

The Seminole Tribe Voice of the Unconquered

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H1N1 Vaccinations Provided on Reservations

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

In a proactive effort aimed at protecting Tribal employees and citizens from the H1N1 virus, Council leaders and the Seminole Health Department hosted a recent four-day vaccination campaign on the Hollywood, Big Cypress, Brighton and Immokalee reservations.

More than 230 employees received with the vaccine, according to Health Department officials.

All participated at different locations through Maxim Health Care Services, which offered the vaccines from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Jan. 11-14.

Thomas Ballard, the Tribal Health Department Special Projects Manager and co-organizer of the vaccination campaign, said the event gave the numerous departments involved the opportunity to execute a plan which has been months in the making.

"This was something which was great for all employees (including gaming) because they did not have to find this in

♦ Please see H1N1 on page 2A

Tribe Celebrates 50 Years in 4-H

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Past, present and future 4-H program members celebrated the Seminole Tribe's 50th year of involvement in the international life skills learning organization during a recent banquet at Brighton's Fred Smith Rodeo Arena.

Brighton Rep. Johnnie Jones Sr. welcomed everyone to his home reservation and shared a few Tribe 4-H memories with the audience. President Richard Bowers Jr. thanked everyone for their hard work in putting on the Dec. 16 anniversary event.

"Good to see all these young 4-Hers getting started," Big Cypress Rep. Paul Bowers Sr. told the audience. "Hopefully these young kids will enjoy it."

4-H was founded in 1902 and has more than six million young adult participants. The organization offers students the opportunity for hands-on learning activities in three areas: healthy living, citizenship and science. Members can join clubs, attend camps and enter their projects into national competitions. The state of Florida is currently celebrating its 100th anniversary in the program.

President Bowers presented Tribe 4-H director Polly Hayes and her assistant, Dionne Smedley, with silver 4-H



(L-R) 4-H members Camryn Thomas and Brighton Junior Miss Aiyana Tommie look at pictures capturing their year in 4-H.

♦ Please see 4-H on page 2A

Students Get Up Close with the Government on Close Up Trip

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

WASHINGTON — Zack Hudson stood in amazement in the U.S. Capitol gallery as he watched U.S. Sen. John Kerry propose amendments to a fiercely debated health care reform bill on the Senate floor.

Amid his awe at watching the former presidential candidate and other politicians who he typically only sees on television, Hudson, 11, realized they were engaged in exactly what he had been studying in textbooks.

"Seeing John Kerry was definitely my favorite part," Hudson said.

Hudson, a student at Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School in Brighton, was one of 65 middle school students from all Tribal reservations who traveled to Washington on Dec. 6-10 as part of the Close Up program. The non-profit educational foundation coordinates visits to the nation's capital for thousands of middle and high school students each year for them to learn how the federal government functions.

A Close Up trip for Tribal high school students is scheduled for February.

The middle school students from the Tribe and five other

♦ Please see CLOSE UP on page 2A



(L-R, Center) Local philanthropist and community advocate Essie "Big Mama" Reed and Chairman Mitchell Cypress distribute toys to a Florida City family on Dec. 22.

Chairman Cypress Delivers Toys to Florida City

BY ELIZABETH LEIBA
Staff Reporter

FLORIDA CITY — Josephine Lupercio had been living with her sister to save money and knew the possibility of affording toys for her three grandchildren was remote.

So when Lupercio heard that the Chairman of the Seminole Tribe of Florida would be giving out Christmas toys for children at nearby Loren Roberts Park, she made sure she was one of the first few community members in line.

The Florida city resident waited in line for 30 minutes and ended up with a toy for each grandchild, whose ages range from 5 to 12 years old.

"I really appreciate it," said a tearful Lupercio, who hugged Chairman Mitchell Cypress tightly after receiving the gifts. "My husband is on disability, so it's month to month. If it wasn't for [Chairman Cypress], I wouldn't have any gifts for my grandchildren this Christmas."

Lupercio was one of more than 500 Florida City residents who attended the toy giveaway sponsored by the Chairman on Dec. 22. For each of the past seven years, Chairman Cypress has held a Christmas toy drive in early December. The toys are donated to children at locations throughout South Florida, including the Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in

Hollywood, which the Chairman visited Dec. 9.

For the first time since he began doing the toy drives, the Chairman made the trip to Florida City, 55 miles south of the Hollywood Reservation, to donate more than 1,500 toys to residents there.

Residents lined up for more than two hours to receive bicycles, dolls, board games and teddy bears for children who reside in the modest, working class neighborhood adjacent to the park.

Chairman Cypress was touched by the stories he heard from Lupercio and other parents whose only wish was for their children to have a merry Christmas.

"It hit me hard when she made the statement that she didn't know where the Christmas presents were going to come from for the children," Chairman Cypress said. "My mom was more or less a single parent. We've been in that situation before and you just got little things like oranges, a bag of peanuts or whatever. That was Christmas for us."

Chairman Cypress also related to how the parents felt based on his personal experience as a single parent.

"My wife died back in '87 and I had two girls," Chairman Cypress shared. "I had to buy two little gas trucks from the Hess station that I could afford. They said 'Daddy, I accept it.' I know how [the parents] feel."

Chairman Cypress was pleased with the success of the event and added that Florida City will be added permanently to the list of future distribution locations for Christmas toys.

Fort Pierce Liaison S.R. Tommie assisted in organizing the toy drive and distribution. She said the reaction from the children receiving the toys was priceless.

"To some of the kids it seems overwhelming; their eyes are so big and they're wondering which one to take," she said. "There are so many people that donated excellent toys this year."

Tommie said she was happy with how the event turned out overall.

"The Chairman has funded and worked very closely with local organizations to bring a smile to a child's face during the holiday season," Tommie said. "Every child is leaving with something so we're very, very pleased."

Local philanthropist and community advocate Essie Reed, better known as "Big Mama," was also on hand to assist with the distribution. She told residents that without the Chairman, there wouldn't have been Christmas.

"We're here with the Seminole Tribe...to serve our community and put a smile on these children's faces," she said.

Tribe Celebrates Annual Winterfest with Reception, Boat Parade

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

FORT LAUDERDALE — Tribal citizens, celebrities, employees and other guests celebrated the holiday season aboard a custom 400-passenger yacht during the Winterfest Boat Parade.

The 2009 Winterfest celebration, whose theme was "That's Entertainment," kicked off on Friday, Dec. 11 with Co-Grand Marshals Alonzo Mourning, Lorenzo Lamas and Kim Kardashian as the guests of honor at the Grand Marshal reception in the Passion nightclub at Seminole Paradise.

"It was a tremendous honor and I thank them for allowing me to be a part of such a rich holiday tradition," said Mourning, who retired from professional basketball in January after a stellar 16-year career. "I was excited about the opportunity and the impact this event continues to have."

Despite heavy rain early on Dec. 12, the tradition-rich 38th annual celebration attracted dozens of vessels that ranged from private boats and showboats to corporate yachts.

"This is the only parade where the floats actually float," Winterfest Chairman and Hollywood Tribal Council Rep. Max B. Osceola Jr. joked.

Other featured vessels included the Smart-Life Grand Marshal Showboat,

Patron Showboat, the Florida Panthers Ice Skating Rink and the Santa Showboat.

Staging began on the New River along the docks to the west side of the historic Stranahan House near the Broward Center for the Performing Arts on Las Olas Boulevard. The parade then traveled east to the Intracoastal Waterway and continued north to Lake Santa Barbara in Pompano Beach.

Many people lined the edge of the Intracoastal to watch the parade.

The Seminole Tribe of Florida continued its tradition of being a major supporter and title sponsor of event. The Winterfest Boat Parade remains a Top 10 spectator event in the U.S. and a Top 20 parade worldwide, according to its official Web site, www.winterfestparade.com.

Mourning has been actively involved in community service in South Florida since joining the Miami Heat in the mid-1990s. His primary non-profit organization, Alonzo Mourning Charities Inc., assists children and families

living in at-risk communities, and provides support and services to enhance the lives of youth. It was established in 1997.

After being diagnosed with focal glomerulosclerosis (FSGS), he launched

♦ Please see WINTERFEST on page 2A



Winterfest Chairman and Hollywood Tribal Council Rep. Max B. Osceola Jr. and wife Marge outside the custom Tribal parade boat before boarding.

❖ H1N1

From page 1A

their own communities and they did not have to come up with the costs or administrative fees," Ballard said. "This has also promoted a healthy workplace."

Ballard said the vaccine, which is also available in a nasal spray form, can cost patients between \$15-\$25. The Tribe provided employees the vaccine for free.

"Our employees are important to us and anything we can do to help them and their families is very important," said Hollywood Tribal Council Rep. Max B. Osceola Jr. "Our employees are the strength of the Tribe."

The virus gained international attention in April 2009 after the first cases were reported in Veracruz, Mexico. It continued to spread globally and clinics became overwhelmed by infected individuals. The World Health Organization (WHO) and United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention eventually stopped counting cases after announcing in June that the illness had reached pandemic status in the U.S.

As of late 2009, there were 13,277 confirmed deaths worldwide. The CDC estimates that in the U.S. alone, there were more than 9,800 deaths as of November.

The illness is common throughout the year. By contrast, seasonal flu flare-ups occur primarily from October through April.

According to research, most people who have contracted H1N1 have recovered within two to three days without needing medical treatment. However, many people in special risk categories such as children (newborns-18), young adults (19-24), and adults in their early 50s have died from the infection.

Symptoms usually last four to six days and are similar to seasonal influenza, which claims 36,000 lives a year. Mild symptoms are experienced by the majority of people including fever, sore throat, cough, headache, muscle or joint pains, and nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

With major hype surrounding the virus since its outbreak, there has been a wide range of responses, reactions and beliefs.

Tribal citizen and employee Everett Osceola received his immunization with friend and co-worker Jonathan McMahon.

"I saw it as a definite convenience having it all at our workplace. It benefits me and my kids also to get the vaccination because I



SMP Brighton employee Rodney Riser has a slight grimace as he braces for his shot.

Protect yourself and others against H1N1

- * Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze
- * Wash your hands often with soap and water. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- * Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- * Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- * If you are sick with flu-like symptoms, stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever passes. Keep away from others to avoid getting them sick.

do not want to get them sick," Osceola said. "I thought to myself based on the feared outbreak (in the Tribe), I needed to be cautious about it all."

Tribal employee Ernie Rich, who works at the Fred Smith Rodeo Arena on the Brighton Reservation, agreed.

"I just wanted to try to be protected. I have been getting the regular flu shots and I have heard so much about how bad it was so I figured I better go ahead and get the shot for it as well," Rich said. "One of my coworkers came down with it and was out for two weeks, so I knew it was pretty serious and nothing you would want to have. So if there was any way to prevent getting it, I wanted to."

Rich said the process for him was easy with no problems. He noted that the media hype played a role in his decision to get the vaccination and he would recommend that other people get vaccinated. Maxim Health Care Nurse Kathy Palmer said the H1N1 virus can be dangerous for young people because their bodies have not had the opportunity to develop an immunity to the illness.

Ballard said there have been a few random confirmed cases of the virus within the Tribe, but all were contained.

Others held the opinions and skepticism of Tribal employee Claudette Pierre. She feels the demand for the vaccine has outnumbered its reliability. "I was just not secure about it (the vaccination) at all," Pierre said. "I feel they (the government) did not do enough research on it."

Staff writers Rachel Buxton, Naji Tobias and Judy Weeks contributed to this report.



(L) Tribal citizen and employee Everett Osceola answers some standard questions from a Maxim Healthcare staff worker prior to receiving his vaccination.

❖ WINTERFEST

From page 1A

Zo's Fund for Life, a campaign seeking to raise money for research, education, and raise funds for those that cannot afford medication to fight the disease. It is known to cause kidney failure in adults. He also founded the Over-town Youth Center in Miami for underprivileged kids.

Mourning's organizations have raised close to \$10 million combined.

Lamas is known for playing Lance Cumson on the popular 1980s soap opera Falcon Crest, Reno Raines on the 1990s crime drama, Renegade, and Hector Ramirez on the daytime soap opera The Bold and the Beautiful.

Kardashian has risen to fame as a socialite, model, actress, businesswoman, and television personality. She is best known in her role on the E! reality show "Keeping Up with the Kardashians." She also is the daughter of attorney Robert Kardashian, a member of O.J. Simpson's legal team during his murder trial in the mid-1990s.



Mourning thanks the staff and organizers of the Grand Marshal Reception held Dec. 11 in Seminole Paradise's Passion nightclub.

❖ CLOSE UP

From page 1A

states were divided into workgroups throughout the week, and they participated in structured learning activities each day. Throughout the week, they were given questions that dealt with citizens' rights and responsibilities in a democracy. On the final night, each group put together a display for parents and teachers that answered the questions and showed highlights from their week in national capital region.

They began the week by visiting the Jamestown settlement near Williamsburg, Va. The group stepped aboard a replica of the Susan Constant, one of the three ships that carried British colonists to the New World to establish a settlement in Virginia. They also toured a life-size recreation of a Powhatan Indian village and colonist fort. They learned about the influence that the British government had on its settlers and how the Anglican Church played a major role in the colony's government.

The next stop was colonial Williamsburg, where students interacted with men and women dressed in traditional 18th Century attire. Students visited several trade shops on the 301-acre historic site, including a pharmacy, blacksmith, printing press and the capitol. At the capitol, students learned how Virginians voted in that building for independence from Great Britain in 1776 and a new state constitution.



Tribal students stand on Capitol Hill.

In their night workshop, students learned how a bill becomes law and role-played congressmen in a mock activity that prepared them for the next part of the tour - Capitol Hill.

made presentations in front of the National World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War memorials about those respective conflicts, as well as the Lincoln Memorial about the Civil War.

"Seeing the wall was cool [and] all the people that risked their lives," said Kaitlin Brown from Brighton, referring to the World War II memorial.

Students also visited the Thomas Jefferson and the Franklin D. Roosevelt memorials, took photos in front of the White House and Washington Monument, and viewed the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery. They also paid their respects to the late President John F. Kennedy and U.S. Sen. Ted Kennedy, who died last year.

While on a walking tour of Washington that ended at the Capitol, students visited the U.S. Supreme Court and some took a peek inside the nation's oldest federal cultural institution, the Library of Congress. They also



Melany Williams, Keyana Nelson, Lindsey Sampson and Kaitlin Brown explore at the Smithsonian Museum.



(L-R) Melany Williams and Keyana Nelson teach their workgroup about the Korean War.

❖ 4-H

From page 1A

pendants for making each 4-H season a success. Tribal officials were presented with a statue of a Seminole man along with the Pemayetv Emahaky statue of the children as a token of appreciation from the Tribal 4-H organizers for all the support they have given throughout the years.

The banquet featured live entertainment by country music recording artist John Anderson. Raffled gift baskets prepared by 4-H members from all reservations included cookies, fruit, barbecue sauce and many other seasonal goodies.

Guests also participated in a silent auction to help raise money for the Tribe's 4-H club. Items included Indian skirts, blankets



4-H members from all Reservations recite the 4-H pledge, pledging to greater loyalty and larger service.

with Indian designs, tool sets, Seminole dolls, western-themed pillows and tickets to Billie Swamp Safari, along with many other items donated by members of the 4-H committee. A live auction was held on stage that included two performance shirts from John Anderson, as well as a cowboy hat donated by the music duo The Bellamy Brothers.

Fort Pierce Tribal residents Shamy and Wanda Tommie, who own the Tomahawk Barbecue catering service, prepared barbecue ribs, macaroni and cheese, and baked beans for the banquet. During the dinner, the audience of approximately 100 people viewed a special documentary presentation on the history of 4-H in the Tribe.

"To know where you are going, you have to know where you came from," Hollywood Rep. Mar-



Beulah Gopher looks over items in the silent auction.

cellus Osceola Jr. told the audience. "I think we've established that (with 4-H). The sky is the limit for this program."

Rep. Osceola also informed 4-H members that Hollywood is in the process of recruiting more participants for the Tribe's 4-H future.

The banquet's guest speakers, State of Florida 4-H Leader Dr. Marilyn Norman and Larry Arrington, Vice President of the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS), spoke about the importance of the Tribe's 4-H participation and history.

"We value our history and our heritage and 4-H is part of that heritage," Arrington said. "We value our partnership that we have with the Seminole Tribe and University of Florida."

Anderson performed hits "Swingin'," "Black Sheep" and "Straight Tequila Night." He ended with his locally popular hit, "Seminole Wind," which pays tribute to the Tribe.

To commemorate Anderson's partnership with the Tribe, Tribal officials presented Anderson with a Seminole patchwork jacket that included the 4-H design in honor of the anniversary. Anderson has been presented with two other Seminole patchwork jackets.



(L-R) Mary Jane Billie and Debbie Osceola from Trail take part in the friendly silent auction.

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

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If you need a reporter or you would like to submit an article, birthday wish or poem to The Seminole Tribune, please contact the Editor Elizabeth Leiba at (954) 985-5702, Ext. 10718 Or by fax at (954) 965-2937

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Community

A



(L-R) Elgin Jumper, accompanied by cousin Blue Jumper on the guitar, recites Shakespearean works for the audience in attendance at the Creative Expressions open mic night at the Native Village.

Creative Expressions Nights Back in Hollywood

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Poets, writers, artists, singers and storytellers had the opportunity to display their talent in time for the holidays in the latest Creative Expressions showcase held at the Native Village.

Tribal poet, author and artist Elgin Jumper headlined the Dec. 16 event and served as the master of ceremonies.

"I am glad for the continued support for the project and I am so grateful to still be involved with it," said Jumper, a three-year participant. "It is about creative expression in a way that can be supported."

With past shows on the Brighton, Immokalee and Big Cypress Reservations, Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum Education Coordinator Diane Stone said the support for the arts seem strong, particularly in Hollywood and Big Cypress. Osceola's Pizza in Big Cypress and the Hollywood Tribal headquarters have been regular spots for showcases.

"Elgin has been the frontrunner with opportunities to perform and this allows individuals to come and just share their art," Stone said. "We are

always looking for something new to present."

Jumper and Stone credited Seminole Recreation Department Director Moses "Bigg" Jumper Jr. and the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum for their support of the event throughout its run.

"The response we have gotten has been very positive overall," Stone said. "We are still perfecting things like where and when we have it."

Jumper recited works from his favorite writers and poets such as British playwright William Shakespeare. Jumper also shared several of his own original pieces, including "Yesterday Was My Birthplace," "Tears Stolen from Crocodiles," "Native Poems," and "You."

Hip-hop artist, deejay and poet Zach Battiest said the experience at the show, his first, and performance was refreshing. It also was his first time on stage since competing in Seminole Star Search in London earlier this year.

"I have been looking for a reason to get back on stage," said Battiest, who co-owns the Native Village facility with his father, Junior Battiest. "The whole thing has given me the drive I need and makes me anxious to do it again."

The next scheduled show will be held on Jan. 28 at the Native Village.



Chris C. Jenkins

Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum Education Coordinator Diane Stone sings the classic Christmas song "Silent Night" in the spirit of the holiday season at the Creative Expressions night performances.

BC Boys & Girls Club Holds Fear Factor

BY THOMMY DOUD
Contributing Writer

BIG CYPRESS — Members of the Big Cypress Boys & Girls Club put their fears aside as they competed in the Friday the 13th Fear Factor.

Participants completed a series of events Nov. 13, including the Rotten Egg Relay, the Blind Slime Find, and the final challenge, the Dreaded Wheelbarrow Race. During the wheelbarrow race each participant raced using only their arms as their partner held their legs. However, unlike traditional human wheelbarrow races, participants also collected objects buried in slop using only their mouths.

Competition was fierce from the start of the event. Children ran with rotten eggs on a spoon, digging their hands blindly into a container filled with slime and slop.

The slop flew as the final three teams raced head to head, submerging their faces into each slop-filled container. The youngsters cheered for their favorite team as the finalists made their way to the finish line. The race was close but the team of John Robbins, 10, and Chaska Osceola, 9, pulled off the win.

For more information about the Big Cypress Boys & Girls Club at Ahfachkee School or the next Fear Factor, please contact Thommy Doud at 954-410-0957.



Thommy Doud

Rayce Noah and Jonah Alvarado practice team building in the Dreaded Wheelbarrow Race.

Jewel Buck Named Okeechobee Football Queen



Tom Riser

Emma Urbina (R) says she's proud of her daughter Jewel's (L) accomplishments.

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

OKEECHOBEE — Jewel Buck of the Brighton Reservation has been named Okeechobee High School Class of 2010 Football Queen.

Buck, 18, represented her school and tribe on Nov. 13 as she walked across the Okeechobee High School football field escorted by football player Brent Harden during the homecoming halftime presentation.

"It was a great honor to represent the Tribe most of all because I don't see a lot of Seminoles as Football Queen," said Buck, the daughter of Jessie and Emma Urbina.

The title Football Queen is given out each year to the senior sports medicine trainer of the Okeechobee football team. Buck became a sports medicine trainer for the team after attending a three-day training course at the University of South Florida in Tampa during the summer of 2008. She returned for further training in the summer of 2009.

The training course teaches students about emergency situations and how to handle caring for sport-related injuries.

Buck who plays on the varsity track and basketball teams said she plans to further her education and attend school for a degree in sports medicine.

"I've been around sports all my life," Buck said. "It just seems like the next step."

Council Holds Second Special Meeting in Brighton

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — The Tribal Council met in Brighton for a second special session the afternoon of Dec. 21. It passed two resolutions on the agenda including:

Resolution 5: Forest Products permit ordinance; and, Resolution 6: A request to the United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs to include forestry on Indian lands in the current P.L. 93-638 contract No. CTS53T02172 for a forestry program for all Tribal lands of the Seminole Tribe.

Council Holds Special Meeting in Brighton and Honors Graduates

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Tribal Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr. honored two young Tribal citizens during a special session for earning their college degrees.

Rep. Bowers presented former Miss Florida Seminole D'Anna Osceola with a watch embossed with the Tribal logo for her recent graduation from Florida State University. Osceola received her bachelor's degree in Family and Child Sciences on Dec. 12 from

and plans to earn a master's degree from the same institution.

"I'm just very thankful for where our Tribe is today and I'm thankful ... for everyone's support," Osceola told the Council.

Heather Peterson also was honored for her achievement in earning her associate degree from Hillsborough Community College in Tampa.

"I just want to thank you for pushing education," Peterson said. "I think it's the most important thing that gets you places in life."

Following Rep. Bowers' presentation, Miss Florida Seminole Princess Brittany Smith addressed the Council for the first time since beginning her reign in July.

"It's a great honor being here to represent the Tribe not only here in the state of Florida but when I travel," Smith said dressed in full regalia. "Thank you for allowing young women to go out and represent the Tribe just as a role model for the youth."

The Dec. 21 meeting proceeded with the consent and regular agenda with 36 resolutions being passed including:

Resolution 32: Bureau of Indian Affairs Indian Reservation Roads Transportation Program



Rachel Buxton

Miss Florida Seminole Princess Brittany Smith stands before the Tribal Council for the first time, thanking them for their support.

— reaffirming the Tribal transportation funds priority list for fiscal years 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014;

Resolution 35: Approval of agreement with Seminole Design-Build, Inc. for Immokalee First Baptist Church retention pond; ratification of execution;

Resolution 37: Revocable permit between Seminole Tribe of Florida (permittor) and Florida Trail Association, Inc. (permittee) — Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation;

Resolution 39: Issuance of revocable permit between Jacob Osceola (permittor) and Georgette Lasley-Yearby

D/B/A Bill's Bar-B-Que Dream (permittee) — Hollywood Seminole Indian Reservation;

Resolution 40: Approval of revocable permit between Seminole Tribe of Florida (permittor) and June Lena Battiest D/B/A Panther Pressure Cleaning and Painting (permittee) — Hollywood Seminole Indian Reservation; and,

Resolution 41: Renewal of revocable permit between Jacob Osceola (permittor) and Pinpoint Marketing, D/B/A A Flower Depot (permittee) — Hollywood Seminole Indian Reservation.



Rachel Buxton

Brighton Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr. presents Brighton resident D'Anna Osceola with a small gift for her academic accomplishments.

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

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

ACTION: Notice of Availability (NOA)

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is issuing a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for approving the construction and lease of a home on trust property for Rosetta Rhodd. The approximately 1.5 acre lot is located at 48 South, Range 33 East, Section 1, Hendry County, Florida, which is located on the Seminole Tribe of Florida's Big Cypress Reservation. The BIA has approved and adopted the Environmental Assessment (EA), dated October 2009, prepared by the Seminole Tribe of Florida Environmental Resource Management Department and entitled "Rosetta Rhodd New Home Site Lease, Seminole Tribe of Florida, Big Cypress Reservation, Hendry County, Florida". This EA has been adopted and FONSI issued for the approval of the home construction and lease of trust lands in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.

NOTICE: This is a Notice of Availability (NOA), that the EA and FONSI for the Federal action of approving the proposed home construction and lease of trust property are available for public review. The BIA has approved and adopted the above referenced EA which addressed this proposal. The FONSI determination was based on review and analysis of the information in the EA. Based on the EA, it has been determined that the action will not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment, therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. You may obtain a copy of the EA and FONSI from the BIA Eastern Regional Office or the Environmental Resources Management Department of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, 5201 Ravenswood Road, Suite 105, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33024, telephone (954) 965-4380.

APPEALS: "This FONSI is a finding on environmental effects, not a decision to proceed with an action, therefore cannot be appealed. 25 C.F.R. Part 2.7 requires a 30 day appeal period after the decision to proceed with the action is made before the action may be implemented. Appeal information will be made publicly available when the decision to proceed is made."

For further information please contact Kurt G. Chandler, Regional Environmental Scientist, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Eastern Regional Office, 545 Marriott Drive, Suite 700, Nashville, TN 37214, telephone (615) 564-6832.

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

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

ACTION: Notice of Availability (NOA)

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is issuing a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for approving the construction and lease of a home on trust property for Clifton Eugene Huggins. The approximately 1.5 acre lot is located at 48 South, Range 33 East, Section 2, Hendry County, Florida, which is located on the Seminole Tribe of Florida's Big Cypress Reservation. The BIA has approved and adopted the Environmental Assessment (EA), dated October 2009, prepared by the Seminole Tribe of Florida Environmental Resource Management Department and entitled "Clifton Eugene Huggins Home Site Lease, Seminole Tribe of Florida, Big Cypress Reservation, Hendry County, Florida". This EA has been adopted and FONSI issued for the approval of the home construction and lease of trust lands in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.

NOTICE: This is a Notice of Availability (NOA), that the EA and FONSI for the Federal action of approving the proposed home construction and lease of trust property are available for public review. The BIA has approved and adopted the above referenced EA which addressed this proposal. The FONSI determination was based on review and analysis of the information in the EA. Based on the EA, it has been determined that the action will not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment, therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. You may obtain a copy of the EA and FONSI from the BIA Eastern Regional Office or the Environmental Resources Management Department of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, 5201 Ravenswood Road, Suite 105, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33024, telephone (954) 965-4380.

APPEALS: "This FONSI is a finding on environmental effects, not a decision to proceed with an action, therefore cannot be appealed. 25 C.F.R. Part 2.7 requires a 30 day appeal period after the decision to proceed with the action is made before the action may be implemented. Appeal information will be made publicly available when the decision to proceed is made."

For further information please contact Kurt G. Chandler, Regional Environmental Scientist, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Eastern Regional Office, 545 Marriott Drive, Suite 700, Nashville, TN 37214, telephone (615) 564-6832.

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

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

ACTION: Notice of Availability (NOA)

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for approving the construction and lease of an organic processing/compost facility on John's Family Enterprises trust property on the Brighton Reservation of the Seminole Indian Tribe of Florida. The BIA has approved and adopted the revision of the Environmental Assessment (EA), dated December 2009, prepared by the Seminole Tribe of Florida Environmental Resource Management Department and entitled "Environmental Assessment, John's Family Enterprises, LLC Lease Site, Seminole Indian Tribe of Florida, Brighton Reservation, Glades County, Florida". This EA has been adopted and FONSI issued for the approval of the facility construction and lease of trust lands in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.

NOTICE: This is a Notice of Availability (NOA), that the EA and FONSI for the Federal action of approving the proposed facility construction and lease of trust property are available for public review. The BIA has approved and adopted the above referenced EA which addressed this proposal. The FONSI determination was based on review and analysis of the information in the EA. Based on the EA, it has been determined that the action will not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment, therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. You may obtain a copy of the EA and FONSI from the BIA Eastern Regional Office or the Environmental Resources Management Department of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, 5201 Ravenswood Road, Suite 105, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33024, telephone (954) 965-4380.

APPEALS: "This FONSI is a finding on environmental effects, not a decision to proceed with an action, therefore cannot be appealed. 25 C.F.R. Part 2.7 requires a 30 day appeal period after the decision to proceed with the action is made before the action may be implemented. Appeal information will be made publicly available when the decision to proceed is made."

For further information please contact Kurt G. Chandler, Regional Environmental Scientist, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Eastern Regional Office, 545 Marriott Drive, Suite 700, Nashville, TN 37214, telephone (615) 564-6832.



Chris C. Jenkins

(L-R) Seminole artist Jimmie Osceola, Elgin Jumper and Jackie Osceola with art students and faculty from Hollywood Christian High School.

Seminole Culture Displayed Through Art Work

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Tribal citizens Jimmie Osceola, Elgin Jumper and Charlie Osceola displayed the rich heritage of the Seminole culture through their original work at a two-day show held at the Native Village to promote Seminole Tribal art.

Jumper, who is also a well known Tribal poet and writer, said he was very excited at the opportunity to display his works. He had 10 pieces in the show.

"I was approached a few months ago about it and I said, 'where do I sign up?'" Jumper said. "I thought it was really appealing and great especially being an artist."

Preferring acrylic medium in his work, Jimmie Osceola began painting at about the age of 12 and said his inspirations often come from subjects in Seminole life like scenery, portraits, and still life. One of his works at the show depicted a traditional stomp dance gathering.

The men are three of the Tribe's better known, skillful and creative minds. They received minimal education in their craft and instead relied on self-taught abilities, according to organizer and sketch artist Jackie Osceola.

"I have seen their work for some time now and it has come along very well," Jackie Osceola said. "I have admired their works and like to see them out there. They deserve to be recognized."

"Being an artist myself, I like it all and love to see it, especially among my own people," Osceola continued.

Jackie Osceola's specialties include pen, ink and pencil sketching, and beadwork. She also plans to learn how to paint.

She and the other artists said the event also represents



Chris C. Jenkins

Guests enjoy the flute styling of Tribal citizen Ollie Wareham throughout the day.

the legacy and talents of her late uncle and celebrated painter Noah Billie and his brother, Jonah Billie. "A lot of my influence came through [Noah Billie]," Osceola acknowledged. "He always wanted Seminole artists to be recognized through their works."

"I always got inspiration from [Noah and Jonah] also. I picked up on the joy they got from their work."

Osceola also thanked Tribal Council Rep. Max B. Osceola Jr. and his office for their support and sponsorship of the show.

"We just want to continue to expose our culture," said Native Village owner Junior Battiste. "One of the things we do not see out there with Seminole activities is more of an emphasis on art. We want other folks out there to also know that there are other talents out there among Seminoles to see."

Students and faculty from Hollywood Christian High School also attended the show.

Osceola announced that a show will be held in March featuring Native women artists. Mary Gay Osceola, Erica North and Rita Youngman are among the artists who may display their work.

For more information on the artists, their work or to purchase pieces call Jackie Osceola at 954-253-0177.



Chris C. Jenkins

Seminole artist Jimmie Osceola with one of his creative works depicting a traditional stomp dance gathering.



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal poet writer and artist Elgin Jumper hangs one of his original pieces entitled 'Skill Life' before the show.

Tribal Elder Mary Osceola-Moore: A Model of Seminole Pride in Life and Cinema

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — While washing dishes at a family friend's truck stop at age 16 in the 1950s, Mary Moore was presented with an opportunity few people have the ability to experience — to star in a motion picture with Hollywood superstars.

As amazing as the chance for stardom seemed to her, she wanted to run it past her mother and father first. "I told them (the producers) I had to speak to my parents about it and get their permission," Moore recalled.

Such is the story of Moore, a Tribal elder whose life can be defined through her love of her family and opportunity.

Moore's early life was similar to other Seminoles at the time — humble and hard-working with a strong cultural rearing. Her family was among a small independent, unaffiliated subset on the Trail Reservation before the Tribe became officially recognized by the U.S. government in 1957.

Her father, Cory Osceola, and mother, Juanita, often spent the day fishing for family meals. With four brothers — two of who are now deceased — and two sisters in the house, Moore said she and her siblings learned to work together and that everyone in the family had a role. The siblings would create beadwork and other traditional art that they would sell to help support the household.

"Even though we were poor financially, we were very strong in togetherness and every night we were shown about the rules of living," the Panther Clan member said. "My mother would even tell us stories after we (would) lay down for the night until we went to sleep."

Three movie producers visited her one day looking to cast roles for their upcoming movie project to be filmed in the Everglades National Park. The film, titled "Wind Across the Everglades," was released in 1958.

After getting over the initial shock of the offer, Moore spoke to her parents. Little did she know her father — an actor, community leader and local Seminole chief — was also being wooed for the same project.

"My mother said since my father was going to be in it also, it would be OK to do," Moore said.

Moore's father played the role of the character Billy One-Arm in the film. In real life, he lost his arm in a railroad accident at around the age of 18. He also had one other film role to his credit in the 1955 film "Yellowneck."

Moore made her feature film debut and played the

role of Suzy Billy, the wife of her father in the film. It would be her only film appearance.

"I was so afraid early on but as we went on I relaxed and enjoyed it," she recalled.

She earned \$75 per day for her work on the movie and used the money to purchase her first car, a 1955 Ford Coupe.

The plot of the film followed a game warden played by Christopher Plummer, then a fresh-faced Canadian theater actor. In the film, Plummer's character arrives in Florida with the hopes of enforcing conservation laws only to be pitted against Cottonmouth, actor Burl Ives' character and the leader of a group of bird poachers.

As an Emmy and Tony Award-winning actor, Plummer is best known to fans as the iconic Captain George von Trapp in the 1965 movie-musical "The Sound of Music."

With only a handful of copies in existence today, "Wind Across the Everglades" was screened by the Fort Lauderdale International Film Festival in January to celebrate its 50th anniversary release. Both Moore and Plummer attended the showing.

Moore said the leadership, strength and presence of her father throughout the years helped lead to her having such a great opportunity. In years past, the two participated in numerous parades and community functions that lead them to be discovered for the movie. Osceola died in 1978, with hundreds of people attending his funeral to pay their respects.

"He met so many people and was so well known," Moore reflected. "I am still so proud of him."

Moore's only regret is not taking advantage of the chance to do more acting. She said her fears kept her from taking acting lessons when approached

after filming. Still, her short-lived film stint cemented her legacy forever on the big screen as a Seminole Tribal citizen.

Moore has three adult children and two adult grandchildren and considers them her most prized life accomplishment. She takes pride in their ambitious, smart, educated, savvy approach to life, as well as in her marriage to her late husband, Franklin Moore.

"[Franklin] always took care of us and was one of those I can never find another one like," Moore said.

Moore said she would like to see more Seminole youth work for the Tribe.

"I do not understand the kids now because we had to work back in my time," she said. "I am so proud of the Tribe and our representatives. I just wish these young people would go to work and help this Tribe."



Chris C. Jenkins

Mary Osceola-Moore shows a picture of father, Cory, and mother, Juanita. Both are on the cover of the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum flyers currently in distribution to promote the facilities.



Chris C. Jenkins

Seminole Coffee Co. owner Gem Osceola welcomes Tribal employees and friends to a five year celebration gathering Dec. 28.

Seminole Coffee Company Celebrates Five Years

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD —The Seminole Coffee Co. recently celebrated its five-year anniversary and co-owner Gem Osceola has big plans to expand the flourishing business around the United States.

"Business is about enhancing a service. We just wanted to give a fresh gourmet coffee at the headquarters at first," Osceola said at a Dec. 28 luncheon with friends, family and employees at Tribal headquarters. "In the beginning, though, we were given a small field to prove ourselves and we did."

Osceola, flanked by wife and Seminole Coffee co-owner Linda Osceola, thanked those who supported them when they founded the company in 2004, including account manager Frank Pego as well as Tribal citizen and Tribal Chief Operations Office Business Analyst Ernest Tiger.

Seminole Coffee, which originally opened in Tribal headquarters, has been hit with employees there.

"I think it has been really nice and great to have here," Grants Compliance Administrator Sandra H. Atkins said of the break room mainstay.

The business has since expanded to the casinos on each of Tribe's seven reservations. Osceola plans

to eventually open Seminole Coffee shops in all Hard Rock Cafes.

"Everyday is a workday for us and it is all a joint effort," Osceola said, noting that the expansion strategy began in 2006. "We have surpassed every item and goal we wanted so we have just happened to come along at the right time with our next phase."

Pego said the carefully-crafted expansion project will be implemented in several stages, beginning with providing Seminole Coffee at Hard Rock locations in Hollywood and Tampa. Expansion will then continue up the U.S. east coast, including a café in the newly built Yankee Stadium in New York. Osceola also plans to look at business opportunities in the Midwest and beyond.

"Gem is really ambitious; it is just one of the major things involved in being successful," Tiger said. "We just opened up the doors for him. He made the right decisions and it has all just fallen into place."

The Seminole Coffee shop at the Hollywood headquarters is on the second floor under the direction of manager Sharon Williams. Hours of operation are Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. For more information call 954-966-6300 at extension 11186 or 954-600-6484 or email flemcoff@yahoo.com.



2010 SEMINOLE TRIBAL FAIR
Little Mr. & Little Miss Seminole
Contest - Application
Friday, February 12, 2010, 5:00 PM
Hard Rock Live
Contestant # _____

(check one) Little Miss Seminole _____ Little Mr. Seminole _____

Date: _____ Reservation: _____

Child's Name: _____ Age: _____

Enrollment #: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Signature (circle one)
Tribal Member Parent
Guardian

Print Name

Contestants must be an enrolled tribal member,
between the ages of 5 - 7 years old
and be a resident of the state of
Florida by February 1, 2010.
NO EXCEPTIONS.

Registration deadline is
Monday, February 8, 2010 - 5:00pm.
Contestants must be preregistered.
Absolutely NO applications will be
accepted after February 8, 2010.

Confirm that your applications have been received by
fax or walk-in to the Secretary's office.
Call (954)-966-6300 ext. 11468 to Wanda or
Leila at ext. 11463
or your local princess committee member.

CONTACTS: FAX NO. (954) 967-3488
Hollywood - Wanda Bowers (954) 966-6300 ext. 11468
Brighton - Salina Dorgan (863) 763-3866
Big Cypress - Alice Billie (863) 902-3200
Immokalee - Crystal Salinas (239) 867-5300
Tampa - Tracy Massey (813) 246-3100
Ft. Pierce - Mary Stomboli (772) 467-2454
Trail Seminoles - Shawndra Billie (305) 553-8245

Big Cypress Cattle Owners Gear Up for Bull Distribution

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Cowboys and cattle owners alike gathered around the cow pens at the Big Cypress Cattle and Range facility as more than 100 bulls were weighed and checked before being released to the area's cow pastures during the reservation's annual bull distribution.

Tribal citizen Mary Jene Koenes, who owns a total of eight bulls, was the first bull operator to have her animals ready for breeding. She owns the most bulls of the reservation's 27 cattle owners.

After the cowboys hauled Koenes' eight bulls onto a trailer, she drove them to her cow pasture about a mile east of the Billie Swamp Safari.

With Koenes allowing her bulls to enter the gated pasture, she knew it was time for the coveted animals to engage in breeding. After being sent to the cow pasture, the bulls galloped off into the field to find the hordes of cows nearby — a necessary practice as the bulls and cows are typically bred for a 90-day period.

The breeding concludes toward the end of March — the time when the bulls are scheduled for their annual vaccinations.

"Once the 90 days are up, the bulls will be going back to their pasture," Koenes said.

Generally, a cattle owner distributes three or four



Big Cypress Tribal citizen Mary Jene Koenes locks her gate as her bulls are released to pasture for breeding on Dec. 29.

bulls on average for the distribution. It takes just one bull to service 25 cows. That means if a cattle owner registers four bulls at the distribution session, then the owner likely has about 100 cows to service.

"I hope the bulls find some good cows for the breeding period," said Big Cypress Board Rep. Paul Bowers Sr., who also serves as the Big Cypress Cattle and Range director. "We want to have some good calves next year."

Cattle live by grazing through the grass and drinking water out of nearby ditches and sloughs, according to Don Robertson, the Tribe's natural resources director of cattle operations. That can adversely affect their health, as they pick up worms and a host of viruses.

The bull distribution and vaccination practices have been going on for more than 50 years, Koenes said.

The first cattle appeared at Big Cypress in the 1930s, when Morgan Smith and other cowboys drove them to the reservation by horse from a train in Palmdale.

Palmdale, a small community in Glades County, is about 90 minutes north of the Big Cypress Reservation.

Additionally, the United States government purchased the cattle from the Apache Tribe in the 1930s and later sold them to the Seminoles.

"Cow and calf operations were the Seminoles' first modern business venture in its history," Koenes said. "They've always been savvy business people, but they figured cattle would be profitable as well."



During the Bull Distribution, a set of bulls are let go from the Big Cypress cow pen as they later get transported, via pickup truck and trailer, to pasture near the Billie Swamp Safari on Dec. 29.

Seniors Learn Lessons from Poison Prevention Clinic

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — The Seminole Fire-Rescue Department personnel hosted a poison prevention clinic for Tribal seniors just before New Year's Day to give some tips on how to safely handle potentially hazardous items.

Seminole Fire-Rescue Inspector Orlando Hurtado, who hosted the 20-minute presentation, told the group that the use of Febreze, an air freshener, can cause lung and breathing problems if used excessively. He recommended using cleaners as directed.

"Too much of anything is a poison," he said.

He offered some caution to the seniors when it comes to dealing with children and housecleaning liquids.

"Stay away from common household products that can kill you," Hurtado advised. "Children may not know these items are bad for them. We want you to know that we teach your grandchildren the same thing you instill in them."

Hurtado touched on how garage items such as gasoline, engine fluids, fertilizers, herbicides, insecticides and lighter fluids can have an adverse effect on a home and its residents.

The fire inspector also advised seniors to refrain from smoking, as gases such as carbon monoxide, rocket fuel, ammonia and nicotine are considered poisonous.

"Carbon monoxide can sneak in through your home and kill you," Hurtado said. "Second-hand smoke can kill you, too."



(L-R): Big Cypress Tribal elders Claudia Doctor and Edna McDuffie each won separate massaging devices and fruit baskets in a raffle drawing at the Seniors Poison Prevention Clinic on Dec. 29.

Hurtado added that it is a good idea for seniors to stay away from animals such as snakes and spiders, as they can be venomous and present a deadly threat to individuals.

"If you see any suspicious animal, just run away from it," Hurtado said to the seniors. "Don't touch it. Call us or SPD (Seminole Police Department) and we'll take care of that for you."

Pets can be poisoned by items such as chocolate, grapes, raisins, plants, mushrooms and insecticides, according to Hurtado. And plants such as poison ivy, poison oak and poison sumac — which can be found at the Big Cypress Reservation — can irritate the skin if someone touches it inadvertently.

Rudy Osceola, a Big Cypress Tribal senior, was enlightened about the adverse effects of touching the aforementioned plants.

"I didn't know about the types of leaves that can poison you," Osceola said. "Next time I see something like that, I'll just stay away from it."

Anyone in need of assistance can contact the Poison Help Hotline at (800) 222-1222.



(L-R): Seminole Fire-Rescue Inspector Orlando Hurtado presents Big Cypress Tribal senior Lucia Jumper with a bag, which contains an array of fire prevention materials, at the Seniors Poison Prevention Clinic on Dec. 29.



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Tribal Representatives Attend Ag Symposium

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

LAS VEGAS — The state of agriculture in Indian Country took center stage at the 17th annual Intertribal Agriculture Council/Indian Nations Conservation Alliance Ag Symposium.

"Caring for Mother Earth" was the theme for the 2009 forum, which brought in hundreds of Native leaders, Tribal agriculture producers and federal agency representatives.

Held Dec. 7-11 at the Flamingo Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, there were more than 600 attendees at the conference with representatives from the Seminole Tribe, including Board President and former INCA President Richard Bowers Jr.

"I think it all was a great success," President Bowers said. "I also appreciate the fact that our own cattle women have established their own group."

The Tribe's Florida Seminole Cattle Woman's Association was represented, led by President Wendy Riley.

The meetings provided insight into the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) report on the implementation of the \$288 billion, five-year Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008, commonly known as the 2008 Farm Bill.

The bill is a continuation of the 2002 Farm Bill and maintains the U.S. game plan of subsidizing agricultural and rural development in areas such as energy, conservation and nutrition.

The Native Women and Youth In Ag Essay Luncheon Another also highlighted the week.

The sixth annual essay contest was sponsored by the USDA Risk Management Agency, the Tribe and the IAC.

Crow Nation member Ray Champ, the 2008-09 In-

dian National Finals Rodeo Announcer of the Year, was the master of ceremonies for the luncheon.

Four compositions were chosen for the contest among Native American high school students throughout the country. Their entries were titled, "How to Manage Risk on My Reservation." The finalists were Jordyn Traversie, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe; Sierra Matt, Blackfeet Tribe; Bradee Hawley, Gros Ventre of the Fort Belknap Reservation and Ashley Carlisle, Navajo Nation.

All four girls will serve as ambassadors for a year to Indian Ag and Indian Country by working with the Native Women in Agriculture in outreach efforts.

As finalists each received an all-expense paid trip with a chaperone to Las Vegas to read their essays at the luncheon. They also each received an engraved award from IAC. On behalf of the Tribe President Bowers gave each a fully-equipped Dell computer.

"The support this year was overwhelming and it is obvious that we are not alone in recognizing the necessity to bring our Native Youth full circle and back to our roots in Ag," Vicki Hebb, NWYIA Executive Director stated in a press release.

The mission of NWYIA is to provide a network and forum for Native women in agriculture. The organization began in 2004.

IAC was founded in 1987 to pursue and promote the conservation, development and use of agricultural resources for the betterment of Native people.

INCA assists all U.S. Tribal Nations and Alaskan villages to establish, maintain and strengthen Tribal conservation districts to protect the air, land, water, cultural and natural resources, along with the Earth for future generations, according to its mission statement.

For more information log on to www.info@indianaglink.com or www.inca-tcd.org.



Natasha Ramdat

Tribal Board President Richard Bowers Jr. (L) with finalists of the Native Women and Youth in Ag Essay Luncheon.

This Holiday Season

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Freedom Edition | Black, H2, 2008, 25 Passenger



Chrysler 300 Lambo | White, 300, 2008, 12 Passenger



Tribal Edition | White, H2, 2008, 22 Passenger



Bentley Edition 2009 | Silver & Black, 300, 12 Passenger



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For more information please contact Wanda Bowers
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Education

B



Preschoolers and staff perform "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" to close out the program.

Chris C. Jenkins

Preschoolers Spread Christmas Cheer in Program

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — The preschoolers of the Hollywood community spread some Christmas cheer to family and friends in the Tribal Headquar-

ters Auditorium.

In a special program Dec. 16, the infant through 4-year-old classes participated with songs and selections. The day also came complete with lunch and a visit from Santa Claus with Christmas gifts. It was all part of an annual show with preparations that take place every day after Thanksgiving, said Preschool Parent Involvement Coordinator Dawna Bell.

"You could tell they knew what they were doing and it worked out well," she said. "It just gets better and better over time."

First Seminole Indian Baptist Church Pastor Paul Buster opened up with a prayer followed by the 1- and 2-year-old class singing the classic Christmas song "Let It Snow." The infant class then performed "Dashing through the Snow."

The 3- and 4-year-old classes also performed their version of "The Twelve Days of Christmas" along with other yuletide songs including, "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree," "Winter Wonderland" and "We Wish You a Merry Christmas."

Irma Berrios said she really enjoyed the program and seeing grandson Jake Osceola on stage. He played



Chris C. Jenkins

Jake Osceola plays the role of the savior in the preschool's rendition of "The Twelve Days of Christmas."



Chris C. Jenkins

Shilin Huggins holds a poster of candles burning.

the role of the savior in the preschool's rendition of "The Twelve Days of Christmas."

"It was a blessing to see my grandchild in the Christmas spirit even though we are going through a lot as a family right now," she said. "The Lord has blessed me with two beautiful grandchildren ... and I enjoyed everything."

Ahfachkee School Students Shine in Christmas Program



Naji Tobias

The Ahfachkee second graders perform "Love Letters of Christmas".

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — The Ahfachkee School's Christmas Program at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium had a wintery feel with dimmed lights and holiday decorations everywhere.

The event on Dec. 17 began with a prayer by the Rev. Bruce Pratt, pastor of the Big Cypress First Baptist Church.

That was followed by words from Chairman Mitchell Cypress, Big Cypress Board Rep. Paul Bowers Sr., and Immokalee Liaison Elaine Aguilar, among others.

"Ahfachkee always puts on a good program this part of the year," Chairman Cypress said. "It feels like winter in here."

After the welcome address from Ahfachkee School principal Walter Swan, the Tribal students took to the stage with a slew of Christmas performances to follow.

One of the highlights of the program was the Christmas Tumblers, a group of students assembled by the Big Cypress Fitness Department, performing a dance sequence to the holiday tune "It's Christmas Time."

The attendees looked on in amazement as the tumblers did cartwheels and flips across the floor.

Next up was a reading of "The Night Before Christmas" by the Ahfachkee School's sixth through 10th grade English students, followed by songs from the pre-kindergarten to fourth grade students.

The third graders sang "Ho, Ho, Ho," while the kindergarten and pre-kindergarten students sang "O Christmas Tree" and "This Little Light of Mine."

The third grade group came back with a "Christmas Medley," followed by a "Jingle Rap" by the fourth graders.

After the second grade class gave a rendition of the holiday tune "Love Letters of Christmas," the first graders sang "Happy Birthday, Jesus."

The performances concluded with all the grades coming together to sing "We Wish You a Merry Christmas."

"I look at it as a puzzle," Ahfachkee music instructor Lana Payne said of the song selections. "We just found a way to put it all together. The [Ahfachkee] teachers helped our kids a lot with the timing of all the performances."

The music teacher said that "Jingle Rap" was perhaps the Tribal students' favorite song to perform, since it featured a combination of singing and rapping.

"This Little Light of Mine" and Happy Birthday, Jesus," were two other songs that were popular with the Ahfachkee students, Payne said.

"The kids did a wonderful job," she said. "They paid attention to where and when they were supposed to come on and off during the performances. They knew the words to all the songs and they were well-behaved."



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee School principal Walter Swan gives the welcoming address at the Christmas Program on Dec. 17.

Ahfachkee Third Graders Take Trip To Sawgrass Mills

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

SUNRISE — Third-grade students from the Ahfachkee School embarked on a bus trip to the Sawgrass Mills Mall to learn, shop and dine.

Big Cypress Library Director Barbara Oelfner and curator Gretchen DeBree accompanied the Tribal students to the Books-A-Million dur-



Naji Tobias

Curator Gretchen DeBree checks out books for the Ahfachkee School third grade students.

ing the Dec. 9 trip for an educational opportunity they won't soon forget.

The students were able to take a look at all the facility's book sections during their 45-minute tour of the bookstore. The children viewed books on science-fiction, cookbooks, history and sports, among others topics.

Mary Moreno, a children's specialist for Books-A-Million, said the Ahfachkee students took a liking to many of the more than 5,000 available books in the store.

"Some of the kids were interested in music books, like Hannah Montana and Taylor Swift," Moreno said. "The most interesting thing about the tour is that they were looking to get Christmas presents for their families. They're not selfish in any way."

Mariah Smith, an Ahfachkee student, had about 20 books in her shopping cart. She revealed that her two favorite books are "How to be a Vampire" and "Wicked," both of which are fiction, Halloween-based tales.

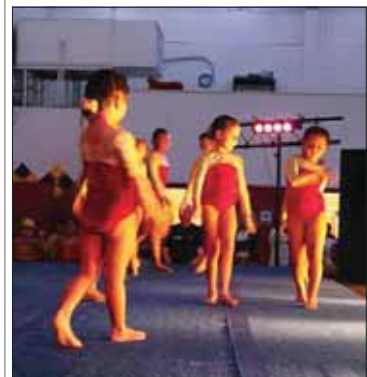
After Mariah and her fellow classmates paid their merchandise, they headed to the Rainforest Café for lunch before traveling back to the Big Cypress Reservation.

"The Tribal kids got to do a lot of shopping independently," DeBree said of the Ahfachkee students. "They were familiar with a lot of the book sections while on tour. A few of them mentioned they will go back to Sawgrass Mills with their parents, so obviously they took something from the Books-A-Million bookstore."



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee student Mariah Smith takes the time to pick up items at the Books-A-Million bookstore.



Naji Tobias

The Christmas Tumblers give the audience a dancing sequence, letting them know through their acrobatic moves, that "It's Christmas Time."



Chris C. Jenkins

College Admissions Panel representatives from schools including Stanford University, Florida State University and the University of Miami hold a question and answer session Jan. 6 for students and parents interested in higher education.

Tribal Youth Attend Panel Discussion with Top Universities

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Tribal youth and parents participated in a question-and-answer session with representatives from some of the best public and private college institutions recently at the Hard Rock Hotel.

In a first-time gathering, Admissions Board Panel members from Stanford University, Florida State University, the University of Miami and other schools were on hand to field questions and offer advice to college hopefuls on a number of common topics.

"We were very happy and pleased with the turnout," said Tribal Education Director Emma Johns of the Jan. 6 event. "We wanted to open the minds of these students and help guide them. It also allowed a lot of questions to get answered that we could not."

Targeted for high school students in grades 9-12, Johns said she hopes to have the affair annually around the same time as the annual College Fair.

She explained that the idea for the panel discussion came from contacts and administrative staff at Fort Lauderdale's Pine Crest High School.

Among the many subjects discussed were basic admission requirements.

Edward Gillis, assistant vice president for enrollment management and the executive director of admissions for the University of Miami, said there are a number of factors involved in his office's recruitment and selection of students. The factors include high school records, courses taken, ACT/SAT scores, extracurricular activities and letters of recommendation to name a few.

Gillis explained that the process of admissions is very competitive and understanding the steps involved remains important. UM, which is a private institution, only admitted 2,000 freshmen from a pool of more than 22,000 applicants last year.

"We want [potential students] to understand this process," Gillis emphasized. "We are a very diverse school and meet that definition. We also want to encourage them to know that our college is a real option."

Chief Enrollment Communications Officer Jenny Rickard of Northeast Philadelphia's Bryn Mawr College echoed Gillis' sentiments.

"We want students that have worked hard, done their research and know what they want," she said.

Another point emphasized throughout the evening was recruitment within the Native American population.

The average Native population is between 1-4 percent among the four schools represented at the session, according to statistics. It is a trend that Florida State University Director of Admissions Janice Finney wants to improve.

"Throughout the years, we have developed a bond with the Seminole Tribe," Finney said. "By them coming to FSU, it helps continue that. We like to tell potential students that we have all the resources for them."

Danielle Frye said the event was a big success and gave her daughter, Dasani Cypress, a lot to consider for her future.

"I thought this would be good for her to see," Frye said. "It was a good experience to get her exposed to what to expect. I do not want her to have a false sense of expectations on what it all involves."

Tribal citizen Audrey Osceola said the event helped give her some direction. The Hollywood resident and future medical assistant technician is currently a student at Florida Career College and wants to eventually return to work for the Tribe and head up the Hollywood reservation clinic.

"I wanted it to help me set my mind for the future," Osceola said.



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal Education Director Emma Johns gives her personal testimony on receiving her education to the panel and guests.

Pemayetv Emahakv Continues to Grow

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School continues to expand as officials broke ground on the construction of 20 classrooms that will host seventh and eighth graders during the next school year.

With platinum silver shovels in hand, Principal Russell Brown, Brighton Tribal Council Rep. Andrew

J. Bowers Jr., Brighton Board Rep. Johnnie Jones Sr., members of the Glades County School Board and Pemayetv Emahakv's own student council members shoveled dirt Dec. 18.

The additional classrooms are expected to be ready for the 2010-2011 school year. Urban Building Systems



Rachel Buxton

(L-R) Brighton Board Rep. Johnnie Jones Sr. and Brighton Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr. have both been instrumental in planning the growth of Pemayetv Emahakv.

along with Seminole

Tribe of Florida Construction Management will oversee the construction of the new classrooms.

"There are no limits," Rep. Jones said. "We're here for education; that is our main goal."

"The growth has just been phenomenal," Brown said. "The Seminole Tribe has provided me with great opportunities and resources and support."

Pemayetv Emahakv opened its doors in August to sixth grade and more than 200 students enrolled.

"I kept hearing things from the students themselves and some parents," Rep. Bowers said. "At that point I didn't think we had a choice but to expand."



Rachel Buxton

Pemayetv Emahakv makes history and embarks on a new adventure with the ground breaking for their expansion.

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Thank you for the effort, time, funding and energy you contributed to making the Rez Rally a success. It is one more step towards a future of health and wellness for our Seminole communities.

**In gratitude,
Connie Whidden
Health Director**



We'd also like to thank:

Mitchell Cypress, Chairman

Richard Bowers, Jr., Vice-Chairman

Andrew Bowers, Brighton Council Representative

David Cypress, Big Cypress Council Representative

Max B. Osceola, Jr., Hollywood Council Representative

Johnnie Jones Sr., Brighton/Tampa Board Representative

Paul Bowers, Immokalee Board Representative

Marcellus W. Osceola, Jr., Hollywood Board Representative

Elaine Aguilar, Immokalee Council Liaison

Richard Henry, Tampa Liaison

O.B. Osceola, Jr., Naples Liaison

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**Congratulations Brighton Reservation
2010 Rez Rally Team Champions!**

Album Review: 'By the Throat' by Eyedea & Abilities

BY MALCOLM LACEY
Contributing Writer

Rap music rarely takes itself seriously. How can it when the scene is flooded with an almost endless

talk of partying, drinking and violence? Sometimes an album comes out of left field that really puts music by Lil Wayne or Gucci Mane in perspective.

Mike Larsen, AKA Eyedea, and DJ Abilities are not new to the rap scene. In 1999 and 2000 Abilities won the regional DMC Award in Minnesota and served as Atmosphere's tour DJ. At the same time, Eyedea won top honors at Scribble Jam and Blaze Battle Chicago.

So when the two got together again to make the third E&A album, By the Throat, expectations were high, to say the least.

"By the Throat" opens with a whimper. On the first track, Mike Larsen draws you into his thoughts. Painting a portrait so vivid, it's frightening. "Hay Fever" is a testament to this. In just over two minutes, he illustrates every one of his emotions. His hate, desires, guilt, and uncertainty pull him in every direction and we go there with him.

Listening to Eyedea turn from pessimist to subtle optimist is hardly an adventure as it is heart wrenching epic. His optimism shows, not always clearly, in the album's title track "By the Throat"

where he continues to exorcise his demons and pent up emotions regarding the death of his ex-girlfriend. Mike Larsen and Gregory Keltgen give us a spectacular album and definitely one of the best alternative rap records released in recent memory.



Album Review: 'Holly' by Justin Nozuka

BY MALCOLM LACEY
Contributing Writer

A lot of Amos Lee, Ray LaMontagne and Paolo Nutini seem to go into Justin Nozuka's diet, and it

shows. On the 21-year-old singer/songwriter's debut album, "Holly," Nozuka uses his influences to great effect. His soulful swagger and narrative songwriting position him as one of the few young emerging to really stand out this year.

I first came across the Canadian-American while browsing through the DVD/music section of Barnes & Noble. His song "After Tonight" was playing over the sound system. To my enjoyment the store clerk had the song on repeat and I was instantly taken by this jazzy-folk catchiness.

Nozuka's voice shines; it really does. He carries this pseudo-love song with urgency and kept me hooked until I felt compelled to ask who I was hearing.

"Holly" embodies everything about a good debut. Although flawed, Nozuka utilizes everything he's got. His vocals are his saving grace. Even during the weakest track of the album, "Down in a Cold Dirty Well," Nozuka can keep the listener interested with his vocal dynamic alone.

However, it's the grit and atmosphere of "Save Him" that puts him on display emotionally. The narrative tale of domestic abuse is harrowing and intense, and it's a testament as to how powerful this young artist is capable of being.



THE HEALTHY SENIOR BY FRED CICETTI

Q: I seem to be getting a lot of headaches lately. I'm pretty sure it's been caused by stress, but I was wondering if I should have it checked by a doctor.

A: You should definitely see your doctor. Most headaches are harmless, but they can be a symptom of a serious condition.

The American Council for Headache Education urges people to see a doctor if there are any of the following symptoms with headache:

Headaches that began after age 50; three or more headaches per week; taking a pain reliever almost daily; taking more than the recommended doses of over-the-counter pain relievers; stiff neck; fever; shortness of breath; unexpected symptoms that affect your eyes, ears, nose, or throat; dizziness; slurred speech; weakness; numbness; a tingling sensation; confusion; drowsiness; headaches that begin and persist after a head injury; a headache triggered by exertion, coughing, bending, or sexual activity; a headache that intensifies and persists; headaches that change character; persistent or severe vomiting; a headache that is your "first or worst."

More than 45 million Americans suffer from recurring headaches. About 70 percent of headache sufferers are women.

There are two types of headaches: primary headaches that are not related to another condition, and secondary headaches which are.

Primary headaches include tension, migraine, mixed headache syndrome and cluster headaches.

About 90 percent of primary headaches are caused by tension. These muscle-contraction headaches cause mild to moderate pain and come and go. Tension headaches are called chronic if you have them more than 15 days per month. They are called episodic if you get them less than 15 days per month.

Most tension headaches can be treated with over-the-counter pain relievers such as acetaminophen, aspirin and ibuprofen.

The precise cause of migraines is unknown. However, research has demonstrated that migraines involve the actions of nerves and blood vessels. The pain from migraines is moderate to severe. They can last from hours to days and be combined with stomach distress. Prescription medications are often needed to treat migraines.

Another subcategory of primary headache is mixed headache syndrome, which is the combination of migraine and tension headaches.

Cluster headaches, which come in groups, are the worst type of primary

headache. The pain hits behind one eye and it's severe. Cluster headaches occur one to three times per day during a cluster period, which may last two weeks to three months.

Preventive medications are prescribed for cluster headaches. During a cluster headache, injecting medication or inhaling 100 percent oxygen may help. About 85 percent of cluster-headache sufferers are male.

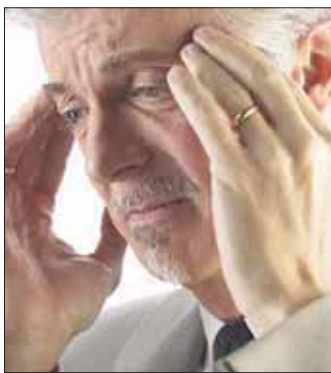
Secondary headaches include chronic progressive, sinus and hormone headaches.

Chronic progressive headaches worsen and become more frequent. These headaches may be caused by a brain or skull illness such as encephalitis, inflammation of the brain. If diseases are ruled out, doctors will try to focus on preventing the pain from striking. Preventive medication may include antidepressants, muscle relaxants or other drugs.

Sinus headaches cause pain in the head and face and sometimes can fool you into thinking you have a dental problem. These headaches coincide with other sinusitis symptoms such as nasal discharge. Over-the-counter pain relievers and decongestants work well with this type of headache.

Hormone headaches come with changing hormone levels during menstruation, pregnancy, and menopause. These are treated with non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as ibuprofen, and other drugs. Another type of headache is caused by taking too much pain medication. This type is called a rebound headache.

[Editor's Note: Fred Cicetti is a syndicated columnist who writes about issues concerning senior citizens' health. The opinions he expresses are his own. If you would like to ask a question, please write to fred@healthygeezer.com.]



Movie Review: 'The Road' Directed by John Hillcoat

BY MALCOLM LACEY
Contributing Writer

The plot of "The Road" is simple: a father and a son walk toward the southeastern coast of the U.S. in a post-apocalyptic future where the world is devastated, food is scarce and people have turned to cannibalism.

If all of this sounds so familiar, it isn't.

During a time when Hollywood movie makers are obsessing over the end of the world with films such as "2012," viewers might rightfully expect "The Road" to be the same old action-packed, CGI-laden, clichéd epic.

Oh, this film is epic, but not one second of it feels manufactured. Raw, intense, chilling, and breathtaking, "The Road" is one of the best book-to-film adaptations in recent memory.

Based on Cormac McCarthy's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel of the same name, "The Road" captures as much emotion as director John Hillcoat possibly could have amongst his actors.

Hillcoat's created an endearing love story between father and son that stands out, not only as an end of the world movie, but one about hope and what it means to be willing to do anything for the one you love.

There's a particularly startling scene in which a large group of people are looking for the father, played by Viggo Mortensen, and his son, played by Kodi Smit-McPhee, in the woods. The two hide behind a pile of branches and leaves to avoid capture.

As the boy's face is huddled towards his father, the man points his gun at his son's head because

incase they are captured, the father could easily pull the trigger and save his son from torture.

While Mortensen's character does not have a name in the film, he does have a definitive purpose: to protect his son.

"The Road" also stars Charlize Theron, Guy Pearce and Robert Duval, and opened on Nov. 25.



Holiday Safety Trips from the Seminole Environmental Health Program

BY NICHOLAS PERSAUD
Contributing Writer

The holidays are a wonderful time of year, filled with joy and celebration. During the holidays, you should be extra careful to keep your children safe.

There are many factors that can put your children more at risk for injury during the holiday season. This includes home decorations such as Christmas trees, lights and toys. Here are some simple precautions that can help make sure that your children have a fun and safe holiday.

Toy Safety

Buy and accept toys that are appropriate for your child's age. Select toys to suit the age, abilities, skills, and interest level of the intended child. Remember toys too that are too advanced may pose safety hazards to younger children. If older siblings receive toys with small parts, keep them away from younger children in the house; this can pose a fatal hazard.

For all children younger than age 8, avoid toys that have sharp edges and points.

Do not purchase electric toys with heating elements for children under age 8.

Be a label reader. Look for labels that give age recommendations and use that information as a guide.

Immediately discard plastic wrappings on toys, which can cause suffocation, before they become deadly playthings. If your child is going to be getting something that they can ride, such as a bicycle, inline skates, ATV, scooter, or a skateboard, be sure that you get the appropriate protective equipment, including a helmet, goggles and boots.

Discourage your children from playing with BB and pellet guns.

Decorations

Christmas trees, holiday lights and candles can also pose a safety hazard.

When choosing Christmas tree, either purchase a fire resistant artificial tree or a fresh, live tree, which should be green with needles that are hard to pull off. Also keep the stand of your live tree filled with water, to prevent it from drying out so that it doesn't become a fire hazard.

When decorating for the holidays with a Christmas tree or lights, be mindful of your child's age. Younger children are likely to play with ornaments and lights on trees. Only place unbreakable ornaments on the lower branches and make sure the tree is stable.

Before using lights when decorating, make sure that they are not damaged. Avoid using more than three sets of lights on a single extension cord and don't overload electrical outlets.

Keep lights and extension cords out of reach.

Tinsel and small decorations should not be put near the bottom of the tree where they can be easily in reach of young children. You should also avoid edible decorations, including popcorn chains and candy canes, since younger children may think that all of the decorations are edible. Keep in mind that artificial snow and flocking materials are not edible. So you may want to avoid them if there are younger children in the home.

Candles should never be left unattended, and should not be placed in an area where they could be easily knocked over or near flammable ornaments or decorations.

Please call the Environmental Health Office at (954) 965-1300, Ext. 10325 should you need more information.

[Editor's Note: Nicholas Persaud is the environmental health specialist with the Health Department. The opinions he expresses are his own. If you would like to ask a question, please write to nicholaspersaud@semintribe.com.]

Fire Rescue Provides Fall Prevention Tips

SUBMITTED BY DAVID LOGAN
Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue Fire Marshall

Most accidents that occur in the home are a result of a trip or fall. We recommend that all tripping hazards be removed from your home. Floors and stairs should be kept clear of obstructions (extension cords, toys and shoes), proper lighting should be installed (nightlights) and furniture should be placed in locations that are not in the walking paths.

KITCHEN

Wipe up spills immediately
Avoid walking on wet floors, especially after they have been cleaned
Keep items in easy-to-reach cabinets
Use a step stool instead of a chair to reach high cabinets

BATHROOMS

Use non-slip mats or strips for the bathtubs and shower floors
Use non-skid mats for bathroom floors
Keep towels within a reasonable reach
Install grab bars in the bathtubs and showers

STAIRWAY

Install handrails on both sides of the stairs
Install two-way light switches at both ends of the stairs

Keep the top and bottom area, as well as the staircases clear of any items that may increase the risk of a fall

FOR OLDER ADULTS

Take your time when moving to a standing position

Physical activities such as walking and stretching helps to improve balance and coordination

Virtual interactive video game systems offer a new and popular way to exercise

Shoes that are loose fitting should not be worn

FOR SMALL CHILDREN

Play pens and stationary activity centers are recommended for small infants

Install safety gates at the top and bottom of the stairs

Use window guards for windows on the second floor

Play sets should have a safe surface that is 12 inches thick of either mulch, wood chips, rubber or sand

[Editor's Note: David Logan is a Fire Marshall with Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue. All opinions he expresses are his own. If you would like to ask a question, please write to dlogan@semttribe.com.]

Lifeline Device Installed in Big Cypress Elder's Home

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Tribal elder Sally Buster no longer needs to make a telephone phone call or yell for help if she were faced with a health emergency. All she needs to do is push a button.

Buster's household is one of at least four in the Seminole Tribe of Florida that has been outfitted with Lifeline, a system that notifies police and fire personnel of a health-related emergency involving a Tribal member.

When someone pushes a Lifeline help button on a waterproof necklace or home-installed machine, the system immediately alerts a Lifeline operator of an emergency. The operator calls a phone number registered to the help button that was pressed and within 10 seconds of confirming the emergency, the operator will contact Seminole Police and Fire-Rescue departments about the emergency.

Lifeline is generally limited to Tribal elders and member who have certain medical conditions. Mary Francis Cypress, the mother of Chairman Mitchell Cypress and Big Cypress Tribal Council Rep. David Cypress, was the first senior recipient of the device. Her system was installed Sept. 15.

SPD Officer Scott Akin and Albert DiDonato, the in-home service representative for Lifeline, installed the system this month in Buster's kitchen, bathroom and two bedrooms. They also showed her and husband George Billie how to use Lifeline and encouraged the couple to press the help button each month to test the system's battery.

"Whatever you ask us to do, we will do it," DiDonato assured the senior. "It's very simple; help will come



Naji Tobias

(L-R): Sally Buster and her son, Christopher, test the Lifeline device in one of her rooms as Albert DiDonato, in-home service representative for Lifeline, makes sure that her push button functions correctly.



Naji Tobias

(L-R) SPD Officer Scott Akin helps Tribal elder Sally Buster fill out an application before the installment of Lifeline begins at her home.

to you quickly."

Buster could have used the system in November, when she fell near her front door. She was trying to open the door to go outside, but slipped and fell on the ground.

"I didn't call nobody that time," Buster said. "I just tried to get up myself."

Meanwhile, her son, Christopher, was in his closed room watching television and wasn't aware of what had happened. When he took a break from watching television minutes later, he heard his mother calling him.

"She said, 'Chris, Chris' and I went over to the door and helped her up," Christopher Buster said.

Luckily, Sally Buster didn't need medical attention.

Akin said there have been at least three incidents — including Sally Buster's — during the past year in which seniors suffered from falls.

Since a Lifeline presentation Oct. 7 at the Big Cypress Senior Center, Akin and SPD have been hard at work ensuring that seniors are connected to the lifesaving item.

"Instead of having a caretaker with our seniors, they can function on their own with Lifeline," Christopher Buster said. "Seniors don't like to feel as if they're being watched over all the time. It's a great way for my parents and all the Tribal seniors to be assured help without someone watching them."

Recovering Tribal Citizens Gather for Gratitude

BY ERIC BRICKER
Contributing Writer

HOLLYWOOD — Seminoles in Recovery gathered in the Seminole Hard Rock ballrooms to celebrate their gratitude for sobriety.

Helene Buster and Jodi King organized the Dec. 15 event, which has taken place each of the past five years. About 100 people attended, including recovering Tribal citizens, their friends and family, and Tribal employees who came out to support the event.

The evening commenced with opening prayers and dinner, followed by a speaker-style meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous featuring Charlie Tiger. His personal disclosures were harrowing and the consequences of his past behavior were severe. He speaks now of his hope for the future and renewed relationships with friends and family.

Tiger's opportunities are abundant to move past the grief of the past as his life continues to improve. As he spoke, people in the audience nodded in familiarity, as those with similar stories heard their own voice in Tiger's words. Once Tiger finished, they applauded enthusiastically. The recovering community wants him to continue to succeed as they are all now succeeding, bringing hope to one another one day at a time.

When Tiger left the podium, others were compelled to come to the microphone to share their own stories. What was most remarkable was that there were several such individuals who have now had significant lengths of sobriety. There were a number of speakers who had made it past the one year bench mark with 18 months, twenty months, and two years sober.

Several of these individuals have experienced multiple past addiction treatment failures, but are now doing well. Some of those now in recovery, had used drugs in the past with others at the gratitude dinner, who are also now sober. They acknowledge the changes in each other



Submitted by Eric Bricker

Charlie Tiger shares his personal experience in overcoming addiction at the Seminoles in Recovery meeting held at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel on Dec. 15.

and refer to their old friends as miracles.

They spoke with conviction about their recovery and about the changes in their lives. They spoke of being better parents.

"I want to show my children a healthy way by being healthy, and doing it with love," one speaker said.

Another speaker simply stated, "I need to be a father to these kids."

They shared their gratitude and acknowledged those who have helped them. Several of the speakers were John's Place alumni, and they thanked the staff at John's Place for helping to provide a foundation for their early recovery. John's Place is a residential treatment center for Seminole Tribal citizens.

Others were thankful to Family Services, and still others were thankful to Seminoles in Recovery for providing support.

For those who have chosen the path of sobriety, the New Year brings the promise of hope and renewal, restoration and healing. It is with that in mind that Seminoles

in Recovery has begun planning the Second Annual Florida Native American Recovery Convention, which will be taking place in Clewiston from March 4-7. The convention will provide another opportunity for recovering Tribal citizens to share their stories of healing with those who are new to the program, and to others who simply want to celebrate their sobriety. For more information about the convention, log onto www.seminolesinrecovery.com.

[Editor's Note: Eric Bricker is the Prevention and Utilization Administrator for the Seminole Tribe of Florida Family Services Department. All opinions he expresses are his own. If you would like to ask a question, please write to ebricker@semttribe.com ... Charlie Tiger waived his anonymity for this article.]



Submitted by Eric Bricker

(L-R) Bernard Robbins and Shane Robbins take a moment to support each other at the Seminoles in Recovery meeting held on Dec. 15 at the Hard Rock Hotel.

BATTLE OF OKEECHOBEE

RE-ENACTMENT

OKEECHOBEE BATTLEFIELD HISTORIC STATE PARK

10:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.

FEBRUARY

6th 7th

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- *Veterans' Honor Song
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- *Story Telling

Battle Re-Enactment Times:

Saturday, 6th: 2:00 PM

Sunday, 7th: 1:00 PM

- *Horse Rides
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- *Living History
- *Blacksmith
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OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA 34974
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From Old Treasury Court: Take 78 West to intersection of 78 and 41st (Okeechobee City). Turn left onto 44th South and continue through Okeechobee to 44th S.E., turn left onto 44th S.E. and go approximately 1 mile and look for signs.

From West Palm Beach: Take 78 (also known as 80th) to 78 West. Take 78 West to intersection of 78 and 41st (Okeechobee City). Turn left onto 44th South and continue through Okeechobee to 44th S.E., turn left onto 44th S.E. and go approximately 1 mile and look for signs.

Seminole Fitness Engages BC Preschoolers to 'Get Fit'

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Tribal preschool students got a chance to enjoy Get Fit Day at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium on Dec. 10.

Members of the Seminole Fitness Department led preschoolers in some warm-up exercises, followed by a series of circuit training activities.

The activities, which are collectively known as the circuit training obstacle course, featured stations such as the hopscotch, the parachute and the bean bag toss, among a few others.

The preschoolers learned how to be more physically coordinated, as the activities focused on using the hands and eyes in conjunction with their feet. In addition, the Tribal youngsters learned the importance of teamwork, discipline and consistency.

The 90-minute long event — an almost entirely high-energy session — concluded with refreshments for the participants.

"It's great to see the kids reacting positively to the



Sarah Robbins, 3, hops through hula hoops on the circuit training obstacle course to improve coordination.

activities and sports we put on for them," Seminole Fitness trainer Mike Iglesias said.

"It puts a smile on our faces when we see them progressing," he said. "This shows that we're reaching the children in an important phase of their lives, when they can absorb everything."



(L-R) Tristen Osceola, 2, works on his hand-eye coordination skills with the help of Seminole Fitness Trainer Neil Prager.



Seminole Fitness Trainer Gina Allardcyce leads the preschoolers in stretching exercises.

Family Services Department Explains Risks Associated with Co-Dependency

SUBMITTED BY FAMILY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

What is co-dependence?

Have you ever heard someone use the word co-dependence but didn't really know what the term meant? Co-dependence can be defined as a pattern of harmful, behavioral interactions within a dysfunctional relationship that many professionals regard as an emotional disorder. Within the context of the relationship, the codependent person is controlled or manipulated by another who is affected with a pathological condition, such as alcoholism or drug addiction. In general, the codependent is understood to be a person who perpetuates the addiction or pathological conditions of someone close to them in a way that hampers the person's recovery. This can be done by making excuses for their behavior or relieving them of the consequences of the dependence. This pattern of behavior is called enabling, which can have negative social and health consequences for both parties. Symptoms of codependence may include controlling behavior, distrust, perfectionism, avoidance of feelings, problems with intimacy, excessive caretaking, hypervigilance, or physical illness related to stress. Research has shown that codependence is often accompanied by clinical depression, as the codependent person often experiences pervasive feelings of frustration or sadness over their inability change their own or significant other's situation.

Codependents Anonymous (CoDA), a national 12-step group, offers these patterns and characteristics of behavior as a tool to aid in the self-evaluation of codependence.

Denial Patterns:

- I have difficulty identifying what I am feeling.
- I minimize, alter or deny how I truly feel.
- I perceive myself as completely unselfish and dedicated to the well being of others.

- Low Self Esteem Patterns:
- I have difficulty making decisions.
- I judge everything I think, say or do harshly, as never "good enough."
- I do not perceive myself as a lovable or worthwhile person.
- I do not ask others to meet my needs or desires.
- Compliance Patterns:
- I compromise my own values and integrity to avoid rejection or others' anger.
- I am extremely loyal, remaining in harmful situations too long.
- I value others' opinions and feelings more than my own and am afraid to express differing opinions and feelings of my own.

Control Patterns:

- I believe most other people are incapable of taking care of themselves.
- I attempt to convince others of what they "should" think and how they "truly" feel.
- I become resentful when others will not let me help them.
- I have to be "needed" in order to have a relationship with others.

There are various treatment options for individuals who struggle with codependency. Oftentimes, individual therapy is recommended in conjunction with the involvement of 12 step support groups. These groups include Co-Dependents Anonymous (CoDA), Al-Anon/Alateen, Celebrate Recovery, Nar-Anon, and Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACoA). Should you wish to know more about co-dependence or treatment options that are available, please feel free to schedule a confidential meeting with a counselor from the Family Services Department on your respective reservation.

Environmental Resource Management Department Focuses on Water Quality

BY LISA MEDAY
ERMD Water Quality Specialist

NUTRIENTS IN SEMINOLE LANDS

Nutrient over-enrichment in Florida's fresh surface waters has two main sources; nitrogen and phosphorus. Nitrogen and phosphorus are common ingredients in landscape and agricultural fertilizers, in dairy and livestock operations and septic systems. Nitrogen and phosphorus nutrients most often enter fresh surface water bodies in run-off caused by Florida's seasonal rains. The Seminole Tribe of Florida ERMD is working directly with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to set numeric nutrient standards for Brighton and Big Cypress Reservation that are protective of aquatic plants and animals; but are not disruptive to the Tribe's agricultural and livestock operations. The Seminole Tribe's numeric nutrient standards will be determined after years of study, sampling, and scientific assessment. They may be lower, or higher than the State of Florida's standards; however what is constant is that waters exiting Big Cypress and Brighton Reservations must meet the State of Florida's standard again, as soon as the water crosses the boundaries.

The average Big Cypress and Brighton Total Phosphorus data from FY09 is shown in the accompanying graphs. Interesting to note is the relative difference between "incoming" phosphorus levels in Brighton and Big Cypress. The annual average Total Phosphorus levels entering Brighton Reservation are much higher than annual average levels entering Big Cypress Reservation. All sample sites show lower Total Phosphorus levels in water leaving Big Cypress and Brighton Reservations, except Harney Pond Canal. Harney Pond Canal's annual average was offset by one dataset in June 2009 that captured very high levels of Phosphorus leaving Brighton Reservation, but correspondingly low levels entering Brighton. The Water Quality Program investigated and learned one week before we sampled, Phosphorus levels entering Brighton were over 800 ppb.

We were not there to capture that event; but the South Florida Water Management District did. The South Florida Water Management District's annual averages for Total Phosphorus show water quality exiting Brighton via the Harney Pond canal to have lower Total Phosphorus levels than water quality entering Brighton Reservation.

WATER QUALITY PROGRAM ACTIVITIES
FY09

During Fiscal Year 2009 (FY09 = 10/1/08-9/30/09), the ERMD Water Quality Program obtained over 4,800



water quality sample results. Over 1,000 sample results were collected in Brighton, and over 2,000 sample results were collected in Big Cypress. Water Quality Program staff obtained over 200 water quality datasets each for Immokalee, Hollywood, Yee Haw Junction and Coconut Creek.

Twenty-eight percent of all water quality data results (1,356 water quality field measurements) were obtained directly in the field by Biological Technician Linda Billie, and Water Quality Technicians Steven Hayes and Edgar De la Cruz following the Seminole Tribe of Florida's EPA approved Standard Operating Procedures to record and report water temperature, conductivity, pH and Dissolved Oxygen. Linda, Steven and

Edgar also collected all samples that were analyzed by the Tribe's Contracted NELAP Certified Environmental Laboratory.

Water quality data obtained to characterize nutrient levels in Seminole lands represented 43% of all data collected. Over 2,000 water sample results indicating nutrient levels were obtained during FY09, and monitored by ERMD. The ERMD Water Quality Program will continue collecting water samples in all Seminole Tribe Reservations and land holdings during 2010. Investigations on water quality entering and exiting Brighton and Big Cypress Reservations will be conducted routinely to confirm the relationship between outgoing and incoming water quality results. Additional samples will be taken within Big Cypress and Brighton Reservation boundaries, as have been done in the past, to characterize water quality within Reservation boundaries, and to compare against water quality "delivered" to the Reservations via the State of Florida's canals. The ERMD Water Quality Program will provide Seminole Tribe members and businesses with scientifically generated and defensible numeric nutrient standards that will protect humans, animals and plants; and will be manageable for agricultural and livestock businesses within Reservation boundaries.

Please contact the ERMD Water Quality Program at 954-965-4380 ext. 10237 if you have any questions.

Team Seminole Participates in Heart Walk

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Reporter

FORT MYERS — Team Seminole's red shirts formed a bright patch in the middle of a sea of nearly 2,500 people at the 2009 Lee County Heart Walk on Dec. 12.

The participants assembled at Centennial Park in downtown Fort Myers for inspirational presentations, a warm-up and pep rally at 8 a.m. before proceeding to the starting line. They were among tens of thousands of people at more than 2,000 locations around the United States who walked in similar events.

Tribal citizens, employees and affiliates from Big Cypress, Brighton, Naples, Immokalee and Hollywood signed the pledge board and then moved forward to the starting line. Team Seminole's participants ranged from babies in strollers to senior citizens.

"I would like to congratulate the Naples Community on their outstanding representation. This is their second foundation walk and they have become an important part of Team Seminole," walk coordinator Edna McDuffie said.

President Richard Bowers encouraged all Tribal citizens by saying, "We are repeatedly reminded that there is strength in numbers. Each individual makes a difference like links in a chain and every footstep counts toward a healthier future. It is important to remember



(L-R) Team Seminole Walk Coordinator Edna McDuffie and Sheila Aguilar sign the Heart Walk Pledge at the Lee County Heart Walk held at Centennial Park in downtown Fort Myers on Dec. 12.

this every day of the year."

The non-competitive walk is aimed at raising funds to fight against America's No. 1 and No. 3 killers, heart disease and stroke. The Heart Walk is a national event sponsored by the American Heart Association to promote safe exercise and wellness through community and corporate participation.

Team Seminole received special recognition for their continued sponsorship in the event. The team has participated in this 5K walk on the U.S. 41 Bridge across the Caloosahatchee River for several years. This is just one of the several non-competitive foundation walks that comprise the Seminole Pathway to Wellness program.



Members of Team Seminole gather from Big Cypress, Brighton, Naples Immokalee and Hollywood gather to participate in the Lee County Heart Walk held on Dec. 12. Team Seminole received special recognition at the event.

ATTENTION TRIBAL MEMBERS!!



Seminole Star Search Music Camp

LOCATION: Okalee/SHEP office in Seminole Paradise
Between Renegade Bar B Que and The Improv

Saturday, February 20th 9am - 5pm

YOU MUST PRE-REGISTER!

To receive your "goodie bag" and meal voucher

CONTACT/PRE-REGISTER INFORMATION:

954-797-5467 / starsearch@semtribe.com

WWW.SEMINOLESTARSEARCH.COM



**Music Camps are open to Seminole Tribal Members only
Ages 10 and up**



Sports

C



Richard Osceola (L) and former FSU player William Floyd (R) show Coach Bobby Bowden the tomahawk that he later received as a gift.

The Seminole Tribe of Florida and Florida State Say Goodbye to a Friend, Legend

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

JACKSONVILLE — Bobby Bowden achieved legendary success as Florida State University's head football coach with his 375 career victories, 28 consecutive bowl games, 22 bowl wins and two national championships.

The Seminole Tribe of Florida revealed in that success as Bowden ensured FSU proudly represented the Seminole name every time his team stepped on the field.

The Tribe and FSU enjoyed the partnership for a final time Jan. 1 as the retiring Bowden led the Seminoles to a 33-21 victory over West Virginia - Bowden's former team - in the 65th annual Gator Bowl at Jacksonville Municipal Stadium.

"We could not have had a better mascot or relationship than what we've had with the Seminoles of Florida," Bowden said. "They are so important to our University and we're thankful for them for letting us use their name and I think they've enjoyed us too. I'm going to miss that really."

Florida State football and Bowden have almost

become synonymous with the Seminole Tribe of Florida during the coach's 34 years at FSU. Before every home game, Florida State mascot Chief Osceola comes onto the field riding his horse Renegade and throws a flaming spear into the ground at the 50 yard line.

Bowden has also developed a personal relationship with the Tribe. He recalls visits to different reservations and golf tournaments he played in with Tribal citizens. Bowden was even a guest speaker at a function on the Hollywood Reservation.

"He had a lot of influence on the Seminole Tribe," President Richard Bowers Jr. said of Bowden. "Bobby is a great person, he's a great coach; it's a great relationship, him, the University and the Seminole Tribe of Florida. All that mix, I just think it's a great combination."

Bowden has become a permanent fixture on many Tribal members' televisions and within their households. He grabbed the attention of many who have stepped foot on the university grounds and become Florida State graduates. For others, Bowden was a mentor through his faith, dedication and perseverance.

"I've followed Bobby throughout his career at Florida State and he's been a mentor of mine because the department I work in is Seminole Recreation," Tribal citizen Richard Osceola said. "I work with a lot of youth and a lot of people that come through his program are successful graduates in life on and off the field and that's kind of how I like my youth to be so he's given me a lot of inspiration watching him over the years."

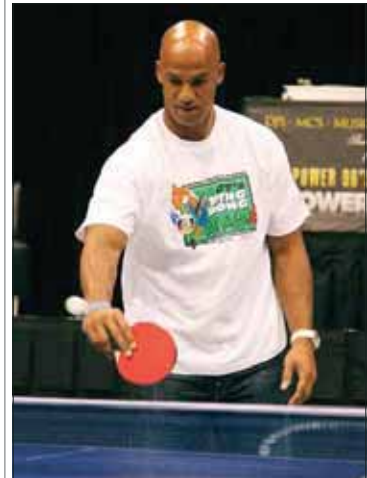
Osceola said losing Bowden is like losing a family member.

"You can ask any Tribal member within our Tribe," Osceola said. "You ask them who Bobby Bowden is and they'll tell you who he is - Coach Bowden or they'll say Grandpa Bowden."

Bowden acknowledges that it will take some time for Tribal citizens and other FSU fans to get used to not seeing him on the sidelines each game. However, he insists that he will always consider himself a part of the Tribe.

"I won't be around," he said, "but I'll always claim them and they can claim me."

Tribe and Taylor Team Up for Sixth Ping-Pong Smash



Chris C. Jenkins

Jason Taylor warms up before engaging in ping pong action.

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Miami Dolphins All-Pro defensive end Jason Taylor and the Seminole Tribe of Florida teamed up for the sixth time in the JT Ping-Pong Smash at the Hard Rock Live.

The annual event Dec. 14 paired community members with some of their favorite Dolphins stars for friendly competition and tournament play, all benefiting the Jason Taylor Foundation. As in 2008, the event raised more than \$50,000 for The Jason Taylor Foundation.

The organization "supports and creates programs that facilitate the personal growth and improvement of South Florida's children in need by focusing on improved health care, education and quality of life," according to its Web site, jasontaylorfoundation.com.

"This event grows more every year and people continue to anticipate it," Taylor said. "The Seminole Tribe of Florida has also been excellent as usual."

The night also featured DJ Laz of Power 96 FM as master of ceremonies and the Dolphins cheerleaders, along with interactive games and activities for the youth to enjoy.

Jason Taylor Foundation Director Seth Levit explained that the tournament continues to be one of a kind, gaining momentum and more of a following each year.

"What is funny is that Jason really did not want to do table tennis originally, but here we are six years later," Levit said. "It is something we talked about and it has continued to really work out well and expose the sport even more."

Former Dolphin Randal Hill and partner Wilfredo Fuentes went on to take home the championship belts this year.

A number of former Dolphin greats as well as current Taylor teammates were also on hand to show their support, including Nat Moore, John Offerdahl, Joey Porter, Will Allen, Channing Crowder, Brandon Fields, Davone Bess and Dan Carpenter.

"You have to take your hat off to Jason. He has come up with a very innovative way to continue to support his charity," Moore said. "It is always good to come out, of course, and help him raise money."

Taylor also hosted the second annual Ping-Pong Smash Kids Clinic led by professional instructor and former Puerto Rican Junior National Table Tennis Champion Juan Ly.

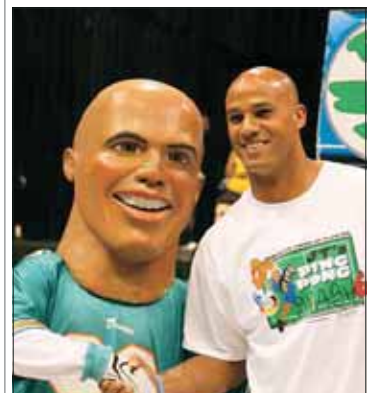
Nearly 100 children had the opportunity to learn the fundamentals of table tennis, including the basics on proper techniques such as hitting, returning and defense.

Ly is also a two-time Ping-Pong Smash Champion and has been a part of the event since its inception.

"For me it continues to be an opportunity to get kids exposed to this sport and was just natural to do," Ly said.

The Jason Taylor Foundation also supports the Holtz Children's Hospital, one of the largest children's hospitals in the southeast United States, as well as Take Stock in Children, a Fort Lauderdale-based nonprofit organization that provides educational assistance and scholarships to children in need.

For more information please call (954)424-0799 or log on to www.takestockinchildren.com or www.jhsmiang.org.



Chris C. Jenkins

Taylor and Taylor together for the media.

Seminole Tribe and Former Players Pay Tribute to Bobby Bowden

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

JACKSONVILLE — The Seminole Tribe of Florida recently honored retired Florida State University head football coach Bobby Bowden for his success in representing the Tribe on the field.

President Richard Bowers Jr., Big

Cypress Board Rep. Paul Bowers Sr. and Richard Osceola of the Hollywood Recreation Department were special guests at a banquet organized by William Floyd, a member of Bowden's 1993 national championship team, at Celebration Church in Jacksonville on Dec. 30.

Tribal representatives presented Floyd with an estimated 6-foot tomahawk created by artist Leroy Osceola of Ochopee, Fla. for Bowden.

"Tonight we're just going to give him a small token of our appreciation for him coaching the Seminoles 33 years and two national championships that put us on the map as Florida Seminoles," President Bowers said to the numerous former Florida State players and guests. "All of us here are Seminoles, right?"

Richard Osceola said the tomahawk was the "best token that I can think of because that's the most powerful tool in our Tribe. It is a tool that will provide for you."

Bowden was not present at the banquet. Floyd planned to formally present Bowden with the



Rachel Buxton

Bobby Bowden wins his 22nd bowl title on Jan. 1.

tomahawk and a DVD of the banquet at a later date.

"Tonight is about former players getting together to honor coach and that's what we're going to do," Floyd said.

Floyd and other former Florida State players who played under Bowden, including 1993 Heisman Trophy winner Charlie Ward, plan to form the Seminole Spirit Tribe. Floyd said the new group is just a way to bring players back together, maintain camaraderie and remember the legend Bowden.

"I'm grateful I had the opportunity to play for a legend such as Coach Bowden," Ward said. "All the things he taught me about integrity and how to be

a good Christian coach, ... I'm grateful I had that experience."

About 40 former players spoke about what it was like playing for the football legend and the impact Bowden had on their lives.

Bowden ended his 42-year coaching career after the Seminoles defeated West Virginia 33-21 in the Gator Bowl on Jan. 1. Bowden was West Virginia's coach before joining FSU in 1976. He ranks second in victories (375) all time among college football coaches.

"Bobby is a great person; he's a great coach," President Bowers said. "It is a great honor to be dedicating tonight with all the players from the past that's here to honor him. I'm just happy to be here and be a part of it."



Rachel Buxton

President Richard Bowers presents the Seminole Spirit Tribe with a tomahawk to be given to Coach Bobby Bowden in appreciation for his close relationship with the Seminole Tribe.

BC Community Represents in Jingle Jog

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Just three weeks after the Turkey Trot Walk/Run, Tribal and community citizens took advantage of another opportunity to get fit in the Jingle Jog.

Participants began the hour-long event on Dec. 11 with some stretching exercises after they registered for the event.

Seminole Fitness trainer Neil Prager led the Reservation's Tribal and community participants in the exercises to gear them up for the three-mile long walk and run along the south side of the Big Cypress canal bank.

It was off to the races, as those who signed up for the run took off first, followed by the walkers.

The function concluded with all participants receiving specially made Jingle Jog shirts before heading off to the Sadie's/Big Cypress Landing convenience store for breakfast.

For more information on the Seminole Pathways weekly walks and a listing of the remaining events for 2009-2010, please contact Edna McDuffie at (863) 983-5798.

Jingle Jog Results

Tribal Walk - Female: 18-40 years old: 1. Carol B. Osceola, 2. Clarissa Bowers; 41-54 years old: 1. Sue Jane Cypress; 55-65 years old: 1. Juanita Osceola; 66 and over: 1. Louise Billie. Male: 18-40 years old: 1. Allen Billie, 2. Cicero Osceola; 55-65 years old: 1. Mitchell Cypress.

Tribal Run - Female: 18-40 years old: 1. Jolo Osceola, 2. Cathy Cypress, 3. Sara Osceola; 41-54 years old: 1. Almira Billie; 55-65 years old: 1. Shirley Clay; 66 years and older: 1. Edna McDuffie. Male: 55-65 years old: 1. Rudy Osceola.

Seminole Senior Handicap: 1. Lydia Cypress, 2. Ruby Osceola, 3. Claudia Doctor.

Community Walk: 1. Delwin McCowan, 2. Amy Adams, 3. Celesta Osceola.

Community Run: 1. Christopher Joe, 2. Marilyn Jumper, 3. Ashley Burnett.



Tribal citizen Shirley Clay finishes her run at the Jingle Jog, grabbing first place in the 55-65 year old category.



The Jingle Jog participants are jubilant after finishing their early morning workout on Dec. 11.

Hollywood Residents Commit to Fitness

BY ELIZABETH LEIBA
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Community members from the Hollywood reservation made the commitment to health and fitness by participating in the Jingle Jog Walk at John Williams Park.

In the early morning hours of Dec. 5, almost a dozen walkers began to circle the nature trail surrounding the 20-acre location. As participants in the Seminole Fitness Department's walking program, the walkers added to their total points by walking anywhere from one mile to three miles or even more.

According to Hollywood Health Educator Joanna Kentollal, the walking program is just one more tool to help Tribal citizens to get moving toward their fitness goals.

"We encourage people to walk more and increase

their physical activity especially during the holidays because of all the food around," Kentollal said. "It controls diabetes and blood sugar and we want people to include physical activity to help maintain their weight and for health issues."

Walkers received T-shirts, healthy snacks and water after concluding their morning exercise. The points collected for participating in the walk will accumulate toward the rewards that will be given out in March to recognize the participants.

For more information on the Seminole Pathways walking program please contact Joanna Kentollal at (954)962-2009.



Elizabeth Leiba

Tribal Treasurer Mike Tiger starts off on his morning walk during the Jingle Jog held at John Williams Park Dec. 5.



Elizabeth Leiba

Tribal citizen Wanda Bowers circles the nature walk at John Williams Park during the Jingle Jog on Dec. 5.

Immokalee Participates in Jingle Jog

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Reporter

IMMOKALEE — They may not have been Dasher, Dancer, Prancer or Vixen, but the participants in the Immokalee Jingle Bell Jog closely resembled Rudolph, the Red Nosed Reindeer, when they made their rounds.

Gathering in front of the Immokalee Administration Building at 8 a.m. on Dec. 10, the group donned red T-shirts to commemorate the occasion. Following a designated route, it was not long before the crisp, morning air turned their noses red and their cheeks rosy. Quickening their pace to stay warm, they raced through the community, down to the ball field and back.

Health and Nutrition Representative Charlotte Porcaro, who coordinated the event, led the procession and offered encouragement. Cheering everyone onward, she said, "Walking should be an important part of your

daily schedule. Remember that walking stands for the following: Weight control, Aerobic exercise, Lower blood pressure and cholesterol, Keeps muscles and bones strong, Improves circulation, No equipment or experience needed and Glucose control. What does that spell? WALKING!"

Porcaro said that during the Christmas and New Year's festivities, people have a tendency to over-indulge at mealtime.

"You don't have to make major sacrifices for your health's sake," she said. "If you eat smaller portions, choose your desserts carefully and try to walk a minimum of once a day to burn up excess calories, you will feel better and enjoy your holidays more."

The Seminole Tribe of Florida has again arranged for RSM McGladrey, Inc. to assist Tribal Members in the preparation of their 2009 Individual Income Tax Returns. The tax accountants will be at each reservation per the following schedule:

Location	Time	Dates
Big Cypress	9:30am to 5:00pm	February 1 st & March 18 th
Brighton	9:30am to 5:00pm	February 1 st & March 16 th
Hollywood	9:00am to 5:00pm	February 1 st - February 5 th February 8 th - April 15 th MWF
Immokalee	9:30am to 5:00pm	February 2 nd & March 17 th
Tamiami	9:30am to 3:30pm	February 2 nd & March 16 th
Tampa	9:00am to 5:00pm	February 5 th & 6 th , March 16 th & 17 th

If you have any questions or need any additional information you can contact Frank Lucas of RSM McGladrey, Inc. at: (561) 712-4808.

RSM McGladrey, Inc. will be providing same day preparation with E-filing for most returns.

Please bring the following information that pertains to your tax return with you when you meet with the accountant:

1. A copy of your 2008 tax return (Form 1040) if we did not prepare your 2008 tax return.
2. Any correspondence received from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) during 2007, 2008 & 2009.
3. Form W-2 from all employers.
4. Form W-2G and related receipts.
5. List of children (dependents) with their birth dates and social security numbers.
6. Form 1099-Misc showing income received during 2009 from the Seminole Tribe of Florida.
7. Form 1099R, if you are receiving any funds from a pension plan.
8. Name, address, and tax identification number of the person or company to which you paid child care expenses.
9. Form 1098 showing the amount of interest you paid to a bank or mortgage company.
10. Social security statement, if you are drawing social security.
11. List of charitable contributions.
12. Property tax bills.
13. Any additional documentation you feel is pertinent to the preparation of your return.

Big Cypress Youth Participate in Instructional Basketball League

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — The Big Cypress Youth Instructional Basketball League held its registration and skills assessment workshop at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium.

The brainchild of Big Cypress Recreation and the Alhachkee School Athletic Department, the league is designed as a feeder program for the school athletic curriculum.

"We are looking toward becoming one of the first Native American sanctioned schools with a sports program," coach Randall Cleckler said. "Targeting kindergarten through sixth grade, the league will place emphasis on teaching the fundamentals of basketball in a fun and rewarding manner."

Assistant Big Cypress Recreation Director Stan Frischman addressed the group of youngsters Jan. 9 following registration.

"We aim to teach you the rules of the game, how to play together as a team and sportsmanship," Frischman said. "You must follow the rules in sports just like the ones in life, but the bottom line is to have a good time."

Coach Eddie Redd led the children in stretches and a warm-up before dividing them into groups to work on the fundamental skills of dribbling, shooting, passing, recovery, defense and rebounding.

"Remember it is always important to finish what you start," Redd said. "If the game gets hard, you have to strive to follow through."

Following lunch, the youngsters participated in a very thorough skills assessment to determine in what areas to proceed. Initially there were enough players for six teams, but it is anticipated that the number of participants will increase before the second skill assessment takes place.

While the children practiced in small groups with staff, the coaches met with the parents to map out the league. Practice sessions will take place Friday afternoons at 4 p.m. to avoid interference with homework. Games will be played Saturdays.

Parents were encouraged to volunteer as coaches,

assistant coaches, concession stand help, offer transportation and form a clean up crew.

"This is your league and we want it to give direction to the children," Frischman said. "With your help, that can happen. Flexibility will make it work."

A sponsorship program that would include individual businesses, churches and departments was discussed as a way to encourage community involvement and generate revenue.

The eight-week season will begin Feb. 6 and will include a full tournament and awards banquet.



Selena Onco palms the ball while Mya Cypress and Chynna Villareal wait their turn during assessments.

Judy Weeks



Judy Weeks

Coach Eddie Redd talks to team candidates about the basics of basketball during registration for the league on Jan. 9.



Elizabeth Leiba

(L-R) Tournament organizer Norman Huggins presents the winning Big Town team with their trophy and letterman jackets.

Big Ballers Tournament Honors Randall Huggins' Memory

BY ELIZABETH LEIBA
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Randall Huggins had a passion for basketball — so much so that when he worked for the Miccosukee Tribe's Recreation Department, he started a basketball tournament there and funded it with his own money.

The Big Ballers Basketball Tournament carries on the legacy that Randall started, with father Norman Huggins organizing the tournament for the past six years to keep alive the memory of his son, who died in late 2000.

"He loved basketball in all his youth" Huggins said. "He played basketball for the recreation departments. He had a real passion for the game."

The tournament has grown each year with more than 30 men's and women's teams participating this year from all over the country, including New York, Nebraska, California and Kansas, according to Huggins.

Tournament play was held Dec. 3-5 with the teams facing off on courts at Seminole Recreation, Hollywood Christian High School and Davie Police Athletic League. The championship games were held on the night of Dec. 5 with play ending just before midnight.

On the women's side, the No Skills squad came out on top over the Lady Ballers, while reigning champions Big Town won 75-61 over the Plainz Men from Oklahoma.

Huggins was happy with the turn out for the tournament and how it honored his son's memory.

"If he was here today, he'd love this," Huggins said. "He liked working with the Indian community. As far as his memory goes, it's great."



Elizabeth Leiba

Amos Huggins, MVP of the winning Big Town team, looks for an open teammate during the championship game.

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The hiring of an attorney is an important decision that should not be based solely upon advertisement. Castillo worked as a Public Defender in Broward County from 1990-1996 and has been in private practice for nine years. In 1995 he was voted the Trial Attorney of the year. He graduated from Capital University in 1989 and was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1990, Federal Bar in 1992, and the Federal Trial Bar in 1994.

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Big Cypress Christmas Pool Tournament

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Tribal citizens and guests congregated at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium for the annual Big Cypress Christmas Pool Tournament.

The competition began at noon on Dec. 12 and lasted well into the night with participants competing in men and women's divisions of 8-Ball and 9-Ball before moving on to the Scotch Doubles.

"Our community Christmas parties are the equivalent of many family reunions all rolled into one," Chairman Mitchell Cypress said. "The Seminole people share a rich culture and heritage and are all related in some respect. As individuals we seek our own path. However, as Seminoles we have combined our strength for survival and are building a bright future for our next generations."

The tournament included a visit from pool professional Vivian Villarreal, also known as "The Texas Tornado." Entering the gym to a chorus of Christmas greetings, she circulated around the room sharing hugs and well wishes with everyone in the tournament.

"The holidays bring out the child hidden in all of us. When we were young, we played together around the fire with homemade toys," Big Cypress Council Rep. David Cypress said. "Our toys have become customized pool cues, motorcycles and classic cars but the important things haven't changed. We share the greatest blessing of all because we still have each other."

Dale Grasshopper, who won first place in the Scotch Doubles with Ralph Gray and came in third in the Women's 9-Ball, said he loves playing billiards but enjoys the way such tournaments bring friends together during the holidays.

"Life moves so fast that we have to stop and take time out for the really important things like friendships that have endured for so long," he said. "Our fondest memories come from spending time together."

Sharing a table with Louise Billie, Juanita Osceola nodded in agreement. She was grateful that the tournament allowed her to spend some quality time with her daughter and friends.

"I can't think of a better way to spend the Christmas holidays," she said.

WOMEN'S 8-BALL: 1. Theresa Nunez, 2. Donnia Antuna, 3. Virginia Billie, 4. Juanita Osceola, 5. Rena Blissett.

MEN'S 8-BALL: 1. Daniel Littlebear, 2. Charley LaSarge, 3. George Grasshopper, 4. Mario Posada, 5. Tony Billie.

WOMEN'S 9-BALL: 1. Phalyn Osceola, 2. Donnia Antuna, 3. Dale Grasshopper, 4. Janel Billie, 5. Theresa Nunez.

MEN'S 9-BALL: 1. Ralph Gray, 2. Daniel Littlebear, 3. Enrique Gamez, 4. Charley LaSarge, 5. Leon Micco.

SCOTCH DOUBLES: 1. Ralph Gray/Dale Grasshopper, 2. Charley LaSarge/Phalyn Osceola, 3. Raymond Garza/Virginia Billie, 4. Alex Villalobos/Jane Beharrell, 5. Jack Billie/Janel Billie.



Judy Weeks

Dale Grasshopper lines up her next shot at the Christmas Pool Tournament held on Dec. 12 at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium in Big Cypress.



Judy Weeks

Chairman Mitchell Cypress takes his shot and puts two balls in the pocket during tournament play at the Herman Osceola Gym in Big Cypress on Dec. 12.

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Rachel Buxton

Howdy Cloud is the first rider out of the chute in the Xtreme Bulls competition with an 84.5 ride.

Seminole Tribe Welcomes Xtreme Bull Riders

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Professional cowboys, cowgirls and 40 of the top bull riders braved freezing temperatures to participate in the Seminole Classic PRCA Rodeo and the Seminole Hard Rock Xtreme Bulls competition at the Fred Smith Rodeo Arena.

A few of the bull riders received the star treatment in the days leading up to the Jan. 9-10 competition as they received a guided tour of the Billie Swamp Safari on the Big Cypress Reservation to get an inside look into the history and culture of the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

"The Tribe is a major sponsor and plays a major role," Amos Tiger, director of the Fred Smith Rodeo Arena, said about the Xtreme Bulls tour. "We got to get that culture out there to the whole public."

For bull rider Tate Stratton, visiting Billie Swamp Safari and going on his first airboat ride was a special treat after studying animal science in school.

"My experience has been amazing," Stratton said. "It's spiritual to learn about what the history books and teachers didn't teach you."

After a water and ground tour of the Big Cypress Reservation, the bull riders saw Tribal land from the air. President Richard Bowers Jr. took them on a helicopter ride over the Tribe's cattle operations. The bull riders then were whisked off for a tour of the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Hollywood.

"They gave us a tour and showed us Council Oak and took us behind the scenes and we got to know things you wouldn't normally know," Stratton said. "Getting to hang out at the Hard Rock with Richard, it was just an absolute honor to be sitting there with him."

Saturday kicked off with the PRCA rodeo with bareback riding, steer wrestling team roping, tie-down roping, barrel racing and bull riding. Xtreme bull riding followed on Sunday with a smashing opening by Chairman Mitchell Cypress and President Bowers breaking guitars adding a little extra excitement to the competition.

"The atmosphere is different and it puts us in a good mood," bull rider Wesley Silcox said about the Seminole Tribe's infamous guitar-smashing opening. "Without these guys we wouldn't even be going. With



Rachel Buxton

Jacob Tyner hears down on Nightmare during the Seminole Classic PRCA Rodeo at Fred Smith Rodeo Arena.



Rachel Buxton

Loretta Peterson represents the Tribe in barrel racing with a time of 18.68 seconds.

Immokalee Seminole Ranch Hosts 2009 Round Robin Championship

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Reporter

IMMOKALEE — The Immokalee Seminole Ranch 2009 Team Roping Championship was held recently at the John Jimmie Memorial Arena and drew contestants from all across South Florida.

The two-head progressive round robin tournament was held Dec. 12. Two fully tooled, ostrich-inlaid leather Running Championship Saddles were riding on the fastest time in two throws for the winning team.

With a combined score of 12.50 seconds in two catches, Header Willie Abrue and Heeler Bear Weeks took home the trophy saddles and first place awards. Registration closed after organizers allowed 20 headers and 20 heelers to enter the competition.

"When we made our first catch in 6.22 seconds, I knew we might have a shot at the saddles, but it was going to be close," Weeks said. "Some of the other team combinations might snatch their steer right out of the box. There were a lot of good ropers out there and we still had to catch in the second round. A broken barrier or one leg could make the difference."

"We each came back to the second round for a couple of throws, but together, we had the best time," Abrue



Judy Weeks

Ivan Bruisedhead and Leanna Billie have team roping in their blood.

added. "Coming out of the box, I had a clean run, caught and pulled left. Bear moved in, picked up doubles and our time came in at 6.28 seconds. I held my breath as the last teams took their chances."

The Abrue/Weeks team was a full second ahead of their runners-up. It was a close competition as the third, fourth and fifth place finishers ended up in the 14 range and only hundredths of a second to separate them.

The event drew several Eastern Indian Rodeo Association (EIRA) members, who have taken home their share of championship saddles over the past couple of years. Among them were the Jumper brothers, Naha and Josh, who placed fourth and fifth in Immokalee after winning the EIRA Team Roping Championships. They recently competed at the Indian National Finals Rodeo (INFR) in Las Vegas.

Team roping requires four members to a team: a header, heeler and their two well trained horses.

"Team Roping is a very competitive sport and requires serious concentration and lots of practice," said said Kenny Joe Davis, Sr., Immokalee Seminole Ranch director. "It was awesome to watch these ropers maintain their high spirits and competitive edge while routing for their opponents. Sportsmanship was the real winner at this roping."



Judy Weeks

Hilliard Gopher throws an open practice loop before entering the box.

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Fast Pitch Baseball Camp Teaches Fundamentals

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Tribal youth eager to have a former professional ball-player sharpen their throwing, hitting, catching and other skills recently participated in the Leon Wilcox Fastpitch and Baseball Camp at the Seminole softball fields.

Running Dec. 28-30 and under the organization and instruction of Wilcox, a Tribal citizen and former member of Major League Baseball's Cincinnati Reds organization, the camp also focused on pitching, base running, foot work, conditioning as well as the mental approach to the game.

The Tribal-run Woods Haven Preparatory School sponsored the camp and participants received T-shirts and gift cards at the conclusion.

"We wanted to try to get all the Tribal kids exposed to the basic fundamentals of the game," Wilcox said. "We want to restructure their fundamentals and get them exposed to the next level of the game."

The camp also was an opportunity for participants to hone their skills for the upcoming season. The Semi-



Chris C. Jenkins

(L-R) Skills Camp participants Phyllis Osceola, Layne Thomas and Layton Thomas stretch and warm up in drills.

nole travel team season begins in February.

"We also wanted to sharpen their skills and show them that the team is a unit," said fast pitch instructor and former University of Alabama women's softball shortstop Dominique Accetturo. "When I played it, was always like a family thing for me."

Hollywood resident and camp participant Dasani Cypress, 11, said she enjoyed the camp experience. She said her father introduced the game to her at the age of 6, and her goal is to play on into high school and at the college level.

"I wanted to get stronger with my batting and my mental concentration," she said. "I also just like coming out and having fun. Going out and meeting new people and teams is cool. I like getting dirty, too."

Jason Thomas said the camp provided a lot of help to sons Layne, 9, and Layton, 11. All three made the trek from the Brighton Reservation.

"I wanted them to learn more discipline," Thomas said. "I have always taught them that you can always learn something new. I tell them also that the only person that can stop them from being the best is them."

The sport has been a part of their lives dating back to the boys' T-ball days. Their mother, Layne, has also been a player on the Seminole teams for several years.

"I guess my ultimate goal for them is to play baseball on the professional level," Thomas said.



Chris C. Jenkins

Camp participant Dasani Cypress works on her batting techniques.



Judy Weeks

Deforest Carter, No. 21, is a guard for the Montverde Eagles.

Deforest Carter Competes in the 37th Annual City of Palms Classic

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Reporter

FORT MYERS — As hundreds of screaming basketball fans packed the Bishop Verot High School gymnasium and ESPN cameras filmed some of the best high school players in the United States gracing the arena floor, Deforest Carter stepped onto the court and savored the moment.

The Big Cypress Tribal citizen was about to represent himself, his team and the Seminole Tribe of Florida to the entire nation.

"I played in quite a few Tribal tournaments. ... We've had games with the schools, but nothing like this," Carter said. "This is my first really big tournament."

Carter, 16, and his Montverde Academy teammates competed in the 37th Annual City of Palms Classic in Fort Myers. The prestigious five-day tournament, which began Dec. 18 and aired on ESPN, hosted 16 of the nation's top high school basketball teams and players who are being actively recruited by big-time colleges such as North Carolina, Georgetown and Harvard.

Visiting college coaches evaluated players throughout the tournament, which has become a showcase for future professional basketball players. The Miami Heat's Michael Beasley, Denver Nuggets' Chauncey Billups and Atlanta Hawks' Joe Johnson are among the stars who have played in the City of Palms Classic.

A 6-foot-1, 210-pound guard for Montverde, Carter's primary responsibility is to set up scoring opportunities for his team through blocking, rebounding and passing.

The fact that Montverde, which is located just west of Orlando, is ranked No. 12 nationally by ESPN.com and No. 20 by MaxPreps is a bonus for Carter considering he initially enrolled in the school three years ago for academic reasons. Either way, his academic and athletic success has left a lasting impression on his family.

"He has become a positive role model for his younger brother and that is very important," said his mother, Myra Jumper.

Montverde began the tournament by defeating Dudley of Greensboro, N.C. and Westchester of Los Angeles. The victories earned the Eagles a tough matchup against Paterson (N.J.) Catholic (ranked No. 7 by MaxPreps).

The Cougars barely defeated the Eagles in a hard-fought game that included questionable calls by the referees at the end of regulation and overtime.

The calls hurt Montverde as the Eagles were ahead 45-44 with 6.9 seconds left in the second half. Free throws allowed the Cougars to send the game into overtime.

Foul shots doomed Montverde in the extra period as Paterson Catholic made 13 free throws with just more



Judy Weeks

Deforest Carter joins his mother, Myra Jumper, and grandmother, Mary Tigertail, after competing in the 37th Annual City of Palms Basketball Classic.

than two minutes left to win 63-51. The free throws were the result of technical and personal foul calls against Montverde, and spectators loudly protested and questioned the calls.

"We played with our hearts," an emotional Carter said afterward. "It's all about reaching in when you have nothing left and finding something more that you didn't know you had to give. It was a rough game, but we had it won until things went crazy at the end. It's hard to comprehend what took place here tonight."

The following night, Montverde took on the Saint Benedict (N.J.) Gray Bees and earned a fourth-place finish in the tournament.

"The Montverde Eagles participated in what might prove to be the most controversial game in what might be the most controversial career and away with the unprecedented respect of their peers and the spectators," tournament announcer Chris Diller said during the awards presentation, referring to the game against Paterson Catholic. "Each of the Eagles' players and their coaches demonstrated the ultimate in sportsmanship under questionable conditions and (they) have my utmost respect for the manner in which they played the game and accepted the consequences."

The crowd chanted "Eagles!" repeatedly as Montverde players stepped forward to accept their trophy.

"I am so proud of my grandson, Deforest. Sportsmanship is the real challenge that most of us fail and he is definitely a winner," said Mary Tigertail as she waited outside the Eagles' locker room. "He puts his heart into everything he does, both in the classroom and on the court."

Carter's mother, Myra Jumper, said he is still undecided on what college he will attend but is considering all of his options.

"He is just in his junior year and has plenty of time to decide on a major and map out his future."

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SPD Golf Tournament



Ryan Watson

(L-R) Butch Bronson, Jackie Smith-Bradley, Lawrence Osceola, Donald DiPetrillo at the 14th annual Seminole Police Department (SPD) Appreciation Golf Tournament Dec. 21 at the Heritage Isles Golf Club in Tampa, Fla. Sixteen teams of golfers took the course on a chilly 40-degree morning for the annual event which teams Seminole Police officers with Tribal citizens and casino employees.

"We just like to show our appreciation to SPD, casino workers and office employees for all the hard work they do," Tampa Liaison Richard Henry said.

The employee Christmas party at the Seminole Hard Rock in Tampa followed the event.

Tribe Co-Sponsors 2010 Orange Bowl Festivities

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

MIAMI — Fifteen Tribal dance, cheerleading and gymnastics students joined hundreds of other youth from around the United States and Canada to perform during the 76th FedEx Orange Bowl halftime show.

Natasha Perez and Gina Allardice of the Tribal Fitness Department, along with several other Tribal departments, organized the Jan. 5 performance. The girls, who are between the ages of 9 to early teens and from all Tribal reservations, danced in chilly conditions on the football field as legendary R&B/pop music group Kool & the Gang performed on stage for a crowd of nearly 67,000 spectators.

"It was a joint effort of calling and convincing them and their parents but it was a great activity for the kids to participate in and a lifetime dream for a lot of the children that do not get to do this type of thing," Allardice said. "We definitely wanted to make sure it all happened for them."

The group consisted of: Haily Osceola, Carson Knaby, Brianna Billie, Tia Blais Billie, Caylin Billie, Sabre Billie, Allyssa Osceola, Chastidy Harmon, Alexis James, Carrisa Colon, Anazette Billie, Katia Jim, Ashley Faz, Larriss De La Rosa and Jillian Rodriguez.

"It was really excited to be a part of it and love to dance," said De La Rosa, who has been dancing for five years.

Rhonda Nunez said her daughter Jillian was very excited to participate in the event as well.



The Seminole Tribe Orange Bowl Dancers up top at Land Shark Stadium before game time.

Chris C. Jenkins

"She jumped at the chance and was very happy to perform," Nunez said. "She has been doing this for a while so I just encouraged her to do her best and have fun."

This year's Orange Bowl, which marked the completion of the Tribe's two-year co-sponsorship of the game, pitted two Top 10 programs — the Atlantic Coast Conference champion Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets and the Iowa Hawkeyes of the Big 10. The game and parts of the halftime show were televised nationally on FOX.

The 11-2 Yellow Jackets came in making their sixth overall appearance in the Orange Bowl and first since 1967. The Hawkeyes entered their second-ever Orange Bowl game with a 10-2 record.

The Hawkeyes ended up defeating Georgia Tech 24-14 as Iowa's defense, led by Orange Bowl most valuable player Adrian Clayborn, managed to keep the pressure on Tech's Josh Nesbitt and company all night.

Ten-year Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz said the win ranks as one of the biggest in his career and for the Iowa program.

"We have not had a bad bowl game experience, this one was our best yet, Ferentz said after the game. "I thought everyone played well on both sides of the ball. To come down here and do the job our players did was just phenomenal."

Chris C. Jenkins



Hundreds of youth and teens dance on the Land Shark Stadium field to the classic songs of halftime special guest performers Kool and the Gang.



Shelley Marmor

Hollywood's Arek Jumper (C) steals the ball from an opponent on the Brighton team in the first game of the tournament, an 8 and younger co-ed game. Brighton beat out Hollywood in this game (11-8).

Christmas Classic Youth Basketball Tournament Results

8 and Younger Co-Ed
All teams received participation awards

GAME 1
HWD (black/yellow) vs. BRI (red)
Bri: 8-11
8 & younger co-ed

13 and Younger Co-Ed
1. Lil Miccosukee, 2. Brighton

GAME 2
HWD (black/yellow) vs. BRI (red)
Bri: 23-26
13 & younger co-ed

17 and Younger
Boys: 1. Brighton, 2. Hollywood
Girls: 1. Hali's Team, 2. Big Cypress

GAME 3
Hali's Team vs. BRI
Hali's Team: 49-8
17 & younger Girls



Shelley Marmor

Sumni Bearden (R) of the Brighton team steals the ball away from the Hollywood team during the 2009 Christmas Classic Youth Basketball, held Dec. 11-12, 2009 in the gym. The Brighton team emerged victorious from this game (26-23).

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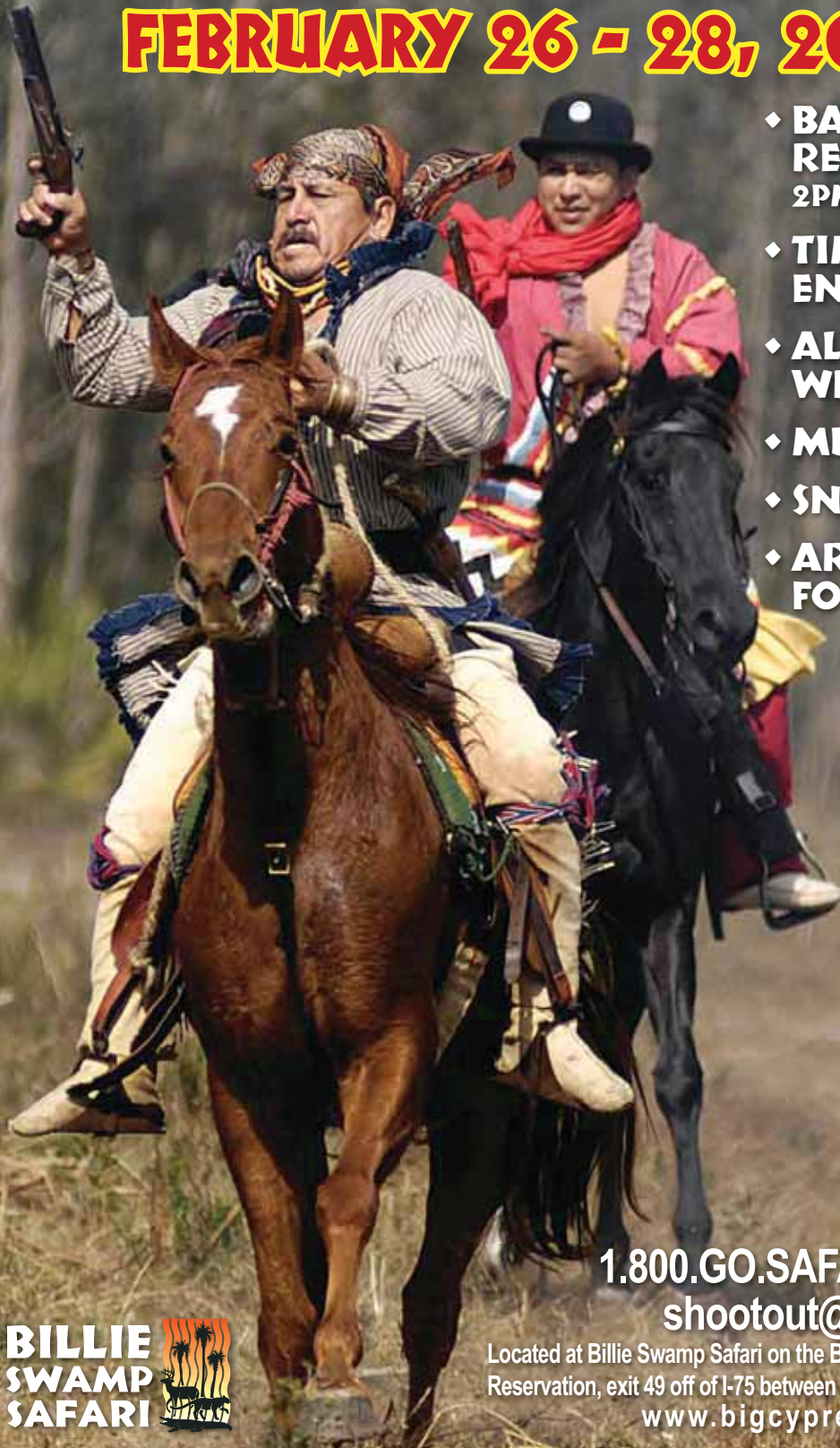
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BIRTHDAYS



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Also happy birthday to loving hearts. Miss y'all two craziness and those lovely smiles. Bet the whole family is enjoying y'all up there. Miss that down here. Keep guiding us until we meet again! Love it when y'all come visit. Puts a smile on my face.

Love daughter and mom
2010

To Ryanna, Daddy's Little Girl
Since you've come into my world,
My life has been more meaningful and complete

You give me a reason to be better
And you've opened my eyes to things that I before could not see
Your laugh is infectious and your smile is my sunshine on a rainy day
And when you speak it's like music to my ears
With every word that you say.
As to watch you grow up
To know that one day I'll have to set you free
Into a world of your own where you may no longer need me.
But in a sea full of treasures you are my precious pearl

And no matter what happens in our lives you will always be
Daddy's little girl.

Love,

Dad (Ryan Osceola)

I would like to wish my daughter Ryanna "Nanna" Osceola happy birthday on Jan. 1 - my New Year's baby.

Nanna,
I can still remember seven years ago when you came into this world and I held you for the first time. I was proud to tell your grandpa that I had a baby girl. Not a day goes by that I don't think about you and your sister Jordan Osceola.

I know I'm far away from you right now and I can't hold you when you need me but my love for you is "100." I know I wasn't there all the time but when I was, I gave all my love and attention to you whenever you needed me.

I'm sorry that I had to miss your special day but always remember that Daddy loves you and your sister Jordan Osceola and y'all mean the world to me. Nanna, be good in school and listen to your teacher. I love you and miss you.

Love,

Dad (Ryan Osceola)

Happy birthday, Devin Mindy Cypress Kimble on Jan. 15. Hey, cuz. Another year without you as time passes the harder it is for me to accept that you're really gone. I miss you so I find myself always at your crib with Swan and Phoenix. They make me happy and they're so much like you. I'd give anything just to be able to see you again. Dev, I love you and I never knew I could hurt like this. You will always be with me. You are never forgotten and always missed. Your memory is alive. And that will always remain. And you will be respected while rest. I love you. Bet that.

Love always,

Your cousin Carolee Anderson
Fooshe 4-Life

To our one and only queen, Jennie B. Harjo. Happy birthday to a grandmother and mother on Feb. 6. It's the caring and sharing and the giving on your part. It's thoughtfulness and kindness and the warmth within your heart. It's your patience and your helpfulness and all your loving too. That makes a wonderful and extra-special grandmother and mother like you on this day. Happy birthday!

Love you always,

The Harjo family



POEMS

A Poem for a Special Someone

You are my inspiration
Having you in my life
Revived my sleeping devotion
You are indeed a special someone.

Loving you gives me hope
To free this misery that I coped
In those times I gave up
You came and I stood up.

Never will I forget
How you always cheer me up
Every time I'm sad
And for that I'm glad.

Whenever I'm lonely
You were there for me
Keeping my heart alive
With your every smile.

I dedicate this poem to you
To show how much you meant to me
I love you
My special someone

— Alex Tucker
Otter Clan



THANK YOU

Thank you, Baby

Salena, I appreciate you a lot.
You are so beautiful, I would say angel like only you don't have a halo.
You've been with me every step of the way through this 34 month bid I caught.

You came to see me every Saturday going on a year now. You answer the phone when I call home and you put money on my books.

Damn, baby. I can't complain. You are my true ride or die chick.
You've been so good to me.

There ain't no better way to express my appreciation from where I am than to put it on paper for the world to see.

I love you, Salena and thank you for being my wife.

Thank you for being you,
You are everything I ever dreamed of.

Your heart string,

Myron Cypress



Dear Mr. Stephen Bowers,
It is with tremendous gratitude that I acknowledge your pledge to donate \$1,500 to be used to purchase gifts for the children of Alpha Company of the 1st Battalion, United States Army 124th Infantry Regiment, based here in Hollywood.

Within the personal sacrifice made by the men and women of our Armed Forces is the inherent sacrifice made by their children who bear the brunt of having to live lives without the daily nurturing and guidance of a mother or father. Their contributions are often overlooked and so it is a real pleasure to know that through your donation, these children will have some joy this season, even as their parents are off defending and protecting the rest of us.

Thank you for your generosity in helping to bring joy this season to those who most deserve it.

Sincerely,

Beam Furr
Hollywood Vice Mayor

Clouds of Love

On the night I met you,
My heart stopped beating
It froze with desire,
At what I was seeing.

On this night for us
That shouldn't have been,
What lay ahead nobody could see.

You alone started these flames
Of wanting desire.
A millions seas couldn't quench the fire.

But love isn't always the easy friend,
You have to sail the storm
To receive the love you send.

So till the day comes
That these arms can hold you near,
I'll sail the storms and watch
As the clouds disappear.

— Alex Tucker
Otter Clan



Golden Street

Seems for the longest I've sought your face
Only to discover the picture in life I'll never be able to place
The pain is great for I was never to touch your skin or hear your voice
Daily, I question because we all deserve a choice
Every tear has been silently stored away.

For us, nothing can we waste
The stranger to this heart will forever be held in its embrace
Are you boy or girl? Black hair or brown?
Regardless you've always had a kingdom. You'll always be part of the crown
From above you look down on "home team" and smile
Yes! They are beautiful indeed and only through them is this journey worthwhile
Life's lesson can only explain the feeling being taught
I often ask, "Was it my error? Father, tell me. Lord, was it my fault?"

What was I to do for the angel was already in flight
You didn't stay but in prayer I speak to you every night
Tell me, li'l one. Does eating cake in heaven taste great?
If you have one each year, this one makes number eight
In tears, I swore my soul never to lose track
So hard it is for a man to move forward when the heart always whispers, "Look back."

Forever, I hold close to what is pure as I patiently await this heart's last beat
It is then you'll take my hand and say, "Dad, walk with me on the golden street."

Wounds heal in time. Or do they?
One day I'll learn the answer

Leslie J. Gopher

Thoughts of You

Fools sacrifice a payment far too great
One being found in a world of envy and hate
In my journey there are those a heart yearns to meet
The love of my princess is that of which I speak
One day in their lives I pray to become a part
I must begin somewhere, for I've too long delayed our start
Of all the choices this man could make
I was blinded to the absence mine would create
There are years left on a debt I must pay
In time I'll return and I can only ask to forgive my delay
"Home Team" of course it's always been true
This was written while having beautiful thoughts of each of you

For Kaylee and Lei Lei
As always, the two of you are my strength

Leslie J. Gopher

Treasure

She's my treasure, tried and true
Whether I be right or wrong, until the end she sees it through
It may be in smiles or with tears
She's sacrificed much throughout the years
When my path is dark and I've found myself alone
Her love has always been a light that's guided me on
Without her, there would be no me
There's much more to her beauty than the eye can see
Daily, I hold her near and with words I share the love for you
I treasure you, Mom. But of course you always knew.

For you, Mom
Thanks for it all

Leslie J. Gopher

Her Splendor

Look to the sky in all its splendor
Such is the beauty of memories created to remember
Holding close to that which life at times deems frail
Patiently, the ocean of the soul awaits a ship eager to sail
As is the night a gift of the day
There are gifts to be given and there are ones to be taken away
Dreams often fade in the presence of those coming true
How a familiar face is found only in the image of the new
The absence of loss endlessly to linger and the pain forever to loom
So precious is the flower and its petals that bloom
Continually life is present to change
For there is nothing beneath the heavens that the creator cannot rearrange
The soul is a pillar that provides a sight to last
Search beyond the boundaries for there is none that love cannot surpass
Look to the sky in all its splendor
It is there you'll find the beauty of a sister you'll forever remember

For Lizina
I hope this is what you asked
Be strong my friend

Leslie J. Gopher

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SEMINOLE POLICE DEPARTMENT



SPD Offers Internet Safety Tips

BY SGT. ARNITA GARRISON
Contributing Writer

There are some quick and easy tips all parents should know about basic Internet safety. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with these suggestions and remember to speak to your children about Internet safety.

Clear, simple, easy-to-read house rules should be posted on or near the monitor. Create your own computer rules.

Look into safeguarding programs or options your online service provider might offer. These may include monitoring or filtering capabilities.

Always read a Web site's privacy policy before giving any personal information. Also make sure that a web site offers a secure connection before giving credit card information.

Web sites for children are not permitted to request personal information without a parent's permission. Talk to children about what personal information is and why you should never give it to people online.

If children use chat or e-mail, talk to them about never meeting in person with anyone they first "met" online.

Talk to children about not responding to offensive or dangerous e-mail, chat, or other communications. Report any such communication to local law enforcement. Do not delete the offensive or dangerous e-mail; turn off the monitor, and contact local law enforcement.

Keep the computer in the family room or another

open area of your home.

Let children show you what they can do online and visit their favorite sites.

Know who children are exchanging e-mail with and only let them use chat areas when you can supervise their activities. Net Smartz recommends limiting chat room access to child-friendly chat sites.

Be aware of any other computers your child may be using.

Internet accounts should be in the parent's name with parents having the primary screen name, controlling passwords, and using blocking and/or filtering devices.

Children should not complete a profile for a service provider and children's screen names should be non-descript so as not to identify that the user is a child.

Talk to children about what to do if they see something that makes them feel scared, uncomfortable or confused. Show them how to turn off the monitor and emphasize that it's not their fault if they see something upsetting. Remind children to tell a trusted adult if they see something that bothers them online.

If you suspect online stalking or sexual exploitation of a child, report it to your local law-enforcement agency. The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) has a system for identifying online predators and child pornographers and contributing to law-enforcement investigations. It's called the CyberTipline. Leads forwarded to the site will be acknowledged and shared with the appropriate law-enforcement agency for investigation.

Seminole Police Department Expands Security Measures to Assure Tribal Safety

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON —The Seminole Police Department continues to help keep Tribal citizens and visitors safe by stepping up security efforts with a variety of new programs and technology.

SPD recently rolled out new programs, including the Youth and Elder Welfare Unit, the Street Crimes Unit and the Agricultural Unit. In addition, SPD has added security equipment such as night vision binoculars and mobile surveillance cameras to assist in preventing crimes.

Heightened security has proven to be beneficial in preventing crime and keeping crime rates down, according to SPD.

Tribal businesses and citizens can request SPD security services to protect themselves from unwanted trespassers or criminal activity. SPD offers four different security check services: Are You OK? (RUOK), residential, business routine and business alert.

Are You OK? security checks are offered to verify the well-being of community members living on or off a reservation. RUOK checks include police visits and periodical phone calls from an SPD officer based on a specific request made by the community member.

Community members can submit a request to have a patrol unit or other sworn personnel conduct residential security checks, also known as away checks, to ensure the safety of their home. During the timeframe specified by the community member, SPD will make

routine visits to the residence.

Business routine security checks are automatic security measures that SPD offers. These checks are conducted indefinitely for every business on all reservations and are assigned to officers as part of their daily duties.

Business alert checks are special requests made due to a special event taking place or suspicious activity that has required additional monitoring. These checks have specific start and end dates.

To ensure safety and to utilize the security check services, community members and businesses should contact their local SPD office to fill out a request form specifying which security check best fits their needs. They should provide the department with contact information, emergency contact information and any specifics that will help SPD.

All information gathered or observed during security checks will be documented for further use and protection.

SPD encourages Tribal citizens to take advantage of the services offered to them and to contact them with any questions or concerns. Tribal citizens can call the following numbers to contact their respective SPD offices:

Big Cypress & Immokalee 863-983-2285
Brighton 863-763-5731
Fort Pierce 772-468-1990
Hollywood 954-967-8900
Tampa 813-664-1253

SPD Offers Black Bear Awareness Training



The Seminole Police Department will be offering a presentation by Mike Orlando with the Bear Management Program at the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission on Feb. 28 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. in Big Cypress' SPD classroom.

The course is designed to provide knowledge and education on the black bear and its interaction with people. The presenter will also offer verbal and physical solutions to help avoid confrontation with the animal. Attendees will participate in a classroom lecture and view a demonstration of specific deterrents.

The training is open to Tribal citizens. Community members interested in attending should contact T.J. in the training unit at (954) 967-8900.

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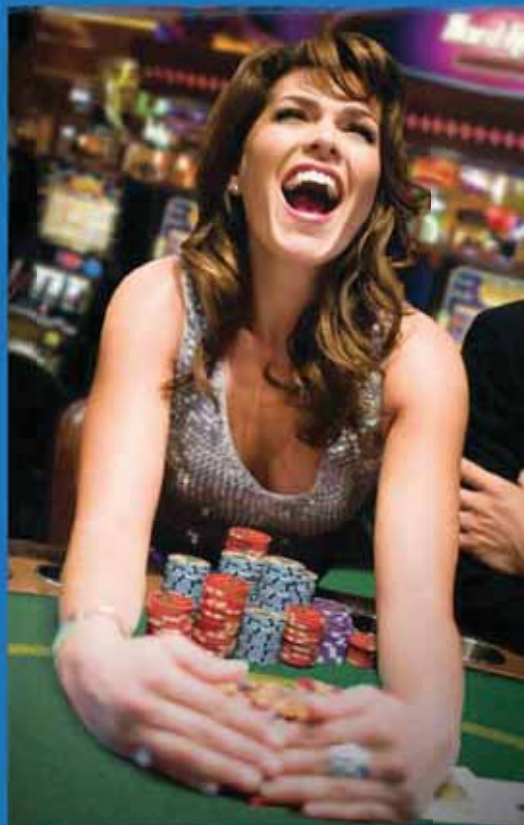
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Christmas

Big Cypress Seniors Enjoy Christmas Party

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Seniors from the Big Cypress Reservation joined Tribal elders from the Hollywood, Brighton, Immokalee and Trail Reservations for their annual Christmas party at the Big Cypress Senior Center.

Big Cypress Tribal senior Jonah Cypress kicked off the function Dec. 10 with three guitar selections of gospel Christmas songs.

"It's wonderful to see all the elders from other reservations to come out and have a good time with us," Cypress said. "We don't see each other enough, so it's refreshing to share the gifts we have and the fellowship that comes with it."

The seniors engaged in a series of bingo



Tribal senior Connie Gowen, of the Hollywood Reservation, receives a purse as a Christmas present at the Big Cypress Seniors Christmas Party on Dec. 10.

games following an opening prayer from Rev. Bruce Pratt of the Big Cypress First Baptist Church. After the games, the seniors enjoyed lunch and pictures with Chairman Mitchell Cypress and Butch Harrison, who donned a Santa Claus suit and gave presents to some seniors.

"I consider it a privilege to be a part of any function with the Seminole Tribe of Florida," Harrison said. "Without the seniors and what they've contributed, combined with their wisdom, the Tribe wouldn't be where it is today."

Chairman Cypress offered some comforting words for the elders.

"I encourage each elder to keep ... (their grandkids) in their prayers as we share in the holidays," Chairman Cypress said. "For the coming year, things may get rough. But if we, as elders, lead the way then things will be all right for us."



(L-R): Senior Center site manager Cecilia Guzman presents Mary Robbins with a Florida Gators commemorative shirt as a Christmas present at the Big Cypress Seniors Christmas Party.



Paul Buster and the Cowbone Band perform at the Big Cypress Community Christmas Luncheon on Dec. 23.

Big Cypress Community Feels Joy at Christmas Luncheon

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — The Big Cypress community enjoyed a special Christmas luncheon on Dec. 23, the last of many holiday festivities on the reservation over a two-week period.

Paul Buster and the Cowbone Band performed a slew of holiday songs at the function, which was held at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium.

The Rev. Arlen J. Payne, the Big Cypress New Testament Baptist Church pastor, gave thanks for the holiday season before everyone lined up for lunch.

"I love Christmas in the Everglades," Payne said of Big Cypress before saying a special prayer at the luncheon. "This is something I praise the Lord for."

Chairman Mitchell Cypress and Big Cypress Council Rep. David Cypress emphasized the importance of exhibiting safe practices for the holidays.

Big Cypress Board Rep. Paul Bowers Sr. offered a few words for the attendees as well, wishing everyone a joyous holiday.



Big Cypress Tribal Council Rep. David Cypress speaks at the Big Cypress Community Christmas Luncheon.

"All I got to say is Merry Christmas and have a happy New Year," Rep. Bowers said. "Hope to see y'all back next year."



(L-R): Samantha Vargas, 11, Stephanie Vargas, 9, Dayra Koenes, 9 and Trinity Williams, 9, enjoy the Teapod ride at the Big Cypress Christmas Carnival, held on Dec. 19 at the Big Cypress Rodeo Grounds.

Big Cypress Hosts Christmas Carnival and Concert

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — There was something for everyone at the Big Cypress Christmas carnival and concert on the Junior Cypress Rodeo Grounds.

While Tribal youngsters rode attrac-

tions like the Ferris wheel and bumper cars, adults swayed to tunes from artists like Paul Buster and the Cowbone Band, Billy Joe Royal and Ronnie McDowell. Followed by a few songs and a prayer from Buster and his band, Royal

took the stage and performed a few songs from his album, "Stay Close to Home."

McDowell belted out songs such as "Blue Christmas," "A Christmas Wipe-out," and "Away in Dixieland," all to the delight of concertgoers.

McDowell's "American Trilogy," which the singer dedicated to U.S. military veterans, was a personal favorite of Chairman Mitchell Cypress.

The song, which Chairman Cypress said was "touching," received a standing ovation.

"When we performed



Billy Joe Royal and his band give a performance at the Big Cypress Christmas Concert on Dec. 19.



(L-R): Keagan Hitchcock is painting the face of Tanoke Billie in one of the fun amenities held at the Big Cypress Christmas Carnival on Dec. 19.

that song, most of the crowd just stood up because it meant a lot to them," said McDowell, who served in the Vietnam War from 1968-1972. "It encompassed the patriotic feeling we all have especially those that have served in the armed forces."

Chairman Cypress thoroughly enjoyed the performances and was pleased with the turnout for the event.

"Especially this time of year, it was great to watch the performers do what they did," Chairman Cypress said. "We were blessed by God to have good and cool weather here. It was great to see everybody come out."

Nancy Hoffman, a camper at the Big Cypress RV resort, was blown away by McDowell's 12-song performance set.

"What a show," Hoffman said. "[Ronnie McDowell] has an entertaining and wonderful voice. My favorite part was when he did an Elvis impersonation of 'Blue Christmas.' It brought me back to my teenage years, way back in 1956."

McDowell, a country artist who has been in the music business for 32 years, said he was pleased with the hospitality that the Seminole Tribe of Florida showed him in his time at Big Cypress.

"The best part of my time here was coming with Billy Joe Royal," he said. "I never dreamed to be on the same stage with him. Chairman and David Cypress were very nice to us and we would like to come back again soon."



(L-R): Ronnie McDowell, the headline performer at the Big Cypress Christmas Concert, pays a special tribute to couple Amy Adama and Chairman Mitchell Cypress as he performed a song entitled "Bedroom Eyes".

Christmas Services at the Immokalee Church

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Reporter

IMMOKALEE — Members of the Immokalee Seminole Baptist Church gathered in the reservation's gymnasium for their Christmas celebration and gave special thanks for the new church building and fellowship hall that are nearing completion.

The Seminole Church in Immokalee's congregation has existed for more than 35 years and the elders attending the 2009 Christmas services on Dec. 6 have been a part of the church's growth since the beginning.

These elders became Christians as

young children and traveled with their mothers to celebrate Christmas at the churches in Big Cypress, Brighton and the Trail reservations. Whether they gathered around a camp fire, in a chickee, wooden shed, a gym or a church sanctuary, the message has always been the same and they have never lost sight of the true meaning of Christmas.

Gathering with their families, the church members rejoiced as Fred Phillips delivered the sermon. Accompanied by Jonah Cypress and Marie Phillips, they sang traditional Christmas hymns.

The highlight of the Christmas service was the performance of a choir of angels led by Geraldine Osceola. Osceola had taught

the children 10 of the old vacation Bible school songs that the elders had learned from their mothers.

"I used to walk to the church in Big Cypress with my mother to sing those songs," Immokalee Board Liaison Delores Jumper said. "She is gone now and the holidays are difficult without her. The singing of the children makes me feel close to my mother and reminds me how important it is for us to gather our families around us. We take too many things for granted and only miss them after it is too late to do anything about it."

Preschoolers Enjoy Christmas Party at Big Cypress

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Toddlers and other young children displayed their holiday spirit at the Big Cypress Preschool Christmas Party in the reservation's Community Center.

The function began with a Christmas play, featuring a medley of songs like "Jingle Bells" and "We Wish You a Merry Christmas." After the Tribal preschoolers performed their selections, a special guest paid a surprise visit.



Naji Tobias

Tribal preschooler Shylah Walker takes a look at the decorations on display at the Preschool Christmas party held on Dec. 11.

It was none other than Butch Harrison, who had donned a Santa Claus suit.

"Did someone say Christmas?" Santa said as he popped up at the event.

"Oh, there's Santa," the 2-year-old preschool students said in unison as he came out.

"We flew all the way down here from the North Pole to be here with you so you could get your gifts," Santa said to the preschoolers.

Soon afterward, Santa helped distribute Christmas gifts to each preschool student.

"Remember to be good boys and girls," Santa said. "Listen to your parents and teachers. I got to go back up to the North Pole. I'll come back down and see you later. Merry Christmas! Ho, ho, ho, ho, ho!"

When Santa left the area, Rosalyn Walker, a preschool teacher with the group of 1-year-olds, led the participants in a prayer before lunch was served.

Tribal citizen Vera Herrera, who is the mother of 6-month-old David Quincy Joe, was impressed with how the Christmas function turned out.

"It gives us parents a chance to come together and just get to celebrate with family and friends," Herrera said. "We all just came to the Christmas party to have a good time and show our support to the preschool and our children."



Naji Tobias

President Richard Bowers, on a horse, takes a ride down Josie Billie Highway during his Christmas Parade in grand style on Dec. 22.

President Bowers Hosts Christmas Party, Bellamy Brothers Perform

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — President Richard Bowers hosted a Christmas Party that featured a parade and country music stars the Bellamy Brothers at the Big Cypress Rodeo Complex and Arena.

The inaugural Christmas parade was held Dec. 22 on Josie Billie Highway, also known as Snake Road. The event featured floats from all of the Big Cypress Tribal departments and a Seminole Tribe of Florida helicopter overlooking the parade. It was highlighted by a grand entrance by the President himself as he made his way down the road on a horse.

The parade, which lasted for about 30 minutes, began at the Big Cypress Bingo Hall and ended at the Big Cypress Rodeo Grounds.

Meanwhile, several Tribal citizens participated in an inaugural horseshoe tournament at the Big Cypress Rodeo Grounds.

The Christmas party followed the parade. The party was attended by Tribal and community citizens from the Brighton, Fort Pierce, Hollywood and Immokalee Reservations.

"This is a wonderful and special occasion," said Brighton Reservation Pastor Wonder Johns, who conducted the invocation. "Every year Christmas comes, we are to be thankful for Jesus. Jesus is the reason for Christmas and in everything we do, we ought to give thanks to Him."

President Bowers said he decided to host the party at Big Cypress after the Tribe ceased four years ago having a single Christmas party in Hollywood for all reservations. Since then, each reservation had held its own Christmas party.

"I thought if we had this in a country setting this time, without all the bright lights, we would have some

good, clean entertainment in a family-type atmosphere," President Bowers said. "We're going to have it [in Big Cypress] again."

While participants in the events sat down to eat dinner, courtesy of Fort Pierce Tribal citizens Shamy and Wanda Tommie, Tribal seniors Sadie Billie and Rachel Pigeon sang a few holiday songs in the Creek language. That paved the way for the Bellamy Brothers, a country music band that headlined the evening concert.

The Bellamy Brothers, who are the recipients of two Grammy Awards and hold the longest song title in history for their 1979 hit, "If I Said You Have a Beautiful Body, Would You Hold It Against Me," performed several of their top hits for the participants.

The Bellamy Brothers — led by David and Howard Bellamy — sang many of their 35-year catalog of songs, including "Redneck Girl," "Beautiful Body," "Tropical Christmas" and "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree." However, the band's "Native American" seemed to resonate with all of the Tribal party attendees and the Bellamy Brothers alike.

"We decided to perform that song because we have a lot of Native American friends in the country," David Bellamy said. "It never was really released as a hit, but we always liked it, so we felt it would be a proper tribute to the Seminole Tribe of Florida. We thought Big Cypress would be a great place to perform the song."



Naji Tobias

The Bellamy Brothers headline the President's Christmas Party, as they perform a slew of their classic hits for the attendees on Dec. 22.

Horseshoe Tournament Results

18 to 54 years old (Co-ed): 1. Justin Aldridge/Dionne Smedley, 2. Emma Urbina/Jessie Urbina, 3. Kenneth Tommie/Erica McGaugh, 4. Jacoby Johns/Linda Tommie, 5. Kasey Baker/Vernon Baker, 6. Laraine Billie/Chris Hulbutta, 7. Almira Billie/Steven Hannahs, 8. Michelle Evanson/Bryan Corwin; 55 and over — Women: 1. Juanita Osceola; 55 and over — Men: 1. David Jumper, 2. Billy Johns.



Naji Tobias

The Christmas card entries give a standout holiday look and feel alongside Josie Billie Highway at the Big Cypress Reservation.

Creative Expressions Abound in Christmas Card Contest

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Tribal families and departments used their imaginations to illustrate their holiday spirit in the Big Cypress Reservation's Third Annual Giant Christmas Card Contest.

A total of 21 entries, which included seven Tribal families and 14 Big Cypress departments, were displayed along Josie Billie Highway at the front gate of the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium.

Stan Frischman, assistant director for the Recreation Department, said the giant-sized cards were a nice attraction for passers-by.

"We've seen cars slow up as they pass the Christmas cards, day and night," Frischman said. "They even light up at night, with Christmas lights strung around the entire display."

One Christmas card caught Frischman's eye and became his personal favorite.

"The Housing Department's Christmas Card was interesting," he said, adding that their entry was "really, really clever."

"I liked the creativity and originality of it," he said. "They took pictures of all their employees, which showed them holding hymn books, as if they were singing Christmas carols."

Frischman has organized the reservation's annual

Christmas Card Results

Tribal Families

1. Alice Billie and Family, 2. Kassim Stockton and Family, 3. Cicero Osceola and Family, 4. Lorraine Billie and Family.

Tribal Departments

1. Seminole Fitness Department, 2. Seminole Fire and Rescue, 3. Big Cypress Recreation, 4. Big Cypress First Baptist Church.

contest since 2006. He said he got the idea from a former employer.

Frischman said he was simply looking for Big Cypress to adopt something that would be "innovative and cutting-edge" for the holidays when he decided to start the tradition.

The Recreation Department recently purchased 30 4-foot by 8-foot plywood sheets, so Frischman figured many Big Cypress community members would take advantage of the creative opportunity.

"I felt it would be a good idea to do something like this for the holidays," he said. "I thought it would help generate a Christmas spirit to the Big Cypress Reservation."

With the contest beginning on Dec. 4 and ending

on Dec. 15, Tribal families and departments used a variety of ways to decorate their plywood Christmas cards. Some chose to paint their cards sideways, while others chose to cut the plywood in half, placing hinges on the boards and making them simulate actual greeting cards.

To add to the excitement surrounding the contest, Frischman and Recreation Department office manager Sherry King co-wrote a poem encouraging those interested to participate. When Frischman revealed the results on Dec. 18, he presented gift cards and trophies to the Tribal families and departments and offered some thoughts on the evolution of the contest.

"It's now becoming like a tradition here," he said. "People look forward to it every year."



Naji Tobias

Giant Christmas cards made from 4-foot by 8-foot plywood sheets line the highway in Big Cypress. A total of 21 entries included Big Cypress families and Tribal departments.



Naji Tobias

(L-R) Tribal elders Sadie Billie and Rachel Pigeon were among the seniors who were specially recognized by President Richard Bowers at his Christmas Party on Dec. 22.



Rachel Buxton

Preschoolers dressed as reindeer sing with lots of holiday cheer.

Brighton Lights Up with Holiday Festivities

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — The Fred Smith Rodeo Arena was turned into a winter wonderland as the Brighton Reservation gathered to celebrate Christmas. “I’d like to welcome each and every one and wish you all a merry Christmas,” Brighton Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr. said. “I hope all of you brought your ice skates.”

The rodeo arena was decked out for the Dec. 15 festivities with huge white snowflakes hanging from the rafters and a variety of activity tents for the children including face painting, spray tattooing and balloon making. Outside the arena, children participated in carnival activity houses and attendees showed off their winter sports skills on an ice skating rink. The Holiday Hotie Rockettes took to the stage and captivated the audience of approximately 200 people with a variety of dance numbers.

Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School students also entertained the community with a few Christmas carols performed in their native Creek language. Songs included “Up on the Housetop,” “Deck the Halls” and “Santa Claus is Coming to Town.” Santa and Mrs. Claus made a special appearance, giving children and families a chance to capture the moment with a souvenir photo.

Chairman Mitchell Cypress was also a guest of honor, bringing with him an ATV to be raffled.

“The year keeps going faster and faster,” Chairman Cypress said. “This is the time of year, we all get together and just smile.”

Two days later, the seniors continued in the holiday spirit during their Christmas celebration at the Senior Center.

Roughly 30 seniors played several rounds of bingo



Rachel Buxton

Willo James is all smiles as she gets a special gift from Santa.

before lunch, all vying for one of many gift card prizes. Brighton Board Rep. Johnnie Jones Sr. donated some of the gift cards for the event.

At the celebration, Wonder Johns announced that he will be stepping down as pastor of the First Indian Baptist Church Pastor. Johns’ friend, Matt Tiger, will succeed him.

Attendees applauded Johns in appreciation for his work at the church where he served as pastor for 11 1/2 years.

“I’m not retiring,” Johns said. “I’m just tired.”

Preschoolers serenaded the seniors with some Christmas songs and presented them with a glass centerpiece. The preschoolers made the centerpiece, which had their handprints embossed on it with red and green paint.

The preschoolers continued to sing holiday songs at their own Christmas party, which was held under the chickadee at the school Dec. 18.

Nearly 40 children, dressed as elves and reindeer, performed for the many parents who attended despite heavy rain.

After the preschoolers sang a variety of Christmas carols, Santa Claus visited with them. He called each student to sit on his lap wishing them a very merry Christmas and giving them a special early Christmas present.



Rachel Buxton

(L-R) Alyke Baker, Todd Pierce and Kaleb Doctor show how Floridians figure skate on ice.

Big Cypress Tribal Youth Enjoy Christmas Bash

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Tribal youngsters were able to engage in a holiday-themed Christmas dance for the first time at the Big Cypress Reservation on Dec. 11.

Approximately 100 Tribal children and teenagers, ages 11-17, danced the night away to a slew of today’s latest music hits including songs from upstart R&B singers Jay Sean and Jason Derulo.

Arellys Valdes, assistant director for the Big Cypress Community Center, likened the function to a high school homecoming dance.

“I asked the kids what they wanted to do for Christmas and I was told they wanted to party,” Valdes said. “The teenagers don’t get to do that too much out here, so they basically came out to have a good time. They enjoyed themselves.”

According to Valdes, the purpose of having the Friday night dance was simply to “keep the kids out of the streets,” ensuring they would have a safe place to unwind and socialize with each other.

There are currently plans to conduct a function of this kind monthly, according to Valdes. Dates and times



Naji Tobias

Tribal youngsters revel in the moment as they dance the night away at the Big Cypress Christmas Bash on Dec. 11.

will be determined at a later date.

For more information, please contact the Big Cypress Community Center at (863) 983-7800.

Big Cypress Reverend Tells Tribal Youngsters ‘A Christmas Story’

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Sitting attentively at the Willie E. Frank Library, Tribal youth spent an hour of their time listening to a holiday storytelling session on Dec. 14.

The Rev. Arlen J. Payne, pastor of New Testament Baptist Church at Big Cypress, told the Tribal youngsters about the origins of Christmas.

In the session entitled “A Christmas Story,” Payne talked about Jesus Christ’s birthplace in Bethlehem, Israel, in the year 4 B.C. The reverend expounded on how, according to the Bible, shepherds tended to their sheep at the time of Jesus’ birth and that the baby was born in a stable.

Payne, who took a trip to Bethlehem about 12 years ago, reminded the Tribal youth that Mary, a virgin before Jesus’ birth, was unable to find room at an inn. She was forced to spend the night in of Jesus’ birth in a stable.

Lana Payne, Rev. Payne’s wife, provided a host of visuals to help better explain Jesus’ birth to the Tribal youth. She also led them in song, as they belted out a holiday tune entitled “Happy Birthday Jesus.”

In addition to the sing-along, Rev. Payne gave an account of how Bethlehem compares to the Big Cypress Reservation.

“Bethlehem is not a big town,” he said. “It may even be smaller than Big Cypress. Did you know that Bethlehem is probably more like South Florida? There wasn’t snow there; it was pretty warm at that time.”

Payne moved on to how the candy cane may have been created.

As the reverend passed out candy canes to the Trib-



Naji Tobias

The Rev. Arlen J. Payne (R) gives the Tribal youngsters an account of how the holidays originated in “A Christmas Story,” a spoken word storytelling session held on Dec. 14 at the Willie E. Frank Library in Big Cypress.

al youth, he told them there was a time that candies were made like white, sugar sticks with no flavor or color in them. Payne explained the possible inspiration for the red stripe on candy canes.

“The red stripe represents when Jesus died on the cross,” he said. “Three little stripes represent God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. White represents purity and ... the peppermint represents frankincense and myrrh.”

Frankincense and myrrh were two gifts presented to Jesus by a host of “wise men” when he was an infant, according to the Bible.

The storytelling segment ended with a reminder of the real purpose of Christmas.

“When you break off a candy cane, make sure you give it to someone you love,” Payne said.

Big Cypress Seniors Get Joy in Exchanging Christmas Gifts

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Big Cypress elders shared holiday cheer during their 10th annual gift exchange at the senior center.



Naji Tobias

(L-R): Big Cypress Tribal seniors Minnie Tigertail and Joe Junior Billie decorate a tricycle at the Big Cypress seniors’ gift exchange.

“It’s heartwarming for all the seniors to spend time with each other, not having to worry about interruptions from their families,” said Big Cypress Senior Center site manager Cecilia Guzman. “They can remember all of the old times they shared together. It gives us so much pleasure to serve them.”

The senior center featured a tall Christmas tree, lights and other holiday decorations. Butch Harrison dressed as Santa Claus and distributed presents under the tree to each senior at the event.

The gift exchange began with a video presentation that highlighted all Big Cypress departments. Following that was a special holiday musical performance by Jonah Cypress, who played a medley of holiday-themed gospel songs with his guitar.

A prayer led by Tribal senior Joe Osceola Sr. was followed by the gift exchange.

Guzman, who played an integral role in organizing the function, was visibly overjoyed after seeing a bevy of smiles on the seniors’ faces — particularly when it came to the Christmas tree decorations.

“The seniors are the ones that always wanted to do something like this every year,” Guzman said. “They’ve helped us decorate the Christmas tree and gave us some ideas on how to put it together.”

Lunch was served after the exchange. Servings included fried turkey and grilled steaks that had been cooked on a nearby grill.

“It’s great to be celebrating Christmas with my fellow seniors,” Osceola said. “The senior center is a place to go and fellowship with my friends. I get so much love here and I thank everyone for what they’ve done for us this Christmas.”

Chairman Cypress’ Annual Toy Drive Continues Giving Tradition

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — In what has become a highly anticipated tradition, Chairman Mitchell Cypress held his annual Toy Drive next to the Seminole Casino in Hollywood at the southwest corner of U.S. 441 and Stirling Road.

“[The Seminole Tribe] giving back to the community is giving to all the needy,” Chairman Cypress said. “This event brings good things to those who need it the most.”

In its seventh year, the Dec. 9 event also included Santa Claus, free food, ice cream and T-shirt giveaways.

Popular South Florida promoter Mobile Mike showed up with a fleet of vehicles and broadcasted live the entire day on all seven of Clear Channel Communications’ South Florida radio stations.

Chairman Cypress also distributed toys in the city of Labelle in Hendry County as well as the Joe DiMaggio Children’s Hospital in Hollywood, generally considered the leading children’s hospital in Broward and Palm Beach counties.

Robert Liquori has been giving to the event since its inception.

“It is a nice thing to help out in within the community,” he said. “My kids are very blessed

so I like helping out.”

Toy Drive co-organizer and Fort Pierce Liaison S.R. Tommie said she still enjoys hosting the event after seven years.

“It is all still somewhat overwhelming in a good way,” Tommie said. “The success factor has remained but we have also been able to keep it all fresh and exciting each year. Each year, this has grown to benefit more and more people.”

Tommie said even those who are less fortunate give to the cause.

“I continue to be amazed because people who really do not have much are the ones that continue to come out and give whatever they can.”



Chris C. Jenkins

(L-R) South Florida radio promoter Mobile Mike gives Fort Pierce Liaison S.R. Tommie a new batch of toys to add to the collection during the toy drive.



(L-R) Rylene Stewart and Keishawn Stewart playing the roles of Mary and Joseph on stage.

Chris C. Jenkins

First Seminole Baptist Celebrates Christmas with Play

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Tribal youth participated in the First Seminole Indian Baptist Church's play on the birth of Jesus Christ.

Friends, family and guests from many of the reservations attended the annual event Dec. 13.

"This is a wonderful time of the year we all should enjoy together," host and Church Pastor Paul Buster said to those on hand. "Maybe through this play, folks can begin to understand Christ better and he can come into your heart."

Production Director and Tribal senior Judy-Bill Osceola said preparation and practice for the youth has been consistent, going on every night since before Thanksgiving. She said she enjoyed the performances. "I enjoyed it and [the kids] did good," Osceola said. "Everything came together well."

In his fourth year participating in the event, Michael Tiger played King Herod Antipas, known for his role in the eventual execution of Christ. He played the role of Joseph, Jesus' father, last year.

"I liked being in the play," Tiger said. "I like the speaking and acting."

After the program, the Tribal youth gathered for gifts from the church staff.

The First Seminole Indian Baptist Church is located at 4701 Stirling Road on the Hollywood Reservation with worship services at 7 p.m. on Wednesdays and 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. services on Sundays.



Chris C. Jenkins

First Seminole Indian Baptist Church Pastor Paul Buster welcomes family and guests to the annual birth of Christ program.



Chris C. Jenkins

Program cast of the birth of Christ.



Malcom Lacey

Betty Goosens addresses the gathering at the TCD Christmas party held in the ballrooms at the Hard Rock Hotel on Dec. 17.

TCD Participants Celebrate the Holidays

BY MALCOM LACEY
Contributing Writer

HOLLYWOOD — Members of the Tribal Career Development Program came together in the ballrooms at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel to celebrate a year of achievements.

The 27 Tribal citizens who participate in the program celebrated the year's achievements on Dec. 17 with Director Betty Goosens and Instructor Sharon Ahl sharing words about the goals and successes of the program.

"Our main goal is to have our own people learning the things we do," said Goosens about the TCD Program, which began nearly six years ago.

Since then, the Tribal Career Development Program has seen several Tribal citizens make a career out of working within various parts of the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casinos' operations and management. As the TCD Program continues to grow, they hope to see more as time progresses.

Seniors Celebrate the Christmas Holiday

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Seniors from the Hollywood, Big Cypress and Trail Reservations celebrated the Christmas holiday together.

Elders enjoyed a variety of fun-filled activities during the Dec. 16 gathering to get into the spirit of the season. The day included prizes in bingo, gifts, door prizes, music selections from the South American group Malkku, and lunch.

"It felt good because it all reminded me of times of my past growing up," Tribal senior Johnny Tucker Sr. said.

President Richard Bowers Jr., Hollywood Board Rep. Marcelus Osceola Jr., Hollywood Tribal Council Rep. Max B. Osceola Jr. and Tribal Council Secretary Mike Tiger also attended the gathering.

"It is and continues to be a privilege to be with [the elders] and among them," President Bowers said. "If it was not for them, I would not be here today enjoying such an occasion."



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal senior Louise Billie of Big Cypress shows off her Santa gift.



Chris C. Jenkins

Chairman Mitchell Cypress and President Richard Bowers Jr. with seniors at the Christmas party on Dec. 16.

Big Cypress Community Holds Christmas Dinner

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — It was a special occasion for Big Cypress Tribal citizens at the Christmas Dinner held at the Big Cypress Rodeo Grounds Building Complex on Dec. 18.

Tribal participants were treated to a holiday performance set from Paul Buster and the Cowbone Band and a few other surprises.

"I'm glad tonight is a night of celebration," said the Rev. Bruce Pratt, the pastor of the Big Cypress First Baptist Church. He led the dinner in prayer.

"It's a special time we are all sharing with out Tribal leaders," Payne said.

Chairman Mitchell Cypress, President Richard Bowers Jr., Big Cypress Council Rep. David Cypress and Big Cypress Board Rep. Paul Bowers Sr. each acknowledged the Tribal attendees during the dinner function.

"When you think about it, [Jesus] Christ was born in a manger," Chairman Cypress said. "We're having a real Christmas party here at a barn. This is a time to enjoy yourselves. You never know who may be here next year, so have a merry Christmas and happy new year."

The Big Cypress First Baptist Church Choir performed a medley of Christmas tunes. Master of Ceremonies Van Samuels came right behind the choir, as he belted out songs such as "Merry Christmas to You" and "Winter Wonderland."

Meanwhile, Butch Harrison, dressed as Santa Claus, was available for photo opportunities with all of the Tribal participants during the dinner.

Tribal youngsters were happy to receive a variety of Christmas presents at the formal function.

The dinner ended with a few raffled Christmas presents, including a golf cart, which was won by Nilda Jumper.



Naji Tobias

(L-R) Paul "Cowbone" Buster and son Paul "Chunky" Buster Jr. perform at the Community Christmas Dinner in Big Cypress.



Naji Tobias

President Richard Bowers Jr. welcomes the attendees at the Big Cypress Community dinner held on Dec. 18.



Naji Tobias

The Big Cypress First Baptist Church sings a medley of hymns at the Big Cypress Community dinner held on Dec. 18.

Trail Community Celebrates Christmas Holiday

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — The Trail community and employees from other reservations celebrated the Christmas holiday Dec. 13 at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel.

The day came complete with dinner, raffle items and a visit from Santa Claus with gifts.

"I just want to wish everyone a happy holiday," Trail Liaison William Osceola said to guests and family in attendance. "We are all blessed to be here today and we should feel good to be here."

Tribal citizen Spencer Battiest as well as musician Robert Mirabal and his band also performed.

"I think William put on a great party," Chairman Mitchell Cypress said. "When he does something he does it well and goes all the way. He and his staff put a lot of hard work into this and it looked good."



(L-R) Trail Liaison William Osceola and Chairman Mitchell Cypress offer Christmas greetings to guests at the Trail community Christmas party.



(L-R) Parisjade and Kelvin Huggins Jr. with gifts from Santa.



Mary Jane Billie, winner of the raffle grand prize, a custom golf cart.

Chairman Cypress toy distribution



Chairman Mitchell Cypress plays the role of Santa, once again, in the spirit of the Christmas season as he makes his annual trip to distribute toys on behalf of the Tribe at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital. Also joining the Chairman were Fort Pierce Liaison S.R. Tommie and Non-Resident Liaison Holly Tiger-Bowers.

Tampa Community Enjoys Christmas Party

BY RYAN WATSON
Contributing Writer

TAMPA — The Tampa community held its annual Christmas party at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino on Dec. 22.

The night was filled with excellent food, stand-up comedy, and tons of door prizes and Christmas gifts.

The evening kicked off with dinner and a video presentation of 2009 events. Brighton/Tampa Tribal Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr. took the stage next to wish the community a happy holiday season.

"Merry Christmas to each and every one of you, and I hope we all have a great New Year in 2010," Rep.

Bowers said.

Brighton/Tampa Board Rep. Johnnie Jones Sr. was next to wish the community a happy holiday season while also presenting Tampa Liaison Richard Henry with a Christmas gift.

The next and arguably the most exciting event on the agenda was the distribution of Christmas gifts in door prize format. Prizes ranged from flat-screen televisions to laptops, which lead to the grand prize give away of a new golf cart, donated by the Tribal Council.

The evening concluded with some stand up comedy from the Pow Wow Comedy Jam. Four comedians, all of Native American heritage, finished off an evening of food, gifts and laughs.



Linda Lee Henry sits in her new golf won at the Tampa community Christmas party

Ryan Watson



Chris C. Jenkins

Richard Primeaux enjoys bumping into friends on the scooter bumper car ride.

Tribal Community Enjoys the Christmas Holiday with Carnival

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Tribal citizens in the community enjoyed the holiday season with a carnival-style Christmas party on the Seminole softball fields.

Hollywood Tribal Board Rep. Marcellus Osceola Jr. and Tribal Council Rep. Max B. Osceola Jr. sponsored a host of activities during the Dec. 19 party to celebrate the holidays.

The festivities featured several attractions including bumper cars, bounce houses, an animal farm, ice cream, burgers and other activities. Cash drawings, raffles, dinner and music from Tribal citizen Spencer Battiest and the Max Band also highlighted the day. There was also an appearance by Santa Claus as well as camels and riders to heighten the Christmas atmosphere.

Third-year organizer and Council Office Assistant Robin Osceola said she began planning for the event in September.

"I live for this and love this part of my job," Osceola said. "It is all for the community and when they get to have something like this, they really do enjoy it. It is in their back yard; I think they look forward to it."

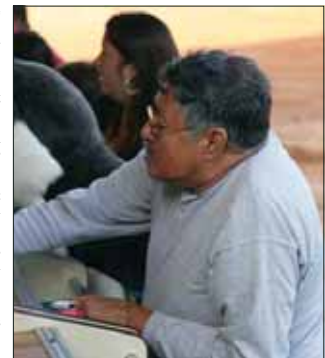
Board Rep. Osceola said he likes the positive feeling that such an event creates.

"I think it is great that we can all get together this time of the year to give back and have quality time together," he explained.

Tribal senior Juanita Osceola agreed. She attended the event with Tribal youth and grandson David Nelson.

"I like it all because it keeps us together on the res-

ervation and it is all about family," she said. "The kids are safe and it is in the community. It is all nice this time of the year."



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal senior Juanita Osceola and grandson David Nelson enjoy a game of horse racing at the Tribal Christmas carnival.

Tribal Employees Celebrate Christmas at Xtreme

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

FORT LAUDERDALE — Hollywood's Tribal employees enjoyed kart racing, golf and other activities during their Christmas party on Dec. 18.

Xtreme Indoor Karting provided employees and their families a good time with dinner, golf, billiards, kart racing and much more to celebrate the holidays.

Hollywood Tribal Council Rep. Max B. Osceola Jr. helped support the event and said the venue provided the perfect atmosphere.

"This has been a hard year for everybody," Rep. Osceola said. "We could have had a family luncheon or something along those lines but I wanted everyone to know the Seminole Tribe appreciates them in this way."

Whether they are Christians, Jews or Muslims, it is a way to celebrate the holiday."

Board and Credit Finance Office Administrative Assistant Melissa Atkins said it was her first time visiting the facility.

"I thought it was awesome. It was a lot to do and very family oriented," Atkins said. "I feel very fortunate to be working for the Tribe and able to go there and celebrate the holidays."

Chairman's Office Research Assistant Nicole Canton brought her two nephews Christian and C.J. to the



Chris C. Jenkins

Vish Ramdat of the Tribal Building and Grounds Department takes aim during a game of pool.



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal employee Lisa Samuels shows off her first place trophy on the race track.

event to join in the fun.

"I think it was a good turn out and a great family place for employees to celebrate the season," said the four-year staff member.

Hollywood Tribal Board Rep. Marcellus Osceola Jr. also made an appearance at the event.

Xtreme is one of the longest and fastest tracks in the state of Florida. The facility has 40 European Bowman Race Karts that can reach speeds of up to 45 mph, as well as a comprehensive race analysis and live results on a 30-foot timing scoreboard.

Xtreme also has a 4,000-square-foot sports bar with a 562-inch projection television and more than 120 interactive arcade games including NASCAR simulators, a derby owners club, basketball games and a mini bowling lane.



Chris C. Jenkins

Hollywood Tribal Council Rep. Max B. Osceola Jr. enjoys a game of pinball during festivities at the Xtreme Indoor Karting facility.



Employees of the Immokalee Community share a Christmas luncheon and gift exchange.

Judy Weeks

Immokalee Employee Christmas Party

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Reporter

IMMOKALEE — Immokalee Reservation employees gathered at the gymnasium for their annual Christmas party Dec. 16.

Following a luncheon buffet, Immokalee Council Liaison Elaine Aguilar thanked everyone for their combined efforts in service to the community.

"The members of the Immokalee Community are very fortunate to have such a dedicated team of individuals administering to their needs," Aguilar said. "Some of you are Tribal Citizens and others have become like members of our extended family. As a token of our ap-

preciation, gift bags have been prepared for each of you."

The afternoon was spent playing the gift exchange game. Everyone received four numbered tickets. As the numbers were drawn, the players came forward to select a gift from the pile on the tables at the front of the room. Once everyone received a gift, the numbers continued to be drawn and the lucky player had an opportunity to swap gifts with other recipients.

The larger packages changed hands many times while players resorted to humorous antics in an effort to protect them from transfer. Presents were eventually opened and the room filled with laughter at the gag gifts that were hidden inside the wrappings.



Patsy Billie and Lucille Jumper, both of Big Cypress, do a little Christmas shopping in Immokalee.

Judy Weeks

Immokalee Seniors Christmas Party

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Reporter

IMMOKALEE — The spirit of the holiday season was in the air at the Immokalee Senior Center on Dec. 15 for the annual Senior Christmas Party.

An abundance of Christmas decorations set the stage for the gala event, but the most important ingredient for the celebration was the guests who traveled from other reservations to share in the festivities.

Big Cypress Board Rep. Paul Bowers, Sr. encouraged everyone to remember the true meaning of Christmas.

"During the three Seminole Wars, many of our ancestors were removed to the Oklahoma Territory," Bowers said. "One good thing came from that tragedy. Native American missionaries found their way back to Florida and brought us the hope of Christianity."

"Throughout the year we say, 'In God we trust.' Christmas is a time to give thanks to God for the trust that he has placed in us."

Mercedes Pophan, 15, entertained partygoers with a



Judy Weeks

Big Cypress Board Rep. Paul Bowers, Sr. talks about the true meaning of Christmas.

medley of Christmas carols and a contemporary Country Western ballad. The aspiring young singer and high schooler received a generous round of applause.

It would not be a Senior Christmas event without the welcome presence of Seminole craftsmen setting up a marketplace for their wares. A colorful array of hand-crafted merchandise lined the sidewalk at the entrance to the center.

Tribal citizens and employees joined the seniors in shopping for the perfect gift and exchanged ideas and information with old friends. Topics of conversation ranged from hard-to-find beads and fabric sources to new grandchildren and cherished memories of life in the Seminole camps.

The morning activities included five rounds of bingo. Playing eight cards each, the participants competed for gift cards. The winners were: Crazy Letter "C": Sally Tommie; Double Bingo: Sally Tommie; Regular or 4 Corners: Pete Aguilar; Kite: Agnes Cypress; Full Card: Daisy Jumper.



Judy Weeks

Immokalee Council Liaison Elaine Aguilar and Rachel Billie greet their visiting friends from other reservations.

Immokalee Preschool Christmas Party

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Reporter

IMMOKALEE — A chorus of children dressed as reindeer welcomed a visitor from the North Pole to the Immokalee Preschool Christmas Party at the Senior Center on Dec. 5.

Wearing little antlers and shaking their sleigh bells, the youngsters crowded around Santa Claus as he greeted them with a "Ho! Ho! Ho!"

Family and friends were treated to a medley of Christmas carols that the children had spent weeks rehearsing for the holiday event. Their performance was animated by the ringing of bells, clapping and gesturing of hands and their gigantic smiles. The children may have been rusty on the words, but they shouted out each of the choruses with enthusiasm.



Judy Weeks

Aubree Rodriguez tugs on Santa's beard.



Judy Weeks

(L-R) Brandon Posada, Denise Gonzales and Amara Martinez entertain their audience with Christmas Carols.

Immokalee Preschool Site Manager Michelle Ford said each child had prepared a wish list for Santa by pointing at pictures in a catalog. He arrived with sacks filled with presents bearing their names.

Taking turns on Santa's lap, the gifts were distributed while the parents crowded around for a photo opportunity. The very young wanted no part of the bearded stranger, so he invited the parents to hold and distract their babies while he snuck in from behind for a candid shot.

Tiny Aubree Rodriguez reached forward, entangled her little fingers in Santa's beard and gave it a hard tug. Wide eyed and grinning in pain, Santa said, "Yes dear, it's real!"

The room was filled with laughter when Santa reached out to Kazmir Joiner and said, "Give me five!" The young man immediately dropped to the floor and gave him five push ups, then jumped up and said, "Merry Christmas Santa!"



Judy Weeks

Santa hugs his little elf, Jaylee Jimmie.



Judy Weeks

Angelina Yzaguirre shows off the little mermaid that she got from Santa.



Judy Weeks

A chorus of little reindeer welcome Santa Claus to the Immokalee Preschool Christmas party.



Judy Weeks

(L-R) Amara Martinez, Federico "P.J." Rodriguez and Angelina Yzaguirre sing "Jingle Bells" for their parents at the Preschool Christmas program.



Judy Weeks

When Santa Claus said "Give me five!", Kazmir Joiner dropped to the floor for five pushups.



The Yzaguirres are just one of the many families that unite to celebrate Christmas in Immokalee.

Immokalee Community Christmas Celebration

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Reporter

IMMOKALEE — Immokalee community members gathered in the entertainment pavilion at the Immokalee Seminole Casino for their annual Christmas celebration.

The Dec. 18 event appeared to be a series of small family reunions that ultimately became one big gathering of community members. Some groupings contained three and four generations who were eager to share the holiday spirit.

A large Christmas tree dominated one end of the room, which was lined with age and gender appropriate gifts. An enormous cake featured a snow covered village, complete with a church, houses, stores, ice pond and landscaping. Encircled with Christmas trees and snowmen, it drew a large crowd of youngsters eager to sample its holiday treats.

"As I stand here looking at all these gifts and the youngsters running back and



Shyanne Escobar wistfully checks out a stack of Christmas presents as she awaits the arrival of Santa Claus.



Santa Claus brought Josh Garza a new set of mechanic's tools.



Immokalee Council Liaison Elaine Aguilar talks about the Christmases of her childhood.



Santa Claus delivers the Chairman's Grand Prize golf cart to the lucky raffle ticket holder, Kimberly Alvarado.

forth in anticipation, I can't help but think back to the Christmases of the past," Immokalee Council Liaison Elaine Aguilar said.

"I wish our youngsters could experience for one day the thrill we felt at receiving a new pair of shoes that would have to last us throughout the year. It would provide them with a whole new outlook on the things that are really important."

Aguilar recalled how her generation grew up poor in material items but rich in family values. Whole camps traveled to distant villages to share a feast of simple food prepared over the open fire, she said. Holiday gifts included a handful of oranges, a piece of candy, a hank of beads, a pouch of tobacco or a yard of cloth, she said.

The party's long-awaited gift distribution began when Santa Claus arrived. Lined up in anticipation, the youngsters took turns visiting Santa to receive a present that had been carefully selected from their wish list.

Adults selected a present from a mountain of items. Their choices ranged from personal to family oriented, home goods to wearing apparel, tools to sporting goods, and appliances to jewelry.

Raffle tickets were drawn for prizes such as bicycles, Nintendo Wii video game consoles, iPods, a \$1,500 furniture certificate, deluxe barbeque grill, large-screen television and a golf cart



Rachel Billie is laden with the gifts she received at the Immokalee Christmas party.



Issiah Garcia tells Santa Claus this is just what he wanted.

Naples Community Christmas

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Reporter

NAPLES — The small Seminole village adjacent to the Collier County Museum was lavishly decorated for the Naples community's annual Christmas party Dec. 11.

"This makes me feel at home again as though I was in my grandparents, Cory and Juanita Osceola's village," Naples Liaison O.B. Osceola, Jr. said. "Family and friends from all along the Tamiami Trail gathered there to celebrate each year. It was a huge reunion that no one wanted to miss. We were poor, but we were happy because we had each other."

Tahama Osceola, matriarch of the Naples Community, took her place in the center of the activities with her brother, O.B. Osceola, Sr., where they greeted their guests and then shared Christmas dinner.

"We saved a little back all year long so that I could take my father down to Miami to buy beads, rick-rack, thread, pocket knives, candy, nuts and yards of material to hand out as Christmas presents," O.B. Osceola, Sr. said. "Everyone looked forward to the truckload of oranges we picked in the grove and loaves of bread from the discount store that we passed around. It is in our culture to share what little we can and it will bring us blessings throughout the year."



(Center) Matriarch of the Naples Seminole Community, Tahama Osceola is surrounded by some of her descendants with whom she is sharing the Christmas holiday.

Tahama Osceola is fortunate enough to visit with her relatives all year long. However, it isn't often that she has four generations of her descendants in one place at the same time. She was all smiles as they gathered for a family portrait.

The families of Corey Billie, Naomi Walden, Christina Billie, Connie Slavik, Tammy Billie and David Billy are the latest to to share in the Osceola Christmas tradition.

Following the meal, the shouting and dancing of children signaled the arrival of Santa Claus. Taking a seat beside the Christmas tree in the main chickee, Santa gathered the children around him to pass out stacks of presents that had been carefully selected for the occasion.

Adults had received raffle tickets and as O.B. Osceola, Jr. called out the numbers, they came forward to claim their gifts. Cameras, appliances, tool sets, kitchen ware, electronics, gourmet baskets, jewelry, power tools, luggage and entertainment components were among the items distributed. Three 42-inch and one 50-inch plasma television were given away as grand prizes.



Youngsters from the Naples Community welcome Santa Claus to their Christmas party.

Naples Shares the Holiday Spirit

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Reporter

NAPLES — When Naomi Walden of the Juanita Osceola Center learned that she and others could send gifts to military personnel at home and abroad through Operation Holiday Eagle, she immediately approached fellow Naples community members about implementing the project there.

The response was over whelming and on Dec. 1, they began their own Operation Holiday Eagle and the Stocking from Santa Program.

"Supporting a soldier is a gift that we can give ourselves, because they are serving on our behalf," said Cultural Outreach Specialist Sandy Osceola. "These programs offer a wonderful way for us to show our appreciation for their efforts and let them know that they will never be forgotten."

The programs were founded a few years ago to provide individuals and groups



Corey Billie stuffs miniature Christmas stockings for the U.S. military.

with a means of sending a little bit of Christmas joy to members of the U.S. Armed Services. The Naples community adopted two platoons — 37 servicemen would receive a Santa Stocking with a candy cane and handwritten greeting card with a short message penned by the youngsters in the community. Twenty-nine Marines were given large stockings stuffed with assorted gifts and a greeting card.

Community members purchased games, toiletries, personal clothing items, insect repellent and basic hard-to-find necessities for military personnel abroad. A mountain of presents was quickly accumulated in Santa's workshop at the center in anticipation of stuffing day.

Christmas carols, a buffet and holiday sweet treats filled the room as up to 70 people formed an assembly line to prepare and overfill stockings for shipment.

The Christmas spirit and generosity didn't end with the U.S. military. Participants at the Juanita Osceola Center collected so many things for the Sioux Nation at the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota that a second truck had to be sent to pick up the gifts.

"I like receiving Christmas presents, but I had more fun giving gifts to other people, even total strangers, than I have ever had getting things," said Kennedy Huggins, 13. "I think that this great feeling is what they mean when people talk about the holiday spirit."



Naples youngsters write holiday messages to the men and women who guard our nation.



(L-R) Pedro Zepeda, Kennedy Huggins and Marissa Osceola act as Santa's helpers as they make Christmas stockings to send to our armed forces.

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