



**Officials prepare students
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Volume XXXII • Number 9

September 30, 2011

Ahfachkee Warriors athletic program recognized by FSU

Tribe's first-ever athletic program gets standing ovation during first half of FSU-Charleston Southern

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

TALLAHASSEE — The standout moments keep coming for the Ahfachkee Warriors.

On Sept. 10 at Florida State University's Doak Campbell Stadium in Tallahassee, athletes, coaches and support staff from the Tribal school's athletic program received a standing ovation from a crowd of more than 80,000 people.

Immediately after the first quarter of the FSU-Charleston Southern college football game — an easy 62-10 win by the then-No. 5 nationally ranked Seminoles — members from the Ahfachkee Warriors athletic program walked out onto the field to wave to the crowd.

With the Osceola mascot and Renegade horse nearby, the Tribal athletes and their coaches soaked in the watershed moment, as they were all humbled by the thunderous applause they received for being Florida's first-ever Tribal athletic program to complete a full season of operation.

In a revealing journal entry of the history-making occasion, several Tribal athletes and some of their coaches discussed what being an Ahfachkee Warrior meant to them.

Ahfachkee Warriors golf and boys' basketball senior player Stevie Billie chimed in on his thoughts.

"When I stepped onto the field with all my teammates and

friends, it felt like we accomplished something and we were accepted," Billie said. "It felt great for everyone at FSU to know who we are."

Fellow Ahfachkee Warriors golf and boys' basketball senior Taylor Pratt opened up about his reasons for the significance of the Tribal athletic program's shining moment.

"I was glad that I got to see the FSU campus and the game," Pratt said. "When I stepped on the field, it was one of the most awesome things I've ever experienced in my life. I wish I could wake up to this [the stadium cheers] every day."

Meanwhile, Ahfachkee Warriors golf and boys' basketball senior Ryan Cypress — who may consider FSU as a college choice after graduating next year — talked about what ran through his mind prior to the weekend's signature moment.

"My very first feeling, before we actually stepped onto the field, would have to be nervous," he said. "But then I thought of what I was actually doing and who I was representing. I just felt overwhelmed with joy and pride. As I took my first steps onto the field, I just couldn't believe where I was at. It was my favorite part of the whole trip because there was so much going on; so many strong emotions. That excitement was just rushing through my veins. I didn't want to step off the field."



Naji Tobias

Members of the Ahfachkee Warriors athletic program stand in front of Osceola and Renegade, the Florida State Seminoles mascot and horse, and soak in the watershed moment at the Sept. 10 FSU-Charleston Southern game inside Bobby Bowden Field at Doak Campbell Stadium in Tallahassee.

♦ Please see FSU on page 6A

Seminole Reservations celebrate Indian Day, honor their heritage



Brett Daly

Tribal youngsters from the Trail Reservation participate in the hay barrel races during Trail's Indian Day celebrations on Sept. 23. All Reservations hosted their own festivities to honor their heritage and to teach youngsters about their culture.

♦ Please see INDIAN DAY on page 1D

Immokalee celebrates Preschool, Community Center grand opening



Judy Weeks

This Preschool and Community Center are the newest additions to the Immokalee Reservation.

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Writer

IMMOKALEE — The Immokalee community achieved one of its most important goals on Sept. 12 with the grand opening of its long-awaited Preschool and Community Center.

"In October it will be 20 years since I began my teaching career as an aide in the Head Start Program that served our community," said Immokalee Preschool Manager Michelle Aguilar Ford. "I love children and realized from the very beginning that I had found my chosen career. Over the years it has been a joy for me to help guide our little ones on the road to higher education. Today's ribbon cutting ceremony opens new doors for the educational possibilities of our next generation of leaders."

♦ Please see GRAND OPENING on page 6A

Showdown at the Collier County Courthouse

Smallwood Store whips developers

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER
Special Projects Reporter

NAPLES — In a stunning victory for Old Florida, historic preservation and the right of Floridians to protect their neighborhoods, Collier County Circuit Judge Hugh Hayes ordered big time out-of-town developers Florida Georgia Grove, LLC (FGG) and its mortgage-holding TD Bank sidekicks to restore public access to tiny Chokoloskee's historic Ted Smallwood Store and Museum.

At the close of an all-day Sept.15 hearing in a Collier County Circuit Courtroom packed with cheering supporters, Judge Hayes gave FGG/TD Bank 30 days to take down the tall fence they erected and to build back the road — historic 75-year-old Mamie Street — which the Highland County developers chopped to rubble during a surprise bulldozer terrorism ambush in the early dawn hours of April 14, leaving the 106-year-old Smallwood Store, in Judge Hayes' words, "for all intents and purposes closed, put out of business."

If FGG/TD Bank do not complete the road by Oct.15, Judge Hayes warned the developers he would haul them back into his courtroom "to find out why!"

In Sagaponak, N.Y., author Peter Matthiessen, who profiled the Smallwood Store and old Chokoloskee in his novel *Killing Mr. Watson*, said the news was "great. I'm delighted common sense prevailed over this outrageous act. For once the good guys won!"

Any appeals relating to the order must be brought in front of Judge Hayes, who gave FGG/TD Bank little room for a reversal, commenting that all four legal factors necessary for an injunction — the likelihood of irreparable harm, the unavailability of an adequate remedy at law, substantial likelihood of success on the merits and considerations of the public interest — were in Smallwood's favor. The Judge also ordered Smallwood to post a \$10,000 bond against the

♦ Please see SMALLWOOD on page 2A



Peter B. Gallagher

Protestors came from all over Florida to sing and hold signs in front of the Collier County Courthouse.

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Crowd gets ‘Storm fever’ at Battiest video debut

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER
 Special Projects Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — It was Saturday, Sept. 17 in a part of the city that never sleeps. Spotlights waved through the evening sky. The beams disappeared into the heavy white night clouds hanging low above the blinking lumina-scape of the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino. Below, just west of the water dancing Paradise fountain show, a murmuring crowd gathered. In front of the intimate Paradise Live theatre, excited eyes darted with abandon, watching for celebrities.

In fact, it WAS a “Celebrity Watch” party, hosted by the two young men whose images were emblazoned on the marquee, Seminole Tribe hip hop singer/songwriters Doc and Spencer Battiest. The next great American Indian idols were throwing a party to celebrate a whole “storm” of thunderous events now happening in their lives:

- The official debut of the Battiest brothers’ first professional music video “The Storm,” a moving, colorful Seminole Indian-themed blockbuster video accompaniment to the brothers’ much-acclaimed single of the same name. “The Seminole Tribe were there for us in all aspects of this video. They trusted us to make a good impression,” said Spencer, who celebrated his 21st birthday that same night. “I hope we did them proud.”
- Three nominations for 2011 Native American Music Awards. The prestigious “Nammys” will be given out Oct. 7 at the Seneca Niagara Hotel & Casino in Niagara Falls, N.Y. Doc and Spencer are finalists for Best Hip Hop Recording, Song Single of the Year and Debut Artist (previously won in 1999 by Seminole Chairman James E. Billie). “Man, if we win that one, I’ll feel like it has really all come around,” said Doc, whose given name is Zachary.
- A visit by celebrity actors Kiowa (Shapeshifter) Gordon and Chaske (werewolf) Spencer from the *Twilight* Saga movie series, and Genevieve, Randy, Jaffar and Jermajesty Jackson (the late Michael Jackson’s niece and nephews) to participate in a red carpet-style entrance. They all signed guitars, autographs and T-shirts and posed with the Battiest brothers for photos that launched like skyrockets through the Internet. “I really like those guys. They are great,” said Genevieve, also a singer. “I was really moved by the video. How beautiful!”
- The launch of Unconquered Media, a Hollywood entertainment production company owned by Spencer and Doc.

“This was our biggest night. Everything, EV-er-ry-thing was goin’ through my head.” – Zachary “Doc” Battiest

Cameras flashed, TV reporters stuck out microphones and cameramen kept yelling out, “Over here, over here!” Blue fruit juice, roasted lamb chops and crab cakes were everywhere. Proud dad, Henry “Junior” Battiest, cracked jokes as master of ceremonies; when the crowd moaned after one bad joke, he came right back: “I can’t get fired from this because I’m Dad!” Tribal leaders in attendance included Brighton Board Rep. Larry Howard,

Tribal President Tony Sanchez Jr. and Chairman James E. Billie, whose voice can be heard at the beginning of “The Storm” video, speaking in Mikasuki dialect. Each leader took the stage to pay tribute to the brothers and expressed pride in their work honoring the Tribe. “You have come a long long way,” Howard said. “The sky is the limit!”

“When we finished the video, I brought it to James Billie for his review,” Spencer said. “He kept it awhile and told me he had watched it 40 times. He was looking for a mistake, something we did wrong, but he finally brought it back and said he couldn’t find anything wrong. He said to go with it, so we did!”

“He’s right,” said the Chairman, who in his other career as musical artist Chief Jim Billie, also won a Living Legend Nammay at the 1999 Awards. “Our Tribe’s young men, the Battiest brothers, show what hard work and dedication can achieve. I’m happy that the Seminole Tribe, along with Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, believe in the future of our young Tribal men”

“The launch party was extremely successful,” said Phil Madow, president of Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood. “It was intimate; it was extravagant; it was unforgettable – and Seminole Hard Rock Hollywood is proud to have had the honor of hosting this unforgettable evening as Spencer and Zachary ‘Doc’ Battiest make their way to stardom.”

The video was preceded by a 40-minute concert presenting Spencer front and center as lead singer, accompanied by singers Kenny Scott and Ebony Whitfield with Doc providing harmonies, rhythm and percussion on the turntables. “We brought out a bunch of new songs. The performance had been on my mind all day,” said Doc, who said he changed his name to honor his grandfather, pianist extraordinaire Henry Battiest Sr., whose nickname was Doc.

“But the video, that was special. No one had seen it until that very night. You know, when it’s your brain child, when you put your heart and soul into your craft, you want some recognition, you want the audience to appreciate what you are doing, especially our members of the Seminole Tribe, so many of whom were there that night!”

“The Storm” director Steven Paul Judd supervised an all-Native American production, which included seven Tribal teenagers from a Seminole Media Productions camp. “They helped in all aspects of the production. They even helped choose our wardrobe,” said Spencer. Doc agreed: “It was a great learning experience for those kids. In fact it was a great learning experience for us, too!”

Judd (Kiowa and Mississippi Choctaw) briefly addressed the audience: “I am so happy to be here among you beautiful Seminole people.”

A standing ovation and rousing applause followed the end of the video. Everyone stood up and cheered: the Jacksons, the Werewolf, the Shapeshifter, the Chairman, the President, all the fancy-dressed folks who followed the invitation’s rule: dress to impress.

Spencer and Doc felt chills down their spines. “I couldn’t believe it,” Doc said. “Everyone’s got Storm fever!”



Peter B. Gallagher

From left: Jaffar Jackson, Jermajesty Jackson, Spencer Battiest, Genevieve Jackson, Doc Battiest, Princess Leeann Al-Saud and Randy Jackson walk the red carpet during the Sept. 17 event.



Peter B. Gallagher

Spencer Battiest gets interviewed on the red carpet prior to the debut of his and his brother Doc's music video.

SMALLWOOD

From page 1A

restoration of the road until the case officially ends.

“We would have been happy to win one point,” said Naples attorney Rachael Loukonen, who represented the Smallwood Store. “But we won all four points. I don’t see where they would have any appeal, especially before Judge Hayes.”

“I fully expect (FGG) to comply with the Judge’s order,” said TD Bank attorney Blake Paul, who emphasized “we didn’t take out any roads or put up any fences. We are just the bank holding the mortgage.” Calls to FGG corporate attorney/spokesman Jim Kelly of Winter Haven were unreturned by press time.

Collier County Commissioner Jim Coletta, who stood up against FGG when the group continued to pursue development plans even after the county withdrew its support, called the decision great news for Chokoloskee and for Collier County. He warned, however, “there are still a lot of things undecided, such as the condition of the new road and the landscape around it. If Smallwood and FGG can’t agree, then it will come before the court again.”

It was FGG’s contention that they owned the lower 983.64 feet of Mamie Street transecting their property as part of a 4.13 acre parcel (immediately north of the Store) which they purchased from STOF Holdings in 2004. They wanted the road closed to facilitate ill-advised development plans for the sleepy island, largest in the Ten Thousand Islands chain, a fishing paradise where the Gulf and the Everglades meet. “The Smallwood Store was collateral damage to them,” said Lynn McMillin, granddaughter of Store founder and Southwest Florida pioneer Ted Smallwood. “They knew Mamie Street was the one and only way to get to the Store. And they didn’t really care.”

County surveys show a 600-foot easement through mangroves on the east side of the Store, connecting to lime rock (private) Calusa Drive. However, an Army

Corps of Engineers (ACOE) opinion, supported by all reporting agencies, declared the area a protected tidal basin ineligible for any road permit. “The laws are different today. What you could do in the early 1900s, you can’t do anymore,” McMillin pointed out. “What gripes me is how many times (FGG witnesses) said there’s no water in there. That’s a lie and they know it. The tide comes in and out of there every day.”

Though the ACOE opinion was not brought up in court, Judge Hayes was obviously familiar with coastal development issues after 35 years on the Collier County bench: “As we know, whether you live in this part of the United States or other parts, it wouldn’t take long before you would end up with, to borrow a local term, a ‘sippy hole’ in that piece of property. Based on all the permitting requirements that they would have to meet, and practically speaking, (a road permit) is not going to happen any time soon. Those types of processes take years rather than months.”

Citing Mamie Street’s documented 75 years of public use, Judge Hayes declared a “prescriptive easement,” pointing out the use of the road predated cars coming to the island (1956) and it was the only road one could take to reach the U.S. Post Office (located at the Smallwood Store until the mid-70s). There was also ample evidence, from local citizens and public officials that suggested Mamie had been paved, re-paved and maintained by the county for decades.

Irritated at FGG’s unannounced April ambush, staged sans any permission (in a misguided plan to force the government’s hand in creating a second access to the Store through the protected mangroves), Hayes admonished FGG managing partner Gary Blackman: “You should not have torn (Mamie Street) up until you found out you could.”

“They knew that if they announced their plans to take out the road, we would have gone to court and obtained a cease and desist order,” Commissioner Coletta said. “They knew it was wrong. They had the gall to call the sheriff requesting protection!”

FGG argued that Collier County city attorneys officially declared Mamie Street

a private road. In fact, county attorney Steve Williams (who, ironically, assisted Loukonen in presenting the case) was one of those officials. But Hayes ruled: “Our case law supports the government entity not being bound by the statement of their employee and so that law is clearly applicable to the situation we have as well. And that is particularly true with the particular individual that, you know, that they discussed this issue with. I am sure he meant well, but I am not sure that he would have risen to the level of culpability to bind the county government. So I think that is pretty well-supported in the evidence.”

Earlier in the day, in a shocking display of macho bravado, Blackman narrated a self-made video in which his large pickup truck ran through the tidal basin stand of mangroves – an attempt to show that large vehicles could transverse the easement and that Mamie Street was not the only access to the Smallwood Store. When an attorney remarked at the tight path, which caused mangrove branches to scratch the truck’s sides, Blackman responded: “I’m not responsible for mowing other people’s lawns. But give me two men, two chainsaws and two hours, and you can drive a semi through there.”

“I didn’t think you were allowed to say the word ‘chainsaw’ when referring to mangroves in Florida,” said a shocked J. Robert, a Marco Island musician who organized a peaceful rally of colorful signs and folk songs on the courthouse steps. “Thank God for Judge Hayes. He saved the Last Frontier.” Robert and famed Miami folkie Valerie Wisecracker performed for the media cameras outside the last hearing, wailing out songs like “Stop Runnin’ My Florida Home Into The Ground.”

“We were concerned when very few supporters showed up for the first hearings, so we wanted the Judge to realize there was a whole lot of support for the Smallwood Store and Old Florida out here,” said Wisecracker, who has a getaway cabin in nearby Everglades City. The support was statewide – even Florida storyteller Butch Harrison made his way to Naples from Live Oak near the Georgia line.

“Things not lookin’ so good for you today, huh? Oh and hey, when you put back that road, don’t waste your time trying to hire anybody from around here. Nobody gonna work for you.” – Heard in the court house elevator at lunch break on the final day. It was a Chokoloskee fisherman speaking to FGG managing partner Gary Blackman, who did not acknowledge the comment.

Blackman admitted FGG had “a couple of ideas” regarding the development of the tract, which had been in the Smallwood family since the town was platted, sold to the Seminole Tribe in the late ’90s, then sold to FGG in 2004. FGG was merely responding to the county’s professed need for a public boat launch and marina in that area of Collier County. “The idea was to develop the land into what the county was looking for and then sell it to them,” said FGG attorney Jim Kelly. “Unfortunately,

that didn’t happen.”

But one fact was certain. No matter what the development, Mamie Street had to go.

The Smallwood Store’s vaunted place in the histories of Collier County, the Seminole Tribe and the State of Florida provided a “unique reason” to grant the injunction, Hayes said: “This property, at some period in its history, was able to get on the National Register of Historic Places. And that does give it a unique overlay that most properties may not have, and it makes it unique in the facts of our case. I doubt there is anything like this anywhere in the county, anywhere in the state for that matter.”

“Any history of Collier County has the Smallwood Store in it,” said county attorney Williams in his closing remarks.

The order granting the temporary injunction and ordering the restoration of Mamie Street came at the end of two days of hearings in which petitioners Ted Smallwood’s Store Inc. (a not-for-profit corporation) and Collier County argued minutiae ad infinitum, filled with surveyor’s jargon, about roads and easements, maps and measurements. Often, the proceedings took on the character of a *Saturday Night Live* skit: FGG attorney Steve Chase consistently called Mamie Street, which stretched across half the island, a “driveway” and referred to the 600-foot mangrove footpath as a “road;” former Highlands County engineer Carl Cool took the witness stand and, with a straight face, declared that he had visited the rubble site that very morning and by measuring chunks of road, came up with a profile of Mamie Street that put the street’s width at 13 feet – a ploy to show that Mamie could not have been a certified county road. In the audience, Goodland resident Colin Kenny shook his head: “I see where they have the fox measurin’ the chicken coop now.”

In fact, aerial photographs provided by Google Earth show the two-lane road much wider than 13 feet, able to handle two lanes of traffic. “There were a lot of lies in this courtroom today,” McMillin said. “They knew before they walked in the door they could not win, so they resorted to lies. I’m so glad the Judge saw through it all.”

Many in the courtroom audience were local business people, such as Joanie Griffin, owner of Joanie’s Blue Crab Café in Ochopee; Bob Miller from the Everglades City Oyster House; Kenny Brown of Outdoor Resorts; and Corey Billie, owner of Corey Billie’s Airboat Ride on the Tamiami Trail near Collier-Seminole State Park. The Road’s forced closure by FGG (which owns the property containing the road north of the Store) has been “devastating to the area economy,” McMillin said. “I can’t tell you how many busloads – school kids, tourists, you name it – that have turned around and left the island when they saw the fence.”

All saw a noticeable drop in business during the late spring and summer months. Based on past years, tourism counts were down more than 15,000 for those months. Several restaurants have discussed a class action suit against FGG. “I’m just like all the restaurants, sitting around all day and waiting and nobody shows up,” said Billie,

a Seminole Tribal citizen who showed up both days of the hearing to show support for the McMillins. “I get quite a few referrals from there. It’s the attraction that brings people here. That’s where they pick up our brochures and ask questions – we all benefit from the Smallwood Store.”

“I thought it was over . . . and then here they come again!” – Lynn McMillin

Following the Judge’s decision, FGG attorney Steve Chase had one more idea. He wanted to put Mamie Street somewhere else: “Your Honor, can I ask for a point of clarification? Does the court care where the access is across my client’s property? If we provide the court and the parties with a temporary access that you ordered, is it OK if we relocate, as long as they have comparable access, so we are not dissecting the entire parcel?”

Judge Hayes: “It is clear that roadway, for lack of a better term, guts your property and makes it questionable economically, as far as development is concerned . . . I think I might stipulate to it, if the government and the Smallwood Store stipulated to it . . . I would have to let affected persons speak, so to speak. Because I mean it is a public right of way in this concept, and there are many other people who say, ‘Hey, you know, I don’t care what the county says’ or ‘I don’t care what Smallwood says, they are selling me out and I want to object.’”

“But for today’s purposes, I can’t agree to that because it is really not in front of the court. That is still up to the parties to look at, but it doesn’t seem to be feasible really at all. I think we will all be retired by the time that possibility actually happens.”

Was FGG trying to subvert Mamie Street’s prescriptive easement by changing the footprint of the road? Attorney Loukonen could only laugh when asked the question after the hearing closed. “I am not going to say anything negative about Florida Georgia Grove. But you heard what they said, I heard it and so did the Judge. I don’t think anyone in that courtroom was fooled.”

Commissioner Coletta agreed: “These guys were hard core. They tried to create a case that would force the county to jump in and buy the property. Remember, they bought that property at the height of the real estate boom and when that all turned around, they were desperate for a way out without losing their investment. There is very little anyone can do down there. The people of Chokoloskee were clear. They did not want it. End of story.”

Coletta heads a committee planning a fundraiser for the Store scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 5 (noon until 6 p.m.), at the Smallwood Store site, featuring Seminole Indian crafts and displays, as well as musical performances by Chief Jim Billie, Valerie Wisecracker, Fiddlin’ J. Robert, Dog Peter Pat and other Florida folk artists. “Now is the time to restore the Museum to its former glory, complete the necessary repairs and take care of the legal bills. We need to get this precious landmark solvent, so it can survive these emergencies, whether manmade or natural.”



Peter B. Gallagher

FGG managing partner Gary Blackman is cross-examined by Smallwood attorney Rachael Loukonen.

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

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Community

A

Senior Profile: Willie Johns

No retirement in sight for the Brighton native

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — When you think of getting older you tend to think of slowing down, retirement, spending time with the grandkids and getting to do all the things you didn't get to do while younger because of work — like days out on the lake fishing. That's not the case for 60-year-old Willie Johns of the Brighton Reservation.

"If anything, I feel like I'm picking up speed," Johns said.

If you're part of the Seminole Tribe or even a citizen of a surrounding county you probably know or have heard of the name Willie Johns.

A member of the Panther Clan, Johns was born in Okeechobee March 23, 1951 to Arlene Johns. Johns grew up on the Brighton Reservation on a campsite where the water tower stands today.

One of four children, Johns spent his days outdoors playing football, baseball and rodeo.

"We played a lot," Johns said. "We didn't move into a house until probably 1965, and we didn't get a TV until very late, so we didn't watch much TV."

Johns attended first through sixth grade in Okeechobee before he transferred to Moore Haven and graduated in 1970.

Creek being his first and native language, Johns had to pick up the English language in the classroom.

"We were speaking some English as we got older and then it got really dominate because we were starting to hang out with white kids," Johns said. "So we adjusted rather quickly."

After graduating high school Johns traveled to Tifton, Ga. where he attended Abraham Baldwin Agriculture College for two years and earned his associate degree, his "smart farmer's degree" he joked.

"It was fun, we had a good time," Johns said about college. "We weren't babied growing up. We had been to a lot of camps so weren't prone to being homesick. We fell right in with society and did what they did."

In 1973 Johns returned to Brighton and got a job with the Tribe working what was then called the bull project, where the Tribe raised their own bulls. Johns only worked there for a couple years before deciding to head back into the classroom.

"I was trying to make a way for myself, so I went back to college," he said. "I knew I wasn't getting nowhere with that two-year degree."

Johns picked up and moved once more to Palm Beach to



Rachel Buxton

Willie Johns during a Seminole Moments presentation at the Brighton reservation.

attend Palm Beach Atlantic University where he received a bachelor's degree in business administration and finance. He said those were the popular courses people were taking, so he figured that's what he should do.

He continued south where he moved to Hollywood and became the Seminole Tribe's education director.

■ Please see **JOHNS** on page 4A

Two new Tribal members join the Seminole Channel team



Chris C. Jenkins

Miranda Motlow and Stephen Billie in between tapings at the Okalee Village Aug. 25 as new reporters for the Seminole Channel variety show airing on Tuesdays from 8-9 p.m. and Thursdays from 5-6 p.m. on DIRECTV Channel 575.

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Seminole Media Productions Broadcasting division staple, the Seminole Channel Show, has undergone a makeover of sorts for its viewers.

New Tribal reporters Miranda Motlow of the Tampa Reservation and Stephen Billie of the Hollywood Reservation will have the opportunity to fill some big shoes, replacing popular, longstanding former hosts Briana D'Andrea and Everett Osceola.

Their first two show tapings were filmed on the Okalee Village grounds Aug. 25 featuring special guests Elliot Alvarado, professional boxer and Panther Boxing Promotions co-promoter, and Lori Vun Kannon, Emergency Management Services director.

The two new reporters met for the first time at the most recent Youth Media Production Workshop in Hollywood in early July.

For Motlow, the eldest daughter of Carol Foret, the opportunity to try and take over the reigns gained momentum after the departure of D'Andrea.

"I felt I would eventually get another shot," Motlow said. "I did not expect it to come so fast though. I was actually unsure. It was kind of fear of the unknown."

"Everything I have done in the past (occasional reporting and fill-in hosting) was just in preparation for this moment. I thought to myself, 'If I do not do it now then will the opportunity come again?'" the 25-year-old of the Panther Clan added.

Billie, Otter Clan and son of Steve Osceola and Rita Billie, said the experience is a blessing he wants to learn and grow from.

"I want to stay a part of this as long as I can," he said. "It is great, and I am trying to take advantage of the opportunity. I want to bring more people to the show."

"For people to know I overcame a lot and be a role model and represent the Tribe makes me proud," Billie continued.

He said he gained respect for Motlow and recognized their potential together after watching her in a Seminole Focus profile story.

"I respected the fact that when she was on camera she let it all hang out. She was herself. I liked that about her and wanted to add that to my own on-air approach," he said.

For Motlow the experience has become one of enjoyment all while she continues to learn more about the broadcasting industry.

"I actually enjoy it," she said. "I have done my fair share of not taking advantage of all the opportunities my people have provided for me. It has turned out to be a wonderful thing so far."

Billie is somewhat familiar to the media as a budding hip-hop artist with several CDs to his credit. "It is all entertainment and similar to rapping," the married father of two said. "(When I rap) I am just getting up there on stage and presenting something. I think they (hosting and rapping) fit together."

Billie and Motlow also credit mentors SMP Special Projects Coordinator Benno Schmidt and SMP Tampa Production Coordinator Ryan Watson with hands in their confidence and opportunity.

Tune in on Tuesdays from 8-9 p.m. and Thursdays from 5-6 p.m. on DIRECTV Channel 575 and Comcast Channel 92 or 93 (depending on HD compatibility). And also visit www.youtube.com/seminolechannel to see all videos featured on the Seminole Channel Show.

Coconut Creek Casino supports local charities



Chris C. Jenkins

Former National Football League players get together for a group photo before tournament play at the celebrity blackjack charity tournament held at the Seminole Casino Coconut Creek Aug. 31.

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

COCONUT CREEK — Although known for its 1,500 gaming machines and 20 blackjack tables, the Seminole Casino of Coconut Creek does more than offer the community a place to play Las-Vegas-style slots and Texas Hold 'em. The casino also hosts charity events to benefit local nonprofit organizations, and since 2001, has raised \$590,000 for charities in the process.

Several times a year, the casino puts on these events, which draw in many local celebrities, to give back to the community and to show support of the organizations that do so much for individuals in need.

"We try and do charitable work every year that matches the qualifications of the Seminole Tribe," said Michael Michaud, Seminole Casino Coconut Creek vice president of marketing. "We like to only focus on two to three each year so that we can really dedicate our time and energy to them."

Michaud said charities with close ties to the Coconut Creek casino family include the Ronald McDonald House — which provides a "home-away-from-home" for families so they can stay close by their hospitalized child at little or no cost — and the Coconut Creek SOS Children's Village — a foster care neighborhood in Coconut Creek that responds to the needs of children left orphaned or abandoned.

But many other charities benefit as well.

For example, on Aug. 31, some of Florida's best-known gridiron greats came together to raise money for their favorite charities and to celebrate a milestone amongst Tribal casinos. In celebration of the one-year anniversary of legalized blackjack, the Seminole Casino Coconut Creek played host to a 64-seat, invitation-only tournament. The event featured several former National Football League players including Miami Dolphins Zach Thomas, Keith Simms and Leon Seay with each donating their winnings to their favorite cause.

The event raised close to \$15,000 to benefit a range of charities including the Dolphins Cycling Challenge (for Cancer), the Alzheimer's Family Center, Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital Foundation and the Broward County Youth Club.

"It is all about giving back to the communities," said Dan Mackey, public relations vice president of Bitner Goodman Inc. "Steve Bonner (General Manager of Seminole Casino Coconut Creek) is always happy to do these types of things."

Coming into the tournament, Errict Rhett, former Tampa Bay Buccaneers star running back and president of the Errict Rhett Foundation, was very confident, predicting he would win the \$5,000 in first-place honors for his charity: "We (my foundation) need it and we are going to win it," Rhett said. His charity, which supports at-risk urban youth, began in 1999 and went on to win the second-place prize of \$3,000.

■ Please see **CASINO** on page 4A

VVA says No, Scruggs says Yes to add Vietnam Native soldier

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER
Special Projects Reporter

RENO, Nev. — A Seminole Tribe of Florida resolution promoting the addition of an American Indian figure to the Three Servicemen Vietnam Memorial on the Washington, D.C. Mall was defeated by Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) voters during the VVA's national convention at the Silver Legacy Resort, Aug. 15-21.

Ten days later, however, well-known Vietnam Veterans' advocate Jan Scruggs agreed to support the effort during a phone interview broadcast nationally on Situation Report, a syndicated Fox News Radio veteran's show. Show hosts Bill Thomas and Dr. Bob Primeaux interviewed Scruggs using a list of questions provided by Seminole Tribal citizen and Vietnam vet Stephen Bowers.

"I am certainly not opposed to (adding a fourth statue depicting an American Indian serviceman)," said Scruggs, the current CEO of the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Fund and the major force behind the creation of the famed Washington, D.C. Memorial, which includes the Vietnam Wall, the Three Servicemen Statue and the Vietnam Woman's Memorial. "It's not going to be easy. It's going to require the approval of Congress, the approval of the President. You're facing an unbelievable uphill battle."

Scruggs suggested that supporters of the proposal, spearheaded by the Seminole Tribe of Florida, might find it easier to connect with the Vietnam Veteran's Education Center, an underground facility planned next to The Wall. "Your manpower hours might be better spent in creating a display or something at that Center," said Scruggs, who was on a nationwide tour to raise money and support for the Education Center.

Hosts Thomas and Primeaux, however, discounted that idea, providing data that indicated one out of every eight American Indians have served in the U.S. Armed Forces. "A lot of American Indian veterans believe that if they are not represented with the Three Servicemen, people will believe they did not serve in battle."

"Whatever you do, never give up," Scruggs said. "Keep moving and running."

The VVA is one of several Vietnam-era veterans' groups that have refused support for the proposal, which seeks to correct the apparent omission of an American Indian soldier to the popular memorial depicting Caucasian, African-American and Hispanic soldiers near the famous Vietnam Wall. But Scruggs said he believed that the third soldier was not Hispanic but represented "all the other minorities, including American Indians." It is widely believed, however, that the late sculptor Frederick Hart chose those ethnic groups with the largest total of servicemen during the 20-year (1955-1975) War.

"It's early in the game, I guess," said Bowers, whose recent Seminole Tribune editorial demanding the monument change has been widely reprinted throughout Indian Country. "These things take time. It's a really big deal to make any kind of changes on the Mall."

Tribal Council meets for Special Meeting, passes 48 resolutions on Sept. 9

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Tribal Council convened for a special meeting at the Hollywood Reservation Headquarters auditorium passing 48 resolutions on the Sept. 9 consent and regular agendas including:

- Resolution 13: Service Agreement with Florida-Spectrum Environmental Services Inc. to provide professional laboratory testing and analysis services for all reservations and trust lands of the Seminole Tribe of Florida
- Resolution 14: Forestry and Wildland Fire Program contract amendment request to the United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs for operations and maintenance of forestry facilities on the Big Cypress and Brighton Seminole Indian Reservations
- Resolution 15: United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs Self-Determination Act contract to design and construct the Brighton Forestry and Wildland Fire Facility on the Brighton Seminole Indian Reservation
- Resolution 16: United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs Water Resource Management planning and predevelopment program application for funding of the Brighton Seminole Indian Reservation Water Rights Quantification Study
- Resolution 18: Appointment of designated plan administrator for the Seminole Tribe of Florida amended and restated supplemental executive retirement plan; investment

advisory committee members; amendment to Wells Fargo documents

- Resolution 19: Prescription Drug Benefit consulting agreement among the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Seminole Tribe of Florida Inc. and Integrated Health Concepts LLC.
- Resolution 28: Pharmacy benefit management agreements among the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Seminole Tribe of Florida Inc. and Express Scripts Inc.
- Resolution 29: Supporting the organization of the Seminole Youth Council
- Resolution 30: Adoption of safety manual for use by Seminole Tribe of Florida employees
- Resolution 33: National Park Service Historic Preservation Fund Grant application for fiscal year 2011; ratification
- Resolution 34: Filming permission letter granting Plum TV LLC permission to film a television segment at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino-Hollywood; ratification
- Resolution 39: Seminole Tribe of Florida filming permission letter granting Ocean Mysteries LLC permission to film a television show segment on the Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation; ratification
- Resolution 47: Amended and restated Seminole Gaming Division Educational Assistance Program
- Resolution 54: Approval of agreement with Turner Construction Co. for the construction of a parking garage and casino expansion at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino-Tampa; limited waiver of sovereign immunity

JOHNS From page 3A



Rachel Buxton

Johns educates a group of Tribal youth about Seminole culture.

“I worked there for a while, but I never could get settled in Hollywood, so I resigned and went back to cowboying,” Johns said.

Johns belonged outdoors. It was what he knew, so he packed up and moved back to Brighton in the early '80s where he met and married his wife, Mary, who he was married to for 30 years.

He stayed outdoors ranching and working cows until he went to work for the State, on their brucellosis program, a disease carried by cattle that causes them to abort.

In the late '90s Johns returned to the Tribe as the education director again, only this time remaining in

“I’ve always wanted to study history,” he said. “It’s kind of funny because I wanted to learn more about my people, but to really learn history in general, I had to take a lot of courses in European history and study other kinds of people.”

Johns admitted that one reason he wanted the history degree was because it gave him the opportunity to attend law school if he ever leaned that way.

After completing his history degree and finally feeling like he had everything in order, his life changed forever.

Johns discovered he had Leukemia.

“It was really by accident or might have even been a prayer really,” Johns said.

He was trying to lose weight and get into shape, so he visited a weight-loss doctor and had routine blood work taken in order to be accepted into the program. When his blood work came back, the doctor told him he needed to consult with another doctor because he was not a good candidate for their program in his condition.

“I was thinking what, what is this guy talking about?” Johns said.

He followed up with doctors at the clinic and then a hematologist in Sebring where doctors confirmed he had Chronic Lymphoma.

In the early 2000s he began chemotherapy that lasted for eight months. Each month he spent a day in the hospital where he was administered an IV drip.

“The doctors kept telling me, ‘We’ll treat it until you die,’ so I always thought I was going to die,” Johns said. “You get those thoughts in your head, but that’s just pity talk.”

While undergoing treatment Johns worked for the Culture Department in Brighton, which allowed him to focus on his recovery and also do a few talks and some research.

Johns beat the cancer and was offered the director position for the Culture Department but turned it down to join the museum in 2006.

“It was an in for me to do what I wanted and studied,” Johns said.

As the community outreach coordinator for Brighton, Johns travels around speaking on the topic that engaged him to go back to school: Seminole Indians.

CASINO From page 3A

Recently retired former Jacksonville Jaguars/New England Patriots NFL All-Pro running back Fred Taylor also participated in the event to raise funds and awareness for his charity, the Fred Taylor Foundation, which began in 2009 to help socioeconomic and physically challenged children while striving to improve their quality of life, according to the foundation’s website. Taylor raised \$500 for his charity and said the Tribe’s accomplished history inspired him to be a part of the evening.

“What they (the Seminole Tribe) have done is amazing,” Taylor said. “I would love to leave a legacy like they have, and it made me want to be a part of something like this type of event.”



Chris C. Jenkins

Retired Miami Dolphin and Dallas Cowboy defensive linebacker Zach Thomas makes his next move in the finals of the blackjack action on Aug. 31. The Seminole Casino of Coconut Creek has helped raise more than \$590,000 at events like this one since 2001.

Johns works with museums across the country, including the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., where he writes articles on Seminole topics such as stomp dance and warfare. He is a member of numerous organizations, including the Okeechobee Battle Friends, the Seminole War Society and the Florida Cattleman’s Association.

You never know where he is going to be, but you’re definitely not going to find him in his office. One day he may be in Naples doing a talk for Kiwanis, another he may be in St. Augustine where he is an adviser for the 450-year celebration and another he might be in Cherokee, N.C. helping start up their Corn Dance.

“I just like to be active,” he said. “I like to be involved and always moving, never stale.”

He explained how the Seminoles are the central theme of his doings, that they are all he knows and that it’s his business to know as much as he can about his people.

“I’m about education and I believe in education and I like teaching others,” Johns said. “If we don’t teach it, no one else will. I think it’s pretty cool to tell a story that people haven’t heard and they look at you and think, ‘He knows that.’”

Johns also stays busy as a member of the Seminole Tribal Court, with hopes to one day become a judge for his people, fulfilling his dream of going to law school. He has also become an entrepreneur with a barbecue sauce company, called Cow Creek, which he started with his cousin Alex Johns.

Asked about slowing down and taking time off, Johns said absolutely not.

“As long as I’m productive, I want to keep working. Our people don’t have that many folks my age that want to continue to go on, and we need those folks in the workforce to be mentors and to guide the little pups.”

Johns said he has no regrets and has enjoyed every part of his life and his accomplishments.

“When I think I’m having a regret moment I usually shake it off,” he said. “Everything happens for a reason. It’s not for me to decide what’s what. So, would I do it over? Yes, in a heart beat, but I wouldn’t change anything.”

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Tribe hosts important Native business event for the first time

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — The National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development (NCAIED) made its first appearance in Seminole Country as part of a two-day opportunity to promote the growth and development of Native businesses.

The multifaceted event featured corporate entities, Tribal leaders and Indian businesses with an American Indian Business Opportunity Fair (AIBOF), a Native American 40 under 40 Reception and the Indian Progress in Business Awards Banquet (INPRO) held Sept. 7-8 at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino.

“The whole idea behind the center (NCAIED) has always been to promote Indian-owned businesses for survival sake, so Tribal citizens can take care of themselves,” said Joel M. Frank Sr., longtime NCAIED Board of Directors member. “We want to continue to bring industry to the reservations. This type of event was to encourage networking where Natives are able to someday submit contracts. They (the young people) need to be competitive and go out there to see that whole new world and be aware of it and reach out beyond the Tribe.”

Tribal Board President Tony Sanchez Jr. also made a special guest speaking appearance in support of the organization.

“It is always great when people come to our property, especially this type of group,” President Sanchez said. “It is nice that people can also recognize the challenges we (Seminoles) have overcome. I was honored and overwhelmed with the chance to address everyone.”

“I believe in the fact that you have to be an Indian 24 hours a day, and we

(as Natives) have to continue to protect our sovereignty through these types of events,” he continued.

Also in attendance throughout the event were Tribal Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr. of the Brighton Reservation and Hollywood and Big Cypress Tribal Board Reps. Christopher Osceola and Joe Frank.

Margo Gray-Proctor, chairwoman of the Board for NCAIED, said with more than half a million businesses represented by NCAIED, the generosity and example the Tribe has set by their own success and as the host for the event was a great example of Native comradery and leadership.

“We (NCAIED) want to promote Native-to-Native buying and business, and the Seminole Tribe has been so good to us. We have begun such a close relationship with them. They have been so gracious,” Gray-Proctor said.

In its third year, another featured aspect of NCAIED was the 40 under 40 list, which highlighted and recognized the brightest Natives in all fields of work across the U.S. younger than the age of 40. It celebrates their accomplishments in business, community and the personal aspects of their life and included Tribal attorney Travis Trueblood.

Thirteen NCAIED scholarship presentations were also made to several Native college and graduate students majoring in business.

NCAIED is a nonprofit organization, founded and directed by Native Americans, that commits itself to developing businesses for Indians. It is the first national organization solely dedicated to developing American Indian economic self-sufficiency through business ownership, according to its website. It was created by American Indians in Los Angeles, Calif. in 1969 and was originally named the Urban Indian Development Association (UIDA). For more information, visit www.ncaied.org.



Chris C. Jenkins

Joel M. Frank Sr., Tribal Grants director and Board of Directors member for the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development, shows off a custom-crafted Native sculpture presented to him by National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development (NCAIED) Chairwoman Margo Gray-Proctor for all his years of service to the organization.

Big Cypress 4-H High Spirits Horse Club kicks off buckle speed series



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal citizen/Tribal adult competitor Toi Andrews places her flag in a barrel during the adult category's flag race. The next and final three race events in the series are scheduled for Oct. 1, Nov. 5 and Dec. 3. All races begin at 10 a.m. inside the Big Cypress Rodeo Arena.



Naji Tobias


The 4-H youth participants from the Big Cypress 4-H High Spirits Horse Club's buckle speed series event on Sept. 3 show off their ribbons for their achievements in the following eight events: hollow log, poles, key hole, hairpin, Texas barrels, barrels, flag race and boot race.



Naji Tobias

Nicholus Andrews rides his horse in the hairpin competition of the Big Cypress 4-H High Spirits Horse Club racing series on Sept. 3 – the first of four total events to be held at the Big Cypress Rodeo Arena.

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Big Cypress 4-H opens season with Fun Day




Naji Tobias

Ricky Garza pets a baby calf during the Big Cypress 4-H Department's Fun Day.




Naji Tobias

Nashoba Gonzalez holds up a baby goat at the Big Cypress Rodeo Grounds on Aug. 24.



United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Seminole Agency
6100 Hollywood Boulevard, Suite 206
Hollywood, Florida 33024
(954) 983 1537
(954) 983 5018 fax



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

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

ACTION: Notice of Availability (NOA)

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for approving the construction and lease of a home on a 1.5 acre parcel for Resha Lee Doctor on trust property within the Big Cypress Indian Reservation of the Seminole Indian Tribe of Florida. The home site is located off of 30711 Melaleuca Trail (Township 48 South, Range 33 East, Section 12), within the Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation, Hendry County, Florida. The BIA has approved and adopted the Environmental Assessment (EA), dated June 2011, prepared by the Seminole Tribe of Florida Environmental Resource Management Department and entitled "Resha Lee Doctor New Home Site Lease, Seminole Tribe of Florida, Big Cypress Reservation, Hendry County, Florida". This EA has been adopted and FONSI issued for the approval of the home construction and lease of trust lands in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.

NOTICE: This is a Notice of Availability (NOA), that the EA and FONSI for the Federal action of approving the proposed home construction and lease of trust property are available for public review. The BIA has approved and adopted the above referenced EA which addressed this proposal. The FONSI determination was based on review and analysis of the information in the EA. Based on the EA, it has been determined that the action will not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment, therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. You may obtain a copy of the EA and FONSI from the BIA Eastern Regional Office or the Environmental Resources Management Department of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, 6365 Taft Street, Suite 3008, Hollywood, FL 33024, telephone (954) 965-4380.

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

For further information please contact Kurt G. Chandler, Regional Environmental Scientist, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Eastern Regional Office, 345 Marriott Drive, Suite 700, Nashville, TN 37214, telephone (615) 564-6832.

Kurt G. Chandler Date: 6/28/2011
Superintendent, Seminole Agency
Bureau of Indian Affairs

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

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

ACTION: Notice of Availability (NOA)

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is issuing a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for approving the construction and lease of a home on trust property for Nichole Billie. The approximately 1.5 acre lot is located off of Bear Clan Lane within the Tribe's Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation (BCSIR), in Hendry County, Florida (Township 48 South, Range 33 East, Section 02). The BIA has approved and adopted the Environmental Assessment (EA), dated July 2011, prepared by the Seminole Tribe of Florida Environmental Resource Management Department and entitled "Nichole Billie New Home Site Lease, Seminole Tribe of Florida, Big Cypress Reservation, Hendry County, Florida". This EA has been adopted and FONSI issued for the approval of the home construction and lease of trust lands in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.

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For further information please contact Kurt G. Chandler, Regional Environmental Scientist, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Eastern Regional Office, 345 Marriott Drive, Suite 700, Nashville, TN 37214, telephone (615) 564-6832.

Kurt G. Chandler Date: 7/25/2011
Acting Superintendent, Seminole Agency
Bureau of Indian Affairs



Immokalee preschoolers are assisted by Tribal leaders during the ribbon cutting ceremony at their new school.



Former Council Rep. David Cypress, Immokalee Preschool Site Manager Michelle Ford and Seminole Design Inc. Building Contractor David Nunez welcome community members to the new facilities.

♦ GRAND OPENING

From page 1A

With an eye to the future, the Seminole Tribe established its own preschool on the old forestry property in 1999 and immediately realized the enrollment limitations because of the size of the facility. By the time new trailer classrooms arrived, the school was again bursting at the seams and unable to accommodate the growing list of children requiring their services.

"I grew up in an era when education for our Tribal citizens was limited and one of my lifelong dreams was to see our community equipped to provide our children with the educational start that they deserve," said former Immokalee Liaison Elaine Aguilar. "Today my dream has become a reality. Not only do we have an adequate preschool, but we are blessed with a community center that can double as an emergency shelter."

Following the invocation by Pastors Bruce Pratt and Josh LeadingFox, the preschoolers led the Pledge of Allegiance and the Manteee. All of the Seminole Tribal communities were represented by their leaders or community members wanting to share in the momentous occasion.

"Today the Tribe is meeting its financial commitment," said President Tony Sanchez Jr. "However, the school will only be successful if we, the people, meet our commitment through the attendance of the students and our parental responsibilities."

Voicing the importance of education for both individual and Tribal survival, the following dignitaries approached the podium and agreed that education is a worthwhile investment that pays the biggest dividends: Chairman's Administrator Danny Tommie, Big Cypress Council Rep. Mondo Tiger, Hollywood Council Rep. Marcellus Osceola Jr., Immokalee Council Liaison Kenny Joe Davis Sr., Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank, Hollywood Board Rep. Christopher Osceola, Brighton Board Rep. Larry Howard Sr. and Immokalee Board Liaison Dorothy Scheffler.

"The people of Immokalee have wanted, asked for and deserved this Preschool and Community Center for a long time," said former Council Rep. David Cypress. "Unfortunately, it isn't always possible to accomplish our goals as quickly as we would like. Especially, with the rapid growth that has taken place within the Seminole Tribe during the past few decades. I am very happy to be a part of this outstanding achievement that will help to ensure our future and promote the preservation of our culture."

It may have been more than 20 years on the drawing board, but it only took 15 months for Tribal member David Nunez of Seminole Design Inc. to construct the state-of-the-art facility in partnership with DeAngelis Diamond Construction. Architect Robert McIntyre created the structure on paper and Construction Manager Ron Bobrowski was instrumental in making it a reality.

The preschoolers officiated at the ribbon cutting ceremony with

the assistance of the Tribal dignitaries and then joined the crowd for the luncheon buffet and Open House activities. The building was lavishly decorated in a Candyland theme for the grand opening and first day of school.

The 20,000-square-foot building comprises a preschool that will be capable of accommodating a generous influx of students and a community center/emergency shelter. Extremely security conscious, the entrance, all classrooms and corridors require coded keys and passes for admittance.

The preschool occupies one wing of the building and is designed to handle five separate age groups with a series of large classrooms, administrative offices, a conference room, storage areas, a cafeteria, open air porch and fully equipped playground with artificial turf. The nursery has an infant playroom, sleep area, outdoor sun room, a half kitchen and bathing facilities.

On the opposite side, the community wing has a capacity of 400 people with theater-style seating or 200 when dining tables are in use. Its purposed use is community meetings, council meetings, temporary training workshops or an emergency shelter. The entire building is served by an enormous generator capable of operating the facility for several weeks if necessary.

A centrally located kitchen has all commercial appliances, a walk in cooler, freezer, pantry and storage area that can serve both entities. In addition, large bathrooms with showers and a laundry room have shared access.

"My two sons received their start in the Immokalee Preschool," said Immokalee Council Liaison Kenny Joe Davis Sr. as he toured the new facility. "It gave them a sense of culture, community and family while providing them with the tools necessary to compete in the public school system. I know how much my children benefited under limited circumstances. I can't help but think that the sky will be the limit for the graduates of this new facility."

Site Manager Ford introduced her staff and thanked everyone for their dedication to the preschool program and diligence that made the new school a reality. She said, "I thank my mom, Elaine Aguilar, for persistently refusing to accept no for an answer and supporting our cause for so many long years. My gratitude goes to the Tribal leaders, both past and present, Preschool Director Leona Tommie Williams, community members and parents who have made this possible."

"Thank you cannot convey the feelings that I have for my extraordinary staff members who are totally committed to the school. They have put in long days and weekends making today possible," continued Ford. "Last, but not least, I want to acknowledge Douglas 'Butch' Dell and David Thompson Jr. from the Hollywood Buildings and Grounds. These two hard-working men literally moved our entire center by themselves in just six days and had us up and running for today's grand opening and first day of school."

♦ FSU

From page 1A

Ahfachkee Lady Warriors girls' basketball head coach/FSU alum Kristin Stoots couldn't agree more with Cypress' assessment of the experience.

"The most overwhelming feeling I had was pride," Stoots said. "I was proud of our athletes and the athletic program. I was proud to be standing next to Seminole students and to hear the crowd explode as they spoke of their accomplishments. I felt chills throughout my body as the announcer spoke about the Tribe. I am proud to be a part of a program that is making history."

Ahfachkee Warriors boys' basketball head coach Antonio Wright shared his reflections of the big moment.

"On this day (Sept. 10), the resilient posterity of the Seminole Tribe of Florida was vindicated for past atrocities and systematic disenfranchisement against their ancestors and predecessors," Wright said.

"Without pun, the playing field was leveled, thus justifying the fight for equality in all endeavors associated with the Tribe. Osceola and Renegade, though in mock form, served as a reminder of the undying relentlessness of the Seminole," the Warriors boys' basketball coach continued.

FSU President Eric Barron, who invited the Ahfachkee Warriors

athletic program to his home for a pregame meal and pep rally, talked about his excitement for their fledgling entity.

"They're off to a wonderful start," Barron said. "I'm proud of what their future is going to be like. I'm hoping we'll see them [the Tribal athletes] as FSU students someday. It feels great to have them at the house and to celebrate their success as a program. I can't think of a better way to put the best foot forward at the university than having the Seminoles here with us."

Ahfachkee Warriors student activities coordinator Randall Cleckler spoke of how the trip signified a culmination of purpose, accomplishment and identity.

"It is up to our younger students to continue the program that this group of athletes started," Cleckler said. "It took a lot of a hard work, courage, pride and a never-quit attitude that has made this program happen. These student-athletes deserve the same commitment to excel in this program and move on to the next level of competition."

Cleckler went on to credit the Tribal leadership for making the moment possible for the entire Ahfachkee Warriors athletic program.

"It's great to know that the Tribal leaders are willing to invest so much in the lives of our Ahfachkee students and athletes," Cleckler said. "Their efforts in allowing events such as these are so monumental in the lives of our children. These experiences are lifelong educational experiences that are tangible and can be used for the good in their lives forever."



Naji Tobias

Florida State University Lady Spirithunters member Caitlin Hall, left, gets Ahfachkee Warriors athlete Taylor Pratt, right, prepped up for the Sept. 10 FSU-Charleston Southern game at the FSU president's home as she paints garnet and gold war stripes on his face.

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Randee Osceola named Miss Florida Pre-Teen Cover Girl

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Writer

IMMOKALEE — "Dreams can come true!" exclaimed Tribal citizen Randee Osceola when she was crowned National American Miss Florida Pre-Teen Cover Girl at the state pageant on July 23. She comprised one of approximately 250 entrants in the three-day event hosted at the Orlando Hyatt Hotel & Resort.

The enterprising 12-year-old joined 94 other young ladies contending for the four teenage categories, which followed stringent requirements based on school grade averages, interviews, social potential, community services, evening gown presentation and advertisement sales.

In addition to being awarded her official state crown, banner, trophy and state ambassadorship for most advertising sales, Randee received a special invitation to compete at the National Pageant to be held during Thanksgiving week in Anaheim, Calif.

Randee began following her dream three years ago when she first entered the pageant while attending school in Maryland. She was recommended by her teachers for her outstanding scholastic and social achievements. A sports enthusiast, she participates in basketball, softball and soccer.

The National American Miss Pageants are dedicated to celebrating America's greatness and encouraging its future leaders. Their focus is on developing the success of young women through programs that are age appropriate and family oriented. Pageants are held in each state for girls from 4 to 18 years old in five different divisions with a national final.

The pageant program is based on inner beauty, as well as poise, presentation and all-American spirit. Emphasis is placed upon the importance of gaining self-confidence, learning new skills, developing a positive competitive attitude and achieving personal goals.

Each year they award \$1.5 million in cash, scholarships and prizes to recognize and assist in the development of young women nationwide. This year National Pageants has added the ultimate door prize



Photo courtesy of Geraldine Osceola

Randee Osceola is crowned National American Miss Florida Pre-Teen Cover Girl.

to the Nationals 2011. Each girl who qualifies for the national pageant has a chance to win a new 2011 Ford Mustang convertible.

"Achieving this title wasn't just all about me," Randee Osceola said. "I owe a great deal to my mom, Geraldine Osceola; my dad, Randall Byrd; grandma, Ruth Osceola; and the Seminole Tribe of Florida. Their sponsorship, encouragement and support have made it all possible. Modeling has given me an opportunity to meet new people, exchange ideas and pursue my love of travel."

Naples community take a Labor Day boating excursion

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Writer

NAPLES — Naples community members gathered with their children on the boat dock of a local marina on Sept. 3 to embark on a day of fun on the water in celebration of the end of summer vacation and the beginning of the new school year and Labor Day.

Six boats with their captains were chartered for the day's activities. Weighing anchor at 8 a.m., the small flotilla cruised down Naples Bay to the entrance of Gordon Pass, the back bays of the Conservancy and the inland water passage to Marco Island.

While some members of the group chose to spend the day fishing, others landed on Keewaydin Island to swim, sunbath and find shells or divided their time between their options. A rare opportunity prevailed when a bald eagle descended from the sky into the water in search of a fish right before their eyes.

It was an excellent day for fishing and the anglers shared success in every age group. Preschooler O.B. Osceola III caught several fish and couldn't wait to drop his line in the water. Maggie Porter garnered the catch of the day with a beautiful snook, and Corinne Zepeda wowed the younger generation with her blowfish. Mackerel and redfish dominated the catch.

A large picnic lunch and refreshments fueled the energy for the day's activities. By late afternoon storm clouds began to gather overhead and the seafarers retraced their route up the channel, through the mangroves, to their landing where they shared their bounty of the day and traded fish tales.



Photo courtesy of Marissa Osceola

Marissa Osceola lands a beautiful mackerel on the Labor Day fishing trip.




Photo courtesy of Marissa Osceola

Corinne Zepeda stares in wonder at the blowfish that she caught near Gordon Pass.




Photo courtesy of Marissa Osceola

Cousins Corrine Zepeda and Jessica Osceola embark upon a boating adventure.



United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Seminole Agency
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Hollywood, Florida 33024
(954) 983 1537
(954) 983 5018 fax.



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

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

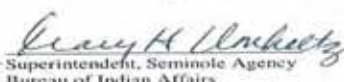
ACTION: Notice of Availability (NOA)

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for approving the construction and lease of homes on 16 lots located off of Mabel T. Frank Way, within a total of 23.83 acres of trust property for Tribal members: Jade Jim, Robert Blackfox Cypress, Richard Doctor, Gary McIntruff, Brande Clay, Chauncey Osceola, Taylor Osceola, Monica Cypress, Janice Cypress, April Baker, Nelson Macelroy, Mary Anne Doctor, Veronica Doctor, Virgil Doctor, David Doctor, and Vacant Lot 004 (Lot A). Each lease site is approximately 1.5 acre in size and is located at (Township 48 South, Range 33 East, Section 02), which is located on the Seminole Tribe of Florida's Big Cypress Reservation. The BIA has approved and adopted the Environmental Assessment (EA), dated June 2011, prepared by the Seminole Tribe of Florida Environmental Resource Management Department and entitled "Mabel T. Frank Proposed Leases, Seminole Tribe of Florida, Big Cypress Reservation, Hendry County, Florida". This EA has been adopted and FONSI issued for the approval of the home construction and lease of trust lands in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.

NOTICE: This is a Notice of Availability (NOA), that the EA and FONSI for the Federal action of approving the proposed home construction and lease of trust property are available for public review. The BIA has approved and adopted the above referenced EA which addressed this proposal. The FONSI determination was based on review and analysis of the information in the EA. Based on the EA, it has been determined that the action will not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment; therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. You may obtain a copy of the EA and FONSI from the BIA Eastern Regional Office or the Environmental Resources Management Department of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, 6365 Taft Street, Suite 3008, Hollywood, FL 33024, telephone (954) 965-4380.

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

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



Date: 6/23/2011

Superintendent, Seminole Agency
Bureau of Indian Affairs

Hollywood youth compete during Community Field Day



Photo above left: Seminole Recreation aide Ashley Wilcox, second from left, is joined by participants Chris Turner, Quinton Wilson and Trey Wilson. The Aug. 20 event featured several indoor and outdoor activities for Tribal youth and teens with trophies and ribbons at the Recreation gym. Photo above right: Joshua Osceola holds two water balloons awaiting his next victim in the water balloon toss. Photo left: Tribal youth get set for a race toward the finish in the 40-yard dash on the softball fields.

Chris C. Jenkins



Preparing pets for a hurricane

BY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Living in Florida, one is quickly made aware of the importance of hurricane preparedness. Residents can usually recite, by heart, the important contents of a hurricane kit, routes to safety and directions on how to prepare one's home for tropical-force winds. Unfortunately, during all the preparations and excitement, many forget about the family pet until it's too late.

The most important thing to remember when hurricane season draws near is to start preparations early. You will want to begin by asking your veterinarian if he or she will board dogs or if he or she can suggest a place that will accept animals should an evacuation be called. This is essential because most emergency shelters will not allow animals. Additionally, for the sake of your pet and others, make sure that your pets' vaccination records are up to date. Find out what additional vaccinations may be required to board your pet.

Family pets should never be left at home or in a car when an evacuation is called! Not only can a storm be traumatizing to an abandoned pet, but there are many risks involved as well. Power outages can cause temperatures to rise to unbearable levels; there is a risk of flooding, flying debris or wind damage; and remember, it may be an extended period before you may return to your home. No matter how sheltered you believe your home may be, no matter how much food or water you think you can leave out for your pet, it is a dangerous and unnecessary risk to take.

The following items should be included in a special kit for each individual pet:

- A carrier to transport your pet in: Bear in mind that this carrier should be large enough for your pet to turn around and lie down comfortably. In the event of an evacuation, cage space may be limited, and your pet may have to stay in the carrier.
- A blanket or bed to lie upon: Ideally, this should fit inside your pet's carrier and will help to not only make it more comfortable but will also help keep it from slipping and falling if moved.
- Personal belonging: Be sure to leave your pet with a favorite toy or a personal belonging of yours that carries your scent to help ease his fears. Evacuations can be very traumatic to pets, and it helps them to have something familiar among all the strange noises and odors.
- Medical records and medicines: This is essential, as some shelters will not allow your pet

in if you do not have an up-to-date shot record. Additionally, it is highly recommended that, should your pet have any serious conditions or require special medication, you not only make sure to provide the medicine that it needs but also make sure to post a visible tag on its carrier, drawing attention to this fact.

- Food: Ensure that your pet has a two-week supply of dry food for workers to feed it and be sure that it is stored in an air-tight container. Wet food is not recommended unless you can provide it in single-serving containers. Should there be a power outage, there will be no refrigeration available. It is highly recommended that you post your pet's usual feeding schedule on the top of the carrier, which will maintain a routine that is similar to its normal home life and will help keep your pet as stress-free as possible.

- Water: This is commonly overlooked, but it's important to provide your pet with a two-week supply of water, and, ideally, this should be the very same water that it is used to drinking at home. People don't always realize this, but water differs from area to area, and suddenly changing your pet's water can lead to bowel disruption and unneeded stress. Several milk jugs, well rinsed and filled with tap water, can be plainly marked with your pet's name using a permanent marker.

- Collars/leashes: Remember that your dogs and cats may need to be moved or taken out for some exercise. For this reason, you will need to provide a collar or harness and a leash. It's also a good idea to be sure that your pet's collar bears a tag that provides owner information that is up to date. Having your pet microchipped is also an inexpensive and painless method of emergency identification.

- Contact information: Be sure to post your name, address and phone number on the top of your pet's carrier. If possible, also provide information on where you will evacuate.

No one can stop natural disasters from occurring, but people can prepare so that when they do happen, everyone can evacuate to a safer place. Ensuring that your pet has its own hurricane preparedness kit will help save time, should an emergency evacuation be called and will help keep your four-legged family member safe. Follow these steps and, before long, everyone will be reunited with tails wagging!

For additional information about pet sheltering and emergency preparedness for pets, please contact the Seminole Tribe of Florida Animal Control Division at 954-965-1300 ext. 10363.

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Indian Removal Act of 1830 latest topic of Seminole Moments



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal citizen and Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum Community Outreach Specialist Everett Osceola discusses the Indian Removal Act of 1830 at the Seminole Moments presentation.

BY CHRIS C. JENKINS
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Tribal citizen Everett Osceola, Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum community outreach specialist, shed light on one of the most important and controversial aspects of the Seminoles' legacy in the latest Seminole Moments series presentation on Aug. 19.

The Tribal Headquarters Auditorium once again hosted the discussion for Tribal employees centering on the Indian Removal Act of 1830.

The May 28, 1830 law — passed by Congress and signed by President Andrew Jackson — called for the removal of Native Americans still residing east of the Mississippi River, relocating them to new homes west of the river.

The South strongly supported the act by an order to access lands occupied by what was termed the Five Civilized Tribes (the Cherokees, Chickasaws, Choctaws, Creeks and Seminoles). Amid pressure, many of the Native American leaders went on to sign removal treaties.

"For us (as Natives) it was taking 100,000 plus of us out of our homes," Osceola said of the process.

The first removal treaty to be signed after the act was the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek in September 1830. With the treaty completed in 1831, the Choctaws of Mississippi ceded their land east of the Mississippi River in exchange for payment and lands in the West.

Osceola said that an estimated 75,000 Natives died



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal employee Stephan Sanford of the Payroll Department asks a question on the differences in the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma versus the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

throughout the removal, which also became known as the infamous Trail of Tears.

After the U.S. acquired Florida from Spain via the Adams-Onís Treaty of 1821, efforts were made for more than a decade to move the Seminoles of Florida onto suitable lands and assimilate them with the Creek Tribe as part of a meeting at Payne's Landing on the Ocklawaha River beginning in 1832.

The Seminoles fought to keep their land and never formally signed a peace treaty with the U.S. government, which they are known for worldwide. The Tribe fought in the backdrop of the Everglades swamplands along with other groups, including African-American fugitive slaves (known as Gullahs) who escaped from coastal South Carolina and Georgia rice plantations.

The Seminoles' fight also continued into the second and third Seminole Wars from 1835-55 with many of their brethren moving on and forced into Oklahoma, establishing what is now known as the Seminole Nation.

"Our Native people will never forget about such a tragic moment," Osceola said. "Even though we had a tragic history we are still here. We all survived."

Tribal employee Stephan Sanford said the presentation was both informative and interesting.

"I liked and enjoyed it. He (Everett) got in-depth, and it all came from a Seminole," Sanford said. "He was affected by it. There were also feelings attached to it. It still resonates with them even with all of their success today."

The Seminole Tribune goes digital

September marked the launching of two new digital ventures for *The Seminole Tribune*: a website and a Facebook fan page.

The website, www.seminoletribune.org, will feature the articles readers see in *The Tribune's* print edition, as well as additional photos from those events and events not covered in the paper. Readers will also have the opportunity to voice their opinions online by posting comments on articles. The launching of the website will provide one more venue for *The Tribune* to spread the word about important Seminole events and issues throughout the community and Indian Country.

In addition to the new website, *The Seminole Tribune* created a Facebook fan page in an attempt

to create even more interaction between *The Tribune* and its readers. Tribune staff will update the fan page with the latest news from the Seminole Tribe of Florida, with photos and even with upcoming events to keep the community informed between print editions. Tribune readers are encouraged to become a "fan" of the page and are encouraged to leave comments on the page as well. Simply search *The Seminole Tribune* in the search function on Facebook to locate it.

And as always, please feel free to e-mail *The Tribune* with any thoughts, questions or concerns at brettdaly@seminoletribune.com; or mail them to 3560 N State Road 7, Hollywood, FL 33021.

Big Cypress Culture Department hosts campfire and storytelling session



Big Cypress Culture's Victor Billie, left, conducts the storytelling session as he talks to the Big Cypress Tribal citizens for approximately 30 minutes — primarily in the Mikasuki language — about the importance of showing their appreciation for the Earth's creation and reverencing a higher authority in their lives during the Sept. 8 event. "We are not alone," Billie said. "The Creator is the one who has given us hope and strength to go on with our lives. He is the reason why we are all here today."

Naji Tobias



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal seniors Theresa Jumper, left, Louise Osceola, center, and Virginia Tommie grab a mix of Americanized and Seminole Indian food just prior to the start of the campfire cookout and storytelling session.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal senior Thomas M.A. Billie passes by the Seminole-style fry bread and banana bread and fills his plate with some Americanized food to go along with his Sofkee drink.



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New Trail Liaison Huggins holds community appreciation dinner

“This gathering was something to give back to the community as a thank you,” said newly elected Trail Reservation Liaison Norman Huggins. “The people asked me to run so I did and we (as a community) are just trying to catch up with everyone else now. It is my job and pleasure to work for my people.” Huggins assumed office on Aug. 4.



Chris C. Jenkins

Newly elected Trail Reservation Liaison Norman Huggins, second from right, with family members and supporters as part of the Huggins appreciation dinner in celebration of his first term as an elected official on the Huggins camp grounds on the Trail Reservation Aug. 11.



Chris C. Jenkins

From left, Kelvin and Paris Huggins and Jayden Billie are all smiles as they take a picture break while jumping in the bounce house.



Chris C. Jenkins

Adrian Billie, 7-month-old grandson of Liaison Huggins, nibbles on some corn during dinner.

Seminole Tribe of Florida employee retires after 32 years of service



Brett Daly

Pete Russo, loan and rental property servicing manager, and Robin Osceola, Council Rep. assistant, present Green with a special Seminole-inspired cane for his 32 years of service to the Seminole Tribe of Florida at his retirement luncheon.

BY BRETT DALY
Senior Editor

HOLLYWOOD — For 32 years, Bob Green devoted himself to the Seminole Tribe of Florida’s Housing Department. To recognize his outstanding commitment to the Tribe, current and former co-workers, as well as family and friends, honored Green with a retirement luncheon at the Ark Restaurant in Davie on Aug. 12. Around 50 people gathered at the restaurant to celebrate Green’s accomplishments, where they enjoyed a buffet lunch and watched as co-workers presented Green with a special Seminole-inspired cane. Green has required the assistance of a cane since beginning with the Tribe, so his co-workers thought the gift would serve as a perfect reminder for Green of his time with the Seminole Tribe of Florida. Now that he has retired, Green plans on spending more time with his 23 grandchildren and playing golf. He would love to one day play on the St. Andrews Golf Course in Scotland.

Tribal athletics highlight Seminole Moments Session in Big Cypress



Naji Tobias

Seminole Moments presenter Everett Osceola spoke with Big Cypress Tribal citizens and employees about the history of Seminole Athletics in an Aug. 24 Seminole Moments presentation.

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Seminole Moments presenter Everett Osceola spoke with Big Cypress Tribal citizens and employees about the history of Seminole Athletics and how it shaped the Tribe over the years in an Aug. 24 presentation held at the Big Cypress Community Center. Osceola highlighted several Seminole Hall of Fame athletes such as the late Tribal pioneer Betty Mae Jumper; Seminole Recreation Director Moses “Big Shot” Jumper; and David Jumper a.k.a. “The Bare Foot Seminole.” Also highlighted were Tribal wrestling legend/former Big Cypress Tribal Council Rep. David Cypress; Tribal Hall of Famer/former Pittsburgh Pirates player Harry Billie (first-ever Seminole to play in Major League Baseball); Tribal athlete Peter Hahn; and Hollywood Tribal citizen/former FAU football standout Jarrid Smith, among many others. For detailed information on these Tribal athletes and much more, visit www.seminolerec.com.



United States Department of the Interior

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Seminole Agency

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

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

ACTION: Notice of Availability (NOA)

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for approving the construction and lease of homes, including access roads, on 2.06 acres for Amy Cox and 2.54 acres for Roy Cypress, on trust property within the Big Cypress Indian Reservation of the Seminole Indian Tribe of Florida. The Amy Cox home site is accessed from Cat's Claw Lane (Township 48 South, Range 33 East, Section 1), and the Roy Cypress home site is located just south of String Fern Lane (Township 48 South, Range 33 East, Section 01), with both roads accessed from Northwest Canal Street within the Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation, Hendry County, Florida. The BIA has approved and adopted the Environmental Assessment (EA), dated June 2011, prepared by the Seminole Tribe of Florida Environmental Resource Management Department and entitled "Amy Cox and Roy Cypress Proposed Lease, Seminole Tribe of Florida, Big Cypress Reservation, Hendry County, Florida". This EA has been adopted and FONSI issued for the approval of the home construction and lease of trust lands in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.

NOTICE: This is a Notice of Availability (NOA), that the EA and FONSI for the Federal action of approving the proposed home construction and lease of trust property are available for public review. The BIA has approved and adopted the above referenced EA which addressed this proposal. The FONSI determination was based on review and analysis of the information in the EA. Based on the EA, it has been determined that the action will not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment; therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. You may obtain a copy of the EA and FONSI from the BIA Eastern Regional Office or the Environmental Resources Management Department of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, 6365 Taft Street, Suite 3008, Hollywood, FL 33024, and telephone (954) 965-4380.

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

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



Supervising, Seminole Agency

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Date: 6/28/2011



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Editorial

Protect your money, rights

• James E. Billie

Very disturbing. That's the best way to describe unscrupulous people out there who try to take advantage of Seminoles when they find out we have money. It's a growing problem that we all must address. You know who these people are. You've seen them stalking our Tribal members, you've witnessed them pressuring Tribal members and overselling them vehicles or overcharging for repairs or pushing us into loans or mortgages we can never repay.

They do this just because we are Seminoles. And because they know we won't complain. We must be vigilant and expect to be treated differently when certain corrupt persons find out we are Seminole Indians. You see, the average wealthy person, I believe, will barter and bicker, back and forth, with sales people and others who may be trying to separate the man from his money. Unfortunately, the average Seminole will just pay the bill rather than complain about the price. This characteristic is then passed on from retailer to retailer, the most dishonest of whom will jack prices up and inflate charges, knowing that the Seminole is not going to argue but will just pay the bill.

It happens with everyone from the car salesman to the drug dealer, even including the so-called caretakers who are supposed to look after our Seminole elders but who often resort to unfair costs they would never dare to impose on seniors in other communities.

This unfortunate situation has grown up through the actions of our recent Tribal administration – not all of the leaders – but three of the top people in our system, men who were ripping their own people off, creating an atmosphere where Tribal members could not complain or object nor question what was going on. Those leaders are gone now but that attitude they nurtured – to pay the bill with no questions asked – continues on with many Seminoles when they go to the dealerships and the banks and the stores and buy new cars and houses and clothes.

As the people watched silently, these Tribal leaders turned away from the best interests of their constituents in favor of kickbacks. For example: a typical chickee hut is going to cost \$18-\$20 a square foot built on the reservation. But these leaders would allow someone to charge the Tribe \$30-40 a square foot, which would include their kickback, of course. Though Tribal members knew they were getting ripped off, they kept their mouths shut. People in the government system with a job knew there was a price to pay in getting and keeping a job, so they chose to stay quiet.

But you can be assured the present administration is doing what it can to get our business back into proper order, to protect Tribal members and ensure the quality of their existence on this earth. Current employees are learning that it is no longer business as it used to be. This Council is sticking together. We are going through every department, cleaning it out and trying to get back to normal. We are changing policies, programs and the whole structure. We will not be held down by the policies and procedures of the previous administration.

As the Tribe changes its way of doing business, so too must Tribal members. You must always remember there are people out there who want to take advantage of you. They make it their business to know what days you get your dividends. Some of them have stalked Tribal members as they walked out of the casino, begging for money.



I would advise all Tribal members to use direct deposit between the Tribe and your bank. It is a very easy and effective way to protect your money. I can understand why some Seminoles feel nervous about keeping their money in a bank, especially when we see all the bad news on TV or in the newspapers about banks failing and the U.S. government in a financial crisis. Many have lost their confidence in letting other people hold our money.

But right now, however, there is no better system. I hope you will have confidence in us. As Tribal leaders we will attempt to stay ahead of the game and keep our eyes and ears open to these issues, so we can alert Tribal members and take our own measures to circumvent any such trouble.

As the Tribe has prospered, it has become a dangerous time when our kids turn 18 and get access to their money, which the Tribe has saved for them all these years. We have already heard many stories where irresponsible spending has drained bank accounts in a short amount of time. Mortgages, money lenders, overpriced vehicles – some have fallen victim to drug dealers. Every 18-year-old person thinks he or she knows more than the people ahead of them. We all know that at the age of 18 you know everything there is to know in the world. . . . until you get totally screwed and come back to the Tribe asking for help and you hear us say, "I told you so."

Tribal youth, come to the Tribe for advice BEFORE it's too late. Please have the common sense to be aware of those who suddenly show up to take advantage of you when you receive your money. Parents, watch out for your offspring, help them, give them advice. The youth may not realize this, but you know that once the money is gone, it ain't comin' back.

This administration is determined to see you through all of these situations. We are determined to keep on the right track where we can benefit from, and maintain, our newfound wealth.

Right now we are hard at work on our budget and when the new budget has been passed, I will establish a date for all Tribal members to meet together under one roof, so we can explain the state the Tribe is in. We will discuss our problems regarding future enrollment, what circumstances will affect our dividends to be raised or lowered and bring you up to date on what monies have been spent right under your noses over the past 10 years. We will review a very serious potential problem that may bring our income down because of new casinos opening up around us.

While the rest of the United States and world is cutting down on employment, our previous leaders over-employed; the so-called sophisticated COOs (Chief Operating Officers) put in place several years back to increase our efficiency and better manage our income actually doubled the size of the government! While other governments of the world were laying off and cutting back on expenses, Seminole Tribe kept employing and employing and spending and spending. We are trying to curtail this now.

We will bring all these issues, everything, back into focus at our General Assembly. We will listen to our constituents. We want to know their insights on what we are doing and their feelings on how well we are doing. I hope to schedule this before Christmas. Sho naa bisha.

– James E. Billie is Chairman of the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

Status quo is gone

• Tony Sanchez Jr.

As you read these words, our new Seminole administration – Board and Council – are approaching 120 days of service to our Seminole Tribal members. Though that is a very short time, we have learned a lot about how the Tribe runs, its infrastructure, programs and policies.

Most importantly we have learned we can't accept the status quo.

The status quo that many in our Tribe are familiar with has led us into critical problem situations and created ways of doing business that we cannot allow to continue. We, the leaders, have a responsibility to implement policies and procedures that will benefit all Tribal members, not just certain individuals. Making these changes is going to ruffle some feathers, but that is what we were put in these positions to do.

An example from my own personal life has opened my eyes. I wanted a new home and I went to Seminole Housing. But, right away I wasn't getting any real answers to my questions. The pricing didn't seem right. I never realized a sense of comfort dealing with Housing. I didn't feel I was going to be treated fairly. I lacked the confidence to leave it in their hands, so I took it away from Housing and will act as my own general contractor. Now this was not done to cut corners. I plan to live there, and I don't want it to fall down around me! I just felt it was necessary to protect myself.

The house will be built to code. I'll hire the architect and make sure the bids come in compared to the bid documents. I'm arranging my own financing. If I'm the guinea pig, if things go wrong, well that's my fault. But the point is, as a Tribal member, I had no sense of any real support from the current Housing administration. I would have thought they should be there to provide direction and other valuable services regarding housing matters.

It led me to wonder, "What's been going on?"

Some of our Tribal programs have existed for years and years, operating in a status quo that really does not seem to benefit the Tribal members. I mean, we could always just sit back and hope that things take care of themselves. Hoping without action – that would be the easy way out. That is not, however, the mandate handed to us by voters four months ago. At the very least we want a situation where Tribal members are paying a fair price and getting



a quality product. We need to be very responsible in that we won't take advantage of our Tribal members but listen to them and respond in ways that will help instead of confuse.

And that is why we are going to be intensely involved in looking at just how these departments are functioning. This is not change for the sake of change. And I don't mean to shine the spotlight on just Housing – I am only using that department as an example of many situations that need fixing within our Tribe.

We will be looking at each and every department of the Tribe to make sure they are fulfilling each goal and doing it at an efficient level. For example, we are looking at Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc. Construction with the same light. Here you have a lot of expense, large salaries, but no work. That doesn't make sense. I don't want to carry that kind of administrative cost. I want to find a partner that can take on some of this expense, share the work and get the jobs. I think there is an opportunity to take Board Construction and provide a level of service and goods that should have been in place and provided all along.

It is just one business opportunity, but we should exploit that to its fullest benefit for the Tribe and all Tribal members and not just a single individual.

While my primary responsibility as Tribal President is to stimulate economic development for the Seminole Tribe, I still have the additional responsibility of wearing another hat as the Vice Chairman of the Tribal Council. So, my focus encompasses a wide range of issues that I must deal with on a daily basis. I am fortunate to be a part of, and witness to, how both governing bodies are working.

I want every Tribal member to take comfort in knowing that both Board and Council are putting in the quality time to address some very tough social and economic issues. God bless the Seminole Tribe and its members.

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

INDIAN COUNTRY ROUNDUP



Native American students file lawsuit over use of Fighting Sioux nickname



Eight Native American students at the University of North Dakota (UND) filed a federal lawsuit to prevent further use of the school's Fighting Sioux imagery and logo. The complaint names the Governor, the Attorney General, the state, the Board of Higher Education and UND as liable for their actions in connection with the North Dakota Legislature's passage of a law mandating the use of the controversial nickname and logo.

About 20 schools with Native American nicknames were targeted by an NCAA policy issued in August 2005. Some teams, like the Florida State Seminoles, were taken off the list when they received approval from namesake tribes. In North Dakota, the Spirit Lake Sioux tribe approved use of the nickname, but the Standing Rock Sioux has not yet decided.

North Dakota's debate appeared to be resolved when the state Board of Higher Education agreed in 2009 to drop the Fighting Sioux logo and nickname, and UND agreed to phase it all out by Aug. 15. But the argument ramped up again when state legislators passed the law requiring the state to maintain the nickname and sue the NCAA over the issue if necessary. It could prove injurious: NCAA sanctions include a ban on UND hosting any postseason tournaments, and a prohibition on UND teams wearing the nickname or logo on uniforms during postseason play. The Big Sky Conference, which UND hopes to join next year, has said the issue will complicate the school's conference membership.

– Associated Press

NARF pushes Native American CLASS Act

The Native American Rights Fund (NARF) recently expressed its support of the Native Culture, Language and Access for Success in Schools (CLASS) Act. "In many regions of our country, Native students suffer from the lowest graduation rates and poorest academic performance," said Sen. Daniel K. Akaka, D-Hawaii, who chairs the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. The bill, co-sponsored by Sens. Tim

Johnson, D-N.D., and Daniel K. Inouye, D-Hawaii, contains a set of provisions that address language and culture-based education, local control and parental involvement and teacher training and development.

"This comprehensive bill outlines a new vision of education built on Native priorities. As a former teacher, principal and administrator, I know the power that integrating culture and increasing access to opportunities can have in improving outcomes for our Native students. To build a successful future for our Native communities, we must start with success in our schools."

New Native American Studies programs guide out

In the fall of 1993, the Association for the Study of American Literatures published a 30-page guide to Native American Studies programs in the U.S., compiled and edited by former ASAIL President Franchot Ballinger. This new "Guide to Native American Studies Programs in the United States and Canada" represents an attempt to update and expand upon Professor Ballinger's pioneering work. It is being published in hardcopy and electronic forms: <https://facultystaff.richmond.edu/~rnelson/asail/>.



Pequots near debt restructuring deal

The Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation plans to finalize a deal with creditors by the end of 2011 to restructure more than \$2 billion in financing related to its Foxwoods Resort Casino and cut the tribe's debt load by half a billion dollars. The Ledyard, wvNorth America, and the tribe's debt restructuring is the highest among Indian gaming tribes. Under new agreement terms, the tribe's \$1.5 billion now owed would be restructured in obligations at favorable 6 percent and 8 percent interest rates with a lengthy payment time line. The tribe would make payments over extended periods; some bondholders would not receive their dues for up to 18 years.

The casino's business is also reportedly improving since the November appointment of chief executive Scott Butera, widely anointed as a "turn-around artist" for his role in leading Las Vegas-based

Tropicana Entertainment, which owns nine casinos in five states, on a restructuring of its finances and operations. Butera helped rescue the company from Chapter 11 bankruptcy in March 2010. Still, Standard & Poor rated the Mashantuckets' bonds the lowest "D" rating.

Connecticut's only other federally recognized Indian tribe, the Mohegan Tribe, which operates the Mohegan Sun, expects to close on a deal to refinance some of its \$1.6 billion in debt in the next few months.

– The Wall Street Journal

Native tobacco seeds in space

NASA, on its final return Shuttle flight, has brought back experiments aboard the International Space Station that used Native heirloom seeds, completing the nearly year-long Indigenous Star Seeds experiment involving indigenous tobacco. Scientists have wondered what effects microgravity plays on the growth of plants in space, and for years has researched the viability of crop growth for long term voyages. "The seeds that were to germinate in zero gravity were 800-year-old tobacco seeds," said Roxanne Gould (Odawan Ojibwe), a Science Museum of MN-American Indian Advisory Committee member. "The experiment came about because my husband (Jim Rock) works with the Minnesota Planetary Society. They had done a presentation at a climate change conference in Shakopee and a representative of NASA was interested in the experiment Jim was proposing."

– TheCircleNews.org

Mississippi Choctaw casino paid off big for non-Indian executive

A non-Indian man whose companies are at the center of a federal investigation into the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians was apparently paid well by the tribe's casino. Doug Pattison was hired as CEO of the Silver Star Casino in December 1999. His salary was \$400,000 a year for five years, plus a \$40,000 relocation fee and other benefits, including a car. The tribe fired Pattison two years later and gave him \$1 million in severance. He reportedly told tribal officials at the time that he was going to "bleed the casinos dry" if he ever returned to the reservation. After Beasley Denson won election as chief in

2007, he re-hired Pattison, this time as a consultant. Mercury Gaming and its marketing arm, the Titan Agency, received \$60,000 a month at first but then got more than \$200,000 a month starting in February. When the FBI raided the Pearl River Resort, the search warrant mentioned Mercury and Titan.

The Choctaws got some more bad news after the FBI raid. Moody's Investors Service downgraded the \$200 million in securities owed by the Choctaw Resort Development Enterprise from B3 to Caa2 – one of the lowest possible junk bond ratings. Moody's cited uncertainty surrounding the tribe's leadership. (The tribal council recently threw out the results of an election in which Phyllis J. Anderson defeated incumbent Beasley Denson.) Moody's also said the tribe could have trouble refinancing its debt. The tribe must pay \$71 million on November 4.

– Jackson Clarion-Ledger

Oklahoma tribes save state parks

Chickasaw Nation Gov. Bill Anoatubby and Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department Executive Director Deby Snodgrass signed an agreement for the Chickasaw Nation to assume management and operations of Boggy Depot State Park beginning Aug. 16. Boggy Depot is one of seven Oklahoma state parks slated to close because of state budget cuts. Thanks to this pact, park operations will continue while the state legislature works out details for long-term management of the park. "We are very pleased to have the opportunity to operate this facility because Boggy Depot has great historical significance to the Chickasaw and Choctaw nations," Anoatubby said. "This agreement is one example of our ongoing partnership with the state of Oklahoma to promote tourism and encourage more people to discover the beauty, history and hospitality Oklahoma has to offer."

The Oklahoma Tourism & Recreation Department will transfer control of the Wah-Sha-She State Park in northeastern Osage County park to the Osage Nation after Labor Day. "Being a good neighbor, whether it is with the State of Oklahoma or nearby local and county governments, was a priority of mine when I took office last year," Osage Nation Principal Chief John Red Eagle said. "This is just one example of how I plan to deliver on that promise."

– americanindianreport.com

Adolescent substance abuse

• Neyom Osceola

When I was young I lived one life with no divisions or boundaries. I went to preschool on the reservation, which was one of the most innocent times in my life. As I grew older and more mature my eyes opened to the lunacy of the world and my whole life did a 180. My happy life on the reservation was filled with cloudless days and drug-free friends and relatives. There was no worry about stepping on broken beer bottles or running into a bad crowd. I like to think of my childhood as more filled if that makes sense. I had more loved ones who were still alive and drug-free. I could talk to anyone and we'd have a good time. Today, many relatives have passed on and I lost relationships with many friends because we were separated by our interests; they chose drugs and I chose to stay healthy. Every time I go back to the reservation, I feel a line separating the drug abusers and the sober; it becomes more eminent with each visit. As the years passed I lost more friends and relatives who died and were sent to rehab for drug addiction treatment. There was a time when I used to feel surprised, but now all I feel is severe loss and sorrow.

During those times I went to many funerals and sent goodbyes through Facebook or MySpace; I cried and prayed those nights, hoping I wouldn't lose anyone else. I felt like a big ball of emotions – pick any type of feeling and I could almost guarantee I had already felt it. I felt very lonely, like everyone was leaving me to be by myself. My cousin overdosed and died. I sat in my house and cut my hair. I went to sleep with my baby sister holding her near. I was livid because I couldn't understand why they would give in to harmful substances and let their family members be affected by it. I was extremely disappointed too because I felt like they were also giving into the stereotypes of Native Americans being alcohol and drug abusers. I didn't like the fact that it was true either; most Native Americans are substance abusers, but what about those who have always been sober? We were judged by our ethnicity because of our people's choices.

Native Americans are the second highest ethnic group that consists of substance abusers; just below those who are of mixed ethnicity. Technically we are the highest ethnic group with substance abusers. Most abusers originate from bad parenting or the witnessing of parents using harmful substances. The uses of illicit drugs or alcohol by parents and their children are strongly associated. When a child is neglected and has no one watching him or her it's easy to follow in the parents footsteps, especially when they think the act of doing so is permissive. It's easier to drift toward bad crowds when adolescents are living on a reservation. They're

practically living with bad influences, so it would be very hard to avoid illicit and illegal substances. We are also affected by drugs and alcohol enormously. As more and more teens get mixed up with drugs and alcohol the results grow more fatal. Nearly two Native Americans a day die from driving under the influence, and Native American surveys show adolescents have been under the influence in the past 30 days.

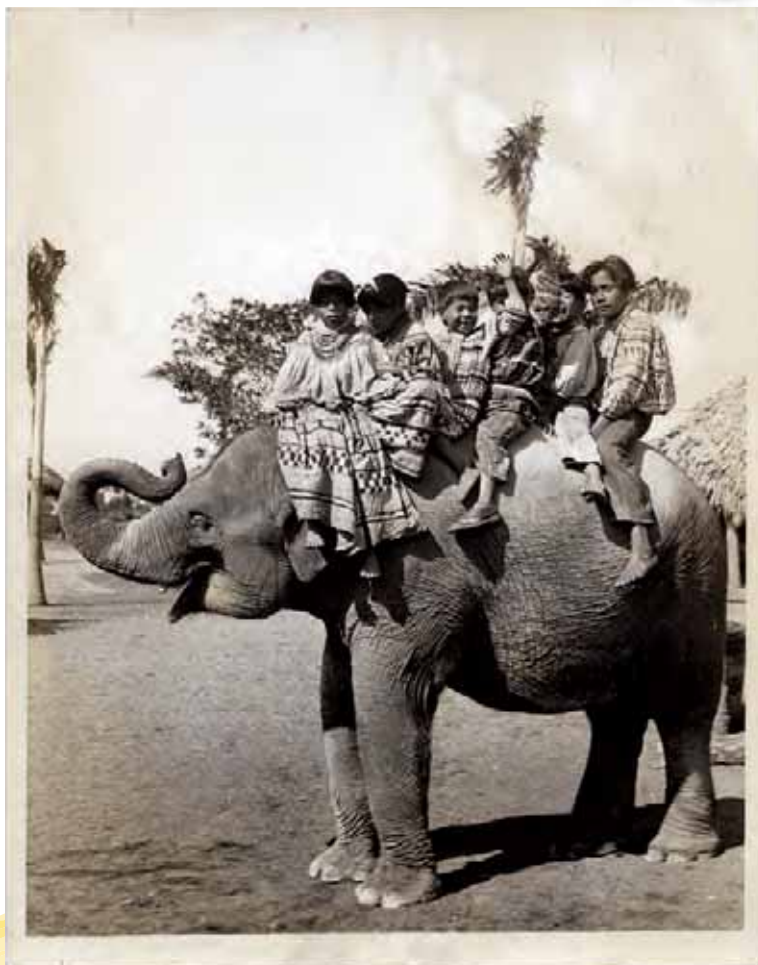
I believe strongly that alcoholic parents are the reason for our youth drug use. When a child sees their parent consume drugs or alcohol it sets the curiosity and adventure in the child's eyes. They think nothing of negative effects; all they see is their parent/guardian doing it and they want to follow them. If I didn't know any better I probably would've tested the substance the first time I saw my parent do it. It's only natural, but I still believe teens have a choice. That's why I want to help spread the knowledge about drugs and alcohol, and how badly it can affect one's life. On the Hollywood reservation in Florida there's a Boys & Girls Club, an organization that educates the youth about the negative effects of alcohol and drugs. This is where I want to start with the journey of helping my generation and all the generations to come. I want to volunteer at the Boys & Girls Club and encourage more kids to attend the informative meetings there that talk about drugs, health, avoiding bad influences.

When I graduate from high school I want to continue to college to pursue a career in business. I want to come back and work for my tribe. When I return I am planning to build a boarding school with the guidance, love and care a home would have. I would also like to add a rehabilitation center and education to continue to help the youth. This is a place where my tribe's youth can escape to when they are hurt and neglected. If a young girl feels she is worthless and not beautiful, I will take it upon myself to show her how she is beautiful, inside and out. If a young man were to feel like he has no home, no life or friends, I would be the first to help him out of that phase; I'd call him into my office every day and tell him how special he is if that's what it takes. Anything to help keep them from illicit drugs, I will do. Here, I will educate them about the negative effects of illegal substances and alcohol. I want to show them how they are better than drugs and keep them busy with school so they can go to college and come back and contribute to my tribe's development. I was blessed with a wonderful home, and I want to spread the care, guidance and devotion to give back to the tribe.

– *Seminole Tribe of Florida teen Neyom Osceola was a first-place winner of the 2011 Young Native Writers Essay Contest.*

SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA
AH-TAH-THI-KI
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A PLACE TO LEARN, A PLACE TO REMEMBER

Identifying the Pas



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

1934 photo documents life at Osceola Village

BY JAMES POWELL
Associate Registrar

When presented with the opportunity to purchase the above photograph, the Museum's acquisition committee eagerly approved this acquisition. This vintage photograph shows six children astride an elephant. It's a rare image from a time that is otherwise well-documented in many images held by the museum. An Associated Press label attached to the back of the photograph provides some information on the photograph. It identifies the name of the elephant as "Macine." The label

also identifies the location as "the Osceola Seminole Indian Village" at Miami, Fla. and dates the photograph on Feb. 19, 1934.

While researching the photograph, we located a similar photograph. It appeared in the August 1934 issue of *Boy's Life* magazine. This photograph shows a young man standing next to an elephant. The caption for this photograph identifies the trainer of the elephant as "Tony Tommy." (To view this photograph online, visit the *Boy's Life* magazine website, select Archives and choose the August 1934 issue, page 26.) This is the same young man pictured at far right in the above

photograph.

As we catalog this photograph, we seek further information from *Tribune* readers on the identity of the children pictured and the elephant attraction at the Osceola Village in general. For example, were elephant rides a common feature at other tourist camps at the time?

Please call the Museum at 877-902-1113 if you can help us identify these children or if you can share any knowledge on this unusual attraction. If you would like to view this photograph, or any Museum materials, please contact the Museum to make an appointment. Thank You!

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Education

Officials offer advice to students in preparation of Student Council



Rachel Buxton

Brighton Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr. explains to the students how Tribal Council is responsible for their education and well-being.

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Students of Pemayetv Emahakv got a lesson on Tribal Government Sept. 12 when Brighton officials Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr. and Board Rep. Larry Howard stopped by to speak with students on the importance of government as they prepare for the upcoming Student Council elections.

Students recently began learning about the governmental process in their history classes by studying past government leaders, their positions and what they do.

The Charter School runs its Student Council similarly to the Tribal Council, with an elected Chairman and representatives for each grade level. Students also campaign by putting up posters to gain support. The school holds an election, followed by an

inauguration.

"I'm just amazed at how many of you are running for office," said Principal Brian Greseth. "That means you care a lot about your school."

Brighton Council Rep. Bowers started his speech speaking about the importance of education and spoke briefly on his "other life."

"I joined the military, got a college degree and became a lawyer," he said.

Rep. Bowers continued with what he thinks the students should know before they decide to run for office. He told the students that one of the most important things they should know is why they want to run for office and followed it up with their involvement.

"I think you have to be involved with

◆ Please see **STUDENT COUNCIL** on page 2B

Ahfachkee School welcomes new principal Lucy Dafoe

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — A new era has begun at the Ahfachkee School.

The Tribe's leadership recently selected Lucy Dafoe as the Tribal school's principal, marking a fresh start to the 2011-2012 academic year.

Ever since Dafoe began her duties in the Ahfachkee School's top position on July 11, she said she's felt very happy with the experience thus far.

Dafoe, who previously served as a principal in the Chief Leschi Schools system from 2003-2010 in Puyallup, Wash., said her first tour of the Tribal school's campus got her excited about becoming Ahfachkee's newest principal.

"It just felt right to be here," Dafoe said.

Dafoe talked about retention as one of her primary goals to accomplish as Ahfachkee's new principal.

"The position I filled prior to this was a high turnover one and had an unstable staff, so it was just high turnover all the time," she said. "Stabilizing a staff is one of the first steps you want to take in school reform and improvement. Even though I heard there had been high turnover with administrators, I was still OK with it because for some reason, it felt right to be here."

Dafoe, who had extensive teaching and administrative experience with students and staff from the Washington-based Makah and Puyallup Indian Reservations over a period of 17 years (1993-2010), said she would like to see all of the Ahfachkee School's students reading on grade level.

"Effective schools have a common vision, so we need to have a plan to bring our kids there," Dafoe said. "We need to execute on the proper steps necessary to bring them to grade level. It won't happen in just one year. It's going to take some time to reach the goal."

Dafoe, a Native American from the Pauquachin Tribe of Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada, said rather than making sweeping changes right away, she would focus on minor changes and improvements for her first year at the helm.

"With our reading program, we opened up flexible grouping," Dafoe said. "If I have a third-grader reading at fourth-grade level, that's great. If I have a third-grader reading at second-grade level and they need more attention, let's put them in a slower-paced group. Kids at their grade level, we're going to have a reading group for them."

Progress monitoring, Dafoe said, will help track how the teachers and students make continuous improvements in a variety



Naji Tobias

Ahfachkee School principal Lucy Dafoe at the Ahfachkee Warriors recognition segment of the Florida State Seminoles Sept. 10 home game in Tallahassee, Fla.

of academic subjects.

"Sometimes, teachers teach eloquently on subjects they like and they spend too long on that," Dafoe said. "There are some areas that don't need as much attention as others, so with our data analysis, we got to see where we are at in our academic subjects and our tests over the summer."

Dafoe also said she has implemented an open-door policy, a move she feels will make the school experience more comfortable

◆ Please see **PRINCIPAL** on page 2B

Tribal graduates and Education Department staff celebrate with prom-style party



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal siblings Mariah and Miles Osceola, far left and right, together with Marie Dufour, Tribal adult vocational administrator. The two students were among 48 other General Education Diploma (GED) graduates, the highest number ever recognized in the Tribe, acknowledged at a higher achievement party at the Old Davie School on Sept. 10.



Chris C. Jenkins

Graduate party Queen and King Agnes Motlow and Stephen Billie together after being crowned as part of the "Dancing under the Stars" higher education prom-style party in Davie.



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal Director of Education Emma Johns, third from the left, in formal dress attire with staff during the prom. The event acknowledged and recognized 86 graduates from all the reservations in the academic areas of high school, GED and college with both Tribal Council and Board officials in attendance.

Trail celebrates new school year

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Writer

TRAIL — Children attending the Trail Back to School Bash made a big splash at the Miccosukee Golf and Country Club on Aug. 20. The pool area and a water slide had been reserved for their exclusive use for the entire afternoon, and they quickly took advantage of this wonderful opportunity.

Joined by their immediate families, the youngsters behaved like a school of fish as they alternated between the super slide and the crystal blue waters of the pool. Playing games, competing in races and performing water aerobics, their laughter filled the air.

A group of the older boys demonstrated their basketball skills by challenging each other as they shot some hoops on the court and then returned to the pool to cool off. Meanwhile, the parents lounged on the deck enjoying an afternoon of relaxation.

Retiring to the tent pavilion, the families shared a gourmet, catered luncheon and then explored the educational opportunities that awaited them in the new school year.

"Your grades have been up this past year and enrollment in the tutoring sessions is bigger and better than ever," said Trail Liaison Norman Huggins. "Attending Miccosukee and private schools, our

children began their 2011-2012 school year approximately two weeks ago. This is our first Back to School Bash and we are running a little behind but it doesn't seem to bother anybody here today."

Addressing the children, Liaison Huggins emphasized that they are the future of their people. Education will provide them with the tools necessary to pour life into the community and insure its survival.

"As you acquire your educational skills, it is equally important that you always remember your strong cultural heritage and strive to keep our language alive," concluded Liaison Huggins. "It defines who you are and it is your responsibility to pass it along to the next generation."

"The Trail tutoring program is making great strides despite the need to relocate our teaching facilities during the school year," said tutoring specialist Julissa Collazo. "I am extremely proud of the parents' diligence in attendance and cooperation with 'in-home' study. Our tutoring programs are continuing to expand and space has become our biggest issue in all of the communities. SAT Prep, mentorship and bridge programming are adding to our educational priorities. I feel confident that your children will make big strides during the coming year."



Judy Weeks

Jaden Billie descends the water slide at the Back to School Bash.



Judy Weeks

Dionah Bert and Nichelle Osceola play like porpoises in the Miccosukee Country Club pool.



Judy Weeks

Trail Liaison Norman Huggins is surrounded by a portion of the youngsters attending the Back to School Bash.

Grandparents enjoy lunch with grandchildren in honor of Grandparents Day



Grandma Mary Jo Micco and Grandpa Billie Micco celebrate Grandparents Day with granddaughters Aleina Micco, center left, and Giselle Micco, center right, during the Charter School's Grandparents Day luncheon Sept. 9.



Beulah Gopher stopped by the Charter School to enjoy lunch with great-granddaughter Summer Gopher in celebration of Grandparents Day.



Emma Urbina fills in as the surrogate grandma for great-nephew Gage Riddle during the Grandparents Day luncheon.



Diane Smith visits Melina Steve at the Charter School Sept. 9 to celebrate Grandparents Day with a special lunch.

◆ PRINCIPAL

From page 1B

for all involved.

"I want to be able to sit down and talk with the parents," Dafoe said. "We have a common goal, which is for a kid to graduate from school. We might have different approaches to getting there, but I want to work with the parents to stay current with their kid's progress. Parents want to know that, so we've encourage them to view a student portal we have here at the school, which tracks their kid's attendance and grades."

One thing Dafoe has noticed is that there are Tribal youngsters from Big Cypress who go to a variety of public and private schools such as The Sagemont School, American Heritage School, Glades Day School (Belle Glade, Fla.), Hollywood Christian School, Clewiston Middle School and Clewiston High School, among others.

"When I see buses going to the different schools every morning, I get hungry to see what we can do to get those kids to become students here at the Ahfachkee School," Dafoe said. "What is it that we need to do to get the kids back into the community? We need to be taking care of all our core subjects. We need to be expanding our electives. Can we offer vocational classes

such as wood shop or auto shop? Can we offer weight training? Can we offer video and media productions? Can we offer culinary courses? We need to do whatever it takes to give those kids a desire to come to school here."

Dafoe also talked about the Ahfachkee Warriors athletic program and how far it has come over the past year.

"Why are athletics a part of any school system," Dafoe asked herself. "It allows us to teach dedication, commitment, standards and teamwork. I'm excited to see where athletics can go, and we want to keep pulling from the student body to get bigger teams. We've just started a volleyball team; it's a true teamwork sport. With all that said, athletics can get kids more connected to the school and it could improve our overall graduation rates here at the Ahfachkee School."

In addition, Dafoe said she would like to see a homecoming, a prom and a music program at the Ahfachkee School someday. Overall, Dafoe said she sees a bright future for Ahfachkee and its student body.

"I would like to see the school grow and expand," she said. "I'm looking to improve our overall attendance, our academics and our morale across the board. I truly believe that our staff and students want to do a good job here. I'm excited for all of them because I see a lot of potential here."

Immokalee students celebrate back to school with spa day

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Writer

IMMOKALEE — Immokalee community service departments coordinated their efforts on Aug. 15 to organize a Back to School Bonanza for the students in preparation for their 2011-2012 school year. A steady stream of young people circulated around the gym visiting each of the booths and collecting stamps in their passports to register for the door prizes.

Immokalee Council Liaison Kenny Joe Davis Sr. commended everyone on their enthusiasm in helping the children. He said, "Obtaining the tools for a successful school year lays the ground work for a bright future. Each of our departments is delivering an important message of encouragement and support to the kids and their parents."

A personalized JanSport Backpack and school supplies awaited children from kindergarten to the 12th grade to enable them to begin their classes well prepared.

Professional hair stylists from one of Immokalee's favorite salons remained busy throughout the day creating fashionable hairdos for the first day of school. Boys and girls waited eagerly to receive a new look, trim, bob, shave or mohawk.

The Fitness Department pampered their young clientele with a back, neck and shoulder massage and then joined Community Care for the Elderly in administering warm wax thermal hand baths to condition their hands and nails with a deep cleaning action. Next stop was the manicure table for a trim and artistic nail painting for girls.

The Clinic checked for lice and talked with parents regarding the importance of immunization and physical exams. Eye screening and a discussion about the pros and cons of glasses and contact lenses were provided by a licensed optician, as well as proper lighting, eye strain and protective eyewear considerations.

Seminole Police Department officers were also on hand to take fingerprints, DNA samples, current photographs and vital statistics to update personal physical information records. Their

presentation on Internet safety provided awareness of the new dangers that await unsuspecting youngsters.

Dividing the group by gender, the boys and girls received instruction from Family Services employees Linda Freeman and Fred Mullins on personal hygiene, puberty, physical development and healthy choices, as well as combating peer pressure.

A drug-free theater documentary set the pace for Family Services Prevention officer Fred Mullins to ask the question, "Why do people take drugs?" An interaction with his youthful audience brought forth many insightful conclusions and displayed their acute awareness of the fact that drugs cause more problems than those people try to solve.

Students' parents were encouraged to investigate tutoring programs, library opportunities and sign necessary release forms that will ensure a safe and productive new school year. Tribal policy on education and the rules and regulations for the upcoming year were also available.

Creating awareness of the Culture Department programs, Immokalee instructor Geraldine Osceola's presentation on Tribal history, clans, language, arts and crafts opened the door for after-school programs and informative workshops.

A foremost objective of the 4-H program is responsibility, self-respect and family values. With the beginning of their new season, they are offering a variety of programs in addition to steer and swine projects. Cooking, photography, archery, fishing, small animal projects and a judging team are just a few of the programs in which the youth can register for participation.

Recreation and Immokalee Seminole Ranch supplied a child-friendly lunch that emphasized healthy food choices and a discussion followed about the importance of exercise and proper hydration.

"There is an excellent turnout here today," said Immokalee Board Liaison Dorothy Benson. "Parental involvement has reached an all-time high, and I am very grateful to each of the departments for their valuable assistance in making our children's education a priority."



Mr. Horacio gives Ezekial Roberts a back to school haircut.



Aaron Alvarado gets fingerprinted for his identification packet.



Jovita Turrubiardez of the Immokalee Senior Center combs out Jaylee Jimmie's hair.

◆ STUDENT COUNCIL

From page 1B

your school," Rep. Bowers said. "You have to listen to people and talk to fellow students. Learn how they feel about certain things."

Rep. Bowers briefly explained how the election process for Tribal Council works. He told the students how individuals must get a petition with signatures of people who agree to vote for them. He also said candidates have three to four weeks to campaign and then elections are held.

"You have to let them know what you are capable of doing," he said.

Students asked questions following Rep. Bowers' speech such as what his specific job entails.

"I speak up for the community, such as if we need that road fixed," explained Rep. Bowers.

Board Rep. Howard continued on the subject of government by telling how he got into politics.

"I've worked with the Tribe pretty much my whole life," Rep. Howard said. "My family was always into politics."

Rep. Howard also stressed the importance of education, advising the students to never forget to keep their grades up.


He also pressed the importance of being able to speak in front of people when it comes to government and politics.

"You have to be a people person," Rep. Howard said. "You have to be able to get along with everyone."


Rep. Howard wrapped his speech up with a very important note. "The sky is the limit, but make sure you're serious about it."



Brighton Board Rep. Larry Howard tells students that while campaigning for Board Representative, he made his own signs and went door-to-door to gain support.



United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Seminole Agency
6100 Hollywood Boulevard, Suite 206
Hollywood, Florida 33024
(954) 983 1537
(954) 983 5018 fax



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

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)


ACTION: Notice of Availability (NOA)

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for approving the construction and lease of a home on a 1.32 acre parcel for James Billie on trust property within the Big Cypress Indian Reservation of the Seminole Indian Tribe of Florida. The home site is located at the intersection of Farmer Road and Wind Clan Road (Township 48 South, Range 33 East, Section 14), within the Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation, Hendry County, Florida. The BIA has approved and adopted the Environmental Assessment (EA), dated June 2011, prepared by the Seminole Tribe of Florida Environmental Resource Management Department and entitled "James Billie Proposed Lease, Seminole Tribe of Florida, Big Cypress Reservation, Hendry County, Florida". This EA has been adopted and FONSI issued for the approval of the home construction and lease of trust lands in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.

NOTICE: This is a Notice of Availability (NOA), that the EA and FONSI for the Federal action of approving the proposed home construction and lease of trust property are available for public review. The BIA has approved and adopted the above referenced EA which addressed this proposal. The FONSI determination was based on review and analysis of the information in the EA. Based on the EA, it has been determined that the action will not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment, therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. You may obtain a copy of the EA and FONSI from the BIA Eastern Regional Office or the Environmental Resources Management Department of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, 6365 Taft Street, Suite 3008, Hollywood, FL 33024, telephone (954) 965-4380.

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

For further information please contact Kurt G. Chandler, Regional Environmental Scientist, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Eastern Regional Office, 545 Marriott Drive, Suite 700, Nashville, TN 37214, telephone (615) 364-6832.



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Welcome to



2011



As Seminole People Once Again

We have many stories
We need to hear them
You need to know
what we have been through

When I was growing up,
most everyone was an alcoholic

But not you

You are clear headed

We must all stand up as
a new generation
Learn our traditional ways

As Seminole people once again

We are giving you our love,
our strength, our power
So that we are not alone
So that we can help each other

It used to be that everyone
had a fire out back
all throughout the year

They were all lit from one fire
four logs from
four different directions
These represent
our grandfather,
our ancestors,
our warriors who bled for us,
our creator who provides for us

That fire is the heart of where we live
That fire is our microphone
to the heavens

But we let the fire go
We let our creator go

We are not Indian anymore
if we let our traditions go
We must stand up as a new generation
Learn our traditional ways

As Seminole people once again.

*As spoken by Herbert Jim, Victor Billie
and Geraldine Osceola during a
culture talk at Seminole Youth Camp*

Youth Camps Stay Focused on Goal: Building Positive, Lasting Relationships

SUBMITTED BY STOF HEALTH DEPARTMENT

■ Week-long camps allow connections to be made with other youth, adults

Imagine a place where children feel unconditional love, tempered with logical rules held together with rewards and consequences. This place has a “Blob” and a mud pit. This place is non-stop activity from the 7 AM morning walk to the 9:30 PM “lights out.”

And it is crawling with cops and firefighters, diabetes staff, fitness professionals and counselors, people who have dedicated six days away from their families to, as Eric Bricker of Family Services said, “give all youth the opportunity to shine.” This place is the 2011 Seminole Youth Camp/ Teen Camp at Camp Kulaqua.

First Year for Two Age-Appropriate Camps

The camp is in its sixth year, but this was the first year there were two weeks of camp: one for children ages 7-10, and one for those ages 11-17. After last year’s record-breaking attendance of close to 300, Seminole Tribal staff decided to split the camp to better serve the different needs of each age group.

About 70 younger campers attended July 31-August 5, and 140 older campers came the following week. On paper, the agenda for both groups looked basically the same, but each activity was fine-tuned to specifically capture the attention and suit each age group’s needs. For example, the younger campers attended “Body Works” and learned about physical changes during puberty, while the older campers attended “Jersey Sore” and learned how to prevent sexually transmitted diseases.

More Similarities Than Differences

This example is attention grabbing, but what was most significant was the commonality between camps: First, there were dedicated staff and volunteer chaperones (over 170) who devoted one week (20 stayed two weeks) to the Seminole youth. These mentors had “whatever it takes” attitudes, as portrayed by Nash The



Malcolm Jones (right) uses positive communications techniques with his friend Kaleb Doctor during a brief pause in the activities of the Seminole Youth Camp for younger children, ages 7-10.

Cop, sitting in the lunch room, having his hair braided by a group of young campers.

“They leave their own kids. They let their guards down and let themselves be whatever the youth need,” explained Camp Director Helene Buster, whose devotion is another common element of both camps.

Many of the campers asked to call Helene “Grandma.” Her enthusiasm and dedication, whether while she was disciplining or complimenting, was so apparent, it infused everyone. She brought out a desire to try in the youth: In the adults, she lit a fire of compassion and service for the kids.

The integral “Learn by Doing” principal of camp was repeated in both camps. Helene asked campers for volunteers before each meal to lead the group in the blessing, then reminded them not to put more on their plates than they could eat.

They were then asked to try serving themselves the correct portion size. “They all listened,” said Helene. Though there was still the occasional plate full of only sausage links, progress was made toward better portion control.

In the case of one young camper who had a harder time breaking the habit of piling his plate, staff chose him as a peer mentor. He was stationed at the buffet. His important responsibility was to remind campers of correct portion sizes. He did this for a few meals, resulting in a reduction of his own portions.

Older Campers Put Teamwork Into Play

Although the camp for the older youth

focused more on sports and leadership, the hands-on learning was still apparent. Through sports, campers learned that giving 100 percent, no matter what their skill level, and being part of a team was most important.

“It doesn’t matter how great you are -- you can be great on your own. But to get to the next level, to really excel and make it in this world, you need to be able to function as part of a team,” explained Thommy Doud, Boys and Girls Club staff member. Thommy played a key role in both camps, serving as master of ceremonies for many camp activities.

Camp Turns Cops Into Friends

As each camp wrapped up, campers headed home with a set of skills that they might not have arrived with. They learned how to prevent diabetes, how to stretch before exercising, how to manage their money, and the dangers of cyber bullying. But more importantly, they went home with new relationships – relationships with cops, firefighters, diabetes staff, counselors and one omnipotent Grandma. Because if Seminole youth camp can be described in a few words, it might be: an ongoing conversation between youth and caring adults.

Now, when youth see a police officer, they will see a familiar face, someone who calls them by name, someone who hosed the mud off of them after the Whacky Sports Challenge, someone who feels more like a friend.



Photos from left top to right: Helene Buster, Camp Director, assists younger campers in leading the prayer; The low ropes course provided a safe, supportive setting for youngsters to learn the importance of teamwork; Seminole Police Officers Colleen Hardin and Jack Nash removed their badges to become friendly, trustworthy mentors to the youth.



Camp Age Split Earns Thumbs Up From Staff and Youth

■ Youth’s Needs are Better Met by Camps for Younger and Older Kids

Last year’s camp proved very popular: About 300 youth, ages 7-17 attended, along with almost as many staff and chaperones. Activities were created and to meet the youths’ health, social, and cultural needs. But camp staff didn’t want to stop there. At the conclusion of every camp, staff evaluated what happened, and how it could be improved. Last year, they came to a huge decision: split the camps into two age groups -- ages 7-10 and 11-17.

This decision was one based on quality control. Staff knew that having specific age groups would allow for age-specific activities: go-carts for younger campers, competitive sports for older campers, for example.

They also knew that two weeks instead of one would mean twice the time. But during the two weeks of camp starting July 31, most staff worked only one week, getting to choose the age group. About 20 staff worked both weeks.

Other than the activities and the time, no one really knew exactly how it would turn out. But everyone had a desire to better serve the needs of each individual.

Now that camp is over, Camp Director Helene Buster said, “The smartest thing we have ever done was to split these age groups. We were able to focus more on the needs of the individuals. It was a better learning experience for both groups.”

Staff noticed that many siblings attended different camps. This year, the younger ones had to depend on peers or counselors for support instead of brothers or sisters. They had to make new friends and learn to depend on and trust adults. They were not overshadowed by their older siblings.

The older ones were relieved of taking care of their younger family members, and got to be teenagers instead of helping and guiding the youngsters. Darryl Allen, Seminole Police Department, said, “We had much more of an ability to make an impact on campers because we didn’t have the older or younger (siblings) creating a distraction.” In other words, campers got to focus more on themselves and their own needs.

Additionally, splitting the camp allowed for a high ratio of adults to campers, so campers not only got the information and attention they needed, they got it from a large, diverse number of adults.

Next year, the camp will continue to be split. It is reported that the staff embraced the changes, and the youth went away feeling that there are a lot of adults who really care.

“I learned about cyber bullying and diseases you can catch if you aren’t careful. I didn’t know all that stuff could happen.”

Darlah Cypress, Justice Baker

“I learned about the importance of respect, and about our medicine and our culture. I learned that the Seminole way to show appreciation is not to clap but to say MVTO. It means ‘thank you’ in Creek.”

Anonymous Youth



Dividing the camps into younger and older age groups allowed for age-sepcific activities like go-cart racing for the 7-10 age group, and a sports focus for the 11-17 age group. This division also allowed for older youth to develop their leadership skills by getting specific instruction and encouragement to become junior counselors to youngsters.

“Rewarding” “Valuable” “Irreplaceable” -- Camp is *All That*

“Part of SPD’s motto is: Partnerships that build respect and trust. This camp is the foundation of respect and trust building. At Camp Kulaqua we become friends and mentors with young men and women Tribal-wide, some of whom, without camp, we would never know. These relationships, these bonds, are so crucial. Here, I become someone other than Nash The Cop: I become Nash The Mentor, and most importantly I become Nash The Friend, someone youth can turn to for help and guidance, no matter what, without bias. That, to me, is irreplaceable.”

Jack Nash, Seminole Police

“It is rewarding to build relationships with the youth. They last a lifetime, and help us achieve our goal: to contribute to the provision of a safe and enjoyable environment. I feel the children are more likely to follow your lead when they know you on a personal level.”

Levi Pearce, Fire Rescue

“I haven’t seen one person who has attended camp who hasn’t come away a better person. There is personal growth for the youngest to the very oldest. It is rewarding to participate in anything that does that for the world.”

Debra Ray, Asst. Director, Family Services

“Emphasis on skill building allows everyone to participate. Those who are not yet accomplished athletes can compete alongside those who are more accomplished. All have the opportunity to shine.”

Eric Bricker, Family Services

“Camp Kulaqua is valuable right now, but it is also helping the next generation. It’s about staying fit, learning to make positive decisions, developing leadership skills and respect within our Tribal traditions. All the reservations coming together like this takes us back to Tribal ways - to becoming closer and being connected. Also, you learn you need

structure - you can’t just go out and be a wild child.”

Jordan Billie

“Teamwork. Unity. Relationship building. A staff of multiple and diverse backgrounds comes forward with an openness and willingness to do whatever it takes to make camp work for each participant. They bring with them a genuineness and caring - you can’t do this work if you don’t care. Where does this dedication come from? At least partially from the team building skills, leadership skills and tireless devotion of Helene Buster.”

Anonymous Camp Staff

“I like being with the kids from all over the Tribe, communicating with them and seeing how they are growing. Each rez has its own style of teaching culture, so it helps me to visit with all of them. It ties it all together when we are with each other.”

Herbert Jim, Culture Department

C.A.M.P.
=
Caring
Atmosphere
Made
Possible



Photos from left: During the teen camp, John Osceola (Hollywood) shows he is a great sport by wearing a ball-toss target on his head; Justice Baker (Brighton) shows her competitive spirit during the sponge toss; Chris Briscall (Immokalee) proves he will do anything for his team, including pulling on panty-hose to catch rubber balls; Sabre Billie (Big Cypress) focuses on helping her team win.



Brighton youth celebrate Incentive Awards Mardi Gras style



Rachel Buxton

With a Mardi Gras theme and masks for all, Education Department's Rebecca Bowers presents Brydgett Koontz with a perfect attendance trophy at the Incentive Awards.



Rachel Buxton

Kristina Osceola, one of six Brighton high school graduates, receives her award and is congratulated by, left to right, Brighton Board Rep. Larry Howard, Non-Resident Liaison Ryan Osceola, Brighton Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr. and Chairman James E. Billie at Brighton's 2011 Incentive Awards Aug. 18 held in the Brighton gym.



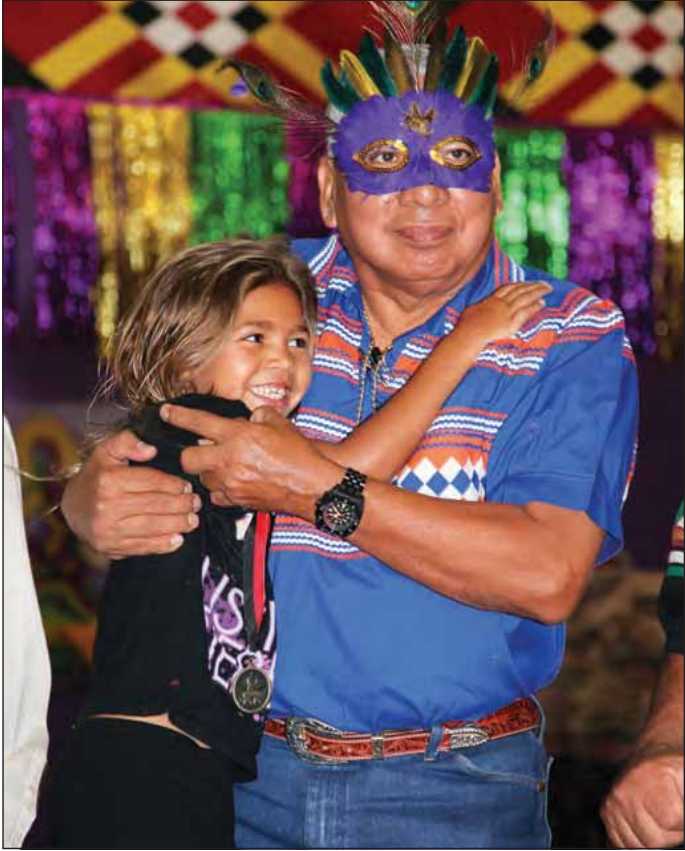
Rachel Buxton

Hunter O'Donnell receives his award and is congratulated by Tribal officials including Chairman James E. Billie.



Rachel Buxton

Eric Puente joins in the Mardi Gras theme where he is congratulated by Chairman James E. Billie with a fist pump for his academic excellence.



Rachel Buxton

Tehya Howard is swept off her feet by Brighton Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr. during Brighton's 2011 Incentive Awards where 63 percent of students received awards for their academic achievements.

Big Cypress Education Department hosts Incentive Awards Carnival



Naji Tobias

Tribal youngster Julian Yescas, 12, rides a bike as he plays the "Downhill Bikers" arcade game at the Aug. 19 Big Cypress Incentive Awards Carnival and Celebration.



Naji Tobias

Tribal youngsters Mara Turtle, 5, and Landell Turtle, 3, squirt each other with Super Soakers during the Big Cypress Incentive Awards and Carnival.



Naji Tobias

Shana Balentine, left, and Alena Stockton, right, face off in the water squirting race at the Big Cypress Incentive Awards Carnival and Celebration at the Big Cypress Rodeo Grounds.



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Immokalee celebrates graduates at 2011 Incentive Awards



Judy Weeks

The Education Department presents diplomas to three of the nine GED graduates from the Immokalee community at the Masquerade Ball themed awards ceremony. From left, Higher Education Recruiter Luis Yeguez, Education Director Emma Johns, GED Graduates Whitney Osceola, Deidra Hall and Michael Shaffer, GED Adviser Marie Dufour, Immokalee Education Adviser Victoria Soto and Higher Education Adviser Linda Iley.



Judy Weeks

Ninth-grader Salena Perez set the bar high when she participated in advanced and honors classes during the 2010-2011 school year. President Tony Sanchez Jr. presents her with her award for all her hard work.



Judy Weeks

First-grader Mae'anna Osceola-Hart shows off the raffle prize that she won at the Immokalee Education Awards Banquet, which took place at the Immokalee Casino Events Pavilion on Aug. 15.

Charter School students prepare for first day with Open House

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School bid farewell to former principal Russell Brown during its Open House on Aug. 18. Parents, students, teachers and staff crowded into the school cafeteria to say their final goodbyes to a man who helped make the Charter School what it is today.

“It’s been a great opportunity starting with something from scratch,” Brown said. Brown was presented with a traditional Seminole jacket donning his favorite colors: orange and blue. Chairman James E. Billie helped Brown into the jacket and thanked him for all his hard work over the past four years. Pemayetv Emahakv’s newly hired principal Brian Greseth took over with a personal introduction leading into parent orientation.
 “There’s a lot of reasons why I wanted to come out

here and work,” Greseth said. “When I come out here, I know parents have a true commitment to education.” Greseth pointed to the hall of fame wall where pictures of Brighton college graduates hang. “I’d like to see this whole room full of pictures,” he said. “That will happen in the near future.” Greseth also commended the staff, calling them dynamite and all-stars. Teachers and aides were introduced by name and position and then filed out of the cafeteria to prepare for classroom visits. Greseth continued parent orientation reminding parents and students of school policies, including tardiness, and wrapped things up with a thank you and a promise to get to know every student personally. “I’ve been studying the yearbook,” Greseth said. “My goal is to get to know all the students by name within the first few months.” Students eagerly left the cafeteria following parent orientation to meet their new teachers and to get their school lists to prepare for their first day, Aug. 22.



Teacher Jeanine Gran welcomes back the Burton family, left to right, Krysta, Caleb and Leilani.



Amanda Smith with son, Austin, and daughter, Mallorie, pick up information for the upcoming school year.



Chairman James E. Billie, far right, and Brighton Council Rep. Andrew J. Bowers Jr., second from left, say goodbye to former principal Russell Brown, second from right, and welcome incoming principal Brian Greseth, far left.

Big Cypress Education/Library/Culture Departments collaborate in Open House initiative



Big Cypress Library assistant Victoria Hernandez places a sand art bracelet on Big Cypress Tribal youngster Janessa Jones, during the Sept. 6 Open House.



Big Cypress Tribal youngster Thomlynn Billie, right, learns about the meaning and creations of Seminole patchwork from the Big Cypress Culture teacher Victor Billie.



From left: Willie Smith, Rylen Billie Cypress, then-Big Cypress Library site manager Barbara Oeffner, Osianna Crespo and Mara Turtle play “Ducks in a Row.”

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Three Tribal departments from Big Cypress hosted their annual Open House for the reservation’s public and private school students on Sept. 6. Held inside the Frank Billie Tribal Field Office, Tribal students and their parents took a tour of the Big Cypress Education Department’s Learning Resource Center, the Willie E. Frank Library and the Big Cypress Culture Department’s culture room. With more than 60 Tribal citizens in attendance, they received information about the Education Department’s amenities, which include SAT/ACT exam preparation help, job placement assistance, computer training courses and ways to obtain a GED diploma. Big Cypress Education Adviser Carine Eugene, who hosted the dinner segment of the Open House function, discussed the collaborative efforts of the Education, Library and Culture Departments in an attempt to reach the Tribal youth constituency. Eugene noted that a “family feel” was evident throughout the function. “We’re here to share all that we have with the community and the youth,” Eugene said. “It was an opportunity for the kids who go to different private and public schools to mingle with each other. They don’t get to do that often during the week. It was good to see

them all spend some time together.” At the Willie E. Frank Library, the Tribal youth and their parents received a tour of the variety of books they can sign out and borrow. In addition, the Tribal kids played a few games and took pleasure in making sand art bracelets, a creative item that each participant took home after the event’s conclusion. “We wanted to show our kids a new perspective of what we do here,” then-Big Cypress Library site manager Barbara Oeffner said. “The kids were well-behaved and seemed very at home. We didn’t want to make it feel too formal. It’s something they noticed and liked a lot.” The Big Cypress Library includes a weekly story-time session for the Big Cypress Preschool students, a variety of educational field trips for Tribal youngsters and periodic visits from Tribal and non-Tribal poets, painters and artists. “Reading is our primary concern,” Oeffner said. “We try to support that and help them with their education as much as we possibly can.” Big Cypress Culture’s Victor Billie spoke about the Culture Department’s segment of the Open House initiative. “We ask our kids what they want to learn about their own culture,” Billie said. “We teach them whatever they want to know. Culture is in me and when I teach the kids about our culture, I learn something from them, too.”

Ahfachkee School starts off new academic year with Open House



Big Cypress Tribal Council Rep. Mondo Tiger offers his well-wishes to the Ahfachkee School’s teachers and students for a successful academic year at the Open House.



Ahfachkee first-grade teacher Mrs. Dawn Meisinger, second from right, shows her new student Jaylee Cypress, 6, right, her new desk as Javian Cypress, 6, left, and Jalycia Billie, 9, second from left, look on at the Aug. 18 Open House at the Ahfachkee School.



Ahfachkee ninth-grader Katherine Bert, 14, left, fourth-grader Kylen Jumper, 9, second from left, and their grandmother, Tribal senior Dale Grasshopper, speak with Ahfachkee English teacher Jordan Rosenberg, right, on the positive vibes they’re getting from the Open House.



Ahfachkee student Ko’Oshee Henry receives an Ahfachkee Warriors hat and an Ahfachkee 500 T-shirt from Ahfachkee Warriors assistant coach Erik Sangabriel at the Open House.

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Health

Naples learns about healthy choices at Pathways Weigh-In

BY JUDY WEEKS
Freelance Writer

NAPLES — "Where are you on your path to wellness?" is the theme for Seminole Pathways III. The starting point for Naples community residents was the weigh-in for the weight loss contest on Sept. 6.

Allied Health nutritionist Charlotte Porcaro discussed nutrition and exercise with those who had made a decision to make a difference in their health. While taking blood pressure and blood sugar readings, she compared the tabulations with ideal guidelines and stressed the need to make a commitment to work on achieving these important goals.

Waist lines were measured following the weigh-in and a ratio determined weight loss objectives. Stress management, eating habits and smoking can have a profound effect upon success in all health programs and is particularly essential with regard to weight loss.

Tribal members, community members and descendants, who are 18 years or older and who live or work in Naples, can compete



Judy Weeks

Ida Osceola listens as nutritionist Charlotte Porcaro explains guidelines for a healthier lifestyle.



Judy Weeks

Nutritionist Charlotte Porcaro weighs in Naomi Walden for the Seminole Pathways III Weight Loss Program.

in the Pathways III Weight Loss Program. The competitors are divided into senior, Tribal member or spouse and descendant categories of male or female gender.

"Losing unnecessary weight is its own reward," Porcaro said. "However as an incentive, prizes will be presented to individuals who lose a minimum of 10 pounds by the weigh-out on Nov. 22. Top prizes go to male and female participants who lose the most pounds overall in each category. Persons of ideal weight or who have used surgical weight loss methods will not be permitted to enter the contest."

A schedule of events for the next 14 weeks, a walking calendar and list of foundation walks provided stepping stones on the pathway to wellness.

Upon the arrival of the school students, Porcaro assumed her role of health educator and delivered a presentation on personal hygiene, what it takes to keep a body healthy and who contestants can talk to if they have questions or concerns. Proper nutrition and exercise were major factors in the delivery and questions and answers were encouraged.

A majority of the adult and juvenile community members participated in the presentations and then shared fruit, vegetable and healthy snack trays at the conclusion.

Health Department sponsors Wellness for Life Expo



Chris C. Jenkins

Dina Dolan of the Tribal Fitness Department instructs Tribal youth in a group activity during the Hollywood Wellness Expo held in the Seminole Recreation Gym on Aug. 18 featuring Tribal programs and other local health agencies to provide information and services to Tribal citizens and employees. Other highlights of the one-day gathering included goodie bags, raffle prizes, back to school giveaways and other entertainment. The day was sponsored by the Health Department.



Chris C. Jenkins



Left photo: Health Department educator Jennifer Schleiss determines the height and weight ratio of Tribal youth Joey Puente. Photo above: Tribal citizen Darline Primeaux has her blood pressure checked by a member of the Tribe's Fire Rescue squad.

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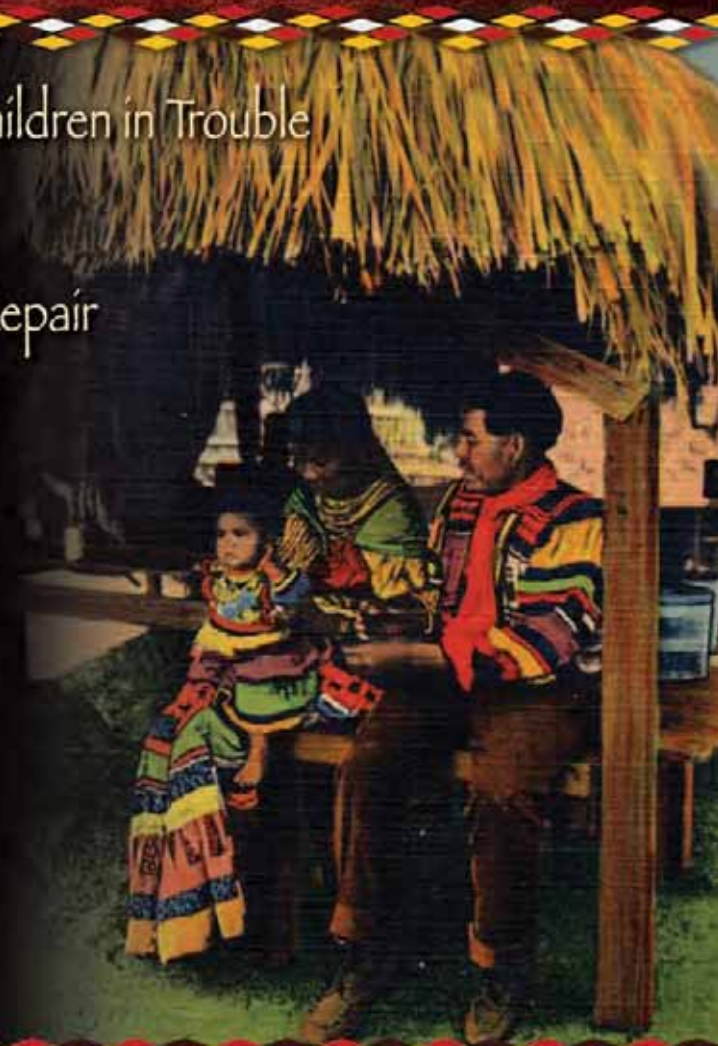
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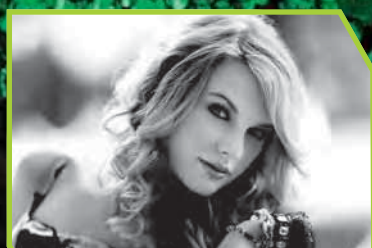
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Announcements

IN MEMORY

The presence of 500 people at Vincent Micco's memorial services last month prove just how many lives the Panther Clan member touched during his fulfilling 50 years. And while his sudden passing shocked the Seminole community, family and friends took solace in their fond memories of Vincent and the positive impact he had on all their lives.

Born on Sept. 20, 1960 in Fort Lauderdale, Vincent grew up on the Brighton reservation and had four brothers (Jerry Jr., Sam, Charlie and Leon) and four sisters (Geraldine, Alicia, Rita and Tristina). He met his wife, Loretta, at the Hollywood reservation during a trip to visit with his mother, JoAnn Osceola, and the couple dated a year before getting married on Sept. 2, 1982. The couple had one son, Jerome Jumper, and two grandchildren, Kate and Molly.

"I'll remember the kind of person he was and how he loved me so much," Loretta said. "He loved me a lot and it showed in his actions and the way he protected me and took care of me. He loved life and loved and respected people no matter where he was. He was selfless."

Vincent started his work with the Seminole Tribe of Florida in 1980 as a carpenter's apprentice for the Tribal Housing Authority and then moved to Building & Grounds as a maintenance supervisor. In 2004, Vincent graduated from the Police Service Aide Academy in Davie and joined the Seminole Police Department as a PSA. In 2006, he became the Facilities Manager for Okalee Village and then took the role of Security Director for the Hollywood community in 2007. He most recently worked as a Village Crafter for Billie Swamp Safari.

"Anything he ever did for the Tribe, he tried to help people in the community," JoAnn said. She said as a police service aide he even visited with elders in the



community to sit down and pray with them. "He cared for the people here. All the way to the end, he lived a good life. He fought for good things. I was always proud of him."

JoAnn and Loretta also appreciated all the people who attended Vincent's memorial services and who paid their respects. The community's encouragement, they said, gave the family a lot of strength for which they will always be grateful – just as the community will also be grateful for having known Vincent.

"Vincent Micco was a friend's friend," said longtime friend Pastor Wayne Taryole of Mt. View, Okla. "He held his friends in high esteem. His concern for his friends caused him to periodically check on them by phone calls or by visiting them no matter where they lived, whether they lived next door or across the country. He was also a loving soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ. Vincent's presence is already missed in the lives of his family, as well as his friends. This is the kind of legacy we all would like to leave when we leave this world."

A memorial for Vincent from his wife, Loretta

I have been so blessed to have Vincent as my husband, friend, lifelong companion.

He was a humble, generous and the most giving selfless man.

I could not have asked for anything more in a man. He made me laugh and smile. God gave us a love for each other that no matter what we had to go through, we help each other through it. He always cared about what I wanted or needed and always thought of others first before himself.

His care and love for me, I will always remember. There is so much to remember.

How he always, always had to bring me flowers on my birthday, Mother's Day or Valentine's Day. How he smiled at me. How he brought coffee to me every morning. How he always held my hand during prayer. How he prayed before we went to sleep.

He has given me so many beautiful memories.

He loved his family, and he always said hello to everyone.

He was one of a kind and I knew this person was special. He was very special to me.

I always thank the Lord for him for being in my life and for the Lord bringing him to me. He is the reason in how I came to know the Lord. He started taking me and Jerome to church and that's how we both accepted Christ.



He loved life. I wish I could tell you so much more about this very special man.

I miss him so much already. My human heart wishes he never left, but my spiritual heart knows where he is right now. We will reunite one day, and it can't be soon enough.

Everything I know of heaven, wow we can't even comprehend it. It's a real place and I know and believe what God has for us after we leave this life. It's only the beginning for Vincent. The beginning of eternity.

THANK YOU

I would like to personally thank the **Seminole Princess Committee** for putting on one our best pageants ever. Mind you we had a great attendance in contestants but that's what made it so beautiful. All the contestants with their rainbow of colors in their clothing to all the different talents they presented on stage was very entertaining and informative.

They always have such a great time whether it's at the banquet answering questions from the judges or just having a good time with the current princess at the Hard Rock Café, I always hear the contestants say they have such a great time every year.

I would like to thank the Seminole Princess Committee for being so much involved and making the pageant weekend what it is today.

— Wanda Bowers



Picture at Seminole Hard Rock, Council Oak Restaurant. From left to right: Priscilla Sayen, Hollywood reservation; Wanda Bowers, Hollywood reservation; Alice D'Anna Osceola, Brighton Reservation; Mercedes Osceola, Hollywood reservation; Christine McCall, Hollywood reservation; Brittany Yescas, Miami; and Connie Gowen, Hollywood reservation.

BIRTHDAY

Happy 1st Birthday to

our Lil Princess **Mariyah Lee Garza** and many more days to come.

May all your little wishes come true.

Love Always,
Daddy, Mommy,
Grandmas Barbara & Maria, Grandpa Alfredo

Grandparents:
Nancy & Chon
Garza, Gualupe & Felix Alvarado

Godparents: Joe & Alicia Martinez

Cousins: Martinez & Garza Family



HAH-TUNG-KE

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

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

A prominent resident of the Hollywood Seminole Indian Reservation since moving from the Brighton area in 1967, Tribal citizen Joe Dan Osceola, 74, has set a lot of records: first Seminole to graduate from high school, first Seminole to graduate from college, first Seminole to letter in college athletics (track), youngest Tribal president in Indian Country (30 years old), a founder of the United South and Eastern Tribes, a designation as one of the top 10 young Americans by the Junior Chamber of Commerce (1957).

The list goes on and on, but how many know he was the first Seminole to have a real record? A music record, that is.

In his second year as president in 1968, Joe Dan said he came up with a novel idea "to improve public relations for the Seminoles." With the help of songwriter Ben Wilson and the singing prowess of the famous Jordanares (Elvis' band calling



From left: Joe Dan Osceola, Josie Billie, Mike Tiger.

Josie Billie

by Joe Dan Osceola

In the cypress swamps, in the Everglades
Where the sawgrass grows
There's an Indian village hidden where
The white man never goes
In the lonely swamp is where he lives
And what he understands
They call him Josie Billie
He's a Seminole medicine man
A Seminole medicine man
When he hears the sound of the cypress trees

Talking every day
Sharing all their secrets with the wind
He knows each word they say
The sawgrass and the willow trees
Bow to his command
They know that Josie Billie
He's a Seminole medicine man
A Seminole medicine man

He hears the talk of the creatures there
When the day is through
He whispers softly to each one
About the things they do
The rattlesnake and the big black bear
They can understand

They know that Josie Billie
He's a Seminole medicine man
A Seminole medicine man

All the Indians there in the Everglades
Feel and declare
Anytime they need his helping hand
They know he's waiting there
He's one man in the Everglades
Always in demand
They call him Josie Billie
He's a Seminole medicine man
A Seminole medicine man
The Seminole medicine man

— Peter B. Gallagher

POEMS

“My Promise”

I promise I will be your strength
Whenever you fall weak
When you cannot find the words
I will be your voice to speak

I promise I will be your eyes
When you cannot see
I will be here forever
If you'll be with me

I promise I will be your hands
Whenever you cannot feel
When you want to hear the truth
I will tell you what is real

I promise I will be your ears
When you cannot hear
I will be your dream catcher
And chase away your every fear

I promise I will be your smile
When you have to frown
I will always cheer you up
When you're feeling down

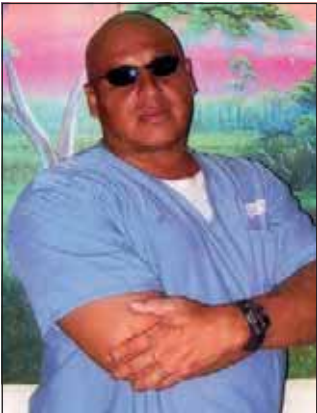
I promise I will keep you sturdy
When you're not feeling safe
And when you're feeling insecure
I will give you faith

I promise to listen
Whenever you need to talk
I will stay with you

When you want to walk
I promise to tell you
No lies, just what is true
And I will always have a shoulder
For you to cry unto

I promise I will hold you
When you need someone
I will not interfere
When you need to get work done
I promise I'll always love you
No matter what we go through
I'll be your guardian angel
This is my promise to you

True 2 life
Alex Tucker
N.F.L. – Native for Life
Otter Clan – Hollywood Rez



“Indian Pride”

Indian pride I will always represent
til the end of time, yatahthihethoguyo
we are one of a kind.

Our ancestors stood tall in the
Everglades and gave them hell, on the
great Western Plains Custer died for
their sins as well.

We Seminoles of Florida are
unconquered no peace with their
government of hate, hats off to the
Sioux and Cheyenne for their victory
in sending the 7th to their fate.

So many victories for our race they
don't teach in schools, they don't
teach about the treaties they made
with tribes or mention that they broke
those rules.

One thing and two for sure they
couldn't break our will to survive,
we natives been fighting terrorism
since 1492 when those snakes
arrived.

Once we were many but now we
are few, honor and always give
thanks to our ancestors for the
hardships they went through.

In time the creator will bring it back
to those snakes in full, we must
continue to multiply keep unity for
Osceola, Geronimo, Crazy Horse
and Sitting Bull.

Each tribe will rise out of poverty
one day, the doors to wealth were

opened by the Seminoles of Florida
be persistent and find a way.

Don't forget the past and always
remember the struggles in life, it'll
make you a stronger and better person
in this land of strife.

Indian pride always remain proud and
hold your head high, thomoshomo
learn from those tribes mistakes and
be skeptical because those broken
treaties don't lie.

Ike T. Harjo
Sholooaphthi bolchunchahga
koowaathi



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Sports

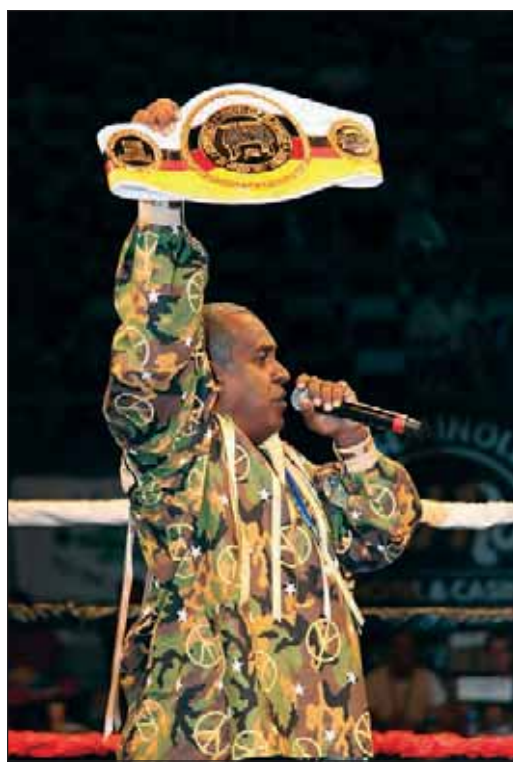
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Chairman and President honored at fight night



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal citizen and President's Executive Assistant Ethel Huggins joins Chairman's Assistant Sandy Arrendondo to accept replica Hard Rock/Seminole Tribe of Florida championship boxing belts on behalf of Chairman James E. Billie and President Tony Sanchez Jr.



Chris C. Jenkins

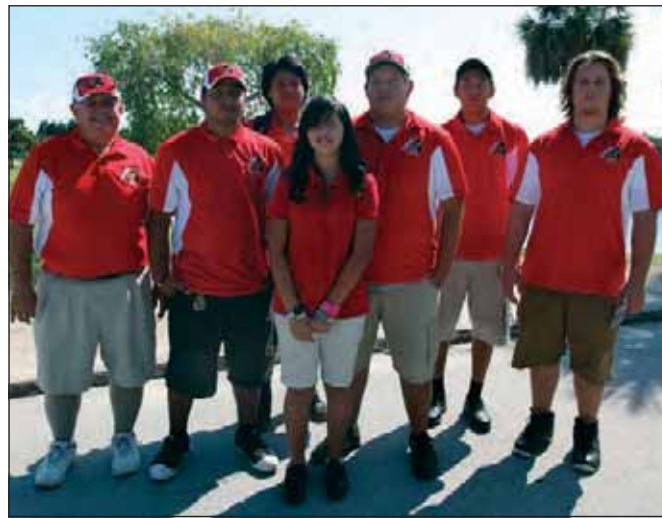
Chairman's Assistant Sandy Arrendondo displays a replica of the newly created Hard Rock/Seminole Tribe of Florida championship boxing belt to be sanctioned by the World Boxing Association (WBA).



Chris C. Jenkins

Henry Rivalta, right, and Carlos Rodriguez, left, owner and promotion duo of Dream Team Boxing Promotions, LLC inside the ring at Hard Rock Live fight night on Aug. 12 as part the Dream Team Boxing Promotions "Night of the Prospects."

Ahfachkee Warriors golf team begins second season with new head coach



Naji Tobias

The Ahfachkee Warriors golf program sports a new look with three key additions. From left: New Ahfachkee Warriors head coach Amos Mazzant, sophomore Quenton Cypress, senior Stevie Billie, new golfer/Ahfachkee sixth-grader Ryanne Pratt, senior Taylor Pratt, new golfer/Ahfachkee senior Jonathan Robbins and senior Ryan Cypress.

BY NAJI TOBIAS
Staff Reporter

CLEWISTON — New coach, same philosophy, better results.

It was Bruce Pratt who made history as the Ahfachkee Warriors first-ever golf head coach last season. But Pratt decided to step down for the program's second year on the golf circuit, making it possible for Amos Mazzant to take over the helm.

Already, the Ahfachkee Warriors have competed in two golf matches at the Clewiston Golf Course in Clewiston. Ahfachkee faced off against the Clewiston Tigers and the Moore Haven Terriers in their Sept. 1 season opener, followed by a Sept. 15 quad-match with Clewiston, Moore Haven and Immokalee.

With six golfers on their squad, Clewiston (228) defeated Ahfachkee (237) and Moore Haven (297) to take the Sept. 1 tri-meet in Clewiston. Ahfachkee senior golfer Taylor Pratt was the top individual golfer of the 14 total athletes from the three teams, posting a nine-hole score of 47.

"Under Coach Amos, I've improved my game a lot," Pratt said. "I've dropped, like, eight strokes off my best score from last year. It felt really good for me to get a score like that. Our coach is very patient with us and he shows our team different ways on how to improve our swings and our putts on the golf course. I feel really good about our team and I think we can win a couple of matches this season."

The Sept. 15 quad-match was won by the Immokalee Indians (194), as they defeated Clewiston (229), Ahfachkee (239) and Moore Haven (260).

"It's not so much about us winning and losing," Mazzant said. "The boys played and hit the ball well, but their overall scores did not reflect their efforts and how hard they tried."

Ahfachkee's golf team faced off in a dual match with Sagemont on Sept. 20 at Weston Hills Golf Course in Weston. They played two days later (Sept. 22) against Heartland Christian at the Gulf Hammock Golf Course in Sebring.

From there, Ahfachkee played in the Sept. 27 Hendry Country Golf Championship against Clewiston, Moore Haven and LaBelle at Glades Golf Course in LaBelle.

The final two matches of Ahfachkee's golf season are scheduled for Oct. 6 versus the LaBelle Cowboys and Oct. 13 versus Heartland Christian (Sebring). Both matches will be held at the Clewiston Golf Course.

"Our goal is to simply get better each time," Mazzant said. "Clewiston's golf coach, Jack Kemp, told his team to look out for Ahfachkee. He said that our team will be very hard to beat soon. It's just a tribute to how hard they work. The kids are outstanding and they are dedicated to their craft. I'm so proud of them."

Big Cypress Tribal Council Rep. Mondo Tiger said he has noticed the improvements made since Mazzant took over the helm just several weeks ago.

See more photos on page 3C

Please see GOLF on page 3C

Brighton hosts NASA softball tournament

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Brighton got the proud honor of hosting the annual Native American Sporting Association (NASA) softball tournament Aug. 12-13 with a total of 26 teams competing.

NASA brings together six Tribes from along the eastern part of the country including the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Seneca Indians from New York, the Choctaw from Mississippi, the Poarch Creek Indians from Alabama, the Coushatta Tribe from Louisiana and the Cherokee Indians from North Carolina.

The NASA softball tournament takes place each year on the second weekend of August with a different Tribe hosting every year.

"This year it is was the Seminole's turn to host the tournament," said Brighton Recreation Director Richard Osceola. "Years before it was held in Hollywood but last year at the board meeting I requested that we have it here."



Rachel Buxton

Virginia Billie stays focused and determined in the batter's box during the annual Native American Sporting Association (NASA) softball tournament Aug. 12-13 in Brighton.

With a brand-new facility, the Brighton community eagerly and willingly hosted the event.

"I'm continually amazed at the progress of the Seminoles," Poarch Creek Councilman Eddie Tulles said. "Everybody knows the Seminoles make a world of money, but if someone would come to this community, [he or she would] see how much they put back into the community. No ballplayer dreads coming to Seminole Country."

Teams came by chartered buses and carloads to Brighton to compete in the annual tournament.

One of the Seminole Tribe's men teams, Hayla Boyz, started off strong, winning their first game 8-6 against the Skins. They continued winning, beating the Poarch Red Stix 15-12.

Seminole Heat however didn't have the same luck. With tough competition they were immediately dropped into the loser's bracket fighting to stay in.

"There's hard rivalry but some of these guys will be out eating dinner together; that's one of the beautiful things about it," Tulles said.

In the women's division, the Lady Seminoles won its first three games before being sent into the loser's bracket only to bounce back and make it into the finals.

Immokalee Recreation struggled being the first women's team to compete, losing 14-4 to the Natives.

In the Legends Division 40 and older, the men and women had some tough competition. The Brighton Seminoles played all the way to the top taking first place as the women's legend team Lady Seminoles had to fight a little harder, coming in third.

With the event being held in Brighton the atmosphere was a little bit different than it was in the past years.

"In Hollywood it's different because everything is on top of you," said Joe Collins of the Hollywood Recreation Department. "But here everything is so laid back. Everyone's kind of isolated, so they can't just run off."

The competition remained fierce up until the final day, but looking out among the crowd, one would never know. The different Tribes took the opportunity to mingle and catch up with old friends from other parts of Indian Country.

"We compete against each other every year, so the friendship's always there," Osceola said. "It's always good to see everybody coming together, so it's always fun."

Next year's NASA tournament will be hosted by the Coushatta Tribe in Louisiana.

Team Florida takes on Milwaukee at the 2011 U.S. Indigenous Games

BY PEGGIE REYNOLDS
Grantsmanship Coordinator & Regulatory Liaison

MILWAUKEE, Wis. — On a warm July day in Milwaukee, Wis., 79 Team Florida athletes, 20 coaches, 32 chaperones and 19 support staff converged on the city that hosted the 2011 U.S. Indigenous Games. Joel Frank Sr., as Team Florida's sports commissioner, led this band of young athletes to eight gold, five silver and four bronze medals.

Opening ceremonies on July 10, were followed by four full days of sport competitions, with closing ceremonies on July 14, at the Wisconsin State Fair Park. Thirteen teams from around Indian Country participated in nine sports at this year's Games.

Gold – silver – bronze

Team Florida competed in seven of the nine available sports: archery, basketball (four teams), golf, shotgun shooting, softball (two teams), track and field and wrestling. Each evening medals were awarded to those athletes whose final competitions were held that day. Team Florida placed third in the overall number of medals won throughout the week, behind Teams Wisconsin and New Mexico, who had much larger delegations. Even more impressive is that Team Florida medaled in every one of its seven sports.

Beyond the medals

While the victories and medals were the goals of the athletes and coaches, there were some very memorable moments and personal achievements that showed the true spirit of Team Florida.

More than 10 community members became volunteer coaches, including Wildcat Naha Jumper, Abner Rockwell, Preston and Ramona Baker, Andrew Jordan Bowers, Jonathon Ordway, John Jumper, Joe Frank and Colleen Henry. Their dedication to the young athletes and the hours they devoted to practice sessions and competitions in Milwaukee made the successes even more valuable.

With more than 150 Team Florida participants and even more family members staying at the DoubleTree Hotel, it quickly became apparent that everyone was pitching in and pulling together. Not only did people do their assigned jobs, but a number of chaperones were suddenly asked to coach teams when the original coaches did not show up in Milwaukee. There were also coaches who doubled as chaperones to some young athletes whose parents could not travel to the Games.

Team Florida athletes and coaches showed great sportsmanship both on and off the field. Hotel staff complimented the youth on their manners; the Host Society commented that Team Florida athletes were one of the best-behaved groups at the Games; and when several umpires/referees made biased calls against Florida, the athletes proved they could carry themselves with the honor and dignity that the officials lacked.

Finally, a true sense of team spirit played out as Team Florida participants moved through the competitions, activities, ceremonies and events. Even the SPD officers and Seminole EMTs who traveled to Milwaukee to provide their services found themselves caught up in the excitement of the competitions and medal ceremonies. The athletes, coaches and support staff attended each others' games to cheer on fellow team members. The lobby of the hotel was the gathering point for the group, and the easels used throughout the week announced the Florida medal winners for all to see. Morning coaches' meetings prepared everyone for the day's activities and allowed issues to be discussed and resolved daily.

The future of team Florida and the games

The next three years will be filled with organization, planning and participating in scheduled Games. For the remainder of 2011 and throughout 2012, Team Florida organizers will work with community volunteers and support staff in what will be referred to as "Off-Year Organization and Team Development." This group

Please see GAMES on page 2C



Sunny Frank

Team Florida prepares to make grand entry in the arena at the 2011 U.S. Indigenous Games in Milwaukee, Wis.

Brighton has big turn out for second Back to School Bike Race



Rachel Buxton

The youth take off on the 6.4-mile track during the second annual Back to School Bike Race Aug. 20 held on the Brighton Reservation.



Rachel Buxton

Elle Thomas competes in her first bike race, finishing first in her age category.



Rachel Buxton

Jayton Baker managed to pass his brothers and finish first in his age category during the Back to School Bike Race.

Pemayetv Emahakv's Lady Seminoles take its first game of the season



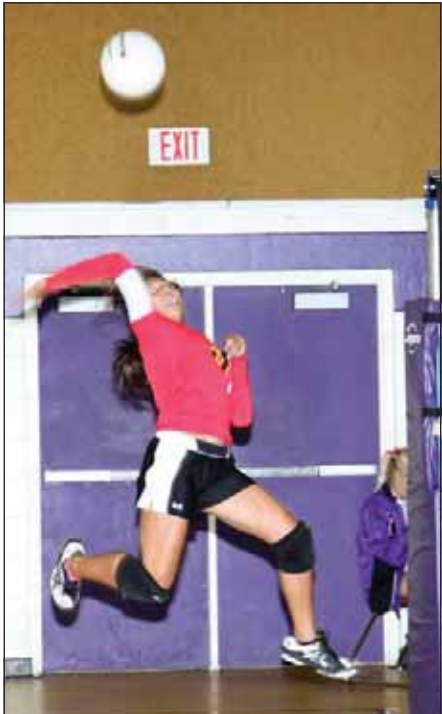
Rachel Buxton

Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School's Lady Seminoles volleyball team won its first game of the season Sept. 12 (25-18, 25-11) against Gifford Middle School of Vero Beach, Fla. held in Okeechobee at Yearling Middle School.



Rachel Buxton

Chastity Harmon serves for the winning point in Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School's Lady Seminoles' first volleyball game of the season.



Rachel Buxton

Odessa King gets air as she spikes the ball during the Lady Seminoles' first game of the season.

♦ GAMES

From page 1C

will assess the strengths and weaknesses of the Milwaukee Games, develop Team Florida governing rules and guidelines, establish ongoing sports practices and tournaments, identify athletes who will be ready for future Games and attend working meetings of the North American Indigenous Games Council.

In 2013, Wisconsin tribes plan to hold the next U.S. Indigenous Games and will focus on increasing the number of participants. These games will serve as preparation for the athletes to participate in the 2014 North American Indigenous Games.

Regina, Saskatchewan will host up to 5,000 athletes from the United States and Canada in the 2014 North American Indigenous Games. There will be approximately 15 sports available to the teams from the Canadian Provinces and from individual states, such as Team Florida.

The wrap-up

Team Florida 2011 proved successful on many levels. With a total of 17 medals there was no shortage of pride and excitement each night at the award ceremonies. These accomplishments, combined with exceptional sportsmanship and team spirit made this year's team stand out among its peers.



Sunny Frank

Sydney Cypress pitches Team Florida straight into the final game, to bring home the silver medal.



Sunny Frank

Seminole archer and silver medalist Christopher Briscall, left, draws his bow in competition against a Wisconsin athlete.

Tribal members make trek to Tallahassee for FSU season opener



Matt Snowberger

From left: Hollywood Board Rep. Chris Osceola, Richard Osceola, Moses Jumper Jr., Norman Bowers, Florida State University President Eric Barron, Neil Baxley, Kyle Doney, Florida State University Athletic Director Randy Spetman. Tribal members were invited guests at FSU's 2011 Athletic Hall of Fame induction ceremony at the University Center Club on Sept. 2.



Matt Snowberger

Recreation Liaison Richard Osceola and Hollywood Recreation Director Moses Jumper Jr. with FSU radio play-by-play announcer Gene Deckerhoff after the football game.



Matt Snowberger

Tribal members Kyle Doney, Hollywood Board Rep. Chris Osceola and Neil Baxley pose with University mascot Chief Osceola and his horse Renegade during the football season opener against University of Louisiana Monroe at Doak Campbell Stadium on Sept. 3.



Rachel Buxton

Native cowboys and cowgirls from across the Southeastern circuit competed Sept. 10-11 at the Eastern Indian Rodeo Association (EIRA) regional finals in Brighton for a chance to advance to the Indian Nation Finals Rodeo (INFR) held in Las Vegas in November. Brothers, Richard Bowers, left, and Paul Bowers Sr., both of the Big Cypress Reservation, earned a spot at the INFR in the Senior Team Roping division.



Rachel Buxton

Leanna Billie races around her third barrel for a time of 16.7035 during the Sept. 10-11 Eastern Indian Rodeo Association (EIRA) regional finals in Brighton.

Tribal members compete at EIRA regional finals for spot at the INFR



Rachel Buxton

Teresa Bowers gives her best effort to rope her calf in the lady's breakaway competition.



Rachel Buxton

The newly crowned Senior Rodeo Queen Erena Billie shows off one of the many items up for auction to raise money for the EIRA.

Gilbert (Gibby) Bowers remembered in 11th year of Memorial Bowling Tournament



Mary, left, and Eugene Bowers, parents of the late Gilbert (Gibby) Bowers, show off the latest commemorative shirt designed in memory of the avid bowler.



Louise Gopher and Eugene Bowers announce the rules of play before action in the 11th annual Gilbert Bowers Memorial Bowling Tournament held on Sept. 11 at Sparez Bowling Center in Davie.



Ken Doney concentrates on his next move in 3-6-9 action. The tournament was open to Tribal citizens and featured no-tap, regular, 3-6-9 and senior singles play, as well as cash prizes.



Hollywood Tribal Council Rep. Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. follows through for a strike in regular game play during the 11th annual Gilbert Bowers Memorial Bowling Tournament.



Seminoles T-Ball player Micah Stockton receives his end-of-season awards from program organizer/coach Josh Jumper.



Seminole Lightning softball player Alena Stockton signs a ball during the Aug. 16 awards ceremony at the Big Cypress Community Center.

Seminole softball, T-ball players honored at end-of-season ceremony



Alyssa Osceola was named the Seminole Lightning's team overall Most Valuable Player by head coach Josh Jumper.



Nancy Ortega, left, receives her autographed ball from daughter/Tribal citizen/Seminole Lightning softball player Harmony Cypress during the Aug. 16 awards ceremony.

♦ GOLF From page 1C

“Amos is a big, big plus for us,” Tiger said of Mazzant. “Right off the bat, Ahfachkee finished second in a golf match. That’s something that never happened before in our program. I wish Amos had more time to work with our kids before the season started, but I believe he will really, really turn it around for the kids. Hopefully, by the time we get out of probation, we’ll get somebody to qualify for the district, conference and regional championships at some point.”

All new sports teams, according to FHSAA rules and regulations, are subject to a two-year probationary period before they can join a district and be eligible for post-season play. Ahfachkee’s golf program is scheduled to come off probation as of the 2012 season.



New Ahfachkee Warriors golf head coach Amos Mazzant, left, and his assistant/wife, Cookie, encourage Ahfachkee senior golfer Jonathan Robbins to continue improving on his craft after he hits his first swing shot of the first hole at the Sept. 15 quad-match.

Tribal citizens come together on Labor Day for Levi Stevens Memorial Golf Tournament



Big Cypress Tribal Council Rep. Mondo Tiger, one of 17 Tribal citizens from Big Cypress, Brighton, Hollywood and Immokalee to compete, works on his putt on a practice hole.



Hollywood’s Mable Doctor was the only Tribal woman golfer at the third annual Levi Stevens Memorial Tournament on Sept. 5 at the Clewiston Golf Course.



Hollywood’s Elliot Young, center, converts on a birdie try as Tribal citizens Ted Nelson, left, and Sam Nelson look on.

♦ More photos from the NASA Softball Tournament



Lady Seminoles show off its second-place trophy and the end to their hard work.



Edna Tommie tries to make an out on third guarding her base.



Josh Jumper steps up to the plate during Hayla Boyz’ first game against the Skins.



Preston Baker relieves Larry Howard of the pitcher’s mound during their second game of the tournament.



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Indian DayD

The fight to establish, honor and celebrate Indian Day

BY RACHEL BUXTON
Staff Reporter

The fourth Friday in September, what has become known as Indian Day, has been set aside by the Seminole Tribe of Florida – along with many other tribes across the country – to honor and celebrate Native Americans as the first occupants of this great nation.

On Indian Day, it doesn't matter what clan Tribal members may belong to or what reservation they may reside on; it is a day to come together as one big Seminole family to partake in activities reminiscent of their ancestors, who fought so hard to remain unconquered.

Even though Indian Day is not a nationally recognized holiday, it is a concept that many individuals have worked hard for over the past century.

One of the very first advocates for an American Indian Day was a member of the Seneca Indian Tribe, Dr. Arthur C. Parker. Parker was the director of the Museum of Arts and Sciences in Rochester, N.Y. and also the founder of numerous American Indian rights organizations, including the Society of American Indians in 1911 and the National Congress of American Indians in 1944.

Parker persuaded the Boy Scouts of America to set aside a day to honor the first Americans. A day was adopted for three years, from 1912 to 1915.

On Sept. 18, 1915, the Congress of the American Indian Association held a meeting in Lawrence, Kan. where the Rev. Sherman Coolidge, also a founder of the Society of American Indians, issued a proclamation declaring the second Saturday of May as American Indian Day.

A year prior to the proclamation, another strong-willed Indian rights advocate, Red Fox James, whose tribal identity is said to be undetermined but is occasionally referenced as a Blackfoot Indian, traveled more than 4,000 miles on horseback to Washington, D.C. to petition for an Indian Day.

Met with resistance, the next year he took to horseback again and went state to state seeking gubernatorial support. He petitioned once more in 1919 to designate the fourth Saturday of September as an Indian holiday.

The first American Indian Day was declared in 1916 when the governor of New York at the time Charles S. Whitman formally designated the second Saturday in May as the day of observance. Other states followed with their own Indian Days including Illinois and Massachusetts. Several states including South Dakota have designated Columbus Day as their Native American Day, making it a state-sanctioned holiday.

Even after so much effort, an actual Indian Day continues to be unrecognized as a national legal holiday.

Florida, along with California, continue to recognize the fourth Friday

of September, the day Red Fox James fought so earnest for, as their Indian Day.

Each September the Seminole Tribe holds celebrations on all reservations, hosting an array of cultural events ranging from archery, pumpkin bread making contests, traditional clothing contests, stickball and the infamous skillet throw to remember their Native ancestors and other Native American tribes that helped make America what it is today.

The fight for Native American recognition continues with the current president and government. In 2009 Congress passed House Joint Resolution 40 designating the Friday immediately following Thanksgiving Day as Native American Heritage Day. President Barack Obama signed the legislation on June 26, 2009.

Then on Oct. 30, 2009, President Obama issued a proclamation designating November 2009 as National Native American Heritage Month and Nov. 27, 2009 as Native American Heritage Day.

In October 2010, President Obama issued yet another proclamation designating November 2010 as National Native American Heritage Month.

These proclamations all help solidify Native Americans' rightful place in the nation's history, and with continued perseverance, Indian Day may soon become a nationally recognized holiday.

Naples community celebrates Indian Day with walk and traditional activities



Judy Weeks

Pedro Zepeda prepares a wooden shaft for construction of a fishing gig during his Indian Day demonstration.



Judy Weeks

Aspen Billie entertains herself on the tree swing while other children played in the swimming pool, on the archery range or interacted with the Seminole Fire and Rescue team.



Judy Weeks

Mae'Anna Osceola helps to prepare breakfast by stirring the grits at the Indian Day celebration in Naples on Sept. 24.



Judy Weeks

From left: Ida Osceola, Kennedy Huggins, Christina Billie and Tammy Billie teach the next generation the art of making fry bread and baking biscuits in a Dutch oven buried in the hot coals of the fire.



Judy Weeks

Naomi Walden chops wood to build a fire for a full day of traditional cooking at the Naples Indian Day celebration.

Immokalee community enjoys outdoor festivities for Indian Day

“During the past 30 years, the Seminole Tribe has made enormous strides to benefit its members,” Immokalee Council Liaison Kenny Joe Davis Sr. said. “However, it is important that we never forget who we are or where we came from. Each year Indian Day gives us an opportunity to celebrate our culture and remember that we are all one big family.”



Judy Weeks

Immokalee Culture Coordinator Geraldine Osceola aces the skillet throwing contest.



Judy Weeks

Remy Rodriguez shows off her contemporary entry in the junior clothing contest.



Judy Weeks

Josh Garza spent four months beading his pool cue that took first place in the arts and crafts contest.



Judy Weeks

Spencer Jock takes careful aim and shoots an arrow directly into the heart of the bear target during the Immokalee Indian Day competition.



Judy Weeks

Taylor Osceola Fulton handles her draw knife like a pro during the log peeling competition at the Immokalee Indian Day celebration.



Judy Weeks

Blake Osceola-Billie joins his dad Alan Michael Billie-Venzor in the lake after a flip over in the canoe race.



Judy Weeks

Bonnie Davis holds up her 2-month-old daughter Elana Kendricks, who stole the show in the infant clothing competition.



Judy Weeks

Immokalee Council Liaison Kenny Joe Davis Sr. announces Whitney Osceola as the winner of the 2011 Smart Car in the Immokalee Indian Day Raffle.



Judy Weeks

Immokalee Council Liaison Kenny Joe Davis Sr. teams up with Nancy Motlow in the paddle boat races.

Trail Reservation hosts Indian Day celebrations for the first time



Brett Daly

Trail Liaison Norman Huggins welcomes Tribal members to Trail's first Indian Day celebration.



Brett Daly

Tribal youngsters Miken and Josie Cantu enjoy breakfast before the start of the festivities.



Brett Daly

Tribal elder Virginia Poole helps Tribal youngsters during the fry bread competition.



Brett Daly

Trail office manager Michael Cantu plays a friendly game of horseshoes.



Brett Daly

Tribal elder Francis Osceola shows off her Indian attire after the clothing competition.



Brett Daly

Top: Michael Osceola prepares a deer for the deer cleaning demonstration. Bottom: Dalton Billie participates in the log peeling competition as Ronnie Thomas holds the log in place.



Brett Daly

Tribal youngster Zaiden Frank participates in the clothing contest.



Brett Daly

Tribal members Loraine Jim and Morningstar Osceola have their hair measured for the longest hair contest.

Tampa Reservation celebrates Indian Day in its own way



Peter B. Gallagher

Susie Henry participates in the log peeling competition during the Tampa Reservation's Indian Day celebrations on Sept. 24.



Peter B. Gallagher

Libby Awonohopay makes herself a special Indian Day bracelet.



Peter B. Gallagher

Preston Osceola demonstrates how to start a fire.



Peter B. Gallagher

Bobby Henry demonstrates how to use a bow and arrow during the Indian Day festivities.



Peter B. Gallagher

Avery Sisneroz is all smiles during Tampa's Indian Day celebrations.



Peter B. Gallagher

Arnulfo and Maggie Garcia make sweetgrass baskets during the Indian Day celebrations on Sept. 24.



Peter B. Gallagher

Amanda Sisneroz shows off her skills during the log peeling competition.



Peter B. Gallagher

Tribal youth learn the process of making sweetgrass baskets and beads.



Peter B. Gallagher

Tribal youth learn how to make arrowheads as part of the Indian Day activities.

Fort Pierce kicks off Indian Day celebrations



Rachel Buxton

Patricia Wilcox shows off her skillet-throwing skills tossing her pan 22.5 inches during the Fort Pierce Indian Day Celebration.



Rachel Buxton

Taylor Fulton takes first place in the youth division of the skillet throw with 27.4 inches on Sept. 17 at the Chupco Ranch.

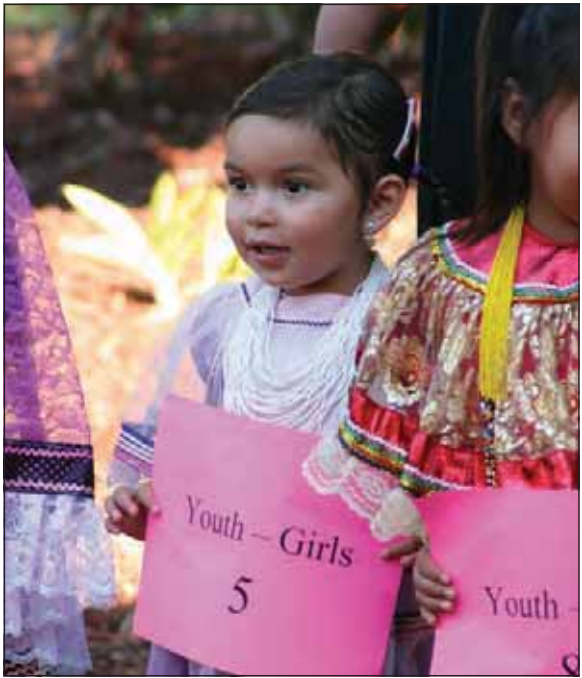


Photo courtesy of Joe Collins

Miah Osceola wins first place in her age division at the Fort Pierce Indian Day clothing contest held Sept. 16.



Photo courtesy of Joe Collins

Shamy Tommie dons Seminole colors and wins first place in the clothing contest at the Chupco Ranch.



Rachel Buxton

Tristen Wilcox visits Fort Pierce from Hollywood where he competes in the youth division of pole peeling finishing with a time of 6:34:97.



Rachel Buxton

Sheree Sneed shows off her strength during the pole peeling competition.



Rachel Buxton

Josh Sneed wastes no time during pole peeling completing in 5:26:47 during the Fort Pierce Indian Day Celebration.

Brighton celebrates Indian Day with friendly competition



Rachel Buxton

Lexi Thomas, left, and Talena Holata enjoy a snow cone and friendship at the Brighton Indian Day celebration Sept. 23.



Rachel Buxton

Aubee Billie prepares pumpkin bread for the fry bread/pumpkin bread competition at the Brighton Indian Day.



Rachel Buxton

Ginger Jones is first to finish her log at the Brighton Indian Day celebration.



Rachel Buxton

Joyce Jumper Piz, left, and daughter Deliah Carrillo work together to make pumpkin bread to enter into the contest.



Rachel Buxton

Brighton women show off tradition style at the clothing contest Sept. 22 in the gym.



Rachel Buxton

Nicki Osceola races to finish peeling her log during the contest.



Rachel Buxton

Layne Thomas, left, and Rayven Smith are head-to-toe traditional old style for the clothing contest.



Rachel Buxton

Rufus Tiger aims for the target with his bow.



Rachel Buxton

Rylee Smith participates in the youth activities during the celebrations.



Rachel Buxton

Billie Micco, left, and Weems Buck fight it out to move on in the senior horseshoes competition.

Annual Indian Day festivities a success for the Hollywood Reservation



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal foursome Johnnie Jones, Ronnie Doctor, Jeremy Bowers and Brett Green at the kick-off of Indian Day festivities at the annual Indian Day Golf Tournament held at the Grand Oaks Golf Club on Sept. 22.



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal citizens Leslie and Juanita Osceola show off their first place trophies in their division of the Indian Day Fun Walk.



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal citizen Larry Tiger works on peeling a log as part of the log peeling competition.



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal elder Bobbie Billie tosses her third attempt in the seniors division of the skillet toss.



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal citizen Savannah Huggins, left, gives Miss Florida Seminole Jewel Buck, and Junior Miss Florida Seminole Jaryaca Baker, right, some cooking tips.



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal senior Dora Tiger sets up to throw a strike in mixed doubles play during the Indian Day bowling tournament held at Sparez Bowling Center in Davie on day two of Indian Day festivities.



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal musician Hank Nelson, middle, and the All-Star Band entertain Okalee Village Indian Day guests on day two of the Indian Day celebration.



Chris C. Jenkins

Tribal youth enjoy the bounce house water station as part of several activities celebrating Indian Day.



Chris C. Jenkins

Ashley Wilcox and Aunt Patricia Wilcox enjoy the horseshoe toss.



Chris C. Jenkins

A member of the native Dance Troupe performs on stage for guests at the Okalee Indian Village.



Chris C. Jenkins

Otter John of the Okalee Village displays a baby alligator during the wildlife and snake show.

Big Cypress Reservation hosts a variety of events to celebrate Indian Day



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal Council Rep. Mondo Tiger at Big Cypress' Indian Day Golf Tournament.



Naji Tobias

Tribal citizen Charlie Cypress gets into competition mode at the Sept. 24 tournament.



Naji Tobias

A group of Big Cypress Tribal citizens conclude the Sept. 23 Indian Day festivities with a stomp dancing sequence.



Naji Tobias

Tribal citizen Joe Junior Billie competes in the senior men's 8-Ball portion of the Big Cypress Indian Day Pool Tournament on Sept. 24.



Naji Tobias

Tribal citizens Barbara Billie, Edna McDuffie and Brian Billie enjoy a moment together during the 3.1 mile Big Cypress Indian Day Walk/Run on Sept. 23.



Naji Tobias

Big Cypress Tribal Board Rep. Joe Frank sets his bow and arrow in motion during the archery contest at the Sept. 23 Big Cypress Indian Day festivities.



Naji Tobias

Tisha Garza shows Tribal contestant Harmony Cypress how to flip the fry bread.



Naji Tobias

Tribal citizen Cathy Cypress runs her way to the finish line of the 3.1 mile Walk/Run on Sept. 23.



Naji Tobias

Malari Baker powers her way in the log peeling competition.



Naji Tobias

Rochelle Osceola, left, and Nadine Bowers, right, paddle themselves to a win in the Big Cypress Indian Day canoe race.



Naji Tobias

Krishawn Tommie wins the male 9-10 year old jackets category of the clothing contest.



Naji Tobias

Tribal toddler Mohayla Billie wins first in the 0-1 year old modern traditional category.