



The Seminole Tribune

Voice of the Unconquered

Volume XLVIII • Number 11

November 2024

Climate Resiliency Department hosts African officials

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Report

BIG CYPRESS — The Climate Resiliency Department participated in the U.S. Department of State's Climate Crisis Initiative by hosting a group of 17 African climate leaders at Billie Swamp Safari on Oct. 16 for a discussion about climate change and action.

The event was part of "The Climate Crisis: Working Together for Future Generations" international leadership program, which brought over 80 climate experts and advocates from about 60 countries to the U.S. to engage with American professional counterparts on the negative impacts of the climate crisis and opportunities for international cooperation.

The visitors from Africa came from Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Haiti, Mauritius, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, United Republic of Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. They were educators, government officials, scientists, university professors and a journalist.

Climate Resiliency officer Jill Horwitz welcomed the group to Big Cypress for the environmental and cultural exchange. She was joined by Joseph John, community engagement coordinator; Krystle Bowers, Climate Resiliency policy coordinator; and Sergio Gonzalez, wildlife biologist and wetland scientist.

◆ See CLIMATE on page 6A

Spencer Battiest, Aubee Billie receive plenty of Seminole support at off-Broadway performance

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

NEW YORK CITY — The Seminole Tribe of Florida was well represented on the stage and in the audience at the off-Broadway, all-Native musical "Distant Thunder." Spencer Battiest and Aubee Billie performed in front of family members and friends, who traveled to New York City to see the show and support two of the tribe's bright, young stars.

The show, which was written by actor and writer Shaun Taylor-Corbett and his mother Lynn Taylor-Corbett, ran Sept. 25 to Oct. 27. It was the first mainstream Indigenous musical to be performed in New York City. After eight days of preview performances, opening night was a celebration of the cast members' family and friends, along with producers, media and special guests.

The lobby of the Mezzanine Theatre at A.R.T./New York Theatres wasn't only filled with patchwork and bouquets of flowers on opening night Oct. 3, but it continued throughout opening weekend. The theater is a few blocks, but worlds away from Broadway theaters. There is no marquee and the intimate theater seats only 125 patrons, compared to the average Broadway house which ranges from about 500 to more than 1,000 seats.

Billie's parents — former Chairman James E. Billie and Maria Billie — were there to support their daughter at performances all weekend.

"This is another exciting moment," James E. Billie said before the opening night performance. "In high school, she did some real nice plays. I was shocked she could do it and then I got used to it. I'm so proud of her. She wants to get into more Broadway shows, we'll see what happens. She's already got



Aubee Billie, Spencer Battiest and actor/writer Shaun Taylor-Corbett pose with members of the Battiest and Billie families after a "Distant Thunder" performance in New York City.

people calling her for movies. Who knows what her future holds."

Brighton residents Michele Thomas, Connie Whidden and Lucy Bowers are long-time fans of Billie and had seen her perform in her high school plays.

"I always told her I couldn't wait until we had to fly to New York to see her, and here we are," Thomas said. "I'm not surprised the time came so quickly."

Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie — sister of Aubee — attended with more

family, who all enjoyed watching Battiest and Billie on stage during the Saturday matinee and evening performances.

◆ See OFF-BROADWAY on page 5A

'Fresh' Walters a national leader in catches

STAFF REPORT

Seminole Tribe of Florida descendent Roger "Fresh" Walters continues to put up big numbers in the Midwest and the entire nation.

Through seven games, Walters, a wide receiver for the Iowa Western Community College football team, has caught 47 passes.

Not only does he lead his team in number of catches, but he also leads the entire National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) in Division I.

Walters added to his reception total with nine catches for 106 yards and one touchdown in a 21-10 win against Independence Community College on Oct. 19 in Council Bluffs, Iowa. He caught a 15-yard touchdown pass that opened the scoring in the first quarter.

For the season, Walters has surpassed the 100-yard receiving mark in a game three times. He has 544 receiving yards and three touchdowns.

Walters has also been a bright spot on special teams. He returned three kicks for 46 yards against Independence.

As of Oct. 21, Iowa Western was ranked No. 2 in the nation in the NJCAA.

Walters, the son of tribal member Sheree Sneed, is in his first season at Iowa Western. He previously spent two years at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.



Roger 'Fresh' Walters

Breast cancer survivor Nancy Frank joins thousands in Tampa walk

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

TAMPA — Surrounded by family members, Nancy Frank donned a pearl beaded bra over her pink Hard Rock T-shirt and proudly walked in Tampa's annual Making Strides Against Cancer on Oct. 26.

"I have been walking in this [Making Strides Against Cancer] for 20 years," Frank said.

Frank, who is a 21-year cancer survivor, was joined by family members including her daughter, sons, grandchildren and great grandchildren as they walked the 2.5 mile route around and through the Raymond James Stadium.

"Since she got cancer, we've all been more aware about being checked and getting mammograms every year," said Frank's daughter Laurie Billie. "She is very strong minded and in that way, she has given me the courage to get myself examined. She inspires a lot of people, especially in the Seminole community."

Although the colors of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers are pewter, red, orange and black, pink was the dominant color of the day around the stadium. Most of the 20,000 participants were decked out in various shades of the color and together they formed a massive wave of pink.

◆ See WALK page 4B



From left to right are Jae Frank, Talia Frank, Kevin Frank and Nancy Frank, as they walk with about 20,000 others in Making Strides Against Breast Cancer on Oct. 26 in Tampa.



Beverly Bidney Nancy Frank, in center with floral headband, and her family pose with the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa staff at the Seminole Hard Rock tent at the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer event Oct. 26.

INSIDE:

Editorial.....	2A	Education.....	1B
Community.....	3A	Sports.....	1C

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Editorial

President Biden formally apologizes for federal Native boarding schools atrocities

• President Joe Biden

On Oct. 25, President Joe Biden formally apologized for the federal Native American boarding school policy that forcibly removed thousands of Native children from their families, homelands, culture and languages from 1819 through the 1970s. In many cases, the children endured abuse at the government assimilation boarding schools. A Department of Interior report released in July concluded that nearly 1,000 American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children died while attending Federal Indian boarding schools.

Here is the text of Biden's speech provided by the White House during his visit to Gila Crossing Community School in Laveen Village, Arizona, on Oct. 25. The remarks have been condensed.

Long before there was a United States, Native communities flourished on these lands. They practiced democratic government before we ever heard of it, developed advanced agriculture, contributed to science, art, and culture.

But eventually, the United States was established and began expanding, entering treaties with sovereign Tribal Nations. But as time moved on, respect for s — for Tribal sovereignty evaporated, was shattered, pushing Native people off their homelands, denying — denying their humanity and their rights, targeting children to cut their connection to their ancestors and their inheritance and their heritage.

At first, in the 19- — 1800s, the effort was voluntary, asking Tribes to sell their children — to send their children away to vocational schools. But then — then the federal government mandated — mandated the removal of children from their families and Tribes, launching what's called the Federal Indian Boarding School era — era. Over a 150-year span — 150 years — from the early 1800s to 1870 — to 1970. One of the most horrific chapters in American history. We should be ashamed. A chapter that most Americans don't know about. The vast majority don't even know about it.

I was — I was at my hotel today. I told the pe — the hotel staff, as we were leaving. They said, "Where are you going?" I told them. They said, "What are you doing?" I told them. They said they're Natives here. They said, "I never knew that. I never knew that." Think of how many people don't know.

As president, I believe it's important that we do know — know generations of Native children stolen, taken away to places they didn't know with people they never met who spoke a language they had never heard. Native communities silenced. Their children's laughter and play were gone.

Children would arrive at schools. Their clothes taken off. Their hair that they were told was sacred was chopped off. Their names literally erased and replaced by a number or an English name.

One survivor later recounted her days when taken away. She said, quote, "My mother standing on that sidewalk as we loaded into a green bus. I can see the image of my mom burned into my mind and my heart where she was crying."

Another survivor described what it was like at the boarding school, and I quote, "When I would talk in my Tribal language, I would get hit. I lost my tongue. They beat me every day."

Children abused — emotionally,

physically, and sexually abused. Forced into hard labor. Some put up for adoption without the consent of their birth parents. Some left for dead in unmarked graves.

And for those who did return home, they were wounded in body and in spirit — trauma and shame passed down through generations.

The policy continued even after the Civil Rights Act, which got me involved in politics as a young man. Even after the Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964, it continued.

All told, hundreds and hundreds of Federal Indian Boarding Schools across the country. Tens of thousands of Native children entered the system. Nearly 1,000 documented Native child deaths, though the real number is likely to be much, much higher; lost generations, culture, and language; lost trust.

It's horribly, horribly wrong. It's a sin on our soul.

I'd like to ask, with your permission, for a moment of silence as we remember those lost and the generations living with that trauma.

(A moment of silence is observed.)

After 150 years, the United States government eventually stopped the program, but the federal government has never — never — formally apologized for what happened until today.

I formally apologize as president of the United States of America, for what we did. I formally apologize. And it's long overdue.

At the Tribal school — at a Tribal school in Arizona, a community full of tradition and culture, and joined by survivors and descendants to do just that: apologize, apologize, apolo- — rewrite the history book correctly.

I have a solemn responsibility to be the first president to formally apologize to the Native peoples — Native Americans, Native Hawaiians, Native Alaskans — and [at] Federal Indian Boarding Schools.

It's long, long, long overdue. Quite frankly, there's no excuse that this apology took 50 years to make.

The Federal Indian Boarding School policy and the pain it has caused will always be a significant mark of shame, a blot on American history.

For too long, this all happened with virtually no public attention, not written about in our history books — not taught in our schools.

For those who went through this period, it was too painful to speak of. For our nation, it was too shameful to acknowledge. But just because history is silent doesn't mean it didn't take place. It did take place.

While darkness can hide much, it erases nothing. It erases nothing. Some injustices are heinous, horrific, and grievous. They can't be buried, no matter how hard people try.

As I've said throughout my presidency, we must know the good, the bad, the truth of who we are as a nation. That's what great nations do. We're a great nation. We're the greatest of nations. We do not erase history; we make history. We learn from history, and we remember so we can heal as a nation. It takes remembering.

This formal apology is the culmination of decades of work by so many courageous people, many of whom are here today: survivors and descendants, allies and advocates — like the nation's Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition and other...

All of you who are part of that, stand up. Stand up. As my grandfather would say, you're doing God's work.

And other courageous leaders who spent decades shining a light on this dark chapter. And leaders like Secretary Haaland, whose

grandparents were children at one of those boarding schools.

U.S. Interior Department, the same department that long ago oversaw Federal Indian Boarding Schools — guess what? — the extensive work on the — breaking ground, it's happened with her. It's appropriate that she is bringing an end to what that very agency did. Groundbreaking report documenting what happened.

We owe it to all of you across Indian Country. The truth — the truth must be told. And the truth must be heard all across America.

But this official apology [apology] is only one step toward and forward from the shadows of failed policies of the past. That's why I've committed to working with Indigenous communities across the country to write a new and better chapter of our — in our history, to honor the solemn promise the United States made to Tribal Nations, to fulfill our federal trust and treaty obligations. It's long, long, long overdue.

I know no apology can or will make up for what was lost during the darkness of the Federal Boarding School policy. But today, we're finally moving forward into the light.

As president of the United States, I've had the honor to bestow our nation's most prestigious medals to distinguished people and organizations all across America. That includes Native Americans who survived the boarding school era.

Early in my term, I bestowed the Medal of Freedom — our highest civilian honor — on a man my grandfather, who was an Irish immigrant and was not treated very well because he was an Irish Catholic in the coalmine era in Scranton — but he went on to be an all-American football player at Santa Clara. And every time they'd talk about all-Americans, he'd say, "Joey, the greatest athlete in American history is Jim Thorpe." Oh, I'm seri- — I knew a lot about Jim Thorpe before some of you probably even knew.

As a child, Jim was taken from his home but went on to become one of the greatest athletes ever, ever, ever in all of American history.

And earlier this week, I bestowed two other rever- — revered medals — the National Medals of Arts and the National Medal of the Humanities — to 39 extraordinary Americans and organizations, including Roseta Wrol [Rosita Worl], an Alaskan Native.

More than 80 years ago, she was a six-year-old when she was taken to a federal boarding school. She spent three years without her family, her family not knowing if she'd ever come home. Nine years old, she was one of those who did come home.

Over the next seven decades, she became a leading anthropologist and advocate, building a new era of understanding. Her story, from being taken from her home as child to standing in the Oval Office receiving one of the nation's most consequential medals, is a story of the truth, the power of healing.

When Roseta [Rosita] sees young people signing tradi- — singing traditional songs, just like we heard today, she says, and I quote, "We will hear the voices of our ancestors, and we are now hearing it through our children."

For too long, this nation sought to silence the voices of generations of Native children, but now your voices are being heard.

That's the America that we should be. That's the America we can all be proud of. That's who we are. For God's sake, let's make sure we reach out and embrace, because you make us stronger. You are America.

Naomi Wilson named Tribal Secretary

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

HOLLYWOOD — Naomi Wilson has loved working in the Secretary's office for the past 10 years.

She says the staff is great. She enjoys helping tribal members solve problems or advise them the direction they could take for an issue. Going to reservations and communities and learning about those places and meeting people, and working with other departments are all high on her list of what makes working in the Secretary's office likable for her.

But when the opportunity to apply for Tribal Secretary became available, Wilson hesitated. At the time — earlier this year — she was the primary healthcare advocate to her mother, whose health was in decline.

While serving as interim Tribal Secretary, Wilson told her mom that her health was priority No. 1. They talked. Her mom gave her blessings to her daughter to pursue the position.

"She said go ahead and apply for that job because we'll get it figured out," Wilson said.

Sadly, one week later her mom passed. Her mother's support meant a lot to Wilson as the interim tag was removed by Tribal Council and the Board this summer when they appointed her as Tribal Secretary.

Wilson, who previously served as the tribe's first supervisor of elections, uses her background that also includes more than 20 years of corporate customer service experience and applies it for the betterment of the tribal members.

"Whatever I'm doing, whatever I have done, whatever I'm going to do, is to their benefit and they receive from me and my office whatever they need," she said.

Wilson is following in the footsteps of Laura Mae Osceola — the tribe's first Secretary back when it was a combined position with Treasurer — and Dorothy Scott Osceola, Priscilla Sayen and, most recently, Lavonne Rose.

The office handles a variety of areas, including enrollment, elections, the princess program, and works closely with the tribal clerk for Council and Board meetings.

Wilson grew up on the Brighton Reservation, served as Princess in 1985 and has lived in Hollywood since '85.

She said she enjoys looking through the tribe's old records, including meeting minutes and resolutions, to learn about how the tribe handled issues years ago and how it's changed.

She also likes that there is something different every day that comes up with her job, but the bottom line never changes.

"At the end of the day, it's what's best for the tribe," she said.



Naomi Wilson

Kevin Johnson

Hiring process kicks into full gear for new Brighton hotel and casino

BY TATUM MITCHELL
Staff Reporter

SEBRING — Seminole Brighton Bay Hotel & Casino is gearing up to open its doors in February 2025. The new location is bringing new opportunities — the job force from the old casino to the new property is expected to more than double, from about 200 employees to 500 employees.

Community information sessions have been hosted in surrounding areas, with the most recent held Oct. 15 in Sebring, 45 miles from the Brighton Reservation. Justin Adorno, director of Human Resources at Seminole Casino Brighton, and Dustin Maurhoff, project director for Human Resources operations, presented career information about a variety of positions at the new property, which will be home to a four-story, 100-room hotel with a pool; nearly 38,000 square feet for the casino; restaurants; and a 10-lane bowling alley. They emphasized that personality is one of the key characteristics in hiring.

An all-property hiring event is scheduled to be held Nov. 4 from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m., and

Nov. 5 from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the current casino's bingo hall. Applicants should bring valid identification and social security card. Applying in advance can be done at gotoworkhappy.com.

Anthony Pasquarell attended the Sebring session. He said he got a job notification for the event because he has been applying to jobs in the area. He hopes to move near Brighton since he likes to fish and could retire there. He said he does a lot of different tasks and isn't sure what position he will pursue.

"I do a lot of stuff. I'm a deacon at the church that I go to, and I work there, too," Pasquarell said. "I do part-time stuff there, the part-time is janitorial."

He said though churchgoers aren't customers, his work is customer service oriented. In addition to his positions with the church, he said he has experience with various job positions.

"Customer service-wise and taking care of people, that's something I've done a lot of," Pasquarell said.

For additional information, visit seminolecasinobrighton.com.

Responses to Biden's apology

Chief Kirk Francis, USET/USSET SPF President: "President Biden's acknowledgment of the deep wounds caused by the Indian boarding school era is a crucial step towards healing and reconciliation. We celebrate this historic moment and call upon the United States to further its commitment to honor our histories, restore dignity, and ensure that the voices of Tribal Nations are respected and not left unheard. Together, we can shed a more truthful light on our history, so that we can achieve a brighter future in our Nation-to-Nation, sovereign-to-sovereign relationship"

Cheryl Crazy Bull, President and CEO of the American Indian College Fund: "The experiences of Native people with boarding schools touches nearly

every Native American alive today. The federal government policy had a goal of total assimilation of Native people. This assimilation was to be achieved by separating children from families, banning the use of Native languages, and forcing children and young people to adopt Western practices, including insisting they give up their own spiritual ways to become Christians. During this period across several generations, many children were physically abused, sexually assaulted, malnourished, and mistreated. The Interior Department urged the U.S. government this summer to formally apologize for the enduring trauma inflicted on Native Americans. The trauma of those experiences reverberates across Indian Country today.

Yet this dark period in American

history is largely unknown to non-Natives. I hope President Biden's apology not only raises awareness of the true Native history in our country but is a step towards national reconciliation and healing.

We join Tribes, Native organizations, and our Native relatives and allies in the call for reparative actions. Today we call for a significant investment by the federal government and philanthropy in restorative and healing approaches and institutions to repair the harm done by the boarding school era. The Native people who we support, from our youngest children to our college students, deserve that investment. The tribal college and university movement that emerged over 50 years ago to support place-based, Native-led, and tribally controlled education deserves that investment.



Justin Adorno discusses the new Seminole Brighton Bay Hotel & Casino at a community information event Oct. 15 in Sebring.

Tatum Mitchell

The Seminole Tribune is a member of the Indigenous Journalists Association.

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

Subscription rate is \$35 per year by mail. Make checks payable to: The Seminole Tribune 6365 Taft Street Suite 3003 Hollywood, FL 33024

The following deadline applies to all submissions to The Seminole Tribune:

Issue: December 2024
Deadline: November 20, 2024

Issue: January 2025
Deadline: December 18, 2024

Advertising rates along with sizes and other information may be downloaded online at: <http://SeminoleTribune.org/Advertise>

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Community



Tribe mostly spared from wrath of powerful tornadoes

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

Some areas near Seminole Tribe of Florida reservations were decimated by tornadoes spawned during Hurricane Milton on Oct. 9, but the tribe emerged mostly unscathed.

At the start of a Tribal Council meeting Oct. 14, Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. said the tribe was fortunate.

"Luckily, nobody got hurt. There are other people who are far worse than us, so please pray for them," Chairman Osceola said.

John Auer, the tribe's chief of police, said two tornadoes occurred on the Big Cypress Reservation and at least two, perhaps three, on the Brighton Reservation. Both reservations and other areas in Glades and Hendry counties encountered power outages.

Auer said Big Cypress didn't have any structural damage, but it was a different story in Brighton where metal bleachers at the baseball/softball complex were tossed and twisted, a 4-H barn was destroyed and a couple residences damaged.



The Brighton 4-H barn was destroyed by a tornado Oct. 9.

Beverly Bidney

Shelter options were opened on both reservations for residents who were without power.

Damage in the tribe was minor compared to the horror that tornadoes inflicted elsewhere. The Twin Palms RV Resort – about three miles south of the Brighton Reservation – suffered extensive damage with dozens of homes destroyed. The Glades County Sheriff's Office reported seven minor injuries and no fatalities.

In St. Lucie County, a tornado that tore through the Spanish Lakes retirement community killed six people. The property is about 13 miles northeast of the tribe's reservation in Fort Pierce. Known as Chupco's Landing, the reservation did not suffer any structural damage.

Some fences and trees were blown down on the Lakeland Reservation – which was on the northern side of the hurricane – but it did not lose power, Auer said. The tribe brought fuel to the reservation because of limited supplies at local gas stations.

In Tampa, the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino became a state-designated shelter for the public. According to Hard Rock, more than 1,000 displaced people used the shelter. Hard Rock and the organization World Central Kitchen combined to serve more than 1,700 meals to people in the shelter at the property and other shelters in



Beverly Bidney

Bleachers at the Brighton Reservation's baseball/softball complex were ripped up by a tornado Oct. 9.



Beverly Bidney

Mangled metal bleachers at Brighton Reservation's baseball/softball complex following a tornado.

the city.

"Tampa Hard Rock was opened by (Chairman Osceola) and (Hard Rock Chairman/Seminole Gaming CEO) Jim Allen as a shelter of last resort. It was good for the community," Auer said.

Once a category 5 hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico, Milton made landfall at the Sarasota-area barrier island Siesta Key as a category 3. It proceeded east across central Florida. At least 24 deaths are linked to the storm, according to a CBS News report.

Mobile market bus to visit BC

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — The Seminole Tribe's Climate Resiliency Program will bring a mobile food market bus to the Big Cypress Reservation on Nov. 7 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The mobile store will be located in front of the To-Pee-Ke-Ke-Yak-ne building.

Mobile food markets usually visit areas that are deemed "food deserts," meaning there are no grocery stores located in the neighborhood. Housed in a bus named MAX, the market will have a variety of produce that is less expensive than that found at grocery stores. The Climate Resiliency Program hopes to bring the bus to Big Cypress every month to alleviate the long distances tribal members must drive for fresh food.

This project ties in with the Climate Resiliency Program's food sovereignty goals, which include increasing tribal members access to fresh foods. Food sovereignty means having access to purchase and grow relevant food in the community. The program wants to eventually include Native food such as beans, corn and squash.

"Seminole families used to have family gardens to grow and share and prepare food together," Climate Resiliency officer Jill Horwitz said. "Part of colonization



Courtesy photo

The interior of the mobile food market bus.

and the attempted eradication of indigenous peoples was to separate families from each other and their food sources. Boarding schools and commodity food followed, bringing a myriad of physical, psychological, and spiritual traumas to the community. Today, the Seminole Tribe of Florida is working to heal those wounds and bring a modern approach to how the community gathers together, shares food, and does good for the earth and each other."

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Seminoles hit the catwalk at international expo

BY CALVIN TIGER
Staff Reporter

FORT LAUDERDALE — Several tribal members from the Seminole Tribe of Florida participated in a Native clothing fashion show during the annual Florida International Trade and Culture Expo (FITCE) at the Broward County Convention Center in Fort Lauderdale on Oct. 23.

FITCE attracted representatives from countries around the world. This year's theme was manufacturing and tourism.

The Seminole portion of the fashion show was organized by the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki

Museum. Seminoles were the first group to start the fashion catwalk at the expo alongside others representing their countries such as Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Italy, and China.

Tribal members who participated in the fashion catwalk included Lenora Roberts, Jojo Osceola, Sarafina Billie, Kyle Doney, Kyla Billie, Chandler Demayo, Cypress Billie, and Lorelei Tommie.

The tribe's presentation also included a video interview from Lenora Roberts and Melissa DeMayo talking about the history of the tribe, clothing and patchwork. The museum also had a table setup with information about the tribe.



Calvin Tiger

Sarafina Billie, displaying tribal patchwork and clothing, walks the catwalk Oct. 23 in a Native fashion show at the Florida International Trade and Culture Expo in Fort Lauderdale.



Calvin Tiger

Italian pianist and visual artist Marco Guglielmi plays his piano while performing with Ollie Wareham, who plays his flute at the Florida International Trade and Culture Expo.



Calvin Tiger

Cypress Billie strikes a pose in the show at the expo.



Calvin Tiger (2)

Harvey Billie Bowers, left, and Kyla Billie, right, participate in the fashion event.



Calvin Tiger

Lenora Roberts smiles and walks down the catwalk.

Tribe's firefighters sharpen their post-storm skills

BY TATUM MITCHELL
Staff Reporter

With hurricane season comes post-storm work from fire departments. To efficiently do that, there's some additional training.

The Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue (STFR) Department has been implementing a Task Force Deployment Team course. It's designed to train basic chainsaw operations and to work safely and efficiently post-storm disasters, division chief Doug LeValley said.

He said 87 STFR firefighters out of 120 have gone through the program so far, and the goal is to get the rest through in the next few weeks. They resumed the training in July 2024 after a brief break for other medical training. He said the feedback has been great.

"The feedback has been awesome," LeValley said. "We've had people from outside agencies come and sit in the class."

LeValley started the class, which entails proper FEMA structural markings. These

markings are a part of searching homes and destroyed areas post-storm. The FEMA system is designed with various shapes to indicate certain things, LeValley said.

"Searching the residence, we would put markings on the outside of the home that depict that a task force was there. We search the building, and we found nobody or we found something, we would mark the outside of the building [accordingly]."

The course also defines chainsaw safety and operation standards. This includes new personal protection equipment, troubleshooting in the field, maintenance and safety features.

Wildland firefighters must complete a 40-hour class on chainsaws, LeValley said. STFR's Wildlife division is run by Fred Boehm, its fire management officer.

"He has six wildland firefighters assigned to him," LeValley said. "On any given day when we taught this class, three of those wildland firefighters would participate as instructors."

LeValley said they now have the



Courtesy photo

From left to right are Mark Lyon, Juan Gomez, Doug LeValley, Fred Boehm, Kristoffer Durthaler, Hans Melius, Nate Cournoyer, Zechariah Hendryx, Robert Rodriguez, Randall Raichandani and Keith Rohan.

necessary safety equipment to use a chainsaw. For example, they are equipped with specialty Kevlar gloves and chaps that are designed to shut the chain off if the material is caught in the saw and protect

from injury. After they cover the FEMA markings and chainsaw safety, the course spends about 90 minutes on properly cutting wood. There are different cuts for different types of

trees, LeValley said, and they teach how to properly sharpen the chainsaw in the field. The course was approved by the Florida State Fire College in Ocala.

◆ **OFF-BROADWAY**

From page 1A

“Spencer and Aubee did great,” Councilwoman Billie said. “They grew up in the music and entertainment world. It’s good to see them living their dream.”

“It was so good to see my sister Aubee. I’m here to support her,” said Hali Garcia. “I’m so proud of them both.”

“It was amazing, it made me tear up at points,” said Jalycia Billie. “Their voices are so good, they are both so talented.”

“It was so good,” said Edna Bowers. “I saw Aubee in high school and college, she’s really good. When she said she got this show, I got chills.”

Battiest’s mother, June Baker, and grandmother, Judy Baker, attended the Saturday evening performance.

“It’s amazing, I was crying through the whole show,” June Baker said. “I knew he was going to be great and he was. He’s always been like this; he’s been singing since he was born.”

“He’s awesome,” added Judy Baker. “He real, he’s talented and he’s the best guy in the world. He is down to earth and he loves people.”

“I had never seen Aubee perform before,” said Hollywood Board Rep. Christine McCall, who also attended the Saturday evening performance. “It was awesome to see her and how she has grown up. The story [of the play] is very relatable.”

“Distant Thunder” tells the story of Darrell Water, who as a child left his Blackfeet Nation home with his white mother. He returns years later, as a successful lawyer, to try to broker a deal with an oil company that could benefit the tribe financially. But the drilling location is at the site of an existing immersion language school. While he was there, Water realizes the business deal could destroy the school and Blackfeet culture.

Lynne Taylor-Corbett, the co-writer, director and choreographer, had worked with Battiest since the show was conceived in 2012, but had never worked with Billie before this show.

“Aubee is the best. She has become near and dear to all of us,” Taylor-Corbett said. “And Spencer, of course. It’s a miracle that we are now in New York. I think if we didn’t do it now, it may not have gone on. Doing a full musical with a small infrastructure is challenging, but otherwise how would new musicals happen? This is a low budget production that gave us a lot.”

One of the special guests on opening night included Lin Manuel Miranda, an award-winning songwriter, actor, singer, filmmaker and rapper. He created the Broadway musicals “In the Heights” and “Hamilton”, wrote the soundtracks to the animated films “Moana”, “Vivo” and “Encanto.”

Miranda met with cast members after the performance and told Spencer Battiest that he did a great job. Miranda has known Shaun Taylor-Corbett since he appeared in the original production of Miranda’s “In the Heights” on Broadway and in the touring show.

Suriya Smith, of Brighton, summed up her experience seeing the show succinctly.

“To see Aubee and Spencer on stage is exciting,” Smith said. “It’s also good to see a whole cast of Native Americans. It shows our youth that we can do it, too. To know those big producers are coming to watch unknown artists and support them is great.”



The cast of “Distant Thunder” gathers after the opening night performance Oct. 3 in New York City.

Beverly Bidney



From left to right, Hollywood Board Rep. Christine McCall, Aubee Billie and Gabriela Diaz pose together after an opening weekend performance of “Distant Thunder.”

Beverly Bidney



Courtesy photo

Shaun Taylor-Corbett kneels next to James E. Billie with Aubee Billie, Maria Billie, Spencer Battiest, and Aubee’s boyfriend following the opening night performance.



Beverly Bidney

Spencer Battiest and his grandmother Judy Baker.



Beverly Bidney

From left to right, Turquoise Battiest, Spencer Battiest, Aubee Billie and Petra Battiest.



Beverly Bidney

From left to right, Mahala Billie-Osceola, Aubee Billie, Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie and Jalycia Billie pose outside of the theater after the matinee performance during opening weekend.



Beverly Bidney

From left to right, Brighton residents Lucy Bowers, Connie Whidden and Michele Thomas stand outside of the theater in New York City before the opening night performance.



Led by Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie, Board President/Vice Chairwoman Holly Tiger, Big Cypress Board Rep. Nadine Bowers and former Board President/Vice Chairman Mitchell Cypress, a ribbon is cut Oct. 4 signifying the opening of "The Groves" residential development in Big Cypress.

Kevin Johnson

New residential development debuts in Big Cypress

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

BIG CYPRESS — The newest residential development on the Big Cypress Reservation — with street names such as West Peggy Billie Lane and Sally Buster Circle — held a ribbon cutting ceremony Oct. 4.

Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie and Big Cypress Board Rep. Nadine Bowers were joined by Board President/Vice Chairwoman Holly Tiger and former Board President/Vice Chairman and longtime BC resident Mitchell Cypress for the cutting of a red ribbon on the property known as "The Groves."

It's a two-phase project by Tribal Community Development. The ceremony

was for the first phase, which features 57 single-family, three-and-four-bedroom homes with garages. All the streets have sidewalks. Those homes are now occupied. The next phase will be construction of 44 townhouses and ADA residences.

Councilwoman Billie said the project addresses several important housing issues. "It means we're improving, we're expanding, the population is getting bigger," Councilwoman Billie said. "It means a lot to people who live off-res and want to come home. It means a lot to the younger generation who have always lived with their parents until they could get a house."

"We built 57 homes, and they're all full. I think that speaks to the tribal members wanting to be back on their own lands," said

Board President/Vice Chairwoman Tiger. Cypress, who said he has lived on the reservation for about 70 of his 77 years, is glad to see housing opportunities expand.

"I think we were overdue, but finally we got some funding to do this. I'm really happy that everybody is coming back to the reservation," he said.

The development is among latest big building projects on the reservation, which in recent years have included the Mabel T. Frank residential development and a new Ahfachkee School. Also, construction continues on a new preschool and senior center.

Located on West Boundary Road, "The Groves" is less than a mile west of the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum.



Kevin Johnson

From left to right, Ahfachkee students Harvey Bowers-Billie, Taina Guzman-Billie and Curtis Smith say the Seminole Pledge in Elaponke and the Pledge of Allegiance at the start of the ribbon cutting ceremony.



Kevin Johnson

Mementos from Tribal Community Development were given to attendees at the ceremony.



Kevin Johnson

New homes in "The Groves."



Kevin Johnson

Little Cypress Way and West Peggy Billie Lane are two of the streets in the new development.

CLIMATE From page 1A

The program agenda was to share the specifics of the climate crisis in Florida and then answer questions from the Africans.

Horwitz began the program by talking about what the Climate Resiliency Department does to deal with climate change. She said the department monitors the dangers of sea level rise, flooding from rain, drought, longer dry seasons and a storm water infrastructure that struggles during times of massive rains.

"South Florida climate experts think there will be eight feet of water rise in the next 100 years, but the water infrastructure will fail at three feet," Horwitz said.

John explained his role in working with federal and state agencies to advance the needs of the tribal community.

"The tribe must be at the decision making table of how federal lands are managed," John said. "They need to take a holistic approach, not just for one species."

Bowers works with tribal departments to enact change in building standards, solar energy and BIA grants to work on a climate action plan. She interacts with the community to see what they want to see in a climate action plan. She also promotes food sovereignty and has started a community garden in Hollywood.

"When you grow your own food, it changes the way you see plants and food in general," Bowers said. "We have to work for it instead of just going to the grocery store to get what we need."

Gonzalez tries to protect wetlands as the tribe continues to develop homes on the reservations. He collects data on ecologically sensitive areas, responds to invasive species of plants and animals and monitors hydrology and habitat changes.

"We build a strong relationship with the community to identify areas of concern in natural resources and traditional areas," Gonzalez said. "Having data to present in court is important to preserving tribal sovereignty."

The attendees, some of who brought interpreters along, were all prepared with questions for the climate resiliency department panel. The first question came from the executive director of an environmental initiative from Tanzania, who wanted to know what research has been done to mitigate sea level rise.

Horwitz said there are municipal collaborations through the Southeast Florida Climate Compact, which has "the best scientists in South Florida." They project what sea level will be in the future by recording how much the sea is rising around the world, how fast polar ice caps are melting and the thermodynamics of the ocean to try to localize the global projection of sea level rise. Cities and counties use those reports to plan for future building.

"But every time we have been wrong,

we have underestimated it," Horwitz said. "We have to look at the higher curve, it [sea level rise] is accelerating faster than we thought it would."

A participant from Zimbabwe wanted to know if there have been significant shifts in agriculture in the region.

"Florida has a lot of cattle and used to have a lot of orange trees," Horwitz said. "It used to be the place the country got a lot of food."

Bowers mentioned the sugar industry, which uses fertilizers, harvest and burn and pollutes waterways.

"Their practices are very damaging to the environment, air and ecosystem," she said.

Gonzalez pointed out that water quality is a big concern from pesticides and fertilizers which create excess nutrients in the water.

"Those external things impact the reservations," he said. "A lot of our issues are regional."

The deputy mayor of a city in Congo wanted to know what needs to be done, beyond compliance with environmental standards.

Gonzalez said it wasn't enough to comply with the environmental regulations, since they are minimum standards of protection that don't account for impacts that may come in the future.

"Cities grow," he said. "Even though things were done in compliance with regulations back then, those standards weren't enough. The impact could have been avoided with more planning. We need more long term planning."

A project coordinator from a sustainable development association in Tunisia wanted to know how many species of plants and animals have been threatened by climate change. Gonzalez said no list has them all, but some habitats have great diversity.

"There is a lot to protect on tribal lands," he said. "They could be a refuge for some species, but external things impact them."

The CEO of an African clean up initiative wanted to know how they get the community to buy into the message. Horwitz said they are still learning.

"I've been listening for four years," she said. "The community has been sharing their ideas with us, but now we want everyone to be in the same room to talk about the issues. Then we will write a climate impact plan for Council to approve and departments to implement."

After the meeting and lunch, the group toured the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum. The following day, Horwitz participated in a plenary session and panel with the topic of working together for future generations.

"It's always amazing that no matter where people are from, when it comes to the environment we are all facing the same issues," Horwitz said. "It was great to brainstorm with them and heartwarming to know other care about climate change and are working equally hard on it around the world. We all have the same challenges, it's all the same."



Beverly Bidney

Members of the Seminole Tribe's Climate Resiliency Department make a presentation to a group of African climate activists Oct. 16 at the Swamp Water Cafe in Big Cypress. From left to right are Sergio Gonzalez, Krystle Bowers, Joseph John and Jill Horwitz



Beverly Bidney

Climate activists from Africa join staff from the tribe's Climate Resiliency Department on Oct. 16 at Billie Swamp Safari in Big Cypress.



A rendering of the Hard Rock Hotel Malta.

Hard Rock breaks ground for 5-star hotel on island of Malta

STAFF REPORT

Hard Rock International broke ground Oct. 3 for a hotel on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea in picturesque St. George's Bay, located on the island country of Malta, about 100 miles from the "boot" of southern Italy.

Described in a press release as a 5-star hotel, Hard Rock Hotel Malta will feature nearly 400 rooms, most with balconies overlooking the sea, and 25 suites with private pools. The mixed-use project, which is being built in association with Malta-based dbGroup, includes two luxury residential towers – known as Ora Residences – and a high-end mall.

"We are excited to work with db Group to bring Hard Rock's hospitality and entertainment offerings to the beautiful island country of Malta. This development is expected to enhance Malta's tourism industry by appealing to the modern traveler, creating yet another wonderful addition to our award-winning Hard Rock Hotels portfolio," John Rees, Senior Vice President of Hotel Operations, Hard Rock International, said in the press release.

Malta's prime minister Robert Abela attended the groundbreaking and foundation stone ceremony.

The project will also include a dozen



Hard Rock

Malta Prime Minister Robert Abela, left, shakes hands with Hard Rock International's John Rees during a groundbreaking ceremony Oct. 3 for the Hard Rock Hotel Malta.

restaurants – including a Hard Rock Café – as well as a Rock Spa, grocery store and public green space.

"Our vision is quite unique. We want people to come here and go wherever their imagination takes them. They can live here, stay at the Hard Rock Hotel for incredible service, dine at any of our 12 restaurants,

swim, shop at Malta's best high-end mall, go to the beach lido, gym, spa, take a seaside walk, feast their eyes on the vertical gardens covering our two residential towers and much more. This will not be a place; it will be a destination," Silvio Debono, Chairman, db Group, said in the release.



Hard Rock

A rendering of the Hard Rock Hotel Malta and Ora Residences' towers that will overlook the Mediterranean Sea.

Aaron Lewis to play Seminole Casino Coconut Creek

FROM PRESS RELEASE

COCONUT CREEK — The Stage at Coco will host Aaron Lewis and the Stateliners: American as it Gets Tour at Seminole Casino Coconut Creek on Feb. 13,

2025, at 8 p.m. For ticket information go to ticketmaster.com.

Lewis, the Vermont-born powerhouse first found success with Staind – the 2000s-era hard rockers who injected meditative muscle into an era better known

for mindless aggression. A series of solo Country projects have led Lewis to two No. 1 Billboard Country Album debuts and a gold-certified Billboard No. 1 with "Am I The Only One" in 2021.

STOF, Hard Rock International donate \$1 million for Helene, Milton relief efforts

STAFF REPORT

HOLLYWOOD — The Seminole Tribe of Florida and Hard Rock International donated \$1 million to support the relief efforts for those impacted by Hurricanes Helene and Milton.

Announced Oct. 14, the funds will support World Central Kitchen and the American Red Cross to aid immediate recovery and long-term rebuilding for communities impacted by the hurricanes in Florida, the Carolinas and Tennessee.

"The Seminole Tribe of Florida has always been committed to helping our neighbors in times of crisis," said Marcellus W. Osceola Jr., Chairman of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, in a press release. "We'd like to thank Governor Ron DeSantis for his partnership in uplifting our communities at this critical time. With the help of our dedicated teams across Florida, we are able to make a meaningful impact for those in need after Hurricanes Helene and Milton." Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino

Tampa opened its doors as a state-designated shelter for more than 1,000 displaced individuals.

World Central Kitchen established a mobile kitchen at the Seminole Hard Rock Tampa Event Center and prepared more than 700 meals for individuals seeking refuge at the shelter. The Seminole Hard Rock Tampa team prepared and delivered more than 1,000 meals at shelter sites in the city of Tampa.

"Opening our doors to displaced families in Tampa and providing financial support is just the beginning of our ongoing commitment to the recovery efforts," said Jim Allen, Chairman of Hard Rock International and CEO of Seminole Gaming, said in the release.

Allen and Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola presented \$500,000 checks each to the Red Cross and World Central Kitchen during a Hard Rock toy kickoff celebration with soccer superstar Lionel Messi on Oct. 22 at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood.

The Seminole Tribe of Florida is the parent entity of Hard Rock International.



Mayli Tommie

With soccer superstar Lionel Messi in the middle, Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola, second from left, and Hard Rock International Chairman and Seminole Gaming CEO Jim Allen, far right, present \$500,000 checks to the American Red Cross and World Central Kitchen on Oct. 23.

Hard Rock Hotel & Casino on Tejon Indian Tribe land celebrates topping off

STAFF REPORT

Seminole Tribe of Florida Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. was among those who attended a topping off ceremony Sept. 30, at the site of the new Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tejon in Mettler, California. The project is on Tejon tribal land, about 90 miles north of Los Angeles.

"A huge thank you to our amazing team, partners, and everyone involved in bringing this vision to life," the Tejon Indian Tribe posted on Facebook.

Construction topping off ceremonies mark the placement of the final steel beam

in projects.

The project is being done in two phases. Phase one, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2025, will include 150,000 square feet of gaming, dining options – including Hard Rock Cafe and Council Oak Steaks and Seafood – a Rock Shop, and more.

Phase II will include a 400-room hotel, 2,800-seat Hard Rock Live event venue, additional dining, pool, spa and cigar lounge.

According to a press release, approximately 2,000 construction-specific jobs and 5,000 direct and indirect jobs will result from the project.



Hard Rock

Seminole Tribe Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr., left, and Hard Rock International COO Jon Lucas, second from right, attend a topping off ceremony Sept. 30 at Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tejon.



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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.

RICHARD CASTILLO
FLORIDA CRIMINAL DEFENSE ATTORNEY
WWW.CASTILLOLAWOFFICES.COM

The tribe makes history everyday

BY MISTY SNYDER
Museum Assistant
Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

We don't often realize that events that we attend, objects that we create, photographs that we take and even what can seem to be the ordinary details of our lives will someday be of interest to people who want to understand what it was like to live how we are now. The way that we marvel at objects behind glass at museums and other institutions now is the same way that future generations will gaze upon things that we may not have given much thought to as we go about our busy lives today.

In 2005 the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki

Museum accepted a photograph and negative collection from the Estate of Ethel Cutler Freeman, an anthropologist who spent time with the tribe in the early 1940s. These images provide a glimpse into life during that period. However, they are quite literally taken through the lens of an outsider. More recently, we have received a donation of thousands of photographs and negatives taken by a tribal member. These images were taken during tribal events such as the Princess Pageant and Tribal Fair. They also include personal occasions like family gatherings and outings. Together they tell a story of tribal life that can only be told firsthand.

It is not only photographs that

provide the glimpse into tribal life and activities. There is a wide and wonderfully varied assortment of objects contained within the museum's collection. While many of these objects may have seemed ordinary at the time of their production and use, they offer important snapshots of the tribal community, its values, and interests. Examples of objects that harken to the tribe's business enterprises include brochures for the Immokalee, Tampa, Brighton, Coconut Creek and Hollywood Casinos, and pamphlets that advertise activities at Billie Swamp Safari and the Okalee Village. We have flyers and schedules for past tribal events, such as Tribal Fair, the Kissimmee Slough Shootout, and Rez Rallies. Swag that was given away at tribal events, such as stickers, commemorative patches, pins, keychains and a beaded necklace are fun reminders of those events. Of course, there are volumes of written articles about the tribe from newspapers, magazines and other publications that very specifically document the times and current events. The museum has also collected tribal calendars, department



Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

Plastic necklace of red hearts, given to the donor upon completion of the 2004 Rez Rally.

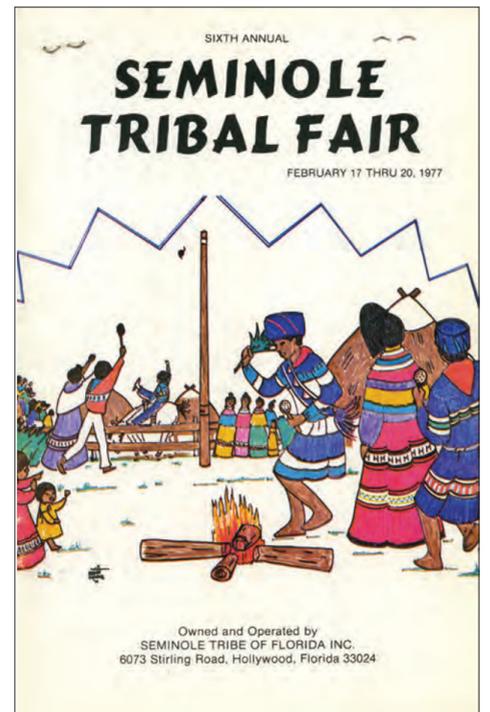
SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA AH-TAH-THI-KI MUSEUM

A PLACE TO LEARN, A PLACE TO REMEMBER.

newsletters, greeting cards and much more produced and published by the tribe over many years. Collectively, these objects represent just some of the many that have been donated to the museum.

The museum has the ability to preserve these unassuming treasures by using archival storage materials that protect objects from agents that can, over time, degrade them, like exposure to light, dust and other contaminants. The museum also controls the temperature and humidity levels to safeguard from damage that may be caused by extreme temperatures or moisture.

Tribal members and tribal departments are encouraged to assess their important objects, photographs, records, pamphlets, and publications and consider them for donation to the museum where they can be preserved for future tribal generations to learn from and enjoy. Donations such as these make the museum's collection a more complete and accurate repository of Seminole history and culture. Do you have any objects, documents or photographs that you would consider donating? Contact the museum's Collections Division at 863-902-1113, ext. 12252 or by email to Laura Dello Russo, Collections Manager, at lauradellorusso@semtribe.com.



Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

Sixth Annual Seminole Tribal Fair, February 17-20, 1977.

Supporting America's Children and Families Act passes House; NICWA urges support to move to Senate

BY TATUM MITCHELL
Staff Reporter

The Supporting America's Children and Families Act was approved in the House of Representatives on Sept. 18. National Indian Child Welfare Association is advocating for the Senate to hear the bill before the end of November.

NICWA has supported and worked on this legislation as it increases "funding for tribes under Title IV-B of the Social Security Act, reduces administrative burdens, and requires the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to collect data and provide technical assistance to states and tribes regarding implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)," according to the NICWA website.

"We need the Senate to act on this bill," David Simmons, director of government affairs and advocacy for NICWA, said. "We're very strongly encouraging all tribes and tribal allies of Indian Child Welfare Act allies to send letters to their senators asking

them to urge that this bill be heard by the full Senate before the end of November. ... We need to make sure that our senators know ... that this is a high priority. There are other things that they need to do as well. We understand that, but this should be a high priority, and it's long overdue."

Simmons said the child welfare programs the federal government offers have flexible funding for child welfare services.

"The bill ... reauthorizes Title IV-B of the Social Security Act, which has two ... major child welfare programs that the federal government offers," Simmons said. "These programs ... do a variety of things, but ... one of their real hallmarks is that they have a lot of flexible funding that can be used for a continuum or variety of child welfare services, including prevention, reunification of children who have to be removed from their homes, even placing them in more permanent homes, like Guardian homes or relative homes or even adoptive homes."

Simmons said this funding can also be

used for tribes to get professional training for their staff who work in child welfare. Additionally, it increases funding for the Tribal Court Improvement Program from \$1 million to \$2 million and will increase the number of grantees if implemented. The court improvement program helps tribal juvenile courts or family courts to improve their processes with child welfare services, Simmons said.

"Equally important is the recognition in this bill that many tribes ... who are much smaller than states have to meet the same ... requirements as a much larger state that gets much more money does. And in this bill, for tribes who get smaller amounts of funding, the Secretary of HHS has the authority to modify those administrative requirements to make the program less administratively burdensome to them," Simmons said.

The bill includes provisions with the Indian Child Welfare Act. One of these is requiring states to collect and report data regarding Native children's cases. Simmons

said this will give them a picture of how states are doing since ICWA was enacted and how they can improve. It will also require HHS to help states and tribes working to implement ICWA.

"I think this is about getting data and getting more support so that we can actually know that what we're doing is going to make a difference. ... I always remember that the Indian Child Welfare Act is ... probably the only major federal child welfare law that doesn't have a review and regular data collection attached to it. And if you don't have data, it's pretty hard to know if what you're planning to do or what you have been doing is making a difference."

Simmons said tribes engaging in federal child welfare programs can exercise sovereignty and be in the "driver's seat" with programs and funding that align with their values and traditions.

"We need to be at the table. ... We need to be able to have our voices heard. We need to make sure that the federal government is

providing resources, and not just any kind of resources, but ones that work in our communities too," Simmons said.

Simmons said he thinks of the tribal leaders and advocates who have provided support to NICWA over the years. He said they try to ensure that people have the tools and information they need if they want to do something positive for Native children and families.

According to their website, "NICWA works to support the safety, health, and spiritual strength of American Indian and Alaska Native children along the broad continuum of their lives. We support tribes in building the capacity to prevent child abuse and neglect through positive systems change at the state, federal, and tribal levels."

For more information and resources for contacting senators visit <https://www.nicwa.org/policy-update/>.

November 2024

ARTIFACT OF THE MONTH

Illness is a part of life; every living thing is susceptible to disease, and of course, humans are no exception. For as long as people have gotten sick, they have tried to find cures and remedies for their ailments. Before modern hospitals and commercial pharmaceutical drugs, people turned to natural resources in their local environments for treatment. But the proliferation of modern medicine has not rendered older medicinal practices obsolete. In fact, in many parts of the world, traditional medicine remains the primary method of healing disease.

Local flora are generally a fundamental element of traditional medicine. One plant that has widespread medicinal use across many different cultures is *Ximenia americana*. Known in English by many names, such as hog plum and tallow wood (Atlas of Florida Plants), this plant is described as a shrub or small tree a few meters in height, ranging from dark brown to pale gray in color (Kefelegn & Desta, 2021).

Its leaves can be lanceolate or elliptic, and its small, almost hairlike flowers are often white, yellow-green, or pink in color. It produces an oval-shaped fruit that is yellow when ripe (Kefelegn & Desta, 2021).



Scott Zona (Wildflower Search), 2018

Ximenia americana has a wide distribution and can be found in several continents, including Asia, Australia, Africa, and the Americas (Useful Tropical Plants Database). Cultures from each of these continents utilize the plant for different purposes; however, its primary use is medicinal. Among the Yucatec Maya in Tabi, Yucatan, *Ximenia americana* is used to treat diarrhea (Hopkins & Stepp, 2012). In Ethiopia, the plant is used to treat a multitude of ailments, from hepatitis to parasite infestations (Kefelegn & Desta, 2021). In Brazil, it is used for cicatrizing (or scar forming), as an astringent and as a remedy for excessive menstruation, as well as a treatment for ulcers and as a laxative (Monte et al., 2012). These are just a few examples of the extensive medicinal capabilities of this species and its importance in traditional medicine worldwide.



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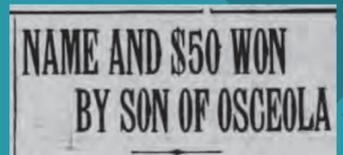
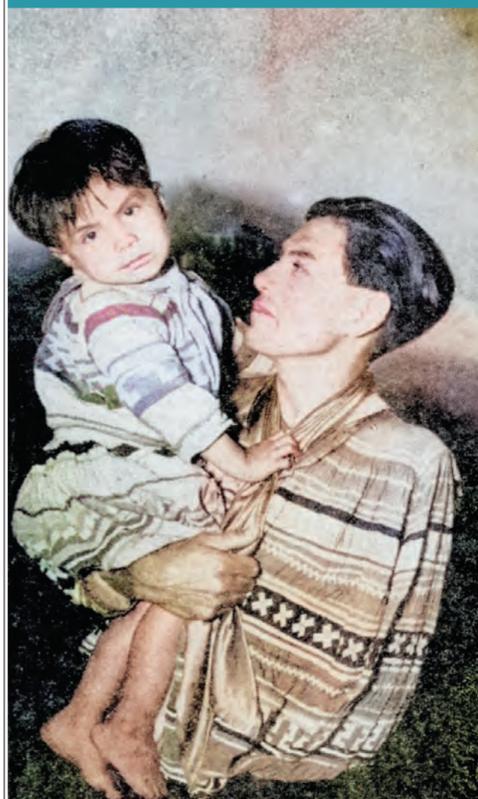
To learn more about all the incredible artifacts within our collection, please visit the THPO website at www.stofthpo.com.

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SEMINOLE HISTORY STORIES - NOVEMBER 2024

TAMIAMI HIT AND RUN



The creation of the Tamiami Trail was a major event for all of Florida, but especially significant for the Indigenous lands that the road led through. Many family camps moved to be along the Trail, and there they opened shops to sell homemade crafts and souvenirs to the people driving by. The Tamiami Trail brought many new opportunities, but it also came with new dangers.

Corey Osceola's son was only three years old in 1937, when his father needed to rush him to a hospital. The toddler had been playing in camp, but had wandered too close to the road. There a reckless truck driver hit him and sped off. The boy survived his injuries, and Corey Osceola took the driver and his company, J.M. Tull Metal and Supply, to court.

There was only one problem, it wasn't proper to share his son's Seminole name, and he had never been given an American one. Needing something to enter into the court records, they decided to give him the name of the lawyer helping them in the case, Mr. O.B. White. They won, though the judge limited the award to only \$50.

O.B. White Osceola still lives near the Tamiami Trail today. He would go on to serve in the US Army, and work to keep the traditional canoe carving tradition alive, a craft he also taught to his son, O.B. White Osceola, Jr.

To see more Seminole History Stories, please visit the THPO website at www.stofthpo.com

Visit the Tribal Historic Preservation Office website at stofthpo.com or use the QR code on the right for more Seminole history resources



Health

BC, Immokalee reservations walk for breast cancer awareness

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

IMMOKALEE — The Big Cypress and Immokalee communities honored Indigenous Pink Day – Oct. 17 – with early morning walks to raise awareness of breast cancer.

About 20 tribal members and employees, dressed in various shades of pink, walked through the streets and on a new sidewalk of the Immokalee Reservation. The Big Cypress walk at the reservation's fitness trail drew about 30 walkers, including Board President/Vice Chairwoman Holly Tiger and Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Activities were scheduled to be held on every Seminole reservation, including walks, pink-themed photo opportunities, mobile mammogram screenings and more.

"Indigenous Pink Day is a day set aside in Indian Country to celebrate people going through breast cancer, those who have survived it and unfortunately, those we may have lost," said Andrea Kuzbyt, Integrative

Health operations supervisor and Immokalee health educator. "This community has been hit hard in the last few years. It's nothing we did, it's just our bodies and we have to fight it."

The American Indian Cancer Foundation website states breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death for Native women. One in eight women will get breast cancer in their lifetime. Early detection is crucial to surviving breast cancer and it recommends annual mammograms begin between the age of 40-44 and should be done until age 54 and every two years thereafter.

Kuzbyt shared information about the new guidelines for breast cancer screenings. She said the changes may have to do with the fact that breast cancer is affecting younger and younger people of all ethnicities.

Now women are encouraged to get their first mammogram at age 40 instead of 45, which was the previous recommendation.

Dense breasts, which means the breast tissue is tighter and thicker, are recognized in the new guidelines. Because mammograms cannot always "see" small areas of concern in dense breasts, a patient may need more



Beverly Bidney

IMMOKALEE — Mario and Lorraine Posada.

screening to get a more accurate picture, such as an MRI.

As of September 2024, the Food and Drug Administration requires all mammogram reports include breast density information and include a breast density assessment, providers must instruct patients about the screening's potential limitations and help them make informed decisions about further testing.

Kuzbyt, a breast cancer survivor, found a lump in her breast during a self-examination 17 years ago. She had it taken out and has been cancer free ever since. She gets mammograms every year.

"Self-exams are a way to get to know

what is normal to you," Kuzbyt said. "If you think something is off, go to a doctor. But self-exams can't detect small lumps, only larger ones."

Kuzbyt recommended everyone should be aware of breast cancer, which can affect everyone regardless of family history.

"Get tested," she said. "The control is in our hands when it comes to health care."

The Big Cypress walk at the reservation's fitness trail drew about 30 people, including Board President/Vice Chairwoman Holly Tiger and Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie.

"Having these events brings helps

bring that awareness to everybody within the community, whether they talk about it at home or not, but you know it's always fun to get together, walk with each other, fellowship is always great. But it means a lot to me especially being involved with the community all the time," Councilwoman Billie said.

Staff reporter Calvin Tiger contributed to this story.



Beverly Bidney

IMMOKALEE — From left to right, breast cancer survivors Becky Martinez, Gale Boone, Lorraine Posada and Andrea Kuzbyt.



Calvin Tiger

BIG CYPRESS — Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie, left, and Board President/Vice Chairwoman Holly Tiger attend the BC walk.



Calvin Tiger

BIG CYPRESS — Participants get ready for the Big Cypress walk.



Calvin Tiger

BIG CYPRESS — Cheyenne Billie, left, and Clea Correa.



Beverly Bidney

IMMOKALEE — Immokalee group at the breast cancer awareness walk Oct. 17 to honor Indigenous Pink Day.

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SEMINOLE SCENES



Beverly Bidney

GRANDMA LOVE: Emma Urbina gives her granddaughter Okalani Collins some love during a break in the Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School vs LaBelle Middle School volleyball game Oct. 1 in LaBelle.



Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue

PINK WITH A PURPOSE: Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue firefighters wore pink T-shirts throughout October in support of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Annually, fire departments across the U.S. embrace the color pink to raise awareness and funds for breast cancer research and support. Firefighters are often seen as symbols of strength and community service, so their support for the cause helps amplify the message of solidarity with those battling breast cancer. The initiative highlights the importance of early detection, research, and support for survivors and their families.



AGA

ACCOLADES FOR ALLEN: Hard Rock International Chairman and Seminole Gaming CEO Jim Allen, right, receives his Gaming Hall of Fame induction trophy during the G2E conference that was held Oct. 6 to Oct. 9 at the Venetian Hall in Las Vegas. Allen is a former chairman of the board of directors at the American Gaming Association. The other inductees in the Class of 2024 are Alan Feldman, director of Strategic Initiatives and Distinguished Fellow in Responsible Gaming at the University of Las Vegas International Gaming Institute and a former executive at MGM Resorts International; and Debi Nutton, an executive coach-consultant, board member at Everi Holdings and former casino operations executive at MGM Resorts and Wynn Resorts. Formed in 1989 and organized by the American Gaming Association, the Gaming Hall of Fame honors gaming legends, pioneers and business leaders for their impacts on the industry. Selections are made by an independent panel of gaming executives.



OUTER BANDS BRINGING RAIN & WIND TO FLORIDA PENINSULA

11:30 TORNADO WARNING IS LIKELY. * LOCATIONS IMPACTED INCLUDE... BELLE GLADE, PAHOKEE, CANAL P...

The Weather Channel screenshot

WEATHER WARNING: The Brighton Reservation was highlighted on The Weather Channel during a tornado warning Oct. 9. A series of tornadoes were spawned in Hendry and Glades counties and elsewhere in Florida as Hurricane Milton made its way across central Florida.



Kevin Johnson

TERRIER TREAT: A Seminole Hard Rock gift basket was in the lobby at the Moore Haven High School gymnasium Oct. 26 as part of a fundraiser for the volleyball program. Among the basket's items were dinner for two at Council Oak restaurant and a one-night stay in a deluxe accommodation.



Beverly Bidney (2)

GHASTLY GOURDS: Above and below, hand-painted pumpkins are on display at Pumpkins of Devil's Garden, the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum's sculpture garden.



Hard Rock Bristol/Facebook (2)

HELP FROM HARD ROCK: Above and below, team members from Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Bristol volunteered at Bristol Motor Speedway's Northeast Tennessee Disaster Relief Center to help victims of Hurricane Helene in October. Hard Rock Bristol also collected donations for the flood relief efforts in partnership with the local United Way of Bristol TN/VA.



NATIONAL NATIVE NEWS

Medicaid will cover traditional healing practices for Native Americans in 4 states

Emery Tahy of San Francisco knows firsthand the struggles of addiction and recovery — a journey that, for him, is intertwined with his experience as a Native American.

In his twenties, Tahy landed on the streets of Phoenix battling severe depression and alcohol-induced seizures. About four years ago, Tahy said, he was on the brink of suicide when his siblings intervened and petitioned for court-ordered treatment.

While Tahy was detoxing in a psychiatric ward, he learned about the Friendship House, a Native-led recovery treatment program in San Francisco. As soon as he was released from the Arizona hospital, he headed to California.

"I knew immediately that I was in the right place," said Tahy, 43. "A traditional practitioner did prayers for me. They shared some songs with me. They put me in the sweat lodge and I could identify with those ceremonies. And from that day moving forward, I was able to reconnect to my spiritual and cultural upbringing."

Now, for the first time, Medicaid in California, Medi-Cal, as well as in Arizona, New Mexico and Oregon, is set to cover traditional health practices such as music therapy, sweat lodges, and dancing to help with physical and mental health.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services announced the move this week. It's a two-year pilot program that applies at Indian Health Service facilities, tribal facilities, and urban Indian organizations.

In California, two new categories of intervention will be covered by the Medi-Cal expansion. People suffering from a substance use disorder can seek therapy from traditional healers who offer ceremonial rituals, or, they can work with trusted figures within tribal communities such as elected officials or spiritual leaders who offer psychological support, trauma counseling and recovery guidance. California is home to the largest Native American population in the U.S., and Gov. Gavin Newsom said in a press release announcing the expansion that the state is "committed to healing the historical wounds inflicted on tribes, including the health disparities Native communities face."

Seeking healing from addiction

Tahy's battle with alcoholism began when he was a small child. He said he took his first sip of beer when he was 4, surrounded by parents, uncles, aunts, and grandparents who all drank heavily on the Navajo Nation.

"I'm a full-blooded American Indian," said Tahy, recounting the difficulties he faced in his youth. "Growing up I was subjected to a lot of prejudice, racism and segregation. I didn't have any pride in who I was. I feel like drugs and alcohol were a way to cope with that shame. Alcohol helped me socialize and gave me courage."

During his teenage years, Tahy drank and began dabbling in marijuana, cocaine and crystal meth. All the while, he said, his family instilled a meaningful relationship to his culture.

"I was always encouraged by my grandparents, on my mom's side, to learn and be connected to traditional Navajo ways of life," Tahy said. "There was a deep connection to family, land and ceremonial activities connected to seasonal changes."

Tahy's story is not unique. Native American communities suffer from some of the highest rates of addiction and overdose deaths in the country, and health experts have long argued that Western medicine alone cannot adequately treat substance use disorders in Native American populations.

The crisis is compounded by centuries of historical trauma.

Roselyn Tso, who directs the federal Indian Health Service, or IHS, has championed Medicaid's coverage of traditional healing. She said in the announcement from CMS that "these practices have sustained our people's health for generations and continue to serve as a vital link between culture, science, and wellness in many of our communities."

Until now some Native Americans have accessed traditional health care practices through IHS appropriations. Tribal resources, various pilot programs, and grants. This is the first time Medicaid will cover these services.

Bridging tradition and modern medicine

While clinical approaches like detox, medication-assisted treatment and behavioral therapy are essential to treating substance use disorders, they often fail to address the cultural and spiritual needs of Native patients.

"Traditional practices are, by nature, holistic," said Damian Chase-Begay, a researcher focused on American Indian health at the University of Montana. "They are treating the person physically, mentally, spiritually and emotionally. They benefit the whole being, not just the physical symptoms."

Studies have shown that integrating cultural practices into addiction treatment can lead to higher engagement and more positive recovery outcomes, though most of the current research is qualitative, not quantitative.

For years, health care practitioners dedicated to Indigenous communities struggled with the limitations of what insurance would cover. Medi-Cal, the state's Medicaid program for low-income residents, reimburses for medical prescriptions or talk therapy, but traditional healing methods were often excluded from coverage, leaving many Native American patients without access to treatments that aligned with their cultural values.

"What California is now covering

under Medi-Cal is exactly what our Native communities have been asking to be covered for years," Chase-Begay said. "This kind of support, had it been in place, could have helped stop some intergenerational trauma and substance use years ago. I'm so thrilled that it's in place now, but it's long overdue."

The new Medi-Cal policy is set to take effect next year, with Indian Health Service providers in qualifying counties able to request reimbursement for these services starting in January 2025. It will expire at the end of 2026 unless extended.

"It is vital that we honor our traditional ways of healing," said Kiana Maillet, a licensed therapist in San Diego and a member of the Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Tribe. "Traditional healing is deeply ingrained in our cultures. Without it, we are missing a piece of who we are."

As for Tahy, he hasn't touched a drop of alcohol since starting therapy at Friendship House. He now holds a full time job as an evaluator for the Native American Health Center in San Francisco. Soon he will complete a master's degree in American Indian studies. And, a few months ago, he completed the San Francisco marathon.

- NPR

Quapaw Nation restoring their reservation that scientist says feds destroyed

The Bureau of Indian Affairs decided to leave 30 million tons of toxic chemicals on the Quapaw reservation after a 1920s mining-boom, and the tribe is still cleaning it up.

The Quapaw Nation has spent 11 years remediating the ghost town Picher, Oklahoma, which covers 80 percent of their reservation, in an effort to give their land an agricultural future.

"It will never be residential. It will never be commercial, but it can still be usable" said Cherokee Environmental Scientist Summer King, who joined the clean-up project in 2016.

Since 2013, the tribe has removed around 8 million tons of chat, lead and zinc, from the ground. Chat is a term for fragments of siliceous rock.

Last year was the project's 10-year anniversary.

King works in Picher for the Quapaw Nation and said that lead and zinc have several human health risks, such as inhibiting brain development for children under six, leading to learning delays that can last a lifetime for adults.

"My personal physician runs my blood lead levels every year," said King.

The Environmental Protection Agency started the clean-up in 1983, when they first realized the red-orange color of a creek in Picher was caused by toxic amounts of iron in the stream that rusted. The EPA named the stream "Tar Creek" because of its unusual color and made it a superfund site.

King said that with the EPA's work on Tar Creek, and her own creation of a one-acre wetland, the creek is almost clean today, but the water, she said, was not the biggest problem in Picher. She said that the EPA initially missed the biggest issue: chat piles.

The chat was initially presumed to be harmless limestone brought to the surface by miners looking for ore used to build ammunition and aircraft during WWI and WWII. The land they were mining under was the Quapaw reservation, where the tribe was relocated after being removed from their homeland in Arkansas.

The mining companies paid tribal members to let them mine under their land, and if allottees did not consent to the mining, the miners would have the BIA declare them "incompetent" and sign the lease for them.

The BIA then told the miners to leave the limestone on the surface for the Quapaw tribe to sell for gravel, even though miners would typically bring left-over materials like that back underground.

When the tribe tried to sell the material, they soon found they were unable to, as it had toxic materials in it.

Not only did the miners leave the chat on the surface, they left caverns underground that have created sinkholes on the surface.

This, King said, is why the town will always be uninhabitable for humans. The sinkholes can be filled, but are often "repeat offenders" and fall through again, swallowing up whatever was above them.

Only two elderly couples live in town, despite the risks, as almost everyone else was bought-out by the State of Oklahoma with a trust fund the Environmental Protection Agency set aside. Even residents who didn't want to take the buy-out and move had their homes destroyed by an F4 tornado in 2008 and took the buy-out option.

The tribe sued the Department of the Interior in 2002 for the damage caused by the BIA's decisions. After nearly 20 years of litigation, the case was settled in 2019 with a payout of \$137.5 million to be split between all enrolled Quapaw Nation members.

King manages the Quapaw Nation's construction services crew of 100 workers, as well as the five main sites they work at daily. The team scrapes the dirt with their backhoes and excavators, removing the chat, and continuing until the ground tests clear of lead and zinc. The chat they remove is used for making asphalt, which has built many roads in Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri and part of Arkansas.

The Western mound of chat is 200 feet tall and is the largest mound left in the whole superfund site, according to King. The Howe pile was once 70 feet tall but is now nearly gone, and King is turning the area into a wetland. Remnants of an old mine shaft can be seen at this site today.

King and her crew are also working on cleaning a chat pile at Blue Goose, a 200-acre site, as well as the dried-up Elm Creek

bed at a site called "Bird Dog."

"We did a study about metals uptake and what we found is that the pasture grasses and row crops are now safe for consumption," King said.

There are three types of agriculture the land is already used for: row crops like corn, winter wheat, and soybeans; cattle grazing; and grass pastures. King said some of the crops and cattle are owned by the Quapaw Nation and some are owned by people who live outside of Picher and lease their property.

King has hand-sewn thousands of seeds to grow Native plants that promote shelter and food for the wildlife currently living there: deer, raccoons, bobcats, beavers, other small mammals, eagles, other raptors and migratory birds, and a small amount of fish and other macroinvertebrates.

The pasture that King garnished with Native plants used to be a smelter site, where metal and contaminants were separated from each other. Today it is lush with plants and wildlife that butterflies and grasshoppers swarm in. King pointed out an eagle nest nearby, as a blue heron swooped into the pond to pick one of the fish that King said she had delivered in two shipments.

"Welcome to my classroom," said King as she stepped onto a Gazebo in the middle of the field. This is where she brings students and researchers to show them what all of Picher can look like in 100 years from now.

King said she is training a newly hired scientist now to take her spot and continue the project when she retires.

"Hopefully, in 10 or 15 years, I'm not still out there digging holes," she said.

This story is co-published by the Tulsa World and ICT, a news partnership that covers Indigenous communities in the Oklahoma area.

- ICT + Tulsa World

Navajo Nation Code Talker John Kinsel dies at 107 in Arizona

John Kinsel, one of the last remaining Navajo Code Talkers, has died at the age of 107.

Born in Cove, Arizona, Kinsel lived in the Navajo community of Lukachukai. He enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1942 and became one of the elite Navajo Code Talkers during World War II. Kinsel served with the 9th Marine Regiment and the 3rd Marine Division during the Battle of Iwo Jima.

The Navajo Code Talkers developed an unbreakable code using their native language, allowing the U.S. military to communicate securely without exposing sensitive battle information. Their contributions were crucial to the Allied victory, and they have been regarded as heroes ever since.

With the passing of John Kinsel, only two Navajo Code Talkers remain: former Navajo Chairman Peter MacDonald and Thomas H. Begay. Navajo President Buu Nygren has ordered all flags on the Navajo Nation to be lowered to half-staff from sunrise Sunday, Oct. 20, until sunset Sunday, Oct. 27.

"It is appropriate for us to acknowledge, recognize and honor this distinguished man's life, bravery and steadfast dedication to his family, community of Lukachukai and to the entire Navajo Nation as a model Navajo citizen and warrior," Nygren said.

Ronald Kinsel shared the news of his father's death with Nygren.

"Cheii passed early this morning in his sleep," Ronald Kinsel said. "The howling wind brought his parents and relatives that came for him early dawn today. He used to keep asking if it snowed yet. He was waiting for the first snow to take his spiritual journey. Moisture lifted his footprints this morning. He lived a very long, full and accomplished life. What he and the other Code Talkers accomplished changed the course of history, and will always be remembered, and I will continue to tell his legend and greatness."

Speaker of the Navajo Nation Crystalayne Curley also gave her condolences on behalf of herself and the Navajo Nation Council.

"We are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of John Kinsel Sr., one of the last remaining Navajo Code Talkers," Curley said. "Beyond his legacy of a warrior, he was also a proud Navajo man who upheld the values of his heritage while serving his country with distinction. As we honor his life, we extend our deepest sympathies to his family, loved ones, and the entire Navajo Nation."

- AZ Central

Woodland school now home to Sacramento region's first Native American library

WOODLAND, Calif. — A first-of-its-kind library in the Sacramento region opened to students and their families Wednesday night at Douglass Middle School in Woodland, California.

The Native Resource Library is now home to hundreds of books putting Native American stories, history and culture in the spotlight.

"This is the first time students are going to be able to understand and get some insight into Native culture, Native tribes, into our different traditions and ceremonies," said Joshina Cluff, director of the school district's American Indian Parent Committee.

Book by book, Cluff built a library full of Native American heritage — books written by Native authors with options for all K-12 reading levels.

"We want people to learn about the impact of the gold rush, the impact of the missions, the impacts of John Sutter that are on these lands around here," Cluff said.

"History books can be very detached. We want to humanize our culture, humanize our experience and also share our very rich traditions with everyone."

The library is housed in the district's Native Student Resource Center at Douglass Middle, which first opened in 2023.

Children in attendance for Wednesday night's grand opening of the library told CBS13 that they were happy to help make history.

"This is brand new and it's from Native Americans. So this is a big accomplishment. It feels good to be the first kid to check out a book from here," said Baine, a Freeman Elementary student.

Elodia Ortega-Lampkin, superintendent of Woodland Joint Unified School District, said these investments for the district's Native American students are a long time coming.

"For so long, they have felt they have been left out of history. That their culture, language, history, ancestors have been forgotten — for us, this is important to acknowledge that no, you are not forgotten. We see you. We hear you. You are important to us," Ortega-Lampkin said.

Organizers say never forgetting the tribal truths of Yolo County's land means passing those stories on to the next generation.

In Yolo County, the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation is a federally recognized tribe of Patwin people. The Patwin are a band of Wintun people, along with the Wintu and Nornlaki, who have lived in Northern California for thousands of years.

"This library, it gets people to read the truth. They don't have to stereotype, make things up, see things on TV. They can come here and read the truth through books. It's a way for educators to build curriculum," said Mike Duncan, director of the local nonprofit Native Dads Network.

Duncan said this library is the first of its kind in the region.

"We are modeling something that has never been done before in an elementary or middle school in Northern California," Duncan said. "Just to be a part of this and know this will continue on for generations and generations, I'm a very proud man."

It is the first page of a new chapter in Woodland schools that organizers hope will be read and replicated at schools regionwide.

"We can break down barriers of racism, systematic policies that continue to hold us down and build a better community for our tribal people," Duncan said.

Organizers hope to name the library to honor the native Patwin people in the near future. The library is open for all students within the district to check out a book.

- CBS

Obama Foundation Leaders USA selects 7 Native Americans to participate in program

Seven Native American leaders have been chosen for the prestigious 2024-2025 Obama Foundation Leaders USA program, marking the largest Native representation in the program's history.

These leaders, selected from across the United States, are part of an exclusive cohort of 100 participants focused on civic engagement and leadership development. This program, inspired by the values of President and Mrs. Obama, equips individuals to make transformative changes in their communities.

As part of the six-month program, these Native leaders will engage in weekly virtual sessions focused on honing leadership skills, building relationships, and learning from global thought leaders and mentors.

The Obama Foundation's "Hope to Action" curriculum will guide them in creating sustainable progress toward strengthening democratic culture and fostering positive change in their communities.

Below are the seven remarkable Native leaders chosen for this year's cohort:

Emily Edenshaw, President and CEO of the Alaska Native Heritage Center, brings her expertise in cultural preservation and her commitment to Alaska Native boarding school healing strategies.

Dustin Goslin, Chief Talent Officer at Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures, has led workforce development initiatives and contributed over \$245 million in investments to support economic growth in the Mille Lacs Tribal Economy.

Sharen Kickingwoman, Policy, Advocacy, and Organizing Director at the ACLU of Montana, is known for her work on Indigenous justice and her advocacy for criminal legal reform. She played a critical role in advancing legislation addressing the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

Rhylee Marchand, an attorney for The Tulalip Tribes of Washington, focuses on tribal sovereignty, natural resource preservation, and promoting civic engagement among law students.

Nazune Menka, Assistant Professor of Law and Faculty Director at Seattle University School of Law's Center for Indian Law & Policy, advocates for Native self-determination and coalition-building to foster a more just society.

Elizabeth Rule, PhD, Deputy Secretary for First Nations under New York Governor Kathy Hochul, is leading policy initiatives on Indigenous representation, child welfare, and healthcare access in the state.

Sheldon Spotted-Elk, Senior Director of Judicial and National Engagement at Casey Family Programs, works with courts nationwide to improve child welfare outcomes and serves as a Judge on the Ute Indian Tribe Court of Appeals.

- Native News Online

Standing Rock Tribe is latest to sue social media companies for alleged mental health effects

The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in North and South Dakota has filed a lawsuit in California against the parent companies of Facebook, Snapchat, YouTube and TikTok.

The lawsuit, which alleges the tech companies' social media apps are addictive and contribute to a mental health crisis on tribal lands, is the latest in a series filed by Native American tribes through the Minneapolis-based Robins Kaplan law firm.

In April, the Spirit Lake Tribe in North Dakota and the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin filed the first two lawsuits to make the allegations of deceptive, harmful practices and demand compensation "in an amount to be determined in a trial."

The lawsuits all allege that the social media companies have preyed upon teens for profit by offering up content through algorithms designed to hook users and keep them online for an unhealthy amount of time.

Recent research "draws a direct line from harmful features on social media to the youth mental health crisis happening in this country," Robins Kaplan attorney Tara Sutton said in an April press release on the initial complaints.

That press release also pointed out that tribal teen suicide rates are roughly 3.5 times higher than the national average in the United States, according to the Center for Native American Youth.

According to Robins Kaplan, the firm has filed similar lawsuits on behalf of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa in Minnesota, Sisseton-Wahpeton Ojate of South Dakota, Spirit Lake Nation in North Dakota, the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin and Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians based in North Dakota.

The social media companies have also been sued by 33 state attorneys general for their alleged targeting of teens. South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley is among the plaintiffs in that case.

The companies involved have pledged to improve their protections for young people. A representative from Meta, Facebook's parent company, appeared in Pierre this week to trumpet the protective measures on its Instagram app. The representative also said it would support an effort by lawmakers in South Dakota to implement app store-based age verification.

The Standing Rock complaint, filed on Oct. 1, charges the social media companies with being a public nuisance, negligence and deceptive practices.

"Defendants' conduct has created a public health crisis in Plaintiff's communities," the complaint says. "There has been a surge in the proportion of youth in Plaintiff's community who are anxious, depressed, or suicidal."

Requests for comment sent to the social media companies by South Dakota Searchlight were not immediately returned.

- South Dakota Searchlight

Lac du Flambeau tribe threatens road closures, contests access to more roads

A northern Wisconsin tribe is once again warning it may restrict access to four roads unless it receives payment from the town of Lac du Flambeau. The tribe is also demanding the town vacate and stop maintenance on parts of three more roads crossing Indian lands.

The Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa made the demands in two letters sent to Town Chair Matt Gaulke on Oct. 18. It's the latest indication that tribal leaders aren't backing down in a longstanding dispute over access to roads. That's despite a federal judge urging tribal leaders not to restrict access until a court case is resolved.

In January 2023, tribal officials placed barricades on Elsie Lake Lane, Center Sugarbush Lane, East Ross Allen Lake Lane and Annie Sunn Lane. The move came after negotiations failed between the tribe, the town of Lac du Flambeau and title companies over expired easements on those roads. While the tribe reopened roads last year, it's been granting access in exchange for a monthly fee that town officials say they can no longer afford.

In an Oct. 18 letter, Lac du Flambeau Tribal President John Johnson Sr. said the tribe considers the town to be in default of a resolution authorizing temporary permits for access to the four roads.

"Please take notice that the town has until January 16, 2025, to pay all outstanding temporary access permit fees due and owing to the tribe, and failure to pay will result in restricted access over the four roads," Johnson wrote.

In a separate letter, the tribe said the town has not proven that it has a valid right-of-way for three more roads crossing tribal lands, including all of Headflyer Lake Lane and parts of North Indian Village Road and Indian Village Road.

If the town doesn't stop maintenance by Nov. 18, Johnson said the tribe would consider it an "unauthorized trespass" and exercise its rights under federal regulations, which could include evicting the town from those lands.

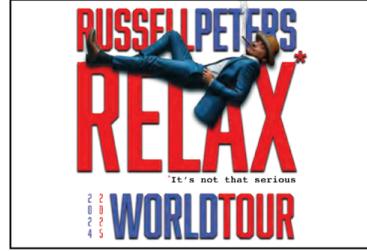
Neither Johnson nor Gaulke were immediately available for comment Oct. 23.

- South Dakota Searchlight

SOUTH FLORIDA'S ULTIMATE ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATION



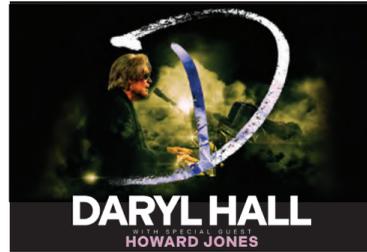
NOV 6
BABYMETAL



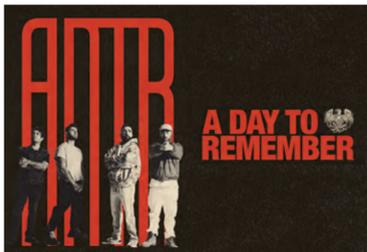
NOV 7
RUSSELL PETERS



NOV 8
CYNDI LAUPER



NOV 9
DARYL HALL



NOV 10
A DAY TO REMEMBER



NOV 14
STARS AND STRINGS



NOV 15
**COMMODORES,
THE POINTER SISTERS,
AND THE SPINNERS**



NOV 16
CUBATONAZO



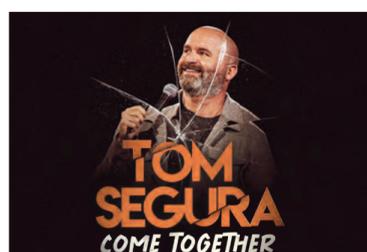
NOV 17
THE AVETT BROTHERS



NOV 22
**FREESTYLE
FREE FOR ALL**



NOV 23
BILLY JOEL



NOV 27
TOM SEGURA



NOV 29
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Education



Incoming PECS student council inaugurated

BY TATUM MITCHELL
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — The Pemaetv Emahakv Charter School hosted its student council inauguration and school clothing contest Oct. 3.

Brighton Councilman Larry Howard swore the new council members in, an event modeled from the Seminole Tribe of Florida tribal council inauguration process. The new tribal secretary Naomi Wilson handed out pins to the incoming and outgoing council

members.

The outgoing members handed over their positions and sashes to the incoming members, who were voted in by their peers.

“To all the students and all the teachers, good luck this year ... Keep striving to be successful, keep growing at the school and keep growing as an individual,” Brighton school board member Bryan Arledge said. “To the outgoing student council, thank you for everything you did ... To the new student council, congratulations on being elected. That’s not easy ... Good luck to you all.”

2024-25 Pemaetv Emahakv Charter School Student Council

Jalaaya Hunsinger	Chairwoman
Kayli Jackson	kindergarten
Henlee Chapman	1st grade
Arya Kayda	2nd grade
Rowen VanHouten	3rd grade
Maycen Buck	4th grade
Maddox Newkirk	5th grade
Dylanie Peak	6th grade
Josiah Gopher	7th grade
Amalia Estrada	8th grade



Tatum Mitchell

Third grade student council representative Rowen VanHouten is sworn in by Brighton Councilman Larry Howard during the inauguration at PECS on Oct. 3.



Tatum Mitchell

The incoming and outgoing representatives line up to shake hands with their peers.



Tatum Mitchell

Outgoing fifth grade representative Makai Newkirk, left, hands off his position to the incoming fifth grade representative and his brother, Maddox Newkirk.



Tatum Mitchell

The incoming student council chairwoman Jalaaya Hunsinger.

♦ See PECS on page 3B

PECS students attend Brighton health fair

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Health and wellness fairs have been a fixture on Seminole reservations for nearly three decades and the Integrative Health Department held its last one for 2024 at the Veterans Building in Brighton Oct. 22.

Pemaetv Emahakv Charter School students from Pre-Kindergarten to 8th grade and the immersion school all attended the fair and were enthralled by the interactive booths. The students made colorful slime, fragrant sugar scrub, salad in a jar, healthy cream cheese with strawberry snacks on graham crackers, had a sample of some tasty but healthy zucchini muffins and spun the wheel at the Fire Rescue booth to win prizes.

Tables filled with information and giveaways were staffed by department representatives or health professionals, all experts in their fields.

Tribal departments at the fair included Human Resources, Seminole Police Department, Fire Rescue, Elder Services, Seminole Health Department, Boys & Girls Club, Recreation, Community Culture, Health Education Youth, Center for Behavioral Health, Interactive Health Physical Therapy and Massage, Nutrition Dental, Medical Clinic, Medical Social Work, Advocacy and Guardianship and the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum.

Outside vendors were United Healthcare, UBS, Trustmark, Allstate Benefits, Florida Health Hendry County, Simpson Chiropractic and Martha’s House.



Beverly Bidney

PECS students gather at the Veterans building as they peruse booths at the Health Fair on Oct. 22.



Beverly Bidney

A group of pre-K boys spin the wheel at the Fire Rescue booth to see what prize would be theirs.



Beverly Bidney

Third grader Charity Turner, center, decorates a planter that holds a succulent plant at the Health Education “Plant Buddies” booth.

College Fund launches virtual series

FROM PRESS RELEASE

Two of the American Indian College Fund’s (College Fund) programs are launching a virtual learning series for early childhood educators and elementary and secondary educators in Indigenous communities.

The five-part virtual series, which started Oct. 22, is aimed for new teachers and people studying to be educators in Indigenous early childhood education. The series will provide resources and motivational speakers. Attendees will receive a gift card for participating and the opportunity to win prizes.

Virtual sessions will be hosted through April 2025 and cover several topics, such as classroom management and family engagement.

More information and scheduling is available here:

Classroom Management – Jan. 16, 2025, from 12 p.m. to 11 p.m. ET. Learn about strategies for classroom management.

TCU Teacher Journeys – Feb. 6, 2025, from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. ET. Hear about the experiences and journeys from two Native teachers who are TCU alumni.

Listening Session – Feb. 24, 2025, from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. ET. TCU Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary students and new teachers will participate in an interactive listening session to share current needs and thoughts with College Fund staff.

Family Engagement – April 17, 2025, from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. ET. Learn how to become involved and engaged with families through best practices.

For more information go to collegefund.org.

Elgin Jumper brings mixed media showcase to FSU

BY EABHA PHELAN
Special to the Seminole Tribune

TALLAHASSEE — Renowned Seminole artist and poet, Elgin Jumper, 60, captivated an audience at Florida State University's Club Downunder on Oct. 22, showcasing his eclectic art through a mix of film, music, painting, poetry and personal stories.

FSU students were treated to a multifaceted presentation that highlighted Jumper's creative talents and offered insight into his life as an artist and member of the Seminole Tribe of Florida. The event, organized by Andrew Frank, director of FSU's Indigenous Studies Center, in collaboration with Club Downunder, was part of Native American Heritage Month.

Although Jumper has been involved in the FSU community in the past, this was his first visit since the pandemic hit in 2020. Initially reluctant to travel post-pandemic, Jumper had decided to stay in his South Florida community, but after talking with Frank agreed to return to FSU and try something different.

"Every time I see [Elgin] he adds another instrument, another skill set," Frank said, reflecting on Jumper's evolving artistic style.

This showcase exemplifies that evolution. What was originally intended to



At left, surrounded by musical instruments, Elgin Jumper speaks Oct. 22 at Club Downunder on Florida State University campus. At right, he plays the gong.



Club Downunder (2)

be three short poetry readings grew into a full-scale presentation with a short film and a musical soundscape.

"It's like taking a journey every time you do a painting or a poem or a piece of nonfiction," Jumper said in his film, *The Project*. "I try not to do the same thing over and over."

The Project explores Jumper's artistic process and the concept of writer's block through a multimedia blend of paintings, visual art, poetry, and even Shakespearean drama. Though writer's block is a central theme of the film, Jumper himself claims he does not experience it, having started his artistic journey "late" at age 40.

"I don't have the time or luxury for a creative block," he said. "I'm always doing something."

Drawing inspiration from Federico Fellini's film "8½," The Project oscillates between black-and-white and color visuals, and was completed entirely within the last month — starring Jumper himself.

"I didn't have time to have a casting session, but I don't charge myself too much and I do my own stunts," Jumper said.

Jumper also demonstrated how he creates soundscapes using instruments like guitars, keyboards and a gong. He begins his soundscapes by playing the gong, which in India, is believed

to replicate the sound of the universe being created. This philosophy, which Jumper studied, guides him as he introduces audiences to the universe he creates through sound.

His soundscapes often take cues from movie scores like "Blade Runner," "Interstellar" and "All Quiet on the Western Front," and he experiments with unconventional playing techniques — like using a bow on an upright guitar like a cello.

Until a few months ago, Jumper had avoided formal music lessons. When he began creating soundscapes in 2018, he aimed to explore sound through experimentation to create something new.

"There's a phrase 'Once taught, you can't be untaught,'" he said. "So, I wanted to just do it without being taught. Just see what I could come out with."

Jumper said he is driven by curiosity and a desire to learn as many art forms as possible, from oil painting to short stories, to poetry, to film. He aims to make art that makes people think and finds that universities are the perfect setting to do this.

"[Students] are bringing more thought into what I'm saying, and they're analyzing and assessing it," Jumper said. "You can't underestimate them; they know so much about [art]."

Jumper, who views his trips to FSU as a way to give back, says the time he spends in Tallahassee enriches his own artistic journey.

"It's giving back for the opportunities and the chances that I've had," Jumper said. "People believed in me, and I believe that

they gave me a chance, so I want to do a good job."

Jumper hopes that his work helps people to see him in a modern light and inspires them to find positivity and goodness in the world.

"It's been a really heartfelt ride," he said. "I hope sharing in front of you sheds light on what kind of artist I am, where I've been, and where I'm heading."



Club Downunder

Elgin Jumper plays the electric guitar like a cello in one of his soundscapes.



Courtesy photo

Elgin Jumper stands next to a display at FSU promoting his Oct. 22 appearance.

University for deaf and hard of hearing holds building renaming ceremony, Native exhibit debut

FROM GALLAUDET UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON — Gallaudet University, widely known as the leading institution in the world for deaf and hard of hearing students, hosted two historic events Oct. 17 on its Washington, D.C. campus: the Building 103 Healing and Renaming Ceremony and the debut of "We, Native Deaf People, Are Still Here!," a two-year exhibition at Gallaudet's National Deaf Life Museum.

Led by Indigenous and Native Deaf community members, both events hold national and Washington, D.C., significance and serve to center Native Deaf experiences, reclaim Indigenous heritages, and acknowledge past harms to Native Americans.

Nearly 500 people attended the events, including: Shelly C. Lowe, the first Native American Chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities; many members of the Indigenous and Native Deaf communities; representatives from U.S. Department of State, Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian, Gallaudet University Board of Trustees and President Roberta J. Cordano. Steve Brunelle hosted and notable drummer Lance Fisher and singer Giovanna Gross performed.

In her remarks at the Oct. 17 ceremony, Gallaudet University President Roberta J. Cordano commented:

"Today, we stand on the path to healing by recognizing and addressing the wrongs of the past. The renaming of this building is a step towards righting these historical injustices. As we unveil the new name, let us recognize that our journey does not end here. It is our collective responsibility to continue working towards justice, ensuring that this university remains a place where all voices, especially those historically marginalized, are heard, valued, and honored."

U.S. Congressman Tom Cole, who is co-chair of the Congressional Native American Caucus and earned an honorary degree from Gallaudet University in 2019, commented:

"As an enrolled member of the Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma and one of the few Native Americans serving in Congress, it will always be a priority of mine to ensure tribal voices are heard. I would like to thank Gallaudet University for the work they are doing for our Native American communities."

Led by Turtle Island Hand Talk (TIHT), the Indigenous healing ceremony was followed by the official renaming of Building 103 to *okānkwēpīhēna tētpi*/Circle of Signers. The name is in Lenape, the language that was spoken by the Nacotchtank and Piscataway Peoples, the First Residents



Gallaudet University

Healing ceremony parade of flags. Leading are drummer Lance Fisher and singer Giovanna Gross.

of the land that would become the District of Columbia.

The ceremony specifically addressed the harmful impact caused by Senator Henry L. Dawes to Native Americans. More than 100 years ago, Building 103 was originally named "Dawes House" after Senator Henry L. Dawes, who served on Gallaudet's Board of Directors for 34 years and initiated the Dawes Act of 1887. The Act gave the government the authority to regulate land rights on tribal territories within the United States and led to catastrophic damage to Native American tribes all over the United States. Lands were stolen, tribes were forced out of their homes, linguistic and cultural genocide occurred, and families were torn apart.

The ceremony included: a land acknowledgment; review of the history of the Dawes Act of 1887 and Dawes sign significance; unveiling of the new signage and remarks from several individuals, including: Indigenous and Native Deaf community members and TIHT leaders.

Cordano added: "This renaming is part of Gallaudet's larger commitment to restorative justice, acknowledging past harms while committing to building a more welcoming and just future. This moment of renaming is a communal act of healing, not just a ceremony. By working with the Turtle Island Hand Talk and listening to the Native Deaf community, we are ensuring that this renaming reflects the values of unity, respect, and recognition."

The Native/Indigenous Deaf community, consisting of alumni and community members, requested a building name change in response to numerous complaints from Native/Indigenous students, staff, faculty, and alumni. Gallaudet's Board of Trustees voted in 2021 to retire the name of Dawes House and temporarily renamed it Building 103.

Gallaudet worked with Turtle Island Hand Talk (TIHT), an Indigenous Deaf organization, on a process to rename Building 103. TIHT surveyed Native/Indigenous persons to discuss potential names. These names were then shared with the Gallaudet community to get feedback and the Board of Trustees approved the new name, *okānkwēpīhēna tētpi*/Circle of Signers, as the official name of Building 103.

Following the Healing and Renaming Ceremony, a reception was held to debut "We, Native Deaf People, Are Still Here!" Led by Indigenous deaf curators and artists and funded by HumanitiesDC, "We, Native Deaf People, Are Still Here!" is a two-year exhibition designed to inform and inspire deaf and hearing people in the Washington, D.C. area and beyond. Free to the public through 2026 and located in the National Deaf Life Museum at Gallaudet University, the exhibition will feature members of the Indigenous Deaf community telling their own stories and exploring what it means to reclaim and heal through art, language, and history.

Key exhibition elements include:



Gallaudet University

Building 103 renaming and new sign unveiling. Pictured left to right: Hallie Zimmerman, Wanette Reynolds, Johnny Reininger, Jr., and Melanie McKay-Cody.

murals and panels addressing land acknowledgments; cultural and language revitalization; a "We Are All Indigenous" selfie wall; books by Indigenous writers; and sign language and tactile features. A focal point of the exhibition is a large mural

by renowned Deaf artist Nancy Rourke which honors the District of Columbia's Nacotchtank and Piscataway heritage by depicting members of that community providing a land acknowledgment in an Indigenous sign language.



Gallaudet University

Land Acknowledgement mural by renowned Deaf artist Nancy Rourke featured in "We, Native Deaf People, Are Still Here!" exhibition.

PECS
From page 1B



Tatum Michell
First grade council representative Henlee Chapman getting sworn in on Oct. 3.

2024-2025 Student Council

 Kayli Jackson Kindergarten	 Henlee Chapman 1st Grade	 Arya Kayda 2nd Grade	 Rowen VanHouten 3rd Grade	 Maycen Buck 4th Grade
 Jalaaya Hunsinger Chairwoman	 Maddox Newkirk 5th Grade	 Dylanie Peak 6th Grade	 Josiah Gopher 7th Grade	 Amalla Estrada 8th Grade

Courtesy Photo



Tatum Michell
Students make their way down the line of representatives to shake hands. Alliyah Howard is the outgoing student council representative in the receiving line.



Tatum Michell
Brighton Councilman Larry Howard shakes hands with incoming student council chairwoman Jalaaya Hunsinger.



Tatum Michell
All grade levels participated in a clothing contest and the top three received medals before the ceremony.

Guardianship program aims to protect tribal members

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

October was National Guardianship Awareness month and the tribe's Advocacy and Guardianship Department held activities, such as wearing orange clothing, wacky socks, favorite sneakers and guardian awareness t-shirts to bring awareness to the tribe.

The theme of the month was "Protecting with Purpose" to highlight the importance of families who are serving as guardians for family members.

"Their job is more important because they are trying to preserve the family," said Advocacy and Guardianship assistant director TreCIA McCleese. "We know it's not an easy task, but we appreciate how they work for their family members every day."

The goal of the Guardianship Department, which is part of the Health and Human Services Department, is to help those tribal members who can no longer make sound decisions about their own welfare.

Reasons for guardianship vary from substance abuse, financial instability or cognitive issues like dementia. The program can be voluntary or ordered by the Tribal Court.

"Our program provides case management services to tribal members who need it," McCleese said.

Tribal Court decides who should become the guardian. When there is no family member willing or available to fill that role, the Guardianship Department is appointed guardian. During the guardianship period, the department works to ensure the client's rights are protected and helps the individual learn valuable life and financial skills. If the family decides one of them wants to become guardian, the department helps them to petition the court.

As the tribal court appointed guardian, the program acts as an advocate to ensure the tribal member's rights are protected and educate them on valuable life and financial skills. In addition, the program provides support to families.

The goal is to help the tribal member transition into independence. The guardianship department educates family members on what the guardian process entails and how they can support the family



Courtesy photo

"Wacky Tacky Wednesday" was held Oct. 23 as part of Guardianship Awareness Week in the tribe during Guardianship Awareness Month. Employees were encouraged to wear their favorite wacky socks.

members who either need guardianship or are under court-ordered guardianship.

If an individual isn't able to manage their finances or make decisions for themselves, family members can file a petition to Tribal Court to have a guardian appointed to protect their rights and make decisions on their behalf.

Currently the department has 106 active cases, which is nearly a 70% increase over last year. The department has 10 advocates, three supervisors plus McCleese and an administrator who all work with the clients. They help clients work on their goals to reach to independence.

"More people are becoming aware of the services we offer, and we are having a lot more success with clients," McCleese said. "We go to community meetings to get more families involved. We want family members to actively participate when [their family member] is under guardianship. Because who knows their family better than they do, rather than a tribal department?"



Courtesy photo

Guardianship and Advocacy staff members show off their orange outfits Oct. 22 during National Guardianship Awareness Month. From left to right are Hollywood employees Elena Hernandez, Debra Ray, Vanessa Golaub Turner, Cierra Innocent, Kandace Sims, Novalee Mumby, TreCIA McCleese, Shamika Beasley, Nicholas Hill, Mildred Ibarra, Terrasina Moore and Lataya Hillton.

Hard Rock Tampa to host country concert benefiting local relief efforts

FROM PRESS RELEASE

TAMPA — Hard Rock Event Center at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa will host US103.5's Jingle Y'all acoustic country concert Dec. 3 at 8 p.m. The concert will benefit Feeding Tampa Bay's post-hurricane Helene and Milton relief efforts across the Tampa Bay area, in addition to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. For ticket information visit casino.hardrock.com and ticketmaster.com.

The concert will feature five of country music's newest stars including Riley Green, Ashley Cooke, Zach Top, John Morgan, and a surprise guest to be revealed that night.

Rockabillaque Florida to be held in Immokalee

FROM PRESS RELEASE

IMMOKALEE — Rockabillaque Florida, billed as the biggest festival of its kind in Florida, will celebrate mid-century and 1950s Americana on Jan. 18, 2025, at Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee. Presented by Florida Weekly, the festival is free and open to all ages.

A kick-off party will be held Jan. 17, 2025, in Zig Zag Lounge and will feature Doug Deming & The Jewel Tones and Shanda & The Howlers. On the following day, the Main Stage entertainment lineup

will feature free performances from co-headliners Les Greene & The Swayzees, Pokey LaFarge, The Rhythm Shakers, The Bellfuries and others.

A new addition is a Burlesque show from Miss Natrix's Ritz Glitz Revue featuring four Burlesque performers doing two shows on both Friday and Saturday nights in the Zig Zag Lounge.

A classic car and vintage bike show are also part of the lineup.

For more information, visit FLOCKS.COM.

Monkees star coming to Immokalee

FROM PRESS RELEASE

IMMOKALEE — Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee will host Micky Dolenz, of the iconic 1960s band The Monkees, live in concert April 12, 2025, at 8 p.m. For tickets, visit ticketmaster.com or at moreinparadise.com. Attendees must be 21.

Dolenz is an actor, singer, director, producer, writer, radio DJ, inventor, and all-around performer.

He is best known as a vocalist and drummer of the 1960s pop legends The Monkees. The Monkees not only achieved great success as a TV show, but also as recording artists selling in excess of 65 million units and achieving worldwide success.

Chicago coming to Hollywood

FROM PRESS RELEASE

HOLLYWOOD — Chicago will perform April 12, 2025, at Hard Rock Live at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood. Chicago is the first American rock band to chart Top 40 albums in six consecutive decades.

Chicago's achievements include two Grammy Awards, two American Music Awards, Founding Artists of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, a Chicago street dedicated in their honor, and keys to and proclamations from an several U.S. cities.

For ticket information visit myHRL.com.

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Christina Honeycutt

Veterans from the Seminole Tribe, Paul Bowers Sr. at left and Andrew J. Bowers Jr. at right, are joined by fellow veteran Jimmy Attaway at the Okeechobee Chamber of Commerce Heroes Lunch.



Christina Honeycutt

Moses Osceola was among the veterans from the Seminole Tribe honored at the heroes lunch.



Christina Honeycutt

Rep. Scott Franklin (18th District), left, with Seminole veteran Paul Bowers Sr. and Paul's wife Charlotte Tommie at the Chamber of Commerce lunch.

Okeechobee Chamber honors Seminole veterans

STAFF REPORT

OKEECHOBEE — Veterans from

the Seminole Tribe were honored at the Okeechobee Chamber of Commerce Heroes Lunch on Oct 16. The lunch honored Vietnam

veterans at a special pinning ceremony by Rep. Scott Franklin (18th District). Each Vietnam veteran was introduced by name,

rank, and branch of service as they went on the stage to receive their Vietnam service pin by Franklin. Representing the Tribe were

Moses Osceola, Andrew J. Bowers Jr. and Paul Bowers Sr. The lunch was sponsored by SouthState Bank.

Big Cypress gathers for annual pink photo



Calvin Tiger

About 30 people wearing pink gather Oct. 23 at the Frank Billie Field Office for the annual Big Cypress Indigenous Pink Out Photo. The photo is held as a way to show its support for Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October. The event was organized by Big Cypress Integrative Health.

WALK From page 1A

"She's always been strong," said Frank's son Aaron Frank. "She put her faith in the

doctors and has her family for support. She has always supported us, so we are always here for her."

Nancy Frank walked with her daughter, Laura Billie; sons Aaron and Kevin Frank; daughter-in-law Jae Frank; granddaughter

Talia Frank, 4; and great-grandchildren Nigel Osceola, 19, Dominic Osceola, 18, and Amari Osceola, 11.

As part of the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa's 25th annual Pinktober campaign, the property was again

the Pink Premier Sponsor of the event. Throughout October, the Seminole Hard Rock Tampa participated in fundraising efforts of the Hard Rock Heals Foundation, which benefits the American Cancer Society and local charities.

Making Strides Against Cancer is a fundraiser for the American Cancer Society to help pay for local programs and initiatives.



Beverly Bidney

Tribal members gather by the Hard Rock tent before the start of the breast cancer walk in Tampa.



Beverly Bidney

Nancy Frank, followed by family members, at the start of the walk in Tampa.

Seminole program to be presented in Boca Raton

FROM PRESS RELEASE

BOCA RATON — The Boca Raton Public Library's Thursday Night Speaker

Series will feature Vandall Samuels, outreach specialist from the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, on Nov. 21 at 6 p.m. Samuels will give a presentation about Seminole history

and culture. The presentation will be held in the community room at the downtown library, 400 NW 2nd Ave.

Tribe reaches sports betting agreement with West Flagler that ends legal challenges

STAFF REPORT

The Seminole Tribe of Florida and West Flagler Associates, LTD, Bonita-Fort Myers Corporation, Southwest Florida Enterprises, Inc. and Isadore Havenick (West Flagler Parties) have reached a comprehensive agreement about the tribe's sports betting enterprise.

According to an Oct. 28 press release, West Flagler Parties has agreed not to engage in any further litigation with the tribe's gaming operations, and instead will begin a partnership to offer and promote wagering on Jai Alai on the Hard Rock Bet app.

West Flagler Parties also agreed not to bring or support any future legal challenge to the tribe's gaming operations, including the mobile gaming offered by the tribe. In addition, Jai Alai provided by Battle Court Jai Alai, LLC, an affiliate of West Flagler, will be offered on the Hard Rock Bet app. The parties expect Jai Alai to launch on Hard Rock Bet in early 2025. The agreement ends years of disputes between the parties and avoids future litigation over the tribe's gaming operation.

"This is truly a win-win agreement for the Seminole Tribe and West Flagler,"

Jim Allen, CEO of Seminole Gaming and Chairman of Hard Rock International, said in a press release. "This agreement establishes a relationship of collaboration among the Seminole Tribe and West Flagler in the State of Florida. Rather than engaging in years of additional litigation, this agreement will allow the parties to work together to promote Jai Alai, which has played an important role in Florida's gaming landscape for nearly 100 years."

"We are thrilled to be partnering with the Seminole Tribe in support of their gaming operations in Florida and to promote Jai Alai, which has been a critical component of Florida's gaming industry since the 1920s," Havenick said in the release. "We are proud that Jai Alai will be featured on the Hard Rock Bet app and we look forward to developing a strong partnership with the Seminole Tribe."

Soon after the tribe signed a gaming compact with the state in 2021, which allowed craps roulette and sports gaming, West Flagler Parties challenged its legality based on its belief that the gambling itself needed to take place on tribal land. The servers for the app are located on tribal land. The tribe won court battles in the dispute all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which declined to hear the case in October 2023.



November schedule

FROM NATIVE LEARNING CENTER

HOLLYWOOD — The Native Learning Center offers free training, technical assistance, and Kerretv online webinars to Native Americans and those working within Indian Country. The NLC's housing-related training opportunities and resources focus on areas that are critical to the growth and improvement of Tribal Communities. Stay informed about the latest trainings, webinars, and podcast episodes.

Webinar: Grants, Tips and Tricks from the Foundation Side

Instructor: Diane Leonard, GPC, RST
Grant Professionals Association
Approved Trainer
Owner, DH Leonard Consulting & Grant Writing Services, LLC
Date: November 5, 2024
Time: 2:00 – 3:30 pm EST

Training Description:

This training shares information about the grant seeking process from the perspective of foundation staff. Tips & Tricks provides "insider" information based on Diane H. Leonard's previous position as a Program Officer for a statewide public foundation. This class will help you to be more competitive in the fund-seeking process with foundations, and it will help you to increase your success ratio.

Webinar: How to Use a Logic Model to Increase Your Grant Seeking Success

Instructor: Diane Leonard, GPC, RST
Grant Professionals Association
Approved Trainer
Owner, DH Leonard Consulting & Grant Writing Services, LLC
Date: Nov. 7, 2024
Time: 2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Training Description:

This session will teach you how to build and design logic models to use in your grant application development process. This will increase your competitiveness.

Onsite Training: The Road to Readiness: Strategic Response and Resilience- NAHASDA Training and Tabletop Scenario Day 1-5

Instructor: William Latchford, President, Native Peacekeeper Consulting Group, LLC.
Date: Nov. 18-22
Time: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Course Description:

This five-day course will maintain an eight-hour training day format, inclusive of breaks to ensure trainee engagement and content retention. Each day's sessions will build upon the previous lessons, culminating a realistic, scenario-driven tabletop exercise on the last day. The goal is to synthesize all the elements of learning for an effective strategic emergency response that aligns with the goals of NAHASDA. All sessions will be facilitated by experienced emergency management professionals who bring practical insights and guide participants through understanding and applying core concepts to real-world situations within Native American housing communities.

This training integrates foundational knowledge of NAHASDA, public safety, law enforcement, fire rescue, and emergency management principles within the context

of Native American housing communities. Participants will actively engage with interactive sessions, workshops, and discussions throughout the week, building towards the tabletop exercise that will put their acquired skills into practice. The aim is to equip attendees with the skills necessary to promote both public safety and the enduring principles of self-determination for these communities. Furthermore, the exercise aims to unite all elements of the training and provide a realistic platform for participants to apply their knowledge and refine their strategies for mitigating hazards, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies within the unique setting of Native American housing communities.

Course Objectives:

Day 1: NAHASDA Governance and Public Safety Fundamentals
-Welcome and introduction to the training program
-Comprehensive overview of NAHASDA
-Introduction to public safety within Native American housing
-Cultivating collaboration between housing authorities and emergency services

Day 2: Preparedness Strategies and Emergency Operations
-Cultural competency in emergency management
-Hazard and vulnerability assessments for Tribal Communities
-Building and refining Tribal Housing Emergency Operation Plans
-Workshop on effective Emergency Communication Plans for Tribal housing programs

Day 3: Comprehensive Response and Community Engagement
-Strengthening Tribal community preparedness and response
-The role of Tribal housing and protocols in emergency preparedness
-Crisis management within an Incident Command System (ICS) framework
-Examination of case studies: responding to emergencies in Tribal housing

Day 4: Sustainable Recovery and Resilience Efforts
-Recovery phase: planning and implementing mitigation strategies
-Understanding federally funded programs for Tribal disaster recovery
-Federal and state collaboration for long-term recoveries
-Interactive group activity: developing recovery and mitigation techniques reflecting cultural sensitivities

Day 5: NAHASDA-Specific Tabletop Exercise
-Reinforcing knowledge through precise review of the week's training
-Conducting "Strategic Response and Resilience: A NAHASDA Tabletop Scenario"
-Exercise in scenario-based crisis management including communication and recovery planning
-Post-exercise debrief: analysis of actions, improvements, and action plan formulation

For more informatoin call 954-985-2331 or visit nativelearningcenter.com.

Indian Day

Brighton

BRIGHTON — Brighton's field day activities for Indian Day were temporarily postponed due to Hurricane Helene. Activities were held Oct. 4, one week later than originally scheduled.



Tatum Mitchell (2)

Above, Salina Dorgan makes pumpkin fry bread at Brighton's Indian Day activities Oct. 4. At right, Jewel Lavatta winds up to throw during the skillet toss



Jake Osceola competes in the log carrying contest.

Tatum Mitchell



Children race after loose chickens and try to catch them during the chicken chase.

Tatum Mitchell

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Sports



Moore Haven makes history with first district title and regional playoff win

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

MOORE HAVEN — History was made at Moore Haven High School on Oct. 18 thanks to the Terriers' volleyball team.

For the first time, the volleyball team won a district championship. Moore Haven topped Marathon High School, 3-1, in an emotional Rural District 8 championship match. Scores were 20-25, 25-11, 25-19, 25-17.

"They just made school history. This is a great team," said Moore Haven coach Mona Baker, who, along with assistant coach Jerry Veloz, has guided Moore Haven to a 15-2 record, likely the program's best ever.

"We've worked so hard to get here," said Tiyanni Anderson, who led Moore Haven in kills.

After the game, Baker's daughter, Preslynn, the team's main setter, received the district championship trophy and hoisted it up in celebration with teammates in a gymnasium whose walls feature championship accomplishments from the school's other sports, but not for volleyball; that's about to change.

"We actually talked about it at practice [the previous day]. We're like, it would be really cool to be the only volleyball up there," said Baker, a senior.

"Nobody has ever done it before, so it feels amazing and it's definitely surreal to be part of history," said Tahnia Billie, a junior.

Baker, Billie and Anderson along with Kulipa Julian, Truley Osceola, Marley Jimmie and Miley Jimmie are Seminole Tribe players on the team. Other players are Adore Thomas, Akeelah Ling, Landra Oxer, Trinity Guerry and Brooklyn Sergent.

After losing the first set, Moore Haven seized momentum in the second set and never relinquished it. With the score tied 5-5, Moore Haven won five straight points on Ling's serves and a kill from Anderson. Shortly after, Anderson reeled off four straight service points and Baker won a battle at the net on one of the match's longest points.

Up 18-10, Moore Haven pulled away for good thanks to four points on Julian's serve.

Game 3 was tight throughout. Tied 18-18, Moore Haven received two kills from Anderson and one from Brooklyn Sergent to outscore Marathon 7-1 and take a 2-1 lead in sets.

Moore Haven led throughout game 4, which was highlighted by a point on a block from Baker.

The championship victory sealed a spot in the regional tournament, which Moore Haven has only qualified for once in its history (1986), according to FHSAA records.

Moore Haven dominates Chiefland to notch first regional playoff win

The best season in Moore Haven High School volleyball history keeps getting better.

Eight days after winning its first district championship, Moore Haven notched its first regional playoff victory with a 3-1 win against Chiefland in a Rural regional semifinal Oct. 26 at Moore Haven High School. Scores were 25-16, 17-25, 25-17, 25-16.

"I'm super proud of them. They've worked really hard and they've come a long way," said coach Baker, whose team improved to 16-2.

Moore Haven, seeded No. 1 in its region, was scheduled to host No. 2 Williston on Oct. 29 in a regional final. The winner will advance to the state semifinals Nov. 4 at Polk State College in Winter Haven.

Chiefland, the fourth seed, had a 250-mile journey from west of Gainesville to Moore Haven.



Moore Haven captain Preslynn Baker brings the district championship trophy to her teammates as Moore Haven celebrates its victory against Marathon Oct. 18.

Kevin Johnson



The Moore Haven High School volleyball team celebrates its first-ever district championship victory Oct. 18.

Kevin Johnson



Moore Haven's Tiyanni Anderson delivers a powerful hit against Marathon in the Rural District 8 championship match Oct. 18.

Kevin Johnson



Akeelah Ling (3) and Tahnia Billie team up for a block attempt against Chiefland in a regional playoff semifinal Oct. 26.

Kevin Johnson



Preslynn Baker (7) and Miley Jimmie celebrate a point with Akeelah Ling (3) in Moore Haven's 3-1 regional semifinal win against Chiefland on Oct. 26.

Kevin Johnson

The wins in the first and third sets were highlighted by several points won during strong serves from Kulipa Julian. Defensively, Baker, Jimmie, Ling and Tahnia Billie combined for blocks, and Anderson, Julian and Truley Osceola shined in the backcourt.

Coach Baker said her team was nervous hours before the match, but settled down after some team bonding before the doors opened. Now, the Terriers are one win away from reaching their first Final Four.

"They want it all. They want every first they can get," she said.



As her teammates and coaches on the bench watch, Kulipa Julian delivers a serve against Chiefland.

Kevin Johnson

Captain Messi toy launch kicks off at Hard Rock Cafe

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

How many soccer fans would love to find Lionel Messi under their tree on Christmas morning?

That's a possibility now that an action toy figure – known as Captain Messi – was unveiled Oct. 22 at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood.

"My kids and I love watching superhero movies together, so it was really special to work with Hard Rock to create Captain Messi," Messi said in a press release. "I hope



The Captain Messi toy. Hard Rock



Soccer superstar Lionel Messi is joined by dozens of local kids, including some youth from the Seminole Tribe, during the launch of his Captain Messi toy figure Oct. 22 at Hard Rock Cafe in Hollywood.

it helps inspire young fans and families to work hard and believe in themselves to do great things."

The toy features Messi wearing a Hard Rock superhero outfit and kicking a soccer ball.

The toy's debut was made during a

ceremony at Hard Rock Cafe – where Messi burgers are served – with Messi and dozens of young soccer fans, including tribal members.

The limited-edition toy is available with any order from Hard Rock Café's kids menu while supplies last. It's also available



Mayli Tommie (2)

through Rock Shops worldwide, which also feature other Messi items, such as apparel, backpacks, lunchboxes and water bottles.

During the ceremony, Messi joined Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola and Hard Rock International Chairman and Seminole Gaming CEO Jim Allen in the

presentation of checks from the Seminole Tribe and Hard Rock to the American Red Cross and World Central Kitchen. The checks are for the organizations' hurricane relief efforts following the destructive and deadly Hurricanes Helene and Milton. The organizations received \$500,000 each.

Okeechobee storms back, but falls short in volleyball regional

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

OKEECHOBEE — After overcoming a two-set deficit and staving off two match points, the Okeechobee High School volleyball team had all the momentum heading into a winner-take-all fifth set in a Class 5A regional quarterfinal against Innovation on Oct. 23 at Okeechobee High School.

Quickly, however, the momentum switched sides as Innovation, a new school in Orlando that is only a couple months old, regained control of the deciding set early and emerged with a 3-2 win.

Okeechobee first-year coach Lauren Throop, whose team finished with its best record (14-5) since 2015, was proud of the way her team battled back.

"They played great. Our defense played absolutely amazing; the best it's been all season. We just couldn't find the holes on the other side with our hits," she said.

Adleigh Schwier and Savannah McCoy were the defensive stars for Okeechobee in the digs department.

Innovation won the first two sets, 25-11, 25-20. In the third set, Innovation led 17-11 and seemed to be headed toward a comfortable sweep, but Okeechobee – sparked in part by the Seminole Tribe of Florida's Yani Smith – mounted a fierce comeback. In a span of a few minutes, Smith,



Kevin Johnson

This season the Seminole Tribe's Yani Smith, left, and Alyssa Madrigal helped Okeechobee High School volleyball to its best record in nine years.

a junior middle hitter, smacked a couple kills and delivered a string of service points as the

Brahmans knotted the set at 18-18.

Okeechobee pulled ahead thanks to a pair of aces from Madison Ayuso, but Innovation regained the lead and had two match points – at 25-24 and 26-25 – but the Brahmans won points to stay alive. A powerful kill from Ayla Rucks late in the set spurred the home team to a 28-26 win.

Okeechobee owned the fourth set from start to finish, winning 25-16, behind kills from Smith, Rucks, Liv Bartels and Jadyne Jeune.

The comeback took its toll on Okeechobee, which appeared emotionally drained in the fifth set. The Brahmans fell behind 9-2. This time they had no response – especially to kills from Innovation's Felicia Omosebi – and saw their season end with a 15-9 setback.

"It was really back and forth. (We) got really up in the third set and were doing great, fourth set great, fifth set we just didn't have it," Throop said.

It was the eighth match this season that went the full five sets for the Brahmans. Innovation advanced to face South Fork in a regional quarterfinal.

Okeechobee will lose three seniors, but there are eight juniors, including Smith and fellow tribal member Alyssa Madrigal.

Throop said Smith and Madrigal played well this season. During the break after the first set loss, Smith gave an enthusiastic pep talk to her teammates in the huddle.

"Passion. I think it worked," Throop said. "She's been great. She played every game [this season], every set. She's been a real huge asset with her serve and her right-side hitting."

Smith finished third on the team in hitting for the season with more than 100 kills.

Madrigal played a substitute role this season. She registered more than 50 digs, including eight each in three separate matches. She did not see any playing time against Innovation.

"She's done well. She plays defense for us. There just wasn't a right time tonight (to put her in)," Throop said.

In addition to Smith and Madrigal, the Brahmans program featured several other tribal members in junior varsity. Some of those Seminoles played big roles in an outstanding season by the JV "A" team, which lost only one match.



Kevin Johnson

Yani Smith delivers a hit for Okeechobee in a Class 5A regional quarterfinal against Innovation on Oct. 23.



Kevin Johnson

Yani Smith (9) and her teammates are fired up after winning a point against Innovation.

Football roundup: Heritage edges Aquinas; Moore Haven notches shutout

STAFF REPORT

After several close losses in powerhouse matchups, American Heritage finally got a statement victory with a 42-38 win against St. Thomas Aquinas on Oct. 25 in Fort Lauderdale.

Heritage (5-4) awaits the Class 4A playoffs. As of Oct. 22, the Patriots were ranked No. 5 in the class.

Through nine games, the Seminole Tribe's Greg "Zae" Thomas has 26 tackles, including 16 solo.

Thomas, a senior cornerback, and his fellow seniors from the class of 2025 were honored Oct. 18 prior to Heritage's 35-0 win against Archbishop McCarthy.

The wins against McCarthy and Aquinas

mark the first time this season Heritage has strung together two wins, which should bode well as the playoffs near.

Moore Haven High School's defense, which includes lineman Greg James from the tribe, shined Oct. 24 in a 36-0 win against Zephyrhills Christian Academy.

Remaining games for the Terriers include Oct. 31 against Palm Beach Christian Prep and Nov. 7 against Fort Meade. Both games are in Moore Haven. Both opponents had losing records as of Oct. 29 as did the Terriers (3-4), but a pair of wins would vault Moore Haven over .500 to end the regular season.



Mayli Tommie

American Heritage cornerback and FSU commit Greg "Zae" Thomas is honored with his family during the football team's senior night ceremony Oct. 18 in Plantation.



Kevin Johnson

Moore Haven's Greg James (52) and Thaddeus Johns (82) listen to the National Anthem before facing Somerset Academy on Oct. 18.



Kevin Johnson

Moore Haven lineman Greg James (52) helps clear a path against Somerset Academy for a lengthy Terrier run on offense.



Kevin Johnson

Golfers, including Mondo Tiger, warm up before teeing off at the Justin Campos Memorial Golf Tournament on Oct. 12 in Ave Maria.



Kevin Johnson

Members of the Holdiness and Yzaguirre families show their support at the Justin Campos Memorial Golf Tournament.

Golfers tee it up in memory of Justin Campos

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

AVE MARIA — A mixture of tribal member golfers and non-Native golfers hit the links early Oct. 12 for 18 holes of golf in memory of Justin Campos.

Sixty golfers registered to play in the annual Justin Campos Memorial Golf Tournament at Panther Run Golf Club in Ave Maria.

The tournament was held 11 days after the 11th anniversary of Justin's passing in 2013 at age 28.

Jimmy Wayne Holdiness — Justin's father — and family members organize the tournament each year.

"I thank everyone for coming out and supporting my son's tournament... We all love Justin very much," Holdiness said to the golfers before they headed to their tees. "We miss him every day. It really means a lot to us that you all took the time to get up early and come out here."

After golf was finished, the golfers enjoyed a lunch banquet at the course.



Kevin Johnson

Pastor Salaw Hummingbird chips onto a green while his playing partner Josh Jumper looks on.



Kevin Johnson

Jimmy Wayne Holdiness speaks to the golfers about his son, Justin, before the start of the tournament.



Kevin Johnson

Golfers received a variety of items in memory of Justin Campos, including hats and bags.



Kevin Johnson

Alfonso Tigertail chips onto a green.



Kevin Johnson

Trey Boone launches a long drive.



Kevin Johnson

Two Florida State alumni - Doug Zepeda, left, and William Floyd - show their rings before teeing off. Floyd's ring is from the Super Bowl that he won while playing for the San Francisco 49ers.

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PECS volleyball rolls to 3rd straight undefeated season

STAFF REPORT

The Pematetv Emahakv Charter School varsity volleyball team wrapped up yet another perfect season. On Oct. 1, the Lady Seminoles won their final match at LaBelle Middle School to finish with a 10-0 record, marking the team's third consecutive undefeated season.

Amalia Estrada and Azariah Washington have been a part of all three teams, which means they went a combined 41-0 in their middle school careers.

Overall, it's the team's fourth undefeated season, with the first one accomplished in 2014.

The JV team also finished on a winning note and had a strong season.



Beverly Bidney

Jalene Smith sends the ball over the net in PECS varsity's win against LaBelle Middle School on Oct. 1.



Beverly Bidney

The PECS varsity volleyball team after it wrapped an undefeated season with a win at LaBelle Middle School on Oct. 1. Front row, from left to right, are: Grace Osceola (7), Kanae Jumper (99), Caysie Platt (6) and Kaliya Hodge (22). Back row, from left to right, Mattie Platt (4), Jalaaya Hunsinger (13), Azariah Washington (10), Ciani Smith (35) and Jalene Smith (15). (Also on varsity, but not in the photo: Amalia Estrada, Dalysé Baker, Jaiden Fludd).



Beverly Bidney

Ciani Smith delivers a hit for the varsity squad.



Beverly Bidney

The PECS varsity team in action against LaBelle Middle as Ciani Smith sends the ball over the net.



Beverly Bidney

Azariah Washington goes airborne to make a hit in the varsity match.



Beverly Bidney

Jamelynn Anderson delivers a big hit across the net for PECS' JV.



Beverly Bidney

The JV team, front row, from left to right, Macayden Sardina (5), Cassie Pearce (3), Dalysé Baker (14), Jaiden Fludd (24), Ameliana Osceola (1), Ianna Cypress (21), Okalani Collins (12), Sincere Faircloth (11), Miranda Tommie (30) and Onnie Cypress (25). In the back row, from left to right, are Naylahnie Hardy and Jamelynn Anderson.



Beverly Bidney

PECS' Jaiden Fludd keeps a point alive in the JV match at LaBelle Middle.



Beverly Bidney

In the JV match, Dalysé Baker sets the ball for PECS.

INFR crowns world champions

STAFF REPORT

Nolan Conway (men's) and Jareth Curely (women's) won the All Around world championships at the Indian National Finals Rodeo.

Conway, of Cut Bank, Montana, has won INFR championships multiple times. He also won this year's steer wrestling title. Curely, from Arizona, came into INFR in good form, having won the All Around title at the Eastern Navajo Fair this summer.

The annual rodeo in Las Vegas, which was held Oct. 22-26 at South Point Arena, draws some of the top rodeo talent in Indian Country.

The Seminole Tribe was represented by Jacoby Johns, Jobe Johns, Norman Osceola and Ace Youngblood.

Jobe Johns started the INFR on a good note Oct. 22. He produced the fifth-best time (9.72 seconds) in tie-down roping on day one, which earned him \$1,118.

The tribe's Norman Osceola also had a strong start. He finished one spot out of the money on day one in bareback with 73 points. Jacoby Johns did not score in bareback on day one.

Ace Youngblood finished 18th on day one in ladies barrel racing with a time of 16.57 seconds.

In round 2, Jacoby Johns missed the money by one spot in bareback. His score of 68 points was good enough for a tie for sixth. Osceola did not score.

Also in round 2, Jobe Johns was 18th in tie-down, and Youngblood was 19th in ladies barrels.

In round 3, Jobe Johns was 24th in tie-down, Youngblood 23rd in ladies barrels, and Osceola and Jacoby Johns did not score in bareback.

For the averages after the three rounds, Jobe Johns finished 18th, Youngblood 10th, Osceola 17th and Jacoby Johns 18th.

2024 Indian National Finals Rodeo World Champions

Ladies Barrel Racing - Quinley Inman
Bareback Riding - Jacob Lees
Steer Wrestling - Nolan Conway
Ladies Breakaway Roping - Bailey Bates
Saddle Bronc Riding - Jackson Ford
Tie Down Roping - Quinton Inman
Team Roping - Erich Rogers & Aaron Tsinigine
Bull Riding - Teigan Gray
Men's All Around - Nolan Conway
Women's All Around - Jareth Curely

Juniors/Seniors world champions

Jr. Barrel Racing - Quinley Inman
Sr. Breakaway Roping - Keith Tatsey
Jr. Breakaway Roping - Lowrey Bruce
Team Roping - Leonard Williams Sr. & Victor Begay
Jr. Bullriding - Wynn Lawrence



The buckle ceremony is held at INFR.



Autumn Wells (Navajo Nation) won 2025 Miss Indian Rodeo at INFR

Fists of Fury coming to Hard Rock Live

FROM PRESS RELEASE

HOLLYWOOD — Fists of Fury boxing series returns to Hard Rock Live at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood on Dec. 6 at 7 p.m.

Tickets are on sale now and start at \$81. All seats are reserved. Tickets are available at myHRL.com. Doors open one hour before showtime. Additional fees may apply.

Twins Andrey (1-0) and Ari Bonilla (1-0, 1 KO) of Mexico return to the ring Dec. 6 after the pair were successful in their professional debuts this past September. Each will be featured in 10 round bouts against TBAs defending their WBA and WBC regional titles they each won in their pro debuts. Andrey is world ranked No. 15 at 118 by the WBA, and Ari is No. 10 by the WBA at 115.

Before their debut, the duo signed with Kris Lawrence (The Heavyweight Factory) in association with Leon Margules and Luis de Cubas Sr. (Warriors Boxing). The highly decorated, amateur 19-year-olds combined to make history in their pro debut winning 10 round bouts against much more experienced seasoned professionals in route to their victories.

Rounding out the card will be world ranked Yosdiel Napoles, Montaser Aboughaly, Jessy Cruz, Alexander Hernandez, Ed Paredes, Aaron Aponte, Peter Green, and Gasvonne Bess in separate bouts.

Allie Williams back for 3rd year with Ottawa bowling

STAFF REPORT

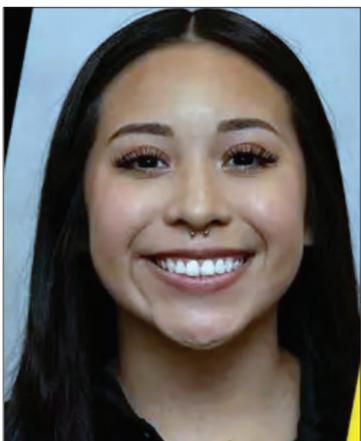
The Seminole Tribe's Allie Williams recently began her third season on the Ottawa University women's bowling team in Kansas.

Williams is coming off a strong sophomore season in which she was named 1st Team All-Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference and the all-tournament teams at the Clarke Invite and the NAIA West Tournament.

She had a 183.810 average in 11 events with two top five finishes and five top 25 finishes. Her season best average came at the NAIA West Tournament with a 205.2 score.

Before coming to Ottawa, Williams was a standout on multiple state championship teams for Neshoba Central in Mississippi.

She is the daughter of Brandi and Gavin Williams.



Allie Williams.

Ottawa University

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Indian Day



Hollywood

HOLLYWOOD — The Hollywood Reservation's main day of activities during Indian Week was scheduled to be held Sept. 26, but because the tribe partially closed due to Hurricane Helene, the activities were moved to Oct. 3.



Calvin Tiger

Doc Native carves away and competes in a log peeling contest during Hollywood's Indian Day event.



Calvin Tiger

Caden Jumper, left, and Madison Jumper, right, play a game of horseshoe together during Hollywood's Indian Day event.



Calvin Tiger

From left to right, Wanda Billie, Agnes Billie Motlow, and Virginia Osceola compete in the clothing contest.



Group photo at the walk/run event.



Calvin Tiger

Patrick Doctor participating during the walk/run Indian Day event in Hollywood.

Seminole artists' work on display in Fort Lauderdale museum

BY CALVIN TIGER
Staff Reporter

FORT LAUDERDALE — Tribal members Erica Deitz and Brian Zepeda have their artwork and photography on display at the New River Inn Museum in Fort Lauderdale in an exhibit titled as "Yanke Seminoli: New Works by Erica Deitz and Brian Zepeda". The exhibition will be open from October 20 to January 12, 2025. Both are award-winning artists whose work has been shown at multiple museums around Florida.

During the opening of the exhibition Oct. 20, Ollie Wareham, director of the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum showed his support for the artists by taking photos and playing his

flute. "Together, their unique iterations on paper and metal reflect themes of leadership and respect in geotemporal context," exhibit curator Tara Chadwick said in a statement. "While Brian Zepeda's photographs give us a glimpse of what respect means within the greater everglade's bioregion, Erica Deitz's mixed media work examines core values of leadership."

Some of Deitz's pieces on display were Seminole Warrior, Seminole Girl, Panther Matriarchs and Dada Battle.

"As a Seminole artist I put myself into all my work," Deitz said. "Sometimes I don't even mean to, it just happens. As it should be. You are creating something from what was just a blank canvas, and paints on the

table. Now there is a painting in front of you. There are many hours that go into a painting. But time stands still while you create, and that is my favorite part about painting. It's such a beautiful feeling and place to be while I create. As with all artists, I create from my heart and soul."

Zepeda's photographs on display were Between the Mangroves, Ghost Orchid, Bare Foot Beach, River's Bend and many others.

"I am deeply honored to have my photos on display," Zepeda said. "I'm always striving to improve and grow as an artist. I hope people feel something when they see my work. I like the challenge of capturing a story in the split second of the camera's shutter."



Courtesy photo

Brian Zepeda next to his photography in "Yanke Seminoli: New Works by Erica Deitz and Brian Zepeda" at the New River Inn Museum in Fort Lauderdale.



Calvin Tiger

Ollie Wareham, director of the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, at the exhibit.



Calvin Tiger

Erica Deitz's work on display.



Calvin Tiger

Erica Deitz observing work at the art exhibit.