



Tribal Athletes Compete in 2011 Indigenous Games
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The

Seminole

Voice of the Unconquered

Tribune

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Volume XXXII • Number 8 August 26, 2011

Jewel Buck Crowned Miss Florida Seminole Princess
Jaryaca Baker takes Junior Miss Florida Seminole title



Brighton Tribal Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr., center, is all smiles with the newly crowned Junior Miss Florida Seminole Princess Jaryaca Baker, left, and Miss Florida Seminole Princess Jewel Buck, right. Both hail from the Brighton Reservation.

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — In its 54th year, some of the Tribe’s most ambitious young ladies took their shot at the coveted crown of Miss Florida Seminole Princess.

Alicia Nunez, Amber Craig, Jewel Buck, Krystle Young and Tianna Garcia vied for the title while 12 others competed for Junior Miss in a packed Tribal Headquarters Auditorium. This year’s theme was “Empowering Native American Women.”

Buck and Jaryaca Baker took their place among the elite July 30 as the new 2011-12 royalty with friends and family on hand for support. Both reside on the Brighton Reservation along with 12 of the other pageant participants.

“People believed in me and told me I could do it. It all motivated me to go for it,” said Buck, the new reigning Miss Florida Seminole. The first-time participant replaced the outgoing Cassandra Jimmie.

“I told her coming in to just be herself. If she lost or won just do her best,” said proud mother Emma Urbina of the former Miss Brighton Seminole Princess (2006-07) and Eastern Indian Rodeo Association Queen (2011). “I have already been on a few rides with her; this one is just a little further now.”

“Her late grandmother Rosie Billie would be so proud,” she continued.

Baker took home the Junior Miss title, finally realizing her dream after four tries. She supplanted Lorelei Tommie.

“I was just myself; I tried so hard this year. My attitude was a lot better, and my mindset was very positive,” Baker said. “I knew I had to try even harder because there was so much competition.”

Former Junior Miss Tommie said she enjoyed many great moments throughout her reign and plans to compete in the 2013 pageant for the Miss Seminole title.

“I have been really proud to represent our Tribe. Hopefully I educated those I met and gave them some insight into what we (the Seminole Tribe) are all about. It has been a great experience,” Tommie said.

The contestants were judged in the areas of traditional wear, talent and impromptu questions. Talent topics included: doll making, storytelling, beadwork, chickee building demonstrations and singing to name a few. Other individual winners were also declared for the Miss and Junior Miss in the categories of talent, S.A. contest

▯ Please see PRINCESS on page 6A

President Sanchez Attends Native American Caucus Reception in D.C.



From left, Congressman Dale E. Kildee (D-Michigan), Seminole President Tony Sanchez Jr. and National Indian Gaming Association Chairman Ernie Stevens Jr. at the July 26 Congressional Native American Caucus reception on the National Mall.

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER
Special Projects Reporter

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Congressional Native American Caucus of U.S. Representatives and U.S. Senators were feted at an early evening reception sponsored by the Seminole Tribe of Florida and the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, July 26, at the National Museum of the American Indian on the National Mall. Formed in 2009, the Congressional Native American Caucus is a bipartisan Congressional service organization concerned with issues of concern to American Indians.

The reception honored retiring Caucus Chairman Congressman Dale E. Kildee (D-Michigan) and Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc. President Tony Sanchez Jr., who accepted a position as Vice Chairman of the Business Council of the National Indian Gaming Association. Sanchez addressed the crowd of 200, which included his wife Paula and family, Executive Assistant Ethel Huggins and Naples Seminoles O.B. Osceola Jr. and Tina Osceola.

▯ Please see more photos on page 2A

Chokoloskee: Road Rage In The Last Frontier

In the early morning hours of April 14, 2011, bulldozers hired by a group of Highlands County land speculators began tearing up historic Mamie Street, a principal road on the tiny island of Chokoloskee, part of the Ten Thousand Islands chain at the extreme tip of Southwest Florida.

When the dust had cleared, the road was a pile of impassable rubble and a tall fence had been erected, blocking access to the Smallwood Store and Trading Post Museum where the now-deceased Mamie Street once met the water’s edge at Chokoloskee Bay.

A precious icon throughout the area known as Florida’s Last Frontier, the Smallwood Store occupies a special place in the histories of the Seminole Indians, the Gulf fishermen, the Everglades and Collier County and has been a charter member of the national Register of Historic Places for 40 years. Citizens

are fighting back, public officials are shifting blame, there is a court hearing, and, as absurd as it sounds, the future is uncertain. The particular circumstances leading up to this surprise ambush, not far from the spot where outlaw Edgar Watson was gunned down by citizen vigilantes in 1910, give disturbing insight into how the beautiful scenes and places across all of old Florida have been destroyed.

Greed, lies, mistakes, criminal acts, manipulations of fact, confusion, money, politics and hardball players – all the elements that historically have combined in the over-development of the former “Land of Flowers” are displayed in **Section D**, in Part 1 of a special *Seminole Tribune* Series by writer Peter B. Gallagher: “Chokoloskee: Road Rage In The Last Frontier.” Also see Chairman James E. Bille’s Editorial “Road Block: Absurd” on page 10A.



A tall fence, covered with green tarp, has blocked visitors to the historic Smallwood Store and Trading Post Museum since April 14.



“Unconquered Spirits” depicts the eight Seminole Clans in a 3-D abstract artwork by artist Tim Parker.

"Unconquered Spirits" Sculpture Unveiled at Seminole Casino Immokalee

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Writer

IMMOKALEE — Seminole Casino Immokalee unveiled a one-of-a-kind sculpture honoring the Seminole Tribe of Florida’s eight clans on Aug. 5.

The 3-D, semi-abstract painting depicts the Wind, Bird, Panther, Otter, Bear, Snake, Deer and Big Town Clans. Acting as a room divider, it suspends from the ceiling of the new Paradise Room in the high-limit area of the casino and has a two-sided surface.

“Looking to enhance a blank wall space in the Casino’s Ee-To-Leet-Ke Grill, we began a search for an artist capable of depicting Seminole culture and heritage from a fresh and appealing point of view,” President Tony Sanchez Jr. said. “We discovered Tim Parker just a few miles away in Naples. His classical paintings and contemporary abstract artwork are featured at several prominent galleries and luxury residences throughout the area.”

Parker employs an abstract quality to his paintings that permit individuals to view many different things and multiple dimensions throughout his work. His association with the casino was initiated when he designed and created a historical Seminole moments canvas collage, which served as a focal point for the grill. He submitted an innovative design for the current undertaking and the casino commissioned him.

“It has been an honor to create an artwork depicting the unconquered spirit of the Seminole clans that continue to thrive in the modern world,” Parker said. “As an artist, a unique installation piece is a dream job and for me, the larger the better. I am quite pleased with the final results and want to thank the folks at the casino for giving me creative freedom and opportunity.”

“Unconquered Spirits” has 16 different sections

▯ Please see SCULPTURE on page 2A

[More photos from Caucus reception on page 1A](#)



Photo courtesy of John Harrington
President Sanchez with National Indian Gaming Association Chairman Ernie Stevens Jr. and Congressman Dale Kildee (D-Michigan).



Photo courtesy of John Harrington
President Sanchez with Congressman Dale Kildee (D-Michigan).



Photo courtesy of John Harrington
President Tony Sanchez Jr. and United States Senator Charles E. Schumer (D-New York).



Photo courtesy of John Harrington
President Sanchez with Honorable Ernie Stevens Jr., Chairman of the National Indian Gaming Association.

SCULPTURE

From page 1A

comprising more than 30 feet wide when hung together. It contains a multilevel surface viewable from the front or back and blends bold, vibrant colors that create a mystical atmosphere.

The unveiling ceremony of "Unconquered Spirits" was open to the public with President Sanchez, Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank and Immokalee Board Liaison Dorothy Scheffler as guest speakers. A private reception followed with Tribal members receiving signed copies of the original artwork and sampling classic favorites of the Ee-To-Leet-Ke Grill's menu.

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Judy Weeks
President Tony Sanchez Jr., Immokalee Board Liaison Dorothy Scheffler and Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank were guest speakers at the "Unconquered Spirits" sculpture unveiling.



Judy Weeks
Seminole Casino Immokalee Manager Tony Alves and President Tony Sanchez Jr. officiated at the unveiling of the "Unconquered Spirits."

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

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

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for approving the construction and lease of homes on trust property for Alexander Cypress and Leon Wilcox. The Alexander Cypress and Leon Wilcox home sites are located off of String Fern Lane and NW Canal Road respectively within the Seminole Tribe of Florida's Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation (BCSIR), in Hendry County, Florida (Township 48 South, Range 33 East, Section 01). The project involves the construction of two single family homes on 1.5 acre leased lots and a 1.35 acre access route for Leon Wilcox. The BIA has approved and adopted the Environmental Assessment (EA), dated July 2011, prepared by the Seminole Tribe of Florida Environmental Resource Management Department and entitled "Alexander Cypress and Leon Wilcox Proposed Leases, 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, 6363 Tuth Street, Suite 3008, Hollywood, 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.

Date: 7/18/11

Kurt G. Chandler
Superintendent, Seminole Agency
Bureau of Indian Affairs

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

- Issue: September 30, 2011
Deadline: September 14, 2011
Issue: October 28, 2011
Deadline: October 12, 2011
Issue: November 23, 2011
Deadline: November 9, 2011
- Please note: Submissions that come past deadline will be posted in the following issue.

Advertising: Advertising rates along with sizes and other information may be downloaded from the internet at: www.seminoletribe.com/tribune Postmaster: Please send address changes to The Seminole Tribune 3560 N. State Road 7 Hollywood, FL 33021

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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 Senior Editor Brett Daly at 954-985-5702, ext. 10725 Or by fax at 954-965-2937
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Community

A

Tina Osceola's "Geronimo" Panel Discussion Among Highlights at 27th Annual NAJA Conference

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

FORT LAUDERDALE BEACH — For the second time in its 27 years of operation, the Native American Journalists Association (NAJA) hosted its annual conference in South Florida to meet with local media outlets to discuss a variety of ways to become more effective in the reporting of Native news.

Catching the attention of Native and non-Native journalists at the conference, held from July 14-16 at the Westin Beach Resort & Spa in Fort Lauderdale Beach, was an hour-long plenary session (July 14 –NAJA Conference's first full day) that focused on the misconception of equating Seminoles to terrorists.

Presented by Seminole Tribal citizen Tina Osceola and Miami Herald investigative reporter Carol Rosenberg, the two figures shed a considerable amount of light on what the issue entailed.

On March 24, the Tribe wrote a letter to President Barack Obama that chronicled its displeasure with comments made by the federal government, who, according to multiple reports, referred to the recent capture and death of Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden as "Operation Geronimo." Geronimo, an Apache leader, is considered a hero to Indian Country.

The comment has offended the Seminole Tribe and other Tribes throughout Indian Country so much so that on behalf of all Native Americans, former Seminole Tribe Chairman Mitchell Cypress asked for President Obama's public apology to Native America for what had transpired.

During the panel discussion, Osceola opened up in great detail on how she felt about the issue at hand.

"When you're talking about the issue of terrorism and how Native people in our Native Nations have been equated to terrorists over the last few months, it's very concerning," she said. "And it's one of the issues that have not been addressed enough or adequately."

Osceola also said that those comments from the federal government "immediately sent up red flags up across the entire Tribal community."

"Tribes are not seen as nations, and we are not taken seriously [by the federal government]," Osceola said. "Under this president, the [former] Chairman and the [Tribal] Council all agreed that we had better hopes. We expected full delivery on what he promised Native Americans on his platform when he ran for office."

On a recent trip to Washington, D.C., Osceola, after checking in to her hotel room, turned on the television to watch the news. Shortly after, Osceola was mortified at what she viewed in regards to bin Laden's ultimate defeat by the U.S. Military.

"Right out of the president's mouth, I heard it for myself when he said the code name for bin Laden was Geronimo," Osceola said. "I couldn't believe it. A friend of mine was checking in with me at the same time and we just looked at each other. We're like, 'Did you just hear that? That couldn't have just happened.' That just sent a completely different message to the rest of the Native nations in this country."

□ Please see NAJA on page 4A

Tribal Council Holds Special Meeting in Brighton

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Tribal Council held a special meeting July 27 at the Brighton Veterans' Building and passed 32 resolutions, including the United States Environmental Protection Agency grant application for funding the fiscal year 2012 Seminole Tribe of Florida Wetlands Program for all Seminole Indian Reservations. But before the meeting began former Pemayetv Emahakv Principal Russell Brown took to the podium to thank Council for all its support during his time at the school.

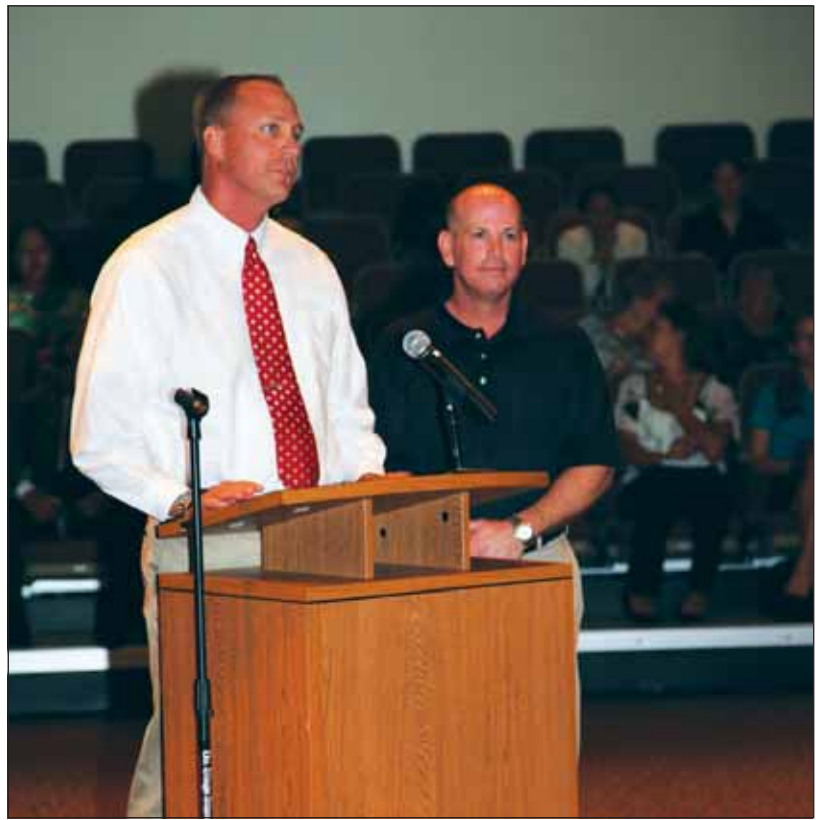
"I can't leave without thanking the Council," Brown said. Brown is leaving the Charter School to become the new provost of Okeechobee's Indian River State College. "I hope to be a bridge to that next level," Brown told Council in regards to Tribal students and higher education.

Brown then introduced Brian Greseth as the new principal for Pemayetv Emahakv.

"I know what one has done and what one is capable of," said Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr. "The Charter School isn't going to miss a beat."

The Council meeting then continued with the regular agenda. The resolutions passed included:

- Resolution 15: Annual renewal of Tribal alcoholic beverage license for certain tenants located within the Seminole Paradise retail/entertainment complex – Hollywood Seminole Indian Reservation
- Resolution 22: Memorandum of understanding between the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Broward County, Florida, the City of Coconut Creek, Florida and the Seminole Tribe of Florida concerning lead agency and cooperating agency coordination for an environmental impact statement on the proposed fee-to-trust transfer of land from the Seminole Tribe of Florida to the Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Resolution 25: Seminole Tribe of Florida photo permission letter granting use of the image of the Seminole Tribe of Florida Tribal seal to the National Museum of the American Indian
- Resolution 33: Issuance of an annual Tribal alcoholic beverage license for the retail sale of beer only at the Seminole Tribe of Florida Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena – Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation; Ratification



Rachel Buxton

Brian Greseth, left, is introduced to Council as the new principal for Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School as Russell Brown, right, says farewell and thank you at the Tribal Council special meeting July 27 at the Brighton Veterans' Building.

Tribal Board of Directors Convenes

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — The Tribal Board of Directors met on the Hollywood Reservation for a special meeting at the Headquarters Auditorium passing six resolutions on the Aug. 11 agenda including:

- Resolution 5: Special Board meetings conducted by telephonic or other electronic means; rescinding, in part, resolution No. BD-18-11 and BD-10-97
- Resolution 6: Pharmacy Benefit Management agreement [Employee Plan] among the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc, and Express Scripts, Inc.
- Resolution 7: Approval of Stone Beads Smoke Shop Customer Discount Card Program
- Resolution 8: Elimination of assistance from the Board members
- Reservation allocations
- Resolution 9: Fiscal year 2011 Budget modification
- Resolution 10: Approval of account documents with JP Morgan Chase Bank, N.A.; limited waiver of sovereign immunity

A Variety of Seminole Art and Music Forms Come to Life at Clewiston Museum

Tribal citizens touch emotions and hearts of Florida Humanities Council's audience through their work

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

CLEWISTON — The Tribe's illustrious culture was on full display at the Clewiston Museum on July 25, with several Tribal citizens sharing their history via the use of their artistic works.

A large group of special guests from the Florida Humanities Council looked forward to hearing a sequence of Seminole storytelling sessions that would set the event in motion and would be followed by a poetry presentation and a poignant Seminole stomp dancing segment.

The evening kicked off with some words from Hollywood Tribal citizen Ollie Wareham, who started his set by playing a flute tune entitled "Tiger Song." Wareham, who gave a storytelling account of the Tribal tune, dedicated the opening song to the late Winifred Tiger, who served as the Tribe's education director many years ago.

"A lot of our Tribal leaders owe their education to her," Wareham said of the late Native Cherokee. "She was my mentor. I would play some songs for her, and if she nodded her head, that meant she liked it. If she shook her head, that meant she wanted me to play something else."

Wareham's play provided a sense of peace and tranquility for the guests, who were captivated and fascinated by his show of talents. The Hollywood Tribal citizen, who has participated in storytelling sessions and has played the flute for six and 11 years respectively, continued his segment of the evening event with a story entitled "The Alligator vs. The Rabbit." In this storytelling account, Wareham talked about how the Seminole culture sees the rabbit as the villain and how Seminole youngsters learn about the function of this animal.

"We try to teach our kids lessons through our stories," said Wareham, who credits the late Betty Mae Jumper for the story creation. "The rabbit is always up to no good. With this story, we teach our kids what not to do and how not to be in life."

Through the storytelling session of the alligator and rabbit, Wareham offered a piece of advice for all youth to follow.

"Be very secure with your private information," Wareham said. "It can be used against you if you're not careful."

Wareham also talked about the flute he brought with him, which he described as one made of oak. Interestingly, Wareham's next tune was entitled "Council Oak," the Hollywood location where the Tribal Council and Board of Directors celebrated their inauguration in June.

The Hollywood storyteller's final session focused on a group of animals, such as the rabbit, lion and turkey to name a few. Another word

□ Please see STORYTELLING on page 4A



Naji Tobias

Immokalee Tribal citizen Victor Billie, left, leads a set of songs at the Clewiston Museum's special Seminole arts and music presentation, with Big Cypress Tribal citizens Cherelee Hall, Avahny Jim and Lenny Jim performing the stomp dances during the July 25 event.

18th Annual Wellness Conference Portrays Positive Message

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Writer

MARCO ISLAND — When the Seminole Wellness Conference convened from July 17-22 at the Marco Island Hilton, it added an 18th year to its history and delivered a positive message to its participants.

"Until 1993 a small group of Seminoles were traveling to Native American recovery conferences out of the state and bringing home the message on an individual basis," said Seminole Family Service Director Helene Buster. "We realized that it was important to share the enormous benefits with a greater number of our people and began picking up cards from motivational speakers. We asked and were granted support by our Tribal Council."

"The Wellness Conference started because we realized that we

were not taking care of ourselves and needed to be educated," Buster continued. "Wellness takes in a broad expanse of the human experience. Choices, self-control, relationships and respect affect your personal, family, work, social and financial life. We are all survivors in one way or another."

Calling attention to the basic focus of the conference, Buster said that loss, grief, abuse and addiction take on many forms and one must develop strength to cope with the traumatic events that create life's challenges and prevent them from adversely shaping the future. Addiction isn't just about drugs and alcohol, she said. Allowing something to control your actions or thoughts, such as diabetes, obesity, smoking, gambling, physical, emotional or financial abuse, all represent forms of addiction.

The Conference officially got under way on July 18 with an extraordinary agenda. The term wellness covers a broad spectrum of topics such as physical, mental and spiritual wholeness, so Buster coordinated representatives from Recovery, Health, Fitness, Culture, Education, Seminole Police, Family Services and Recreation, as well as Tribal citizen volunteers, to implement a host of activities and presentations to assist, support and inspire personal wellness.

Many of the Tribal Leaders participated in the opening commentaries, gave personal testimony and offered encouragement.

"We are all one big family and need to take care of each other," said President Tony Sanchez Jr. "That is why we are here. Be supportive and include those around you in fellowship. Rehabilitation is something that you have to work hard to achieve. You only get back what you put into it."

The guest speakers focused upon health issues, child welfare, substance abuse, financial stability, community and family involvement, mentoring, recovery, grief, gambling, spiritual wellness, self-help groups, warning signs and relapse.

The motivational speakers came from across the nation and had been carefully selected based on their expertise on specific topics and past presentations. For many this was not their first appearance at the Seminole Wellness Conference, but their material was fresh and innovative. This year's line up included Dr. Bartlett, Doug Cox, John Bird, Rick Benson,

□ Please see WELLNESS on page 9A



Judy Weeks

From left, Lydia Cypress, Director Helene Buster, motivational speaker Denise Alley and Teresa Jumper talk about living a well life with a native heart at the 18th annual Wellness Conference July 17-22 at the Marco Island Hilton.

◆ STORYTELLING

From page 3A

of advice came out of this story, courtesy of Wareham.

"Listen to your inner voice and always be true to yourself," he said as his storytelling segment came to its conclusion.

Next up was Tribal painter/artist and Hollywood Tribal citizen Elgin Jumper, who showed the special guests a collection of artwork that he crafted. Jumper's art, on display, featured the likes of a special mixed media Seminole collage and an oil painting of his father, Big Cypress Tribal elder Alan Jumper.

The art presentation was followed by perhaps the night's top highlight – a special Seminole poetry/stomp dancing sequence led by Immokalee Tribal citizen Victor Billie, which included words of poetry from Elgin Jumper.

While Billie led the stomp dancers in song for the duration of the special function, Jumper recited seven poems from an acclaimed chat book he created in 2006, which was in conjunction with the University of Arkansas, according to the Tribal poet and painter.

Jumper's recited poems, combined with the Seminole stomp dancing song sequences, included the following: "Native Poem," "The Green Corn Dance," "Nightfall," "For the Everglades," "The Unconquered – 1842," "The Better Road of Dreams – 1978" and "The Sorrow of Fort Marion."

After the stomp painting/poetry session concluded, a recap of all the action followed.

"Growing up, we learned that our teachers were breathing inside of us," Billie said. "We would never forget what our elders told us. They became a part of us on the inside."

Peter John Arroyo, the Florida Humanities Council's alumni coordinator, said he was thoroughly moved by what had transpired at the museum function.

"We came here to feel a reconnection with things that seem to be lost in this modern world," Arroyo said of the Seminole special presentation. "As I listened to the flute, the poems and to the signing, I truly felt that. It transported me to another place in time. This was some really powerful stuff here. It took me to another level; it gave me goose bumps."

Arroyo said that those from the outside world should



Naji Tobias

Hollywood Tribal citizen Elgin Jumper shows off an acrylic painting of Tribal pioneer/warrior Osceola featured with his black sash.

appreciate the Seminoles' willingness to share their life stories through song, art and poetry.

"It's a very emotional thing for them to open up to us," Arroyo said. "With me as a minority, as a Hispanic, I really felt for them. I was able to share their pain and their glory."

This special event was presented to the Florida Humanities Council as part of its three-day summer trip to South Florida. The special guests were educators and administrators from schools across Florida.

Jumper, who spearheaded the special event, said it was the first time the Tribe combined all of the Seminole arts and music elements into a single presentation at a public facility, as far as he was concerned. Overall, he said he was pleased by the warm reception he and his fellow Tribal citizens received from the City of Clewiston, the Florida Humanities Council and the Clewiston Museum.

"This is something new to us," Jumper said. "We thought about doing it for a long time, and I'm glad we got it done. There needs to be more of this. We need to continue to keep our culture alive and always strive to be in it with all our hearts."

◆ NAJA

From page 3A

Osceola referred to that surreal instance as a "strike two" moment for the federal government. Two letters from the Seminole Tribe – one on March 24 and another in May – were drafted to President Obama in hopes of gaining the federal government's acknowledgement of apology to Indian Country.

"What's going to be strike three before anyone takes us serious?" Osceola said. "This was the second time the [former] Chairman went directly to the White House. We have folks in Washington that were supposed to be interfacing between the United States of America, the Executive Office of the President and the Tribal leaders. The president of the United States is ignoring the Chairman of the Seminole Tribe of Florida. Something has to change."

Osceola continued with her stance and beliefs on the federal government's disposition toward Indian Country, stating that Natives are seen as a "problem" and a "threat" to the U.S. government.

"If we have to stand here as Native people in 2011 and put up with the same derogatory, insulting and genocidal policies of the 1800s, then what can we tell our children that they have to look forward to?" Osceola asked aloud.

"As of right now, the president has not corrected the record," Osceola continued. "A letter and memo from the Department of Defense? That is not speaking on behalf of this country. That is not the president of the United States. We have heard no response from the president."

Osceola said it was necessary for the Tribe to take a "hard-line stance" on this

issue. The Tribal citizen concluded her segment of the panel discussion by stating that the thought of Natives being seen as terrorists in 2011 is a "travesty."

"This Tribe isn't going to tolerate it," Osceola said. "I don't know of any Tribe that would be willing to let that record stand...Other people are drawing lines. We didn't create states. We didn't put borders between the United States and Canada. We didn't put borders between the United States and Mexico. We didn't do that. We also didn't create the reservations. All we were responsible for was dreaming that dream and that was to remain Native."

Rosenberg, Osceola's co-panelist, highlighted this issue in greater detail months ago and reiterated the Tribal citizen's view of the controversy during the NAJA Conference's panel discussion of the matter.

After the discussion, Osceola touched on the reason why it's important for President Obama to issue a public apology to Native America about the federal government's controversial comment.

"The President of the United States represents the highest level of government in this country," Osceola said. "If the highest level of government says it's unacceptable and apologizes on behalf of the country and the administration, then that would mean something to Indian Country and its Tribal leaders. We can say we're finally being taken seriously and we're talking about issues that affect us. But without the apology, we're still a problem. And that's for all of our issues."

As of press time, no public apology has been issued by President Obama and the federal government. It remains to be seen whether the Tribe's official request will be met with its total satisfaction.

Polynesian Dancers and Tribal Citizens Get Their Groove On At Big Cypress Luau



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal youngster Harmony Cypress shows off her skills as she performs a Hula-Hoop dance.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal citizen Cicero Osceola, center, will be remembered by the Big Cypress Luau's Polynesian dancers as the "Big Kahuna." The event was held on July 26 inside the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium in Big Cypress.



Naji Tobias

The Polynesian dancers are on the stage set with Big Cypress Tribal senior Juanita Billie and Big Cypress Tribal youngster Ko'Oshee Henry at the conclusion of the July 26 event.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal citizen Brian Billie dances his way to the top as he grabs first place in the men's clothing contest.

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Judy Weeks

Pastor Wonder Johns coordinated the services at the Seminole Tribe of Florida Prayer Gathering in Immokalee on July 23.



Judy Weeks

Tribal elder Betty Osceola has participated in prayer gatherings for her family, friends, community and leaders since she was a little girl.



Judy Weeks

Immokalee First Seminole Baptist Church Pastor Josh LeadingFox said, "You honor our church family by allowing us to host this prayer gathering."

Immokalee Hosts Prayer Day to Ask for God's Guidance

JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Writer

IMMOKALEE — The official logo of the Seminole Tribe of Florida is surrounded by the words "In God We Trust." These words reflect the beliefs of the forefathers in a higher power than themselves. In adopting a constitution, they prayed for the guidance of their Creator.

Years have passed and many changes have taken place within the structure and economy of the Tribe, but these few simple words still ring true. As a democracy, the Tribal leaders are destined to change from time to time and the burdens they carry take on new shapes; however, their basic goals remain the same.

The leaders must strive to protect and preserve the economic and physical well-being of their fellow Tribal members to guarantee the survival of their culture and to ensure their traditions are passed on to future generations. As citizens of the United States, it is important to pray for the wisdom, compassion and understanding of the president and congressional leadership that they might be guided along the right path to protect our freedom and country.

Throughout the coming year, each reservation will host a Prayer Day asking God's guidance for their leaders, communities and all Tribal citizens. The Immokalee First Seminole Baptist Church opened their doors for their first prayer day on July 23.

Following in the footsteps of their ancestors, religious leaders from all of the Tribal communities participated in the presentations, which Wonder Johns, Pastor Josh LeadingFox and Van Samuels coordinated. Nine pastors, missionaries, laymen and deacons took part in the service, offered prayers for God's help, gave thanks for his many blessings and led the congregation in song.

The church was filled with people who had traveled from Brighton, Hollywood, Trail, Big Cypress, Tampa and Immokalee. For the elders, it was like the gatherings in the old days when they would attend all-day "sings" in

the old churches, under the chickees and arbors, for the glory of their God and for the sharing of his blessings.

"We came here and prayed when this was just a small piece of ground with a few chickees," Wonder Johns said. "Our prayers were heard and our leaders' hearts were touched. They have given us this church, which shows that with God all things are possible."

Leading the congregation in the singing of traditional Mikasuki and Creek hymns, Matt Tiger said, "The spirit of our elders who have gone on before us fills the room as we sing the old hymns. They taught us to believe in God and worship him with these songs in our hearts."

Taking turns, each religious leader quoted passages of inspiration from the Bible, gave encouragement, shared words of wisdom, offered prayers and counted the many daily blessings that people should not take for granted.

"This brings back memories of my childhood," said President Tony Sanchez Jr. "I ask that you keep us in your prayers as we meet people and make decisions that affect others. I am humbled by your support and count my blessings. Without the Lord, I would not be where I am today. We must remember that divided we fall, but if we stay together God will give us strength."

Coming forward Jack Smith joined the Tribal leaders and asked the congregation to offer prayers for his son who was very ill in the hospital in Hollywood. The congregation prayed for strength to carry his family through their time of trouble. Then one by one they filed past the leaders and offered prayers on their behalf.

"We should be thankful that we are free to pray here today and remember the sacrifices that others are making to protect our freedom and religious rights," Big Cypress Council Rep. Mondo Tiger said. "I say 'sho-na-bish' to those of you who pray each day for me and my staff. You are precious to me and I ask God to make me worthy of your trust."

Following the prayer meeting, the congregation moved to the Fellowship Hall where a generous buffet had been prepared by the ladies of the church following the Seminole traditions of their ancestors.

Back to School Safety Tips: Bus, School Zone Safety; Social Media; And How Kids Can Handle Strangers

BY THE OFFICE OF YOUR POLICE CHIEF,
William R. Latchford

The new school year has arrived, following a summer full of fun activities our children and their families enjoyed. As we prepare for a successful year, here are some suggestions to help keep children safe.

BUS & SCHOOL ZONE SAFETY

Transporting kids to and from school in a safe manner is a priority to all of us. Therefore, we need to keep in mind and discuss the following safety tips:

- Be on the lookout for children darting out between cars as we transport kids to school.
- Follow the posted speed limit signs in each school zone.
- Be sure children are familiar with the procedures for getting on and off the school bus.
- Parents keep in mind, as buses travel with the children, traffic does move slower and patience is vital to allow everyone to get to school and home safely.
- Familiarize yourself with school drop off and pick up rules. Follow the designated patterns.
- Always cross the street in the designated crosswalks.

- Refrain from distractions in a school zone including the use of cell phones.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a great way to engage our kids within school as well as within families.

- It is a brave new world of communication. However, we must remind kids what they write and what they say is not private and not to publicize the things they don't want public.
- Spend time with your teenager going through the privacy settings and discussing how to set each one.
- Depending on the age of your teenager, you may want to restrict how your teen can be found. A 14 year old should be a bit tougher to find than an 18 year old.
- Most people utilize social media, and it is a great avenue for kids to intertwine with parents, keeping in mind safety first.

STRANGERS, BOTH GOOD & BAD?

- Teach your child the power of "no." Predators seek out kids who may be reluctant to oppose an adult.
- Good communication between parents and children is vital. Teach your child to tell you immediately if approached by a stranger.
- Be careful with stranger danger conversations. Just knowing who is

a stranger can be confusing to kids. They may picture someone who looks scary, but sometimes danger can come from someone they already know. Teach them the difference.

- For example, teach them to ask for help from a woman with a child, uniformed officer or someone wearing a nametag. There are good strangers such as teachers, security guards and store clerks.
- Tell your child who will be picking them up every day. If someone different arrives they will hopefully alert someone and curtail a potential dangerous situation from occurring.
- Children should not get into a vehicle of someone they do not know. If someone tries to pull a child in, teach them to kick hard and scream loud for help.
- Ongoing dialogue with a child about strangers builds confidence and strength.
- If approached by a stranger, run to another adult or home for help. Most adults will assist a child.
- Teach the buddy system to children. Walk in pairs or more.
- If being followed by a vehicle, try and obtain the tag number and report the incident to an adult.


Seminole Police Department wishes a spectacular school year for our children and families.

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Tribal Members Attend Zo's Summer Groove

BY GERRY MAYEN
SMP Event Coordinator, Producer

Last month, the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino presented Zo's Summer Groove, a three-day fundraising event benefiting Alonzo Mourning Charities (AMC), to celebrate 15 years of the nonprofit organization's service to the community. Several Tribal members attended the charitable anniversary extravaganza that took place from July 22-24 and included a golf tournament, comedy show and benefit dinner.

Alonzo Mourning Charities, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, aims to create platforms for youth to succeed. Since 1997, AMC has raised more than \$7 million for various programs that aid in the development of children and their families, according to the organization's website. In addition to supporting other nonprofit organizations, Mourning has focused his attention on the development of education and enrichment programming for at-risk students.

This year's Summer Groove event included Zo's Summer Groove Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Golf Classic presented by Hublot Watches and Coca-Cola; Zo's Summer Groove Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Comedy Show presented by Alters Law Firm; and Zo's Summer Groove Benefit Dinner and Gala with a Night of Entertainment Featuring Grammy Award Winner Alicia Keys that took place at Hard Rock Live.

For more information about Alonzo Mourning Charities, visit <http://www.amcharities.org>.



Claribel Linderman

Former Miami Heat player Alonzo Mourning, right, and wife, Tracy, support his three-day fundraising extravaganza at Zo's Summer Groove Benefit Dinner and Gala at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino on July 23.



Claribel Linderman

President Tony Sanchez Jr., Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank, Hollywood Board Rep. Christopher Osceola and Sandy Arrendondo are joined by friends at the Zo's Summer Groove Benefit Dinner and Gala.

54TH ANNUAL 2011 Miss Florida



Seminole Princess Pageant

The Legend of Eecho, Huhl-pah-te and Amber Craig

It was 11 p.m., but Eecho Billie was wide awake. He and little sister Aubie stood on the deck of their father's airboat as it soared atop the water. Both had search lights strapped to their foreheads and were holding long-handled gigs. They balanced, shifting weight from one leg to the other, as the airboat flew over grass patches and tidal flats, roaring full speed through the night.

Suddenly the wind stopped squealing by, the big propeller roared to a hummm, the boat dropped and centrifugal force pulled the two kids forward. But they were ready and balanced, legs holding tight. Out in the water were hundreds of orange lights.

Alligator eyes. We were looking for a special gator, Eecho told me. Had to be just the right size. He held 9-year-old hands, thumbs and forefingers together in a simulated gator grabbing grip. His friend Amber Craig needed a gator for the Seminole Princess Pageant, in which she was a contestant from the Brighton Reservation. "She needs it for her talent show," he explained.

At low power, his father deftly maneuvered the craft, following the fingers as the kids pointed here and there over the water teeming with huhl-pah-te. Finally, not

far from shore, a small gator was separated from the crowd.

The boat glided over close and the unlucky gator froze. Eecho gently set down the gig, leaned over, aimed and jabbed his arms into the water as the gator dove. Water splashed all over the front of the boat. Aubie leaned over with beautiful big brown eyes wide, watching her brother work.

With a smile wider than the gator, he pulled the creature into the boat, hands positioned perfectly behind the jaws, away from the wildly thrashing, snapping mouth. His father, an old gator wrestler himself, never said a word. He had taught the son well. Eecho had the black electrical tape – the most important part of gator catching – and began wrapping it around the snout.

Someone said, "Good job, Eecho." The young man looked up and half-smiled. It was no big deal. He does it all the time.

Next week at the pageant, Eecho ran onstage and handed Amber the gator. She held the reptile as she told a legend about the dog and the gator. At the end of her story, the dog ran away with the gator's nose. The gator was left with the dog's nose and everyone thought the gator ate the dog.

-- Peter B. Gallagher

PRINCESS

From page 1A

(a written summary about the theme of the pageant) and Miss Congeniality and included: Jewel Buck (talent), Jaryaca Baker (talent and S.A.), Alicia Nunez (S.A.) and Apolonia Nunez (Miss Congeniality).

The event also featured new faces in judging and visiting royalty: Evereta Lee Thinn of the Navajo Nation and Miss Indian Nations 2010-11; Mitchelene BigMan of the Crow Nation and retired First Class Sergeant; Julia Kelly of the Piegan Clan and retired Ammunition Specialist Private/Command Sergeant Major; and Karina Brez, the newly crowned Miss Florida U.S.A. 2011-12.

"It has been a wonderful experience seeing you ladies grow up and now you will represent us as our princess," said Chairman James E. Billie at the annual dinner reception a day earlier.

Buck said outgoing Miss Seminole Jimmie was a mentor throughout her reign, as well as a big supporter and motivator.

"She (Cassandra) told me that representing the Tribe is not hard, just be myself. She was my inspiration throughout. The way she talked to people and represented herself was a great thing," Buck said.

Jimmie said the experience was a once in a lifetime opportunity and helped her develop socially.

"I accomplished a lot in my public speaking. The whole thing has opened my eyes to becoming a leader," Jimmie said. "I would tell the new Princess to be herself. Everything she does needs to come from the heart and remember where she comes from and that she represents the Tribe."



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Seminole Police Department CSA Larry Hamilton Retires With 11 Years of Service



Chris C. Jenkins

Hamilton gets a hug from Legal Department Executive Assistant Agnes Motlow during the farewell retirement gathering held in the Tribal Headquarters break room July 29 among dozens of supporters and co-workers.



Chris C. Jenkins

Larry Hamilton, right, 11-year Seminole Tribe of Florida employee and Seminole Police Department CSA (Community Service Aide), shows off a custom-made police badge given to him courtesy of SPD and Seminole Police Chief William Latchford, left.

Household Products Health and Safety Information

BY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Do you know what's under your kitchen sink, in your garage, in your bathroom and on the shelves in your laundry room? Do any of the household products you use pose a potential health risk to you and your family? To help you answer these questions The National Institutes of Health (NIH) National Library of Medicine (NLM) has established an online consumer guide that provides easy to understand information on the potential health effects of more than 4,000 common household products.

Many household products contain substances that can pose health risks if they are ingested, inhaled or come into contact with your eyes and skin. The new Household Products Database at <http://householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov> provides information on these substances and their potential health effects in language that's clear and easy to understand. Additionally, technical information is also available by following links directly into NLM's more technical databases on toxicology, hazardous chemicals and other topics.

The Household Products Database allows the general public to browse a product category, such as "Pesticides" or "Personal Care," by alphabetical listing or by brand name. You can also search for products by type, manufacturer, product ingredient or chemical name.

For example, suppose you're trying to decide which algae-killing product to use in your swimming

pool. You can select the "Landscape/Yard/Swimming Pool" category in Household Products and click on "Algaecide," and then browse through several brands to look for chemical content and possible health hazards.

The Household Products Database can help you answer questions like:

- What chemicals are found in a specific product and in what percentages?
- What are the potential health effects of the ingredients in a specific brand?
- Which products contain a specific chemical you are concerned about?
- Who manufactures a specific brand, and how can the manufacturer be contacted?
- What other information about a chemical can you find in other NLM databases?

Information for the Household Products Database comes from a variety of publicly available sources, including brand-specific labels and information provided by manufacturers and their websites. NLM plans to continue adding more brands to the existing categories and will also continue to add new types of products to the Household Products Database as well as work to keep the existing information in the database current and accurate.

Information taken from National Institute of Health website and www.eNotAlone.com.

The Environmental Health Program requests that you call the Health Department with any environmental health issues. You can reach them at 954-985-2330.

Longtime SMP Broadcasting Reporter Briana D'Andrea Says Farewell After Four Years



Chris C. Jenkins

Seminole Media Productions broadcasting reporter Briana D'Andrea, middle front row, with co-workers and friends outside of Marino's Italian Restaurant as part of D'Andrea's farewell luncheon on Aug. 1. As one of the faces of the Seminole Channel, the longtime mainstay says goodbye after four years of service in the department.



Chris C. Jenkins

D'Andrea, right, with Higher Education Adviser Linda Iley.



Chris C. Jenkins

D'Andrea, left, with Seminole Channel co-host Everett Osceola.

Seventh Annual Seminole Superstar Talent Show Crowns Another Champ



Chris C. Jenkins

Lola Lavoy is all smiles on stage with her \$5,000 prize winnings as the latest winner of the seventh annual Seminole Superstar Talent Show held at the Hard Rock Live on July 25. Joining the Seminole Hard Rock employee were five other musical acts representing the Tribe's casino properties with other cash prizes, raffles and giveaways.

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Bureau of Indian Affairs
Seminole Agency
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NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for approving the construction and lease of a home on trust property for Marcellus Osceola Sr. The approximately 1.49 acre lot is located off of Molly Prichard Road within the Tribe's Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation (BCSIR), in Hendry County, Florida (Township 48 South, Range 34 East, Section 32). The BIA has approved and adopted the Environmental Assessment (EA), dated July 2011, prepared by the Seminole Tribe of Florida Environmental Resource Management Department and entitled "Marcellus Osceola Sr. Proposed 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, 6363 Taft Street, Suite 3008, Hollywood, 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.

Kurt G. Chandler
Superintendent, Seminole Agency
Bureau of Indian Affairs

Date: 7/28/11

What is Codependency?

BY FAMILY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The term codependency describes a situation in which a person literally becomes emotionally addicted to another person's addiction. Some experts even refer to codependency as a "relationship addiction" because codependents often form dysfunctional, one-sided relationships with self-destructive partners. Although the phenomenon of codependency has existed for many years, a constructive definition only emerged with the rise of 12-step recovery programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Overeaters Anonymous (OA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA).

Researchers studying the mechanisms of addiction discovered that certain family members, romantic partners or close friends formed unhealthy bonds with the addict. These people seemed determined to rescue or protect the addict, even to the point of self-sacrifice. Recovering addicts recognized this behavior as "enabling," providing addictive substances in order to keep an addict from becoming completely healthy. Codependency is often defined as a maladjustment disorder, in which the codependent feeds off the emotional need created by the addict. Codependency is usually an emotional self-defense mechanism triggered by childhood experiences in a dysfunctional home marred by substance abuse or overly restrictive parents.

Many people assume that codependency is a strictly passive condition, with the codependent only performing as a servant to the addict. In reality, codependency is a passive-aggressive condition, with the enabler controlling the addict through emotional and physical manipulation. In an unhealthy relationship forged by codependency, the enabler needs

the addict to remain unhealthy and dependent. While many people feel a strong need to help a loved one in a time of personal crisis, a number of codependents see themselves as martyrs or self-sacrificing heroes. Caring for an addict helps define them as people worthy of respect, which they believe they wouldn't receive under healthier circumstances.

Codependency is a learned behavior, with children observing the effects of addiction on their parents. A person who experienced childhood traumas will often seek out a partner with substance abuse problems or anti-social behavior. The belief generated by codependency is that he or she will somehow be able to "fix" this person's numerous issues. In actuality, these codependent relationships often crash and burn, leaving the codependent with even lower self-esteem. Because many codependents avoid interaction with healthy, well-adjusted people, the codependency cycle usually continues with a series of damaging relationships.

Codependency can be treated through psychotherapy and intervention, although it can be very difficult to convince codependents to seek help. In their minds, codependents only perform a role others should play in an addict's life. Many feel they have honorable intentions, even if they don't always have successful results. Ironically, codependency can trigger addictive behavior in the enabler, creating an even more complicated relationship with the addict and others.

Should you wish to learn more about codependency, please feel free to schedule a confidential meeting with a Family Services Counselor on your respective reservation.

Source: 2003-2011 Conjecture Corporation



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WELLNESS

From page 3A

Denise Alley, John Glen, Dr. Packer, Sonya Beanland, Nadja Jones, Tommy McGee and Renee Siegel.

Annual Native American favorites John Bird, Alley and Dr. Bartlett entwined their life's stories and personal experiences with their messages of spirituality, family communication, relationship challenges, cultural and heritage beliefs.

Author and lecturer Alley emphasized the importance of family communication and living a well life with a Native heart. She said, "We are born with our culture and heritage. They define who we are and give us the strength from our Creator for survival. Love yourself and develop self-respect so that you can love others and ensure that your culture survives for future generations."

Outstanding presentations by Allied Health, Seminole Police, Fitness and Dr. Packer tackled the difficult topics of diabetes, medication abuse, obesity, exercise and diet control that can literally steal the life from your body.

"At every Conference, we have focused upon ourselves," said Carol Cypress. "We started a youth program approximately four years ago and it has been a tremendous success. More than 60 young people participated in this year's activities with special presentations by our guest speakers focusing on age appropriate topics for children from 5 to 16 years old. By turning from addiction to family programs we are helping to ensure that our children have the advantage of not having to experience our mistakes."

Nightly meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, the Women's Group and Culture saw record participation. Lawrence Osceola hit the mark when he said that we create our own limitations in our minds, and our bodies are too willing to follow. If you are at the conference, you are in service and this is vital. Sharing your experience and perseverance provides the support necessary to continue life one day at a time.



Judy Weeks
Native American motivational speaker Dr. Bartlett was not only a hit with the adults but became a real hero for Alice Jimmie.



Photo above, Lydia Cypress, Harry Billie, former Chairman Mitchell Cypress and Claudia Doctor share both family ties and commitment to the Seminoles in Recovery. Left photo, Carol Cypress focuses on youth programs, AA Meetings and the Women's Group.

Judy Weeks

And 6 a.m. wasn't too early for the 137 walkers who trekked along the edge of the surf during the early morning beach walks. Several of the participants commented on the empowered feeling that comes from hitting the sand in the dark and sharing the sunrise. Exercise is a big part of a healthy lifestyle. The Fitness Department urged that the attendees take this knowledge home and let it be an inspiration.

Personal testimonies provided by Tribal citizens in recovery are a daily highlight. Sharing the pain of their problems and the stressful transition to recovery forms a connection between the speaker and the audience that is inspirational and brings hope to those struggling to achieve or maintain recovery.

The 2011 Closing Sobriety Count Down reached awesome proportions. Making a declaration of their time in recovery, the attendees came forward one at a time and joined the Circle of Recovery. The final tabulation reached 684 years, nine months and 20 days. Joining hands the group recognized the power greater than their own that gives them the strength to go forward one day at a time. Strength comes in support and more than 500 people participated in the week's activities.

Tuxedos, evening gowns and party attire transformed the banquet room into a Royal Ball for the closing dinner party. All of the participants were recognized as VIPs for the occasion. Following an exquisite buffet, a live performance by "The Beatles" rocked the room and brought the audience to their feet for a standing ovation as the impersonators played a continuous repertoire of the British icons.

"Seminoles in Recovery are all about giving back what is freely given to you," Jodie King said. "Sobriety is a lifetime project and the Wellness Conference is designed to provide support and empower us to achieve our goals one day at a time. Remember that you made these things happen and you are why we are here. Stay focused!"

Pesticide and Fertilizer Application

BY WHITNEY SAPIENZA
Environmental Resource
Management Department

The Environmental Resource Management Department (ERMD) was created in 1987 by the Tribal Council of the Seminole Tribe of Florida to protect and evaluate the Tribe's land and water resources. ERMD is overseen by the Seminole Water Commission which was created in 1989 by the Tribal Council. The Commission, with technical assistance from ERMD, has developed rules to protect the quality of surface water within the boundaries of the Tribe's reservations. ERMD assists other Tribal Departments such as Housing, Real Estate and Community Planning and Development and works with Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc. in the development and management of Tribal natural resources.

To continue our mission for education and dissemination of information that aims to environmental compliance, ERMD will publish a series of articles that inform and educate the Seminole community and citizens in general about common practices that can potentially harm our environment and alternative practices that can minimize or prevent the adverse impacts to our health and the environment. We welcome your suggestions, comments and questions. Please send them to isidroduque@semtribe.com or contact us at 954-965-4380. The following article about plastic water bottles is the third article in our series.

Identifying the Best Management Practices (BMPs) for pesticide and fertilizer use can save you both time and money, while decreasing the adverse effects to the environment. Fertilizer application can increase short-term crop yields or keep the grass on your lawn green; however, this comes with potential detrimental environmental and health effects. Many of the problems associated with fertilizer application stem from the inability of soil to retain the applied fertilizer. It is estimated that about half of every metric ton of fertilizer applied to fields never end up in the plant tissue but are instead evaporated or washed into our wetlands, rivers, canals and lakes. Excess nutrients from fertilizers in waterways produce excessive plant production in the form of algal blooms. The surplus of plant life consumes all available oxygen in the water causing other plants and animals to suffocate. To decrease the amount of runoff into the local water ways, postpone your fertilizer application if a rain event of greater than 1 inch is expected and do not fertilize on lawn areas within 10 feet from the water's edge.

Most fertilizers on the market include a combination of nitrogen (N), phosphorus

(P) and potassium (K), which are the primary major nutrients required for plants to grow. Fertilizer bags are labeled with their nutrients concentration in percentile form. For example, if the fertilizer label states 15-0-15, this indicates that the fertilizer contains 15 percent N concentration (first number), 0 percent P concentration (middle number) and 15 percent K concentration (last number). The concentrations of N, P, K are very important when purchasing a fertilizer. In South Florida, the soils are usually sufficient in phosphorus; therefore, phosphorus is not always required for plant growth. To decrease the adverse affects of fertilizer application to the environment purchase a slow-release fertilizer with low or no phosphorus.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is utilized in efforts to promote the most sustainable ways to control pests while minimizing the risks to human health and the environment. ERMD offers the following pesticide application recommendations:

1. Do not over water your lawn. When grass is overwatered it becomes a breeding ground for unwanted insects.
2. Tolerate some insects and leaf damage; this allows beneficial predatory insects and birds to locate and naturally resolve the pest problem.
3. Always read the labels and apply the recommended application of pesticides. More is never better.
4. Select a pesticide that will have the least impact on the environment. The environmental impacts of pesticides are based on three properties: the sorption, how tightly pesticide are held by the soil surface; water solubility, the amount of pesticides that will dissolve in a given amount of water; and persistence, the amount of time a pesticide remains in the environment. Pesticides with high sorption and low solubility are the least likely to have adverse effects on the environment by leaching into groundwater or being transported by runoff into local waterways.
5. Do not apply pesticides before a high-intensity rainfall. The highest vulnerability of pesticide runoff is typically within 10-15 days after application. Applying pesticides surrounding a rainfall event will increase your overhead cost and environmental pollution caused by runoff.
6. If utilizing a sprayer, calibrate sprayers regularly to ensure the correct amount of pesticides are being applied.

Remember to store all pesticides and fertilizers in the original containers in a dry, well-ventilated area out of the reach of children. For additional information pertaining to pesticide and fertilizer application, please contact the ERMD office at isidroduque@semtribe.com or at 954-965-4380. We welcome your suggestions, comments and questions.




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The hiring of a lawyer is an important decision that should be based solely upon advertisement. Guy J. Seligman worked as a Certified Legal Intern in both the State Attorney and Public Defenders offices in Dade and Broward County; he has been in private practice for 16 years. He graduated from Nova Southeastern University Law School in 1987, and was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1988.

Editorial

ROAD BLOCK: ABSURD



• James E. Billie

Chokoloskee is a legendary location for Seminole people, especially for the families of the late Frank Billie, Sonny Billie and his mother, and Betty Mae Jumper. I believe that Frank J. Billie and Alice Billie of Big Cypress are the only elders still alive from the many Seminoles and their families who came to Chokoloskee to trade with Ted Smallwood throughout the early 1900s.

The Smallwood location is a historic place that honors our Seminole people, poor but strong, who first came out of the swamps in those days. Mr. Smallwood welcomed and provided us credit. He even allowed Seminoles to camp and fish from the beach next to the Store.

As time went along, I came along in the 1990s and asked around if the land known as the old Blue Heron motel property, next to the Smallwood Store, was for sale. They said it was and the Seminole Tribe purchased the property in 1999. There we began an annual gathering, our Seminole Indian Days, where we could bring our arts and crafts and share our old stories and legends about the place. We enjoyed sharing this history with others and the feelings it brought to us about how important the Smallwood Store was to our people in the early 1900s.

We had great fun. Paul Buster, myself,

Andy Buster and others would provide music, and Tribal members would conduct clothing contests, arts and crafts contests, even baby contests to the delight and education of many Seminoles and our visitors. Since the property belonged to the Seminole Tribe in honor of our people who came here to trade in the early 1900s, we had no thought of ever selling it or being betrayed to sell the property by our own system.

Which was, in fact, exactly what happened. We have records and documents that show the previous administration and our Indian employees orchestrated the sale of the Smallwood property to a group of non-Indians. The transaction was not told to the rest of Tribal members. It went through Legal, Real Estate and the Tribal Council, and the Tribal members were not told. The sale was done in an underhanded manner; in fact, it has only been recently that we all finally realized agreements had been signed and the Smallwood property had been sold.

Even though the land was sold to non-Indians, at first, we still had the opportunity to go through the property and visit the Smallwood Store. But, in a very short time, the new owners have recently demolished all the buildings on the site, demolished the road, put up a fence and do not allow anyone to go to the Smallwood Store.

This seems absolutely absurd to me. We Seminole Indians cannot visit that store unless we want to walk through the swamp and mangroves on the other side. When we had the property, all those years, we allowed anyone to come through there to visit. I would believe this if I was in some third-world country. But here in Chokoloskee, U.S.A.? I cannot believe it. What an absurd situation.

But, it was created by our own previous Tribal Council. When I found out how Legal, Real Estate and the Council sold away historic property of the Seminole Tribe . . . I began to wonder: What is this group coming to? I guess you could say it finally came back at them.

Now, at this point, the case has fallen into the court. We must hope for some justice and that a decision will be made to take the fence down and restore the right-of-way, so we can all once again visit the Smallwood Store.

Sho-naa-bish!

James E. Billie
Chairman
Seminole Tribe of Florida

NEW BOARD: HARD WORK

• Tony Sanchez Jr.

After wanting to serve the Tribe in this capacity for a long time, now that I am in the President's office, I am surprised at how little we have done to carry forth the vision our elders instilled in our original corporate charter and constitution, especially in the area of economic development.

Historically, it seems as if our Boards have preferred to take a "sit back, wait and see" attitude, instead of proactively investing the real time and effort that it takes to make a business venture successful.

Believe me, a lot of time and effort was invested by our elders and ancestors as they pursued the process to establish this Tribe more than 50 years ago. They even had to work to raise the basic funds to travel to Washington, D.C., where they had to go to get us recognized and get our charter and constitution approved.

From the very beginning the Tribe's goal has always been to be self sufficient. We can't just sit back and wait for that to happen – it takes a lot of hard work, in and out of the office. My job is to clearly communicate this goal, not just today, but way beyond that, across the long term where the results will speak for themselves. This is not just me, but the belief of all of us on the Board.

I'm excited about the makeup of our Board of Directors. We are probably the most educated and proven experienced Board the Tribe has ever had. We have had opportunities that those before us did not have and we took advantage. I am confident in this Board. We know what needs to be done; each and every one of us on the Board is willing to put forth the effort.

So, when I say that this is a new day, I am not being disrespectful or criticizing – in fact I thank all of those who came before us for getting us to where we are right now. We have benefitted from those in our past who gave us opportunities that they never had and told us to "get an education, work as hard as you can and then bring your knowledge back to help the Tribe."

That is what we are all about. The community will watch us step forward, and they will enjoy the successes of our hard work. The main function of the Board is to create bottom-line profit and that is what we are going to do. We are not going to just rely on the information given to us by experts. We are going to roll up our sleeves and get right in there, become part of the process. Hands on, not sitting back.

There will be an infrastructure for profit. You can set up a business, put your policies and procedures in place, establish your managers and directors – but without hard work, your chances of failure are excellent. We plan to be in daily communication and meet regularly. We will all be seen everywhere in the Tribe. Yes, we have reservation Representatives, but you will see the guy from Hollywood everywhere, Big Cypress, Brighton, the Trail, not just on the reservation he was elected from. I want those guys with

me, as much as possible, at every corner of the Tribe.

That's because everything each one of us Board members does will impact not just our own reservation, but the entire Tribe. The community is already seeing this as a whole new day. They see it in the way we conduct ourselves as elected officials and the way we express our visions to our enterprise managers. I guess you could call it intimate involvement, because in the end, we on the Board are responsible. If something happens, we can't just shift blame to one of our managers. We are in there every day. Nothing will happen without all of us knowing about it.

I am talking about a much more cohesive, proactive Board. That is not to say we won't have disagreements. I expect heated discussions. We all won't agree on everything, but we will sit there and hash things out, with all the passion we all have for our job. And we will walk out of the room together. It's like a marriage. Each time you have a fight, you don't call in the divorce lawyer, do you? There is nothing wrong with healthy disagreement!

There are so many exciting things going on. Just today on my desk is an idea about expanding our cigarette business, perhaps manufacture our own tax-free cigarettes like other Tribes are doing. We want to let the U.S. government know, "Hey, if Homestead Air Force base closes and the land reverts back to Indian Tribes, the Seminole Tribe is interested in that land." Every day, these ideas emerge – new and exciting possibilities for the Seminole Tribe.

As I said, we are not going to sit back and let anyone, not even other Tribes, beat us in our own backyard. We want to make it known that we aren't just sitting around waiting for something to happen. We are proactive. We'll make it happen. Our noses are to the grindstone. Our eyes are looking everywhere. We will recognize and take advantage of our opportunities, for the greater benefit of all our people.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Letter of Support to Smallwood Store Manager Lynn McMillin from Barbara E. Mattick

Dear Ms. McMillin:

We recognize that the Ted Smallwood Store, Inc. as 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization represents the place where Florida's pioneer culture and the Seminole Tribal culture of the Everglades came together at the beginning of the 20th century. This nearly 100-year-old building was constructed on an ancient archeological site in 1917 and raised on pilings in order to make it better withstand hurricanes in 1925. The store was an early trading post, providing the material goods required for settlement, and served as the post office for the remote area.

Because of its vital significance to the settlement of Southwest Florida, Ted Smallwood's Store was honored by placement on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974 and has been the recipient of historic preservation and museum grants from the Florida Division of Historical Resources, Museum of Florida History and the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs.

Today, the Smallwood Store still serves as a time capsule of Chokoloskee/Everglades City life. It represents Southwest Florida's earliest fishing and farming industry and is a place where tourists and residents go to experience the unique history of the Ten Thousand Islands area. Any interruption in heritage visitation adversely impacts this important historic landmark, diminishes the site's value as a cultural tourism destination and denies a direct validation of the life and times of some of the region's earliest settlers. Please keep our office updated on significant developments concerning the ongoing negotiations related to access to this important historic cultural property.

Sincerely,
Barbara E. Mattick, Ph.D.
Interim Chief, Bureau of Historic Preservation
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Florida Department of State

Letter to Chairman James E. Billie from Secretary of State Kurt S. Browning

Dear Chairman Billie:

On behalf of the Florida Department of State, I want to congratulate you on the occasion of your inauguration as Chairman of the Seminole Tribe of Florida and leader of the Tribal Council. We certainly want to offer our best wishes to you for a long and successful tenure.

The Department of State particularly notes your strong support of Florida's cultural heritage throughout your entire career as Chairman of the Seminole Tribe. We appreciate your continued awareness of the value of the cultural arts in Florida, exhibited by your commitment as a performing artist, your vision for the founding of the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, your longtime dedication to the Florida Folk Festival and assistance to the Museum of Florida History, and your endorsement of numerous other education programs for the Seminole Tribe and the people of Florida in past years.

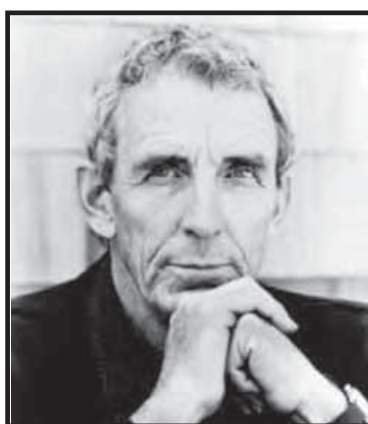
As Florida's Chief Cultural Officer, I have been asked by Gov. Rick Scott to coordinate Viva Florida 500, the 500-year anniversary

of "La Florida" coming in 2013. This will be a wide-reaching celebration of who we are as a state. We are already in touch with the Florida Governor's Council on Indian Affairs. I look forward to you joining with us for this important series of events and festivals in order to commemorate not only the arrival of Spanish, English and French explorers to these shores beginning in 1513, but most especially, to remember the pre-European history of our state. This journey – from colony, to territory, and to state of the union – is a blending of all the cultures that have made us what we are today.

The Viva Florida 500 initiative will honor the important role of Florida's native people in our history. When your schedule permits, please contact my office so that we can begin discussions as we move forward in the planning process.

Sincerely,
Kurt S. Browning
Florida Secretary of State

Letter to the Judge, Sheriff and County Commissioners of Collier County from Peter Matthiessen



To The Judge, Sheriff and County Commissioners of Collier County, Florida:

It is with a deep sense of distress and great astonishment that I have learned the fate of the historic Smallwood Store and Trading Post. Even here in far Southern Florida, in a part of the world legendary for frontier justice, an

outsider can come to town, tear apart a quiet fishing village with fences and bulldozers, rip up a roadway that has served the community for more than 70 years, and block access to a Florida historic monument to the dignity and survival of Seminole Indians, American pioneer settlers and Gulf fishermen, with the protection of the local sheriff.

How is it possible that a public roadway maintained by taxpayers dollars for more than half a century can be shut down, unannounced, in an early morning ambush the likes of which have not been seen in these parts since outlaw Edgar Watson was killed by local citizens right behind the Store in

1910? All one can do is hope and pray that common sense will prevail and that this outrageous attack on the citizens and government here in Collier County will be rectified by a court order to reconstruct Mamie Street, restore access to the Smallwood Store and return peace and order to Chokoloskee and the beautiful Ten Thousand Islands.

Have we finally run out of places to despoil elsewhere in Florida in the name of progress? Must we now suffer swarms of developers, like mosquitoes in a hot windless summer day, here in the paradise of the last frontier? On whose watch does this insanity occur? Who will be the judge and sheriff and the county commissioners whose names will be bronzed on the annals of infamy, forever despised as the foolish ones who opened the door?

Peter Matthiessen 8/16/2011
Sagaponak, NY

Send your letters to the editor to
The Seminole Tribune at:

3560 N. State Road 7
Hollywood, FL 33021
or
brettdaly@semtribe.com

M • F • H MUSEUM of Florida History

Forever Changed: La Florida 1513–1821

A New Permanent Exhibit at the Museum of Florida History in Tallahassee

In 2013, Florida will commemorate the first European settlement and 500th anniversary of the landing of Juan Ponce de León on Florida shores in 1513. This event marked the beginning of the European and the African presence in Florida and in the United States — to a continent then settled by many well-organized and culturally adaptive Native tribes. The Museum of Florida History will open a major permanent exhibit in the spring of 2012, as part of the statewide effort to recognize Florida’s initial Hispanic heritage and the moment of first contact with the state’s Native populations.

“The Museum of Florida History, the state history museum, is the appropriate venue for this interactive and engaging exhibit that will highlight the 308 years that Florida was a colony of Spain and Great Britain,” said Secretary of State Kurt Browning. “The exhibit will educate, inspire and challenge visitors to think about an often overlooked or misunderstood period of Florida history.”

The story will begin with the Native Americans who were here in 1513. Several hundred thousand, to perhaps more than 1 million Native people, lived in towns and villages along the coast at that time. The portion of the exhibit called “Land of Many Cultures” will highlight the diverse cultures of those indigenous Native groups including the Timucua, Apalachee and Calusa Indians. Visitors will learn that, although these Native peoples shared important cultural traits, there were many differences among them as well.

Although Christopher Columbus came to the Western Hemisphere in search of a route to the Indies in 1492, Ponce de León was the first recorded in 1513 in a line of Spanish conquistadors who sought gold

and riches in Florida. In the portion of the exhibit called “Spanish Exploration,” visitors will walk on a dock and be part of a scene reminiscent of the loading of a ship traveling to La Florida. The pier will lead to a reproduced portion of a Spanish ship, where visitors can learn about the age of exploration.

The exhibit features a third section called “Meeting of the Cultures.” Museum-goers will view life-size figures representing these people of many diverse cultures who interacted in 16th century Florida. Maps show locations of settlements in La Florida and trace routes of the explorers. Artifacts in the exhibit will lend evidence of European presence in Florida.

In addition to text panels, drawings, recreated settings and three-dimensional objects and artifacts, the exhibit will feature many interactive and hands-on activities. These components will assist visitors of all ages to better understand the colonial history of Florida.

The Museum will extend the exhibit in future phases, eventually bringing the story up to 1821. Subjects to be included during the continuation of the project will be settlements, missions, forts, the British period and second Spanish period.

The Museum in the Division of Cultural Affairs is located in the R. A. Gray Building at 500 South Bronough St. in Tallahassee, Florida. Hours are Monday through Friday, 9: a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Sunday and holidays, noon to 4:30 p.m. Free parking is available in the adjacent garage on South Bronough Street. Admission is free. For more information, call 850-245-6400 or visit the website at www.museumoffloridahistory.com.



Overhead drawing of the Forever Changed Gallery designed by Synergy Design Group: Phase One as it will look in spring of 2012. Visitors will experience a Timucuan dwelling, a Spanish ship and an array of original American Indian and European artifacts in this immersive exhibit.



Photo courtesy of Wanda Richey

Florida Museum of History artist Bob Deaton paints the background mural for the Land of Many Cultures diorama. The diorama will depict a village near the Lake Jackson mounds as it may have appeared more than 500 years ago.



Identifying the Pas



Women's Seminole patchwork skirt (2011.18.5), maker unidentified

If you have additional information on this photograph including participants and the occasion for this event, please contact the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum at 877-902-1113 to share your knowledge.

Textile Donation Increases Museum’s Ethel Cutler Freeman Holdings

BY JAMES POWELL
Associate Registrar

Recently, Nancy Niles Faesy and her daughter Margaret Faesy MacKenzie donated 12 Seminole patchwork textile items to the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum. The items include women’s and girls’ skirts, a women’s matching skirt and sleeveless blouse, and men’s and boys’ jackets. These beautiful items are welcome additions to the Museum’s textile collection, and they carry the added value of having once belonged to Ethel Culter Freeman. Granddaughter Nancy Niles Faesy and great granddaughter Margaret Faesy Mackenzie told the Museum that Seminole Tribal members made these textiles and then gave them to

Ethel Cutler Freeman, who in turn gave many to members of her family. Nancy Niles Faesy wrote in her donation letter that she felt her grandmother would be pleased that these textile gifts have been returned to the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

This month the Museum again seeks your assistance. We are searching for information about who made these items and who gave them to Mrs. Freeman. This invaluable information will allow us to link these items directly to Seminole Tribal members and properly place the textiles in the Tribe’s history. We are also searching for more specific information on the skirt pictured above. Can you assist us in describing this item? Any information on skirt style, patchwork designs and

date would be helpful. Please contact the Museum at 877-902-1113 to share your knowledge on this skirt, the textile items made and given to Mrs. Freeman or any recollections or stories related to her.

We would like to thank the family of Ethel Cutler Freeman for this and all of their past donations to the Museum; each item forms a clearer picture of Freeman, her relation to the Seminole Tribe and the culture and history of the Seminole Tribe of Florida. We also want to thank, in advance, the Tribune readers for their great information and response. To view these textiles, additional items related to Freeman or any museum materials, please call the Museum at 877-902-1113 to make an appointment. Thank you!



Ethel Cutler Freeman, January 1946

and while conducting research for the American Museum of Natural History, Freeman discovered the Seminole Tribe of Florida. Freeman decided to take a trip down to the Big Cypress Reservation to study and document the Seminoles’ life in the Everglades. So began a 30-year relationship between Freeman and members of the Seminole Tribe in Florida.

In 1939, Ethel Cutler Freeman decided to undertake a great adventure. Already a wife to a successful New York stockbroker and mother to three children, Freeman had become bored with the east coast social life available to her. A close friend encouraged her to take classes at nearby Columbia University, and Freeman quickly found herself under the tutelage of eminent anthropologist Ruth Benedict. An interest in Native American Tribes soon developed,

Humans: Earth’s Most Invasive Species

• Ruth Hopkins

I grow wildflowers. Part of the price one pays for enjoying the beauty of an organic flower garden is spending a considerable amount of time pulling weeds.

A weed is any plant that humans consider unattractive, undesirable, or bothersome, that persists in a place where it is not wanted. Invasive weeds all possess the ability to spread rapidly, and are associated with decreasing property values as well as reducing the production of livestock or crops. Most invasive weeds are not indigenous to the locale in which they’ve been designated as such.

While weeds may be classified as invasive, no plant—even ones that are poisonous—are bad, per se. What makes them invasive is the fact that they have been harmful or troublesome to humans or livestock, or are highly competitive with plant species that humans prefer.

Despite the negative connotations associated with invasive weeds, many of the same plants have medicine uses. St. John’s wort, (*Hypericum perforatum*) is classified as an invasive weed in my home state of South Dakota; however, tea made from St. John’s wort has been used by American Indians for centuries as a pain reliever and in the treatment of tuberculosis.

Today, St. John’s wort is used as a herbal remedy to treat depression. Hypericin, a complex molecule found in St. John’s wort, is strongly antiviral

and is currently being investigated for its ability to inhibit HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) and HPV (human papillomavirus).

Not all invasive species belong to the plant kingdom. Invasive animal species are not indigenous to the habitat where they have become a problem. They upset the natural balance of their new home because natural population controls like predators are no longer present. As a result, invasive animal species disrupt their new environment by essentially taking over, often to the detriment of species native to the area.

Most invasive species have been introduced by humans. History is replete with examples of how humans have brought non-indigenous species to new habitats, often during the process of colonization. The majority of animal species introduced by humans eventually become invasive. Ship rats (*Rattus rattus*) originated in India, but because of human exploration and colonization via ships infested with rats over the past several centuries, the species has spread to nearly everywhere on Earth.

The rat is now classified as an invasive species that has caused the extinction of multiple wildlife species abroad and contributed to the decline of others. In 1854, a mere 24 European wild rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) were released in Australia for the purpose of recreational hunting. Rabbits soon infested much of Australia and are now held responsible for the extinction of a number of species on that continent. They continue

to cause millions of dollars of damage a year. In North America, the German cockroach (*Blattella germanica*) is an invasive species originally from Asia that now infests countless human dwellings.

Even though plant or animal species may be classified as invasive, they could be viewed as evolutionary successes. They’ve adapted to their environment, and successfully reproduced offspring on a grand scale. What makes them invasive is that we as humans deem them so, and most of the time the species in question became invasive because they were introduced to foreign habitat by humans.

Evolutionarily speaking, human beings (*homo sapiens*) have been successful too, but not in any romanticized version we might like to imagine. Much like the invasive species we disdain, we’ve thrived at the expense of other species and become adapted to the progressive destruction of our collective environment. We’ve managed to eliminate or weaken most of the natural population controls that kept the human species in check. Thanks to humans, the majority of predators that once preyed upon humans, like tigers and wolves, are either endangered or extinct.

Because of modern humans’ irresponsible management of resources and inability to live in balance with Earth’s natural systems, we could have more in common with invasive weeds, rats, and cockroaches than the majestic endangered animals we admire. We have allowed ourselves to become scavengers and opportunists who strip Earth of

its resources at a rate that cannot be replenished, and take from every other species on Earth to our advantage. One can only conclude that there’s been a major oversight on the list of invasive species plaguing natural habitats abroad: humans are the most invasive species on Earth.

That said, if humans were to be classified as invasive, it does not mean that we as a species are all together bad. Like St. Johns wort, we too have medicine. We have the ability to change our behavior and help heal our planet. Unlike the beasts of the field, we can make a conscious choice to start living in balance with Earth. We can choose to respect the laws of nature and life in all its forms.

As indigenous people, natives should reject the slash-and-burn “Drill, Baby, Drill” mentality of many modern humans in western society and instead take a leadership role in showing the entire human race how to live in balance with the earth, our mother. Let us heed the advice of Tatanka Iyotanka, Hunkpapa Lakota Chief Sitting Bull, who said, “It is not necessary for eagles to be crows.”

Ruth Hopkins (Sisseton-Wahpeton/Mdewakanton/Hunkpapa) is a writer, a pro-bono tribal attorney, a science professor, and a columnist for the Indian Country Today Media Network. She can be reached at cankudutawin@hotmail.com. Published by Indian Country Today Media Network.



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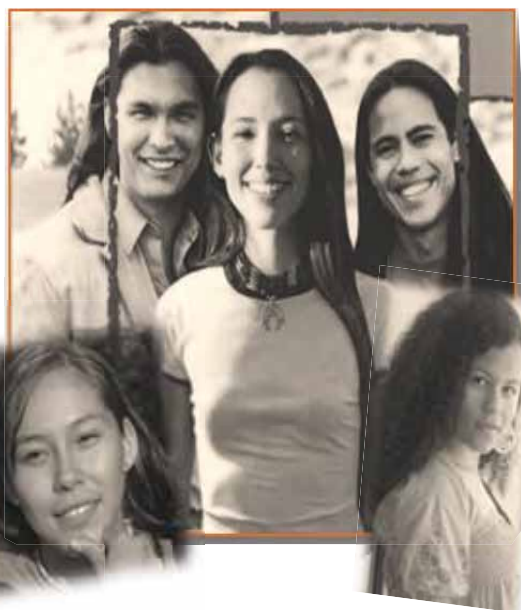
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EducationB

Tribal Teen Neyom Osceola Wins National Essay Contest

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

MIRAMAR — Tribal teen Neyom Osceola’s knack for writing has been nurtured for years.

Since the age of four, she has written notes on the world around her. Those talents were rewarded in a big way last month as she became the first-place winner of the 2011 Young Native Writers Essay Contest.

As one of eight finalists, the 15-year-old American Heritage sophomore also became the first Seminole Tribal winner of the contest.

Her three-page paper on adolescent substance abuse allowed her to express her thoughts on the impact, pain and devastation of the epidemic in and around her community.

According to the rules and guidelines, the essayists were asked to describe a crucial issue confronting their Tribal community and explain how they hoped to help their Tribal community respond to the challenge and improve its future.

“I felt really close to this topic because I have lost a lot of friends and close relatives to this problem,” Osceola said. “It was a paper expressing my feelings on the topic but was not meant to tell people what to do at the same time. I felt confident when I submitted it (the essay). I kind of knew I would win but not in an arrogant way. I thought it would go far.”

She and the other winners also received an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. to visit the National Museum of the American Indian and other sites. They were accompanied by supporters who inspired their entries into the contest and received a special award and a \$2,500 scholarship to the college or university of their choice after their high school graduation.

Although confident in Osceola’s writing ability, Mother Pearl Bert said she felt surprised her daughter claimed the first-place honor because she was the youngest writer among the winners.

❑ Please see NEYOM on page 2B



Photo courtesy of Lindsey Gaszczynski

Neyom Osceola, center, with mother, Pearl Bert, left, and stepfather, Jody Bert, right, in Washington, D.C.

Big Cypress and Immokalee Libraries Take Tribal Youngsters to Morikami Museum for Cultural Lesson

Naples Community’s Tribal youth learn about Japanese culture as well

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

DELRAY BEACH — Two cultures and three groups took center stage at a unique public facility on July 15.

For the first time, the Big Cypress, Immokalee and Naples Tribal youth took a trip to the Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens in what was an eye-opening experience for all involved.

A plethora of activities at the Delray Beach-based museum captivated Tribal youngsters, including a special video presentation that all three Tribal youth groups took part in, entitled “Two Little Girls in Japan.”

The short film taught Tribal kids from Big Cypress, Immokalee and Naples about the variety of intricacies in Japanese culture, which included Japanese children riding unicycles and the high cost of buying groceries in Japan.

Tribal youth were wowed by the fact that “The Little Travelers” stars and sisters Chantelle and Nakia, both 4 years old, spent three months in Japan to learn about its culture, food and customs. Immokalee Tribal citizen Jada Holdiness was visibly shocked when she and her fellow Tribal peers saw that the Japanese have to squat to use the bathroom.

“I’d rather use a sit-down toilet,” Holdiness said, eliciting a burst of laughs in the Morikami Museum’s film room.

Holdiness noted a stark contrast between the Seminole and Japanese cultures, notably a couple of standout recreational features at school yards.

“Their schools are different because we don’t have trampolines on our playgrounds,” Holdiness said. “We don’t get to ride on unicycles, but they do.”

However, the film also showed that the Japanese way of life included the lack of ovens in homes – something the Seminoles tend to value as a modern home staple in their kitchens.

In addition, because of the high population density of Japan, many rooms in the homes are small and serve as multipurpose functions. Also, the Japanese don’t use dryers – they hang their washed attire on a clothesline.

Immokalee Tribal youngster Jade Tapia, 14, said the trip showed the Tribal youth the importance of embracing the noticeable differences between the Seminole and Japanese cultures – namely the religious aspect of it.

“Ours is different from theirs,” Tapia said. “We have the Baptist, Christian and Catholic religions, and they practice Shinto, Buddhism and Christianity. But either way, we’re just one big family.”

The Morikami Museum’s cultural experience extended to its gallery, where the Tribal youth took a tour of a collection of artworks primarily assembled by a host of Soaring Voices female contemporary Japanese ceramic artists. Visitors cannot take photos at the gallery because of the potential for material distortion by flashing lights, according to Morikami Museum officials.

An origami craft session, which focused on the creation of specially made rabbits, was another favorite as far as Japanese activities were concerned. The exercise, held at the Morikami Museum’s library, taught the Tribal youth the art of folding sheets of paper into a unique creation.

According to Morikami Museum summer intern Nicolle Garber, the origami craft session highlighted the rabbits because of the fact the Japanese celebrate years through the use of Chinese Zodiac signs. There are 12 such animal signs, and for this year, it happened to be the rabbit in the Japanese culture.

❑ Please see MORIKAMI on page 2B



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal citizen Willie Smith, 7, takes a look at a collection of Japanese works of art at the Morikami Museum's gift shop on July 15.



Judy Weeks

Colleen Clark of the Shy Wolf Sanctuary allows the kids from the Juanita Osceola Center an opportunity to pet Ernie the prairie dog at the Shy Wolf Sanctuary on Aug. 10.

Naples Youth Visit Shy Wolf Sanctuary

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Writer

NAPLES — The adventure of a lifetime awaited the children of the Juanita Osceola Center when they entered the Shy Wolf Sanctuary on Aug. 10. The sanctuary is a nonprofit education and experience organization located on private property in the Golden Gate Estates region of Collier County.

Since 2001, volunteer efforts and donor support have maintained the Shy Wolf facilities. Initially founded by Nancy Smith, it has become the safe home of a select group of wild animals that mankind has attempted to domesticate with lack of regard to their natural habitat and needs.

The resident animals include not only wolves and wolf-dogs but also big cats, foxes, tortoises, prairie dogs and an occasional exotic bird. Curiosity turned to excitement and compassion as the children moved from one natural enclosure to another, interacting with wild animals and learning valuable lessons about ecology and responsibility.

Twelve full-blooded wolves and 21 hybrid wolf-dogs currently enjoy a safe home where their needs are recognized and met. The Shy Wolf Sanctuary participates in rescue efforts throughout the country, and the majority of its animals have come from urgent situations. Some have been rescued from roadside zoos or abusive owners, have been neglected or have escaped from improper confines or abandonment.

Rare opportunities to view animals from a different perspective abounded. The children talked with a Florida panther, watched a prairie dog pop out of his tunnel in the ground for a belly rub and then touched a wolf and combed his fur. Clutching a ball of hair after grooming a wolf, Dominic Osceola-Lugo said, “I am going to take this home to my mom. She won’t believe all the things that I have done today.”

Alexus Walden was surprised to learn that foxes eat fruits, vegetables, meat, fish and eggs just like people and can run up to 25 miles per hour. Timid at first, Aspen Billie overcame her fear and giggled as she tickled the belly of a prairie dog and heard him whistle.

Wolf packs are like families and the children watched in amazement as a large male disciplined one of his pack that ventured close to the fence to gaze at the youngsters.

All of the animals within the facility have been born in captivity and lack the skills for survival in the wild. The educators stressed the fact that wild animals make extremely poor pets, are a great deal of responsibility, can become a menace if abandoned, and can cause ecological damage. Good examples are the pythons that threaten the Everglades environment or the coyotes that ravage residential areas in Lee County.



Judy Weeks

The children pet and comb Akeba, a full-blooded wolf rescued from an abusive home who now flourishes at the Shy Wolf Sanctuary.

Big Cypress/Brighton/Immokalee Libraries Take End-of-Summer Trip to Lion Country Safari

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

LOXAHATCHEE — A few groups of Tribal youngsters from Big Cypress, Brighton and Immokalee took a field trip to the Lion Country Safari on Aug. 4.

Hosted by the Big Cypress, Brighton and Immokalee libraries, the Tribal youth embarked on an experience they won’t soon forget.

The end-of-summer trip started off with a 4-mile drive through the Lion Country Safari’s jungle, as the youngsters got to see a plethora of animals from their buses.

While the guests were strictly prohibited from opening their vehicle doors and windows for safety purposes, they did get some prime opportunities to view a host of antelopes, ostriches, hyenas, elephants, camels, rhinos, rams, flamingos and lions, among the many animals on the tour.

Brighton Library Assistant Alyssa Willie, who said she wanted her Tribal youth participants to have a hands-on experience, talked about the journey around the Lion Country Safari’s habitat.

“We’ve been learning about different cultures and went to different parts of the world this summer,” Willie said. “With our group, we’ve been studying a lot about Africa. We had done a mock safari experiment before the trip, so we wanted to come to Lion Country Safari and learn about all the different animals from the continent. We didn’t want them to be inside all the time and just learn from a book.”

Immokalee Tribal citizen Jade Tapia, one of 28 youngsters from the reservation who went to Lion Country Safari, shared her

observations of the jungle sightseeing segment.

“It’s nice to see different animals from different countries,” Tapia said. “I didn’t know that the zebra would be small. I was surprised to see how big the rhinos and how tall the giraffes were. All that caught my attention.”

Immokalee’s Le’Andra Mora, 16, said she liked the audio explanations the participants received of each animal and habitat while on the sightseeing tour.

“It was nice to see how the animals behave on a daily basis,” Mora said. “It’s good for the kids to look at because they get to learn about the animals and environment for themselves.”

The tour – the Brighton group was on one bus and the Big Cypress/Immokalee groups were on another – included a lunch break and some extensive time in the Lion Country Safari’s water park afterward.

The water park experience proved to be the most exciting part of the day-long trip among all the Tribal youth in attendance.

“We were looking forward to getting in the water,” Mora said. “It was hot out there and we needed to get cooled off. It was really fun for all of us.”

Immokalee’s Eliza Mora, 14, touched on the relationship-building moments all the participants valued on this field trip.

“It was nice to be with my family,” Mora said. “I haven’t seen my cousins in a while. We got to kick back and talk about all the old times we had. It was nice for us to have fun together at the water park and on the Ferris wheel.”

❑ Please see SAFARI on page 2B



Naji Tobias

Brighton’s Nena Youngblood, 5, shows Brighton Library assistant Alyssa Willie some of the animals of the Lion Country Safari’s brochure during the tour on Aug. 4.

SAFARI
From page 1B

Mora was among several Tribal youth participants to ride on the Ferris wheel, which turned out to be the last activity the entire group took part in before heading back home.

Immokalee head librarian Cris Marrero touched on what the Tribal youth gained from this experience.

"It's a really good time for the kids to share all their experiences," Marrero said. "The trip, with all the reservations we had here at Lion Country Safari, allowed them to get to know each other better. We try to make these trips Tribalwide, so the kids could build a rapport with one another. It was great to see them interact and mix with each other."

Big Cypress/Immokalee Library program manager Barbara Oeffner said the trip served as the culmination of the



MORIKAMI
From page 1B

The Zodiac runs on a 12-year cycle, which means that the rabbit is highlighted in the Japanese culture every 12 years. Garber said that honoring the Zodiac signs could mean "good luck" for the Japanese in any given year.

"It's a great tactile experience for the children," Garber said. "It's a physical way to embrace Japanese culture. Rather than just listening, they can actually participate. That's a really good way for them to learn."



Immokalee's Lauren Posada, 13, shows off her finished origami product. The origami craft session was a favorite among the Tribal youngsters.



The Naples Community learns about Japanese culture in a classroom at the Morikami Museum, with Naples Tribal citizen Angelina Osceola-Lugo conducting the lesson. Front row: Karie Osceola, Alexis Walden, Jessica Osceola. Second row: Naomi Walden, Joseph Osceola-Lugo.

libraries' "One World, Many Stories" initiative, a statewide summer program that all libraries throughout Florida have taken part in.

"This was a great way to explain to the children that the African animals won't be seen on the reservations," Oeffner said. "We wanted them to know they need to come to a park like this to see all these kinds of animals. It was a perfect opportunity to see all the reservations come together for this Tribalwide trip."



Big Cypress Tribal citizens Lacilyn Crespo, left, and Osianna Crespo, center, are with Big Cypress Library site manager Barbara Oeffner on the Lion Country Safari's Ferris wheel.



Big Cypress Tribal youngster Kadin Tommie cools off at the Lion Country Safari's water park on Aug. 4.



Five Immokalee youngsters escape the heat. Front from left: Kyle Alvarado and Alphonso Alvarado Jr. Back from left: Troy Cantu, Ray Yzaguirre and Aaron Alvarado.

NEYOM
From page 1B

DeBree said she felt the overall feel of the Morikami Museum trip coincided with the Big Cypress Library's summer theme, entitled "One World, Many Stories."

Immokalee Tribal youngster Randeon Osceola agreed with DeBree about the trip's concept, uttering just one word about the whole experience.

"Awesome," she said.



Immokalee's Priscilla Alvarado, 9, draws a Kanji pictograph on a Sumi-e board. The sign that Alvarado draws is that of a heaven symbol in the Chinese and Japanese language.

"She worked hard and has been writing a long time," Bert said. "She has always been a big reader and writer. She is an advanced writer for her age. It was good to have her around the environment of the older writers."

Osceola said she appreciated the strong support system from her mother; stepfather, Jody; and others, including Aunt Neyom Friday.

Osceola dreams big, as she currently interns in the president's office and plans to attend an Ivy League college at Columbia or Harvard University. She also plans to someday return to serve the Tribe as president.

The Young Native Writers Essay Contest is an annual writing contest for Native American high school students designed to encourage young Native Americans to examine, reflect and discuss the issues impacting their Tribal communities. The contest is open to Native American high school students enrolled in grades 9-12. Students are asked to draw from their own personal knowledge and to research information from various sources with each essay being no more than 1,200 words in length.

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Big Cypress Preschoolers Show Display of Energy As 2011-2012 Academic Year Begins

Big Cypress Preschool site manager Shirley Clay, right, interacts with Tribal infant students Ada Bruisedhead, left, Mohayla Billie, center, and Terrance Robbins, right, during the first hour of the Big Cypress Preschool's 2011-2012 academic year on Aug. 8.

Naji Tobias



Judy Weeks

Seminole artist Elgin Jumper teaches about depth of color and highlights at his art workshop at the Juanita Osceola Center on July 14.



Judy Weeks

Traditional Arts Specialist Jessica Osceola answers questions and distributes supplies to young artists. From front: Angelina Osceola-Lugo, Dominic Osceola-Lugo, Bryce Osceola and O. B. Osceola III.

Elgin Jumper Brings Artistic Skills to Naples Community

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Writer

NAPLES — The Naples community was very enthusiastic upon hearing that Seminole artist Elgin Jumper would be returning to the Juanita Osceola Center to conduct another class in his series on painting. When the workshop convened on July 14, every available space in the craft center was employed to accommodate a capacity crowd.

The budding artists ranged in age from kindergartners to seniors. Taking their places in front of the blank white canvases, they gave their undivided attention to their instructor. Preschoolers were given the opportunity to exercise their creativity with finger paints and Play-Doh.

A quick review of the previous class refreshed the students' memories and provided an introduction to newcomers. The discussion included the use of the color wheel, palette, proper application of brush styles and paint, which creates texture and adds dimension to their individual artworks.

Displaying two pastoral scenes as examples, Jumper said,

"I have selected an acrylic landscape and water as the topic of our current project. As we paint each picture, it will reflect our own impression of the scene and give personal meaning through our application of the medium. I can't stress enough the need for proper lighting in your studio to enhance the focus of your eyes and give the proper perception to the depth of color."

The class blended hues of color for the sky, ground and water to establish basic backgrounds and give definition to the land mass. From that point forward, each artist used individual imagination to create trees, foliage and reflections in the water. Learning about the value of color and intensity, the painters gave shadows and depth to their landscapes.

"There is a lot of talent in this room. I see improvement in everyone's brush control and technique since our last session," Jumper said. "This class is showing initiative toward individual expression with only basic similarities in your artwork. I have to commend all of you on your dedication and concentration. Known for their short attention span, I am amazed by the way that our youngest artists are remaining focused, asking questions and attempting to employ detail to their work."



Big Cypress Preschool site manager Shirley Clay, left, and Tribalwide Preschool Director Leona Tommie-Williams, second from left, speaks with the Big Cypress Preschool's Tribal parents about the curriculum for the 2011-2012 school year at the Tribal school's Open House on Aug. 10.

Naji Tobias



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Council's Noella Dyan O'Donnell brings her beautiful Tribal newborn daughter Keltie to her first-ever day of school at the Big Cypress Preschool on Aug. 8.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Preschool 1-year-old Lead Teacher Vickie Jackson, left, looks on as Tribal youngster Kalaney Hannahs, center, receives a kiss on the cheek from her father, Steven Hannahs, right, as she begins her first day of school on Aug. 8.



Judy Weeks

Naples Liaison Brian Zepeda and his daughter Corinne develop their own personal impressions of a landscape with water reflections.



Judy Weeks

Nadia Osceola expresses her creativity through finger painting at the workshop at the Juanita Osceola Center.

Maxie and Kim Tommie enjoy refreshments with daughter Addison after meeting with her new teacher at the Brighton Preschool Open House Aug. 5.

Rachel Buxton



In preparation for Brighton Preschool's first day on Aug. 8, Joanie Johnson, right, receives information at the school's Open House where parents and students met with teachers and visited their new classrooms.

Rachel Buxton




Brighton Preschool Welcomes Parents, Students to Open House



Rachel Buxton

Photo above left: Cyndl Purvis provides a little background music during the Brighton Preschool Open House where parents and students met with teachers to receive information on the upcoming school year. Photo above center: Chase Micco tests out the kitchen in her new classroom during the Brighton Preschool open house. Photo above right: With the theme "Under the Sea," teacher Tasha Sutherland works with Ben Purvis on an arts and crafts project. Photo right: Waylon Yates, right, and teacher Jimi Lu Huff play with Legos.





United States Department of the Interior

Bureau of Indian Affairs


Seminole Agency

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

AGENCY:

Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

ACTION:


Notice of Availability (NOA)

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for approving the construction and lease of a home on trust property for Kyle Baker. The approximately 1.5 acre lot is located near the intersection of Farmer and Wind Clan Roads within the Tribe's Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation (BCSIR), in Hendry County, Florida (Township 48 South, Range 33 East, Section 14). The BIA has approved and adopted the Environmental Assessment (EA), dated July 2011, prepared by the Seminole Tribe of Florida Environmental Resource Management Department and entitled "Kyle Baker Proposed 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, 6365 Taft Street, Suite 3008, Hollywood, 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.




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Superintendent, Seminole Agency

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Big Cypress Library Hosts Storytelling Workshop for Gymnastics Summer Camp Participants



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress/Immokalee Fitness Specialist Tracy DeLaRosa, center, provides some much-welcomed help to the Fitness Dome Gymnastics Summer Camp Tribal participants during the Big Cypress Library's storytelling session on July 20.



Naji Tobias

Tribal youngsters and staff employees from the Big Cypress Fitness Dome's Summer Camp, along with the Big Cypress Library staff, wear their finished tiger masks at the July 20 storytelling session for the fictional book "How a Rabbit Got Wisdom."



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Fitness Instructor Mijail Iglesias helps out Valholly Frank, 8, with her tiger mask creation.



Top: Big Cypress Tribal youngster Aujua Williams, 7, squeezes an orange in a juicer during the Big Cypress Library/Allied Health Department-sponsored Healthy Snack Eating session at the Willie E. Frank Library on July 27.

Right: The Tribal youngsters dance to the Cha-Cha-Slide in their efforts to shake off their healthy snacks they digested as part of a quick exercise at the healthy eating session.

Naji Tobias



Willie E. Frank Library, Allied Health Department Host Healthy Snack Eating Session



Naji Tobias

Allied Health's Amy Kimberlain, center, pours out a smoothie drink in a cup for Aujua Williams, far left, as the rest of the Tribal youngsters at the Library table get some as well.

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Naples Community Gather at the Juanita Osceola Center to Acknowledge Achievements of Youngsters

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Writer

NAPLES — Naples community members gathered at the Juanita Osceola Center on July 27 to acknowledge the outstanding achievements of their youngsters during the 2010-2011 school year. A luncheon preceded the Education Incentive Awards presentation.

Special recognition went to GED Recipient Dakota W. Osceola for earning her 2011 high school diploma. The 17-year-old daughter of Tina Marie Osceola is preparing to take her SAT in anticipation of enrollment at Edison State College.

"In choosing a career path, I am leaving my options open at this time," Osceola said. "I have an interest in a number of fields but would prefer to complete my first year of rudimentary courses before settling upon a specific major."

Seminole Education Director Emma Johns said, “By earning your GED, you have proven that you are capable of setting and achieving goals. Believe in yourself and your accomplishments will be unlimited.”

The children of the Naples community attend both public and private schools and receive their cultural education at home or through the numerous programs offered by the Traditional Arts program at the Juanita Osceola Center.

Naples Liaison Brian Zepeda joined Johns in presenting the Incentive Awards. Jessica Michelle Osceola received special recognition for attending advanced classes and earning awards and certificates during her junior year in high school. She will enter her senior year this fall with a 4.0 Grade Point Average.

Each of the students received a backpack and school supplies in anticipation of the new school year along with their certificates and incentive awards.



Judy Weeks

Dakota Osceola is recognized for earning her GED by Naples Liaison Brian Zepeda, Seminole Education Director Emma Johns and Higher Education Recruiter Luis Yezquez.



Judy Weeks

School children of the Naples community gather with members of the Seminole Education Department to receive their 2010-2011 Incentive Awards.



Judy Weeks

Naples Liaison Brian Zepeda, center, helps Martin Slavik, left, shoulder his new backpack as Education Director Emma Johns presents his awards.



Judy Weeks

Naples Liaison Brian Zepeda congratulates his children, Ross, Serena and Corinne, on a successful school year.

Trail Students Honored at July 13 Incentive Awards



Elrod Bowers

Chairman James E. Billie addresses the crowd: "One of the most important parts of our culture is our language," he said. "Don't let that disappear."



Elrod Bowers

Education Director Emma Johns, Darian Cypress-Osceola and Chairman James E. Billie.



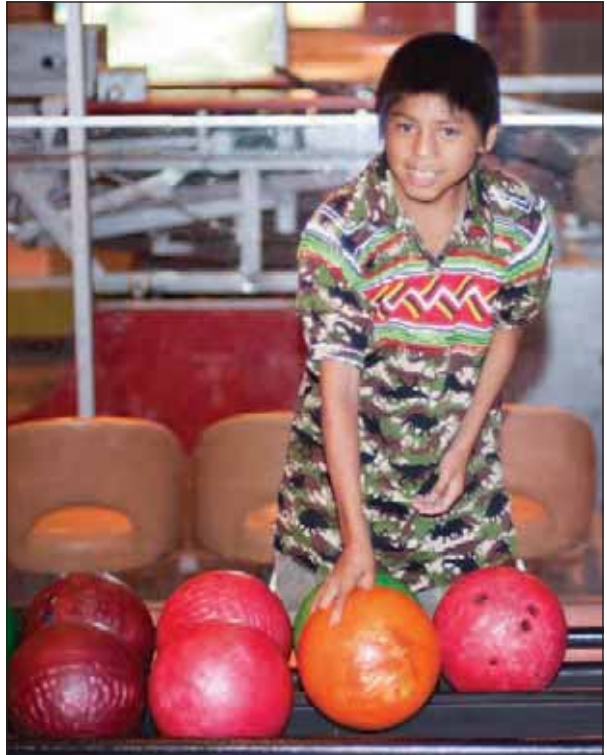
Elrod Bowers

Education Director Emma Johns, Elena Jim and Chairman James E. Billie.



Elrod Bowers

The Education Department staff take a bow at the July 13 Trail Incentive Awards at Strike Lanes in Miami's Dolphin Mall.




Elrod Bowers

Franklin Jumper chooses his ball at the bowling session held after the Incentive Awards.



Elrod Bowers

Education Director Emma Johns welcomes everyone to the Trail Incentive Awards.



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Hollywood/Fort Pierce Tribal Youngsters Grades K-5 Receive Incentive Awards at Dave & Buster's



Naji Tobias

Just before breaking for fun and games at Dave & Buster's in Hollywood, the Hollywood/Fort Pierce K-5 group of Tribal youngsters, along with staff, shared a spotlight moment in conclusion of their Incentive Awards Ceremony on July 14. All of the Tribal award recipients received certificates and gift cards, courtesy of Dave & Buster's.



Naji Tobias

Education Program Manager Tony Bullington and Hollywood kindergarten Tribal student Nikko Doctor are all smiles during the presentation of the Hollywood/Fort Pierce K-5 Incentive Awards.



Naji Tobias

A moment with Education Program Manager Tony Bullington, left, and Hollywood Tribal youngster Chahechom Osceola, right.



Naji Tobias

Hollywood Tribal citizen Cameron Osceola plays pool at Dave & Buster's in Hollywood.



Naji Tobias

Hollywood Tribal citizen Neyom Osceola focuses on her pool shot.



Naji Tobias

With her group of friends looking on, Hollywood Tribal youngster Destiny Diaz, 9, right, powers herself on the Dave & Buster's shuffleboard.

Brighton and Tampa Tribal Leaders Recognize 2011 Tampa Education Incentive Award Recipients



Peter B. Gallagher

Education Director Emma Johns congratulates Caitlyn Garcia on her high school graduation during the 2011 Tampa Incentive Awards that took place at the Museum of Science and Industry in Tampa on July 25.



Peter B. Gallagher

Brighton Tribal Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr., Brighton Tribal Board Rep. Larry Howard and Tampa Liaison Richard Henry with Mason Foret.



Peter B. Gallagher

Brighton Tribal Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr., Brighton Tribal Board Rep. Larry Howard and Tampa Liaison Richard Henry with Katie Smith during the 2011 Tampa Incentive Awards.



Peter B. Gallagher

Education Director Emma Johns presents Gladys Guzman with a plaque at the 2011 Incentive Awards.



Peter B. Gallagher

Brighton Tribal Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr., left, and Brighton Tribal Board Rep. Larry Howard, center, with Bobby Henry.

Announcements

POEMS

“One Purpose”

One purpose left in my life is to show my love ones that I am a better man, a menace no more creating chaos off the rez with a gun in hand.

That saying you live by the gun you die by the gun is true, but as always I defied the odds and survived now I write about it touching the spirit in you.

Back in the day off the rez those streets were rough so I gave it all the hell it could handle, it was common to see a body riddled with bullets or a fiend smoking with a candle.

No teenage years to enjoy just a life of crime, jackin became a game of who can drop more within a certain time.

On the rez I grewed up hunting hog and deer so fools in the streets were easy to track, the Panther in me refuse to let me lose so I mastered the game of jack.

I am not proud of that but at the same time I’m not ashamed, I was playing the cards I was dealt and only I am to blame.

So much lost time in that cruel dark place, so many lives lost gone without a trace.

But here I am still standing tall, Wild Bill you will not be forgotten your Panther spirit still prowls though physically you took a fall.

I look forward to seeing you again one day but until then I will continue to rise, wiser, determined and focused to become an even better man before my demise.

Its been mind over matter and a strong will power too, I didn’t need a college educated counselor to tell me what, where or who.

Only I can make the choice to wash blood from my hands and keep them clean, that’s the reality of it twelve steps is a useless dream.

Sam Cooke said “A change is gonna come” and I did just that, making Aawaache, Chaaye and other loves ones proud of me is where my mind is at.

For the record what will not change is I live, I ride and I will die for you all, to any fool don’t become a statistic with the imprint of this Panther paw.

I’m not a saint and I’m not striving to be one, just a simple man being better so smile 4 the Native son.

One purpose and I will achieve my goal, because I am a warrior from the only unconquered Seminoles.

Ike T. Harjo
Sholooapathi Bolchunchagha
Koowaathi



Time on me

Looking out this window time always slows down
Free as a bird gives way to a whole new meaning
The more things change out there, the more things
Have always stayed the same for me in here.
I’ve seen my own kids grow old through pictures
Only becuz I didn’t truly understand what life had in store
Young, dumb and full of myself lost me 9 years I will never get back
At my age theres no more using young as an excuse
Games give you the chance of losing
And with my life I only plan on winning
In order for one to be real with someone else
That one has to be real with his self first
We all live our own life and yeah we all have fallin
But make no mistake about it, we all don’t get back up.
There has to be that want to above all else
Don’t just be fooled by the next mans words
Watch and you will see the future I know is within

Kiel Jumper

She Says

She says her hearts gone cold becuz of men
I say lets talk about it an start this again.
She says your all birds of a feather that flock together
I stop her right there and show her
When the creator made me he didn’t take from him, him and him.
No I was built as the sun with you as my moon.
She says boy you need to stop cuz that’s not even true
I say then why are you the moon and I the sun
She says why?? Becuz just like the moon is to the sun
Woman is a reflection of me, The man.
Now she just sits there and thinks about it.
As I take the time to say theres no game to play.
Take your time to understand that a man has to be more on point
If his mate is to be an equal that’s looking for success
All I’m saying is that in order for us to gain from each other
We have to bring each other up so smile.

Kiel Jumper

Special Someone

They say something happens to you when you find that special someone
Your heart grows a little softer and your life goes a little slower
It’s like the world around settles down with you.
Oh there’ll always be chaos but now you see thru to the other side
All the childish ways of thinking fades away
Life becomes more about us and we than it does just the I.
One might even get married and be a family man
Never to miss the young wild kid he has within.
And if it’s like they say and that is all I have to give up
Then I’m sure glad I’ve found my own Special Someone.

Kiel Jumper

BIRTHDAYS

Happy 18th Birthday **Tana Bear-Osceola**
August 27, 1993

You have grown into a beautiful young lady.
I love you with all my heart.

Love your **Aunt Mary, Mark and Dayne-Dayne Billie**



Happy late birthday **Zaiden Frank** “Nash-kee”
August 27, 2011

You are growing up so fast into such a handsome little boy. Everyone around you loves you so much. You are so funny and caring. You take care of your big sister and little brother so well. Happy Birthday.

Love **Mommy, daddy, tah-feeke, and Lenny**



HAH-TUNG-KE

Editor’s note: *Hah-tung-ke* is a new feature in which *The Tribune* will profile a Seminole artist and his or her work. This month features Paul Buster and includes the lyrics to one of his songs. *Hah-tung-ke* means music in Mikasuki.

For an audio recording of the song, visit <http://seminolemediaproductions.com/hah-tung-ke/>



Thank God The Seminole Survived

by Paul Buster

Spring comes on
Swamp apple trees turn blossom
Cypress trees turn to green
Baby animals, coons and possums

Spring is a revival of nature
Everything comes alive
Winter cold gives way to spring and summer
Thank God the Seminole survived
Thank God the Seminole survived

Summer heat is on
Alligators don’t mind at all
Sawgrass is on the scene
Before long change will turn to fall

Spring comes on
Swamp apple trees turn blossom
Cypress trees turn to green
Baby animals, coons and possums

Spring is a revival of nature
Everything comes alive
Winter cold gives way to spring and summer
Thank God the Seminole survived
Thank God the Seminole survived

Sitting by the firelight, fingers tweaking a tiny black dial, the rural songwriter finds radio WSM through the gleeks and crackles of his \$2 Motorola brand, battery-powered transistor radio. He twists the coat hangar antenna just right and out jumps Little Jimmy Dickens catchin’ an ol’ cold tater and waiting on the Friday night Grand Old Opry. Tweak it some more and the noisebox puts out the lilt and lollar of Hank Williams’ voice and the imagination takes control: a nightbird screams, moonrise clears the tree moss, a pain of lost love spears the heart, and the world so far from Nashville is so lonesome he could cry.

Then, when the wind blows a certain way and the signal swoons into a cacophony of Cuban rhetoric and multigarble, he picks up an old Kay acoustic guitar and starts to strum and croon. His voice is so close to howlin’ that a tune of songbirds could divebomb every hound on the reservation and never draw out a better bay. The beat is slow, like drips of blackstrap and as individual as a slice of pumpkin pie. Through the sweltering summer nights and crisp fall snaps, the melodies roll on sure and straight as a brand new Uniroyal on a fresh laid moist asphalt road.

This romantic stereotype, claimed by many, is owned by one man. Paul Buster is a Seminole Indian who grew up in the most remote wilderness east of the Mississippi, a place called Big Cypress on the very edge of the radio signal atmospheres, where fish have gatorteeeth, the bears walk around like men and the record producers are too scared to scout for new talent.

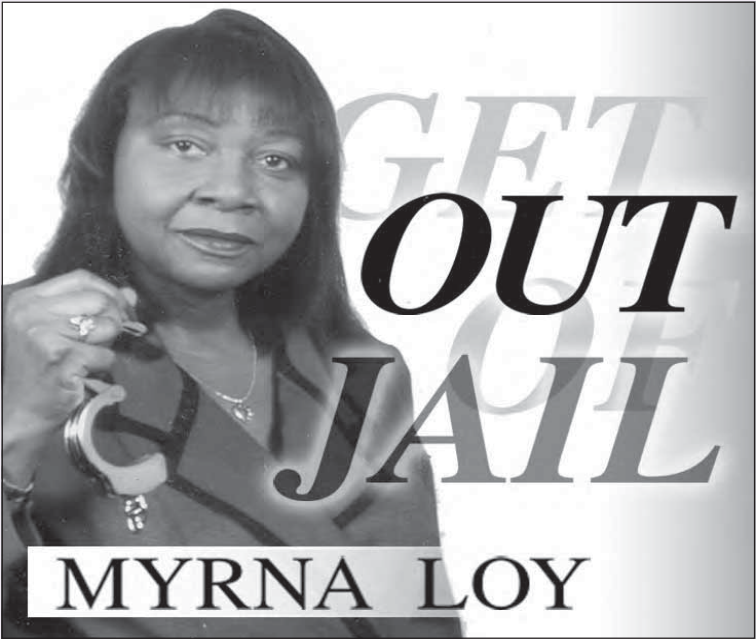
A Miccosukee speaker, the young Paul Buster had no idea what the words meant in the songs he memorized from the radio. But he sang them anyway in the back seat of the family’s rickety ’40 Ford. His mother, Mary Annie Osceola Buster, knew though. She spent her life savings – her last dollar, Paul describes it – on his first guitar.

Eventually, the faraway world inside his transistor radio lured Paul to Nashville where he played with the hottest pickers in town. He jumped onstage at Tootsie’s, like every other songwritin’ dreamer. There he saw the light and came right back home to raise a family, a whole lot of cows and a personal musical catalogue well known about the South Florida outback.

People in these parts call Paul what his dad branded him. Cowbone: that’s the place in the swamp where the lost cows go and can’t find their way back out. That’s the space of mind where Paul Buster comes from, and you can hear it in every note he sings and plays on his album “Blackwater Bayou” and at the live performances he still puts on, occasionally, in and around Seminole Country.

-- Peter B. Gallagher

CLASSIFIEDS



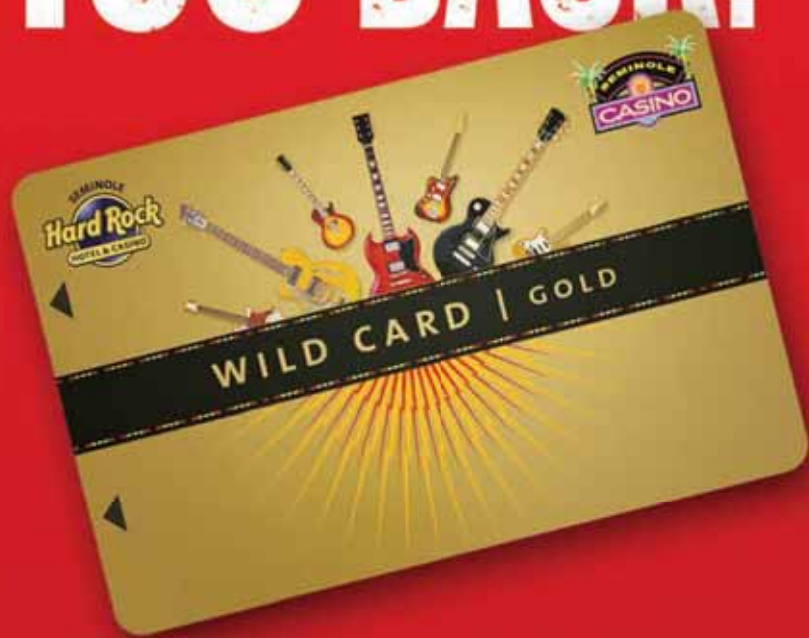
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SportsC

Brighton Honors Late Friend and Teacher Ollie Jones at Park Rededication

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Family, friends and Tribal officials gathered at the Brighton softball field Aug. 4 to remember a late friend and to rededicate a field and park that held a special meaning to him. The late Ollie Jones was remembered for his continued support of Tribal baseball and competition as the community rededicated the Ollie Jones Memorial Park in his honor.

“Today we pay tribute to a man we all know,” Moses Jumper Jr. said, reading from the poem he wrote and read several years back at the late Ollie Jones’s funeral.

Ollie Jones was an avid supporter for intramural baseball and softball and even became the main sponsor of the Brighton traveling baseball team, the O’Jays.

“I always wanted to play baseball,” Johnnie Jones, son of the late Ollie Jones said. “And finally he said, ‘If you want to play, get your boys together and I’ll pay to sponsor you all.’”

Johnnie Jones reminisced about his father buying a station wagon and later a

van from the First Indian Baptist Church to haul the O’Jays from tournament to tournament. Jumper along with Chairman James E. Billie, Brighton Tribal Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr. and Brighton Tribal Board Rep. Larry Howard also shared stories and treasured memories about the late Ollie Jones.

“At one time around the ’70s, there was a name attached to this park,” Rep. Bowers said, “but somewhere along the way we lost track of it.”

A few years back Council Rep. Bowers and Board Rep. Howard got together to discuss reconstructing the Brighton softball fields in an effort to encourage more youth and Native Tribe softball teams to participate and compete.

With the help of Tribal member Marty Johns and his construction company, Native American Construction Co., all three fields, including the park, were redone. They put up new scoreboards, reconstructed fields, installed bleachers and lights and built a concession stand along with a press box with a PA system.

After the completion of the

construction project, officials decided to hold a rededication.

“We thought we owed this much to our late friend, teacher and mentor, Ollie Jones,” Rep. Bowers said.

Family and friends watched as the new scoreboard was unveiled branded with the late Ollie Jones’s name.

“I’d just like to thank the community for doing this,” Johnnie Jones said. “I’m glad they decided to build something new.”

Four generations of the Jones family gathered for the momentous occasion.

“I think it’s cool because it shows that they respected him and he was real liked around here,” said George Micco, grandson of the late Ollie Jones.

Following the rededication and unveiling, the original O’Jays stepped up to bat against the Seminole Legends for an all-around fun scrimmage softball game in memory of the man who touched so many of their lives.

Back in the day the O’Jays were known for their many wins; however, they fell short against the Legends, 2-7, but that certainly didn’t stop the friendly banter and laughs.



Rachel Buxton

Fire Rescue unveils one of the new scoreboards branded with the late Ollie Jones’s name.

“He liked this game,” Micco said. “He and just come out here and have fun.” taught me to always respect everybody — just like in baseball, respect your opponent

[See more photos on page 2C](#)

Tribal Citizen Kamani Smith and Chaka Smith Appear at Third Annual Edgerrin and Javarris James Football Camp



Naji Tobias

Tribal citizen Kamani Smith, center, with NFL legend Edgerrin James and his younger cousin, Indianapolis Colts running back Javarris James at their football camp.



Naji Tobias

Tribal citizen Kamani Smith, 9, of Okeechobee, right, participates in a football agility drill at the third annual Edgerrin and Javarris James Football Camp in Immokalee on July 25.



Naji Tobias

The Okeechobee High School Brahms football team, who competed in the Edgerrin and Javarris James Football Camp’s 7-on-7 tournament with the Immokalee Indians (this year’s 7-on-7 champion) and Orlando-Jones (7-on-7 runner-up), spend a moment with Tribal citizen Kamani Smith, 9, his father/Brahms 7-on-7 Coach Chaka Smith and NFL legend/Immokalee native Edgerrin James.

Big Cypress Seniors Participate in Juanita Billie Pool Tournament



Naji Tobias

Joe Junior Billie finishes at first place overall in the 9-Ball section of the 10th annual Juanita Billie Pool Tournament inside the Big Cypress Senior Center on July 28.



Naji Tobias

Tribal senior Esther Buster sets up the pool balls for play to start the 9-Ball competition.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal senior Louise Osceola comes out on top in the women’s 9-Ball part of the tournament.

[See more photos on page 2C](#)

Tribal Loved Ones Remembered at First Memorial Golf Tournament in Hollywood

“This tournament was organized to recognize Tribal members that have lost children. They are very easily forgotten,” said Elliot Young, Memorial Golf Tournament organizer. “There are a lot of families that have lost children. This is an opportunity for everyone to appreciate their lives.”



Chris C. Jenkins

Elliot Young prepares for his approach to the green on the front nine during the first Memorial Golf Tournament held at The Club at Emerald Hills Golf and Country Club in Hollywood on July 30.



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal senior Steven Bowers tries a chip shot to make par on the third hole during the tournament. The 18-hole, six-team tournament featured Tribal citizens and employees with awards given in specific categories in a blind draw scramble format. It was created to honor lost loved ones within the Tribe.



Chris C. Jenkins

Ronnie Doctor concentrates before teeing off.

Multiple Tribal Elders Participate in 10th Annual Big Cypress Seniors Tournament on Aug. 5



Naji Tobias

A group moment with the Big Cypress Tribal seniors, the Big Cypress Senior Center's staff and the Big Cypress Councilman's Office staff with Big Cypress Tribal Council Rep. Mondo Tiger at the 10th annual Big Cypress Seniors Pool Tournament on Aug. 5.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal elder Esther Buster competes at the 10th annual Big Cypress Seniors Pool Tournament.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal elder Rudy Osceola places third overall in both the men's 8-Ball and 9-Ball portions of the 10th annual Big Cypress Seniors Pool Tournament.

10TH ANNUAL BIG CYPRESS SENIORS TOURNAMENT – RESULTS
8-Ball Men: 1. Joe Junior Billie, 2. Tommy W. Billie, 3. Rudy Osceola;
8-Ball Women: 1. Ruby Osceola, 2. Esther Buster, 3. Louise Osceola;
9-Ball Men: 1. Joe Junior Billie, 2. Alan Jumper, 3. Rudy Osceola;
9-Ball Women: 1. Esther Buster, 2. Louise Osceola.

More photos from the Juanita Billie pool tournament



10TH ANNUAL JUANITA BILLIE POOL TOURNAMENT – RESULTS
Men's 8-Ball: 1. Joe Junior Billie, 2. Ronnie Billie, 3. Thomas W. Billie; Women's 8-Ball: 1. Esther Buster, 2. Louise Osceola, 3. Claudia Doctor; Men's 9-Ball: 1. Joe Junior Billie, 2. Thomas W. Billie; Women's 9-Ball: 1. Louise Osceola, 2. Esther Buster.

Photo above, a photo reflection of the late Juanita Billie.
Left photo, Big Cypress Tribal senior Thomas W. Billie shoots his way to a second-place overall finish in 9-Ball play at the 10th annual Juanita Billie Pool Tournament on July 28.

Naji Tobias

More photos from the Ollie Jones park rededication



Rachel Buxton

Chairman James E. Billie has the honors of being the first up to bat.



Rachel Buxton

Members of the original O'Jays applaud as they see the new scoreboard for the first time.



Left photo, Parker Jones, son of the late Ollie Jones, steps up to bat as his team watches in the background.
Right photo, emcee of the dedication ceremony, Moses Jumper Jr., switches roles for the softball game and becomes the pitcher for the Seminole Legends.

Rachel Buxton

Snapshots From the 2011 Indigenous Games

Photos by Janice Osceola



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Smallwood Store

Chokoloskee: Road Rage in The Last Frontier

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER
Special Projects Reporter

“Have we finally run out of places to despoil elsewhere in Florida in the name of progress? Must we now suffer swarms of developers, like mosquitoes in a hot windless summer day, here in the paradise of the last frontier?” —Peter Matthiessen, author “Killing Mr. Watson”

CHOKOLOSKEE — Not many roads down here in the Last Frontier. Fact is, the extreme bottom Southwest Florida hinterlands of the United States, where the Everglades, Ten Thousand Islands and Big Cypress lie, is considered the largest, most roadless area in the lower 48 states.

For that reason alone, it’s a big deal when they come and take a road OUT.

But what happened on tiny Chokoloskee Island (population: 393) in the early dawn hours of Thursday, April 14 is a Florida black-topped nightmare. A crew of workers and bulldozers – organized by a group of Highlands County developers, supervised by a foreman with a back pocket full of county OKs and I don’t knows, monitored by a group of do-nothing Collier County Sheriff’s Deputies – crept into this quiet fishing village before dawn, erected a tall chain link fence, slapped it up with green tarp and little square eye-holes, and took out Mamie Street, a main drag through Chokoloskee for more than 100 years.

They chopped Mamie up, ruined at least three layers of the taxpayers’ asphalt and spat her out into piles of limestone rubble and ancient bits of Calusa Indian mound, leaving her to lie in pools of mosquito water and cragged landscape like you see on TV in Beirut. And, when the dust cleared, access to one of Florida’s most historic structures was completely shut down: the reddish weathered peckerwooden, 95-year-old Smallwood Store and Trading Post. Also blocked from access was Bill and Patricia Vaughn’s home of 50 years.

A wealthy assembly of outside investors wanted to develop the tip of the Last Frontier and, darn it, Mamie Street was in their way. The Vaughns? Tough luck, Bill – This is Florida. Shouldn’t live where developers want to go. “We had no warning whatsoever,” said Bill Vaughn, who, like every other character in this story, stormed off to find a lawyer.

And the Smallwood Store? A sacred place to Seminole Indians and Florida pioneers since 1906, nearly 40 years on the National Register of Historic Places . . . Eight days after the road was removed, the trucks all left. Not a single worker has returned to the site. More than \$50,000 worth of business rolled into Chokoloskee, saw the fence, turned around and got the heck out of town. Area seafood restaurants are talking class action suit. Worst off season since Hurricane Andrew.

Road rage wasteland.

“Smallwood Store is collateral damage to them. That’s all,” said Lynn Smallwood McMillin, granddaughter of the founder and the Store’s current manager, still in shock. “I guess this is how it happens all over Florida. It’s how everything gets ruined. They just come in and take you down. And then get away with it. I just never thought they’d ever find us waaayy down here.”

In the corner, her husband, Gary, sits. He won’t say a word, just seethes. A big Viking of a man with a sunburnt face, Gary Mac is a veteran guide and expert fisherman who knows the Ten Thousand Islands like the skeeter bites on the back of his arm; Gary McMillin’s angry. If he were a hurricane, he’s already Category 2. You can almost tell what he’d like to do about it. Right now, he just seethes.

Over in Naples, the County seat an hour away, Sheriff Kevin Rambosk and County Attorney Jeffery Klatzkow aren’t seething. They are just mute. They refuse to disclose to this newspaper why they both looked the other way while the road came down. Or how they feel now, since the County Commission has filed a lawsuit demanding the developers reverse everything that happened on April 14. . . under their watch.

↔

The modern settlement of Chokoloskee Island began in 1874. Early residents farmed, fished and caught turtles, selling surpluses in Key West. Ten years later, up in South Georgia, 11-year-old Charles Sherod “Ted” Smallwood ran away from a mean stepmother and his boyhood home. He somehow grew to manhood wandering Ybor City, Cuba, the Bahamas and Chokoloskee, always working with boats. He finally settled down and married Mamie Ulala House of Chokoloskee in 1897. In 1906, Ted opened his famous Smallwood Store and Indian Trading Post right on the waterfront, at the end of the dirt road he named for his wife.

The Store served as the town’s post office for the next 68 years. Mail came by boat from Key West, Punta Gorda, Fort Myers and Everglades City – until the causeway to Chokoloskee Island was completed in 1956. Ted would blow a conch shell to alert Islanders when the mail arrived.

The original store fell to a hurricane in 1916 and was immediately rebuilt on the same point, at 360 Mamie St., looking out at the Ten Thousand Islands. Though this was the edge of the middle of nowhere, Smallwood Store operated as a main center of commerce for the Everglades, where an eclectic clientele of Seminole Indians (emerging from their swamp hideouts unsure if the Wars were over), outlaws, hermits, traveling preachers, passing ship crews and scores of fishermen, turtle-men, plume hunters and crabbers were surviving in the watery paradise that was then, as now, the bottom of Florida.

History tells us Ted Smallwood gave credit to the Seminoles, traded with them fairly, gave medicine when they were ill. Like the Stranahans of pioneer Fort Lauderdale, the Smallwoods of Chokoloskee provided a critical transition for the scattered Seminoles, from despair in the outback to hope in the new frontier.

In 1910, outlaw turned farmer Edgar Watson was gunned down at the Store by a posse of town residents in one of American history’s most blatant examples of frontier vigilante justice. Watson, pursued by bounty



Peter B. Gallagher

Every few days, Smallwood Store Manager Lynn McMillin checks on the Store, closed since April 14.

hunters for numerous murderous misdeeds out West, had taken to “paying” his local farmworkers with bullets through their hearts on payday; a large crowd opened fire when he arrived in his dinghy at the Smallwood Store on Oct. 24. The incident has been memorialized in song and in legend, most prominently in Peter Matthiessen’s award-winning 1990 novel “Killing Mr. Watson.”

Ted Smallwood died in 1951 but his Store remained open to serve as the area’s main grocery store, bank, pharmacy and boat stop until it closed in 1982. Granddaughter Lynn Smallwood reopened the building in 1989 as a Museum, which, today is credited with attracting more than 30,000 annual visitors to the rugged old building on Mamie Street, which McMillin swears has been paved by the County “at least three times since Hurricane Andrew (1992).”

An odd memorandum written by Assistant County Attorney Stephen Williams, obtained by *The Tribune*, displays his opinion that there are actually only two public roads on the entire three-tenths square mile island – Chokoloskee Drive East and Chokoloskee Drive West. All other roads are present, states the memo “via private access agreements.” The County Attorney refused to talk with *The Seminole Tribune* about the memo or the Smallwood issue.

On Dec. 28, 1999, urged by Chairman James E. Billie, the Seminole Tribe of Florida purchased 4.13 acres of Chokoloskee land from the Smallwood family for \$984,000. It connected with a small mangrove parcel Billie and the Tribe had purchased in 1994, just north and east of the Store.

The land was contiguous to the Smallwood Store property and included the old Blue Heron motel, a decrepit waterfront boat slip area, and Mamie Street, which came through the center of the property, then, as now, the only legal access to the Store. It was Chairman Billie’s vision to save the property from development by creating a marina and park to complement the Smallwood Store. The purchase would also support Billie’s other dream of creating an authentic Indian/fishing village area nearby that could re-imagine the past for visiting students.

These properties had always been in the Smallwood family, said Lynn McMillin: “My mother was getting too old to run the motel and care for the property so she decided to sell it to the Seminoles because she knew that James Billie would never let anything bad happen to it, that he would make sure the land always supported and protected the Store.”

In December 2004, however, James E. Billie was out of office. The Seminole Tribe abruptly sold the property to Florida Georgia Grove, LLC (FGG), much to the chagrin of both Billie, who says the sale was hidden from Tribal members and Lynn McMillin, who knew nothing of her new neighbors. “The Tribe should have never sold it,” she said. “They knew that property was special to James Billie. I think some of those leaders just wanted to rub salt in his wounds.”

Leonard C. Smith III, a Highlands County citrus grower, founded the FGG partnership in 2002 with Sebring Attorney W. James Kelly. The entire property, including the mangrove lot, was purchased from the Tribe for \$1.5 million. The Collier County Appraiser assesses that property today at \$990,000, about 66 percent of its purchased value – about what Billie and the Tribe paid in 1999.

“I’ll be honest with you, we never had any plans to develop this property. We had just sold a grove in Hendry County, and this came up and it looked like a good deal. We were going to hold on to it and sell it later.



Photo courtesy of Google Earth

Aerial view of the property. Red: FGG fence line; Yellow: Mamie Street removed; Green: Smallwood Store.

So, please don’t call us developers. We are investors,” said Kelly, whose father, the Hon. Clifton Kelly, was the judge who set Arcadia farmworker James Richardson free after a 1988 *Seminole Tribune* series proved his innocence in the murder of his seven children. “The last thing we wanted to do was upset the community.”

“Well, if that’s the case, they should have stayed the hell away from the Smallwood Store,” said Lee “Leebo” Noble, owner of Leebo’s Rock Bottom Bar, Everglades City’s main drinking establishment. “You mess with Smallwood, you messin’ with all of us natives. That store been mindin’ its own bidness out there for a hundred years. Leave it alone!”

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Here’s how it all went down.

It started with a boat ramp.

In late 2004, around the same time FGG was purchasing the Seminole Tribe’s Chokoloskee parcels, Collier County Commissioner Jim Coletta inspired his colleagues to declare a “major need” for a public (free) boat ramp in the Everglades City/Chokoloskee/Western Everglades area – one of Florida’s top saltwater fishing and boating spots. The nonprofit Trust For Public Land agreed to pursue, negotiate and buy boat ramp property, with the county’s guidance.

At first, the new Florida-Georgia Grove LLC (FGG) purchase seemed to fit the Trust profile perfectly. These were wealthy men. Several were former public servants. And they all claimed to be investors and not developers. They began talking with the Trust. “We wanted to build the marina and boat ramp, make a real nice park and then sell it to the County,” remembered FGG Attorney Jim Kelly. “Right away they all seemed interested. Then the County just pulled out of the deal.”

Commissioner Coletta remembered that when FGG came forward with plans to remove and replace the seawall and docks, dredge and install a boat ramp, then sell it to the County, Collier officials said no. “That location would have required extensive permitting,” Coletta said. “Sure we talked with them. They wanted to sell us the whole tract for a park. It was too expensive.”

John Garrison, director of the Trust’s Southwest Florida office, recalled the County was never “real hot” on the idea: “That was, of course, key to us. We talked awhile to the developers but it all broke off when the County officially pulled out.” The Trust prefers longtime landowners concerned less with turning a profit than ensuring their property is preserved for future generations or available to the public – not quite the profile of FGG. “Back then, the real estate market was booming around Naples. Property was going up 5 percent a month,” Garrison recalled. “We were not really interested in buying the big parcel just to put in a boat ramp.”

The County actually reconsidered the issue a year later and hired an environmental engineering firm for a property analysis. The firm’s findings led Collier officials to again reject the property, citing the extent of dredging and permitting needed. A marina also didn’t mesh with the county’s Manatee Protection Plan.

The County eventually purchased the Port of the Islands Marina in 2008, established a boat ramp there and, in 2010, with the help of the National Trust, added another public ramp in Goodland. Coletta said the County has no need or the money to pursue anymore marina sites.



Peter B. Gallagher

Famed Everglades author Marjory Stoneman Douglas, wearing a Seminole-style dress, was escorted to the Smallwood Store by Chairman Billie in 1996.



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki

A common scene in pre-1950 Seminole history: a family visit to the Smallwood Store.

Undaunted, Florida-Georgia then pursued construction on its own. As expected, permitting to re-dig the boat basin and replace the seawall was lengthy and expensive. And the recession was sending land values south. It was absolutely necessary, FGG point man Gary Blackman said, explaining that “all of the value in the land is the ability to have a boat basin.” Workers partially dredged out the basin and readied the banks for a concrete and steel seawall. Then work stopped.

Blackman, a former used car salesman and Sebring race car driver, had taken over the lead after Smith died, unexpectedly. And Blackman had a plan.

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“No we don’t really have any plan for a development. We aren’t even developers. But we HAD to take that road out. I mean, you don’t want to have people going back and forth all day through the middle of your private property, do you?” – W. James Kelly, Sebring attorney for FGG

In early November, FGG officials Blackman, Kelly and Greg Griffin met with Lynn McMillin beneath a giant round chickee built by Chairman Billie several years ago behind the McMillin’s home. They presented her with an unsubmitted (unsigned) Joint Environmental Resource Permit application to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) and Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) that FGG had taken out Oct. 3. They mentioned removing Mamie Street for the first time. They had a plan, though. “They told me, ‘We know we have to give you access, but we are going to pursue permits to get you access through your own property. We will pay for it, pave it, give you a brand new road,’” Lynn McMillin said. “All I had to do was sign and submit the application in my name.”

The proposed access road, marked on the deed, would come off Calusa Drive (another private neighborhood road in use for decades), travel through 6,000 square feet of mangrove tidal wetlands (owned by the Smallwoods) west to the Store. FGG proposed to build a 30x200 asphalt road, with drainage. They would pay for all application and permit fees. “We said we would repave and improve Calusa all the way up if we had to,” Kelly said. “First class, flowers, anything, however Lynn wanted it.”

Lynn McMillan says she never wanted to pave the easement but went ahead with the partnership’s plans as a way to avoid costly litigation: “My lawyer said, ‘Let’s try to work with ‘em.’ He also said, ‘That’s a mangrove area; they will never get the permits.’”

Out on Calusa Road neighbors caught wind of the plan. One-hundred-fifty cars a day coming through their quiet area, where a dozen children are used to playing all over the street, did not sit well with anyone. They were clear: “We don’t want Smallwood traffic.” They threatened to get a lawyer.

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McMillin signed the application on Nov. 4. She certified she was the property owner and agreed to provide federal inspectors access to the site. FGG also talked her into allowing contractor Griffin of Bayhead Consulting, Inc., a FGG subsidiary, to act on her behalf. The application was received by USACOE on Nov. 24, 2010.

Titled “Smallwood Store Driveway,” the project advocated the “construction or operation of a new system, other than a solid waste facility, including dredging in, on, or over wetlands and other surface waters.” They noted that only in “times of extremely high tides or severe storm events does this area collect and hold water.” FGG offered to purchase .065 credits in the Little Pine Island Mitigation Bank to offset the impact of the project.

Perfect solution? Take out Mamie Street and put in another access road off Calusa. Everybody happy.

“I really didn’t want to do it, but I didn’t know what else to do. These were big talkers. They seemed sure of what they could do,” McMillin said. “So I signed.”

It didn’t work out quite that way.

The objections to the application came in swiftly, all negative. The property was subject to tidal flooding. The “proposed filling of the mangroves for roadway construction” would violate the Clean Water Act,” create an “adverse impact to Chokoloskee Bay,” and mess with the “estuarine food chain.” National Marine Fisheries wanted to know why this Project was necessary, since “access to the site is already provided by Mamie Street.” USACOE engineers echoed that sentiment in its own remarks. The great majority of public commentors either felt the project was pointless “because Mamie Street is already there” or felt the Project would create a “safety hazard” for children playing on Calusa Drive.

On March 11, the USACOE sent an e-mail to Griffin asking about FGG’s plans to fence their property and take away Mamie Street. Griffin replied four days later, baring the soul of FGG’s scheme: Griffin was clear and to the point. With a wink toward the Project, he self-affirmed “(Mamie Street) was an encroachment and not an easement . . . (The Smallwoods) clearly have no suitable upland alternative . . . physically there appears to be an alternative access, legally there is not.”

As for the fence: Griffin promised to show records of interference from local residents in past projects he had worked at Chokoloskee. “FGG exercises its legal right to fence its property for the purposes of construction safety and risk management . . . at which time all physical remnants of the suitable upland alternative are no longer observable. This will likely lead to an injunction and a hearing . . .”

“It will be noted that all possible alternatives to provide Ted Smallwood’s Store like-kind access (the asphalt road as proposed) at the expense of FGG have been explored, and that the only viable option necessitated the removal of Mamie Street to meet the 404(b)91) requirement regarding suitable upland alternatives in order to obtain the USACOE permit.”

In other words, if it came down to it, they would take out Mamie Street and then there would be no other alternative access unless they cut through the mangroves as proposed. The law says a landowner must have upland access to his or her property.

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In an April 4 meeting attended by FGG representatives Griffin, Kelly and Blackman, the USACOE staff had bad news. Lynn Smallwood’s application for the new access road would be denied. Official notice would come later. Lynn McMillin was not there; she was not notified of the meeting.

“They knew that if I had been there and heard the bad news that I would have gone and sought an injunction to prevent them from closing down the Store with their fence and tearing up the road,” McMillin said.

“I’m not saying she’s not right,” said Kelly, who had a different take

on the meeting than anyone else. “But the Army Corps was very cordial. They said it had to go to legal. They did not say they would deny it.”

The County was also not notified. “Oh, we knew they were going to start tearing things up, just not when. We tried everything we could, but . . .” Commissioner Coletta’s voice trails off. “We tried the EPA, we talked to the Seminole Tribe, we sent out Code Enforcement and they found everything in order. We contacted all the state agencies, and, environmentally, they had everything in order. These guys really did their homework.”

On Wednesday, April 13, Lynn McMillin received a strange fax late in the afternoon. It was a letter of resignation from (her “representative” on the USACOE application) Greg Griffin, who cited an unnamed “conflict of interest,” as the reason he had to suddenly step down, in mid-application, as her representative for the USACOE permit. “I thought, ‘How odd,’ why would he do that?” remembered McMillin.

“We found out the next morning.”

The first call came to the Collier County Sheriff’s dispatch center at 7:51 a.m. Thursday, April 14 by a Chokoloskee resident who said a “contractor was attempting to fence off his property.” Witnesses report seeing several Sheriff’s cruisers and multiple deputies on the scene, but Collier County Sheriff’s records report only one deputy was sent to the scene, who deemed the contractor – none other than Greg Griffin, Lynn Smallwood’s former representative – “properly permitted” in an 8:19 a.m. radio to dispatcher Patricia Clemons.

“There was a traffic jam out here. There were four cop cars. Neighbors all over the streets. The developers claimed later they had been getting death threats,” said McMillin, who adds, “anytime those guys came to the property, there were deputies escorting them. The deputies would wait outside the fence until they left. Talk about a misuse of taxpayers dollars – protecting these guys while they take out a road that the County is now suing to have put back!”

Citing the pending lawsuit, Sheriff Rambosk refuses to comment. His staff, however, notified *The Tribune* that they have no record of any deputies escorting persons to and from the Mamie Street site.

Coletta viewed the rubble at a press conference the next day, promising to help the Smallwood Store owners find an attorney using county legal aid. (The store is officially owned by a nonprofit Ted Smallwood trust) He told reporters that, in his opinion, the law is clear that any road maintained by the County for four or more years is deemed dedicated to the public, whether or not local officials have formally dedicated the roadway as a highway. In real estate language, it is called a “prescriptive easement.”

“The County has been taking care of Mamie Street for decades,” said Coletta, who pointed to a 1972 “County streets” document, which recognizes Mamie Street as a County road. “What really bothers me is the way they did it. No one came and asked us to vacate the road, so they could tear it up,” said Coletta, who plays the part of Ed Watson in an annual play production of “Killing Mr. Watson.” “If we knew ahead of time, we would not have let them do it.”

“I got freaked out on what Gary (Blackman) and Greg (Griffin) did,” Kelly said. “They got excited and just took action. It’s all about moving the project forward.”

FGG’s Griffin said the company’s hand was forced when it learned at the April 4 meeting that USACOE was going to recommend denial of McMillin’s application for the alternate access road: “There is an appropriate access site along lot 12 to the Smallwood Store to Calusa Drive that we are willing to pay for the entire project to solve the problem so that we can develop our property. Mamie Street winds right through our property to the Smallwood Store. Since the Army Corps plans to deny that permit, we had no other choice but to take out Mamie Street so that it could not be considered an access source.”

“We told them that their building encroached on our property, but that we would work it out if the Corps approved the permit request,” Griffin said. “We will deed the portion of the land that encroaches to them. We also would pay to develop a (roadway) to the (Smallwood property) from Calusa Drive. We still will do that if the Corps approves the permit request.

“We don’t want to interfere with the Smallwood property, or the museum. We also have offered to pay any down time at the store they experience from the new access construction. We have been working on this project with the Department of Environmental Protection and the Army Corps for two and a half years.



Peter B. Gallagher

Resplendent in long shirts, Tommy Osceola, Little Tiger Tail, Cypress Billie and Dixie hang out at the Smallwood Store, Chokoloskee’s U.S. Post Office for 68 years.



Peter B. Gallagher

The oldest Seminoles, Susie Billie and Buffalo Jim, in a 1999 photo next to the Smallwood Store.



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-K

The Store has many rare Seminole photos on view like this 1920s unidentified girl in elaborate bead necklaces.

“It seems we just keep beating our heads against the wall. We don’t want to make everyone mad, but we don’t think our request is unreasonable. We decided to use the shock all approach, even though we know it wasn’t politically correct.”

“He wants to force the County to buy it,” McMillin said. “He came right out and admitted it. He’s what you call an honest thief!”

FGG attorney Kelly said Griffin spoke out of turn: “He spoke unbeknownst to me. I would have rather that he didn’t come right out and say that. He was out of bounds to say those things. Blackman was supposed to be the lead dog down there.

“To say that we took out that road just to force the Army Corps to give us a permit is total bull----.”

McMillin was further surprised later that afternoon when she received an angry call from Brianne McGuffie of the USACOE. It was the first call she had ever received from the Army Corps. “She was mad. She told me that she wanted to make it clear that my taking that road out was not going to affect the decision of the Army Corps of Engineers on my permit. I was speechless! Then she told me about the April 4 meeting where they told us the application would be denied.”

“I told her, ‘Excuse me. I wasn’t at that meeting, I didn’t take out that road. I wasn’t there!’”

On Saturday, April 16, 200 sport bicyclists and a tour bus filled with tourists were seen lurking around Chokoloskee, said McMillin. “They wandered around and left. It’s been that way ever since. Here we have big DOT signs on I-75, SR 29, the Tamiami Trail. We’re even on the state’s Florida Heritage Trail, but the developers took down our signs near the Store. We put one up that said ‘Closed No Access,’ and they took that down, too.”

A week later, on April 25, the Vaughns filed a suit in Collier County Circuit Court demanding FGG give them access to their home. The same day, a *Naples Daily News* editorial declared, “We haven’t seen an example of developer hardball like this in some time.”

The April 29 edition of the area’s bi-weekly Mullet Rapper newspaper carried a front page letter from 11-year-old Chokoloskee native Tori Wells: “Dear Buyer & Destroyer of Mamie Street,” it began, “You have demolished the land where I and all my family and friends have been



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki

Mamie Street began as a dirt path and, over time, became an asphalt two lane maintained by Collier County.



Peter B. Gallagher

Mamie Street today: a pile of rubble and debris leading up to the Smallwood Store.

raised. Today was the first time I saw the fence you put up, and I cried. That road is our heritage and because of you, it is no longer there.”

In early May, state DEP spokeswoman Dee Ann Miller announced a site inspection of the Mamie Street incident, declaring her agency never permitted work on the property’s interior. With the OK of his peers on the Commission, Coletta met in person with FGG. He came away disappointed: “I gave them every opportunity to build that road back, without going to court. They are in a negative situation. It’s unbelievable but they chose to destroy the goodwill of the people of Chokoloskee.

“It is unbelievable that people of such high caliber – former public servants, a clerk of courts, respected attorneys – would do this.”

FGG’s Blackman told Coletta he would sell the property for \$3 million – twice what they paid for it – and walk away: “Here’s a perfect opportunity to make Ms. McMillan happy, make everyone happy,” he told *Naples Daily News*.

Coletta was insulted: “They made a land purchase and got hit by the recession. Period. They are between a rock and a hard place. They can never develop it. Four out of five County Commissioners must agree on a zoning change. I can assure you that ain’t gonna happen. They made a bad deal. I don’t see us as the entity that’s going to have to bail them out.”

“Besides, the County does not have \$3 million. No one is going to buy it at that price. I met with them. We had a hell of a talk. Here were all the cards on the table. I told them, open the access to the Smallwood Store, and then we’ll talk about everything else. They said, essentially, ‘See you in court.’”

FGG’s Kelly calls Coletta “Foghorn Leghorn,” after the old pompous Warner Brothers rooster: “I can assure you we do not want to be where we are right now. But ol’ Commissioner Foghorn’s got us pegged as three headed monsters. The County Attorney told him we were legal, but he jumped in screaming and hollering, anyway. Wait till we get him under oath in a deposition. I’m sick and tired of him trashing us in the newspapers, trying to get re-elected. People will soon find out: This guy is a real piece of work!”

On Tuesday, May 10, angry Commissioners directed the County Attorney to join the Smallwood Store in a suit against FGG for cutting access to the Store. They want Mamie Street restored. Commissioner Fred Coyne said he wanted to “smack (Blackman) upside the head with a two-by-four.”

The County/Smallwood suit was officially filed May 26, contending that for more than 70 years access to the store was provided using the portion of Mamie Street on FGG property. The suit goes on to say the street was constructed by a government entity and has been maintained

by the County staff for more than seven years. Coletta produced documents and a statement from former County traffic engineer George Archibald, who claimed that Mamie Street was a County road and is public.

The suit, before Judge Hugh Hayes, is scheduled for a first hearing Sept. 8 at the Collier County Courthouse. In a letter to Collier County officials, author Peter Matthiesen eloquently states Chokoloskee’s public sentiment: “On whose watch does this insanity occur? Who will be the Judge and Sheriff and the County Commissioners whose names will be bronzed on the annals of infamy, forever despised as the foolish ones who opened the door?”

A month later, a Collier County judge ordered FGG to open access to William and Patricia Vaughn’s home. FGG obliged and moved their fence a few feet, just enough to squeeze a vehicle from Chokoloskee Drive and the 200 feet to the Vaughn’s front step. Inside the boarded Smallwood Store, dust is accumulating on the artifacts, the wood is creaking with the wind. Money saved over the years to do structural repairs on the Store has now gone to the McMillin attorneys. A committee is meeting Sept. 14 to discuss a fundraising event.

On July 29, a large package arrived at Lynn McMillin’s door. It was the USACOE application decision. Denied. The document invited McMillin to resubmit if the situation changed.

Ironically, on Aug. 2, the area celebrated the unveiling of four new Neighborhood Watch signs in the communities of Everglades City, Chokoloskee, Plantation Island and Copeland. “Neighborhood Watch? It’s a little late for that. Someone should have been watching the neighborhood when those bone-heads came down and took out that road,” said bar owner Leebo. “Everybody’s talking about this.”

“Well how DO these guys continue to get away with this,” a customer asked: “I mean, if the Sheriff won’t help, if the County don’t care, isn’t it time for frontier justice? How come a group of good ole boys don’t just go out and do a ‘Mr. Watson’ on those guys?”

Leebo looked up with a sad look on his face, voice real low. “Now, if I accidentally touch you, I might go to jail. That’s the times we live in. You can sneak in town and take up a road. But you can’t look a man in the eye.”

“The reason they don’t do a ‘Mr. Waston’ on those boys is it’s not the 1880s anymore, son. Hell, the 1880s are long gone. They’ve been gone since around 1994.”

“You kill Mr. Watson today, they’ll put you in jail.”

Next issue – Part II: “Showdown at the Collier County Courthouse.”



Peter B. Gallagher

Bar owner “Leebo” says times have changed in the Last Frontier: “You kill Mr. Watson today, they’ll put you in jail.”



Atilano Nunez

There are Seminole jackets, dolls, Florida books and more on display, and available for purchase, at the Smallwood Store Museum . . . when it is open.



Atilano Nunez

Today, the Store looks very much like it did before it closed in 1982. It reopened in 1989 as a Museum. It is filled with Florida Indian artifacts, from the Calusa to the Seminole.

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