



BC RV Resort a popular winter spot
COMMUNITY ♦ 5A

Panther Posse at Florida Gulf Coast University
EDUCATION ♦ 1B

Basketball is back at Ahfachkee School
SPORTS ♦ 1C



The

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Voice of the Unconquered

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Tribal members concerned about Lake Okeechobee Watershed project

BY LI COHEN
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — A presentation made by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Jacksonville District on Nov. 28 left the Brighton Reservation community in an uproar over the federal agency’s plans to potentially place a large part of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed (LOW) Project within 1,000 feet of Tribal lands in Brighton.

According to the Corps, the project ultimately has four goals: Improve the quality, quantity, timing and distribution of water in Lake Okeechobee; better manage the lake’s water levels; reduce high-volume water discharges into the estuaries of the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie rivers; and improve system-wide operational flexibility. To achieve these goals, the Corps plans to build a large reservoir along the boundaries of Brighton, near St. Thomas Ranch.

At the meeting, attended by Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr., Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr., and dozens of Tribal members, the Corps suggested four alternatives for reservoir placement, each of which uses reservoirs for above-ground storage and underground storage with Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) wells.

- Alternative 1Br – a \$1.9 billion plan – would place the K-05 reservoir, which would be approximately 14,600 acres and have 198,000 acre-feet of storage, along the east border of the St. Thomas Ranch



President Mitchell Cypress and Santa Claus bring some holiday cheer to Brianna, 11, a patient at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in Hollywood on Dec. 8. President Cypress and Santa distributed toys to patients throughout the hospital as part of the Board's annual toy drive.

Board’s toy drive brings joy beyond reservations

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor
and
BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD/IMMOKALEE — From room to room and floor to floor, the gifts of new toys lit up young faces at Joe DiMaggio Children’s Hospital in Hollywood thanks to the Seminole Tribe Board’s annual

toy drive.

President Mitchell Cypress, Hollywood Board Rep. Gordon Wareham and Santa Claus spent hours Dec. 8 distributing dozens of toys to patients ranging from nine days to 19 years old. Each child was given an age appropriate gift as large boxes filled with toys were hauled through the hospital hallways with assistance from the president’s staff, Seminole Fire Rescue and Hollywood Boys & Girls Club.

“Give it to the children in the hospital

who might not be able to make it home for Christmas; some might go home early with a smile on their face,” said President Cypress, who added that the toy drive is one way the Tribe can show its support in the local community, which in a way supports the Tribe through the casinos.

Brianna, 11, glowed when she was given a toy by President Cypress from The Little Pony series.

“It’s really good. It’s from the movie,” she said.

Another girl named Brianna, this one age 9, smiled as Rep. Wareham gave her a Bratz doll on the day before her birthday.

“That was awesome,” Brianna’s mother said.

Brandon Large, 11, was given a football by Rep. Wareham.

“I love it. They were awesome to do that,” said Brandon, a New England Patriots fan.

♦ See TOY DRIVE on page 4A

Lisa Osceola takes the helm at EIRA

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

For the first time, the Eastern Indian Rodeo Association has a female president. Lisa Osceola was elected at the EIRA annual awards banquet this summer.

Osceola is no stranger to the rodeo. The daughter of Josiah Johns, an Indian National Finals Rodeo Hall of Famer and co-founder of the Florida Indian Rodeo Association which in 1995 became the EIRA, Osceola grew up in the rodeo and recalls the first rodeo held in the old Brighton arena.

“I remember when they asked workers to get their crazy horses and old bulls and cattle owners to put in a few calves for the rodeo,” she said. “I did rodeo from the day I could walk.”

In her role as president, Osceola wants to get more kids involved in the rodeo by offering more clinics. The youth rodeo

has grown over the years and she wants to continue that trend.

“A lot of parents don’t know about rodeo,” she said. “The more you can get the kids involved in something that requires responsibility, the better. Rodeo is yearlong, not seasonal like basketball and other sports.”

Osceola has been part of EIRA leadership for years and has served as secretary and barrel racing director. EIRA’s directors are responsible for specific events; team roping header, team roping heeler, bareback, steer wrestling, calf roping, saddle bronc, women’s breakaway, barrel, bull riding, rodeo queen, fundraising and kids rodeo / special events.

“I rely on the directors,” Osceola said. “We have a pretty good team; they get in here and help. It’s all us putting on these rodeos, but it’s something we all enjoy.”

♦ See EIRA on page 3A



The 2018 Eastern Indian Rodeo Association season kicks off Feb. 3 with the Betty Mae Jumper Memorial Rodeo in Hollywood. Action from last year's rodeo is shown here.

Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum featured on USA Today travel list

BY LI COHEN
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — USA Today gave the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum an early Christmas present this year, featuring the museum on the company’s list of “Great places to honor the original Americans.” The list also features Chaco Canyon in New Mexico, the Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks in Ohio, Connecticut’s Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Spiro Mounds in Oklahoma.

The museum found out about the opportunity the weekend of their 20th anniversary celebration at the end of August. Carrie Dilley, the museum’s visitor services and development manager, explained that Cécile Ganteaume, an associate curator at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., mentioned the opportunity while at the celebration. Dilley believes Ganteaume put in a good word for the museum to USA Today.

While other publications have featured the museum over the years, mostly about large events such as the American Indian Arts Celebration, Dilley said “to be included on a list like this is really special.”

“It’s just awesome to share the Seminole story with the greater area. It’s not just Florida history; we’re being recognized on the national level,” she said. “It’s the country’s history and people are recognizing that. It’s great exposure for the Tribe and the museum. ... To go neck-and-neck with some of these well-known places is awesome.”

While getting recognized by USA Today is a large accomplishment for the museum, Dilley said they still have huge plans ahead. One of these plans is a fundraising for a redesign of the museum’s permanent exhibit. In June, they will also house an exhibit called “We are here” that focuses on Tribal departments and how they work together to serve the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

“This is a great testament to what we’re

trying to do here. We’re not some isolated museum that people aren’t familiar with,” Dilley said on a final note. “We’re getting our name out there. ... It just shows how tribes around the country are maintaining their history and culture and they’re proud of that. They’re not going anywhere.”

To see the full list, visit USAToday.com/travel.



Courtesy photo

At right, the man standing in a canoe is just one part of the large permanent exhibit at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum in Big Cypress. Below is the front entrance to the museum.



Editorial

Native American students continue facing education challenges

• **Natalie Pate, Statesman Journal**

Debbie Austin grew up in the Great Depression, a “time when it was not a good thing to be an Indian.” Talked down to by teachers, professors and medical professionals, berated by passers-by, Austin thought, “If we were white, things would have been a lot easier for us.” But she doesn’t want her more than 40 grandchildren and great-grandchildren to grow up the same way. “I (don’t) want my children to feel bad about themselves,” Austin said. Austin and her husband, Warner Austin, are elders in and founders of the Native American Cross Cultural Association, based in Salem, which celebrates various indigenous cultures across North America. They advocate for more Native American studies and experiences to be shared in the classroom and encourage native students to pursue their education. But they are working against myriad obstacles. Native American students in Oregon are graduating at lower rates, performing worse on state assessments, attending fewer days and receiving more suspensions and expulsions than their peers, according to a recent report released by the Oregon Department of Education. For graduation rates alone, Oregon’s Native American students are graduating at about 56 percent, compared to the state’s overall four-year graduation rate of 74.8 percent. “It’s clear from the data that there are significant opportunity gaps for American Indian and Alaska Native students,” said Colt Gill, acting deputy superintendent for the state. “The data allow us to see the problem, but it is up to us to partner with our tribes, communities and districts to ... better support our American Indian and Alaska Native students in culturally responsive ways.” Experts believe a few key issues causing these negative outcomes include the lack of culturally relevant curriculum, a lack of Native American teachers and staff in schools, a gap in services available to the

families along with additional obstacles many Native American students face outside of the classroom. A doctor in Pennsylvania told Debbie Austin in the late 1970s when she was a young mother, “Don’t ever bring your child here again — You people carry syphilis and tuberculosis.” Shortly after, a college professor in Oregon told her the same thing. So did her textbooks. “Our children need to know that is not true,” Austin said. “They need to know who they are and where they came from.” Austin argues there needs to be more curriculum about the Native American experience and more teachers and staff who identify as Native American in schools. Shelby Maerz, who works for the Indian Education Department for Salem-Keizer Public Schools, agreed, saying students “need to be able to see themselves throughout the system.” And according to state workers, student outcomes improve when an effort is made to be more inclusive. The Tribal Attendance Pilot Project, for example, has been working to lessen the rate of chronically absent native students. By partnering school districts with the nine federally-recognized tribes in the state, the program creates culturally specific plans and materials designed to the needs of each community. Though the chronic absenteeism rate for native students is higher than that of their peers, according to the report, the rate held steady at 30 percent in the last year recorded. The rate of chronically absent non-native students increased from 17 to 19 percent. “Despite an unusually harsh winter, the majority of the schools with Tribal Attendance Pilot Project family advocates had improvements in their chronic absenteeism rates,” said April Campbell, the Indian education advisor for the state. “It’s a good indicator that implementing culturally relevant programs provides benefits to all students, not just those from specific student groups,” she said. There has also been action at the state level to improve representation in course materials. Senate Bill 13, passed earlier this year, requires the Oregon Department of

Education to develop curriculum exploring the Native American experience and provide professional development to teachers and administrators relating to the curriculum. Native American students in Oregon check the box “American Indian/Alaska Native” for race/ethnicity when enrolling in school. But in order to receive services from the school districts, they have to do the additional paperwork required by the federal government and prove they have a parent or grandparent who is a member of a tribe in the United States. In Salem-Keizer Public Schools, the approximately 700 students who take the additional steps receive various services, including weekly study groups, additional math tutoring, summer school classes, cultural events, parent classes and a culturally-appropriate graduation ceremony. This past year, 56 of the 70 seniors in the program graduated — an 80 percent graduation rate. Yet when averaged with dozens of other American Indian/Alaska Native students who do not receive services from the Indian Education Department, the four-year graduation rate is only 56 percent. Lillian Govus, a spokeswoman for the district, said the individual attention is part of what makes the students served by the department as successful as they are. “The students see Shelby (Maerz), how much she cares, and they have a sense of value in the schools,” Govus said. “That’s unique.” Austin spoke to the effectiveness of the district’s efforts through her great-grandchildren’s experiences. “They love school,” she said. “They don’t feel bad about themselves. They wear their hair long and are proud of who they are.” But there remains a gap in which families who do not fill out additional paperwork do not receive the support they may need. “There need to be more services for all our native students,” Maerz said.

All of us need to stand up for justice for Native Americans

• **Brooklyn Wehr, Louie Schmidt and Logan Holdt, The Register-Guard**

This fall, eighth-grade U.S. history students at Spencer Butte Middle School were tasked with determining why it is important to learn about the Native Americans who have claim to this land, and how to educate others in our community about our findings. We have completed tribal and cultural region research projects, engaged in personal reflections about what we learned, and compiled the information into visual presentations. These projects will then be used to supplement curriculum used in the sixth-grade social studies classes later this year. We have learned that Native American people were indigenous to this land and were the first to populate it. Unlike as depicted in most of our history books, a lot of depressing and catastrophic things happened to indigenous people. We should have these tough conversations and recognize that Native Americans hold the history of this country. The U.S. government took almost everything away from Native Americans, including their culture and land. Why are people punishing and trying to get rid of people who are indigenous, especially when all other people here are their guests? It is important to teach that stereotypes are bad, because kids grow up learning to hate or think badly of Native Americans. We need to make sure our facts are correct and

look up ways to help outside of school and in the community. We can find an organization that helps support Native American rights, and vote for laws that don’t take away or erase history. We can educate the community about Native Americans by letting indigenous people teach us about their culture. The city of Eugene needs to celebrate Indigenous People’s Day by creating some sort of ceremony, but it also must be more than just one day. The Eugene School District needs to require its schools to teach students about those who came first, and those who do have the right to claim this land. Going beyond the classroom — and with the recent passage of Senate Bill 13, which directs “the Department of Education to develop curriculum relating to the Native American experience in Oregon and provide professional development related to curriculum” — we hope the lessons we’ve learned result in community action not only for ourselves, but for adults who, though perhaps no longer in educational settings, will engage in discussion with their own children, peers and co-workers to confront any obstacles that continue to perpetuate inaccurate historical and current information about the Native American people of Oregon. Changing our perspective can help us to make everyone’s lives better.

Brooklyn Wehr, Louie Schmidt and Logan Holdt are students in Shanna Davis’ U.S. history class at Spencer Butte Middle School in Eugene, Oregon. The entire class collaborated in the preparation of this essay.

Cherokee Nation leads in green energy solutions

• **Chief Bill John Baker, Indianz.com**

Cherokee Nation continues to lead northeast Oklahoma, as well as Indian Country, in embracing green energy solutions. Recently, we dedicated a new solar power canopy at the Cherokee Nation’s W.W. Keeler Tribal Complex in Tahlequah. It will harness the power of the sun to charge electric vehicles and provide additional power to our complex. Cherokee Nation is the first tribal government in Oklahoma to build and utilize a solar canopy like this. We have always been good stewards of the land, and this is another example of exceptional natural resource conservation. Embracing solar panels and adding electric vehicles to our fleet are consistent with Cherokee Nation’s leadership in clean-energy usage and carbon-footprint reduction. We have made an investment in clean and renewable energy a priority. We have embraced ideas that look to the future and how we can be better stewards for our children and for the earth. These ideas are really just a continued extension of the long tradition that Cherokees have always held. Our commitment to clean energy is rooted in our history, as well as in our values. We look at what our ancestors thought, did and believe, and we try to follow in their footsteps. There is no doubt that our ancestors were among the first conservationists, and we must commit ourselves as they did to protecting the earth. It gives us life, and anytime we can help harness that to make the lives of Cherokees better, we are doing what we’re supposed to be doing.

The solar panels cover an awning that can charge eight electric vehicles. The structure’s design also enhances the beautification efforts we have made at the tribal complex. The solar panels can generate 58,000 kilowatt hours per year, which is enough to power three homes for a year. In addition to the charging station, which can charge up to eight cars at a time, Cherokee Nation has incorporated two electric vehicles to its fleet for employee usage. In recent years, we have transitioned many of our fleet buses to CNG [compressed natural gas] vehicles, which are more efficient and cost effective in the long term. By using both electric and CNG vehicles, we are reducing our carbon footprint, stretching our dollars and leading by example. Preservation of natural resources has been a major theme of our recent accomplishments in the past year. In addition to consciously reducing our carbon footprint within the Cherokee Nation, we continue to lead the fight against the burial of corporate toxic waste within our jurisdiction, have pledged to reduce usage of Styrofoam-like products in our daily operations, and undertaken a business initiative to develop a wind energy farm on Cherokee Nation trust land in Kay County. Green energy – CNG, wind and solar – is creating jobs and a cleaner, better future for Oklahoma. Cherokee Nation has fully embraced these efforts, and we will remain on the cusp of positive change going forward. It is the right thing to do for the next seven generations.

Bill John Baker is the 17th elected chief of the Cherokee Nation, the largest Indian tribe in the United States. Born and raised in Cherokee County, he is married to Sherry (Robertson) Baker.

Finding the meaning of Christmas in family

• **Aaron Tommie**



After Thanksgiving, the holiday season seems to snowball into several different holidays during the month of December, including Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, and New Years Eve, just to name a few. For many people, Christmas represents a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ with family, friends and loved ones. Christmas trees and homes flooded with presents and decorations have become the norm. When Christmas comes to mind, my initial thoughts bring me back to those times during my childhood living in New York, seeing the Christmas tree at Rockefeller

Center. I think of scarves, gloves, blizzards, hot chocolate, pajamas and staying up late watching Christmas films and hearing Christmas music. I remember opening up presents while my mother took pictures of me with her disposable Kodak cameras. I believe Christmas represents the quintessential opportunity to spend time with family and strengthen those ties that may have been weakened throughout the year. Since my birthday is Christmas Eve, Christmas has always been my favorite holiday. Some of my most enjoyable memories took place during Christmas. In 2007, I spent my Christmas break primarily on the Fort Pierce and Brighton reservations with my father Kevin Tommie Sr. I developed very close bonds with the Seminole side of my family during that time. Spending time with my Seminole relatives made me realize another side of my existence that I had yet to truly tapped into. Over the course of the last 10 years, I have made efforts to become more knowledgeable and accepting of my Seminole heritage and will always continue to do so. My Seminole relatives embraced me as if I never left the reservation as a child. They have always made me feel welcomed and have kept me abreast on any events that

have taken place within the Seminole Tribe of Florida. There were presents that were exchanged during that 2007 Christmas, but being around my relatives was a better gift than I could have ever wanted. Christmas seems to have become so commercialized and focused on acquiring possessions that, at times, there are missed opportunities to experience the joys of giving. For several years, led by Vice-Chairman and President Mitchell Cypress, the President’s Office has done a toy drive that provides toys for children in need. As Tribal citizens, we all know how much the Tribe takes care of its people, so for the Tribe to be able to extend that action to other groups of people is something I greatly admire. Since this is the season of giving, there is probably no more appropriate time to share the blessings life has afforded us.

Aaron Tommie has worked for the Tribe since 2015. He is a participant in the Tribe’s Advanced Career Development program. He is currently working in the Executive Operations Office.

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Community



NICWA trains STOF employees on child welfare

BY LI COHEN
Staff Reporter

MIAMI BEACH — The National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) made its way to Miami Beach from Dec. 5-7 to train employees from the Seminole Tribe of Florida and others throughout the nation about the importance of Indian child welfare.

The training focused on the history and regulation of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and Positive Indian Parenting (PIP), a topic focused on preparing child welfare workers to train Native American and Alaska Native parents on how to better parent their children while maintaining cultural practices. ICWA Specialist Shanna Knight and PIP Specialist Barbara Gladne led the sessions.

In Understanding ICWA, Knight provided attendees with a comprehensive overview of the act's history, current child welfare system and court processes, appropriate times to use ICWA, the role of the tribe, what happens when children are removed from their homes, voluntary placements, what happens after parents terminate their rights, and recent ICWA cases and challenges. PIP topics included the philosophy of family services, values and beliefs of family preservation services, how to implement PIP tactics in various types of families, substance and alcohol abuse issues,

and how to support children and other family members in times of need.

While the trainings specified different aspects of Tribal children, the overall message was the same: Native American families require a Native American perspective and understanding. Knight's perspective comes from her extensive research and advocating for Native American rights throughout the U.S., as well as her husband's indigenous roots. Gladne on the other hand, has a more personal connection, as her grandmother was one of the children sent to a federally-organized boarding school that housed Native American children. At the school, she explained students were abused for speaking any language other than English, had all of their goods from home taken away and many times, were kept from their families until they were 18. Just a few years ago, she even found that more than 100 priests, nuns and other school personnel were arrested for sexual abuse.

She said that this kind of trauma impacts individuals at such a deep level that it passes on from generation to generation. Both trainings explained how traumatic experiences subconsciously affect how an individual thinks, acts and speaks, and those effects can take an unforgiving toll when children are born.

"When people experience trauma, it

impacts them at the molecular level," Gladne said.

Shamika Beasley, the advocacy administrator for STOF, is one of nine Seminole Tribe of Florida employees who attended the NICWA training. She explained that going to trainings such as this better equips Tribal employees to handle family issues that may occur in or out of the Tribe. In her role, she oversees the Tribe's advocacy program across the reservations and works with children and families to better Tribal children's environments.

"It's important for me to be updated on what's going on, as far as it relates to ICWA nationwide," she explained. "I try to get some kind of ideas and strategies that I can use working with the Seminole Tribe and the Florida Department of Children and Families program."

Some of these ideas and strategies include blending traditional values with modern skills to effectively parent children and training tactics to use when dealing with non-Tribal agencies.

Along with taking the information back for her own cases, Beasley also uses the information when she trains other teams. Part of her role within the tribe is traveling to DCF agencies and training their departments on how to better handle situations involving Tribal children. She said that learning more about the regulations and laws surrounding ICWA, as well as its history, helps her and others better advocate for their clients.

The government adopted the ICWA in 1978 after children's advocates found that in the 1970s, more than 92 percent of American Indian children adopted in California were placed with non-Native families. Many of those children had no access to or even knowledge of their tribal ancestry and communities. Moreover, the number of American Indian children in the foster care system was more than double the number of non-American Indian children. Advocates created ICWA to help prevent future heritage losses and mandate that whenever a Native child is removed from his or her home, child welfare workers must actively attempt to place him or her with extended family, a tribal member or a Native American/Alaska Native foster home.

"The more I understand the historical information the better I am to present to state workers so they can understand why the Indian Child Welfare Act is really needed," she said. "You can't advocate for something you don't know much about."



Li Cohen

ICWA Specialist Shanna Knight taught social workers, lawyers, Tribal representatives and various other people who work with Tribal members and their children on a regular basis about the importance of NICWA during the organization's three-day training in December.



Li Cohen

As part of the Positive Indian Parenting seminar (PIP), a group of attendees was tasked with brainstorming parenting techniques that they have experienced and how those experiences shaped them. Later, they learned methods to teach more positive parenting techniques to others.

◆ EIRA From page 1A

EIRA officers:

President- Lisa Osceola
Vice President- Mackenzie Bowers
Secretary- Melissa Gopher
Special Events- Moses Jumper
Rodeo Queen- Jimi Lu Huff-Jamison
Fundraiser- Jade Braswell
Bareback Riding- Joe Osceola
Saddle Bronc Riding- Rodney Osceola
Steer Wrestling- Blevyns Jumper
Calf Roping- Paul Bowers Sr.
Breakaway Roping- Trina Hipp
Team Roping Header- Josh Jumper
Team Roping Heeler- Naha Jumper
Lady's Barrel Racing- Scooter Johns
Bull Riding- Paul Bowers Jr.

2018 EIRA schedule:

Feb. 3
Betty Mae Jumper Memorial Rodeo
Hollywood Rodeo Arena

Feb. 10
Bill Osceola Memorial Rodeo
Hollywood Rodeo Arena

Feb. 13
Brighton Field Day Tour Rodeo
Fred Smith Rodeo Arena

March 16
Junior Cypress Memorial Rodeo
Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena

April 21
EIRA Rodeo
Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena

July 7
Josiah Johns Memorial
Fred Smith Rodeo Arena

July 27-28
EIRA Regional Finals
Fred Smith Rodeo Arena

Seventy years ago President Truman visited FL tribes

BY LI COHEN
Staff Reporter

December is traditionally known for the holiday season, but this year, the month also carries a historical significance. Dec. 6 marked 70 years since President Harry Truman visited with the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

In 1947, President Truman and other members of his administration worked to attract more attention to issues affecting Native American tribes. During that time, the Bureau of Indian Affairs suffered much criticism and many people, including Tribal leaders, wanted the department to be abolished and manage their own affairs. According to the book "Native Americans and the Legacy of Harry S. Truman," Truman originally vetoed a pro-Indian bill that year that would have reimbursed Native Americans for overpaid taxes. The bill would have amounted to \$220,000 and reduced the interest rate from 6 percent to 4 percent, but because of advice from the Treasury Department, it did not pass. However, despite the termination of the bill, Truman made his way around the country to meet with tribes and learn the issues that affected them.

Included in this tour was a stop at Everglades National Park, where he met

with the Seminoles. The federal government and Seminole Tribe did not have an overall positive relationship at the time, as the naming of the National Park forced hundreds of Tribal members to relocate and the government was trying to terminate the Seminole Reservation. Despite this turmoil, Truman dubbed the National Park as "another great conservation victory" and praised the Seminole Tribe for its positive conservation efforts and use of natural resources.

Miccosukee Tribal leader William McKinley Osceola and other Tribal members presented Truman with a traditional Seminole shirt, comprised of orange, yellow and black patchwork symbolizing the Osceola family, for his efforts in visiting the Tribe. Additionally, medicine man Ingram Billy presented Truman with a bag made of palmetto leaf fiber, buckskin thread and cypress. According to logs of the visit, which were compiled by Lt. Commander William Rigdon, both the shirt and the bag were handmade. Chief Osceola's children, Mike and Carey, also attended the meeting, where Mike interpreted the interaction between Truman and the Tribal members.

Although it was after Truman's presidency, the Tribe officially established its government in 1957, preventing further talks of termination and/or relocation.



Courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

Miccosukee Tribal member William McKinley Osceola presents a patchwork shirt to President Harry Truman at the Everglades National Park dedication on Dec. 6, 1947.

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◆ **TOY DRIVE**
From page 1A

The benefits for the annual toy drive are reciprocal.

“It brightens up my day,” President Cypress said. “If I can be able to help put a smile on a kid’s face, that’s my reward.”

The toy drive also extended to the western side of Alligator Alley. About 700 Immokalee children had a Christmas filled with toys thanks to the toy drive.

Nearly all of Eden Park Elementary school’s 683 students qualify for the federal government’s free and reduced price lunch program, an indicator of low family income. Many of the parents work in the fields of Immokalee, but Hurricane Irma destroyed the crops and delayed the next one causing families to lose significant income.

Donned in cheerful Santa hats, on Dec. 12 Rep. Wareham, Naples Council liaison Brian Zepeda, Board staff and members of We Do Recover filled the school’s lobby with about 700 toys and games, snacks, candy canes, pencils and love as students from every classroom came by to choose a present.

Mouths agape, the children were surprised and delighted to see the bounty of colorful gifts. Some were drawn immediately to that perfect toy; others were more deliberate as they carefully chose. The piles of age and gender appropriate toys were continually replenished so each child had a huge array of choices.

“We are bringing happiness,” Rep. Wareham said. “There’s a kid who’s in need and we’re filling that need.”

Rep. Wareham recounted an interaction with a patient who turned 7 years old on the day the toy drive visited Joe DiMaggio Children’s Hospital. Rep. Wareham said the boy was abandoned by his parents, so he and Santa entered his room singing Jingle Bells. They gave him a Christmas present and an additional birthday present, causing the boy’s eyes to tear up as he got his wish.

“That will stay with me for the rest of my life,” Rep. Wareham said. “That’s the gift I got back and it’s more than money can buy.”

The volunteers at Eden Park knew the already impoverished town had been hit with hard times and did their best to bring holiday cheer to the children.

“Service is always what we do,” said Charlie Tiger, We Do Recover program supervisor. “It feels a lot different now because this is a public school with kids who aren’t tribal members. They don’t have the resources we have so it feels really good to help them.”

“It’s a blessing to be able to help these kids and give them a good Christmas, especially since Hurricane Irma,” added Billie Tiger.

Many of Eden Park’s students were told by their parents not to expect Christmas presents.

“Some of these kids wouldn’t have had gifts at all this year,” said Principal Linda Salazar. “This is unexpected and so joyful.”

Over at the overflowing toy tables, it was hard to tell who got the most joy - the givers or the receivers. Happiness filled the lobby as adults and children alike wore big smiles and enjoyed the morning.

“It’s very touching for the Tribe to donate to this,” said Immokalee Council project manager Ray Garza. “Not a lot of people have been as lucky as us and I’ve always believed we have to share and give back. It’s heartwarming to see these kids get a toy.”



Kevin Johnson

Santa Claus and Hollywood Board Rep. Gordon Wareham bring a smile to the face of Brandon Large, 11, a patient at Joe DiMaggio Children’s Hospital, by giving him a football on Dec. 8.



Beverly Bidney

Board employees hand out Christmas presents to Eden Park Elementary students Dec. 12 in Immokalee.



Courtesy photo Hard Rock

Volunteers from the Boys & Girls Club were among the groups helping collect gifts for the toy drive.



President Cypress delivers gifts to young patients at Joe DiMaggio Children’s Hospital.



Kevin Johnson (2)



Kevin Johnson

Naples Council liaison Brian Zepeda and Hollywood Board Rep. Gordon Wareham watch as students choose toys at Eden Park Elementary.



Beverly Bidney

Eden Park Elementary school students compare toys given to them by the Board for Christmas.



Beverly Bidney

This Eden Park Elementary student seems overwhelmed by the abundance of toys brought as gifts from the Tribe Dec. 12.

Big Cypress RV Resort fills up for winter

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — The snowbirds have come home to roost at the Big Cypress RV Resort and Campground; the number of RVs at the campground is a sure sign of winter.

The nip in the air doesn't bother these guests, who hail from places where snow is a common sight including Canada, Massachusetts, Michigan, Illinois, Ohio and Indiana. Many stay for months to bask in the warmth of the Sunshine State.

But the weather isn't the only warmth these temporary residents feel during their BC stay; the guests create their own community filled with friendship, fun and fellowship.

"We bring them and they keep them here," said Evie Mata, manager. "Guests love the peace and tranquility and the country atmosphere. This is their winter home; some have been coming here for 19 or 20 years."

The campground features 110 sites; some on concrete pads and some on grass. The sites are more spacious, and thus more private, than at most campgrounds. There are enough activities to keep anyone busy, including shuffleboard, mini-golf, a swimming pool, two outdoor pool tables in chickees, a bocce ball court, horseshoes and a clubhouse.

Wildlife abounds; bears, turkeys, panthers, foxes, falcons, squirrels and alligators have all been spotted.

"The guests love it," Mata said. "Most of them live in the country and they enjoy the wildlife. We are in the everglades and are in the animals' space, so we are going to see them."

Cheryl and Skip Skipper, of Ontario, Canada, are spending their fourth winter at

and Canada," Cheryl said. "We see the same people here every year, but there are always some new ones, and we know everyone by name. The staff here is exceptional and they go out of their way to make us feel welcome."

The busiest time at the resort is November through the beginning of April. The average stay lasts three or four months but some stay for just a few weeks.

Experienced campers Roberta and Bob Paoni, of Springfield, Illinois, and Kristina and Tom Tognarelli, of Demotte, Indiana, are new to the resort and were getting acquainted with it and each other. So far, they like what they see.

"This area is similar to where we come from," Kristina said. "This is a smaller campground, which makes a big difference. The sense of community here is much bigger."

The Paonis stayed in South Bay last winter and decided to come to Big Cypress this year instead.

"The people in this park are the best I've run across," Bob said.

"I think we've found our forever home away from home," added Roberta.

Winter will end in a few months and like all migratory birds, these snowbirds will head north for the summer. But until then, the campground and the reservation will remain filled with guests.

the resort. Aside from an occasional trip to Fort Myers Beach or Everglades City, they plan to stay at the campground and enjoy its activities through March.

"This is our favorite place to camp, and we've camped in plenty of places in the U.S.



Beverly Bidney

Visitors enjoy the wide open spaces of the Big Cypress RV Resort and Campground in December.

Pooches vaccinated at Big Cypress rabies clinic

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

Judging by the number of dogs and cats living on every reservation, its clear Tribal members enjoy their pets. The Animal Control Program makes sure these beloved family pets receive rabies vaccinations and electronic microchips every year at its free rabies clinics.

A parade of pets came through the Big Cypress rodeo grounds Dec. 1 as Tribal members took advantage of updating their pets' shots and microchips at the clinic.

The Tribe enacted an animal care regulation ordinance in 2005 which

mandates pet owners register their pets annually and keep vaccinations up to date. Animal control sees about 300 dogs per year at the clinics.

"We have seen a decrease over the years of bite cases," said Patrick Peck, environmental health manager. "We have about 10 cases per year, which is down from 40 or 50. It's a drastic reduction."

Peck attributes the decrease to the presence of three animal control officers, who have worked on the reservations since 2006.

The next rabies clinic will be in Hollywood in February 2018.



Beverly Bidney

Cowboy, an Australian Shepherd, doesn't appear to like what's going on at the Big Cypress rabies clinic. Animal control and wildlife officer Alberto Rivera holds him as Sean Heron administers a rabies shot Dec. 1.

First place for Immokalee Reservation float in town parade



Beverly Bidney

Cecilia Garcia paints a patchwork vest on a wooden gingerbread cutout on the Immokalee Reservation's float for the Immokalee annual Christmas parade Dec. 7.



Beverly Bidney

Susan Davis, on float, Juanita Martinez, America Martinez and others in the Immokalee Culture Department worked for days to create the gingerbread-themed float for the town of Immokalee's annual Christmas parade Dec. 9. The hard work paid off; the float took home first place.



Courtesy photo Cecilia Garcia

Proudly displaying the trophy after the Immokalee Christmas parade are Denise Gonzalez, Jayla Garcia, Pedro Martinez Jr., Jesus Martinez, Mary Jane Martinez and Zoe Garcia.

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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.

◆ **WATERSHED PROJECT**
From page 1A

alongside Paradise Run Wetland. This alternative would also place 80 ASR wells in seven clusters between Brighton and Lake Okeechobee, to the east of Paradise Run and near Taylor Creek in Okeechobee County.

- Alternative 2Bwould put the K-05 reservoir in the same location as 1Br, but would also put another reservoir, K-42, a bit northwest in Highlands County, just west of the Kissimmee River Center Wetland. The two reservoirs would take up about 20,300 acres and create 276,000 acre-feet of storage. ASR cluster locations would be the same, but there would be only 70 wells in eight clusters. The estimated cost for this alternative is \$2.5 billion.

- At an estimated cost of \$3.3 billion, Alternative 2A would create three reservoir components — K-42 reservoir would be just west of the Kissimmee River Center Wetland in Highlands County, K-05 North Reservoir would be along the border of Highlands and Glades Counties and the west border of the Paradise Run Wetland, and the K-05 South Reservoir would be between the St. Thomas Ranch and the Brighton Reservation, Lake Okeechobee, and the South border of the Paradise Run Wetland. This alternative would take up approximately 26,500 acres and create 361,000 acre-feet of storage. The plan would include 110 ASR wells in eight clusters.

- Alternative 2Cr places the K-42 reservoir in Highlands County west of the Kissimmee River Center Wetland. This estimated \$1.8 billion project would take up approximately 14,600 acres and create 195,000 acre-feet of storage. Though this reservoir would not be alongside Brighton, there would still be two ASR well clusters along the southeast border of the reservation, as well as five more clusters in the previously mentioned locations. In total, there would be 65 wells.

The project is part of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), an initiative authorized by Congress in 2000. LOWP is one part of the 68 components of CERP and is being paid for by the Corps and the South Florida Water Management District. The Tribe will have no financial obligations to the project.

Understanding the reservoir

The reservoir will be an above-ground storage unit for water from Lake Okeechobee. The proposed alternatives are part of a larger plan to create a reservoir system surrounding the lake to help with water levels. Currently, there is only one reservoir approved to start construction south of the lake. The Corps also plans to implement reservoirs to the east and west of Lake Okeechobee.

With the project, U.S. Army Corps Engineer Tim Gysan and John Campbell, acting chief of the Army Corps' communications office, explained the Corp is essentially trying to recreate a more natural flow within Lake Okeechobee.

“We’re trying to mimic that as best as we can naturally with an unnatural facility,” Gysan explained. “Currently that water, due to the manmade system, moves much faster than it would historically ... the system doesn’t work the way it was supposed to naturally. This project is addressing a portion of that by trying to slow down flows coming into the lake and then releasing water back to the lake when it’s needed.”

Gysan said 260,000 acre-feet of storage in a reservoir is equivalent to approximately six inches of water from Lake Okeechobee. Only two of the proposed alternatives, 2A and 2B, would hold that amount or more. The proposed ASR wells will hold between 364,000 and 616,000 acre-feet of storage, as well.

Campbell added that while this may not seem like a significant amount, having multiple reservoirs is what is going to make an impact on the lake. Each reservoir will use a pump system to hold and release water to and from the lake.

“Taking in their totality and the aggregate gives us a lot more flexibility in how we can manage Lake Okeechobee and water throughout the central and southern Florida system,” he said.

Numerous people have also suggested that instead of building so many reservoirs, the Corps increase the parameters of the lake itself. However, Gysan said that aside from the substantial cost associated with such a plan, expanding the lake would devastate wetlands and force many people to relocate. Essentially, the costs of this route would far outweigh the benefits.

During the meeting, Corps representatives also suggested that water in the new reservoir could serve as water for the Tribe. Gysan explained that one of the Corps’ objectives is to improve water supply to current users of this particular water system. With the reservoir being so close to the reservation, he said that the planning team envisions an increased water supply to local water consumers.

“That would enable the Tribe to have access to that water under the water compact,” he said, explaining that this would not change how water is currently distributed or be an additional cost to the Tribe. “It would be for the betterment of everyone.”

However, Stacy Myers, assistant director at the Tribe’s Environmental Resource Management Department, stated that making such a decision is out of the Corps’ control, as such a decision is not in their jurisdiction as per the Surface Water Right Entitlement contract. This contract states the reservation must get a specific amount of surface water from surrounding basins based on the ratio of Tribal land to total land in the area and is determined by the state, the Tribe and the South Florida Water Management District.

Myers said the Corps never presented this idea to the Tribe prior to the community meeting and that the Corps hasn’t disclosed what the quality of the water in the reservoir will be. He doesn’t see how they would accomplish the idea successfully, primarily

because they do not have the authority to make the decision and do not fully understand how such a task would be apportioned and operated for the Tribe.

“There are a lot of issues with doing that because we are supposed to get a significant amount of that water to begin with because it’s supposed to be a part of our entitlement water,” he said. “How that water would be separated from other water and provided to the Tribe and treated...that would be really difficult for them to do.”

Tribal members react

Reaction from the Brighton community at the Nov. 28 meeting was unanimously negative, with many residents suggesting that building a reservoir so close to the reservation is life-threatening should the reservoir breach and cause a flood. Others cited that the location of the reservoir is on Tribal burial grounds and would harm the Tribe’s history.

In tears, Brighton resident and Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School student Winnie Gopher, 12, pleaded with the presenters to consider children like her who live on the reservation and who would be in the high-risk area of the reservoir. After the meeting, she explained that having the reservoir so close to people in Brighton does nothing but make them fear for their lives.

“The reservoir is so close to Native American sites and it’s going to disrupt those sites because it’s so close to it. Who knows what’s going to happen to those sites when they start construction,” she said. “It’s always going to be a fear for our community for us having to wake up every day and just think that any day this reservoir could break or there be a hurricane and us have to think we need to evacuate because it could flood. It’s just a big ‘what if’ situation that’s going to be sitting there threatening lives.”

Winnie’s father Lewis Gopher shared similar sentiments about the proposal. He said the problems originate to the Hoover Dike around Lake Okeechobee and the construction they started in the first place, as it disrupted the natural flow and filtration of the lake’s water.

“The real problem was created back in the 1930s when they wanted to make the lake a reservoir. It’s not a lake anymore and they’ve reshaped its boundaries. It used to run way more south, almost all the way to Broward County,” he said of Lake Okeechobee. “Now it’s cut off so they could use that land to grow sugar cane, but that’s a part of the story that isn’t told.”

During the Corps’ presentation in Brighton, engineers mentioned that the proposal is a high-risk project, meaning that a breach of the facility could result in a devastating loss of life. Gysan further explained that while this term is used to explain the potential consequences of a failure, it does not refer to the chances of the failure itself, which he said are “extremely small.”

While that is the case, Campbell said that the Corps is not ignoring this risk.

“We want to be cognoscente that if [the reservoir] were to ever fail, there would be significant and potentially tragic consequences in terms of the flooding of the surrounding properties,” he said.

Campbell informed the Tribune in December that he does not know what the Corps’ policy is if a devastating flood were to happen in regards to paying for and initiating the recovery process.

After learning about the Corps’ plans, Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School seventh- and eighth-graders wrote a unified letter expressing their concerns to Army Corps of Engineers Jacksonville District Commander Colonel Jason Kirk. The letter was proofed and sent to Colonel Kirk by PECS English teacher Suraiya Smith.

While Winnie has expressed strong opposition to the reservoir, she said it’s important for people to realize that reservoirs

themselves are not bad. In fact, she said she completely supports the Corps building a reservoir for the project, just not so close to where people live to prevent potentially catastrophic situations.

“The reservoir itself isn’t all bad,” she said. “We could use it for hydraulic energy and stuff like that. It just shouldn’t be so close. If they built it somewhere else, maybe so many people wouldn’t oppose it.”

Environmental implications

While many are worried about the effects of the reservoir on the human population, many cite environmental implications as a major concern as well.

When Lake Okeechobee’s waters get too high, officials who work on the lake drain the water into the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee rivers. The water within Lake Okeechobee is known for containing toxic pollution and chemicals from nearby cattle and sugar farms, and the drainage causes harmful algae growth in the rivers, resulting in the death and overall endangerment of sea grasses, oyster beds and various sea animals.

While the Army Corps of Engineers stated that having the new reservoir will help relieve this issue along the rivers, some Brighton residents and Tribal officials are concerned that the construction of the reservoir will only hurt and kill local animals and plants. They’re also worried that if the reservoir floods or suffers damage, it will only exacerbate the problems caused by draining Lake Okeechobee.

As reported by the University of Florida’s Florida Museum of Natural History, there are numerous threatened and endangered animal and plant species surrounding Lake Okeechobee, many of which live in the Brighton area. Included in this list are brittle thatch palms, Florida thatch palms, alligators, Everglades snail kites, wood stork, bald eagles, and Florida panthers.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will conduct surveys of the proposed alternatives before construction begins, but Myers said that displacing animals, regardless of their endangered status, is a large risk. Once construction begins, they will most likely make their way closer to the reservation.

“That [animal displacement] is a potential undue burden that’s placed on the tribe because if they’re endangered species, there are special measures we have to take in future developments of the reservation,” he said. “We’re not like other people, where they can pick up and move if a project is built, we’re set by physical boundaries of the reservation.”

In addition to the impacts of the reservoirs, Whitney Sapienza, ERMD environmental protection specialist, said ASR wells are suspect for negative implications as well. She explained that these wells, which store water underground, have the potential to be greatly beneficial, but their success rates are inconsistent. There is also a large risk of fish larval entrapment within the wells, as well as other ecological risks.

In a 2014 Ecological Risk Assessment by the Army Corps of Engineers, they found that there is high risk of larval fish impingement or entrainment during ASR recharge for non-catfish species and a low risk of this for catfish species. Additionally, they found a low risk of chronic or acute toxicity to aquatic life from ASR discharges, an average high risk of ASR discharge plume size covering the entire width of the river during low river flows, a high risk of invertebrate impingement or entrainment during ASR recharge, and on average, a moderate risk of invertebrate impingement or entrainment during ASR recharge.

Lewis Gopher said that unless Lake Okeechobee is allowed to naturally filter its water and the manmade dams and dikes end, problems will continue.

“If they go ahead with this project, the Army Corps of Engineers is going to have to

come back and say there’s another problem they have to fix. This land was here and it was great; there was nothing wrong with it, but when people come along and say the lake doesn’t work for them, they try to make it work for them. When they try to make it work for them, they affect Mother Nature. If you’re going to change those things, you’re going to have some backlash,” he said.

Myers agreed that less problems would occur if the lake’s water was free to flow from north to south naturally.

“Their [the Corp’s] concept is to protect the estuaries from harmful discharges from Lake Okeechobee. They felt that to do that, they needed to establish these storage areas in the north. We feel that what is more important is storing water in the south of Lake Okeechobee in these southern reservoirs,” he said. “If they truly want to restore the Everglades and the whole Kissimmee and Okeechobee Everglades system, you want to return it to the way it was because that’s what restoring is. Essentially, there have never been reservoirs north of the lake. The lake was larger than it is now, and by putting reservoirs south of the lake, you’re sort of mimicking the natural and historic condition.”

Cultural impact

Along with worrying about the environmental and societal implications, Winnie shared worry about the impact that could have on the Tribe’s customs.

“It’s going to be taking away so much that nature already has for us. Our culture is such a nature-based culture and it’s going to be hard for us to live off the nature if we don’t have it there,” she explained. “They [Army Corps of Engineers] are just trying to contain the nature and say it’s bad for us.”

The Tribal Historic Preservation Office fears a reservoir so close to Tribal lands as well. Paul Backhouse, director of the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum and THPO, said the plans could have a negative cultural impact on the Tribe, as his office suspects that there are numerous significant sites in the proposed construction areas.

According to the Tribe’s Compliance Supervisor Bradley Mueller, field investigations of the Kissimmee Circle Earthworks site, a possible location for a reservoir which has an undisclosed exact location, is undergoing a contracting process, so the survey of the area will not be complete until 2018. The only investigation of the area was conducted by two Corps archaeologists on Oct. 11. Additionally, SEARCH, Inc., an archaeology company, has surveyed a small area of the proposed K-05 reservoir, but the area surveyed is currently owned by the state and SFWMD.

The only area in the proposal that has been surveyed is a small piece of land owned by the South Florida Water Management District, on which there is a significant site called Kissimmee Circle where Tribal ancestors are likely buried. Kissimmee Circle is within the boundaries of the proposed K-05 reservoir, meaning the site would be destroyed if the reservoir is placed on top of it.

Once the Corps completes surveys of the areas that will be potentially impacted by the proposal – which includes sending a team of archaeologists to the areas to identify and document cultural resources – THPO has the opportunity to review the information and identify cultural properties. Additionally, Backhouse explained that the Tribe has a special burial resources agreement with the Corps that will prevent any damage to buried ancestors.

“Any time a project has the potential to disturb Seminole ancestors, there’s a very strict process that we follow to make sure the Tribe is given every opportunity to be involved in the decision-making with the Army Corps,” he said, explaining that at this point, the Corps’ just needs to put boots on

the ground and begin the survey process.

THPO is trying to get access to the site and conduct an assessment as well. The Corps has not identified a timeframe for the survey to be complete, but because of their three-year planning limit, Backhouse expects it will be done in the coming months.

While all proposed project alternatives will likely have an archaeological and cultural resource impact, Backhouse said Alternative 2Cr may be the least harmful, as it is farther away from Tribal lands. Even though it is farther, however, Backhouse assured that there’s still a risk for historical and archaeological damage and they are awaiting survey results to come to an ultimate conclusion.

Tribal members are encouraged to report any culturally or historically significant sites and resources to THPO so they can discuss those sites with the Corps.

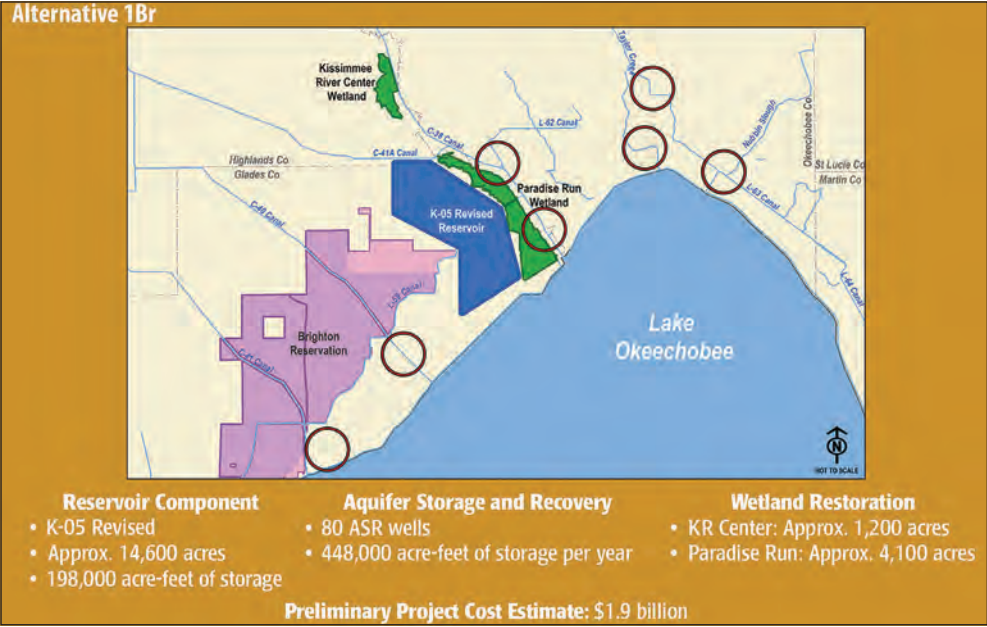
Next steps

Campbell and Gysan stressed that they are still in the planning process and they are not yet a Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP). The Corps is considering all the feedback presented by stakeholders and reevaluating plans to try and fit the needs of the community. The next major point in the Corps’ timeline is Jan. 25, during which time they hope to have a tentatively selected plan they can proceed with.

“The milestone is a goal. It would certainly help if we had a TSP by then to help keep us on track for that overall three-year goal,” Campbell said, referring to the SMART Planning Initiative, which confines the project’s planning phase to be complete within three years.

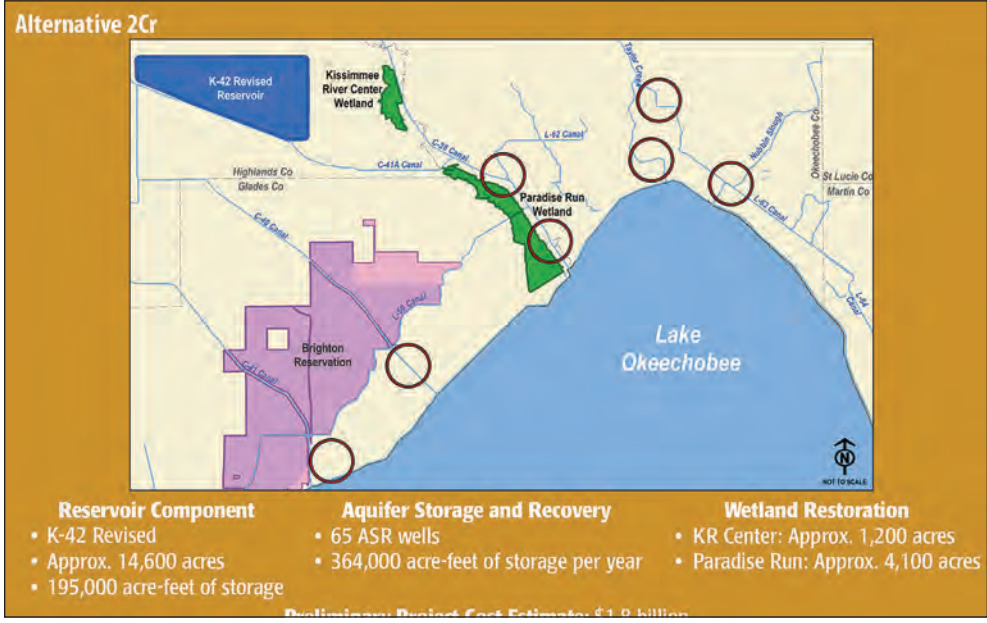
In order to proceed with a specific alternative, Gysan, Campbell and other Corps engineers on this project must present their plan to their supervisors. If they approve the plan, the engineers are then required to submit a Project Implementation Report and Environmental Impact Statement, which will be released to the public so that everyone can see the plan and provide comment and feedback for revisions. This report is due within 60 days of the approved tentatively selected plan. The public should not expect to see such a report before March at the earliest.

Once the Corps has a final plan, the project will be sent for approval to Congress, who has the ultimate say in whether the project will proceed. Army Corps representatives do not have any more Brighton community meetings planned at this time, but Campbell and Gysan assured they would be happy to return to present updated information.



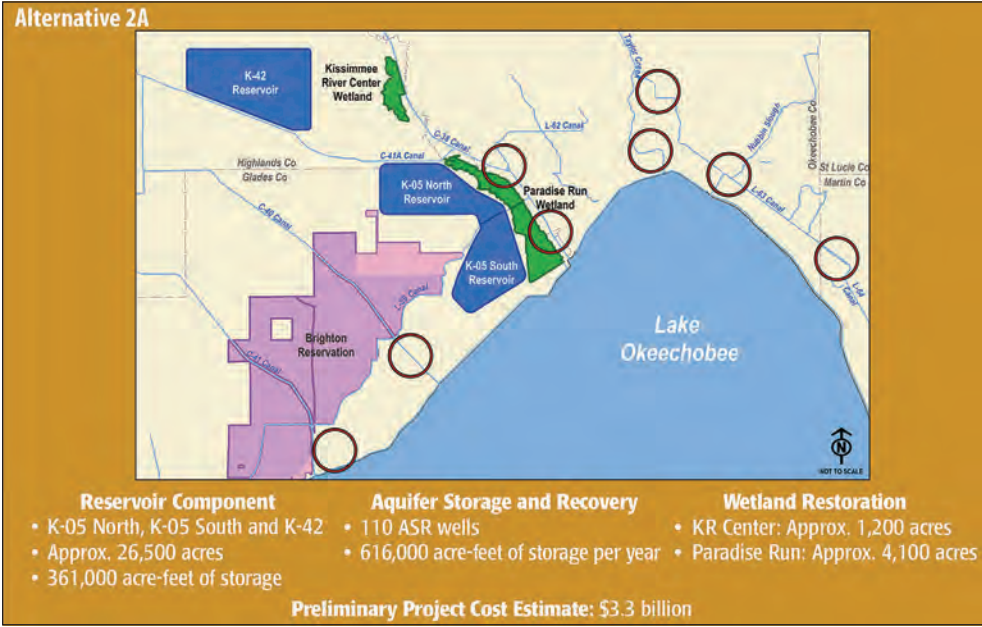
Courtesy image

Watershed Project alternative 1BR, focusing on the K-05 reservoir.



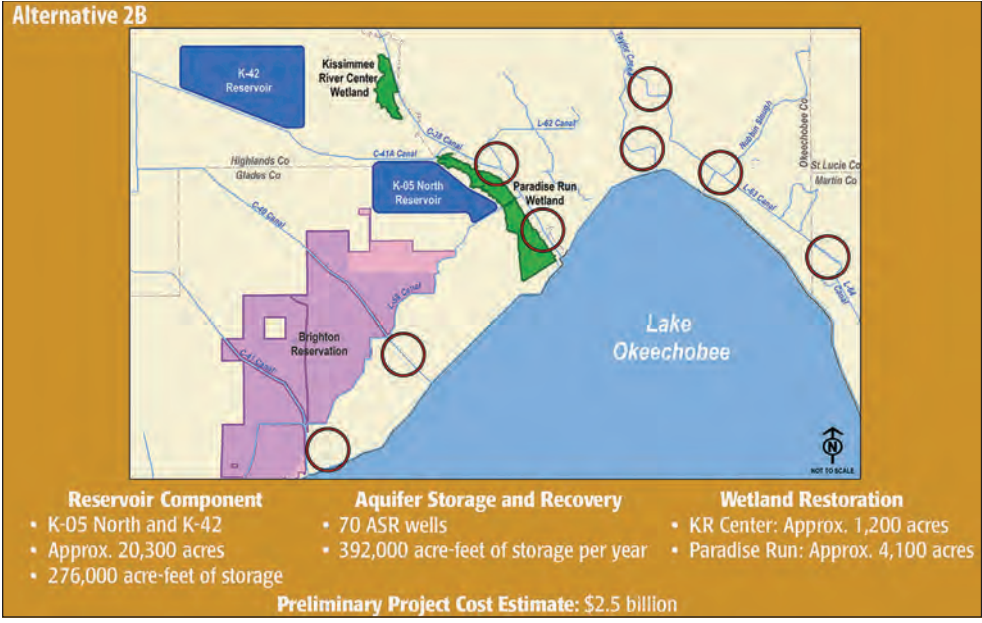
Courtesy image

Watershed Project alternative 2Cr, focusing on the K-42 reservoir.



Courtesy image

Alternative 2A, focusing on a large K-05 reservoir and a K-42 reservoir.



Courtesy image

Watershed Project alternative 2B, focusing on the K-05 and K-42 reservoirs.

Seminoles play big role in Fort King grand opening

BY MICHAEL JAMES
Special to The Tribune

OCALA — The grand opening of the reconstruction of historic Fort King, which played a large role in Seminole war history, attracted hundreds of visitors to programs in late November and early December.

Fort King, in Ocala, is steeped in history. It was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2004 by the Department of the Interior for its significance as both the U.S. Army Southern Command during the Second Seminole War and the site where U.S. Indian Agent Wiley Thompson and Lt. Constantine Smith were killed by Osceola and a group of 80 warriors on Dec. 28, 1835. Earlier that day, two companies of soldiers dispatched from Fort Brooke in Tampa were ambushed while on their way to reinforce Fort King. Chief Micanopy and his band of warriors killed 106 soldiers in a surprise attack known today as the Dade Massacre. These two events ignited the Second



Michael James

Seminole War reenactors, from left, Jason Melton, Quenton Cypress, Andrew Wallin (on ground) and Tucomah Robbins, provide a realistic battle scene for spectators at the grand opening of Fort King.

Seminole War.

Fort King had humble beginnings. The first construction near the site was the

first Seminole Indian Agency in 1826. In March 1827 Fort King was constructed to administrate the Treaty of Moultrie Creek

which relocated Seminoles to an expansive reservation in Central Florida. The treaty was supposed to protect the Seminoles from trespassing settlers as well as promote wilderness law and order for a period of 20 years. By 1829, a deepening recession forced the Army to abandon Fort King because of severe budget cuts. With the soldiers gone, the Seminoles continued to go on about their lives and never disturbed the fort.

In 1832 times began to change as Andrew Jackson summoned the Seminole leaders to Payne's Landing and coerced their signatures on the newly drafted Treaty of Payne's Landing which ordered all Seminoles out of Florida in compliance with Jackson's Indian Removal Act, passed by Congress and signed by Jackson in May of 1830. By June of that year Fort King was re-garrisoned. This time the troops and new Indian agent Wiley Thompson came as hostile enforcers of the Treaty of Payne's Landing. Instead of being seen as protectors, the soldiers now became the symbol of hate and oppression for the Seminoles.

Osceola was no stranger to the fort. In 1834 he made his first appearance at Fort King as a participant in talks held there between the U.S. government and the Seminoles. Osceola rejected the orders to leave Florida. He opposed emigration to the west and threatened war unless the Seminoles were left alone.

After the events on Dec. 28, 1835, the

ensuing Second Seminole War featured many notable army generals stationed at Fort King. Unable to win against the guerrilla warfare tactics of the Seminoles, the U.S. forces abandoned the fort once again by May of 1836. The Seminoles returned and burned the fort to the ground that summer.

In 1837 the fort was rebuilt. The Army returned as the Army of the South where soldiers launched unrelenting search and destroy missions against the Seminoles. In 1842 the war ended and the fort was once again abandoned. The fort was transferred to the people of Marion County where it served as the county's first courthouse and public building. In 1837 it was dismantled for its lumber. The new courthouse was moved to the new city of Ocala.

In July 2016, after years of planning, fund raising, grant applications, and acquisitions, enough money and willpower were raised to reconstruct Fort King. In December 2016 the first re-enactment of 'The Killing of Wiley Thompson' took place. In April site preparations were begun, logs began to arrive and the reconstruction of Fort King began in earnest. In May a groundbreaking ceremony was held which included a contingent from the Seminole Tribe of Florida. In September, Hurricane Irma barreled over the site. The chickee

♦ See FORT KING on page 8A



Michael James (2)

Seminole participants in the Fort King program include Pedro Zepeda, above, and Daniel Tommie, right.



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Battle of Okeechobee

BY REBECCA FELL
Curator of Exhibits

This year, 2017, is an important year of anniversaries for the Seminole Tribe of Florida. It marks the 200th anniversary of the beginning of the Seminole Wars, in 1817. It is the 60th anniversary of federal recognition of the Seminole Tribe of Florida as a government and a business enterprise. Over this year, this column will alternately explore key events of the Seminole Wars and highlight the great advances of the Tribe during the last 60 years. This month we will feature a battle that took place on Christmas Day, 180 years ago along the shores of Lake Okeechobee.

Many history books say the December 25, 1837 Battle of Okeechobee was won by the U. S. Colonel Zachary Taylor. They certainly spun it to the press that way. This battle is often credited with giving him the fame to rise in the ranks of the military and ultimately become president.

Seminole historians see the story very differently. Colonel Taylor’s reason for claiming victory rests solely on the Seminoles leaving the battlefield first. However, this ignores several aspects of the U.S. government’s war with the Seminoles and the battle itself.

The Seminole warriors’ battles against the U.S. are some of the finest examples of guerrilla warfare tactics. The warriors recognized they were vastly outnumbered. However, they knew the landscape, had better training, and had better guns. There was no reason to stand in formation and fight like Europeans. A surprise attack and melting back into the scenery produced far more devastating effects and preserved more Seminole lives.

There is good reason to believe the Seminoles led Colonel Taylor’s men to their

chosen battlefield by Lake Okeechobee. Taylor’s men conveniently “captured” a Seminole warrior the day before, a man who uncharacteristically gave no fight and pointed the troops to the spot. The landscape the troops traversed to reach the Seminoles was 5’ tall sawgrass, muddy, uneven, and full of dying vegetation. But, the area directly in front of a stand of trees was mown and clear of saplings. After the battle, Taylor’s men found notches in the tree branches where Seminole warriors had rested their guns.

That stand of trees also provided two convenient escape routes to the west and east. When two companies of U.S. troops attacked from the east, some warriors gave cover while the rest of the Seminoles escaped west.

The most telling proof of Seminole victory lay in the numbers. Having left a few men at Camp Bassinger, Taylor arrived to the battle with just over 800 men. The totals for Seminole warriors have ranged from 380-480 men. At a 2:1 ratio, Taylor’s men should have overwhelmed the Seminoles. Instead, they lost 26 men with 114 wounded. The dead were primarily officers, a wise tactical move that made it hard to regroup or give a hard chase. There were only 11 dead and 14 wounded on the Seminole side.

So how could the U.S. claim a victory? Fake news and bias have long been an issue in the media. The truth was the U.S. government was spending a lot of money and getting nowhere with Seminoles. Commander of the war and Taylor’s boss, Colonel Thomas Jesup’s reputation was already in tatters for capturing warriors, most famously Osceola, under a flag of truce. Finally, Florida was an isolated frontier few knew anything about. The newspapers were not going to ask the Seminoles for their version of the story. So what the officers said was taken for truth. Given how poorly the war was going (and would continue to go), Colonel Taylor made the case for victory.



Guy LaBree's depiction of the Battle of Okeechobee. A print of this painting is in the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum's collection

Coeur d'Alene Tribal member running for Idaho governor seat

BY LI COHEN
Staff Reporter

The U.S. could soon see its first Native American state governor in 2018.

Paulette Jordan, a member of the

Coeur d'Alene Tribe and a Democrat in the Idaho House of Representatives, announced Dec. 7 that she will run for governor of Idaho. If elected, she will be the first female governor of the state, as well as the first Native American state governor. This move places her on a short list of Native American political candidates, alongside Lt. Governor of Alaska Byron Mallott and Larry Echo Hawk, who was a former Idaho State Representative and Attorney General for the state.

“Service is an inherent value in my family, from my ancestors on down to my sons, and they will carry that tradition forward in their lives,” Jordan said during her announcement. “I’m proud to be part of Idaho’s family.”

Jordan is currently in her second term as a Representative for District 5, where she serves on three committees: Environment, Energy and Technology, Resources and



legislature.idaho.gov
Paulette Jordan

Conservation, and State Affairs. Before being in the state House of Representatives, the 38-year-old was a council woman for her tribe from 2009 to 2012.

According to the website Governing, Jordan already reported the major component of her platform.

“There will be zero tolerance for violence. There will be zero tolerance for sexual harassment and zero tolerance for drug abuse or child abuse. And there will be zero tolerance for discrimination in any form,” she said, adding that these intolerances are what the state is known for. “The system is so corrupt, we have to fix it. If we don’t do anything, nothing will improve.”

The Idaho primaries are set for May 15 and the gubernatorial election is set for Nov. 6. So far, Jordan is running against Democrats Troy Minton and A.J. Balukoff. Republican candidates include Tommy Ahlquist, Raul Labrador, HyDee Liebelt, Brad Little and Steve Pankey. Adam Phillips, Michael Richardson and John Thomas Wiechec have also announced their candidacy for the Independent ticket.

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

The ever-present past: Caring for modern objects

BY ROBIN P. CROSKERY HOWARD
Museum Conservator

When do objects become historic? At what point are objects worthy of care? And why collect modern objects? Institutionally and individually, these are questions that the Museum’s staff contend with each day. Here is our process for answering these questions when considering modern objects.

When do objects become historic? This first question is more philosophically difficult as there is no right or wrong answer! For some, the answer lies in a certain number of years past the point of the object’s creation, such as twenty or fifty years. This lengthy period of time allows for historical perspective to shape the importance of the object. For others, the answer becomes wrapped around when the object becomes historically relevant. As many objects are tied to events, these objects could become historically relevant immediately following the event (i.e.: a fragment from the Berlin Wall during its destruction).

After a consensus has been reached on the object’s importance, the question becomes: when do objects become worthy of care? Objects become worthy of care when they are deemed important, which is a value judgement that can come from many passionate discussions about the object. The degree of importance that one person places on an object may be more or less than what another would place upon it. In that case, it becomes important to understand the intrinsic value of an object from a historic perspective.

So why collect modern objects? Simply put, modern objects will become historic either through a temporal or association measurement. By collecting objects that commemorate events as they happen, the Museum is able to record the Tribe’s history as it happens. And in collecting modern objects that will become temporally important, the Museum views the Tribe’s history through a much longer lens.

Recent acquisitions of modern objects include three T-shirts commemorating events held on different reservations and drum created by Thomas Storm, Sr. Even though they are modern, caring for these objects can be quite tricky, so it is important to factor all of these things in when making decisions on collecting objects for the Museum.

Important voices in this decision process are Tribal Members. I sat down with Quenton Cypress to discuss this topic. He is the THPO’s Community Engagement Coordinator and sits on the Museum’s Acquisition Committee. To him, collecting modern objects helps demonstrate the larger historical growth and prosperity of the Tribe. When asked about the different event T-shirts, he said that “they are events we can have because the Tribe has

modernized and adapted to the times. It shows our ability to adapt, persevere, and overcome the restrictions placed on us after many years of being moved around into different areas deemed unlivable.”

Our discussion continued in regards the modernization of the Tribe. Quenton believes that the Tribe’s adaptability – the

light. The T-shirts’ deep hues are still more likely to fade, even with the modern colorfast dyes. While the museum may display these textiles in the future, like all textiles, they will not be displayed for an extended period of time to prevent any further light damage.

Like the T-shirts, the modern drum will be displayed infrequently. The drum has small cracks and fractures throughout the wooden body and the drumhead is taut but not supple. Even in the museum’s controlled environment, cracking of the drum body could continue to occur while on display. Therefore, it will remain in custom housing in the vault to prevent and/or slow further cracking to the body of the drum.

All of these items are less than 20 years old, but nonetheless document important



Courtesy photo

One of the three newly acquired T-shirts, commemorating Halloween

modern government, gaming, and different departments – allows for Seminole culture to continue evolving. This includes exploring and expanding art in to areas such as comic book and graphic novel art and modern art on used objects, such as Wilson Bower’s skateboards.

Of the objects recently acquired, the saturated colors of the dyes in two of the T-shirts would be adversely affected by extended light exposure and will therefore remain in the vault and away from direct

moments in the Tribe’s recent history. They have been deemed important and worthy of care by the Tribe and therefore by the Museum. My job as a conservator is to facilitate both of those processes, and ensure that these objects are around for many years to come. If you would like to see ‘conservation in action’, the Museum laboratory is open for observation. Come see how we care for the ever-present past. Please call me at 863-902-1113 x 12220 or just stop by.



Courtesy photo

Cypress drum created by Thomas Storm Sr. Note the use of modern materials in the construction of the drum, including plastic webbing and nylon cords.

♦ FORT KING From page 7A

constructed by Daniel Tommie in 2016 stood strong on the edge of the hammock and didn’t lose a single piece of thatch.

The recent re-enactment was the second time this event had taken place and the first time it took place with the newly reconstructed Fort King.

Fort King is the centerpiece of the 37-acre site and dominates the landscape. The site is surrounded by dark hammocks much like it would have been in 1835.

The re-enactment and grand opening drew visitors from the area and many more from across the state and the country. Marion County, the City of Ocala, and the park officials take a great deal of pride in the park and its history. An expansive parking area made it easy to access the events via a courtesy shuttle that ran continuously. Many vendors were located near the entrance and provided books and information about the history of the site as well as the Seminole wars. Others offered academic research and information about ongoing projects throughout the state.

Pedro Zepeda demonstrated traditional dugout canoe-making for the curious. Charlie Osceola, from Big Cypress Martial Arts, conducted a hand-to-hand combat demonstration that featured Seminoles and real weapons. The only casualty was a bump on the head of Quenton Cypress. Also on display were a period settlers camp, an Army camp and a Seminole camp. A fully functioning blacksmith shop on a trailer kept visitors riveted as tent stakes

were manufactured on site. The Fort King interpretive was busy throughout the day with an informative film that ran continuously. In addition to the makeshift theater inside, there were display cases filled with site artifacts that reflected life at the fort.

The re-enacted battle began with an assault from the woods by the Seminoles. Warriors attacked with knives and rifles after they caught Thompson and Lt. Rogers outside the compound on an afternoon stroll. They were both killed trying to get back to

the fort.

True to the historical account, a few settlers made it into the fort and the gates were closed leaving Thompson, Rogers and other individuals dead in the grass outside the gates. Their bodies remained there for a period of time as those inside didn’t realize yet that they hadn’t made it back inside. When Thompson’s body was recovered it was discovered that he had 14 bullet holes in him along with a deep penetrating knife wound to the heart.



Michael James

The reconstructed fort at Fort King in Ocala.

Health

Run your way into feeling great



Beverly Bidney

Chatting all the way, Amy Yzaguirre and Amy Dimas participate in the Immokalee Jingle Jog to catch up and have a few laughs.



Li Cohen

Hollywood Boys and Girls Club members take off during Hollywood's Jingle Jog on Dec. 21.

BY LI COHEN
Staff Reporter

Jingle jogs and 5k's are not just for the holidays. While keeping that calorie count down is a great benefit to the activity, there are other less recognizable side effects that are just as, if not more, advantageous. A new year is a new chance to make some positive lifestyle changes, and the following benefits of running may be just the changes needed for a bigger and better year ahead.

Fight depression

Depression is more common than many think. Overall, the mental illness accounts for affects 6.7 percent of adults in the U.S. and 8.9 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native adults in the U.S., according to the National Institute of Mental Health. While anyone experiencing depression should consult their doctor about treatment, many studies have shown that running is just one of many forms of exercise that can help relieve the symptoms.

Relieve stress

Just as it helps fight off depression, running helps alleviate stress as well. Exercise releases a rush of endorphins that are known to help people feel happier and more relaxed. Running also provides a strong and lasting burst of energy to help people stay focused and excited about tasks they may need to do after their run.

Desk job recovery

For many adults, sitting at a desk all day is part of the job description. While this might help pay the bills, sitting for long periods of time takes large toll on bodies, especially because many people fail to sit with proper posture. Sitting all day can lead to back problems and poor circulation, among other issues. Spending at least 20 minutes a day running will help fix poor posture, reestablish good circulation and overall improve the condition of one's health.

Stay organized

Running regularly does take some scheduling, especially for those who work or go to school full-time. While it may be easier to think there is no time to run, scheduling those runs makes the rest of the day seem to flow more smoothly. For those who want to become competitive runners, training becomes a more crucial part of the week and



Beverly Bidney

Raymond Garza Jr. leads the pack at the start of Immokalee's Jingle Jog Dec. 19. The annual 5K event traversed the residential area of the reservation to the ranch and back.

requires thoughtful planning.

Boost confidence

Remember those endorphins previously discussed? They are a great confidence booster as well. Those who run regularly tend to be healthier physically, mentally and emotionally, and that increase in health radiates through confidence. Even a simple 20-minute jog can make someone feel

accomplished and confident in everything they set out to achieve.

Running is more than a workout; it's a positive lifestyle choice. It's not necessary to run marathons and be a professional athlete to reap the benefits of the activity. With just a few hours a week, anyone can become healthier and happier for the new year.

All about the mumps

SUBMITTED BY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
BROWARD COUNTY

Mumps is a contagious disease that is caused by a virus, but it can be prevented by a vaccine given routinely to children.

Before the U.S. mumps vaccination program started in 1967, mumps was a universal childhood disease, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Since the vaccine era, the number of mumps cases across the nation has decreased by more than 99 percent. However, mumps outbreaks can still occur in highly vaccinated communities in the U.S. and the Caribbean, particularly in close-contact settings such as schools, colleges and camps. Florida and the Caribbean have seen mumps cases among children and adults during 2017. Fortunately, high vaccination coverage helps to limit the size, duration and spread of mumps outbreaks.

Mumps spreads through droplets of saliva or mucus from the mouth, nose or throat when an infected person coughs or sneezes, or on items touched by a person carrying the virus. Mumps symptoms typically begin with fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness and loss of appetite. Subsequently, most people will have swelling of their salivary glands. This is what causes the puffy cheeks and a tender, swollen jaw. If untreated, mumps can

cause serious complications such as swelling of the brain (encephalitis), swelling of the tissue covering the brain and spinal cord (meningitis) and deafness.

Luckily, the disease can be prevented with the MMR vaccine, which protects against measles, mumps and rubella. The CDC recommends children get two doses of MMR vaccine, starting with the first dose at 12 to 15 months of age, and the second dose at 4 to 6 years of age. Teens and adults should also be up to date on their MMR vaccination, which is very safe and effective. The mumps component of the MMR vaccine is 88 percent effective on average when a person gets two doses and 78 percent effective on average with one dose.

Children may also get MMRV vaccine, which adds protection against varicella, commonly known as chickenpox. This vaccine is only licensed for use in children who are 12 months through 12 years of age. Other ways to prevent mumps are to wash hands often and thoroughly, to stay home when sick and to clean objects touched by a person who is ill.

For more information, contact the Seminole Health Department at 954-962-2009, the Florida Department of Health at floridahealth.gov/mumps or the CDC at cdc.gov/mumps.

Tribal First acquires American Indian Health Services

PRESS RELEASE

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. — Tribal First, a division of Alliant Specialty Insurance Services, has acquired American Indian Health Services (AIHS). The acquisition pairs Tribal First, the nation's largest tribal insurance brokerage, with one of Indian Country's leading providers of healthcare services and financing tools.

"Access to quality, affordable healthcare continues to play a significant role in Tribal First's mission as we expand our reach and service profile," said Sean McConlogue, President of Alliant Specialty Insurance Services. "AIHS is an organization that has consistently improved the lives of Native Americans nationwide by reducing healthcare costs and developing strategies that have a significant positive impact on the community."

Founded in 2005, AIHS is an American Indian-owned organization dedicated to promoting tribal sovereignty to obtain best-in-class healthcare products and services. The AIHS team is comprised of dedicated

specialists with experience identifying and addressing the distinct healthcare needs of American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes and related enterprises. This includes expertise in Indian health law, healthcare design, provider networks, and tribal and federal Indian Health Service (IHS) programs.

AIHS will provide additional strength and expertise to Tribal First's Tribal Care program, a dedicated healthcare solution that coordinates with the IHS to deliver cost-effective healthcare coverage for tribes nationwide. Tribal First provides insurance, risk management, and employee benefits consulting services to more than 400 tribal nations throughout the United States and is

a specialized program of Alliant Specialty Insurance Services, Alliant's growing MGA and program administrator.

"Our mission at AIHS is simple: to improve the lives of American Indian and Alaska Native people through the timely access to appropriate healthcare," said Brendan McKenna, President of AIHS. "Tribal First, with its reach and scale, will enable us to further this mission through the deployment of high-caliber people and products that directly address the needs of tribes and their respective communities."

McKenna and the AIHS team will join Alliant and continue to service clients from its Sammamish, Wash. location. Terms of the agreement were not disclosed.

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Chiropractic Physician
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Protect the Circle of Life

THE FLU & YOU

What is influenza (the flu)?

The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs. It can cause mild to severe illness. At times, it can lead to death.

Who should get a flu vaccine?

Everyone 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine, especially if you are at high risk for complications, or if you live with or care for someone who is high risk for complications.

Your family may be especially vulnerable to the flu.

Influenza poses a greater risk to certain people, including pregnant women, children, and elders, who are all at high risk for flu-related complications. In fact, pneumonia and flu are a leading cause of death among Native elders. The flu also can cause certain health conditions, including diabetes, asthma, and heart and lung disease, to become worse. Pneumonia and bronchitis are examples of serious flu-related complications, which can result in hospitalization and sometimes even death.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF THE FLU

People sick with influenza feel some or all of these symptoms:

- Fever* or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue (very tired)
- Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults.

*Not everyone with the flu will have a fever. You can be sick and contagious without running a temperature.

HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD OF THE FLU

- Get a flu vaccine each year.
- Stop the spread of germs, including influenza viruses:
 - ♦ Cover your coughs and sneezes
 - ♦ Wash your hands often
 - ♦ If you're sick, stay home
- Take antiviral drugs if they are prescribed for you.

Where to Get a Flu Vaccine:

- Hollywood Health Clinic
- Brighton Health Clinic
- Big Cypress Health Clinic
- Immokalee Health Clinic
- Tampa Health Clinic
- Grocery Store
- Pharmacy
- Physician's Office

PROTECT YOURSELF.
PROTECT YOUR PEOPLE.

This article was submitted by Pauline Good, ARNP, Clinical Operations Director

SEMINOLE SCENES



Winterfest Facebook

CUTLINE: Big Kenny, from the country music duo Big & Rich, joins Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola at a celebration for the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Winterfest Boat Parade in December. Big & Rich served as the parade's grand marshals.



Courtesy photo

ARTISTS AROUND: Zack "Doc" Battiest, Jessica Osceola and Spencer Battiest represent two pillars of the arts at the AIAC Nov. 3 in Big Cypress. As musicians, the Battiest brothers spend their time in front of audiences and in the studio as they create and perform music; fine artist Osceola creates her ceramic sculptures in the studio and displays them in galleries and museums.



Beverly Bidney

21st CENTURY CULTURE: While cooking enough traditional food for 400 guests at the Immokalee Christmas party Dec. 21, members of the Culture Department do some last minute shopping the modern way. Juanita Martinez, America Martinez, Susan Davis and Cecilia Garcia look at some items they want to add their lists.



Beverly Bidney

BOUNCING AROUND: Youngsters at the Immokalee Christmas party have fun with the bounce houses.



Kevin Johnson

OH, DEER: The front entrance of the Brighton Senior Center is decorated for the holiday season.



Beverly Bidney

ERASING IRMA: Debris from Hurricane Irma can still be seen in Big Cypress, but not for long. Huge piles of debris from all over the reservation were deposited in front of the old bingo hall and languished there for months. When weather conditions are ideal, the Wildland and Forestry firefighters burn the debris pile by pile and soon the evidence of the storm will disappear.



Hard Rock/Facebook

GIVING TUESDAY: Hard Rock Heals Foundation has supported several community-driven programs in 2017, including Seattle Music Partners, which received a \$5,000 donation in November. Seattle Music Partners provides youth with free music instruction and one-on-one mentoring with after-school and evening programs. "We are so grateful to be one of the Hard Rock Heals Foundation's grant recipients this year! Thanks so much to them for this wonderful Giving Tuesday gift," the Seattle program posted on its Facebook page.



Beverly Bidney

TURKEY TROT: Wild turkeys take a stroll in Big Cypress in early December, or maybe it was a victory lap after emerging from Thanksgiving unscathed.



Li Cohen

FUNDRAISING FATHERS: Preschool parents Chris Torres, left, and Sunny Frank, right, washed cars in Hollywood Dec. 1 to raise money for the Hollywood Preschool.



Kevin Johnson

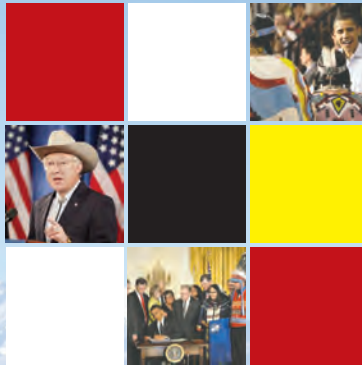
FROSTY IN BC: Snowmen under palm trees are stationed at the entrance of the Frank Billie Field Office for the holidays.



Courtesy photo

SUCCESSFUL TOY DRIVE: The Office of Emergency Management, SPD, thanks the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) who helped brighten the holiday season with contributions to the Seminole Tribe of Florida's Toy Drive for children impacted by Hurricane Irma.

NATIONAL NATIVE NEWS



Environmentalists, Native American tribes file lawsuits to block shrinkage of national monuments

SALT LAKE CITY — Environmental groups and five Native American tribes have filed two lawsuits to block the Trump administration's plan to drastically scale back two national monuments in Utah.

President Donald Trump announced the decision on Dec. 4 at the Utah State Capitol. Opponents immediately vowed to take legal action to block the changes.

On Dec. 5, a coalition of five tribes filed a complaint in D.C. District Court, arguing the president did not have the authority to undo or replace the existing Bears Ear National Monument. The tribes have long argued that the land protected by former President Barack Obama is an important part of their heritage and includes historic and culturally significant artifacts.

The team of lawyers representing the Navajo Nation, Hopi tribe and others is asking the court for an immediate injunction on the Trump decision to prohibit so that the new monuments boundaries cannot be enforced until the matter can be fully litigated.

Shaun Chapoose, a leader from the Ute tribe who is part of the coalition, said at a press conference Dec. 4 the announcement was a line in the sand.

"We gathered as sovereign tribes and put aside our differences to benefit not just us, but the citizens of the United States. So, with that same mentality, we'll do the same to protect it. And if they think we're not prepared to protect it, they're kidding themselves," Chapoose said.

In a second lawsuit, environmental and conservation groups, including the Sierra Club, Natural Resources Defense Council and The Wilderness Society, formally sued the administration for its plans to reduce the size of a second national monument: Utah's Grand Staircase-Escalante.

Both lawsuits said the president doesn't actually have the legal authority to make the changes he announced this week.

Trump authorized a review of national monuments designated under the Antiquities Act in an executive order signed in April. The Antiquities Act was enacted in 1906 and gives the president the power to create national monuments, but there has been some disagreement over whether the act gives the president the authority to eliminate them.

The Congressional Research Service wrote a report on this issue in 2016 that found that while the Antiquities Act doesn't specifically grant the president the power to shrink or eliminate monuments, it does say that monument size "shall be confined to the smallest area compatible with the proper care and management of the objects to be protected," which could be used to justify making the monument smaller.

Trump said Dec. 4 that previous administrations abused the act by designating monuments that were too big and gave too much power to the federal government. When he signed the order initiating the review, he called them a "massive federal land grab."

"Previous administrations have ignored the standard and use the law to lock up hundreds of millions of acres of land and water under strict government control. These abuses of the Antiquities Act give enormous power to faraway bureaucrats at the expense of the people who actually live here, work here and make this place their home," Trump said in his remarks at the Utah State Capitol.

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said the land will still be federal land managed by the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management. But Republicans on the House Committee on Natural Resources introduced a bill Dec. 4 that would establish co-management of the entire area that is no longer part of the monuments between Native American groups and elected officials. The bill's co-sponsors, who are all Republicans from Utah, said on a call with reporters Tuesday that the legislation will create specific protections around the land that is no longer part of the monument, and they hope it will make the lawsuits irrelevant.

In response to a question about the new legislation, Ethel Branch, attorney general for the Navajo Nation replied, "Then why they are so insistent on the president messing with the original proclamation?"

"Why don't they just honor the existing lawful proclamation instead of doing whatever it is they are trying to do here?"

Rep. Chris Stewart, R-Utah, also said on the call that they will propose creating a national park on the land called Grand Escalante Canyon National Park and will move to transfer Hole in the Rock Road, which is a historic location for the Mormon community in Utah, back to the state's control.

Big names such as Patagonia are also getting involved. Patagonia's website featured a page that read "The President Stole Your Land" with information about the president's decision and a call to help groups that are suing the administration.

But Zinke said on a call with reporters Tuesday that no land has been transferred out of federal control and that special interests were using the announcement to raise money.

"The argument that somehow President Trump stole land is nefarious, false and a lie," Zinke said.

One of the concerns cited by those who want the monuments to stay as they are is that revoking the monument status will allow companies to begin mining the land for oil, gas or uranium.

"The Trump administration has declared 'open season' on places Americans hold dear so that profit-seekers can drill, mine and log our public lands for private gain. By making commercial exploitation of these national treasures the top priority, this administration betrays the history of these sacred places, as well as their value as places for people to enjoy the outdoors and for wildlife to thrive," Wilderness Society President Jamie Williams said in a statement.

The bill would also protect the land from mining, Republican Rep. John Curtis of Utah said on a call with reporters, as well as require a law enforcement presence and a unit specifically to protect the antiquities and historical sites on the land.

An Interior Department official said that there has not been any interest in mining on land that was part of the monuments. The Bureau of Land Management announced last week that there will be an auction in March to allow oil and gas permits in other parts of San Juan County, where the monuments are, and a neighboring county. Local political leaders cited harm to the mining industry as a reason the monuments should be made smaller in a comment posted on the review in May.

A hearing has not yet been scheduled in either of the lawsuits.

- My Central Oregon

Human skull found during Northern California traffic stop belongs to Native American

ANGELS CAMP — Authorities say a human skull found last month in the trunk of a car during a Northern California traffic stop belongs to a Native American that was dug up from a construction site.

The Stockton Record reported Dec. 5 that officials determined the skull was that of a Native American but experts are still trying to determine its age and whether it was extracted from a Native American burial site.

Deborah Grimes, a member of the Calaveras Band of Mi-Wuk Indians, says she went to the site and though she did not find additional human remains, she located tools used by the land's original inhabitants.

Angels Camp police officers on Nov. 22 pulled over 41-year-old Joshua Davis of Murphys for failing to halt at a stop-sign. They found methamphetamine behind the fuel door and the skull in the trunk.

- The Mercury News

Couple seeking to adopt Native American child balks at Indian Child Welfare Law

Whether the Indian Child Welfare Act applies to a young girl is at the center of a legal custody fight playing out in Hennepin County.

The ICWA is supposed to help Native American children find foster families in Native American Communities. But there aren't enough qualified foster homes for some of the 2,000 foster children who need them.

That's why Jason and Danielle Clifford signed up. The couple said they heard Hennepin County social services' call for help at their church, in which the agency said it needed more foster families urgently.

The Cliffords said they fell in the love with the little girl who came to live with them a year-and-a-half ago, whom KSTP is identifying as "P" at their request. The foster care system's privacy policies protect the identities of children in the system.

The Cliffords said the county had given them reason to believe their adoption of the child would be approved. But 11 months ago, the White Earth Ojibwe tribe intervened, invoking the spirit of the ICWA that attempts to prevent Native American children from being separated from family or extended family.

The Cliffords said they couldn't understand why, because the county had said the child is not eligible for membership in any Indian tribe and the Indian Child Welfare Act doesn't apply.

The Cliffords said the White Earth Tribe wanted the maternal grandmother to adopt.

A county lawyer told a family court judge that P's biological grandmother, Robyn Bradshaw, didn't qualify as a foster parent because of her criminal history. But Bradshaw's lawyer Ron Walters said

his client's record had been expunged. Bradshaw would not speak on camera, but Walters sent this statement:

"Ms. Bradshaw appreciates the difficult situation the foster parents are facing in this matter. Ms. Bradshaw also believes, however, that her granddaughter's long term best interests are best served by a permanent placement that preserves her connection to her family and her tribe."

P is Native American and African-American. "We were told she'd been neglected severely. We were told she had witnessed a lot of violence," Danielle Clifford said.

Documents show Hennepin County terminated the rights of the child's biological parents because of criminal incarcerations and her mother's drug addiction. The Cliffords said the county told them they would be the best parents for the little girl, and that they'd be able to adopt her.

Pictures of the young child are all over the Cliffords' home. Jason Clifford said his foster daughter helped him put up Christmas lights inside the house. The third stocking on their fireplace represents the answer to the prayer for the gift they'd always wanted. They remember when they first met P.

She was "sweet, obviously smart, who has been through a lot and needs someone to give her consistency and love her," Danielle Clifford said.

The Cliffords said that in the last year-and-a-half, P went from a shy, disconnected little girl to a happy, social child who has lots of friends, is exceeding her reading level, is a Girl Scout and in ballet class.

"We were on the fast track to adopt her," the Cliffords said. Now, they are hoping a court decides in their favor.

The Cliffords said the Guardian Ad Litem, P's official advocate in court, believes that P should stay with the Cliffords and have contact with her biological family.

The Cliffords said they are determined to keep fighting for their foster daughter. The case will be back in court on Jan. 16.

- KSTP

Osage Nation rolls out eWIC to replace paper vouchers

PAWHUSKA, OKLA. — Osage Nation Women, Infants and Children (WIC), a maternal and child health nutrition program, is now offering its families a new way to shop for WIC food benefits using an EBT (electronic benefit transfer) card. After a quick set-up, new and current recipients can begin using their cards immediately.

"The EBT card has all the products and services the participant is supposed to receive and they can take that card to the grocery store immediately and purchase the products they have been approved for and swipe to pay instead of paying with a paper voucher," said Scott Hilboldt, Project Manager for CDP.

The EBT process is easier to use and the participant does not have to purchase all approved products at once, they can get just the products they need when they need them. And, if they have an issue with their products or checking their balance, they don't have to make a trip to the WIC clinic to have it addressed, participants and their proxies can call and have it taken care of in real-time.

"To see it come to fruition is like a dream come true," said Osage WIC Director Manon Taylor who became the director a couple years after initial eWIC (electronic WIC) planning started. "So many people have been involved. We have done months of training with our staff. It's been ongoing and we are at the point where [all the WIC staff] feels comfortable. It's not only going to benefit our management of WIC resources and benefits but more importantly, it is going to benefit the client and alleviate some of the stigma associated with standing at the checkout with paper vouchers."

Participants currently use paper vouchers to buy healthy WIC foods. Now, with the new eWIC card, shopping will be easier and WIC families will be able to better track their monthly food balance. The new system also allows for better tracking of purchase trends for Osage WIC staff.

"With the tracking mechanisms, we can track, by product, what people are buying, [and] trends, like what time of day people are shopping the most and which stores they are shopping at the most. It helps with cost-containment. An integral part of the federal regulations for WIC is to provide cost-containment measures," said Taylor about new data the eWIC card provides. "We always strive to keep costs low per participant while delivering the best nutritional value that we can."

Osage Nation WIC provides services at six clinic sites throughout the Osage Reservation or Osage County and serves approximately 2,930 low-income pregnant women, infants, and children under age five. Monthly, Osage WIC families shop at more than thirty-two grocery stores and have a 2018 base grant of \$1,960,374 for direct services food delivery. Nationally, WIC has been offering participant-centered nutrition education, healthy food, and breastfeeding

support and has been serving as a gateway for preventative health for more than forty years. It is considered one of the most successful, cost-effective and nutrition intervention programs in the U.S.

- Native News Online

Kateri Residence in Minneapolis, haven for Native American women struggling with drug addiction, to close after 44 years

The Kateri Residence, a temporary home for American Indian women recovering from drug addiction, is closing its doors after 44 years.

Citing financial pressures, St. Stephen's Human Services, which operates the south Minneapolis home, said it has stopped taking new residents and will permanently shut its doors by July 2018, as staff works to help the current residents find permanent housing in the community, according to an online announcement. The home has a capacity to house 12 women, but currently has fewer than 10 residents.

"Our first focus will be working with those families to make sure they will have as smooth a transition as possible, because these are families that have been through a ton of trauma," said Gail Dorfman, executive director of St. Stephen's.

The two-story brick residence, located in Minneapolis' Phillips neighborhood, has long been a fixture in the American Indian community in the Twin Cities.

The decision comes as local officials report an alarming increase in overdose-related emergency calls, both citywide and in the neighborhoods surrounding Little Earth — long the heart of Minneapolis' American Indian population. Through the first week of December, Minneapolis police responded to 32 overdose-related 911 calls in the neighborhoods around Little Earth, twice the average number for the previous five years.

Dr. Kari Rabie, chief medical officer at the Native American Community Clinic in south Minneapolis, said Kateri had become more vital in recent years, as the opioid epidemic intensified.

"Losing any transitional housing at this point — amid a major drug epidemic — is a really big deal," she said.

Minnesota has one of the widest disparities in the nation in the rates of overdose deaths between American Indians and whites. Statewide, Indians were six times more likely to die of a drug overdose last year than white residents, according to Minnesota Department of Health data.

James Cross, founder of Natives Against Heroin, a 12,000 member group based in Minneapolis that advocates for sobriety, said that over the years he has referred dozens of women to the Kateri Residence, and has watched as many have returned to stable lives. Without such a program, he said, many of these women would have ended up homeless and cut off from drug treatment services.

"This is a very big deal in our community," said Cross, who is Anishinaabe and Dakota. "Unless we can find an alternative shelter soon, more of our Native sisters will end up on the streets or living under bridges."

In addition to providing temporary housing, the program has helped hundreds of young women find jobs, health care and support for recovering from drug addiction. The home was known for blending traditional treatment methods with a focus on Indian culture and spirituality, through such practices as talking circles, community feasts and meditation.

The Kateri Residence gave priority to young Indian women who are pregnant and have small children, or who recently have been released from prison.

Dorfman said the home had struggled financially for the past decade, as its focus on transitional housing fell out of favor with government programs. In an effort to combat homelessness, state and local agencies have shifted more of their funding toward programs that provide permanent housing.

- Star Tribune

Addison nonprofit behind PBS film highlighting dietary, health issues of Native Americans

Addison-based Partnership With Native Americans has collaborated with Front Page Productions to create a documentary about dietary and health issues faced by Native American communities.

The documentary, which is airing on Public Broadcasting System stations across the nation, is hosted by renowned actor James Earl Jones. It takes a look at how "Indian Country" is returning to healthy, ancestral diets to combat food insecurity and health issues.

According to PWNA, 23 percent of Native American families experience low

food security because remote reservations have few supermarkets or access to fresh vegetables, fruits, and whole foods.

Lack of access to such foods contributes to Native Americans having the highest diabetes rate in the country, the release said.

In the documentary, native chef Lois Ellen Frank; Daniel Vega, director of the Pascua Yaqui Tribe Department of Language and Culture; and Rafael Tapia Jr., PWNA vice president of programs, talk about the Native American Food Movement and its efforts in addressing food insecurity.

"Healthy food choices are in abundance for most Americans, but that's not always the case for our Native American citizens," Tapia said in the release. "This documentary captures the reality of food deserts and how traditional knowledge and local ingredients can reduce the shortage of healthy foods and dietary deficiencies, for sustained health and wellness."

Addison-based PWNA said it tackles the issue of food insecurity through healthy food access, nutrition training, garden support, and garden training.

For example, the Huyapo Bwaa'ame ancestral garden project was created two years ago in the partnership with the Pascua Yaqui tribe in Tucson, Arizona, to engage that community and reinforce the importance of incorporating tribal knowledge and culture into solutions for healthier living.

"The goal is to provide a better understanding of ancestral foods and their holistic spiritual, mental, physical, and emotional impact, as well as the connection of the land to the people and the people to the land," Vega said in the release. "From the harvest to youth engagement, the ancestral garden continues to impact our community."

Founded in 1990, PWNA is a nonprofit committed to championing a brighter future for Native Americans living on remote, geographically isolated, and often impoverished reservations.

- Dallas Innovates

MGM Resorts wants to intervene in suit over 3rd-casino gaming amendments

MGM Resorts International is seeking to intervene on the side of the U.S. Department of the Interior in the lawsuit the State of Connecticut and the Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan tribes lodged last month against the department.

The suit, filed in federal court in Washington, D.C., seeks to compel the Interior Department to act on gaming-agreement amendments Gov. Dannel P. Malloy signed with each of the tribes. State authorization of the tribes' East Windsor casino project is contingent on the Interior approvals.

In a court filing Dec. 26, attorneys for MGM Resorts say the Las Vegas-based casino operator should be allowed to intervene in the suit because its business interests are at stake.

"MGM seeks intervention because its ability to do business in Connecticut is directly implicated by the amendments and the relief Plaintiffs seek," the filing says. "MGM has interests in Connecticut, both as developer of a proposed casino in Bridgeport and as operator of MGM Springfield, a casino north of the Massachusetts-Connecticut border, scheduled to open in 2018."

It was the Springfield project that prompted the tribes — respective owners of Foxwoods Resort Casino and Mohegan Sun — to launch a joint bid for a third Connecticut casino on nontribal land. The East Windsor casino site is off Interstate 91 about 12 miles south of Springfield, Mass.

MGM Resorts argues that it meets all legal requirements for intervenor status, noting that the Interior Department wouldn't represent "MGM's private, competitive interests because those interests differ from Interior's institutional interests as a federal agency charged with representing the public and with carrying out the United States' trust obligations to Indian tribes."

The state and the tribes are opposed to MGM Resorts' motion to intervene, according to the filing. The Interior Department has taken no position on it.

In a memorandum accompanying the filing, MGM's attorneys write that approval of the gaming amendments would cause their client injury by granting the tribes "the exclusive right" to operate the East Windsor casino as well as "new commercial casinos without eliminating the State's right to collect hundreds of millions in annual royalties from Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun — putting MGM's Bridgeport proposal (and others) at a disadvantage ..."

Under the tribes' exclusive gaming agreements, Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun pay the state 25 percent of their slot-machine revenues. In addition, the East Windsor casino would pay the state 25 percent of all of its gaming revenues.

- The Day



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Education



Ahfachkee School plans expansion

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — The Ahfachkee School will undergo a massive expansion next year with the addition of a new middle and high school building. The two-story 30,000-square foot structure will be built on the site formerly home to a cluster of portable classrooms west of the school's existing classroom building.

Council approved the expansion Dec. 14 and hired Pirtle Construction, a firm that specializes in school construction, for the job. The expansion will be done in two phases beginning in Feb. 2018. The first phase will be the new building; the second is the renovation of the existing classroom buildings the following year.

"The Ahfachkee School is like a tool to help educate your community," said Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger. "I'm emphasizing school so when students graduate, they can go beyond that to help the community. I'm hoping this is just the beginning. If you have the right school and teaching, anyone can be successful."

Construction on the middle and high school building should take 11 months. It will contain a new cafeteria, an art studio



and a media center with a large computer area. Four high school and three middle school classrooms are on the second floor along with labs including science, bio med, MakerBot 3-D printing, media and TV production.

The school is designed for the 21st

Century learning curriculum, which emphasizes group projects guided by teachers in which students work and learn together. The objective of 21st Century learning is to prepare students to be active, successful and contributing members of society. Experts believe collaboration,

digital literacy, critical thinking and problem solving are skills every student needs.

Ahfachkee's new layout includes spacious indoor areas outside of the classrooms for collaborative work. An abundance of large windows will bring in natural light and interior glass walls in the

classrooms will make the school cheerful and bright. Additionally, it will allow teachers to observe students in the collaboration areas.

Principal Dorothy Cain believes the new building design will benefit the students by engaging them as they learn. Cain recently met with the Bureau of Indian Education at the school.

"Many of the BIE's new schools have those collaborative areas," Cain said. "They were pleased to see our school will also have those areas and are with us 100 percent."

After the new building is complete, the existing building will be renovated and include the administration office and pre-kindergarten through fifth-grade classrooms. The primary grades, K-5, will also have collaboration areas. The existing science classroom building will be repurposed for the Culture Department. Culture's chickens and gardens will remain where they are.

Project manager Fred Barrios anticipates the entire project will be complete by October 2019.

"It's going to look beautiful," said Barrios, of the Construction Management Department. "Council is excited, everyone is excited."

Hollywood celebrates Tribal Career Development graduates

BY LI COHEN
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Families and friends gathered Dec. 7 at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino to celebrate Andrew Henry and Sheree Sneed graduating from phase one of the Tribal Career Development program.

The TCD program was created to get more Tribal members work experience and obtain positions with Seminole casinos. Divided into five phases, TCD aims toward securing executive leadership positions for participants. In phase one — which can take up to three years depending on prior experience — participants spend up to 12 weeks in each department of a Seminole casino property as paid interns. Participants can go to any Seminole casino property of their choosing and can choose to follow a general curriculum or get a custom plan that tailors more to their career interests.

Ervina Capricien, TCD director, said completing the program takes a lot of hard work, dedication and perseverance.

"This is going to be one of the easiest jobs in the world but it's also going to be one of the hardest jobs in the world. Whatever you put into this is what you're going to get out of it," Capricien said. "If you're here and you're learning and working and not giving anybody a hard time, then you're going to make it."

Henry agreed.

"This hasn't been as easy as I thought," he said during the graduation party. "I'd be lying if I said I told you I never looked at the door while going through the program and just thought about walking out."

For Sneed, taking part in the program involved moving her three young children — the youngest is in preschool — to Tampa. She said balancing being a single mom with her work schedule was difficult, especially because the schedule changes every time she moved departments. Despite this, along with dealing with multiple deaths in her family, she said completing phase one of the program at the Tampa Hard Rock helped her grow.

"I feel that I have to work just 10-times harder just to show them [my kids] that it's not easy, but if you keep going it will be worth it," she said, explaining that throughout the program, there were times she had to work



Li Cohen

Andrew Henry, left, and Sheree Sneed, right, celebrate their phase one completion in the Tribal Career Development Program Dec. 7 at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Hollywood. Ervina Capricien, director of the program, seen in back, presented their awards.

overnight and early in the morning. "My kids are my number one inspiration."

In phase two, participants obtain supervisory roles for one year. They can choose to enter a supervisory role for up to four departments, each lasting three months. If there is no open position in the department they want, TCD will help create a position for them. Henry plans to pursue a supervisory role in poker and Sneed is pursuing slots and marketing in Brighton.

Edward Aguilar Sr., assistant director of Immokalee casino operations, said that seeing people like Henry and Sneed doing what they need to do to serve the community is great.

"Coming here tonight and seeing the future of the Tribe really brings what we do in our industry with the program to our people," he said. "The future of the Tribe and the future of everything we do SGA [Seminole Gaming Association] and HRI [Hard Rock International] related is so strong."

The rest of the phases include gradually moving up and taking on more projects with

higher leadership. Unlike other internships or jobs, Capricien said that this program allows people to connect and get to know many of the leaders at the hotels and casinos, many of whom obtained their positions by working from the ground-up as well.

"We know who they are and they know who we are. There are not a lot of interns that would receive that face time. Most of them will only see a photo of the CEO on the wall and that's how they know them," she explained. "But here Mr. Allen knows our name, knows us by sight and what we're going to do in the program."

Getting to know these leaders, as well as other people who have gone through the program, is an invaluable experience, according to Henry.

"You meet some good people who have been here for years and how the company has changed their lives and how appreciative they are of the Seminole Hard Rock," he said. "You realize what a good company you work for."

To participate in the program, enrolled Seminole Tribal members must be 18 years or older, have a high school diploma or GED and clear background and drug tests. People can join the program at any time; currently there are approximately 14 participants.

While the program ensures Tribal members will have a secure career with the casinos, Capricien said that the program should come second to higher education if that is an option. For those who are unsure about a career in gaming or hospitality, she encourages participation in TCD because it will provide valuable insight on the Seminole business.

"This is a real growth time for the company, not just the property here [Hollywood] with the expansion, but across the Tampa property, Immokalee, Coconut — all these properties are expanding and we really need good talent," said Auggie Cipollini, president of Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino Hollywood. "Programs like this are just absolutely terrific to just try to get homegrown talent and train them and develop them to look at them as future leaders in this community."

FGCU Panther Posse aims to save endangered species through education

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

FORT MYERS — With only 120 to 230 adult Florida panthers left in the wild, the species needs all the help it can get. Education could be the key to their survival and Florida Gulf Coast University's Wings of Hope program has stepped up.

Since 2000, its Panther Posse has taught more than 5,500 fourth and fifth grader students annually about panthers and other species that rely on a healthy Florida habitat. The program requires the young scholars to spread the information they learn to at least two family members, increasing the reach of the program by about 12,000 people.

"They will be the voice of these animals into the future," said program founder and director Ricky Pires.

An additional part of the Panther Posse program is a presentation by Bryce Osceola, who discusses the culture and history of the Tribe.

"People need to know about the ancient culture that is still here," said Osceola, an FGCU senior.

About 100 students from Vineyards Elementary in Naples participated in the program Dec. 5, which is part of FGCU's environmental humanities curriculum. University students and volunteers teach the science-based Panther Posse and introduce students to native wildlife and their habitats.

Students moved through four stations for hands-on activities in which they learned about the natural history of the panther and its kittens, how to recognize tracks, black bears and other "umbrella" species who share the habitat, panther research and water conservation. Slides, videos, notebooks

and interactive activities kept the students engaged.

Students learned how to co-exist with wildlife, including black bears, by taking simple steps such as taking out the household garbage on the morning of pickup instead of leaving it out all night for bears to find and ransack.

"The program increases awareness of the panthers," said Vineyards fifth grade teacher Nicole Burton. "Students have to teach their parents and have them fill out a survey, so it's about educating not just themselves. This is the best program, they are so engaged."

Students learned panthers sometimes kill each other over territory and food and that some are better mothers than others. Sometimes a mother panther will abandon her cub if food is scarce, but usually they remain together for about 18 months.

Osceola got involved with the Panther Posse in 2015 after the state approved a legal bear hunt. She contacted Pires and offered to teach about Seminole culture.

"This [the Panther Posse] gives kids a new perspective of how to look at nature and develop a healthy relationship with the natural world," said Osceola. "When the bear hunt happened, members of the bear clan protested."

Osceola's presentation was the last of the day. She asked if anyone had cousins and of course they all raised their hands, which led Osceola to explain clans and the matriarchy of the Tribe. She also told them about the Tribe's relation to nature.

"The Seminole Tribe believes plants and animals have equal rights as humans," she said. "We all need a home and food. Animals are our friends and we have a lot of respect for their space."



Li Cohen

Andrew Henry, right, celebrates his achievement with his wife Torie and daughter Jordyn.



Beverly Bidney

Bryce Osceola gives a presentation about Seminole culture and history Dec. 5 to a group of fourth and fifth graders at Florida Gulf Coast University's Panther Posse.

Hollywood Preschool rings in Christmas

BY LI COHEN
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Hollywood preschoolers rang in the holiday season Dec. 21 with their annual Christmas show.

Donning their holiday attire and Christmas cheer, a few dozen three- and four-year-olds showed family and friends what the season is all about. They performed renditions of “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star,” “I Want to be An Elf,” “All I Want for Christmas,” “Rockin’ Around the Christmas Tree,” and “Jesus Loves Me,” as well as few poems. They ended their performance with a reenactment of the Nativity Scene.

“Just watching all these kids, you guys should be proud of yourselves. These kids are doing an amazing job today,” Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola said to parents watching the show. He added that his favorite part of the season has yet to come.

“I think they know Christmas is right around the corner; you can see it in how excited they are. What makes me excited is when you watch your kids open those presents and seeing how happy they get. It just brings a smile to my face.”

In between each of the acts was a cheer-filled video. Many of the clips were scenes from “A Charlie Brown Christmas” while others revealed footage from the play practices and warm wishes from Tribal elders.

Ending the celebration was a surprise visit from Santa. After sitting on Santa’s lap and taking a quick photo, each preschooler received their first gift of Christmas before heading to the catered lunch.



Li Cohen (3)

Above, preschoolers Dalina Rodriguez, Aislinn Osceola, Caden Jumper, Ella Forbes and Sincere Fairclough reenact the famous Nativity scene during the Hollywood Preschool Christmas Show. Right, four-year-olds Morgan Frank, Lola Cypress and Emmett Williams perform “I want to be an Elf,” donning matching elf hats and special holiday Tribal attire. Left, Santa surprises guests at the show and gives a warm hug to Delsin and Albert Brooks.



Tomie Motlow graduates FSU, continues education

BY LI COHEN
Staff Reporter

Tomie Motlow, Councilman Chris Osceola’s executive assistant, has spent the last few years dedicated to higher education. Already having earned a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice from Penn State in December 2015, she recently earned a crime scene investigations (CSI) minor and her second bachelor’s degree from Florida State University, this time in law enforcement operations.

Her most recent accomplishment took two years to complete through FSU’s online program, through which she earned a 3.5 GPA and graduated cum laude. Along with completing a full-time course load, which included classes such as ethics in policing and intelligence, evidential reasoning, and homeland security, she also spent a year as a background investigator at the Seminole Police Department. In addition, she spent two weeks completing lab and field work with other students in the program at FSU. During these labs, she worked with peers to investigate crime scene simulations, reconstructed bullets, learned forensic photography and even witnessed an up-close autopsy in a local morgue.

Ultimately, Motlow’s goal is to work in forensics or a CSI unit. While the Tribe does not have a traditional CSI team, SPD does have a Criminal Investigation Unit (CIU), which is led by detectives to investigate crimes involving financial, technological and organized crimes against Tribal people and properties.

“It’s so interesting to me,” she said, explaining that her fascination for the field sparked from crime television shows. “When ‘America’s Most Wanted’ came on in the ‘80s, I was glued to the TV. I had to find the crime and find out who the killer was. Ever since then, I’ve always wanted to know how

to solve this and that.”

Pursuing this field and getting her degree online was not easy. The mom of two children — aged 20 and 10 — said that balancing work, school and parenthood was not easy. After she got her GED when she was 16 or 17, Motlow tried pursuing an associate’s degree, but dropped out of college two credits shy of completion. It wasn’t until 2013 that she decided to focus on pursuing her career at Penn State.

“It’s not easy. I’ve done all my bachelor’s degrees online and you have to be really self-motivated,” she said. “If you don’t get it done, they [the professors] don’t care; you’ll get an F.”

As the first person in her family to graduate college, she wants to continue on her educational journey. Motlow is enrolled at FSU for yet another degree, this time for an MBA, which she started at the beginning of January. Once she gets her MBA, which she predicts will take two years, Motlow plans to pursue another bachelor’s degree in biology, as most forensic positions require a general science degree, such as biology or chemistry.

To those who think they cannot return



Courtesy photo/Grad Images

Tomie Motlow graduated from her online law enforcement operations program at FSU. She plans to continue her education in January and pursue an MBA.

to school, Motlow says they just have to push themselves, especially mothers and single parents, because there is no lesson as valuable as an education.

“Mothers and single parents, it’s not hard [to pursue higher education]. You just have to push yourself. Sometimes you have to put yourself first,” she said, explaining how she completes her homework at night once her son goes to bed. “Everybody thinks, ‘I can’t do it because I have kids.’ You can find time. Even if you’re doing it late at night, you can still do it. ... It’s a sense of accomplishment and pride you can give yourself.”

Senate passes Esther Martinez Native Languages Preservation Act

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

The Esther Martinez Native Languages Preservation Act, which supports Native American language immersion programs, language survival schools and language restoration programs, was signed into law in 2006 but requires reauthorization by Congress every six years.

The Senate passed the bill unanimously Nov. 29 and sent it to the House of Representatives for a vote. Once both houses of Congress approve it, the Act will be in place until 2023.

According to the National Indian Education Association, monetary grants provided by the law have empowered Native communities to establish immersion programs that are successfully revitalizing Native languages. One of NIEA’s priorities is preserving language and culture, which goes to the heart of Native identity.

Marcus Briggs-Cloud, who runs the Creek language enrichment program in

Brighton, lobbied for the bill in 2006 and in 2011 on behalf of the National Alliance to Save Native Languages and Cultural Survival.

“The grants are most important because immersions programs, above any other methodology, are most effective at generating fluent speakers,” Briggs-Cloud said. “There are immersion programs that we want to see succeed because we draw strength and encouragement from one another in this journey to perpetuate our languages. When Esther Martinez grants aid these other programs, we feel that positive energy.”

The Creek language enrichment program, located in a portable at Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School in Brighton, opened in 2015 with 10 non-verbal babies who learned the language through everyday conversation with teachers, elders and each other. There are 13 in the program today, all of whom are fluent for their age.

“Our kids are talking outside of the program,” Briggs-Cloud said. “When they see these elders in the community, they

speak to them in the language. It comes very naturally because they are first language speakers.”

The goal of the program is to revitalize the language and create fluent speakers. Since real fluency depends on using the language at home, parents are required to participate in the program and attend a weekly adult language class, use words and commands at home and take their child to see an elder speaker once a week.

“All you have to do is speak and speak to the children and they will catch on,” Jennie Shore said in October, when she was named NIEA Elder of the Year for her work in the immersion program. “I want people to learn the language. Whatever I know, I’m willing to share.”

Although PECS curriculum includes daily language classes, Briggs-Cloud believes it takes a lot more to become fluent.

“We all learned to be fluent because we were immersed in language,” Briggs-Cloud said. “Language programs should set goals and there should be only one; fluency.”

PECS November Students of the Month



PECS Elementary

Makai Newkirk
Nevaeh Johns
Bentley Osceola
Macayden Sarding
Juan Solis-Howard
Jon Jones
Koty Gopher-Turtle
Caysie Platt
Karter Puente
Dyani Kayda
Daliyah Nunez
Layda Choquette
Jeremy Urbina

Devon Mitchell

Bailey Bowers
Alyssa Madrigal
Jayleigh Braswell
Aaryn King
Merlelaysia Billie
Yauvani Beltran
Jordan Johnson
Ringo Billie

PECS Middle

Keiyana Osceola
Pearcetin Trammell
Leilani Burton



Hollywood kids show holiday spirit



Courtesy photo
THIS GRINCHMAS: Kids at the Hollywood Boys and Girls Club spent this Christmas giving the Grinch his heart on Dec. 1, as they celebrated their Grinchmas Party.



Li Cohen
SANTA BABY: The Hollywood Preschool Ugly Sweater Party wasn't just for the preschoolers and teachers; the infants got to take part in the fun with their Santa costumes.



Li Cohen
JOY TO THE WORLD: Hollywood preschoolers sang their hearts out at the school's Ugly Sweater Party in December, performing a medley of Christmas songs to their parents and guests.



Courtesy Photo
ALL WRAPPED UP: Ryland Fuentes got wrapped up in green streamers during the Hollywood Boys and Girls Club's Grinchmas celebration Dec. 1.

Christmas fun in Fort Myers



Beverly Bidney (2)
Above, Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. and his family pose together at HeadPinz Entertainment Center in Fort Myers on Dec. 12 during an evening of fun, food and fellowship at the Chairman's tribalwide Christmas party. Below, kids and adults alike try their hand at some of the many games and activities at HeadPinz.



Avery Miller participates in Brandon Academy program about respect

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

BRANDON — The Tribe's Avery Miller enlightened an audience at Brandon Academy's open house on Nov. 9. Avery and her 4th grade classmates discussed the character trait "RESPECT" and provided examples of what the trait is and is not.

Avery's line was "'P' stands for property, make sure when you borrow something from someone you return it in better condition than what you received it in." Although the lines were not lengthy, Avery had great command of her voice and had great stage presence. Additionally, Avery is an exceptional student who has a current 4.0 grade point average.



Courtesy photo
Avery Miller holds up the letter P as part of a performance about respect at Brandon Academy.

Christmas celebration for seniors tribalwide



Beverly Bidney
Linda Beletso exudes the Christmas spirit at the tribalwide seniors Christmas luncheon Dec. 7 in Immokalee.



Beverly Bidney
Wanda Bowers, center, is flanked by Paul and Charlotte Bowers at the seniors Christmas party held at the casino in Immokalee.



Beverly Bidney
Ruggy Jumper celebrates as he wins the largest bingo game of the day at the seniors Christmas party in Immokalee.

Happy Holidays



Kevin Johnson
A visit with Santa means nap time for Lily Reese, 5 months, at the Trail Christmas party Dec. 15 at the Miccosukee Sports & Entertainment Dome.



Beverly Bidney
Afhachkee students dressed as presents bring joy to the Big Cypress Christmas celebration Dec. 15 during the school's annual Christmas performance.



Beverly Bidney
Mariah Robbins secures a festive strand of lights necklace around her grandmother Mary Robbins' neck at the BC Christmas party.



Beverly Bidney
Michael, Nickolai and Michaela Shaffer enjoy Immokalee's Christmas party.



Kevin Johnson
From left, Armani Torres, Akol Billie, Chris Torres, Rhys Billie and S. Kimble attend Trail's Christmas party Dec. 15.



Kevin Johnson
From left, Trail Council liaison Norman Huggins, Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr., Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Kailani Osceola and Hollywood Board Rep. Gordon Wareham gather in front of the Christmas tree during the Trail Christmas party Dec. 15 at the Miccosukee Sports & Entertainment Dome.



Kevin Johnson
Yaya Beltran, left, and Jalene Smith enjoy a fast fair ride at the Brighton Christmas party Dec. 14.



Kevin Johnson
From left, Paige Ramos, David Ramos and Maddie Ramos show the toys they received at the Trail Christmas party.



Kevin Johnson
The top three finishers in the adult women's ugly sweater contest at the Brighton Christmas party are, from left, Jaryaca Baker (3rd place), Pamela Snell (2nd) and Kay Braswell (1st).



Kevin Johnson
Boogie Johns, left, and Maranda Jade show their holiday spirit during the Brighton Christmas party.



Kevin Johnson
JoJo Hernandez, left, and Charity Jones enjoy their day at the fairgrounds during the Brighton Christmas party.



Beverly Bidney
Aniya Gore, 16, Abby Tigertail, 15, and Leilani Gopher, 15, strike a pose in the photo booth at the BC Christmas party and carnival.



Kevin Johnson
The Tom Jackson Band, featuring Tom Jackson, performs as the headline attraction at the Trail Christmas party. Other entertainment included the Female Marching Band and Rony the Juggler.



Beverly Bidney
Amasiah Billie, 3, gives his uncle Alfred Billie a big hug at the Big Cypress Christmas party Dec. 15.



Kevin Johnson
After getting a face-painting, Onnie Cypress, left, and Ianna Cypress get ready to move on to another youth activity at the Brighton Christmas party.



Kevin Johnson
Sadriylonn Tiger, left, and Mae'anna Osceola-Hart enjoy Trail's Christmas party.



Carlos Menendez
Zach "Doc" Battiest and Taboo, from the Black Eyed Peas, entertain the audience during the Hollywood Reservation's Christmas party Dec. 16 at Hard Rock Live. Spencer Battiest also performed.



Li Cohen
Derrick Timothy Jr. takes a break from the holiday festivities at the Fort Pierce Christmas party to hang out with Santa Claus.



Beverly Bidney
Ja'Dayah Gustave, Nayeli Mariscal and Melani Garza bring a twinkle into Santa's eye at the Immokalee Christmas celebration.



Carlos Menendez
Santa proves to be a popular fellow during Hollywood's Christmas party.



Beverly Bidney
Karma Koenes, 5, isn't shy about telling Santa exactly what she wants for Christmas at the BC Christmas celebration.



Li Cohen
Derrick Timothy, center, helps his sons Prince, left, and G'lim, right, build a gingerbread house at the Fort Pierce Christmas party Dec. 21 in Vero Beach.



Kevin Johnson
Zechariah Summeralls hugs Pua the pig from the Disney movie "Moana," which was part of the tropical theme at the Brighton Christmas party.



Kevin Johnson
Preston Baker, left, shows his sweater that earned him first place in the ugliest sweater contest for adult men at the Brighton Christmas party.



Carlos Menendez
Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola, center, Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr., left, and Santa Claus, right, address the audience at the Hollywood Christmas party at Hard Rock Live.



Beverly Bidney
Looking festive, Dylan and Demi Garza pose for a photo by the Christmas tree at the Immokalee Christmas party..



Beverly Bidney
Esther Gopher, Angela Cypress and Shannon Cypress, 4, enjoy the BC Christmas party.



Beverly Bidney
Immokalee Council project manager Raymond Garza holds his granddaughter Addie Rodriguez at the Immokalee Christmas party Dec. 21.



Li Cohen
Tamia Tommie wanted nothing more to shine for Christmas this year. She received a special glitter tattoo at the Fort Pierce Christmas party to show off to her friends and family.



Kevin Johnson
A Polynesian flame dancer entertains the audience at the Brighton Christmas party.



Karla Noriega Pedroza
Country music star Travis Tritt performs during the Hollywood Reservation's Christmas party Dec. 16 at Hard Rock Live.



Carlos Menendez
Photos with Santa receive plenty of smiles during the Hollywood Reservation Christmas party.



Li Cohen
From left, Maayana Stockton, Makiyah Stockton, Celeste Stockton, Taariq Johnson and Tavarious Johnson celebrate Christmas at the Fort Pierce celebration on Dec. 21 in Vero Beach.



Beverly Bidney
Danny Stumblingbear, Shannon Wells and Danny Stumblingbear Jr, 1, enjoy a laugh at the BC Christmas event.



Kevin Johnson
Santa and Mrs. Claus receive a visit from Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr., Brighton Board Rep. Larry Howard and Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr. at the Brighton Christmas party.



Li Cohen
Marty Tommie, left, and Josh Sneed are excited to get back together for the holidays and enjoy a fun evening with the Fort Pierce community.



Kevin Johnson
Homer Huggins, right, works at an arts and crafts table as Amos Huggins looks on during Trail's Christmas party Dec. 15. At far left, Kyrie Huggins and Adrian Osceola-Huggins work on a project.



Beverly Bidney
Marina Garcia, Lauren Posada, Lindsey Posada, Lorraine Posada and Linda Beletso enjoy the season at the Immokalee Christmas party.



Beverly Bidney
Michaela Cypress, Rashaun Johnson and Draeden Cypress-Johnson, 6 months, enjoy some family time at the BC Christmas soiree.



Beverly Bidney
Ariel Concepcion jumps rope on the dance floor before the music starts at the Immokalee Christmas fest.



Li Cohen
Jayveon Wyatt gets some assistance from Santa's helper to create a gingerbread house at the Fort Pierce Christmas Party on Dec. 21.



Kevin Johnson
Students from Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School entertain the audience with songs during the Brighton Christmas party.

Sports



High school basketball returns to Ahfachkee

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

BIG CYPRESS — What a difference a year makes.

There was no basketball season at the Ahfachkee School last year. The interest was there – enough kids wanted to play – but the court was silent because not enough players met the academic requirements.

This season improvements made by students in the classroom have allowed for the return of both boys and girls basketball teams on the high school level.

“We’ve really worked at getting grades up over the last year, which we’ve done,” said Ahfachkee athletic director Matthew Beckham. “The kids are a little bit more in tune with their academics. It’s been a success there, so we look at continuing that success and continuing to grow.”

Ahfachkee’s girls and boys teams made their home debut at Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium on Dec. 5 against Donahue Academy from Ave Maria.

The boys played well enough to win, but fell to Donahue 47-45 in a competitive game from start to finish, something that bodes well for the future.

“They gave a lot of effort,” said boys coach Cicero Osceola. “We only had six [players] and then we were down to five, but they played good. We have a lot of young kids. It’s a work in progress. They played hard.”

Ahfachkee’s sharp shooting was on display early. With a starting lineup of Les Gopher, Leviticus Buster, Jeremiah Pickup, Anthony Alvalos and Gordon Cypress, Ahfachkee built a 12-9 lead after one quarter behind 3-pointers from Buster and Gopher. Alvalos hit a three early in the second quarter and Gopher dominated the final few minutes before halftime with three layups and a steal



At left, Ahfachkee's Les Gopher (11) attempts a block against Donahue Academy during a boys game Dec. 5 at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium. At right, Ahfachkee's Leilani Gopher battles for position in the paint in a girls game.

Kevin Johnson (2)



Ahfachkee boys coach Cicero Osceola and his players break from a timeout.

to give the hosts a 25-16 lead at the break.

Donahue, which had taller players and a deeper bench, wore down Ahfachkee in the second half. Donahue rallied to take a 35-34 lead after three quarters, but instead of faltering down the stretch, Ahfachkee showed plenty of determination. Buster hit a 3-pointer and had a layup that gave Ahfachkee a 39-37 lead, but Donahue went ahead with a few minutes left and didn't relinquish the lead.

Although Ahfachkee lacks size, it makes up for it elsewhere, such as strong ball handling and passing and quick transitions.

“We’re small. We don’t have big guys, so we have to run small ball,” Osceola said. “Once we get more games under our belt and more practice, we’ll be fine.”

Similar to the boys, Ahfachkee’s girls hung close with Donahue until the final minutes. The game was knotted at 24-24

before Donahue scored the game’s final 11 points to emerge with a 35-24 win.

There will be plenty of learning moments this season for the Ahfachkee girls, which feature some players who have never played on a team and are new to the sport. Plus, most of the team is comprised of sophomores and seventh-and-eighth-graders. It was understandable that they were nervous on opening night against Glades Day.

“They were like a deer in headlights. They didn’t know where to go,” girls coach Eddie Redd said. “After the second half, they put it together and we played way better. We only had six players. I had two girls with four fouls. They made a good game out of it.”

Abby Tigertail, the team’s top offensive threat who can pull up and hit jump shots and drive the lane for layups, scored 20 points in the team’s opening day loss to Glades Day. Aloni Gore contributed 12 points.



Ahfachkee girls basketball coach Eddie Redd provides instruction to his team during a timeout against Donahue Academy.

Kevin Johnson

One challenge Redd faces is getting all eight of his players to attend practices at the same time. Practicing shorthanded makes it tough to teach the basics and run plays.

“It comes with being at practice and doing the fundamentals. The drills are going to get you where you need to be at,” Redd said. “We’re young. Stay at it and stay focused.”

At least Ahfachkee is on the right track now that basketball has returned. Missing entire seasons, such as last year, sets back programs.

“Kids go to other schools and don’t come back,” AD Beckham said. “It’s like starting from scratch.”

But perhaps the foundation being laid this year will help solidify the basketball program in years to come.

“The future is looking bright,” Beckham said.

Beckham would like to see more sports be offered at the school. He said there wasn’t enough signups for softball, but interest in forming a girls flag football was strong. He also hopes to create a soccer team at some

point.

“I want to open their eyes to other athletics,” he said. “When you specialize in one sport it actually limits your athletic ability, so I want them to have a well-rounded athletic program that allows them to open all types of motor skill functions that can allow them to develop and increase their skills in the sports they decide they want to specialize in later.”



Kevin Johnson

The Ahfachkee boys basketball team battles Donahue Academy on Dec. 5.



Kevin Johnson

Abby Tigertail lines up a jump shot against Donahue Academy.

FGCU's Ahnie Jumper returns to help young softball players

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

BRIGHTON — About 35 young girls had plenty of talented softball players to learn from during Florida Gulf Coast University's clinic Dec. 2 at Ollie Jones Memorial Park in Brighton.

There was Riley Randolph, a junior left-handed pitcher who won Atlantic Sun Conference rookie and pitcher of the year awards as a freshman. Morgan White, the 2015 Florida Miss Softball, was there, too.

But the player all the girls most wanted to see was Ahnie Jumper, a Seminole who grew up on the Big Cypress Reservation, starred on state championship teams at American Heritage and has now landed as an Eagle for FGCU's NCAA Division I softball team.

For the girls at the clinic, Jumper is far more than just a freshman third baseman.

"She's a person you can look up to in all aspects of life. Good person, good softball player, good teammate. She does it all," said Jill Rodriguez, an 11th grade pitcher on the Immokalee High School team who hopes to follow in Jumper's footsteps and play college softball.

Rodriguez said she's learned from Jumper as a friend and former teammate.

"I love the attitude and the drive she has. She has a passion for the game," Rodriguez said.

Jumper's passion and her dedication to helping the Tribe haven't gone unnoticed.

"It's cool. She represents the Tribe and she's doing an awesome job," said FGCU assistant coach Jamie Kertes, who ran the clinic with fellow assistant Jaime Edwards. "She's an amazing kid. She's got a great personality. She's going to bring a lot to the team."



Kevin Johnson

Florida Gulf Coast University freshman softball player Ahnie Jumper, of the Big Cypress Reservation, pitches during a youth clinic hosted by the Eagles on Dec. 2 at Ollie Jones Memorial Park on the Brighton Reservation. Jumper and some of her teammates and coaches provided about three hours of hitting, pitching, catching and fielding instruction.



Kevin Johnson

Ahnie Jumper provides batting instruction to youngsters at the clinic.

Jumper spent plenty of time working with the girls in small groups on their hitting, including helping with their stances and grips. During a break she said being part of the clinic on the reservation opened a new view of the impact she can have on young Seminoles.

"Being here right now changes my perspective a little in how big a role I can be to these young girls," she said. "I've been in this role for a while doing the extracurricular stuff that I do, but going from college is different."

Playing a different position on the field is also something Jumper is adapting to in her freshman season. She mostly played catcher

during her career at American Heritage, but has now shifted to third base at FGCU. She began getting accustomed to playing third during the fall season.

"Not too bad. I know how to play a lot of positions, but coming from where my comfortable spot is at catching it's kind of a transition," Jumper said.

Jumper, an Early Childhood Education major, is enjoying life at FGCU.

"I love school a lot," she said.

FGCU's clinic wasn't only about softball. While Randolph and White chatted with a group of girls and stressed the importance of conditioning, they also asked the kids about their favorite subjects in school and what they want to be when they

grow up.

Jumper is one of seven freshmen on the Eagles, who open their 2018 season Feb. 8 with a home game against Long Island in the FGCU Kickoff Classic that also features Ball State, Georgetown and North Carolina State.

FGCU's schedule also includes games against Ivy League's Harvard and Princeton as well as USF, UConn, FAU, FIU and a March 2nd clash against Pac-12 powerhouse Oregon.

No doubt March 3 will carry extra significance for Jumper as FGCU visits the Florida State Seminoles in the FSU Unconquered Invitational. The Eagles also have a trip to Southern California for seven games in March.



Kevin Johnson

FGCU left-handed pitcher Riley Randolph watches the windup of Ava Nunez as Canaan Jumper looks on during the youth softball clinic.



Kevin Johnson

Truley Osceola takes a turn pitching under the guidance of FGCU pitcher Morgan White.



Kevin Johnson

FGCU softball players and youngsters put their 'wings up' during the Eagles' softball clinic the Brighton Reservation's Ollie Jones Memorial Park.

Seminoles shine for Heritage on multiple levels

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

PLANTATION — Skylia Osceola was only a few feet from her former teammates December Stubbs and Tiana Stubbs as the American Heritage sisters battled Dillard in an early season clash of Broward County powerhouses. Of course, being in the bleachers, which is where Skylia lent her support and encouragement to her alma mater Dec. 1, isn't nearly the same as being on the court.

Life without Skylia, who helped the team reach the Class 6A state semifinals last season, is something the Stubbs and the rest of the squad is learning to cope with.

"I miss her, but she's doing good in college," Tiana said.

Indeed, Skylia has made a smooth transition from American Heritage to nearby NCAA Division II Nova Southeastern University, where she leads the squad in assists early in her college career.

"I talk to the NSU coach once a week," said American Heritage coach Greg Farias. "Skylia is doing a great job. She's in the starting lineup now after a couple games. She's so bright and knows the game, that it was just a matter of time."

With the graduation of Skylia and other key players from last season's squad, opportunities opened up for returning players. Tiana and December, both sophomores from the Hollywood Reservation, have stepped up and helped the team to a solid start that included winning an early season tournament with victories against Pahokee and Grandview Prep.

"Tiana is our starting shooting guard. She's doing a great job," Farias said. "She's one of our most athletic [players]. She's the best shooter on the team right now, and she'll cover the best player on the other team. So she's my best defender and pure shooter."

While Tiana is a fixture in the starting lineup, December isn't too far behind. The point guard is often the first sub off the bench.

"December is like my sixth man on the bench. She comes off and plays defense. I call her my defensive stopper. She's very tough. She can guard inside and outside," Farias said.



American Heritage sophomore sisters, December Stubbs, left, and Tiana Stubbs are playing key roles on the American Heritage varsity girls basketball team this season.

December and Tiana made their presence felt right away against Dillard. In the first quarter, Tiana hit a 3-pointer and December had two offensive rebounds and one basket that pulled Heritage to within 12-11 at the end of the quarter.

In the fourth quarter, Tiana helped keep Heritage within striking distance by making a layup and hitting a short jumper, but if Dillard has any flaws, they are tough to find. Dillard seldom fouls or turns the ball over, so coming back was indeed a tough task. Dillard won 52-42.

Having Skylia and a few other Tribal members go through the program in previous years, Farias is familiar with the type of player that the Tribe sends to Heritage.



Kevin Johnson (2)



American Heritage junior high player Canaan Jumper talks to teammates Cyiah Avila and Madison Jumper during a timeout.

Kevin Johnson



Kevin Johnson

American Heritage junior high's defense is set with, from left, Makayla Torres, Cyiah Avila, Canaan Jumper and Armani Torres during a game against Dillard High's junior varsity in December.

"It's a great relationship with the Tribe," Farias said. "Their knowledge of basketball is unbelievable. Because they have the two gyms [on the Hollywood Reservation], they do a great job of playing all the time."

Farias said the players are also strong in the classroom.

"They come here and they're academically strong and they know the game of basketball," he said.

While December and Tiana are the only players from the Tribe on varsity, American Heritage's junior high team is loaded with

Seminoles. The school does not have a JV team this year.

"They've won two games in a row. They're doing a great job. They're very young," Farias said.

Cyiah Avila, Canaan Jumper, Madison Jumper, Armani Torres, Makayla Torres and Skye Stubbs – younger sister of Tiana and December – form the nucleus of the squad. Four of the girls – Canaan, Madison, Makayla and Skye – started against Dillard.

Not surprisingly, the young junior high team struggled against the far more

experienced JV squad. Dillard won easily, but Heritage never stopped hustling right up to the end when Canaan battled for a loose ball in the final minute as if it was the game's first minute.

Farias said the young players from the Tribe are the foundation for the future of the program. All are sixth-and-seventh-graders, which means it may be at least a couple years before their impact is felt on varsity.



Kevin Johnson

Seminole representation on the American Heritage junior high girls basketball team includes Armani Torres (14), Skye Stubbs (11), Canaan Jumper (24), Cyiah Avila (4), Madison Jumper (41) and Makayla Torres (20). Joining the players for the photo was Addy Hall, age 6, sister of Cyiah.

Brighton players leading Moore Haven teams

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

MOORE HAVEN — It didn't take long for Donovan Harris to make a good impression on the Moore Haven High School boys basketball team.

Not only did Donovan earn his way onto the varsity as a freshman this winter, but the former Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School standout has contributed right away. The sharp-shooting guard scored 14 points in his first game as a Terrier.

"He had a really good game. He's a good shooting. He's a good all-around player," said Moore Haven coach Matt Zinser.

Donovan's not only the only player from the Brighton Reservation making an impact in the Moore Haven program. His brothers Robert, a sophomore starting power forward, and Richard, a senior substitute, along with Andrew Fish have helped Moore Haven notch wins against Clewiston, Evangelical Christian and a couple of victories against Lake Placid.

Donovan and Rob have seen plenty of minutes.

"Donovan and Rob are huge parts of this team. They earned what they're getting playing-time wise," Zinser said.

Moore Haven wasn't in mid-season form — especially from the free throw line — against Clewiston on Dec. 11, but the Terriers still managed a 45-35 home victory.

"We just got to get better as a team," Zinser said.

Fish played limited minutes, but his impact was felt.

"He gave me some good minutes," Zinser said.

After the Clewiston game, the Terriers had a 6 a.m. practice scheduled for the following morning before the start of classes.

"There's nothing given around here. What you get, you earn. You earn that by coming to practice, working hard in practice and making sure you're on time," Zinser said.

Brighton is also being well represented on the junior varsity level. From scoring to rebounding to hard work to leadership, Alyke Baker and Jaylen Baker are leading the Terriers in several areas.

"They're my top two guys," said JV coach Chris Cook. "A lot of hustle. They're learning the game of basketball, they're learning quickly. They're very physical players."

Every game Alyke and Jaylen have been the team's top scorers. A sampling: Alyke 18 points, Jaylen 18 vs Lake Placid; Jaylen (22), Alyke (16) vs Seacrest and Jaylen (16), Alyke (13) vs Canterbury.

"Alyke is especially athletic. He can jump and play just about any position. He's probably my go-to guy," Cook said. "Then real close behind him is Jaylen. We really



Kevin Johnson

With his younger brother Donovan behind him, Moore Haven High School's Robert Harris (24) snags a rebound in the Terriers' 45-35 win against Clewiston in a varsity game on Dec. 11 in Moore Haven.



Kevin Johnson

Moore Haven freshman Donovan Harris takes a jump shot in a varsity game against Clewiston.

depend on them heavily. They get a lot of rebounds and score a lot of points."

Ramon Baker has also seen early season playing time on the JV.

Moore Haven won its first four games before losing a close battle to Clewiston by two points. Cook hopes the first loss was a

learning experience and motivational tool for his players.

"It's frustrating to lose. That's our first loss. That hurt them a little bit," he said.



Kevin Johnson

Moore Haven's Alyke Baker (23) takes a short jump shot over a Clewiston defender in a junior varsity game Dec. 11 in Moore Haven.



Kevin Johnson

Moore Haven's Jaylen Baker battles for position in a junior varsity game against Clewiston.

PECS girls, boys begin basketball season



Kevin Johnson

Ysla Gopher (12) grabs a rebound for Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School during a girls game against West Glades on Dec. 13 in Brighton. Looking on are Kalyn Hammil (1) and Giselle Micco.

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

BRIGHTON — Just how tough is it to face the ultra-aggressive defense of the Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School girls basketball team?

West Glades Middle School found out the hard way that PECS prides itself on the work it does without the ball.

The Lady Seminoles used their suffocating defense to build a big lead and do something rarely done in basketball — pitch a shutout — in a 47-0 win Dec. 13.

"Our press defense has been very good," said PECS coach Tim Thomas. "I teach them that if we get turnovers, defense wins the game. Hustle, trap, make them throw it away, intercept the pass and get a layup."

All of which was on display in the game's first minute as PECS made three steals before West Glades saw the other side of the court.

After Ysla Gopher sank a short jump shot to open the game, Adryauna Baker stole the inbounds pass and laid the ball in for a 4-0 lead. A West Glades timeout didn't halt the ferocious press. Kalyn Hammil stole another pass and fed Ysla for a layup. Moments later, Giselle Micco showed no quit as she forced a jump ball with hard work on defense.

PECS laid off on the press once they built a sizable lead. The Lady Seminoles were sharp with the ball, too. Adryauna led a balanced attack with 14 points followed by nine from Ysla, seven each from Karey Gopher and Lexi Thomas and four each from Tafv Harris and Kaylin.

The victory helped erase some of the bad taste left from the night before when PECS suffered its first loss of the season, a one-point overtime nail biter against Osceola Middle.

"Our goal was to go undefeated until last night," Thomas said. "We got back on track today and hopefully we can keep it going."

Karey and Adryauna led the way against Osceola with 10 points each. Ysla had five points and Elle Thomas had four points.

In addition to the triumph against West Glades, PECS (3-1) picked up early season wins against Clewiston (50-17) and LaBelle (37-30).

Giselle had a game-high 11 points against Clewiston followed by Adryauna (9), Tafv (9), Karey (8), Ysla (7) and Elle (4).

In the LaBelle game, Adryauna paced the offense with 14 points while Tafv and Karey contributed 11 points each.

While PECS has thrived so far in defense and scoring, Thomas said there are areas that need improvement, especially at the foul line.

"We're still missing a lot of free throws. I work on that daily with them at practice. It's just not going in right now for us," Thomas said. "I told them in a tight game, free throws are going to count."

Thomas said his team would have beat Osceola if it had made a couple more

free throws. PECS will get another shot at Osceola in the final regular season game Feb. 1, which will also be 8th grade parent night for the team's seven eighth-graders.

PECS will also be looking to defend the conference title it won last year. The conference tournament is expected to be held in early February.

After several successful seasons with Kevin Jackson at the helm, the Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School boys basketball team hasn't missed a beat with a new head coach.

This season PECS is being guided by Preston Baker. Having served as an assistant coach for Jackson the past two years, Baker is plenty familiar with the players and with winning. The transition has been smooth as PECS roared out to a 5-0 start as of mid-December.

"I like it. I learned a lot from Kevin Jackson last year and the year before that. He taught me a lot. He's a real good coach," said Baker, who has one son on the team (Pherian) and several nephews.

All indications are for PECS to be a serious contender to claim its conference championship. The Seminoles overwhelmed West Glades, 48-5, on Dec. 13 for its fifth win. More impressive so far early in the season were wins against Clewiston and Osceola.

"We're starting to focus and put everything together and get our heads in the game. They're listening, they're passing. They're doing what they're supposed to do," Baker said.

PECS weaknesses are hard to find; its strengths are plentiful. The team features a solid balance inside and outside. Size, scoring and rebounding come from a talented group of forwards. A smart, experienced core of guards provide reliability and pass the ball with nary a hiccup.

Jayton Baker, Jaytron Baker and Corey Jumper are among the big men being counted on to control the paint at both ends. They haven't disappointed.

"That's the most impressive part, they're working both ends. They're doing what they're supposed to do on offense and then they're hustling right back down on defense," Baker said.

Being sharp offensively and defensively also describes the guards, led by Dakoya Nunez, Nakai Alex, Deagan Osceola and Tanner Gore.

"They handle the ball well. They move the ball. Hardly any turnovers. They're ready for ninth grade," Baker said.

Before the high school careers start, there's plenty of work left to be done in the middle school season.

PECS exacted some revenge with the win against Clewiston. Last year, Clewiston handed PECS its only losses of the season.

2018 PECS varsity girls basketball team

Head coach: Tim Thomas
Asst. coach: Jewel Buck
30 Javale Anderson
4 Adryauna Baker
3 Karey Gopher
12 Ysla Gopher
1 Kalyn Hammil
35 Tafv Harris
10 LaShae King
23 Angelie Melton
15 Giselle Micco
22 Shylynn Testerman
11 Elle Thomas
2 Lexi Thomas

2018 PECS varsity boys basketball

Head coach: Preston Baker
Asst. coach: Aaron Suarez
12 Nakai Alex
1 Aundre Baker
2 Bryce Baker
24 Jayton Baker
21 Jaytron Baker
3 Tanier Gore
20 C.J. Jumper
4 Dakoya Nunez
14 Deagan Osceola
10 Bryce Ward



Kevin Johnson

Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School's Nakai Alex takes to the air to get off a shot in a boys game against West Glades on Dec. 13. Helping out are Deagan Osceola (14) and Bryce Ward (10).



FSU Sports Info/Mitch White

The Florida State football team, including Seminole Tribal member Justin Motlow (86), take the field to face the University of Louisiana Monroe on Dec. 2 at Doak Campbell Stadium in Tallahassee. FSU won its final regular season game, 42-10.

Florida State's Motlow catches one pass in final home game

STAFF REPORT

TALLAHASSEE — Florida State wide receiver Justin Motlow caught one pass in his final game at Doak Campbell Stadium on Dec. 2. Motlow hauled in a 2-yard pass from quarterback J.J. Cosentino on a third down and 7 with 2:32 left in the Seminoles' 42-10 win against Louisiana Monroe.

The victory boosted FSU's record to 6-6 and paved the way for an invitation to the Independence Bowl in Shreveport, Louisiana against Southern Miss on Dec. 27. (See the Jan. 31 Tribune for coverage). The win also highlighted the interim head coaching debut of Odell Haggins, who was named the temporary replacement in the wake of Jimbo Fisher's departure to Texas A&M. A few days after the victory, Willie

Taggart was named FSU's new head coach.

Motlow, a Seminole Tribal member from Tampa, has played in four games this season and has four receptions for 27 yards and one touchdown. He has one year of playing eligibility left, but has said he plans to graduate this spring and won't return to the team.

College teams wear special jerseys as part of Native American Heritage Month

STAFF REPORT

Some college basketball teams featured a different look in November and December.

As part of a Nike N7 program, the men's teams from Florida State, Haskell, Marquette, Nevada, New Mexico, Nevada and Oklahoma State and women's teams from Haskell, Nevada, Oklahoma State, Oral Roberts and Stanford wore turquoise jerseys and other specially made apparel to celebrate Native American Heritage Month.

FSU wore the jerseys in a 67-43 win against Fordham on Nov. 17 and again in

the team's first loss of the season, a 71-70 setback to Oklahoma State in the Orange Bowl Basketball Classic on Dec. 16 at the BB&T Center in Sunrise. FSU (9-1) was ranked No. 19 in the nation as of the week of Dec. 11. The FSU-OSU game was the only game in December to feature the turquoise jerseys; the other games were held in November, which is Native American Heritage Month.

Nike's N7 program is in its 10th year. Also, as part of this year's program teams wore so-called N7 Equality T-shirts in pre-game warmups.

"Our involvement with Nike N7 allows

us to help create awareness and to be active in our community," Brad Hutchins, deputy athletic director at New Mexico, said in a press release.

According to Nike, the N7 program's mission is to inspire and enable two million Native American and Aboriginal youth in North America to participate in sport and physical activity. The N7 philosophy states that it embraces the Native philosophy: "In every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations."



FSU Facebook/Jeff Romance

Florida State guards Braian Angiola (11) and Trent Forrest (3) wear jerseys that celebrate Native American Heritage Month as they face Oklahoma State in the Orange Bowl Basketball Classic on Dec. 16 at the BB&T Center in Sunrise.



Stanford Facebook/Bob Drebin/ISIPhotos.com

The Stanford University women's basketball team huddles during its Nov. 19 game while wearing turquoise jerseys to commemorate Native American Heritage Month.

Chobee Gurlz softball win Santa Slam tournament



Courtesy photo

The Chobee Gurlz 8 and under softball team proudly poses with the championship trophy it won in the PBC Santa Slam tournament held from Dec. 2-3 in West Palm Beach. The team includes (in alphabetical order): Olivia Bartels, Serenity Billie, Allyson Bohannon, Melanie Bonilla, Audra Friend, Waniya Fortner, Kulipa Julian, Alyssa Madrigal, Dallyah Nunez, Joleyne Nunez, Tehya Nunez and Ila Trueblood. The team's head coach is Daniel Nunez Sr. He is assisted by Roy Bohannon, Amanda Julian, Carla Rodriguez and Katarina Suarez.

STAFF REPORT

WEST PALM BEACH — The Chobee Gurlz 8 and under softball team, which features several players from the Brighton Reservation, ruled the PBC Santa Slam tournament

from start to finish. Chobee won all six of its games to capture the 9U championship on Dec. 3.

The team won all three of its pool play games (11-4 vs Diamond Dusters, 12-6 vs Miami Stingrays and 13-2 vs MC Cruisers).

In the playoffs, Chobee

opened with a 13-1 win against MC Cruisers. Chobee cruised past the Miami Stingrays 12-5 in the semifinals. In the championship, Chobee outslugged the Coral Springs Panthers, 18-11.

2018

SEMINOLE

TRIBAL FAIR

AND

POW WOW

47th Annual Celebration of Native Arts and Culture

February 9-11, 2018

Southern Emcee: Juaquin Hamilton
Northern Emcee: Howard Thomson
Arena Director: Chaske LeBlanc

Arena Director: Wendall Powless
Drum Judge: Calvin "Beaver" Campbell

DANCE COMPETITION:

TEENS/JR. BOYS (12-17):
Fancy, Northern Traditional, Grass, Southern Straight, Chicken
TEENS/JR. GIRLS (12-17):
Northern Traditional/Southern Traditional Combined and Fancy/Grass Combined
TEENS/JR. MEN (18-35):
Southern Cloth, Southern Buckskin, Fancy, Jingle, Northern Cloth, Northern Buckskin
TEENS/JR. WOMEN (18-35):
Southern Cloth, Southern Buckskin, Fancy, Jingle, Northern Cloth, Northern Buckskin
SR. MEN (36-54):
Fancy, Northern Traditional, Grass, Southern Straight, Chicken
SR. WOMEN (36-54):
Southern Cloth, Southern Buckskin, Fancy, Jingle, Northern Cloth, Northern Buckskin
1ST \$1.2K • 2ND \$1K • 3RD \$800 • 4TH \$500
GOLDEN AGE MEN (55+):
Northern Traditional/Southern Straight (Combined), Fancy/Grass/Chicken (Combined)
GOLDEN AGE WOMEN (55+):
Fancy/Jingle (Combined), Northern Cloth/Buckskin (Combined), Southern Cloth/Buckskin (Combined)
1ST \$1.2K • 2ND \$1K • 3RD \$800 • 4TH \$500

REGISTRATION
REGISTRATION CLOSES 30 MINUTES PRIOR TO GRAND ENTRY.
-\$10 at registration.*
-Thursday: 12 - 8 pm
-Friday: 9 am - 1:30 pm / Reopen: 2:30 pm - 6:30 pm
*Pre-registration also available online.

2018 POW WOW SCHEDULE:

POW-WOW STARTS:
Feb. 9, 2018:
Friday afternoon Grand Entry @ 2:00pm - 5:00pm
Friday night at 7:00pm - 10:00pm Good Night
Feb. 10, 2018:
Saturday afternoon @ 12:00 noon - 5:00pm
Saturday night @ 7:00pm
Payout
Feb. 11, 2018:
Entertainment

DRUM COMPETITION
NORTHERN/SOUTHERN COMBINED
\$20,000 - 1ST PLACE
\$15,000 - 2nd Place \$6,000 - 5th Place
\$10,000 - 3rd Place \$4,000 - 6th Place
\$8,000 - 4th Place \$2,000 - 7th Place
3 CONSOLATION PRIZES

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For further information regarding the Pow Wow, you may contact:

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Announcements

WWII Navajo Code Talker Teddy Draper Sr. dies at 96

FROM PRESS RELEASE

PRESCOTT, Ariz. — *World War II Navajo Code Talker Teddy Draper Sr. passed away Dec. 14 in at age 96 in Arizona. The Navajo Nation Council issued the following statement:*

On behalf of the Navajo Nation Council, Speaker LoRenzo Bates offers condolences to the family of Navajo Code Talker Teddy Draper, Sr., who passed away on [Dec. 14] in Prescott, Ariz. He resided in the community of Chinle, Arizona at the time of his death.

“With the loss of another of our Navajo Code Talkers, we grow even more grateful and appreciative of their lives and their brave service for the Navajo Nation and our country,” stated Speaker LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse’Daa’Kaan, Upper Fruitland). “The Navajo Nation Council offers our prayers to the family and loved ones.”

During his service with the 5th Marine Division, Draper delivered and received coded messages using the Navajo language during World War II, which included the Battle of Iwo Jima. For his honorable service, he was awarded the Purple Heart and the Silver Congressional Medal of Honor.

Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) also shared his thoughts and sympathy for Draper’s family and said he hopes the United States will show appreciation and honor all of the Navajo Code Talkers and the Navajo people.

“The Navajo Nation salutes the service and sacrifices of all Code Talkers that have gone and for those who are still with us,” said Delegate Hale. “Our language is resilient and powerful enough to move mountains and save lives, through our language we will carry on as a people.”

Speaker Bates said he will offer a letter of condolence to the family of Draper and offer assistance to the family on behalf of the Navajo Nation Council.



Navajo Code Talker Teddy Draper Sr.

NMAI to unveil imagiNATIONS Activity Center

FROM PRESS RELEASE

NEW YORK — The Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian, George Gustav Heye Center in New York, will unveil its newest educational initiative, the imagiNATIONS Activity Center, on May 17, 2018. The multimillion-dollar upgrade to the museum transforms 4,500 square feet of office space into modernized educational and exhibition spaces. The content embraces STEAM-based (science, technology, engineering, art, math) education and introduces young visitors to Native innovations across history that continue to impact modern life. The project marks the most extensive enhancement to the museum since opening its doors at the Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House in 1994.

“The museum is undertaking a critical effort to enhance Native curricula not just in our own facilities, but in classrooms as well,” said Kevin Gover (Pawnee), director of the National Museum of the American Indian. “With the addition of the imagiNATIONS Activity Center in New York, we are providing a learning environment suited to 21st-century students that helps us meet this goal.”

The museum will hold its annual Children’s Festival May 19–20, 2018, featuring special activities in conjunction with the opening.

Tamara Eagle Bull receives American Institute of Architects award

FROM PRESS RELEASE

WASHINGTON — The Board of Directors and the Strategic Council of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) announced Dec. 6 that Tamara Eagle Bull, FAIA, has been selected recipient of the 2018 Whitney M. Young Jr. Award.

The award honors architects and organizations that champion a range of social issues, including affordable housing, minority inclusion and access for persons with disabilities. Eagle Bull will be honored at the AIA Conference on Architecture 2018 in New York City.

Eagle Bull, a member of the Oglala Lakota Nation, is known as an advocate for culturally relevant and responsible design, and a recognized leader in the realm of contemporary Native American architecture.

Eagle Bull is the first Native American woman in the U.S. to become a licensed architect. She co-founded Encompass Architects in Lincoln, Neb. in 2002. The firm has worked with several tribal clients.

“When I hear her tell the story of place, of how place formed her perspective on architecture, it reminds me of Native Peoples’ distinct connection to Mother Earth,” wrote Michael Laverdure, AIA, president of the American Indian Council of Architects and Engineers, in a letter supporting Eagle Bull’s nomination for the award. “She has been an advocate for Native American communities, while working in those communities. Simply



Tamara Eagle Bull

by listening and designing with her Tribal clients instead of for them, she is doing a great service to society.”

Eagle Bull’s sensitivity is evident in projects such as the Gila River Indian Community Governance Center in Sacaton, Arizona. Envisioned as the embodiment of tribal sovereignty, it expressed strength and independence, its landscape design and details depicting the culture of the Pima and Maricopa peoples in an elegant manner.

In South Dakota, Eagle Bull developed three concepts for the Oglala Sioux Tribe to create a new memorial at the site of the Wounded Knee Massacre. The sacred site currently has no memorial, merely a sign that is often vandalized or stolen and a nearby museum operated by a non-tribal

member. Three schemes were presented to community groups, and the project is currently exploring funding options to finance next phase.

Eagle Bull became active with the American Indian Council of Architects and Engineers shortly after graduation from the University of Minnesota School of Architecture. She led the way for changes in the organization and transitioned it from a small gathering of Native American firm-owners to an organization that welcomes architects and engineers at all career levels. As the council’s executive board secretary, Eagle Bull was instrumental in negotiating a memorandum of understanding with the National Organization of Minority Architects that allows the two organizations to work together for mutual benefit.

Oak Ridge Boys coming to Immokalee casino

FROM PRESS RELEASE

IMMOKALEE — Country music legends The Oak Ridge Boys will perform in concert March 3 at Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee. The performance is part of The Oak Ridge Boys’ Shine the Light Tour.

The group’s four-part harmonies and upbeat songs have spawned dozens of country hits and a number one pop smash, earned them Grammy, Dove, CMA, and ACM awards and garnered a host of other

industry and fan accolades. Their string of hits includes the country-pop chart-topper “Elvira,” as well as “Bobbie Sue,” “Dream On,” “Thank God For Kids,” “American Made,” “I Guess It Never Hurts To Hurt Sometimes,” “Fancy Free,” “Y’all Come Back Saloon,” “Sail Away,” and “It Takes A Little Rain.”

The Oak Ridge Boys feature lead singer Duane Allen, bass singer Richard Sterban, tenor Joe Bonsall, and baritone William Lee Golden. Tickets are available at the casino, on jaytv.com or by calling 800-218-0007.

Mary J. Blige to perform at Hard Rock

FROM PRESS RELEASE

HOLLYWOOD — Singer, songwriter, actress and philanthropist Mary J. Blige will perform at Hard Rock Live at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Hollywood on Feb. 19, 2018, at 8 p.m. Blige is considered a defining voice of the contemporary music era with nine Grammy Awards, 32 Grammy nominations and eight multi-platinum albums. She has also won five American Music Awards, sold more than 50 million albums.

Blige has appeared onscreen in both film and television, including Tyler Perry’s dramatic comedy, “I Can Do Bad All By

Myself,” “Rock of Ages,” “Betty & Coretta” and “Black Nativity.” Blige has also guest-starred on the ABC comedy “Black-ish” and the FOX musical drama “Empire.” Blige also portrayed Evillene, the Wicked Witch of the West, on the NBC musical, “The Wiz LIVE!” Blige most recently guest starred on ABC’s “How to Get Away with Murder” and is currently starring in “Mudbound,” opposite Carey Mulligan and Garrett Hedlund, which premiered to rave reviews at Sundance Film Festival.

Tickets are available at Ticketmaster outlets, at www.myhrl.com, www.ticketmaster.com and 1-800-745-3000.

NIGC issues Certificate of Self-Regulation to Barona Band of Mission Indians

FROM PRESS RELEASE

WASHINGTON — The National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC) announced Dec. 6 the issuance of a certificate of self-regulation to the Barona Band of Mission Indians, which operates the Barona Resort & Casino in Lakeside, Calif. Under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) and NIGC regulations (25 C.F.R. Part 518), self-regulation status allows a tribe to regulate Class II gaming with reduced oversight from the NIGC. The Commission only issues certificates of self-regulation to a tribe that can demonstrate it has satisfied the applicable requirements, which

include a three-year review to ensure its gaming activities have been in compliance with the IGRA, NIGC regulations, and the tribe’s laws and regulations.

“The Barona Band of Mission Indians has taken significant time and effort to build a successful gaming operation, while simultaneously creating a strong regulatory structure to oversee that gaming. Therefore we are granting a certificate of self-regulation to the Barona Band of Mission Indians. This is an exemplary feat, and I congratulate the Tribe for being able to achieve self-regulation under IGRA,” said NIGC Chairman Jonodev Chaudhuri.

Poem: Eeche Poo Te Chach Cha Lee Wah Waache

Until my time comes,
as you begin your next journey do not
worry about your youngest warrior son.

I have been through this before yet this
is the ultimate test of time,
Aawaache is the greatest with pure love
and pure strength that’s one of a kind.

Waache that same strength I have too,
It was given to me by Amposhe & you.

Shonaabish for the many blessings you
give,
The memories I will cherish for as long
as I live.

For forty-five plus years I received
unconditional love that cannot be replaced,
The truth is right now I feel all alone in
space.

Waache remember I would always say
they can put me on the moon and I’ll be all
right?

That hasn’t changed in keeping it in
positive light.

100 percent unconquered Seminole
woman that’s well respected in our Tribe,
I know that continues for the greatest
Waache on the other side.

I’m sure Poshe, Big Sis, cousins Sue,
Olivia and Poma La Kaathi are happy to see
your beautiful face,

Waache I truly look forward to being
reunited with you and them in that beautiful
place.

Until then I will write poems and talk
about you with a smile,

Us going to swap shop, the clock and
movies since then we have come many miles.
Each mile has been a true blessing

Waache I am thankful and grateful for each
one,

Sholloopahthi Bolchunchahga loves you
second 2 none.

You are an inspiration to many people in
very different ways,
Waache it’s a lasting impression day
after day.

Do not worry about Lil Burt he is in
great hands,
Your grandson Jr. is going to finish what
you started raising him to be a great man.

Just relax and enjoy that journey you are
on,
“A Song for Mama” is perfect no one or
anything can match this ultimate bond.

Pops asked me to be there for you it’s an
honor to do that,
Whatever Waache wanted to do you did
because I have your back.

I hold my head high knowing I did
everything possible so you can enjoy
yourself and have fun,
I love you Waache and I’ll be missing
you too second 2 none.

Eeche Poo Te Chach Cha Lee Wah
Waache Neh Tah Ke Hetho,
Ah Ha Ya Kee everyday Jennie Billie
Harjo.

Always my pride and joy,
I love you Waache.

Warrior 4 Life
Ike T. Harjo



Courtesy photo

Jennie Billie Harjo is on the left.

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B27097		2007	FORD SUV	EXPLORER (4WD)	109,241	Poor	\$1,212.00
161627		2004	POLARIS UTV	RANGER 6X6	505-hrs	Poor	\$2,600.00
032001		1992	AMERTEK CRASH RESCUE VEHICLE	CF4000L	14,611	Poor	\$7,167.00
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Theodore Nelson Sr.

Licensed Clinical Social Worker, SW5813, Indian Child Welfare Consultant-Expert, Board Member National Indian Child Welfare Association, Licensed and Insured, Seminole Health Plan Provider

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