



# The Seminole Tribune

Voice of the Unconquered

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## SPD dispatch opens new 10-20: Immokalee

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**IMMOKALEE** — Seminole Police Department Capt. Mary Negrey understands the power of 911 dispatch.

"It's a comforting voice ... the highest level of service ... it's time saved," Negrey said.

In mid-March, the Seminole Public Safety Department, led by Police Chief William Latchford, opened the Immokalee Dispatch Center at the direction of Tribal Council. The space, at 1110 South First St., is equipped with a high-tech computer-aided dispatch system to serve residents and employees in the tight-knit community and scores of workers and guests at the Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee.

Previously, calls from Immokalee were routed through the Big Cypress dispatch office before reaching an on-duty officer. Though only seconds will be shaved from the police response time, Negrey said, when it comes to emergency situations seconds count.

"There are the seconds to actually call 911, then the caller explains the situation — where you are, what is going on. Then a few more seconds for the dispatcher to relay the information," Negrey said.

In cases when fire rescue is needed, the police will respond in tandem with units from Collier County EMS/Fire Service. If police arrive on the scene before fire rescue, the police are trained to administer first responder first aid.

♦ See DISPATCH on page 7A

## Seminole musicians rock the crowd at Hard Rock Rising Miami Beach



Beverly Bidney

The Osceola Brothers Band — comprised of lead singer and guitarist Cameron, bass guitarist Tyson and drummer Sheldon — performs March 26 at Hard Rock Rising Miami Beach, at which 52,000 people celebrated the city's 100th birthday.

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**MIAMI BEACH** — The first Hard Rock Rising concert in the U.S. attracted 52,000 people to the sands of Miami Beach on March 26, and Seminole performers Spencer Battiast and the Osceola Brothers Band rocked the stage with music legends Andrea Bocelli, Jon Secada, Gloria Estefan

and Barry Gibb. The event celebrated the city's 100th birthday.

Hard Rock Rising concerts, which began in London with Hard Rock Calling in 2006, provide a forum for music icons and up-and-coming artists to connect with fans around the world, according to the Hard Rock website. In 2014, Hard Rock International hosted more than 28,000 live music events around the world to support

the music industry and its performers.

Including tribal acts in the show demonstrates the Tribe's ability to offer Tribal members unique opportunities, said Jim Allen, chairman of Hard Rock International and Seminole Gaming CEO.

"This is an amazing night for them," he said. "We hope to give them this opportunity for many years to come."

Spencer Battiast, who has performed

at Hard Rock Rising in London four times starting in 2007, belted a heartfelt rendition of "Mary Jane," a new original song. He watched the crowd dance to his music as he sang.

"It's always an awesome experience to perform at any Hard Rock event and represent the Tribe," Battiast said. "This

♦ See HARD ROCK on page 4A

## Jenkins retires at height of his Seminole Gaming career

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — The man who Chairman James E. Billie calls "one of the most professional men I've ever worked with" has retired.

Ed Jenkins, 70, credited by Chairman Billie for holding the Tribe's reigns during meteoric gaming success that led the Tribe to become the first in Indian Country to achieve self-regulation from the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC), worked his last day April 30 as the executive director of Seminole Gaming Compliance and Regulation.

Jenkins ran the regulatory body of Seminole Gaming, made up of nose-to-the-grindstone investigators, analysts and surveillance experts; oversaw the government-mandated standards of the Tribe's seven gaming operations from Tampa to Hollywood; and answered to the Tribe's five Council-appointed gaming commissioners.

"To Ed I say 'sho-naa-bish' from the bottom of my heart," Chairman Billie said.

Barbara Calisanti, manager of the background and licensing unit, said Jenkins made sure everything "was on the up and up. He established transparency and put the rules and regulations in place."

NIGC is an independent regulatory agency authorized by Congress through the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988. Under the Act and subsequent NIGC regulations, self-regulation is only granted if a Tribe proves it has satisfied all requirements, including a three-year review to ensure that gaming activity is compliant with IGRA, NIGC and the Tribe's own laws and regulations.

♦ See JENKINS on page 7A

## Anti-child abuse events held in shadow of recent tragedy

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

By all accounts, Ahizya Osceola should have turned 4 years old on April 15. Instead, when a solitary candle was lit on his birthday cake decorated with SpongeBob SquarePants toys, only memories provided glimpses of his happy smile and quick laugh.

It was an unreal moment for his mother, Karen Cypress, who tearfully blew out the lonely candle and thanked more than 50 family and friends who turned out to mark National Child Abuse Awareness Month at Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena in Big Cypress.

"My son should be here, but he is watching over us," Cypress said. "Please, we have to watch, too. Be aware. Don't overlook a single thing."

Ahizya's life ended tragically a few weeks earlier in Hollywood from physical abuse allegedly at the hands of his stepmother, who was subsequently charged with aggravated manslaughter, child neglect with great bodily harm and giving false information to police. His custodial father was charged with one count of child neglect.

It was because of Ahizya that tribalwide events scheduled for April to educate against child abuse took on weighted meaning.

Former Tribe Chairman Mitchell Cypress said Ahizya's short life will be long in purpose.

"He was born for a reason. Ahizya will bring a lot of positive changes in the Tribe and the world," Mitchell Cypress said.

At the rodeo grounds, white kites with blue streamers to be flown in memory of all abused children were also decorated with birthday wishes for Ahizya. A blue and white balloon release, also planned, was led by his extended family — aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents.

"As a community, as a family of people, we have to watch out for red flags especially those little things that can go unnoticed. Sometimes, when children suffer horribly, it's because no one speaks out," said Pastor Salaw Hummingbird, of Big Cypress First Baptist Church.

Seminole Police Department and Fire Rescue Department also participated. SPD Lt. Joe Johnson read startling statistics: More than 3 million cases of child abuse are reported nationally every year by state child welfare departments; one in 10 of the cases are physical abuse; the most vulnerable children are those ages 3 and younger; last year alone, 1,600 children died from physical abuse.

Johnson urged attendees to become more involved — if they see something, say something.

"This is where we need to help the



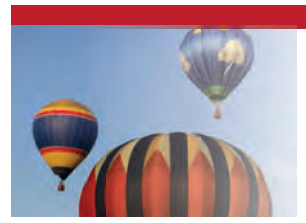
Eileen Soler

Children pick up blue and silver bracelets, necklaces and stickers from the welcome table staged April 24 at the old Hollywood gym for the Child Abuse Awareness Community Walk.

most. We, all of us, have to make the call," Johnson said. He suggested two phone information stations.

Many Big Cypress departments

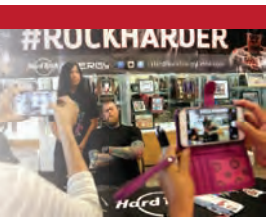
♦ See AWARENESS on page 4A



**Balloons take flight over Immokalee**  
COMMUNITY ♦ 3A

**PECS second-graders learn valuable library, money skills**  
EDUCATION ♦ 1B

**Hundreds flock to see Birdman in Hollywood**  
SPORTS ♦ 1C



# Editorial

## Life in a chickee on 'Tahl-chobee yo-gee'

• James E. Billie

My family lives in a thatched-roof hut called a chickee. It does not hold back the noises coming from the outside. It does not prevent spiders, cockroaches, mosquitoes, rats or snakes from visiting. Wintertime you freeze but in summertime you are cool and comfortable.

Every morning we are awakened an hour before daylight by the cawing of the crow greeting the day. Red birds (cardinals), mockingbirds, woodpeckers and from a distance you can hear the whooping crane and all are singing their songs and looking for breakfast.

Jets flying overhead seem like they are coming through the roof. A chickee does not hold back noise. Raining on the roof and the lightning above is especially nice but a little scary. But it's our house and we love it.

At the junction of Highway 70 and State Road 721 is a settlement named Brighton, one of Lykes Brothers' headquarters, and this reservation is in the proximity. It was named Brighton Seminole Indian Reservation, with approximately 36,000 acres of land taken into trust in 1936.

On this land there are zillions of sabal palms or swamp cabbages. Because of this, Seminole Indians named it *Tahl-chobee yo-gee*, or "Land of the palm trees."

I first set foot in Brighton around 1947. I was only 3 years old. My Bird Clan uncles Willie Tiger, Tom Smith and Dick Smith were living in the Bowlegs Camp area at this time.

Morgan Smith was their brother. My mother and I stayed with Morgan and his wife, Katie, back in those days.

The chickee was the predominate dwelling throughout *Tahl-chobee yo-gee*.

If you live here in Brighton, you should try sitting outside under a palm tree and close your eyes and listen ... the wind blowing through the leaves sounds like the ocean waves.

I like living in a chickee, probably because I was born under one.

There are a few Tribal members my age who grew up in chickee huts. God bless them. It's an experience they will never forget.

*Hessaketmesse heremahes. Sho-naa-bish.*

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



## Cultural injustice at music festivals

• Jordan Russell

The beginning of summer ushers in a wave of music festivals, bringing hordes of attendees flaunting the kind of neo-hippie fashion that has become so closely tied to festival culture. However, in the crowds of festivalgoers donning beads, feathers and elaborate headdresses, there is an unwelcome guest that many may not realize is present: misappropriated Native American culture.

Thanks to powerhouse events like the recent Coachella, "festival fashion" has become a ubiquitous term in the fashion industry. Major retailers such as Forever 21 and Urban Outfitters have capitalized on the popularity of music festivals, creating annual lookbooks encouraging people to look their "fest best." While there is nothing inherently wrong with adopting a festival-centric style, the mainstream adaptation and use of traditional Native cultural elements is a trend that demonstrates a severe lack of respect for this country's oldest cultures.

Regardless of which minority group's culture is in question, its function is invaluable. When a population has spent centuries being systematically abused, its culture can be a saving grace. It serves to keep individuals connected and provides a sense of self-direction to communities whose rights and opportunities are continually dictated by the white majority.

Native Americans have suffered abuse since the European invasion of the 15th and 16th centuries. Throughout this country's history, our First Nations have

been murdered by white settlers, robbed of their tribal lands, driven onto reservations and whipped into religious conversion.

My own Tribe, the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo, exists because a portion of the Tiwa Tribe was taken prisoner by the Spanish after the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 and marched in chains from their home of Taos, New Mexico to El Paso, Texas.

When all else has been taken away, culture remains as that which has the power to endure through the abuses of history and allow individuals to maintain their dignity in the face of horrendous injustices. We do not have a right to adopt the bits and pieces of a culture that we find attractive and commodify them to fit our own wants. This is not to say that any and all parts of Native American culture are off-limits to non-Natives, nor that an interest in Native culture denotes racism. With more than 500 federally recognized Tribes throughout Alaska and the continental U.S., according to the National Council of American Indians, there is a wealth of history and meaning to be explored and respected. However, the "boho" section of Forever 21 is not the place to begin this cultural journey.

Our own Washoe Valley is home to not one, but three, Tribes whose members make and sell goods that reflect their unique cultures. Though these items will generally be more expensive than anything commercially produced, buying directly from Tribal members will ensure two things: that what you are buying is free of sacred symbols that would be offensive if worn by non-Natives and that you are

doing your part to support populations that continue to struggle economically.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs' 2014 American Indian Population and Labor Force Report estimates that 23 percent of all Native American families in the United States were living below the poverty line in 2010.

According to the National Council of American Indians, the unemployment rates on reservations are on average double those of the rest of the population, reaching as high as 80 percent in some communities.

Let's be honest: If you can afford to drop \$375 on a ticket to Coachella, you can afford to buy your Native-inspired jewelry and other goods from artisans whose profits help them feed their family.

When Native culture is reflected in the goods produced by that culture's own members, those goods become things of beauty. When similar goods are mass-produced as mere shells of their true cultural context, they become articles that represent a cultural misappropriation that we should be ashamed to perpetuate.

No matter how attractive we find feathered headdresses or bastardized Navajo prints, these are not ours to claim. They carry with them a rich history and importance that is unique to the Tribes they originate from; they carry with them the legacy of a people's ability to persevere through injustice and to disregard this cultural context is an injustice in itself.

Jordan Russell is a member of the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo Tribe and a student of political science.

# Seminole Tribe General Election candidates

## Tribal Council

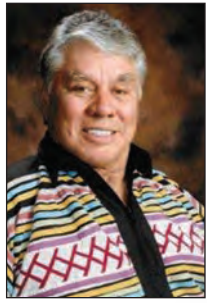
## Board of Directors

### Chairman

### Big Cypress Reservation

### President

### Big Cypress Reservation



James E. Billie (Incumbent)



Richard Bowers Jr.



Manuel (Mondo) Tiger (Incumbent)



Cicero Osceola



Tony Sanchez Jr. (Incumbent)



Mitchell Cypress



Joe Frank (Incumbent)



Paul Bowers Sr.



Tony Billie



Marcellus W. Osceola Jr.



Mary Jean Koenes

### Brighton Reservation



Larry Howard (Incumbent)



Johnnie Jones Sr.

### Hollywood Reservation



Mark Steven Osceola (Incumbent)



Gordon Oliver Wareham

### Brighton Reservation



Andrew J. Bowers Jr. (Incumbent)



Diane Smith

### Hollywood Reservation



Christopher Osceola (Incumbent)



Douglas Smith

**Vote Monday, May 11, 2015**  
**Polls will be open 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.**

#### Voting Locations

Big Cypress Reservation: Senior Center  
Brighton Reservation: Cattle/Range Office  
Hollywood Reservation: Classic Gym (Old Gym)

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Publisher: James E. Billie

Senior Editor: Brett Daly  
[BrettDaly@semtribe.com](mailto:BrettDaly@semtribe.com)

Copy Editor: Kevin Johnson  
[KevinJohnson@semtribe.com](mailto:KevinJohnson@semtribe.com)

Staff Reporters:  
Peter B. Gallagher, Beverly Bidney  
Eileen Soler

Contributors:  
Rachel Buxton

If you would like to request a reporter or would like to submit an article, birthday wish or poem, please contact Senior Editor Brett Daly at 954-985-5701 ext. 10725 or by fax at 954-965-2937

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# Community

A

## Immokalee X factor

### Hot-air balloons chase mark for fun, money

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**IMMOKALEE** — Kelsey Cooper and Doug Allen climbed inside a wicker basket April 12 and peered deep into a massive balloon that towered above propane-driven flames that fueled the most basic air-flight machine.

"I probably won't ever get to do this again in my entire life," Allen said before the Immokalee Casino hot-air balloon lifted toward the sky to start the Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee's fourth annual Balloons Over Paradise Festival race.

Sixty hot-air balloons peppered the ground near Immokalee Reservation's youth ranch and culture village for two days of hare and hound races. Seminole culture crafts and food, heart-stopping alligator wrestling and afternoon polo exhibitions rounded out the festival that drew nearly 36,000 spectators, according to event organizers.

"We've been embraced by the ballooning community," said Jim Gibson, the director of marketing at Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee.

Gibson, who established the event in 2010, said the proof is in the turnout. Twenty-five balloon pilots signed up to participate the first year. Now, the event — staged primarily to promote the Immokalee casino and its new 99-room hotel and entertainment complex — is one of the largest in the nation, he said.

Spectators formed constant lines just outside the balloon field for shuttle rides to see the casino and hotel for themselves.

In the beginning, balloonists mostly from the southern United States participated. This year, balloonists hailed from Maine, Colorado, Idaho and even Albuquerque, New Mexico, which is considered the hot-air ballooning capital of the world.

Sheryl Jimson, a new resident of Florida's west coast via Albuquerque, said the festival made her feel at home — albeit with about 700 less balloons.

"When I walked through the field with hot-air balloons all around me, I felt lucky to be here and a little more like home. That feeling is always amazing to me," Jimson said.

The hare and hound race worked like this: The Immokalee Casino balloon (the hare) took off first, catching the breeze to somewhere near Ave Maria where balloon captain Charlie Edwards dropped a 50-foot-wide X into an open field. The other balloons (the hounds) followed the hare in search of the X and if they found it, they dropped a weighted marker as close to the X as possible.

The closest marker won the first prize, the second closest won the second prize and so on.

First place \$1,000 prizes on April 12 went to Tyler Jaques, of Battle Creek, Michigan, and Bill Whidden, of Tavares, Florida. On April 13, balloonist David Justice, of Tampa, took home the \$1,000 first-place prize.

Bob Carlton, the event's lead balloon organizer and the commercial pilot of the Immokalee Casino balloon, said weather

and wind dictate whether races actually occur. Visibility must be at least 3 miles out and winds can be no more than 7 knots, or nearly 8 miles per hour.

In the case of the first April 12 race, an unexpected fog that rolled in over the marshland caused the race to be called short but not before the first cash prize winners made it to the destination.

Carlton, a balloonist since 1976, said he takes the Immokalee Casino balloon to about 20 events per year. His favorite ballooning tradition is plucked from ballooning history that dates to the 18th century — the sharing of champagne at the journey's end.

"Land owners have to be supportive

if you expect to land in peace — no one likes a trespasser. It's tradition to bring a bottle of champagne to celebrate with the landowners. It was considered the kings good spirit," Carlton said.

Fun was had also by hundreds of festival attendees who mounted baskets on tethered balloons that lifted only 20 feet from the ground and never left the festival field.

"It was awesome, very beautiful. The stillness, the quiet, the view — it was all so nice," said Cris Brown, of Naples, after her first, though tethered, balloon ride.

"It absolutely capped another fun day in paradise," said her husband, George Brown.



Eileen Soler

Brightly colored hot-air balloons ascend April 12 at the Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee's fourth annual Balloons Over Paradise Festival race.



Eileen Soler

Kelsey Cooper and Doug Allen score a ride in the Immokalee Casino balloon for the Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee's fourth annual Balloons Over Paradise Festival race.



Eileen Soler

Noogie, a northern grizzly bear, seems cuddly cute but only from behind the protective fence of a new 5,000-square-foot habitat he shares with Little Girl, a black bear, at Billie Swamp Safari.

## Home sweet home for Billie Swamp bears

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — If the two bears residing at Billie Swamp Safari could speak, they might say they are the happiest bears in town.

At least that's the human interpretation of their collectively loud, motorboat-like grumblings when greeted "good morning" on a Tuesday in mid-April. Like cats that purr when pleased, Noogie, a 300-pound northern grizzly, and Little Girl, a 100-pound native black bear, reverberated pleasantries from their gut to Billie Swamp secretary Debi Lee.

"It's a sound of contentment and comfort," said Lee while the too-large-to-cuddle but just as cute bears suckled their paws and waited for handler Jodi Reynolds to serve 10 pounds of breakfast berries, mangoes, grapes, greens, peaches, yogurt and Honeycomb cereal on a gold-colored platter.

They are the king and queen of the attraction's nearly completed 5,000-square-foot bear habitat. With a freshwater pond, cozy rock cave, plenty of yard to lumber about and soon-to-be-built jungle gym, Noogie and Little Girl are home sweet home.

Both bears are rescued animals, Lee said. They were taken in separate scenarios from urban home owners who likely thought it would be fun to keep bear cubs. It did not take long before the owners learned that bears are not physically cuddly for long.

"They can cause great danger," Lee said. "Yes, they are cute. But if they play with us the way they play with each other, we would be hurt, seriously hurt."

No one knows that better at the Big Cypress attraction than Reynolds. Although she has never suffered more than a minor clawing, if Reynolds was not a 29-year veteran animal trainer, interacting with Noogie could have been deadly.

"We don't teach the animals to do tricks — it's about interaction, creating bonds and learning limits. These are never just animals in a cage," Reynolds told The Seminole Tribune in an earlier interview.

Noogie came to Billie Swamp when he was a bottle-fed cub. He is now just past his first birthday and towers about 6 feet tall. Little Girl arrived about four months later. She is now about 11 months old and stands a tad shy of 5 feet.

Putting the bears into the wild is not an option, Lee said, because they were "humanized" during their first months and would not survive if left on their own.

Wovoka Tommie, acting director of operations at Billie Swamp, said the habitat construction will be completed in coming months. Workers are also plugging away at finishing a new water-based habitat for other triplets River, Kora and Daisy. Possibly by next season, the 2,200-acre preserve will also feature new habitats for resident baby bobcats Skye and Jezebel and two raccoon pets. Between jaunting tourists through swamp buggy and airboat

♦ See DA BEARS on page 4A

## Emma Johns lifts spirits at Haitian orphanage

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**JEREMIE, Haiti** — Emma Johns traveled to the Caribbean during spring break, but the trip was far from a relaxing beach vacation. She and eight other members of Okeechobee's More 2 Life Ministries spent March 14-21 in Haiti on a mission to help orphans and residents in the impoverished town of Jeremie.

"There is no medical treatment in Jeremie, no government and no hope for change," said Johns, dean of students at Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School. "That's why the ministry is there; there's a need for it."

Johns and the group filled the orphanage's larder with food, clothing, school supplies, soccer balls and tools. They brought toiletries, coloring books, crayons and a month's supply of rice and beans.

Most of the items were donated by the First Indian Baptist Church of Brighton.

Jeremie, an isolated coastal town of about 31,000 people, is about a 10-hour bus ride from Port-au-Prince. There are only several flights each week from the capital to the town's gravel airstrip. Roads are unpaved, unmaintained and contain large potholes. Electricity is undependable and mail systems are non-existent.

There is a high birthrate in the area because of a lack of birth control. Abandoned babies are sometimes found in dumpsters.

The mission group teamed up with the Haiti-based Pure Hope and Transformation ministry, led by Haiti native Jude Eugene and More 2 Life Ministries member Casey

Lumpkin. The group, which also included PECS teachers Traci Mendez, Cindy Ringstaff and Ryan Tedders, stayed at the ministry's facility.

Lumpkin has lived in Haiti on and off for five years and attended Youth With A Mission Discipleship Training School to prepare him for his role at the ministry. He said he was pleased to see the church group touch lives in Jeremie.

In his experience, he doesn't know many Haitian mothers who show affection toward their children.

"Their hearts are very calloused to the hard way of life here. I loved having people here who can love on these children as our mothers loved on us," Lumpkin said via Facebook chat.

The nameless orphanage's staff of five attends to 52 children, including three who are disabled.

Lumpkin said parents are ashamed of their special needs kids, so they leave them at the orphanage. Other children are dropped off by parents who continue to have more kids but can't afford to feed them.

"Haitian men can have up to four to eight wives with a small tribe of children. I know men who have 22 children and don't make five dollars a day," Lumpkin said. "Eighty-five percent of the children in Haiti do not have fathers. It breaks my heart and I thought I would get used to it, but I haven't reached that point yet."

From infants to late teens, each child was photographed by the church group with the intent of finding them sponsors to help sustain the facility, which has showers and one unreliable toilet.

♦ See MISSION TRIP on page 4A

**"Seeing how big a difference you can make changes your perception."**

— Emma Johns

# EPA funds in-house water utilities training to combat climate change

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency met with professionals from the Tribe's Environmental Resource Management and Public Works departments March 26-27 to address climate change impacts that may affect tribal water utilities.

The meetings were part of the EPA's Climate Ready Water Utilities initiative, which provides funds, training and technical assistance to help water utilities prepare for climate change in 20 communities nationwide.

The most serious risks facing the Tribe in Brighton were identified as wildfires that could damage the water treatment plant. Aquifer contamination from surface runoff and increased water demand were cited as the biggest threats in Hollywood.

"We didn't really see anything climatically in the data that would radically change the water supply," said Gary Braganza, Public Works water quality specialist. "We are too far from the coast for salt water intrusion to impact us in Hollywood, so we looked at things that were more pressing."

Contaminated runoff from increased population and development was considered to be more of a threat than climate change. The EPA will work with the Tribe to manage future challenges.

"We are at mercy of something we can't control. We just have to deal with it as it comes," Braganza said. "The EPA was very willing to work with us with what we define as threats to us and not just impose a climate model."

Hollywood and Big Cypress draw water from the relatively shallow Biscayne Aquifer. Immokalee receives water from the Tamiami Formation. Brighton currently gets its water from the shallow surficial aquifer, but there are plans to drill two additional wells into the deeper Floridan Aquifer.

According to the EPA, deeper wells will yield higher quality water and reduce treatment costs. However, the EPA is concerned the Floridan Aquifer could be affected by increased demand as a result

of other water systems in the region all tapping into the same location. But the threat was deemed less of a priority than wildfire.

The EPA provided Climate Resilience Evaluation and Awareness Tool software to help the Tribe assess risks from climate change.

Based on the software's analysis, threats to the Tribe are low.

"Climate change is such a broad topic, but the software is a good tool," said Carolina Speroterra, Environmental Resource Management water quality technician. "It is a framework of how to organize things that may be affected by climate change threats. It was a useful meeting and it allowed us to get together to talk about issues we haven't thought of before."

The group, which included Braganza, Speroterra, the EPA's Mike Maier and consultants hired by the EPA, toured the Brighton water treatment plant and discussed various scenarios to protect it from fire. The building is made of concrete and metal, but the site is vulnerable because a backup generator is near a tree line.

In Hollywood, the Tribe's demand for water from the aquifer will likely double when it starts to provide water to the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino. Currently, the Tribe depends on a non-Seminole utility to supply water to the venue.

"We have no news as to when or how it will occur, but we are installing two more wells in Hollywood to meet that demand," Braganza said. "The Tribe wants to retain self-sufficiency and not rely on any other utility for its water."

By the end of the meetings, the group had identified solutions to several threats. In Brighton, the group agreed the generator should be moved away from the tree line and placed behind a firewall.

In Hollywood, discussions included community outreach, drought contingency plans, and landscape and irrigation changes to the casino.

The Tribe will continue to use the software and work with the EPA for the next two to three years while collecting data for analysis at future meetings.

## ◆ DA BEARS

From page 3A

tours and performing alligator and wildlife shows, staff members are building the habitats themselves.

A bird of prey house was recently

completed and is awaiting rescue birds.

"We'll never be able to recreate a totally natural habitat for the rescue animals, but we try and at the same time give people a chance to witness up close the animals that live here," Tommie said. "We want to provide an interactive experience without putting our human guests in danger."

## ◆ AWARENESS

From page 1A

At the Boys & Girls Club table, children bedazzled hand fans that declared, "Hands are for helping, not hurting." Adults, at the rodeo table, wrote names of children on blue ribbons and then tacked them to a larger blue ribbon poster. Erin Sexton, of the Housing Department, distributed homemade cupcakes topped with blue icing.

Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger said he hopes to launch a training initiative soon for employees, Tribal and non-Tribal, across all departments for all to become more keenly aware of the signs of child abuse.

"I want to see everyone who comes in contact with our kids, from Ahfachkee School to the gymnasiums and the Culture Department, to be able to recognize the signs. Forget about the stigma of being afraid to hurt a person's feelings. It takes the entire village to save our children," Councilman Tiger said.

On April 24, Tribal members, community residents and employees participated in the Tribe's third annual Child Abuse Awareness Community Walk and Ice Cream Socials in Hollywood, Immokalee, Big Cypress and Brighton.

Hosted by the Family Services Department, the event fliers promised that "together we can build brighter futures for our children and families in our community."

In Hollywood, about 40 people dressed in blue T-shirts marched through streets in a show of solidarity. But first, everyone pledged to "speak up for the rights of children; help when I suspect that a child is being abused; speak with other people in my community about protecting children ... do everything in my power and authority to end the abuse."

## ◆ HARD ROCK

From page 1A

isn't a tribal event and they don't have to like you, but it was a great validation to see a crowd like this respond to me."

It was no easy feat to produce Hard Rock Rising Miami Beach; the organizers didn't approach Hard Rock International until December 2014. Allen said other concerts take up to two years to plan but that Miami Beach Mayor Philip Levine wanted a seasoned company to produce the event.

"We have a lot of talent from around the world and we are blessed to have so much talent here," said David Gold, Hard Rock Live vice president of entertainment, who spent two weeks on-site with his team to ensure the concert's success. "We are pleased with the eclectic group of talent and are looking forward to next year." Allen said he hopes Hard Rock will

have the opportunity to produce more concert events in Miami Beach during the next three years.

The Osceola brothers said they did exactly what they set out to do during their performance; they played "loud and in-your-face rock 'n' roll," Cameron Osceola said. It was the largest crowd the brothers played for, and they were primed to take the stage.

"We give our all for each show," Cameron said. "You never know who is watching or if this will be your last day."

After darkness had fallen and parachutists with flares on their heels landed safely on the beach, Andrea Bocelli took the stage. The crowd stayed until the wee hours to hear Secada, Estefan and Gibb perform and to watch fireworks. A dance party ensued with Fantine, Flo Rida and Wyclef Jean, who provided the soundtrack.

The next Hard Rock Rising will take place July 24-25 in Barcelona, Spain.



Timothy Urbina guides his calf around the ring March 27 at the Seminole Indian 4-H Show and Sale in Brighton.

Beverly Bidney

# Animals take center stage at Brighton 4-H show, sale

## 76 kids compete at annual event

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BRIGHTON** — The cold, rainy and blustery evening of March 27 soaked the Brighton 4-H grounds but didn't dampen the spirits of 76 young competitors who vied for wins with their steer, heifer, hog or small animal at the Seminole Indian 4-H Show and Sale.

While friends and relatives encouraged them from the stands, 4-H'ers from each reservation showed determination in the ring as they displayed 52 hogs, 24 steers, 2 heifer yearlings and 19 small animals for the judges.

Chade Osceola, of Hollywood, took top honors for grand champion steer, while Ramone Baker, of Brighton, earned grand champion swine accolades.

Seasoned 4-H'er Hunter Strickland, 15, remained busy this year raising three heifers and a steer. It was her fourth year showing heifers. Hunter showed a yearling, which she planned to breed after the show, and she showed and sold a steer.

"I enjoy it, but it's a lot of work," she said. "It's expensive, but you make your money back. The steer pays for the expense of the heifers. In the end, I'll have a herd."

Participants in the three-year heifer program don't sell the animals; they use them to breed their own herds. The first year, they show a yearling; the second year, a bred heifer; and the third year, a cow-calf pair.

Rodney Osceola said he believes the responsibility he learned as a 4-H'er growing up in Brighton helped prepare him for adulthood.

"The main thing is being responsible," he said. "You have to get the animals fed. Just like you would a young child, you can't put yourself before them. I hope that's what some of these kids have learned."

In addition to caring for the animals, 4-H'ers learned the business of livestock. They tracked every expense, including



Morgan Yates, right, holds her heifer as Adarius Ford and Shyllynn Testerman pet the animal before the 4-H show in Brighton.

Beverly Bidney

supplies and veterinarian visits, and then they sold the animals and pocketed the profits at the 4-H sale March 28.

Children begin the 4-H program at age 5 with small animals like chickens, rabbits, goats, puppies, piglets and calves. At age 8, they may upgrade to hogs, and by 10 the kids can raise steer.

"You get the young kids involved with small animals, and it prepares them for the next level," said Brighton Board Rep. Larry Howard. "At the end of the day, you are teaching them the responsibility of caretaking these animals. It will serve them well in life regardless of what they do."

CeCe Thomas spent two years in the small animal program and proudly showed her first hog this year.

"Having a pig is more work. You have to spend a lot of time with it every day," said CeCe, 9. "That's the most important thing, so it gets to know you."

She raised the 240-pound hog from a piglet weighing only 36 pounds. Her efforts paid off. She placed first in her weight category.

"It's always a pleasure to come out and see what the kids have worked on all year," said Immokalee Board Liaison Dorothy Scheffler. "They do well and learn about hard work and the reward at the end."



Aleah Turtle, the intermediate showmanship winner, shows her 1,048-pound steer in the ring as judge Clint McWater examines the animal.

Beverly Bidney

## ◆ MISSION TRIP

From page 3A

"Casey is a direct link to the church," Johns said. "We know where the money will go and how it will be spent."

Johns said there is more to be done. "None of us wanted to leave," she said. "I can see myself going back in the future for longer periods of time."

The mission group also visited the small fishing village of Bonbon, about 25 minutes west of Jeremie, where many residents suffer from alcoholism. Lumpkin maintains a fishing ministry in Bonbon called Gideon Men.

Lumpkin meets with 35 to 50 men every week to hold Bible study and host fishing trips.

"Mainly [I am] sharing God's truth on how to be Godly husbands and fathers," Lumpkin said.

During the week, the group also hosted a movie night at the mission and prepared about 250 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for children and women in the tent cities that line the roads.

"Seeing how big a difference you can make changes your perception," Johns said. "With something so small like peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, who ever thought someone would hug you for something like that?"

Mendez said the highlight of her third mission trip to Haiti was spending time with the children at the orphanage and in the community.

"We held them, loved on them, sang with them and prayed over them," she said in an email. "Most children do not get much attention from adults. They are hungry for affection and attention. I love sharing with them how much Jesus loves them and how they have many people in the states praying for them. I believe in investing in the children. They are Haiti's hope."

Johns said she has always felt compelled to help others and now wants to do something greater with her life. She said that while survival is the main

goal for children at the orphanage, they are desperate for love.

"God's love doesn't stop at the U.S. boundary; the need is worldwide," Johns said. "The trip changed me. I see the need and realize there are things we can do. Understanding you can make a difference to those people every day is life changing. I'd go back tomorrow and stay; that's how life changing it was."

Emma Johns poses with children at the Pure Hope and Transformation Ministry in Jeremie, Haiti on March 15. Johns was part of a mission group from the More 2 Life Ministries in Okeechobee.

Photo courtesy of Emma Johns

# Poetry, painting, music deliver passionate theater experience

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**AVON PARK, Fla.** — A stark stage was set at the South Florida State College (SFSC) auditorium March 26 for a performance art show by Seminole poet and painter Elgin Jumper.

Easels held canvases: two filled with images of Seminole warriors, one blank save for a thin layer of chartreuse and bright green strokes. A table was decked with tubes of paint, water glasses and paint brushes that stood in a tall jar like arrows at the ready. Two empty chairs and three microphones waited.

"This is very much experimental," said Mollie Doctrow, curator at the college's Museum of Florida Art & Culture. "What we are about to see is a mixed-media, theatrical presentation that combines music, vocals and fine art."

Called "Elgin Jumper's Theatre Studio Experience," the show figuratively painted life in the Everglades and the struggles of one modern-day Native American through candid and emotional poetry performance.

"Open sky and clear blue miracles in the sky," Jumper began reciting about the Everglades' heavenly canopy.

To lilting background vocals by Brittney Brady and acoustic, electric and bowed string accompaniment by Philip Huebeck, Jumper followed his recitations with the rise and fall of his paintbrush at

first peaceful, then conflicted, then at peace again.

At the climax of the show, Jumper's poetic quarrel was punctuated by musical dissonance via Brady's purposeful off-key soprano that clashed with Huebeck's intentionally dreadful-sounding bow dragged across banjo strings.

"Nine millimeter still smoking and a rose in a vase ... I was only good at being no good," Jumper recited. "It's so hard to come back from that."

Eventually, when the stormy discourse of words and music cleared and the musical complement turned playfully light, Jumper had produced another, perhaps stronger, warrior portrait. At the end, many in the audience of nearly 30 art lovers and SFSC students gave enthusiastic reviews.

"Time flew by in a very enjoyable, lovely, artful way," said Linda Williams, of Lake Placid, who attended with her husband, Michael Williams.

Art professor Cathy Futral sat for the performance with about 10 students who were assigned to watch and then write a critique on the show for a grade. Futral said she related to the show.

"Power and energy transmitted through the painting. I had my mouth open. I really connected to the artists' passion," Futral said.

Sophomore Cherie Racke called the presentation "dreamlike."

Doctrow said the event complemented an exhibit that runs through May 1 at the college's museum, "At Home: Seminole Reservations and Contemporary Native Art — Elgin Jumper and Jessica Osceola." A special chickee made by Norman "Skeeter" Bowers; paintings by Guy LaBree and Christopher Sill; items from the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum; and artifacts from the private collection of Anne and Charles Reynolds supplement the show.

Jumper, of the Otter Clan, shared with spectators that he felt compelled to create art about 10 years ago when he found himself at a personal crossroad. By way of intense study, his first series of paintings was inspired by art masters.

The show at SFSC was a result of Jumper's art evolution, he said. He produced a similar performance with assistance from Brady and Huebeck for a show with other Seminole artists in January 2014 at Florida Gulf Coast University.

"I just felt like I needed to do something different, something that incorporated theater and music. I needed to take art to another place," Jumper said.

After viewing the show, Doctrow understood.

"The result was very, very special. I felt like I was on a journey, too," Doctrow said.



Eileen Soler

Vandall Samuels, a community outreach specialist from Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, gives visitors at Clewiston Museum an up-close and hands-on look at authentic Seminole moccasins April 9 during a Seminole Heritage Day presentation held in conjunction with the town's annual end-of-harvest Sugar Festival.

## Tribe gets nod at Clewiston Seminole Heritage Day

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**CLEWISTON** — Delores Duncan, of Clewiston, remembers the mid-1950s when Seminole women dressed in patchwork clothing would come into town from Big Cypress Reservation for weekly shopping at Royal's department store.

"They would sit with their children under the Australian pine trees where Corbin's is now. It was interesting to see but most of them didn't speak English — or at least not to us," Duncan said.

On April 9, at the Clewiston Museum just off U.S. Highway 27, Duncan joined about 25 other locals at Clewiston Museum to honor their Seminole neighbors at the fifth annual Seminole Heritage Day. The event featured a history and culture lesson from Vandall Samuels, a community outreach specialist from Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum.

Samuels presented spectators with a glimpse into early Seminole living in the Everglades through the slideshow "Seminole Camp Life — Turn of the Century."

He explained how Native communities revolved around chickee camps, males were hunters and women were matriarchs, the Tribe survived on local plants and animals for food, and how thick cypress

trees were hand carved into canoes for transportation.

"Girls had to earn a spot at the cooking fire ... men spent days hand carving canoes from the biggest cypress trees," Samuels said. "From all of what we learn, we get a better appreciation for what they put their hearts into for the survival of the family."

After the presentation, attendees perused a collection of Seminole clothing, dolls, jewelry and camp tools.

The museum, one of 80 stops along the Big Water Heritage Trail that encompasses five counties surrounding Lake Okeechobee, was the original home of The Clewiston News. Built in 1928, it is one of the town's oldest buildings and now also houses the Clewiston Chamber of Commerce. It features a 60-seat theater and a vast collection of fossils, photographs and artifacts that highlight the heritage of Hendry County.

Brenda Lopez, chair of the museum and a lifelong Clewiston resident, said the museum began formally honoring the Seminole Tribe in 2000 with proclamations and special activities during the annual Clewiston Sugar Festival. Began in the 1930s to herald the end of the sugar harvest, the festival this year was held April 9-12.

"We are all part of this community here so we should be all about opportunities that show and share out cultures," Lopez said.



Eileen Soler

During one of several poetic segments of the performance art show 'Elgin Jumper's Theatre Studio Experience' March 26 at South Florida State College, Jumper recites an emotion-filled soliloquy.



Eileen Soler

Painter and poet Elgin Jumper creates a Seminole warrior portrait to musical accompaniment during a performance art show at South Florida State College.



REGISTERED VOTERS

REMEMBER  
ELECTION DAY

MAY 11th, 2015

IF YOU DID NOT REGISTER BY THE DEADLINE OF JANUARY 31<sup>ST</sup> 2015, YOU CANNOT VOTE IN THIS ELECTION



# E a s t e r



Eileen Soler  
Chaska Osceola turns an Easter basket into an Easter bonnet March 25 during the Big Cypress Easter celebration at Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena.



Rachel Buxton  
Mable Haught dons a festive hat during Brighton's senior Easter celebration April 6.



Brett Daly  
Ava-Jae Cypress, 4, peels a bright purple hard-boiled Easter egg during the Hollywood Reservation celebration March 31 at the airnasium.



Brett Daly  
Dalina Rodriguez, 2, smiles widely after the Easter egg hunt on the Hollywood Reservation ball field.



Eileen Soler  
Eden Jumper gets the jump on other teen competitors during an Easter egg hunt at the Big Cypress Easter celebration.



Brett Daly  
Nettie Stewart is all smiles during a cellphone photo shoot with Mr. Peter Cottontail, the Easter Bunny, in the fur, at the Hollywood Reservation celebration.



Eileen Soler  
Harmony Cypress hunts through piles of hay for pastel-colored eggs during an Easter egg hunt in Big Cypress.



Eileen Soler  
Children dash after greased pigs during the Big Cypress Easter celebration. Other activities included egg tosses, bean bag tosses, garden planting and dunking each other in a dunk tank.



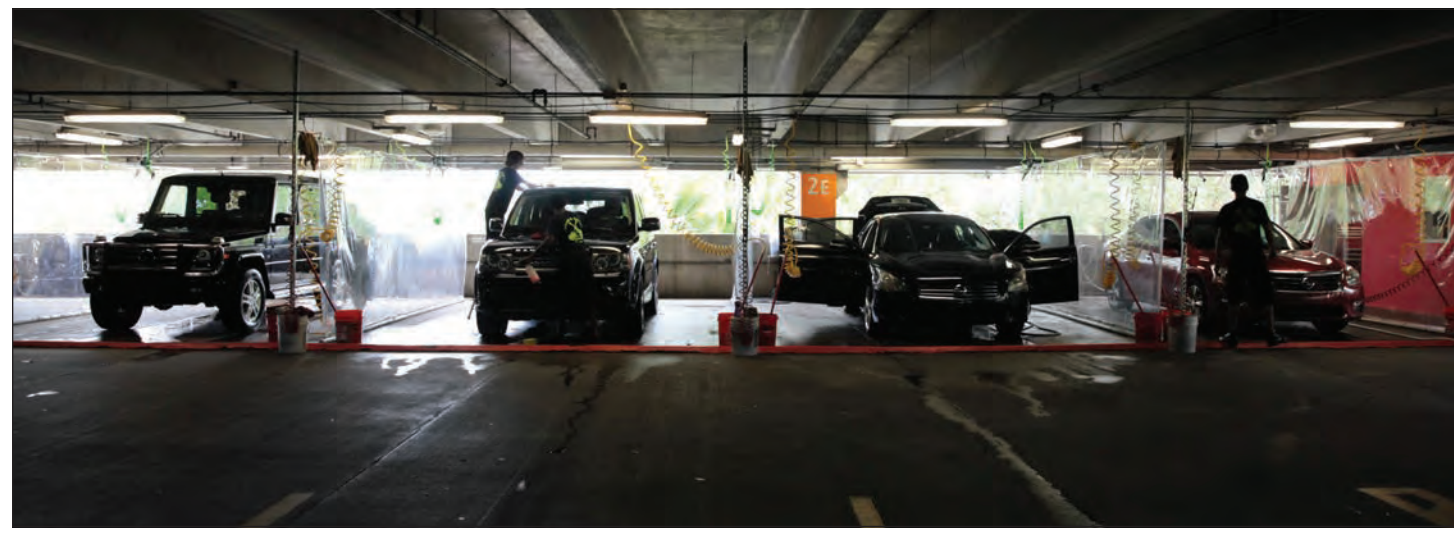
Photo courtesy of Mary Stomboli  
Youth from Fort Pierce dye Easter eggs April 1 during the community Easter celebration.



Photo courtesy of Taylor Mauldin  
From left, Lake Goodwin, Jaiden Gould, Chyler Villarreal and Kayden Warrior show off the Easter baskets they won April 2 during the Brighton Boys & Girls Club Easter celebration.



Rachel Buxton  
Sandy Billie proudly wears his Easter bonnet during the egg hunt for seniors during the Brighton Reservation Easter celebration.



Beverly Bidney

Vehicles are cleaned at the Winner's Way Auto Salon, owned by Gem Osceola, at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood.

## Business profile: Winner's Way Auto Salon delivers shiny rides

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — Another amenity has been added to the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood. Customers can now have their vehicles hand washed and detailed at the Winner's Way Auto Salon while playing, dining or enjoying a show.

Located in the Seminole Way Garage, the business is the latest endeavor of entrepreneur Gem Osceola.

"You are always going to have dirty cars out there and everyone will need their cars cleaned," Osceola said. "Why not do it while they are at the Hard Rock? It saves them time if they can get it done while they are inside."

A similar business previously operated in the garage, but when it closed more than a year and a half ago, Osceola saw an opportunity. He went after the lease, received Council approval in January and has been developing the business ever since.

Osceola hired long-time acquaintance Richard Palacios, who has owned and operated a car wash in Dania Beach for 13 years, to serve as operations manager. He brings his expertise to the fledgling business.

"This is a unique opportunity. We are trying to bring an enhancement to the property by providing a service that is much needed," Palacios said. "The challenge will be to let everyone know we are here. Then word of mouth should speak for itself."

Customers get free parking with a car wash. Winner's Way has 100 spaces on the second floor adjacent to the car wash and 15 on the ground floor by the valet area. The service costs just a few dollars more than the valet fee, so Osceola expects Hard Rock patrons will see the value. Discounts are available for Tribal members and employees.

The space contains six bays divided by heavy vinyl curtains, new machinery, vacuums, lighting, computers, security cameras and point of sale tablets. New air compressor lines were added to dispense eco-friendly, biodegradable cleaning products at each bay. A staff of 10 is available even at night, the busiest time at the car wash. Osceola said.

Hours are Tuesday through Thursday noon to 7 p.m., Friday and Saturday from noon to midnight, and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Services include interior and exterior cleaning, which features rim and tire shining. Prices start at \$25 for exterior cleaning, and \$40 for interior and exterior cleaning; both include valet parking.

Customers may leave their car at the valet stand, where a Winner's Way Auto Salon representative awaits patrons with the menu of services and payment options. Their vehicles will be brought back to the valet area when clean. Customers also have the option of driving directly to the car wash and picking up their vehicles there.

Osceola intends to match the high standard of the Hard Rock brand through service and quality.

His other companies, Florida Seminole Coffee and Paparazzi Photography and Entertainment, have been vendors for Hard Rock for about 10 years. Osceola plans to create a parent company to oversee them all.

"The Hard Rock and the Tribe have strict guidelines for how things are done," he said. "I have the depth of experience now, so I know we can make it work."



Beverly Bidney

Gem Osceola poses with his son, John, 16, at the Winner's Way Auto Salon in the Seminole Way Garage at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood.

## Egmont Key stakeholders seek preservation solutions for tiny island with Seminole ties

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER  
Special Projects Reporter

**EGMONT KEY** — A boat trip organized by the Seminole Tribe gathered together most of the entities important to saving erosion-wracked Egmont Key. The March 25 voyage included a guided tour of the island and a brainstorming session among 18 persons with interest or key roles in preserving the little endangered atoll at the mouth of Tampa Bay.

The group was welcomed aboard the Friendly Fisherman at Fort Desoto by Capt. Mark Hubbard. About two years ago, Capt. Hubbard guided the Gulf deepsea fishing boat loaded with Seminoles from Egmont Key to St. Mark's in the Florida panhandle — a re-creation of the mid-1800s trips taken by the government steam vessel Grey Cloud that hauled deported Indians to join other exiled southeastern Indians on the "Trail of Tears" to Oklahoma during the Seminole Wars.

On one voyage, Seminole Polly Parker escaped when the boat reached St. Mark's in the Florida panhandle. The boat had stopped to pick up wood for the journey up the Mississippi River.

Parker and others walked and canoed back to the Okeechobee area and were never recaptured. Egmont Key's history with Seminoles includes bodies buried in a marked graveyard and, experts suspect, in unmarked graves elsewhere on the island.

"If we lose Egmont Key, we may lose this part of our history. Few people know about it, as it is," said Willie Johns, a Seminole Tribe historian and Chief Justice. "It may be a dark history — this was our holocaust — but it is still important to remember. We must never forget what happened to our people here."

During the late-March trip, voyagers were shown the results of recent sand replacement efforts by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Egmont Key's northern beach area now extends an estimated 50 to 75 yards farther as a result of nearly 600,000 cubic yards of sand dumped there by the Corps in recent months. Erosion has claimed more than 50 percent of the almost 400 acres

of the island's 580 acres since the 1970s. A combination of global warming, wave action from supertankers passing nearby through the deepwater Tampa Bay shipping channel and the occasional violent storm are blamed for most of the devastation.

The new sand is temporary, as was sand dumped there and on other parts of the island several times during channel dredgings since 2000.

"When Mother Nature wants it she'll take it. That could be in a year or decade. It could be next week if a big enough storm hits," said Egmont Key ranger Tom Watson, marking the former 4-foot cliff edge of the beach (now in the middle of the new beach) that used to mark the island's northern tip.

In an attempt for a permanent solution, the Army Corps has applied to grab \$38.6 million from penalties paid in connection with the Deepwater Horizon oil spill to build an underwater support structure. The metal sheet piling wall would preserve future sand renourishment and add an estimated 39 acres of "permanent" coastal habitat. The U.S. Treasury is reviewing the application for emergency funding.

Beau Williams, of AquaTech Eco Consultants, discussed another suggestion which is now in use to fight erosion at the Richard T. Paul Alafia Bank Bird Sanctuary. He feels it is better than the "wall." He said placing wave-attenuation devices — concrete pyramids pierced with holes — in the bay is a more advanced idea.

"They lessen both the wave's power and the ability of the tides to pull sand away from the island," Williams said. "We can build the beach as far back as we want; that's the benefit of these instead of installing a wall that would be there forever or until it breaks apart."

Williams has been assured the Corps will consider his recommendations.

Wildlife is also a key component of the island. Ranger Watson pointed out that Egmont Key is home to more than 30,000 pairs of birds and 1,800 gopher tortoises. He said last season 54 loggerhead sea turtle nests holding up to 100 eggs apiece were recorded.

From the late 1800s through early

1900s, Egmont Key was home to Fort Dade, where the U.S. military protected the Tampa Bay area during the Spanish-American War. The fort housed a town of more than 300 and included brick roads, a railroad and 70 buildings, including a bowling alley, but most everything is gone now. Built in 1847, the lighthouse still stands as a working beam, operated by the U.S. Coast Guard.

A report on the meeting was broadcast nationwide by National Public Radio. A reporter and a photographer from the Tampa Tribune also covered the meeting.

"It is amazing how much media and government attention this project is getting now, after languishing all these years," said Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum Director Paul Backhouse, whose staff organized the meeting. "The more we can do to keep this project in the public eye, the better chance we'll have of seeing the island saved."

During the meeting, Backhouse described several tribal projects, including public information and attention grant applications with the National Park Service and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Backhouse said he thinks the Tribe has a good chance of getting them.

"It is appropriate that the Seminole Tribe is the driving force behind (Egmont Key restoration)," said Mary Glowacki, Florida's state archaeologist. "History and culture play a very important role in preserving sites such as Egmont Key."

Backhouse said he met with the Alliance for Integrated Spatial Technologies on the University of South Florida campus.

"They probably have one of the most advanced archaeological visualization labs in the world. Coincidentally, they really want to work on Egmont Key," Backhouse said. "We agreed to begin discussion on an interdisciplinary program that will focus on expanding knowledge of the island in a number of directions, including allowing tribal school groups to get exposure to the history through hi-tech laser scanning and non-invasive geophysical techniques like ground penetrating radar. We will be looking to seek a grant for this work so that it won't ultimately encumber the Tribe in any way."

## Young marksman's aim right on target

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — Call it beginner's luck or call him a naturally skilled marksman, but either way Elijah Cook nabbed his first turkey with the first bullet he ever shot from his new Remington 20-gauge shotgun.

"I didn't expect to hit something because I never went hunting before," the 11-year-old said. "When I did, I felt very excited."

The hunting expedition March 17 took place during the Big Cypress Wildlife Department's Spring Gobbler Turkey Hunt. Eli, as he prefers to be called, went out with Wovoka Tommie at about 5 a.m. After setting up, they waited. Eli tried his hardest to remain still and quiet.

"The big challenge was the mosquitoes," said Eli, a sixth-grader at Clewiston Christian School. "Wovoka found a leaf to keep them away, so I rubbed it on me and it kept them away for a little while."

They decided to move to another spot and then another. At about 8 a.m., they found a location where turkeys were plentiful. They tracked one behind a palmetto, and Tommie told Eli to take aim.

"The turkeys came in and a second later, he nailed his first turkey," said Eli's mother, Sissy Cook. "I bought him his first shotgun the week before and the first shot on that gun was his first kill."

Although Eli spent plenty of time at target practice with a .22-caliber rifle, he had never fired a shotgun.

Cook saved the tail feathers, beard and

spurs for mounting in a shadow box along with the shell casing. Eli plans to hang it in his bedroom.

"Hunting is a learning experience," Cook said. "Patience is the main thing you learn from it; that's one of the things I hope he learns."

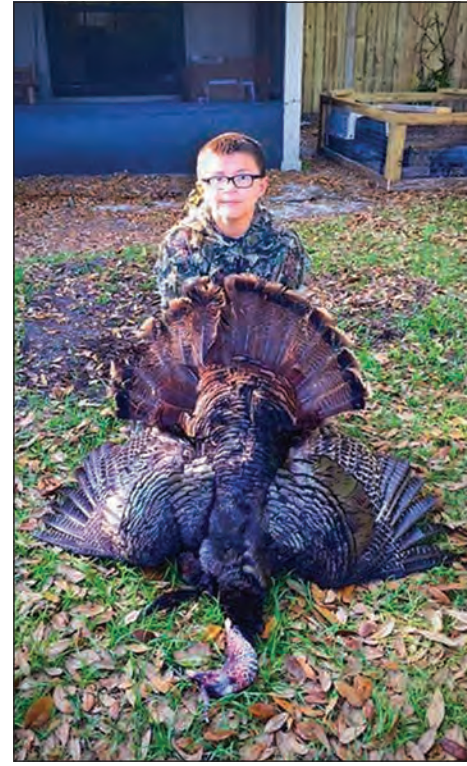


Photo courtesy of Sissy Cook

Elijah Cook displays the turkey he nabbed with the first bullet he shot from his new shotgun.

### ◆ JENKINS

From page 1A

The Tribe must also always account for all gaming revenue; have earned and maintained a reputation for safety, fairness and honesty; be free of illegal activity; and operate on a fiscally sound basis with adequate accounting, investigation, licensing and enforcement systems in place.

"[Jenkins] put all of the regulations in place to the 'T' and because of that, no question about it, to this day other Tribes look to us for guidance because we are the first to accomplish self-regulation," Calisanti said.

In October 2014 when then-NIGC Acting Chairman Jonodev Osceola Chaudhuri presented the certification, Chairman Billie insisted that Jenkins instead of him pose for photos with Chaudhuri and gaming commissioners. Chaudhuri was confirmed by the Senate as the new chair of the Native gaming commission on April 16. NIGC provides oversight for more than 450 Native American gaming establishments operated by about 250 Tribes in the United States.

Jenkins, born and raised in Newark, New Jersey, earned a bachelor's degree in business management from Seton Hall University in 1966 while working in support services for the FBI. He was then promoted to FBI street agent in Louisville, Kentucky; Gary, Indiana; and Detroit, Michigan. In 1989 Jenkins was named the



Eileen Soler

Ed Jenkins, the Tribe's executive director of Seminole Gaming Compliance and Regulation, poses in his office just days from his April 30 retirement.

### ◆ DISPATCH

From page 1A

Seminole Tribe of Florida Fire Rescue is present in Hollywood, Big Cypress and Brighton. All other communities rely on county services.

SPD is training four dispatchers to cover Immokalee calls. Currently, one trainee is serving with a full-time dispatcher, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Ultimately, the four trainees will be employed on the reservation around the clock, seven days a week.

Negrey said Hollywood, Big Cypress and Brighton dispatch centers already exist to deploy police day and night in those

assistant special agent for the agency's Organized Crime and Drug Section in Las Vegas. He retired from the FBI at age 47 to become vice president of security at Caesars World Inc. and later the head of corporate security for MGM Grand in Australia.

Jenkins was hired by the Seminole Tribe to serve as a gaming consultant in 2001. The Tribe's flagship Seminole Hard Rock Hotel Casino opened in 2004.

"I came on as a 60-day consultant and now almost 14 years later I'm still here ... I came with a 6-foot, 4-inch body of steel and jet black hair. Now I am white haired and well ...," said the grandfather of five.

Jenkins said he set his personal goal "on day one" at earning self-regulation for the Tribe. And from day one, he operated a tight ship as a no-nonsense manager.

"All of the policies and procedures formulated and based on Class III regulations in Nevada, and later when slot machines and table games were added, were made universal throughout Florida — all the same from Tampa to Hollywood," Jenkins said. "Everything fell into place."

Employees learned his mantra by heart: If it isn't in writing, it doesn't exist.

"What did I learn from Ed? To dot my I's and cross my T's. You know when you have to present to Ed you have to be on the mark," said gaming investigator Karen Alena.

Chairman Billie said Jenkins left a disciplined and strong impression and will be missed.

"I was always a wild card kind of guy. I shot from the hip and needed Ed to keep the aim straight," the Chairman said. "I may get things going in unorthodox ways but I have professionals like Ed Jenkins, Jim Shore and Jim Allen — all good people — to keep us in good standing."

The compliance and regulation staff toasted (and roasted) Jenkins during a private dinner at a Fort Lauderdale restaurant where they awarded him with an album that included photographs and newspaper clippings that heralded landmarks in Jenkins' Seminole Gaming career.

"He reached the summit and took the Tribe with him," Calisanti said.

Jenkins, who cooks dinner every Wednesday for senior ladies at his Fort Lauderdale condo building and has written cookbooks of his favorite family recipes, plans to spend more time with his wife of four decades, two children and five granddaughters at his homes in Nevada and California.

Soon, he hopes to launch a retirement gig as the owner of Tribal Gaming Regulatory Consultants in Las Vegas.

"I'm leaving with mixed emotions. The Tribe has been good to me, but it's time for me to go home, play with my grandchildren and relax for a while," Jenkins said.

reservations, but the additional five tribal communities and the Tribe's Coconut Creek casino property are also protected by on-duty officers.

Dispatchers, also called public safety communicators, must complete six months of training to earn seven certifications. The certifications include CPR, Emergency Medical Dispatcher, Public Safety Telecommunicator 1, Fire Service Dispatcher Communications, State of Florida Dispatcher Certification and Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Criminal Justice Information Systems (CJIS) Certification.

For emergencies on the Immokalee Reservation, dial 911. For non-emergency, police-related issues, call 239-657-6956.

# Preserving historic, contemporary patchwork through conservation

**SUBMITTED BY TARA BACKHOUSE**  
 Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

The Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum currently has an exhibition featuring contemporary Seminole patchwork from the last 30 or 40 years. The exhibit is on display until early December for visitors wishing to view it. In addition, the Museum has more than 400 textiles in its historic collection, many of which are older than 40 years.

The earliest pieces date from the first few decades of the 1900s. Back then, patchwork was a new art form. These early pieces do not have much patchwork, but they show patchwork in the beginning stages of development.

Other pieces, dating from the mid-20th century, show how fully patchwork styles developed within a few decades. These skirts, big shirts and jackets sometimes have as many as five small rows of colorful and intricate patterns.

Preserving these textiles is one of the most important things that the Museum does on a daily basis, but many people don't know what is involved in the process.

Many things can be done to preserve a historic object. Sometimes the best thing to do is to keep it in a special acid-free box away from light that would fade it and chemicals in regular cardboard boxes that would transfer to the object and damage it. But the most recent project the Museum completed was a little different. This project involved a conservation process designed to connect information to each object. Another important aspect of preserving the past is preserving the information connected to an object. In the case of the textile collection, staff members used a numbering system to connect existing information to the objects in the collection.

Each textile has its own unique accession number that is documented in the Museum's collection management database along with the information about each object.

This identification number is typically composed of three sets of numbers that correspond to the year the object came to the Museum collection, the designated number for the overall group of objects that were donated or purchased in one lot, and the unique number for the individual piece.

The accession number is also a form of security in order to track the object's location when in storage, on exhibit or on loan to another museum. It connects any information known about the object, such as the name of the artist, former owner of the object or the date of a piece, to the actual object.

Based on the material of the object, accession numbers are attached to objects differently. For metals or wooden objects, the number is often applied on top of a barrier of an acetone coating (a substance that looks like clear nail polish) and written with black or white ink depending on the color of the object. Textiles have a different numbering system — cotton tags.

Museum staff permanently numbers each textile by sewing a fabric tag made of cotton twill to the inside of the object. If the tag needs to be removed for any reason, the thread can be easily snipped without leaving a visible trace of the tag.

In conservation, it is all about reversibility.

The tags are normally in discrete areas so visitors don't see it while on display. But they are systematically placed in areas on the objects similar to one another so that Museum staff can easily locate the number.

A few weeks ago, the Museum finished tagging all textile objects in its storage vault thanks to the dedication and time put in by volunteer Larry Landry.

Now, staff members are permanently tagging and numbering more objects in the Museum's collection, including fine art objects, militaria and beaded objects that can be viewed during behind-the-scenes tours at the Museum.

Stop by the Museum and ask about taking a tour with a Collections staff member.

*Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum Collections manager Tara Backhouse contributed to this article.*



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum  
 This child's big shirt dates to the early 20th century and shows two rows of a basic patchwork pattern (ATTK Catalog No. 2009.39.1).



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum  
 This satin patchwork jacket with a date range between 1920 and 1960 shows increased complexity in the patchwork designs (ATTK Catalog No. 1994.11.1).



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum  
 Pictured is a close-up view of a tag with an accession number sewn inside the jacket (ATTK Catalog No. 1994.11.1).

## Laurel wilt conference set for June 16-18

**BY PETER B. GALLAGHER**  
 Special Projects Reporter

**CORAL SPRINGS** — Laurel wilt disease is killing red bay trees (*tu-lee*) at an alarming rate across South Florida and other parts of the southeastern United States. The plague has been called one of the most damaging invasive exotic diseases to ever affect North American forests. An estimated hundreds of millions of trees have died, "with multiple significant radiating effects on ecosystem structure and functions, endangered species and cultural impacts," said Jason Smith, associate professor of Forest Pathology at the University of Florida's School of Forest Resources and Conservation.

To address the issue, scientists,

academia, farmers, land managers and policy makers from the government, Tribes, nongovernmental organizations and the private sector will meet June 16-18 at the Coral Springs Marriott for the "Conference on Laurel Wilt Disease and Natural Ecosystems: Impacts, Mitigation and the Future."

The conference is open to anyone interested or involved in natural ecosystems resource management, invasive species, conservation and restoration. It will be an opportunity to network and exchange ideas on research, management, prevention and slowing the spread of laurel wilt.

According to Smith, both the Seminole Tribe of Florida and the Miccosukee Tribe of Florida Indians are extremely interested in the issue, especially on cultural grounds.

"We have been educated by Tribal leaders regarding how important the red bay and swamp bay trees are to Florida Indians, used, in fact, throughout their cultural rituals and medicine," said Smith, who spent time with Chairman James E. Billie in Brighton as part of his quest to learn more about the cultural loss to the Indians that dead red bays present.

Airboat tours of the Everglades, visits to South Florida Indian lands and conversations with Seminoles and Miccosukees will take place during the conference, Smith said.

The conference hotel reservation deadline is May 12. For conference registration and other information visit <http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/laurelwilt/reg.html>.

**Betty Mae Jumper**

## Wisdom from the past

### A Mother's Day message

The following column was written by Betty Mae Jumper and printed in the May 10, 1990 issue of *The Seminole Tribune*.

It will soon be Mother's Day and people will be wearing red flowers to show their mother is alive and some will wear white flowers to show that their mother passed away.

Twenty years have passed since I talked to my mother. In the wee hours of a late spring morning, God called her home in the year of 1970. Often I think of her; I miss her and tears drop from my eyes for she was a friend as well as my mother. Many hours we used to spend together and talk, which you can't do with anyone else. We were close, so it became a great

loss in my life. But I know someday I will see her again because she was a Christian and went home to be with God. God promised us all that if we follow his footsteps we will all meet again. So this is what I believe and trust.

So today many of you have a mother nearby you or even at a distance. Go see her or call her and tell her "Happy Mother's Day." You will see the joy in her eyes that she knows you thought of her. Do it now before it's too late, as you may regret it.

The reason I'm writing this little note is I am also a mother and know the feeling when one of your children comes around and says a word or so about it. You know they think of you and it makes your day. Happy Mother's Day to all.



**Remember mom. Mother's Day is May 10.**

# Hah-pong-ke: Irving Berlin

**BY PETER B. GALLAGHER**  
 Special Projects Reporter

Anyone familiar with the classic 1946 Broadway musical "Annie Get Your Gun" may recognize the controversial song "I'm an Indian, Too," written by American composer Irving Berlin and performed by America's first lady of the theater actress Ethel Merman. As the main character, Annie, she sang this song after Sitting Bull adopts her into the Sioux Tribe.

The play, produced by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II, was a fictionalized version of the life of Annie Oakley (1860-1926), a sharpshooter who starred in "Buffalo Bill's Wild West," and her romance with sharpshooter Frank Butler. The original Broadway production was a hit (1,147 performances) and then went directly to London, spawning revivals, a 1950 film version and various TV versions.

Songs from this musical that became hits include "There's No Business Like Show Business," "Doin' What Comes Natur'ly," "You Can't Get a Man with a Gun," "They Say It's Wonderful" and "Anything You Can Do." "I'm an Indian, Too" which mentions the Seminoles, among other Tribes, is not regarded in that echelon. It is, however, historically typical of mid-20th century views of Native Americans and has often been labeled racist and demeaning from a more contemporary perspective; some also see it as a satirical attack on racial stereotyping.

Native Americans have staged protests outside playhouses and movie theaters, holding picket signs stating: "Don't See 'Annie Get Your Gun.'" Fearing this reaction, many contemporary productions omit the song from their revivals, stopping the protests.



Courtesy photo  
 Ethel Merman was known primarily for her powerful voice and roles in musical theater. She played Annie Oakley in the Broadway musical 'Annie Get Your Gun.'

## 'I'm an Indian, Too'

By Irving Berlin

Like the Seminole, Navajo, Kickapoo  
 Like those Indians  
 I'm an Indian too  
 A Sioux, a Sioux  
 Just like Battle Axe, Hatchet Face, Eagle  
 Nose  
 Like those Indians  
 I'm an Indian too  
 A Sioux, a Sioux  
 Some Indian summer's day  
 Without a sound  
 I may hide away  
 With Big Chief Hole-in-the-Ground  
 And I'll have totem poles, tomahawks,  
 pipes of peace  
 Which will go to prove  
 I'm an Indian too  
 A Sioux, a Sioux  
 With my chief in his teepee  
 We'll raise an Indian family  
 And I'll be busy night and day

Looking like a flour sack  
 With two papooses on my back  
 And three papooses on the way  
 Like the Chippewa, Iroquois, Omaha  
 Like those Indians  
 I'm an Indian too  
 A Sioux, a Sioux  
 Just like Rising Moon, Falling Pants,  
 Running Nose  
 Like those Indians  
 I'm an Indian too  
 A Sioux, a Sioux  
 Some Indian summer's day  
 Without a care  
 I may run away  
 With Big Chief Son-of-a-Bear  
 And I'll wear moccasins, wampum beads,  
 feather hats  
 Which will go to prove  
 I'm an Indian too  
 A Sioux, a Sioux



# Health



Eileen Soler

Ahfachkee School students are excited to receive free crispy red apples from Disney characters Elsa and Olaf, stars of the animated movie 'Frozen.'

## Big Cypress health fair offers passport to better living

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — Many of the nearly 300 people who streamed through the Big Cypress Health Fair April 17 at Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena probably thought they knew everything about the path to a healthy life, said Edna McDuffie, community outreach coordinator for the Seminole Health Department.

"But we just need to remind everyone, every once in a while, to keep on track," McDuffie said.

Hosted by the Health Department, the fair featured about 35 booths manned by tribal department representatives, health professionals or health-related vendors. Each table highlighted a different health topic by providing educational literature, activities and giveaways.

Passports to health — sheets of paper that listed booths — were provided at the fair's entrance. Participants who visited at least 15 booths were eligible for a special thank you card from Health Director Connie Whidden and various surprise gifts.

Similar health fairs are planned for Brighton (May 28) and Hollywood (June 9).

McDuffie said the Big Cypress visitor turnout was huge but that the vendor turnout was "awesomely unexpected."

"We were very happy to have to add tables at the last minute," McDuffie said.

Health issues addressed ranged from prenatal care thanks to Healthy Start Southwest Florida to financial health

courtesy of the Tribe's Native Learning Center (NLC).

"It's as simple as this: If you can learn to handle your bills, you will have less worry and less stress. We know stress can cause health problems," said Wilma Noah, of NLC.

Free blood pressure screenings, blood sugar screenings, and height and weight screenings were available. McDuffie said past health fairs have revealed problems for several participants.

"People came back to me saying they found out they were pre-diabetic. That's what it is all about to us because that puts a person on prevention," McDuffie said.

A handful of booths put the spotlight on foods as vehicles toward well-being.

Lance Vaz, a nutritionist from Brighton, handed out free Greek yogurt and dried fruit parfaits. Steven Alvarado and Womdretta Gibson, of the Big Cypress Boys & Girls Club, let visitors prepare their own trail snack bags with granola, dark chocolate, nuts and other healthy ingredients.

Children from Ahfachkee School were treated to free apples hand delivered to each from Disney characters Elsa and Olaf.

And just in case visitors had too much fill of trail mix, parfaits or apples, Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki staff members, Roberto Luque, a geospatial analyst, and Eric Griffiths, the Museum's oral history coordinator, were on-site to promote the Museum's 1.2-mile boardwalk that can be used for sightseeing and exercise.

"We have the boardwalk and at the



Eileen Soler

A Tribal member gets a free blood sugar screening April 17 during the Big Cypress Health Fair at Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena.

end of it a native, traditional garden — and we need volunteers. People can get a workout and do something good for the community," Griffiths said.

## Potentially active mosquito season on Florida's horizon

SUBMITTED BY PATRICK PECK  
Health Department

Mosquito season 2015 is almost here, and the Tribe's mosquito control program is gearing up for another possibly active mosquito season. Florida has 80 species of mosquitoes, more than any other state. Of these, 33 species can cause pest problems for humans and domestic animals, and 13 species are capable of transmitting pathogens that cause disease. They all vary to some extent in their individual preferences for types of blood meals, egg laying sites, time of day they will fly, temperature at which they are most active and seasonality.

Florida faces threats from two mosquito-borne diseases — dengue fever and chikungunya — and residents should take steps to control mosquito populations to limit the danger. Both are viral diseases spread by mosquito bites. The Florida Department of Health in 2014 said that dengue fever was confirmed in six people in Florida and chikungunya was confirmed in 11 people who acquired them locally. Many more individuals returning from international travel to Florida also acquired the virus.

Epidemiologists fear that mosquitoes in Florida may have picked up the diseases by biting infected people out of the country, which could ignite an epidemic in the state.

"The threat is greater than I've seen in my lifetime," said Florida Medical Entomological Laboratory director Walter Tabachnick, who has worked in the field for 30 years. "Sooner or later, our mosquitoes will pick it up and transmit it to us. That is the imminent threat."

Dengue is potentially fatal, and both diseases cause serious and lingering symptoms. The most common symptom of chikungunya infection are fever and joint pain, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Tabachnick said the last statewide dengue epidemics in Florida occurred in the 1930s. Localized epidemics of dengue occurred in 2013 in a small neighborhood in Jensen Beach where 24 people were infected, and in 2009 and 2010 in Key West where 28 people were infected, according to state and federal reports.

The public should eliminate standing water, including in buckets and rain barrels where mosquitoes can breed, to help prevent mosquito problems.

"If there is public apathy and people don't clean up the yards, we're going to have a problem," Tabachnick said.

For more local information, call the STOF Environmental Health Program at 954-962-2330 or the Mosquito Control hotline at 561-371-5643.

Source: Reuters



## Florida Department of Health to promote HPV vaccinations

SUBMITTED BY BOB LAMENDOLA  
Florida Department of Health in Broward

Some parents don't like to hear about it. Some doctors don't like to talk about it. As a result, the Florida Department of Health in Broward County will start a special initiative to increase it.

"It" is the vaccine for human papillomavirus, which federal experts recommend for girls and boys starting at ages 11 and 12 to prevent cancers caused by the sexually transmitted infection.

Unlike childhood immunizations, the three-dose HPV vaccine is not required for school enrollment in Florida and is not offered by some physicians. Vaccination rates are low nationwide, including Broward and Florida, and among Native American families.

DOH-Broward is preparing a campaign to start this summer to increase the number of adolescents vaccinated against HPV, said Dr. Paula Thaqi, director of DOH-Broward.

"We think the major issue is education," Thaqi said. "Parents may be hesitant about the vaccine. We need to communicate that the vaccine can prevent cancers."

Every year, HPV causes 21,000 cases of cervical cancer (1,000 in Florida) and kills 4,000 women — and also causes other genital cancers and warts.

In 2013, an estimated 50 percent of Florida girls received a first dose of HPV vaccine (seventh lowest among states) and 28 percent of boys (17th lowest), according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Only 34 percent of

Florida girls and 13 percent of boys received all three needed doses. The rates in South Florida are thought to be similar.

The CDC has no figures for the Seminole Tribe but indicates that nationally Native American children are more likely than average to receive the HPV vaccine. Still, the rates are low.

Hoping to boost usage of the vaccine, DOH-Broward won a \$40,000 grant

over two years from the National Association of County and City Health Officials. Grants were given to only nine organizations nationwide from states with low HPV vaccination rates.

The grant will be used to create the new campaign, which will concentrate on informing medical providers about the vaccine and educating families about the benefits and misconceptions about the vaccine.

To better understand the community's thoughts about the HPV vaccine, DOH-Broward is asking parents to fill out an anonymous, nine-question survey about HPV.

In addition to education, there's a logistical hurdle to solve. The vaccine is given in three doses over six months, but many families who come for the first dose never return for the second or third dose. Officials are planning to create a system to remind families about the follow-up doses.

For more information, call the Health Department at 954-962-2009 or visit the CDC website at [www.cdc.gov/hpv/vaccine.html](http://www.cdc.gov/hpv/vaccine.html).



## Know proper storage, disposal of hazardous household products

SUBMITTED BY MISHKA SHAW  
Environmental Resource Management Dept.

Many products found in homes contain chemicals potentially harmful to both people and the environment. Chemical products such as oven cleaners, paint, paint removers, bug killers, solvents, motor oil, degreaser and drain cleaners are just a few common hazardous products in the home.

During the last 20 years, concern about the disposal of such products has grown. In 1976, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act was passed to regulate the procedures governing the generation, storage, transport, treatment and disposal of hazardous materials. Although this legislation has mitigated some problems associated with commercial hazardous material disposal, more needs to be done to reduce and properly dispose of home hazardous wastes.

The simple practices listed below can help keep families, homes, communities and the environment safe.

### Practices to follow

- Think carefully before buying a product. Is it really needed? Buy just enough to do the job; clean, empty containers can be put in the trash.

- Look for a non-hazardous or less hazardous substitute. Instead of purchasing every specialized cleaner on the market, buy fewer products and use each one for

several purposes. Look for signal words on the label, such as toxic, danger, caution or warning to determine which product may be more hazardous. Products without the signal words, such as natural or plant-based cleaners, are considered the greenest alternatives.

- Keep leftover products in original labeled containers to refer to manufacturer directions for use and proper disposal.

- Share unused products with others only if each product is in its original container with a label.

- Dispose of unused household hazardous products properly by taking it to transfer station near you.

- Locate auto repair shops and gas stations that recycle used motor oil, antifreeze and batteries.

### Practices to avoid

- Do not dump leftover products into the street, storm drains or ground. It is illegal.

- Do not burn used or leftover products or product containers. Burning may produce toxic fumes hazardous to health and contribute to air pollution.

- Do not bury leftover products or containers in yards or gardens.

- Do not reuse pesticide or other chemical containers for other purposes.

- Do not mix chemical products or wastes. Products that are safe when used alone can sometimes become dangerous if

mixed with other products. For example, avoid mixing products containing liquid household bleach (sodium hypochlorite) with products containing ammonia or acids. Such mixtures can release hazardous gases.

- Do not store corrosives, flammables and poisons together. Separate these containers.

Improper disposal of hazardous household wastes can include pouring them down the drain, on the ground, into storm sewers or in some cases putting them out with the trash. The dangers of such disposal methods might not be immediately obvious, but improper disposal of these wastes can pollute the environment, waterways and pose a threat to human health.

Properly disposing of household hazardous wastes ensures that contamination through leaks and spills does not occur. If toxic wastes are disposed of with regular garbage, they could destroy landfill liners and compromise other disposal areas.

Proper storage practices also ensure that dangerous incidents to health and environment such as food, water and air contamination are avoided.

If you have questions regarding proper use, storage and disposal of hazardous household products, contact the Environmental Resource Management Department at 954-965-4380.



Photo courtesy of the Florida Department of Health in Broward County

Every year, HPV causes 21,000 cases of cervical cancer (1,000 in Florida) and kills 4,000 women. To combat the disease, the Florida Department of Health in Broward County will begin a campaign to promote HPV vaccinations among adolescents.

# SEMINOLE SCENES



Eileen Soler

**PUT ME IN, COACH:** Though still crawling, baby Kyrin Billie is dressed and ready to play on the basketball court at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium in Big Cypress.



Eileen Soler

**POLO PASSION:** Polo teams compete in an exhibition game April 12 on an Immokalee field during the fourth annual Balloons Over Paradise Festival.



Eileen Soler

**READER'S PICK:** Sontino Billie checks out an array of fun reading accessories April 13 during the Scholastic Book Fair at Ahfatchkee School.



Eileen Soler

**WRASTLIN' REPTILE:** Alligator wrestler Julian Keen, of Billie Swamp Safari, goes intrepidly head to head with angry alligator Beast Mode April 11 during a wildlife exhibit at Immokalee Reservation.



Eileen Soler

**NET GAIN:** Good-natured competition is had by workers across several tribal departments April 9 during Big Cypress Employee Fun Day. Here, at right dressed in glowing yellow T-shirts, Reinaldo Becerra, Paul Backhouse and Ellen Batchelor of the Tribal Historic Preservation Office and Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, show team spirit against a mixed team from Recreation, Public Works and the Council Office departments. At the end of the day, a Recreation team took home first-place bragging rights.



Eileen Soler

**WEATHER ALERT:** A sign at the parking lot entrance to New Testament Baptist Church in Big Cypress heralds Easter season tidings.



Beverly Bidney

**SISTER ACT:** Education was on the menu during the Hollywood Culture Department's cooking class April 17. At right, Savannah Huggins teaches her sister Sara Huggins how to fry garfish while Kurya Kippenberger prepares dough for lapale.



Beverly Bidney

**THICK SKIN:** Kurya Kippenberger struggles to cut the skin of a garfish, which is said to be as tough as an armadillo's, during the Hollywood Culture Department's cooking class April 17 where participants learned to cook garfish and lapale.



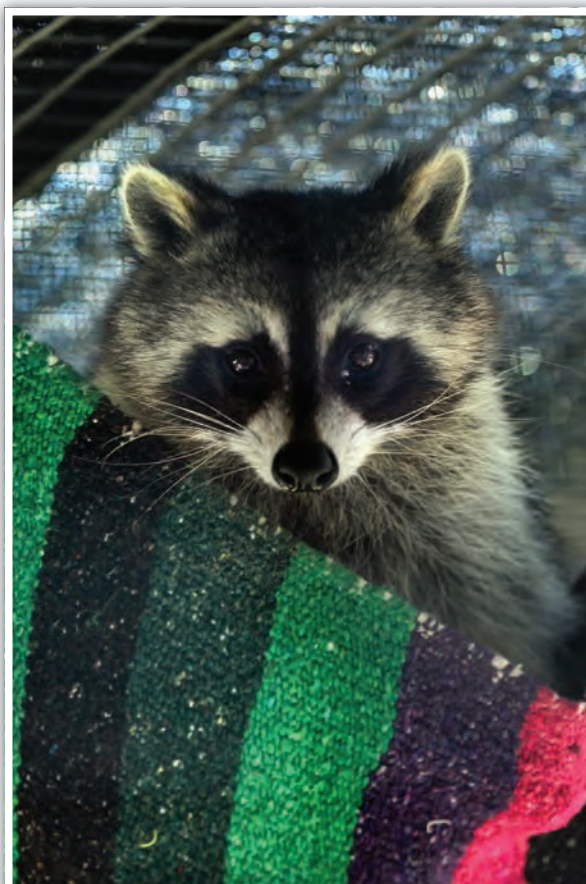
Beverly Bidney

**TICKLING IVORIES:** Isabella Josh, 9, plays Beethoven's 'Ode to Joy' during the Hollywood Boys & Girls Club Spring Talent Show April 10.



Beverly Bidney

**MONKEYING AROUND:** Pemyetv Emahkv Charter School first-graders test their climbing skills on the playground April 16 at Highlands Hammock State Park in Sebring.



Eileen Soler

**PEEKABOO RACCOON:** Cute and cuddly Stitch peeks out of her blanket digs April 14 at Billie Swamp Safari just in time for breakfast.



Eileen Soler

**IF IT'S NOT ONE THING, IT'S THE OTTER:** One of a trio of otter siblings wants to play April 14 from his 'otterly' cozy home at Billie Swamp Safari in Big Cypress.

# NATIONAL NATIVE NEWS



## New Mexico governor signs 22-year gaming compact

**SANTA FE, N.M.** — New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez ended three years of negotiations by bringing together five Native American leaders to sign a new gaming compact that will allow the Pueblo of Acoma, the Pueblo of Jemez, the Jicarilla Apache Nation, the Mescalero Apache Tribe and the Navajo Nation to operate casinos for another 22 years.

"I'm pleased that we were able to come together to secure this compact," Gov. Martinez told the Ruidoso News. "It preserves the stability and predictability of gaming in New Mexico while addressing key priorities of the state and each individual tribal government."

According to a press release from the governor's office, the compact is a balanced approach that provides economic development opportunities for Tribes, protects the revenue the state receives and ensures safe and responsible tribal gaming in New Mexico. In exchange, the Tribes agreed to increase the revenue sharing amounts they pay to the state, the report states. A percentage of gaming revenue will also be directed toward problem gambler treatment services for the first time.

—Source: Ruidoso News

## Oneidas delay debut of 'Wizard of Oz' themed casino

**CHITTENANGO, N.Y.** — A controversial theme is rumored to be the reason the Oneida Indian Nation of New York has delayed the opening of a new Class II gaming facility. The \$27-million, 67,000-square-foot Yellow Brick Road Casino was scheduled to open in the spring, but a press release now states the facility will debut "later this year."

The casino, featuring more than 430 slot machines and a 500-seat bingo hall is based on a Wonderful Wizard of Oz theme. It's located in Chittenango, the birthplace of Oz author L. Frank Baum, who called for the "extermination" of Indian people just days after the 1890 massacre at Wounded Knee.

Lakota descendants have questioned the use of the theme, but the Oneida Tribe has defended it. Rep. Ray Halbritter told The Washington Post that the author's family has apologized for the racist statements: "I think that's a wonderful message — that we're able to overcome by repentance and by forgiveness. It's looking forward rather than backward."

Meanwhile, the Oneidas are opening another convenience store with slot machines, this one at a Sav-on location near the Tribe's Turning Stone Resort Casino in Verona. The store will offer 21 cash slot machines in a similar operation to a Sav-on operated by the Tribe in nearby Canastota.

—Source: IndianZ.com, SFGate.com

## Controversy arises over Mohegan wood pellet plans

**UNCASVILLE, Conn.** — One of Tennessee's biggest renewable energy failures — the shuttered Tennol Energy plant in Jasper — may be transformed into a business success by the Mohegan Tribe of Connecticut, who want to retrofit the plant to begin making wood pellets from waste wood collected in the region. By year's end, the abandoned ethanol-producing plant is expected to be on track to produce up to 125,000 tons of wood pellets a year and employ about 25 workers.

Tennol Energy built the ethanol plant in 1984. The original \$72 million plant was never successful in making ethanol and defaulted on its government loans.

But the Mohegans' entry into Cherokee land isn't being welcomed by all. Although energy generation from wood pellets is considered carbon neutral and encouraged as an alternative to burning coal and gas, some environmentalists worry it may encourage the exploitation of area forests. Two decades ago, predicting clear cutting and deforestation along the Tennessee River, environmental leaders fought down plans to build chip mills in Marion County.

"This is the invasion of the chip mills round two," Chattanooga environmental activist Dennis Haldeman told TimesFreePress.com. He said he would fight any permits required by the Tennessee Valley Authority or Army Corps of Engineers for barge shipments of the wood pellets. "There isn't waste wood around here anymore, and I just worry they are going to go after the same trees that the chip mills were going to try to clear cut and harvest 20 years ago. It's not clean, it's not sustainable and it's not environmentally friendly in any way, shape or form."

But in an interview recently from a conference in London, England, Northeast Wood Products Senior Vice President Michael D. Reid said the company plans to use waste wood and will not harvest area forests or clear cut land for the wood needed for pellet production.

"We would anticipate sourcing from about a 100-mile radius with wood wastes

and other wood materials readily available in this region," Reid said. "The majority will be sawmill residue or waste wood that typically is of no use to anybody else."

The Pellet Fuels Institute, a trade group for those making wood pellets, projected that North American wood pellet production is growing 14 percent annually and will increase from 7.9 million tons in 2013 to 15.5 million tons by 2018.

Made from compressed pieces of wood and sawdust, pellets can be burned in a specialized woodstove or boiler system to heat homes.

—Source: TimesFreePress.com

## Native actors walk off set of Adam Sandler movie

**ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.** — A dozen American Indian actors and actresses recently walked off the set of "The Ridiculous Six," a major motion picture spoof of "The Magnificent Seven," charging repeated insults and disrespect toward Native women and elders and gross misrepresentation of Apache culture.

Among examples of disrespect in the movie's satirical script were feathers inappropriately positioned on a teepee; Native women sporting names such as Beaver's Breath and Wears No Bra; and an actress portraying an Apache woman squatting and urinating while smoking a peace pipe.

The script was co-written by comedian Adam Sandler, who also stars in the film along with Nick Nolte, Steve Buscemi, Dan Aykroyd, Jon Lovitz and Vanilla Ice. The movie is currently under production by Happy Madison Productions for a Netflix-only release.

Most actors who left were Navajo Nation Tribal members, including Loren Anthony, who is the lead singer of the metal band Bloodline, and film student Allison Young.

"There were about a dozen of us who walked off the set," said Anthony, who told Indian Country Today Media Network (ICTMN) he had originally refused to do the movie but relented when he was informed that a cultural consultant had been hired to ensure a tasteful representation of Natives.

Anthony told ICTMN he was first insulted that the movie costumes that were supposed to portray Apache were significantly incorrect and that the jokes seemed to get progressively worse.

"We were supposed to be Apache, but it was really stereotypical and we did not look Apache at all. We looked more like Comanche," he said.

Allison Young, Navajo, a Dartmouth film student, was offended by the portrayal of stereotypes, as well as disrespect paid to her and others by the director and producers.

"We talked to the producers about our concerns. They just told us, 'If you guys are so sensitive, you should leave.' I was just standing there and got emotional and teary-eyed. I didn't want to cry but the feeling just came over me. This is supposed to be a comedy that makes you laugh. Nothing has changed. We are still just Hollywood Indians."

Netflix gave the following statement to koat.com: "The movie has 'ridiculous' in the title for a reason: because it is ridiculous. It is a broad satire of Western movies and the stereotypes they popularize, featuring a diverse cast that is not only part of — but in on — the joke."

Neither Adam Sandler nor anyone for Happy Madison Productions would comment.

—Sources: Indian Country Today Media Network, Koat.com

## Hopi-Navajo feud frustrates Tribe leaders, residents

**WASHINGTON** — The settlement of a bitter, centuries-long land dispute between the Navajo and Hopi Tribes was originally supposed to take five years and \$41 million to resettle around 1,000 families.

But \$564 million and three decades later, there are still families waiting to be compensated. The Office of Navajo and Hopi Indian Relocation is still sifting through the remnants of what actually are more than 7,000 families who applied to the program. Tribal officials and residents complain that the failures of the program have severed important ties with ancestral lands and contributed to a number of social ills, like alcoholism, and a "tremendously significant" loss of culture.

But they don't want it to end just yet, indicates the Navajo-Hopi Observer in a recent article: "Decent homes, decent roads. They said they would do it, now we would like to have them finish the relocation process," said Rosa Honani, a Hopi woman who testified last month on the relocation to a congressional subcommittee. "To us it hasn't really started."

"We don't have the money to move more people," said Nancy Thomas, chief financial officer of the Office of Navajo and Hopi Indian Relocation (ONHIR). "It's frustrating in the sense that we know people are waiting for homes, but we don't have the money."

The issue began in the 19th century when the U.S. government designated 2.4 million acres of northeastern Arizona as reservation land for several Tribes but did not delineate boundaries within the reservation. Hopi and Navajo disputes ended up in a 1950s court, which established — almost a decade later — a 1.8-million acre "joint use area." But disputes continued, and in 1978 a federal judge drew a clear boundary, ordering dozens of Hopis relocated off Navajo land and thousands of Navajos off Hopi land.

To date, ONHIR has moved 3,511 families — all but 27 Navajo. But there are still 110 families waiting for relocation benefits and hundreds more waiting out a lengthy appeals process. At the current annual funding level of about \$7.7 million, the office said it can only relocate 16 families each year.

"Our beef with them has to do with how they have been spending their money in the process of relocation," said Walter Phelps, the chairman of the Navajo-Hopi Land Commission. "We found they are spending more money and more time denying (applications), and then the denials trigger an appeals process, and there are more resources being spent on that than there are building homes to relocate families."

—Source: Navajo-Hopi Observer

## Miccosukees lose suit targeting former DOJ attorney

**MIAMI** — U.S. District Judge Cecilia M. Altonaga, the country's first Cuban federal judge, granted the Department of Justice (DOJ) a summary judgment, turning back the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) suit for public records on former DOJ attorney Guy Lewis, who the Tribe has accused of fraud.

Judge Altonaga found no fault in the DOJ's decision to neither confirm nor deny the existence of the requested documents that the Miccosukees wanted to use to back up suspicions that Lewis had left his directorship of the Executive Office of U.S. Attorneys (EOUSA) under a cloud of misconduct in 2004, years before he represented the Miccosukee Tribe in private practice.

"Although the FOIA favors the disclosure of government records for the good of the public, the DOJ has met its burden to show the [Office of Professional Responsibility], [Office of Tribal Justice] and EOUSA's refusals to confirm or deny the existence of the records the Tribe is seeking are justified," the judge wrote in an order, referring to the various DOJ offices named in the complaint.

—Sources: National Freedom of Information Coalition, Law360.com

## Study: Native American lawyers excluded from legal profession

**TEMPE, Ariz.** — A large number of attorneys who identify as Native American have been systematically excluded from full participation in the legal profession, according to a new study commissioned by the National Native American Bar Association (NNABA).

The causes span a variety of issues, from inadequate recruitment efforts to an inability to retain attorneys in the profession.

"The Pursuit of Inclusion," the first study of Native lawyers, surveyed 500 American Indians, Alaskan Natives and Native Hawaiians and interviewed more than 50 others by phone. The study is said to encompass more than 20 percent of the Native American attorneys in the United States.

Despite the attention paid to diversity and inclusion in the legal profession, there existed a lack of data regarding Indian lawyers and their experiences.

"The NNABA hopes that this research will be used to build a more robust pipeline of Native American attorneys and to work toward the full inclusion of Native Americans in the legal profession," said Mary Smith, a former president of NNABA to the National Law Review.

Aside from failures of inclusion, the research shows that Native American attorneys share a feeling that their experiences do not matter.

"One of the powerful findings of this study is that Native American attorneys often feel invisible and share an overarching perspective that their experiences are not valid or real," Smith said. "This research presents a stark portrait of an entire group of attorneys systematically excluded from the legal profession."

According to National Native American Bar website, "the pressures and challenges unique to Native American attorneys come from a variety of sources. Fundamentally, identifying and being recognized as Native American is a complex process requiring a variety of criteria. This is very different from the identification process of other racial and ethnic minorities and complicates any study of progress or measurement of the group in terms of inclusion."

"Native American attorneys confront challenges on all sides and at many points

in their legal career they are confronted with these challenges. From the decision to attend law school, to the occasional pressure from law firms to work in Indian Law Practice and the pressure to return to practice within their Tribe, Native American attorneys faced challenges unique to their ethnic group. These problems are compounded by the failure of diversity initiatives to understand and serve this population. These reported challenges were on top of the 40.65 percent of respondents who indicated experiencing demeaning comments based on their race, ethnicity and tribal affiliation and more than 33 percent reported instances of discrimination based on their race, ethnicity and tribal affiliation."

The study identifies significant barriers to Native American attorney participation in the legal profession, and it identifies ways to break down the barriers. It starts with creating more opportunities for Native American students to learn about the law, starting in elementary school.

"Diversity efforts should specifically include Native American lawyers and their stories, as well as financial aid outreach should pointedly include Native American students," said the National Law Review. "Additionally, law school career centers should revisit and educate themselves on the motivations of Native American law students in order to effectively support Native American students as those students research and choose career paths."

—Sources: NativeAmericanBar.org, National Law Review

## Jude Schimmel inks new book, 'Dreamcatcher'

**LOUISVILLE, Ky.** — Though college basketball star Jude Schimmel could not quite match the rewrite her sister Shoni performed on the University of Louisville record books, she found the time to write a book.

Titled "Dreamcatcher," it tells the story of her upbringing on a reservation, successes in the "real world" and development into a WNBA hopeful.

"I want to positively impact other Native Americans so that they can live the life they want to achieve and fulfill the dreams that they have," Schimmel said in a news release announcing the book in the Louisville Courier-Journal. "I went through and witnessed similar struggles that many Native Americans go through and want to share that with others. I want my story to show that there can be great success found both on the reservation and off the reservation."

Raised on the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation in Mission, Oregon, she was a member of Louisville's winningest women's basketball class. She and her fellow seniors tallied 112 victories, played in a Final Four, two Elite Eights and three Sweet 16s. Sister Shoni, a year older, is a professional player for the Atlanta Memory in the WNBA.

A documentary film by Jonathan Hock called "Off the Rez" chronicled her journey to earn an NCAA scholarship with her basketball ability. American Indians, some driving for hours from remote reservations, filled the grandstands in every town where Louisville's Schimmel sisters played.

Jude Schimmel was named a Nike N7 ambassador, a position that connects her with Native American communities. As part of the program, she visited the White House in April, advocating for better education and health care for others on reservations.

According to her press release, Schimmel also plans to start her own foundation supporting Native American causes.

—Source: Louisville Courier-Journal

## Hard Rock Rocksino showing great numbers

**NORTHFIELD, Ohio** — Combining entertainment, dining and the Hard Rock brand, the Hard Rock Rocksino Northfield Park video lottery terminals rang up \$18.5 million in revenue in March, leading all other casinos and racinos in Ohio except Horseshoe Casino Cleveland.

The Rocksino, between Cleveland and Akron, opened December 2013 and is hitting its stride, general manager Mark BIRTHA told Cleveland.com: "It was a perfect storm."

BIRTHA cited good weather, the NCAA basketball games in Cleveland and five popular concerts with the uptick in revenue.

Members of the Ohio Lottery Commission, which oversees the seven racinos, told Cleveland.com that Hard Rock differs from the others, which may explain its success.

"Northfield has a different model than the others," Director Dennis Berg said. "The Hard Rock name is powerful and they did an excellent job. I'm not sure they can mimic the model everywhere in the state."

And the Rocksino may soon stand out from other gaming facilities if it builds a hotel. While most guests live within

30 miles, many are traveling farther, including from out of state, BIRTHA said: "Adding a hotel is definitely on our radar. It's something we would love to see happen here to become a more regional destination. It is in the discussion phase and it is a matter of timing and what type of hotel."

The venue's 2,000-seat concert venue has hosted a variety of acts ranging from Dwight Yoakam to Natalie Cole. Three to eight concerts are held each month. Kosar's Wood Fired Grill draws diners and fans of former Cleveland Browns quarterback Bernie Kosar.

"Bernie is a tremendous asset," BIRTHA said. "He is here a lot meeting with our guests."

—Source: Cleveland.com

## Cherokee Nation remembers Oklahoma City bombing

**TAHLEQUAH, Okla.** — The Cherokee Nation, the largest of three Cherokee federally recognized American Indian Tribes in the United States, marked the 20th anniversary of one of the deadliest domestic terrorism acts in United States history when Principal Chief Bill John Baker signed a proclamation in remembrance of the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City.

"The April 19, 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City was an incredibly dark day for our state," Chief Baker said. "It was a tragedy of epic proportions that sent an entire nation into mourning. The loss of 168 innocent civilians, including 19 precious children, was the result of an evil act we never imagined could happen in Oklahoma. As tragic as that day was, what emerged was a united Oklahoma that showed strength, humanity, courage and resilience. No act of terror could extinguish the indomitable Oklahoma spirit."

"We will collectively mourn again, but we will also reflect on our strength as a society to pick ourselves up and pull through anything, despite our broken hearts. I hold the deepest admiration for the courage shown by everyone affected by that day: the survivors, their families, first responders and so many others. So while we grieve with you for those we lost, we also honor you for your strength and resilience."

"On behalf of the entire Cherokee Nation, our thoughts and prayers continue to be with each and every one of you. God bless."

—Source: NativeNewsOnline.net

## Virginia supports Pamunkey Tribe's BIA fight

**KING WILLIAM, Va.** — The 200-member Pamunkey Tribe of Virginia, the only Tribe located in Virginia to have filed a fully documented recognition petition, was dealt a setback in its effort to gain federal recognition by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). The Tribe that claims the famous Pocahontas, and whose roots pre-date the founding of the U.S.A., has been delayed federal recognition until the end of July.

Critics, including the Congressional Black Caucus, have pressured the BIA to deny the Pamunkeys because of a lack of tribal records (destroyed early last century because Virginia state policy recognized only two races: white and black), allegations of Pamunkey racially discriminatory policies, and fear of MGM officials that federal recognition could bring Indian gaming to southern Virginia, which could imperil their casino venture in Maryland.

"This is an outrageous injustice. These are the Indian Tribes that enabled the original English settlers to survive," former Virginia Congressman Jim Moran told WVTF Radio. Moran has advocated for Pamunkey federal recognition for nearly two decades. Gov. Terry McAuliffe has also stood up for the Tribe, publicly declaring MGM should have no say in the matter.

The Pamunkey nation is one of 11 Virginia Indian Tribes recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Professor Gregory Smithers, an expert on Native Americans at Virginia Commonwealth University, said it's difficult to say how many Virginians can trace their ancestry back to the Tribe: "From the arrival of Europeans in the 17th century there was intermarriage between European men and Native Americans all up and down the Eastern seaboard. The Pamunkey were no different."

There was also intermarriage with freed or escaped slaves, and then in the early 20th century, Virginia law made it impossible for many to claim Native status.

The Pamunkeys signed a treaty with the British in 1658, giving them a reservation in Virginia, but much of their land was taken away in subsequent centuries.

—Source: WVTF Radio

Compiled by Special Projects Reporter Peter B. Gallagher.

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# Education



## PECS second-graders learn valuable library, money skills

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**MOORE HAVEN** — Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School second-graders learned education doesn't only take place in classrooms. During an April 21 field trip to the Glades County Public Library and First Bank in Moore Haven, 25 students learned lessons they will use for the rest of their lives.

With 28,000 books, the library has something for everyone to read, said Mary Booher, director of the library. She explained the difference between fiction and nonfiction and taught students how to locate books in the library using a computer.

Booher shared her passion for books while reading from "Today I Feel Silly: And Other Moods That Make My Day" by Jamie Lee Curtis.

The book opens with: "Today I feel silly. Mom says it's the heat. I put rouge on the cat and gloves on my feet. I ate noodles for breakfast and pancakes at night. I dressed like a star and was quite a sight."

The kids laughed at the humor, including the various moods conveyed in rhyme.

"I want them to get a love of reading and know how important it is," Booher said. "They have to read, even if it is just to fill out a job application or use the computer."

Students learned that they must get a library card signed by a parent to take books, videos and DVDs on loan. The group toured a variety of sections, including children's, adult fiction and nonfiction, young adult and western fiction. Booher brought out items from the history room, including a book about a Seminole Princess written in 1966, "When the Moon is New: A Seminole Indian Story" by Laura Bannon.

Like any library, the Glades County library has rules. No running and no shouting top the list. But unlike days gone by, silence isn't demanded of patrons.

"This isn't a shushing library," Booher told the students. "You can talk, but don't yell and you must be polite."

Booher invited the children to take advantage of the library's summer program, whose activities include game and movie days.

"I liked the library because you get to learn about stuff," said Candice Melton, 7.



Beverly Bidney

Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School second-graders peruse bookshelves April 21 at the Glades County Public Library in Moore Haven during a class field trip.

"I really like books about sharks."

Jaydence Urbina, 8, said he likes books, and that "Hey, Little Ant" by Phillip and Hannah Hoose is the best one he ever read. During the field trip he learned the difference between fiction and nonfiction, which he called "fake" and "real."

After the library visit, it was off to First Bank for a lesson in money management tailored for second-graders. Students previously had studied money in class, so teachers wanted to give them firsthand knowledge about banking.

Mali Gardner, First Bank vice

president, began by asking if anyone had ever heard the saying, "A penny saved is a penny earned." Gardner said the phrase should remind them all to save money for the future.

Gardner taught students about the power of saving and urged them to always pay themselves first. Whenever they earn money, she said they should put some away before spending it all, which led to a discussion about compound interest and how money, when saved in banks, can grow.

"We pay you to save your money with us," Gardner said. "We want you to be smart

savers and prepare for the future."

The students also learned how to fill out deposit slips, use ATMs and debit cards and write checks.

But a tour of a bank wouldn't be complete without seeing the inside of the vault. There, the students toured the safe deposit boxes and the safes where the bank stores its cash.

"Seeing the safe was the best," said Carlee Osceola, 8.

The lesson of saving wasn't lost in the

◆ See SKILLS on page 5B



Rachel Buxton

Lewis Gopher talks to youth about the accomplishments of his late mother, Lorene Bowers Gopher, during a women's history month presentation April 8 at the Billy Osceola Memorial Library in Brighton.

## Library honors the late Lorene Bowers Gopher during women's history month

BY RACHEL BUXTON  
Freelance Writer

**BRIGHTON** — The late Lorene Bowers Gopher was honored and remembered April 8 at the Billy Osceola Memorial Library in Brighton.

As part of the library's women's history month program, Lorene's son Lewis Gopher spoke to youth about his mother's life, accomplishments and dreams for the Seminole Tribe.

"She always wanted the traditional way to be carried on," Lewis said. "She wanted to spread her knowledge."

He told youth that his mother did everything possible to attend school and get an education — even if that meant completing her homework by the light of a lantern.

"She had a drive inside of her," Lewis said.

He stressed to the kids that his mother accomplished much for the Tribe, including helping start the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, Pull Out Program and Creek language classes.

"She helped create the Florida Creek dictionary," he said. "She always wanted the language preserved, how she learned, how her grandma taught her."

Many of the kids shared experiences they had with Lorene.

Lewis concluded his presentation with a short video that was made in honor of Lorene for posthumously receiving the Florida Folk Heritage award in March. With pride, he displayed the award he and his family accepted on her behalf.

"She never wanted to earn an award," Lewis said about his mother. "Her goal was to teach the kids, to be a good person, and that makes me want to do more and to be a better person."



Rachel Buxton

Son Lewis Gopher and grandchildren of the late Lorene Bowers Gopher pose for a photo after a library presentation recognizing the late matriarch's accomplishments within the Tribe, which included publishing the first Creek dictionary.

## Book fair bridges classroom learning with reading fun

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — For Elisah Billie, hanging out at the Ahfachkee School book fair was the next best thing to visiting a bookstore.

"It's like having Books-A-Million come to my own school," Elisah said.

Staged in half the school's cafeteria, with teen novels by James Patterson, John Green and Suzanne Collins at his fingertips, the book fair was a literary buffet for the ninth-grade avid reader.

Walls were lined in packed bookshelves, three tables overflowed with books stacked three and four high, boxes filled with posters capped aisles and a glut of writing and reading accessories fed the impulse buyer's urge near the cash register. Everything was had at bargain prices — buy one get one free.

Elisah purchased two novels by Ransom Riggs: "Hollow City" and "Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children."

"I'm pretty sure that not every kid appreciates the book fair, but there are a lot of us who can spend the whole day here," Elisah said. "For me, reading is more fun than watching television."

Third-grader Jody Cabral turned out for his second day of book fair shopping.

"Awesome," Jody said several times as he perused a plethora of pens, erasers, pencils, stickers, bookmarks and writing pads. With two erasers that looked like mini cellphones in one hand, Jody used the other to give a dollar to cashier and instructional aide Margarita Lugo. He counted back his own change and then put his receipt in his pocket.

"I'll be back to spend more money tomorrow," Jody promised.

Lugo said the Scholastic Book Fair that ran April 13-18 at Ahfachkee created a stir of reading excitement among students across all grades. Though the school's two libraries provide plenty of classics, best-



Eileen Soler

Ahfachkee School instructional aide Elizabeth Veras and high school senior Kaitlin Osceola shop for interesting books April 13 at the Scholastic Book Fair in Big Cypress.

sellers, periodicals and reference materials, the Scholastic Book Fair presented some of the most current and popular releases.

"Basically, we're offering the newest books at the best deals to show appreciation

to the community. Anyone can come and buy," Lugo said.

From preschool to 12th grade, students filed into the cafeteria. Teachers, school staff, members of the community and

employees were welcomed to shop. Prices were set from 50 cents for a pencil to \$59.99 for a Junie B. Jones 27-book collection.

Elisah summed up the book fair as being "pretty cool."

# Charter School March students of the month



Photo courtesy of Michele Thomas

Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School elementary students of the month: Luci Banda, Clayson Osceola, Jace Johns, Jayleigh Braswell, Jetta Osceola, Penny Jimmie, TL Gopher, Logan Butler, Serenity Micco, Marcos Reyna, Zach Riley, Kyrh Suarez, Mario Fish, Ysla Gopher, Pearcetin Trammell, Leilani Burton, Angelie Melton, Mariah Garner and Kiona Garcia.



Photo courtesy of Michele Thomas

Middle school students of the month: Jahbahn Arnold, Aubrey Pearce and Kyle Palmisano.

# Awards, praise doled out to top-performing students

BY RACHEL BUXTON  
Freelance Writer

**BRIGHTON** — Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School staff spent April 6 recognizing students for achievements during the last nine-week academic period. "This is our chance to reward students for their hard work in class," said principal Brian Greseth.

Students earned certificates for overall grades and for improvement and effort in Seminole history and Creek language classes. Greseth emphasized the importance of learning Creek to earn high school credits that satisfy the Florida Course Code requirement. Students must earn two credits of a foreign language before admission to all Florida state colleges and universities.

Creek was added to the Florida Course Code in October.

"[Now], all the state universities will accept Creek," Greseth said. "We've come a long way."

Students were also acknowledged for improvements in physical education. P.E. teacher Chris Goodwin presented students with awards. The awards included basketballs for reducing their body fat percentages and improving their times in the 1-mile challenge.



Rachel Buxton

Hyatt Pearce receives the most improved award in Creek class during the Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School nine week awards ceremony April 6 in Brighton.



Rachel Buxton

Jathan Tommie, left, and Drake Lawrence receive awards for their efforts in culture class.



Rachel Buxton

Alex Armstrong earns an effort award for his hard work in Creek class.

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# Jonathan Idle shares own experiences, promotes positive futures for other teens

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

DAYTON, Ohio — Jonathan Idle has figured out some important things about life. Compelled to share the newfound information, the high school senior wrote a letter to his peers describing how hard work in school pays off in the end.

He hopes to encourage students to complete their educations.

Jonathan, 18, has earned a 3.61 GPA at The Miami Valley School in Dayton, Ohio, and has been accepted to the University of South Carolina. He plans to study chemical engineering. He lives with his mother, Jennifer Idle, in Ohio, and visits his father, Michael Frank, four or five times a year in Florida.

In his letter, Jonathan wrote about self-sufficiency and not relying on dividends. Education is not just about opening a book and taking tests, he wrote; it is also about trying new experiences and challenging yourself.

“Going through life, it’s really about what people around me have done for me to make sure I have the best life,” Jonathan said in an interview. “My mom is definitely the most important person in my life; she’s encouraged me to do so many things.”

Grateful for all the Tribe has provided, Jonathan has taken advantage of everything available to him. He has tutors and coaches; plays soccer, basketball, tennis and golf; takes piano lessons, which he began at 3 years old; travels extensively; and speaks Spanish fluently.

“I’ve always wanted him to see the big picture, that there is life out there and he should go see it and do it,” Jennifer Idle said. “He came home from school in the ninth grade and told me he wanted to go to Chile with his school.”

Jonathan went on the trip and lived with a host family for 10 days. In 10th grade, he went on an educational tour of Spain, France and Italy, and in 11th grade, he traveled to Ghana in Africa, where he helped build the ground floor of a hospital with his classmates and lived in a local village for 15 days.

The summer before his senior year, Jonathan went with his aunt Debi Hand and her church on a 10-day mission to Belize where he helped take the roof off a building and plant a garden. In January, he went on a 10-day trip to Andros Island in

the Bahamas, where he completed a marine ecology course and scuba dived.

“I made him try everything,” Idle said. “He’s receptive to whatever I give him to do. He’s my only child so I had more time to concentrate on him.”

The idea for writing a letter came from the Tribe’s Education Department. Higher education recruiter Vivian Cywink said the department is always on the lookout for students who can be an example for others. She knew Jonathan would be perfect for the assignment.

“He is a student who has worked very hard for everything he earned,” she said. “He intends to give back to the Tribe and this is his first way – to try and touch his peers and encourage them.”

Jonathan, who copes with the challenges of Asperger syndrome, is ready to take on the challenges of college. He chose the University of South Carolina for its engineering program and because his aunt lives only an hour away from campus. He believes anyone can be successful in life.

“I know people who have started with nothing and have gone on to do really great things,” he said. “My mom raised me and I’ve learned to cope with certain things and adapt. You can do anything they aspire to do; there is nothing that’s impossible.”



Photo courtesy of Jennifer Idle

Jonathan Idle, a senior at The Miami Valley School in Dayton, Ohio, plays golf to expose himself to a variety of after-school activities.



Photo courtesy of Jennifer Idle

Jonathan Idle spells out O-H-I-O with his classmates undersea while on a class trip to the Bahamas in January. In addition to scuba diving, Idle completed a marine ecology course.

## A letter of encouragement to his peers

Dear members of the Seminole Tribe,

School is hard. It is really hard. I’m not going to lie to you and say it’s something easy; in reality, it is very difficult. I attend one of the most prestigious schools in my area and the work is so hard that I sometimes get frustrated and want to quit.

Like so many people before me, I sometimes felt that giving up would be easier than sticking it out. I know that we get a monthly dividend and I could probably live off of that, right? Well, that’s what I thought for a short minute. You see, I have a mom who does more research on things than you could ever imagine and she showed me a few things that kicked me into high gear.

Other Tribes around the country receive dividends, too. Like our dividends, their dividends have been getting smaller and smaller; they are to the point that surviving on those dividends is near impossible. My mom told me that the dividend should be used for nothing other than my future, that it needed to be invested, and so I went and talked with people close to me to show me how to be smart about my money and help it grow. I also made the decision to attend the financial seminars, which helped me understand how the real world works and how I should manage my money wisely. My money will help me some day when I’m ready for it, but I won’t have to survive solely on it.

Now you may be asking what I could be doing if I’m going to survive without touching my money from the Tribe. My mom instilled a desire in me to learn and to educate myself. From a very young age, she placed me in the best schools, procured tutors and made sure I stayed on top of my classes. She introduced me to people who have helped me and encouraged me; they were more than just tutors. They instilled the desire to be educated just as much as my mom. Surrounding myself by people who educated themselves showed me the importance of attaining that level of thinking and understanding. Intelligent conversations, debates, inquiries ... all of these things became more and more interesting to me as I worked with Martha and Daniel.

Part of my education is not just

opening up a book and taking tests. It’s about trying new experiences and challenging myself to go further than I already was. My mom pushed me ever since a young age to partake in sports such as basketball, golf, tennis and baseball and learn how to interact with those around me. I started out crying and telling my mom that I didn’t want to play with the other kids. Now, I have developed into a leader on and off the court; one who is willing to go 100 percent every night and is not afraid to make decisions.

Another thing my mom has pushed me to do in recent years is travel the world and learn about cultures abroad. She has sent me off to three different continents in the past four years allowing me the opportunity to partake in tourism, missionary work and foreign exchange programs. During these trips, my routine and customs from America had to be changed in order to get the full experience of the land. Doing this offers a new perspective on the world, and when I return home, I can feel the change in my persona.

Because of my hard work, good grades and drive for excellence, I was able to gain admittance into the University of South Carolina’s College of Chemical Engineering. This program is one of the top 100 programs in the nation and holds its students to very high expectations. I am excited, not scared, by the challenges that lie ahead and look forward to furthering myself in the future.

These things weren’t possible for me just because I’m some super genius or amazing at everything I do. They were made possible because the right people supported me and I knew I had to do well or my life would be over ... over in the sense that I wouldn’t make the best of everything I’d been afforded. The Seminole Tribe helped pay for my tutors, my prestigious schools ... for which I’m extremely grateful ... but I also had to prove myself over and over and that hard work and determination has benefited me more than you could ever imagine.

You, too, can do just as well as me, or better; I have no doubt about that.

Sincerely,  
Jonathan Idle

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The hiring of a lawyer is an important decision that should be based solely upon advertisement. Guy J. Seligman worked as a Certified Legal Intern in both the State Attorney and Public Defenders offices in Dade and Broward County; he has been in private practice for 16 years. He graduated from Nova Southeastern University Law School in 1987, and was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1988.

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# Littlest students party like pint-size islanders

**BY EILEEN SOLER**  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — Let high school and middle school kids have their fancy nighttime dances; Ahfachkee School's youngest students, from pre-kindergarten through grade five, marked history April 17 with the first early evening kid-fest just for them.

"It came up at a meeting with parents that the little kids should have a special party, too, and everyone agreed," said Jonelle Pollard, an instructional aide.

Bounce houses, piñatas and limbo dancing were deemed the most fun activities during the two-hour luau event in the school cafeteria. Kids were decked with Hawaiian leis and tables were topped with tropical centerpieces. Pizza, chicken wings, cookies and ice cream were served with cups of island punch garnished with sliced oranges.



Eileen Soler

Pre-kindergarten student Joshua Billie is king of the Elementary Spring Social bounce house at a special early evening soiree for younger students at Ahfachkee School.



Eileen Soler

Even blindfolded, fifth-grader Edie Robbins releases a wallop and smacks open a piñata filled with candy at the Ahfachkee School Elementary Spring Social.



Eileen Soler

First-grader Ewanteke Roberts dances through a sea of bubbles April 17 during the school's Elementary Spring Social.



Eileen Soler

Pre-kindergarten student Kalaney Hannahs swings with all her might at a piñata during Ahfachkee School's island-themed social.



Eileen Soler

Abbiegale Green, left, and Lucee Cypress, both of second grade at Ahfachkee School, play little surgeons during a game of Operation at the school's Elementary Spring Social.



Eileen Soler

Gilbert Guerrero Jr., a second-grader at Ahfachkee School, makes his own music with a whistle during the school's Elementary Spring Social.



Eileen Soler

Kids scramble for candy after popping a piñata at a special early evening soiree at Ahfachkee School just for pre-kindergarten through fifth-graders.



Eileen Soler

Teena-Maree Covarrubias, a second-grader, is in charge of the checkerboard in a game against Ahfachkee School cafeteria manger Horacio Smith during the school's Elementary Spring Social.



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# First-graders explore great outdoors

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**SEBRING** — Pemaaytv Emahakv Charter School first-graders crisscrossed a swamp and connected with nature April 16 during a field trip to Highlands Hammock State Park in Sebring.

The group of 33 students journeyed across the boardwalk through the cypress swamp trail, which snakes just above the water. A narrow portion of the boardwalk, which only has a rail on one side, thrilled the explorers. Insects, frogs and small fish were abundant, but there wasn't an alligator in sight.

"I never went on a nature walk before," said Miley Jimmie, 7. "I was holding onto the rail and looking for gators."

"Walking on the bridge was scary and fun," added Jovanny Torres, 7.

The science curriculum in the first-grade classrooms includes living and non-living things, butterfly life cycles, mammals and animal mothers with their young.

"It was a great way for them to experience nature and see animals in their natural habitat," said Rachel Raulerson, a

first-grade teacher at PECS.

Teacher Chris Duncan's students pointed out butterflies, dragonflies, beetles, mosquitoes and spiders as they navigated through the swamp.

"We have been talking about insects and what classifies something as an insect or bug in our class," Duncan said. "We talked about how bugs are an important part of the food chain in a swamp. We also identified different types of plants, from trees to moss."

Founded in 1931, the 9,000-acre park also features trails through pine flatwoods, ancient hardwood hammocks and a fern garden. After a picnic lunch, students enjoyed the park's playground where they tested themselves on the monkey bars and swings.

During lunch, nature came to watch the students in the form of a hungry raccoon. The kids agreed it was the second coolest thing they saw all day, after the section of the boardwalk with only one rail.

"They were eager to learn about everything we explored," Duncan said. "They asked many questions and are still talking about the trip."



Beverly Bidney

PECS first-graders and their teachers bravely traverse the narrow walkway of the cypress swamp trail during a field trip to Highlands Hammock State Park.



Beverly Bidney

Pemaaytv Emahakv Charter School second-graders listen as librarian Mary Booher reads aloud April 21 during a field trip to the Glades County Public Library in Moore Haven.

## ◆ SKILLS From page 1B

excitement of the tour.

"They taught you have to save money, which is important so you'll have more for the future," said Willo James, 8. "I put money in my piggy bank but not all the time. It's good to save so you can buy stuff."

Teachers stressed to their students the importance of reading and saving money in their everyday lives.

"Even though they are kids, it's still

important for them," teacher Lisa Clements said. "Now we can go back [to class] and talk about it. This gives us good follow up to do with them."

The teachers also wanted to show students what each nearby community offers during the summer.

Their next field trip will be to the library in Okeechobee.

"The libraries have summer activities and programs," said teacher Cindy Ringstaff. "I encourage parents to get their children there so they can stay on top of their reading."



Beverly Bidney

Pemaaytv Emahakv Charter School first-grade teacher Chris Duncan and her class examine the natural world of the swamp April 16 during a field trip to Highlands Hammock State Park in Sebring.



Beverly Bidney

Branch manager Belinda Rodriguez Couse gives PECS second-graders an inside view of the safe deposit boxes and vault at First Bank in Moore Haven during a field trip.

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# Sports



## Men's Money Team hits jackpot at Howard Tiger basketball tournament

### Lady Ballers edge N Squad to win women's division

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

**HOLLYWOOD** — A trio of brothers led Money Team to victory in the adult men's championship game April 18 at the 47th annual Howard Tiger Memorial Basketball Tournament.

Brothers Trewston Pierce, Ty Pierce and Duelle Gore combined for 53 points as Money Team edged Nothing Fancy, 69-64, in the title game at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center.

Six teams, all Native, comprised the division in the double-elimination tournament. Some teams featured a combination of Seminole and Miccosukee players.

The championship tilt wasn't decided until the final seconds. A jump shot by Shelby Osceola put Nothing Fancy in front 64-63 with 1:12 left, but Money Team seized the lead for good when Ty Pierce converted a no-look pass from DeForest Carter into a 3-point play. Nothing Fancy was hit with a technical foul, which turned into another point for Money Team.

With Nothing Fancy trailing by three points, Josie Balentine nearly tied the game in the waning moments, but his 3-point shot rimmed out.

Carter, who recently concluded a standout four-year career for Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, tacked on an additional insurance basket to conclude the scoring. He finished with nine points.

Trewston Pierce, who led Fort Lauderdale High School in scoring this season as a senior, drained a team-high 19 points for Money Team, which received 18 points from Ty Pierce and 16 points from Gore, who plays for Haskell Indian Nations University in Kansas.

The game-high scoring honor was earned by Nothing Fancy's speedy point guard Charlie Osceola. At 5-foot-6, Osceola showed no fear going into traffic against players nearly a foot taller.

"I had to beat them with speed," said Charlie Osceola, a freshman at Miami's Ferguson High School, where he was the varsity basketball team's leading scorer this season.

Charlie Osceola finished with 25 points and was named the tournament's most valuable player.

"It felt good, even though we didn't get the win," he said.

Nothing Fancy received 10 points each from Greg Carter, Jerome Davis and Shelby Osceola.

Money Team led by as many as 11 points in the first half, but Nothing Fancy clawed its way back and took a 35-34 lead at halftime thanks to a 3-pointer from Shelby Osceola.

Trewston Pierce shifted into a higher gear in the second half when he scored 13 points, including three 3-pointers.

Hollywood Recreation site manager Joe Collins presented Money Team with the championship trophy.

At the start of the two-day tournament, Money Team didn't look like champions. They dropped their first game to Big Town, 65-64, but roared back in the losers' bracket the following day and cranked out four straight wins.



Kevin Johnson

Trewston Pierce soars to the hoop for the Money Team on April 18 during the 47th annual Howard Tiger Memorial Basketball Tournament at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center. The Money Team won the men's adult division.

Hollywood Heat won the men's legends division on April 16. Charlie Frye led the Heat with 24 points in the decisive 47-42 win against the Seminoles. Vince Billie had a 3-pointer for the Heat. The Seminoles received 12 points from Jason Don Billie.

In the women's division, the last leg on the path to perfection for the Lady Ballers wasn't easy.

The team captured the adult women's division during tournament play by holding off a scrappy N Squad, 65-55, in the championship game on April 18 at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center. The Lady Ballers finished 3-0 in the three-team division.

The teams traded leads and a bevy of 3-pointers throughout the first half. Every time one team appeared ready to pull away,

the other answered back, and the responses usually came from beyond the arc.

N Squad, led by Nora Billie, opened a 15-10 lead on a fast-break layup by Annie Osceola only to see the Lady Ballers knot it up with a 3-pointer from Courtney Osceola and a basket from Candace Blackbird.

Courtney Osceola's 3-pointer put the Lady Ballers in front 25-22, but N Squad's Demetria Tigertail promptly drained a 3-pointer to forge another tie.

A late surge from the Lady Ballers before halftime proved to be the turning point. A 3-pointer by Tasha Osceola and a jump shot from Blackbird gave the Lady Ballers a 31-25 lead at the break.

N Squad never regained the lead as the

♦ See TOURNAMENT on page 5C



Kevin Johnson

Tough defense like this from Tasha Osceola, left, and Courtney Osceola, right, helps propel the Lady Ballers to a championship victory in the adult women's division at the 47th annual Howard Tiger Memorial Basketball Tournament in Hollywood.



Kevin Johnson

Brent Frank poses with Chris 'Birdman' Andersen during the Miami Heat forward's appearance April 18 at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center in Hollywood. Birdman is the celebrity spokesperson for the Tribe's Hard Rock Energy drinks.

## Hundreds flock to see Birdman in Hollywood

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

**HOLLYWOOD** — The mysterious, shiny, black, souped-up muscle car that pulled up in front of the Howard Tiger Recreation Center appeared suitable for Batman, but it was Birdman who emerged.

Much to the delight of hundreds of fans, 6-foot-10, 245-pound Miami Heat forward Chris "Birdman" Andersen — sporting the vast array of tattoos that have made him one of the NBA's most recognizable characters — spent a couple hours April 18 signing autographs and posing for photos in the lobby of the Howard Tiger Recreation Center. The celebrity spokesperson for the Tribe's Hard Rock Energy drinks signed everything that came his way, including basketballs, hats, shirts, photos and even limbs. He shook hands, too, including with Raymond "Sugarfoot" Stewart III.

"He's my favorite player. He's better than LeBron James," Raymond, 10, said.

Raymond's dad, also named Raymond, praised the Tribe for giving kids a chance to meet Andersen.

"He inspires the kids. That's what

they need, something to look up to, and there are other things out there in life to do. It's a good thing they bring him to the reservation," the father said.

Hollywood Board Rep. Steve Osceola estimated about 300 people attended the event, which coincided with the 47th annual Howard Tiger Memorial Basketball Tournament that was held for the first time in the new facility that bears Howard's name.

"Howard was one of our Tribal leaders," Rep. Osceola said. "He was a Tribal president. He was a war leader, a Marine, and he was one of our first leaders in Hollywood to start organized sports. He helped clear this field behind [the Center] and started the first basketball, baseball and football teams."

Tournament games took place during Birdman's visit, but he didn't shoot any baskets. He was recognized during a brief ceremony at midcourt by Rep. Osceola and President Tony Sanchez Jr. Birdman also received a patchwork jacket that was presented by Joe Dan Osceola.

♦ See BIRDMAN on page 5C

## New facility a big hit for NAYO basketball teams

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

**HOLLYWOOD** — While basketball teams from Tribes in New York and Mississippi battled in a girls championship game, Mike Tiger watched from the front row bleachers near midcourt. He wanted to be close to the action in a new facility that is close to his heart.

Christened in November 2014, the Howard Tiger Recreation Center — named in memory of Mike's father — hosted its first major athletic competition April 3-4 as 46 Native teams from four states vied for championships in the Native American Youth Organization (NAYO) Basketball

Tournament on the Hollywood Reservation.

"We're real happy with the participation we got from the other Tribes," said Mike Tiger, who watched games until about 11 p.m. on day one and returned the next day for the finals.

In the center's bustling lobby and hallway, hundreds of players, coaches and spectators passed by glass-framed cabinets filled with photos and plaques of Seminole Sports Hall of Fame inductees, including Howard Tiger, whose accomplishments as a multi-sport athlete and a coach for youth are recognized on a plaque that shows him in football gear.

The basketball court was divided into two side-by-side courts until the championship games when the full court was used and all bleachers were lowered. Spectators occupied nearly every seat for the first title game between New York's Seneca Falls and North Carolina's Smokin Hot.

"It's wonderful," Mike Tiger said. "I'm just proud for the community and the Tribal Council that passed resolutions that support this. It's a great honor to my family to have this built in my dad's name. I'm just real happy with the outcome."

Reviews from the out-of-town guests were positive.

"The gym is very nice," said Seneca Falls coach Frank John, who was impressed with the upkeep of the court. "They don't mess around; they were cleaning every scuff mark."

Colby Hemphill, 17, a forward on the ABC team from North Carolina, said he liked the facility, even with what he considered unforgiving rims.

"The rims were not friendly at all," said Hemphill, whose team finished third in its division.

As for Seminoles who were accustomed to playing in tournaments next door in the old gym — now known as Seminole Classic Gym — the upgrade was welcomed.

♦ See NAYO on page 4C



Kevin Johnson

Florida Natives' Lucas Osceola eyes the basket against No Fear at the NAYO basketball tournament April 4 at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center.



Kevin Johnson

American Heritage sophomore Ahnie Jumper belts the ball April 8 during a game against Wellington in Plantation. Jumper had a .400 batting average as of late April.

# Ahnie Jumper excels for defending state champs at American Heritage

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

**PLANTATION** — Transitions don't go much smoother than the shift made by Ahnie Jumper, whose ascension from the bench to behind the plate has been a key factor this season for the state powerhouse American Heritage School softball team. After spending two-plus seasons as a substitute on the varsity squad, Jumper began her first year as a starter with a base hit in the team's season opener Feb. 10 against Archbishop McCarthy. For the next seven weeks, the hits kept coming from the Big Cypress sophomore who generated a 15-game hitting streak for the six-time state champions.

"Ahnie is doing great," said Heritage coach Marty Cooper. "Last season she was more of a fill-in as a support role player, but now she is a starter and she's an impact player. She's grown as a player and grown physically. She's gotten stronger and faster."

Evidence of Jumper's improved power and quickness can be found in the field and at the plate. During a 6-2 win April 9 against Wellington, a low pitch brushed the dirt and scooted out of the batter's box to Jumper's left. A base runner at first base appeared to have ample time to safely advance, but Jumper quickly retrieved the ball and rifled a bullet to second to nab the runner. Later in the game, Jumper stood her ground in a play at the plate and tagged out a runner.

Offensively, Jumper has been among the most productive hitters all season. Batting anywhere between the 3 and 6 spots, she reached mid-April in the top five on the team in hits, runs, RBIs and doubles while compiling a batting average that hovered around .400. Six times she's registered multiple hit games, including a 3-for-3 night with two RBIs against Lely in March.

Although this year's squad can be deemed young with just three seniors, Heritage still rolled past a majority of opponents during the regular season in lopsided fashion. The Patriots won nine regular season games by seven or more runs, but a blowout wasn't part of the scenario March 31. In one of Broward County's most anticipated regular season games, Jumper delivered an RBI single in the Patriots' 2-1 win against rival and fellow defending state champs St. Thomas



Kevin Johnson

American Heritage catcher Ahnie Jumper throws out a Wellington base runner at second base April 8 in Plantation.

Aquinas on Heritage's senior night.

When catcher Lauren Newmark graduated last year after another state championship drive, a void needed to be filled. Jumper and senior D'Kota Cassidy have shared those duties this season. When Jumper doesn't catch, she plays in the outfield. Since Cassidy is in her final year, Cooper expects Jumper's role as catcher to increase next season.

"It looks as though Ahnie is going to be the lead person for a couple years to come," Cooper said. "We have some young people coming in, but right now she's targeted to be the lead person behind the plate."

The victory against Wellington marked Jumper's third consecutive game catching in as many days, so it came as no surprise she sought the trainer and a large bag of ice afterward. From the reservation to Plantation, being a catcher has been a big part of Jumper's softball career, which began at age 8.

"I started out with the Little Seminoles for my dad with the rez, and I've been catching ever since," said the daughter of Josh and Andrea Jumper.

Ahnie Jumper first suited up for Heritage's softball program as a seventh-grader on the JV team. Now she's cherishing her role as an everyday varsity player for a squad that annually graduates players to the college ranks. Players from last year's senior class are playing this season at Penn State, Florida International, Bowling Green and Nova Southeastern.

"It's intense, and a lot of pressure, especially as a catcher," Jumper said. After compiling a record of 19 wins, 1 loss and 1 tie in the regular season, Heritage — which has been ranked among the nation's top 25 teams in polls — turned its focus to the playoffs with hopes of retaining the Class 5A state crown it captured in remarkable fashion a year ago when the Patriots erased an eight-run deficit to overcome Belleview in the title game. Jumper didn't play in the championship game, but she learned from it.

"Never give up. We were down by a lot," said Jumper, who isn't the only member of her family to make an impact at Heritage. Her brothers Andre and Blevyns helped the football team win a state title last fall. Heritage softball has also received a boost this season from two other Seminoles: Kiauna Martin and Analise Jimenez. Martin, a speedy freshman, has started some games, but a knee injury forced her to the sidelines. She returned to the lineup just in time for the playoffs.

"She's very fast, very quick on the bases," Cooper said. "She's what you call a slapper bunter, and she puts the ball in play and it's very difficult to get her out. She's very tough to throw out as a stealer, too. She can steal a lot of bases." Martin, an outfielder, notched a pair of hits and drove in a run Feb. 24 in a 7-2 win against Westminster Christian.

Jimenez, a seventh-grade JV player, received a promotion to varsity late in the regular season. She went 1-for-1 with an RBI and scored a run in a 16-0 win against Cardinal Gibbons in the 5A-District 16 semifinals April 13. Cooper, who has guided Heritage to 12 consecutive trips to the state playoffs, said he's always enjoyed coaching players from the Tribe, ranging from this year's crop to former players such as Kristen Billie and Chelsea Mountain, daughters of Esther Gopher and John Billie Jr.

"It's a nice group of kids," Cooper said. "They're all good kids, which is nice. Somebody is doing a good job."

# Impacting Immokalee

## Seminole members help high school softball program surge forward

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

**IMMOKALEE** — When Vanessa Billie arrived at the plate with the game on the line in extra innings, Destinee Jimmie knew her teammate and cousin would come through in such a critical moment.

"It runs in the family," Destinee said. Indeed, Vanessa didn't disappoint her fellow Tribal member or the rest of the Immokalee Indians High School softball squad on that early March evening as she delivered perhaps the team's biggest hit of the season in a 5-4 eight-inning upset against Cape Coral.

Vanessa's walk-off single against the district's No. 1 team lifted Immokalee in more ways than one.

"Beating them was very important for our team. That was really a great boost for their confidence. It showed them that they can do it by beating that team. Vanessa did her part. She really executed her job," said Destinee's sister Cassandra Jimmie, a former Immokalee outfielder who returned to the program two years ago to serve as an assistant varsity coach and head coach of the junior varsity team.

Compared to a year ago when the Indians won only four games, significant gains were achieved this season in a 15-8 campaign that concluded April 15 with a loss to Lely in the Class 5A-District 12 semifinals.

Seminole players played pivotal roles in the resurgence this season with Vanessa and Destinee in the field and Cassandra on the bench. But wins and losses are only a slice of the story being written at Immokalee.

Cassandra said turning losses on the field into lessons in life is one way the coaches challenge the players.

"Yes, we do want to win," said Cassandra, who assists varsity head coach Danny Garcia, "but as coaches we also want to teach them morals to be successful. We're not here just to coach them about softball because after softball there's a big world out there. We want to teach them to be ready for whatever they've got to face."

At 23, Cassandra is only a handful of years beyond some of the players. Sometimes she is mistaken by umpires as a player. Make no mistake, she wants to be a role model to the girls as an alumna pursuing higher education and giving back to the softball program.

After graduating from Immokalee in 2010, Cassandra was crowned Miss Florida Seminole and attended Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts in Orlando. These days she is pursuing a degree in sports medicine at Keiser University in Fort Myers with aspirations of helping the Tribe and the high school. She already guides players in preseason conditioning workouts, a demanding period when a usually likeable coach might not be so likeable.

"Most of them hate me during that time more than they do now," she joked.

Plenty of questions greeted Cassandra last year when she became skipper of a vastly inexperienced JV team that featured almost no previous playing experience.

"That was my biggest challenge, trying to teach a big group of girls about how to catch, how to throw, how to hit a ball within three weeks," she said.

Perseverance and patience paid off. Nobody dropped out, which was treated as a cherished victory in itself.

"They all came back this year, which was really good," Cassandra said.

On the varsity level, Cassandra praised the hard-working approaches that her sister and Vanessa bring to the field.

"Dripping in sweat, who wants to be out here conditioning, throwing a ball day after day? They're out here because they love the sport. They love being interactive with other girls," Cassandra said.

Destinee is a sophomore who starts in the same outfield that Cassandra used to cover. Claiming to have "a better arm" than her older sister, Destinee said she learned from watching the way Cassandra played years ago and now how she coaches.

"Never give up and always keep fighting," Destinee said.

Destinee batted .255 with 13 hits this season. She registered multiple-hit games against Lake Placid and Golden Gate and a two-RBI game against Palmetto Ridge. Defensively, Destinee had an even stronger year.

"She's progressed in the outfield," Cassandra said. "Our (March 31) home game, all the balls were going her way. She was doing her job, catching the ball, backing up the shortstop. She really has a good attitude and supports the team."

Ditto for Vanessa, who earned the nickname "the ball magnet" because she is prone to getting hit by pitches, something she's become accustomed to after a black-and-blue season in which she was hit a team-high six times. It was almost fitting that a pitch smacked her in the right shoulder in her final at-bat on her senior night April 7 against Naples. She shrugged it off and headed to first base.

After the game, she smiled while reeling off where previous plunks have landed.

"Rib, elbow, knee, ankle," she said.

Being hit by the ball didn't put a dent in Vanessa's emotions on senior night. As the only player from the class of 2015, Vanessa had the spotlight to herself during a brief pregame ceremony. She was accompanied to the pitcher's circle by her mom, Maria, and brother David.

The evening's tributes included one of Vanessa's youngest fans. Immokalee changed its uniform tops from red to blue in honor of Vanessa's nephew, Josiah Osceola, a 3-year-old autistic boy. Vanessa said her teammates came up with the idea to wear the blue jerseys for her senior night, which coincided with April being National Autism Awareness Month.

"The captains and the whole team came together and decided to make these shirts. They surprised me. I literally cried. It means so much to me," Vanessa said.

Vanessa did her part in trying to make it a victorious evening. She played errorless ball at first base and ripped an RBI single to right field that knotted the game at 2-2 in the first inning. Immokalee rallied to tie the game in the seventh inning before Naples pulled out a 5-4 win in eight innings.

After the game, Josiah was surrounded by the Immokalee players in the middle of the infield as he posed for photos

while in the arms of Vanessa. Josiah wore a New York Yankees jersey, which is the favorite team of his mother, Esmeralda, who watched the game with about 10 family members.

"He loves coming to watch her play. He comes to every game," Esmeralda said.

Next season Immokalee will have to fill the void left behind by Vanessa, whose final season included a .404 batting average with 17 RBIs, four doubles, one triple and 16 runs.

"Throughout the years, she's progressed, not only as a player, but as a young woman," Cassandra said. "She's matured as a person. The whole purpose of the program is to teach them not only about softball but also about morals of life as well as being successful. She took in what we're trying to teach her."

Vanessa and Destinee will still be teammates outside high school. They plan to play for the Tribe at the NAYO softball tournament this summer.

While Destinee comes back for her junior season next year, Vanessa plans to attend Valencia College in Orlando with hopes of moving on to the University of Central Florida.

As for that winning hit against Cape Coral in the regular season, Vanessa said she didn't initially realize it was a hit, but confirmation came when her teammates stormed onto the field and mobbed her.

"I was so proud of myself and my team for coming back and winning. I couldn't have done it without all their support," she said.

This season the Seminole trio of Vanessa, Destinee and Cassandra made others proud, too.

"I'm proud of having Tribal girls here," said Elsa Zamora, the mother of Destinee and Cassandra. "They have a big impact on this community."



Kevin Johnson

Immokalee High School senior first baseman Vanessa Billie gets set in the field April 7 during a senior night game against Naples.



Kevin Johnson

From left, Immokalee High outfielder Destinee Jimmie, assistant coach Cassandra Jimmie and first baseman Vanessa Billie pose for a photo April 7 before a game against Naples. The Jimmie sisters and Vanessa helped the team compile a 15-8 record this season.

# Justin Motlow hopes to spring ahead with FSU

## Tampa Seminole helps Gold defeat Garnet

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

TALLAHASSEE — Playing football in Doak Campbell Stadium on a Saturday in April may not rival the importance and ambiance of a Saturday in October, but Florida State's spring game served a few purposes for Justin Motlow as he enters his second year on the team.

Motlow played on special teams and saw action in the second half at wide receiver. He caught one pass for the Gold team, which defeated the Garnet, 38-17, in front of 17,250 fans on April 11.

The intrasquad scrimmage marked the end of spring practice. It was the first time Motlow has played in game action since late 2013 when he was a senior at Tampa Catholic.

"It felt good to be back," Motlow said. As a freshman last fall, Motlow served on the practice scout team. He didn't see any playing time; however, he retained his four years of eligibility because he redshirted.

Now Motlow's goal is to earn playing time, which is a challenging task considering he is one of 15 wide receivers on the spring roster. Winning a spot on kickoff or return teams might be a quicker route.

"I'm trying to work my way onto

special teams first and then work my way up the ladder to receiver," he said.

Midway through the third quarter in the spring game, Motlow made his only reception of the game. The 12-yard catch on a pass from quarterback Lucas Clark came close to midfield.

"It was pretty good. First catch in the stadium," Motlow said.

With the departure of Jameis Winston for the NFL, FSU will have a new starting quarterback this fall. Sean Maguire, who has played in 13 games for FSU, appears to have the edge over less-experienced competitors heading into the summer.

"Right now I think Sean Maguire is winning the battle. He knows the offense better than the others," Motlow said.

Last season, Motlow became a popular figure within the Seminole Tribe of Florida as its first member to suit up for FSU's football team.

"It was surreal. It's crazy to think I'm the first," he said. "I have a lot of support. A lot of people tell me how proud they are."

Florida State opens Sept. 5 at home against Texas State. The Seminoles return four starters on offense — including two wide receivers — and seven starters on defense from last year's squad that was 13-0 before suffering a loss to Oregon in the national semifinals.



Photo courtesy of Ross Obley, FSU Sports Information  
Florida State wide receiver Justin Motlow runs a route during the team's spring game April 11 at Doak Campbell Stadium in Tallahassee.

# Tribe donates new wrestling mat to Oklahoma high school

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

FORT GIBSON, Okla. — The Seminole Tribe of Florida's presence on the wrestling mat at Fort Gibson High School is prevalent in several ways.



Courtesy photo

Fort Gibson High School wrestling coach Sammy Johnson holds a plaque of appreciation from the Seminole Tribe of Florida that was presented to him by Sammy Micco Sanchez, left, and Jesse Sanchez, during the team's banquet April 10.

Not only does the Oklahoma school's wrestling team feature Tribal members Sammy Micco Sanchez and his brother Jesse Sanchez, but the program now has a new mat thanks to the Tribe.

Fort Gibson wrestling coach Sammy Johnson said the Tribe donated \$10,000 to the program for the purchase of the mat, which replaces one the team used since the mid-1980s.

"It's an awesome gesture. We'll get to use it for the next 30 years," said Johnson, whose team rolled out the new mat in competition toward the end of its season.

The team had been considering fundraising ideas to buy a mat, but then the Tribe stepped in. Frank Cabal, Jesse and Sammy's stepfather, surprised Johnson with the news.

"The school was in need, and the Tribe has been very successful, and any time we can help someone out, we'll try to make it possible," Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc. President Tony Sanchez Jr. said.

President Sanchez watched his nephews win medals in wrestling at last summer's North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) in Canada. Those accomplishments — Sammy won gold; Jesse won silver — are noted on the new mat next to the Tribe's seal that is prominently displayed.

Johnson trained and coached Sammy and Jesse at NAIG. As appreciation for Johnson's efforts, the boys presented their coach with a plaque during the team's banquet April 10. The presentation also included the boys' mother, Alicia J. Cabal, school principal Gary Sparks and Fort Gibson superintendent of schools Derald Glover. The plaque was provided by the Seminole Recreation Department.

Sammy recently completed an impressive freshman season. He placed fourth at regionals and was the only freshman in Oklahoma's Class 4A to qualify for the state tournament.

Jesse, a sophomore, did not wrestle this winter because of an injury he suffered during football season. Jesse, a running back, and Sammy, a linebacker, helped Fort Gibson's football team to a 13-1 record last fall.

"I'm very, very happy about how my nephews are performing out there with school and wrestling and football. They've just been very successful," said President Sanchez, who also played football and wrestled when he was in high school.

Even though his team's wrestling season ended in early March, Sammy has remained busy on the mats along with his brother. In March, they competed in the National High School Coaches Association's National Wrestling Championships in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Jesse won two matches in the sophomore 170-pound class. Sammy won three matches and placed seventh in the freshman 195-pound division. He earned a Freshman All American honor.

Sammy's performance also netted him an invitation that will take him a long way from America's heartland. He was selected to be part of an Oklahoma contingent that will compete in a wrestling tournament this summer in Australia and New Zealand.

"For kids to have an opportunity to travel to other parts of the world, I think that's a great opportunity," President Sanchez said. "You want to see that life is much bigger than the reservation or the small town that you're raised in. I wish him all the luck in the world."



Kevin Johnson

Okeechobee High School senior Layton Thomas makes contact April 17 against Lincoln Park in his final regular season game for the Brahms. Thomas batted over .300 this season.

# Okeechobee High gets boost from Brighton

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

OKEECHOBEE — In the coming months, Layton Thomas will pack his bags to begin his college career in Fort Myers; Sean Osceola will depart for California to play summer baseball; and Trevor Thomas will return to the football field.

If Okeechobee High School baseball coach Eric Kindell had his way, he'd keep the trio from Brighton Reservation around as long as he could. This winter and spring Kindell coached Layton and Sean on varsity and brought up Trevor from the junior varsity squad late in the season.

As his team warmed-up before its final regular season game April 17 against Lincoln Park, Kindell delivered glowing remarks about the Tribe's representatives on his team, starting with Layton, a captain and four-year varsity outfielder who added pitching duties to his repertoire this season.

"Layton has done a good job," Kindell said. "He's hitting [.326 as of April 17], which is good. He's played a good right field for us. I enjoy having him around. He's a good guy to have on the team, and he's a good teammate to others."

Layton's solid numbers extend into the classroom.

"He's a very intelligent young man," Kindell said. "It's nice to watch kids grow up. He does great in school. He's a 4.0 student. His mom and dad should be really proud."

A proud moment for Layton came as a junior in the 2014 Class 6A-District 13 championship game when he helped Okeechobee win its first district title in five years. Layton said going 2-for-2 with two RBIs in the game is one of his fondest memories, along with hitting his only home run when he was a sophomore.

Layton, the team's starting right fielder, decided this season that he wanted to give pitching a shot. The southpaw saw limited action on the mound with just seven innings in the regular season. Although he struggled to find the strike zone in the regular season finale as a starter, overall his first season as a pitcher received decent reviews.

"He pitched against Westwood [in the regular season] and he did pretty good," Sean said. "He threw a lot of first-pitch strikes and got ahead of batters."

A college career awaits Layton, whose new baseball home will be the former spring training stadium of the Boston Red Sox. In January, Layton signed to play for Florida SouthWestern State College in Fort Myers. The team's home venue is City of Palms Park, which seats more than 7,000. Formerly known as Edison State College, the school will field a baseball team starting in the 2015-16 season for the first time since the 1990s. Layton is eager to be part of the rebirth.

"I'm excited. I'm ready to help get it started," Layton said.

Layton and Sean grew up as neighbors on Brighton Reservation. Because Layton is a few years older than Sean, they rarely played organized baseball together. A few games for the Brighton Warriors when they were youngsters were the extent of their experience as teammates, until this winter when Sean joined Okeechobee as a freshman.

Sean, who has accumulated years of nationwide travel baseball experience, is no ordinary freshman.

"He's definitely seasoned," Kindell said. "He's seen some good pitching and faced good batters when he's pitched. I actually don't call him a freshman, even though he is on paper. To me, I think of him a lot more than that. His baseball IQ is probably the highest on the team. As a freshman, that's saying a lot. You can tell he's been around people who have played a lot of baseball."

Lincoln Park quickly witnessed a sample of Sean's pitching skills. The first two batters who faced Sean were caught looking at third strikes on breaking pitches. Sean pitched two scoreless, no-hit

innings with three strikeouts in late relief.

Like most Okeechobee pitchers, Sean was on a pitch count during the regular season. He had several no decisions, but in mid-February, he notched a complete game victory in a 4-1 win against Vero Beach, an accomplishment made even more noteworthy considering Vero Beach is an 8A school that finished first in its district during the regular season.

"I'm pretty happy with all my performances. I've limited runs. I've given up only one home run all season, which is pretty good as a freshman," said Sean, who will rejoin the California-based Phenoms travel team at the end of the school year. "We practice every day, and we go to a lot of tournaments where colleges look at us."

When he wasn't used as a pitcher, Sean played first base or third base. Regardless of where he plays, he's already made a significant impression on his coach.

"He's an outstanding kid," Kindell said. "You couldn't ask for a more polite kid. When my kids grow up, I'd like for them to be like him. He does a lot of things right. He's a great kid to have around."

Kindell echoed those sentiments when asked about Trevor's promotion to varsity from junior varsity.

"He's a pretty cool kid. He plays two sports at the school; there's not many kids that do that anymore," Kindell said. "He works hard every day. He's pretty witty. I brought him up to have him around. I think he's a good aura for the team."

Trevor spent his sophomore season this year improving his pitching and batting. He started the season in the lower third of the batting order but worked his way up to the 3 and 4 spots. He boosted his batting average more than 100 points compared to his freshman year and delivered three complete games on the mound.

"Much better year," said Trevor, who batted .285 and also played shortstop, third base and left field.

Trevor made the most out of the few games he played on varsity late in the season, including notching two hits in four at-bats.

When baseball season finished, Trevor planned to shift his focus to spring football. He was a quarterback and free safety on the JV team last season until a broken finger sidelined him.

As for baseball, Okeechobee will lose its three starting outfielders — including Layton — to graduation. The voids will need to be filled next season.

"Our outfield is completely seniors, so I'd like to think that one of those spots could be mine," Trevor said.

"He's definitely here learning and we really like him," said Kindell, whose team finished with an 11-13 record after being eliminated April 22 by top-seeded Jensen Beach, 4-2, in a 6A-13 semifinal.



Courtesy photo

A donation from the Seminole Tribe of Florida allowed Fort Gibson High School to purchase this new wrestling mat, which features the Seminole seal and includes the accomplishments at the North American Indigenous Games by Tribal members and Fort Gibson wrestlers Sammy Micco Sanchez and Jesse Sanchez.



Kevin Johnson

Okeechobee freshman Sean Osceola delivers a pitch April 17 during a late-inning relief appearance against Lincoln Park at Okeechobee High School.

**NAYO**  
From page 1C

"It's way better," said Leilani Gopher, who helped the Native Elite 14U girls team to a third-place finish, the best mark among the nine girls and boys Seminole teams.

With nearly 50 teams and more than 500 boys and girls ages 12 to 18 in the double-elimination tournament, more than one game was required to accommodate all games within two days. The Classic Gym was busy with games both days and Hollywood Christian School was also used for a few bouts.

NAYO secretary Salina Dorgan said the tournament rotates annually among its members. NAYO is comprised of Tribes from Alabama, Florida, New York, North Carolina and Mississippi. Dorgan said the tournament is traditionally held Easter weekend because players don't have school on Good Friday and out-of-state teams can travel back home Sunday before the start of the school week.

For New York's teams, that meant a 20-plus hour charter bus ride back to Seneca Nation.

Dorgan said NAYO's debut at the new rec center went smoothly.

"With two floors here, it was convenient, and we have the other locations. All in all, it's gone pretty good," Dorgan said as she manned the tables in the lobby that featured giant boards with schedules and results from each of the four divisions. "The flow of our brackets has stayed consistent to the time we set."

About 25 Seminole Recreation employees from Big Cypress, Brighton and Hollywood handled a variety of tasks. They operated game clocks, kept statistics, managed crowds and sold tournament merchandise. Dorgan said staff departed the gym at about midnight on the first day and returned about seven hours later to begin day two.

Seminole Recreation Director Richard Blankenship said the Tribe will host baseball and softball tournaments for the Native American Sports Association (NASA) – the adult version of NAYO – this summer. NAYO's baseball and softball tournaments will be held in Alabama.

As for NAYO hoops, none of the Seminole teams reached championship games.

Native Elite narrowly missed a bid to play in the 14U girls final but fell to the Lady

Cyclones from the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, 48-47, in the semifinals.

Unlike some visiting teams in the tournament who play together back home in leagues, Native Elite and other Seminole teams were created just for NAYO and didn't have much time to prepare.

"We were a last-minute team. If we would have practiced more, I think we could have had it," said Native Elite forward Dayra Koenes.

Native Elite rallied from an early 13-2 deficit against the Lady Cyclones to get back in contention before halftime thanks to 10 points from Dasani Cypress, two 3-pointers from Gopher and one from Charli Frye.

In the second half, Native Elite dominated at times and built a 43-38 lead with four minutes left behind baskets from Cypress, December Stubbs and Tiana Stubbs. Cypress finished with a game-high 17 points, which is the same amount the Stubbs duo combined for in the second half.

December Stubbs made two pressure-packed free throws with 30 seconds left to give Native Elite a 47-46 lead, but the Lady Cyclones' Lorianna John scored the winning basket with 16 seconds left.

Native Elite won three of its five games in the double-elimination tournament. Other Seminole teams in the 14U girls division

included Seminole Wind (0-2) and the Lady Rebels (0-2).

In 17U girls, Native Hoops went 1-2, which included a win against Hustle Gang from Mississippi.

On the boys side, Dark Side, which featured a combination of Seminole and Miccosukee players, finished 3-2 in the 17U division. Dark Side's wins came against the Bear Cats from Mississippi and two teams from North Carolina.

Other 17U Seminole teams included Florida Boyz (2-2) and Unexplainables (1-2).

All three Seminole teams in the 14U division – Florida Natives, Seminole Warriors and SFL – went 0-2.

The Native Dominators (14U girls), Choctaw Ballerz (14U boys) and Bad Boyz (17U boys) – all from Mississippi – captured championships as did Smokin Hot, from the Eastern Band of Cherokee in North Carolina, in the 17U girls division.



Kevin Johnson

Darlah Cypress controls the ball for the Native Hoops in a girls 17U game at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center.





Kevin Johnson

Joseph Osceola leads a fast break for the SFL team against the Young Dawgs in the boys 14U division during the NAYO tournament in Hollywood. Osceola scored a team-high 12 points.



Kevin Johnson

Seminole Wind's Alli Stayathome fights for a rebound against Native Crush in a 14U girls game.


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**DeForest Carter**

was named a 2014-15 NAIA II Men's Basketball First Team All-American; lead the Eagles to the best record in program history (35-2), a Sun Conference regular season title, a Sun Conference Tournament crown and an appearance in the NAIA II Men's Basketball National Championship semifinals. Carter became the first Eagle since 2006-07 to claim first team honors and the eighth Eagle in program history to claim a spot on the first team roster; he is the third Embry-Riddle player to earn three All-American honors in his career. The 6-1 guard was named an Honorable Mention All-American in both his sophomore and junior seasons and joins the elite company of Rob Padgett (1993-97) and Harold Pierson (1999-03) as a three-time All-American; born in Naples, Fla. on Apr. 30, 1993...son of Myra C. Jumper...majoring in Interdisciplinary Studies...is a Seminole and was raised on the Big Cypress Indian Reservation.



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# PECS spotlights eighth-grade softball players and parents

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BRIGHTON** — With help from their parents, student-athletes balance school, team practices and homework. The hard work of the eighth-grade softball players and their parents were recognized March 31 at Pemaevt Emahakv Charter School's last home game of the season.

For the two departing eighth-graders, Aleina Micco and Krysta Burton, the night was their last hurrah.

The girls were escorted by their parents through a tunnel of teammates as they took the field for the final time. Aleina was escorted by Joey and Reina Micco, and Krysta was accompanied by Chris and Micki Burton.

For star pitcher Aleina, the feeling was bittersweet.

"It's kind of sad; I've been here since first grade," said the 14-year-old. "I'll miss playing here on the reservation with this team and these coaches, but I'm ready to start something new with a new team and a new coach."

Both girls plan to play for their high school teams next year. Aleina, who will be home-schooled, will play for Moore Haven High School, and Krysta will attend Moore Haven or Okeechobee High School.

Coach Nancy Jimmie said she will miss both players next year. She said she is proud of their accomplishments with the team.

"Aleina was my No. 1 pitcher and



Beverly Bidney

Krysta Burton walks with her parents, Chris and Micki Burton, during Pemaevt Emahakv Charter School's eighth-grade parent night March 31 before the last home softball game of the season.

has a big bat," Jimmie said. "She has a great attitude and I'm going to miss her. She helped us win a lot of games. Krysta is a sweetheart. She has a great attitude and she'd go anywhere I needed her. Her biggest strength is her fielding; she has a good arm."

Krysta, who played first and third base,

looks forward to the future, but she said she is also nervous.

"I had a lot of fun playing softball and will miss this team," said Krysta, 13. "It was hard work, but I got encouragement from them. I'll remember that the most."

Both girls want to play for Florida State University after high school.



Beverly Bidney

Aleina Micco is escorted by her parents, Joey and Reina Micco, during eighth-grade parent night. PECS recognized the student-athletes and their parents for their hard work and dedication before the team's last home game of the season.

## ◆ TOURNAMENT

From page 1C

Lady Ballers built a cushion that grew to 45-33 on a 3-pointer from Courtney Osceola. While her teammates were hitting long range shots, Raeanne West owned the paint at both ends. She scored six consecutive points during one stretch for the Lady Ballers.

The champions were comprised of Candace Blackbird, Adriana Huggins, Courtney Osceola, Francine Osceola, Tasha Osceola and Raeanne West.

Although her team lost, Tigertail was rewarded for her solid performance in the tournament by being named the most valuable player.

N Squad finished 1-2. Trail Women went 0-2.

The women's legends division drew two teams. Team Leslie topped Team Stacy twice to win the title.



Kevin Johnson

Lady Ballers' Candace Blackbird attempts to block a shot by N Squad's Demetria Tigertail during the adult women's championship game.



Kevin Johnson

Money Team forward Duelle Gore controls the ball while defended by Nothing Fancy's Charlie Osceola and Josie Balentine (11) during the 47th annual Howard Tiger Memorial Basketball Tournament on April 18 at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center.



Kevin Johnson

Nothing Fancy's Jerome Davis attempts to steal past Money Team defender DeForest Carter during the tournament.



Rachel Buxton

Conner Thomas recognizes parents, Janelle Robinson and Frank Thomas, April 2 during eighth-grade parent night.

# PECS baseball team completes season

## Conner Thomas, Lucas Osceola recognized on parent night

BY RACHEL BUXTON  
Freelance Writer

**BRIGHTON** — Before the first pitch of Pemaevt Emahakv Charter School's last home baseball game April 2 the parents of eighth-graders Lucas Osceola and Conner Thomas were called to home plate.

Lucas and Conner then presented their mothers with flowers to show their appreciation for making their baseball dreams possible.

Head coach Harry Tewksbury said parents support their children to ensure they keep up with school work and find a balance with extracurricular activities.

"They support the program and the school very well, so it is nice that we can do something to at least thank them for that to some degree," he said.

Lucas, Conner and the rest of their teammates played their last game on their home field against Moore Haven and wrapped up the season April 9 in Clewiston. PECS could not boast a winning season but they found success in other ways.

"Win or lose, we were successful," Tewksbury said. "We have been in some games and we have made some plays."

PECS faced older and more

experienced players on high school junior varsity teams. Tewksbury said that because PECS' players were less experienced, the coaches worked with them to build up the fundamentals of baseball.

"They are very coachable, they listen well, they work hard, they want to learn; they are eager to learn when they come to practice," he said.

While most middle school teams play on smaller baseball fields, PECS played on a standard high school-sized field. Tewksbury said he believes playing on the larger field at a younger age will give the players an edge when playing in high school. Next year Lucas will attend the Okeechobee Freshman Campus while Conner will head to Lake Placid.

"Both of them ... are just great kids; they are fun to be around, very respectful," Tewksbury said.

A season full of determination, frustration and hard work paid off, not in wins, but in development and improvement, Tewksbury said.

"We practiced for almost a month before we played our first game," Tewksbury said. "From that time to now, it is amazing how far they have come, and we really have not even scratched the surface."



Rachel Buxton

Lucas Osceola presents his mother, Crystal Marr, with flowers to show his appreciation.

## ◆ BIRDMAN

From page 1C

"We wish the Heat were in the playoffs, but we had an opportunity to bring him here for the Tribal community to meet him," Rep. Osceola said. "He's all about Hard Rock; the tattoos; he loves the music."

Even though he's been in the NBA for more than a decade and will turn 37 this July, Birdman possesses a youthful,

not-your-average-Joe appeal that attracted Hard Rock Energy.

"We thought he'd be a real good fit because he's kind of a young person's guy," said Marc Solomon, general counsel for the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc. "He has a lot of energy and he's a little bit off-center and that's what the whole energy drink category is. So you need somebody who's got an image out there for the young people in the energy market. I think it's a good combination; we've just got to keep building on it."



Kevin Johnson

Miami Heat forward Chris 'Birdman' Andersen shows a tough look for the cameras April 18 while posing with Beverly Alumbaugh at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center in Hollywood.

# Announcements



## Notice of Availability of the Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs  
ACTION: Notice of Availability

all potential impacts to the human environment that may be associated with the project.

Based on review of the EA and supporting documentation, the BIA has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the proposed project.

**NOTICE:** This is a Notice of Availability that the EA and FONSI for the project are available for public review. This FONSI is a finding on environmental effects, not a decision to proceed with an action, therefore cannot be appealed. You may obtain a copy of the EA and FONSI from the BIA Eastern Regional Office or the Environmental Resources Management Department of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, 6365 Taft Street, Suite 3008, Hollywood, FL 33024, telephone (954) 965-4380.

For further information please contact Chet McGhee, Regional Environmental Scientist, Bureau Of Indian Affairs, Eastern Regional Office, 545 Marriott Drive, Suite 700, Nashville, TN 37214, telephone (615) 564-6830.

Johnna Blackhair  
Acting Director, Eastern Region  
Bureau of Indian Affairs

**SUMMARY:** The Seminole Tribe of Florida (Tribe) is currently evaluating a grant of easement agreement with the City of Hollywood to remove and install a new sewer lift station off North 64th Avenue on the Tribe's Hollywood Reservation. The proposed grant of easement is necessary to facilitate continued uninterrupted wastewater service for Tribal members on the Hollywood Reservation. To move forward with the project the Tribe will need the grant of easement approved by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Due to the need for federal approvals, this project was reviewed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act.

The BIA has reviewed and adopted the Environmental Assessment (EA), dated March 2015, prepared by the Seminole Tribe of Florida Environmental Resource Management Department, to determine the environmental impacts that may result from the project. The EA is well written and considers



Beverly Bidney

Small animals and their caretakers take center stage in the ring March 27 at the Seminole Indian 4-H Show in Brighton.

**SEMINOLE MEDIA PRODUCTIONS WORKSHOP COMING THIS SUMMER. MORE INFORMATION TO FOLLOW.**



## 4-H livestock show results

**BRIGHTON** — The Seminole Indian 4-H Show and Sale in Brighton March 27-28 featured 76 youngsters who showed 52 hogs, 24 steers, 2 heifer yearlings and 19 small animals.

Here are the results:  
Grand Champion Steer: Chade Osceola, of Hollywood, with his steer from Polly Hayes' herd on Brighton Reservation.

Reserve Grand Champion Steer: Harmony Cypress, of Big Cypress, with her steer from Naha Jumper and Moses Jumper Jr.'s herd on Big Cypress Reservation.

Junior Showmanship Steer: Jaylee Wilcox, of Big Cypress Reservation.

Intermediate Showmanship Steer: Aleah Turtle, of Brighton Reservation.

Senior Showmanship Steer: Ashley Weikert, of Brighton Reservation.

Grand Champion Swine: Ramone Baker, of Brighton Reservation.

Reserve Grand Champion Swine: Jillian Rodriguez, of Immokalee Reservation.

Junior Showmanship Swine: Kaleb Doctor, of Brighton Reservation.

Intermediate Showmanship Swine: Aidan Tommie, of Brighton Reservation.

Senior Showmanship Swine: Aiyana Tommie, of Brighton Reservation.

In previous years at the sale, as with other 4-H sales in the area, the Grand and Reserve Champions were the first animals to be auctioned and consistently brought the lowest prices. The staff decided to reverse the order and save the best for last, thus rewarding the youth who worked so hard to attain the top status in the show. Auctioneer Buddy Mills commended the Tribe

for being the first to sell the animals in this order and believes other fairs in the area will follow the Tribe's lead in the future.

All of the animals were sold, as was a blanket that was purchased by the Chairman's office. The blanket sale benefits youth that show animals which do not sell, such as small animals and heifers. The Board of Directors donated funds to the heifer program last year and again this year to encourage youth to enter the cattle program.

Polly Hayes, 4-H director, would like to thank the Boys & Girls Club's Lewis Gopher and Charlotte Burgess, who cooked for all the 4-H participants and parents for the two days of the show and sale. This is the second year they provided meals for 4-H.

Parent volunteers who helped on show night were Dionne Smedley, Clarissa Urbina, Shawna Tommie, Jimi Lu Huff, Scooter Johns, Bobby Yates, Marvin Hines, Melissa Gopher, Frank Thomas, Mary Jen Koenes and Emma Urbina.

Hayes would also like to thank bid takers Bobby Yates, Gene Thomas, Marvin Hines and Frank Thomas, as well as Norman Johns, who has served as ring master for many years. She is proud of the 4-H staff, which includes Yolanda Gore, Louvella Yates, Jason Beer, Donnie Hayes, Kenny Vickers, Jennifer Fish, Joseph Castellano and extension agent Aaron Stam.

Hayes greatly appreciates everyone who attended the show and sale; she said it would not be successful without everyone's help, whether it was sweeping floors or helping youth with their projects. It was rewarding to see the parents who were former 4-H'ers helping their kids, as well as others because they remember how it was when they were showing.

### SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA, INC.

#### NOTICE SEMINOLE TRIBE GENERAL ELECTION MAY 11, 2015

In accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, and the Corporate Charter and Bylaws of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc., a General Election is called for the following offices on Monday, May 11, 2015; qualified candidates for each office are listed.

#### SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA TRIBAL COUNCIL

**Chairman:**  
James E. Billie  
Tony Billie  
Richard Bowers, Jr.  
Marcellus W. Osceola, Jr.

**Big Cypress Reservation:**  
Manuel (Mondo) Tiger  
Cicero Osceola  
Mary Jean Koenes

**Brighton Reservation:**  
Andrew J. Bowers, Jr.  
Diane Smith

**Hollywood Reservation:**  
Christopher Osceola  
Douglas Smith

#### SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President:**  
Mitchell Cypress  
Tony Sanchez, Jr.

**Big Cypress Reservation:**  
Paul Bowers, Sr.  
Joe Frank

**Brighton Reservation:**  
Larry Howard  
Johnnie Jones, Sr.

**Hollywood Reservation:**  
Mark Steven Osceola  
Gordon Oliver Wareham

Registered absentee voters are urged to contact the Tribal Secretary's Office for an absentee ballot request form at 954-966-6300 ext. 11463.

Registered voters who are NOT Voting Absentee are required to cast their ballot at their established polling places on the three (3) reservations.

**VOTING LOCATIONS:**  
**Big Cypress Reservation:** Senior Center  
**Brighton Reservation:** Cattle/Range Office  
**Hollywood Reservation:** Classic Gym (Old Gym)

**Polls will be open 8:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.**  
LaVonne Kippenberger  
Tribal Secretary  
3/2015

## FINANCIAL LITERACY SEMINARS

**HUMAN RESOURCES TRAINING CENTER**  
6365 Taft St. Suite 1008  
Hollywood, FL 33024

**Must register at [www.semtribe.com/signmeup](http://www.semtribe.com/signmeup)**

### June Seminar

Session I: Weds, June 10, 2015  
Session II: Thurs, June 11, 2015  
Session III: Fri, June 12, 2015

### July Seminar

Session I: Weds, July 8, 2015  
Session II: Thurs, July 9, 2015  
Session III: Fri, July 10, 2015

**\*\* Registration Deadline\*\*  
Mon, May 18, 2015**

**\*\* Registration Deadline\*\*  
Mon, June 15, 2015**

**ALL SESSION TIMES ARE 9:00AM—3:00PM.**

**STUDENTS MUST ARRIVE BY 8:45AM.**

**Financial Literacy Seminar is open to all Seminole Tribal members ages 17 and older.**

**Students are highly encouraged to complete all three sessions during this series as this series of classes will fulfill your Minor Trust Financial Literacy Requirement.**

**All three sessions must be completed in consecutive order to earn your Certificate of Completion.**

**For more information please contact:**

**Rita McCabe - Brighton Executive Administrative Office 863.763.4128 x. 15403**  
**Lisa Estopinan - Hollywood Office of Trust Management 954.966.6300 x 11442**  
**Hollywood Executive Administrative Office 954.966.6300 x. 11432**

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