



Longtime teacher Alison McCulloch retires
EDUCATION ♦ 1B

Prevent violence against Native American women
COMMUNITY ♦ 3A

Indian National Finals Rodeo 2011
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The Seminole

Voice of the Unconquered



Tribune

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Seminole royalty represent Tribe at annual FSU homecoming events

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

TALLAHASSEE — New faces and old traditions capped off festivities for the annual Florida State University homecoming weekend.

The newly crowned Miss Florida Seminole Princess Jewel Buck and Junior Miss Jaryaca Baker, joined by a host of other Tribal alumni, got their first taste of the whirlwind experience Nov. 18-19.

“It was a great experience,” Buck said. “I got to meet a lot of people and it was an honor to represent my Tribe like this. I can’t describe it all. It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience.”

The annual homecoming parade ushered in the day on Nov. 18 and proceeded on its usual route through the FSU campus with several Tribal citizens participating.

Tribal citizen Emma Urbina, Buck’s mother, said she enjoyed the first-time experience. “I was very excited for Jewel,” Urbina said. “It was all very fun because I didn’t know what to expect coming in. I am still so proud of her.”

Later in the evening, the Tallahassee Leon County Civic Center hosted the annual Pow Wow with special guest comedian and CBS *Late Late Show* host Craig Ferguson entertaining students and guests.

One new addition this year was the first Seminole Florida State University alumni group, which represented the Seminole Tribe of Florida. Princess Committee Chairwoman Wanda Bowers introduced the group, called the “Seminole Tribe FSU Alumni.”

“We (the Seminole Tribe) continue to support FSU so much that the Tribe should recognize our own graduates for their accomplishments,” Chairwoman Bowers said. “This will hopefully motivate our kids also. It’s a good way to show support through education.”

This year’s Tribal alumni participants included: Kyle Doney, Doug Zepeda, Emily Osceola-Branch, Christine McCall, D’Anna Osceola, Rita Gopher, Brian Zepeda and Toni Sanchez.

For the fourth time, Doney participated in the homecoming tradition of the flaming spear toss in the middle of Bobby Bowden Field at Doak Campbell Stadium. The tradition of more than 30 years symbolizes the Seminoles’ warrior spirit while igniting the crowd of thousands before the game.

“Even though I’ve done it before, it doesn’t take away from the fact that it was awesome,” said Doney, a member of the Alumni Association Board of Directors. “Even in practice my heart was racing.”

Beginning in 1978 in a home game versus Oklahoma State, the much-famed pregame rite featured an FSU student dressed in traditional Seminole regalia and makeup playing the role of the legendary Chief Osceola riding a horse named Renegade. Both have become steadfast traditions of FSU football, motivating thousands in attendance with tremendous dedication.

Allen Durham, program director of Renegade and Osceola, said he has taken the job seriously ever since he took over the program in 2007. He assumed the role after the retirement of his father, Bill Durham, a 1965 FSU graduate who designed, developed and paid for the program.

“Just to have the honor of playing the role of Osceola and



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal royalty, led by the reigning Miss Florida Seminole Princess Jewel Buck, middle, and Junior Miss Florida Jaryaca Baker, right, wave to the crowd during the Florida State University homecoming game.

knowing what he stood for is important,” said Durham, who played the role from 1992-94. Durham was also part of the Seminoles’ first national championship under legendary former head coach Bobby Bowden in 1993. “They (the students) need to have a great respect for the spirit of who they are personifying.”

In order to take on the coveted role of Osceola, students must maintain a 3.0 GPA, complete an essay on their desire to play the role, read about the life and impact of Osceola and have extensive experience riding horses, among other criteria.

“We want to show continued respect to the Tribe,” Durham said. “Kyle (Doney) was a graduate; his interest and the Tribe’s support is a huge honor for us at Florida State University to have.”

Spirits were also high coming into the game, as FSU put their five-game winning streak on the line against foe Virginia in a pivotal conference match-up on the gridiron. However, in heartbreaking defeat, the Noles lost 13-14 on a missed 42-yard field goal attempt in the last minute. The Seminoles would end their regular season on a high note the following week, beating in-state rival Florida 21-7 and finishing with an 8-4 mark.

♦ See more FSU photos on page 5A

Tribal members featured on National Geographic Channel



© Gabby Nickerson/Spectrum Field Productions, LLC

Everett Osceola sits on alligator's back during the filming of an episode of *Swamp Men*.

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — It’s all about the swamp.

The National Geographic television network has filmed a series entitled *Swamp Men* at the Big Cypress Reservation for the past three seasons, and it has generated a lot of positive buzz for the Tribe.

Several Tribal citizens have played an integral role in how the show has come about since its 2009 inception, adding to the authenticity and credibility of the well-received program.

Big Cypress Tribal citizen Cory Wilcox, one of two Tribal members involved with *Swamp Men* since the beginning, said the experience of being seen on televisions worldwide has been one he’ll never forget.

Wilcox was born in Fort Pierce, but he has spent most of his life on the Big Cypress Reservation.

“Being a part of *Swamp Men* has impacted my life to the point where I am known better by my people within the Tribe,” said Wilcox, who has been working with the Tribe’s Wildlife Department

(formerly called Hunting Adventures) for the past nine years.

“The reason why I appear on the show is because I’m known for removing hogs and buffalo from the Billie Swamp Safari,” Wilcox said. “Until recently, when I wasn’t guiding hunts for the (Wildlife) Department, my job included trapping of mainly hogs, American bison and Asian water buffalo. I also had to replenish the game that had been harvested by hunters. So, because of my knowledge in the field of trapping, I was asked to be a part of the *Swamp Men* show.”

Meanwhile, fellow Big Cypress Tribal citizen Billy Walker, the other Tribal member in the *Swamp Men* since the start, has been involved with the series as a cultural adviser for the cast. Walker said that two of his cousins, Tribal citizens Jacob “Jay” Osceola and Brian Zepeda, suggested him.

“Anything that has to do with culture, they (Jacob and Brian) wanted a Tribal member to come in and share some knowledge with the world,” Walker said. “So I went out there as an alligator wrestler

♦ See SWAMP MEN on page 2A

Eighth Huggins Big Ballers basketball tourney draws crowd



Chris C. Jenkins

Tournament organizer Norman Huggins, left, and son Lucas Huggins, middle, join womens and mens MVPs Gwynn Grant and Gary Parker. The tournament is put on every year in memory of Norman's son Randall Huggins.

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — The memories of Tribal citizen Randall Huggins still remain strong years after his passing. The eighth annual Memorial Big Ballers Basketball Tournament and Car Show kicked off with high hopes, strong competition, good food and great prizes for teams and car enthusiasts near and far.

This year, teams from several states competed in the double elimination event. From recreational to professional, 17 mens and 10 womens teams participated. Trophies were awarded to the winners, and the first place team received a \$12,000 prize.

Once again, members of the Huggins family coordinated the three-day tournament held Dec. 1-3 at the Seminole Recreation Gym.

“For me, it (the tournament) continues to be a healing process, so people don’t forget who he was,” said Norman Huggins, father of Randall and liaison for the Trail Reservation. “We’re just picking the ball up where he left it and it’s a family effort.”

The late Randall Huggins began the tournament prior to his death in 2000 using his own money as a way to unite and connect with the youth and his community. His legacy and efforts continue with the help of his two brothers, four sisters, other family volunteers and his mother, Kathy.

“The whole tournament reflects who he really was. He was giving and full of hospitality,” said younger brother Kelvin Huggins.

Oklahoma player Vincent Coon and his eight-member squad, named Oklahoma Criminal Indians (OCI), said it was worth the 1,400-mile trek all the way from Okemah, Okla. for the tournament.

“We select this tourney every year to come to and they (the Huggins family) really take good care of you also with all their hospitality,” Coon said.

“I still like seeing all the other (Native) nations come together through sports each year,” father Norman added.

The championships offered the exciting and familiar as the womens title game pitted Another Bad Creation (ABC) against the Native Ballers, consisting of a mixture of players from several states. ABC would control the tempo early and often with double-digit leads throughout and headed

into the break up 17, with a score of 40-23.

In the second half, the Native Ballers would start out on a 10-2 run and would close the gap to within five points at the seven-minute mark of regulation. They would surge to within one point, but they got no closer; ABC would win 58-52. Raeanne West of ABC led her team in the win with 23 points. Gwynn Grant would earn tournament MVP honors.

The mens side featured the dynasty-driven Big Town, winners of the last three mens titles facing the Plainsmen, another perennial favorite.

The Plainsmen showed a spark early out to a quick, energized start and a 6-0 run in the first. BT would roar back going on an 8-2 run minutes later for their first lead. They would head into the break up 34-31.

The always formidable muscle of BT on the post proved to be the difference in the end, however, as they pulled ahead by 13 with five minutes to play. A last-minute run by the Plainsmen made it interesting cutting into the lead to within four. They missed two point-blank layups inside 15 seconds and BT would win their fourth straight championship 78-74.

Eric Beatty led the way for BT with 25 points, with Gary Parker selected as the mens tournament MVP.

The car show featured a mix of classic and modern cars. Although it was not put on in 2010, it made its reappearance this year under the organization of Tribal citizen Eric Osceola, owner of Bigg E. Customs. Trophies were given to the winners and included categories such as: Best in Show, Best Interior, the Family Choice Award and Best Motor with special guest emcee and Florida State University football great William Floyd on hand for the judging.

“It was a good turnout and I felt good about it all,” Osceola said. “People that come by the shop (Bigg E. Customs) supported it also. I hope this is something the family will help me to continue and maybe get some of the kids in the communities involved to help them stay out of trouble.”

Tribal Board of Directors President Tony Sanchez Jr. also made an appearance.

“I’m always amazed at the cars and what they can do,” President Sanchez said. “I continue to be surprised pleasantly at the number of Tribal members that have developed an interest and creativity in their vehicles. The commitment made by Norman (Huggins) and the family each year and sharing it with everyone is tremendous.”

♦ See more BIG BALLERS photos on page 5C

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See Native American Heritage Month coverage on page 3B

Big Cypress seniors celebrate first Trike Fest championship



Naji Tobias

The Big Cypress seniors share a special group moment as they celebrate their first Trike Fest title win toward the conclusion of the Nov. 16 championship dinner at the Big Cypress Senior Center. During the Senior Trike Fest event held at the Big Cypress Aviation Hangar on Nov. 3, Team Big Cypress (127 total points) blew past runner-up and last year's Trike Fest champion Team Brighton (91 total points), as well as Team Hollywood (48 points), Team Tampa (26 points) and Team Immokalee (0 points).

U.S. Department of Justice honors Brighton SPD officer



Chris C. Jenkins

Four-year Brighton Seminole Police Department veteran officer Holly Ramsey, fourth from right, and SPD Chief William Latchford, far left, gather with members of the Tribal Council before their Nov. 14 meeting. During the meeting, Ramsey was recognized for receiving the U. S. Attorney General's Exceptional Service in Indian Country Award, the highest honor given by the U. S. Department of Justice. Ramsey was among 15 recipients in Indian Country to be honored; she helped solve a missing child/murder case on Wyoming's Wind River Reservation, where the Shoshone and Arapaho Tribes reside.

SWAMP MEN

From page 1A

to show them how I catch alligators. I got a chance to show how the Seminoles and Miccosukee Indians used to go alligator hunting for a food source."

Hollywood Tribal citizen Everett Osceola, who joined *Swamp Men* this season, said that having Tribal members involved has been a much-welcomed and much-needed addition to the series. With on-camera face time as a past anchor for the Seminole Channel and some past acting experience, the Tribal television personality saw the opportunity as a way to represent his people from a cultural standpoint.

"I came up with the idea of asking for permission to perform alligator wrestling," Everett Osceola said of the live, on-camera footage. "I was trying for a cultural outlook, but I did not want to step on any toes, as far as the elders are concerned. I had asked my aunt, Elsie Bowers, for

permission before, but I had to ask again."

With his aunt's permission, Everett Osceola was filmed by the Spectrum Productions crews as he caught an alligator with Walker one day in Big Cypress. Osceola said he thought the live footage could be good to show the cultural aspect of the sport.

"It was fun for the most part, but my feet were all cut up," he said of the experience, which will be aired on one of the 10 scheduled episodes for Season Three.

"I guess they're not as callous as Billy's yet, but it was a great experience and it was pretty dangerous. I saw Billy step on a gator and the gator climbed a tree like a cat. It was a sight to see, but at the same time, I was like, 'I could step on one too.'"

For Osceola, his main concern was how his aunt would feel about the sequence being aired on the NatGeo Wild network.

"The only thing for me was this: Is Elsie going to be OK with it?" Osceola wondered. "I found out that she was fine with it all. From what I heard, it turned out to be a good episode."

Swamp Men has an avid fan in Claudia Selva, who said she regularly watches the show. Selva recalled a show in which Jacob Osceola explained how his grandmother taught him about life on the Big Cypress Reservation and how he learned to catch alligators as a youngster.

"I like the fact that the show lets us see the history of how the Seminoles interact with the animals," Selva said. "It's really interesting to see how they (the Seminoles) are dressed in Native and modern clothing. It's cool to see the Indians using ancient and modern techniques to catch the gators."

At this time, whether the *Swamp Men* series will continue after this season is unknown, according to Everett Osceola and Wilcox. But one thing's for certain: it has given the Tribe far-reaching exposure.

"You never can tell, but hey, at least I can say that I had my 15 minutes on a gator and crashing swamp buggies," Everett Osceola said.

"I have had my fellow Tribal members wanting to take pictures with me, which is weird for me," he continued. "I thought they were joking with me, but it was cool because it made me feel like a Hollywood star for the day – a Hollywood, Fla. star that is. But if the



Guy Nickerson/Spectrum Field Productions, LLC

Cory Wilcox and his team trap hogs inside a cage.



Gabby Nickerson/Spectrum Field Productions, LLC

Everett Osceola prepares to jump on an alligator.



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Community

Swamp Screammers Motorcycle Ride benefits the Florida panther



Naji Tobias

Hollywood Tribal citizen and avid motorcycle rider Ollie Tiger, mother of BC Tribal Council Rep. Mondo Tiger, displays her Harley Davidson Track UltraClassic motorcycle at the Billie Swamp parking lot on Nov. 12. The Nov. 12 Swamp Screammers event raised money to protect the endangered Florida panther.

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — The Tribe’s Billie Swamp Safari welcomed scores of bikers to their inaugural Swamp Screammers Motorcycle Ride and Bike Show held in the Safari parking lot on Nov. 12.

The event helped raise awareness for the Florida panther, classified as an endangered species by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission.

The Swamp Screammers campaign drew motorcycle enthusiasts from near and far, and they certainly didn’t mind the scenic ride to Big Cypress, said Melissa Sherman, Billie Swamp Safari’s marketing and promotional coordinator.

Several Tribal citizens rode out in full force to show off their wheels. Hollywood Tribal citizen Ollie Tiger, the mother of Big Cypress Tribal Council Rep. Mondo Tiger, was one of the featured riders at the weekend event.

“I just wanted to ride down here to see what was going on,” said Tiger, who has been an avid rider for the past seven years. “I like what the Billie Swamp Safari is trying to do.”

Big Cypress Tribal Board Rep. Joe Frank, who attended the Swamp Screammers show, talked about the importance of raising awareness for the Florida panther.

“We have a large panther population out here on the reservation lands,” Rep. Frank said. “The need for awareness is growing, and we support the Tribe’s efforts in doing what can be done to keep the habitat intact.”

The Florida panther is known as the state’s official

animal and has a current population of around 100 panthers, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Florida panther typically makes its home in the Everglades, a federally protected environment which includes the Big Cypress National Preserve, Everglades National Park, the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge, the Big Cypress Reservation and the Miccosukee Reservation.

About 150,000 people across South Florida – including those from Fort Myers, Miami and West Palm Beach – have supported the cause. Portions of the proceeds from the Swamp Screammers event went to the Wildlife Foundation of Florida, Sherman said.

Donor organizations included Harley Davidson of West Palm Beach, Fla., Hot Leathers, Leathers for Less and Sysco.

The Billie Swamp Safari has recently opened its own panther exhibit to the public. According to Sherman, the two-story structure – conceptualized by Steve McNeil and Jodi Reynolds – is between 6 and 7 feet tall and features a high island in the middle of the exhibit’s enclosure.

The completed display is designed to house panthers who can view tourists and guests at eye level, Sherman said.

Billie Swamp Safari plans to continue the Swamp Screammers show next year, Sherman said.

For more information on the Florida panther movement, visit www.floridapanther.net.

♦ See more SWAMP SCREAMERS photos on page 6A

Tribal member Jessica Osceola pursues her artistic passion

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Writer

NAPLES — Jessica Osceola has always been creative, and she comes from a close-knit family who place their heritage and cultural traditions at the top of the list. A daughter of Douglas M. Osceola Jr. and his wife, Sandy, she was raised in a traditional atmosphere that adhered to camp life through her father’s generation.

Her grandmother, Tahama Osceola, and her great grandmother, Juanita Osceola, introduced her to the Seminole arts at an early age. She has always shown a keen interest in adopting the skills of her ancestors.

Following graduation from high school, Osceola enrolled in Florida Gulf Coast University. Originally a history major, she was drawn to the world of art as she attempted to express herself and the role of Native Americans in American society. In 2008, she received a bachelor’s degree from the College of Arts and Sciences.

“My Seminole ancestry and their way of life include the pride of a people who are known as ‘The Unconquered,’” Osceola said. “My Irish background from my mother helps me to blend into the melting pot of diversity, struggle and opportunity for which this country stands. I am constantly battling with these two identities and the stereotypes conferred upon my cultures by society. My art provides me with a media for self-expression.”

A year of study at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, N.M. further enhanced her artistic skills and broadened her scope of communication through her art work. Several of her sculptures were included in the Seminole Artists exhibit at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum.

A rapid learner, Osceola easily passes on information to others, and she shows a great deal of promise and compassion when teaching children and adults. This skill motivated her acceptance of the role of traditional arts specialist at the Juanita Osceola Center where she served her community for more than a year.

Realizing that she had reached a plateau in her development, Osceola recently resigned her position to pursue her artistic career. She joined a diverse group of eight emerging artists from Fort Myers, Fla. called the San Carlos Collective. The members are connected by friendship, place and ambition. They have all received their technical training at Florida Gulf Coast University.

Although highly individual in style and medium, the members share a sense of experimentation and discovery, as well as a desire to react to the traditions of art, whether affirming or negating them. Through their combined efforts, they are receiving positive exposure for their creations, and they recently exhibited at the Taste of the Arts, Art Walk and Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center in downtown Fort Myers.

The San Carlos Collective was accepted for exhibition at the prestigious Art Now Fair at the Catalina Hotel in Miami Beach from Dec. 1-4. This unique, contemporary art fair is held annually and focuses on providing exposure for internationally renowned artists to private collectors, museum curators and art dealers.



Photo courtesy of Jessica Osceola

As the furnace heats up, Jessica Osceola gets ready to express her artistic talents through metal sculpture.

The exhibit enjoyed a high volume of traffic, and each of the members found a buyer for some of their creations. Completing this very successful venture, the Collective has been invited to participate in the New York Art Now Fair in March 2012.

“Creating art, whether it is a sculpture or ceramics, is a constantly evolving process,” Osceola said. “In my own art, my biggest inspiration comes from the people I meet, the places I visit and the emotional experiences I draw from it. Through art I can tell the world how I feel and how I think and how I perceive.”

Osceola said she prefers working in clay and metal, but she likes experimenting with as many materials as possible. She’s worked with glass, resins, steel, plaster and more, and her current piece combines heavily glazed clay surfaces and cast metals. She likes to emphasize form, texture and medium.

“I am instinctively drawn to creating unattractive surface imperfections and forms that arouse vulnerability. My quiet, introverted personality is often contradictory of my outspoken work. As a result the work becomes a catalyst for communicating with an audience about visions of my past, present and future.”

Even though she enjoys a very productive period in her artistic creativity, Osceola is looking ahead. She is exploring the curriculum at several possible universities in consideration of pursuing her master’s degree in fine arts.

♦ See more ARTIST photos on page 8A

Epidemic of violence against Native women continues to grow

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Freelance Writer

No one wants to think about physical assaults happening to someone they know or even happening to themselves. However, out of any ethnic or racial group in the U.S., Native women face the highest rates of sexual violence and physical assault.

One out of three Native women will be raped in her lifetime, and three out of four will be physically assaulted, according to the U.S. Department of Justice. As those alarming statistics show, violence among Native women in the U.S. has become an epidemic.

With the help of the Indian Law Resource Center, the Safe Women, Strong Nations project was started to help raise national and international awareness against the growing epidemic in Native communities. Women like Tillie Black Gear, Cecelia Fire Thunder, Terri Henry, Karen Artichoker and many others spearheaded the project and continue their grassroots efforts today.

Because more than 80 percent of the violence occurring against Tribal women is perpetrated by non-Native men, Tribal courts have a hard time prosecuting and bringing the perpetrators to justice.

Safe Women, Strong Nations, however, helps fight the epidemic by educating Tribal communities with proper legal skills and Tribal jurisdiction knowledge.

If violence among Native American women is classified as an epidemic, then why are we just now hearing about it?

“It is an issue, but not an issue that is dealt with,” Seminole Tribe of Florida Family Services Director Helene Buster said. “However, it needs to be.”

Safe Women, Strong Nations and the Indian Law Resource Center recently aired a public service announcement publicizing the shocking statistics and the facts.

“Every time I watch this video and read the onscreen statistics, I picture my mom, my sisters and fiancée,” Tribal member Jarrid Smith said. “Given the statistics stated and the fact that crimes like domestic abuse and rape go underreported, I know that the Native

women in my life have experienced some form of violence which they haven’t expressed.”

Seminole Police Department Sgt. Angela Comito confirmed that domestic abuse and rape do go underreported.

“In my 10 years here in Brighton, we have had only one Tribal victim involved in something similar to a sexual assault and not too much violence involving women other than domestic,” she said.

Unfortunately, just because Sgt. Comito only has one report filed in her police records, the Seminole Tribe is not exempt from this violence epidemic.

“I see it happening,” Buster said. “It happens on a daily basis, but it is our culture that you stick with your family even if that means keeping it private.”

Many victims find themselves scared with no knowledge of what to do or where to go for help. Buster, a domestic violence victim herself, found herself in that exact situation.

“I didn’t know, I was too scared,” Buster said. “I didn’t know who to go to.”

If it is Seminole culture, and possibly other Native cultures as well, to stick with their family no matter what, even if that means turning a blind eye toward domestic violence and sexual assault, what is it going to take to stop the violence?

“It will take Native people saying to themselves that enough is enough,” Smith said. “It will take collective action by communities and loving by individuals to defeat this epidemic.”

Thanks to Safe Women, Strong Nations and the Indian Law Resource Center, some people are taking action.

In May of this year a delegation of Native women’s organizations met with Doudou Diéne, the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism. The delegation educated the United Nations official on Native American violence and how Tribal courts are limited and discriminated against, making it difficult to fight violence. The Special Rapporteur took great interest in the subject and promised to include it in his report to the United Nations Human Rights Council.

Another group of Native women led by Navajo Nation First Lady Vikki Shirley traveled to the United Nations headquarters to raise awareness on the cause. They came forward asking the U.N. to make public safety on Indian reservations a priority and to give Tribal governments the authority to enforce Tribal laws against anyone on Tribal land.

“It will take initiatives like this one to break down the tolerance and acceptance that violence against women has built up,” Smith said.

What the Navajo Nation First Lady asked for is a service that the Seminole Tribe already offers: public safety is a priority. The Family Services Department and the Seminole Police Department offer help to those in need.

“Family Services is there to help people,” Buster said. “We want to help. Our counselors are trained on such topics as domestic abuse. We offer courses when needed. But we can’t change it if no one speaks up.”

The Indian Law Resource Center is also trying to help raise awareness about speaking up.

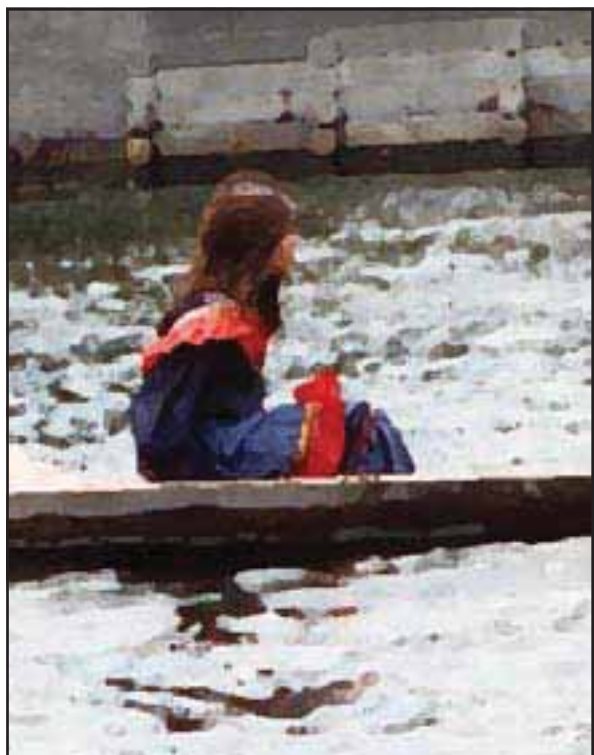
“The tendency to not act, to choose inaction, is what is defining us,” Smith said. “We take the easy route and don’t pick up the phone. We don’t use our voices to protect others.”

On Jan. 27, 2011, Rashida Manjoo, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, visited the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in Cherokee, N.C.

“A visit to a sovereign Indian nation will allow the Special Rapporteur to learn firsthand about the distinct legal barriers that prevent American Indian nations in the U.S. from protecting their women citizens,” said Painttown Rep. Terri Henry who also serves as the co-chair of the NCAI Task Force on Violence Against Women.

Most Native Americans do not have to visit a Tribal community to understand. Most have probably already witnessed firsthand the acts of violence toward a Native woman.

But Smith is in the rare minority that hasn’t seen it. “Growing up I never saw a man hit a woman; on



the rez that is a huge accomplishment,” Smith said. “So, most of all, I’m tired of that being abnormal.”

As the Indian Law Resource Center states, Indians are “warriors.” The Seminole Tribe prides itself on the idea of being the unconquered warrior, and they should not let violence conquer them.

Fortunately, the Seminole Tribe has the resources available to help stop this epidemic. People just need to speak up and reach out for help by calling their reservation’s Family Services Department.

Seminole can make a difference and stop being complicit. Start by getting the word out about abuse

♦ See EPIDEMIC on page 8A

◆ **HOMECOMING** From page 1A



Chris C. Jenkins

Miss Florida Princess Jewel Buck waves to the crowd as part of the homecoming parade festivities on Nov. 18.



Photo courtesy of Wanda Bowers

Florida State University President Eric J. Barron, center, joins the Seminole Color Guard, the Seminole Princesses and the newly formed Tribal alumni group before the annual homecoming parade on the FSU campus on Nov. 18.



Chris C. Jenkins

Florida State University Tribal alumni Doug Zepeda, left, and Emily Osceola-Branch, right, greet the crowd at the annual FSU parade held Nov. 18.



Chris C. Jenkins

Former Florida State University alumnus Kyle Doney throws the famed spear of the Seminole rider Osceola as part of the pregame kickoff festivities for homecoming.



Chris C. Jenkins

Little Miss Florida Seminole Brooke Yescas participates in the Nov. 18 FSU Homecoming Parade.



Chris C. Jenkins

Miss Florida Seminole Junior Princess Jaryaca Baker crowns the new FSU Homecoming Queen at halftime.



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal senior Connie Gowen, middle, with the mothers of the Tribal Princesses before the parade on Nov. 18.



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal royalty and honorary spear toss guest Kyle Doney with Osceola and Renegade on the field during the FSU homecoming game.



Chris C. Jenkins

Former Florida Gov. Reubin Askew joins Tribal citizens at the Florida State University Alumni breakfast held at the FSU Alumni Center. Askew served from 1971-1979 as the 37th governor.



Photos courtesy of Elizabeth Bates Bowers

The Seminole Color Guard with FSU President Eric J. Barron.



Chris C. Jenkins

Seminole royalty meet FSU football players during the homecoming game on Nov. 19.

Holiday food safety tips

SUBMITTED BY AVA JOHN
Environmental Health Department

Our Tribal communities are making plans for holiday feasts that include everyone’s favorite dishes, from Indian tacos to Indian stew. Friends and families are invited, and excitement is in the air. Food safety is probably not the first thing you think about when planning a holiday dinner, but to keep your gathering from becoming memorable in the wrong way, it’s important to take steps to protect your guests from foodborne illnesses.

To make sure your holiday dinner is not only delicious but also as safe as possible, the Seminole Tribe of Florida Health Department would like to offer a few simple steps to ensure a delicious and safe holiday meal:

1. Wash your hands thoroughly and often before, during and after food preparation. Simply washing hands is one of the easiest ways to minimize bacterial contamination and keep your food safe. Wash with soap up to your wrists and between your fingers for approximately 20 seconds.
2. Defrost turkey and other foods in the refrigerator. The safest thawing method is in the refrigerator at 41 degrees F. Plan ahead: a 16-20 pound turkey can take two to three days to thaw in the refrigerator or eight to 10 hours to thaw in cold, running water. Never thaw a turkey or any other food by leaving it on the counter.
3. Separate; do not cross contaminate. Keep raw meat, poultry, eggs and seafood and their juices away from ready-to-eat food and away from each other.
4. Cook to proper temperature and use a thermometer. There is simply no other way to determine that food has been cooked enough to kill bacteria unless you use a thermometer. Turkeys, stuffing, side dishes and

all leftovers should be cooked to at least 165 degrees F and kept higher than 140 degrees F during serving to be sure that any potential bacteria is destroyed. Remember to keep hot food hot and cold food cold.

5. Stuff and cook your turkey the right way. The safest way to cook the stuffing is separate from the turkey. But whether the stuffing is cooked inside or outside of the turkey, the stuffing must reach an internal temperature of 165 degrees F. If the turkey is stuffed, mix ingredients just prior to filling the cavity. Stuff loosely to help ensure safe, even cooking. Remember, the temperature of a whole turkey must reach 180 degrees F in the innermost part of the thigh and the center of the stuffing must reach 165 degrees F.

6. Refrigerate leftovers within two hours of preparation. Leaving food out for too long is one of the biggest holiday food safety problems. When food sits out for more than two hours, its temperature falls into the danger zone, higher than 40 degrees F and less than 140 degrees F, which is ideal for bacterial growth. Package leftovers in small portions and make sure the refrigerator is not over-packed so that air can circulate around the food and cool it properly.

7. Reheat leftovers to 165 degrees. Popping a plate of food into the microwave for a few minutes may seem safe enough; however, you should use a thermometer to make sure all the food is reheated enough to kill bacteria. Microwaves heat in an uneven manner, so let the covered food sit for a minute or two to let the heat destroy any bacteria, and then check the temperature all around the plate.

Remember, if in doubt, throw it out.

Information taken from Broward County Health Department and WebMD websites.

For additional food safety information, call the Environmental Health Department at 954-985-2330.

From the Office of Police Chief William R. Latchford

Holiday wishes and a safe new year

The holidays are a time of the year filled with warmth and good cheer. We should be thankful for all the blessings we have in our lives. Please remember as we partake in holiday festivities and family gatherings to be safe and keep your families safe. Here are a few safety precautions to keep in mind to assure a safe and happy celebration for everyone:

- Remember, fireworks are very unstable and unpredictable. Therefore, be sure to use caution around these displays.
 - Children must be supervised around fireworks.
 - Firearms should be properly locked and not aimlessly shot in the air to celebrate.
 - Do not drink and drive. Designate a driver or a mode of safe transportation if you plan to drink during the holidays.
 - Be aware of your surroundings at parties, and do not leave with strangers.
 - Take notice of your surroundings while in attendance at a holiday party, especially exits in case of an emergency.
 - If hosting a party, collect the car keys from everyone as they arrive. This will lessen the likelihood of a guest leaving intoxicated and driving.
- Remember, spending time with your family and friends during the holidays is a fascinating time to reconnect. Make spectacular memories that will last a lifetime.
- May you and your families be filled with warmth and good cheer this holiday season and continued successes during the upcoming New Year.



– Will

SWAMP SCREAMERS From page 3C



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal senior Joe Junior Billie – a Panther Clan member – enters his 2001 Harley Davidson motorcycle into the Swamp Screamers Bike Show on Nov. 12. His bike has a Panther Clan design. “We’re just here to have a good time with everybody,” Billie said. “The panther means so much to me.”



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal senior Ronnie Billie, with wife, Almira Billie, shows off two of his motorcycles, including a 2008 Suzuki BK King, left, and a 2005 Harley Davidson Deluxe motorcycle, right. Ronnie entered five bikes in the Nov. 12 Swamp Screamers Bike Show.



Photo courtesy of Melissa Sherman

The panther exhibit at Billie Swamp Safari is now open. The enclosure above houses Liberty the Panther.



Photo courtesy of Melissa Sherman

The Swamp Screamers campaign drew motorcycle enthusiasts from near and far to help raise funds for the endangered Florida panther.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal Board Rep. Joe Frank participates in the Swamp Screamers Bike Show on Nov. 12.



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

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Seminoles Without Addictions Make Progress hosts holiday dance

SUBMITTED BY VALERIE MARONE
Family Services Department



Photo courtesy of Valerie Marone

Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) guests from Okeechobee High School take a break from dancing. Seminole Without Addictions Make Progress (S.W.A.M.P.) teens hosted the holiday party on Nov. 19.

BRIGHTON — Seminole Without Addictions Make Progress (S.W.A.M.P.) held its first holiday dance for Brighton teens and tweens on Nov. 19 at the Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School cafeteria.

S.W.A.M.P. is a Brighton Family Services substance abuse prevention program. One of the goals of S.W.A.M.P. is to provide drug-free, fun alternatives for the teens and tweens of the Brighton Community, reinforcing its motto, that Brighton's youth do have "Better Things To Do Than Drugs!"

The Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) teens from Okeechobee High School made a guest appearance at the event.

Brighton Boys & Girls Club site manager Derek Pierce and youth who participated in his music production program served as the disc jockeys for the night, running the mix board as the teens danced to their favorite tunes.

S.W.A.M.P. members host activities like this dance to build social competence and drug-resistance skills. The organization believes that youth who engage in

healthy alternative activities are less likely to become involved with negative peer pressure and are more prepared to say no to dangerous activities such as using alcohol and drugs.

Seminole deliver food, clothes and toys to Pine Ridge Sioux

• Paula Bowers-Sanchez

Native Relief Foundation Inc. (NRF) is a nonprofit organization with a mission to assist Native communities who have little to no resources. NRF steps in to provide food, shelter and clothing, not to mention desperately needed social services. I, like several other Seminole Tribal citizens, was so moved by a recent television broadcast that we refused to stand by and do nothing. The realization that fellow Tribal communities and/or individual members face significant adversity just to survive, prompted us to take action.

The television broadcast, a 20/20 documentary by Diane Sawyer, was filmed in South Dakota on the Pine Ridge Sioux Reservation. The story highlighted unbelievably dire conditions, which currently exist in this Tribal community. The film was replete with examples of Pine Ridge members suffering through atrocities such as an 80 percent unemployment rate; an alcoholism rate of 80 percent; a 50 percent rate of diabetes; and an 80 percent drop out rate of children before completing high school. The conditions are heartbreaking. It is unfathomable to comprehend that such "third-world" conditions exist here in the U.S.!

We created NRF in response to the program and with the understanding that these types of conditions are not limited to the Pine Ridge Sioux. Our first initiative is to offer aid and assistance to the Pine Ridge Sioux community in South Dakota. We contacted Alice Sweat of the Brighton Seminole Indian Reservation, as she and her staff have distributed much-needed supplies for the past six years to the Chadron community. However, Mrs. Sweat was not able to raise the funds needed to make

the trip to South Dakota this year.

With the Pine Ridge story as inspiration, NRF initiated a drive to collect non-perishable goods, clothing, blankets, toys, etc. Our fundraising activities are made possible through volunteers, NRF staff, private donations from individuals and surrounding communities and raffles. Sweat and her crew traveled with the NRF team to distribute donated items.

Our endeavor to deliver the first load of donated supplies in a timely manner has been hastened by the fast-approaching winter season. On Dec. 7, NRF volunteers drove a rented moving truck full of necessities to South Dakota. We are privileged and excited to make this initial contribution, but we are most concerned with our future ability to provide consistently, not only to Pine Ridge, but to other similar Native communities as well. If you would like to volunteer or make a donation (via PayPal), contact us at nativerelieffoundation@gmail.com.

Thank you all for your support in making this a joyous Holiday Season for such deserving individuals...Have a wonderful and safe Holiday Season for you and your family!



Tribal Council and Board approve resolutions for the new year

Board holds special session

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — The Tribal Board of Directors convened for a special session at the Hollywood Tribal Headquarters auditorium on Nov. 16 and passed six resolutions on the agenda including:

Resolution 5: Appointment of designated plan administrator for the Seminole Tribe of Florida amended and restated supplemental executive retirement plan; investment advisory committee members; amendment to Wells Fargo documents

Resolution 7: Amendment and summary of material modifications to the Seminole Tribe of Florida and Seminole Tribe of Florida Inc. employee health plan #502 and First Amendment to the Seminole Tribe of Florida and Seminole Tribe of Florida Inc. premium only plan (Plan No. 501)

Resolution 8: Execution of Business Associate Agreements

Resolution 10: Adoption and approval of prescription drug benefit consulting agreement among the Seminole Tribe of Florida and Seminole Tribe of Florida Inc. and Integrated Health Concepts LLC; ratification

Council passes 32 resolutions at regular session

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — The Tribal Council convened for a regular meeting at the Hollywood Tribal Headquarters auditorium on Nov. 14 and passed 32 resolutions on its regular and consent agenda including:

Resolution 21: Establishment of the Brighton Seminole Indian Reservation Florida Panther Preserve - Brighton Seminole Indian Reservation

Resolution 27: DirecTV Inc., Second Amendment to the 2009 agreement for DBS

Satellite exhibition of programming

Resolution 28: Revision to Tribal Truancy Committee policy and procedure

Resolution 29: Approval of Purple Sky Property Management Inc. service agreement for housing services

Resolution 30: United States Environmental Protection Agency grant application for funding of the Hollywood Water Infrastructure Project reverse osmosis membrane skid purchase

Resolution 31: Appointment of one commissioner to the Seminole

Water Commission in accordance with the Tribal Water Code

Resolution 32: Filming permission letter granting Station 24 LLC permission to film a music video at Seminole Indian Casino - Immokalee; ratification

Resolution 34: Waste Management Inc. of Florida service agreement for Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino — Hollywood, Seminole Indian Casino – Hollywood, Seminole Paradise and Seminole Gaming Annex Building

Resolution 35: Approval of the Third lease modification agreement by and between Seminole Properties Retail LLC and Cache Inc.

Resolution 40: Occupancy and use of land by the Forestry and Wildland Program for an office and work center for forestry and wildland management purposes – Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation

Resolution 43: Seminole Tribe of Florida filming permission letter granting Seventh

Art Releasing permission to film a history of the Seminole Tribe of Florida relating to Chairman James E. Billie on Seminole Indian Reservations

Resolution 46: Evans Oil Company LLC fuel purchasing master service agreement

Resolution 47: Budget approval – FY 2012

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Native American Travel relocates, hosts open house



Chris C. Jenkins

Native American Travel staff members gather outside their new facility during the open house on Nov. 16. The new location, 5385-B Stirling Road, is just minutes from Hollywood Tribal Headquarters. Its hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and after-hours phone service is available. For more information, call 954-967-3614.

♦ ARTIST From page 3C



Photo courtesy of Jessica Osceola

Using casts to make a mold of her body, Jessica Osceola plans to make a life-sized self-sculpture.



Photo courtesy of Jessica Osceola

Jessica Osceola, left, is a member of a diverse group of emerging artists called the San Carlos Collective.

♦ EPIDEMIC

From page 3C

against Native women. There are other simple but important gestures that the Indian Law Resource Center suggests doing:

- Call or write your senators and representatives and ask them to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act.
- Send a letter to international human rights bodies to investigate, report and comment on the United States' actions and whether they meet international obligations.
- Donate to the Safe Women, Strong Nation project, so the women spearheading the initiative can continue to fight for justice.

"This issue needs to be recognized," Buster said. "It takes the people."

For more information visit www.indianlaw.org or contact Jana Walker at jwalker@indianlaw.org or 406-449-2006 ext. 106.

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Announcements

BIRTHDAYS

Nov. 2
Happy belated birthday to Ms. Zoey S. Osceola Puente.
Hey Princess! I want you to know that you are and will always be my baby ever since the first day you were born. I love you so much and I'm sorry I haven't been a part of your life in a while but I had to get my life together. Don't worry, one day Princess we will meet up again and it'll be like I never left. Please don't forget me and all the good times we had together okay. I miss all of you guys so much; you are still and will always be my family. Take care of your mom and your brothers and sisters. I love you ZOZO!!!
Love, Aunt Lee
FOOSHE 4-life

Nov. 12
Happy belated birthday to Ms. Maggie M. Osceola.
Hey Mae, I had to send you a birthday wish...I have been missing you guys and I want you to know that I love you and that I'm sorry if I ever hurt you. I was going through so much a while back and I know all you were trying to do was be there for me. I never meant to hurt you or anyone. I can't take back all that crazy stuff. But I can say that today I'm living so much better and one day I would love to make things right between us because we used to be so close and I miss those days. Well enough of all that. I love you and hope you had a good birthday. Till next time...
Love, Carolee J. Anderson (Lee)
FOOSHE 4-LIFE

Dec. 12
Happy birthday to Ms. Terrijo D. Nelson.
Wow... Mom, I can't believe you getting old LOL! Just kidding. There are so many things I want to tell you but not enough paper to write it on. The most important thing is that I love you dearly. You are my inspiration and you keep me focused on what's important to me in my life. I know you are going through a lot of things in your life and I wish I could change it all for you and take all your pain away because lord knows it hurts my heart to see you unhappy. You mean so much to me and always have and I know you always will. Things may not have always been good to us or between us but you are my ONLY mother and I'm your daughter. I'm a part of you and my daddy (Late) Ricky Ray Baxley. And that I'm so proud of. After I lost my dad I thought it was the end of the world. I lived my life without a care in the world. I gave up on everything: myself, my son, and even the Lord. But through all that you continued to love me and never gave up on me. I will never forget that when it counted the most, there you were taking care of Rick for me and even though it hurt you to see me going through all that crazy mess you still held me when I needed it and that's a real mother. Thank you for being the Best mother that you could to me and for always loving me and believing in me... MUAH!
LOVE, Carolee Anderson
FOOSHE 4-life

Dec. 16
Happy birthday to Joel R. Osceola.
Hey LIL' MAN, I guess you not so lil' no more huh? I had to send you a birthday wish because I feel like I missed so much in your life these past couple years. I know you are doing well in school and taking care of your mom and your brothers and sisters. I hope you always remember the good times that we had together and always know I will always love all of you. Stay focused and never lose sight of your goals and stay far away from drugs; they ruin lives and kill. I know you will do great things and be a wonderful young man. I love you LIL'MAN...
LOVE, Aunt Lee
FOOSHE 4-life

Dec. 20
Happy 4th birthday to our daughter Jetta Brantley Osceola.
May God bless you in everything you do! We love you so much!!
Love Mom, Dad, and Clayson



Dec. 25
Happy birthday to Leilani Jean Gopher.
It's hard to believe it's number 10 already. Christmas is a time of giving, and 10 years to this day God gave this man a lifetime of beauty.
Love Always,
Dad
"Heavenly Child"
As I held you for the first time this heart once again found the strength to believe
Listen as my pen journeys to 2001 and on that Christmas day the greatest of gifts I received
Closing my eyes, a lovely face with beautiful black hair I clearly see
Never have I been as blessed than at that moment when it was just you, mom and me
You didn't cry much, just a bit here and a bit there
I remember looking upon the two of you and thinking, "God has decided to share"
Since that day our love has traveled both near and far
It will always exist in the memories of Itsy Bitsy Spider and Twinkle Twinkle Little Star
No girl other than you will my heart ever adore
How can it? When each time I say, "Lei-Lei, I love you," you say, "Dad, I love you more"
Nothing in life will I ever hold as dear
You, Kaylee and Les will always be my happiness and cheer
That Christmas our journey began in such a unique style
Leilani, you are the greatest of gifts...you are my heavenly child
— Leslie J. Gopher

CHRISTMAS

Merry Christmas Kaylee, Leilani and Les!
Another year comes to a close as the gifts find their way to Christmas trees all over. The three of you will always be the most precious gifts I've been blessed with. Each day, I'm reminded how much love and joy I have in life through each of you. Truly, I am because the three of you are.
In time we'll be together again, physically! We've come a ways and before long we'll have knocked these walls down. Without each of you it wouldn't be possible for me to create change. It's a work in progress but I've taken steps from being a boy to becoming a man.
Santa has the address. May the presents be plentiful where they matter most...within your hearts.
Have a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.
Love,
Dad

POEMS

“Earth (Corn Dance)”
We are here together even under the weather.
The sun shines upon us all, at corn dance I will stand tall.
Strength is all there will be,
The old way is all I will see.
Indian is what I am. Peace and kindness is what I want to understand.
So the stomp dance will teach me the way,
I will listen and learn.
So peace and kind kindness will be a part of me everywhere I turn.
The old way is what I will know, because corn dance told me so.....
Remember this before I go, unconquered is what I know.
— Gator Doctor

“My Strength”
I look to the east and I see the sun rise,
It shines all day long.....
So I remembered what the angels say.
They say to stand strong, and always look up.
I am. I exist. It took me a while to understand that there is a better way to live...
So in my life I know how it is.
Peace and grace be unto us all, for the unconquered will always stand tall.
In the chain gang is where I sit, only the strong survive.
So, I look to the east and see my peace....
But the streets I will see again, all thanks be to the Almighty forever more, I promise to never ever see another locked door.
Even though I am in prison, I have a future, another chance at life, without all the strife.
— Gator

“Sunshine”
Rays of beauty brighten even the darkest of days
Within their frolic I've learned to overcome my frays
On a cool spring afternoon they can be seen high above the sky
And during a freezing winter night they remain the twinkle of my eye
They belittle any struggle with the words, “Dad, we love you so much”
Only through them have I been allowed to escape life's cold touch
Kaylee, you will always be the strength to help me carry on
Princess, you are by far the first fortune my heart has truly ever known
It began with you, mom and me then along our princess came
Les, never forget that because of them we will forever share more than a name
Leilani, our youngest heir, a future queen indeed
You are all the treasure I could want, never again in life will I ever need
Yvonne, things have changed but to not include you in this stanza I would not dare
For it was you who helped guide me to the road that has taught me to care
Each of you are truly special, beautiful and certainly one of a kind
“Home Team” will always be my light...It will forever be my sunshine
— Leslie J. Gopher

My Mind is a “Battlefield”
It's a “Battlefield” of our minds, over “Drugs” and “alcohol.” The time has come for us to awaken from our long sleep and search again for the teachings of our “creator” through which I find healing, wisdom and Power. Not power over other, but power over our greatest enemy “ourselves.” As for myself being “Seminole,” I'm seeking healing at this time – I needed to stop inflicting pain on myself and my family, I've been needing to fill the spiritual emptiness.
True healing for me to ask for the “creator's” help. I must cry tears of sorrow, to confront my shame, to forgive the unforgiveable and to return to the values of our “ancestors” – Love, Courage, Justice, Generosity, Respect, Humility, Gratitude and Acceptance of those who are different.
Me, being in the program has open doors, especially the “Traumas,” it's taken me to have the willingness, open-mindedness and honesty to deal with my program.
I hope and pray that I can reach out to my people that are still out there; let's don't our life by our own hands, it is a major Battlefield of our minds.
May God Bless Us All.
I love the Seminole Tribe.
MVTO,
Martha Tommie
“Remember”
Remember a laugh...Remember a smile
Hold close the things in life that are truly worthwhile
Remember a touch...Remember a kiss
For there is much in life that provides the heart its joy and bliss
Remember to love...Remember to share
Because in life those treasures are the most rare
Remember you are special...Remember each day begins with you
Do not doubt nor forget you're the one who makes dreams come true
— Leslie J. Gopher
“Only a fool forgets”

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Editorial

Seminole Gaming: clean since 1979

• James E. Billie

We are more than a little surprised at a recent news story about Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi and her comments regarding “money laundering” at the Seminole Tribe’s Hard Rock Casino in Tampa.

In an article published around the world by the Associated Press (AP), Dec. 11, Bondi voiced her opposition to the “destination resort” casino bills now before the state legislature by tying gaming to criminal activity. The article said Attorney General Bondi “contended that recent drug trafficking convictions in Hillsborough County showed that drug money wound up being routed through the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Tampa.”

I am very disappointed to hear one of our top Florida government leaders come forward with such a statement that is so damaging to the reputation of the Seminole Tribe of Florida. I am disappointed the AP would publish this statement without checking its accuracy or even contacting us for our comments. Unfortunately, because of the fact it came from the Attorney General and was published by AP, untold numbers of persons who see this will believe it is true.

As long as I have been Chairman, since way back in 1979, and during the years I was out of office, I have never seen any information, whatsoever, come across my desk about money laundering involving any individuals, including outside drug traffickers or even our own staff. At the first inkling of such activity, we would have immediately reported it and took strong measures to expose and stop this crime.

With all due respect, Attorney General Bondi must know that everything the Seminole Tribe does regarding gaming is watched with intensity. By our very nature as sovereign American Indian gaming operators, all of Seminole Gaming, from our small hometown operation in Brighton to our tall Hard Rock Hotel & Casinos in Tampa and Hollywood, is scrutinized by more eyes at more agencies than any other gaming enterprise in the state.

I’m talking about the U.S. Department of the Interior-Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC) and, yes, State of Florida auditors, themselves!

All members of our staff who handle money receive periodic comprehensive training when they first start and every six months after that to make sure our facilities are not used for illegal activities. All gaming staff is made familiar with the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) and taught regarding compliance with the Bank Secrecy Act (BSA). We participate in several regular, mandated audits, including independent financial audits conducted by the NIGC and State of Florida, as well as our own in-house audits. Our Hard

Rock Gaming facilities are audited by Deloitte, the world’s leading casino-auditing firm.

In all these years the Seminole Tribe has conducted Gaming, since 1979, no audit has ever found any fraud, theft, embezzlement or large variances of any kind.

We have absolutely no idea where Attorney General Bondi’s information is coming from. If this charge is true, then this criminal action was missed by the FBI, the BIA, the IRS, the NIGC and the State of Florida, as well as our own professional security. If Bondi’s statement is factual, then why didn’t she alert us? Why, we went to dinner with Gov. Rick Scott, very recently, right in his own house, and he never mentioned anything, not a word, about any such money laundering charge.

It is disturbing to us for such a serious charge to come out of nowhere through the mouths of such high-ranking leadership as the Cabinet of the State of Florida without any regard to the high potential for damaging the Tribe’s reputation and the reputation of its businesses. The Seminole Tribe prides itself on running a clean operation and paying our bills on time. We remain extremely sensitive to our relationship with the State of Florida and adhere exactly to our responsibilities as detailed in our gaming compact with the state.

Even in these highly charged political times, we expect the state to treat us with the same respect.

Sho-naa-bish.

James E. Billie is Chairman of the Seminole Tribe of Florida and Publisher of the Seminole Tribune.



It’s tu-lee, not pulley



Tu-lee

CORRECTION: It’s tu-lee, not pulley. In last month’s editorial, Chairman James E. Billie described a traditional Seminole ritual often used prior to eating a turkey. In transcribing the Chairman’s dictation, however, *Seminole Tribune* writer Peter B. Gallagher misunderstood the word “tu-lee,” a Mikasuki word for the red bay (a common tree found in Florida forests and swamps). Gallagher thought the Chairman had said “pulley,” which is the bone in a turkey often referred to as the wishbone. The line should have read: “Remember to put a leaf of tu-lee on the scalpkeeper before you eat it.” We regret any confusion caused by this error.



Pulley

‘Touch, kick and feel’ those issues

• Tony Sanchez Jr.

Recently, I was in Washington, D.C. for the Tribal Leaders Summit at the White House. I heard President Barack Obama make a personal commitment to meet with Tribal leaders, directly, to better understand their issues. He went so far as to decree that any federal agency that deals with Indians – the BIA, the NIGC and any of a hundred other agencies – must consult personally with impacted Tribes before any regulations or other critical decisions are made and implemented.

I applaud the White House for this initiative. It means a lot. Why, over a three-day period, there were more than 500 Tribal leaders gathered in our Nation’s Capitol, many with similar needs and just as many with unique needs. In such a large setting it is easy for any one Tribe to wonder if their individual concerns were actually heard and understood . . . or did their issue fall on deaf ears?

I could not help but think that Indian Country now has a golden opportunity to be heard. Obama is on the record about his commitment to make sure our treaties are upheld. Since this was the third meeting between Obama and Tribal leaders, the general consensus was “Hey, it’s been great to talk. But now is time for action!”

I think the people Obama has appointed to serve in government agencies rarely have time to visit with those they have been assigned to communicate with. It’s all done from the confines of offices. Through reports. You really can’t tell by just reading reports. You have to go out there and touch, kick and feel the issue. Obama knows that to strengthen our “government-to-government” relationship, he needs to personally sit down with Tribal leaders.

I have always wondered what level of involvement and influence the Seminole Tribe enjoyed regarding federal and state issues involving American Indians. I knew we had lobbyists and a level of faith in their abilities. But I felt a need to be physically present in the same place where all the politicians and lobbyists are getting their information firsthand. A physical presence is powerful. No one else can deliver the message with the emotion and intensity it deserves!

The Seminole Tribe of Florida is viewed with a very bright light in these arenas – not just by the politicians, but by Tribes across the nation. They know us through our proactive involvements in landmark court decisions and legislative bills that have changed Indian Country. The path we took with big stakes bingo and other issues laid foundations for everyone else and put us in the spotlight. What the Seminoles think means a lot to tribes across the nation. Tribes everywhere acknowledge that fact and are very respectful of who we are. Those familiar with the old E.F. Hutton commercials will know what I am taking about.

“When E. F. Hutton speaks,” the commercials said, “people listen.” I equate the Seminole Tribe with ol’ E.F.! You can feel it. Everyone’s wondering, “What’s Seminole Tribe gonna do? What’s Seminole’s position on that?”



I like to remind people: “We are fortunate; we are humble; by the grace of God we enjoy our current success. But we can’t afford to slow down, stop working, diversifying and protecting what we have.”

Recent events bear this out. Who would have ever thought that just about every state out there would be entertaining ideas of passing gaming bills hoping it will make up their budget deficits? Some look at the success of a handful of Tribes across the nation, and figure it is a good deal to hang their hat on a jackpot by partnering with their respective Tribes. Remember, the more successful the Tribe is, the more money flows into the state.

But what happens when you dilute the market? Take the Northeast Region. At one time it was just Foxwoods. Now you have Mohegan and a number of others open throughout New York. Then here comes Massachusetts, Pennsylvania coming on board. Better be careful! Yes, casinos can be successful, but everyone needs to be cognizant of the strengths and weaknesses of their current markets.

Just because you build one, doesn’t mean they will come.

With all the current discussion about the scope of gaming expansion in Florida, you can be sure this administration will be very noticeable in making sure our presence is felt . Our voice will be heard loud and clear. I want every Tribal citizen to take comfort in knowing that their Tribal administration is taking a hands-on approach. We not only had dinner recently with the Governor, but we have also had dinner with the current and incoming House Speaker, as well as the Senate Majority Leader. We will continue to seek out and meet with top government leaders.

Government to government.

There has always been a close relationship between the Seminole Tribe and the State of Florida . . . and not just gaming. Ours is a relationship of culture and history stretching back many, many generations. We want that to continue. We are family, the State and the Seminoles.

It’s just that now we are being asked to let someone we don’t even know into our family. We sure don’t need to let any unknowns into our family – especially those who do not share our same values and goals.

Sho-naa-bish.

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

NATIONAL NATIVE NEWS

\$15 million for Native American transit options

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood announced that \$15 million has been set aside to help American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments invest in public transit to help improve access to employment centers and to promote economic development on Tribal lands.

“With unemployment among American Indians at an unacceptably high rate, reliable public transportation offers a vital link to jobs, training centers and other essential services,” Secretary LaHood said. “The Obama Administration is committed to working with leaders in Indian Country to improve transportation connections while boosting economic conditions and creating jobs in Tribal communities.”

The money, awarded through the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) Tribal Transit Program, will provide grants to tribes in 25 states for 67 separate projects. Only three were awarded to Tribes in the Southeast: Catawba Nation (SC) was awarded \$55,000 as operating assistance for their existing paratransit program and assistance with building a transportation facility; Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians was awarded \$190,000 to pay salaries of drivers on night routes, and for vehicle replacement on the Qualla Boundary portion of the Cherokee Indian Reservation in Western North Carolina; and Mississippi Band of Choctaws were awarded \$41,910 to enhance an existing transit system with intelligent transportation system equipment, including GPS units and computer equipment.

“For people who live in rural communities and on tribal lands, access to reliable, affordable public transit is a lifeline,” said FTA administrator Peter Rogoff. “We’re committed to ensuring that every American

Indian or Alaskan native who needs a ride to earn a paycheck, attend school, see the doctor or buy groceries has that opportunity.”

—U.S. Department of Transportation

Lawsuit to reclaim Jim Thorpe’s remains proceeds

A federal judge in Pennsylvania is allowing a lawsuit filed by two of Jim Thorpe’s children and a Native American tribe over his remains to go forward.

U.S. District Judge Richard Caputo ruled that William and Richard Thorpe’s claim could continue under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, which has been applied to remains held by museums.

Thorpe was born near Prague in 1888 of Pottawatomie, Sac and Fox, and white ancestry. He first achieved fame as a multisport and ballroom dancing star at the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania. Thorpe won the 1912 Olympic pentathlon and decathlon gold medals and the designation of “World’s Greatest Athlete.” His Olympic medals were taken away in 1913 after it was revealed that he had played minor league baseball. Thorpe later played professional football and baseball, but by the 1930s was bouncing from job to job. He took roles as an Indian in B-list Hollywood movies and then struggled financially before he died in 1953 in California at age 64.

In a bizarre deal to draw tourists, the merging towns of Mauch Chunk and East Mauch Chunk, Pa., brokered a deal with Thorpe’s third wife, Patricia, which renamed the community Jim Thorpe in 1954 and brought his remains to the town.

It is that agreement that William and Richard Thorpe, sons of Jim Thorpe’s second wife, Freeda Thorpe, are seeking to overturn. William and Richard’s brother, Jack Thorpe, who died earlier



this year, originally filed the lawsuit. Ward said the Thorpe brothers are trying to honor their father’s request to be buried in the old Sac and Fox Nation in present-day east-central Oklahoma. Jim Thorpe was a member of the Tribe, which also is a party in the lawsuit.

—Wilkes Barre Times Leader

Marine mammal peddling ring sentenced

Three members of a marine mammal peddling ring were sentenced in U.S. District Court in Anchorage. They were convicted of violating the Lacey Act for illegally buying or trading for animal parts in Savoonga.

The Glenallen residents transported approximately 230 pounds of walrus tusks valued at about \$22,000 and two polar bear hides for \$2,700. The U.S. Attorney’s office says in a release Jesse LeBoeuf got nine years in prison and Loretta Sternbach received 3 and a half years. Both were also convicted of weapons charges. Richard Weshenfelder of Anchorage got three years’ probation for violating the Lacey Act.

Federal law allows Indian, Aleut or Eskimos who reside in coastal Alaska to hunt and kill walrus and polar bears for subsistence purposes but they can’t sell animal parts to non-Natives.

—The Associated Press

As Native populations grow, number of Native doctors shrinks

The American Indian/Alaska Native population exceeds five million and has increased by 27 percent since the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau Report. Despite this positive population growth, there is an alarming inverse to this equation: the number of Native people applying to medical school and earning medical degrees is shrinking.

Statistics released by the Association of

American Medical Colleges (AAMC) show that in 2004 and 2005, 465 American Indian and Alaskan Natives applied for medical school in each of those two years. By 2011, this number dwindled to 379. Furthermore, the numbers of American Indian and Alaskan Natives who are first-year medical students is even smaller. In 2004, there were 202 first-year Native medical students. By 2011, there were 157.

“A lot of Indian students don’t think about going into medicine as a career,” says Dr. Donna Galbreath (Athna Athabaskan) and president of the Association of American Indian Physicians (AAIP). “That is something that the AAIP has been working on for a number of years -- trying to expose more students to medical careers. If you don’t think about it or if it’s really foreign, it’s not something you’re going to want to do.”

Galbreath said Native students need to be exposed at a younger age to the “STEM” courses of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math.

—Indian Country Today

Berkeley honors Geronimo, lets Obama off the hook

Berkeley, Calif. city officials adopted a resolution this week honoring the Chiricahua Apache leader Goyathlay or Goyaale, also known as Geronimo, but decided against asking President Obama to apologize for using his name in the May mission to kill Osama bin Laden. Instead, the city council asked the President to retroactively change the code name of the operation from “Operation Geronimo” to “Operation bin Laden” and pledge not to use Native American names in future military actions.

—Berkeleyside.com



Some holiday memories

• Moses Jumper Jr.

This time of the year has always been a great time of year for me. It brings to mind many memories from which I will share a few. As a youngster growing up on the Dania Reservation (that’s what they called the Hollywood Reservation back then), I remember watching the trucks from various organizations around the state bringing used bikes to distribute among us Indian kids. They would line those used bikes up in the old rec hall that we had on the Rez. If you were late when they gave the bikes out, you usually got a real junker. Of course those kinds of bikes brought out your mechanical skills. It seems we were always fixing bikes. Very rarely did someone have enough money to buy a new bike.

There was an organization back then known as The Friends of the Seminoles. They were prominent in Broward County. They would set up toy drives and food drives to distribute among our people. Most of the toys were used but they were new to us. Two of the women I remember very well were Mrs. Shelton and Mrs. Abby. They come to mind because I would travel with my mother to their homes in a very well-to-do section of Fort Lauderdale. Their homes were beautiful and always very well decorated, and they always had pretty candy canes and an assortment of sweets in beautiful glass bowls.

This time of year always brought the snow birds down from up North. It seemed the tourists were always down at the same time. The robins were frolicking through the woods. A large part of our income was made off the tourists who travelled through the inter-coastal waterways on sightseeing boats. All these tour boats always had a stop where they would get out and visit a replica of a Seminole Village. These villages always had a few chickees, a snack bar and a gator pit. It seems these places always had totem poles standing around. I guess it always gave the impression of an exotic tropical village. We would travel and try to make as many of these village stops as we could. Sometimes the old car or truck wouldn’t start and we would be out of money for that day. The money we would make would come from the souvenirs my mother would sell or the tips my father would get from wrestling alligators. As kids we would make our money by standing behind little cups near the boat



ramp and we would sing *Jesus Loves Me* in Creek and recite a little poem in English. The tourists thought that was cute and would sometimes drop us a coin or two in our cups. We learned to work and earn our money. It was also a lesson in public relations and public speaking.

During this Christmas season we were always visiting. Sometimes we would go out to the Tamiami Trail and visit the camps. They would be having their Christmas gatherings giving out used clothes and toys. I remember they would always pass out bakery goods that they would get from local bakeries. It was food the stores could no longer sell but it sure tasted good to us. During this time we would also visit the churches, and I will always cherish the Christmas plays and hearing the Christmas message given by the great preachers of that time: men like Billy Osceola, Henry Cypress, Stanley Smith and a man respected by all Native people Rev. Genus Crenshaw. This was a great time growing up on the Rez. We had no money but you could never convince us we were poor. I pray that this Christmas Season you will create your own good memories. Let it not be a time when you have lost your memory due to a pill, drink or weed. Have a safe holiday and remember the real reason for the season!

Moses “BigShot” Jumper Jr. is the director of Hollywood Recreation for the Seminole Tribe of Florida.



Caring for the collection to preserve the past

SUBMITTED BY TARA BACKHOUSE
Registrar

The Registration Division at the Museum manages the Museum’s collection, which contains more than 20,000 artifacts, and we’ve had a busy year. So what do we need to do to take care of this priceless collection of historic Seminole objects? One thing we do is acquire new things for the collection, so our knowledge of Seminole culture and history can grow.

In 2011, 158 objects were added to the Museum’s permanent collections. Notable objects included a beaded wooden necklace from the early 20th century (see photo below).

This unique item is like nothing else in our collection because most of our historic beads are made of glass. Twenty pieces of patchwork clothing and one palmetto fiber doll were also acquired.

We also have a lot to do with the things that are already in our collection. Everything needs to be numbered, housed in safe materials and added to our collection management database. Although only 158 objects were acquired, 1,503 objects were cataloged into the database, and this represents an enormous amount of effort from the three division staff members, as well as the interns and volunteers that helped us out this year.

Many of these cataloged objects were photographs and identification cards from the Boehmer photographic collection which was accessioned in 2009. This collection of more than 2,000 photographs from the first half of the 20th century is a priceless record of the Seminole Tribe of Florida (see photo above). By digitizing this collection, the Museum has enabled Tribal departments and individual Tribal



A photograph from the Boehmer Collection depicts Toby (Rosa) Johns, Cecil Johns (her son), Mary Parker and Mabel Johns at the Toby Johns camp on the Brighton Reservation.

members to have access to important and previously inaccessible photographs.

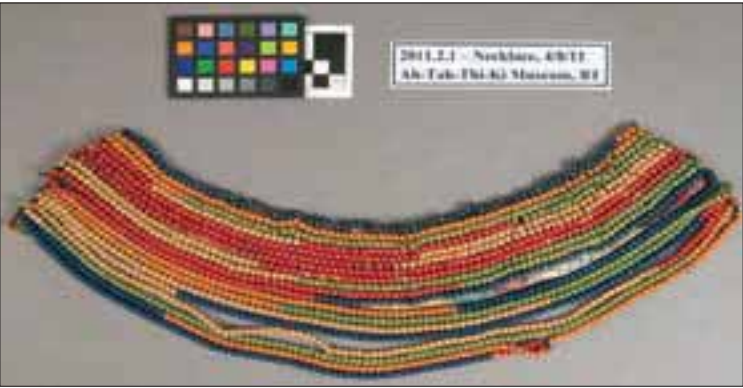
Another collection we worked on was the Audiovisual Collection. This is a collection consisting of spoken word, music, documentaries, motion pictures, interviews, raw footage and computer files. Subjects covered in the collection include the Seminole Tribe, other Native American tribes, Florida wildlife and nature and other various subjects useful for comparative studies.

First, the 668 items in the collection were cataloged into our collection management database. The objects were also scanned so that their images could be attached to the catalog records. Finally, the obsolete formats in the collection (VHS tapes, cassette tapes and LP records) were copied onto CDs and DVDs so they could be easily viewed or listened to. Now it is much easier to access this collection.

A n o t h e r project this year

was an assessment of the research needed within the collections at the Museum. We examined the catalog records for more than 2,000 Seminole and related objects, such as patchwork clothing, dolls, baskets, militaria and fine art. The assessment showed that most objects are in definite need of extensive research. Not only do we need to discover and add the names of artists and artisans to our records of patchwork clothing, dolls, baskets and fine art, but we also need to research the stylistic history of our beaded objects and the historical relevance of much of our militaria. Such knowledge would be invaluable in our efforts to preserve, interpret and disseminate Seminole culture and history to the Museum’s audiences. This means there’s a lot of work for us next year and that we need a lot of help from the Tribal community.

The Registration Division does all these things so that the Tribe’s history is preserved and so that the Tribal community has access to it. We are only here to serve you. We work to identify the past, but we also need your help. You could help by identifying artists or patchwork patterns or naming locations and people in photographs, for example. Please contact the Registration Division at 877-902-1113 ext. 12246 if you want to see the collections and how we take care of them, or if you want to help us to preserve and identify the past. We’d love to hear from you!



A wooden beaded necklace from the early 20th century is on display.

HAH-TUNG-KE

Editor’s note: *Hah-tung-ke* is a feature in which The Tribune profiles a Seminole artist and/or a Seminole song. This month features Pat Barmore and includes the lyrics to one of his songs. *Hah-tung-ke* means music in Mikasuki.

To listen to an audio recording of the song, visit <http://seminoletribune.org/hah-tung-ke/>

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER
Special Projects Reporter

Pat Barmore is a singer and songwriter from the Tampa Bay area.

He has been writing songs and poetry since grade school. He has performed all across Florida, including at the annual Florida Folk Festival. Songs from his three albums (*Flatwoods*, *High Tide* and *Postcards from Florida*) are played regularly on WMNF and other Florida radio stations.

Barmore’s lyrics mirror the evolution of Florida culture from the perspective of someone who loves the diversity of its people and natural wonders. His influences include Bob Dylan and Johnny Cash. He performs as a solo act; in the Florida folk duo Dog Peter Pat; and with his full band The Fugitive Kind.

When he’s not performing, he co-hosts the weekly Florida Folk Night singer-songwriter shows at the Sloppy Pelican in St. Pete Beach and Kojak’s RibHouse in Palmetto. He also produces festival shows across Florida, including shows at Withlacoochee, Chokoloskee and Limestone. When he’s not doing music, he runs a medical billing business in Pinellas County.

Barmore was born in Iowa. Since his father designed guidance systems for U.S. spacecrafts, he grew up traveling across the country from Maine to California with his family of “space program gypsies.”

When Barmore was 11, his family moved to Indian Rocks Beach for a year. “There was only one paved road; the waters were clear and plentiful,” Barmore said. “I was Huckleberry Finn in Paradise. I fell in love with Florida. I returned at age 15 and the affair has never waned.”

In Florida, he attended Largo High School, St. Petersburg Junior College and the University of South Florida.

Through the years, he developed his niche in music. One of his most popular tunes is his signature ballad about Billie Bowlegs III, a significant figure in Seminole Tribal history. Barmore said that the song is a “historical fantasy.”

“Billie Bowlegs was such a charismatic character that he would have survived in any situation during those tumultuous years of his lifetime,” Barmore said.

Billie Bowlegs III, Snake Clan (Cofehapkee, 1862-1965), was a maternal grandson of Osceola who lived on the Brighton Seminole Indian Reservation. As an adult, he renamed himself after Billy Bowlegs (Holata Micco), the prominent Seminole leader during the 2nd Seminole War.

Billie III recruited friends James Mallory and Minnie Moore Wilson to help him advocate for the Seminoles with the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, the resident Indian Agent and the National Indian Association and was instrumental in the eventual establishment of the Brighton, Big Cypress and Miccosukee Indian Reservations. Billie Bowlegs died at the age of 103 and was buried in Ortona Cemetery.

PAT BARMORE



From back left: Minnie Moore Wilson; Billie Bowlegs III; Martha Tiger, wife of Big Tom Tiger; Ben Wells; Front: unknown, Chief Tallahassee’s son; Lake Wilson, Martha Tiger’s daughter. If anyone knows the young boy and the circumstances of this photograph, please contact *The Seminole Tribune*.

Billie Bowlegs

I’m rollin’ down to Florida
In my V8 Ford

I’m flyin’ like the wind across the plains
I’m goin’ where the Tamiami wanders
Through the heart of the Everglades
I’m gonna see a friend of mine
Gotta find out if he’s still there
I’ll look in the 10,000 islands
In a place only he and I know

(Chorus)

Hey Billie Bowlegs
Where have you been?
Can you take me to the place where time began
Tell me ‘bout the panther, the turtle and the bear
Hey Billie Bowlegs
I’m gonna meet you there

Mr. Ford carry me out of Missouri
I got my 45 on my hip
Them old savings and loans was just too easy
For this Dust Bowl fugitive
My gal she’s a little bit nervous
I got the money under the boards
The Parkers and the Barkers took the blame
And this old country boy just got away

– Pat Barmore

Winter in the Big Cypress

The winter winds will come and go.
At night the cool crisp air will gently flow.

With shedding of the leaves, the hammocks give an eerie scene.
The colors will turn to gray and green.

The inhabitants of the glades have changed, for they know
the winter days are up ahead.
The squirrel, toad, and snake are looking for their winter bed.

The birds of the North are down; they mock the residents of
the glade.
The robin and ducks with their song and dance are on
parade.

The buck is bold and proud and he’s ready for a fight.
He knows it’s the season of the doe and his cautious fear
will no longer cause him to take flight.

The rabbit is fat and round and he’s ready for the day ahead.
The little squirrel seems to be in a panic and the turtle is
going down below the river bed.

The summer rains have come and gone, the water level will
soon go down.
The flag hole will still be green, but the outer grass will turn
to brown.

Old panther will roam the night as he feeds on the little
creatures of the dark.
Perhaps in the gray of dawn he will pounce upon a quail or
meadow lake!

The winter breeze is clean and cool and only the creator
will bless.
It is time, it is the season, it is winter in the Big Cypress.

– Moses Jumper Jr.

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Education

B

Longtime educator Alison McCulloch retires from Ahfachkee School

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Welcome to the retirement club, Alison McCulloch!

On Nov. 18, students and staff from the Ahfachkee School hosted a special going away breakfast for McCulloch, who served since 1988, making her the longest serving employee at the Tribal school.

Since the event was held in conjunction with the annual Thanksgiving breakfast, the cafeteria was packed with people who got to witness the joyous, yet emotional teacher goodbye.

The event kicked off with the traditional welcome address from Ahfachkee culture teacher Mary Jene Koenes. Ahfachkee students Harmony Cypress, Krishawn Henry and Nicholus Andrews led the Seminole Pledge of Allegiance. Then, a host of individuals took the time to reflect on McCulloch's impact on the Ahfachkee School and its student body throughout the years.

"Teaching is a very hard job to do," Ahfachkee Principal Lucy Dafoe said. "There's a reason why. It's a calling to get into this field. The educators just have a different heart about them."

To many members of the Ahfachkee School community, McCulloch embodied just that.

"Thank you for all the hard work you've done here," Ahfachkee seventh-grader Corbin Billie said to McCulloch. "I hope you enjoy life. You will be missed."

Big Cypress Tribal citizen Alexandra Tommie, who was tutored by McCulloch years ago, also spoke in gratitude for the retiree.

"I thank you for all the years you have been here," Tommie said. "It's kind of sad that my kids didn't get to work with you like I did. You had a lot of patience for me when I was growing up. It takes a lot of patience and hard work to deal with our kids. I appreciate you for everything you've done for me."

In addition to those words of appreciation for McCulloch's services, a PowerPoint presentation was given, highlighting McCulloch's more than 20 years of work with the Ahfachkee School.

McCulloch contributed significantly to the school's growth. She witnessed the exponential strides made at the Tribe's educational facility; it began as a small elementary school and later quadrupled in size and expanded to include pre-kindergarten through 12th grade.

Among McCulloch's many roles, she had been a classroom teacher, reading interventionist, high school math teacher, alternative assessment manager, testing coordinator, individual tutor and title programs manager.

The retiree now resides in Broward County and continues to maintain her longtime home near the Big Cypress Preserves. She plans on spending more time with her husband and her family upon her retirement.

"I have known her for a long time," fellow retiree Keeno King said of McCulloch. "We're like family. We shared a lot of



Naji Tobias

Former Tribal Chairman Mitchell Cypress congratulates retired Ahfachkee School reading teacher Alison McCulloch on a job well done. She taught at Ahfachkee for more than 20 years.

times together. I would like to tell her to enjoy life every day. Congratulations on her retirement and may God bless her."

For parting retirement gifts, McCulloch received a sweet basket from Ahfachkee student Tequesta Tiger and a book from the entire school body, among many other presents.

McCulloch said she's "very thankful" to the Tribe for giving her the opportunity to serve them in a career that she loved.

"It's really been a pleasure to work with the Seminole community here," McCulloch said. "It's been a place that offers an ideal environment for the children. A lot can be learned from the Seminole culture, and I believe the school will continue to grow and move forward for it."

♦ See more RETIREMENT photos on page 2B

Ahfachkee's fourth annual Science Fair highlights scores of exhibits

Eight Ahfachkee students qualify for 2012 national Native American competition

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Nena Waggerby spent hours upon hours working on her exhibit entitled *Don't Be Blue If Your Color Fades*, and her hard work paid off.

It turned out to be the Ahfachkee School's top-rated display at the fourth annual Science Fair on Nov. 15 inside the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium. The Tribal freshman registered a score of 94.3 out of a possible 100 points.

A total of 117 students from the Ahfachkee School, grades Pre-K through 12, participated in this year's Science Fair.

"It was really nice to see many of the parents and teachers involved with the whole process," said Ahfachkee science teacher Timothy Blount.

Waggerby was one of eight students who qualified for the National American Indian Science & Engineering Fair (NAISEF) to be held wMarch 22-24 in Albuquerque, N.M. She was excited to have her work recognized, and so was her mother, Amanda Cypress.

Cypress said, "It's a good project and I'm proud of Nena for what she put out. I hope she can win the nationals next spring."

Waggerby said that her six-day-long experiment tested how color fades on cloth after it's washed and dried. She used blueberry dye, blueberry juice, salt and vinegar on the cloths. One cloth, which she didn't wash, served as the control.

"Vinegar holds the color blue more than salt will," she said. "It took two washes for the salt to start fading the blue fabric. The vinegar faded a little bit on the first day. But after that, it didn't really fade anymore...The plain blueberry juice faded less than the one with salt but a little bit more than the one with vinegar."

Meanwhile, fellow NAISEF qualifier and Ahfachkee seventh-grader Stanly Cypress IV said he enjoyed working on his award-winning exhibit, entitled *Dizzy Hiders*. Cypress' creation consisted of spinning an Australian roach to test its reaction time.

His experiment results were: first time – when not spun: 13.81 seconds; second time – when spun: 33.1 seconds.

"It feels amazing to win this," Cypress said. "I feel like I could do more work and get through the seventh grade. Mrs. (Vicki) Pratt and Mr. (Timothy) Blount are excellent teachers. Without them, I would have never gotten through the experiment."

Ahfachkee junior Danni Jae Tommie, who also qualified for the 2012 NAISEF competition, worked on an experiment called *In Full Bloom*.

"I used white carnation flowers and food coloring to see how much the flowers would change in color," Tommie said. "It took three days for the color to change from white to yellow, red, green and blue."

At the Science Fair's culture exhibit, Ahfachkee sixth-grader Alyssa Osceola could be seen matching a variety of fruits and vegetables with the vines they originated from. It was one of the most popular visuals out of the 127 entries.

Ahfachkee language and culture instructor Mary Jene Koenes explained how the standout exhibit came together. She also discussed gardening processes, such as how a sweet potato grows.

"The sweet potato is a prolific grower because it does well by itself," Koenes said. "If you don't keep its vines under control,



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee second-grader Harmony Cypress shows off her Science Fair exhibit, entitled Meltdown: Led vs. Incandescent.

then it will take over your whole garden and yard."

Other plants at the exhibit included: tomatoes, carrots, peanuts, pumpkins, peppers, aloe, figs, bananas, guavas, papayas, avocados and cotton. All the plants had healthy growth because of the soil's composition.

"We take dead leaves and scrap vegetables to make our soil," Koenes said. "We also take in earthworms and put all of it together in compost. The earthworms do all the work and when it's finished, it turns into very rich soil."

The students weren't the only ones who took home a lesson from the Science Fair.

Science teacher Blount said, "Personally, I learned that students can become team players and logical thinkers. All of the students learned more information about their projects and were proactively involved in organizing and displaying facts. The students were more apt to show various levels of scientific ability to complete challenging topics."

♦ See more SCIENCE FAIR photos on page 3B

Charter School students inducted to Safety Patrol



Rachel Buxton

Seminole Police Department Lt. Arnita Garrison and Lt. Joey Chapman congratulate Alicia Fudge.

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Freelance Writer

BRIGHTON — Eighteen students were inducted into Pemayetv Emahakv's Safety Patrol on Nov. 11 in a ceremony held at the Brighton Veteran's Building.

In a joint ceremony that also celebrated Veterans Day, parents, teachers and fellow students watched the new members take their oaths.

The following students were sworn into office by Capt. John Auer of the Seminole Police Department: Capts. Aiyana Tommie and Camryn Thomas; Lts. Jalynn Jones and Brady Rhodes; Sgts. Alicia Fudge, Aidan Tommie, Andrew Fish, Aleina Micco, Krysta Burton and Gage Riddle; and Officers Jathan Tommie, Shyla Gopher, Sage Motlow, Kamani Smith, Echo Billie, Dante Thomas, Jenna Brown and Ozzy Osceola.

Officer Darryl Allen, the school resource officer who leads Safety Patrol, explained how students are selected as members of the Safety Patrol. Teachers request students and students must obtain a C average at all times, he said. Once the

teachers submit their requests, Allen and guidance counselor Jeanine Gran make the final decision.

Brighton Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr. said to the patrol members, "Somebody saw that quality in you to step up."

One by one, students received their sash and pin. Then, together, they took their pledge as Pemayetv Emahakv's Safety Patrol.

Officer Allen told the students, "It is an absolute honor we are here. We continue to grow; we started with eight members, then went up to 16 and now we are at 18."

Chairman James E. Billie also shared in the occasion and had a little secret to tell newly inducted officer and son Echo Billie. He was part of the Safety Patrol 55 years ago.

Chairman Billie went on to stress to inductees the importance of their roles.

"You may take that yellow stripe on you lightly, but don't," he said. "One of these days, you may step up and we will all be proud of you."

♦ See more SAFETY photos on page 2B

Native Learning Center to host Winter Symposium



Chris C. Jenkins

The Native Learning Center will host its annual Winter Symposium from Jan. 24-26.

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — The Native Learning Center (NLC) is gearing up for its annual Winter Symposium with the hopes that its formula of housing strategies, grant education and emphasis on culture and language will be another success heading into 2012.

"This symposium is held each year to provide free courses and training to Native American and indigenous people to emphasize the educational needs of Tribal members and their communities," said Kyle Doney, the Center's deputy director.

The annual event will be organized by NLC staff and hosted at the Sheraton Suites Cypress Creek from Jan. 24-26.

"It's my hope that we can educate attendees with information on how to adapt to their communities and Tribes to the different elements of society," Doney said.

"Each one of our focus areas is important to Native Americans. This symposium is also targeting and celebrating culture and language, which is important to the Native American identity. Our culture and language defines us as Native Americans. All of our courses are specific in promoting the Native Learning Center's focus areas, and I hope Native Americans take advantage of our valuable resources."

Last year's three-day event offered guests insight and training on topics such as housing development, Tribal culture, grants, Tribal museums and social media.

Doney said that for the 2012 event, he hopes to have representation or coverage from Native news groups such as the *Cherokee Phoenix* in Oklahoma, *The Circle* in Minnesota and *First Nations* in California.

"I attended last year's Native Learning Center's Winter Symposium, as a longtime social worker/advocate and was in the process of starting my business, Eagle Creek Entertainment," said Tara Pretends Eagle Weber, CEO of the company. "I attended the workshops that emphasized the preservation of culture, specifically the curriculum at a Seminole elementary school. It was very uplifting and quite amazing what they are doing at a very young age."

Special guest Kevin Fitzgibbons, administrator of the Eastern Woodlands Office, will teach the course "Sustainable Development with Recovery Act Funds."

Located at 6363 Taft St. in Hollywood, the Native Learning Center was created in 2008 with the mission of providing Native and indigenous people with skills and knowledge to improve their quality of life through housing-related educational programs. It offers free courses and training to address specific educational needs of Tribal citizens.

The NLC is the first educational facility and resource for Native Americans that is owned and operated by a Native Tribe with programs developed specifically for Natives.

For more information, visit www.NativeLearningCenter.com.

Ahfachkee School recognizes students in First Quarter Awards Ceremony



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee students celebrate at the conclusion of the Nov. 10 First Quarter Awards Ceremony. The event included a pizza party; games of tug-of-war; a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the students' academic achievements; and Principal Lucy Dafoe thanking the students for their accomplishments.



Naji Tobias

Nick Andrews, Krishawn Henry and Javian Cypress display their awards.



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee seventh-grader GraySun Billie shows off the three awards he earned during the school's First Quarter Awards Ceremony on Nov. 10.

Tribal storytellers Billy Walker, Gordon "Ollie" Wareham pay visit to Big Cypress Library



Naji Tobias

In honor of Seminole Music Appreciation Month, on Nov. 8, Tribal storyteller Billy Walker paid a visit to the Big Cypress Library and shared several Seminole stories with Tribal youth from the Big Cypress Boys & Girls Club.



Naji Tobias

Tribal storyteller Gordon "Ollie" Wareham plays the flute during his special presentation at the Big Cypress Library on Nov. 22 for Seminole Music Appreciation Month.



Naji Tobias

Tribal storyteller Gordon "Ollie" Wareham passionately talks to the Tribal youth about stories such as the formation and growth of the little water turtle during a special presentation on Nov. 22. Wareham also talked to the Tribal youth about the importance of respecting their elders: "We have to be respectful to our elders all the time," Wareham said. "If we lose our temper and disrespect them, the elders will close their hearts to us and we will lose their knowledge and wisdom forever."

♦ SAFETY From page 1B



Rachel Buxton

Pemayetyv Emahakv Charter School students take the Safety Patrol pledge, repeating after Seminole Police Department Capt. John Auer.



Rachel Buxton

Aidan Tommie is welcomed into the Safety Patrol by Seminole Police Department Lt. Arnita Garrison and Lt. Joey Chapman.



Rachel Buxton

Krysta Burton is inducted as a sergeant into the Safety Patrol and congratulated by Seminole Police Department Lt. Arnita Garrison and Lt. Joey Chapman.

♦ RETIREMENT From page 1B



Naji Tobias

Fellow Ahfachkee School retirees Keeno King and Alison McCulloch share a moment together at the Nov. 18 Thanksgiving breakfast and retirement party. McCulloch received a Seminole gospel CD and a photo autographed by King as parting gifts.



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee students Harmony Cypress, left, Krishawn Henry, center and Nicholus Andrews, right, recite the Seminole Pledge of Allegiance at the breakfast on Nov. 18.



Naji Tobias

Retired teacher Alison McCulloch receives a handmade sweet basket as a parting gift from Ahfachkee student Tequesta Tiger during the Nov. 18 Thanksgiving breakfast.

Tribal members learn Indian history to celebrate Native American Heritage Month



Judy Weeks
Second-grader Arianna Medina, center, shows fellow students a Seminole doll during a Native American Heritage presentation at the North Naples United Methodist School.



Judy Weeks
Immokalee Culture coordinator Geraldine Osceola uses arts and crafts to introduce students at the Naples Bear's Den Childcare to Native American heritage.

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Writer

IMMOKALEE — It began nearly a hundred years ago as an effort to gain one day of national recognition for Native Americans. After all, the First Americans made significant contributions to the establishment and growth of the United States. Now, Native American Heritage is celebrated all month every November.

The celebration started in 1912 when Seneca Indian Arthur Parker, the director of the Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences in Rochester, N. Y., persuaded the Boy Scouts of America to set aside a day for Native Americans. Three years later, the Congress of the American Indian Association met in Lawrence, Kan., approved a plan to celebrate American Indian Day and made the first formal appeal to recognize Indians as citizens.

In the ensuing years, numerous state governments endorsed the concept, and by 1990, President George H.W. Bush approved a joint resolution designating November as National American Indian Heritage Month.

Senate Resolution 145 of the 105th Congress of the United States of America acknowledged that Tribal governments developed the fundamental principles of freedom of speech and separation of the powers that form the foundation of the U. S. Government. Native Americans traditionally exhibit respect for our natural resources and serve with valor in the military. They have made important contributions in many fields, including agriculture, medicine, music, language, art, athletics, education and leadership.

Last year, to pay tribute to the rich ancestry and

traditions of Native Americans, the Diane Yzaguirre Memorial Library and Immokalee Culture Department joined forces to offer a series of educational programs throughout the month of November.

On Nov. 2, the library sponsored an afternoon of cultural awareness when Gordon “Ollie” Wareham entertained the youngsters with storytelling and the animated expression of Seminole legends. With voice changes and graphic interpretations, he assumed the role of multiple characters and captivated his audience. Picking up his flute, he filled the room with the haunting notes of past generations and helped his listeners envision their heritage.

On Nov. 7, artist Elgin Jumper visited the library to teach painting on canvas. He assisted the Immokalee seniors in the creation of a landscape sunset in the early part of the day.

“I am always rewarded when I spend time with our elders,” Jumper said. “They teach me more than I could ever hope to teach them. As an oral culture, we rely upon their memories to pass on the important lessons of our ancestors.”

During an afterschool session, Jumper introduced more than a dozen young artists to the Seminole Horse.

“Comprised of the Tribal colors of red, yellow, black and white on a landscape background, the Seminole Horse is designed to carry art and poetry into the Seminole future,” Jumper said. “It is my goal to create a chat book focused on the artwork and poetry of our youth.”

Every month is Native American Month in the cultural departments on the reservations, where a concentrated effort is made year-round to teach, inspire and encourage the Seminole culture and heritage.

However, this November brought in numerous requests for presentations off the reservation in both public and private schools in Collier County.

Immokalee culture coordinator Geraldine Osceola prepared a curriculum suitable for presentation to a variety of age groups that brought a favorable response in each of the classrooms she visited. For instance, while talking to preschoolers at the Bear’s Den Childcare Center, she passed around beadwork, a sweet grass basket, a doll, a patch work example and a miniature chickee while talking about language, clans, animals and camp life. At the conclusion, she gave each student a piece of a totem pole to decorate and assemble.

On Nov. 29, about 35 second graders at the North Naples United Methodist School learned about the Seminole people and their way of life. In addition to the Seminole crafts, they viewed archive photographs, a hand-crank sewing machine, whole and ground corn, dried deer meat, lapoli, sugarcane, pumpkin, squash, a stalk of bananas and sweet potatoes. A brief historical presentation included the Three Seminole Wars, life in the Everglades, travel by dugout and on foot, the trading posts, hunting and fishing.

“I find that the children are very inquisitive and ask numerous questions,” Osceola said. “The response from the teachers is overwhelmingly positive.”

Librarian Jamie Yzaguirre said, “Our library has a vast assortment of reference material of a Native American nature. The learning materials target all age groups and we are always ready to assist our readers in locating the items that would best suit their needs and encourage them to learn about their past as they prepare for the future.”



Judy Weeks
Raymond Garza Jr. completes his rendition of the Seminole Horse.

◆ SCIENCE FAIR From page 1B



Naji Tobias
Ahfachkee students Ethan Balentine, left, and Roderick Bert, center, marvel at the winning exhibit by Stanley Cypress IV during the Ahfachkee School’s Science Fair on Nov. 15.



Naji Tobias
The eight qualifiers for the 2012 National American Indian Science & Engineering Fair, from left: Ryanne Pratt, AnnaBelle Whiteshield, Kaitlin Osceola, Nena Waggeberby, Danni Jae Tommie, Taylor Pratt, Nashoba Gonzalez and Stanley Cypress IV.



Naji Tobias
Ahfachkee School sixth-grader Alyssa Osceola matches a sweet potato with the vine it originated from with Ahfachkee language and culture teacher Mary Jene Koenes during the Nov. 15 Science Fair at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium.



Naji Tobias
Ahfachkee School sophomore Reagan Whitecloud takes top honors in her grade as Ahfachkee School Principal Lucy Dafoe congratulates her on the accomplishment.



Naji Tobias
Boys & Girls Club's Thommy Doud interviews 11th-grade winner Danni Jae Tommie about her Science Fair experiment.

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Sports

C

Tribal members rank among best at Indian National Finals Rodeo

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Writer

LAS VEGAS, Nev. — Congratulations to the Eastern Indian Rodeo Association (EIRA) 2011 qualifiers for their performance at the 36th Annual Indian National Finals Rodeo (INFR) competition. They did a terrific job of representing their region at the event held at the South Point Arena in Las Vegas, Nev. from Nov. 8-12.

“The mission of the INFR is to provide, promote and preserve the advancement of professional Indian Rodeo by empowering Native American families, youth and communities,” said INFR President Richard Bowers Jr. “We encourage positive role modeling, educational opportunities, healthy competition and preservation of culture and tradition.”

The INFR commissioners and staff said that it was an honor to award the 2011 champions with gold buckles and saddles that said “World Champion.” This includes the stars and legends that competed in the Junior and Senior Finals.

The INFR currently has 11 regions within the United States and Canada, and its members range from 10 to 80 years old. Champion Native Americans compete against each other in the INFR. There were 59 Tribes represented at the 2010 Finals.

EIRA qualifying champions were: Jacoby Johns, Gray Wolf Herrera, Ivan Bruised Head, Josh Jumper, Naha Jumper, Marvin Bowers, Cort Herrera, Casey McDonald, Jay Garza, Shelby Osceola, Leanna Billie, Mackenzie Bowers, Calgary Johns, Dayra Koenes, Budha Jumper, Jobe Johns, Andre Jumper, Blevyns Jumper, Kelton Smedley, Richard Bowers Jr., Paul Bowers Sr., Rudy Osceola, Joe L. John and Norman Johns.

Traveling to Las Vegas, Nev., they were all champions upon their arrival and worked hard to represent their region.

The first few days of competition – known as the Long Go Rodeos – began the process of elimination for the final 10 contestants who would participate in the World Championship during the Short Go on the final day.

Shelby Osceola, 2011 EIRA Ladies Breakaway Champion and Lady’s All Around, took third place in with an impressive average score of 10.2. Shelby’s rodeo career includes high school rodeo as well as collegiate rodeo at Troy University, which she attended with a rodeo scholarship.

EIRA Regional Finals Champion and 24-year-old Leanna Billie, brought home gold buckles in the first and third rounds of the Ladies Breakaway. An outstanding athlete, Billie began her rodeo career in the EIRA junior division and has qualified twice for the INFR.



Photo courtesy of Quick Shot Photo.com

Junior Bull Rider Kelton Smedley's dream of competing at the INFR becomes a reality in the arena at South Point in Las Vegas, Nev.

“I drew a bad calf in my final round,” Billie said. “But that’s rodeo. You don’t always get what you want, and it’s up to you to work it out if you can. Rodeo is an unforgiving sport, and you have to earn what you get. Nobody is going to hand it to you.

♦ See INFR on page 6C

New additions provide fresh start for Ahfachkee Warriors basketball teams



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee Lady Warriors sophomore guard Reagan Whitecloud drives past the St. John Neumann defense as she drives towards the opponents basket in her team’s 61-40 home win on Nov. 17. Whitecloud scored 36 points and made six rebounds, three assists and nine steals.

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Writer

BIG CYPRESS — Progress continues for the Ahfachkee Warriors basketball program.

When both the boys and girls teams play, there’s excitement in the air, particularly when it comes to the additions made in the program’s second season of operation.

Beyond that, the boys team scored their first-ever win in history – albeit by a forfeit from Charter of Boynton Beach on Dec. 5. Meanwhile, the girls team is starting its season strong, as the Lady Warriors have managed to earn a 4-0 record (as of their Dec. 6 home game vs. King’s Academy-Clewiston) with relative ease.

“It’s not the win that we wanted, but we’ll take it,” Ahfachkee Warriors senior Taylor Pratt said. “I’m just excited that this season is looking up more than last year.”

Big Cypress Tribal Council Rep. Mondo Tiger opened up on how this season has turned out for the Tribal athletic program thus far.

“There are a lot of young kids that are playing for us right now,” Tiger said. “The girls are starting out really fast and I

expect them to keep winning their games. The boys are starting out slow, but I expect them to start clicking towards the middle of the season. The abilities are there for both teams, so we’ll see how it plays out.”

Lady Warriors blow out opponents with relative ease

There are only three returning players from last year’s squad – eighth-grader Michaela Cypress, freshman Sabre’ Billie and sophomore Reagan Whitecloud.

Despite that, this year’s collective – which includes eight new players – has shined brightly in their first four games in the key area of teamwork.

In addition to that, Whitecloud, arguably the team’s best overall player thus far, has made some big strides in her shooting abilities and her overall leadership skills – a key component to the her team’s relatively fast start.

Whitecloud, who has averaged a team high of 25.3 points over four games, has been the team’s go-to player to set the tempo.

Whitecloud has helped speed the game up with her hustle and drive, particularly on the defensive end, where she leads the team with an impressive average of 8.9 steals per game at this point in the season.

“Reagan has definitely stepped up this year as a leader on and off the court,” Ahfachkee Lady Warriors second-year head coach Kristin Stoots said. “She has great ball-handling skills and great vision on the court. She’s very quick and a lot of her lay-ups come from the fast-break offense that we run. I’m really proud of her efforts and growth as a player from last year to this year.”

Whitecloud’s leadership has had a positive effect on her teammates, including junior and new addition Danni Jae Tommie. A transfer from Glades Day School in Belle Glade, Fla., Tommie has fit in nicely with the team, as evidenced by her stellar averages of 14.5 rebounds, 11.0 points, 3.3 steals, 2.5 blocks and 2.5 assists per game – perhaps the team’s most well-rounded player at this juncture.

“Danni Jae has been phenomenal on the boards so far this season,” Stoots said. “She’s put up a whole lot of points for us as well. She’s been a key addition to our team and it’s helped us a lot.”

Meanwhile, Cypress has been a pleasant surprise to the team’s early success, as she has averaged a total of 11.5 points, 6.0 steals, 3.5 blocks, 3.0 assists and 2.5 rebounds per game. Cypress leads her team in blocks per game – including a season- and team-high 11 blocks in Ahfachkee’s 49-12 win over King’s Academy-Clewiston on Dec. 6 – and in 3-pointers made, with 8 total as of four games played.

“I’ve seen so much growth in Michaela,” Stoots said. “She is one of our best shooters on the team. I’m really proud of her in how she’s stepped up.”

The team faced a challenge when last year’s stars left. Terri Baker, 2010-2011 MVP, transferred to play for the Clewiston Lady Tigers this season and her sister, Tia Osborne, graduated from the Ahfachkee School last spring. But even without them, this year’s squad may have a chance at an undefeated season.

A lot of that has to do with teamwork and sportsmanship – two things that Stoots has worked really hard with her players to embrace.

“I have four sixth graders (Eyanna Billie, Dayra Koenes, Alyssa Osceola and Trinity Williams) on the team,” Stoots said. “I’m looking forward to their growth over the next few seasons. The talent is spread out a little bit more, and they all definitely come together for a group effort on both sides of the ball.”

♦ See WARRIORS on page 7C

Tribal youth shine in Virgil Billie Volleyball Tournament



Naji Tobias

Lady Swag's youth volleyball team has a group moment at the Virgil Billie Volleyball Tournament. The event was held at the Big Cypress Reservation's Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium on Nov. 19.



Naji Tobias

Lady Swag's Ashley Wilcox, left, spends some time with her son, Trey Wilson, 11, at the Nov. 19 Virgil Billie Tournament in Big Cypress.



Naji Tobias

Hollywood Tribal youngster Mailani Perez of Lady Swag practices her volleyball serves to prepare for the tournament.



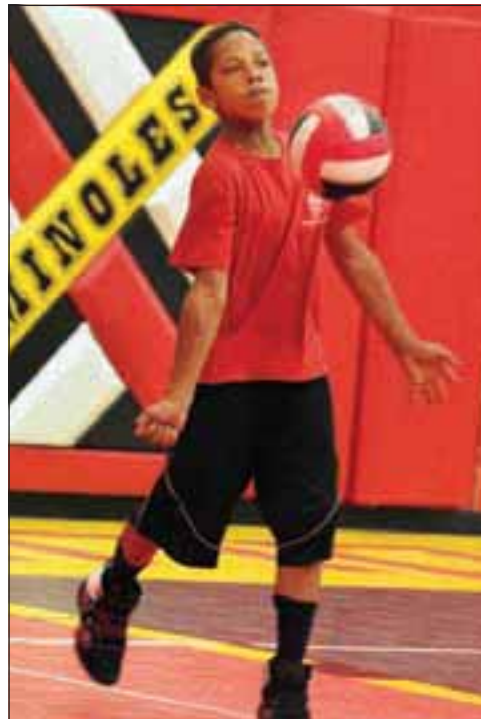
Naji Tobias

Lily's, from the Immokalee Reservation, shares a team moment at the tournament.



Naji Tobias

Zoey Puente, 12, serves the ball for Maggie's. She is the only girl on the team.



Naji Tobias

Dyami Nelson, 12, hits up a serve in Maggie's preliminary best-of-three matchup against Lily's.

♦ See more VOLLEYBALL photos on page 2C

Ahfachkee Warriors honor star athletes at Fall Athletic Awards Banquet



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee Warriors golf assistant head coach Cookie Mazzant and head coach Amos Mazzant present Ahfachkee Warriors senior golfer Ryan Cypress with a participation award for his efforts on the golf course throughout the fall 2011 season.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal citizen Jerilynn Tsosie, left, and her younger brother, Ahfachkee Warriors senior Stevie Billie, show off the water golf ball retriever, photo and plaque Billie received for his accomplishments on the golf course.



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee Lady Warriors volleyball coach Bernadette Schyvinch stands by Tribal volleyball athlete Reagan Whitecloud as she wins the volleyball program's first Most Valuable Player honor.



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee Warriors golf assistant head coach Cookie Mazzant presents Warriors golfer Taylor Pratt with the Most Valuable Player award.



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee Lady Warriors volleyball coach Bernadette Schyvinch, left, congratulates her team on a job well done during the Ahfachkee Warriors Athletic Awards Banquet on Nov. 10 inside the Big Cypress Community Center.



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee Warriors golf head coach Amos Mazzant presents Ahfachkee Warriors senior golfer Stevie Billie with the Most Improved award.



Naji Tobias

Tribal citizen Jarrod Smith speaks at the Fall Athletic Awards Banquet on Nov. 10 inside the Big Cypress Community Center.



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee Lady Warriors volleyball coach Bernadette Schyvinch congratulates Lady Warrior Spirit Award recipient Alyssa Osceola.

♦ VOLLEYBALL From page 1C



Naji Tobias

Maggie's has a team moment at the Nov. 19 Virgil Billie Youth Volleyball Tournament in Big Cypress.



Naji Tobias

Lily's Christopher Briscall, from the Immokalee Reservation, spikes the volleyball into Lady Swag's territory in a preliminary match.

Brighton Recreation holds fifth annual bicycle race for health

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Freelance Reporter

BRIGHTON — Five brave souls bared the early morning humidity and wind on Nov. 19 as they competed in the Brighton Recreation Department's fifth annual bike race, a 13.5-mile trek.

After fitness specialist Kai Setty led a brief stretching session, participants lined up along the entrance of the Brighton First Indian Baptist Church on Rez Road to begin the race.

The participants were Carla Gopher, Avalon Puente, Lisa Huff, Suraiya Smith and the sole male competitor, Norman Bowers.

"On your mark, get set, go!" Setty shouted.

Gopher took an early lead among the rest of the competitors. Cyclists traveled down Rez Road to the water tower to the first water station, turning onto Harney Pond Road.

At the end of the pavement, past the Red Barn, Seminole Tribe Health Department's fitness specialist Ignacio Orozco waited with water and beads to pass out and send competitors onto the second leg of the race.

"You got this," Orozco encouraged the bikers.

Back down Harney Pond Road and a right back onto Rez Road put the cyclists into the homestretch to the finish line at the Brighton Trading Post.

One by one, competitors came in with impressive times.

Gopher, placing first among all and first in her age category, finished with a time of 47:23. Gopher competed even though less than 24 hours later, she would run her first half marathon in St. Petersburg.

Bowers came in right behind Gopher with a time of 52:20.

The other three competitors completed within minutes of each other: Puente with a time of 1:04:58, Huff at 1:08:38 and Smith who made an impressive comeback after switching bikes halfway through the way, finishing with a time of 1:10:40.

The event marked Smith's first competitive bike race. She recently joined a spin class at the gym and admitted that she

decided to compete because she had nothing better to do. She figured she would give it a shot.



Rachel Buxton

Carla Gopher wastes no time at the turn and begins her race to the finish at Brighton's annual bicycle race.

"All I kept saying, 'I'm going to finish,' coming back from the bridge," Smith said. "I didn't know if I was going to finish. The wind was something else coming back."

Setty announced the times and places and congratulated everyone on a great job.

"I know you came for your health," Setty said. "And this was about improving your cardiovascular endurance and you all did that."

Everyone received shirts for their participation and snacked on fruits and granola to regain strength.

"Remember, 'dead last finish' is better than 'did not finish,' which greatly trumps 'did not start,'" Setty said.



Rachel Buxton

The competitors take off for the 13.5-mile trek in Brighton's bicycle race for health.

Bowers siblings shoot hoops in season opener



Chris C. Jenkins

Devon Bowers competes in American Heritage basketball team's season opener at the Sunset Lakes Community Center in Miramar on Nov. 30. Devon saw fourth-quarter action in a close 29-31 defeat versus Somerset Academy.



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal hoopsters Devon Bowers and sister Mariah Bowers share a sibling moment after their basketball games. Mariah scored three points as a starter for the Lady Patriots in a close 12-18 loss versus Somerset Academy.

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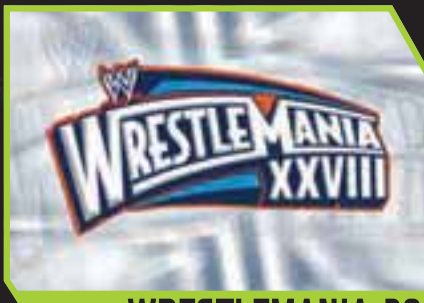
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Chris C. Jenkins

The mens championship game tips off at the eighth annual Memorial Big Ballers Basketball Tournament at the Seminole Recreation Gym on Dec. 1-3. Big Town players, left, and Plainsman players go for the ball tossed up by William Floyd, a special guest and former Florida State University gridiron national champion.



Chris C. Jenkins

Father and son are all smiles as they enjoy the action courtside at the Big Ballers Tournament.



Chris C. Jenkins

The game gets intense as a player from Big Town defends against a Plainsman shooter.



Chris C. Jenkins

Womens basketball players step up the competition at the Big Ballers Basketball Tournament.



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal citizen and third place “Euro four-door car” winner Elliot Young and his wife, Jessica Young, stand next to their customized Mercedes Benz.



Chris C. Jenkins

Womens champions celebrate their victory at the eighth annual Memorial Big Ballers Basketball Tournament with their winnings and trophy at the Seminole Recreation Gym Dec. 1-3.



Chris C. Jenkins

Classic cars line up to be judged at the car show.



Chris C. Jenkins

Car show organizer Eric Osceola shares a moment with Florida State University football great William Floyd, who served as emcee and car show judge.



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal elder Betty Osceola sells beaded jewelry at the car show.

Seminole Fastpitch Softball Team wins championship



Back row, from left: assistant coach Joe Collins, assistant coach Ron Ward, head coach BigShot Jumper, assistant coach Robin Drayton and assistant coach Ruggy Jumper; Middle row: Claireese Billie, Tianna Baker, Dasani Frye, Reanne Drayton, Amanda Lopez, Annie Jumper and Alexis Gonzalez; Front row: Hannah Ward, Alani Gonzalez, Kiauna Martin, Bayleigh Kraft, Lauren Stancel and December Baker.

SUBMITTED BY MOSES JUMPER
Hollywood Recreation Director

HOLLYWOOD — The girls “12 and under” Seminole Fastpitch Softball Team recently won the county recreation softball championship in a close and exciting game against The Sting from Silver Lakes, Fla. Although at one point the Seminoles were down 2-5, they tied up the game and won by one point in extra innings. Tribal member Kiauna Martin hit the winning run.

There are eight Tribal members on the team. Coach Moses Jumper said that although every team member contributed to the win, Tribal member Claireese Billie “carried the team in her hitting.” He said, “She’s probably one of our most improved players.” Dasani Frye also made some memorable plays. “Dasani was one of our top pitchers and also played first base and did a good job hitting,” he said.

Annie Jumper was a notable player as well. “Annie did an outstanding job catching and hitting,” Jumper added.

The team posted a 12-3 record throughout the season and qualified for the 9-team playoffs in which they went undefeated.

The team is coached by Moses Jumper, Ruggy Jumper, Joe Collins and Ron Ward. Moses Jumper said that they have played together for two years. He said he hopes they can return to the Native American Youth Organization (NAYO) softball tournament in Mississippi in the future. The winter season will begin in January, and all Tribal girls are invited to come out for the team.

For more information, contact Joe Collins at the Seminole gym in Hollywood or Ruggy Jumper at the Hollywood Tribal office.

◆ INFR
From page 1C

I’ve started barrel racing and roping on the Pro Rodeo circuit and am looking forward to next year.”

The calf ropers worked hard for their points with Josh Jumper making it all the way to the Short Go. However, his final calf took him out of the running. BruisedHead drew a mean steer in the second round that ran over him. Slamming its head into his chest, it took him out of the race for the gold.

Regional Finals Barrel Racing Champion Bowers had some great runs that took her all the way to the Short Go. Her final average of 68.539 put her in eighth position for the championship.

The INFR Junior/Senior Rodeos were an opportunity for the EIRA participants to shine. Growing up in the arena, most of these youngsters got their start riding sheep and running the barrels on a lead line. Years of hard work won them a slot at the Finals, and they put their hearts into the job at hand.

The 2011 EIRA Boy’s All Around and Junior Breakaway Roping Champion, Jobe Johns, made it through all three rounds of the Junior Steer Riding and averaged eighth in the nation in the final count.

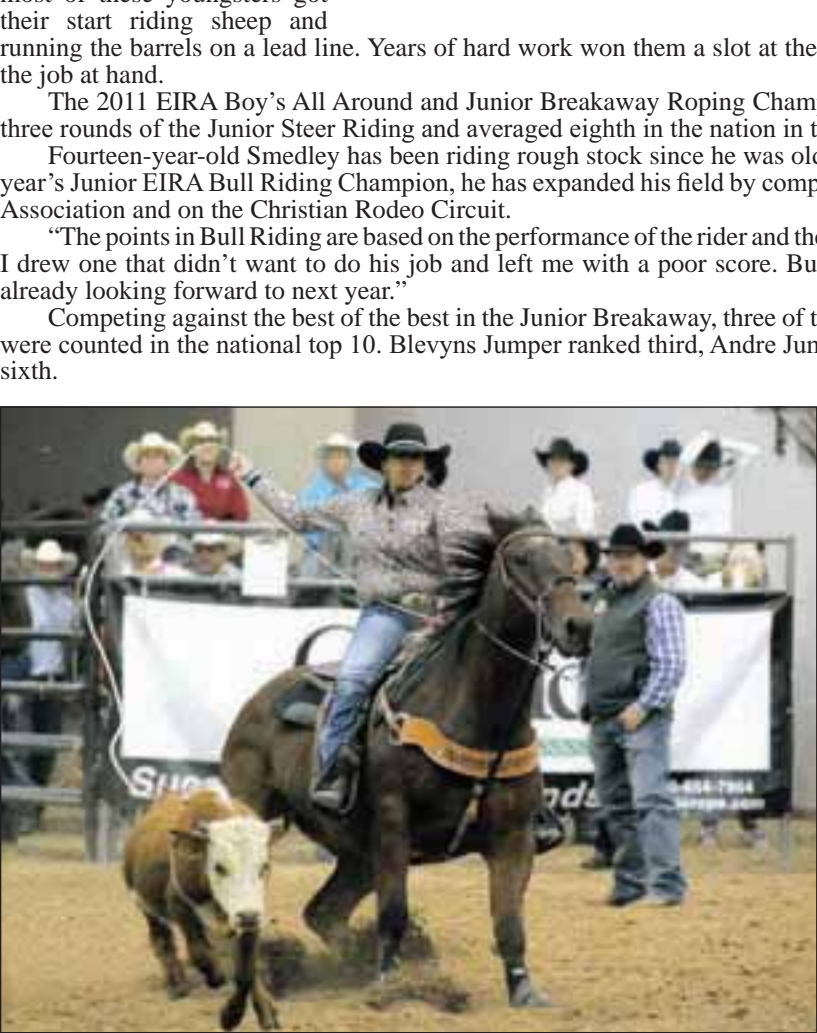
Fourteen-year-old Smedley has been riding rough stock since he was old enough to climb on a sheep. As this year’s Junior EIRA Bull Riding Champion, he has expanded his field by competing in the Southern Pro Bull Riding Association and on the Christian Rodeo Circuit.

“The points in Bull Riding are based on the performance of the rider and the bull,” Smedley said. “Unfortunately, I drew one that didn’t want to do his job and left me with a poor score. But that’s the luck of the draw and I’m already looking forward to next year.”

Competing against the best of the best in the Junior Breakaway, three of the Tribe’s outstanding young athletes were counted in the national top 10. Blevyns Jumper ranked third, Andre Jumper took fifth and Jobe Johns earned sixth.



Junior barrel racer Dayra Koenes flies through the barrels at the INFR in Las Vegas, Nev.



Leanna Billie won two golf buckles in the Ladies Breakaway Roping at the 2011 INFR.

It proved to be a tough barrel pattern for Kalgary Johns, Koenes and Budha Jumper running in their respective divisions, but it didn’t damper their spirits.

“I was thrilled to have the chance to participate at the INFR,” Dayra Koenes said. “The best part was meeting so many other young Native Americans who share the same interests and enjoying the company of my friends. I can’t wait to get home and start preparing for the next season.”

With 30 contestants vying for the World Championship in each of the major events, Tour Rodeos have become an important part of the qualifying process. The Tour Rodeos hosted by the EIRA in 2011 have been recognized by the INFR as two of their major events of the year. Many of this year’s World Champions traveled across the country to earn their qualifying points in the Big Cypress and Brighton arenas.

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♦ **WARRIORS**
From page 1C



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee's Matthew Bluebird dribbles his way past the Cape Coral Christian Crusaders defense in the second half of his team's season-opening game on Dec. 1 in Immokalee.

Stoots said she spent some time in efforts to bridge the age gap between the older and younger players, with the team's 11 players ranging from 10 to 17 years old.

"That's a huge difference in terms of maturity," Stoots said. "So what we did was match the older players up with the younger ones. It's like a big sister/little sister thing we have here. The older players are responsible for encouraging the younger ones on and off the court. They'll encourage the younger players by actions such as writing cards to them and even giving each of them a bottle of Gatorade before game. It's a team-building concept that has worked out really well."

And all that has helped the Lady Warriors win their first four games with relative ease, as evidence by their blowouts against Hialeah Educational Academy with a score of 45-18, St. John Neumann-Naples 61-40, LaBelle 50-39 and King's Academy-Clewiston 49-12.

The Lady Warriors finished the first half of their season with road games against Moore Haven and Donahue Academy-Ave Maria.

The Lady Warriors will finish the second half of the 2011-2012 season with five of seven home games against the following teams: King's Academy-Clewiston on Jan. 9, Cape Coral Christian on Jan. 10, LaBelle on Jan. 17, their homecoming game against Moore Haven on Jan. 19 and their season finale against Donahue Academy on Jan. 27.

The team's final two road games are against St. John Neumann-Naples on Jan. 6 and Hialeah Educational Academy-Hialeah on Jan. 12.

"We've been trying to focus on bringing them all together as one program, one family, one team," Stoots said. "It has been a challenge at times, but I think it's really showing on the court. I'm really proud of them for that."

Warriors boys team shows some promise

The new addition of players like Ahfachkee senior Jonathan Robbins has provided a much-welcome spark to a team that suited just six players last season.

Under the coaching leadership of Big Cypress Tribal citizens Cicero Osceola, first-year head coach, and Josh Jumper first-year assistant coach, the team's enthusiasm suddenly grew from last year – and it has truly shown on the court.

Though the boys lost their first three games of the season – 39-69 to Cape Coral Christian in the season opener, 32-98 to Immokalee in the home opener and 25-52 to LaBelle on the road – there seems to be a feeling that they'll likely win at least a few games this season.

Robbins has almost single-handedly carried his team through the season's first three games – he has averaged a team-high 20.3 points per game. However, statistics don't tell the whole story as to how the boys are expected to grow as the season rolls along.

There are now 10 players on this year's team – a positive thing because not all of them will have to be on the court for the full 32 minutes of regulation, giving the players much-welcomed rest from time to time.

"We're going through growing pains right now," Osceola said. "They're learning, but we haven't caught up as a team yet...But as you see, they have a lot of heart and they don't give up. They'll get it together and play pretty decent in a few games."

Osceola considers this season as a learning curve for his boys.

"When you learn how to play against tougher teams, it boosts the confidence of our kids," Osceola said. "Even though Immokalee beat us bad, they didn't give up. In the second half, it always seems as if we play tougher."

Osceola said his team could have had a chance to win their road game against LaBelle, fighting back from a seemingly insurmountable halftime deficit to the Cowboys.

"We played nowhere near where we should have," Osceola said. "Keep in mind that we opened the season up with three games in three days. Our kids got to get mentally sound to the point that they won't get tired, but it's going to take some time."

This year's team consists of: Christian Anderson, Jonah Alvarado, Roderick Bert, Corbin Billie, Matthew Bluebird, Quenton Cypress, Nathaniel Jim, Pratt, Robbins and Uriah Waggerby.

The boys record is 1-3 as of Dec. 5. They played on the road against Moore Haven and Donahue Academy-Ave Maria to finish out the first half of their season.

They will complete their second season with seven of eight games at home: against Cape Coral Christian on Jan. 10, Charter of Boynton Beach on Jan. 13, LaBelle on Jan. 17, Moore Haven on Jan. 19 for their homecoming game, Heartland Christian on Jan. 20, American Prep Academy on Jan. 26 and Donahue Academy Jan. 27 for the season finale.

The boys' final road game of the season is on Jan. 9 against Heartland Christian in Sebring.

Osceola said he expects to see a lot of improvement as far as team play goes.

If the boys score in the first half of games as much as – or even more than – they do in the second half, expect to see some wins on their final record.

"I'll wait until the end," Osceola said. "We're not worried about who we're playing. It's all about playing with defense, fundamentals and heart. Just watch; you'll see a lot of improvement in our boys."



Naji Tobias

The Ahfachkee Warriors boys team groups up. The team is hopeful that they will see some improvement.



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee Lady Warriors freshman Sabre Billie attempts a long range jumper against St. John Neumann of Naples on Nov. 17. The Lady Warriors won 61-40.



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee's Jonathan Robbins (team-high 19 points) goes up for a high-flying layup during his team's 52-25 loss to the LaBelle Cowboys on Dec. 3.



Naji Tobias

The Ahfachkee Warriors girls team gets together. They've had a strong season so far.

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