





Seminole Tribune Voice of the Unconquered

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Betty Osceola inspires during saga of Everglades detention center

BY KELLY FARRELL Special to the Tribune

One woman stood at the center of defending the Everglades this summer as the immigration detention center dubbed Alligator Alcatraz opened and, according to a judge's ruling, will be closing.

Betty Osceola stood across the street from the gate to the JetPort in Big Cypress National Preserve amidst the first arrival of infrastructure in June through to the ongoing departure in late August. Meanwhile she continues to be featured in just about every news outlet, from Florida, throughout the U.S. and around the world, uniting indigenous and non-indigenous people alike.

"People can learn from trees," Osceola said during recent talks. "Trees support each other through their roots," she said.

They nourish and hold each other up. "Trees don't stop to think 'oh that one offended me," Osceola said.

Trees don't hold back from each other, she said.

"So, who are we to forsake another human being?" Osceola asked as a group of people surrounded her, gathering in the renowned Everglades' photographer Clyde Butcher's Big Cypress Gallery, located in Ochopee, in midsummer.

Ruby Tiger Community Center opens on Lakeland Reservation

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY Staff Reporter

LAKELAND — With the pop of a balloon, Seminole Tribal members officially opened the Ruby Tiger Community Center with a joyous celebration and ribbon cutting Aug. 26.

The opening of the 35,339 square-foot community center marked another milestone for the young reservation, which is located on more than 1,200 acres north of Interstate 4 in Lakeland.

Construction of dozens of single-family homes on the reservation began in 2020 on the land located about 40 miles west of the Tampa Reservation. In 1999, the Tampa residents were asked to move to make way for the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino

The Ruby Tiger Community Center is the first community building with services for the residents.

A wall in the community center lobby features a large photo of Ruby Tiger, who was Tampa's matriarch with seven children, 28 grandchildren and 30 great grandchildren. Tiger made sure tribal members in Tampa remained a close-knit community after they moved off tribal land.

"They were promised a reservation and they waited and waited and waited," said Brighton Councilman Larry Howard. "We made sure to bring people back to their reservation. Ruby is no longer here, but I guarantee she's looking down on us today."

During the ribbon cutting ceremony, dignitaries and long-time Tampa area residents spoke about what it took to get the Lakeland reservation up and running. Lakeland resident and Ruby Tiger's daughter See EVERGLADES on page 6A | Nancy Frank spoke about the sacrifices her



Beverly Bidney

A ribbon cutting ceremony Aug. 26 officially opens the Ruby Tiger Community Center on the Lakeland Reservation.

community made to get to this day.

'We relocated from Tampa to be able to benefit from what the tribe could do,' Barbara Billie translated what Frank said

in her language. "It took a long time and [Ruby] passed, but her daughters took up the

See LAKELAND on page 4A

Zae Thomas suits up for first time at FSU

BY KEVIN JOHNSON **Senior Editor**

TALLAHASSEE — Florida State University's 31-17 win against Alabama on Aug. 30 was memorable for more reasons than just the final score, which was college football's biggest upset in week one.

Freshman Zae Thomas became just the second Seminole Tribe of Florida tribal member to suit up for the FSU football team. He is the first tribal member to join the team on a scholarship. Tribal member Justin Motlow played for FSU as a preferred walk on from 2014-17.

Thomas, a 6-foot-3, 196-pound freshman defensive back who helped American Heritage-Plantation win a state title eight months ago, wore No. 22 in FSU's home garnet jersey with gold helmet and pants as the Seminoles stunned the Crimson Tide in a game televised on ABC.

The afternoon provided other firsts for Thomas, including his first Legacy Walk when buses drop off players, who are dressed in suits, outside the stadium. They walk between throngs of cheering fans and cheerleaders before entering the stadium.

There's also the tradition of players standing shoulder-to-shoulder at midfield at the end of warm-ups and raising their helmets as they walk to the endzone.

Tribal members, including Thomas's family, showed their support; some watched from the stands. Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. and his family watched pregame activities from the sideline. Brighton Councilman Larry Howard watched some of the first half next to the endzone with FSU '07 graduate and alumni representative for the tribe Kyle Doney and JoJo Osceola.

At the conclusion, a good chunk of the 67,277 fans stormed onto Bobby Bowden Field at the recently renovated Doak Campbell Stadium to celebrate a win that many pundits predicted wouldn't happen.

Thomas, who did not play, was amid the wild celebration with teammates and fans who whooped it up with perhaps even more vigor than usual because the victory fueled hope that this season will be different than last year's 2-10 record.

FSU has a reasonable chance to surpass last year's win total in a couple weeks with its next two games coming against East Texas A&M and Kent State.



Florida State freshman football player Zae Thomas (22) and his teammates raise their helmets to the home crowd as part of a team tradition at the end of warm-ups Aug. 30 in Tallahassee. FSU won the season opener against Alabama, 31-17, in front of 67,277 fans at Doak Campbell Stadium.

See ZAE on page 3C

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Editorial

The importance of the Voting Rights **Act for Indian Country**

John Echohawk

Tednesday, August 6, is the 60th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act. This landmark civil rights legislation helps ensure equal access to voting guaranteed through the 14th and 15th amendments of the U.S. Constitution. Every eligible citizen of the United States has the right to vote and have their political will counted, free from racial discrimination.

This anniversary is not just a moment of commemoration but also an opportunity to recommit to foundational democratic principles, for every American. For too long and even today, full and fair access to the ballot box is being kept from Native Americans and Alaska Natives across this

My organization, the Native American Rights Fund, is the oldest and largest nonprofit providing specialized, high-impact legal assistance for tribal nations and Native people seeking to assert and protect their rights. For decades, we have fought hard to protect the voting rights of Native Americans across the United States. We have successfully vindicated the rights of Native Americans in states like Arizona, Alaska, North Dakota, Montana, South Dakota, and Nebraska. Often, we have relied on the Voting Rights Act.

Racial discrimination still exists, and

the Voting Rights Act has proven to be an effective tool for individual Native voters to unable to deliver on its promise of protecting the right to vote from race-based attacks. confidently stand up for their voting rights. The act is powerful and necessary legislation. Now, however, in a time when electoral margins are thin and political jockeying is intense, we see the Voting Rights Act itself under direct attack.

Right now, NARF is working on a case, Turtle Mountain v. Howe. In that case, the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals issued a radical decision that goes against 40 years of precedent. The court concluded that individual voters and tribal nations cannot bring claims under Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act or under a separate law called Section 1983. With this decision, the court cut off all options for everyday Americans, tribal nations, and organizations to directly challenge racial discrimination that impedes their fundamental right to vote. We, along with Campaign Legal Center and other cocounsel, are seeking United States Supreme Court review of this devastating opinion.

Turtle Mountain is one case in a line of cases designed to undermine the Voting Rights Act. Based on the wrongheaded notion that racial discrimination is no longer prevalent, we have seen the U.S. Supreme Court narrow the Voting Rights Act whether by gutting preclearance in Shelby v. Holder or narrowing vote denial claims in Brnovich v. DNC. Turtle Mountain must go the other way. If it does not, then the Voting Rights Act will be a hollow shell, gutted and

We must be able to continue to bring claims on behalf of Native people and tTribes, whether that is fighting a polling place put 50 miles from a reservation, or contesting a gerrymandered map that excludes Native populations, or challenging ID laws that exclude tribal IDs. We must have tools, like the Voting Rights Act, to beat back this inequity. The act has been an essential part of the fight for Native voting rights. And we are committed to that fight. We will fight to protect the Voting Rights Act and we will fight for every Native voter's every American's — right to vote free from racial discrimination.

If you or your tribe have encountered restrictions on your opportunities to register, vote, and have your vote counted, the Native American Rights Fund is available to help. Contact us at vote@narf.org. Learn more at

John Echohawk, Pawnee, is the Executive Director of the Native American Rights Fund. He has been recognized as one of the 100 most influential lawyers in America by the National Law Journal and has received numerous service awards and other recognition for his leadership in the Indian Law field.

This opinion was published on ictnews. com on Aug. 6.

This book comes from a place of

healing — learning how to forgive, how to

surrender, how to let go, how to release,'

Caché explained. "It's not for experts — it's for beginners. It's my experience of how I

through incarceration, addiction, and recovery. "I found God incarcerated," she

shared. "That experience reshaped my life,

and my writing became my testimony.

completed several cornerstone works:

The 4 Sacred Agreements

• The Holy Grail

Her writing is informed by her journey

In addition to her debut, Caché has

• The Sacred Art of Feminine Alchemy

The 4 Sacred Laws of Attraction

Beyond these, she has ten more books

in her catalog, including Cache's Seminole

Legends & Stories, / Native Hands to Heal,

and her forthcoming memoir Chickees to

Casinos, which chronicles her Seminole

The Sacred Lady: The Alpha & The

became a believer."

Omega

Gathering of **Nations to close** after 2026 pow wow

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY **Staff Reporter**

After 43 years, the Gathering of Nations Pow Wow announced in a press release Aug. 16 that the event will end next year. The final pow wow, dubbed "The Last Dance," will be held April 24-25, 2026, at the Expo New Mexico/Tingley Coliseum in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Billed as the largest pow wow in North America, GON is a celebration of Indigenous music, dance and art from around the world. Annual attendance is about 3,000 competitors and 100,000 visitors from the U.S. and Canada, according to its website.

The website states the 2026 celebration will honor 43 years of history, legacy and cultural splendor. The only information about why GON is ending on the website was "several factors beyond our control make long-term planning and coordination challenging. With that in mind, we have chosen to close this chapter by celebrating its incredible history at the 2026 event."

Gathering of Nations Limited, a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization, was founded by Derek Mathews and Dr. Lita Mathews in 1984, and is run by the Mathews family, including daughter Melonie. The pow wow has always been held in Albuquerque. In 1983 it began at the University of Albuquerque and over the years, moved to the University of New Mexico basketball arena and then to Expo New Mexico.

Many Seminole tribal members have attended GON over the years and numerous Miss Florida Seminoles have competed for the Miss Indian World title and crown.

Cheyenne Kippenberger was the only one to achieve the title and served from 2019-2021. She was the 36th Native woman to wear the crown and the only one to serve two years, due to the pandemic.

"It's very bittersweet to see it come to an end," Kippenberger said. "It's been a large part of why my life is where it's at now. Being Miss Indian World impacted my career; you have a large national and international platform through the people, connections and friends I made. It was an eye-opening experience and gave me the opportunity to see the world.

Kippenberger hoped another Seminole woman would someday be named MIW. She plans to attend the final GON in April.

"We all want it to be a celebration instead of a funeral," she said. "It had a really great tenure and had an impact on a lot of people's lives. I think it will be one last beautiful gathering together and will end it in a proper way that feels good.'

Last year, 2024-25 Miss Florida Seminole ČeCe Thomas and former Miss Florida Seminole Thomlynn Billie competed for Miss Indian World.



Cheyenne Kippenberger won the Miss Indian World at Gathering of Nations in 2019.

Dancers and drummers have always attended GON to compete, reconnect with old friends and drink in the diverse Native American culture. The two-day event includes two Grand Entries each day where all the dancers fill the dance floor in an evertightening spiral of colorful regalia, beads and feathers. When the floor is too full to properly dance, the participants bob in place to the sound of the drums.

The drum competition includes Northern, Southern and Hand drums. Dancers compete in the Northern, Southern, Fancy, Grass, Chicken, Jingle, Shawl and Traditional styles. Tiny Tots, Elders and every age group in between show their skill as they vie for prizes in their categories.

Spectators are plentiful and have plenty to watch including the dance competitions, the Horse and Rider Regalia Parade, Indigenous musical acts, the Miss Indian World ceremony and shopping at the Traders Market with hundreds of Native vendors.

Dennis Bowen Sr. began announcing at GON in 1991 and spent decades on the road working pow wows around the country. He and his wife Alita began pow wowing in 1972 in Tuba City, Arizona. He had a stroke in early 2025 and could not announce at GON, so 2024 was his last year.

"I don't know of anyone in our lifetime that's going to put together an event like the Gathering of the Nations and draw so many people," he said.

Sacred Lady Caché publishes literary debut with Sacred Lady Panther Press

FROM PRESS RELEASE

JUPITER — Author and spiritual teacher Sacred Lady Caché, founder of Sacred Lady Panther Press, has officially debuted as a published writer with the release of "The Sacred Lady: The Alpha & The Omega." In just months, Caché has completed multiple books and now stands as a powerful new voice in Indigenous literature, spirituality, and sacred feminine healing.

"I want to connect with an audience that feels like picking up my book is not by coincidence," Caché said. "It's very spiritual. My book is a guide to connect with a Higher

On Aug. 7, Caché participated in a professional photo shoot in Jupiter, Florida, with photographer Dani Carretero, capturing new portraits with her debut book. The images reflect both pride and hopefulness as she steps into her role as author and cultural voice.

"The Sacred Lady: The Alpha & The Omega" is available in paperback through Amazon (\$14), Barnes & Noble, Google Play, Apple Books, Walmart, Lulu, and other major retailers.



Sacred Lady Caché holds her book, "The Sacred Lady: The Alpha & The Omega" during a photo

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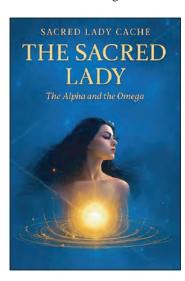
upbringing and the tribe's rise from traditional chickee huts to building the global Hard Rock enterprise. shoot on Aug. 7 in Jupiter.

Caché has also trademarked her signature Sacred Lady Alchemical Writing MethodTM, which fuses Indigenous wisdom, Christian faith, and New Age spirituality into a transformative literary style.

"I wanted to do more than just tell my story," Caché said. "I wanted to build an audience for spirituality. That's the foundation of The Sacred Lady: The Alpha & The Omega. It's a blueprint of remembrance - to realign yourself, to reset, and to heal."

About Sacred Lady Panther Press

Sacred Lady Panther Press is a Native, woman-owned independent publishing company founded by Sacred Lady Caché. Dedicated to healing, spirituality, and cultural remembrance, the press uplifts authentic voices and stories that empower communities and future generations.



Photographer Dani Carretero photographs Sacred Lady Caché.

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NCAI to hold convention in Seattle

FROM PRESS RELEASE

The National Congress of American 82nd annual Convention & Indians' Marketplace will be held Nov. 16-21 at the Seattle Convention Center in Seattle, Washington.

Attendees will have the opportunity to collaborate with federal partners and tribal organizations to defend and enhance tribal sovereignty. Tribal leaders, NCAI members, Native youth, community advocates, and partners from across Indian Country will gather to embark upon a new era of nationto-nation engagement, including strategy development, advocacy, and more.

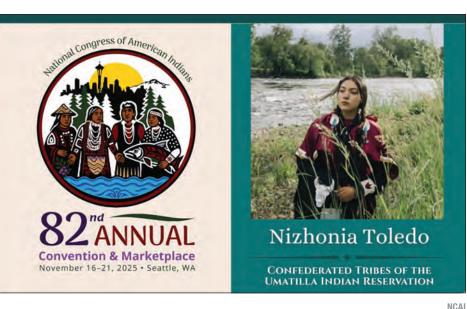
NCAI elections will be held during the convention.

Also, the Native Youth Convention will be held as part of the NCAI convention. The youth convention brings together Native youth leaders by providing interactive learning sessions to build upon their leadership abilities. Youth will have access to the full convention.

Youth participants will engage in a larger conversation about protecting and maintaining tribal sovereignty from a youth perspective.

This year's conference logo was created by Nizhonia Toledo, a 21-year-old artist and enrolled member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. Her work is grounded in community, tradition, and the belief that art is a living expression of culture.

For more information go to ncai.org.



Native artist Nizhonia Toledo created the logo for this year's NCAI convention.

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Community

Conservation's summer program provides interns with hands-on experience

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY **Staff Reporter**

BIG CYPRESS — The Department of Conservation's Summer Work Experience Program (SWEP) participants made their final presentations to the community Aug. 1. They described what they did and learned during their tenure with the department.

Carlise Bermudez, 21, Ahfachkee School 10th grader Randy Rueda, 15, and Ahfachkee School 12th grader Savanna Cypress, 17, created PowerPoint presentations showcasing the highlights of their summer work.

Photos of the SWEP interns working in the field throughout the summer were placed on each table in the back room at Billie Swamp Safari for all to see. The participants learned to monitor the palmetto berry harvest; identify land and water species to determine if they are native or invasive; fly drones as a tool for forestry; and create PowerPoint presentations, graphs and map the data with help from the latest geolocation

"They did a diversity of things this summer," said Craig Van Der Heiden, Department of Conservation (DOC) director. "It's amazing the depth of knowledge they

gained in just eight weeks."

Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie told the gathering of Environmental Protection Office employees and SWEP participants' family and friends how important it is to get young people involved in programs like this one.

"To be self-sustaining, we need them to be working here or anywhere in the tribe," Councilwoman Billie said. "You can be anything from an alligator wrestler to a doctor or a lawyer within the tribe. You guys are the fresh minds with fresh perspectives; you see things different than we do. We can all work together for the betterment of the

"This was a good group," said invasive wildlife biologist Joe Andreoli. "They were super enthusiastic and were often the first ones out of the UTV in the field."

As the interns made their presentations, they described what they did in detail. Bermudez said she enjoyed her time with the DOC so much that she sought employment with the department and is now a DOC Work Experience trainee

"I see myself doing this for the long term," said Bermudez, who attended Florida SouthWestern State College for a semester. "I wasn't sure what I wanted to do with my life, so I did this for the summer. Now I'm

In front from left to right, DOC director Craig Van Der Heiden, SWEP participants Savanna Cypress and Carlise Bermudez, Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie, SWEP participant Randy Rueda and DOC invasive wildlife biologist Joseph Andreoli gather together with DOC employees after the students' final presentation of their summer working with the department.

thinking about taking some college classes while I work in the department."

The participants described some of the things they did during their presentations. Bermudez said she surveyed the

pinelands to note the size and health of native plants, such as the Seminole Pea, in addition to monitoring the aquatic diversity in the Kissimmee Billie Slough in Big Cypress.

"There are a lot of invasive aquatic species in Big Cypress," Bermudez said. "But we found a lot of native crayfish, twotoed amphiuma and greater sirens [both are aquatic salamanders] every day. We even caught a gator in the net, but Hunter [Howard, DOC field tech] got it out."

Cypress had a rodent trap with her and showed how it works and what was put inside to trap the animals. Once trapped, its gender and weight were determined before it was released back into the wild.

"I've been interested in rodents since ninth grade," Cypress said. "I've learned how the hydrology and landscape affects them. It's important to study rodents and see how they are affected by the vegetation and predators. If the rodent population is healthy, so is the environment.'

Rueda got a better understanding of

what the department does and could see himself working with it in the future. During the presentation, he explained how they surveyed the aquatic areas for invasive and native species using Fyke nets, which are used in shallow areas. They found a lot of native Everglades crayfish and pig frogs.

"We found walking catfish, which have

been established in the Everglades since the 1970s," Rueda said. "The Florida gar is the only native fish we found. Aquatic diversity research matters because it is linked to water quality. A lot of crayfish helps the fish population thrive."

Councilwoman Billie asked them if they would share importance protecting environment with their peers.

"If we can help educate them, that would be good," Bermudez said. "It's important to see seven generations ahead. A lot of kids are interested in keeping the environment sustainable for all of us. It's in our interest to protect it, so naturally I'll want to speak



Beverly Bidney

SWEP intern Randy Rueda gives his presentation.

Carlise Bermudez, now a DOC employee, gives her final presentation about what she did with the department over the summer.

FWC seeks sightings of rare rainbow snake

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY Staff Reporter

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is asking the public to report any sightings of the elusive rainbow snake (Farancia erytrogramma), a nonvenomous species whose population has declined in recent

The snake is semi-aquatic and feeds on American eels, whose population has also declined in Florida waters. Rainbow snakes depend on eels for prey, which along with habitat loss and snake fungal disease, have contributed to the population loss and has raised concerns about the species long term survival.

According to FWC, rainbow snakes are visually striking and difficult to mistake for other species. They are iridescent black or violetblue with three red stripes along their back. Their lip and chin scales are yellow, marked with violet spots, and adults typically reach 3 to 4 feet in

These snakes are usually found

in or near water, including rivers, One south Florida subspecies was historically found in Fisheating Creek in Glades County. That location is more than 150 miles south of the nearest known population in Lake County but hasn't been documented since 1952.

Although the rainbow snake has always been more common in the northern part of Florida and the coastal southern states, FWC believes every sighting gives the agency valuable data and helps them assess the health of the species.

The tribe's Department of Conservation is aware of the rainbow snake but has yet to see one.

"If we had found one, we would definitely be talking about it," said Fish and Wildlife manager Sergio Gonzalez. "I don't think any of us in the Fish and Wildlife section have actually ever seen one in our careers."

However, DOC has documented sightings of two other relatively rare snakes on the Big Cypress Reservation this year: the mud snake (Farancia abacura) and scarlet snake (Cemophora coccinea).

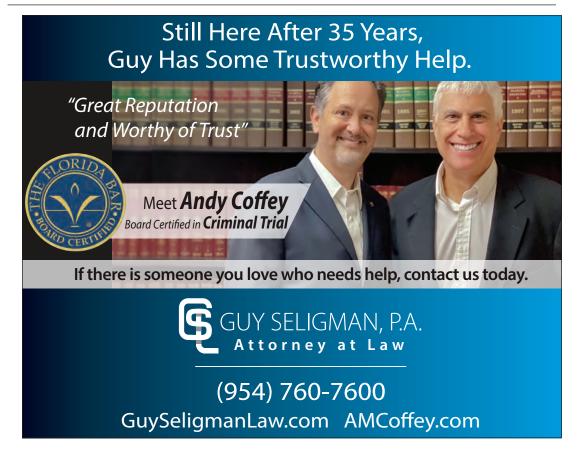
Gonzalez has encountered fewer springs and brackish marshes. rough green snakes (Opheodrys aestivus) than he used to in areas northeast of Big Cypress. He recently had a conversation with a University of Florida graduate student about trends in reptile and amphibian surveys across southern Florida. The student gave him a few examples of measurable declines in certain

"Most shocking to me was learning that banded water snakes (Nerodia fasciata) in Everglades National Park are less commonly encountered in recent years," Gonzalez said. "When I was personally collecting data for those surveys at the inception of these long-term projects (ca 2010), banded water snakes were among the most common species encountered.

The cause of the species' decline can be attributed to various factors including habitat loss, regional water level management, introduced parasites such as the lung worm introduced by Burmese pythons and road mortality from increased traffic.

For more information and to report a sighting, go to fwc.com.







The front of the Ruby Tiger Community Center on the Lakeland Reservation.



A few weeks before the official opening, from left to right, Keith Simmons, Phaydra Clark and Joshua Smith stand next to the mural of their great-grandmother Ruby Tiger in the lobby.

♦ LAKELAND From page 1A

Later, Frank talked about her mother, who died at age 106 in June 2001 with Frank by her side.

"I think about her all the time," she said. "She told me "When I'm gone, don't cry for me. Be happy.""

Brighton Board Rep. Bryan Arledge called Lakeland "one of the most beautiful reservations we have as a tribe." Hollywood Board Rep. O'Hara Tommie said "despite being spread out geographically, the tribe is still a family.'

"I think of how God has blessed us; 26 years later we are here on this reservation with homes, this building and more to come," Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr.

said. "You were a community already; you just needed a place to call home. Thank you to the Tampa community for giving us the best chance to survive, for our children to survive, for the future."

The 35,339 square-foot community center is designed to bring the community together in large gatherings or small. It has a large gymnasium which can double as a hurricane shelter, administrative offices, a lounge for elders and spaces for cultural, educational and recreational activities. Additionally, there is a weight and aerobics training room, game room, computer room and a conference room. Outdoors there is a pool with a wading area and swim lanes, two outdoor kitchens, shaded poolside lounging areas and three metal chickees on an expansive patio overlooking Lake Bowles.

"It took more than 20 years, but you

kept track of our traditions and culture when everyone was scattered," President Holly Tiger said. "This building is a place where kids will come to learn, elders will come to gather and families will come to celebrate. There will be a lot of things going on within these walls; it will be the heartbeat of this community.'

Beverly Bidney

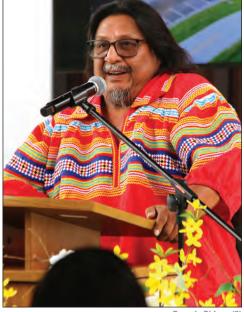
"For most people here, this is the first time they've ever lived on a reservation," said reservation administrator Richard Henry. "It's like a big old camp here and I know this community is going to grow. This building comes with a lot of responsibility to keep it active and keep it open. The more we use it, the bigger the community will get."





Beverly Bidney





Beverly Bidney (2) Brighton Councilman Larry Howard, at left, and Tampa/Lakeland Reservation Administrator Richard Henry speak to the audience during the ceremony.



Nancy Frank watches as Barbara Billie translates her remarks into English during the opening ceremony for the Ruby Tiger Community Center, which is named for Nancy's mother.



Bobby Henry and his daughter, Barbara Henry, visit the Elders lounge at the community center.



The back patio provides plenty of space and a peaceful view.



Larry Sisneroz gives his grandson Alijah Jordan a few tips on how to throw a basketball as they check out the community center's game room.





Beverly Bidney



After the opening ceremony, Joelli Cypress and Koa Cypress were the first ones to try out the

TCD participants graduate from Seminole **Coconut Creek Casino dealer school**

BY CALVIN TIGER Staff Reporter

COCONUT CREEK — Three Tribal Career Development (TCD) team members took a chance and successfully completed an eight-week dealer training school at the Seminole Coconut Creek Casino.

Dylan Robbins, Aldrice Cummings and Nicholus Andrews participated in the dealer school to learn about the different table games offered to casino patrons, including Blackjack, Casino War, Ultimate Texas Hold'em, Craps, Roulette, and Pai Gow

"It was just fun learning to be a dealer," Cummings said.

Cummings learned how to organize the dealer rack, shuffle cards and cut casino chips, all of which are crucial steps in making the game run smoothly.

Andrews enjoyed connecting with his co-workers during dealer school. Andrews grew up with Cummings and appreciated that he was able to share the experience as they both learned new games together.

Robbins liked learning how the different games are dealt and the dealer procedures.

They said they look forward to working on the casino floor as table games dealers and, in the future, learning the management side of table games and eventually start working

with pit bosses and other departments. The dealer school is part of the TCD curriculum. The program allows the tribal team members to work in multiple departments for weeks at a time, where they get a well-rounded education of how a casino and hotel operate.

The trio earned high praise from management.

'All three guys have shown so much potential with not only their skillset that they just learned from school, but have shown a level of guest service that cannot be taught," said Michael Cantu, Seminole Casino Coconut Creek Human Resources manager. "Now after a few weeks of dealing they are going to be learning more games so they can be utilized in other areas of the gaming



Two first responder participants in the casino training exercises act out the roles of finding and containing an assailant.

Tribes first responders prepare for anything and everything

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY **Staff Reporter**

BRIGHTON — The ambiance of a Seminole casino is familiar to the Seminole Tribe of Florida's first responders with loud, lively music playing amid the sounds of slot machines dinging, ringing and buzzing.

That atmosphere was replicated at the empty former Brighton casino for training exercises by the Seminole Police Department (SPD), Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue (STFR), Emergency Management and casino security. On Aug. 12, the training included SPD officers from Big Cypress and Immokalee, STFR paramedics from Brighton, public safety dispatchers and Immokalee casino security . The training sessions for responders from all reservations will continue into September.

Huge boxes were stacked high and placed in aisles as substitutes for slot machines, which are gone. Security officers from the Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee stood in front of the boxes. portraying gambling bystanders.

"We train to assess our response capabilities enhance our skills in significant incidents the casinos,' SPD Major Jeffrey Maslan said. "It's a group effort of all the public safety elements with the

casinos reservations.

The first training scenario of the day included an assailant, a security officer, dispatchers, role playing bystanders and a police officer. The assailant made his intentions clear when confronting a security officer with a training simulated weapon. The security officer reported the encounter to security dispatch, which relayed the information to a Seminole police dispatcher, who then sent an officer to respond to the scenario. The officer sought out and took control of the assailant while maneuvering through the bystanders and avoiding obstacles.

The second scenario included Fire Rescue paramedics, who triaged the roleplaying victims of an assailant, under the training of Training Division Chief Jorge Valdes.

The participants repeated the exercises numerous times. After each session, SPD

Sergeant Daulton Self and Lieutenant Kevin Zarrella, both of whom oversaw the exercises, debriefed the group and discussed what went well and identified other options to enhance response.

The training sessions are held annually with all the departments together in person. Additionally, security and emergency management departments conduct tabletop exercises and classroom training to develop a command structure. The in-person training put it all into action in a full-scale exercise.

Before the scenarios were acted out, Self and Zarrella practiced with the participants, who were told what, why and how they would conduct the exercise. Paramedics would move quickly between victims after determining the extent of the injuries and prioritizing treatment and removal of victims. The most seriously injured would



Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue paramedics tend to a 'victim' during a simulation exercise in the old Brighton casino Aug. 12.

be treated first.

"The officers are challenged with dealing with the threat at the same time providing safety for bystanders," Self said.

"There has to be communication between your tactical side and our medical side," added STFR battalion commander Lt. Joshua Furman.

During an incident, security officers will need to find a safe and defendable location for casualties to be brought if necessary. Security officers are in the casino daily and know every inch of the property. Maslan said potential casualty collection points should be predetermined; responders must be cognizant of their surroundings and potential locations to use to safeguard victims.

"The point is to be ready for anything," Maslan said. "We train together between police, fire rescue, dispatch and security in order to be prepared to accomplish this



From left to right, Tribal Career Development's Nicholus Andrews, Aldrice Cummings and Dylan Robbins completed dealer training school at Seminole Casino Coconut Creek.

LAKELAND From page 4A

"Everybody's excited," Herbert Jim said. "I want to get in here and start working out. The kids are happy to see what they are offering and the whole community is looking forward to it. This is a pivotal point for us."

The lobby of the community center features modern furniture and a huge mural of a photograph of Ruby Tiger.

The center is named for my great grandmother Ruby Tiger because she used to gather us all together when we lived in Tampa," said culture instructor Keith Simmons. "When she died, we all moved from Tampa and scattered around the county. We all live here now.'

"This is the first time we ever had a community center," said culture instructor and Tiger's granddaughter Phaydra Clark. "It will bring us back together."

Seminoles are no stranger to Polk County. The county marked its 150th anniversary with a resolution recognizing its history and included two mentions of Seminoles. It reads, "Whereas, the Seminole Indians settled in Polk County in the 1700s seeking bountiful hunting ground, ranges for cattle and forage;" and "Whereas, Seminoles

established villages near the Peace River trading centers and Seminole Chief Oponay kept a magnificent plantation near

Lake Hancock." Evidence Indigenous life in Polk County is also verified by a 600-year-old dugout canoe buried found in the silt of Lake Hancock in Polk County. historic

canoe is part of the Seminole collection Florida Museum of

History in Tallahassee.

"The Tampa community made that sacrifice for all of us and we all benefit from that today," Big Cypress Councilwoman



The weight room has plenty of machines for everyone to get into top shape.

Mariann Billie said. "Take the time to talk about our history and bring it to life; that's what will keep us together. Remember who we are and where we come from.'





RICHARD CASTILLO 954.522.3500

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

Surprise birthday party honors Dorothy Tommie

Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — A surprise 90th birthday celebration for Dorothy Tommie took place Aug. 15 at the Seminole Estates clubhouse. Members of the community, elected tribal officials and the Tommie

Tommie received gifts and plenty of

compliments from speakers.

President Holly Tiger praised her leadership qualities and thanked her for always being a beacon of light to her.

Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola thanked her for her positive impact to the

"I totally want you to enjoy yourself, be happy, the new 90s," Hollywood Board Rep. O'Hara Tommie said.

'She is the oldest in our tribe, so it's an honor to be here," Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie said.

Partygoers enjoyed lunch, live music and photos with the honoree.



With her daughter Karen Two Shoes accompanying her, Dorothy Tommie enters the Estates clubhouse Aug. 15 and discovers a surprise 90th birthday party in her honor.





Calvin Tiger

Dorothy Tommie and Barbara Osceola at the



Birthday girl Dorothy Tommie is the center of attention with, from left to right, Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie, President Holly Tiger, Hollywood



From page 1A

The birthday cake.

This was among numerous times the past several months that Osceola spoke of the importance of protecting the area from the harms of the immigration detention center just a few miles down the road from the Gallery and near her and other Indigenous people's homes, school, government buildings, ceremonial grounds and camps.

Hours after Florida Attorney General James Uthmeier announced the coming of the detention center and its name—Alligator Alcatraz— Osceola was on the phone with this reporter, having contacted attorneys, tribal leaders, government officials and other people who could potentially help prevent the development at the site, which is also called the Dade Collier Training and Transition Airport, TNT.

The site, approximately 25,000 acres. was to become the world's largest airport only to instead lead to the establishment of the nonprofit Friends of the Everglades, Big Cypress National Preserve and Earth Day.

Government and tribal officials at the time of the proposal in June had told this reporter they didn't think the facility was really going to happen. Don't even report on it, Collier County Commissioners and some other leaders advised at the time. There is no way a detention center could be built in the Big Cypress National Preserve, in the heart of the environmentally sensitive Everglades, with both of Florida's tribes among its closest neighbors, these officials said.

But Osceola insisted. "I think it's important," she said.

So, reporting continued locally. And then it took off— around the world.

Within about 10 days of Uthmeier's initial announcement, the facility was partially constructed and detainees began being bussed into the locked and guarded gates. Osceola documented the activity live on Facebook, as she continues to do in what is to be the restoration of the property.

It wasn't always so quickly that Osceola could turn being offended or angry into a positive action, she said. And this site offended her for numerous reasons, from the name to the purpose, environmental harm

and the location.

She reflected back on teachings from her late Uncle Bobby C. Billie and from her Osceola said that once it took her a

couple weeks from when she first got angry about an injustice to then pray on it, research it and turn that anger into constructive actions she could take. As a child she recalled saying she hated someone. Her mother responded to

the young Osceola of the time that to hate another person would mean she hated herself and Creator—which was not true, so she should not use the words again.

Instead, now, Osceola prays that people receive the insights they need, just as she prays for her insights and direction.

Across the street from what she described as the offensively named Alligator Alcatraz, Osceola, who has a bond and respect for alligators as well as humans and their environment, stood vigil, documenting the coming and going of dozens to hundreds of vehicles day and night on what had previously been a relatively quiet, rural road along that portion of Tamiami Trail. Beside her were some people whose names and faces stayed out of the public eye, as well as some of her closest friends, allies and other defenders of the Glades and of the environment throughout Florida and the world. These included environmental activist Jessica Namath, daughter of football Hall of Famer Joe Namath, as well as prayer walker Nora Negron Espinal of Miami, among numerous others, who often documented outside the site on live social media posts.

"My dad has always said life is a team game, and I think [Osceola] would agree with that, because the battles we've fought together, especially Alligator Alcatraz, have taken an army of support from people around world," Namath said.

Prayers and ceremony were offered by Garrett Stuart, whose Lakota roots have been supported by Osceola, as well as Gary Wilcox, vice president of the American Indian Movement of South Florida, who provided protection during times of growing crowds at the site. Robert Rosa, also of AIM, and other indigenous folks from near and far remained integral to the protection of the



Betty Osceola speaks during a rally in opposition to a detention center in the Everglades.

Early on Osceola said, "We're going to win this on the environment."

That became true in August. She taught that Indigenous people do not separate humans from the environment, yet other aspects of American culture do talk about humans as distinct from their

environment. These and other matters caused occasional shifts from sacred protection to more political activism at the site and in the reports of the site. Still, Osceola stood consistently.

At times, she wrapped her arms around person crying, including families of detainees and youth concerned for their own and parents' futures. She held people up both physically and figuratively— so they could speak their truth.

She stood among mosquitoes, in heat and rain. It wasn't just sage that she lit—she ignited inspiration in people near and far.

People who knew her well over long periods of time, including those involved

in previous years, described learning from Osceola throughout the recent defense of this land. People who never met her prior also described deep lessons from learned

'When [Osceola] speaks, she seems to effortlessly take into consideration her audience with diverse interests," said Amy Neuser, of Naples, who met Osceola for the first time at a prayer gathering outside the gates in July.

'[Osceola] tells things like they are in a kind, yet no nonsense delivery that instantly inspires respect. She has a 360° type of wisdom that is stoic yet empathetic and honest. She addresses the elephant in the room head on, even if it may not be what everyone wants to hear," Neuser described.

Many people lauded Osceola for increasing or restoring their faith in the power of prayer. Others said she increased their faith in the power of right action and determination.

What I learned most was that together, the power of prayer and ceremony is so much stronger," said Wilcox. "As the saying goes, 'We are all related,' when we come

together, we can do great things. Also, despite all the naysayers and reasons people gave that first it wouldn't happen at all and then that it couldn't be undone, Osceola maintained that people must not quit. Just like the initial building of the Jetport being stopped after the runway was constructed decades earlier by Osceola's ancestors and others working together, things can be changed at any time with continual effort and collaboration, she said.

"You can't let up," echoed Wilcox. You have to stay in the fight. Never let up, that is what Betty Osceola has taught me,' he said. "She is an awesome person, and I am humbled to know her and learn from her," Wilcox said.

Osceola didn't do it alone. And she wouldn't want anyone to think so, she has said. Still, her vigilance inspired people.

As Namath pointed out, a considerable challenge was that many people support immigration policies but do not support use of that land in the center of Big Cypress.

"What my auntie Betty has taught me is to never give up, no matter what," Stuart said. "Don't give up on the fight; don't give up on the situation; don't give up on the hope; don't give up on the people and each other; and mostly, don't give up on yourself.

'The fight isn't over until you throw in the towel. People told us the fight was over before it even started, however, many of us have proven that to be untrue.'

U.S. District Judge Kathleen Williams of the Southern District of Florida ruled that people and materials need to be vacated from the immigration detention center within 60 days as of late August. She cited the breaching of environmental laws as the primary reason. Closing the center could restore the environment without thwarting immigration enforcement goals, Williams

The importance of the site was made clear by the Miccosukee Tribe when they joined the lawsuit in mid-July that had been filed in late June by the Friends of the Everglades, Earthjustice and the Center for Biological Diversity against the state of Florida and members of the Trump administration.

'Rather than the Big Cypress being an uninhabited wasteland for alligators and pythons, it is traditional tribal homelands and home to 15 traditional Miccosukee and Seminole villages, bordered by the Miccosukee Water Conservation Area 3-A and the Miccosukee Reserved Area," the tribe announced.

The landscape has protected the Miccosukee and Seminoles for generations.

The lack of environmental permitting despite adding fill, pavement, chemicals, 24/7 lighting and other materials in an area that is the source of drinking water that led to the lawsuits and then the judge closing it

'We will always stand up for our culture, our sovereignty, and for the Everglades. When it comes to our homeland, there is no compromise," said Talbert Cypress, chairman of the Miccosukee Tribe.

Osceola maintains the advice she offered at the outset: Don't let doubts creep in.

"Never give up," she said.



Hard Rock Casino Northern Indiana donates \$3 million for city's police fleet

STAFF REPORT

The police department in Gary, Indiana, will be getting a major upgrade thanks to Hard Rock Casino Northern Indiana.

On Aug. 12, the casino, located in Gary, Indiana, announced a \$3 million donation to go toward the purchase and upgrade of 83 police vehicles for the city.

"Hard Rock has always been committed to supporting the City of Gary and the surrounding communities," Matt Schuffert, president of Hard Rock Casino Northern Îndiana, said in a press release. "This major investment will ensure that the Gary Police Department has all the necessary resources to meet its needs as the city prepares to become the new home of the Lake County Convention Center.'

In the release, the city emphasized that the donation is a significant step toward

strengthening public safety.

"Keeping our community safe will always be our top priority," Mayor Eddie Melton said in the release. "By updating our patrol vehicles, we are making sure our officers have the tools to serve our residents with the professionalism and care they

Hard Rock's donation is spread out over five years. According to the city, Hard Rock will contribute \$1 million in 2025 and \$500,000 each of the following four years.



Hard Rock Northern Indiana presents the city of Gary, Indiana, with a \$3 million donation.

The city will provide \$500,000 in matching funds each year.

The casino opened May 14, 2021, with Seminole Tribe Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. and Hollywood Councilman

Chris Osceola among the officials who participated in the opening day ceremony. The casino is about 30 miles southeast of Chicago.

Inaugural Native Finance Summit to be held at Hard Rock Tulsa

STAFF REPORT

The Native American Financial Services Association (NAFSA) will host the inaugural Native Finance Summit Jan. 27-29, 2026, at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tulsa in Oklahoma.

This summit will feature tribal leaders, financial professionals, legal experts, and industry innovators.

"The Native Finance Summit is a critical platform to equip tribal nations with the tools and knowledge they need to thrive in today's rapidly evolving financial environment," Gary Davis, executive director of NAFSA, said in a press release. "We're broadening the conversation beyond tribal lending to include sovereign finance and new economic pathways that are aligned with the self-determined futures of

With the theme "Empowering Tribal Nations Through the Emerging Financial Technologies of Tomorrow & Sovereign Finance," the summit will include keynote speakers, expert panels, networking, sessions, and a trade show.

For more information go to nativefinance.org.

Hard Rock Cafe burger finalists selected

Indigenous communities."

FROM PRESS RELEASE

Hard Rock Cafe has announced the five finalists for its annual World Burger Tour competition. Hard Rock Cafe chefs developed culturally inspired, unique burger recipes and were mentored by chef, content creator and brand partner Olivia Tiedemann to finesse their creations.

The 2025 World Burger Tour Finalists

Clash of the Titus Burger from Hard Rock Cafe Tampa, located inside the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino

2 Smashed Burger Patties | Smoked Cheese | Bacon Jam | Garlic Aioli | Crispy Shoestring Onions | Sliced Avocado Bacon Jalapeños | Served with Seasoned

Basilico Burger from Hard Rock Cafe Milan

2 Smashed Burger Patties | Provolone Cheese | Roasted Roma Tomatoes | Herb Aioli | Leaf Lettuce | Fresh Basil | Served with Seasoned Fries

Condal Burger from Hard Rock Cafe Barcelona

2 Smashed Burger Patties | Manchego Cheese | Smoked Paprika Spicy Mayo Chorizo Jam | Bacon | BBQ Sauce | Pickles | Served with Seasoned Fries

Sweet & Smokey Burger from Hard Rock Cafe New York

2 Smashed Burger Patties | Fried Cheesecake Bite | Monterey Jack Cheese Bacon | Garlic Aioli | House-Made BBQ Sauce | Smokey Onion Frizzles | Served with Seasoned Fries

Budapest Burger from Hard Rock Cafe Budapest

2 Smashed Burger Patties | Pulled Pork | House-Made Plum Jam | Cheddar Cheese Truffle Mayonnaise | Arugula | Served with Seasoned Fries

'The burgers these Hard Rock Cafe chefs have curated are seriously impressive. Each one has two smashed patties (my favorite way to make a burger!) and creates this amazing flavor experience that's both satisfying and totally unexpected visitors will love them," Tiedemann said in a press

The Hard Rock Café will announce the inning burger on Sept. 5.

For more information on the burger tour, visit cafe.hardrock.com/world-burgertour.aspx.

Culinary pop-up at Hard Rock Hollywood to feature Chef Michelle Bernstein

FROM PRESS RELEASE

HOLLYWOOD — From Sept. 19-21, Abiaka at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood will host an exclusive culinary pop-up in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, featuring James Beard

Award winning Chef Michelle Bernstein, who also hosts the "Check, Please!" restaurant review show on South Florida

Led by the resort's culinary director, Chef Robert Ciborowski, Abiaka is a Latin wood fire grill concept inspired by South Florida's melting pot of cultures. The restaurant combines the vibrant flavors of Spain, Central and South America and the Caribbean with Florida's fresh ingredients.

Abiaka is located on the second floor of The Guitar Hotel Pool Vista Pavilion at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood. Dinner is served Wednesday through Sunday starting at 5 p.m.

Hard Rock Sacramento steps up for city concert series

STAFF REPORT

With an assist from Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Sacramento, residents in Yuba City, California, can enjoy the "Concerts in the Park" series this summer.

The free series - held in August and September – features six concerts at Gauche Aquatic Park.

According to a report by CBS

Sacramento, last fall the series was cancelled due to budget cuts. However, Hard Rock stepped up and became a sponsor to ensure the series would continue.

"We wanted to be involved. We wanted to make sure that artists in our area have the opportunity to be spotlighted and, of course, people in the region can come out and enjoy a fun evening every Thursday night," Mark Birtha, president of Hard Rock Casino

Sacramento at Fire Mountain, said in the CBS story.

Thank you Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Sacramento for becoming our sponsor," Dave Shaw, mayor of Yuba City, posted on

Hard Rock also sponsored "Movies in the Park" at Gauche this summer.

California charity awarded Hard Rock Heals grant

Thanks to Hard Rock Casino Tejon, CAPK Foundation was nominated and chosen from a global pool of nominees to receive funding as part of Hard Rock Heals Foundation's worldwide commitment to healing through philanthropy. The grant is one of 50 awarded this year by the Hard Rock Heals Foundation, totaling \$250,000 in donations to local charities around the world. CAPK's mission is to assist disadvantaged and low-income individuals in Kern County, California, to improve their quality of life, attain selfsufficiency for themselves and their families and achieve a better standard



Tower of Power coming to **Immokalee**

FROM PRESS RELEASE

IMMOKALEE — Funk and soul legends Tower of Power will perform at Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee on Nov. 29 with doors opening at 7 p.m. and the show beginning at 8 p.m. Tickets are available at ticketmaster.com and moreinparadise.com. Attendees must be 21. Parking is free.

Jim McGlothlin, instrumental in bringing Hard Rock to Virginia, dies at 85

BY KEVIN JOHNSON **Senior Editor**

McGlothlin, a prominent businessman and philanthropist in Virginia and founder of a company that partnered with Hard Rock International to develop Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Bristol in Virginia, died Aug. 6 at age 85.

A press release from the office of Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin described McGlothlin as "a towering figure in Virginia's business and philanthropic communities.

'Coming from humble beginnings and rising to a titan of industry, Jim embodied the American dream. Alongside his wife Fran, they used that success to dedicate their time and treasure to changing the lives of countless Virginians," Youngkin said in the release.

Born June 18, 1940, in Gundy, Virginia, McGlothlin was a lawyer when he cofounded the United Coal Company. The company was later sold, but he remained CEO and chairman of a remaining entity, The United Company, which partnered with Par Ventures and Hard Rock International to bring Hard Rock to the Virginia/Tennessee border. The property officially opened Nov. 14, 2024, with McGlothlin, Seminole Tribe of Florida Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. and other dignitaries in attendance.

McGlothlin was introduced at the opening ceremony accompanied by Glen Campbell's catchy tune "Rhinestone Cowboy." He and Chairman Osceola kidded



Hard Rock Bristol Jim McGlothlin

each other about their golf games in their comments to the audience at the guitar smash ceremony.

McGlothlin smashed his guitar standing between Chairman Osceola and Jim Allen, Hard Rock International chairman and Seminole Gaming CEO.

'On behalf of the entire Hard Rock family, we extend our deepest condolences to Mr. McGlothlin's family and loved ones, Allen said in a statement. "His determination, integrity, and generosity left a profound mark on all of us, and his legacy will live on through the incredible impact he made — in Bristol, across Virginia, and in the lives of so many. He was the living embodiment of Hard Rock's guiding principal to Love All, Serve All. The Hard Rock team is grateful for the time we had with him and will continue to honor his memory in all we do.'

Hard Rock Las Vegas to hold online auction of Mirage collection

STAFF REPORT

More than 300 pieces of artwork from The Mirage Hotel & Casino will be up for grabs in an online auction hosted by Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Las Vegas. Items include framed photography, art prints, statues, mirrors and more.

Absentee bidding is available now through Sept. 19 with live bidding beginning Sept. 20 at 10 a.m. (Pacific Daylight Time). The online auction will be hosted by Prime Auctioneers.

To register and preview The Mirage Collection auction items, go to liveauctioneers.com.

Hard Rock International, owned by the Seminole Tribe of Florida, purchased The Mirage in 2022. The Mirage closed in 2024 to make way for the transformation of the property into Hard Rock Hotel & Casino and the construction of a Guitar Hotel. The new resort is expected to open in 2027.



Hard Rock Las Vegas

A 650-pound mermaid sculpture that was at The Mirage is among the more noteworthy items in



A framed photo of The Beatles from The Mirace collection is in the auction.

Tampa's 'Change for Change' helps local organizations



In June, the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa's "Change for Change" charity was Pride & Passion, a fundraiser organized by the LGBTQ+ community and allies for the Tampa Museum of Art. "Change for Change," where guests can donate spare change from their slot voucher tickets, raised more than \$53,000 for the charity.

A summer of new acquisitions at ATTK

BY CONOR ANDRICH Registrar, Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

BIG CYPRESS — As the Registrar here at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, every new acquisition we make comes across my desk in one way or another. Whether I'm corresponding with donors, receiving,



Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museun

Elgin Jumper's latest work, "Astronaut Girl".

housing, and cataloging objects, or simply doing paperwork, I have to stay up to date with everything that's coming through our doors. 2025 has been a busy year for the Museum in terms of acquisitions. Most

visibly, we loaned several objects from the Tribal community to bring our Miss Seminole: Beautiful and Proud exhibit to life. We also added quite a few interesting pieces to our permanent collection. Since we can only exhibit a certain number of objects at any given time, we wanted to use our September column to highlight some of this year's most exciting accessions and provide

an exclusive look into the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum's vault.

For one, we received a few dolls which date to the 1960's, at the latest. Two of these dolls (ATTK 2025.14.1 and ATTK 2025.14.2) came from a woman named Rosalie Ebert, who was gifted them when she was a child, and the other (ATTK 2025.22.1) was collected decades ago by donor Barbara Farrell's parents. Though they all show signs of wear, they are excellent examples of an antique style of dollmaking, with calico cloth, floral patterned fabric, and faces that are far more expressive than you might think possible given their simple compositions.

Our largest accession this year came from the Brighton 4-H program. They transferred seven large plastic tubs, filled

mainly with photographs but also several plaques and other materials, to the Museum, and we have yet to be able to even determine exactly how many individual items we received. So far, over 1,100 have been

SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA

A PLACE TO LEARN, A PLACE TO REMEMBER.

given catalog numbers (special thanks to our summer SWEP interns), but this doesn't even represent one entire tub's worth. It's going to be a tall task to work through them all, but it will be worth it – the 4-H program hadn't previously been well-represented in our collection, and now we have tens of thousands of photographs spanning roughly two decades and featuring countless Brighton residents.

Finally, we are pleased to announce that we have purchased Elgin Jumper's latest painting. Entitled "Astronaut Girl", this work of oil on canvas features a girl wearing a red dress and a matching space helmet adorned with an eagle feather standing on the surface of the moon, with two astronauts and a lunar module filling out the scene behind her. Elgin put the finishing touches on the painting just hours before dropping it off at the museum. This is a practice we've come to expect from him - after all, can the work of a great artist ever truly be complete?

For more information on these or anything else in our collection, please remember to also visit the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum's online database at https:// semtribe.pastperfectonline.com/, much of our collection of roughly 200,000 objects, photographs, books, and archival materials is searchable and available to view.



Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

This antique palmetto fiber doll sports a floral calico cloth dress.

Oklahoma's missing, murdered Native American cases delayed as police struggle to work together

BY ELIZABETH CALDWELL Oklahoma Watch

The most important part of 28-year-old Brandon Hummel's life was his two children, according to his mother.

"I know in my heart he's probably not alive anymore because he never would've stayed away from those kids this long, or me," Deana Floyd

Floyd left Hummel, a Choctaw citizen, and her other son at home for a trip out of town in January 2024. Hummel stayed in Atoka while his brother reported going to the movies in Ada. When the family returned, Hummel had vanished.

"Yeah, he made mistakes, but through it all, he loved them kids," Floyd said. "He was just a down-to-earth guy. Even when he got in trouble with the police before, they all liked him. It wasn't like he was a bad guy or anything, he just had some issues that he got in trouble for.'

Hummel had a track record of leaving home without a lot of communication, so Floyd didn't contact authorities to report him missing until a month passed. What followed, she said, was a disorganized and lackluster performance from law enforcement resistant to cooperation.

The first organization involved in the search for Hummel was the Atoka County Sheriff. Floyd said the agency initially responded, but passed the case to Choctaw Lighthorse police without further involvement. That was something new,

Floyd said, because the sheriff helped the family

"When [Brandon] was in his addiction, they didn't have a problem coming out and arresting him and taking him to jail," Floyd said. "He was in their jail before.

Things changed in Oklahoma after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on the McGirt case. That 2020 decision drastically altered the state's legal landscape, finding much of the eastern portion to be reservation land. As a result, cases that the state would have previously handled were scheduled for tribal or federal courts.

"I think this law that they passed is ridiculous," Floyd said. "They just want to shove everything over to the [Bureau of Indian Affairs] or the Lighthorse. If they're Indian, they want nothing to do with it."

Atoka County Sheriff Kody Simpson was elected last summer, defeating the incumbent after Hummel's disappearance. Simpson said relations between his office and the Choctaw Nation have improved and it's no longer policy that cases be sent without follow-up to the tribe.

"I hate to say this, but it's the truth: in the municipal police and the county sheriff's offices, it is a way to be lazy," Simpson said. "It's absolutely what it boils down to, 100%. They don't want to deal with the call; they don't want to deal with any call. The municipalities and the county sheriff's offices that hand every call off, for tribal citizens, it is a way to be lazy.

Under the purview of the Lighthorse police, Hummel's case languished, Floyd said. They weren't interested in helping because of Hummel's criminal record. In a written statement, Lighthorse police denied negligence, saying it "investigated and followed local leads diligently for a year before the remaining leads were identified to be individuals located out of the state."

Lighthorse eventually requested help from the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation and the BIA. Floyd said the first BIA agent in charge left without an explanation. His replacement, who is based in Tennessee due to a staff shortage in Oklahoma, has been scarce.

The BIA did not respond to requests for

Advocates note similar breakdowns in procedures and relationships. The Northeastern Oklahoma Indigenous Safety & Education advocacy network creates reports for cases it handles. Last year, the group was involved in the search for Trey Glass, a 19-year-old United Keetoowah Band member found dead in a well belonging to a former Kansas, Oklahoma police

In its report on Glass, NOISE noted a tangle of issues, including a delay before tribal authorities were notified of Glass' disappearance

See MISSING on page 6C

Courtesy Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum.



September 2025

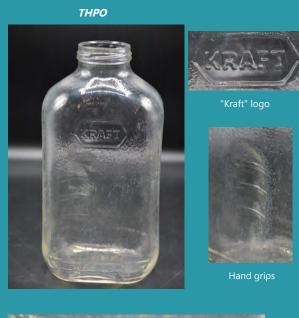
ARTIFACT OF THE MONTH

Oranges are one of Florida's biggest sources of pride. It is one of the state's top agricultural exports (FDACS), and one can see acres of orange groves while driving along Florida highways. The fruit can even be spotted on Florida license plates. The prominence of Florida oranges has its origins in an unlikely but historically significant place. During World War II, soldiers subsisting off of rations needed a way to supplement their vitamin C intake. A lack of vitamin C can lead to scurvy, which can cause anemia, bleeding in the gums, and a host of other symptoms (Cleveland Clinic). The military-issued emon crystals were not appealing to soldiers and mostly went ignored. The solution to this dilemma came in the form of canned orange juice concentrate (National Park Service).

Developed by the National Research Corporation and the Florida Department of Citrus, orange juice concentrate quickly found its way to consumers back home and exploded in popularity (National Museum of American History). Orange juice became known as a breakfast staple, and as its leading producer, Florida Florida Statute § 15.032 was passed, declaring orange juice its official state beverage.



This month's artifact, a Kraft orange juice jug, is a product of this rich history. Pictured below, this clear glass half-gallon jug, dated to 1968, has indented grips along the sides for ease of pouring; it also has "no deposit no return" embossed at the base, indicating that the bottle was intended for disposal after its contents were consumed (Friedel 2014). Found in Brighton, one can imagine someone discarding this bottle as a remnant of their



'No Deposit No Return'

National Museum of American History

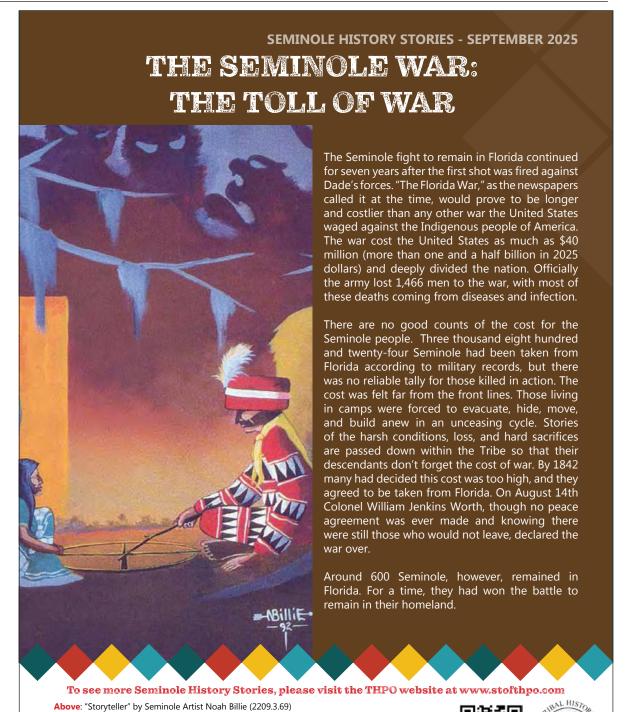
To learn more about all the incredible artifacts within our collection, please visit the THPO website at www.stofthpo.com.

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Health *

Lakeland holds health fair, comic-con, back to school bash in new community center

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY **Staff Reporter**

LAKELAND— Reservation showed off its spacious gym at the new Ruby Tiger Community Center on Aug. 5 with a well-attended health fair, comic con and back to school bash.

Numerous tribal departments including Allied Health, Education, Culture, Elders, Seminole Police, Fire Rescue, Environmental Health, the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, Language, Advocacy and Guardianship, Center for Behavioral Health, Fitness and Recreation set up tables filled with information, interactive activities and treats.

The Education Department gave out plenty of school supplies and the Comic-Con encompassed nearly a dozen booths and a runway for a comic-inspired fashion show.



Third grader Jacob Smith enjoys the day as he

gathers information and giveaways.



Gathering information at the Allied Health table are, from left to right, Herbert Jim, Kini Sherwood and Ruth Osceola. The fair was held in the Lakeland Reservation's new Ruby Tiger Community Center on Aug. 5.



Kids play and create things at the Lego table at the health fair, comic con and back to school bash in the Ruby Tiger Community Center.



Beverly Bidney

Talia Frank paints a design on a planter cup as her mother Jae Frank pays attention.

AAIP to hold conference in Seattle

FROM PRESS RELEASE

The Association of American Indian Physicians will hold its 53rd Annual Meeting & Health

Conference from Sept. 18-21 in healthcare professionals, students, Seattle, Washington, at the Hyatt Regency Seattle.

The conference features a gathering of American Indian and Alaska Native physicians,

and community leaders from across the country.

For more information aaip.org.

Program provides \$3 million in grants for health of Native pregnant women, families

FROM PRESS RELEASE

Administration Children and Families (ACF) announced Aug. 12 over \$3 million in new awards to six tribal entities for the Tribal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program. Tribal MIECHV develops and strengthens tribal capacity to promote the health and well-being of pregnant

women and families with children from birth to kindergarten entry in American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities. The program now funds 53 grants supporting tribes, tribal consortia, tribal organizations, and urban Indian organizations to implement voluntary, evidence-based home visiting programs across 110 tribal communities.

The grant recipients are:

- Owens Valley Career **Development Center**
- The Chickasaw Nation Tule River Indian Health
- Center Inc. Peoria Tribe of Indians of
- Oklahoma Native American Community Services of Erie &

Niagara Co. Kodiak Area Native Association.

Dr. Myron Rolle starts athlete interview series

STAFF REPORT

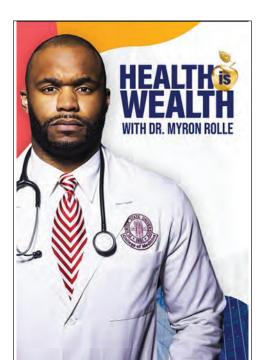
Dr. Myron Rolle, a pediatric neurosurgeon who had ties with the Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School during his college days in the early 2000s, recently started an interview series on PlayersTV.

"Health Is Wealth" features Rolle interviewing star athletes about health issues, including personal wellness, mental health and longevity. It started in June.

"This show is about transformation," Rolle said in a story on PlayersTV.com. "From the field to the operating room, I've seen what true wellness demands, and 'Health Is Wealth' offers those lessons in ways that are relatable, deeply human, and inspiring."

Before he played in the NFL and became a doctor, Rolle was a star football player at Florida State University. While at FSU in 2008, Rolle visited PECS and helped the school create a health-based curriculum with part of the focus being on avoiding diabetes. He went on to earn his medical degree from FSU.

Rolle, who lives in the Orlando area, is a Rhodes Scholar. He studied at Oxford University and has worked at Massachusetts General Hospital and Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital.



Dr. Myron Rolle

Nominations sought for agriculture tribal advisory committee

FROM PRESS RELEASE

WASHINGTON Department of Agriculture (USDA) is seeking nominations to serve on the USDA Tribal Advisory Committee. A total of four appointments will be made by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins and Ranking Member Angie Craig of the House Committee on Agriculture.

Authorized in the 2018 Farm Bill, the Tribal Advisory Committee is tasked with providing advice and guidance to the Secretary of Agriculture on matters relating to Tribal and Indian affairs. The committee submits at least one report yearly to the Secretary and Congress on recommendations for legislative or administrative action.

USDA encourages nominations from

federally recognized Tribes, Alaska Native Corporations, Tribal organizations that are arms and instrumentalities of tribes or democratically elected by their community, or national or regional organizations with expertise in tribal food, forestry, and agriculture issues.

Appointments for membership will be made by the Secretary of Agriculture for a three-year term. The appointment by the Ranking Member will serve the remainder of the current term's vacancy, ending Dec. 19, 2026. All nominations are requested to follow the process identified in the Federal Register.

The nomination period for membership to serve on this advisory committee will be open through Sept. 22. Specific information and nomination instructions are available in the Federal Register.



OCTOBER 18, 2025 TO MARCH 29, 2026

Yakne Seminoli/Seminole World

In partnership with Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum



Art and history – present and past – intersect in Yakne Seminoli, a vibrant exhibition in partnership with Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum at HistoryMiami Museum. Roughly translated as "Seminole World," the title reflects the idea of "all our traditions coming together". The Seminole people have a history of adapting, surviving and thriving despite irreversible changes in lifestyle, government, and environment. They have also helped shaped the Florida we know today. This exhibit will showcase an impressive number of Seminole artists and a diverse collection of art, revealing how these artists bring that history and culture to life. Come experience how diversity brings a community together and learn how Seminole history is Florida history.

Some of the artists featured will be: Wilson Bowers, Elgin Jumper, Erika Deitz, Brian Zepeda, Gordon Oliver Wareham, CeCe Thomas, Brody Osceola, Jojo Osceola, Donna Frank and Haley Garcia.













SEMINOLE SCENES *







Courtesy photos (3

GALA BENEFITS CHARITIES: Denim, diamonds and dollars helped usher in a new fundraiser at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood on Aug. 7. The inaugural Seminole Hearts Denim & Diamonds Gala featured a performance by country singer Kameron Marlowe, who appeared on "The Voice" in 2018. The Covenant House Florida was among the recipients of checks presented during the evening.

"We are especially grateful to receive a \$10,000 gift from the Seminole Tribe and President Holly Tiger. This donation will go directly toward helping young people who are experiencing homelessness or who have been impacted by sex trafficking providing them with safety, resources and hope for a brighter future. Thank you, Seminole Tribe, for standing with us in support of our youth. Your generosity will make a lasting difference," the Covenant House Florida posted on Instagram.

Autism Speaks also received a \$10,000 check.

"Thank you, President Tiger, for believing in our mission at @autismspeaks, and more importantly, in our community. We are truly honored to have you by our side," Candi Spitz, executive director of Autism Speaks Florida, posted on Instagram

The American Indian Cancer Foundation, another recipient, said on Instagram that it was honored to be invited to the

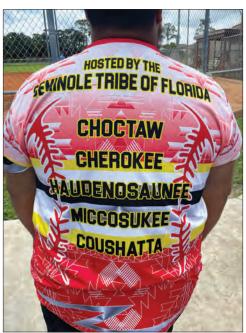
event.

At left, President Tiger makes a check presentation. Center, Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie and President Tiger speak at the event. At right, Virginia Osceola (left) and Courtney Osceola (right) meet State Sen. Barbara Sharief.



ribal Community Development

A VIEW FROM THE TOP: A view from a drone in early August shows the construction site of the future Hollywood Senior Center. The site is located near the Estates entrance on 441/State Road 7.





Kevin Johnson on the Brighton

NASA IN BRIGHTON: The annual NASA softball tournament for adults was held in August on the Brighton Reservation. At left, the back of the NASA T-shirt shows the tribes that are part of the NAYO/NASA group: Seminole, Choctaw, Cherokee, Haudenosaunee, Miccosukee and Coushatta, which recently joined. The tournament featured mostly Seminole teams and a few Choctaw teams. At right, Sandy Billie Jr. shows his support for the Native Sisters team.





Beverly Bidne

SAFER STREETS: The streets of the Big Cypress Reservation are about to become a lot more peoplefriendly thanks to a sidewalk now under construction on Josie Billie Highway. The project will add 3.5 miles of sidewalk to the road.



Hard Rock AC

ROCK 'N' ROW: Hard Rock Atlantic City's Rock 'N' Rowers won the Casino Cup for the third consecutive year at the ninth annual Dragon Boat Festival in July. The team placed first in the corporate category. The event, which features teams competing in dragon boat races, benefits Cancer Support Community New Jersey.

SCENIC CENTER: The back of the Ruby Tiger Community Center in Lakeland overlooks Lake Bowles, providing a tranquil setting.

NATIONAL NATIVE NEWS

Historic mining deal gives the **Shoshone-Paiute Tribes** a 'seat at the table'

The Shoshone-Paiute Tribes have grown accustomed to being an afterthought to companies mining for precious metals in their ancestral homelands. They're not alone. Earlier this year, a hotly contested gold and antimony mine in Central Idaho won final approval from the U.S. Forest Service despite environmental objections from the Nez Perce Tribe, which had previously sued over alleged Clean Water Act violations and will lose access for decades to federal lands guaranteed by a U.S. treaty.

But a gold and silver mine in Southwest Idaho appears to be bucking the trend.

A Canadian mining company and the ShoPai have announced an agreement that makes the tribes a partner in managing the environmental impacts of the site throughout the life of the mine and its reclamation period, the process of restoring land and waterways disturbed or degraded by mining. The DeLamar Project in Owyhee County is an open-pit mine that Integra Resources acquired in 2017.

"Tribal nations are often an afterthought and not considered in operational plans unless litigation or government intervention occurs," Marco Ovando, public affairs officer for the Sho-Pai, told the Idaho Statesman. "Integra actually reached out to the tribes

The deal also allows the Sho-Pai to benefit economically, the tribe and the company said Aug. 15 in a news release. Ovando said by email that the deal will provide tribal members with employment, training, contracting opportunities and revenue-sharing mechanisms to directly benefit the tribes.

DeLamar boomed in the late 1800s when gold and silver deposits were first found in the area, according to the National Register of Historic Places. Mining resumed in the 1970s, when Earth Resources Corp. established the open-pit mine, and continued into the late 1990s.

Integra plans to resume operations again using the heap leach method, where valuable metals are extracted by dissolving heaps of ore in a chemical solution for weeks or months, according to Science Direct. Integra has told investors that it thinks the mine could produce the monetary equivalent of 136,000 ounces of gold over its projected eight-year life. At Aug. 18's spot gold price of \$3,348.60, that's more than \$455 million.

Ovando told the Statesman that terms of the deal with Integra are confidential, so it's unknown how much of the mine's revenue the tribes would receive.

Integra said in an earnings release on Aug. 13 that it expects an environmental review to begin before year end by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and cooperating federal and state agencies.

The mine sits just north of the Duck Valley Reservation on the Sho-Pai's homelands, an area their ancestors were forcibly removed from over a century ago when Europeans colonized the West and corralled them into the remote reservation with little resources on the Idaho-Nevada border. Life at Duck Valley can be challenging, tribal leaders have said. That's a big reason the Sho-Pai are planning their first casino off Interstate 84 between Boise and Mountain Home.

The off-reservation gaming operation could generate millions in revenue that the tribes could use to improve their quality of life back at Duck Valley. The Sho-Pai have about 2,300 members.

"We struggle with high unemployment, we don't have access to adequate medical care and we can't attract enough qualified teachers," Brian Mason, chairman of the Sho-Pai Tribal Business Council, said in June at a blessing ceremony for the casino. "Tribal gaming can give us the resources we need to solve these problems.'

- Idaho Statesman

Tribal golf tournament raises \$450K

The 2025 San Manuel Golf Tournament, hosted by Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation and Yaamava' Resort & Casino in California, brought together more than 920 golfers and raised \$450,000 for six charities

Each charity received a \$75,000 unrestricted gift, offering them flexibility to invest in areas of greatest need to support of their mission. The recipients were selected to reflect the Tribe's spirit of Yawa' -- a Serrano value meaning "to act on one's beliefs" -- and to drive lasting impact for seven generations within the pillars of education, economic development, health, and cultural preservation.

The recipients are:

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County & the Inland Empire

California Fire Foundation

California Indian Education For All (CIEFA)

Home Base

Tribal Oak Tree Foster Family

Restoring Ancestral Winds, Inc.

- From press release

Chapter Emmy Award goes to animated documentary honoring **MMIP**

In 2022, directors and writers Sophie Barksdale and Jordan Dresser released a documentary about missing and murdered Indigenous women from the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming. Their work is still having an impact three years later

'Who She Is" by Caldera Productions has been playing as part of a film festival in cities across the country, gaining national recognition and, in July, winning a Heartland Chapter Emmy Award for best cultural documentary. The stories of the women inspired locals to pick up the phone and call legislators, advocating for the return of the Not One More Report, which was removed from the U.S. Justice Department's website this year.

The directors used animation to tell the story, unusual in documentaries. Native artist Jonathan Thunder, who is part of the Red Lake Band of Ojibwe, used watercolor to create beautiful swirls and color palettes unique to each woman.

"We wanted something that felt alive and had motion and was beautiful," Barksdale said. "With the watercolor, it's very feminine, the way it shifts and changes and the water can drop from one frame to the next and lead you down the stream of the story. Water is important to life, and we wanted to make those connections to the vibrancy of life."

Abbi Washaki, Sheila Hughes, Jocelyn Watt and Lela C'Hair's stories are told in first person, voiced by family members. Washaki's murder case is closed, Hughes's murder is a cold case and Watt's murder case is ongoing. C'Hair is the only woman in the film who is still alive. She voiced herself

The film is bookended by a jingle dress dancer performing a dance of healing. The dancer also appears after each woman's story. Viewers don't see her face until the end, when she lifts her head to show "Who

The goal of the film is to humanize the women behind the statistics. To the directors, this comes in the form of storytelling. It is hard for people to relate to a statistic. But by sharing the women's hardships, the things they loved, their contributions and goals, they are remembered for who they are, not what happened to them.

"Who she is is not how she left this earth, that's not how people should remember her," Barksdale said. "We feel strongly about that and want other people to feel strongly about

Barksdale said advocacy for MMIP may be recent, but families have been affected for generations.

"Just because the (MMIP) hashtag is new doesn't mean this epidemic is new." This has been impacting families forever, really since colonization," Barksdale said.

- Buffalo's Fire

Indigenous health providers share hopes, concerns about Medicaid covering traditional healing

The effort to secure coverage for traditional healing services for Indigenous peoples across Arizona started over 10 years ago, with many health care professionals working to improve access for patients seeking alternatives to Western medicine.

"It was a long time coming," Terrilynn Nez-Chee said.

Nez-Chee is Navajo and the director of revenue cycle management for the Tse'hootsooi' Medical Center in Fort Defiance. She also serves as the chair of the Traditional Healing Workgroup for the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment

"It was a long journey," she added, but all the work put in was worth it.

Offering more access to traditional healing practices through the state's Medicaid program is a significant win for people seeking such services through the Indian Health Service or a tribally operated health facility.

The Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System, or AHCCCS, is the state's Medicaid program and provides health care coverage for about two million Arizonans — about 28% of the state's residents — including 167,000 Native Americans.

AHCCCS received approval in October from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to cover traditional healing services provided through the Indian Health Service and tribally operated health facilities in Arizona.

Arizona is one of only four states that have received federal approval to cover traditional healing practices as a Medicaid benefit, joining California, New Mexico and Oregon.

Indigenous traditional healing is a comprehensive medical system encompassing a range of holistic treatments used by Indigenous healers to treat various acute and chronic conditions, as well as to promote health and well-being, according to the National Institutes of Health/National Center for Complementary and Alternative

After federal approval, Gov. Katie Hobbs allocated \$100,000 from the state to secure over \$222 million in federal matching funds for culturally relevant traditional healing practices.

Through our bipartisan balanced budget, we're able to secure the necessary state funds to be able to draw down the federal funds to cover traditional healing,' Hobbs said, adding that she understands many people have advocated for decades to get the service covered.

Hobbs held a roundtable discussion with health care officials and traditional practitioners at the Center for Native American and Indigenous Futures at NAU

on Aug. 8. Hobbs heard what traditional healing means for the Navajo Nation and White Mountain Apache Tribe, the two tribes present for the roundtable.

"I am committed to ensuring that health care is accessible to Arizonans across the state, and that those deeply personal health care decisions are able to happen in the way that meets everyone's needs," she said. "This is a huge step forward in doing that."

Ann Marie Chischilly, the vice president of Native American Initiatives at NAU, said Hobbs' administration has demonstrated a strong commitment to supporting Indigenous peoples across Arizona, and her work will leave a lasting impact on the communities.

Traditional healing practices vary across tribal nations, but some standard practices include sweat lodges, prayers, talking circles and ceremonial rituals.

Chischilly said that Indigenous medicine people and traditional knowledge holders have always been "our original healers and our scientists.'

Your steadfast commitment from time immemorial to our ways of healing is deeply honored," she added. "We're proud to live in a time where both Western science and Indigenous knowledges are increasingly recognized and respected as equals.

Funding for traditional healing services provided by the Indian Health Service or tribally operated health care facilities will be 100% reimbursed by the federal government.

The state would need to pay for reimbursements involving non-Native family members of Indigenous people covered by Medicaid who receive their health care from Indigenous providers. Even though traditional healing services

have not been covered under federal programs like Medicaid previously, many health care facilities in tribal communities continue to offer these services to Indigenous For Nez-Chee, having coverage for

traditional healing methods in Arizona fills that access need but also creates a path to educating young generations. 'It's more than reimbursement, it's

reeducating and regrowing our tradition and our culture," Nez-Chee said. "It's a community development." She said that improved community

understanding and access to traditional healing help people understand its role in the daily lives of many Indigenous people. As the state moves forward, Nez-Chee

said that the workgroup is trying to ensure that the process includes all 22 tribes in Arizona because they understand that each tribe is "very unique in their culture and tradition.' "We made it to where it would be open-

ended, to where they can tailor and customize the purpose of the reimbursement with their organizations and healthcare," she said, adding that this allows healthcare providers to involve the community, traditional practitioners, and physicians in the process.

Now that traditional healing practices are covered, Nez-Chee said the work begins for everyone to engage with their community to let them know about these services within their health care facilities.

For the White Mountain Apache Tribe, Michael Tate said they are actively working to include traditional healing services within their care efforts for both behavioral and physical health.

"This is a big milestone for all tribes," he said, because it shows that traditional healers are equivalent to what a doctor is in the system.

Tate is the chief executive officer for the White Mountain Apache Behavioral Health Services and has been actively working to secure access to traditional healing services since 2019.

"We've always had the option, regardless of us getting reimbursed," Tate said. "We covered the service."

The tribe does not have traditional practitioners on staff, and when patients request services, Tate said they usually rely on the patient to select who they want to provide that service from within the community.

Traditional healing services are not widely used within the hospital setting for the White Mountain Tribe. Tate said that it is most likely due to the fact that it is a very private experience and many don't want to share that information openly with a health care provider.

The traditional practices aren't meant to be written down or shared publicly, and Tate said their tribe is very concerned about that potentially happening because their communities have been taken advantage of

"We don't want this to be a big fraud," he said, explaining that the sober living facilities scam is what drives this caution because a lot of Indigenous people were exploited, especially from the White Mountain Apache Tribe.

"Organizations who are not good might take advantage of this program," Tate said. "We don't want this to be bigger than it Tate said that the White Mountain

Apache people need the service and he just

wants to make sure that it is being provided for the right reasons. There's always gonna be bad actors out there that're gonna try to take advantage of this," he said. "We need to protect our own

teachings, our own way of life.' Tate shared his concerns about the possibility of fraudulent scams happening with Hobbs and her staff during the roundtable discussion.

Zaida Dedolph Piecoro, the governor's state health strategist, said that since the benefit is specifically for tribal health facilities, only those providers can bill for the service.

AHCCCS will not determine who traditional practitioners are or who they can reimburse, she said, because it was vital to ensure that the benefit remained about the healing practices being self-directed and self-determined.

"It's determined by tribal leadership and determined by tribal health facilities, Piecoro said, adding that someone can not just walk into a tribal health facility and tell them they want to provide traditional services.

- Arizona Mirror

Chippewa Cree tribal members allege Chouteau County elections are discriminatory

A new federal lawsuit alleges Chouteau County prevents Native American voters from fully participating in elections for Board of Commissioners, and county officials have been unresponsive to working on a joint solution with the Chippewa Cree

In the complaint, the Chippewa Cree Indians of the Rocky Boy's Reservation and a couple of tribal members are suing the county, the commissioners, and the clerk and recorder alleging the county's at-large elections are unlawful.

The plaintiffs want the U.S. District Court's Great Falls Division to find Chouteau County's at-large elections for its three commissioners don't comply with the Voting Rights Act.

They also want the court to implement a redistricting plan that doesn't dilute the Native American vote.

The complaint requests the court order a plan "that provides at least one Native American voting-age majority single-member commissioner district that effectively performs for the Native American candidate of choice."

In a statement provided by the ACLU of Montana, Chippewa Cree Tribe Chairman Harlan Gopher said it's time for the county to respect the rights of its Native voters.

"We're filing this lawsuit because Chouteau County continues to hold elections in which the Native votes don't count," Gopher said in a statement. "The Chippewa Cree Tribe filed this lawsuit to prevent this local government from trampling on the civil rights of our people. A fair redistricting process must respect the boundaries and voice of our Nation."

The Native American Rights Fund and ACLU Foundation also are representing the plaintiffs.

The Chouteau County Attorney was out of the office Friday and unavailable for comment until Monday; he could not be reached Monday morning before publication.

The complaint said Montana law requires at-large elections unless a court orders otherwise, and Chouteau County meets the conditions for a claim of vote dilution under the Voting Rights Act.

Those conditions are that the minority group is sufficiently large and geographically compact to constitute a majority in a singlemember district; that the minority group be politically cohesive; and that the majority vote usually defeat the minority's preferred candidate, the lawsuit said.

"Native Americans in the county are sufficiently numerous and geographically compact to constitute a majority of the voting-age population in one single-member district," the lawsuit said.

overlaps with roughly one third of the reservation, the lawsuit said. It said in the county, 25.8% of the population is Native American ("alone or in combination"), as is 20.71% of the votingage population.

But "to plaintiffs' knowledge, no Native American has been elected to the Board of Commissioners nor to any other countywide office for at least the past ten years," the lawsuit said.

The results mean Native Americans in the state and Chouteau County continue to experience the effects of discrimination, tribal members allege.

'Native Americans have a lower socioeconomic status and lag behind non-Hispanic white residents in a wide range of areas, including employment, income, education and access to health care," the lawsuit said.

Ken Morsette, a plaintiff and member of the Chippewa Cree Tribe, said Native voters need a fair election system, and they need the ability to elect a commissioner who understands Native issues and is willing to collaborate with the tribe.

"The three local representatives currently in power do little that benefits the Native taxpayers in this part of Montana and adopted a system that prevents us from being able to vote them out," Morsette said in a statement provided by the ACLU of Montana. "Until our votes matter, too, we're stuck under their thumb.'

The lawsuit said the tribe notified commissioners in November 2023 that at-large elections were in violation of the Voting Rights Act, and the tribe offered to work with the county on a solution "to avoid unnecessary expense to the county's taxpayers.

The tribe wanted to create a district map with commissioners that complied with the Voting Rights Act and could be jointly submitted to Montana's federal district court for approval, the lawsuit said.

- Daily Montanan

First Nations partner to buy port terminal that moves critical minerals

Two First Nations have formed a joint partnership with a transport company to purchase the Port of Stewart bulk terminal on the Portland Canal that separates British Columbia and Alaska.

The Nisga'a and Tahltan nations and Arrow Transportation Systems said in a statement the deal to buy Stewart Bulk Terminals Ltd., which owns and operates the

facility in Stewart, B.C., is expected to close

in the coming months.

Kerry Carlick, president of the Tahltan government, said the deal is "making history" and will drive economic growth and selfdetermination, while Eva Clayton, president of the Nisga'a Lisims government, said it's a chance for "economic reconciliation."

The three equal partners said the deepsea terminal's primary purpose is transporting critical minerals such as copper concentrate to market from sources including Newmont's Brucejack and Red Chris mines in Nisga'a and Tahltan territories.

The price of the terminal wasn't included in the group's statement, but it said the province provided a \$5-million grant to the Tahltan and Nisga'a nations to support the purchase.

The statement quoted B.C. Premier David Eby saying the joint venture furthers reconciliation while creating jobs and 'demonstrating how British Columbia will become Canada's new economic engine.' In an emailed statement, Stewart Mayor

Angela Danuser described the purchase as 'an historic step forward.' She said that when Stewart Bulk

Terminals was purchased by the Soucie family years ago, it was a "saviour" for the community, creating jobs and supporting the mining industry.

Today, that legacy continues with new ownership that puts reconciliation and shared prosperity at the centre," Danuser said. This partnership will bring opportunities for local families, Indigenous communities, and future generations — and Stewart will continue to be proud of the role our port plays in supporting the region.'

- CBC News

Shadow Wolves Improvement Act passes Senate committee with bipartisan support

A bill to strengthen border security and expand opportunities for agents involved in the Shadow Wolves Program is advancing through Congress, as the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee voted to move it forward.

The Shadow Wolves Improvement Act is sponsored by U.S. Sen. Ruben Gallego (D-AZ), and it passed the committee unanimously on July 30.

The Shadow Wolves are an elite unit within the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The agents are members of the Tohono O'odham Nation who patrol the 76mile stretch of land the Nation shares with

Since 1974, the Shadow Wolves have utilized traditional tracking methods to assist in disrupting and dismantling drug and human trafficking organizations, according

"Despite their critical role in border security, Shadow Wolves currently lack the same career advancement and compensation opportunities as other Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) agents," according to Gallego's office.

The legislation reclassifies Shadow Wolves as competitive service employees, them grving greater improving retention, and making it easier to recruit new agents. 'The chaos at our southern border has

harmed Arizona communities and caused a dangerous rise in illicit smuggling, especially on tribal lands like the Tohono O'odham Nation," Gallego said in a press release. He said the dangerous rise has stretched

tribal law enforcement thin and diverted them from their primary jobs of policing their streets, which is why the Shadow Wolves program is so important. The Shadow Wolves Improvement Act codifies key recommendations from the

Government Accountability Office (GAO) to enhance and expand the Shadow Wolves program, permitting ICE to change Shadow Wolves from excepted to competitive service status after three years.

Gallego commended the support of the bill's co-sponsors, U.S. Senators John Hoeven (R-ND), Mark Kelly (D-AZ), and James Lankford (R-OK).

- Utah News Dispatch

Yurok citizen selected for position with California attorney general

California Attorney General Rob Bonta recently hired the Honorable Christine (Butler) Williams to serve as the Senior Assistant Attorney General for Native American and Tribal Affairs.

"Christine exemplifies leadership in tribal justice. Her ability to build bridges across jurisdictions, elevate Indigenous legal systems, and lead with integrity will make her an extraordinary asset to the AG's office and a powerful force for progress in California," Joseph L. James, the chairman of the Yurok Tribe, said in a

As the Senior Assistant Attorney General for Native American and Tribal Affairs, (Butler) Williams will serve as a technical expert and legal advisor to the Attorney General, Governor, and state agencies on complex tribal issues such as cultural resource protection, civil and criminal jurisdiction, gaming compact negotiations, and government-togovernment consultation.

(Butler) Williams, a Yurok citizen, has 25 years of experience in tribal jurisprudence with a focus on Indian child welfare, tribal court development and cultural resource protection and repatriation under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA).

- From press release

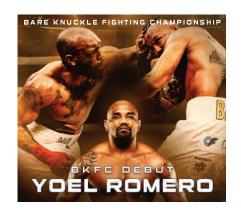
SOUTH FLORIDA'S ULTIMATE ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATION



SEPTEMBER 5
KC AND THE
SUNSHINE BAND



SEPTEMBER 6JOEY DIAZ



SEPTEMBER 12 BKFC



SEPTEMBER 13 TIM MCGRAW



SEPTEMBER 18
CAGE THE
ELEPHANT



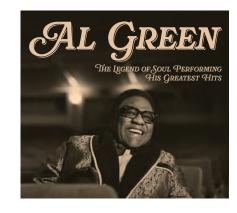
SEPTEMBER 19 JIMMY 0. YANG



SEPTEMBER 19 NOCHES DE NEÓN WITH BACILOS



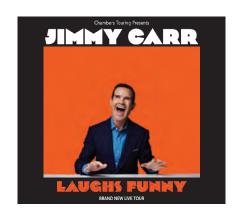
SEPTEMBER 20 HÉCTOR ACOSTA 'DOS LEYENDAS UNA TARIMA'



SEPTEMBER 21 AL GREEN



SEPTEMBER 22 CONAN GRAY



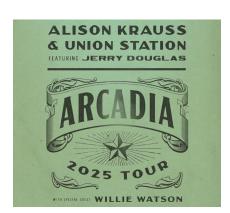
SEPTEMBER 23 JIMMY CARR



SEPTEMBER 24NATE BARGATZE



SEPTEMBER 25 & 26 SHANE GILLIS



SEPTEMBER 28
ALISON KRAUSS
& UNION STATION









Education





Brighton Councilman Larry Howard, center, joins PECS staff, all dressed up as circus performers Aug. 11 for a school-wide celebration for receiving an "A" rating.

'Circus' comes to town to celebrate PECS 'A' rating

BY CALVIN TIGER Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School recently earned another "A" rating by the Florida Department of Education. The "A" rating is a result of PECS' high student achievement, an enriched learning environment, and improved student

outcomes.

To celebrate the outstanding achievement and the first day of classes, school staff assembled a circus-themed celebration for all the students to attend in the gymnasium Aug. 11. Staff dressed up as circus performers and gave out goodie bags for the students.

Brighton Councilman Larry Howard

hosted the event with PECS principal Tracy Downing. Councilman Howard spoke highly of the school's "A" performance.

"I feel like we're starting to get accustomed of being an "A" rated school. If you can see all of these banners up here today, you know, speaks volumes, it's not our first rodeo, you know, it's all coming

dressed as the circus's ringmaster and co-from the teachers," Councilman Howard

The gym has multiple school banners showing an "A" school rating for multiple

"The rating simply shows that the students are able to master the standards that the Florida Department of Education requires that we teach. In addition to that, it makes

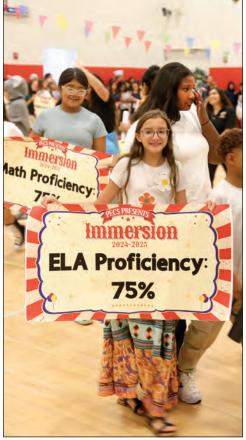
them happy and comfortable and productive, it gives them a really good foundation in order to go on to high school, and then some type of post-secondary training or college if they choose to, or if they choose to, they'll have a really solid foundation for going right

into the workforce," Downing said.





Above, PECS 5th grade students Kalliope Puente, left, and Serenity Bishop, and at right, student Hvse Osceola hold signs displaying math and ELA (English Language Arts) proficiency marks.



Brighton Councilman Larry Howard gets the PECS students cheering and ready to start the new school







From left to right, PECS staff Jade Braswell, Lucy Anselmo, Jimi Lu Jamison and Stephanie Tedders masquerade as circus elephants during the PECS "A" rating celebration.

The circus-themed celebration concludes with students showering the gymnasium with massive amounts of confetti.

Hollywood Preschool holds grand opening

BY TATUM MITCHELL **Staff Reporter**

HOLLYWOOD — The Seminole Tribe of Florida's Hollywood Preschool opened its doors Aug. 11 following a packed ribboncutting ceremony.

Tribal Council, Board representatives and other dignitaries cut the ribbon. Dozens of people toured the facility, which opened to students for their first day of school Aug. 12.

Elected officials who spoke included Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr., President Holly Tiger, Hollywood Councilman Chris Oseola, Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie, Brighton Board Rep. Bryan Arledge and Hollywood Board Rep. O'Hara Tommie.

"This is something monumental for the whole tribe," Chairman Osceola said.

Other speakers included Lee Zepeda, executive director of Administration; Thommy Doud, tribalwide preschool director and emcee; Derek Koger, Tribal Community Development executive director; and Leona Tommie, who has been involved with Hollywood Preschool for many years.

"This is a tribe and a community that invests in its people, and that values education from the very start, so that there can be a bright future. So opening these doors today really is opening the world for the children and giving them the best possible start,' Zepeda said.

The classroom wings are split for ages, ranging from infants to five-year-olds. The hallways and cafeteria are lined with murals and large windows overlooking playgrounds, chickees and greenery. The playgrounds feature shades and fans.

'[To] those of you that have children that are getting ready to come over here, I can't wait to see the smile on their faces when they walk into this school and see the new state of the art classrooms," Councilman Osceola said.

It didn't take long for the new facility to welcome its first children. The following day was the first day of school.

The preschool is the latest addition to the ever-changing landscape of the area. The Betty Mae Jumper Medical Center, which is next door to the preschool, opened in 2020. A new senior center is being built on the other side of the preschool.

The Estates clubhouse, which is behind the preschool, is slated for demolition to make way for a new community center.



Kevin Johnson

The front of the new Hollywood Preschool, which held a grand opening Aug. 11 and welcomed students to the first day of school Aug. 12.



Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola checks out a playground at the preschool. The playground is covered by shade and has a cushioned surface.



Kevin Johnson

Alexander King enjoys playing on the preschool playground.



From left to right, preschool staff Tangela Linder, Shanelle Wright, Isma Prawl and Trellany Griggs stand in a new classroom.



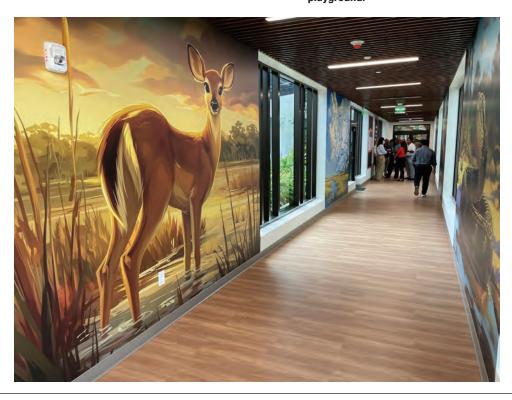
Red ribbon, red carpet and giant red scissors are used for the grand opening celebration of the Hollywood Preschool.



Giant murals line the halls, including this one as Dorothy Tommie tours the Tables and chairs were set up for the guests' lunch, overlooking a



playground.



Kevin Johnson

The tribe's clans, including Deer, are represented in large murals that line a hallway.

UNITY youth meet for stewardship

FROM UNITY

ACME, Mich. — The UNITY Earth Ambassadors (Midwest) Gathering, held Aug. 21-24, at the Grand Traverse Resort & Spa, brought Native youth together for an immersive training rooted in the stewardship of the four elements—Fire, Earth, Wind, and Water. Hosted by the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, the event combined cultural traditions, environmental science, and peer-to-peer leadership. By the end, participants left with action plans to guide environmental projects in their home communities.

The gathering began with songs by the Dusty Bear Drum Group, followed by a pipe ceremony led by Elders Tom Peters and Arlene Kashata of the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians. Their prayers set the tone for a weekend of cultural grounding and responsibility. One youth reflected, "The elder storytelling and prayer really helped me feel grounded in my identity." Many youths expressed that they felt this connection with traditional elder teachers was something they were missing

Earth

McKaylin Ambassadors

Peters (Menominee Tribe), Néepa Hyde (Shinnecock Nation), and Marla Mesarina (Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe and Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate) introduced the training with icebreakers that built connections among peers. "The icebreakers were my favorite part because we got to hang out and connect with others while learning, which made it so fun," shared Payton Benak (Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians). The youth shared how the Earth Ambassadors made them feel welcome, and their inspiring platforms showed the youth how "people my age are actively making a difference.

A highlight of the gathering came from Ecologist Brett Fessell of the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, who shared "The Ottaway: A River Reborn." After watching the documentary, the youth kayaked down the Boardman-Ottawa River, where dams had been removed and restoration was underway. "Kayaking made me feel connected — it was powerful to see the land healing," said Néepa Hyde. This hands-on activity reminded participants that restoration is both real and achievable.

Saturday's teachings focused on the four elements. Earth activities were facilitated by LorenAshley Buford, Fire teachings by

Marla Mesarina, Water by Néepa Hyde, and Wind by McKaylin Peters. "I liked the project where we find a solution for our rez and create something together," shared Azhiyen Wemigwans (Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe). These sessions helped youth translate cultural values into environmental solutions.

The evening panel featured Elders Arlene Kashata, Tom Peters, JoAnne Cook, and Eva Petoskey of the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, along with guest speaker John M. Petoskey, Senior Associate Attorney with Earth Justice.

Camp Kulaqua brings Seminole kids together for fun-filled week

BY TATUM MITCHELL Staff Reporter

HIGH SPRINGS — Campers from the Seminole Tribe of Florida jumped into the week-long Camp Kulaqua July 28 to Aug. 1 in High Springs, 20 miles northwest of Gainesville.

After a travel day Monday, campers went over some rules, took a swim test, had dinner, played some rec sports and participated in an interactive "hygiene skit" to end the evening. The campers were split up into two age groups, youth and teens. They did not include the seven-year olds this year, which contributed to the lower number of campers, totaling 140.

Cathy Cypress, camp director, said camp was a great experience bringing kids and tribal employees together from different reservations.

"But if they weren't [from the same reservation], then you're going to get to know other youth from the other reservations," Cypress said. "And then that applies with the kids too. I mean, yes, we're all tribal members, but just because you're from Big Cypress, doesn't mean you know everyone from Brighton. Bringing them all together, to me, was a good thing because it helped build relationships and help the kids understand, 'Oh, hey, I didn't know you were my cousin.' You know, things along those lines. I thought



Kids enjoy a peaceful canoe ride at the camp



Above and below, Seminole youth enjoy their together time at Camp Kulaqua.





Tatum Mitchell

Horseback riding was a popular group activity.

that was really cool."

The skits were led by multiple tribal employees/departments and centered around hydration, safety and hygiene. At the end of the skits, the campers played a trivia-style game to test their knowledge. Whoever pushed the noise-making button the fastest, had the opportunity to answer the question to

To keep people hydrated in the heat, the team put together multiple outdoor games and included a water element in most of them, like water balloons or hoses. Tubing, swimming and other water-related fun were highlights as well. The campers said meeting new friends, having fun together and the variety of activities were some of their favorite parts.

Tuesday morning started with a walk at 8 a.m. sharp before breakfast. Then, campers broke into age groups to ride horses, hang out at the "River Ranch" pool and play Elaponke bingo before lunch.

In the afternoon, campers rode horses, canoed, jumped on the "Blob", created box cars and did some arts and crafts. They finished the evening with the "Amazing Race" and practice for Thursday's talent show, which was a highlight for many.

The guest speaker was Native American fancy dancer and rapper Christian Parrish, also known as "Supaman." He brought his regalia and performed on stage for the campers as well.

"[He spoke] on multiple topics, you know, cultural identity, cultural appropriation, really loving your family," Cypress said. "And he actually spoke about himself and how he grew up in different foster homes waiting for his parents to come back. ... But he shared all this information. And I thought, okay, this is what I was looking for, because some of our kids are going through this. To see that he had gone through it and where he's at, now, you know, [there's] a sense of hope. That was

Cypress said watching the busses roll in at the start of camp and then watching them drive away at the end of it is an emotional part. But overall, she hopes campers met people from multiple different places and branched out, like she did.

"I hope it's going to be one of those that later on in life, they remember when [they] went to camp and did this activity. Or 'I met her for the first time over there.' Without these activities and these programs, I want to know people from Brighton, I want to know people



Using a giant beach ball makes for an interesting volleyball match.

from Hollywood, unless they're my immediate family, you know," Cypress said. "But then that also opened the door for me to start participating in sports, going into different avenues, and then, once that started, I started traveling around, getting to meet other people. So I'm hoping that this is what they're going to do as well. ... I'm trying to get you out of your comfort zone, because that's what life's about. You know, you're gonna be out of your comfort zone. And when you live on a reservation, you're constantly in your comfort zone. You know, it's like a bubble.'

Tampa to host evening of country music

FROM PRESS RELEASE

TAMPA — The "Big & Rich: Country Hits for a Cause Supporting Operation HeartF.E.L.T. heading to Hard Rock Event Center at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa on Oct. 14 at 8 p.m.

Experience the high-energy, chart-topping duo Big & Rich as they bring their explosive mix of country, rock, and pure fun to the

Sing along with hits like "Save a Horse (Ride a Cowboy)"

supporting Operation HeartF.E.L.T.'s mission to feed children in need. This is more than a concert—it's the ultimate country party with a purpose.

Tickets starting at \$40 are available via casino.hardrock. com and Ticketmaster. 100% of the concert proceeds will benefit Operation HeartF.E.L.T.

Big & Rich formed in Nashville around 1998, It consists of Big Kenny (Kenny Alphin) and John Rich. Known for their distinctive blend of rock-infused

country with elements of hip-hop and dance, the duo has carved out a unique space in the genre. Their high-energy performances and genre-bending sound have made them a polarizing yet highly influential act in the country music

Before teaming up, both Kenny and John experienced individual setbacks in their careers, which led them to collaborate and form the "MuzikMafia" collective in Nashville.



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Beverly Bidney

A ribbon cutting ceremony officially opens the Big Cypress Preschool on Aug. 7.

Big Cypress opens new preschool

BY CALVIN TIGER Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Tribal leaders, teachers and three Ahfachkee School students cut the ribbon at the new Big Cypress Preschool on Aug. 7 to celebrate its grand opening in time for the new school year, which began Aug. 11.

The 26,279 square foot building includes 10 classrooms, each with bathrooms for the students; a covered entrance; a large shaded outdoor playground appropriate for different age groups which is cooled with fans and misters; and a culture camp.

The rooms and hallways are adorned with colorful and cultural art, giving the school a cheerful atmosphere. The sounds of birds chirping in the hallways when people walk through sounds nice but is really one of many security features of the school. One of the walls in the large cafeteria features a huge mural depicting the tribe's clans.

"I want you to feel like you're walking into grandma's camp," said Preschool Center manager Andrea Jumper said during the ribbon cutting ceremony. "Once we dedicate the new culture camp, there will be the smell of smoke in the air."

The building has an emphasis on Native

art throughout the preschool, including artwork from Seminole artists Erica Deitz and Noah Billie. A huge mural on the wall of the culture room, originally a painting by Billie, shows a woman in the cooking chickee sitting by the fire. The room also has the sound of a fire crackling, engaging another sense in the students.

The building features the most up to date safety equipment for the students and staff and has the ability to lock down the facility completely. The equipment communicates with Seminole Police Department and Fire Rescue for a quick response in the event of an emergency.

"I just want to thank all of the teams that are here today," said Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie. "It may take one person for a vision, but this takes a team of people".

"I just want to say thank you to the preschool team for doing a good job, setting it up and everything because I like it, it's beautiful in there," said Big Cypress Board Rep. Nadine Bowers .

"Today, we're doing more than just unveiling a new building," said President Holly Tiger. "It's a new chapter for this community, for our families, for our teachers, for our kids.

Lee Zepeda, the tribe's executive director of Administration, shared his remarks as well before the ribbon cutting.

"This place is so much more than a building, it is a promise actually," Zepeda said. "It's a promise to the kids that we'll give them a place to grow, a place to learn, and a place to be curious."

After the ribbon cutting, tribal members and staff explored the building and the playground.

This building is our grandchildren's learning house and we couldn't be more proud of what we have created," Jumper said. This is only the beginning and I am excited about our future as Seminole people.

"Our goal was to build a facility that intertwined the spirit of the Big Cypress Community with a state-of-the-art child development focused space that will inspire students to explore, create, and imagine," said preschool director Thommy Doud

The preschool is located on Josie Billie Highway on the site of the old bingo hall. It is next door to the reservation's new senior center, which opened July 7. The former preschool was next to the Frank Billie Field



A mural of a Noah Billie painting is on a wall in the preschool's culture room.



Beverly Bidney

Former Miss Florida Seminole Thomlynn Billie sits on a swing at the new playground with her nephew.



Bronze statues are part of the décor outside the school.

Beverly Bidney



The new Big Cypress Preschool is the second major new building opened on the reservation this summer. The senior center opened in July.



An infant room at the new preschool.



From left to right, Lorraine Jumper, Justice Jumper and Allie Billie say the Pledge of Allegiance in English and Elaponke with Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie in the background and President Holly Tiger at right.

Hall of Fame releases first book honoring inductees

STAFF REPORT

The National Native American Hall of Fame announced Aug. 27, 2025, the release of its Hall of Fame book, volume I.

Inductees from 2018 to 2024 are

featured in the book, which has the title "National Native American Hall of Fame" and a Hall medallion on its cover. Their accomplishments and contributions to Indian Country are highlighted with photos and biographical accounts.

Fifty-three inductees from a variety of fields are included in the book, such as Ben Nighthorse Campbell (government), Billy Mills and Jim Thorpe (athletics), Wes Studi (arts), Joy Harjo (writing), Lori Piestewa (military), John Herrington (science), Joanne Shenandoah (entertainment) and Hattie Kauffman (journalism).

The Hall of Fame's next round of inductees – the class of 2025 – will be honored Nov. 1 in Oklahoma City. They

W. Ron Allen, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe.

Notah Begay III, Navajo. Ross Anderson, Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribes, and Mescalero / Chiricahua Apache. Dwight Birdwell, Cherokee Nation of

Oklahoma. Deb Haaland, Laguna Pueblo.

Lynn Valbuena, Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation.

The cost of the book is \$69, which includes shipping. For more information visit nativehalloffame.org.



Volume 1 of the National Native American Hall of

Fame's book.



Astronaut John Herrington, above; singer Joanne Shenandoah, middle; and athlete Jim Thorpe, bottom, are among the Hall of Fame inductees featured in the book.





Indigenous Fashion Show to be held in Niagara Falls

FROM PRESS RELEASE

The third annual Indigenous Fashion Show will be held Nov. I at the Seneca Niagara Resort & Casino in Niagara Falls, New York. The celebration of Native heritage will feature Indigenous designers Designs, Go-Gei-Sas, Homer Couture,

and models from across North America on the runway, showcasing the rich tapestry of Indigenous fashion. The event coincides with Native American Heritage Month.

Featured designers include Bitterwater for Redhouse, Bruno Henry, Cami Jones senecaniagaracasino.com.

Kreations by Kehala, Martha LeRoy Designs, ResiliencexCarlyKoban Pidabinikwe, Shinymoon Creations, Stray, The Snipes Nest, and Tisha Thompson

For tickets and more information go to

NATIVE LEARNING CENTER

FROM NLC

HOLLYWOOD — Here's a look at programs offered by the Native Learning Center in September. For more information visit nativelearningcenter.com or call 954-985-2331.

> Webinar: NAHASDA Required Policies & Procedures Webinar

Instructor: Cheryl A. Causley (Bay Mills Tribe of Chippewa Indians) Principal, Cheryl A. Causley and Assoc. Housing Consulting & Management

Date: Sept. 2-5 Time: 2-3:30 p.m.

Training Description:

This course will cover the process of writing clear and effective policies and procedures and provide the tools for participants to learn to review, revise, and adopt policies that are required under NAHASDA with some sample policies and language.

Training Objectives:

-You will know all the required policies and certifications of compliance that your Housing Organization must have in place for a HUD Grants Monitoring visit
-Sections 203 and 207 of NAHASDA,

implementing regulations at 24 CFR Part 1000, and the Uniform Requirements at 2 CFR part 200 require that the recipient develop written policies and procedures to provide guidance for its programs and implement effective internal controls

Webinar: Admissions & Occupancy 5-Day Webinar Series

Instructor: Cheryl A. Causley (Bay Mills Tribe of Chippewa Indians) Principal, Cheryl A. Causley and Assoc. Housing Consulting & Management

Date: Sept. 8-12 Time: 2-3:30 p.m.

Training Description:

This course will cover Admissions and Occupancy Program management with topics to include the application and selection process, eligibility for housing assistance, calculating annual income, determining monthly rental or homeownership payments, occupancy standards, collections practices and compliance, effective communication techniques with residents, lease agreement compliance, and collections.

Training Objectives: -Understand how NAHASDA, Tribal Housing Policies, and other program requirements impact Admission and Occupancy Programs

-Împrove job performance related to nissions and occupancy issues

-Learn the application and admission

process for tenants and residents

-Understand what requirements should be included in admission, occupancy, and collection policies

-Calculate annual income to determine income eligibility for NAHASDA assisted

-Learn how to calculate adjusted gross income to calculate monthly housing payments or other housing assistance

-Know the process for and importance of verifying applicant information

Webinar: How to Tell Your SMART Story in Grant Applications

Instructor: Diane Leonard, GPC, RST Grant Professionals Association Approved Trainer; President, DH Leonard Consulting & Grant Writing Services, LLC Date: Sept. 18 Time: 2-3:30 p.m.

Training Description:

This session will address how to go beyond putting together a grant application. We will teach you how to customize each proposal to include a compelling need statement and related SMART objectives, and how to engage the grantmakers reading your proposals.

Training Objectives:

-How to craft compelling SMART

-How to expand your SMART objectives to SMARTIE objectives

-How to ensure that the story you craft for the entire application aligns with and builds upon the objectives

Webinar: How to Use an Agile Framework to Write (& Win!) More Grants

Instructor: Diane Leonard, GPC, RST Grant Professionals Association Approved Trainer; President, DH Leonard Consulting & Grant Writing Services, LLC Date: Sept. 25 Time: 2-3:30 p.m.

Training Description:

This session will address how to utilize the Agile Framework in your organization to significantly improve the grant seeking process. Scrum is a wonderful way for grant writing teams to increase the efficiency application design and to manage the iterations of applications, as well as the numerous stakeholders involved in successful grant applications.

Training Objectives:

-How to increase the output of your grant writing efforts

-How to increase the happiness of your grant team

-How to utilize Scrum in creating your grant plan (and calendar) for the year

-How to manage large grant applications

Artists to receive awards

FROM PRESS RELEASE

Peoples Fund's Jennifer Easton Community Spirit Awards recognizes Native artists and culture bearers who exemplify cultural generosity, artistic excellence, and deep commitment to their communities with a \$50,000 unrestricted award.

The 2025 honorees are: • Silver Galleto (Cloverdale

Rancheria of Pomo Indians) • Terrill Goseyun (San Carlos Apache Tribe)

• Janie Verret Luster (United Houma Nation) Julia Marden

(Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head, Aquinnah)

• Sonya Moody-Jurado (Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians) • Lisa Moorehead-

Hillman (Karuk, Yurok, Shasta) The artists will be honored at a First Peoples Fund's celebration Oct. 14 in Santa Fe,

New Mexico.



Lisa Moorehead-Hillman

Thousands expected to attend **Indigenous STEM conference**

FROM PRESS RELEASE

The annual AISES National Conference will be held Oct. 2 through Oct. 4 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The conference for Indigenous STEM professionals and students attracts over 3,500 members and attendees from the United States and Canada.

The event focuses educational, professional and workforce development with dozens of Native and non-Native presenters from universities, organizations, government and businesses. Attendees include Indigenous high school and college students, educators, professionals, tribal nations and tribal enterprises, universities, corporations, and government agencies.

AISES is nonprofit organization focused on substantially increasing the representation of Indigenous peoples of North America and the Pacific Islands in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) studies and careers. The deadline to register for the

conference is Sept. 18.

For more information visit at aises.org.

Rock Spa partners with skincare leader

FROM PRESS RELEASE

HOLLYWOOD — Rock Spa & Salon at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood recently launched an exclusive partnership with Germaine de Capuccini, a global leader in premium professional skincare. The collaboration was celebrated at Rock Spa & Salon on Aug. 21, featuring lifestyle and wellness influencers Pao Ruiz, Osmariel Villalobos, Yohana Vargas, Stephy Carrillo, Jackie Olavarría, and Ari Global, among many other guests. The guests enjoyed an evening

inspired by the Mediterranean spirit, paying tribute to the care of the soul and beauty.

Founded in 1964 in Spain,

Germaine de Capuccini is known for transforming professional skincare into a holistic beauty ritual, backed by science and advanced technology.







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Josiah Johns receives PRCA bullfighting permit

BY TATUM MITCHELL **Senior Editor**

BRIGHTON — Josiah Johns grew up around the rodeo scene. He went from riding bareback horses to getting his Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association permit for bullfighting this year.

He started getting into bullfighting at 12 years old.

"I've always had something to do with [rodeos] since my family has been a part of it," Johns, 19, said.

The PRCA permit allows him to professionally bullfight at a different level than before. He can travel out of state for rodeos and bullfight at PRCA level rodeos, which can be at a larger scale than local

"The only thing it's really changed is the rodeos I'm able to go to, but besides that the job stays the same, and I enjoy [it] just as much," Johns said.

The process of getting the permit includes applying for it, getting three signatures of approval and letters of recommendation from two National Finals Rodeo (NFR) bullfighters and an NFR bull rider.

"Being approved for my PRCA permit, that's something I've always wanted since I was a little kid watching like my heroes on TV at the national finals or seeing those bullfighters that worked for my grandpa (Marty Johns)... work pro rodeos, it's just always something I've wanted to do so I think that's what I'm most proud of is being approved for that permit," said Johns, who shares the same name with his greatgrandfather Josiah Johns, an inductee of the Indian National Finals Rodeo Hall of Fame.

Johns said when a bullrider gets bucked off there's one or two things that can happen. "They can get off good or they can get

hung up. And if they get hung up, it's my job to get to them as good as I can and get their hand out of the wrap and get them unhung from the bull," Johns said. "And if they don't get off very good, my job is to basically step in between them and the bull and guide the bull away from them."

The bulls either come out of the shoot and spin to the right or left, or they runoff and jump. A part of his job is trying to read what the bull is going to do next.

"It's something that comes with the experience. Like you can't really learn to read a bull or pick apart one before he's gonna do anything. It's more of the more bulls you get around, the more you fight, the more experience you have the better you can read them," Johns said.

It's thrilling to be a bullfighter, Johns said. At the beginning, it was more scary for him, but now he says he can relax and enjoy

"I think it's the selflessness is really what gets me," Johns said. "There's a Bible verse, John 15:13, 'Greater love has no one than this, than a man lay down his life for his friends.' It's always been my favorite Bible verse because it's selflessness and the feeling of being able to step in and get a man out of harms way, you know, put yourself on the line for him. It's a really good feeling, it's very rewarding for me."

With his PRCA permit, Johns is looking forward to traveling out of state more often. He said he wants people to recognize his faith throughout everything else.

Really what I want people to see is my faith. I don't want them to see me as a bullfighter. I want them to see me as a man who loves Jesus that just so happens to fight bulls. That's what I'd like people to see, the faith side of things and the fact that faith can get you through things no matter what it is.'



Courtesy photo

Josiah Johns fights a bull at a rodeo, after a bull rider had fallen off.

Moore Haven volleyball eyes another strong season

BY KEVIN JOHNSON **Senior Editor**

MOORE HAVEN — With nearly everyone back from last year's squad that reached the state semifinals, the Moore Haven High School volleyball returned to action Aug. 19 with lofty aspirations.

"We want to go back to states again," said Terriers head coach Mona Baker, whose assistant coach Jerry Veloz is back along with new assistant coaches Brianna Billie and Amanda Julian.

If the Terriers are going to replicate or exceed last year's 17-3 team – by far the most successful in the program's history – they'll have to do it without standouts Preslynn

Baker and Akeelah Ling, who graduated. But there is plenty of talent back from last year's squad, including the Seminole Tribe's Tiyanni Anderson, Tahnia Billie, Miley Jimmie, Kulipa Julian and Truley

Osceola along with newcomers Halley Ballentine and Rae Gentry. Those players along with a strong core of non-Native players should have Moore Haven right in the thick of another playoff run.

"They're going to improve a lot over the season. It's not how you start, it's how you finish," Baker said.

The Terriers' five seniors are Anderson, Billie, Jimmie, Osceola and Gentry.

The Terriers didn't win their season opener Aug. 19, but fans got their money's worth as the they battled Sebring in an epic

Sebring staved off five match points in the final set and returned home with a 3-2 win (25-10, 21-25, 25-19, 22-25, 20-18).

"I think they did really well," Baker said. "Once these girls get their mojo going and their rhythm going, they're going to be a fierce squad."

See MOORE HAVEN on page 4C



Coming off a season when they made it all the way to the state semifinals, the Moore Haven High School Terriers started a new season Aug. 20 against



Moore Haven's Rae Gentry delivers a hit over the net against Sebring.



Kevin Johnson



Kevin Johnson

Moore Haven's Tiyanni Anderson keeps her eyes on the ball during a match against Sebring.



Darin Sicurello

Kashlynn Cooper - Native Soldiers

Darin Sicurello

Xavier Osceola - Unconquered

Seminoles compete in NABI tournament

BY KEVIN JOHNSON Senior Editor

No Florida team reached the finals of the Native American Basketball Invitational that was held July 22-26 in Phoenix.

The massive annual tournament for Native high school players featured more than 200 teams and more than 450 games. Young Gunz defeated Rezbombers to

win the boys title in a championship tilt between two Arizona-based teams.

On the girls side, Rezbombers (AZ) defeated Legendary Elite (OK) to win its second straight NABI championship.

Coached by Eric Osceola, Rez Ballers

had the most Seminole representation on a team. The team featured both Seminole and Miccosukee players.

Rez Ballers generated some success.

They went 2-1 in pool play, good enough for second place. In the playoff round, they defeated their next two opponents by more than 30 points each before being eliminated with a loss to Pack.

For two Seminole standouts, the tournament featured a farewell of sorts and a welcoming. Xavier Osceola, who signed this summer with Florida State University men's basketball on a scholarship, played in his

final NABI for Unconquered. Meanwhile, Kashlynn Cooper, a rising star from Oklahoma, played for Native Soldiers in her first NABI.

In addition to Osceola, Unconquered included Glenardo Stubbs and Ezekiel Billie. The team was unconquered for most of the tournament. They won their first six games before losing to eventual champion Young Gunz, 63-45, in the round of 16.

Similar to Unconquered, the Native Soldiers girls won their first six games, some by extremely lopsided margins, before being ousted by eventual runner-up Legendary Elite, 63-49. Cooper was the only Seminole

The Seminole Tribe has been a longtime major sponsor of the tournament.



Antonio Tosco - Rez Ballers



Ezekiel Billie - Unconquered



Glenardo Stubbs - Unconqurered



Darin Sicurello



Tayin Fairclough -Rez Ballers





Darin Sicurello Rez Ballers with coach Eric Osceola Jemere Osceola - Rez Ballers

Zae Thomas starts FSU career



The 2025 Florida State
Seminoles football
team includes the
Seminole Tribe's Zae
Thomas. FSU opened
its season with a
31-17 win against
Alabama on Aug. 30 in
Tallahassee. Thomas
did not play.



Zae Thomas catches a ball in the endzone during early warm-ups before FSU faced Alabama on Aug. 30



Kevin Johnson

The FSU Seminoles, including freshman defensive back Zae Thomas (22), leave the field after warm-ups.



Kevin Johnson (2 The Seminole Tribe had

plenty of representation at the game. Above, from left to right, FSU grad Kyle Doney, JoJo Osceola and Brighton Councilman Larry Howard watch the game from the endzone.

At right, Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. attends the game with his son, William, and wife, Trish. Joining them for a photo were Mark Macias and Brittany Macias, top, and, at far right, Christian Weisz and his girlfriend Isabelle Santana. For five years, Weisz was part of the Osceola-Renegade tradition at FSU games as the rider of Renegade.



Kevin Johnson

FLORIDA STATE

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Kevin Johnson

Zae Thomas takes warm-ups before FSU and Alabama squared off in the season opener at Doak Campbell Stadium.



Kevin Johnson

The Osceola-Renegade duo keep the crowd revved up after an FSU touchdown against Alabama.



Kevin Johnso

During a break, a video set to John Anderson's "Seminole Wind" honors the relationship between FSU and the Seminole Tribe. The final scene is Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. planting the spear at midfield a couple of years ago.



Kevin Johnson

At the conclusion of FSU's 31-17 win against Alabama, Zae Thomas and his teammates are swarmed by fans who rushed the field.

Seminole Natives team wins NASA softball coed championship

BY KEVIN JOHNSON Senior Editor

BRIGHTON — The Natives softball team did it the hard way, but the players accomplished their goal by winning the NASA (Native American Sports Association) coed division championship Aug. 9 on the Seminole Tribe of Florida's Brighton Reservation.

Organized by Jaryaca Baker, the Natives featured players from the Seminole Tribe and a couple players from the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. They battled their way out of the losers' bracket and beat HJ Regulators twice to win the title.

In the winner-take-all game, Ivess Baker sparked the Natives to a 9-6 win with a tworun inside-the-park home run. Winning pitcher Preston Baker had an RBI single.

HJ Regulators, named in memory of Moses Happy Jumper III, received an RBI fielder's choice by Jacee Jumper and an RBI single by Ray Yzaguirre that scored Kalgary

The Natives broke a late tie on a run by Jrayko Billie following Ramone Baker's single. Ivess Baker gave the Natives more breathing room with a two-run single that

Jrayko Billie (third base) and Ramone Baker (left field) were defensive stars for the

In the opening game of the championship, the Natives won 9-8, anchored by a 3-run home run by Dakota Kennedy (MBCI). For HJ Regulators, Yzaguirre and Ethan Cypress were the hitting stars. Both had two-run singles.

Other champions were the Seminole's Hayla Boyz (men's), MBCI's Intensity (women's) and Seminole Legends (legends). The tournament drew 15 teams, fewer than usual. Most of the teams were Seminole and a few were from MBCI.

Ramone Baker makes a tough catch in left field

for the Seminole Natives coed team.



After her team won the coed championship, Jaryaca Baker receives the winning plaque from Brighton **Recreation Director Mary Huff.**



The Hayla Boyz celebrate after winning the men's division Aug. 8. At far right is Brighton Councilman Larry Howard.



The NASA coed champion Seminole Natives celebrate after their championship victory in Brighton.



The NASA coed runner up HJ Regulators.

Kevin Johnson



Carlee Osceola makes solid contact in a women's game.





Arek Jumper tags Zayden Micco in a men's game.



Kevin Johnson

Ivess Baker catches a high popup at third base in a men's game.



Greg James transfers to **Bishop Verot**

STAFF REPORT

After being a big, steady presence as a lineman at Moore Haven High School - some games playing both offense and defense - Greg James has a new team this season.

James, a junior from the Brighton Reservation who was listed at 6-foot-3, 270-pounds as a sophomore last season, transferred this summer to Bishop Verot High School in Fort Myers.

Verot lost its opener against powerful Tampa Jesuit, 33-14, but rebounded in week 2 with a 44-34 win against True North Classical Academy of Miami.

Verot has had strong teams recently, going 10-3, 11-2 and 9-4 from 2022-24.



Greg James is in his first season on the Bishop Verot High School football team in Fort Myers.

MOORE HAVEN

The Terriers were shaky in the opening set loss and trailed 8-3 in the second set before a few kills by Anderson and aces from Gentry and Julian sparked a much-needed

From page 1C

Later in the set, Anderson, who had a match high 22-kills, delivered two key aces and the Terriers wrapped up the set on two service points from Osceola.

Set three was tied 16-16 before Sebring went on a 9-3 run to go up 2-1.

In set four, Sebring appeared to be on its way to clinching the match and led 11-2, but the determined Terriers clawed their way back. Jimmie and Tara Person came up with big plays at the net as Moore Haven stormed back and went ahead 20-19. Moore Haven won the final two points thanks to a great defensive play by Julian that kept a point alive and an ace by Anderson for the final

The intense winner-take-all fifth set (play to 15, must win by two) needed extra points. On the brink of losing, Sebring fought back after being down 14-11. Tied at 17-17, Moore Haven went ahead on a kill by Jimmie, but Sebring won the next three points for a hard-earned victory.

Kevin Johnson

Earlier in the evening, Sebring defeated Moore Haven, 2-0, in the JV match.

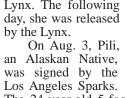
The varsity quickly rebounded from the defeat and finished the month with consecutive wins against LaBelle, Lake Placid and Donahue Catholic.

Alissa Pili signs with LA Sparks

STAFF REPORT

WNBA When player Alissa Pili spoke virtually to kids at a sports camp on the Big Cypress Reservation on July 11, she was a member of the Minnesota Lynx. The following day, she was released

On Aug. 3, Pili, an Alaskan Native, was signed by the Los Angeles Sparks.



Alissa Pili The 24-year-old 5-foot-11 forward saw her first action with the Sparks on Aug. 8 when she scored one point in three minutes in a loss

against Golden State. Prior to turning pro, Pili was a star at the University of Southern California and the University of Utah. She was the eighth overall draft pick in the 2024 WNBA Draft.

Englishman wins Seminole Hard Rock Poker Open

FROM PRESS RELEASE

HOLLYWOOD — Jake Cody, from Rochdale, England, was the big winner at the Seminole Hard Rock Poker Open in August.

Cody won more than \$500,000 and the championship trophy for finishing in first place. The field included nearly 900 entries and a prize pool of more than \$4 million.

1st: Jake Cody (Rochdale, England)-

SHRPO Championship Final Table

\$510,850 2nd: Jeremy Wien (Mount Kisco, N.Y.)

3rd: Stephen Song (Greenwich, Conn.) \$438,000

4th: Andjelko Andrejevic (Miami, Fla.) \$240,000 5th: Shaun Davis (Fort Lauderdale, Fla.)

\$181,000 6th: Arlinda Johns (Carterville, Ill.)

\$138,000

7th: Jasper Ma (Los Angeles, Calif.) \$106,000

8th: Joseph Curcio (Freehold. N.J.) \$82,000

9th: Chris Hunichen (Clayton, N.C.) \$65,000.

Hard Rock Bet earns 5 nominations

FROM HARD ROCK BET

The 2025 EGR Operator Awards officially revealed its shortlist of nominees for several awards in August, and Hard Rock Bet was recognized with five nominations.

Among the categories listed, Hard Rock Bet appeared on the shortlist for the following awards: Best Customer Service, Marketing Campaign of the Year, North American Operator of the Year, Best AI Development and Omnichannel Operator of the Year.

Hard Rock Bet will look to take home Marketing Campaign of the Year after a successful rollout of its Jackpot Season campaign, which culminated with a Big Sunday Jackpot every week during its run.

The EGR Operator Awards honor the star affiliates, operators and suppliers across the iGaming industry each year. The award ceremony will take place on Oct. 22 at De Vere Grand Connaught Rooms in London, England.

Dolphins' home opener Sept. 14 vs Patriots

FROM PRESS RELEASE

2025 Miami Dolphins schedule

Sept. 7 at Indianapolis 1 p.m.

Sept. 14 vs New England 1 p.m. Sept. 18 at Buffalo 8:15 p.m. Sept. 29 vs NY Jets 7:15 p.m. Oct. 5 at Carolina 1 p.m. Oct. 12 vs LA Chargers 1 p.m. Oct. 19 at Cleveland 1 p.m. Oct. 26 at Atlanta 1 p.m. Oct. 30 vs Baltimore 8:15 p.m. Nov. 9 vs Buffalo 1 p.m. Nov. 16 vs Washington 9:30 a.m. Nov. 30 vs New Orleans 1 p.m. Dec. 7 at NY Jets 1 p.m. Dec. 15 at Pittsburgh 8:15 p.m. Dec. 21 vs Cincinnati 8:20 p.m. Dec. 28 vs Tampa Bay 1 p.m.

Nov. 16 game is in Spain.

Jan. 4 at New England TBA

'Hard Rock' Harry finishes **PGA Tour season in top 20**

BY KEVIN JOHNSON **Senior Editor**

PGA Tour golfer Harry Hall, who has Hard Rock as one of his sponsors, produced plenty of positive vibes on the golf course this season.

Statistically, he was the No. 1 putter on tour, which helped him make a tour-leading 22 cuts in 25 starts.

The 6-foot-4, 28-year-old Englishman didn't win in the 2025 PGA Tour season, however, he finished top 10 five times and qualified for all three playoff events. His best finish – sixth place – came at the BMW Championship, a playoff event.

Hall tied for 17th at the season-finale Tour Championship in August, a giant leap from last season's 84th place finish.

Hall had solid showings in his first appearances at the PGA Championship (T19) and The Open (T28).

His \$4.3 million in earnings this season reflected his remarkable steady season. His consistency was evident down the stretch. In his final 12 events, he finished no worse than

Hard Rock's logo appears on the right chest of Hall's golf shirts and jackets.

> Via Instagram **Harry Hall competes** in the 2025 Open, where he finished tied for 28th.



Fight night comes to Hard Rock Sept. 12

STAFF REPORT

HOLLYWOOD — Bare Knuckle Fighting Championship (BKFC) returns to Hard Rock Live at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood on Sept. 12 at 7 p.m. with BKFC-80.

BKFC-80 is headlined by the heavyweight rematch between No. 1 ranked Leonardo 'El Zambo' Perdomo, of Miami and former two-time world champion Arnold 'Bomaye' Adams of Chicago.

For tickets, go to myHRL.com.



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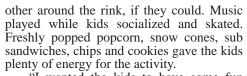
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BC gym turns into roller skating rink for an afternoon

STAFF REPORT

BIG CYPRESS — Big Cypress Board Rep. Nadine Bowers made sure kids had some fun as they went back to school by having a professional roller-skating rink set up on the floor of the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium after school on Aug. 21.

Kids of all ages tried their best to stay upright on the roller skates and helped each



"I wanted the kids to have some fun and get their energy out," Rep. Bowers said. "I've always wanted to see the kids skating and wanted to do something different for them."

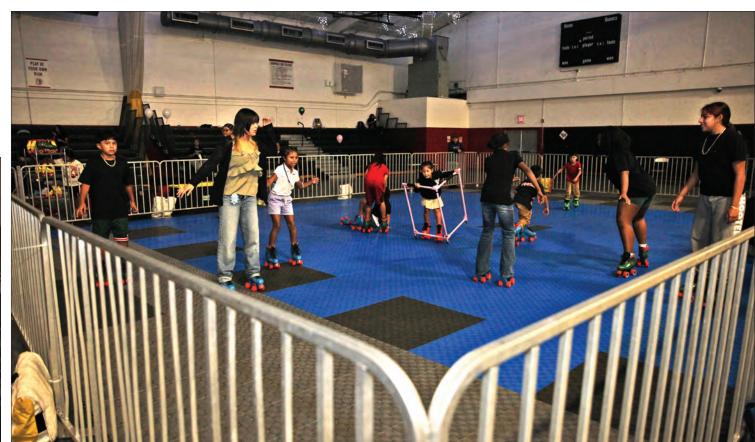




Aubrey Cypress, left, and Willow Cypress tie their skates as they prepare to go onto the roller rink set up for an afternoon at the Herman L. Osceola Gym in Big Cypress.



From left to right, Nancy Shaffer, Jonah Walker, Briella Hall and Zendaya Quintana help each other to stay on their feet.



The roller skating rink inside the gym attracted kids of all ages and skill levels.



From left to right, Mason Bear, Shayln Koenes, Briella Hall, Zendaya Quintana and Justice Jumper unite hand-in-hand for a skate around the rink.

Big Cypress welcomes new school year



Curmya Smith, left, receives school supplies from Christina Aguilar on Aug. 6 as students on the Big Cypress Reservation prepared to return to school. In addition to BC, the Education Department held back to school events in Brighton, Hollywood, Immokalee and Lakeland in early August. Most students' first day was Aug. 11.



Calvin Tiger Tammy Billie, from Culture, hands items to Braylen Carter at the back to school event.



Gordon Bird and Jackie Bird provide entertainment with puppets at the BC event.

◆ MISSING From page 8A

"Much of the confusion could have been delayed, and more resources could have been deployed if the Kansas PD had some foundational knowledge of operating a police department within the exterior boundaries of the Cherokee Nation Reservation," the NOISE report stated.

The confusion was compounded by an intertribal dispute. Because Glass' family is UKB, they chose to contact their tribe for help, but the UKB and the Cherokee Nation are at odds over a recent opinion that they legally share the same reservation. The initial search for Glass was a "cluster," according to the report, as the UKB, the Cherokee Nation and the police tried to sort out who was in

Chaos, apathy and uncooperative interagency behavior are not uncommon in missing or murdered Native cases such as Hummel's and Glass'. That's according

to Karrisa Newkirk, president and founder of Missing Murdered Indigenous Women Oklahoma, who said it can be difficult to get law enforcement at any level across the state involved, even in violent emergencies.

"There's been many domestic violence cases too," Newkirk said. "So there's been many times when someone has called because of a domestic violence incident and the city police are like, 'Oh, you're tribal? You're going to have to call tribal police.' Even though they're in the city limits. And when you're in a time of need, that's not something you want to hear.'

Newkirk, who also collaborates with the Department of Justice, said responses improve if a cross-deputization agreement is in place, but the responsibility for contacting tribal police often still falls on the shoulders of victims, which breeds distrust and confusion.

"I can't tell you how many times I have been told, 'Well, they said this, but I was so flustered in the moment, I didn't do it. I called you," Newkirk said.

Newkirk advocates for a range of solutions, including greater resources for the BIA, continued involvement of a responding officer and a standardized approach to police notifying tribes of arrests.

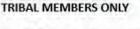
They probably don't have a manual, but I really do think there needs to be some kind of workflow," she said. "Like, 'Oh, this is a tribal member. How many hours do we have to contact the tribal authority?"

Newkirk also said agencies that work together should have biweekly check-ins, networking events and annual training.

"A lot of these small PDs don't even have proper training in human trafficking, or missing children, or even murder cases. Newkirk said. "It should not take 10 hours to issue an AMBER Alert when it meets all the criteria. Training is a necessity.

In the meantime, Deana Floyd and other families with missing loved ones wait.

It's a nightmare when you don't know where your child is," she said. "At this point, I don't care about anything anymore, except for finding him."







Contact Fleet Services: 954-967-3480 or fleetservices@semtribe.com