

The Seminole Tribune

Voice of the Unconquered

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Seminole women make history at inauguration

Four women elected to office

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Hundreds of tribal members and guests gathered under a large tent in front of the historic Council Oak Tree on the grounds of the Hollywood Reservation's Classic Casino on June 7 to swear in the Seminole Tribe's newly elected leaders at Inauguration Day ceremonies.

The tribe holds elections every two years to install the leadership of its government operations and business enterprises. While familiar faces are still on Tribal Council and on the board of Seminole Tribe of Florida Inc., it was a day to celebrate new faces and Seminole women — three newcomers and one incumbent — who were voted in at the tribe's May 10 election.

The tribe has never had four women serving in leadership positions at the same time — the most at any one time has been two.

Inauguration Day also marked the tribe's first sit-down public event in about the past 15 months as the Covid-19 pandemic halted most in-person gatherings and limited the few that were held to drive-thru arrangements. The event was live streamed.



The Tribal Council and Board of Directors gather in front of the Council Oak Tree after the inauguration ceremony June 7 in Hollywood. From left are Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola, Brighton Councilman Larry Howard, Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie, Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola, Jr., President Mitchell Cypress, Brighton Board Rep. Helene Buster, Hollywood Board Rep. Christine McCall and Big Cypress Board Rep. Nadine Bowers.

Beverly Bidney

♦ See INAUGURATION on page 4A

New mobile command vehicle enhances tribe's emergency services capabilities

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — The Seminole Tribe got a special delivery May 27 — one that few tribes in Indian Country have ever seen.

The tribe's Public Safety departments — police, fire rescue and emergency management — now have a 45-foot long, fully decked out vehicle with a 70-gallon fuel tank that can operate as a mobile command center for a variety of purposes.

The tribe acquired the "Office of Public Safety Command Vehicle" through a Department of Homeland Security grant. Its value is approximately \$1 million.

William Latchford, executive director of Public Safety for the tribe, said the unique vehicle, commonly referred to by staff as the "command truck," will be used as a main workspace and storage area for equipment.

"So much of what we do is away from the office. This vehicle was built to function on the same level as a central office would, with industry-standard technology. Put simply, you're putting your main center of operations on location," Latchford said.

Latchford credited the hard work and team approach within several tribal

departments that made the acquisition possible, including Grants, Emergency Management, Information Technology and Public Safety.

Ralph Tirona, the tribe's Emergency Management coordinator, said the command truck is rare in Indian Country. He said the Seminole Tribe had previously operated a trailer pulled by a truck as a mobile command, but "never anything on this scale."

Tirona, Emergency Management director Larry Rogers, IT and representatives from LDV Inc. (makers of the command truck) held staff training on its capabilities just hours after it arrived at Seminole Fire Rescue in Hollywood.

State-of-the-art

The capabilities of the command truck are impressive. It can connect to dispatch services across the tribe, monitor the weather and has several cameras for surveillance, like tracking drone footage. It features multiple workstations and a private meeting area for command personnel.

There are several fully automated and state-of-the-art functions like two, 10-inch LCD touch screens and two, three-inch touch pads with custom graphics for local control

and monitoring systems. It's got exterior lighting with optional use of awnings as well.

One of its many benefits is a decreased response time for law enforcement and emergency services. For example, the command truck could respond to an affected area during a natural disaster as opposed to people needing to be transported to multiple facilities.

The command truck can double as a mobile crime lab and survey an area with thousands of people. It can respond to events like flooding, wildfires, hurricanes, tornadoes, or even active shooter and terrorism incidents.

But its use is not limited to emergencies. The command truck can function as a mobile medical treatment facility, too. For example, the tribe has the option to use it to distribute Covid-19 vaccines, or to administer booster shots, if necessary, in the future. It can simply be used for event safety and security at tribalwide functions or Hard Rock events as well.

There are creature comforts on board for staff that spend hours on board — a refrigerator, freezer, microwave and coffee maker.

♦ For additional photos go to page 5A



Public Safety's new 45-foot long mobile command vehicle arrived May 27 in Hollywood.

Damon Scott

Jim Allen reflects on Hard Rock at 50

Tribe now owns London building that is home to first Hard Rock Cafe

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — When Peter Morton and Isaac Tigrett opened the first Hard Rock Cafe in London in 1971, no one could have imagined that 50 years later it would be a global brand that serves more than 100 million people a year at not only cafes, but hotels, casinos, resorts and live music venues.

Hard Rock International Chairman and Seminole Gaming CEO Jim Allen recently reflected on his part of the story and that of the Seminole Tribe. He said it began July 4, 2006 — "the real day that changed the Hard Rock." Allen spoke at a media event June 10 at the Hard Rock Cafe at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood.

Prior to July 4, 2006, Allen said, he had been relentless for almost two years in trying to convince then-Hard Rock owners Rank Group PLC to sell to the Seminole Tribe.

"They told me 'no' about 30 times," Allen said. "But then they called me up and said 'we're gonna sell.'"

It was good news, except Rank Group was simply letting Allen know they were putting the Hard Rock up for a public auction. Along with the tribe, Allen said there were more than 72 bidders, including large private equity firms, major restaurant companies, hotel companies and a few casinos.

"We were in the battle of our lives and I assure you they didn't want to sell Hard Rock to a Native American tribe from the U.S.," he said.

The first bid was rejected, so Allen called his team together and they worked around the clock to put together another one. Rank Group narrowed the bidders from 72 to 30 — and then to 14.

"And then we literally battled the final three or four bidders, which were large — in one case a private equity group with hundreds of billions of dollars," Allen said. "How is this little tribe from Florida and this crazy guy from Jersey gonna buy this brand?"

But it happened. The purchase was officially announced about five months later on Dec. 11, 2006. The tribe bought the Hard Rock for \$965 million in a deal that became



Hard Rock Cafe London via Facebook

The Hard Rock brand started with the opening of a Hard Rock Cafe in London 50 years ago. This pin, with the London cafe in the background, is part of the anniversary memorabilia collection.

official in March 2007 and included 124 Hard Rock Cafes, four Hard Rock Hotels, two Hard Rock Casinos and two Hard Rock Live venues.

Sixteen years later, the brand has expanded in a massive way and has a presence in 68 countries. There are many more locations and where there was no memorabilia, there are now 86,000 pieces on display; where there was no live music, there are now 30,000 live music events held each year.

"If the Seminole Tribe had not purchased Hard Rock, it would not be what it is today," Allen said. "I look at Hard Rock today and I think about where it started — to me it's kind of like 'wow,' — you have to pinch yourself. People talk about lifestyle brands, but Hard Rock is really the first lifestyle brand."

♦ See HARD ROCK on page 7A

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Visit the Tribune's website for news throughout the month at seminoletribune.org

Editorial

My grandparents were stolen from their families as children. We must learn about this history.

• **Deb Haaland**

As I read stories about an unmarked grave in Canada where the remains of 215 Indigenous children were found last month, I was sick to my stomach. But the deaths of Indigenous children at the hands of government were not limited to that side of the border. Many Americans may be alarmed to learn that the United States also has a history of taking Native children from their families in an effort to eradicate our culture and erase us as a people. It is a history that we must learn from if our country is to heal from this tragic era.

I am a product of these horrific assimilation policies. My maternal grandparents were stolen from their families when they were only 8 years old and were forced to live away from their parents, culture and communities until they were 13. Many children like them never made it back home.

Over nearly 100 years, tens of thousands of Indigenous children were taken from their communities and forced into scores of boarding schools run by religious institutions and the U.S. government. Some studies suggest that by 1926, nearly 83 percent of Native American school-age children were in the system. Many children were doused with DDT upon arrival, and as their coerced re-education got underway, they endured physical abuse for speaking their tribal languages or practicing traditions that didn't fit into what the government believed was the American ideal.

My great-grandfather was taken to

Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania. Its founder coined the phrase "kill the Indian, and save the man," which genuinely reflects the influences that framed these policies at the time.

My family's story is not unlike that of many other Native American families in this country. We have a generation of lost or injured children who are now the lost or injured aunts, uncles, parents and grandparents of those who live today. I once spent time with my grandmother recording our history for a writing assignment in college. It was the first time I heard her speak candidly about how hard it was — about how a priest gathered the children from the village and put them on a train, and how she missed her family. She spoke of the loneliness she endured. We wept together. It was an exercise in healing for her and a profound lesson for me about the resilience of our people, and even more about how important it is to reclaim what those schools tried to take from our people.

The lasting and profound impacts of the federal government's boarding school system have never been appropriately addressed. This attempt to wipe out Native identity, language and culture continues to manifest itself in the disparities our communities face, including long-standing intergenerational trauma, cycles of violence and abuse, disappearance, premature deaths, and additional undocumented physiological and psychological impacts.

Many of the boarding schools were maintained by the Interior Department, which I now lead. I believe that I — and the Biden-Harris administration — have an important responsibility to bring this trauma to light.

Our children, parents and grandparents deserve a federal government that works to promote our tribal languages, culture and mental health. Many Native children want to learn their tribe's language, songs and ceremonies. Many Native families want the children who were lost to come home, regardless of how long ago they were stolen.

The obligation to correct and heal those unspeakable wrongs extends to today and starts with investments such as those President Biden has made to strengthen tribal sovereignty through the American Rescue Plan, the American Jobs Plan and the budget for fiscal 2022.

Our administration has set out to forge a new path to engage with tribal communities and to live up to its trust and treaty responsibilities. But that obligation also requires that all Americans listen and learn, that we allow federal boarding school survivors and their families an opportunity to be heard, and that we engage in meaningful tribal consultation to seek justice. Though it is uncomfortable to learn that the country you love is capable of committing such acts, the first step to justice is acknowledging these painful truths and gaining a full understanding of their impacts so that we can unravel the threads of trauma and injustice that linger. We have a long road of healing ahead of us, but together with tribal nations, I am sure that we can work together for a future that we will all be proud to embrace.

Deb Haaland, the U.S. interior secretary, is the first Native American to serve as a Cabinet secretary. This article appeared in the Washington Post on June 11. It is online at washingtonpost.com.

Hard Rock, Seminole Gaming step up to assist Surfside efforts

FROM PRESS RELEASE

HOLLYWOOD — Hard Rock International and Seminole Gaming, both owned by the Seminole Tribe, announced June 30 a multi-dimensional Support Surfside Program to provide relief for those impacted by the tragic collapse of Champlain Towers South in Surfside.

The Support Surfside Program includes an immediate minimum cash donation of \$250,000 to the Support Surfside Fund at www.supportsurfside.org, created by the Coral Gables Community Foundation, the Key Biscayne Community Foundation, the Miami Foundation, the Knight Foundation, Miami Heat and Miami Heat Charitable Fund. The \$250,000 contribution announced today brings the total raised by the Support Surfside Fund to more than \$2,250,000.

In addition, a public fundraising campaign will be conducted at all restaurant, retail and hotel venues of Hard Rock and Seminole Gaming. Guests will be encouraged to round up their purchase amounts to the next dollar, with their change also donated to the Support Surfside Fund.

All team members of Hard Rock and Seminole Gaming will be offered the opportunity to contribute directly to a designated account linked to the Support

Surfside Fund, which will be matched by Hard Rock and Seminole Gaming. Hard Rock International and Seminole Gaming together employ 50,000 team members worldwide.

Hard Rock Cafe Miami to deliver dinners to Miami-Dade Fire Rescue teams

Beginning Saturday, July 3, and continuing for several weeks, team members at Hard Rock Cafe Miami at Bayside Marketplace will prepare and deliver 100 dinners each day to help feed Miami-Dade Fire Rescue professionals working at the site.

"This is a terrible tragedy and our hearts go out to the many people affected by it," said Seminole Tribe of Florida Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. "The Seminole Tribe pledges to marshal our resources and do everything we can to help."

Jim Allen, chairman of Hard Rock International and CEO of Seminole Gaming, said the Support Surfside Program will be a



priority for everyone in the coming weeks and months.

"In keeping with one of Hard Rock's founding mottos of 'Take Time to Be Kind,' Hard Rock and Seminole Gaming team members want to do something meaningful to help people affected by this tragic event," said Allen. "Our Support Surfside Program is about reaching out to our neighbors in need and extending a helping hand."

Tribal police can detain non-Natives, court affirms

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

The U.S. Supreme Court issued a broad, unanimous ruling June 1 reaffirming that tribal police officers have the power to temporarily detain and search non-Native Americans on tribal land if they're suspected of violating state or federal law.

Indian Country saw the ruling as an affirmation of tribal sovereignty.

The case before the court was United States v. Cooley. It involved a 2016 incident on Montana's Crow Reservation where the defendant — Joshua James Cooley — was arrested after a Crow Police Department officer searched his vehicle and found weapons and methamphetamine.

A grand jury later indicted Cooley on drug and gun charges, but submitted a motion to suppress the drug evidence on the basis that the tribal police officer lacked the

authority to detain and search him because he is not Native American.

Two lower courts had ruled in favor of Cooley's argument, but the Supreme Court overturned those rulings.

"Rightfully, the Court held that tribal law enforcement have the authority to temporarily detain and search non-Indians traveling on public rights-of-way running through a reservation for suspected violations of state or federal law," said a statement by the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and the Native American Rights Fund (NARF).

NCAI president Fawn Sharp said the 9-0 decision is one "of the strongest affirmations of tribal sovereignty in a generation" and helps keep Native communities secure.

"For too long, non-Native criminals escaped justice from crimes committed on tribal lands, but [the ruling] is monumental in changing that. We applaud this decision

and look forward to advocating for our member tribes as they improve safety and security in tribal communities as a result of this new precedent," Sharp said in the statement.

The Supreme Court relied on the second exception of the 1981 Montana v. United States case which states that tribes have the authority to address "conduct [that] threatens or has some direct effect on . . . the health or welfare of the tribe."

The Supreme Court also reasoned that not recognizing the authority to detain suspected non-Native offenders could pose serious threats to public safety in Indian Country. It noted that several state and lower federal courts have recognized the authority and several previous Supreme Court opinions assumed such authority existed. It also pointed out that such detentions of non-Natives do not subject them to tribal law, but only to applicable state or federal law

ICWA advocates stay on guard after latest ruling

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) has been challenged in the courts in an unprecedented over the past few years in the case of Brackeen v. Haaland (formerly Brackeen v. Bernhardt). The latest ruling on the case was a mixed bag for ICWA supporters.

ICWA is a 1978 federal law put in place to protect Native American children by keeping them with Native families and connected to their community and culture in custody, foster care and adoption cases. The law also affirms the inherent rights of tribal nations to be involved in child welfare matters involving their citizens. Inside and outside Indian Country it is largely held up as a gold standard of child welfare law.

The Brackeen lawsuit asserted that ICWA is race-based and unconstitutional. Chad and Jennifer Brackeen, a Texas couple who fostered a baby who was eligible for membership in both the Navajo and Cherokee tribes, filed it. Court briefs state the boy's parents had voluntarily given up their parental rights and the Brackeens then petitioned to adopt him — as well as his younger half-sister.

The states of Texas, Indiana and Louisiana would join the lawsuit, siding with the Brackeens. It marked the first time a state has sued the federal government over ICWA's constitutionality.

In 2018, a federal district court in Texas held that ICWA violates the U.S. Constitution. However, in response to appeals brought by the federal government and a group of intervening tribal nations, a three-judge panel from the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the decision, reaffirming ICWA's constitutionality. But then the Fifth Circuit's panel of 16 judges granted an en banc review of the decision.

In April, the Fifth Circuit issued a complex 325-page decision with eight separate opinions and multiple holdings.

"It is one of the most complex if not the most complex ruling that I have ever read," Sam Daugherty, who has a Native American law and policy practice, said during a recent webinar hosted by the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA).

In short, the court only agreed on two decisions. The first is that ICWA is constitutional — a positive for advocates. It rejected the equal protection claim that ICWA is based on race, which would have made the law unconstitutional.

But the court was equally divided on a number of provisions and there was a narrow majority on three provisions. One of the more significant majority decisions was that ICWA unconstitutionally commandeers state agencies — that the federal government can't enforce child welfare agencies to do certain things that serve federal purposes.

Advocates agree that the effects of the entire ruling are narrow — it only involves

the federal courts in the Fifth Circuit, which are Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi. Any ruling does not bind any state or tribal court. But one risk under the commandeering provision, they say, is that it could embolden states that choose to test the waters and stop following certain ICWA provisions.

'Broader attack'

Advocates worry that anti-ICWA forces are less concerned about child welfare and more concerned about dismantling tribal sovereignty.

Dan Lewerenz of the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) said during the webinar that it's hard not to draw that conclusion when looking at the actions of the opposition in recent years.

"They have not worked on a broad based basis to try and improve child welfare conditions," Lewerenz said. "I see them trying to make it easier to adopt children out of their families, and in this particular case, they are clearly interested in a broader attack on Indian law."

Lewerenz said he doesn't doubt the Brackeen family love their children.

"But I think they are misguided in this instance. They are not who's driving this. The people driving this have less good intentions," he said.

NICWA's David Simmons said in the webinar that the ruling is a reason for advocates to work toward having child welfare cases heard in tribal courts or have ICWA codified into state law, which would remove the threat of federal court challenges. At least seven states currently have their own ICWA provisions, which avoid charges of commandeering.

"When you look at the way that Texas, Louisiana and Indiana brought the case — the arguments they made tells us there could be a bigger prize there for them," Simmons said. "Many of the allies of those who don't support ICWA have always wanted to get another case to the Supreme Court. If they were just interested in trying to redefine ICWA, the way they brought it would be different. For me it raises questions about why the lawsuit was brought and what the real purpose of it was."

Any further litigation would involve either or both sides issuing a request for the Supreme Court to take up the case. There is a Sept. 3 deadline to do so. While a request doesn't ensure the Supreme Court will grant it, many advocates think the opposition will keep working toward the goal in the hopes justices will someday rule ICWA unconstitutional.

In the meantime, advocates are encouraging those in Indian Country to contact tribal, state and Congressional leaders to join pro-ICWA amicus briefs. Tribal-state agreements on child welfare law, which Alaska has, could also be pursued, they said.

More information is on nicwa.org.

King would be third Native American federal judge

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

President Joe Biden nominated Lauren J. King (Muscookee Creek Nation) to a federal judgeship in the spring, which began what is sometimes a slow process to a confirmation vote by the U.S. Senate.

If confirmed, King would be only the third active Native American federal judge serving in the U.S. and the first Native American federal judge in Washington State. She has been nominated to the Western District of Washington.

Indian Country sees King's nomination as the Biden administration continuing to deliver on its promise to promote diversity in an array of positions and issues.

There are only two Native American federal judges currently serving in a U.S. District Court — Diane Humetewa (Hopi) who serves the District of Arizona and Ada Brown, of Choctaw lineage, who serves the Northern District of Texas.

There are 890 federal judgeships in all. Prior to Humetewa and Brown, only two other Native Americans had ever served as federal judges since the establishment of the federal court system in 1789.

King, 38, has been a pro tem appellate judge for the Northwest Intertribal Court System since 2013. She is an appointed commissioner on the Washington State Gambling Commission and previously taught federal Indian law at the Seattle University School of Law.

"Ms. King has a wealth of knowledge and experience in the legal field that includes positions as a judge, practitioner and instructor. Her work on behalf of our Nation, both on our Mvskoke Reservation Protection Commission and in defending the

preservation of sacred ceremonial sites, will be impactful for generations to come," read a partial statement by the Muscookee Nation.

The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) have long advocated for more Native American nominees for federal judgeships and both organizations are pushing for King's confirmation.

"Washington State is home to 29 federally recognized Indian tribes, making it critical that its federal judges better reflect the communities they serve and understand the unique histories of Native peoples and the legal principles that protect and preserve our standing under federal law," read a partial statement from NCAI president Fawn Sharp.

Sharp added that if the federal judiciary reflected nationwide demographics, there would be at least 14 Native Americans serving as federal judges.

King's confirmation is still pending before the Senate Judiciary Committee, who last held a hearing on the nomination June 9. If the nomination advances, a full Senate vote would take place. As of press time, no further action had been scheduled.



Lauren King

The Seminole Tribune is a member of the Native American Journalists Association.

Letters/emails to the editor must be signed and may be edited for publication.

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Correction

In the April 30, 2021, print issue of the Tribune, the article "The Gathering of Nations bids farewell to Miss Indian World Cheyenne Kippenberger" misidentified Arlie Neskahi as being affiliated with the Coast Salish Tribe in Washington State. Neskahi is a member of the Dine' Nation of New Mexico and currently lives in the Pacific Northwest, which is home to the Coast Salish people. The Tribune regrets the error.

Community



Robert O'Donnell graduates police academy, joins SPD

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

Ever since he was a child, Robert Hunter O'Donnell always wanted to go into law enforcement. On June 23, the 19 year old fulfilled those aspirations when he graduated from the Southwest Florida Public Service Academy in Fort Myers. He will join the Seminole Police Department.

"I want to support my community and tribe, keep the community safe and be an example to my younger siblings," said O'Donnell, a member of the Panther Clan. "I want to be part of something bigger."

A 2019 graduate of LaBelle High School, O'Donnell is the oldest of four siblings. His parents, Noella and Robert O'Donnell, and

grandmother, Jenny Johns, attended the graduation, along with members of SPD.

"This is a great day for the Seminole Tribe to have another member in law enforcement for the SPD," said Will Latchford, executive director of Public Safety, in an email.

O'Donnell becomes one of the few tribal members who have served in SPD over the years. According to Police Chief John Auer, O'Donnell's service is unique not just to the tribe but to communities around the country who strive to enlist people from the community to represent them on the police force.

"It is an important tenet in achieving effective community policing," Auer said in an email. "And that is very important to us at SPD."



Courtesy photo

From left are Robert O'Donnell, cadet Robert Hunter O'Donnell, Noella O'Donnell and Jenny Johns at the graduation at Southwest Florida Public Service Academy in Fort Myers on June 23.



Courtesy photo

From left, SPD Lieutenant and tribal member Allen Colon, Assistant Chief Kevin Tyrrie, Cadet and tribal member Robert Hunter O'Donnell, Sergeant Emily Malave and Police Chief John G. Auer at O'Donnell's graduation in Fort Myers.

For the past decade or so, SPD has made opportunities to experience the police department available to tribal youth and adults with citizen police academies, youth explorers and internships through the tribe's work experience programs.

O'Donnell is the second tribal member to join the ranks of the police this year. Brady Osceola Latchford, director Latchford's son, is going through the police academy and then is expected to join the Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office.

SPD has graduated interns, taken on mentoring roles and will soon restart its youth explorers program, with new Covid-19 safety protocols. The department will also make it easier for tribal members who live off the reservations to join the program. All

of this activity is to encourage more tribal members to choose a path of public service in one of the tribe's public safety programs.

O'Donnell exceeded all the requirements to be a police officer in Florida and has met the stringent guidelines of the SPD hiring process.

"He will now learn through training and experience how to hone his craft of police service delivery, while at the same time imparting his knowledge of culture and the tribe to his fellow employees," Auer said.

Auer has no doubts in O'Donnell's abilities to succeed as a police officer and said he "knows how to earn respect."

"We are proud of Robert not only because he has shown the expertise and desire to dedicate his life to serve the tribe

in a difficult job," Auer said, "but because he is part of building the team that reaches the level of self-determination for the Seminole Tribe so that it continues to be successful for many decades to come."

O'Donnell said he is confident in his career choice to join law enforcement.

"I want to be a person people can look up to and have a respectful and honorable career," he said. "I've always wanted to help people and make a positive impact on the world."

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INAUGURATION

From page 1A

“For the first time in over a year we gather again as a group of people, to show our determination,” Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. said. “We live today in a historic moment. Today demonstrates where the tribe is going by having four women serve at the same time. Women who had the courage to stand up and say ‘I’ll run.’”

In all, six candidates won positions for two-year terms. Returning are Brighton Councilman Larry Howard, Hollywood Councilman Christopher Osceola and Brighton Board Representative Helene Buster. The three newcomers are Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie, Big Cypress Board Representative Nadine Bowers and Hollywood Board Representative Christine McCall. Chairman Osceola and President Mitchell Cypress are in positions with four-year terms. They were not up for reelection this year.

“For the first time since our federal recognition in 1957, we are installing four Seminole women,” tribal secretary and emcee LaVonne Rose said to loud applause at the beginning of the ceremony. “We are a matrilineal society and it’s about time our leadership reflects that most sacred heartbeat of our community.”

As part of tradition, the tribe’s princesses said a few words to the crowd. It was a particularly special moment for Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Aubee Billie.

“My family is ecstatic today because my sister Mariann is being inducted today as the Big Cypress council representative and I’m very proud of her,” Billie said. “You’ve not only impacted me but all the younger generation of women who are going to be authoritative figures in the tribe as well.”

Councilwoman Billie and Board Representative Bowers are the first females to represent Big Cypress in their respective positions.

Miss Florida Seminole, Durante Blais-Billie, invoked the names of influential women like Polly Parker, the Seminole



From left, Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie, Brighton Board Rep. Helene Buster, Hollywood Board Rep. Christine McCall and Big Cypress Board Rep. Nadine Bowers share a lighter moment by the Council Oak Tree after the inauguration June 7 in Hollywood.

Beverly Bidney

Cattlewomen Association, and “everyday storytellers and knowledge keepers.”

“The power of women exists beyond one role, beyond one expectation and beyond just one moment in time,” Blais-Billie said. “They carry the fight for our continuation of language, culture, being, and for the protection of the ancestors that came before us by protecting the land. Let this inauguration be not just a landmark in our history, let this inauguration be a call to action, a call to uplift Indigenous women

across Indian Country.”

Also a tradition, the outgoing leadership expressed thanks to their respective staffs, showed support for their opponents, and called for unity among tribal members.

Outgoing Big Cypress Councilman David Cypress and Big Cypress Board Representative Joe Frank also took the opportunity to encourage tribal members who haven’t received a Covid-19 vaccination to do so.

“There are 2,000 tribal members who

are eligible to get vaccinated that haven’t yet,” outgoing Councilman Cypress said. “Would you please really think about getting the vaccine? I don’t know of anyone dying from getting the vaccine, but I do know quite a few people who died from getting Covid.”

Outgoing Hollywood Board Representative Gordon “Ollie” Wareham used his turn at the podium to thank President Cypress.

“You’ve been my role model and for the past four years you’ve been my father

figure,” Wareham said.

After a Bureau of Indian Affairs official administered the oath of office, the newly elected leaders each took to the stage. Here’s a sample of what each had to say.

Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie:

“We have shown that women are much more than clan lineage, the matriarchy is about strong Seminole women serving in our government and our businesses. I stand on the shoulders of those who came before me. I dedicate this to the late Betty Mae Jumper, a woman of true substance who paved the way many, many years ago.”

Big Cypress Board Representative Nadine Bowers:

“We did it. We have many women-owned businesses within our tribe, so it is natural that women should serve on the board of directors. I hope through working together that we can serve as role models for young girls and women who want to pursue a role in a tribal and global business environment.”

Hollywood Board Representative Christine McCall:

“I am proud to stand here representing a new generation of leadership, and I hope it will inspire more young tribal members to get involved.”

Brighton Board Representative Helene Buster:

“It’s been a long time coming. I think the four of us are some very proud, proud women today. Our job is to represent you as our community as our tribe.”

Brighton Councilman Larry Howard: “We are all one, no matter what. Our ancestors didn’t pave the way for us to fight with one another. They paved the way for us to be stronger than we were before.”

Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola:

“Congratulations ladies. It’s a new day for the Seminole Tribe. I really do look forward to seeing what these ladies bring to the table. I have a feeling they’re going to light it up. All these ladies possess all the right tools to do the right things and I look forward to working with them.”



Council and board members sit on the dais as Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Aubee Billie addresses the crowd during the Seminole Tribe’s inauguration ceremony.

Beverly Bidney



Beverly Bidney

From left, Hollywood Board Rep. Christine McCall, Brighton Board Rep. Helene Buster and Big Cypress Board Rep. Nadine Bowers take the oath of office.



Beverly Bidney

From left, Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie, Brighton Councilman Larry Howard and Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola take the oath of office.



Beverly Bidney

A sign in support of Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie is held up in the audience.



Beverly Bidney

Coleman Josh, left, and his mother, Salli Josh, represent the Seminole Color Guard at the start of the inauguration ceremony.

Work experience programs start anew

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — After a pause of more than a year due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Seminole Tribe's work experience programs have started to come to life again.

Kerlande Patterson, the supervisor of Tribal Professional Development (TPD), said about 40 students recently enrolled in the Student Work Experience Program (SWEP).

It's a smaller number than normal — a typical year has seen as many as 160 students.

"We're just getting SWEP back off the ground because jobs are just getting back into the flow," Patterson said.

The eight-week program runs from June 14 to Aug. 6. Students enter SWEP while still enrolled in high school; the minimum age is 14. The current summer class includes students from the Naples community and the Immokalee, Big Cypress, Brighton and Hollywood reservations. The group has been placed in departments that include information technology, public works, recreation, the Boys and Girls Clubs, culture, cattle and range, the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum and in tribal administration offices.

SWEP also operates for one week each spring to coincide with the spring breaks of respective high schools.

WEP & TCD, too

SWEP isn't the only option under the TPD umbrella at the Center for Student Success and Services (CSSS). The department also runs the Work Experience Program (WEP) and the Advanced Career Development (ACD) program.

Patterson said whereas SWEP is designed for younger students wanting to get their feet wet and try something new, WEP is for those who are starting to think more long term about their job interests.

WEP participants need to be at least 18, have a high school diploma, and go through an application and interview process. The program runs for up to two years.

The pandemic affected the program substantially. For more than a year there were no jobs to fill and WEP employees were furloughed and there were layoffs during the shutdown. But Patterson said enrollees have started to return, albeit at a slower pace.

"Once departments tell us they're ready to take them back, then we'll push them towards that," she said.

WEP enrollees are currently in jobs at CSSS, the Okalee Village, Buildings and Grounds, the Environmental Resource Management Department (ERMD) and the Heritage and Environment Resources Office (HERO). Past participants have gained full time jobs with the tribe.

"We have someone right now who's in in buildings and grounds — he's the A/C person. I asked him the other day: 'Did you have any experience when you started?' And he said: 'I didn't even know how to hold a screwdriver properly.'" Now he's the person that comes to service our air conditioner," Patterson said.

Meanwhile, ACD is more selective and is comprised of no more than five participants at any one time. It is a leadership development program for those who seek full time employment. To qualify you need an associate degree.

Patterson said ACD is being revamped and will soon be called the "Emerging Leaders Program."

"The goal is to give it a fresh face for new Tribal Members who just got their [associate] degrees," she said.

All work experience positions are paid. Hours range from 20 to 40 hours a week, depending on the department and program. Patterson hopes that as tribal operations return to more normal levels in its final phase of reopening, interest will increase.

"I want TCD to be a pillar in the community, because this is the only program within tribal government where the Tribal Members have direct access and there are no experience restrictions," she said. "As long as a department is capable and able to accommodate them, the Tribal Member just needs to have the basic qualifications."

For more information, contact Patterson at kerlandepatterson@semtribe.com.



Damon Scott

Kerlande Patterson is the supervisor of Tribal Professional Development programs at CSSS.

Tribe's new mobile command center



Damon Scott

A representative from LDV Inc., left, trains Public Safety staff on the command truck's capabilities the day it arrived at Seminole Fire Rescue in Hollywood.



Damon Scott

The interior of the vehicle has state-of-the-art features, such as LCD touch screens with custom graphics for local control and monitoring systems.



Damon Scott

The command truck can be used for a variety of reasons for the tribe, including in emergency situations.

Federal budget considered historic for Indian Country

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

President Biden's proposed \$6 trillion federal budget would direct investments to Indian Country at levels that are being described as historic.

Biden already sent billions in funding to Indian Country through the American Rescue Plan that was signed into law in March. Those funds were largely designed to help mitigate immediate economic and health effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Now two more massive pieces of legislation — the American Jobs Plan and American Families

Plan — are being debated and negotiated in Congress. The two plans are part of Biden's proposed fiscal year 2022 budget.

Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland (Laguna Pueblo) testified June 16 before a Senate subcommittee about her department's budget — which includes billions across virtually all the programs and services at the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).

In all, the Interior would receive \$17.6 billion, an increase of \$2.5 billion, or 17%, over fiscal year 2021.

◆ See BUDGET on page 11A



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

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Hollywood Reservation celebrates Father's Day

Golf event held in Miami Gardens

BY TAYLOR HOLATA

Advanced Career Development program

MIAMI GARDENS — The tribal community from the Hollywood Reservation and Broward County came together June 15 to celebrate Father's Day at TopGolf in Miami Gardens. After more than a year of celebrating events at a distance, the atmosphere was vibrant as families gathered to honor the dads of the tribal community.

The past year posed challenges of many kinds, but it also allowed for the Seminole Tribe to come up with some interesting ways to celebrate special occasions. Throughout the pandemic, the community hosted many events that families celebrated from the comfort of their cars in drive-thrus and drive-ins.

Though the past year of restrictions could not entirely stop the community from coming together to celebrate, as those restrictions lift, families are welcoming the

return of somewhat normal in-person events, such as the golf outing.

"It's good to be with everybody again because you get to hang out more with your friends and family," said Darrell Tiger, 13, who attended the event with his family.

The event featured a private section for Seminole community members to hit golf balls and enjoy food. Each family sat at their own tables with plastic dividers in between each table. Buffet-style food was served by TopGolf employees.

For a community in which gathering together is so deeply engrained in the culture, it was certainly welcomed to be able to return to those practices. Kenneth Tommie, who attended the event with his children and grandchildren, was pleased with the return of in-person gatherings.

"It's great that everybody can come together and have a great time," he said. "It's about just getting together...Now we can actually get together and enjoy each other and friends and family."



Taylor Holata

Kenneth Tommie participates in the Hollywood Reservation's Father's Day event at TopGolf in Miami Gardens on June 15.



Taylor Holata

Jay Holata shows a raffle prize he won at the Hollywood Reservation's Father's Day event June 15 at TopGolf in Miami Gardens.



Taylor Holata

Kenneth Tommie with his son, KJ, at the event.



Taylor Holata

Phil Bowers enjoys the Father's Day event at TopGolf with his children.

Jessica Osceola artwork to be featured at Marco Island museum

STAFF REPORT

MARCO ISLAND — "Creating Home: Artwork by Jessica Osceola" will be featured at the Marco Island Historical Museum from July 13 to Oct. 9.

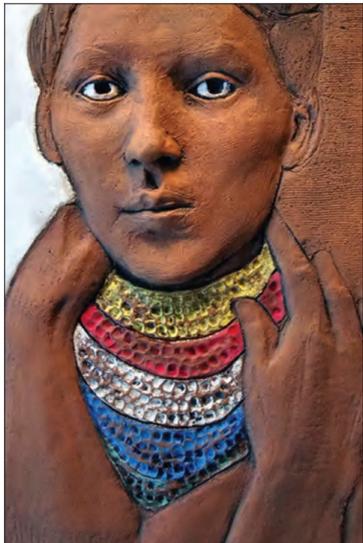
Osceola, a Seminole tribal member and adjunct art professor at Florida Gulf Coast University, focuses on themes of culture, home and identity. The exhibition features ceramic bas-relief portraits, patchwork and aprons.

A closing reception will be held Sept. 29 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Also, museum manager Rebecca Mazerowski will host a gallery talk about the history of patchwork in Seminole culture on July 15 at 2 p.m.

The museum is located at 180 S. Heathwood Dr. in Marco Island. It is open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free.

For more information call (239) 252-1440 or visit themihis.info/museum/.



Courtesy photo

Jessica Osceola's artwork can be seen at Marco Island Historical Museum July 13 through Oct. 9.

Big Cypress Reservation fathers honored

BIG CYPRESS — Dads and their families drove through the Big Cypress field office driveway June 17 to celebrate Father's Day and collect a few gifts from the offices of the Tribal Council and the Board. Barbeque lunches, colorful Hard Rock beach towels, raffle tickets, hats, fishing gear, outdoor equipment and games were distributed to the dads.



Beverly Bidney

John Robbins and Billie Walker collect their Father's Day gifts June 17 as Walker's daughter Shylah waits in the back seat



Beverly Bidney

Joe Benji Osceola collects Father's Day swag at the Big Cypress drive thru event June 17.



Beverly Bidney

Paul Bowers and Charlotte Tommie share a laugh with Marlin Miller as they drive through the Big Cypress Father's Day event.



Beverly Bidney

Treasurer's Office employee Andrea Alexander displays one of the Hard Rock beach towels given to dads for Father's Day.



Beverly Bidney

Joe Frank with his gifts at the Father's Day event.

Hard Rock partners with star athlete to mark 50 years

Soccer icon Messi named global ambassador

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Hard Rock has forged relationships with the world's most famous musicians and celebrities over the years. It's been an effective way to promote the brand and its intrinsic connection to live music and star-level amenities at its properties. Now, to mark its 50th anniversary, Hard Rock is collaborating with one of the world's most famous athletes — soccer star Lionel Messi.

Hard Rock International chairman and CEO of Seminole Gaming, Jim Allen, made the announcement at the Hard Rock Cafe at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood on June 10.

The first Hard Rock Cafe opened in London on June 14, 1971. Since then, the brand has gone through massive transformations — it now operates not only cafes, but also resorts, hotels, casinos and live music venues in 68 countries. Hard Rock was acquired by the Seminole Tribe in 2007 and remains its parent entity.

While Hard Rock does have a connection to sports — in 2016 it purchased the naming rights to the Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens where the Miami Dolphins play — it has never forged a partnership with a famous athlete as a global ambassador until now.

The 33-year-old Messi is an Argentinian who plays as a forward and captains FC Barcelona and the Argentina national team. He is considered one of the greatest soccer players of all time. He will be a Hard Rock brand ambassador for five years.

"Sports and music are an integral part of my life, a perfect combination between my profession and my leisure time. It is an honor to be the first athlete to partner with a brand who has a history of teaming with music legends," Messi said in a statement.

Part of the partnership includes the launch of Messi-branded Hard Rock apparel — a new collection of merchandise that features the 50th anniversary logo and some of Messi's most iconic symbols — a lion, his No. 10 jersey number, and his own logo. The collection is available at Hard Rock retail stores and online.

More is at hardrock.com.



Soccer superstar Lionel Messi was presented with a special Hard Rock guitar to mark his partnership with Hard Rock. The announcement was made June 10.



Left, Messi.com/Right, Hard Rock

Lionel Messi is one of the world's most recognizable athletes. His partnership with Hard Rock includes memorabilia, such as T-shirts and pins to mark Hard Rock's 50th anniversary.

50TH From page 1A

Milestones, memories

Allen announced a new milestone at the event. He said the tribe recently purchased the building that houses the original Hard Rock Cafe in London — a location that had always been under a lease agreement.

"The original location can stay there forever, because we don't have to worry about the landlord anymore," Allen said. "We didn't want to lose that iconic location."

Allen related the story to the Seminole Classic Casino in Hollywood, the tribe's first. It's adjacent to the towering Guitar Hotel and its amenities and huge casino. He said the Classic Casino has a special value.

"Because that's where Native American gaming started; that's the basis of over three or four Supreme Court decisions and that's what's launched a business for Native Americans around the United States that exceeds over \$30 billion a year and employs hundreds of thousands of people on an annual basis."

Allen said there are many fond memories in his Hard Rock journey, but one stands out above all. He said it was when tribal members joined him in Times Square in New York City to announce the purchase.

"We just were overwhelmed. I started doing interviews at 2 a.m. and I lost my voice about 8:30, nine o'clock," Allen said. "It was just a world-renowned story. When people think of tribes, they could just never imagine a tribe that is as successful, the unconquered warriors — their story is just truly astonishing and I think the day we purchased Hard Rock that was a pretty legendary deal."



The building in London that is home to the first Hard Rock Cafe now belongs to the Seminole Tribe. Hard Rock recently purchased the building on Old Park Lane.



Damon Scott

Hard Rock International Chairman and Seminole Gaming CEO Jim Allen speaks during a press event June 10 at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood. Hard Rock is celebrating its 50th anniversary.

Hard Rock Atlantic City launches VIP air charter service

STAFF REPORT

ATLANTIC CITY — Customers of Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City have a new service to get them to the resort.

Hard Rock announced Friday the launch of Hard Rock Air, a 30-seat VIP air charter service. The round-trip service will be operated by Ultimate Jetcharters, an Ohio-based company whose fleet includes Dornier 328 and Embraer 135LR jets. The service is slated to start July 16.

According to Hard Rock, the service will cater to high-end customers.

"We are confident that Hard Rock Air is going to take our VIP guest experience to new heights and offer a convenient, seamless getaway that is unmatched in the market," Joe Lupo, president of Hard Rock Atlantic City, said in a statement.

Additional amenities for the air travelers include private charter check-in at the airport,

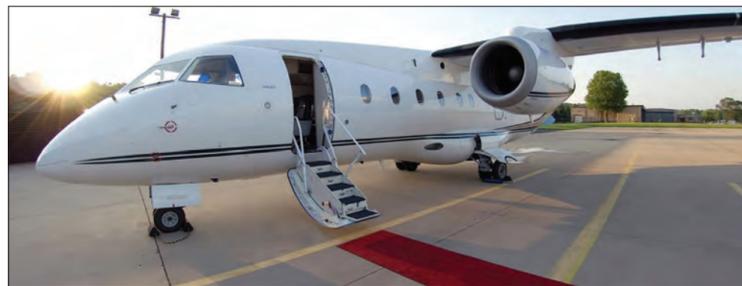
complimentary airport parking, overnight accommodations at Hard Rock Atlantic City and ground transportation to and from Atlantic City International Airport.

Hard Rock Air services the following cities:

Farmingdale, N.Y.
White Plains, N.Y.
Scranton, Penn.
Latrobe, Penn.
Norfolk, Va.
Richmond, Va.
Baltimore, Md.
Cincinnati, Ohio

The resort, located on the famous Atlantic City boardwalk, opened as Hard Rock in June 2018. The property was previously Trump Taj Mahal. The Seminole Tribe is the parent entity of Hard Rock International.

For more information call (609) 449-5757 or email HardRockAir@hrhccac.com



Ultimate Jetcharters

Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City announced June 4 the launch of Hard Rock Air, which will be operated by Ultimate Jetcharters.

Eric Clapton, whose guitar started Hard Rock's memorabilia collection, will perform in Hollywood

STAFF REPORT

HOLLYWOOD — Eric Clapton, whose guitar donation started the Hard Rock music memorabilia collection, will play two shows this fall in Florida, including a Sept. 26 appearance at Hard Rock Live at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood.

Tickets for the Hollywood show cost \$505, \$405, \$305, \$205 and \$105. Tickets are available at www.myhrl.com. Doors will open at 6 p.m.; the concert will be at 7 p.m.

Clapton, 76, will also perform in Tampa on Sept. 25 at Amalie Arena.

Clapton's band for his North American shows will include Doyle Bramhall II, Paul Carrack, Nathan East, Sonny Emory, Steve Gadd, and Chris Stainton with Sharon White, and Katie Kissoon on backing vocals. The show will feature Jimmie Vaughan as special guest.

Clapton played a huge role in the start of Hard Rock's massive music memorabilia collection, which now totals more than 86,000 items. According to Hard Rock, it all began when Clapton was a regular customer at the Hard Rock Cafe in London. He asked Hard Rock Cafe co-founder Isaac Tigrett to hang his guitar above the bar stool Clapton occupied to "mark his spot." A week later, Pete Townshend, of "The Who," sent his guitar to the restaurant with a note that read "Mine's as good as his! Love, Pete."

The Hard Rock memorabilia collection was born.

Another connection between Clapton and Hard Rock came in 2013 when they partnered on limited edition T-shirts and



Hard Rock

Eric Clapton

pins in support of the Crossroads Centre Antigua, a non-profit addiction center in Antigua co-funded and substantially funded by Clapton. Also that year, Clapton played at the Seminole Hard Rock in Hollywood.

ZZ Top to perform at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa

FROM PRESS RELEASE

TAMPA — Top will perform at the Hard Rock Event Center at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa on Nov. 9 at 8 p.m. Tickets are available at [Ticketmaster](http://Ticketmaster.com) and seminolehardrocktampa.com.

ZZ Top is a Rock and Roll Hall of Fame member. Original band members, Billy F. Gibbons, Dusty Hill and Frank Beard are still together after almost 50 years of rock, blues, and boogie on the road and in the studio.

Seminole Hard Rock Hollywood to host comedian Tom Segura

FROM PRESS RELEASE

HOLLYWOOD — Comedian Tom Segura will bring the "I'm Coming Everywhere — World Tour" to Hard Rock Live at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood on Oct. 1 at 8 p.m.

Tickets cost \$76, \$56, \$46 and \$36. Tickets are available at www.myhrl.com.

The actor, comedian and writer is best

known for his Netflix specials. He co-hosts a number of podcasts, including "Your Mom's House" with his wife and comedian Christina Pazsitzky, and "2 Bears 1 Cave" with Bert Kreischer.

Segura can be seen in the STX film "Countdown" opposite Elizabeth Lail, "Instant Family" opposite Mark Wahlberg and Rose Byrne, "Opening Act" and "Flinch."

Clint Black to perform in Immokalee

FROM PRESS RELEASE

IMMOKALEE — Country music star Clint Black will perform at Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee on Oct. 30 at 8 p.m. Tickets are available for \$79 and can be purchased at www.moreinparadise.com

or by calling Ticketmaster at 800-653-8000. Concert attendees must be 21 years of age or older.

Black has sold more than 20 million records. Born in New Jersey and raised in Texas, Black has earned more than a dozen gold and platinum awards.

SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA AH-TAH-THI-KI M U S E U M

A PLACE TO LEARN, A PLACE TO REMEMBER.

Before the Tribune: Early newsletter offers a glimpse into the past

BY LAURA DELLO RUSSO
Collections Assistant

BIG CYPRESS — Since the early 1980s, The Seminole Tribune has served as the Seminole Tribe of Florida's official newspaper. However, the Tribune was not the first news publication created for and by the tribe; there were various versions over the course of the mid-20th century of what would eventually become the widely-circulated and award-winning publication that is still around today. The 1970s, especially, saw tribal newspapers continue to grow and develop with such important figures as Betty Mae Jumper and Polly Buck Hayes at the helms of these projects.

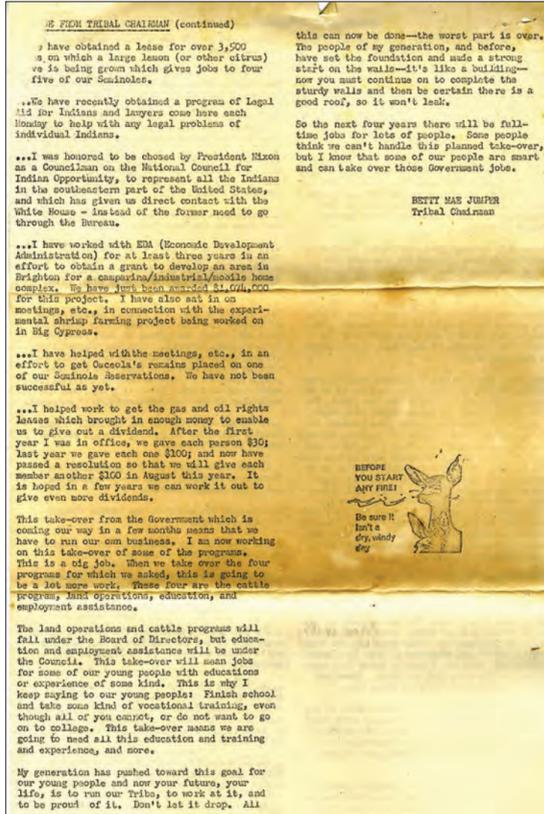
Amongst the many documents within the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum's archival vault is an early copy of one of these periodicals, an Alligator Times newsletter published by the Community Action Program and dated April 1971. The newsletter was part of a collection originally donated to the Clewiston Museum by Claudia Wilson, a nurse with the Hendry and Glades County Health Department, who worked within Seminole communities during the 1960s and 1970s. Since the collection came to the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, its contents have provided important insights into Seminole life during those decades. The Alligator Times issue is no exception in its ability to offer a unique glimpse into the past.

Notably, the front page of the newsletter features information about that year's tribal election, which was held May 10, 1971. Candidates for Tribal Council chairman included incumbent Betty Mae Jumper, Rosie Buck, Billy Osceola and Howard Tommie (who would go on to win). Board of Directors candidates included Jimmy Cypress, Henry J. Gopher, Fred Osceola, Fred Smith, Willie Frank, Tom Bowers, Johnny Buck and JoAnn Micco. A list of polling locations on the Hollywood, Brighton and Big Cypress reservations is included, and tribal members 21 years or

older are urged to exercise their right to vote in the election. Additionally, the front page features an article from the National Congress of American Indians about a call for unity. The article ends with the statement "In Unity There Is Strength."

Other pages include standard newspaper content: advertisements for legal services and tutoring on the reservations, news about a Boy Scouts trip to the Florida Keys, announcements featuring the winners of the first annual Seminole Indian Bowling Tournament, plans to further develop the Brighton Reservation, and general articles about the events and goings-on in the local area. The newsletter also highlights two poems written by Moses Jumper Jr. titled "E'cho" and "Pride." Moses, who was attending the Haskell Institute, won first prize in the Haskell Poetry Contest that year.

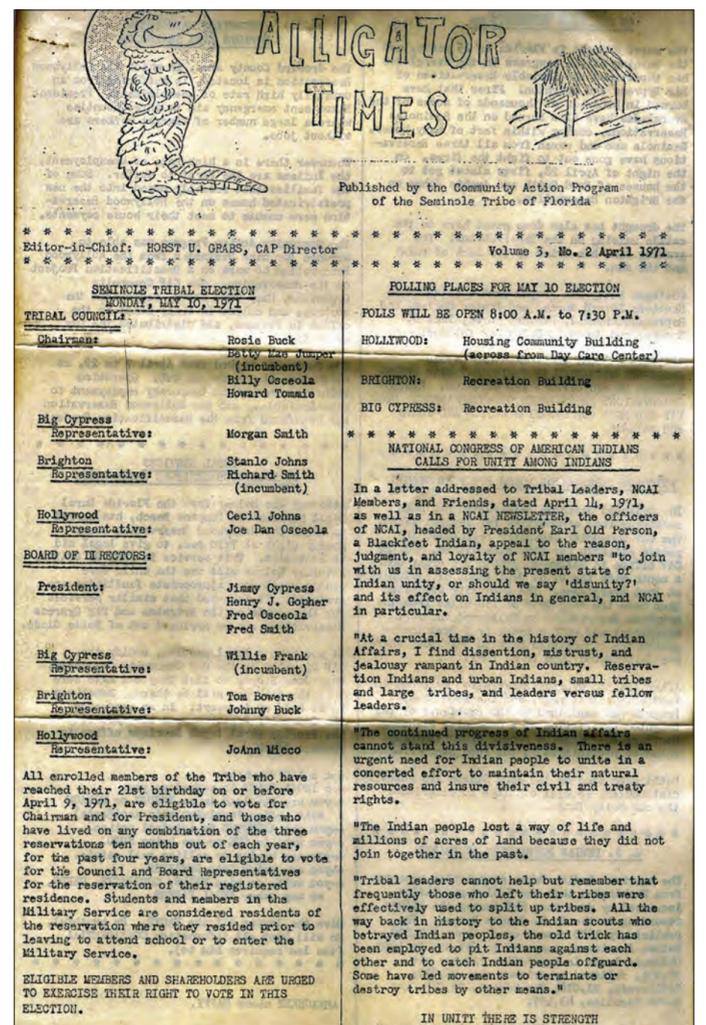
The final pages contain a message from then-Chairman Betty Mae Jumper, a feature not always seen in the monthly issues. In her message, Chairman Jumper details the work accomplished by the tribe since her election four years prior, including the recent development of health programs, recreation programs, employment opportunities and growing funds. Chairman Jumper completes her message by emphasizing the importance of



The back page of the newsletter includes a message from then-Chairman Betty Mae Jumper.

continuing the work in the decades to come, and how foundations laid in the past can build a better future.

"My generation has pushed toward this goal for our young people and now your future, your life, is to run our Tribe, to work



The front page of the Alligator Times, Volume 3, No. 2 April 1971

at it, and to be proud of it. Don't let it drop...The people of my generation, and before, have set the foundation and made a strong start on the walls-it's like a building-now you must continue on to complete the sturdy wall and then to be certain there is a good roof, so it won't leak."

The Alligator Times issue is just one of many newspapers from the tribe's history which is preserved at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum. The museum's archival collection features Seminole newsletters and newspapers ranging from 1969 to today, including earlier and later issues of the Alligator Times. Copies of the

Tribune since its inception in the 1980s can also be found in the collection.

These historic newspapers and thousands of other documents, photographs and books are available for the community to access anytime. If you'd like to see the collection, and you're on Big Cypress, come on over. You can make an appointment to get behind the scenes by emailing museum@semtribe.com or you can check out the museum's collection online at <https://semtribe.pastperfectonline.com/>.

Big Cypress remembers fallen soldiers on Memorial Day

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

Memorial Day in Big Cypress had an air of normality to it, if only because people attended in person rather than on computer screens.

A few dozen community members gathered May 31 at the Seminole Veterans Memorial Fitness Trail to honor the fallen.

"There's a special sadness that accompanies the loss of service men and women," said emcee S.R. Tommie. "No matter what we do to show our appreciation, it's never quite good enough. What they gave us is beyond our ability to ever repay. So when a service person dies, it's a tear in the fabric of our being. All we can do is remember them and honor all of those who died in defense of our country."

Attendees remained socially distanced under a large tent as they listened to the speakers.

"We experience the freedoms we experience because of their dedication and sacrifices," Tommie said. "When we imagine these soldiers, they are portrayed as greying old men and women; they are wise as we see them in our minds eye. But most of them were boys and girls when they crossed

over, fighting for our country. They gave up two lives; the one they were living and the one they were supposed to live. When they crossed over, they gave up their chance to be husbands, wives, mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles and grandparents. They gave up their chance to be loved and respected. They gave up everything for our country, for us. We must never forget them."

Tommie asked everyone to keep these fallen soldiers in their hearts and prayers. Jonah Cypress gave the invocation, Pastor Salaw Hummingbird, of Big Cypress First Baptist Church, said a prayer and elected officials and community members spoke.

"We always want to pay respect to our tribal warriors," said outgoing Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank. "We've lost many due to battles once they got home. There is a lot of drama that goes on in warfare and our warriors have to live with it. I think as we continue on, we will join the mainstream American practice of celebrating Memorial Day. In the past its always been 'these are soldiers that fought against our people,' but for the last two, three, four generations these veterans all over the country are ones that have fought with us, for us. It is fitting that we pay respect to all of them and we pay respect to our fallen tribal warriors."

Outgoing Big Cypress Councilman David Cypress acknowledged that although

he didn't serve in the military, he was appreciative of those who did.

Newly elected Councilwoman Mariann Billie quoted former President Barack Obama from a speech he gave on Memorial Day in 2011: "Our nation owes a debt to its fallen heroes that we can never fully repay."

Paul Bowers provided some insight into why so many tribal members joined the military.

"I went to Indian school in Kansas," Bowers said. "When we got back to the reservation, there was nothing to do and no jobs, so we went into the service. At least they paid you and fed you three meals a day. I went to Vietnam and got wounded, but I made it back. I'm glad I'm here."

After he completed training for the National Guard, President Mitchell Cypress recalled going to Haskell Indian Nations University to see Bowers.

"Back then, the majority of men our age went into the military," President Cypress said. "They were drafting us. A lot of them came back and ran the tribe. But we are sorry to see our veterans pass on."

Pastor Arlen Payne, of Big Cypress New Testament Baptist Church, spoke about his family's history of veterans going back to the Civil War.

"I imagine every family here can go back and identify someone in their family who gave their lives," said Payne. "Because they died, we can sit today under this tent and gather in freedom. I'm glad they stood up for what they believed in."

Tommie said she knows what it means to miss family and lose a loved one.

"It's an everyday hurt," she said. "We keep them alive by talking about them, sharing the memories and experience with the younger ones who have not had the opportunity to meet them."

Jacob Osceola Jr. related his experience when he came back from serving in the military. Older veterans, who he didn't realize were veterans when he was a younger man, took him aside and said here is your brother.

"We all have friends and family who passed on, members who were influences, people who shaped the tribe," Osceola said. "These people served as well, it was kind of an eye opener. Let's remember these people."



President Mitchell Cypress, left, attends the Memorial Day program at the Seminole Veterans Memorial Fitness Trail in Big Cypress on May 31.



Wearing a patriotic mask, Edna McDuffie attends the Memorial Day program in Big Cypress.

He read the list of fallen Seminole veterans, his voice cracking with emotion.

"Sorry, some of these gentlemen I knew well," Osceola said. "Folks, I implore you, the ones that are still here today, talk to them,

know them. You'll never forget."

After a moment of silence to honor the memory of those who gave everything, taps was played.



U.S. flags line the fitness trail at the Memorial Day program.

Alabama museum to return Native American art

FROM WBHM (NPR)

The Birmingham (Alabama) Museum of Art will soon return several works of art to two Native American tribes that have requested them back. An ordinance passed June 8 by the Birmingham City Council has cleared the way for the return of several items to the Tlingit and Haida tribes of Alaska.

The BMA "no longer [has] a moral, ethical or legal claim under federal law" to those works, Director Graham C. Boettcher told the council, referencing the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act passed by Congress in 1990. That act requires institutions that receive federal funding to return Native

American cultural items to their respective tribes.

The ordinance updates a city law originally enacted in 1983 — before NAGPRA — that "does not include specific language that permits us to return culturally sensitive works" to which the museum no longer has rightful claim.

The Tlingit and Haida tribes initially had requested the return of their items in 2017.

"We did all the due diligence working with tribal authorities as well as other experts in the field and determined them to be claims with merit," Boettcher said.

The BMA lists several Tlingit items as

part of its collection — including several spoons, baskets and bentwood boxes — almost all of which were purchased by the museum in 1956. The museum also lists three works by Haida artists, including two Freida Deising screenprints and a Reg Davidson totem pole, all of which were acquired by the museum in 1994.

Health

Tribe hopes more will get vaccine in new phase

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — The Seminole Tribe began to transition to phase three of reopening June 7 and it comes with a message to those who have not yet received a Covid-19 vaccine – get one.

Part of phase three entails tribal employees returning to work in tribal buildings July 6. Officials consider phase three the final phase of reopening.

However, the tribe's Health and Human Services department (HHS) still has certain pandemic-related requirements in place. One is that masks are still required inside tribal buildings.

"The use of masks will likely be in place until we are able to get a clear from the CDC," Dr. Vandhana Kiswani-Barley, the executive director of HHS, said. She added that mask use was also still in place to "ensure the safety of our vulnerable population." (The CDC is the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

One change with the new phase is that temperature checks are only required at tribal clinics. However, enhanced cleaning and disinfecting is still in effect, and as a precaution, the tribe is asking anyone with Covid-19 symptoms not to enter a tribal building before calling their clinic or doctor. This also includes if their family members have symptoms – which include fever, cough, sneezing, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.

Health clinics offer the two-shot Pfizer and Moderna vaccine to those 12 and older. Those in the tribal community, including

non-tribal employees, can call the HHS hotline at (833) 786-3458 to determine eligibility and be placed on a waiting list.

Since the tribe's vaccine program began Dec. 28, 2020, both HHS and Public Safety department staff have administered shots and overseen considerable logistics. Vaccine administration has now shifted to HHS exclusively because there is no longer a high volume of vaccine requests, even though just 25% of the tribal community had been vaccinated as of late June, according to HHS.

Kiswani-Barley and tribal leadership had been hopeful that vaccine numbers would rise significantly through a vaccine drive it held at all reservations from June 1 to June 4.

"Unfortunately, the vaccine drive did not go as well as we thought it would," Kiswani-Barley said. "We got only 10 individuals to come through tribalwide."

The issue of vaccines was raised at the tribe's Inauguration Day ceremony June 7. Both Hollywood Councilman Christopher Osceola and (former) Big Cypress Councilman David Cypress pleaded with tribal members to be vaccinated.

Kiswani-Barley is particularly concerned about a new variant of Covid-19 that has recently emerged.

"The delta variant is in the U.S. and is more contagious," she said, adding that a vaccine is 80% effective against it after the two-shot dose and 30% effective after one dose.

"We are here to serve the community in any way," Kiswani-Barley said. "Individuals are encouraged to seek medical care if they exhibit symptoms, have questions or are exposed."

Veterinary hospital planned for Rosebud Sioux Tribe Reservation

STAFF REPORT

Cats, dogs, horses and other animals – including injured wildlife – will soon have a facility to care for them on the Rosebud Sioux Tribe Reservation in South Dakota.

A collaborative effort, which includes the Banfield Foundation, IDEXX Foundation and Sovereign Nations Veterinary, has teamed up to build and staff a veterinary hospital on the reservation, which encompasses 20 communities. The facility will be named Wamakanskan Wawokiye Oti, which translates to "helping animal center."

"In the Lakota culture, animals are considered sacred — this requires respect for animals, manifested by providing for their health and well-being. When animals are healthy it ultimately impacts the health and spirit of the tribal community," Kathleen Wooden Knife, a former six-year tribal leader with the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, said in a statement regarding the June 8 announcement. "I have dreamed of a clinic for many years — for a place where the tribal communities can access affordable pet

health care. Today, my dream is becoming a reality. On behalf of the entire Rosebud Sioux Tribe – 'Wopila' – thank you."

"Among tribal nations, access to veterinary care is often beyond reach due to financial, socioeconomic, and geographic barriers that not only impact the pet but also pet owners," said Kim Van Syoc, executive director of Banfield Foundation. "We are committed to helping remove barriers and bring much needed veterinary care and veterinary careers to the pets and people of the Rosebud Sioux Tribal communities."

Sovereign Nations Veterinary will oversee the medical operations and education programs. Full scholarships will be offered to tribal members who are interested in being trained in the veterinary field and working at the new clinic. Sovereign Nations Veterinary and VIDAS, a group of veterinary spay and neuter experts who help provide pet sterilization to underserved areas, will offer free spay/neuter services for pets.

Hospital renovations were scheduled to be completed in late June.

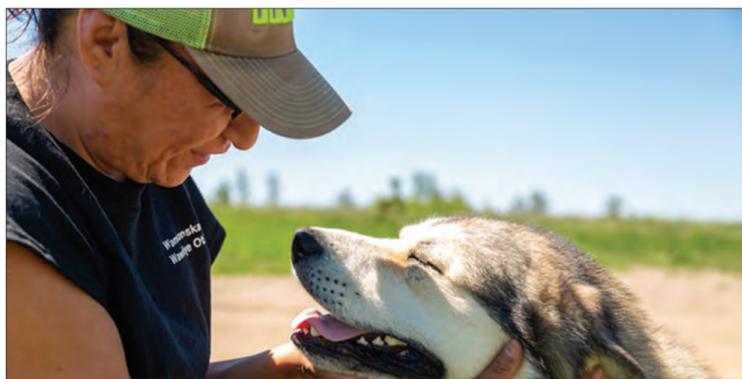


Photo courtesy VIDAS/H. Navarro

Terri Joe Stone, a resident of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe Reservation, volunteers at the VIDAS clinic.

American Indian Cancer Foundation names CEO

PRESS RELEASE

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. — The American Indian Cancer Foundation (AICAF) board of directors Chairperson Gary Ferguson, ND (Aleut/Unangan) announced June 24 that Melissa Buffalo, MS (Meskwaki & Dakota) has been appointed chief executive officer of the organization.

Buffalo has worked with AICAF since 2019 and previously served as interim CEO, deputy director, and cancer equity program manager. She is an enrolled member of the Meskwaki Nation and a descendant of the Crow Creek and Lower Brule Sioux Tribes. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities and earned a Master of Science in human development from South Dakota State University.

"I am beyond thankful to head this

amazing organization," Buffalo said in a statement. "It is my goal to lead our dedicated team in reclaiming Indigenous health. We are focused on reducing Indigenous cancer burdens every day, and I will continue to advance this mission as chief executive officer of the American Indian Cancer Foundation."



Melissa Buffalo

Climate Conversations

Stay cool while you get hot

BY JILL HORWITZ
STOF Climate Resilience Officer

Extreme heat is the silent killer of the climate crisis. While getting exercise and connecting with nature is healthy, it is important to know that high temperatures combined with humidity and sun exposure can put you and your loved ones at risk.

STOF Climate Resilience Program and Integrative Health are collaborating to understand this climate risk, and make all Tribal communities safe. Please be careful exercising outdoors this summer as we see temperatures rise across the reservations. Here is some information to help you stay safe.

What is extreme heat?

Extreme heat contributes to 5,600 deaths in the United States each year. In Florida, temperatures above 88°F significantly increase the risk of cardiovascular disease, respiratory illness and heat stroke.

When combined with high humidity, sun exposure, stagnant air, and poor air quality, high temperatures can become a health concern.

Even moderate heat can be dangerous for older adults, children, athletes, pregnant women, and anyone who spends a lot of time outdoors.

What are heat-related illnesses?

Heat exhaustion: Strenuous activity in high temperature resulting in the body being unable to cool itself down. Warning signs: heavy sweating, cold clammy skin, rapid pulse, weakness, nausea, vomiting, muscle cramps, dizziness, passing out.

Heat stroke: Failure to treat heat exhaustion can lead to this deadly condition. Warning signs include high body temperature, lack of sweat leading to dry skin, flushed or reddened skin, rapid pulse, headache, dizziness, nausea, confusion, passing out. Heat Stroke is a medical emergency. Call

emergency response number immediately.

While awaiting emergency response you can:

- Move person to the shade or air conditioned environment.
- Help lower the person's temperature by applying cool water bath, cool towels or ice packs on the person's armpits, neck, and groin.

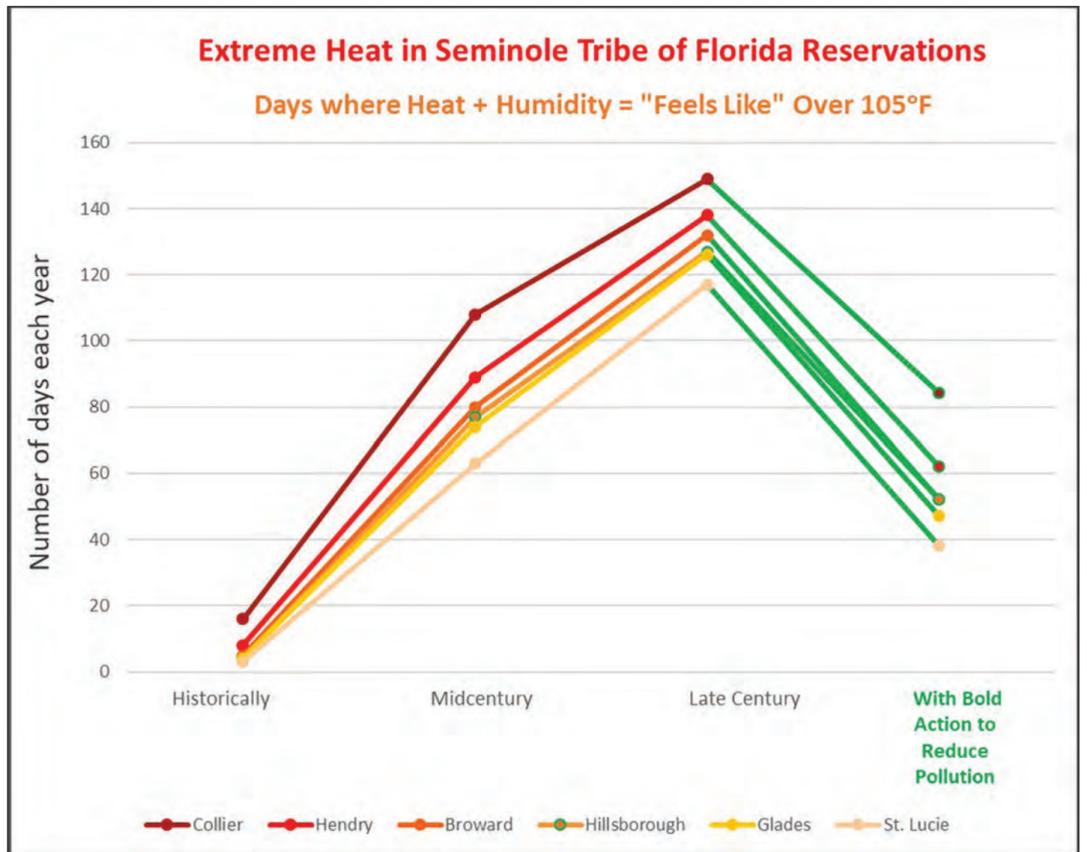
Tips for staying safe during extreme heat:

- Walk/run in the early morning or late afternoon. Avoid doing outdoor activities mid-day.
- Stay hydrated. Drink plenty of water.
- Cool down in air conditioning after exercising, or at night if you have been outside all day.
- Look for shaded areas to walk or run.
- Exercise with a group or partner. Watch out for signs of Heat-Related Illnesses.
- Don't wear trash bags or sweat suits.
- Try other activities that keep you cool, like swimming, yoga and other indoor fitness classes.

Extreme heat and climate change

All around the world, people are noticing that the planet is heating up. Global warming is caused by pollution from burning fossil fuels, which thickens the greenhouse gas layer and traps heat within our atmosphere. In the last 20 years, we have had 19 of the hottest years on record. Looking long-term, this is a very real and dangerous trend.

Already, extreme heat is a significant climate concern for Big Cypress, Brighton and Immokalee. These inland reservations currently have about 40 to 60 days each year of temperatures above 95°F, and by the end of the century residents will have dealt with extreme heat for half the year.



Reservation	County	Historically 1971-2000 average	Midcentury 2036-2065 average	Late Century 2070-2099 average	WITH BOLD ACTION TO REDUCE POLLUTION Extreme Heat can be limited to
Immokalee	Collier	16	108	149	84
Big Cypress	Hendry	8	89	138	62
Hollywood	Broward	5	80	132	52
Tampa	Hillsborough	4	77	127	52
Brighton	Glades	4	74	126	47
Fort Pierce	St. Lucie	3	63	117	38

Data are drawn from the July 2019 report, Killer Heat in the United States: Climate Choices and the Future of Dangerously Hot Days. Union of Concerned Scientists <https://www.ucsusa.org/resources/killer-heat-interactive-tool>

Indigenous women chefs live webinar continues July 13

PRESS RELEASE

The annual conference on Native American Nutrition's next installment in its "Celebrating Indigenous Women Chefs" webinar series will be held July 13 from 1 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. (ET). The featured chef will be Loretta Barrett Oden (Potawatomi).

Barrett Oden was raised in Oklahoma. She was surrounded by cooking and often accompanied her mother, grandmothers, and

aunts while they prepared traditional dishes. As an adult, she realized the potential opportunity to educate others about Native American history and culture through cuisine. She has spent the past 30-plus years, cooking, studying, teaching and adapting recipes to preserve the culinary legacy of her upbringing. In the early 1990s, she and her son, the late chef Clayton Oden, opened the Corn Dance Cafe in Santa Fe, New Mexico, the first restaurant to showcase the bounty of

food indigenous to the Americas. She is best known in the public eye for her five-part television series, "Seasoned With Spirit: A Native Cook's Journey," by PBS.

The monthly webinar series highlights the culinary expertise of Indigenous women through live cooking demonstrations.

For more information visit: <https://hfhf.umn.edu/events/indigenouschefs>.

SEMINOLE SCENES



WEST MEETS EAST: Lummi Nation tribal members from Washington State visited the Hollywood Reservation on June 21. At left, Raiden Tommie, 4, who came to the gathering with his grandmother Martha Tommie, receives a blanket from the Lummi. The Lummi also brought their totem pole that they have traveled with throughout their 82 stops on their cross-country journey. At right, youngsters from the Hollywood Boys & Girls Clubs stand next to the totem pole, which is slated to be brought to Washington, D.C.

Kevin Johnson (2)



SEMINOLE SINGER: Jr. Miss Florida Seminole and 2021 The King's Academy graduate Aubee Billie sings at her school's graduation May 27. Billie acted and sang in several theatrical productions during her four years at the high school in West Palm Beach.

Jerry Cantave/Infinite Loop Photography via Facebook



COUNSELOR FAREWELL: Retiring Pemaetv Emahkv Charter School guidance counselor Jeanine Gran gets some farewell flowers and a sweet embrace from former student Tadan Santiago during a last day of school event May 27.

Beverly Bidney



POPULAR POPCORN: The Center for Student Success and Services's Sandra Freeman, left, and Leila Patterson enjoy working at the popcorn booth during the tribalwide graduation celebration June 20 in Big Cypress.

Kevin Johnson



ROCK YOUR SHOT: Seminole Fire Rescue paramedic Kristoffer Durthaler administers a Covid-19 vaccine to Seminole Hard Rock Tampa team member Nicolas Diaz-Granados. Hard Rock International and Seminole Gaming announced a Covid-19 vaccination-incentive program June 21. The "Rock Your Shot" program is open to all full-time and part-time fully-vaccinated team members of company-owned or managed Hard Rock International and Seminole Gaming entities in the United States. All team members who have been fully vaccinated and who show their vaccination record card to their human resources department or Hard Rock Cafe general manager will automatically receive a \$50 gift card. All team members who report their vaccination and claim a gift card will be entered into a drawing for the 2021 Jeep Cherokee and cash prizes to be held Oct. 31.

Hard Rock



GOOD DEEDS: Members of American Legion 133 in Pompano Beach decorated Seminole Casino Coconut Creek east perimeter for Memorial Day.

Seminole Casino Coconut Creek via Facebook

CENTER SIGN: A sign with an illustration for a new senior center is located at the entrance to the old Bingo Hall on the Big Cypress Reservation.

Kevin Johnson



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NATIONAL NATIVE NEWS

Motion calls for Los Angeles to formally apologize to Indigenous communities

Los Angeles should formally apologize to its Indigenous communities for decades of violence and mistreatment, according to a motion introduced June 25 by City Councilman Mitch O'Farrell.

The motion, which was seconded by Councilman Marqueece Harris-Dawson, directs the city's Civil and Human Rights Department to report on how the formal apology should be dispensed.

"The motion I introduced today is bold, and for good reason," O'Farrell, a member of the Wyandotte Nation in Oklahoma, said in a statement. "The City of Los Angeles has never formally apologized for its treatment of the Indigenous Native American communities who originally inhabited this land."

The motion also directs the city to report on its progress on its Civic Memory Working Group, which was impeded by Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti's office to help develop ways to more accurately reflect the city's history, as well as the implementation of portions of Assembly Bill 52 that relate to the city. The bill, which was approved by the California Legislature in 2014, requires that agencies consult with Native American tribes when undertaking projects that affect their cultural resources.

The Civil and Human Rights Department should also recommend policies to better serve Native Americans, the motion states.

"We can and must do better — not just in acknowledging our past, but in building a better future for Native communities in L.A.," said O'Farrell, who represents an Echo Park-to-Hollywood district.

O'Farrell in 2017 worked with the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission to eliminate Columbus Day from the city calendar and replace it with Indigenous People's Day.

Rudy Ortega, tribal president of the Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indians and former chair of the commission, thanked O'Farrell and praised his leadership.

"It is critical that Los Angeles lead the way in righting the wrongs committed against the first governments of this land," Ortega said in a statement. "I look forward to seeing the City's recommendations on how to better represent Native American communities in Los Angeles."

"We are the descendants of the original inhabitants of this land, and we are ready to move forward toward a more just and equitable future."

- Los Angeles Times

Wilma Mankiller to be among women on U.S. quarters starting next year

Former Cherokee Nation Chief Wilma Mankiller is being included in the U.S. Mint's series of coins through the American Women Quarters Program.

As well as honoring author Maya Angelou, astronaut Sally Ride, suffragist Adelina Otero-Warren and actress Anna May Wong, designs reflecting Mankiller's achievements will be featured on coins beginning in 2022, according to the U.S. Mint.

"Courageous women have made countless contributions throughout our great nation's history," said Director David J. Ryder. "The American Women Quarters Program is a unique opportunity to honor a broad and diverse group of women whose achievements, triumphs, and legacies reflect the strength and resilience of our nation. We look forward to sharing their stories."

The first woman to serve as assistant principal chief, Mankiller became principal chief of the Cherokee Nation in December 1985 after Chief Ross Swimmer's resignation. During her 10 years in office, the tribe's enrollment and revenue more than doubled, thus allowing the Cherokee Nation to expand its Head Start program and open three rural health facilities across northeastern Oklahoma. The Cherokee Nation's clinic in Stilwell is named in her honor.

- Tulsa World

2 more Catholic churches on First Nations reserves burned to ground

VANCOUVER, British Columbia Two more Catholic churches on First Nations reserve land in B.C. have burned to

the ground.

The churches, both in the Similkameen region, went up in flames early June 27 and both were destroyed completely, say Pentiction RCMP.

RCMP say that just before 4 a.m. they received a call about a fire at St. Ann's Church, which is located just east of Hedley on Upper Similkameen Indian Band land. Then at 4:45 a.m. they got a call about a fire at Chopaka Church on Lower Similkameen Indian Band land, just east of Keremeos.

The fires come on the heels of similar incidents on June 21, when two other Catholic churches in B.C. were burned to the ground. One was on Osoyoos Indian Band reserve and the other on the Pentiction Indian Band reserve.

Chief Keith Crow of the Lower Similkameen Indian Band was woken up early June 27 with the news that the Chopaka Church in the small community of Chopaka was ablaze.

"It's a big impact," he told Castanet News.

"We still have our Christian and Catholic followers, and they just had service a couple weeks ago at that church. They were very upset on Monday when the two churches were burnt in Osoyoos and Pentiction. Now that these ones have burnt, it's devastating to them."

Crow says the investigations into both fires are in their early stages. RCMP say that both fires are "suspicious."

A total of four Catholic churches on First Nations reserves have been burned to the ground in the month following an announcement from the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc that it had discovered remains of 215 children in unmarked graves at the nearby Kamloops Indian Residential School. The school was run by church missionaries.

On June 24, the Cowessess First Nation announced it had located 751 unmarked graves near a former residential school in Saskatchewan.

So far, officials have not announced any indication that the fires are connected to the discoveries at residential schools, but Crow mentioned the bodies when speaking about the latest two fires.

"We're in for more hurt now. Look at what happened in Saskatchewan, Kamloops, and Williams Lake is doing their testing right now. When all the rest of the residential schools start doing testing, there's just going to be more and more pain that comes out; the 215 was just a start."

- CTV News Vancouver

Bill to allow tribal gaming in Maine heads to governor

AUGUSTA, Maine — Maine's Native American tribes have been trying for decades to be allowed to operate a gaming casino, but those efforts have always been rejected, whether by lawmakers, a governor or by voters.

On June 17, the Legislature gave final passage to a bill that would allow the Maine tribes the same rights most other tribes in the country have under federal law, which would let them open a casino on tribal land. The tribes are currently bound by state law, under the requirements of the 1980 Maine Indian Land Claim Settlement.

Rep. Ben Collings of Portland sponsored the bill this year, which now has been sent to Governor Mills to sign or veto.

"What we are trying to do here," Collings said, "is have Maine have the right to negotiate with the tribes for a gaming right that virtually every tribe in the country has."

He said that right dates back to the law passed by Congress in 1988, giving tribes the right to operate gambling on their own lands, which led to the development of many casinos around the country.

He said the law was to help the tribes, many of which struggled financially.

"To give tribes gaming rights to help tribes in mostly remote, rural areas to do casino gambling as a form of economic development. The tribes in Maine haven't had that right and been asking for that right since 1988."

Collings said if the bill becomes law there would not be an immediate opening of casinos. Instead, the state would begin negotiations with tribes that want to operate a casino, and work out an agreement on where and how it would be developed and managed.

Maine's current casinos have detailed agreements with the state for sharing profits with a variety of interests, and a portion of proceeds from the Oxford Casino even go to the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Tribes.

The four tribes have said they should have the same rights as other tribes in the

country, both for economic improvement and as an important part of regaining more tribal sovereignty.

Governor Mills now has 10 days to decide whether to sign, the bill, veto it or allow it to become law without her signature.

- News Center Maine

DOI returns more than 18k acres of land to Native American tribes

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Department of Interior announced June 23 the restoration of more than 18,800 acres of land, known as the National Bison Range, so it can be returned to Indigenous tribes in Montana.

The transfer will be issued from the Interior to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), specifically to be held for the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) of the Flathead Reservation in Montana.

The lands were already within the bounds of the CSKT reservation prior to being officially transferred.

The National Bison Range (NBR) was established in 1908 to protect the American Bison from extinction following the desecration of the species in the centuries before — driven by American settlers and systematic hunting. It marked the first time Congress allocated tax funding to buy land for the single mission of preserving wildlife.

- The Hill

Roosevelt statue in front of New York's Museum of Natural History to be removed

A controversial statue of Theodore Roosevelt will finally be moved from its current location after years of debate -- and one year after a formal request for its removal.

The statue debuted in 1940 and stands in front of the American Museum of Natural History in New York. It features the 26th president on horseback flanked by a Native American man on one side and an African man on the other -- conveying a "racial hierarchy that the museum and members of the public have long found disturbing," wrote the museum in its initial removal request last June.

On June 22, the New York City Public Design Commission voted unanimously to remove the statue, marking the final step after a year of discussion.

Sam Biederman, chief of staff and assistant commissioner at NYC Parks, called the move to remove the statue "incredibly rare," but "the right course of action."

"Though historical circumstances demonstrate that this sculpture was not erected with malice of intent, the compositional hierarchy ... visually supports the thematic framework of colonization and racism," he said during Monday's meeting.

Mayor Bill de Blasio supported the removal effort last year, calling it "the right decision and the right time" in a statement to CNN.

Though the statue's new home has not yet been determined, the city and museum will coordinate a long-term loan of the statue to publicly accessible grounds or a cultural institution dedicated to Roosevelt, officials with NYC's Public Design Commission said.

- CNN

Calls to cancel Canada Day after graves found: 'Indigenous people paid with their lives'

Indigenous groups have called for Canada's national celebration to be cancelled over the discovery of more than 1,000 unmarked graves, most of which are believed to belong to Indigenous children.

July 1 marks 154 years since Canada became a country — and until recently, festivities in cities across the country were expected, amplified by the arrival of summer and the pent-up excitement of a country emerging from the coronavirus pandemic.

But three grim discoveries on the grounds of former residential schools have quickly shifted the national mood.

"We will not celebrate stolen Indigenous land and stolen indigenous lives. Instead we will gather to honour all of the lives lost to the Canadian state," said the group Idle No More, calling for national rallies to support Indigenous communities.

At least 150,000 Indigenous children were taken from their families to attend the notorious schools. They were given new

names, forcibly converted to Christianity and prohibited from speaking their native languages. The last residential school closed in the 1990s.

"This coming Canada Day, I think we all need to pledge ourselves to doing what we can to continue that effort to make Canada better, all the while respecting and listening to those for whom it's not yet a day of celebration," said Justin Trudeau last week.

The hashtag #CancelCanadaDay has taken off on social media, with many suggesting that celebrations and fireworks displays are out of touch with the dawning reality that more unmarked graves still await discovery.

"I don't think people really understand how much Indigenous people were forced to pay to this country. Our spirituality was taken away. Our way of life, our languages and our families were taken away. With the remains we continue to find, people are beginning to see that Indigenous people paid in full — with their lives," said Sol Mamakwa, an Ontario lawmaker from Kingfisher Lake First Nation.

Instead of celebrating, Mamakwa has asked Canadians to spend the day reflecting and mourning the children who never returned home.

"It's important that we acknowledge this history, the pain and what was done to Indigenous people in this country."

Some cities have outright cancelled their celebrations, while others have planned events that will reflect a sombre national mood.

Victoria, British Columbia became the first city to cancel its Canada Day programming, announcing it would consult with the Lekwungen community and broadcast celebrations with local artists later in the summer.

Canada must reveal 'undiscovered truths' of residential schools to heal

Across the country in the city of Fredricton, officials say the city will be lit orange — the colour largely tied to Canada's residential school history — and is urging citizens to spend the day learning about Indigenous communities.

The city of Dawson has said it will donate all funds earmarked for Canada Day celebrations to an investigation into residential schools in the Yukon Territory.

A recent poll commissioned by the conservative National Post suggested the "vast majority" of Canadians want to keep the holiday and that calls to re-think the holiday reflected the siloed thinking of social media.

"I'm concerned that injustices in our past or in the present are too often seized upon by a small group of activist voices who use it to attack the very idea of Canada itself," said Conservative leader Erin O'Toole last week. "We are seeing news this week of Canada Day celebrations being cancelled. Canada Day, our day of celebration, when Canadians of every background come together to give thanks for living in the greatest country in the world."

Despite the heavy emotional toll the findings over the last month have had on communities, Mamakwa feels optimistic Canadians are finally reckoning with the country's dark past.

"The oppression, the colonialism, the genocide and the crimes against humanity: people are learning their government, their churches and their police did this," he said. "It's important that people finally know the real history of this country — because it's our shared history."

- The Guardian

U.S. Army to begin Native American disinterment at Carlisle Barracks

CARLISLE, Pa. — The U.S. Army is one step closer to reuniting the remains of one Alaskan Native and nine Native American children who died hundreds of years ago with their families.

In 1879, Carlisle Barracks became the site of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School. The students who died were buried hundreds of years ago. Most of the students at the school died due to illnesses.

The students being returned to their families are Sophia Tetoff, who came from an Alaskan Aleut, Lucky Take the Tail (Pretty Eagle), Rose Long Face (Little Hawk), Ernest Knocks Off (White Thunder), Dennis Strikes First (Blue Tomahawk), Maud Little Girl (Swift Bear), Friend Hollow Horn Bear, Warren Painter (Bear Paints Dirt), Alvan (Kills Seven Horses), and Dora Her Pipe (Brave Bull).

The disinterments was scheduled to begin June 19 and end July 17. All families

will have a transfer ceremony according to their traditions. The transfer will also enable families to return the children to cemeteries of their choice.

- CBS 21 (Harrisburg, Pa.)

Chief Leonard Crow Dog passes on

An internationally renowned Lakota medicine man has died.

Chief Leonard Crow Dog passed away June 6.

Crow Dog was a spiritual advisor to many, including the American Indian Movement during the Wounded Knee Occupation in 1973.

The Sicangu Lakota medicine man was born in 1942 in the Rosebud Reservation.

Crow Dog was kept from Boarding School education.

Milo Yellow Hair is an Oglala Lakota, who met Crow Dog as a kid. Yellow Hair said Crow Dog grew up in a traditional way.

"He was kept away from schools and from the influences of even electricity," Yellow Hair said. "Grandfathers never lived with electricity. They always had a ceremonial lifestyle. He grew up in this and the energy that creates all of that come to visit him and makes him a man that can heal. A man that can identify plants and animals that can be helpful to your spiritual upbringing, but also your physical upbringing."

Yellow Hair and Crow Dog spent time together during the Wounded Knee Occupation in 1973. During that time Crow Dog served as a spiritual advisor to the group.

"He always talked about the Universal Person," Yellow Hair said. "In our case it would be a two legged being on one world. He said he was a graduate of the University of the Universe. It's a fundamental point of view. It means that all the things you use on a daily basis has got to be clean. You also got to put prayer first in your life. This is something that he always carried with him no matter where he went."

Rosebud Sioux Tribal president Rodney Bordeaux says Crow Dog created a pathway for indigenous people to follow to restore traditional ways.

"He did that throughout his life," Bordeaux said. He's a staunch supporter of our treaty rights, the return of the black hills. Basically, he was one of many of our people that have gone on that preserved our spiritual ways—the language—so that we could continue as a people."

Crow Dog's influence is international. He shared Lakota culture across the world.

Lloyd Big Crow is one of Leonard Crow Dog's nephews.

"He healed a lot of people, he changed a lot of people's lives," Big Crow said. "He was one of the last great medicine men. He took a whole generation of knowledge with him."

Big Crow says Crow Dog was always focused on future generations.

"Our visits were always about the kids. He was always talking about we have a natural teach and that's the universe itself," Big Crow said. "The plants, the animals, we just have to be self-aware."

- South Dakota Public Broadcasting

Wes Studi will be keynote speaker at RES 2021

Attendees of the Reservation Economic Summit (RES 2021) in July will be treated to a keynote address by Academy Award winner Wes Studi (Cherokee). The National Center for American Indian Enterprise (The National Center) announced Studi will be its keynote speaker during a fireside chat during a general session.

The National Center will hold RES 2021 in Las Vegas, Nevada, at the Paris Las Vegas Hotel & Casino from July 19-21. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the annual economic conference was moved from March to July. This year's theme is "Forward with Resiliency and Reinvention."

Last year, Studi was named to The New York Times' prestigious "25 Greatest Actors of the 21st Century (So Far)" list.

Studi, who grew up in Tahlequah, Okla., is known for his portrayal of Native Americans in a way that forever shattered age-old stereotypes in the movie industry. Breaking new ground, he brought fully developed Native American characters to the screen, and then took it a step further by highlighting the success of Native Americans in non-traditional roles.

- Native News Online

BUDGET From page 5A

Haaland spoke about the budget's importance for land consolidation, public safety, water claims settlements, climate issues and clean energy priorities. She singled out tribal broadband needs, infrastructure improvements and making sure funds are put directly into the hands of tribes, which has been an issue in past federal budgets and the source of court battles.

"Tribal nations know what's best for their communities far better than we can say," Haaland said at the hearing. "And that's why we have been adamant about tribal consultations. We like to see direct funding go directly to tribes so they can make the decisions that they need to make."

The Bureau of Indian Affairs, an agency within the Interior Department, would see \$2.7 billion in funding, \$609.9 million more

than in 2021.

"We are pleased with this new commitment that will bring much needed resources to Indian Country. With it also comes an increased capacity for BIA that will enable us to better support and administer programs held in trust for the benefit of American Indians and Alaska Natives," BIA director Darryl LaCounte said in a statement.

Meanwhile, the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) would receive \$1.3 billion for initiatives that support Native American students and teachers from early childhood through college, an increase of \$110.6 million.

"With the dedicated financial resources outlined in this proposal, this funding would go a long way in supporting some of our most critical educational infrastructure needs and programs that serve students located in often geographically challenged locations across the country," BIE director Tony L. Dearman said in a statement.

The BIE oversees 183 elementary

schools, secondary schools and dormitories located on 64 reservations in 23 states serving 45,000 students. The BIE-funded and tribally controlled schools in Florida are the Ahfachkee School on the Seminole Tribe's Big Cypress Reservation and the Miccosukee Indian School in western Miami-Dade County.

In addition, the chronically underfunded Indian Health Service (IHS) would also receive not seen before levels of investment for research and public health needs.

On June 16, an additional \$1.8 billion in American Rescue Plan funding was issued to IHS for Covid-19 related programs. This is in addition to the more than \$4 billion that was announced in April.

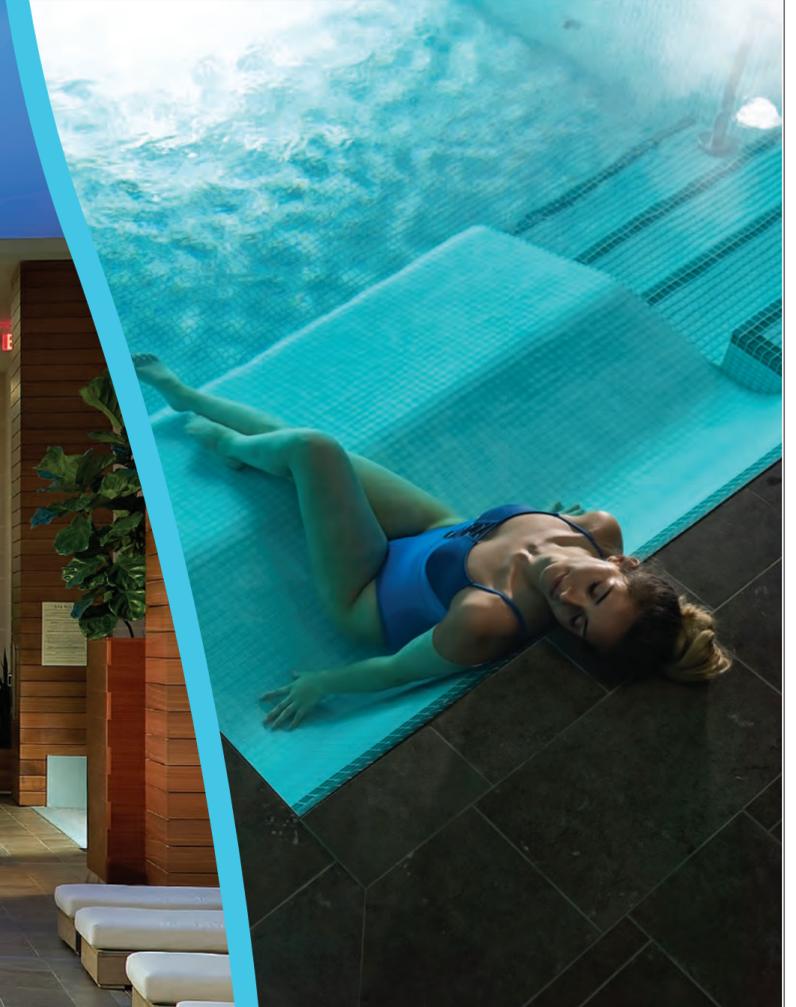
Congress has until Sept. 30 — when fiscal year 2021 funding levels lapse — to pass new spending bills.



Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland testifies before a U.S. Senate committee June 16.

Image via U.S. Senate

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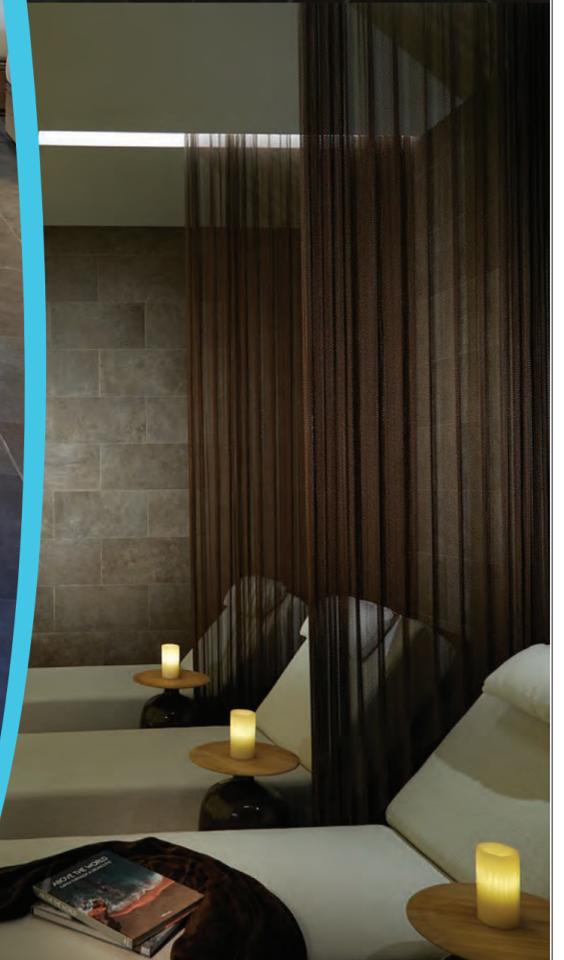
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Education



Seminole graduates from Okeechobee High School

BY TAYLOR HOLATA
Advanced Career Development program

The Okeechobee community gathered together May 28 for a graduation ceremony to celebrate the Okeechobee High School and Okeechobee Virtual School's class of 2021. Spirits were high as students sat in anticipation of walking across the stage after what seemed like an insurmountable year.

As Covid-19 restrictions lift nationwide, students are beginning to experience the return of in-person events.

"We survived all of high school and even a pandemic to be where we are tonight," graduating senior Jaydon Egger said in his summa cum laude address.

Proud family members and friends packed the stands at the Okeechobee County Agri-Civic Center as the ceremony commenced with the presentation of colors by the school's JROTC Color Guard and the singing of the national anthem by graduating senior Jessica Lashley.

The ceremony featured several speeches made by class delegates and summa cum laude graduates, all of which touched on the past year that was unlike any other. In an opening address, class delegate Lauren Sills spoke about the uniqueness of her classes' senior year and the significance that the evening holds for each of them.

"This year has been different in many ways and we have been faced with numerous obstacles, but our class has persevered through the unknown and conquered whatever challenges were thrown at us," Sills said. "We have finally made it to the day that all of us have been waiting for."

Principal Lauren Myers followed the students' speeches with the presentation of graduates and a special message that touched on all of the obstacles and accomplishments that accompanied the school year.

"You, class of 2021, you are one we will not soon forget," began Myers. "You have come to this stage through a global pandemic and have faced barriers unlike any



The Seminole Tribe's 2021 Okeechobee High School graduates are from left, Haylie Huff, Dakoya Nunez, Jagger Gaucin, Caylie Huff, Shaela French and Laila Bennett.

Courtesy Wendi Snow

other class before you. You have embraced 'the Brahman way' and have sought out ways in which you can fulfill our vision of excellence."

After the graduating students walked across the stage to receive their diplomas, class delegate Mattie Garcia led the class in the turning of their tassels from right to left in commemoration of crossing over to their next stages in life. The graduates then joined together in the singing of the school's alma mater and the momentous act of throwing their caps into the air.

Myers closed the ceremony with one final parting message to the new graduates. "As you leave here tonight, set new goals and dreams to keep you moving forward," Myers said. "Go out into this world and be great."

Among the 367 students that were

celebrated in the 2021 OHS graduation ceremony, six are members of the Seminole Tribe. All six plan to attend college.

The Seminole Tribune congratulates the following tribal members on their accomplishment. The graduates are:

- Laila Bennett
- Shaela French
- Jagger Gaucin
- Caylie Huff
- Haylie Huff
- Dakoya Nunez

IS Graduation Ceremony



Image OHS via Facebook

Jagger Gaucin proudly raises his diploma at Okeechobee High School's graduation ceremony.

PECS awards serve as tribute to those who helped shape the school

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

On the last day of a most unusual school year, Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School Principal Tracy Downing let her students know how proud she was of them.

"This year we never dreamed we would have to navigate a global pandemic," Downing said during the virtual 7th and 8th grade end of year awards ceremony May 27. "Students, you faced those challenges with grit and spirit, you did a fantastic job and were adaptive and resilient. It has been a privilege to work with you this year."

Downing thanked parents and guardians for helping the school provide a quality education to the students. She also recognized the community and the Seminole Tribe for checking in regularly to see if the school needed anything and thanked them for providing a tremendous amount of support.

Culture awards

The culture awards were a tribute to three women who were important in the development of PECS: Louise Gopher, Jennie Micco Shore and Lorene Gopher. Each award had slightly different criteria.

Qualifications for the Louise Gopher Educational Award include attending PECS for at least three consecutive years, maintaining a 3.5 or higher GPA, exhibiting positive moral attributes, taking pride in their studies while striving to achieve excellence, showing engagement and enthusiasm in academic material and persevering even when tasks seem difficult to master.

Rita Gopher introduced the award with a video narrated by her late mother Louise Gopher. "Education is your gold mine. Treasure your heritage, whatever it may be. Pass your knowledge on to your children. We learn more from the future when we are grounded in the lessons of the past," Gopher said in the video.

The winner of the award was eighth grader Kalissa Huff.

Qualifications for the Jennie Micco Shore Educational Award include attending PECS for at least three consecutive years, maintaining a 3.0 or higher GPA, being a hard-working individual who strives for excellence both in standard academics and the Creek Seminole language studies, shows enthusiasm and a willingness to learn more about Seminole history and culture

and exemplifies Creek Seminole virtues: Eyasketv – to be humble, Vnokeckv – to be loving, Mehenwv – to be truthful, Kvcncpvk – to be meek and Vrakhueckv – to be respectful/honoring.

"Many of us were students of Miss Jennie," said Jade Osceola, PECS culture teacher. "She helped lay the guidelines and framework of the award. Culture staff and teachers chose the winner."

The winner of the award was Serenity Lara.

Qualifications for the Lorene Gopher Educational Award include attending PECS for at least three consecutive years, maintaining a 3.0 or higher GPA in Seminole Creek language classes, being active and knowledgeable in Seminole Creek culture, shows enthusiasm and a willingness to learn more about Seminole history and culture, displays leadership qualities in school as well as in the community and believes culture should be present everywhere; not just in the classroom.

The award was introduced by Lorene Gopher's oldest grandson Lewis Gopher Jr., who learned language, culture and tradition by spending a lot of time with her.

"We need to memorialize who these people are," Gopher said. "The most important thing my grandmother said was that I need to be there and listen when she was speaking to other Elders. Today as young people, we have to push to be there. Grandma instilled a drive in me, but the most impactful thing she did was to come up with the Creek dictionary. That's been crucial to being able to teach the language. She was the binding to a lot of things we have in our family, culture and tradition. You all have the ability to carry this forward with you."

The winner of the award was Preslynn Baker.

Academic awards

The awards ceremony also included winners of the President's Education Awards, which honored graduating elementary, middle and high school students for their achievement and hard work. A letter from President Joe Biden accompanied the awards.

The winners of the President's Education Achievement award, which recognizes students with a GPA of 3.0 to 3.4, were Jayleigh Braswell, Brandon Greene, Ava Taylor and Hayden Woodward.

The winners of the President's Education

Excellence award (3.5 to 4.0 GPA) were Sariya Alvarez, Preslynn Baker, Kalissa Huff, Serenity Lara, Alyssa Madrigal, Chaka Smith and Madison Taylor.

Other awards given out at the ceremony were:

- Straight A's all year**
Serenity Lara
Alyssa Madrigal
Chaka Smith

- Citizenship of the Year**
Jayleigh Braswell
Brandon Greene
Serenity Lara
Jaydence Urbina

- National Honor Society**
First year: Jayleigh Braswell, Brandon Greene
Second year: Ava Taylor, Madison Taylor

- Third year: Hayden Woodward
Fourth year: Sariya Alvarez, Serenity Lara, Alyssa Madrigal, Chaka Smith
Fifth year: Preslynn Baker, Kalissa Huff.



Beverly Bidney

PECS ESE teachers Dena Whidden and Lydia Pell wished their students a great summer May 27.



Beverly Bidney

Fourth grade teachers bid farewell to their students at the PECS last day of school drive thru celebration May 27.

Ahfachkee's two graduates earn praise

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Ahfachkee graduates Brandi Osceola and Leo Osceola-Onco were virtually surrounded by friends and family as the school conducted its graduation ceremony online June 3.

The ceremony opened with a slide show of the graduates through the years. Principal Dorothy Cain read congratulatory messages from Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. and President Mitchell Cypress. Outgoing Big Cypress Board Representative Joe Frank spoke directly to the grads.

"Your diploma will be an important cornerstone as you build your life going forward," Rep. Frank said. "Continue your learning; your community and tribe will need your experiences to build a stronger future. Let us all rejoice in this moment."

Lee Zepeda, executive director of administration, gave the keynote address.

"You guys are not here by accident," he said. "This year was full of challenges, but you didn't quit. School is a way to grow and become who you are meant to be. Spend some time fulfilling your purpose, school helps you do that. It helps you turn knowledge into wisdom. Remember where you came from. Leo and Brandi, be strong and be courageous. Congratulations to both of you."

"Brandi and Leo have been at Ahfachkee since kindergarten," Cain said. "Graduation marks the end of childhood years and the beginning of adulthood. Many things are yet to come, this is just one step. Continue to pursue your dreams, you have the choice to make the world a better place."

Osceola was the class valedictorian and said she was honored to have that role.

"We chose to continue at Ahfachkee to have a well-rounded education," she said as she paraphrased a famous quote by Winnie the Pooh. "We didn't realize we were making memories, we were just having fun."

Osceola thanked her teachers for their commitment to serve.

"Today the fruits of their labor have been materialized," she said. "I'm filled with so much joy and happiness and proud to complete one step on the ladder of success. I hope by my example I can help future students."

A few teachers paid tribute to the grads. Social studies teacher Joseph Burley said he was fortunate to have them both in his classes.

"You were valued students in those classes for your thoughtfulness and compassion for those around you and your perseverance for weathering the challenge of going to school in the Covid era," Burley said.

Math teacher Dr. Chin Tang Liu said it was an honor to teach them both and watch them work diligently to solve tough problems.

English teacher Dr. Rona Olukolu began her remarks with a quote from Shakespeare.

"Parting is such sweet sorrow," she said. "But tonight I want to put another meaning to it. Brandi and Leo were very sweet students who were determined. There is a part of me who will be sad, I have never met a pair of students like Brandi and Leo. They were very quiet, you never had to redirect them to their tasks and they were never disrespectful. I am



Brandi Osceola

Courtesy photo



Leo Osceola-Onco

Courtesy photo

happy that you are moving on and continue to leave footprints in the sands of time."

Music teacher Cesar Taveras and science teacher David Sellepack also had kind words for them.

Graduation wouldn't be the same without playing the traditional graduation march "Pomp and Circumstance," so the melody played as videos of Osceola and Osceola-Onco were shown in which they each walked in their caps and gowns as family members watched nearby.

The ceremony concluded with a few remarks from Cain, who welcomed them to come back to school for a visit any time.

"Congratulations to our students for completing a rigorous course of study to get this diploma, they worked very hard for it," Cain said. "Thank you graduates for your perseverance. We hope you have a very bright future and we know that you will."

Brighton Reservation honors its class of 2021

STAFF REPORT

BRIGHTON — The front of Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School was decked out with balloons, a festive backdrop and bags of gifts for graduating eighth graders, high

school and college graduates June 4.

Cars, trucks and SUVs drove up with graduates, who posed with Brighton Councilman Larry Howard to commemorate their achievements.

A few of the high school students from the class of 2021 graduated a year early,

helped in part by earning high school credits in programs such as language and algebra while they were middle school students at PECS.

See additional photos at seminoletribune.org.



Aleah Ray Turtle (Moore Haven High School)

Beverly Bidney



Haylie Huff, left, and Caytie Huff (both Okeechobee High School)

Beverly Bidney



Ramone Baker (Moore Haven High School)

Beverly Bidney



Madisyn Osceola (Penn Foster)

Beverly Bidney



Trevor Thomas, left, (Warner University) and Hyatt Pearce (Moore Haven High School)

Beverly Bidney

Pemayetv Emahakv opens doors for summer school

STAFF REPORT

After doing virtual learning for more than a year due to the pandemic, Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School students finally returned to their classrooms for face-to-face summer school from June 7-24.

Although summer school was held in person, CDC guidelines were enforced. Everyone wore masks, remained socially distanced and plastic barriers were prominent in the classrooms.

One hundred four students from pre-kindergarten to eighth grade studied reading, math and Creek language weekdays from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. PECS administration encouraged students to take advantage of summer school to get a jump on the upcoming school year.



Courtesy photo

Mrs. Jimmie provides instruction to Braydon Osceola, Nohea Collins and Minnow Garvey in PECS' summer school session that ran June 7-24.



Courtesy photo

Jordan Jumper



Courtesy photo

Ianna Cypress



Courtesy photo

Ollie Jones, Hendrix Osceola and Jakai Smith



Courtesy photo

Eziel and Jasiel Juarez

Class of 2021 honored in Big Cypress

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

BIG CYPRESS — Escorted in the front and rear by police and fire personnel, a line of about 30 vehicles — some with waving graduates emerging from sunroofs — slowly made its way along Josie Billie Highway accompanied by a chorus of honking horns.

The class of 2021 gave the Big Cypress Reservation — and the tribe — plenty of reasons to celebrate June 19. The graduation parade culminated on the grounds of the old bingo venue where food, music and goodie bags from various departments greeted the stars of the day. Preschool director Thommy Doud served as the emcee who shouted out the name of each graduate as they passed by the stage. For most of the program, graduates and their families remained in or near their vehicles.

The reservation's newly elected leaders — Councilwoman Mariann Billie and Board Rep. Nadine Bowers — congratulated the graduates, who also heard from four of their own. The guest speakers all came from the class of 2021: Mya Cypress Langston (Boca Beauty Academy), Valhally Frank (The Sagemont School), Lewis Gopher Jr. (Florida Gulf Coast University) and Randeon Osceola (The Sagemont School).

The parade, which was open to all tribalwide graduates, ranged from preschoolers to college students. All had to earn their accomplishments while navigating through the pandemic.

"Over the past year we have experienced some life-altering events, and to continue in

an academic pursuit through it all has been a great accomplishment that many of us can lean on," Gopher told the audience. "Virtual learning, networking and making the most out of technology never seemed to be a part of the plan for Natives, but I would say we continue to make the most of it."

For Cypress Langston, the pandemic hit while she was attending college and it altered her path.

"Being stuck at home for so long, I was forced to be in a position to think about my life and what I wanted out of it, and eventually I came to the realization that what I wanted was to focus on my career in the beauty industry," she said.

After completing 600 hours of professional training, Cypress Langston is now a certified makeup artist and licensed aesthetician. She hopes to return to college to finish her degree.

College is just starting for the Sagemont grads. Frank said her college career will begin at Broward College. Eventually, she would like to attend Evergreen State College in Washington State. Osceola's college life began two days after the parade. She is attending Florida International University in Miami.

Gopher, who also handled disc jockey duties at the event, stressed to the audience that receiving an education stays with someone forever.

"My late grandmother Lorene Gopher always told me that if anyone came and took away everything you had, they couldn't steal your knowledge," Gopher said.



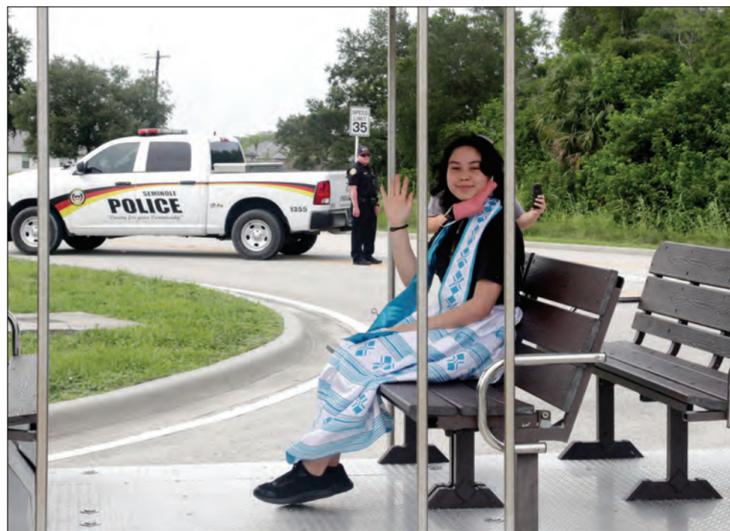
Ahfachkee School graduate Leo Osceola-Onco waves to spectators during a parade in Big Cypress that recognized tribalwide graduates from the class of 2021 on June 19.

Kevin Johnson



Aubrey Billie, left, and preschool graduate Allie Billie, show their enthusiasm on the parade route.

Kevin Johnson



Florida Virtual School graduate Mahala Billie-Osceola receives a ride on a tram along the parade route.

Kevin Johnson



Boca Raton Beauty Academy graduate Mya Cypress Langston speaks to the graduates. She was one of four featured speakers.

Kevin Johnson

Secretary Haaland, Interior Department congratulate tribal graduates

FROM PRESS RELEASE

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Interior has released a video with speakers congratulating tribal graduates from the class of 2021 across Indian Country.

The 30-minute program includes remarks from Interior Secretary Deb Haaland.

"The gift of education is so precious. It not only opens the doors of opportunity to each individual student, but also has the power to end cycles of poverty and turn the page for Native communities everywhere," Haaland said in the video message.

The program also includes:

- Welcome message by Bureau of Indian Education Director Tony Dearman
- Opening prayer by Tina Abrams of the Seneca Nation
- Poem by U.S. Poet Laureate Joy Harjo
- Remarks by Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary — Indian Affairs Bryan Newland
- Honor Song from Professor Dale Old Horn of Montana State University-Billings/Little Bighorn College, Clement Other Medicine of the Black Lodge District, and Robert 'Corky' Old Horn of the Black Lodge District.

The video is on YouTube.

PECS principal's perspective on the 2020-2021 school year

BY TRACY DOWNING
Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School Principal

A person's character is defined, in part, by their ability to face adversity and challenges and overcome them.

This school year, as we maneuvered through a global pandemic, we certainly faced many challenges. However, we overcame them with grit, determination, and a spirit unique to our community.

In School: At Home was our motto, and we relied heavily upon our parents, guardians, and family members to support the educational process at home. Our families were teachers, educators, and facilitators of learning. Thank you for balancing work and your home life all while being our educational partner. Thank you for letting us lean on you and count on you to do this most important educational job with us.

Our students were real troopers while live streaming with us daily, communicating with us, learning new skills, and focusing all their attention on learning as much as possible in this new environment.

Our teachers and staff rose to the challenge by researching innovative ways to teach remotely. Their lesson plans were created to meet the individual styles of our "In School: At Home learners." They faced the demands of teaching from afar with grace and compassion.

Our Brighton community and our Seminole Tribe of Florida stakeholders supported us by providing us with the

materials, curriculum, supplies, and resources we needed to provide a quality education. Their support has been invaluable and so much appreciated.

As family members, students, a faculty and staff, and as a community, we showed how adaptable and resilient we are during this unprecedented time in our lives and in our history.

On behalf of the entire faculty and staff of Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School, I wish to extend congratulation to all of our students for completing another year of school. It is my hope that you will remember this year not only for the good times you've had, but for the efforts of those who have provided you with the very best possible education.

As we move into the summer, I am so happy to be able to provide our students with a face-to-face summer program. Not only will we provide instruction in math and reading, but we will focus on instruction in the Creek Language. Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School exists to provide the Brighton school community with a rigorous student-centered curriculum meeting high standards of academic achievement in a safe and nurturing environment while actively preserving the Seminole language and culture. While students are in school, our top priority is their health and safety. All approved health and safety guidelines are strictly adhered to in order to ensure our students receive a quality education while in a safe environment.

A look back at the Ahfachkee school year

BY DOROTHY CAIN
Ahfachkee School Principal

The 2020-2021 school year ended June 9 and we are excited that our world is getting back to some semblance of normal. Currently summer term is being offered to students who are in need of extra help and credit recovery. We are implementing a face-to-face model at the elementary level and virtual education for middle and high school students. Summer school ends on July 1, 2021. There is additional support for students who are attending summer term for credit recovery through July 30.

This year our students, families, and teachers have had to adjust to an entirely new education landscape — one that has never been navigated before — and our course was steady and sure.

We started the year training our teachers and staff on Google's G-Suite for Education. This program gave our teachers the freedom to spend more time personalizing the learning experience for our students and less time having to manage it. Our students learned 21st century skills that they will use in their future careers.

In January we added single sign on through Clever. Now teachers, students, and staff have easy access to all learning applications. Clever gives us automatic rostering, seamless integrations and flexible configurations all with the click of a mouse.

We are so proud of our team. Our

teachers and staff have gone to extraordinary lengths to engage students who might be struggling, not just with school, but with their social emotional well-being.

Connectivity was a struggle for some families, but, overall, teachers noted that distance learning has had some surprising upsides. Some students have thrived without the social pressures and distractions of in-person school and teachers have discovered new and creative ways to engage students through technology.

We look forward to the 2021-2022 school year as Ahfachkee will transition to a blended-learning model. This platform will combine distance and in-person learning and our focus will be on facilitating blended learning courses that effectively merge these two platforms. Our staff is poised to facilitate a creative, interactive and immersive learning environment for our students.



Dorothy Cain

File photo



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Pedro Zepeda carries on Seminole tradition of canoe making

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

Pedro Zepeda may not consider himself a master carver, but he is one of a few Seminoles who currently carve traditional dugout canoes.

In May, Zepeda made a video about the history of Seminole dugout canoes for the Silver River Museum in Ocala, which is affiliated with the Marion County Public Schools. In it, he described the process of making a canoe from finding the right tree to using a variety of tools to make it into a functional water craft.

"Traditionally we would have learned this from our uncles on our mother's side," Zepeda said. "For some of us, some of that chain of knowledge has broken down somewhat so we have to go to someone who may not be a direct uncle."

Zepeda learned to carve canoes from various people and did his own research on dugout canoes. His interest in traditional Seminole arts, especially those that weren't being done anymore, began when he was 14 years old. By age 19, he was learning from and carving with his brother Brian. Later, he learned from his uncle Leroy Osceola as well.

"Dugout canoes have always been an important part of the Seminole Tribe," Zepeda said. "We never stopped making them and continue to make them today. They are an integral part of our culture and history and was one of the primary means of transportation in the wetlands of the Everglades."

Most of the cypress logs Zepeda carves come from the Big Cypress Reservation. He finds trees that have fallen naturally and goes back for them when he is ready to create a canoe. The old growth cypress trees he prefers to use are 200 to 350 years

old. Cypress is the best material for canoes since it is straight, has few if any knots in the wood and the natural oils make it rot and insect resistant, he said.

"Canoes are a utilitarian item and they don't necessarily survive through time," Zepeda said. "We know what they look like for the last 120 years or so; they have changed very little in that time. They have a knife-like bow. The water is very shallow for much of the year and the shape of the bow helps to part the sawgrass and keep you in the water instead of riding on top of the grass."

In shallow water, push poles are used to move the canoes. In deeper water, paddles are used. In the past, sails were relatively common. Zepeda has only seen them in historic photos and said it's probably been more than 70 years since they were used.

Zepeda said canoe sizes were determined by their usage. He explained small ones were used by children; medium sized canoes could hold two or three people to go fishing or hunting and were large enough to bring the catch back to camp. The largest canoes could be 30 feet long and were used for families to go to the trading post or to see other family members who lived several days distance away by canoe. These were large enough to hold all the goods and camping supplies they needed for the journey.

Zepeda talked about starting to carve a canoe and noted the importance of shaping the outside first.

"You need to know how deep to dig the inside," he said. "It's important to start with the outside and get pretty well along before you dig the inside out."

Another aspect to consider when carving a canoe is the amount of moisture inherent in the wood and the importance of slowing the drying process to prevent too much cracking.

"It's a large piece of wood, so you will get some cracking but you are trying to mitigate the amount so you don't get too much," Zepeda said. "To slow it down, you can cover it with leaves or wood shavings or canvasses and tarps. Wood is a natural thing and doesn't dry evenly. The parts that dry first will contract and split and crack. They are utilitarian pieces, so they don't have to look perfect."

Patches on the cracks are common on canoes and usually made with tar and tin. A canoe built by legendary Seminole carver Charlie Cypress, on exhibit at the Silver River Museum, has a patch made from tin on the front of the boat.

Zepeda is a modern carver and uses modern tools.

"We have always done dugout canoes and we've added different tools over the years," he said. "Four hundred years ago when we came in contact with the Europeans, they brought steel tools so we immediately began to use steel tools. They were much better than the shell and stone tools we previously had."

In modern times, Seminole carvers added chain saws and electric hand planers to do the job, but hand tools are still necessary. Chain saws replace the work a cross cut saw would have done in the past. Power tools speed up some aspects of canoe carving, but can remove the wood too quickly.

"Once I get close to the end, I switch exclusively to hand tools," Zepeda said. "I try to get as much usable wood off the canoe when I'm carving it with the chain saw. That way I can get a couple of boards off the top and bottom of the canoe and use them for the planks or other things, like paddles."

Zepeda also carves other pieces such as stickback sticks, spoons and small models of canoes.

"I feel like a lot of these traditional



Courtesy photo

Pedro Zepeda discusses dugout canoes during a presentation for the Silver River Museum in Ocala.

items are important to our culture," he said. "These objects are not simply objects; they are carriers of our culture and they have traditional knowledge associated with them. We have lost some of that information over time. Over the last 40 years, even though we have continued to make dugout canoes, there has been very little use of those dugout canoes. I hope we get to the point of where we have several canoe carvers and we can actually begin to use them again, even if it's just a scheduled paddling event to be able to maintain those aspects of the culture."

Seminoles have always had an important connection to the water and Zepeda believes it is important to retain what the Elders have taught about living in the watery environment of the Everglades.

"I hope to maintain and preserve these

traditions and hand them down to the next generation," Zepeda said. "I've been told by the elders that all this knowledge has been given to us by the breathmaker, the creator, by God. It's a way of honoring our creator by maintaining what he has given us."

Zepeda hopes to be able to pass his knowledge and skills to his family and community, while also teaching the public at large a little bit about Seminole culture and why it is important to tribal members.

"I don't consider myself a master canoe carver, although I know more than most people around today," Zepeda said. "I also know I'm not as good as my grandparent's generation would have been at making dugout canoes. I feel like I'm getting close to that, but I'm not quite there yet."

Nonprofit that supports Native artists and culture bearers receives \$6M gift

STAFF REPORT

RAPID CITY, S.D. — First Peoples Fund, a national nonprofit organization that helps tribal communities through supporting Native artists and culture bearers, announced that it received a \$6 million donation from MacKenzie Scott. The former wife of Amazon founder Jeff Bezos wrote in a blog post that her donations announced June 15 totaled \$2.74 billion in gifts to "286 high-

impact organizations in categories and communities that have been historically underfunded and overlooked."

"We are profoundly humbled and honored to be among the organizations chosen to receive such a historic gift," First Peoples Fund President Lori Pourier, a member of the Oglala Lakota Nation, said in a statement. "At First Peoples Fund, we are guided by the belief that art and culture are essential to life. This investment will

allow us to grow our work in helping Native communities heal and thrive by deepening our collective connection to both art and culture."

According to First Peoples Fund, the announcement comes at a time when philanthropic giving to Native communities has steeply declined over the years, noting that since 2006 only 0.4% of all philanthropic funding by large U.S. foundations has been directed to Native communities.

"Organizations serving Native communities need more support," Pourier said. "This major gift helps showcase the vital work being done in Native communities across the country. And as one of the six organizations behind the Cultural New Deal, which among other things calls for deep investment in arts and cultural ecosystems for Black, Indigenous, and communities of color, we hope the broader philanthropic sector is inspired to invest more in all of our

communities."

First Peoples Fund said it will use the investment to support more artists and culture bearers with grants, assist community development programs that strengthen cultural practice and increase access to financial resources.

Elgin Jumper's 'Nightfall, the Novel'

BY ELGIN JUMPER

Editor's note: This is the second of two parts of an excerpt from chapter five of "Nightfall, the Novel," by Seminole artist and writer Elgin Jumper. The first part was featured in the May 31 edition of the Tribune.

The storm continued, unabated, as the commotion was still transpiring inside. Someone in a black hoodie either jumped through or was hurled out of a large window, on the side of the house. And that person, whoever it was, came barreling over to the pick-up truck and got in. The engine thunder to life. This individual then drove pell-mell back out on the bumpy, pot-hole strewn dirt road, and back onto Snake Road. Trace's heart was definitely making haste!

"Geez, now what?" Lobo murmured.

The bed of the pick-up smelled of gas and oil and leaves and mud. Trace suppressed a cough. Trace whispered, "Be ready just in case he loses control and dumps us all in the canal." It was fearful going indeed. Beyond belief. And yet, somehow they had withstood it. Trace even felt a tinge of exhilaration, an inexplicable taste for authentic action and adventure! It quite amazed him.

"What would Gandalf do?" Trace asked. "I only wish I coulda watched one of them Hobbit flicks before we left out. I'm thinking of Comanche, too, what's he doing right now, will we ever get out of this, and get to him?" Lobo appeared far beyond worried. Trace examined his phone.

"Ahh, phone's still out," he said in a hushed voice. "Lo', we're gonna get out of this, you hear. You'll see."

"O-Okay," Lobo muttered. He was no doubt rattled.

The pick-up seemed to slow and the road seemed to change to a less precarious surface. The truck accelerated for what seemed like twenty-minutes, thereabouts. Then the truck decelerated again, or so Trace reasoned, and it was back to a more unstable roadway.

There was the typical debris, Trace noted, as with many truck beds. He saw a rusty hacksaw blade, which he grabbed and concealed, in case he might need it later for defense. The truck came to a stop. The two men somehow steeled their nerves, and found new courage, to continue on.

When the truck stopped, they were silent, because sometimes you don't even need to say anything in order to speak volumes, and sometimes you have to stay silent, in order to survive. They could hear shuffling and moving about, metal clank and trampling footfall. Suddenly the blue tarp was pulled from off of them, and there, glaring animosity down on them was the dark-hooded figure, pointing a long bony finger at them.

"Now I want you two outta my truck right now," he said. "Come on, let's go, let's go."

"We didn't do anything, honest," Trace exclaimed. "We were just tryin' to get away from all that trouble back there."

The two men got to their feet and climbed out the bed of the truck, where they cringed, cowered and huddled close to each other.

"Liar."

"Matt!" It was someone shouting from inside the house. "Just got word! Party lights over to Ashley's place! Five-O!"

Matt was obviously the dark-hooded figures name, and that spelled bad news for Trace and Lobo, for names had now been named and it didn't look good. The storm was in a lull, but the wind deployed a wailing and a howling and the birds of forests scattered and thus came an eerie silence. Then a sinister-looking woman came out from the house and was somewhat taken aback by what she saw.

"Oh, so this is what you're hollerin' about," she said. "Gonna get rid of em, right?"

"Well, yeah, because thanks to you, they now know my name."

Matt Piper was his full name, and the woman was, Camille Eagle, and they were in a full-scale feud with Ashley Royal, in the belief that Matt and Camille and their gang, had stolen cattle from Ashley's outfit. It was quite the complicated mess.

"But we gotta move," Matt urged. "Get outta Dodge, quick."

"Well, let's tie em up for now," Camille said. "Put em in the shed out back. We'll figure it out." She produced plastic ties, like the kind the cops use, and they then secured the two men from behind.

"Let's go," Matt said, searching their pockets, and then leading the men to the backyard.

Trace and Lobo were put into an old rusty tool shed, made of aluminum. It had two windows and a sliding door, difficult to move, but workable if one just put some elbow grease into it. Their mouths were taped shut and their ankles were restrained with plastic ties. Their tormentors then closed the sliding door and locked it behind them. And not long after that noises from the pickup were heard, as if it had made a hasty departure.

Earlier, while still in the bed of the pick-up, Trace had stashed the hacksaw blade in his shoe, and in their haste, Matt and Camille had failed to search his or Lobo's shoes. Now Trace got on his knees and working his shoe off managed to saw off his restraints, uncovered his mouth, and get to his feet. Free! He freed Lobo and tore tape from his mouth as well.

Both men free! They quickly dusted themselves off and began looking for a way out of the shed.

"Let's get outta here, Lo'," Trace said. Lobo nodded and said, "I'm sayin'."

There were several tools on the floor, some arranged on the wall. The shed had once been a workshop, Trace thought. Trace saw a lawn-mower blade on the floor. Just what he needed to break a window out. And so, directing Lobo outta the way, he did just that. The noise from metal to glass was loud enough for anyone nearby to hear, but it simply had to be done, as the windows had

been stupidly bolted down. Relieved, he then dropped the lawn-mower blade.

When they scrambled out of structure, Trace said, "Let's get to a faucet. I don't think anyone's here. But Lo', don't overdo it on the water — We still gotta get moving. We'll find more."

"Geez," Lobo cried.

"You gotta be able to run."

The two men tended to their immediate thirsts, but didn't make a production of it. Trace saw a white water tower in the distance, to the northeast, and found himself remembering this part of the rez, where they were at. As a boy, he had ridden BMX bicycles here with his cousins. He knew where they were at now, thank goodness.

They started off on foot on yet another dirt road. Trace saw a Nighthawk dive-bombing its prey, just above a tree-line. It shrieked and swooped and soared away with dinner. Bullfrogs and crickets joined in the sound show. A yellow moon made appearances from time to time. Trace and Lobo hung close to the shrubbery and tall grass on the side of the road, in case a vehicle approached, ever on the alert.

Trace looked at his watch. It was nearing midnight. At one stage, they had to make a run for it when a strange car, with a spotlight, rumbled through the area.

Then inexplicably Lobo bolted into the woods and swamps to the west, crying, "I need water! I see a building! They might have a phone!" Trace tore off after him, fearing Lobo had finally found his breaking point.

It was a dark wilderness through which they passed, it was lovely and scary in the moonlight. Trace paused to study it. He could've sworn he heard the thunder of a bull-gator off to his left and continued on in search of his good friend. He was trampling through ankle-deep swamp water, when he heard a faint clink of metal and water barely rippling, as if someone was moving nearby.

Who could it be? Lobo? He crouched low and then he saw several silhouettes dark against the moonlight. They were Seminole warriors, dressed in battle array, muskets at the ready, but something told him these weren't real men. No, these were spectral warriors, phantom-like, from the Seminole past. On the move. They had pulled the veil of history and had allowed Trace to see, as though a gift. They had plumbed turbans, calico shirts, glistening gorgets, necklaces, breech-cloth, leggings, and deerskin moccasins. Trace could hardly believe it.

They were there only momentarily, and then they were fading gradually away,

gone, outta there! Trace stayed there for five to ten minutes, he didn't really know how long. He stared mesmerized at the sparkling dark waters where the warriors had been. He was just about to continue searching for Lobo, when that self-same Lobo came stumbling upon him, out of breath, huffing and a-puffing, plain as night.

Lobo managed to say, "I saw a building over that way." He was pointing to the west.

Trace said, "Okay, let's go." Then they

walked for some time in the direction Lobo had indicated.

At last Trace saw a beige-colored building with a two-lane road way on the other side. Lobo was right! It was a very rural area, a convenience store that was closed at this time of night. On walking up to the store, Trace noticed a pay phone. Light at the end of a tunnel. They could call a friend for help. Who could they call out here? Would that person come to their rescue? When could they let their

guard down? And when, for heaven's sake, was all this mayhem going to end?

Trace and Lobo hastened up to the phone by the front doors. There was a faucet there, too, which they made careful use of.

"You okay?" Trace asked Lobo. He patted his friend's shoulder.

"Yeah, yeah, thanks," Lobo answered. He paused, and then, he added, "And you? You okay?"

Trace nodded, confidentially. "Lo'," he said. "we're gonna make it through this, okay?"

"Okay." All of sudden, the two men were shocked to see a group of tattooed gang members, in low-riders, roll up onto the scene. These hoods, with weapons in hand, got out of the cars, and made a battle line, on one side of the store's parking lot. At the same time, another group of gang members showed up, obviously their enemies, got out and formed their own battle line. The two men were situated directly in the center of these two dangerous gangs.

Trace pushed Lobo behind him. "I can't believe this," he said. "West Side Story, of all things. Just stay behind me. Stay alert."

Trace stood his ground, while Lobo clutched Trace's shirt in fear. By now the gang leaders were inciting their gangs on. They had bandanas, multiple tattoos, skullcaps and body piercings. They were armed to the teeth, but they didn't appear to have guns. Perhaps an agreement had been ironed out beforehand. Sometimes that happens. Gang members were barking out insults towards the opposing gang, and clearly inviting a whirlwind of turmoil. And if bedlam and mayhem should come to pass, Trace reasoned, the two friends would then be reduced to mere collateral damage.

"So," Trace observed, guarding Lobo and moving them through the melee, "the Sharks" and "the Jets" goin' at it, huh. This is something." He smiled. He was, in a strange way, animated by the sudden energy of the spectacle. The noise and action of the players was absolutely stunning.

It was a full-fledged, card-carrying gang battle now, sans firearms, which, in and of itself, was quite incomprehensible! War cries and fighting occurred all along the opposing lines. The were mingled all together as a brawl ridiculous, a grueling contest of contending gang members, and clashing arsenals.

The night winds began to howl. Nighthawks plunged through the terrible disorder. The large birds assailed the combatants. Trace and Lobo, dashing and

darting through it all, managed to make good an escape from the loud, dangerous ground of the backwoods convenience store.

They were out on the roadway, striving to put time and distance between themselves and the harrowing gang fight, which was now barreling towards them, like a stampede of war. That was when an old white F-110 pick-up truck drove up, stopping right where they were, on the side of the road.

The driver leaned over and threw open the passenger-side door, and yelled, "Get in! Quick!"

Trace and Lobo piled into the truck. They turned around to see smoke and flame where they'd just been. The thugs and wildlife had turned up the dial on chaos and disarray. Orange flames reached out for the night sky.

The man floored it. Trace exhaled, relieved. "Whoa," was all he could say. Lobo was speechless. Trace studied the driver, who had long silver hair, and a silver beard, a Native American, but not Seminole. Trace sensed he wasn't Seminole. He could've well been a shaman from an ancient tribe, Trace fancied. He wore a white shirt over a white t-shirt, and he had piercing brown eyes that were on fire with life.

"You two didn't seem to be a part of that craziness back there," the driver said, "so I stopped."

"Thank you," Trace said. "You would not believe what we've been through. I'm Trace and he's Lobo."

Lobo was taken aback by the driver's appearance. "He's Gandalf." Lobo whispered to Trace.

Trace nudged Lobo. "Shhh," he urged. "I'm Ian Grey," the man said. "How can I help you?"

Trace explained everything that had transpired since they'd left Hollywood for the Everglades, and Mr. Grey immediately offered to help them in any way he could.

Trace said, "I've been thinking about our friend, Comanche, what's he been doing all the while, is he okay, and will we ever get to him, and make it back home?"

Mr. Grey indicated he knew the area where Comanche might be located and said he would take them by there to pick him up and would even drive them back to Hollywood. They could then sort out the troubles with the Silver Bullet later, and that is indeed what happened. Several hours later, very much to their relief, the three men were back home once again, safe and sound, thanks to Gandalf-look-a-like, Mr. Ian Grey.

Trace, Lobo, and Comanche, couldn't thank Mr. Grey enough for what he'd done for them. He had truly restored their faith in humankind.

"You see," I clarified for Uncle Wilbur, "Trace hadn't known of that side of himself that took to real adventure. That unique type of true courage had long-been dormant within him, until the day before. Now he would watch his action-adventure stories with a different kind of appreciation."



Gordon "Ollie" Wareham

A view from above of the 4,900-pound totem pole brought to the Hollywood Reservation on June 21. The pole will eventually be brought to Washington, D.C.

Totem pole's cross-country journey comes to Hollywood Reservation

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

HOLLYWOOD — It's not every day a 24-foot-long, 4,900-pound object comes to the Hollywood Reservation.

Plenty of heads turned when a silver Ram Big Horn pickup truck with a Washington State license plate pulled up in front of the Howard Tiger Recreation Center with a massive totem pole on a flatbed trailer June 21.

The trip to the reservation marked the 82nd stop for the pole that is crisscrossing the United States with members of the Lummi Nation from Washington State. Its final destination is Washington, D.C. with a late July arrival. The pole has received national media attention, including recent coverage from the Washington Post and National Public Radio.

Hollywood Culture employees greeted the Lummi. Before they sat down for lunch together in the Culture cooking area next to the recreation center, the Lummi discussed their journey and the pole's mission. Under the chieftess in a quiet gathering that included Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola and Miss Florida Seminole Durante Blais-Billie, Lummi Douglas James explained how he and his brother Jewel James, both experienced carvers, began carving the pole in February from a 400-year-old Washington red cedar.

"Everything that we've been doing has been guided by the spirit. It has been guiding us across the country," Douglas James said. "This pole will go to all the sacred sites we can hit in the United States."

"It made me cry because of what it represents," said Martha Tommie, who came from the Brighton Reservation with her 4-year-old grandson, Raiden Tommie, to view the pole and learn about and support

its journey.

During their visit to Culture, the Lummi heard from Gordon "Ollie" Wareham, who told them about the box turtle versus the rabbit, a Seminole story that has been handed down through generations in his family.

"The story reflects how the Seminole people survived the Seminole Wars. We came together as many groups and we came together as one," he said.

Similarly, the Lummi's mission calls for a unified voice to bring attention to the Biden administration about issues affecting "mother earth."

"It's uniting all the voices together and send that wave to D.C. and (say) let's do something to stop what's happening to the earth," Douglas James said.

The Lummi's trek to South Florida included a visit to the Miami Seaquarium, which has been home for decades to a whale that the Lummi have fought to bring back to its native waters off the Pacific coast. The group was joined by Seminole Samuel Tommie, who said they paid regular admission to enter the Seaquarium in order to see the whale. Although protests have been organized in previous years, this visit to the Seaquarium was to see how the whale was doing.

"We're hoping that she feels that we were there supporting her," Tommie said.

The whale is known as Lolita the Killer Whale at the Seaquarium but is Sk'aliCh'elhtenaut to the Lummi.

"Their stories and their relationship with whales goes back hundreds of years, way before the United States was created. They feel that connection, they feel that responsibility. They're doing everything from their hearts," Tommie said.

When it came time to carve the tree, James said it was left up to the spirit to guide them. The result was a variety of depictions, each carrying special meaning as James

explained:

- Indian and a moon. "He's praying to the Creator to save Mother Earth for the children."

- Diving eagle. "The eagle is symbolic of power throughout the country, right into the White House. The eagle flies the highest, sees the furthest, sees past, present and future, and he can carry the prayers to the highest element."

- Two salmon, one on each side. "The eagles and the orca love the salmon. When we heard about the Snake River dams, you have to remove the dams in order for the salmon to get back up there and repopulate." (Some tribes in the Pacific Northwest are calling for the removal of the dams to help replenish salmon.)

- Wolf, bear, whale. "We put a wolf head on the whale. They're like wolves, they hunt in packs. The bear is for a legendary sea bear. In between the fins is a copper shield to recognize the Canadian relatives and the Alaskan relatives. Copper shield was a status item for them."

- Grandmother. "One of her hands is painted red for the lost Indigenous women. She has a rattle in her other hand and a granddaughter that is learning traditional songs because her granddaughter is missing. On the granddaughter's side there are seven tears, seven generations that went through all the hardships, including the Trail of Tears."

The bottom is painted blue to reflect that all water flows to the ocean.

Although the pole is not finished, the last item carved on it was a dancing feather, which James said came to his brother in a dream.

The pole is scheduled to be brought to tribes in Alabama and Oklahoma, among others, before it returns briefly to Washington State. Its final trek to Washington, D.C. is scheduled to begin in mid-July.



Kevin Johnson

Bobby Frank, left, from Hollywood Culture, welcomes Douglas James, a carver from the Lummi Tribe, to the Hollywood Reservation.



Kevin Johnson

Gordon "Ollie" Wareham plays the flute before telling a Seminole story to the Lummi visitors.



Kevin Johnson

Seminoles and Lummi gather in front of the totem pole.

Immokalee women walk to honor lost Indigenous children

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

The remains of 215 Indigenous children were found in unmarked graves May 27 on the grounds of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School in British Columbia, Canada.

Some of the children buried there were as young as three.

After the discovery, Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called for flags to be lowered to half-staff. Across Canada, people lined up rows of 215 pairs of children's shoes to memorialize the children, were urged on social media to wear orange shirts to honor them and the British Columbia schools organized "orange shirt walk-ins," according to CTV News.

A group of Immokalee friends learned about the discovery and organized a walk of their own June 4 in memory of the lost children.

"We felt like we needed to honor the families and the children that were broken because of this horrible situation," Amy Yzaguirre said. "It was our way of walking in their shoes."

The school and the unmarked graves were near the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation community, which released a statement which said the loss of the children was known, but never documented.

"This past weekend, with the help of a ground penetrating radar specialist, the stark truth of the preliminary findings came to light," Chief Rasanne Casimir said in the statement. "To our knowledge, these missing children are undocumented deaths."

The Kamloops Indian Residential School operated from the late 19th century to the late 1970s. It was run by the Catholic Church until the late 1960s.

More graves were discovered at the Marieval Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan June 24. Ground penetrating radar found 751 "hits," which could indicate at least 600 graves.

"This is not a mass grave site, these are unmarked graves," said Cadmus Delorme, Chief of the Cowessess First Nation during a virtual press conference.

These schools were not unique to Canada. The U.S. government funded more than 350 Indian boarding schools across the country in the 19th and 20th centuries. The schools were often church operated. Children were abducted by government agents, sent to schools hundreds of miles away from their homes and beaten, starved and abused when they spoke their Native languages.

The schools were authorized as part of the Indian Civilization Act Fund of 1819 and the Peace Policy of 1869 with the intent of destroying Native cultures and communities. The stated purpose was to "kill the Indian, save the man."

Many children never returned home and their fates have never been determined by the U.S. government. That accountability is about to change with the announcement that the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) will investigate the federal Indian boarding schools.

DOI Secretary Deb Haaland made the announcement at the National Congress of American Indians' mid-year conference June 22.

"Today I'm announcing and sharing



Courtesy photo

From left, Amy Yzaguirre, Demi Garza, Amy Garza, Krystal Rodriguez, Juanita Martinez, America Ramirez and Cecilia Pequeno get ready for their 2.15-mile walk June 4 in Immokalee to honor the missing Indigenous children recently found in an unmarked grave at an Indian boarding school in Canada.

with you all first, that the department will launch the federal Indian boarding school initiative. At no time in history have the records or documentation of this policy been compiled or analyzed to determine the full scope of its reaches and effects. We must uncover the truth about the loss of human life and the lasting consequences of these schools," said Haaland (Laguna Pueblo).

The final report will be submitted by April 2022. Haaland said the initiative was the result of the discovery of the remains of

215 children found in Canada. Haaland's great-grandfather was taken to the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania.

"I come from ancestors who endured the horrors of Indian boarding schools assimilation policies carried out by the same department that I now lead. The same agency that tried to eradicate our culture, our language, our spiritual practices and our people. To address the intergenerational impact of Indian boarding schools and to promote spiritual and emotional healing in

our communities, we must shed light on the unspoken traumas of the past, no matter how hard it will be. For more than a century, the Interior Department was responsible for operating the Indian boarding schools across the United States and its territories. We are therefore uniquely positioned to assist in the effort to uncover the dark history of these institutions that have haunted our families for too long. It's our responsibility," Secretary Haaland said.

Sports



Gordon "Ollie" Wareham

In addition to capturing fish, Team Jacob Osceola Jr. also captured first place May 21 in the first Invasive Species Fishing Tournament on the Big Cypress Reservation.

Fishing tournament targets invasive species in Big Cypress

SUBMITTED BY GORDON "OLLIE" WAREHAM

BIG CYPRESS — By gig, pole or bow fishing, the first annual Invasive Species Fishing Tournament was held on the Big Cypress Reservation on May 22. Twelve teams comprised of three-person teams — one member of the team had to be a tribal member — gathered at the Big Shot's docks on Northwest Canal Road. The tournament started at 7 p.m. and ran until 11 p.m. The teams could use boats to fish, or fish from the banks of the canals. Winners were awarded by total weight of fish caught at the end of the tournament.

The tournament focused on the removal of the invasive species that have been harming the natural ecosystem of the Florida Everglades. The variety of fish on the hit list included the oscar, armored catfish, peacock bass and tilapia. The tournament was a catch



Gordon "Ollie" Wareham

Incoming Big Cypress Board Rep. Nadine Bowers and Cicero Osceola at the tournament May 21.



Courtesy photo

At left, outgoing Hollywood Board Rep. Gordon "Ollie" Wareham, Alice Sweat, James Sweat and, at right, outgoing Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank at the first annual Invasive Species Fishing Tournament in Big Cypress.

and keep, so no native fish species were allowed to be caught.

The tournament was hosted by outgoing Hollywood Board Representative Gordon "Ollie" Wareham, who donated the prize fund, and outgoing Big Cypress Board Representative Joe Frank, who donated the drinks and snacks for the employees and teams.

The first place winner was Team Jacob Osceola Jr. with a total weight of 18.46 pounds. The second place winner was Team Clinton Billie with a total weight of 17.82 pounds. The third place winner was Team Tristan Wilcox with a total weight of 13.90 pounds. The combined weight from all the fish caught that night was roughly 70 pounds.

"Thanks to all who helped to make this event a success; this includes BC Recreation, Buildings and Grounds, Housing and especially the tribal members, family and friends that showed up to fish," said tribal member Jacob Osceola Jr. "Last

but not least, I would like to thank the Board Representatives for hosting the event and the incoming Big Cypress Rep. Nadine Bowers for stopping by and expressing interest in this event."

There was plenty of positive comments and suggestions about the next invasive species tournament to be held. One comment was to start the tournament earlier — at 5 p.m. — and fish until 11 p.m. so there could be more fishing time.

"I would like to continue having invasive fishing tournaments and hopefully we can get more participants. I enjoyed the nice weather until mosquitoes came out," said incoming Board Rep. Bowers.

All of the fish were donated to Billie Swamp Safari to help feed the animals so none of the fish caught went to waste. Thank you to all the participants who came out to help protect the Big Cypress ecosystem.

With an eye on growth, NABI returns

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

When the Native American Basketball Invitational decided it was "game on" again, the president and CEO of its foundation figured about half the normal field would attend. After all, the country is still in the midst of emerging from pandemic shutdowns and restrictions.

GinaMarie Scarpa is glad her estimate proved to be wrong because it is expected to be nearly a full house when the tournament for Native high school players and recent graduates returns July 11-14 in Phoenix after a one-year absence due to the pandemic.

"Right now we have 124 teams coming," Scarpa said in a phone interview June 16. "We're really excited about it."

Those teams from throughout Indian Country, including a few Seminole squads, will squeeze in more than 400 games in four days. Spectators will be required to wear face coverings.

The tournament — on and off the court — is vastly different than when it began in 2003 behind the efforts of Scarpa, former Phoenix Suns player Mark West and the late Scott Podleski.

"We started with 24 teams (12 boys, 12 girls). It's crazy. It was only supposed to be for our local Arizona tribes. In the first year, it just spread like wildfire through Indian

Country. We were getting interest from teams from other states, so we decided to open it up," Scarpa said.

There's no sign of slowing down. NABI is the largest Indigenous basketball competition in North America, but it has evolved into far more than just a tournament. Its educational summit, which coincides with the tournament, featured 36 presentations and 18 speakers when it was last held in 2019. A college and career fair and scholarships are also part of the opportunities offered to players. This year's offerings have been scaled back due to the pandemic and there will be no parade of flags or meet-and-greet party, but continued growth is just around the corner.

NABI has plans to expand to 256 teams by 2025. An adult version for ages 21 and over is in the works with the hope of attracting alumni. The foundation's golf tournament, which raises money for scholarships, has grown so much that two courses are now needed.

On June 30, the foundation announced the launch of NABI Network to livestream games.

NABI has local partnerships with the Suns and the WNBA's Mercury and it hopes to add Arizona State University as a major partner in the educational summit.

"They have one of the best Native American programs," Scarpa said.

The foundation is constantly seeking

additional sponsors.

"It's a great organization for those big companies who want to have those initiatives where they're giving back to Indian Country," she said.

The Seminole Tribe is a major sponsor of NABI. The tribe's financial support began in the tournament's infancy when Max Osceola was on the Tribal Council.

"Max loved NABI. He really got involved. That was when we were really little and just starting," Scarpa said.

After Osceola left office, the tribe's sponsorship went away until about five years ago when Scarpa met Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola at a conference.

"I introduced myself to him and he called me probably a week later to see how he could help. He's a big advocate for youth programs and helping our kids," Scarpa said.

Since then, the tribe has restarted its sponsorship. Scarpa has provided updates to the Tribal Council, which she said has been "fabulous."

"Extremely instrumental in our success. They're very significant sponsors," she said. Seminole teams are often among the top contenders. A Seminole boys squad won the championship in 2018.

"Seminole are up there with Cheyenne Arapaho and some of our northern Navajo teams that are just consistent in level of play," Scarpa said.

Next stop for Charli Frye: St. Thomas University

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

A serious knee injury derailed Charli Frye's senior season on the IMG Academy's national girls basketball team this year, but it hasn't hindered her eagerness to return to the court.

Instead of being a starting shooting guard in her final high school season, Frye saw her role reduced to supporting teammates in practices and games from the sidelines. She traveled with the team and did as much as she could to be a good teammate.

While a season-ending injury would test the patience of any athlete, to lose a senior season amplifies the setback, but there was a silver lining along the arduous path to recovery. Frye learned to be patient, something that she admits she didn't have a lot of before the injury.

"It came with a lot of learning," she said June 19 in Big Cypress after participating in a tribalwide parade for 2021 Seminole graduates.

Frye will take her newfound patience and healed knee to Miami Gardens to play for St. Thomas University, a well-established NAIA program that has won a handful of Sun Conference titles. Frye would like to pursue a field of study related to mental health.

Frye's years at IMG have prepped her for college. The school's Bradenton campus attracts some of the top young athletes from around the globe with an academic and athletic structure akin to college. Sports in the morning are followed by classes in the afternoon and early evening. In addition



Kevin Johnson

After graduating from IMG Academy in Bradenton, Charli Frye is headed to St. Thomas University in Miami Gardens.

to head and assistant coaches, there's also coaches for strength and conditioning, and nutrition. Advisers, managers and trainers are part of the athletic programs, too.

"It feels like you're in college," Frye said.

Frye said she enjoyed her time at IMG more than she anticipated.

"I didn't realize how close I would become to my teammates and the coach," she said.

Now, she's set for her next move.

"I'm ready to play," she said.

Lexi Foreman selected for national Native tournament

SUBMITTED BY OWASSA DAVILLA

Lexi Foreman, a 2021 Anadarko (Oklahoma) High School valedictorian honors graduate, was selected to play in the second annual Native American Vegas Jr. Nationals hosted by Tribe Athletics in Las Vegas and Henderson, Nevada, from June 25-27.

Foreman played for the Legendary Elite team from Oklahoma, which won the national high school division for 11th and 12th grades.

Foreman is an enrolled member of the Seminole Tribe of Florida and a descendant of Kiowa Chief Lonewolf, Sac-N-Fox, Shawnee, Oneida Tribes and a descendant of the last Blackfeet Mountain Chief. She is the daughter of Matt and Alicia Foreman and the paternal granddaughter of the late Patty Botone-Kaubin and Charles Kaubin, the late Bill Foreman, the maternal granddaughter of the late Mary Bointy-Josh and the late Coleman Josh.

The national recognition is the most recent honor among many for Foreman this spring.

In April, Foreman was one of the state's top 20 players selected by the Oklahoma Native All State Association (ONASA) selection committee to play in its All-Star game. The 12 Native American coaches on the committee had their job cut out for them this year with a record high 160 nominated players.

While playing in the ONASA All-Star game June 12, Foreman did not disappoint as she came ready to play. She showcased her natural talent with 23 points, nine rebounds, six steals and six assists, which helped her earn her invitation to play in the national tournament. Foreman's team won the showcase.

On June 5, Foreman played in the Oklahoma Girls Basketball Coaches Association (OGBCA) All-State game in Mustang, Oklahoma. She played for the West team which lost by one point, 61-60, in a back-and-forth game. The West was behind by 20 points in the first quarter. The East came out hard and took fast control of the game but, the West would not be denied as they fought back and were up by a few points at halftime. Both teams played hard in the second half trading points. In the end, the



Salvador Diaz Velaquez via Instagram

Lexi Foreman takes a shot during the second annual Native American Vegas Jr. Nationals in Nevada held June 25-27.

East put up a last shot to win. The OGBCA named Foreman to its All-State team. Also, the Oklahoma Coaches Association (OCA) named Foreman to its All-Star team for large schools (4A-6A).

Foreman is an unselfish, hard-working 5-foot-8 guard who excels on both ends of the court. Last season she scored in double digits 15 times while leading Anadarko with 140 rebounds, 107 assists, 105 steals and 17 blocks.

Foreman brings plenty of versatility and leadership to the court. She can play in any position and excels on defense while producing all around numbers in each category.

Academically, she is just as sound and hard-working. She's a member of Who's Who, maintains a 4.0 GPA, is a class valedictorian and has constantly been on the superintendent's honor roll throughout school.

Foreman will attend the University of Central Oklahoma, where she'll play basketball. She aspires to fulfill her lifelong dream to become a pediatrician.

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