



The Daredevil Divas completed death-defying challenge No.1, recently, by jumping from an airplane over the Clewiston Airport. Diane Frank, Amanda Jaffe and Rhonda Bain each strapped on a parachute , attached themselves to an instructor, then leapt out into the wide blue yonder. Each landed safely.
What's the next challenge, girls?
"We're not telling," said Diane. "But it's even more dangerous than skydiving! You'll have to keep reading the *Tribune* to find out!"

Youth Conference Gives Lessons

By Sandi McClenithan
BRIGHTON – Brighton Youth Conference 2000 was held at Sheraton Four Pointe Hotel in Tampa, in August.
This is the 5th annual conference and all went well. More than 250 students and parents attended. Youth of all ages participated in the week long event that was full of excitement and lots of skillful challenges.
The purpose of this conference is to provide parents and children a way to learn new skills in a fun filled atmosphere. It's designed to provide time after families spend a busy summer. This conference was about courage, confidence and trust and to learn more about their culture.
The first morning started



These youngsters were part of the 250 students and parents at show.



Nursery children enjoyed play while parents were in session.

out at 6 a.m. with a fitness hour with Jenny Johns, which consisted of swimming exercises and walking and stretching. Quite a few showed up — maybe a little sleepy — but ready to participate.
Classes offered were as follows;
Culture with Alice Snow, Health with Suzanne Davis and Wendy Johns, Arts and Crafts with Lorene Gopher and Jenny Shore, By-Laws with Tribal General Counsel Jim Shore, Juvenile Justice with Salina Dorgan and Abby James, Parenting Presentation with JoLeigh Johns, Bible stories with Mable Haight, Library Presentation, Teen Money Management, Seminole Police Department, 4-H Presentation with Polly Hayes and Indian Medicine with Alice Snow.
The committee added a new activity this year — a talent show. More than 20 participants performed. There was singing, acting, dancing, and more. All were great. One in particular surprise was Jeff Osceola who sang 'Seminole Wind' with only his guitar as backup. He received a standing ovation. Look out John Anderson!

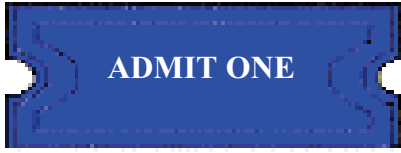
Entertainment was also provided by a young Christian group lead by Happy Freejo and her brother Marcus. Freejo is a Pawnee/Seminole from Oklahoma who gave testimony while singing and dancing to gospel and modern music.
The youth were rewarded for their participation with day trips to Adventure Island, Busch Gardens and movies. A special thanks to Jack Smith Jr. for sponsoring this event and for participating in all activities.
Thanks to all the working committee who helped put this together for a well-organized and enjoyable week.
The Brighton Youth Conference Working Committee is: Jack Smith Jr., Jenny Shore, Smawley Holata, Lorene Gopher, Jenny Johns, Alice Sweat, Salina Dorgan, Polly Hayes, Abby James, Louise Gopher, Diane Smith, Sabrina Tuttle, Sara Sampson and Dawn Snow.



These children sang and danced during the talent contest.

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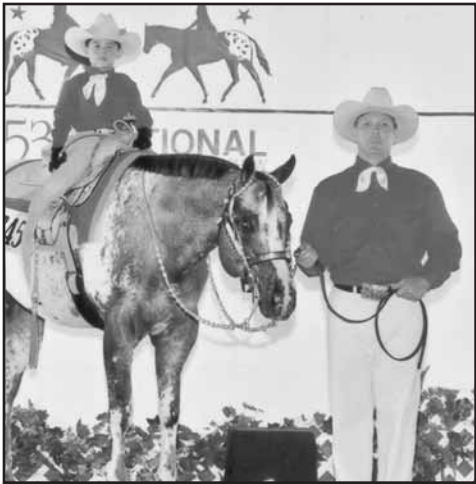
Seminoles Finish 7th In Shootout

By Libby Blake
FREEPORT, Grand Bahama Island — Team Seminolas came home with a seventh place finish in the “A” Division at the 8th Annual VNEA (Valley National Eightball Association) Bahamas Shootout.
Team members included Big Cypress Council Representative David Cypress, Big Cypress Recreation Director George Grasshopper, David Nunez (Brighton Reservation), Tony Billie (Hollywood Reservation), and Okeechobee teammates Comted Carter and Corey Penrod.
Thirty teams competed in the double elimination tournament held Sept. 8 – 10 at the Country Club at Bahamia including a team that traveled all the way from Argentina. Raymond Mora from the Immokalee Reservation served as interpreter for the Spanish

speaking team. Because of his assistance, tournament officials allowed Mora to join the team for tournament play.
Motown Boyz, also from Immokalee, failed to place. The team consisted of Ralph Sanchez, O.B. Osceola, Assistant Recreation Director David Billie, Mario Posado, and Isaac Rodriguez.
Play’AZ from the Immokalee Reservation placed third in the six team “B” Division. Team members included Maria Billie, Roy Salinas, Mike Alvarado, Marciano Calderon, and Juan Salinas.
In men’s singles competition, George Grasshopper finished 11th out of 112. Marciano Calderon finished 22nd, Corey Penrod 26th, David Nunez 31st, and Tony Carter 32nd.

Billie Takes 10th At Nationals

OKLAHOMA CITY, Ok. — Cypress “Kowako” Billie finished tenth in the Western Pleasure, Lead Line, 6 and Under category of the 53rd National Appaloosa Horse Show held June 26 – July 8.
Cypress, the 4-year-old son of James and Lesley Billie of Big Cypress, has been taking horsemanship lesson for over a year under the guidance of Brian Reyburn and Christy Cotton of the Academy Rose & Company Riding Academy in Plantation.
Cypress is currently a member of the Plantation Saddle Club and the Appaloosa Horse Club Youth Association, and has won numerous trophies in local shows.
“This was his first National competition and he did very well,” Cotton said. “He came in tenth out of 50 contestants. He’s come a long way in a very short time. He has won many local contests and I’m sure he’ll have success if he continues riding in the Nationals.”



Seminole Teams Take Summer Titles

By Libby Blake
PLANTATION — The Hollywood Girls’ and the Big Cypress Boys’ teams came in first place in their respective divisions in the 23rd Annual Reebok Summer Basketball League held at Broward Christian School.
JoJo Osceola led the girls with 12 points in their 40 – 24 victory over Upperroom in the championship game. Phalyn Osceola scored ten points, Mercedes Osceola racked up nine points and two blocks, Tasha Osceola scored six points, and Daisy Tiger added three points.
The boys won their championship game 66 – 57 against the purple team – the only team to beat Big Cypress during the nine-week regular season. Moses Billie led the team with 16 points from the floor and was two for two at the foul line.
Other team players included Justin Osceola (two points), Issiah Billie (eight points plus two of three free throws), Andrew Bowers (eight points and three of six free throws), Charlie Cypress (four points), Tyrel Osceola (12 points),

Pete Osceola (four points plus one three pointer), and Wilson Bowers (two points).
Big Cypress girls, who struggled all season with transportation problems, came in last. The team consisted of only five players between the ages of 9 – 16, and battled hard against the much older and experienced teams in the division. The brave five included Heather Billie, Victoria Hernandez, Klaressa Osceola, Natasha Billie, and Tiffany Billie.



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HUMOR

King Of The Code

Here I am Raiford Starke driving through West Memphis on the outskirts of Starkansaw, going from bar to bar with a whole trunk load of Raiford Starke CDs. I looked into the rear view mirror and had to blink about 20 times before the face of my great Uncle McAlester, the family Fuller Brush man, morphed back into mine. Scared the bejunias out of me.
Sweat beaded burbles on my brow. One thing I didn’t want in life was to be like Mac. The whole family despised Uncle Mack because he was a salesman whose main customers were his own family. He even tried to sign Lowella up for a Brush Convention in Vegas. Lowella says Uncle Mac was a pervert, too.

Uncle Mac was heavy on my mind when I strolled into Stephen and Ira’s Lounge, lugging my crate of CDs. A local came right up to me and asked me to “give” him a CD.
“You . . . uh . . . don’t want to buy one?” I asked. He shook his head heck no.
I was insulted! “Partner, I ain’t in this for nothin’. I got to make a livin’, y’know!” He walked away muttering something a “lousy”lousy fifteen bucks for my twelve-song CD. I mean, if it wasn’t me, I’d buy a whole box and give ‘em out as Christmas presents. Me. Raiford Starke. I’ve been to Copenhagen, Nashville and Mosca, Colorado. Chief Jim Billie and Phish are my back-up band. That makes me famous, right?

“Me, me, me, me, me, me, Raiford. It’s all about me. You think the world revolves around you. I got news for you, friend — it does not.” The words were those that Lowella nags me with every day of my life. But the voice was different. I turned and saw the club’s part owner, my main hombre, Stephen Flowers.

“You’ll never sell any CDs like that Raiford. Why, your CD doesn’t have a bar code,” he said, “you can’t sell anything these days without one of those.”

“Well, how do I get one?” I said.
“Well, you need to mail \$500 dollars to the Uniform Pricing Control, and they send a barcode and stickers to put on your CD’s. Of course . . .” he started looking around the room and then he leaned into me, lowering his voice, “if you want to cut through all the red tape and speed things up you can give me \$300 right here, and I’ll take care of you. This is a bar. And we got the code!”

I was suspicious, but I trusted Stephen Flowers. I handed him my Bank of Starkansaw debit card and we completed the transaction. The band immediately went into a familiar Carlos Santana groove.

“Ol’ Stephen started sashaying to the hypnotic Latin rhythm with a catnip-laden, canary-eating grin. Strange enough, I heard the band’s lead vocalist crooning: “I’ve got a black magic . . . marker!”

The music was hypnotic. Stephen grabbed my arm and began to lead me around the bar, pulling a magic marker in and out of his coat like Groucho twirling a cigar. Next thing I know, I’m rolling up my sleeve and each bar patron is placing an individual black magic marker mark on

my arm..
“Okay Raiford,” said Stephen, after we were done and my arm was a tattooed nightmare of lines and squares. “You now have your very own official “bar” code. You can sell anything you want.”
He pushed me outside, closed the door and locked it behind me. I could barely make out the sounds of uproarious laughter and the salute: “Boys . . . I believe this next round is on me!”
Confused, violated and

RAIFORD STARKE

my stomach upset from the jalapeno health shake I had this morning, I hopped in the car with an empty bank account and a trunk full of the blues — a real live blues song playing on an endless, hopeless loop. I stopped at the Bower Records store and walked in with a box of CDs. I rolled up my sleeve to show the manager my official Stephen and Ira’s UPC barcode. He looked at me like I was Elian. “There’s a public restroom across the street at the Hess station if you want to wash that off,” he said.
“What do you mean? This is my barcode and here’s my CDs. Now start settin’ up a display . . .”

He got on the intercom: “Security at customer service, please!”

Next thing you know I’m surrounded by three Wackychut guys who have no appreciation for barcodes or the blues. As they approached, their meaty hands clenched, I backed up slowly towards the register, where the checkout girl was ringing up merchandise. “Watch out,” one of the goons yelled..

Too late. I tripped and fell onto the conveyor belt and immediately assumed my favorite fetal position, tensing up to ward off the blows. Suddenly, the checkout gal hit the foot pedal and the belt began to move. I passed right under the scanner and got dumped into a shopping cart. Sunset Beach Pete saw the whole thing and came running over.

“Hey, check it out Raiford,” Pete exclaimed, pointing to the register. There, in digital letters, was displayed “Starke \$2.99.”

I slumped in the shopping cart, as Pete pushed it out into the parking lot. A little child passed by tugging on his mother’s harm. “Look Mommy, that man’s for sale! How much is he? Look Mommy!”

Sunset Beach Pete stopped and smiled at the embarrassed mother trying to shush her child. “No problem ma’am,” he said, “this man’s not for sale. He’s a salesman!”

I groaned. Then another hit song came to me. Thanks Uncle Mac. This one’s for you.

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No poems, no fools in debt/Ain’t got no minaret

Four hours of pushing tunes/Buys 8 to 10 pasture ‘shrooms

I’m a man of jeans, with no seams/King Of the Code

— **Raiford Starke is a Fort Lauderdale-based bluesman whose CDs are available at www.seminoletribe.com**

Classified • Announcements

Happy Birthday



Happy 1st Birthday to our baby girl, **Ai yana Leann Tommie** on Sep. 3. Love always, **Mommy and Daddy**.



Happy Birthday to our “Curly Top Baby Girl” **Nicole Marie Osceola**, 10 years old on Sept. 28. All our love; **Mom (Robin), Dad (Tate), and Bubba (Huston) Osceola**.

Happy Birthday to **Rhett Anthony**, Sept. 16 and **Katelyn Rene**, Sept. 26. Love **Mom, Elrod, Tianna**, and **Trinity**.



Happy Belated Birthday wish to **Rhiannon Dianne Tiger** and **Happy Birthday Deandra Rogene Tiger** on Sep. 18.

No matter how late we are on your birthday wishes to you, you both had a great time on your birthdays! On Rhiannon’s birthday her best friend **Eri** came and two weeks later she moved back home to Japan. Also your cousin **Gibby** was there and last month he passed away. These are memories we will cherish forever.

And Deandra at your birthday party your new baby cousin **Kian Billy Madrid** came. And lots of little cousins, friends and family. Your smiles and happiness made these parties complete.

We love you forever. **Mom, Dad & Big Bro “Brown.”**

I would like to wish my sisters **Keyah** and **Lysandra** a Happy Birthday. I love you! Always; **Lizina Bowers**.

Happy Belated Birthday to **George Osceola**. From your friends **Lizina** and **Rachel Billie**.



Jumper Pumpkins, Happy 1st Birthday. Love you always, **Jumpers. Arek Dalton** and **Phoenixsun Derek**.

Poems Memories

All my memories start with you,
All those times you cried, I cried too.
All those times you smiled, I smiled too.
Even when you laughed, I laughed too.
Remember when you was scared, I was scared too.
When you thought you was alone, I was there with you.
Our life wasn’t so good, but what could we do?
Our life and childhood was deprived of us,
We had no one that we could really trust.
Between all the abuse and sexual abuse,
We was the only one that would lose.
No one ever believed us,
even when it was a must.
We continued to get punished with all mom’s hate,
We even got raped.
But now all those things have made you what you are,
A strong and very wise person.
Carolee, I love you and I’m proud of you,
always stay true.
— **Carolee Jeannette Nelson**.

Note: The author of this poem will be recognized at the 6th Annual Poetry Convention in Reno, Nevada on Oct. 26. Look for the complete story in the Nov. issue of the Seminole Tribune.

Farewell



Friends and family gather to pay final respects at Big Cypress Cemetery.

Malcolm Tigertail Laid To Rest

By **Benny Secody**

BIG CYPRESS — After living a nightmare for the past 16 months, family, friends and Big Cypress community members came together Sept. 9 at the Big Cypress First Baptist Church to bid a final farewell to Malcolm Tigertail.

Finally — at last — the family found closure. It had been a long time coming. Tigertail, 25 and his 21 year-old friend Manuel Pizana were last seen alive in the early hours of May 15, 1999 on the Big Cypress Reservation in a green 1999 Honda Civic owned by Manuel Pizana. That was the day many lives were put on hold for over a year, until Sunday, June 2000.

On June 4, a forestry helicopter pilot flying over the L-28 canal spotted four wheels pointing skyward from the shallow waters a short ways out from the bank of the canal.

Authorities were contacted and a tow truck was dispatched. The car, after remaining submerged for over a year, was exhumed from its muddy resting-place.

Although family and friends had hoped for a miracle, the obvious was finally acknowledged.

The car was indeed the 1999 Honda Civic registered to Manuel that the pair had been seen in the night they disappeared. A wallet found by divers further confirmed identification. However, a forensic conclusion was required, including extensive DNA testing that took several months to complete. All of those procedures further postponed a Christian service and interment, keeping loved ones in limbo for three months pending results.

Services for Malcolm Tigertail were held on Sept. 9 at the Big Cypress First Baptist Church with interment following at the Big Cypress cemetery. Tigertail is survived by his mother Minnie (Tigertail) Bert, Stepfather Ernie Bert, two brothers and a sister — all of Big Cypress. Tigertail was a member of the Otter Clan.

The *Seminole Tribune* extends condolences to the family and friends of Malcolm Tigertail.

Jesse Montsdeoca: 1916 - 2000

By **T.R. Benn**

LORIDA, Fla. — Mrs. Jesse Montsdeoca passed away at her home in Lorida Saturday, Sept. 2, at the age of 84.

Miss Jesse was the wife of the late Fred Montsdeoca, Seminole Indian Agent for over 40 years. It was Montsdeoca who was responsible for bringing cattle to the Seminole Tribe of Florida. He also taught Tribal members various farming practices such as citrus and timber. It was through the work of her husband that Miss Jesse became a supportive friend of many Seminole Tribal members.

Miss Jesse was born in Douglas, Ga., Feb. 27, 1916. She is survived by her oldest daughter, Cherrie McColley, of Moore Haven, her son, Dr. Gary Montsdeoca, and youngest daughter, Judy Bronson, both of Lorida. A stepson, Fred Montsdeoca Jr., of Ocala, Fla., six grandchildren and nine great grandchildren; A brother, Robert Davis of West Palm Beach, and a sister, Nora Abney of Okeechobee, also survives her.

She was a mother, a housewife and a member of the First Baptist Church of Lorida and a life time member of the Order of the Eastern Star.

The Highlands County Historical Society

said, “the Montsdeoca family has lived and ranched on the shores of the Kissimmee River for over a hundred years.”

She was a kind giving person, a wonderful person to call friend, one who gave more of herself than she expected in return.



Stanlo Johns with file photo of Jesse Montsdeoca.

Domestic Violence Event Set

BRIGHTON — Because October is Domestic Violence Month, Inmormation, a Dance Theater Company, will present a performance at the Brighton Field Office Auditorium, Oct. 19, at 7 p.m.

Everyone is invited to attend this performance, and refreshments will be served.

For further information contact Jenny Johns at (863) 763-4128, Immokalee — Billie Napper-Bodway at (941) 657-6567, Tampa — Tom Ryan — (813) 983-8920, Big Cypress — Reagan Bennett — (863) 983-6920 and Hollywood — Yvonne Courtney at (954) 964-6338.

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L to R: June Degnan, Mariann Billie, Megan Yescas, Camilla Frank, Rita Otero, LaToyia Thomas, Ricardo Hernandez, Charlie (Brown) Tiger III, Matthew Billie and Patrick McElroy.

Graduate Take Trip To Bahamas

On August 13, 2000 the graduates from Big Cypress and Hollywood took a trip to the Bahamas. They were there to three days on Paradise Island. During their stay they spent time jet skiing, swimming, tanning in the sun, or shopping on near by Nassau Island.

Along with the eight graduates there were chaperones: Mitchell Cypress, James and Leslie Billie, Danny Wilcox, Sally Tommie and Scott Cohen (not pictured)

We the graduates would like to thank James Billie for sponsoring the trip and everybody else that helped to make it possible.

Weight Loss Winners Sweetly Rewarded

BIG CYPRESS — A reward luncheon was held in Big Cypress to honor participants of the Community and Employee Weight Loss Contest.

This was the second contest held in Big Cypress since January in hopes of promoting healthier lifestyles among both community members and employees that work on the reservation.

With the threat of Type II Diabetes increasing among Native Americans, it is important to take a preventive role in combating the disease. Obesity and a sedentary lifestyle are two major risk factors that predispose an individual to diabetes. Both these risk factors however are



(Back row l-r) Georgina Bert, Robert Hill, Myra Jumper, Mitchell Cypress, George Grasshopper. (Front l-r) Linda Billie, Marilyn Billie, Mary Jumper, Vicki Barroganis.

modifiable and with changes in diet and exercise, can be eliminated. By offering monetary awards, the weight loss contest adds incentive to shedding those extra pounds that may, in addition to diabetes, lead to high blood pressure, stroke or heart disease.

There were four different categories: Community Men, Community Women, Employee Men and Employee Women. Robert Hill took first place (\$2,000) for the Community Men and Joe Frank took second (\$1,500).

In the women category Myra Jumper took first place (\$2,000), Georgina Bert (\$1,500), Marilyn Billie (\$1,000), Linda Billie (\$800) and Mary Jumper (\$800) were also winners. Patrick McElroy (\$750) of the Education Department was the only male winner for the employees, while Francine Brown (\$500), Catherine Terburgh (\$300) and Cecilia Solano (\$150) won for the women.

Francine and Cecilia are both employees of Ahfachkee and Catherine is the Nurse Practitioner at the Big Cypress clinic. After the rewards were handed out participants shared their secrets of weight loss which ranged from exercise to eating well to drinking plenty of water.

A third contest has recently begun and will continue through until Nov. 20. Big Cypress Recreation, the Health Department President Mitchell Cypress and Council Representative David Cypress will once again sponsor the contest.

Vicki Barroganis, Big Cypress's personal trainer, will also be available to assist participants with their weight loss goals.

Pac Meeting September 20

HOLLYWOOD — The Hollywood Parent Advisory Committee held its first meeting on Sept. 20 to elect new officers and set the schedule for future PAC event and meetings.

The newly elected PAC officers are Wanda Bowers, Chairman; Esther Gopher, Vice-Chairman; and Virginia Mitchell, Secretary/Treasurer.

PAC meetings are scheduled to be on the third Wednesday of every month, the next meeting is on October 11, at noon. Parents are strongly encouraged not to miss more than four meetings.

The PAC committee is preparing for Halloween and interested parents are invited to submit fundraising suggestions.

Councilman Max Osceola Jr. said he would again donate monies for Polaroid picture/booth during the carnival.

Housing Director Joel Frank Sr. addressed the question of Tribal members who live near, but not on, the reservation. Frank stressed the need for more reservation housing and it was noted that the Tribe is aware of non-residents who live near the reservation.

The consensus seems to be that parents will noted for their level of involvement and attempts to be part of the community.

Brochure Targets Diabetes, Kidney Disease

HOLLYWOOD — One in every five American Indians and Alaska Natives has diabetes, which is the number one cause of kidney failure in the United States today. This high incidence of diabetes causes American Indians and Alaska Natives to develop kidney failure three times more often than whites, says the national Kidney Foundation (NKF).

To help people in these communities learn more about two of the diseases that disproportionately affect them, the National Kidney Foundation has created a new educational brochure, "Diabetes and Kidney Disease: A Guide for American Indians and Alaska Natives."

Written in question-and-answer format, "Diabetes and Kidney Disease" provides important information about the prevention, control and treatment of both diseases. Readers will learn the symptoms of diabetes, the early signs of kidney damage and treatment options for kidney failure.

Though all American Indians and Alaska Natives at increased risk for developing Type II diabetes, both diabetes and kidney disease can be prevented. For a free copy call the foundation at (800) 622-9010.

The National Kidney Foundation is the nation's leading voluntary health agency dedicated to preventing kidney and urinary tract disease, improving the health and well-being of individuals and families affected by these diseases, and increasing the availability of all organs for transplantation.

Dream Team Ready For New Season

By Director Miss Patty

HOLLYWOOD — As the new school year approaches we hope everyone had a great summer. The Dream Team had a very special program for "Summer Dance."

They were honored with William Osceola, 14, sharing some history of Native American dance and music. Everyone had a rewarding experience learning about their Indian heritage and culture through dance and music.

Regalia and competition were studied with great interest. Children interacted with the teenager and together had an enriching experience and fun. Special thanks to Shadoe Billie and Tiffany Doctor who also shared with us. In addition, a very special thanks to William Cypress and "Daddy" Rueben.

The children participating in the Summer Dance Dream Team experience were: Roy Stewart, Rhiannon Tiger, Deandra Tiger, Brandon DiCarlo, Bobby Frank, Taylor Osceola, Letitia Foster, Krystle Young, Casey McCall, Jessica Turtle, Erin Cypress, Jackson Richardson, Randy Osceola, Whitney Osceola, Justin "JT" Osceola, and Shadoe Billie.

We plan to include our extension of the Native Culture Dance in the fall classes this will include, with the help of Miss Mabel, designing and making regalia for the individual dance of choice by each dance-member of the Dream Team.

New classes for fall began Monday, Sept. 11, from 3:30 – 4:30 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday for children seven years old and older.

On Wednesdays, classes are held from 3 – 4 p.m. for 4-to-6 year olds. Classes are held in the Dance Studio in the gymnasium. Parent must fill out permission slips that are available at the DSO Library and gymnasium office. Classes include tap, ballet, acrobatic, and liturgical as well as cultural dances.

Like last year, we plan to do performances in the Seminole Community, as well as some outside performances. Several field trips are also being planned.

For those dancers that missed the award presentation the end of last year – you may pick up your trophies and certificates at the library during library hours.

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Civic leader Jim Blosser holds rendering of building that was to be placed on the site.

Mrs. Stranahan

Continued from page 1

Hollywood Reservation.) Most of the roads were dirt at that time.

Mrs. Stranahan and my mother arranged it that we could go to the movies on Saturday afternoon and spend the night at Mrs. Stranahan's house.

Mother made us all take a bath and change into clean clothes before we went to Mrs. Stranahan's. We'd take a bucket of water from the pump, dip the water out and soap up. We also had two tubs behind the house and we filled them up. Mother washed clothes under the trees. She had two tubs and would scrub in one and rinse in the other. She scrubbed the shirts and pounded the skirts.

My mother would drop us off with her Model T at the theater. The movies cost 10 cents to go in and 5 cents for a cold drink. Candy was also 5 cents and pop corn was 10 cents a box. We used to pick beans in the field just east of S.R. 441 for a man called Mr. Doan. We made 25 cents a hamper for picking beans.

After I'd get my money, I'd go home and if I had 75 cents, or \$1, my Grandmother would divide my money three ways. One-third went to buy material so she could make new clothes for me. One-third went to help buy food, and one-third I got to spend any way I wanted. That was my movie money.

Me and Mary Bowers, Agnes Parker, Mary (Charlotte) Tommie, my brother Howard, and sometimes Willie Tommie, George Huff (Storm), Okay Tommie, Moses Jumper, Juanita Billie, Annie and Agnes Billie,

and Elizabeth Buster would go to the movies almost every Saturday.

We'd watch mostly cowboy movies with Tom Mix, Buck Jones and Tex Ritter. We'd watch the movies twice. Then, we'd walk to Mrs. Stranahan's house (the Pioneer House) to spend the night.

It was interesting because Mrs. Stranahan couldn't climb the stairs in her house. She sat on a chair and pulled something and it lifted her up and down. There was a porch all around and we would sit in chairs and look at the river. We would yell, "Where you going?" at the boaters. A lot of boat people knew us and they'd come to shore and throw us candy. Sometimes ladies would bring Mrs. Stranahan used clothes for us kids.

Mrs. Stranahan would give us a big bowl of soup or stew for supper. We'd fight for the couch. Whoever got there first got it! We would all sleep in the living room of her house.

Sunday morning after breakfast she would drive us back to the reservation and teach Sunday school at the original wooden Seminole First Baptist Church that was just north of Stirling Road. Usually the same kids who went to the movies would go to Sunday school.

Mrs. Stranahan taught us about Jesus and how to be good Christians. Mrs. Stranahan taught me lots of things that I didn't know about in the white mans' world. She taught me Sunday School and read the Bible to me.

She taught us right from wrong and how to behave when we go places. She was a great influence in our lives. When I was growing up the Bible had much influence on me. I

was scared that God would punish me if I did something wrong.

She explained to us the 23rd and the 100th Psalms and worked with us so that we could memorize them. I still know them by heart: "The Lord is my shepherd" and "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord." I found out it's how you live and how you act. The Psalms helped me sometimes in later years, when I'd sit there and think what it means. The Bible taught me how to live.

She used to bring us kids clothes for school. And in the Spring, she used to send us a few dollars to buy our shoes. She was a kind woman who wasn't like a lot of women in those days. She was nice to everybody — black, whites. Indians. It didn't matter. She was a kind woman.

We only stopped going to Mrs. Stranahan's when we went away to school at Cherokee, North Carolina. But, even then she still remembered me. I'd get a letter and she'd send me a few dollars in the Spring, or around Easter, so I could buy new shoes for school. She never forgot me.

I was really sad when she died in 1971. I went to her funeral. I felt like the Seminole Tribe had lost a friend. I know I lost one.

That's why I'm so happy the Tribe is helping to preserve the property. It's hard today to imagine how that little house had such a big impact on our Tribe. There was a time that little trading post helped keep our people alive.

Now, we have the money to help preserve the Stranahan property house. It's a nice tribute to a nice woman. I'm sure Mrs. Stranahan would approve.

Stranahan

Continued from page 1

precious landmarks left from that era of frontier Fort Lauderdale, the Stranahan House was threatened by a development that planned a 38-story tower on the same property. "That project would have dwarfed the Stranahan House and ruined the historic ambience of this area," said Naugle, who led City officials in condemnation proceedings against the property owner, The Related Group.

A March referendum authorized the city to spend \$8 million for the property, but the developer has balked, claiming it is worth \$36 million.

The "eminent domain" matter is before the courts now, but, according to civic leader John Collins, "this will help seal the deal. The City has the money set aside to buy the property at the fair appraised value, but not enough to develop it. The judge is not going to just let it sit there. This shows the courts that the money and the energy is there to build a park and that our partner is the Seminole Tribe."

The Tribe's money must be used to create the park and not buy the building, said Billie, who reminisced about his own personal experiences hanging out with Mrs.

Stranahan (who died in 1971): "This is where the Seminoles first learned to read and write. This is where I first learned about business. She taught me how to negotiate with the man who owned the shoe store."

"Mrs. Stranahan never knew me as James. She knew me as *Who-kip-pee*. That was my Indian name. It means 'thief!' The last time I saw her, I was in my boat with a bunch of lobster I just caught and she yelled out at me from the back porch, 'Hey *Who-kip-ee*!' I stopped and gave her some lobster. I remember thinking how ironic she

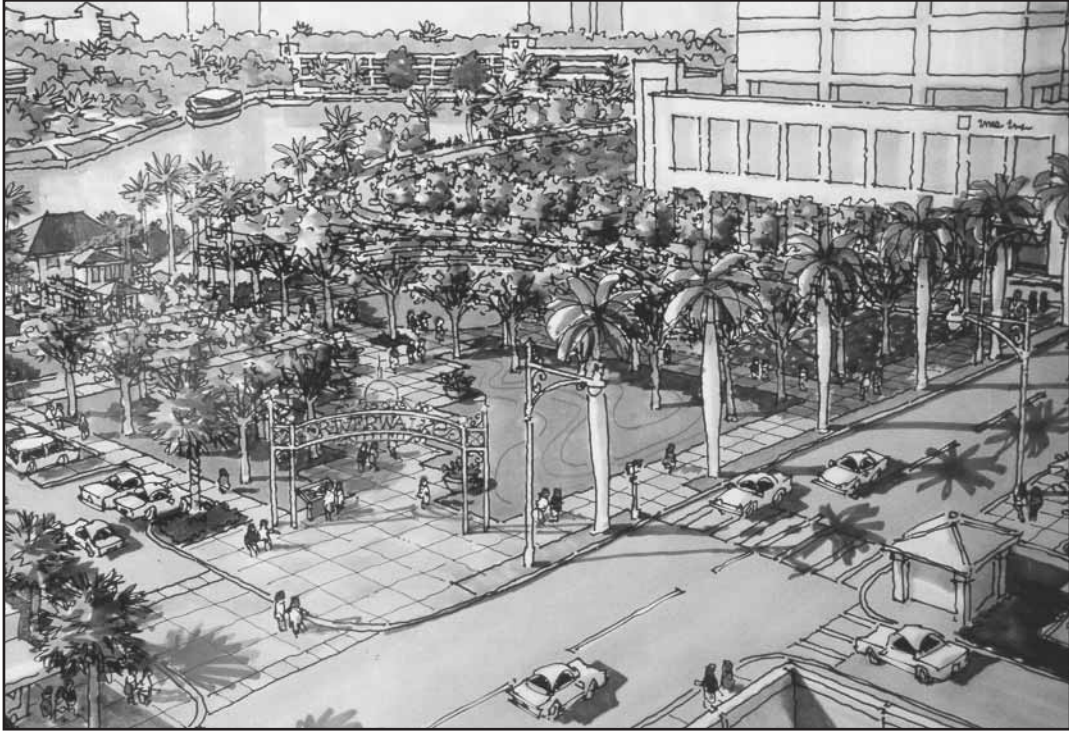


Chief Billie with City and Stranahan House officials stand on the steps of the old Stranahan House.

fed us all these years and now we were feeding her."

Among those in attendance, was Broward Folk Club board member David Cambest, there to support the building of a permanent amphitheatre on the site, located just off Las Olas Blvd. at the point where the New River Tunnel goes underwater.

The Mayor presented the Chairman of a box of cigars. Chairman Billie promised to stage a re-enactment with canoes and traditionally clothed Indians when the park becomes a reality: "We'll bring our Hatteras' and everything," he joked.



Artist's rendering shows what the park may look like once the project is complete.

Donna Reynolds

"Ready to Serve"



Glades County Citizens,
It is time for a change.
Before leaving a successful career in business to run for Supervisor of Elections, it was my responsibility to manage costs and profitability through the highest standard of work ethics. In government, costs should be controlled just like in private enterprise and the profits given to the taxpayers in the form of better public service. With my experience in management, finance, marketing and computer software applications, I will bring public service to the highest and expected standard in the elections office.

— Donna Reynolds

- Committed to increase voter registration
- Bringing technological progress to office
- Update and maintain accurate voter logs
- Professionalism and service for the public
- I am ready to serve you

Vote Donna Reynolds for
Glades County Supervisor of Elections

Paid political advertisement by Donna Reynolds campaign. Approved by Donna Reynolds, (Rep.)

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MASTER TECH INSTALLATIONS

Indigenous Plays Alley

By E. Bowers

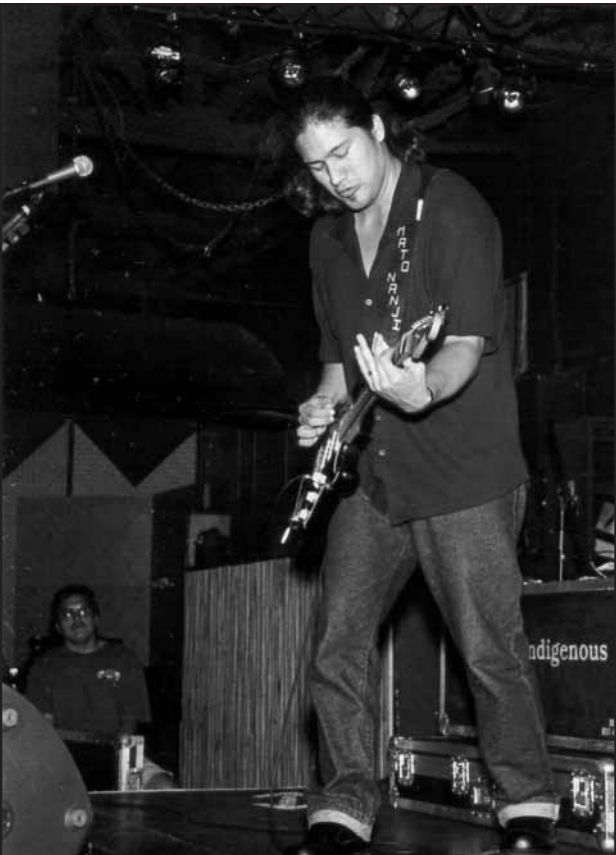
SUNRISE – On Sept. 8, the Alligator Alley nightclub, voted “Best New Venue for Live Music” by New Times magazine, hosted the rising Native American blues band, Indigenous.

The band was welcomed warmly by the (mostly female) members of the Seminole and Miccosukee Tribes, who had packed the club to capacity.

Comprised of four family members from the Yankton Sioux reservation in South Dakota, Indigenous is touring in support of *Circle*, released in May 2000. The band is fronted by guitarist Mato Nanji (Standing Bear), and supported by bassist Ptehcaka Wicasa (Little Buffalo Man), drummer Wandbi Win (Good Eagle Woman), and percussionist Tasunka Wakan, who prefers the English translation of his name, Horse.

Circle, a follow-up to 1998’s *Things We Do*, was produced by Texan Doyle Bramhall, who collaborated numerous times with the late Stevie Ray Vaughan. The album is the band’s second major release after signing with the Minnesota label, Pachyderm Records, in 1998.

Bramhall’s involvement highlights the playing of Mato Nanji, who has often been compared to Vaughan, Hendrix and young blues guitarist, Jonny Lang, who was rumored to have laid his guitar down and bowed before Nanji during a concert.



Mato Nanji and Indigenous played to packed house.

Billie, whose set featured a tireless fan doing a “Buzzard Dance” of his own design, gave a performance that mixed the familiar with tunes from his new album, *Seminole Fire*.

Nanji was the first band member to appear after Billie’s set, causing a rush of young ladies to the front of the stage. A portion of the audience had never heard Indigenous, attending the concert through word of mouth about the acclaimed Native American band.

The band even inspired some of the men to throw caution to the wind, as evidenced by one man who jumped up onstage to strut his stuff.

Much of the audience stayed at the club long after the band had left the stage and the d.j. began to play dance music. Indigenous, however, is headed west for dates in Arizona and California and will eventually join up with Bonnie Raitt and the Indigo Girls for a string of Honor the Earth concerts.



Chief Jim Billie opened the show with a hard driving set that had crowd rocking.

Opening for Indigenous at the Alley was Chief James Billie, backed by guitarists Raiford Starke and Dave Shelly, bassist Robert Parker (Seneca), keyboardist Bob Taylor, and drummer Jeff Renza.

American Indian Outreach

Hi, I’m Lee Tiger with the Florida Department of Transportation’s Native American Outreach Program. I’d like to thank all the tribal members that participated in this past years workshops.



Lee Tiger

To those who would like to attend one, we will continue FDOT workshops throughout 1999. One of the more asked questions in getting DBE Certified was “Do we need to have a Florida Corporation?” The answer is no, you can apply for a registration with a fictitious name. We have these one page forms and can help you fill them out.

So if you or a family member are interested in pursuing contracts with the state of Florida’s largest contracting agency The Department of Transportation, call me at (954) 370-3900. We will be happy to answer any questions and add you to our current mailing list to keep you informed on upcoming workshops.

If you have any questions regarding the Florida Department of Transportation Native American Outreach, please call (954) 370-3900.

Youngblood, Tree Cody Lead Nammy Award Nominees With Seven Each

ALBUQUERQUE – The third annual Native American Music Award (NAMMY) nominees were announced recently and one familiar name is not among them. Because he did not have a new record during 1999, Chief Jim Billie did not qualify for this year’s contest. A three-time Nammy award winner, Chief Billie’s newest product, “Seminole Fire,” was released in the spring of 2000 and will be eligible for next year’s contest.

Last year’s big winner of five Nammys, songwriter Bill Miller, is also absent from the nominations list.

The actual awards ceremony will take place in Albuquerque’s Popejoy Hall on Nov. 11. Tickets can be purchased through Protix by calling (800) 905-3315. Tickets are priced at \$35 and \$50. Special VIP seats are priced at \$100 each which also include admittance to the VIP post Awards show reception party

Two flautists, Mary Youngblood (Aleut-Seminole) and last year’s Discover Native America star Robert Tree Cody (Dakota-Maricopa), lead the 77 American Indian artists with seven nominations each.

NAMMY Nominees:

Artist Of The Year - John Trudell “Blue Indians” Dangerous Discs/Inside; Mary Youngblood “Heart of the World” Silver Wave; Robert Mirabal “Taos Tales” Silver Wave; Robert Tree Cody “Native Flamenco” Canyon; Sharon Burch “Colors of My Heart” Canyon.

Best Blues Recording - “Blues Nation” Blues Nation, Rhom; “Fingermonkey” Keith Secola & Wild Band of Indians, Akina; “Live At Pachyderm Studio 1998” Indigenous Pachyderm; “One Step Ahead” Vince Converse Mystic; “Raw Blues” Jimmy Wolf Red Reverend.

Best Compilation Recording - “Across Indian Lands” Various, SOAR; “Gathering of Nations ‘98” Various, SOAR; “The Sounds of Indian Country” Various, Red Vinyl; “Voices Across The Canyon” Vol. 4, Various, Canyon; “Wolves Original Soundtrack Recording” Various, Silver Wave.

Duo Or Group Of The Year - Brule “One Nation” SOAR; Clan/destine “Deeply Rooted” Rez Dawgs; Indigenous “Live At Pachyderm Studio 1998” Pachyderm; Keith Secola & Wild Band of Indians “Fingermonkey” Akina; Verdell Primeaux & Johnny Mike “Live In Harmony” Canyon.

Best Male Artist - Cherokee Rose “Love Medicine Music” Clearlight; Judy Trejo “Stick Game Songs of the Paiute” Canyon; Mary Youngblood “Heart of the World” Silver Wave; Sharon Burch “Colors of My Heart” Canyon; Thunder Bird Sisters “Still Singin” Thunderbird.

Best Folk Or Country Artist - Little Deer “Earth Mother” Little Deer; Pima Express “Together We’ll Fade Away” Canyon; Sharon Burch, “Colors of My Heart” Canyon; Thunder Bird Sisters “Still Singin” Thunderbird; Yolanda Martinez “Lonely Warrior” YML.

Flutist Of The Year - Andrew Vasquez “V3i An American Indian” Makoche; Kevin Locke “The First Flute” Makoche; Mary Youngblood, “Heart of the World” Silver Wave; R. Carlos Nakai “Inner Voices” Canyon. Robert Tree Cody “Native Flamenco” Canyon.

Best Male Artist - Andrew Vasquez “V3i An American Indian” Makoche; John Trudell “Blue Indians” Dangerous Discs; Litefoot “Rez Affiliated” Red Vinyl; Robert Mirabal “Taos Tales” Silver Wave; Robert Tree Cody “Native Flamenco” Canyon.

Best New Age Recording - “Heart of the World” Mary Youngblood, Silver Wave; “Inner Voices” R. Carlos Nakai, Canyon; “Native Flamenco” R. Romero, R. Tree Cody, T. Redhouse, Canyon; “Obsidian Butterfly” Alice Gomez, Silver Wave; “V3i An American Indian” Andrew Vasquez, Makoche.

Best Pop/Rock Recording - “All Together Here” Lunar Drive, Beggars Banquet; “Deeply Rooted” Clan/destine, Rez Dawgs; “Ma Wio Mi” Medicine Dream, Canyon; “One Nation” Brule, SOAR; “Plight of the Redman” XIT, SOAR.

Best Pow Wow Recording - “Gathering of Nations ‘98” Various, Drum Groups, SOAR; “Here To Stay” Northern Cree, Canyon; “Keepin’ It Real” Southern Cree, Canyon; “Rendezvous” Young Bird, Canyon; “Tribute To The Elders” Black Lodge Singers, Canyon.

Best Pop/Hip Hop Recording - “Murder In Our Backyard” Shadowyze, Red Earth; “Rez Affiliated” Litefoot, Red Vinyl; “The Lite Years, The Best of Mr. Foot” Litefoot, Red Vinyl; “The Red Ryders Vol 1” Various Artists, Red Vinyl; “Urban Skins II” Various Artists, SOAR.

Best Radio Station - CKON Roosevelttown, NY; KILI Porcupine, SD; KNBA Anchorage, AK; KSUT Ignacio, CO; KTNN Window Rock, AZ.

Song/Single Of The Year - ‘Blue Indians’

John Trudell w. Quiltman & Jackson Browne, Dangerous Discs; “Mystical Shaman MC’s” Litefoot w. Coolio, Red Vinyl; ‘Ooh baby, baby’ Jana, Curb; ‘Where’s Your Honor, Mr. Gorton’ Jim Boyd, Thunderwolf; ‘Yuba’ Mary Youngblood w. Joanne Shenandoah, Silver Wave.

Best Spoken Word Recording - “All Together Here” Lunar Drive, Beggars Banquet; “Blue Indians” John Trudell, Dangerous Discs; “First Mother” Troy De Roche & Liz De Roche Song Stick; “Native American Meditations” Various Artists, New World; “The Elders Speak” M.L.D. Wilson & F. Cree, Makoche.

Best Traditional

Record Of The Year - “Red Cedar Medicine: Circle Songs” Beave Chief, Lyrichord; “Stick Game Songs of the Paiute” Judy Trejo, Canyon; “The Elders Speak” Mary L. D. Wilson & Francis Cree Makoche; “The First Flute” Kevin Locke, Makoche; “Yankton Sioux Peyote Songs” Primeaux – Dion, Cool Runnings.

Debut Artist Or Group Of The Year - December Wind “Sacred Voices” Canyon; Lunar Drive “All Together Here” Beggars Banquet; Medicine Dream “Ma Wio Mi” Canyon; Red Earth “When Worlds Collide” Third Mesa; Thunder Bird Sisters “Still Singin” Thunderbird.

Drum Group Of The Year - Black Lodge Singers “Tribute To The Elders” Canyon; Northern Cree “Here To Stay” Canyon; Southern Cree “Keepin’ It Real” Canyon; Crib “Straight From The Rez” Canyon; T2K “Tha Tribe” Canyon.



Mary Youngblood

Best Historical Recording - “Songs of the Caddo - Ceremonial & Social Dance Songs” Caddo Singers, Canyon; “Stick Game Songs of the Paiute” Judy Trejo, Canyon; “The Elders Speak” Mary L. D. Wilson & Francis Cree, Makoche; “The First Flute” Kevin Locke, Makoche; “Voices of the 6th Generation” Red Cloud, Cool Runnings.

Best Independent Recording - “Deeply Rooted” Clan/destine, Rez Dawgs; “Fingermonkey” Keith Secola & Wild Band of Indians, Akina; “Full Moon Session” Skychasers, Annp; “Pearl Moon” Xavier Quijas Yxayotl, Drum Beat Indian Arts; “Warrior’s Pride” NDN, Thunderous Nations; Red Earth, “When Worlds Collide” Third Mesa Music.

Best Instrumental Recording - “Heart of the World” Mary Youngblood, Silver Wave; “Inner Voices” R. Carlos Nakai, Canyon

3. “Native Flamenco” Ruben Romero, Robert Tree Cody, Tony Redhouse, Canyon; “Enter The Earth” Burning Sky, Rykodisc; “Walk Between Worlds” Golana’, Oginali.

Best Latin Recording - “Eagle’s Journey Into Dawn” Ronald Roybal, RR; “Native Flamenco” Ruben Romero, Robert Tree Cody, Tony Redhouse, Canyon; “Obsidian Butterfly” Alice Gomez, Silver Wave; “Pearl Moon” Xavier Quijas Yxayotl, Drum Beat Indian Arts; “Wind” Tchín & Yovani, T&Y.

Best Producer - David Swenson “V3i An American Indian” Makoche; Eddie Weber “Dine’ Prayer Peyote Songs” Cool Runnings; Jackson Browne “Blue Indians” Dangerous Discs/Inside; Tom Bee “Plight of the Redman” XIT, SOAR; Mary Youngblood & Tom Wasinger “Heart of the World” Silver Wave.

Record Of The Year - “Blue Indians” John Trudell Dangerous Discs/Inside; “Colors of My Heart” Sharon Burch, Canyon; “Heart of the World” Mary Youngblood, Silver Wave; “Inner Voices” R. Carlos Nakai Canyon; “Taos Tales” Robert Mirabal, Silver Wave.

Songwriter Of The Year - Andrew Vasquez “V3i An American Indian” Makoche; Medicine Dream “Ma Wio Mi” Canyon; Paul LaRoche & Robby Bee “One Nation” SOAR; Robert Mirabal “Taos Tales” Silver Wave - James Bilagody; Sharon Burch “Colors of My Heart” Canyon.

Best Short & Long Form Music Video - Connie Dover “Who Will Comfort Me?” Taylor Park; Jana “WPLJ” Curb; Joanne Shenandoah, “Warrior In Two Worlds” WXLI; Lunar Drive “Square World” Beggars Banquet; Robert Mirabal w. John Tesh “Valley of Dreams” GTSP.

Best World Music Recording - “Eagle’s Journey Into Dawn” Ronald Roybal, RR; “One Nation” – Brule, SOAR; “Native Flamenco” Ruben Romero, Robert Tree Cody, Tony Redhouse, Canyon; “Obsidian Butterfly” Alice Gomez; Silver Wave; “When Worlds Collide” Red Earth, Third Mesa.

Native Artist™ - Bruce Cockburn “Wolves Original Soundtrack Recording” Silver Wave; Coyote Oldman “House Made of Dawn” Hearts of Space; Douglas Spotted Eagle “Voices” Higher Octave; Paul Horn “Inside Monument Valley” Canyon; Sandy Hoover “All Together Here” Beggars Banquet.

To vote for the Nammys online go to www.nativeamericanmusic.com/vote.htm



Bellamy Brothers

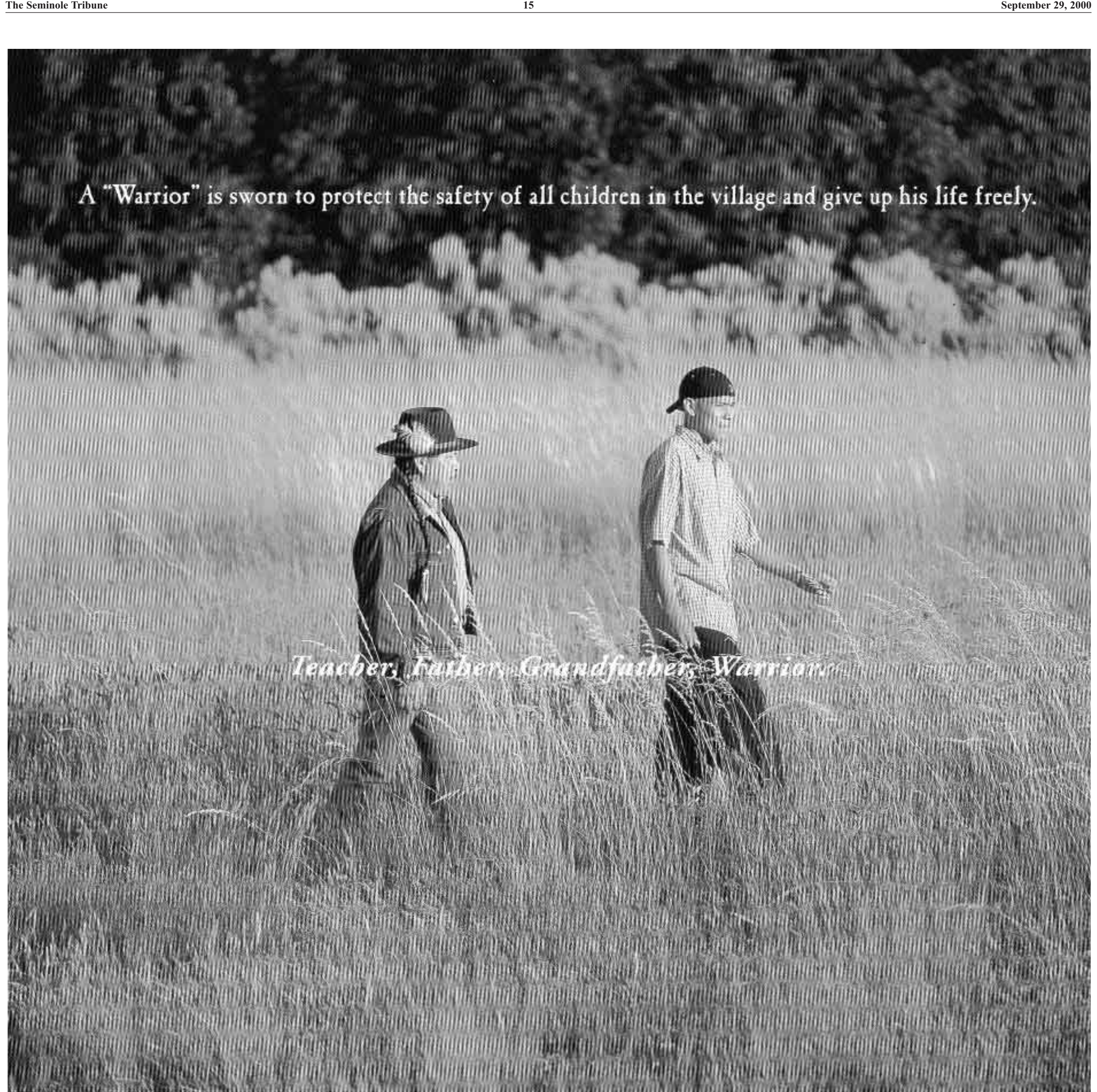
Party

Continued from page 1

“Redneck Girl,” “Reggae Cowboy,” “Let Your Love Flow,” “Old Hippie,” and “For All The Wrong Reasons,” among others. Their 23 music videos are well known to country music fans all over the world.

Bruce Williams, a fair-skinned Scandinavian from Mountain Home, Idaho and Terry Ree, a Sioux Indian

from Pierre, South Dakota, are the real names behind the legendary comic duo “The Indian and the White Guy.” For the past 26 years, they have been entertaining audiences with their tongue-in-cheek ethnic humor. Regulars on the old Hee Haw television show, Williams and Ree and have appeared on their own TNN comedy special and have toured with Randy Travis, Charlie Daniels, Garth Brooks, and the Oak Ridge Boys.



A "Warrior" is sworn to protect the safety of all children in the village and give up his life freely.

Teacher, Father, Grandfather, Warrior

Moments like eating breakfast at the kitchen table, on the way to grandma's house, or getting ready for a brand new day of school are all great opportunities you have to communicate with your children. Take time, pass down the traditions and communicate to our youth that drugs are not a part of our Native cultures.

For more information on talking to your kids about drugs, please call 1.800.788.2800.

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Tryouts

Continued from page 1

he raised the salary a little bit and added some interesting “perks” such as “life insurance.” “We were trying to have a little fun with the ad,” says Malkus, who also thought “no experience necessary” was a good line. “It’s not your everyday occupation.”

Ka-boom!!! “The shrapnel is still falling around us,” said Baxley, ducking each time a phone rang nearby.

Immediately, the Seminole Tribal phone system began to sing. Tribal Personnel Director Diana



Paul Festa never saw reptiles like this back in his native New Jersey.

Sgroi began hearing from strange applicants for a Tribal job no one told her existed. The Tribal Internet e-mails began beeping with interested “alligator applicants” from all over the country. The Tribal Communications office, the front desk, well, you get the picture. “We wondered where these people were hearing about this,” said Buster.

As in most media “snowballs,” it is impossible to trace exactly what transpired. This much is known: a reporter made funny mention of the ad in a small *Sun Sentinel* column. Then *USA Today* got in on the act. And the worldwide Associated Press wire services. The snowball shot all around the world — Australia, Germany, Japan, and England. Television, newspapers, radio broadcasts. *CNN International* and the *BBC*, *MSNBC* and *ABC Nightly News*. Even Peter Jennings wanted to know what this was all about! And everybody wanted to interview Buster. “Basically, we got ten gators and we need some people to wrestle ‘em,” says Buster, who actually means “demonstrate,” just to be politically correct. “It’s that simple. I didn’t plan on it being worldwide news.”

The Tryouts

The whole world was watching resident alligator wrestler Mike Bailey at

the Okalee Indian Village (at Stirling Rd. and 441) as he — in front of TV cameras and scribbling journalists — gave some cautionary notes on the feeding of these naturally shy, untamable swamp beasts. “By feeding them you’re creating a dangerous alligator.” He then went into a brief history of alligator wrestling and how it evolved into a tourist attraction.

Bailey concluded his introduction. “If you see any blood,” he said, “It’s real — and it’s mine. Take some pictures . . .”

He dove into the deep Okalee pool to retrieve the beast hiding below and heaved the six-foot reptile out of the water, placing it on the deck to show the gathered media (including *People Magazine*, *NBC Today* and this newspaper.)

“That’s how you catch an alligator — any questions.”

He opened the alligator’s mouth to show off what is known as the “Florida smile.” As soon as he released the alligator’s jaws, they snapped shut. “Kind of sounds like grandma’s pocket-book last time you asked her for a quarter,” he quipped.

He then demonstrated what is known in alligator pits as “bulldogging.” That’s where the wrestler straddles the reptile’s back, lifting the beast’s head up — while holding the mouth shut with both hands — and then pulling the head back and pinning the alligator’s jaws between the wrestler’s chest and chin, leaving both hands free either to tie the beast’s mouth shut or for the wrestler to spread his arms out into what is known as the “spread eagle.”

After demonstrating the “spread eagle,” Bailey gently let the beast’s head down and pointed out the location of the alligator’s brain — which he said was the size of a pea — and gave the audience a



Travis Carlson has his chance to get up close and personal with a gator.

pop quiz: “Do you know who’s got a brain smaller than that?”

Before anyone could make an educated guess — Bailey zinged them: “The applicants who want to wrestle alligators!”

The Applicants

It was time to put the applicants to the test. “Hopefully they have some kind of experience being around alligators . . . [let’s] see if they have the guts to wrestle,” said Okalee supervisor Baxley. Due to safety regulations, the alligator’s mouth would be taped shut for the applicants.

The first applicant was a well-muscled young man — who appeared to be no stranger to pain, with his tattoos and nipple rings — named Paul Festa, currently of Miami. Festa seemed to have a healthy respect for the reptile beast as he waded into the pool and approached it very cautiously. Even with the jaws taped shut, one good swipe of an alligator’s tail could break a man’s leg.

Festa would try to grab hold of the beast’s tail and attempt to drag it towards the pool’s steps, but the tail kept slipping out of his hand. Finally the 23 year-old New Jersey native managed to “grab tail and keep grip” dragging the cumbersome creature up the steps, to the deck of the pool, where Bailey and fellow ‘gator wrestler Michael Osceola were more than happy to give him advice.

Next up was a Palm Beach resident and apparent adrenaline junkie named Travis Carlson, who immediately started traipsing into the water until at least two Okalee staffers intervened, advising him to remove his boots. The pony-tailed man took off his boots and showed no fear as he marched back in and muscled the beast out of the water like a deadhead log out of Newnan’s Lake.

He “couldn’t get snipped” if that alligator’s mouth wasn’t taped shut, remarked Buster Baxley about Carlson.

The safety regulations were temporarily dropped for one applicant — an attractive 24 year-old Broward Community College student named Cecilia Bohus. In no time she had that ‘gator on the deck bulldogging him like a pro. It turned out that Bohus was more an exhibit than an actual applicant, says operations manager Alexandra Frank: “She was borrowed . . . to show that women could do it as well.” Bohus had had prior alligator wrestling experience as a volunteer at the Native Village and out at Big Cypress some time ago. Was she a little nervous? “I’ve got the shakes now,” she said afterward.

One strange, graying, bearded man showed up dressed like a 1940’s gangster — complete with pinstripe suit, hat and wingtips — wanting to apply for the ‘gator wrestling position — only to be politely turned away by Frank.

Perhaps the applicant from this set most likely to be employed was a 38-year-old wildlife photographer/plumber



Cecilia Bohus, an experienced handler, shows the proper form.

named “Alligator” Mike Dempsey of Naples Fla. Dempsey, who readily concedes that he watched too much *Mutual of Omaha’s Wild Kingdom* when he was little, impressed Alexandra Frank not only with his handling of the alligator, but also with his presentation skills.

“He exhibits the skills we really need,” said Frank. Frank decided to have Dempsey back at the 1 p.m. audition — without the tape.

One applicant, Greg Long, 43 -- who had previous experience -- was finally hired as Okalee Village’s new alligator wrestler.

The Alligator wrestling exhibition/audition at Okalee Indian Village was aired on the *Daily Show* with Jon Stewart on the *Comedy Central* cable channel the very next day. *People Magazine* should run a full story — complete with photos in the next issue or following week and *NBC Today* will air a feature on Oct. 17, after the Olympics. Oh, and the *Sports Illustrated* with the red Bobby Knight cover mentions Okalee, also. And the *New York Times*. And *Real Video* wants to look at the Chief Billie finger film.

Then there’s the *Survivor Show*. They’re suddenly interested in gator wrestlers. Think of it: ten men and women and a giant gator marooned on an island. The gator guards the refrigerator . . .

At press time, no decision on the new gator handlers had been made.

“We need to get moving on it, though,” said Buster Baxley. “We’re liable to have some good crowds this season after all this publicity.”

Okalee Snake-Man Snake Bit

By Colin Kenny

HOLLYWOOD — Snakes are in Troy Gillett’s blood.

Literally. Anti-venum made from poisonous copper-head skeet was injected into Gillett’s bloodstream by emergency room paramedics, Sept. 20, shortly after the 24-year-old professional snake handler was bitten on the pinky by a baby Southern copperhead during a Seminole Okalee Village show. The potent cocktail saved Gillett’s life.

But it hasn’t scared him off snakes. In fact, copperheads are his favorites. “Beautiful snakes,” he said from his Hollywood Regional Memorial Hospital bed, his pinky black and blue and his entire left hand swollen like a baseball glove.

It was a little past high noon at the Seminole Okalee Village when Gillett was showing off a couple of venomous vipers (including a juvenile Western Diamondback rattlesnake as well as the baby Copperhead) to a group of tourists. Because of the docile nature of this particular snake, Gillett began handling the baby serpent without a snake-hook.

While placing the 18-inch baby back in its box, “I got popped!” recounts Gillett.

Indeed, the cold-blooded reptile had sunk its fangs into Gillett’s left little finger and just started gnawing. Immediately Gillett hoped “Maybe it’s just a ‘drive by,’” a snake-handler’s term for a snake that will “bite down but he won’t pump [venom] into you,” says Gillett.

But this was no drive-by. A certain pain — “a little burning, then numbness” — let Gillett know that “this guy juiced me!”

That baby Southern Copperhead got him good. Fellow employee and gator wrestler Mike

Bailey immediately applied First Aid. But within minutes, Gillett felt a surge of pain creeping through his hand and up his arm that has been described by Bailey (who also has been snake-bit a few times) as being “stung by a 25 pound wasp.”

Bailey picked up the phone and contacted Al Cruz of the Miami-Dade Anti-Venom Unit. Cruz arranged to meet Gillett at the hospital. Bailey then had gator wrestler Michael Osceola drive Gillett to the hospital.

“Mike was callin’ all over the city trying to get anti-venom . . .” Gillett said of Bailey. “Yeah, Mike’s my hero. He had some quick thinking. He told me to be calm — and he was panicking like crazy!” laughs Gillett.

It was at the Emergency Room that Gillett met up with local TV news stations and was given 10 vials of anti-venom by paramedic Cruz. Gillett was then transferred from the ER to the Intensive Care Unit, for two days of observation (and where he could watch himself on the 6 p.m. news).

It wasn’t the first time that Gillett has been snake-bit. He received anti-venom after being bit by a Prairie rattlesnake in Colorado years ago. That fact — plus a reaction that Gillett had to his present anti-venom treatment was cause for concern to at least one Hollywood Memorial nurse. After being treated two times, Gillett may not respond to anti-venom if he ever gets snake-bit in the future, she said.

The nurse advised Gillett to seriously consider changing his job. Troy promised to use the snake hook from now on.

This marks the fourth serious snake bite on Tribal property in the last six months.

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