



**Riverwalk Trust Tribute  
Honors Tribe  
COMMUNITY v 3A**

**Battiest Brothers Hold  
'The Storm' Launch Party  
COMMUNITY v 6A**



**Tools of War Exhibit Opens at  
Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum  
COMMUNITY v C3**

# The Seminole

Voice of the Unconquered



# Tribune

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## Tori Osceola Sings National Anthem at Daytona National Speedway

BY JUDY WEEKS  
Freelance Reporter



Tori Osceola sings the National Anthem Feb. 18 at the opening of the Next Era Energy Resource - 250 Race at the Daytona National Speedway.

DAYTONA, Fla. — Tori Osceola took her place in the spotlight on Feb. 18 when she sang the National Anthem at the opening of the Next Era Energy Resource - 250 Race at the Daytona National Speedway.

The annual 100 Lap/250 Mile Race is a prelude to the Daytona 500 and drew a crowd of more than 50,000 spectators on site, as well as millions of viewers over the CNN Network. A special car bearing her name was provided for Tori's grand entry by the Checkered Flag Committee.

Following her introductory lap, 12-year-old Tori joined the color guard for their presentation of flags and then ascended to the stage of the official race scoreboard. In a strong, clear and confident voice, she gave tribute to the United States Flag by singing the National Anthem.

A Spot Light Award Winner of Seminole Star Search, Tori has been singing since she was 3 years old and is planning on making it into a career. She is the daughter of Naples Council Liaison O. B. Osceola Jr. and is an honor student at the Community School of Naples.

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## Breanna Billie Crowned Brighton Princess at 33rd Annual Pageant

Melinda Gentry wins Brighton Jr. Miss

BY RACHEL BUXTON  
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Eight young ladies donned their finest traditional Seminole clothing Feb. 17 as they vied for a chance to represent the Brighton Reservation as either the Brighton Miss or Jr. Miss Princess.

The 33rd annual Brighton Seminole Princess Pageant was held at the Brighton Veterans' Building with Brighton Princess Committee member Salina Dorgan as the master of ceremonies.

Brighton Jr. Miss Seminole Princess contestants included Krysta Burton, Malorie Thomas, Melinda Gentry and Raylon Eagle. Brighton Miss Seminole Princess contestants were Jennie Eagle, Deliah Carillo, Kirsten Doney and Breanna Billie.

Before the girls were brought on stage, Brighton Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr. said, "Let's give these girls all the support and applause they need. They're our future."

The young contestants, starting with the Jr. Miss candidates, introduced themselves in front of the judges and listed a few of their hobbies. Burton said she enjoyed cheerleading, while Gentry expressed her interest in drawing.

Brighton Miss contestant Jennie Eagle

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The newly crowned Brighton Princesses share a moment together, Jr. Miss Melinda Gentry, left, and Miss Breanna Billie on Feb. 17 at the Brighton Seminole Princess Pageant.

## Tribal Army Sgt. Gabriel Coppedge Honored on 33rd Birthday for Active Duty Service in Kuwait

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS  
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — A mixture of happiness and high emotional energy filled the ballrooms of the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Feb. 21, celebrating the military service and 33rd birthday of U. S. Army Sgt. and Seminole Tribe citizen Gabriel Coppedge.

It was a first of its kind, special video broadcast and thank you party streamed live among family, friends, and Tribal officials while the world watched. The event, sponsored by Seminole Business Marketing (Seminole Media Productions), allowed the father of two serving his third war stint, to see and interact live with family while on duty in Kuwait.

"I want to thank everyone for their hard work in being a part of this event," Coppedge said of the patriotic President's Day gathering. "As a part of the Seminole people I am proud of my heritage also. As a Seminole warrior and soldier I try to exemplify the values of the military and my people."

"I would encourage everyone to join the military. It is also a great honor for your family to see you serve," he added.

Coppedge's parents Gene and Cheryl Coppedge made the trip from Coolidge, Ariz., and were in high, moved spirits seeing their son, a postal operations non-commissioned officer, for the first time in a year.

"I think the whole thing was fun. He looked good and it was good to see his fellow soldiers with him," father Gene said.

Mother Cheryl said, "It was exciting. I wanted to cry, but I was able to keep it together and I thought it was great."

Tribal officials and citizens on military assignment in the past also gave thanks to Coppedge for his service.

"It is good to see you and have you here with us. I am glad we now have this type of technology to do this type of thing," an impressed Big Cypress Tribal Board Rep. Paul Bowers Sr. said.

Bowers was honored with the distinguished Purple Heart for service during the Vietnam War given to wounded or killed soldiers who serve in combat.

"You may not know it but you are a hero down here in Seminole Country," Chairman Mitchell Cypress said to Coppedge.

As a strong military advocate, Tribal color guard member and spokesman for the Tribe Steven Bowers has maintained consistent contact with Coppedge facilitating support to him. Bowers, the liaison for Governor's Council on Indian Affairs, said it was an exciting day.

"It is something I feel has been long overdue," Bowers said. "The

Please see COPPEDEGE on page A5



Chris C. Jenkins

The 2011-2012 Florida High School Athletic Association Class 1A State Champion Hollywood Christian Lady Eagles are all smiles with their championship trophy. The Lady Eagles won their first state championship at the Lakeland Center in Lakeland, Fla., Feb. 24 in a 72-65 victory versus Trinity Christian of Lake Worth, Fla.

## Hollywood Christian Academy Lady Eagles Win State Championship

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS  
Staff Reporter

LAKELAND, Fla. — State champs, finally!

The Eagles of Hollywood Christian Academy can now boast those words as the new Class 1A Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSA) ladies champions of the hardwood.

After coming up three points short of claiming the crown last year, the gritty, focused group of nine, led by second-year Hollywood Christian Academy head coach Carlos Adamson, soldiered their way to glory and their first state title in a 72-65 win over Trinity Christian (Lake Worth) Crusaders.

The Feb. 24 achievement came in front of dozens of supporting family and friends at the Lakeland Center but did not come without a fight. Christian faced its biggest test of the season with a deficit as high as 10 points in the second quarter and went into the half trailing 35-27.

"We [Hollywood Christian] were kind of emotional and we felt like we were not getting calls. When we went in the locker room I asked them, 'Are we eight points better than this team?' All the girls agreed that we were eight points better than them so that erased the score for us and it became a 0-0 ball game,"

Please see EAGLES on page C5



Chris C. Jenkins

Seminole Channel Broadcast Reporter Briana D'Andrea, right, and Tribal co-host Everett Osceola co-host a live broadcast of Army Sgt. and Seminole Tribe member Gabriel Coppedge and his unit in Kuwait Feb. 21. Family and friends were present to celebrate his years of military service and his 33rd birthday at the SMP event Seminole Salute to the Sergeant special event held in the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino ballrooms.

## Big Cypress Shootout Highlights Second Seminole War Reenactment at Billie Swamp Safari



Naji Tobias

The U.S. military re-enactors at the Feb. 26 Big Cypress Shootout give a special salute to the Seminole Tribal warriors, who emerged as the only unconquered Native American Tribe after the second Seminole War of the 19th century.

BY NAJI TOBIAS  
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Hundreds of spectators witnessed a reenactment war between the Seminoles and U.S. military at the Billie Swamp Safari on Feb. 26.

Highlighted by several cannon launches and gunshots, the Big Cypress Shootout featured an all-out battle that saw the Seminoles fire the first and last shot, signifying a big win for the Seminole Tribe.

Using guerilla warfare as its tactic for victory in the shootout, the Seminoles hid behind bushes, trees and rocks to open fire on the lined-up U.S. soldiers.

The U.S. military, which failed in its mission to conquer the Seminoles, was doomed by its strategy to line up for combat in the open field, hoping the opposition would simply retreat and give up.

The shootout, which featured a host of Tribal citizens acting out as the Seminole warriors and local community members starring as the U.S. military, was a reenactment of the Second Seminole War that lasted from 1835-1842.

"We were trying to create a trip back into history for the crowd," Moses "Big Shot" Jumper said. "We were fighting for our freedom and our history back then. We wanted to show the authenticity of how the Seminole War actually was."

Jumper played the role of Seminole warrior Abiaka, also known as Sam Jones. In the Second Seminole War of 1835-1842, Abiaka, the Tribal name for Sam Jones, emerged as an influential leader who was the Tribe's primary anchor in the Seminoles' battle victory over the U.S.

In what is now considered the costliest Native American war in U.S. history, it's unknown how many Seminoles were killed or wounded over the course of the seven-year conflict.

What's clear today, however, is that Jones did not offer a truce, compromise or surrender signal to the U.S. military — a key component in how the Seminoles were able to claim official status as the only unconquered Native American Tribe in the U.S.

"We're resilient people," Jumper said. "They [the U.S. military] weren't able to capture the remaining soldiers in the swamp. The United States soldiers pursued our Seminole warriors in the Sawgrass areas and deer islands down here, but it was too hard and costly for them."

In addition to the shootout reenactment, spectators were able to see the Seminole soldier camps and live action such as an alligator show, a snake show and a Seminole dance sequence.

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INSIDE:

COMMUNITY: A

EDUCATION: 1B

Health: 7B

SPORTS: C

ANNOUNCEMENTS: 11B

Check out Tribal basketball player Deforest Carter's special profile in Sports!



Happy Easter,

Easter is a time to gather as a community to honor the Creator for what he has given to each and every one of us. We as a nation must be thankful for what we have been blessed with in each of our lives, remembering without the resurrection of Christ this would not be so.

While we celebrate and welcome the new spring season, we must remember our loved ones who cannot be with us on this Easter day to celebrate.

As we watch our children grow and grandchildren play without a care in the world, let us remember what matters most on this and every day to follow.

For it is truly Family that is our purpose on this earth and in our lives.

I wish each and every one of you true blessings of the Easter Season.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead... 1 Peter 1:3

Shonabisha!

Mitchell Cypress  
Chairman  
Seminole Tribe of Florida



Dear Tribal members, Family and Friends,

Once again, spring is here and that means the Easter Bunny will be out in full force. I would like to take this opportunity and reach out to all and wish everyone a very happy and healthy 2011 Easter! Please take this blessed time to take a break from our everyday life and visit with family and friends.

I remember my Easter Holidays growing up and things have changed, but I still enjoy seeing all of the communities and families gather to see as our tribal members of all ages scramble to obtain the most eggs! During this time, sit back, relax and celebrate this holiday as we all look forward to a day filled with fun, family, candy and EGGS!!!

I am very proud of our young tribal members and implore you to take time and visit with our seniors and ask questions about our past, present and definitely about our future!!

Have a very happy and safe Easter,

President Richard Bowers, Jr



The Seminole war re-enactors join Seminole Tribal citizen/fellow war re-enactor Billy Walker.

## SHOOTOUT

From page A1

"It's so important for us as Seminoles to give and show our side of the story," Florida Seminole Director/Big Cypress Shootout narrator Brian Zepeda said. "When you learn Florida history in the public school system, the Seminoles get just two pages in history books and it's not written from our perspective."

Zepeda likens the Big Cypress Shootout experience to an educational tool for visitors who aren't too familiar with Seminole history.

"It wasn't a battle between just men," Zepeda said. "Our women and children were actually involved in the battles. It affected everybody on our Seminole side, so [the spectators] get to learn about that when they come out."

The Big Cypress Shootout, in its fifth year at the Billie Swamp Safari, originated 14 years ago as the Kissimmee Slough Shootout. According to Zepeda, the Kissimmee Slough Shootout lasted nine years at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum before the annual reenactment event was taken over and renamed by the Billie Swamp Safari.

"You can't find all this in any book, anywhere," Zepeda said of the Big Cypress Shootout.

Seminole Tribune Contributing Writer Briana D'Andrea Contributed to this story.



Seminole Tribal re-enactor Tylor Tigertail, right, kills the last U.S. military soldier with a Tomahawk during the Feb. 26 Big Cypress Shootout's Second Seminole War re-enactment.



Seminole war re-enactors on their horses claim victory over the U.S. military in the Big Cypress Shootout's reenactment on Feb. 26.



Big Cypress Tribal citizen/Seminole war re-enactor Billy Walker shares a storytelling segment with fellow war re-enactors.

## OUR SEMINOLE VOICE

Music has always been my medicine. When I was a youngster, my mom's lullabies would rock me to sleep and ease the pain. I also remember how my dad's eight-track player made our cross-country summer treks seem less arduous. The awesome northern songs of the Red Leaf Takoja helped me get through the school year, as I worked toward the summer pow-wow circuit.

As a teen, the bass of Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five blasting through the speakers of my brother's boom box helped me through basketball drills. As I stumbled through my college years, Bob Marley motivated me while the psychedelic melodies of Jerry Garcia and the Grateful Dead soothed my restless soul. As a single mom, my little Dakota and I would spend every Saturday night dancing in the living room to the theme song to "COPS." Now, as a mother of two, who is well into her forties, I find great comfort in the feminine fire power of Mary J. Blige and Joss Stone.

You would think because music was always such a big part of my conscious life that I would have learned to sing, play an instrument, or at least try karaoke. Not a chance. What I did get out of music was, however, much more valuable. I grew a powerful dedication to the influence of lyrical masters and their effect on society.

As I sat down to write this issue's column, I played the music of those who inspire me today. These words came blasting through my speakers and hit me right in the soul. "Years ago my people were hunted because of where they lived. They were driven out of their homes where they have been established for many years...one day terrorists came from overseas...they raped and pillaged my people...the only options that we were left with was fight, surrender, or die...we ain't gonna surrender. We weathered the storm and through the rain, out of the darkness and into the day..." The words and voices of Zach and Spencer Battiest are forever in my head and etched deep into my Seminole consciousness.

I then played Hopi reggae artist, Casper

Lomayevsa's latest album (the unmastered version), and listened to the gut-wrenching words of "My Brother's Keeper," a song written in response to the life, addiction, and eventual death of his brother. Lyrics such as, "Me warn them about the poison...but them no listen," and eventually, "how them build their own coffins" will resonate in the caverns of the listener's psyche for a long time.

I decided to dive deeper into native music by listening to Keith Secola's "Indian Carz," and memories of doing the Snake Dance through the Hard Rock Café in Washington, D.C., on the eve of Obama's inauguration brought a huge smile to my face.

I followed up by playing the inspiring words penned by Micki Free. His song "Wounded Knee" is as much of an anthem for Indian Country as the Battiests' "The Storm" is for Seminoles.

I remembered the Tribe's latest project, Seminole Star Search, and decided to play the music of Paula Bowers-Sanchez, Hank Nelson Jr., David Billy, Tori Osceola and Preston Osceola. Young Preston Osceola is my reason for staying dedicated to this program. Not only can he play

the guitar, but he writes and performs his own creations! Amazing!

I am looking forward to the work of this year's winners, Paul Buster & Cowbone, Natomah Robbins, Shelly Tiger, and Unconquered Bird Clan. Not to mention our 2008 Spotlight Award Winner Stephen Chad Billie who is preparing to release his CD produced by Prince Markie D!

Native Music Rocks, an initiative whose genesis only dates back to 2008, began as a call for artists to showcase what they had to offer the world of music. It has evolved into the future of Native Music for Indian Country and the voice of indigenous artists. Most importantly it has the potential to advance the talent of the Seminole Tribe of Florida. What would our life be like without music? What would our life be like without the lyrical masters who pose the questions, who challenge the establishment as well as the established?

Yes, music is truly the medicine and Native Music Rocks!



TINA OSCEOLA

## SING

From page A1

Tori owed a debt of gratitude to Bob Germain for making this achievement a reality. An astute business man, Germain owns several new and used car facilities in the Collier/Lee County area and is a main stock holder in the Entertainment Complex in Estero, which bears his name. An avid racing enthusiast, Germain has been entering vehicles in major competition for many years and used his influence to make a young girl's dream a reality.

Prior to the race, Tori and her family were taken on a tour of the pits, talked with the drivers and got a first hand look at the competitive world of racing. Tori met Todd Bodine, driver of the Germain No. 30 and had a lengthy conversation with him about his car, safety concerns and healthy lifestyle choices.

While singing is her passion, this seventh grader recognizes the fact that an education is a priority for success. She loves studying English and history and is already making plans for college. Enhancing her musical background, Tori plays piano, cello and is taking guitar lessons.



Judy Weeks

Tori Osceola made her grand entry in a special car bearing her name at the Daytona National Speedway.



Judy Weeks

Tori Osceola sings the National Anthem at the opening of the Next Era Energy Resource - 250 Race at the Daytona National Speedway.



# Community

A

## 11th Annual Riverwalk Trust Tribute Honors Tribe for Role in City of Fort Lauderdale's Growth and Development

BY AIMEE HOYT  
Copy Editor

**FORT LAUDERDALE** — More than a dozen Tribal elders came out March 10 to Timpano Chophouse & Martini Bar to watch the Seminole Tribe of Florida being honored at the 11th annual Riverwalk Trust Tribute.

The Tribute, presented by the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, honored the Tribe for its role in the growth and development of Fort Lauderdale and the Riverwalk Park.

After attending a VIP cocktail reception, the honored guests watched Fort Lauderdale Mayor John P. 'Jack' Seiler and Commissioner Bobby B. DuBose present Hollywood Council Rep. Max B. Osceola Jr. with a plaque honoring the Tribe's contributions over the past centennial.

There are three ways to approach thinking about the centennial, Mayor Seiler said. He mentioned reflecting on the past, celebrating the present and focusing on the future, with the Seminole Tribe remaining through all three.

"When you look at the history of Fort Lauderdale, the Seminoles came before us," Mayor Seiler said. "And the Seminoles thought beyond themselves. The Seminoles thought that, you know what, this isn't ours. This belongs to generations."

Over 100 years ago, the Seminoles used the New River as a means of transportation, exploration and new beginnings. The Stranahan House became a center of trade, unifying the Tribe and new residents of the city, according to the press release prepared by Riverwalk Trust.

"I want to thank the Riverwalk Trust because in your name, you have one of the four elements," Osceola Jr. said. "The river is water, and that used to be the highway for the Seminoles."

Mayor Seiler and Commissioner DuBose offered Osceola Jr. a key to the city and proclaimed March 10 as Seminole Tribe of Florida Day in the City of Fort Lauderdale.

"The way they approach this community, it's never about themselves," Mayor Seiler said. "It's about how do we make this community better. How do we make this a stronger Fort Lauderdale?"

Without the Tribe, the city would not have the great downtown, the Riv-

erwalk or the river, he said.

"Sometimes I say I get too much credit. I'm a reflection of my elders right here," Osceola Jr. said, motioning to the elders lining the stage.

He said the elders taught him the importance of sharing with all people, adding that the Tribe's success is a reflection of people's generosity.

"It's not about the Tribe and it's not about the city — it's about all of us," he continued. "Working together will make this another great hundred years that we can celebrate together."



Fort Lauderdale Mayor John P. 'Jack' Seiler, right, and Commissioner Bobby B. DuBose, center, present Hollywood/Fort Pierce Council Rep. Max B. Osceola Jr. with a plaque honoring the Seminole Tribe of Florida at the 11th annual Riverwalk Trust Tribute March 10 at Timpano Chophouse & Martini Bar in Fort Lauderdale.

## Tribal Council Convenes for Special Meeting

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — The Tribal Council convened at the Tribal Headquarters on the Hollywood Reservation Feb. 22 for a special session passing resolutions on the consent and regular agendas including:

- Water and Wastewater agreement between the Seminole Tribe of Florida and the city of Coconut Creek for Tract 65 in the Commerce Center of Coconut Creek.
- Addition to Tribal Truancy Committee Policy and Procedure.
- Approval of revised Tribal Athlete Scholarship Program and Procedures.
- Approval of Panther Paws Enterprises, Inc. service agreement for housing services.
- Approval of agreement with Urban Building Systems, Inc. for the Brighton Charter School classrooms addition in the Brighton Seminole Indian Reservation, Glades County, Fla.
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security — Fiscal Year 2010 Fire Prevention and Safety Grant application; ratification.
- Grant of easement for right-of-way to Florida Power & Light Company for Osceola Circle East Tribal Housing Development — Hollywood Seminole Indian Reservation.
- Approval of agreement between John's Place, Inc. and the Seminole Tribe of Florida.
- Approval of Election Board Members for general election — May 9, 2011.
- Approval of agreement between the Seminole Tribe of Florida and Rapid Roofers, Inc. for roof replacement work at buildings located in the Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation; Limited waiver of sovereign immunity.



Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum's Pedro Zepeda shows Tampa Reservation senior Bobby Henry a touchable screen that explains the different parts of a gun and how it works at the March 11 VIP grand opening of the Tools of War exhibit.

## Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum's Tools of War Exhibit Displays Weaponry Used in Seminole Warfare

BY NAJI TOBIAS  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — A special piece of Seminole Tribal history has been officially unveiled at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, as the Tribal facility hosted a grand opening of its Tools of War exhibit from March 11-12.

The Tribal citizens' exclusive VIP viewing, which took place on March 11, provided a relatively introspective experience for those who took a tour of the museum's new exhibit.

A host of Tools of War-related gallery items were on display for the VIP viewers, including a gun anatomy interactive device geared toward showing individuals a variety of weapons used in the three Seminole Wars of the 19th century. A plethora of weaponry used in those battles was also readily available for the VIP viewers — which also included museum members — to see at the new gallery.

Hollywood Tribal citizen David Dehass and his two young sons, Daniel and Hunter Dehass, shared a bonding moment together at the Tribal citizens' Tools of War grand opening on March 11.

The three, who jointly viewed weapons such as a .44 cal Colt Revolver pistol and an 1838 Waters Single Shot pistol, were seen engaging into a discussion on how their Tribal ancestors fought to preserve the lands they now are proud owners of.

"I just wanted my boys to see the stuff we had to fight with," Dehass said. "We started out with whatever we could get — bows, arrows and knives. What we took from them [the U.S. soldiers], we used it on them. I tell my sons about the war stories my grandmother [the late Mable Frank Tiger] told me. I wanted them to see and understand that everything they were told is real."

Meanwhile, as Big Cypress Tribal citizen Rowdy Osceola tried on a replica of the Seminole warrior backpack — it weighed over 25 lbs. — he recalled how life was as a Seminole back in those war times.

"We have to understand the history of what we [as Seminoles] had to go through," Osceola said. "I could imagine how difficult it was for the Seminole warriors to carry all that war gear in their bags. We had to do a lot of training back then so we could get prepared to go into battle. It was tough."

Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum curator of exhibits Saul Drake, who played an integral role in the year-long construction of the Tools of War exhibit, delved into the historical importance of making this creation available for the Tribal citizens and the viewing public.

"We wanted to display that despite overwhelming odds the Seminole faced, they were successful," Drake said. "They didn't leave Florida. From the remnants that remained here after the third Seminole war, it grew from there and that's why the Seminole Tribe of Florida is where it's at today."

The Tools of War exhibit also features the Seminole War timeline, which gives viewers a chance to learn extensively about how the Seminole wars played a significant role in the Tribe's illustrious history.

Hollywood Tribal citizen Stephen Bowers, along with fellow Tribal citizen Moses 'Big Shot' Jumper, gave a keynote address at the March 12 general public grand opening. Bowers shared his thoughts on the exhibit's place in history. "It allows people to see our own people and hear about our history from three Seminole wars," said Bowers, who gave the general public visitors an account of several individual Seminole Indian war veterans such as Moses Jumper and Howard Tiger.

"The displays at the museum were very accurate. It's great to see detailed information on who was involved and what was used in Seminole wars. A lot of people have read about the wars, but it's another thing to actually see it in public."

The Tools of War Exhibit will be on display from now until January 15, 2012. For more information, contact the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum at 863-902-1113 or visit the Internet at [www.ahtahthiki.com](http://www.ahtahthiki.com).

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## Tribe Launches Nationwide Seminole Cigarette Brand

BY NAJI TOBIAS  
Staff Reporter

**SOUTH BOSTON, Va.** — Tribal World Ambassador Joe Dan Osceola once envisioned the Tribe's ownership of a tobacco entity. For the Tribal entrepreneur and his Tribe, the long-held dream — it was primarily conceived by an idea from Osceola in 2008 — came true in the form of a nationwide Seminole cigarette launch on March 9.

Joe Dan Osceola, along wife Virginia Osceola, daughter Mercedes Osceola-Hahn, President Richard Bowers Jr. and Big Cypress Tribal Board Rep. Paul Bowers Sr., represented the Tribal citizens



Tribal World Ambassador Joe Dan Osceola signs his autograph on a Seminole cigarette branded poster at the March 9 launch presentation and luncheon in South Boston, Va.

in what was truly a celebratory gathering at the Firebird Manufacturing facility in South Boston, Va.

Upon arrival at the tobacco plant, the five Tribal representatives were heartily greeted by the likes of business partner Tom Henry, Seminole Brands CEO Charles F. Fuller and South Boston Mayor Carroll Thackston in this historic occasion. Following a moment of photo opportunities, the group took an extensive tour of the tobacco facility, where the first run of Seminole Cigarettes was set to launch on that day.

Fuller offered his take on the Tribe's official ownership entry into the tobacco business. "We are looking forward to a long and prosperous partnership with the Seminole Tribe of Florida in the tobacco industry," Fuller said. "This new product is an exciting addition to our brands. It is an extremely high quality, value-driven cigarette, and we predict that it, like the Seminole, will prove to be 'unconquered' by the competition!"

The Tribal representatives were afforded an exclusive first look of how the tobacco product was processed in the South Boston, Va. plant facility, which included the machine refining, purifying and packaging of the newly launched Seminole Cigarettes.

The tour concluded with the autograph signings of each Seminole Cigarette carton at the plant by the five Tribal representatives. Joe Dan Osceola expounded on his excitement for the Tribe's cigarette brand launch. "Our tribe is called the 'Unconquered Tribe' because out of all the Indian nations throughout America, only the Seminoles remained unconquered by the United States government," the Ambassador said. "With that in mind, we desired to create a bold new product that reflects our spirit. It will show the pride we have in our heritage and our homeland."

Joe Dan Osceola, a direct Tribal descendant of Seminole Warrior Osceola, pitched the business idea to a host of executives from Cherokee Brands about three years ago. The then-potential partnership between the Tribe and Cherokee Brands later blossomed into a reality, thus making the Tribe's business venture possible today.

During the special cigarette launch presentation, Mercedes Osceola-Hahn shared her thoughts on what the move meant for the Tribe. "If you noticed anything about my dad [Joe Dan Osceola], he's a very proud person. Originally, he wanted to put his face on the wrapping. But I'm just glad the Tribe has undertaken this huge endeavor. I can't wait to see how far it goes."

Tom Henry, who attended Georgetown University (Ky.) with Joe Dan Osceola, talked about his appreciation for Joe Dan Osceola and the Tribe's efforts to advance in the business world.

"Joe Dan, what you have endeavored and started out with, you've always held on to with a grip and wouldn't let go," Henry said to the Tribal ambassador, who he considered as a "brother" at the luncheon presentation.

"Like President Richard Bowers, you want what's best for the Seminole Tribe, which is a [group of about 3,500] people that we can thank God for in our history as Americans," Henry continued.

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## One of Tribe's First Presidents William 'Bill' Osceola Honored at Annual Luncheon in Hollywood

BY AIMEE HOYT  
Copy Editor

**HOLLYWOOD** — One of the Seminole Tribe of Florida's first presidents, the late William "Bill" Osceola was honored for his leadership and achievements at a commemorative luncheon hosted by President Richard Bowers Jr. Feb. 23 at the Hollywood Tribal Headquarters Auditorium.

Following the national President's Day holiday, the luncheon also honored all presidents who served the Tribe, including former presidents in attendance Chairman Mitchell Cypress, Joe Dan Osceola and Moses Osceola. Other past presidents were Frank Billie, Howard Tiger, Fred Smith and Cecil Johns.

"Hopefully I can fill the shoes of the past presidents," President Bowers Jr. said following a prayer led by Joe Osceola Sr. and a video presentation from Seminole Media Productions.

Former president Bill was born on June 30, 1919 in the Everglades to Jimmy and Mary Osceola. Although he grew up without formal schooling, he became an important political and spiritual leader who fought for the preservation of the Tribe.

"I remember seeing Bill always busy, always working," Bill's nephew and former president Moses Osceola said. "Bill, of course, had a big heart for his people."

That big heart, along with a steadfast dedication to

Please see PRESIDENT on page 44



From left, Wanda Bowers, Yvonne Courtney, Judy-Bill Osceola, Priscilla Sayen, Marcellus Osceola and President Richard Bowers Jr. honor former president Bill Osceola. President Bowers Jr. presented the family members with a custom-made plaque and Tribal Board flag in honor of Bill.



## Seminole Fire Rescue Holds Live Fire Training Session in Big Cypress



Naji Tobias

Seminole Fire Rescue firefighters from Big Cypress, Brighton and Hollywood recap all that transpired at a Feb. 16 live fire training session in Big Cypress. The two-hour training, assembled primarily by Seminole Fire Rescue Training Chief Joe Sorrentino, featured a simulation of real structure fires at the Fire Rescue's Structure Fire Training Prop. According to Seminole Fire Rescue Deputy Fire Chief David Casey, there were two simulation training rounds, which included the firefighters' entrance into the training prop in the building fire. With limited to no visibility, firefighters had to navigate through the smoke, locate the fire and extinguish it with a water hose and fire extinguisher.

Big Cypress District Chief George Asencio exits following a crew that "rescued" a mannequin after searching in the dense smoke on the second floor. The Seminole Fire Rescue held a series of live fire trainings from Mondays to Thursdays in February and March.

Seminole Fire Rescue Deputy Fire Chief David Casey



## PRESIDENT

From page A3

the Tribe, pushed Bill to help establish a constitutional committee and a corporate board to fight for the Tribe's preservation.

"The federal government would not give us money until we had a formal government, so that's what Bill and the committee were working on," Moses said.

Bill's oldest daughter, Judy-Bill Osceola, recalled traveling with her father and sister Priscilla Sayen to the different reservations to obtain signatures for developing a constitution to bring to Washington, D.C.

"He said, '[Tribal members] can't survive on arts and crafts alone. We have to get them jobs,'" Judy-Bill said.

Chairman Cypress said that Bill was also responsible for leading him into politics by taking him to Washington.

"One day he said, 'Pack up and we'll go to Washington,'" Chairman Cypress said. "He paved the road for us to go to Washington, and now that's where we have to go to get things done."

Due to efforts from Bill and the committee and board, the Seminole Tribe Charter and by-laws were signed by 1957, enabling the federal recognition of the Tribe.

Bill later became the second president of the Board of Directors where he was instrumental in establishing the Okalee Indian Village, the Seminole Arts and Crafts, the first

all-Indian Rodeo and the textile factories in Big Cypress and Brighton, said daughter Yvonne Courtney.

"Reverend Bill Osceola, always guided by the Holy Spirit of God, was determined to help his people gain the tools needed to survive in a non-Indian world," Yvonne said. "While still maintaining being an Indian, he was a Christian first."

She said he also spearheaded the movement for modern conveniences and created profitable businesses on the reservations, which allowed Tribal members to become more financially independent.

While the Tribe's budget was small in the beginning, money was not the greatest concern for Bill, Moses said.

"What was in Bill's heart was taking our Tribe forward," Moses said. "Bill was not only concerned for our well-being, he was also concerned for our spiritual well-being."

Like their father, who served multiple terms as president, Bill's children have also continued to serve the Tribe by working in various departments over the years.

Daughter Priscilla, secretary of Tribal Council and Corporate Board of Directors said, "I think that's a legacy to our mother and father that their children have kept on the legacy of serving the Seminole Tribe."

Judy-Bill said, "In spite of all he did, [the Bible] is more important to him."

She said, "I thank the Lord and ask everyone to pray for our Seminole Tribal leaders. If we all do that, I know our Tribe will heal."

## More photos from Tools of War exhibit



Naji Tobias

To conclude the two-day Tools of War grand opening festivities at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, the Seminole Re-enactors, Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum staff, Tribal guest speaker Stephen Bowers and a host of visitors share a shining moment together outside at a Seminole camp presentation on March 12.



Naji Tobias

Tribal citizen/poet/historian Moses 'Big Shot' Jumper was one of two Seminole keynote speakers - Tribal citizen Stephen Bowers was the other - at the general public grand opening of the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum's Tools of War exhibit.



Naji Tobias

Hollywood Tribal citizen David Dehass, center, shows one of his son's 8-year-old Daniel Dehass the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum's Tools of War gallery of pistols used in the Seminole Wars of the 19th century.



Naji Tobias

The Big Cypress Cattle and Range Department, with Big Cypress Tribal Board Rep. Paul Bowers Sr., Veterinarian John Yelvington and Tribal Board President Richard Bowers Jr., are relishing in a hard day's work at the cow pen site of Bowers Sr. in Big Cypress on March 10. The Big Cypress Tribal Board Rep. owns over 60 calves, 28 heifers and 32 steers - good for about 94 total pounds of cattle that he owns. The cattle vaccinations took place at the cow pen sites of 28 cattle owners in Big Cypress and about 32 cattle owners in Brighton throughout the month of March, according to Bowers, Sr. "You have to treat the animals like they're babies," Bowers Sr. said. "They need shots to protect them from any diseases out there."

## President Bowers Visits Tribe's Annual Cattle Vaccinations at Big Cypress Cattle and Range



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Cattle and Range employees Randy Rueda, left, David Rojas, center and Ivan BruisedHead, right are administering a worming vaccination shot to a calf at the squeeze shoot, owned by Big Cypress Tribal Board Rep. Paul Bowers Sr., at the March 10 cattle vaccination drive. This calf is also ear-tagged for identification purposes.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal citizen Paulette Bowers is pushing a herd of heifer calves into a processing hopper at the cow pen site of her father, Big Cypress Tribal Board Rep. Paul Bowers Sr.

## SEMINOLE

From page A3

"The Seminoles will never run last and they don't run scared at all. They run right out front... They're making lives better for people all across America and the world."

The Seminole Cigarettes, which feature a high-quality blend of flue-cured and burley, will be processed in Wilson, N.C. and will be produced by Firebird Manufacturing in South Boston, Va. The Tribe's cigarette packs, which are designed in the Florida red, yellow and black colors, will soon be available in shelves throughout the state of Florida and the entire Southeastern U.S. region.

"I've seen cigarettes being made many times before, but this one is really special because it's made to be Seminole cigarettes," President Bowers said. "This is the beginning of a historic partnership. Hopefully, we could be very successful with this business venture and go into more endeavors in the future."

The Florida launch of Seminole Cigarettes is slated to convene on April 7 at the Hard Rock Café in Hollywood.

For more information, call the Seminole Brands sales office at 866-482-2760 or visit [www.semcigs.com](http://www.semcigs.com).



Standing together in business unity outside of the South Boston, Va.-based Firebird Manufacturing tobacco plant on March 9 are Big Cypress Tribal Board Rep. Paul Bowers, Sr., Tribal World Ambassador/Entrepreneur Joe Dan Osceola, CB Holdings, LLC President/CEO Charles "Chuck" F. Fuller and Tribal Board President Richard Bowers Jr. The foursome spend a moment together after taking a full tour of the plant facility, which is largely responsible for the product launch of the Seminole cigarette brand.

Naji Tobias



Naji Tobias

The Tribal business family of Mercedes Osceola-Hahn, her father, Joe Dan Osceola and her mother, Virginia Osceola are all smiles as they show off the official nationwide launch of the Seminole cigarette brand at the March 9 special presentation in South Boston, Va.



Naji Tobias

Tribal Board President Richard Bowers, Jr. signs an autograph at the Seminole Cigarette nationwide launch ceremony on March 9 in South Boston, Va.



Photo above. The Seminole cigarette cartons, created at the Firebird Manufacturing plant in South Boston, Va., are designed with the Tribal colors in mind - red, yellow, black and white. Left photo, President Richard Bowers, Jr., second from left, feels the refined tobacco blend, with Tribal Board Rep. Paul Bowers, Sr., left, Virginia Osceola, center, Joe Dan Osceola, second from right and CB Holdings, LLC President/CEO Charles "Chuck" F. Fuller, right, looking on in excitement.

Naji Tobias





Naji Tobias

The Seminole Fashion Show, which featured several Brighton Tribal citizens, was a way to show the Chalo Nitka crowd the importance and significance of how Seminole clothing is worn as it pertains to the Tribal culture and tradition.

## Seminole Tribe Stands Out at 63rd Annual Chalo Nitka Festival



Naji Tobias

Former Tribal Chairman James Billie served as the Chalo Nitka Festival's master of ceremonies.



Naji Tobias

Chairman Mitchell Cypress sits on top of a gussied-up Ford F-Series pickup truck as he waves to onlookers at the Chalo Nitka Parade. Cypress recalled a time in his early life when he and his fellow Tribal citizens from Big Cypress used to come to the annual festival by a cattle truck. "Those were the good old days," Chairman Cypress said. "Chalo Nitka started when I was born, in 1947. The Tribe was here since it began, but we stopped away for a while. Now that we're back, it's just like old times. This is a time for everyone to reconnect with their old friends and enjoy each other."



Naji Tobias

The 63rd annual Chalo Nitka Festival, held March 5 in Moore Haven, featured a special parade down Avenue J as Brighton/Tampa Tribal Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr. served as the event's grand marshal.



Naji Tobias

From left, Chalo Nitka event co-coordinator Alvin Ward (Glades County) presents Brighton/Tampa Tribal Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr. with a special plaque for the Brighton Reservation's contribution to this year's festival.



The Brighton Reservation's Pemayetv Emahkv Charter School wins Most Original Float honors at the parade.

Naji Tobias



Naji Tobias

The Seminole Tribal royalty court makes an appearance at this year's Chalo Nitka Festival.



Naji Tobias

Hank Nelson Jr., of Hollywood, and his All-Star Band perform a slew of country cover songs.



Naji Tobias

Seminole Tribal citizens and non-Indians show off their unity and camaraderie wearing Seminole jackets in support of the culture-sharing occasion.

## COPPEDGE

From page A1

Tribe and SMP] wanted to recognize him and his troop over there and just give them a chance to forget about the war a little bit."

Fort Pierce Liaison Sally Tommie also took time during the program to shed light on the ongoing Native American Veterans Memorial Initiative. Speaking on behalf of Tribal Council Chairman Mitchell Cypress, she spoke about rallying support for the establishment of a Native American soldier to be represented along with the African-American, Asian

and Caucasian soldiers currently on display at the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

The military service of Coppedge dates back to 2001, when he completed basic training in Fort Benning, Ga. He was then assigned to Alpha Company 2nd Battalion, 30th Infantry in Fort Polk, La. He has served two prior tours in the Middle East from 2006 to 2008. After an honorable discharge with the rank of E5, he reenlisted with the Army Reserves for his most recent stretch.

Coppedge remains the only Seminole Tribe of Florida Tribal citizen actively serving in the military.



SGT. GABRIEL COPPEDGE



Chris C. Jenkins

Family members of Army Sgt. and Seminole Tribe member Gabriel Coppedge anxiously await his appearance via live streaming video.



Chris C. Jenkins

Gabriel, 5-year-old son of Coppedge, says hello to his father.



Chris C. Jenkins

The Coppedge family is interviewed by the local media.



Chris C. Jenkins

Members of the Red Boys Native pow-wow singers of Saskatchewan, Canada perform on stage as part of opening ceremonies for the event.





Chris C. Jenkins

Seminole Star Search Program Executive Director Tina Osceola talks about the positive impact of the song.



Chris C. Jenkins

From left, Tribal musical artists Spencer and Zach Battiest together before their live performance of their hit original single 'The Storm' on March 10 at the Seminole Star Search Theater.



Chris C. Jenkins

The Battiest brothers are joined by family members after their performance.

## Tribal Musical Duo Zach and Spencer Battiest Shine at 'The Storm' Listening Party

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — The Tribal musical duo of Zach and Spencer Battiest celebrated the release of their debut music single "The Storm" at the Seminole Star Search Theater to a packed house March 10.

Their Seminole Tribe-inspired tribute is the first release for the group paying homage to the Battiest family, with an emphasis on their ancestry, culture and personal lives.

Both performed the song live in front of family and friends marking the completion of a collaboration three years in the making.

"We made this song because the people [Tribal community] were asking us to write something," brother and producer Zach also known as "Doc" said.

"When it came time to write a song [involving the Tribe] we did not take it lightly," song co-writer Spencer said.

The pair said the song was inspired by their grandmother Judy Baker and was produced in Zach's Midnight Studios on the Hollywood Reservation during a nighttime recording session. The lyrics depict the Tribe's emotional and historical trials, survival, resistance and perseverance during the Seminole Wars and highlight a theme of power and unity in present day. It is currently available for purchase on iTunes and at Amazon.com.

"When there is a purpose and the stars align, everything can flow like a faucet," Zach said of the creative process involved. "The message

is telling our version of our history, kind of from the horse's mouth." Zach, 22, is the older sibling and a married father of one who is known for his music producing, writing, dancing, rapping, drumming and percussion skills.

Spencer, 20, a resident of Hollywood, Fla. and Hollywood, Calif. has continued to gain national attention as an up-and-coming R & B crooner. He made a splash at the age of 14 being named "The Best Teen Male Artist" at the International Presentation of Performers (IPOP) talent show.

The song marks their first official recording together, but is one of their many performances over the years as they mutually began performing in a touring gospel show in their youth.

Proud father Henry Battiest (also known as Junior) was among the family, friends and supporters on hand.

"As a father it makes me proud. We [as a Tribe] have been in this industry a long time, for almost a hundred years. I was a little nervous for them but I think it was great," he said.

Tina Osceola, Seminole Star Search program executive director and Native Music Rocks Records president, spoke highly of them after their performance.

"These two young men are magical. They are our tomorrow," she said. "This song is going to endure for eternity. It says it all; it is our anthem."

For more information, visit [seminolestarsearch.com](http://seminolestarsearch.com), [nativemusicrocksrecords.com](http://nativemusicrocksrecords.com) or e-mail [starsearch@semtbribe.com](mailto:starsearch@semtbribe.com).



Chris C. Jenkins

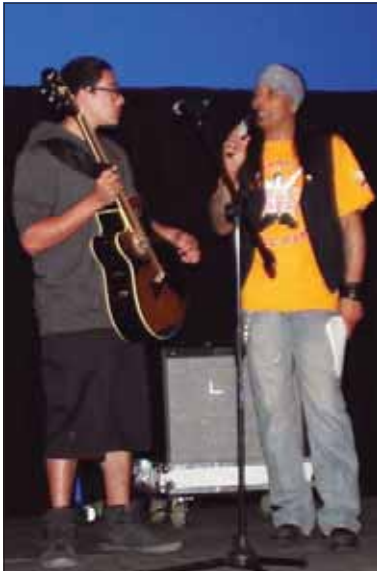
From left, Zach and Spencer Battiest perform 'The Storm' on stage.

## Seminole Star Search Music Camp Showcases Talent of Tribal Youth



Adina Loochkartt

Prince Markie Dee discusses hip hop music and song writing with the teens during the camp.



Adina Loochkartt

Micki Free, right, director of the Star Search program, talks to 2009 Star Search Winner Preston Osceola about his journey in the program after he performed his original song "Protected."



Adina Loochkartt

Zach "Doc" Battiest, left, and Spencer Battiest perform their new single "The Storm" at the Star Search Music Camp organized March 5 in Okalee Indian Village.



Naji Tobias

About 40 Natives from all over the United States and Japan spend the weekend of March 11-13 at the 12th annual Flute Retreat in Big Cypress. Here, the Native participants share a peaceful and tranquil moment on March 12 near a Chickee hut.

## Natives From All Over U.S. and Japan Gather at Billie Swamp Safari for 12th Annual Flute Retreat



Far left photo, Sonny Nevaquaya, Native flutist and organizer of the 12th annual Flute Retreat, plays a flute tune for peace and tranquility. Left photo, Hollywood Tribal citizen Jackie Osceola decides to create a snake beadwork-designed bracelet, in red, yellow, black and white beads.

Naji Tobias

Hollywood Tribal citizen Jaden Bankston, 10, left, takes lessons on the creation of a beaded fish critter from beadwork artist Debi Lowe, right, at the 12th annual Flute Retreat on March 12. Lowe briefly discussed how she helped Bankston out with his project. "We're following the steps to make his beading project, which consists of numbering the beads, bead colors and steps to get it done," Lowe said of Bankston. "It's a little frustrating for young people because you have to pay attention to the beadwork and wires. But once you start to gain patience and finish your project, you feel good about yourself."

Naji Tobias







DIRECTV technician Mark Vogelsang, left, troubleshoots an HD channel connection problem for BC resident Gary Waggener at his home on March 2.

Message from STOF DIRECTV  
Customer Service Coordinator Diane O'Donnell:

"Our customer service staff is here to save you time, stress and money. We can assist Tribal Members with all their DIRECTV issues. Many times we resolve a problem over the phone, or we may contact DIRECTV for them to resolve billing errors. We schedule service calls, add special programming requested, and provide additional or upgraded equipment. When taking applications for STOF DIRECTV, we explain everything the program has to offer. We work continually to verify and maintain all our customers' information, making sure they are getting the most from the program. Our department also handles senior satellite/cable benefits, paying up to \$125 per month of approved fees. We try to provide a level of assistance that is not found anywhere else, far above the norm, and with a smile too. Thank you for being our customer!"



Big Cypress Tribal homeowner Bobbie Billie, left, and her son, Alex Cypress, receive a DIRECTV tutorial from technician Mark Vogelsang, right, at a March 2 installation visit.

## STOF DIRECTV — NOT JUST A GREAT DEAL, YOUR DEAL

PREPARED BY SMP STAFF

The STOF DIRECTV program is not just a service offered by the Tribe. It's simply a great deal.

When one does not have to worry about the cable bill, but still gets to view more than 210 channels, including the Tribe's only channel, that's one irrefutable offer.



DIRECTV technician Mark Vogelsand, left, stands with Chris Sanchez in Big Cypress on Feb. 7.

The Tribe has facilitated subscriptions to DIRECTV at low or no cost to Tribal citizens for five years. "Our customer service staff is here to save you time, stress and money," says Diane O'Donnell, customer service DIRECTV coordinator.

"We can assist Tribal Members with all their DIRECTV issues. Many times we resolve a problem over the phone, or we may contact DIRECTV for them to resolve billing errors," she adds.

O'Donnell says the department schedules service calls, adds special programming requested, and provides additional or upgraded equipment.

### WHY STOF DIRECTV IS THE BEST CHOICE:

- In December the Tribe upgraded its agreement with DIRECTV for discounted bulk programming to Choice Xtra, now providing 210 channels plus locals.
- The Tribe covers the discounted rate of \$28.99 per month (regular price is \$65.99) STOF citizens, who sign up for DIRECTV through SMP only pay for additional requested upgrades.
- Access to the Seminole Channel, broadcasting from 5 to 7 p.m. on Thursdays. Channel 575 can be viewed only with STOF DIRECTV.
- New, first time, customers are provided free installation, which includes a satellite dish, basic receiver, and all parts and labor.
- Since the Tribe has its own DIRECTV staff, which includes technicians and office personnel, service is fast, in most cases same or next day appointments, with no monthly maintenance fees (regular \$5.99 per month).
- If you already have DIRECTV, but did not order it through the Tribe, you can have your account assigned to the Tribe's program and join in on the savings.
- We service Big Cypress, Brighton, Hollywood, Immokalee, Tampa, Naples, Fort Pierce, the Trail and nearby off-res customers in Florida, call to see if we can help you.

You may reach our customer service at 954-985-5703.

"When taking applications for STOF DIRECTV, we explain everything the program has to offer. We work continually to verify and maintain all of our customers' information in order for them to get the most from the program.

"Our department also handles senior satellite/cable benefits, paying up to \$125 per month of approved fees. We try to provide a level of assistance that is not found anywhere else, far above the norm, and with a smile too!"

One of the many advantages in subscribing to STOF DIRECTV is that in addition to the 210-plus channels, Tribal citizens have access to the Seminole Channel, channel 575, which broadcasts from 5 to 7 p.m. on Thursdays, only with STOF DIRECTV.

Peter Osceola-Hahn, of the Hollywood Reservation began receiving STOF DIRECTV service in 2007.

"They [STOF DIRECTV] have always been very speedy in their service and have always been very courteous to me," Osceola-Hahn says.

"Those I have met and dealt with have been very professional and I have had no problems."

He says overall it has been a very satisfactory experience and the Tribe has done very well in providing this service.

Fort Pierce Tribal citizen Margaret Wilcox joined the program when she moved into Chupco's Landing.

"It is really to our advantage, we couldn't get no other service out here," Wilcox says of her family subscribing to STOF DIRECTV services.

"The program really helps Tribal members out financially," she says. Remember, the Tribe covers the discounted rate of \$28.99 per month (regular price is \$65.99). And STOF citizens, who sign up for DIRECTV through SMP only pay for additional requested upgrades.

Wilcox says the service in general is great and when they encounter a problem the technician gets the job

*"I get to watch TV for free. You can't beat it. I have to say thank you."* — Naples Tribal citizen and STOF DIRECTV customer Corey Billie.

done ASAP.

"He's on time, he's here when he says he will be," Trail Office Manager Michael Cantu has STOF DIRECTV service at this Miami home.

"I like the fact that DIRECTV offers the Seminole Channel to us as Tribal citizens. I like how the Seminole Channel keeps us current with all the different Tribal citizens at all the reservations," he says.

The fact that the Seminole Channel is exclusive to Tribal citizens only is a wonderful thing for the Tribe, Cantu added.

"The customer service is great because the employees do whatever it takes to keep me satisfied," he says. "I have no complaints."

Hollywood senior Alice Tucker has enjoyed the services of STOF DIRECTV for three years. She says she used to be a Comcast customer before switching to STOF DIRECTV.

"I think they [STOF DIRECTV] are pretty excellent. I have not had any problems with them," Tucker says. "Their customer service is excellent, also. And if they do not resolve your problem in a matter of hours it will be in a matter of days."

O'Donnell explains why the STOF DIRECTV staff is able to offer such prompt response.

"Since the Tribe has its own STOF DIRECTV staff, which includes technicians and office personnel, service is fast, in most cases same or next day appointments, with no monthly maintenance fees, which are regularly \$5.99 per month," O'Donnell says.

STOF DIRECTV services Big Cypress, Brighton, Hollywood, Immokalee, Tampa, Naples, Fort Pierce, the Trail and nearby off-res customers in Florida.

Tampa Tribal citizen Gladys Guzman says she is satisfied with the service for the price she pays.

"You can't go wrong," she says. "Every time I've had a problem they are always quick to come and fix it."

The Seminole Channel gives highlights of what goes on in the Tribal communities, says Big Cypress Tribal citizen Janice Osceola. "It gives all of our Tribal members a chance to see each other on TV Tribal wide," she added. "Maybe some of our Tribal members haven't seen one of their friends for a while, but it's a good thing for them when they get to see themselves on the Seminole Channel."

Janice Osceola is also a STOF DIRECTV customer.

"Even though we only have two techs [technicians], they do a good job of keeping up with all the work orders that come in. I'm happy with the service they provide us here [in Big Cypress] at the Tribe."

O'Donnell says the STOF DIRECTV department also handles senior satellite/cable benefits, paying up to \$125 per month of approved fees.

"We being a senior, the Tribe pays my bill if it's up to \$125 per month," Janice Osceola says. "If it goes over, or if I order a special program, then I have to pay the difference. I'm very happy with that."

"Diane [O'Donnell] is very good at what she does. She and her staff do great work. They make sure all of our needs are met as quickly as possible," Janice Osceola says.

In December the Tribe upgraded their agreement with DIRECTV for discounted bulk programming to Choice Xtra, now providing 210-plus channels locals.

Janice Osceola says that all Tribal citizens who have STOF DIRECTV like the bulk rate.

"Who doesn't like to save money?" Osceola says.

Big Cypress Tribal citizen Corinna Frank-Sanchez recently received a replacement remote control for her living room's DIRECTV receiver. She had noticed a delay on her remote control when changing a television channel or the volume. Satellite supervisor Mark Vogelsang visited Frank-Sanchez' home in Big Cypress on Feb. 7, and it took him less than 20 minutes to fix the problem. Frank-

Sanchez had a wide grin on her face after receiving a replacement remote control.

"We're pretty much satisfied with the work our staff does on our homes," Frank-Sanchez says. "Mark [Vogelsang] is very friendly, courteous and efficient. He

*"The fact that the Seminole Channel is exclusive to Tribal citizens only is a wonderful thing for the Tribe."* — Trail Office Manager and STOF DIRECTV customer Michael Cantu.

gets right down to the problem at hand and takes care of it as quick as he can."

Corey Billie, of Naples, says he is very pleased with the STOF DIRECTV program, which he has been enjoying for about two years.

"I live off the reservation, so for them to drive all the way out here it is really great," Billie says.

Corey says he has called for a technician three times. One time he called first thing in the morning and a technician was at his home that afternoon. The other two times when he needed assistance the technician was there the very next day, which he says is still great fast service, considering he lives in Naples.

"Jose [STOF DIRECTV technician] is very professional, he always listens to whatever problem I have," he says. "Every time I call I get a quick response."

Billie says he doesn't take the offer for granted. "I got to watch TV for free. You can't beat it. I have to say thank you."

Brighton Tribal citizen Amos Tiger has enjoyed STOF DIRECTV services since the program was introduced to Tribal members.

"You get better rates, better benefits, an in-house technician, it is really quality control," Tiger says.

"Having an in-house technician you're able to get

things done on a personal basis. Jose [Garcia, satellite technician] and I get a long great."

When asked about the service and any technical issues, he says, "I don't have problems, I have solutions." — meaning Jose is right there with a solution.



DIRECTV technician Mark Vogelsand replaced the remote control for Big Cypress Tribal citizen Corinna Frank-Sanchez on Feb. 7.

He says STOF DIRECTV's program is really the cheaper way to go and he was offered the best service he has had. He says he switched to Dish Network for two weeks and says he fought with them from the very beginning with the installation. He had it for two weeks and went right back to STOF DIRECTV.

O'Donnell explains how first-time, customers are provided free installation, which includes a satellite dish, basic receiver, and all parts and labor.



# Watch History In The Making

## FREE INSTALLATION

## FREE MAINTENANCE

## PAID

### XTRA DIGITAL 210+ CHANNELS & LOCAL



The Tribe offers a great DIRECTV satellite TV program to all Tribal Citizens who sign up for it through Seminole Broadcasting. Many thought this was only a benefit available to our seniors, NO, it is not! DIRECTV's Choice Xtra Digital package has 210+ channels, including your locals, and is paid for by the Tribe. We also offer you the Seminole Channel, broadcast each Thursday between 5:00 – 7:00 PM on DIRECTV Channel 575.

The DIRECTV bulk rate program allows each new subscriber to receive free installation of a basic receiver and dish. Any upgrades in equipment or channels offered by DIRECTV are also available through our service. If you already have DIRECTV, but did not order it through the Tribe, you can have your account assigned to the Tribe's program and save money.

Besides offering DIRECTV at a great price, we also have our own customer service staff and technicians for service and installation, no need for a monthly maintenance fee. Don't get frustrated by those automated telephone systems, we can answer your questions and help you solve any problems you may have. Just call our office at (954) 985-5703 for more information or assistance.



SEMINOLE CHANNEL

Big Cypress: 863-902-3217 • Brighton/Ft. Pierce: 863-763-6380 • Tampa: 813-246-3100  
Immokalee: 239-658-9256 • Hollywood/South Florida: 954-985-5703



# Winter Funday Draws Large Crowd with Snow, Cook Offs and a Car Show in the Big Cypress Community

BY JUDY WEEKS  
Freelance Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — The 2011 Big Cypress Winter Funday drew a large crowd of Tribal members and affiliates to the Bingo grounds on Saturday, March 5 for the all day annual event.

Creating a new skyline, a snow mountain, giant ferris wheel and carnival rides rose above brightly colored tents beckoning to the car loads of participants that quickly filled the parking lot. Each of the Big Cypress administrative and service departments had created entertainment booths and age-appropriate games, with piles of prizes to delight the winners. A continuous flow of players made their way around the activities throughout the day.

Children of all ages made a mad dash for the mountain of snow where they grabbed sleds, inner tubes and plastic boats for their rapid descent down the slope. Cold, wet snow balls whizzed through the air in all directions and showed no mercy to the bystanders. A steady stream of participants took shelter from the battlefield inside of an igloo.

Circus music, laughter and screams of joy surrounded the midway of carnival rides. The wonderful smell of snow cones, popcorn, cotton candy, hamburgers, hot dogs and barbecue ribs created mouth watering temptation for the energetic crowd.

Participants in the frybread and chili cook-offs set up their stoves

early in the day. Taking great care to hide the source of their secret ingredients, the challengers spent hours preparing their entries for the impartial judges from the RV Campground. When the winners were announced, it didn't take long for the contents of their kettles to disappear into the mouths of their appreciative audience.

The Bingo tent provided a steady source of entertainment throughout the day and proved to be a big favorite of the Tribal seniors as they watched the younger generation blow off steam from a safe distance.

A large portion of the play area contained a vast assortment of vehicles competing in the annual car show. Several categories of trucks, motorcycles, sports utility vehicles, four-wheelers, bicycles and cars were lined up on display with their owners eager to talk shop with the crowd. The participants displayed the result of many long hours of hard work that went into the creative design and maintenance of their projects.

An avid collector and customizer of motorcycles, cars and trucks, Ronnie Billie Sr. pointed out what a great benefit it is to have hobbies that can occupy your free time and stimulate your creativity. Motivating toward his collection, he said, "Working on these has turned my life around. I encourage all of our youngsters to get involved in healthy activities that will get them off the streets and on the road to a bright future. We have a lot of smart, young minds growing up in the Tribe and we are depending on them to build a future for our people."

## 2011 Big Cypress Winter Funday Results

**CHILI COOK-OFF:** Spicy Hot: 1. Beverly Alumbaugh, 2. Marlin Miller, 3. Jennifer Chadwick. Seniors: 1. Janice Osceola. Adults: 1. Charlie Cypress, 2. Tonia Cypress, 3. Beverly Alumbaugh.

**FRYBREAD COOK-OFF:** Regular Women: 1. Marlin Miller, 2. Beverly Alumbaugh, 3. Jennifer Chadwick. Regular Men: 1. Charlie Cypress. Pumpkin: 1. Jennifer Chadwick. Specialty (Fruit Filled, Squash and Sweet Potato): 1. Sue Jane Bert, 2. Beverly Alumbaugh, 3. Sue Jane Bert.

**BINGO GAMES:** Single Bingo: Alice Billie and Virginia Tommie. Double Bingo: Vanessa Billie. Postage Stamp: Mondo Tiger. Kite: David Jumper. Straight Line Bingo: David Jumper. Six Pack: Brian Billie. Yellow Special Single Bingo: Brian Billie. Letter "L": Ronnie C. Billie. Pink Special Single Bingo: Claudia Doctor. Pink Special Double Bingo: Virginia Tommie. Gray Special Single Bingo: Mary Robbins. Letter "T": David Jumper. Small Round Robin: Daisy Jumper. Buster. Letter "X": Daisy Jumper. Buster and Virginia Tommie. Coverall: Daisy Jumper. Buster.

**CAR SHOW:** Cars - Donk: 1. Carradine Billie. Best Interior, Best Paint & Best Engine: Carradine Billie. Cars - Muscle: 1. Lydia Cypress, 2. Charlie Cypress. Best Interior & Engine: Charlie Cypress. Best Paint: Lydia Cypress. Cars - Luxury: 1. T.J. Koenes. Best Interior, Paint and Engine: T.J. Koenes. Trucks: 4 X4: 1. Charlie Cypress, 2. Ronnie Billie Sr., 3. Rudy Osceola. Best Interior & Paint: Charlie Cypress. Trucks: Pickup: 1. Tonia Cypress. Best Interior & Paint: Tonia Cypress. Trucks: Jeep: 1. Joe Billie. Best Interior & Paint: Joe Billie. Motorcycles: Street Bike: 1. Leo Onco, 2. Ronnie Billie Sr., 3. Jr. Buster. Best Paint: Leo Onco. Motorcycles: Hoggs: 1. Ronnie Billie Sr., 2. Leo Onco, 3. Ronnie Billie Sr. Best Paint: Ronnie Billie Sr. 4 Wheelers - ATV (4X4) 1. Cecilia Tigertail, 2. Chska Osceola, 3. Rudy Osceola. Other - Side X Side: 1. Cecilia Tigertail, 2. Chirstalee Coppedge, 3. Brian Billie. Children's Specialty: 1. Thomlynn Billie, 2. Thomlynn Billie. The Bests: At Show: 1. Ronnie Billie Sr. Interior: 1. Charlie Cypress. Paint: 1. Ronnie Billie Sr. Engine: 1. Charlie Cypress. 4-Wheeler: 1. Cecilia Tigertail. Side X Side: 1. Cecilia Tigertail. 4 X 4 Show: 1. Charlie Cypress.



Judy Weeks  
Veteran Chili Cook-off winner Charlie Cypress garnered another first place for his adult entry.



Judy Weeks  
Snowball fights abound at the 2011 Big Cypress Winter Funday.



Judy Weeks  
Left photo, Shana Ballentine selects a prize at the Broadcasting booth being manned by Allen and Rhonda Hoffman. Right photo, Jared McInturf exits the igloo to rejoin the show ball fight.

## Traditional Seminole Canoe Carving Workshop Comes to Okalee Indian Village



Aimee Hoyt

From left, Pedro Zepeda, traditional arts and outreach coordinator for Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum and Fort Pierce Tribal citizen Shamy Tommie chip away wood of a tree from Big Cypress to create the canoe's dugout at the March 9-10 Seminole Canoe Carving workshop in Okalee Indian Village. The event gave Tribal citizens an opportunity to learn and practice the traditional custom of carving a dugout canoe.

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## Third Annual SPD Spring Break Camp Features MILO Simulation Sequences in Big Cypress



SPD Officer David Lee fires off some shots in a hallway with his simulator Glock 48 gun at the camp. This sequence set off the mood for one of the two MILO shooting scenarios.



Hollywood Tribal citizen Kenny Descheene, 13, speaks with Seminole Media Productions Special Projects Coordinator Benno Schmidt about his experience at the third annual SPD Spring Break Camp, held March 14-17 in Big Cypress and Hollywood.



In a conference room at the Jimmie Cypress Public Safety Complex, from left, SPD Sgt. Scott Goodman, Hollywood Tribal members John Osceola and Trinity Bowers, 11, SPD Officer Summer Huggins, Hollywood Tribal member Rhett Tiger, 12, and Hollywood Tribal citizen Kenny Descheene, 13, discuss a MILO simulation scenario in which the Tribal youth have to bunker down in a corner after hearing gunfire pop off in a hallway. Officer Huggins impersonated a teacher and made a 911 call to notify the Tribal kids about the shooter in the hallway.



Aimee Hoyt

The group gets a firsthand look at what training entails for Police Academy recruits while they practice formations and drill and commands outside. Training at the Academy lasts six months and includes dozens of written tests like the CJBAT and physical tests such as pushing a car, swimming laps in an Olympic-size pool and completing the obstacle course at Parc de Triumpe on campus.

## SPD Spring Break Campers Tour Broward Community College Police Academy



Aimee Hoyt



Aimee Hoyt

Tribal campers, led by SPD Officer Michele Daza and SPD Sergeant for Youth Services Angie Margotta, view a memorial March 16 at Broward Community College in Davie before touring the Police Academy. The group began their tour by watching a PowerPoint that new recruits watch on Family Night, a night dedicated to showing families what they've been learning at the Academy.

From left, Trakia Lockhart, 13, Donovan Bacon, 9, and Trinity Bowers, 11, wait for their turn to practice shooting an unloaded gun before using Range 3000 in the training lab with the help of Fort Lauderdale Police Department Officer Thor Lockhart. Officer Lockhart compared Range 3000 to the MILO simulator, which some of the youngsters used earlier in the week in Big Cypress. "This is almost the equivalent of a newer version of the MILO," he said. "You can think of an old Xbox where the graphics got better. That's what this is."

## Boys & Girls Club Hosts Beach Bonanza Concert for Tribal Youth in Hollywood

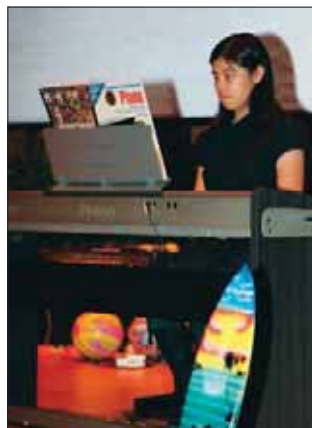


Natomah Robins sings the classic "Seminole Wind" on stage along with several other acts as part of the Boys & Girls Club Youth Beach Bonanza Youth Concert held at the Tribal Headquarters Auditorium Feb. 25. The show featured several Tribal youth and teens playing musical instruments and performing cover and original songs with family and friends on hand in support.

Chris C. Jenkins



Chris C. Jenkins



Chris C. Jenkins

Cameron Osceola plays a guitar solo on stage.

Kiana Bell performs on the piano.

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## Dedication is Incumbent Upon Us and Our Commitment to the Tribal Community

BY OFFICE OF YOUR POLICE CHIEF, WILLIAM R. LATCHFORD

Seminole Police Department and the Seminole Tribe of Florida employ police officers, each of whom has a main goal of keeping the Tribal Community safe. Our officers have many attributes that make up their individuality. However, what is unique to each one of them is their dedication to the profession and the Tribal community. As they prepare for work every day, they are under the realization they may not have the luxury of coming home to their family after work due to the nature of their profession.

It is a noble profession and our officers have made a commitment to protect the community where they serve. Tragically, through the most recent loss of Miami-Dade Police Officers Amanda Haworth and Roger Castillo, and of Sergeant Thomas Baitinger, Officer Jeffrey Yaslowitz and Officer David Crawford of St. Petersburg Police Department, we are reminded how dangerous this profession can be. Notwithstanding, our officers come to work every day maintaining their dedication to the Tribal community to make sure everyone is safe and makes it home to their families.

The challenges and stressors within our society are without question overwhelming, and sometimes our officers are placed into compromising situations. With that in mind, as each of you spends time within the community, should you see anything alarming or questionable, please do not hesitate to call upon our officers to assist and protect you. Due diligence is vital to the safety of everyone.

Our commitment every day to the Seminole Tribe of Florida is to be out in the community and really get to know everyone, as well as have the Tribal citizens know each of our officers. We believe this type of interaction will allow for the growth of a more enriching environment for the entire community. Fostering strong positive relationships requires true dedication.

More often than not, police officers are called upon when something goes wrong, such as handling a car accident, thefts, robberies, fights, etc. The officers within the Seminole Police Department work diligently on a daily basis to build positive relationships within the community during events such as Rez Rally, National Heart Day golf tournaments, simply stopping by Hot Meals to say hello and stopping by the gym to play basketball with the youth. Building a positive rapport within the community is done with the hope that should someone be placed into a situation involving a negative event such as a car accident, having an officer you are familiar with show up on the scene may make the situation seem much less traumatic.

Police officers are under scrutiny from the moment a shift begins until the officer goes home. They are expected to maintain composure at all times, which requires a true dedication to be at the "peak of performance" each day. Our officers have made the commitment to the Seminole Tribe of Florida to be prepared and available to our Tribal citizens and keep them safe. Our doors at the Seminole Police Department are always open with a goal of fostering the best relationships we can within the community. We thank you for your continued support.

## Seminole Moments Brings Back Lecture About Life on Traditional Campsites



Rachel Burston

Willie Johns shows a picture of his family living on a traditional campsite on the Brighton Reservation during a Seminole Moments lecture in Fort Pierce Feb. 10 at the Chupco Youth Ranch. Johns explained how he lived on a campsite for the first 17 years of his life with no electricity or running water. He said his campsite was made of 20 chickees and was one big communal living space.

## Seminole Moments Educates Employees on Traditional Seminole Foods



Rachel Burston

Willie Johns explains how the Seminoles' diet evolved through the years during a Seminole Moments session March 9 at Brighton's Cattle and Range. About 20 employees enjoyed lunch while Johns explained that the Seminoles' eating habits changed drastically from plant-based to more animal-based after they began using a musket gun and a single-shot, muzzle-loading rifle. "We probably ate better than you guys," Johns joked.

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# Education

B

## Brighton's McKayla Snow Qualifies For State Science Fair Second Year in a Row

BY RACHEL BUXTON  
Staff Reporter

**OKEECHOBEE** — As the Brighton youth continue to excel in academics, McKayla Snow was recognized for her



Elbert Snow

McKayla Snow is recognized at the Okeechobee School Board meeting and presented with an award of excellence from Superintendent Dr. Patricia Cooper for her academic achievement in science.

academic achievement March 8 at the Okeechobee School Board meeting.

Snow received an award from Okeechobee Superintendent Dr. Patricia Cooper for her outstanding achievement in the Okeechobee and Regional Science Fair.

Snow got first place at the Okeechobee Science Fair, moving on to the regional level that was held Feb. 18 in Sebring. Snow also received first place at regional along with the Charles Ross Memorial Award.

"It meant a lot," Snow said. "Because I was thinking I wouldn't get any special award."

Snow attended the State Science Fair on March 24 in Orlando at the Orange County Convention Center and said it is the only time she gets nervous.

Snow was able to continue the project she started last year titled, "Plop, Plop, Fizz: What Do You Think the Reaction Time Is?"

"I saw a commercial for Alka-Seltzer and wanted to do a project on it," Snow said.

Snow's project tested the reaction time of Alka-Seltzer dissolving in different liquids at room temperatures. Liquids used included tap water, whole milk, soy milk, sweet tea, orange juice, soda and tomato juice.

Snow also excelled last year making it all the way to state, placing fourth.

She said science is her favorite subject.

"It's a good way to learn," Snow said. "It's good for your future."

Over the next couple of weeks Snow plans to prepare for state by working on her presentation and trying to figure out the density of the liquids after one of the judges at regional asked her that very question.

"We had a couple of variables in there, but we fixed all that," Snow said.

Snow said she hopes to follow in the footsteps of her late mother, Dawn Marie Snow Fertitta, who was a nurse. She said she doesn't know if she wants to be a chemist, but she definitely wants to do something involving either medicine or science.

"It's cool to learn about the human body," Snow said. "And the earth is pretty awesome."

## Immokalee Preschoolers Participate in MDA Hop-A-Thon Fund Raiser

BY JUDY WEEKS  
Freelance Reporter

**IMMOKALEE** — Students of the Immokalee Preschool joined the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) Helping Jerry's Kids program on March 2 with a Hop-A-Thon on their playground. They were among approximately 300,000 children attending more than 16,000 preschools, child care centers and elementary schools across the United States who took part in the annual fund raiser.

Kids and parents obtained pledges from family members, friends and neighbors based on the number of hops they were able to complete during the 30 minute period or an overall donation. Each child received a support monitor to tabulate their hops in anticipation of collecting their pledges.

"By participating in the MDA Hop-A-Thon program, we are teaching our children about the importance of helping others," Immokalee Preschool Site Manager Michelle Ford said. "This isn't just about exercise and having fun. Our students are learning about disabilities, health issues and compassion for the needs of others."

In accordance with the MDA fund raiser guidelines, donations received through the Hop-A-Thon will help send children with neuromuscular disease to special summer camps, assist with the purchase of wheelchairs and leg braces, as well as funding worldwide research for treatment options.

The monitors tabulated a total of 3,224 hops for the boys and girls who appeared to have a fabulous time pretending to be rabbits. Hopping up and down is not an unusual activity for little children and they really put their hearts into the game.

Winning bunnies went to the girls' champion Makayla Mata with 481 hops. Angelo Colon Jr. who registered 259 times won on behalf of the boys' division. A giant yellow duckling was awarded to Arianna Rodriguez for collecting the most amount of money in donations.



Judy Weeks

259 total hops made Angelo Colon Jr. the Boys' Champion at the MDA Hop-A-Thon March 2 in Immokalee.

## Mark Twain Visits the Diane Yzaguirre Memorial Library in Immokalee to Promote Reading

BY JUDY WEEKS  
Freelance Reporter

**IMMOKALEE** — Literary history came to life at the Diane Yzaguirre Memorial Library in Immokalee on the afternoon of March 4.

As a group of students, education advisors and library staff gathered in the main teaching area, the topic of conversation centered around one question: "Who is Mark Twain?" They didn't have to wait long for the answer.

A deep masculine voice sounded from behind the rows of books lining the walls and said, "I am Mark Twain." Assuming the character role of the famous 19th century author, poet and humorist, Dave Ehler began a first person narrative that chronicled the life of the American literary genius, Samuel Langhorne Clemens, who assumed the pseudonym of Mark Twain.

"I was born under a lucky star in Missouri in 1835, which was the year of Haley's comet and I made my final exist in 1910," said Ehler's Mark Twain as he materialized wearing a white Victorian era suit, flashy satin tie, gray hair, mustache and bushy eyebrows that were the trade mark of the author during his public appearances more than one hundred years ago.

Coming from Bronson, Mo., Ehler has portrayed Mark Twain in 30 states on the stage and in schools, libraries, courthouses, prisons and the Immokalee Seminole Reservation. He said, "My main concern is the demise of books. I hope that young people are not deprived of books as a result of the new technical trend, because it will be a tremendous loss."

In the hour that followed, the audience listened to an animated description of the life and works of Mark Twain, which encompassed his many professions as a newspaper man, riverboat pilot, prospector teacher, world traveler, lecturer, humorist and the renowned author of books, short stories and poetry.

Twain had prepared an autobiography and left instructions that it was not to be released until he had been dead for 100 years. This work has recently become available to the public and is being added to libraries across the country.

Listening to excerpts from Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn, the audience learned about the morals of Twain's writings that applied to both the past and the present. The startled youngsters screamed in delight at the conclusion of a scary mystery story and then begged to hear more.

Ehler said, "As I leave you today, I want you to remember one of Mark Twain's most important quotes, 'Kindness is a language heard by the deaf and seen by the blind.' Make this a standard of your lives."



Judy Weeks

Children gather around to look at an original copy of Mark Twain's classic, 'Tom Sawyer' and laugh at the humor of his stories as told by Dave Ehler at the Diane Yzaguirre Memorial Library in Immokalee on March 4.

## Pemayetv Emahakv Students and Staff Get Private Concert from Country Artist Jake McVey



Rachel Buxton

Country recording artist Jake McVey makes a special trip to the Brighton Reservation Feb. 28 to perform a private concert for the students and staff of Pemayetv Emahakv at the Fred Smith Rodeo Arena amphitheater. The stop was part of McVey's special project Roads to Home, Pay It Forward concert series. "It's finally great to be at a point where I can give back and be who I am," McVey said.



Rachel Buxton

Pemayetv Emahakv Principal Russell Brown presents Jake McVey with a token of appreciation before giving him a tour of the school and a glimpse into the life of the Seminole Tribe.



## Pemayetv Emahakv Students Compete, Play Games to Become the Ultimate Survivor



Rachel Buxton  
Victor Parrillo, left, and Lupe Mora-Lara shake as fast as they can in the bottle shake game during the annual Pemayetv Emahakv Survivor Day March 16 at the Brighton Gym.



Rachel Buxton  
Jarrett Bert, left, attempts to catch a ping pong ball while Kyndra Harris, center, and Donovan Harris watch during the school's Survivor Day.



Rachel Buxton  
Jason Webber and son Jessie Webber, decked out in team T-shirts, await their score for math flash cards.

## Big Cypress Tribal Youth and Teens Learn Seminole Language and Crafts



Chris C. Jenkins  
Culture instructor Jane Billie helps students with the spelling and pronunciation of the word turkey in Mikasuki.



Chris C. Jenkins  
Tribal youth and teens discuss words in the traditional Mikasuki as part of the Ahfachkee School/Culture Department early release gathering on March 9 in the Municipal Building in Big Cypress. The day featured traditional craft making and practicing Seminole language skill development.



Chris C. Jenkins  
Lauren Doctor decorates her drum during the crafts portion of class.

## NASA Speaker/Chippewa Tribal Member Louise Kleba Visits Big Cypress



Alyssa Osceola, left, pours water on a tile that protects the NASA space shuttle during a presentation hosted by NASA Speaker Louise Kleba, center, and NASA Education program Specialist Helen Kane.

Naji Tobias

NASA Speaker/Chippewa Tribal citizen Louise Kleba held an hour-long space shuttle presentation for the Ahfachkee School Boys & Girls Club students on Feb. 16 at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium. Kleba, an electrical engineer at the Kennedy Space Center, spoke about the operations of a space shuttle and how astronauts prepare to launch into space.

Naji Tobias



Naji Tobias  
Six rockets were launched at the Big Cypress Bingo facility during the NASA event. Boys & Girls Club student Leo Onco is getting set to launch his rocket with the help of Boys & Girls Club assistant Derek Pierce.

Naji Tobias

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The staff of the Ahfachkee School, along with the Tribe's Human Resources Department, sent off former principal Walter Swan, sitting at center, in grand Seminole style as they presented him with a host of gifts of appreciation for his three years of service at the Feb. 10 going away party in the Ahfachkee School's cafeteria.

Naji Tobias



## Ahfachkee School Surprises Principal Walter Swan With Going-Away Party in Seminole Style

BY NAJI TOBIAS  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** – After about three years as the Ahfachkee School Principal, Walter Swan has decided to accept a new role in Nashville, Tenn. as the Bureau of Indian Education's Line Officer for the Native American entity's South and Eastern states region.

Staff members from the Tribal school hosted a special surprise going-away party in Swan's honor on Feb. 10, marking the end of an era at the Big Cypress Reservation's academic campus.

"It's been a good ride," Swan said. "It's taken a while to assemble the staff this school has here, but they're an outstanding group. They are all very considerate and hard working. All of us are truly here for the kids, and it shows by how much better the Ahfachkee School is now because of it."

The former principal was in tears after the Ahfachkee School staff presented him with a host of gifts, including two specially made Seminole jackets. Other gifts included an alligator hat, a book of specially made awards in the former principal's honor, several tickets to B.B. King's Restaurant & Blues Club and a chickee made by an unidentified Tribal citizen, among others.

"It's all about the teamwork," Swan said. "The Ahfachkee School is in good hands with the staff we have here. I'm very moved by what they put on for me. It's a great feeling to feel appreciated for what's been accomplished here."

Since taking the job as the Ahfachkee School's principal in August 2008, a transitional plan, which consisted of 29 items, was put in place for the advancement of the Ahfachkee School.

Under Swan's watch, some initiatives the Ahfachkee School implemented include the following:

- Development of the Boys & Girls Club's after-school tutoring program.
- Redevelopment of community involvement nights such as the Literacy Fair, Math Fair, Science Fair and Family Sports Night.
- Implementation of Native American Student Information System to track student attendance, class schedules and parent contact information.
- Creation of athletic program in the areas of basketball, golf, softball, track and weightlifting.
- Involvement in the Tribe's resources, such as the Truancy Program, the Child Protection Team and the Center of Child Diagnostics Team.
- Tiered interventions of reading and math programs to help develop learners at all levels.
- Implementation of comprehensive and cohesive reading and math programs.
- Transition planning and career awareness to Tribal and post high school resources.
- Hiring of highly qualified and effective teachers and staff, with 16 of the Ahfachkee School's 31 teachers holding at least a master's degree.

- Successful re-accreditation from Advance Ed (formerly known as Southern Association of Colleges and Schools).

"It takes a special individual to come into an organization such as this one," Seminole Tribe Chief Human Resources Executive Officer Lee Zepeda said about Swan. "He created a plan and vision for the school and that's going to live way past him."

Taking Swan's place as the interim principal will be Grant Richardson, who was hired this past summer to be the Ahfachkee School's Dean of Students. According to a memorandum from Tribal officials, a plan is in place to seek out and find the best qualified candidate for the Tribal school's permanent principal position prior to the start of the 2011-2012 school year.

"Obviously, it's some big shoes to fill," Richardson said. "There are going to be some challenges, but I'm excited to serve any role I can to help advance the school. Mr. Swan did a fabulous job here and he had everything going in a good direction here. We're happy with the standards that have been put in place; we're not expecting to see many changes here right now."

Richardson credited Swan for his dedication to the Ahfachkee School's advancement, citing that it was the staff's honor to send off the former principal in style.

In life, we always want to celebrate and honor people that are special to us," Richardson said. "Mr. Swan did a lot of heavy lifting for us and gave up a lot to take us to where we're at now. We felt it was only right to recognize all that."

"Mr. Swan has been instrumental in updating our school," Administrative Assistant Betty Cypress-King said, who has worked at the school for 17 years.

"He has upgraded our standards of learning and the kids have benefited from his leadership. A lot of the changes made were for the good of the children and that's something we need to remember."

While Swan will be moving on to a different educational position, he won't be officially out of touch with the Seminole Tribe. In his new role, Swan will be playing an integral part in serving the needs of all Native American students at BIE schools, from Maine to Florida.

"As an organization, the Seminole Tribe of Florida is very grateful to Walter Swan for his dedication to excellence in Seminole education," according to a statement from Chief Executive Administrative Officer Amy Johns. "We wish him all the best in his new position."

Swan, who previously held a position as a BIE director in Tacoma, Wash., said he is appreciative of the Tribe's efforts in giving him a chance to take the Ahfachkee School to a higher educational level.

"I thank the Seminole Tribe of Florida for flying me in all the way from Seattle," Swan said of his 2008 hiring. "They knew they wanted something different from this school. It's really a unique opportunity to serve here. I'm grateful to the Tribal Council and Board for believing in my vision and letting me represent them."



Naji Tobias

From left, Lena Swan, her husband, former Ahfachkee School Principal Walter Swan and their son, Stephen Swan are misty-eyed at the Feb. 10 going-away party at the Ahfachkee School's cafeteria as they show gratitude to all of the school's staff and the Tribe's Human Resources Department for the well-wishes sent their way.

## Willie Frank Library Introduces Students to Russian Culture



Library Program Manager Barbara D. Oeffner

Big Cypress Librarian Gretchen DeBree, Ricky Rodriguez and Melissa Silva examine Matryoshka dolls during the Russian craft program offered the week of March 7 at the library to introduce the students to Russian cuisine. Children painted their own Matryoshka dolls, listened to stories about Russia, watched the movie "Peter and the Wolf" and tasted the Russian-inspired dish beef Stroganoff, prepared by Library Program Manager Barbara D. Oeffner.



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## ATTENTION ALL TRIBAL MEMBERS

The **Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum** is pleased to announce it is forming a **Museum Advisory Council (MAC)**. We would like to invite interested Tribal members to become actively involved in the Museum by becoming members of the **MAC**.

We are looking for Tribal members, 18 years and older, who would be willing to join Museum staff in the planning of exhibits, events and the future of the Museum collections acquisitions.

The Museum relies closely on Tribal member input for cultural, historical relevance and accuracy and we are excited to invite you to join the **MAC**.

If you have any questions about the **MAC** or are interested in joining, please contact Anne McCudden at (863) 902-1113 or [amccudden@semtribe.com](mailto:amccudden@semtribe.com).





## Tribal Citizen Jarrid Smith, Seminole Gaming's Doug Cox Speak at Warrior Lunch Bunch Series



Naji Tobias

Hollywood Tribal citizen and former FAU Owls college football star Jarrid Smith paid his first-ever visit to the Ahfachkee School on March 15 for the Tribal entity's monthly Warrior Lunch Bunch series. With their eyes visibly glued to Smith's presentation, the Ahfachkee students in attendance learned about what the four primary Seminole colors – red, yellow, black and white – meant to him. The Tribal keynote speaker talked to them about the importance of looking out for their families in the time of need – one of a host of things that represents the Seminole Tribe, according to Smith. "We need to care about ourselves and the people around us," Smith said to the Ahfachkee students. "To me, that's what all the colors are about. It has helped me a lot in my life. I hope that these colors mean a lot to you, too. I love this Tribe and I love each and every one of you. I want you to remember that."



Seminole Gaming's Doug Cox gave a presentation to the students that centered on offering them the option of joining the Tribal career development program and having a career with the Seminole Hard Rock franchise. He encouraged them to believe in their dreams and take pride in their Seminole heritage. "When you think about what you want to do in your life, take care of yourselves, your family and each other," Cox said. "You are unconquered, so you act like, walk like it, talk like it, think like it and smell like it. Find joy in your life and make it work for you."

Naji Tobias

## Immokalee Preschoolers Learn How to Create Traditional Frybread

BY JUDY WEEKS  
Freelance Reporter

**IMMOKALEE** — The 3- and 4-year-old students at the Immokalee Preschool embarked upon an extraordinary experience that won't soon be forgotten, when they accepted an invitation from the Immokalee Culture Department on Feb. 23.

Traveling to the Immokalee Administration Building, the boys and girls gathered in the culture kitchen to learn how to create frybread, which is a culinary favorite that has sustained generations of families throughout Tribal history.

"Working with children of this age may seem like a challenge, but for us it is pure pleasure," said Immokalee Culture Site Manager Geraldine Osceola. "While they may seem awfully young, it hasn't been that long ago since their mothers and grandmothers were learning how to cook at the same age. If these little ones were growing up in a camp environment, watching and helping prepare the meals would be a part of their daily routine."

"We really look forward to working with the small children because they are filled with enthusiasm and tackle each new experience as though it was an adventure," Osceola continued. "They have open minds and quickly absorb new ideas like little sponges that are eager for knowledge. This is the opportune age to expose our children to their language and culture before they become preoccupied by outside interests." The children watched carefully as the simple ingredients were turned into dough and then delighted in the chance to make their own individual pieces of frybread. With sticky little fingers, they worked the flour into the dough, shaped it and then took it to the frying pan. Jumping up and down, they could hardly wait for the finished product to cool so that it could be eaten.



Judy Weeks

Immokalee Culture Site Manager Geraldine Osceola distributes frybread dough to each of the preschoolers.

Ingredients were turned into dough and then delighted in the chance to make their own individual pieces of frybread. With sticky little fingers, they worked the flour into the dough, shaped it and then took it to the frying pan. Jumping up and down, they could hardly wait for the finished product to cool so that it could be eaten.

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## Important information about the \$3.4 billion Indian Trust Settlement

**For current or former IIM account holders,  
Owners of land held in trust or restricted status, or their heirs**

There is a proposed Settlement in *Cobell v. Salazar*, a class action lawsuit about individual Indian land held in trust by the federal government. This notice is just a summary. For details, call the toll-free number or visit the website listed below.

The lawsuit claims that the federal government violated its duties by (a) mismanaging trust funds/assets, (b) improperly accounting for those funds, and (c) mismanaging trust land/assets. The trust funds include money collected from farming and grazing leases, timber sales, mining, and oil and gas production from land owned by American Indians/Alaska Natives.

If you are included in the Settlement, your rights will be affected. To object to the Settlement, to comment on it, or to exclude yourself, you should get a detailed notice at [www.IndianTrust.com](http://www.IndianTrust.com) or by calling 1-800-961-6109.

### Can I get money?

There are two groups or "Classes" in the Settlement eligible for payment. Each Class includes individual IIM account holders or owners of land held in trust or restricted status who were alive on September 30, 2009.

#### Historical Accounting Class Members

- Had an open individual Indian Money account ("IIM") anytime between October 25, 1994 and September 30, 2009, **and**
- The account had at least one cash transaction.
- Includes estates of account holders who died as of September 30, 2009, if the IIM account was still open on that date.

#### Trust Administration Class Members

- Had an IIM account recorded in currently available data in federal government systems any time from approximately 1985 to September 30, 2009, **or**
- Owned trust land or land in restricted status as of September 30, 2009.
- Includes estates of landowners who died as of September 30, 2009 where the trust interests were in probate as of that date. This means you have asked a court to transfer ownership of the deceased landowner's property.

An individual may be included in one or both Classes.

### What does the Settlement provide?

- A \$1.5 billion fund to pay those included in the Classes.
- A \$1.9 billion fund to buy small interests in trust or restricted land owned by many people.
- Up to \$60 million to fund scholarships to improve access to higher education for Indian youth.
- A government commitment to reform the Indian trust management and accounting system.

### How much can I get?

- Historical Accounting Class Members will each get \$1,000.
- Trust Administration Class Members will get at least \$500.
- If you own a small parcel of land with many other people, the federal government may ask you to sell it. You will be offered fair market value. If you sell your land it will be returned to tribal control.

If you believe you are a member of either Class and are not receiving IIM account statements, you will need to call the toll-free number or visit the website to register.

### What are my other rights?

- If you wish to keep your right to sue the federal government about the claims in this Settlement, you must exclude yourself by **April 20, 2011**.
- If you stay in the Settlement you can object to or comment on it by **April 20, 2011**. The detailed notice explains how to exclude yourself or object/comment.

The U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia will hold a hearing on June 20, 2011, to consider whether to approve the Settlement. It will also consider a request for attorneys' fees, costs, and expenses in the amount of \$99.9 million. However, Class Counsel has fee agreements that would pay them 14.75% of the funds created for the Classes, which could result in an award of \$223 million. The Court may award more or less than these amounts based on controlling law. If approved, these payments and related costs will come out of the Settlement funds available for payment to Class Members.

If you wish, you or your own lawyer may ask to appear and speak at the hearing at your own cost. For more information, call or go to the website shown below or write to Indian Trust Settlement, P.O. Box 9577, Dublin, OH 43017-4877.

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# Health



Naples Community members joined the Friends of the Collier Seminole State Park and marched in the Naples St. Patrick's Day Parade March 12 to create public awareness of the park's significance to the region. Collier Seminole State Park is dedicated to the memory of the Seminole ancestors that originally inhabited the Everglades of South Florida and entrepreneur Barron Collier Sr., who was instrumental in the completion of the Tamiami Trail.

Judy Weeks

## Naples Community Marches in St. Patrick's Day Parade to Celebrate the Holiday



Judy Weeks

Decked out in a wee bit of the green, Naples Seminole Community members combined their monthly health walk with support for the Collier Seminole State Park.



Judy Weeks

Dominic Osceola-Lugo is disguised as a little Irish leprechaun.

## Tara Robbins Shares Weight Loss Challenge Experience at Seminole Pathways II Lesson Finale

**Big Cypress Tribal citizens Katherine and Wanda Billie complete eight-week initiative with Robbins**

BY NAJIB TOBIAS  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — "Self-discipline is a key to obtaining weight loss," said Big Cypress Tribal citizen Tara Robbins.

It's a topic that has been addressed extensively throughout the eight-week long Seminole Pathways II Weight Loss Challenge, which convened from Jan. 26 to March 16.

During the Weight Loss Challenge's lesson finale on March 16, Robbins, an active participant in the Seminole Pathways II-sponsored initiative, said she recently noticed a change in her eating and exercise habits since the health program began.

A visibly ecstatic Robbins went into detail on how the weight-loss initiative has played a role in her new outlook on living a healthy lifestyle.

"It has taught me to make better health choices and to eat better," Robbins said. "We were told not to set a real big goal but just do it in little increments. It helps a lot because you don't see this gigantic mountain you're trying to climb. It's just about taking the little steps and I was comfortable with that."

In the Weight Loss Challenge, Tribal citizens who chose to participate were encouraged to lose as much as 10 pounds in the eight-week period. Robbins exceeded the suggested goal, losing a total of 11 pounds in the aforementioned time frame.

In addition, Robbins said her blood pressure decreased as a result of the program.

"Exercising and eating right is a big thing for me right now," Robbins said. "My parents, Mary and Bernard Robbins, have had high blood pressure and they are on medication for that now. So, with that in mind, I really started to pay attention to my body. Now, I've seen results of my blood pressure since the program started. It feels real good to have accomplished that."

Robbins said she now walks on a regular basis and has added jogging to her daily exercise regi-

men. In addition, Robbins regularly works out on a treadmill at a rate of two miles per day, four days per week.

"I've gotten comfortable with walking, so now my body feels like moving on to the next step," Robbins said. "With a combination of the exercise I'm doing now and watching what I eat, I'm feeling more confident in myself as a person. My self-esteem is going up because of this."

Robbins said that prior to joining the program, she would eat a variety of foods to fill up her stomach. But now, with the help of the Seminole Wellness team and the eight weekly health lessons she's received, Robbins makes sure to eat plenty of vegetables before consuming anything else.

The Big Cypress Tribal citizen said she's cut down considerably on salt intake and eats primarily lean meat in her efforts to maintain her newfound healthy lifestyle.

"I had to learn how to eat all over again," Robbins said of the change. "It was like a food addiction to me."

Robbins weighed in on the Seminole Wellness team's impact on her change of eating and exercising habits.

"They've been a big help to all of us," Robbins said of the Weight Loss Challenge, which also included fellow Big Cypress Tribal citizens Katherine Billie and Wanda Billie. "They think of all possibilities to help us keep going. They have even given us some cooking recipes on how to eat the right way. It's really been a wonderful experience because of their support."

Robbins revealed what her biggest reward was as a result of joining the program.

"My daughter [Mariah Smith, 10] hugged me one day and said, 'I can touch you with my hands together right now,'" Robbins said. "That was pretty awesome. I feel ready to face every day not feeling lazy or tired."

See photos on page 9B



Rachel Buxton

The Seminole Tribe earned the award for having the most participants March 12, as Tribal citizens and employees took part in the annual March of Dimes March for Babies. The Seminole Tribe team had 67 participants with 45 Tribal citizens and 22 employees.

## Brighton Walks to Support Annual March of Dimes March for Babies in Okeechobee



Rachel Buxton

Kai Setty, left, of Brighton Recreation, runs with Tribal citizen Mable Tichenor. The walk consisted of 3.1 miles with spirit stations set up along the way offering goodies to raise awareness for the March of Dimes.



Rachel Buxton

The Seminole Tribe Health Department's own Connie Whidden, left, and Edna McDuffie walk along Highway 441.



Rachel Buxton

Patty Entry participates with her daughter Patricia Entry in the March of Dimes March for Babies, March 12 in Okeechobee. Daughter Patricia was born eight weeks early. The walk raises money to support programs that help moms have healthy, full-term pregnancies, and to fund research. Entry walks with her mom Laurie Snow and niece McKayla Snow.



## Immokalee 28-Day Challengers Attain a Healthier Lifestyle With Diet and Exercise



From left, Mary Lou Alvarado, Susan Davis and Armondo Nunez show off the gift baskets that they received as a portion of the winners in the Immokalee Pathways 28-Day Challenge. "Dedicating themselves to a healthier lifestyle through diet and exercise made winners of all the participants," said Health and Nutrition Specialist Charlotte Porcaro. "With the contest behind them, the real challenge will now begin as they strive to continue the healthy habits they have attained."

Judy Weeks

## Brighton Raises Awareness for Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day with Door Decorating Competition

For the second year in a row the Education Department took first place in the National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day door decorating contest March 16 sponsored by the Brighton Seminole Health Department. March 20 is National Native Awareness HIV/AIDS Awareness Day helping to raise awareness to a disease that continues to increase among Native people. American Indians along with Alaskan Natives have the third highest rate of AIDS diagnosis in the U.S., despite having the smallest population.

Rachel Buxton



Rachel Buxton

Third place goes to Brighton Council Office for its door decorating.



Rachel Buxton

Brighton Health Department is awarded second place.



Rachel Buxton

Brighton Family Services takes home fourth place in the contest.

## Aftercare: The Importance of Follow Up in the Recovery Process

BY ERIC BRICKER  
Family Services Department

The term "aftercare" is a healthcare term that generally refers to the follow-up that is required when a patient completes some kind of treatment. When it comes to addiction, aftercare is thought by many to be the most important part of treatment. The reason for this is the nature of addiction itself, where relapse is often part of the recovery process, and the focus of aftercare is relapse prevention.

In 2006, Helene Buster, registered nurse and director of the Seminole Tribe of Florida Family Services Department, sought to create an aftercare program within Family Services. Prior to that time, Family Services was often known for being very efficient about getting clients into treatment centers, but far less effective in the department's ability to provide follow-up and aftercare to its addicted clients.

Buster, a known recovering Tribal citizen and recovery activist said, "When I was getting sober, there was a counselor from the facility who would come out to the reservation to have aftercare meetings. Sometimes it would be just he and I. His support helped me, and the meetings kept me accountable. That's a big part of how I got through my early sobriety."

With addiction recovery, effective aftercare programs usually include a strong emphasis on support. In most cases, the Family Services aftercare counselor will be introduced to the client while that individual is in

treatment. Once this relationship is established, the aftercare counselor will continue to follow the individual after they are discharged from the residential program. The goal is for the recovering person to learn how to effectively turn to others for assistance, rather than turning to drugs or alcohol during times of discomfort or stress. Over time, the hope is that the recovering person accumulates a recovery support network of friends, family, and fellow participants in a 12-step program such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous.

It was Buster's practical and professional knowledge of aftercare that fueled the vision for the Family Services Department's Aftercare Program, which now employs three counselors and one administrator. Buster said, "We needed a professional bridge to bring our clients into the recovering community, so that they could learn to socialize and interact in a sober way. Now, some of those clients have been sober for a while, and are mentoring and sponsoring other clients that are new to the program."

In order for an aftercare plan to be successful, it should be comprehensive, and it should address the major aspects of the individual's life, including the social, emotional, vocational and spiritual. Usually, those who are successful in staying sober will make changes in many areas of their life. The goal of the Family Services aftercare counselor is to provide guidance and support to the individual while these changes are taking place.

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## Seminoles in Recovery Hosts Third Annual Recovery Convention in Clewiston



Raynaldo Yzaguirre Jr. and Charlie Tiger enjoy some recreation playing horseshoes between meetings.

### BY SEMINOLES IN RECOVERY

On March 3, Seminole in Recovery hosted its third annual National Recovery Convention at the John Boy Auditorium in Clewiston. Recovering Tribal citizens and other recovering individuals came from as far away as Canada, Oklahoma and Washington State to attend this annual event that has doubled in size since its inaugural year in 2008. The four day convention consisted of various 12-step fellowship meetings and testimonials as those in attendance celebrated their sobriety, and bolstered their recovery through the messages of hope from the conference speakers. Five of the 10 speakers were Seminole Tribal citizens, each of whom had over a year of sobriety. Their message sets a powerful example that recovery and sobriety is possible for anyone willing to make an effort.

The convention was organized by the Seminole in Recovery group, which is a contingent of recovering Tribal citizens who routinely organize recovery activities and 12-step meetings. However, the event is open to all recovering people who wish to share in the fellowship of sobriety. Meals are included in the cost of registration and cooked on the premises. Dining is communal, which increases the sense of fellowship among those that attend. On the second evening of the convention, all were invited to attend or participate in the jam session, where conference participants had a chance to strum and sing together. They covered old hits from Hank Williams, Elvis Presley and the Grateful Dead. Some attendees shared original tunes as well, making it that much more personal.

Each activity was an opportunity for fellowship, and every effort was made to make all feel welcome. As with all 12-step recovery activities, the most

important individual is the new comer. That message is repeated over and over again throughout the convention as those in recovery believe that the only way for them to hold onto their sobriety is to share it with someone else in need.

On Saturday, participants had an opportunity to attend a sweat lodge. This is always a popular activity, and one way to diversify the healing activities that take place at the convention. Those who opted not to join in the sweat, attended a talking circle, which was facilitated by a recovering Tribal citizen. On Saturday evening, the meetings concluded with a sobriety countdown, during which conference participants totaled up their lengths of sobriety from drugs and alcohol. The number totaled well over one thousand years of sobriety, sending a powerful message of unity to all of those in attendance that "we can accomplish together what we could not accomplish alone."

We would like to offer our extend our most sincere thanks to all of those who supported the self-funded event with their gracious donations. Among those are included:

GERALDINE OSCEOLA - BRIAN TOMMIE - THE AH-TAH -TH-KI MUSEUM GIFT SHOP - ELIZABETH OLEA - JUANITA MARTINEZ - SONIA PEREZ - NANCY MOTLOW - ASHLEY FAZ - GAYLE GREER - THE IMMOKALEE SENIOR CENTER - RUTH OSCEOLA - LINDA FRANK - JOHNNY BOONE - RUBY OSCEOLA - COUNCILMAN MONDO TIGER - AMY YZAGUIRRE - CRIS MARRERO - LUIS VEGUEZ - LOUISE MOTLOW - THE MARCO ISLAND HILTON - THE SEMINOLE HARD ROCK HOTEL

Thank you all! We can't wait to do it again next year! For information about the recovery convention or other Seminole in Recovery events, please log onto [seminolesinrecovery.com](http://seminolesinrecovery.com) or look for us on Facebook.

## Get Fit Day Makes Way for Big Cypress Preschoolers and Ahfachkee School Students



From left, 3-year-olds Louie Billie, Jonah Cypress and Emma Dicarlo take a walk through the fitness circuit's maze.



Rylin Osceola, 3, goes through a tunnel maze on the Seminole Fitness department's circuit course at the Big Cypress Reservation's Get Fit Day on Feb. 18.



Photo above, Ahfachkee's H.O.P.E. (Health Opportunities in Physical Education) class takes a visit to the Big Cypress Preschool's Get Fit Day. The kids get down on their stomachs in a stomach race, a drill that works on the children's legs, biceps and improves coordination skills. Left photo, Seminole Fitness Trainer and Big Cypress Tribal citizen Cathy Cypress pushes Shylah Walker, 2, on a coaster.

### Photos From the Weight Loss Challenge in Big Cypress



Allied Health Educator Jillian Guralski, left, takes a blood pressure reading of Big Cypress Tribal citizen and Seminole Pathways weight loss challenge participant Tara Robbins, right. It was revealed at the March 16 health lesson that her blood pressure went down throughout the eight-week initiative. "No one's going to keep track of you to better your health," Robbins said. "It's all up to you; you have to have a mindset of maintaining your weight."



Big Cypress Tribal citizen Katherine Billie helps her two sons, Avery and Andrew Bowers Jr., pick out some fruits for a healthy lunch.



From left, Big Cypress Tribal participants Tara Robbins, Katherine Billie, Avery Bowers, Andrew Bowers Jr., and Wanda Billie. The Seminole Pathways weight loss challenge's parting gift for completion of the eight-week initiative - a wrapped healthy food bag featuring cooking utensils, fruits and vegetables - went to Big Cypress Tribal citizens Tara Robbins and Katherine Billie as the two were at class each of the eight weeks, which began on Jan. 26 and ended on March 16.

## Learn Information About Your New Health Plan Card And Book

BY CONNIE WHIDDEN  
Health Director

A new Health Plan card and Health Plan book were mailed to you in January 2011. If you did not receive this mailing please contact the Patient Services Coordinator at one of the Seminole clinics so that a new card and book can be given to you. It is very important that you show your new card to medical and dental providers and to the pharmacy beginning February 1, 2011.

On February 1, 2011 we began using a new company to manage your prescription drug benefit called Express Scripts. Your new card contains the Express Scripts logo along with other information that the pharmacy needs in order to fill your prescriptions. It is important that you show your new Health Plan card at the pharmacy when getting prescriptions filled beginning February 1, 2011. If you do not show your new card at the pharmacy, the pharmacy will not be able to process your prescription.

In addition, beginning January 1, 2011, there were changes to your Health Plan book. Some of the changes to read over include:

- Children's Center for Diagnostics &

Therapy contact information was added (see inside cover of Book)

- Outpatient services for Mental Health, Alcoholism, Drug Abuse, and other Behavioral Health Treatment (page 10)
- Pediatric (birth to 21 years of age) Physical, Speech, and Occupational Therapy (page 10)
- Eyewear benefit increased (page 10)
- Smoking Cessation Prescription Medication (page 11)
- Diabetic and Orthopedic Shoes (page 14)

Please review the book and keep it on hand. Please contact the Health Plan Office if you have any questions about your benefits at 1-866-505-6789.

If you did not receive your new Health Plan card and book in the mail, please call the Patient Services Coordinator at one of the Seminole Clinics:

Big Cypress Health Clinic: 863-983-5151  
Hollywood Health Clinic: 954-962-2009  
Brighton Health Clinic: 863-763-0271  
Immokalee Health Clinic: 239-867-3400  
Tampa Field Office: 813-620-2860

**New Health Plan Card**  
Begin using your new Health Plan card  
February 1, 2011.



**Old Health Plan Card**  
Destroy your old Health Plan card on  
February 1, 2011.



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# SEMINOLE INDIAN 4H LIVESTOCK SHOW & SALE

Welcome one and all!

It is once again time for the Seminole Tribe of Florida 4-H Show and Sale.

4-H has a long-standing tradition of excellence within the Tribe. 4-H started about 50 years ago within the Tribe, mostly consisting of chicken and sewing projects. Today our 4-H has exploded with a wealth of input from members, staff and support personnel.

Our emphasis these days are on swine and steer projects with a growing small animal club.

In some of the early days at camp Cloverleaf the Seminole Tribal members had a good reputation as great swimmers, but this was not the only talent recognized. Tribal members left a legacy of fancy patchwork sewing projects, as well.

This year we embark on our largest 4-H show to date and welcome the Tribal and non-Tribal community to participate in the fun and excitement.

The exhibitors have taken the time to participate in showmanship and grooming clinics, as well as a new requirement: taking an ethics class. As part of the class, a state Ethics I.D. number is assigned to the exhibitors. The new class ensures the best and most outstanding traits in our youth and their accomplishments.

Most of our Tribal leaders were 4-H participants. One past participant is President Richard Bowers, who got involved in the Share the Fun 4-H contest, which promotes individual skills.

The Seminole Tribe's approach to 4-H provides a forum for unique expression. Please join us at our annual 4-H Show and Sale and see what great accomplishments we have achieved as individuals, and as a team.

It's that time again. 2011 Seminole Indian 4-H Show and Sale. You're invited to come watch all the 4-H members compete for the biggest prize of the show, which is Grand Champion & Showmanship. The show night is the exciting night of all, when the children have to compete against each other with showmanship. We have three categories for showmanship: junior, intermediate and senior. So, don't miss the competition. The 4-H members and leaders have worked really hard this year on learning the different parts of their animals and how much feed it takes to make their project animal make weight to be eligible to show. The leaders have been doing showmanship & grooming clinics. So, please take the time to come watch these 4-H members take pride in showing off their 4-H project animals.

**SEMINOLE INDIAN 4-H LIVESTOCK SHOW AND SALE**  
**SHOW: THURSDAY, MARCH 31, 2011 AT 6 P.M.**  
**BUYERS DINNER: FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 2011**  
**FROM 5 TO 6:45 P.M.**  
**SALE: FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 2011, AT 7 P.M.**





# Announcements

## CONGRATULATIONS

February 28, 2011



Attn: Seminole Tribe of Florida

Subject: Dillon Joe Cypress – Honor Roll & Student of the Month

Re: Alice Blount Academy of Georgia Announces (Honor Roll & Student of the Month)

Letter to the Tribe....

My name is Dillon Joe Cypress. I am 17 years old and I am from Big Cypress, Florida. I am the son of Charles and Regina Cypress. I have three sisters and two brothers. I am currently attending school in Vidalia, Georgia at Alice Blount Academy of Science & Agriculture. I have been attending the academy for two years. During that time I have learned self respect, how to respect others, and life skills. I have lost a lot of family members and friends due to drug usage; however my parents wanted a different way of life for me. Even though, I was upset and I cried when my mother said I was going to leave home. I came to the realization that she was right. I feel that others students like me who have experienced or presently experiencing with drugs and who are just roaming the streets can really benefit from a program like the one I am taking.

I have made honor roll this quarter and currently student of the month at the academy. I would like to leave all of friends, family, and tribal members a message....God has a purpose for you in life, don't turn him down welcome him with open arms. God will bless you and he will be with you during hard times, he is always with you.

Sincerely,

Dillon J. Cypress

## BIRTHDAY WISHES



I want to wish a Happy Birthday to two wonderful amazing little ladies in our lives. **Alyss Cypress (6) & Mae'Anna Osceola (7)**. We love you both so much.  
From  
the Panther Clan  
Camp.



Happy Birthday to my sister **Samantha Osceola Hiesler** on March 23rd and to my mom **Barbara Osceola Butera** on April 7th. The both of you mean the world to me. Happy Birthday and I love you very much! XOXO Ciara Billie Guerue

Happy Birthday **Egoosh** and **grandma!**  
Love, Melinda Guerue

## IN MEMORIAM

In Loving Memory of my Momma!

It's been two long years since you've been gone. But not a day goes by that I don't sit back and reminisce about all the laughter we shared with each other. I know it's gonna be hard for me when I jump out of this hell they call prison. I've accepted the fact that you're gone physically but in spirit you're in my heart every day. I know you're not suffering anymore and that's good, Momma. You showed me so much love but I took it for granted; now I'm paying the price every day because I can't see you and tell you I love you! I will always keep you in my heart!

Faith C. Osceola  
Sunrise: 12-28-1955  
Sunset: 3-28-2009  
R.I.P.

One love,  
Your son,  
Ryan Osceola



Ryan Watson

Tribal members **Justin Motlow**, left, and **Andrew Henry**, right, pose for a photo at Tampa Catholic's JV football year end banquet with the head coach **Feb. 20**. The team finished with a record of six wins and one loss.

## POEMS

The Idea of Survival

By Stephen Billie

To survive is to carry on and carry through adaptation  
To persevere and persist through the darkness and depths of the abyss.

To endure afflictions and tribulations, persecutions and  
excruciations.  
To overcome situations, that are lost in doubtless variation.

To rise to the occasion, to prove that doubt is just an equation.  
To the puzzle of survival and salvation.

To breathe, eat and pray in another day on the reservation.  
Survival is the means of life, strategies, masterfully by the  
creator's doubtless determination.

Survival is the meaning of life the fulfillment of success  
through life's procreation.  
Just sounds like another day on the reservation.

## BIRTHDAY WISHES



Tampa Senior  
**Bobby Henry**  
cuts his birthday  
cake at his birthday  
celebration at the  
Lakeland Property  
February 26.

Ryan Watson



Ryan Watson

**Nancy Frank** celebrates her 61st birthday at the Tampa Elder Affairs Office on March 1st.

## CLASSIFIED



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## CLASSIFIED

PRISCILLA D. SAYEN  
Office of the Secretary

March 22, 2011

RE: ELECTION ANNOUNCEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE  
PUBLICATION

Attn: Legal/Classified:

The Seminole Tribe of Florida and the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc., is announcing their General Election for the position of Tribal Council Chairman at Large and Board of Directors President at Large along with the Reservation Representative for the Big Cypress, Brighton and Hollywood Reservations. By our Tribal Constitution and Corporate Charter we are publicly announcing our Seminole Tribe of Florida and Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc. General Election to be held on Monday, May 9, 2011.

NOTICE SEMINOLE TRIBAL GENERAL ELECTION MAY 9, 2011

For the Chairman of Tribal Council at Large and the President at Large of the Board of Directors and Tribal Council Representatives and Board of Directors Representatives for the Big Cypress, Brighton and Hollywood Reservations in accordance with the Amended Constitution and Bylaws of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, and the Amended Corporate Charter of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc., a General Election is called for the following offices, on Monday, May 9, 2011

Tribal Election Announcement Publication

SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA  
SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA, INC.

TRIBAL COUNCIL:

CHAIRMAN (1)

BIG CYPRESS RESERVATION REPRESENTATIVE (1)

BRIGHTON RESERVATION REPRESENTATIVE (1)

HOLLYWOOD RESERVATION REPRESENTATIVE (1)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:  
PRESIDENT (1)

BIG CYPRESS RESERVATION REPRESENTATIVE (1)

BRIGHTON RESERVATION REPRESENTATIVE (1)

HOLLYWOOD RESERVATION REPRESENTATIVE (1)

Enrolled members of the Seminole Tribe of Florida who have reached their 18th birthday on or before April 9, 2011, and who have lived on any combination of the reservations ten (10) month out of each year for the past four years, are eligible to vote for the positions mentioned above.

The representatives for Tribal Council and Board of Directors are voted for by residents of their respective reservations.

All eligible voters may vote for at-Large candidates.

Eligible members who wish to become candidates may obtain a petition form from one of the Tribal Offices at Brighton, Big Cypress, and Hollywood reservations, beginning March 31, 2011 or can obtain information from the Secretary of the Tribal Council and Board of Directors. The completed petitions from candidates must be in the hands of the Secretary no later than 5:00 p.m. on or before April 11, 2011 so that the announcement of candidates can be announced April 13, 2011.

ALL ELIGIBLE TRIBAL MEMBERS ARE URGED TO VOTE!

PRISCILLA D. SAYEN  
SECRETARY

You may send the bill to the above address for payment, along with an affidavit of publications. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call me.

Attention: Priscilla Sayen,  
Secretary's Office.



Dear Parents and Families,

You are invited to our Scholastic Book Fair, a reading event packed with excitement for students and families.

Our theme – **Book Fair Carnival** – will make reading as entertaining as a carnival midway. The entire community will delight in an exciting atmosphere of great books and fun. Readers of all ages will walk away from the Book Fair with the grand prize of all: new books to inspire a lifelong love of reading!

Strong reading skills are essential to a child's success in school and life. Our Book Fair encourages this success by offering students access to great books at affordable prices. Children are more likely to read books they personally choose. The wide variety of choices offered at our Book Fair ensures that there will be something for everyone, including adults!

Please join us to make this Book Fair the BEST our library has ever seen. I look forward to seeing you at the Fair!

Fair Dates: Monday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup>

Shopping Times: 9 AM- 4 PM

Location: Hollywood Headquarters Auditorium Lobby

Sincerely,

Elita Kalma  
Library Program Manager



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## FINANCIAL LITERACY SEMINARS

### Youth Program

Big Cypress Family Investment Center

Saturday, April 30, 2011 8:00 am - 5:00 pm (modules 1-3)

Saturday, May 28, 2011 8:00 am - 5:00 pm (modules 4-6)

Saturday, June 25, 2011 8:00 am - 5:00 pm (modules 7-8)

All minor Seminole Tribal Members who will be 18 years of age by December 31, 2011 are strongly encouraged to attend. This series of classes will fulfill your Grantor's Trust Financial Literacy Requirement. All modules must be completed in order to earn your Certificate of Completion. If you miss a class it can be completed during the next series of classes which will begin in July.

### Adult Program

Big Cypress Family Investment Center

Saturday, April 30, 2011 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Saturday, May 28, 2011 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Saturday, June 25, 2011 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

This class is new to our financial literacy program. It is open to all adult Seminole Tribal Members and will run in conjunction with the youth financial literacy program. Parents are encouraged to attend. If you miss a class it can be completed during the next series of classes which will begin in July.

For more information or to sign up for either program please contact  
Rita McCabe - Brighton Executive Administrative Office 863 - 763 - 4128 ext. 15403  
Office of Trust Management 954 - 966 - 6300 ext. 11432

**Attention 10th—12th graders**

## SAT TESTING

**TESTING DATE : MAY 7, 2011**

**Regular Registration Deadline: April 8, 2011**

**Late Registration Deadline: April 22, 2011**

Ahfachkee will be administering the **SAT TESTING** on

**May 7th** the 1st Floor Learning Resources Center.

We can help you register for the test on-line.

Please contact Gina Walters@the Ahfachkee: 863-228-1059

or the Big Cypress Education Department : 863-902-3200

**REMEMBER:**

**The SAT is designed to assess your academic readiness for college.**

## BE THE WALL – WISDOM FROM SOME TRIBAL PARENTS WHO CARE QUESTION: WHAT CAN PARENTS DO TO PREVENT UNDERAGE DRINKING?



*"Talk with your kids. Always keep communication open and going"*

**Sheila Billie**



*"Get involved....spend time with your children"*

**Joe Frank**



*"Have a foundation of trust with good communication and honesty"*

**Sam Tommie**



*"Share our experiences....it makes for a stronger impact. & spend the time & effort to educate"*

**Virginia Garcia-Sanders**

*"..listen as much as you talk, ..... I keep a connection with my kids, we do everything together, I don't let them spend time with the wrong people" ..... tribal parents*

The Big Cypress Team sponsors  
teens and underage drinking.



and encourages parents to "BE THE WALL" between  
For information : Contact [fredmullins@semtribe.com](mailto:fredmullins@semtribe.com)



# Sports

C

## Seminole Pride Competes at Gasparilla Classic Gymnastic Meet

BY RACHEL BUXTON  
Staff Reporter

**ST. PETERSBURG, Fla.** — The gymnastics team Seminole Pride showed off their hard work and competed in the annual Gasparilla Classic March 27 at Tropicana Field against teams from all over Florida.

Seminole Pride is comprised of six talented gymnasts: Charlie Osceola, Harmony Cypress, Tawni Cypress, Valholly Frank, Alyssa Osceola and Trinity Williams.

The young girls showed their skills on the vault, bars, balance beam and finished off with a floor routine. This was the team's first time competing at Gasparilla Classic and only the girls' sixth meet as a team.

"I love this meet, the competition setting is amazing," team coach Gina Allardye said. "You can just feel the energy. I know our girls were nervous but they did very well."

Tawni Cypress nailed the vault scoring a 9.5. Valholly Frank impressed the judges with her floor routine earning her a score of 9.0 and a fourth place medal for the category.

Seminole Pride was started just two years ago and they have come so far, Allardye said. The girls train in Big Cypress three days a week after school.

"It takes a lot of dedication and perseverance," said Allardye, also a member of the Seminole Fitness Department.

She also commended the parents, saying they are just as dedicated as the kids are. At Gasparilla Classic, they sat in the stands and along the railings cheering their daughters on while snapping pictures.

"If these parents didn't show their support, it would be hard for the kids to compete," Allardye said.

Medals and trophies were given out for each individual event, overall ranking and team standing.

All of the girls showed impressive scores for their first time competing against such large and experienced teams.

"I'm so proud of them and they know it," Allardye said.



Photo above, Alyssa Osceola maintains focus on the floor during the annual Gasparilla Classic March 27 at Tropicana Fields in St. Petersburg. Left photo, Tawni Cypress proudly salutes, showing off her three medals for the vault, floor and all-around.

Rachel Buxton

SEE MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE C7

## Former NBA All-Star Jamal Mashburn Presents Game Jersey to Ahfachkee School



Chris C. Jenkins

Former University of Kentucky All-American and National Basketball Association All-Star Jamal Mashburn autographs one of his custom college jerseys from his University of Kentucky playing days at the Hollywood Tribal Chief Operations Office Feb. 11. The jersey was presented Feb. 24 at the Big Cypress Ahfachkee School basketball awards banquet where Mashburn was the keynote speaker.

## Deforest Carter's Inside Story Strikes Special Chord With His Seminole People

*A special profile of the college-bound Tribal basketball player's young life*

BY NAJI TOBIAS  
Staff Reporter

Determination, focus and readiness.

The above traits may best describe the character of Deforest Carter, a Tribal citizen who hails from the Big Cypress Reservation.

Dreams of becoming a bona fide basketball player embodied Carter's mindset ever since he was just a toddler at his home residence. It's something the 17-year-old envisioned not only in his mind, but quite possibly his heart, body and soul as well.

All of that has translated into Carter's successful transition from his younger days at the Big Cypress Reservation to his time at national high school basketball powerhouse Montverde Academy in Montverde, an area that is 20 minutes west of Orlando.

And it has earned the honor roll student — now a senior and starting two-guard at Montverde — a college scholarship.

*Carter's early days on the reservation*

Life in Big Cypress was all about dreaming big for Carter. He first played basketball at just nine years old, when he starred for the Big Cypress Recreation's 9U Youth Basketball of America team.

Carter's head coach, then-Big Cypress recreation coordinator Eddie Redd, noticed a special leadership quality about him early on.

"Everybody looked up to Deforest because of the way he loved basketball," Redd said. "Most kids out in Big Cypress liked to ride four-wheelers, but Deforest put a lot of his time into the court. Kids loved to play with him because he stayed positive."

Redd also took notice of how Carter overcame his on-court vision problem while in Big Cypress. To correct that, Carter began wearing goggles on the court — something that players from other teams initially made fun of him for.

"The thing is that Deforest had poor vision back then," Redd said. "We didn't notice it until he started missing a lot of passes. That's where it came in about him wearing the glasses."

Carter, who now wears contact lenses, acknowledged that past issue as he boldly addressed how it inspired him to display a noticeable work ethic on the court.

"People would laugh at me, but I would go out there and bully my opponents," Carter said. "The other kids wouldn't say anything after I scored 15, 20 points a game against them. Now, I don't have to worry about my image."

Please see CARTER on page C2

## Big Cypress Seniors Celebrate Remembrance of John Billie Sr. in Fifth Annual Horseshoe Tournament



Naji Tobias

Family members of the late John Billie Sr., who was born on Feb. 5, 1939 and passed away on March 24, 2006 at age 67, share a group moment with Tribal Board President Richard Bowers Jr. and Big Cypress Tribal Board Rep. Paul Bowers Sr. in remembrance of the honoree.

SEE MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE C5

## Tribal Youth Participate in American Heritage Quad Meet



Chris C. Jenkins



Chris C. Jenkins

American Heritage sprinter Neko Osceola, left, races toward a first place photo finish against Home Schools' Darlen Ruiz, right, in heat are all smiles in a show of sportsmanship between one of the boys' 100-meter dash. Osceola joined three other Tribal youth for competition in the American Heritage Quad Track and Field Meet featuring six other schools in a variety of field and race events held at the American Heritage School Feb. 17.



# Ahfachkee Lady Warriors Launch Inaugural Softball Season

Lady Warriors start off at 0-2, with a 13-6 loss to LaBelle and a 12-9 loss to Glades Day (Belle Glade)

BY NAJI TOBIAS  
Staff Reporter

History repeats itself again with the Ahfachkee Warriors athletic program.

In what has turned out to be a year of firsts, the Ahfachkee Lady Warriors softball program played its first two FHSAA-sanctioned games on the road against the LaBelle Cowgirls on March 1 and against the Glades Day (Belle Glade) Gators on March 4.

Both games resulted in losses for the Lady Warriors – a 13-6 defeat at the hands of the Cowgirls and a 12-9 loss to the Gators.

*First-ever Lady Warriors softball game in LaBelle*

As the girls took to the field, a group of fans from the Big Cypress Reservation watched them begin the first inning with a 2-0 lead, thanks to walks by Lady Warriors starting pitcher Dasani Cypress and first baseman Nauthkee Henry. After a few LaBelle wild pitches, Cypress and Henry each advanced bases to reach home plate, as they scored the Lady Warriors' first two runs, respectively, in its history.

The Lady Warriors lead was short-lived, however, as Cypress (four innings pitched, nine runs allowed, three hits allowed, two walks allowed, seven strikeouts) struggled early on with her pitches, allowing four runs to the Cowgirls as the home team took a 4-2 lead into the second inning.

Ahfachkee wouldn't score again until the third inning, as Taylor Fulton (1-for-4 batting, RBI, two strikeouts) connected on a triple off a 2-and-1 pitch count, sending Cypress (three total offensive runs scored) to home plate. That would cut the Cowgirls' lead to 5-3.

However, the game was essentially out of reach by the end of the third, with Cypress allowing three more runs to the Cowgirls. It was an 8-3 deficit at the point for the Lady Warriors.

By the start of the fifth inning – when Danni Jae Tommie (offensive run scored in the fifth) relieved Cypress – the Ahfachkee deficit was 9-3.

Ahfachkee Lady Warriors first-year softball head coach John Gallegos explained how the early game struggles transpired.

"Most of our mistakes came in the third and fourth innings," Gallegos said. "It usually starts with a small mistake, like a dropped ball, an over-thrown ball or an error by one of the girls. It leads to the team getting frustrated and then making more mistakes."

The Lady Warriors did try to make a strong push for a comeback, scor-

ing three runs in the pivotal fifth inning. A few passed balls by LaBelle's pitching corps contributed to runs from Tommie, Cypress and Henry (two total offensive runs scored). The Cowgirls' lead was cut to 9-6 as the game went into the bottom of the fifth.

But Tommie (two innings pitched, four runs allowed, two hits allowed, four walks allowed, one strikeout) couldn't stop the Cowgirls' offensive attack, as LaBelle added two more runs in that crucial inning to give them an 11-6 lead.

LaBelle scored two runs in the sixth to cap the game's scoring.

"One strong point I got from this game is that the girls find a way to rally back together," Gallegos said. "Although we fell short of a win, we take this as a learning experience. Our team played together for the first time, so that means we're beginning to work on our teamwork ability. We don't have that yet; it will take some time to get there."

*Lady Warriors travel to Glades Day in matchup with Gators*

Ahfachkee's next softball game against the Glades Day (Belle Glade) Gators started off strong in the first inning, as Tommie banded in the program's first-ever home run for a 1-0 lead. Fulton, who smacked in a triple, also scored to give the Lady Warriors a 2-0 lead in the first.

Cypress, meanwhile, had a fast start on the mound, as she limited Glades Day's offense to one hit and forced three groundouts to keep the 2-0 score in Ahfachkee's favor.

The Lady Warriors added another run in the top of the third inning, with Savannah Tiger connecting on a single that sent Henry home for a 3-0 lead by Ahfachkee.

But the Lady Warriors' three-run advantage quickly evaporated in the bottom of the third inning, as Glades Day's offense was firing on all cylinders, highlighted by an inside-the-park home run that cut Ahfachkee's lead to 3-2. That fateful inning ended with the Lady Warriors down 5-3.

Ahfachkee cut Glades Day's lead to 5-4 in the fourth, thanks to an RBI single by Cypress that sent Mika Lopez to home plate. However, the Lady Warriors would get no closer in this game, as Glades Day went on a tear, scoring five runs in the bottom of the fourth for a 10-4 lead.

In just four innings, Glades Day's offense amassed 15 hits and two walks – something that Gallegos said the team needs to address.

"During this game, we called a time out to get the girls refocused

so they could have a little time to cool off," Gallegos said. "Once they overcame their frustrations, I was confident they would start a rally later in the game."

And that they did – all in the sixth inning.

Down 12-4 in the top of the sixth, Ahfachkee scored five runs to cut Glades Day's lead to three. The offensive onslaught began with Tommie's RBI single that allowed Lopez to score her second run of the game, which sliced the Gators' lead to 12-5.

Then Sarah Osceola and Tiger came up big, as they knocked in RBI singles that were keys to their huge inning. Cypress scored after Tiger hit a bases-loaded single and Tiger ran to home plate after Osceola connected on her hit.

Tommie and Henry also scored in the inning, which put the Lady Warriors back in the game again as they were now down 12-9.

The game was called after six innings due to darkness at Gator Field, with Ahfachkee suffering its second loss of its inaugural season.

Gallegos recapped what happened in these first two games and offered his take on what to expect later on this season.

"Some of the girls have never played before, so we have to teach them bunting, sliding and base running," Gallegos said. "One thing that helps is the support we have from the community in Big Cypress. Everyone in the community has helped in getting our program off the ground. With everybody behind us, we'll get better as a team and bounce back."

Ahfachkee's next three softball games include an April 4 home opener at the Big Cypress softball field against Glades Day, a home date against LaBelle on April 5 and a road game at Moore Haven on April 6.

## AHFACHKEE LADY WARRIORS SOFTBALL TEAM ROSTER

Chelsey Alvarado  
Sabre Billie  
Catlin Cypress  
Dasani Cypress  
Taylor Fulton  
Nauthkee Henry

Mika Lopez  
Sarah Osceola  
Rheannon Robbins  
Savannah Tiger  
Danni Jae Tommie

Head Coach - John Gallegos  
Assistant Coach - Celesta Osceola



Players and coaches of the Ahfachkee Lady Warriors softball team enjoy a memento together after their hard-fought game against the Glades Day (Belle Glade) Gators on March 4.



Ahfachkee Lady Warriors second baseman Savannah Tiger (4-4 batting, 2 RBI singles) hustles her way in for a run in the top of the sixth inning against Glades Day on March 4.



Ahfachkee's Mika Lopez connects on a hit single against LaBelle in her team's first-ever FHSAA-sanctioned game on March 1.

## CARTER

From page C1

After getting past that problem, Carter's main focus from there on was to take his game to an even higher level. But first, Carter needed to hone his basketball skills on the court with his Big Cypress travel teams.

Carter, who played on the 9U and 10U YBOA Big Cypress teams with the likes of fellow Tribal hoopsters Arah Osceola, Catlin Tommie, Anthony Balentine and Josie Balentine, said he and his teammates were constantly thinking about what they could do to impact the lives of their younger Tribal peers.

And they have, as each one of them has, in their own way, made their marks in Seminole Tribal sports history.

Osceola recently led her Hollywood Christian Eagles girls' basketball team to its first-ever state title, while Tommie has demonstrated his ability to play football, basketball and baseball at Woods Haven Preparatory Academy – to name just two Tribal sports accomplishments made over the past year.

"I've always told them that we are the ones who could set the example for future generations," Carter said. "It's great to know that we're all finishing school and are on our way to realizing our dreams."

*Carter's move from Big Cypress to Montverde Academy*

When Carter turned 12 years old – he began his schooling at Eastside Elementary School in Clewiston – a major decision was made on his behalf.

Carter's parents – his mother, Myra Orlando and his stepfather, Bronson Hill – decided that they move to Jupiter so they could give him a better shot at obtaining exposure in basketball.

An honors student throughout much of his childhood, Carter enrolled at Central Florida Preparatory School – a launching pad for where he would end up next.

Carter attributed the transition – and the continuation of his lifelong dream – to a special group of people in his life.

"It's great to have the family behind me," Carter said. "I got to know most of my family as I grew up. The main obstacle was to figure out how I could develop into the player I wanted to be. The only way I could have done that was to move off the reservation. It was tough, but I believe my mom made one of the best decisions she's ever made for me."



Deforest Carter goes up for a slam dunk during a warm-up drill session at practice on Jan. 21.

It worked out very well for him, so much so that he earned his way into becoming the first Seminole Tribal citizen in history to attend the internationally known campus of Montverde Academy.

Redd, considered by Carter as his second father and mentor, discussed the move.

"Deforest has opened a lot of doors for other kids who may want to go through that program," Redd said. "Montverde is a top-notch basketball program, so if you get a kid from the reservation to play for them – and start there – then you did a good job. It's not easy to accomplish because they bring the best of the best from all over."

Mary Tigertail, Carter's grandmother, couldn't agree more.

"Deforest is at a school where the coaches and teachers care about him," Tigertail said. "He's in good hands."



Mary Tigertail, the grandmother of Deforest Carter, holds up a specially made photo of the Montverde Academy hoopster on the court.

are concerned. I hope that this will be the beginning of the opportunity to have more Seminoles in our program."

Carter, who has been with the Montverde Academy Eagles since he was a freshman on the 2007-2008 team, has had to work his way up the system. But through it all, he eventually earned a key spot on the varsity team.

As the team's sixth man in his junior season, Carter played an integral role in Montverde's road to last year's National High School Invitational tournament – a national championship round-robin competition formed and televised by ESPN.

He even got some fame on ESPN in Montverde's national championship game against Findlay Prep (Henderson, Nev.), thus elevating his profile as a bona fide high school basketball player.

"Deforest has been a big contributor to our program, particularly over the last two seasons," Sutton said. "He has helped make our program one of the best not only in the state, but also in the country."

Carter's role increased by the start of his senior season, when Sutton named him the team's starting two-guard. He was also tabbed as one of the team's captains.

Mentioned in a January issue of the USA Today newspaper – Carter led all scorers with 19 points in a win over Sagemont (Weston, Fla.) for then-No. 22 ranked Montverde – the Class of 2011 senior class president stood out primarily for his all-around versatility and leadership skills.

It was not lost on Sutton, who said the game against Sagemont was one of Carter's finest to that point.

"In that particular game, Deforest was very aggressive on the offense," Sutton said. "More importantly, from a leadership standpoint, he led by example on both sides of the ball. But for him [Deforest] to score 19 points is not his game. Deforest tends to impact the overall game with plays that can go unnoticed by people who don't know the game of basketball."

By the time Montverde's 2010-2011 season ended – the Eagles (23-5 final overall record) finished as the No. 3 overall team in the state's high school preps poll, while rising up to No. 13 in the USA Today Super 25 national rankings, No. 26 in the Rivals 100 national poll and No. 28 in the ESPN Rise national poll as of the week of March 21 – Carter turned out to be one of team's top overall players.

The Tribal standout finished the season with averages of about 12 points per game, six rebounds per game and five steals per game.

"Deforest played consistently all season long," Sutton said. "He made the plays that were needed to help our team become successful."

*Carter's plans to further his basketball career and education*

Carter recently declared his verbal college commitment to Embury-Riddle College, a NAIA basketball program school out of Daytona Beach, Fla. Deforest plans to major in engineering.

"Four years ago, I asked Deforest what his goals were," Sutton said. "He said to me, 'Coach, I want to go to college and get my degree. I want to play college basketball and get my education paid for.' For him to reach his goal, he now becomes a living trophy to me. Deforest is a feather in my cap, one that I'm truly proud of."

Carter's time as a Montverde Academy Eagles basketball star

Kevin Sutton, the longtime boys' basketball coach at Montverde Academy, has been impressed with Carter's work ethic on and off the court throughout his time at the campus.

With his sheer attention to detail and expectation for continual all-around improvement in his players, Sutton noted something special about Carter.

"To have Deforest as my first Seminole I've ever coached is an honor," Sutton said. "He brings so much to the table as far as his character and play

are concerned. I hope that this will be the beginning of the opportunity to have more Seminoles in our program."

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Carter, who is expected to officially sign his letter of intent to Embury-Riddle sometime next month, will soon be enshrined in Montverde's wall of honor – a special kind of recognition that highlights the program's alumni accomplishments in college and beyond.

"Deforest is setting a big example for his family," Sutton said. "He's showing that hard work pays off. Hopefully, it could carry over to his siblings and let them know that college is an option."

Marcia Moore, Carter's English teacher, expects Carter to continue his winning ways – particularly when it comes to the art of balancing his academics and athletics in college.

"We're very proud of Deforest," Moore said. "He's a role model inside and outside of the classroom. You're going to get his best in everything and he has a great attitude about life."

Carter attributes much of his high school basketball success to Sutton, who has apparently played an integral role into his development as a young man.

"Coach [Kevin Sutton] has always been there for me," Carter said. "Literally and figuratively, we [Deforest and his teammates] know we have one more player on the court with us. It's great to see and know that he's always fighting for us in the heat of the moment. Even if Coach is not there, he's there in spirit. It's been the best experience of my life."

*Carter's gratefulness of how he achieved his early childhood dreams*

Tigertail said he always desired to have an impact on his Tribal peers through the game of basketball. Carter's primary goals in life have stuck with the Tribal senior and grandmother to this day.

"Deforest always wanted to be the role model for the younger kids in Big Cypress," Tigertail said. "The most important thing in his life is showing them they can be anything they dream to be."

And just because Carter is moving on to college, it doesn't mean he's going to forget about his family and friends at the Big Cypress Reservation.

"I think that now, maybe people from the Tribe can see there's more to life than just staying on the reservation," Carter said. "You could leave the reservation and still be there in spirit."

Carter said he still often thinks about all of his Tribal peers and the ones that will be coming behind him – particularly his younger siblings.

"To see that my little brothers were watching me play, it lets them know they can always achieve any dream they have in their minds," Carter said.

Carter also continues to think about what he could do to help improve the Tribe's image. Tigertail said her grandson recently talked about the possibility of hosting a basketball clinic and camp in Big Cypress someday.

But for right now, it's all about the continued pursuit of self-improvement for Carter – a hallmark trait has stood the test of time for him throughout his young life.

"I'm never going to stop developing myself," Carter said. "I'm always going to keep representing for my Tribe, my school and my team. Wherever I go, I'm always going to give my all in everything I do. I just want to better myself as a person and the people around me."



Deforest Carter, left and his coach Kevin Sutton, right, share a bonding moment together after the Jan. 21 basketball practice concludes at Montverde Academy.





Family members, community members and friends of the late Tyler Cypress gather together for a special group moment in his honor during the 2nd Annual Tyler Cypress Memorial Fishing Tournament on March 12.

## Children and Families Bond Together at 2nd Annual Tyler Cypress Memorial Fishing Tournament



During the morning hours of the fishing tournament, the tandem of Elijah Marrero, 6, left and his grandfather, Frank Marrero, right, is out and about as they're searching for some big bass in the Big Cypress L-28 canal waters.

### 2ND ANNUAL TYLER CYPRESS MEMORIAL FISHING TOURNAMENT RESULTS

**Bass**  
1. Fred Phillips/Cooper Rivers, 2. Jason Billie/Jonah Alvarado, 3. Frank Marrero/Elijah Marrero  
**Panfish**  
1. Brian Billie/Elijah Cook, 2. Charlie Cypress/Ryan Cypress/

Caitlin Cypress, 3. Jason Billie/Jonah Alvarado  
**Garfish**  
1. Jason Billie/Jonah Alvarado, 2. Charlie Cypress/Ryan Cypress/  
**Biggest Bass**  
1. Jason Billie/Jonah Alvarado  
**Biggest Panfish**  
1. Brian Billie/Elijah Cook  
**Biggest Garfish**  
1. Jason Billie/Jonah Alvarado



The parent/child team of Jason Billie, left and stepson Jonah Alvarado, 12, right, shows off their big bass at the weight in. Their bass was weighted at 7.31 lbs. - good for top honors in this year's competition.



Here's a look at a baby picture of Tyler Cypress, who passed away last March at the age of 15 years old.

## Lady Seminoles Kick Off Inaugural Season at Home Game Against Glades Day



Brighton Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers, left, and Pemayetv Emahakv principal Russell Brown do the honors of throwing out the first balls at the Charter School's Lady Seminoles' inaugural season and softball game against Glades Day, held on the Brighton Reservation Feb. 22.



Sydney Cypress rounds third base, earning her the first homerun of the season.



Darla Cypress winds up for a fast pitch against Glades Day.

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The families of American Heritage Lady Patriots seniors and Hollywood Tribal citizens Kristen Billie, No. 3, and Whitney Osceola, No. 24, share a group moment after Heritage defeated the St. Andrews Scots (Boca Raton), 46-32, in the Feb. 10 Class 3A regional quarterfinals.

Naji Tobias

## American Heritage's Girls Basketball Season Ends in Class 3A Playoff Loss

BY NAJI TOBIAS  
Staff Reporter

**COCUNUT CREEK** – Defense, fouls and free-throw shots.

The Class 3A regional semifinal matchup between the American Heritage (Plantation) Lady Patriots and the North Broward Prep (Coconut Creek) Lady Eagles on Feb. 15 came down to those three things, as North Broward Prep defeated American Heritage, 43-41.

The Lady Eagles, who beat the Lady Patriots four times this season, denied Heritage (16-12 overall final record) a shot at reaching this year's Class 3A State Finals Series berth.

Had Heritage won this game, they would have faced off against the University Lady Suns in the Feb. 19 Class 3A regional finals in Davie.

Seminole Tribal basketball fans likely would have been in a torn state thinking which team to root for, as they would have seen University senior Courtney Osceola face off against Heritage seniors Kristen Billie and Whitney Osceola – all hailing from the Hollywood Reservation.

"We were looking forward to it," said Hollywood Tribal citizen Esther Gopher, mother of Heritage's Kristen Billie. "We should have moved on to play University, but it didn't work out for us."

Heritage, who was unable to hold on to a 20-17 halftime lead, was done in by a slew of missed free-throw opportunities in the second half and several fouls – two things that Prep took advantage of down the stretch.

"They have beaten us so many times over the years," North Broward Prep Lady Eagles head coach Greg Walker said about Heritage. "Our girls have been kicked down a lot, but we had to fight back. We just beat a great ball club in Heritage. Their team is really talented."

In what came down to a nail biter, fans from both teams were on the edges of their seats much of the game. Prep took a 6-0 run early in the third quarter to give them a 23-21 lead, their first of the game.

Billie (six points – all in the first half) grabbed a steal from Prep with 7:06 left in the third, but the critical possession ended in a missed shot for Heritage, giving Prep the momentum from there – which was on their side the rest of the way.

Billie hit a timely 3-pointer from the top of the key with 2:57 left in the first, giving Heritage a 13-7 early lead – their largest of the game. But she was completely shut down in the second half, as Prep keyed in on her every time she touched the ball.

"If she's knocking shots down early in the game, it's going to be a long night for any opponent," Walker said of Billie. "Kristen is someone you dread to play against but love to have on your team. If we didn't clamp her down on defense, it would have been a long night for us."

Meanwhile, American Heritage senior point guard Whitney Osceola converted on a free throw with 1:32 left in the third quarter to pull the Lady Patriots within two – a 28-26 margin in favor of Prep. She opened up on how the game got away from her team.

"We played hard and put everything on this line," Whitney Osceola said. "Not a lot of teams make it as far as we did. Both teams gave their all and left everything on the court. It's just that North Broward Prep got the breaks at the end."

Facing a 32-30 end-of-third-quarter deficit, Heritage knew it had to limit Prep's shot opportunities in the pivotal fourth frame. But it didn't happen, as the Lady Eagles cruised to an 8-4 run, giving them a 40-34 lead with 4:32 left.

Heritage found themselves down just two points to Prep – a 42-40 margin in favor of the Lady Eagles with 1:20 left. A steal from Whitney Osceola with 1:32 left played an integral role in Heritage's late 6-2 run.

The Lady Patriots would get no closer, however, as they missed a 3-pointer with less than a minute left in the game. Prep needed to convert just one free throw down the stretch to end Heritage's season for good.

"Our bodies got fatigued toward the end of the game," American Heritage Lady Patriots first-year head coach Natasha Kossenko said. "We're pretty young and inexperienced, so when we have calls that don't go our way, we tend to fold just a little bit. But our girls fought very hard on the court and I can't complain about that at all."

Heritage was looking to play their way into a second consecutive Class 3A State Finals Series appearance.

Starring Whitney Osceola, the Lady Patriots losing it to their first-ever State Final Four last season, leading to Bishop Moore (Orlando), 46-39, in Lakeland.

## More photos of John Billie Sr. Horseshoe Tournament

### Fifth Annual John Billie Sr. Horseshoe Tournament Results

**Lounger Ball**  
1. Joe Billie Jr., 2. Almira Billie, 3. Thomas W. Billie  
**Horseshoes**  
1. Janice Osceola, 2. Joe B. Osceola, 3. Tommie Billie



Naji Tobias

A snapshot of the late John Billie Sr. in his earlier days.



Naji Tobias

Rudy Osceola aims for his target at the fifth annual John Billie Sr. Horseshoe Tournament on March 17.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal citizen Judy Jim makes fry bread and other Seminole Traditional foods under the Family Investment Center's Culture Camp Cooking Chickee for the Big Cypress seniors at the fifth annual John Billie Sr. Horseshoe Tournament on March 17.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress elder Theresa Jumper represents the women in the fifth annual John Billie Sr. Horseshoe Tournament.

## Tribal Members Gather in Memory for Jennie Chalfant Bowling Memorial



Photo above, grandchildren of the late Jennie Chalfant, Jennifer and Justin Chalfant throw out the first balls during their late grandmother's bowling memorial tournament March 12 held at Lucky Lanes in Okeechobee. The tournament brought Tribal members from different reservations together for a day of memory and fellowship. Left photo, Elbert Snow, co-organizer of the tournament, sets up for another strike.

Rachel Buxton



Josh Sneed from Fort Pierce gets ready for a strike.

Rachel Buxton



Kevin Tommie Sr. makes the trip from Fort Pierce to participate. Tommie tries to repeat his recent score of 300.

Rachel Buxton

## Eastern Indian Rodeo Association Tour Makes a Stop in Brighton



Rachel Buxton

Freddy War Bonnet takes the lead with a 76-point ride during the two-night rodeo.



Rachel Buxton

Jacoby Johns comes out of the shoot during the bareback riding competition at the EIRA rodeo in Brighton Feb. 11-12 held at the Fred Smith Rodeo Arena. Johns scored a 68-point ride.



# Former NBA Player Jamal Mashburn Inspires Youth at Ahfachkee's Basketball Awards Banquet

**MVP awards go to Lady Warriors freshman sensation Terri Baker and Warriors junior Stevie Billie**

BY NAJJI TOBIAS  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — The Ahfachkee Warriors brought out a special guest and handed out a slew of season-ending awards to commemorate the school's inaugural basketball season Feb. 24 at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium.

A special basketball highlight video was shown to the Ahfachkee athletes, courtesy of Seminole Media Productions.

An awards presentation followed the video viewing, with the honors going to the following players, coaches and support staff:

## AHFACHKEE LADY WARRIORS

**Most Valuable Player:** Terri Baker

**Leadership Award:** Tia Osborne

**Most Improved Player:** Caitlin Cypress

**Warrior Pride Recipients:** Sabre Billie and Reagan Whitecloud

**Seminole Vest** — courtesy of Tribal Council Rep. Mondo Tiger: Kristin Stoops — head coach

## AHFACHKEE WARRIORS

**MVP:** Taylor Pratt

**Most Spirit:** Ryan Cypress

**Most Improved:** Stevie Billie and Quenton Cypress

**Seminole Vest** — courtesy of Tribal Council Rep. Mondo Tiger: Antonio Wright — head coach

## OTHER HONORS

### Team Plaques

Charlie Osceola — Music, Ashley Burnett — Concessions, Tommy Doud — Game Announcer, Kristin Stoops — Head Girls' Coach, Hope Baker — Assistant Girls' Coach, Antonio Wright — Head Boys' Coach, Erik Sangabriel — Assistant Boys' Coach, Cicero Osceola — Assistant Boys' Coach, Cicero Osceola — Ahfachkee Warriors Letterman's Jacket  
Girls: Kristin Stoops — Head Coach, Hope Baker — Assistant Boys: Antonio Wright — Head Coach, Erik Sangabriel — Assistant, Cicero Osceola — Assistant

Former NBA player Jamal Mashburn was the highlight at the banquet. He offered words of encouragement and inspiration to the Warriors program.

A montage presentation of Mashburn featured a highlight reel of his feats that spanned from his playing days as a Kentucky Wildcat in college basketball to his time in the NBA.

"The biggest encouraging word I can give you is this: play the sport, but don't let the sport play you," Mashburn said. "You can play whatever sport you like, but use it to get somewhere in life."

Mashburn, who was the fourth overall NBA draft pick in the 1993 draft by the Dallas Mavericks, admonished the Ahfachkee basketball players to remember the journey that they took to reach this point in their young lives.

"Look at all the hard work that you've endured, all the friendships that you've made, all the great coaches that you have," Mashburn said. "Listen to them, believe in yourself and really take your education seriously. I could never own anything that I have without having an education."

Mashburn told the Ahfachkee athletes to take their academics and their coaching very seriously.

"In my life, when I was a young kid, I was a great basketball player," Mashburn said while telling a story of how he grew up in New York City as a youngster. "Back in 1990, when I was a freshman, I failed three classes in my first semester. And I got kicked off the basketball team at that point."

Mashburn said his mother motivated him to put education at the forefront of his career plans. He recalled his mother telling him that anything could happen, which underscored the importance of obtaining an education in case his NBA dreams didn't work out as planned.

"If it wasn't for that experience of failing those three classes, which made me take my education much more seriously than my athletic career, I wouldn't be standing here today," Mashburn said. "Your academics, the way you treat people, the way you go about living a clean life can go a long way. You can only dribble a ball or catch a pass for so many years, but your life will continue. You don't want life to go on without you."

A University of Kentucky college graduate, Mashburn earned a bachelor's degree in communications. The former NBA player of 11 seasons has used his education and expertise to own a few automotive dealerships, a chain of Outback Steakhouse restaurants and several Papa John's Pizza and Dunkin' Donuts franchises. The business investor has also seen air time as a sports analyst for ESPN — a major after-career achievement for Mashburn.

"This is only one phase of your life and it's a great phase; trust me. Be cognizant of the fact that your awards signify a journey in your life," he said. "Continue to educate yourself and have fun on your journey."

To top everything off, the celebrity speaker pulled out a special surprise gift for the Ahfachkee Warriors — an authentic plaque featuring his signed college basketball jersey. It was a throwback piece of memorabilia from when Mashburn starred for the Kentucky Wildcats college team.

"This is something I would like for you to look at," Mashburn said to the Ahfachkee athletes before they took photos with him. "I hope it inspires you to think that the sport is more than just dribbling a ball. There are a lot of more things for you in life. Just keep on striving for your goals; you'll get there."



Featured guest speaker and retired NBA superstar Jamal Mashburn receives a complimentary gift of Ahfachkee Warriors memorabilia from Ahfachkee student activities coordinator Randall Cleckler, right, at the Feb. 24 basketball awards ceremony.

Najji Tobias



Najji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal Council Rep. Mondo Tiger shows off the newly-minted Ahfachkee Warriors golf plaque at the awards ceremony.



Najji Tobias

Charlie Osceola, left, who provided music for all of this past season's Ahfachkee Warriors home games and awards ceremony, was awarded a special plaque of appreciation from student activities coordinator Randall Cleckler at the Ahfachkee Warriors basketball awards ceremony.



Najji Tobias

Teammates of Stevie Billie give a thunderous applause for his season accomplishments after the MVP award was announced.



Najji Tobias

The Ahfachkee Warriors girls and boys teams share a special moment with former NBA player and guest speaker Jamal Mashburn, who framed and signed his authentic Kentucky Wildcats college basketball jersey as a gift to the Tribal athletic program.

## EAGLES

From page A1

the always calm and stoic Adamson said after the game. "We just felt like if we played a little bit better, played a little bit harder and focused a little bit more on defense that we would come out on top."

"My concern was that we were too emotional. Our communication was bad and so was our spacing," Adamson continued. "For us it was about knowing we needed to settle down and that there was a lot of time left and that in the end we would prevail if we just stayed persistent."

The game started out with TC going early and often to star senior power forward Danielle McCray as she had her way, establishing herself on the post for which the Eagles had no answer. She racked up a game high 22 points at the break and finished with a whopping 40 point, 15 rebound performance to lead all scorers.

The Eagles clamped down defensively in the second half however, using their smothering 2-2-1 press and went on a 23-11 run ending the third with a slim 50-46 lead. Adding to the Crusaders' (23-6) struggles were several missed free-throw attempts shooting only 65 percent from the stripe.

The turning point in the game came at the 5:20 mark of the fourth as junior guard forward Ariah Osceola forced a steal and was intentionally fouled on a fast break attempt, leading to her making two free throws plus getting possession of the ball. After another Christian score, the lead swelled to 60-52.

Osceola would come up big once more inside a minute to play in regulation, hitting a huge 3-pointer after running several minutes off the clock.

"This is what we worked for, this was our motivation and what we were dedicated to. We worked hard to come here," Osceola said with 14 points and nine assists in the win. "I am thankful we had those three losses in the state championship and state semi-finals (in 2009 and 2010) because it made us smarter, stronger and a more dedicated, closer family."

"They played a beautiful game," Trinity Christian head coach Luke McCray said of the Eagles' game plan.

In the postgame press conference Adamson praised the efforts of TC. "Hats off to Trinity and their team, they are a great team with a great coaching staff," Adamson said. "That type of game is what state championships are supposed to be about."

Looking back on the win, it completed a journey filled with unprecedented success and domination for the Eagles, which included a 24 game win streak and a 31-1 overall record. Heading into the championship game, the team had an amazing 53-point per game average margin of victory with the only blemish coming in an 88-83 defeat at Archbishop McCarthy of Southwest Ranches in December 2010.

But, the true measure of their dominance can be shown in their 2011 postseason run. Regional and state semifinal wins came over Lake Worth Christian (61-5), Florida Bible Christian (84-15), Miami Christian (77-10) and the Florida A&M University (Baby Rattlers) (63-27).

Christian's championship squad also featured seniors Lorena Spaulding and Kaley Howard. Each averaged five and 11 points along with six and seven rebounds, respectively. Christian junior guard/forward Rebecca Lytle was named game MVP finishing with 28 points and nine rebounds.

The defending champs' 2011-2012 season will feature seven returners including Osceola and Lytle along with Tribal teammates underclassman Skyia Osceola and junior Maleah Isaac.



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal standout guard/forward Ariah Osceola makes her move down court on the fast break versus Trinity Christian in second half action.

## Valentine's Classic Has Two Championship Divisions



Chris C. Jenkins

The 17-and-under championship boys' team Harlem Wildcats of Clewiston was led by head coaches Eddie Red, far left, and Tim Thomas, third from right. The Wildcats won the title game 45-22 as part of the champions crowned from two divisions held at the Hollywood Recreation Gym Feb. 19. The winners received trophies.



Chris C. Jenkins

Lil Miccosukee B are the co-ed middle school champs.



## Teams Commemorate Howard Tiger at Memorial Basketball Tournament



Aimee Hoyt

Men's team Big Cypress scores the championship trophy during the Howard Tiger Memorial Tournament on March 5. The team finished on top in a best of series against team Hollywood in the Seminole Recreation Gym.



Team Y.D.W.I. takes home the championship trophy in the women's bracket winning against team Southern Smoke.

Aimee Hoyt

## Ahfachkee School's Students and Staff Participate in Field Day Activities



Naji Tobias

The Ahfachkee School's third graders, with teacher Sue Tiger and instructional assistant Patty Sangabriel, celebrate their medals of accomplishment after the Tribal Institution's Field Day activities concluded on March 17 at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium in Big Cypress.

### AHFACHKEE SCHOOL'S FIELD DAY RESULTS

Round-Robin Tournament Play - Basketball, Softball and Volleyball

- Upper Grades (6-12)  
1. Team Grey/White (5-0), 2. Team Red (4-1), 3. Team Yellow (3-2), 4. Team Green (2-3), 5. Team Black (1-4), 6. Team Blue (0-5)  
Lower Grades (Pre-K - 5)  
1. Team Blue, 2. Team White, 3. Team Green

Students vs. Staff Games - Upper Grades  
Team Grey/White (students) def. Ahfachkee's Staff Crew, 33-32, in volleyball  
Team Red (students) def. Ahfachkee's Staff Crew, 15-14, in basketball

NOTE: All basketball, softball and volleyball games were timed at 20 minutes each on a running clock

## University's Dream Season Ends in Class 3A Regional Finals Loss to North Broward Prep

### Lady Suns Reach Class 3A Regional Finals for First Time in History

BY NAJI TOBIAS  
Staff Reporter

**DAVIE** — The dream season of the University (Davie) Lady Suns ended in dramatic fashion.

Favored to reach this year's FHSAA Class 3A State Finals Series, all University had to do was hold steady in their Class 3A Regional Finals matchup with North Broward Prep (Coconut Creek) on Feb. 19.

The pumped-up crowd at University School witnessed a very tight contest throughout, as the Lady Eagles eked out an emotional 36-34 win — a game that neither team ever led by more than three points.

"It's a heartbreaker," said Hollywood Tribal citizen Virginia Osceola, who is the mother of University senior point guard Courtney Osceola. "I really thought [University] had the momentum going, but it just didn't work out."

University (23-7 final overall record) seemed to be ripe for the breakout win when they converted on a floating jumper with 2:04 left in the game, taking a 34-31 lead.

But the Lady Suns were completely shut down the rest of the way, as North Broward Prep (18-8 record after the win over University; 19-9 final overall record) muscled its way to 5-0 run en route to their big win. That all came from a combination of two critical layups the Lady Suns allowed in the final two minutes and a key free-throw conversion.

Regardless of University's loss, it will still go down as the Lady Suns' most successful season ever, as they reached the Class 3A regional finals for the first time in its history.

To reach that point, the Lady Suns blew past Ransom Everglades (Miami), 53-33, in the Feb. 10 Class 3A regional quarterfinals and defeated Monsignor Pace (Miami), 54-44, in the Feb. 15 Class 3A regional semis.

North Broward Prep, which advanced all the way to this year's Class 3A state championship game, broke a 34-all tie on a game-winning layup from inside the paint with just 9.2 seconds left.

Following an inbounds pass from University's Courtney Osceola (two points in this game), the Lady Suns simply were denied a good look by Prep's clamping defense for a chance at a buzzer-beating 3-pointer — thus crushing University's hopes at reaching their first State Final Four in Lakeland.

"Once again, there are no words I can explain how I feel about this win right now," North Broward Prep head coach Greg Walker said. "From our last game with University to this one, we're a night and day team. In this game, we were concerned about Courtney Osceola because when her name comes up, I think of her as a shooter. She's a tough, tough player."

In their regular season matchup on Nov. 17, 2010, University played on North Broward Prep's home court and opened its season up with a resounding 61-42 victory.

"Well, we beat them before, but they're obviously a much better team from the last time we saw them," Joe Dan Osceola said of North Broward Prep.

In a game that saw both teams go into halftime with an 18-18 tie and University taking a 27-26 lead going into the fourth

quarter, Courtney Osceola was visibly disappointed in how her University team let the game slip away from them.

"We didn't run our plays or show up like we usually do," Courtney Osceola said. "This team shouldn't have been on the court with us, but we let them stay in the game. We didn't stop the ball or penetrate. We just didn't run the play our coach drawn up for us to execute on."

University Lady Suns' second-year head coach Greg Farias agreed with his point guard's assessment of the game.

"Unfortunately, we didn't execute at the end of the game," he said. "We shouldn't have lost this game."

Just before the Lady Suns left their home floor for the last time this season, Farias talked about Courtney Osceola's impact on this season's team.

"Courtney is an all-around unselfish person and student athlete," Farias said. "All that shows on the court. She has the ability to score at least 20 points per game, but she's all about helping her team out. I'm going to miss her a lot."



Naji Tobias

University Lady Suns' senior point guard Courtney Osceola, left, is embraced by her father, Tribal World Ambassador Joe Dan Osceola, after her team loses a tough one, 36-34, to North Broward Prep in the Feb. 19 Class 3A regional championship game.



Naji Tobias

Team Black's Mika Lopez earns a single as she connects her bat to the ball.



Kelly Espasandin

Team Green/White goes undefeated with a 6-0 round-robin record and takes home this year's Ahfachkee Field Day team top honors.



Naji Tobias

Team Green's Rayce Noah goes up for a serve.



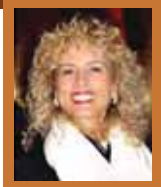
Naji Tobias

Ryan Cypress (Team Green) and Stevie Billie (Team Red) set themselves up for the tip-off to the round-robin basketball games, with Student Activities Coordinator Randall Clevelander (center) in position to throw the ball up.



Naji Tobias

Team Yellow's Jalen Cypress hits a jumper over Team Black's Ricky Joe Alumbaugh.



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## Big Cypress Seniors Enjoy Recreation During a Trip to Immokalee's Golf Driving Range



Naji Tobias

Ricky Doctor, who took the Big Cypress seniors to the Immokalee Golf Driving Range on Feb. 24, shows off his talents as he drives his Fairway club for a long distance.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Senior Center Director Cecilia Guzman, who said she played golf for the first time, enjoys her time with the Tribal elders.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal senior Daisy Jumper swings for a long-range drive.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal elder Claudia Doctor was one of five seniors who took to the driving range.

## More photos from Seminole Pride's Gasparilla Meet



Rachel Buxton

Valholy Frank nails her floor routine, earning a 9.0 and fourth-place finish.



Harmony Cypress shows her upper body strength as she prepares to flip on the bars.

Rachel Buxton

**All-Around Individual Ranks**  
Charlie Osceola – 14th place  
Harmony Cypress – 12th place

Tawni Cypress – 13th place  
Valholy Frank – 13th place  
Alyssa Osceola – 12th place  
Trinity Williams – 13th place

## Tribal Hoopsters Stand Out in All-Star Game



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal basketball senior Kristen Billie of American Heritage School (Plantation) warms up on before the Tournament of Champions Dade vs. Broward (private school) All-Star Game, held at Blanche-Ely High School on March 12. The Broward team also featured five other schools, winning the game 65-57 over Dade.



Chris C. Jenkins

Courtney Osceola, No. 22, of the University School, streaks past several defenders to the basket for a score in the first half.



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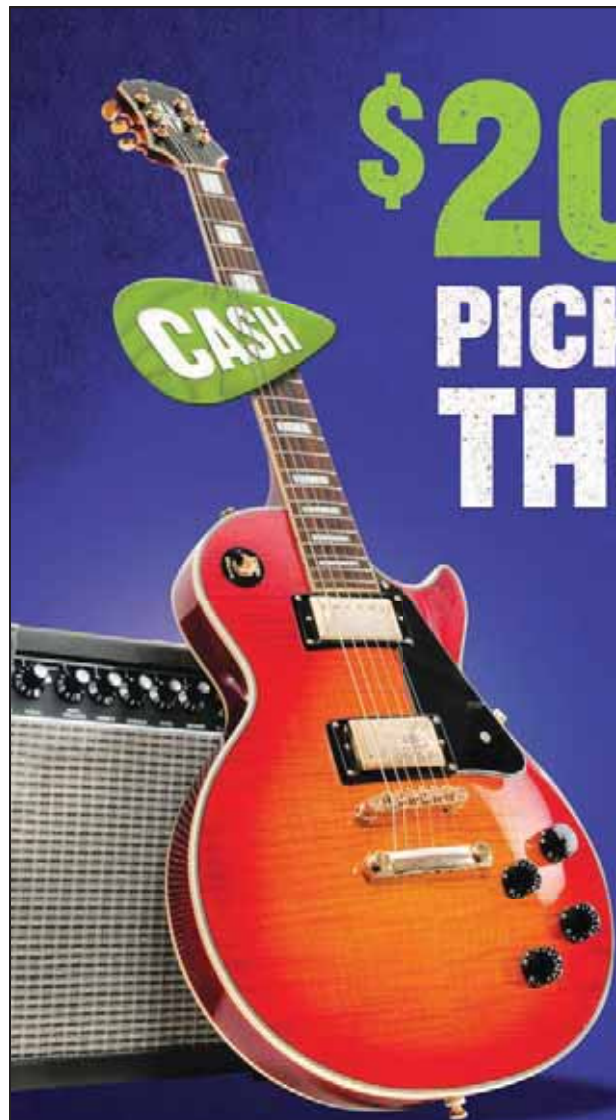
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# Brighton Field Day D



Rachel Buxton

Former Brighton Councilman Wonder Johns was honored as the Grand Marshal for the 73rd Annual Field Day parade Feb. 18 driven by Lucy Bowers.



Rachel Buxton

Family Services takes part in the annual Field Day parade.



Rachel Buxton

The Brighton preschoolers kick off the Field Day with the Pledge of Allegiance in both English and Creek.

## 73rd Annual Brighton Field Day Shares Traditional Culture with Seminoles and Tourists

BY RACHEL BUXTON  
Staff Reporter



Rachel Buxton

Former Chairman James Billie is forced to kiss a pig after collecting the most money in support of the 4-H small animal club.



Rachel Buxton

Gary Sampson represents the Seminole Hog Farm in the Field Day parade.



Rachel Buxton

Dawn Meisinger of the Ahfachkee School gets wrapped up by a python from Okalee Village.



Rachel Buxton

Eight-month-old Walnard Fortner takes first place in the kid's clothing contest.



Rachel Buxton

Larry Howard stands by son, Takoda Howard, during the clothing contest.



Rachel Buxton

Bradley Cooley visits one of the many vendors during Field Day and purchases a patchwork Seminole shirt.



Rachel Buxton

NASA Princess Krystan Perry from the Haskell PowWow Dance group performs the fancy shawl dance.

Ollie Wareham, a well-known storyteller within the Tribe, shared many of his Seminole legends, including the story of the tortoise and the hare. He also shared his talents on the flute playing "The Tiger Song."

The Haskell PowWow dancers returned once again to show off their many types of dancing, including the chicken dance and the fancy dance.

On Saturday, Feb. 19, sirens started out the day, signaling the start of the infamous Brighton Field Day parade. Former Brighton Council Rep. of the 70s, Wonder Johns, led the parade as the grand marshal.

"It seemed like a great opportunity to have this chance," said Johns about being asked to be grand marshal.

Following Johns came royalty including Miss Seminole Princess Cassandra Jimmie and Jr. Miss Seminole Princess Lorelei Tommie.

Little Miss Brooke Yescas and Little Mr. Brighton's own Caleb Burton were also in attendance riding in the motorcade.

Brighton Tribal departments, including Family Services, Pemayetv Emahaky and 4-H, were among the floats in the parade decorated with traditional Seminole themes.

"It's something that we have every year to make friends, good friends, new friends, an opportunity to show our arts and crafts and what we do best around reservations," said Johns.

The always popular clothing contest took place for Tribal tots 4 years old and younger. Instead of holding a contest for the older age groups, Brighton Council put on a fashion show displaying different styles of Seminole clothing.

"I like the Indian clothing," Brighton Miss Breanna Billie said. "It's just what amazes me because there [are so many] different designs."

Tourists and even Tribal members themselves made their way to the food vendors to enjoy some traditional Seminole delicacies before heading to the rodeo arena for a little PRCA rodeo action each day, followed by the Xtreme Bull riding Sunday, Feb. 20.





The entire royalty runner ups and winners pose for pictures with former royalty, Brighton Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr. and judges of the Brighton Princess Pageant.

Rachel Buxton



Rachel Buxton

2011-2012 crowned Brighton Princesses show off their trophies, Brighton Jr. Miss Melinda Gentry, left, and Brighton Miss Breanna Billie.



Rachel Buxton

Brighton Miss contestant Jennie Eagle shows how to make the Seminole traditional food fry for her talent.



Rachel Buxton

Bright Miss contestant Kirsten Doney shows off her basket weaving skills for her talent.

## PAGEANT

From page A1

said she enjoys cooking and beading. Carrillo said she has fun playing football with her brothers and shopping with her mom.

Rep. Bowers Jr. joked with the judges saying, "I don't want to be in your shoes."

The ladies took to the stage once again showing off their traditional outfits. They were judged on their choice of attire and on their poise.

As each girl crossed the stage, Dorgan read off why the contestant wanted to become one of the Brighton princesses.

All of the young ladies said they wanted the title of Brighton Miss or Jr. Miss so they could be a good role model to the younger Tribal generations. They also said they hope to represent their Tribe and community with the title by teaching the culture and history to others and by traveling and meeting new people.

The judges got a real treat with the talent portion of the competition.

Using an oversized poster board, Jr. Miss contestant Thomas showed the judges how to sew a traditional short skirt. Thomas had the final project to display to the judges.

Raylon Eagle demonstrated her singing talent performing "10 Little Indians" in her Native Creek language.

Burton and Gentry did a step-by-step demonstration on how to make the traditional Seminole drink sofkee, ending with samples for the judges.

Jennie Eagle didn't leave the judges empty-handed either. Supported with a slideshow, Jennie showed how to make frybread, and the judges got to taste Jennie's frybread with cherry filling.

Doney also did a demonstration but instead of traditional food, she focused on another Seminole tradition: basket weaving.

Carrillo serenaded the judges and audience with a song about the meaning behind the Seminole medicinal colors.

Bringing little helpers on stage, Billie talked about and showed the difference between Seminole clothing styles: contemporary, traditional, modern and medicinal.

The impromptu questions section, always the most

nerve-wracking part of the program, followed the talent portion.

Each girl picked a question pertaining to the pageant and Seminole culture and answered it with much poise and clarity.

"I have never seen a more fantastic set of ladies," said Glades County Clerk of Circuit Court Joe Flint.

Before the winners were announced, the outgoing princesses Brianna Nunez and Cheyenne Nunez gave their farewell speeches. The tears began to flow as the princesses thanked their grandmother Alice Sweat for all of her help and support during their reigns.

Rep. Bowers Jr. presented Brianna with a Brighton Princess medallion that has become a traditional parting gift for the outgoing Brighton Miss.

"Oh, man! This is hard," said Brianna, wiping tears away. "It really means a lot, and it's really been memorable."

The contestants lined up across the stage as they waited for the final results. Gentry and Billie received trophies for winning the talent portion of the pageant.

The Brighton Jr. Miss winners were the first to be announced. Third runner-up went to Raylon Eagle with second runner-up awarded to Thomas.

Burton and Gentry were brought up to the front of the stage for the final result with Gentry being named the 2011-2012 Brighton Seminole Jr. Miss Princess.

Outgoing princess Cheyenne Nunez crowned the new princess and presented Gentry with her sash.

Next, Brighton Miss contestants took center stage. Jennie Eagle was presented with third runner-up, followed by Carrillo taking second runner-up.

Doney and Billie lined up side-by-side with anticipation building. The 2011-2012 Brighton Seminole Miss Princess title was awarded to Billie.

Brianna Nunez crowned the newly announced princess. "I was shocked," said Billie. "I couldn't believe they called my name. I've waited so long and I wanted to give up so many times, but my mom was just there pushing me and pushing me."

Family and friends raced to the stage to capture the moment with several photo opportunities. By the end of the evening the atmosphere became emotional with tears of happiness and joy.



Rachel Buxton

Jr. Miss contestant Mallorie Thomas holds up her finished patchwork skirt after explaining to the judges how to make a tradition short skirt.

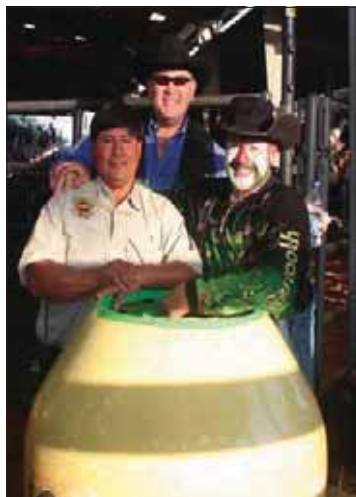


Rachel Buxton

Jr. Miss contestant Krysta Burton shows the judges how to make tradition corn sofkee during the talent portion of the competition.

## Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association Continues Tradition of Performing at Brighton Field Day

BY JUDY WEEKS  
Freelance Reporter



Judy Weeks

Fred Smith Arena Director Amos Tiger, PRCA Announcer Roger Mooney and rodeo clown Ryan Rodriguez organized the 2011 Brighton Field Days PRCA Rodeo.

**BRIGHTON** — The 73rd Annual Brighton Field Day Festival featured three days of extraordinary rodeo competition performed by members of the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) on March 17 through 19 at the Fred Smith Rodeo Arena.

The PRCA is the premier sanctioning body of rodeo. Created in 1936, it is a global leader in producing rodeo events and preserving the rich traditions and values of one of the oldest sports in America. The association membership comprises the leading rodeo performers across the continent and creates opportunities for cowboys and girls to compete with the highest standards.

Participating in the Brighton Field Days has become a tradition of the PRCA and contestants from all across the country have put this rodeo on their annual schedule. Points earned during the event help the rodeo legends become qualifiers for the world's top rodeo competition, the National Finals Rodeo (NFR) in Las Vegas, Nev.

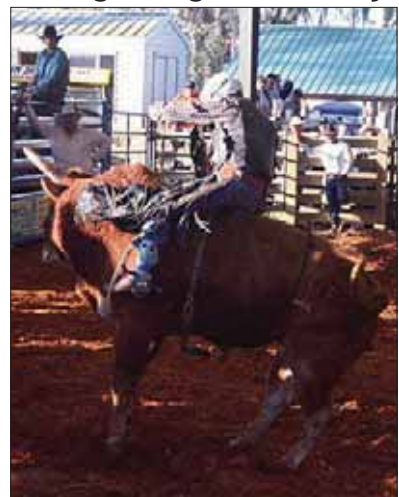
Team Roping Champion Nelson Linares reminisced about his experiences in Brighton. He said, "My dad used to compete at the Seminole arena down on Stirling Road many years ago. As a boy, I started coming to Brighton every year and when I turned 11 I started competing here. This rodeo has special meaning to all my family. In fact, I won the Team Roping Championship here on two occasions and wouldn't miss it for the world."

Each contestant had an opportunity to enter just one time per event in the three-day rodeo. Three hundred and ninety contestants threw their hat in the ring to take part in the seven events. Among them were Eastern Indian Rodeo Association (EIRA) members Josh and Naha Jumper, who suffered some unfortunate luck in the Team Roping and Ivan Bruised-Head, whose score of 9.2 seconds in the Tie Down roping earned him a seventh place.

Rough stock provided by Marty Johns and Paul Bowers Jr. of the Five Star Rodeo Company gave a distinguished performance, along with some of the finest specimens being bucked out all across the southeastern part of the U.S. A portion of the points earned by the riders are accumulated from the animal's exhibition. Five Stars' No.307, "Dippin Wacky", did his job and carried Mert Bradshaw into first place with an 82 point ride in the Saddle Bronc Division.

EIRA bull fighters John Copsey and Chris "Weasel" Forrest employed their talents to head up the team that protected the riders during each performance. Certified members of the PRCA and PBR, they are no stranger to the dangers that await them in the arena, but willingly sacrifice themselves to protect the contestants.

Working with the PRCA officials, Fred Smith Arena Director Amos Tiger put together a team of professionals that wowed three audiences who filled the bleachers to capacity during the 2011 Brighton Field Days event. Announcer Roger Mooney and Rodeo Clown Ryan Rodriguez provided a top notch performance for the fans.



Judy Weeks

Lee Woolsey earned 87 points on No. 67 Freebird to become the Brighton Field Days Bull Riding Champion at the 2011 Brighton Field Days PRCA Rodeo March 17 to 19.







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