





The Seminole Tribune

Voice of the Unconquered

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Lakeland seniors hit the road, explore southern sites

BY DANIELLA HAKIM
Staff Reporter

PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. — As fall began to turn, seniors from the Seminole Tribe of Florida made their way through North Carolina, Tennessee, and Kentucky from Oct. 15 to Oct. 22.

Christopher Holmes, Lawanna Barnes, and Bailey Musgrave from the Department of Elder Services accompanied eight participating seniors on the excursion organized to uplift and promote self-confidence and socialization.

"We're one large family," Holmes said. "Lawanna and I, we get paid to laugh alongside our seniors. Our only hope is for more of them to participate."

The seniors departed from the Tampa Senior Center and Lakeland Elders Lounge for Cherokee, North Carolina, where a cultural exchange between the Seminole Tribe of Florida and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians ensued.

Bobby Henry, 89, led the exchange with a speech and blessing as the eldest among his peers. The afternoon's meet and greet, cultural lunch, bingo, and gift exchange concluded with a dinner sponsored by Brighton Councilman Larry Howard.

"Our seniors departed on two other trips earlier this year," Barnes said. "We've arranged trips to St. Augustine and Hollywood, Florida, and Savannah, Georgia. Our seniors have had the best time."

✦ See TRIP on page 4A



Daniella Hakim

Lakeland seniors and Department of Elder Services staff gather at the Ark Encounter in Williamstown, Kentucky.

STOF files suit claiming DraftKings operates illegal sports betting business in Florida

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

The Seminole Tribe of Florida, owner of Hard Rock Bet, the only legal betting app in Florida, filed a complaint Oct. 8 against DraftKings Inc., its CEO Jason Robins, and subsidiary DraftKings Predictions. The filing alleges the Boston-based online mobile sports betting platform is operating an illegal sports betting business in violation of Florida law and the terms of the 2021 Gaming Compact between the state and the tribe.

The 72-page document was filed in Broward County Circuit Court.

According to the filing, the tribe states that DraftKings' 'Super App' is illegal sports betting. The app "violates the Compact and state law, and deprives Florida of substantial revenue and regulatory oversight, including mandatory consumer protections such as minimum 21 years-old age verification and restrictions on certain categories of bets," according to a press release from the tribe.

The complaint also claims that DraftKings' Pick6 is illegal gambling under Florida law and that it "illegally offers player-proposition bets that are reserved exclusively to the tribe."

Florida's sports betting market is regulated under the Compact. Challenges to the Compact in federal and state courts have been rejected. According to the filing, DraftKings has secretly funded challenges to the Compact.

The tribe is seeking "all injunctive relief, including an injunction enjoining each Defendant from operating, conducting, advertising, soliciting, accepting, processing, or otherwise facilitating any sports wagering activity in Florida outside the Compact, including Pick6 and the Super App sportsbook, and to disgorgement of the profits that Defendants have obtained through their unlawful conduct," according to the filing.

The tribe's press release mentions that revenue-sharing payments from the Compact help fund public programs, including environmental conservation, water management, and support for local governments.

Founded in 2012, DraftKings is a publicly traded company on Nasdaq.

Ollie and Elgin perform in campus towns

BY EILEEN SOLER
Special to the Tribune

GAINESVILLE — For two decades, tribal members Gordon "Ollie" Wareham and Elgin Jumper have educated and entertained listeners statewide using their respective artistic talents and gifts. Recently, they performed together on the same stage near the University of Florida in Gainesville to merge the best of their artforms for the first time.

"Elgin and Ollie weave music, storytelling, poetry and fine art as ways to convey the past, present and future. They use their medians to tell their story," said lead organizer Michelle LeFebvre, associate curator of South Forida Archeology & Ethnography at the Florida Museum of Natural History.

Florida Indigenous Soundscapes, presented Oct. 27, was supported also by an impressive list of partners: Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum; George A. Smathers Libraries; UF American Indian and Indigenous Studies Program; UF Center for Arts, Migration and Entrepreneurship; and the venue Heartwood Soundstage.

The show provided an intimate space and time for Wareham and Jumper to perform their self-described experimental collaboration that was "95 percent improvisational . . . from instrument to inspiration", Wareham said.

Planned segments included Wareham's enthusiastically received performances of two longstanding Seminole stories (box turtle and the rabbit; four brothers) and Jumper's heartfelt recitations of about eight poems gleaned from his experiences in Everglades nature, his boyhood reservation memories, and love. Wareham also performed his memorable and melodious Indigenous flute compositions "Tiger Song" and "Butterfly".

The unplanned "experimental" show, before nearly 125 spectators, required Wareham and Jumper to capture their individual energies and the collective energy of the crowd to keep the show moving. For entirely instrumental pieces, Wareham accompanied Jumper on flute while Jumper plucked and picked the strings of an electric guitar. Jumper also used a violin bow, drumstick and screwdriver to slide across the strings. For the first time, Jumper parlayed the sounds of Warham's flute and shakers with a bongo drumbeat.

"If we're lucky, we'll get that lightning in the bottle", Wareham said before the show.

According to spirited applause during and after the show, the duo accomplished their goal. Each piece delivered the peaceful, mysterious and healing sounds of the Everglades. Different sounds invoked images of creatures, rain, wind, meditation, sunlight.

"They keep getting better and better," said Rosa Godshall of the Seminole Wars Foundation. Godshall, a friend of Jumper's, was familiar with Jumper's poetry and fine art but had never heard Wareham's storytelling before the show.

✦ See CAMPUS on page 5B



Eileen Soler

Gordon "Ollie" Wareham, left, and Elgin Jumper perform at Heartwood Soundstage in Gainesville on Oct. 27.



Courtesy photo

Gordon "Ollie" Wareham and Elgin Jumper are joined in Gainesville by Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum staff.

Atlantic City organization honors Jim Allen

STAFF REPORT

On Oct. 23, the Atlantic City Metropolitan Business and Citizens Association (MBCA) hosted its 35th annual Installation & Awards Gala at Hard Rock Atlantic City. Jim Allen, chairman of Hard Rock International and CEO of Seminole Gaming, was named recipient of the 2026 Community Spirit Award in recognition of his longstanding commitment to the Atlantic City community.

"We are truly humbled by the generosity of Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino's Jim Allen and the entire Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City team as well as all of our sponsors as we celebrated the 35th anniversary of the MBCA AC at our 2026 MBCA Fall Gala Dinner Dance with 700 fellow supporters," MBCA posted on Facebook.

More than $500,000 was raised to benefit two local organizations: the MBCA's Foundation to Beautify Atlantic City and the Community FoodBank of New Jersey's Egg Harbor Township location.

"It was by far the most successful gala and event in the MBCA history thanks to Hard Rock, our dedicated supporters, and devoted board members and members," MBCA said.

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Georgette Palmer Smith appointed to Tribal Leadership Council Foundation

FROM PRESS RELEASE

LAWTON, Okla. — Georgette Palmer Smith, executive director of the Seminole Tribe of Florida's Native Learning Center, has been appointed to the Tribal Leadership Council Foundation for a two-year term ending in 2028. The annoucement was made in October.

"I am honored to be appointed to the Tribal Leadership Council Foundation and grateful to the Board of Directors for their confidence," Smith said in a press release. "Education and training have the power to strengthen Native communities, and I look forward to contributing to the foundation's mission alongside my fellow members."

The Tribal Leadership Council is a national organization committed to advancing the sovereignty, leadership, and longterm sustainability of tribal nations in the U.S.

The Native Learning Center provides tuition-free training supporting the primary objectives of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act. Smith is a certified Financial Education Trainer in Building Native Communities and a trainer for NeighborWorks Center for Homeownership Education and Counseling. A member of the Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma and of Choctaw descent, she also serves as president of Seminole Taft Street Properties, LLC and 6365 Taft, LLC.

Smith graduated from the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma in Chickasha with a Bachelor of Arts degree in communications. She attended the Eli Broad Graduate School of Management at Michigan State University. In December 2000, Smith was designated a Certified Meetings Manager (CMM) by Meeting Professionals International (MPI). The recognition of MPI's CMM designees exemplifies MPI's commitment to one of the seven key goals within the association's strategic plan.

Smith began her career with the National Congress of American Indians, where she served as White House Logistical Coordinator for President Bill Clinton's meeting with 545 Tribal Leaders. She later served as director of Forum and Conference Services for the University of Oklahoma and brings over 30 years of experience in planning hundreds of meetings, trade shows and special events from coast to coast as well as internationally.



Courtesy photo

Georgette Palmer Smith, executive director of the Seminole Tribe's Native Learning Center in Hollywood, has been appointed to the Tribal Leadership Council Foundation.

"We are honored to welcome Georgette Smith to the Foundation," Dr. Crystal Miller, TLC Foundation Chair, said in the release. "Her three decades of experience, her dedication to training and empowering Native communities, and her leadership at the Native Learning Center will be a tremendous asset to our work. The board is confident she will make a lasting contribution."

"Georgette has spent her career building opportunities for tribal communities and bringing people together. Her experience and commitment align closely with the values of the Tribal Leadership Council, and I look forward to working with her," Justin Barrett, council president, said in the release.

NCAI honors trio of leaders

FROM PRESS RELEASE

PALM SPRINGS, Calif. — The National Congress of American Indians honored three leaders for their decades of service, advocacy, and dedication on Oct. 20 at NCAI's 83rd annual Convention and Marketplace in Palm Springs, California.

NCAI recognized Governor Emeritus Bill Anoatubby of the Chickasaw Nation with the 2026 John Echohawk Lifetime Achievement Award and honored Arlinda Locklear of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina and Councilman Gilbert Suazo Sr. of Taos Pueblo with the 2026 Native American Leadership Awards.

"Tonight, we honor three remarkable individuals whose leadership has shaped Indian Country and created opportunities for generations to come," said Larry Wright Jr., NCAI executive director, in a press release. "Governor Anoatubby, Arlinda Locklear, and Councilman Suazo have each demonstrated that leadership is not simply about the positions we hold, but about the lasting impact we make for our people. Through their dedication to tribal sovereignty, justice, and self-determination, they have strengthened our Nations and helped build a future rooted in opportunity, resilience, and cultural identity. Their legacies remind us that the work we do today will shape the lives of generations yet to come."

John Echohawk Lifetime Achievement Award: Governor Emeritus Bill Anoatubby

Governor Emeritus Bill Anoatubby was recognized for more than five decades of dedicated service to the Chickasaw Nation and nearly four decades as Governor. Throughout his illustrious career, Anoatubby led the transformation of the Chickasaw Nation through visionary leadership, economic development, expanded governmental services, and investments in education, health care, and opportunities for Chickasaw citizens.

His commitment to self-governance and longterm Nation-building has made a lasting impact beyond the Chickasaw Nation, providing an enduring example of the strength and possibilities of tribal sovereignty.

Native American Leadership Award: Arlinda Locklear

Arlinda Locklear, a citizen of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, was honored for her groundbreaking career in federal Indian law and her lifelong commitment to advancing and protecting Tribal rights inside and outside of the courtroom.

As one of the first Native American women to argue before the United States Supreme Court, Locklear shaped significant legal victories involving Tribal lands, jurisdiction, and sovereignty. Her decades of advocacy, including her leadership with the Native American Rights Fund, have strengthened the legal foundations of Tribal self-determination and inspired generations of Native attorneys and advocates.

Native American Leadership Award: Councilman Gilbert Suazo Sr.

Councilman Gilbert Suazo Sr. of Taos Pueblo was recognized for his decades of leadership and steadfast commitment to protecting Tribal sovereignty, cultural heritage, and the lands and natural resources of his people.

As a former Governor and longtime Tribal Councilman of Taos Pueblo, Suazo has dedicated his life to serving his community and advocating for the protection of Tribal lands, water rights, and cultural resources. For decades he fought for the return of Blue Lake to the Taos Pueblo, epitomizing the land back movement. His leadership reflects the importance of honoring ancestral responsibilities while ensuring future generations inherit strong, thriving tribal nations.

Elsewhere, NCAI's 2027 Executive Council Winter Session and Native Youth Leadership Summit will be held Jan. 31-Feb. 4, 2027, in Washington, D.C. For more information visit ncai.org.

Orchestra to perform in Brighton

FROM PRESS RELEASE

BRIGHTON — Classic Albums Live, a modern-day orchestra, will perform a show called "AC/DC: Highway to Hell" on Nov. 14 at 8 p.m. at Seminole Brighton Bay Event Center

Bring the kids. This is a family album that brings great records to life on stage. Tickets start at $38 and are available at Ticketmaster.com.

Indian Day 2026 - Lakeland/Tampa



Courtesy photo

The Tampa/Lakeland Community held its Indian Day on Sept. 26 at the Lakeland Reservation's culture grounds. The event featured archery, ax throwing, kettlebell toss, basket making, fire making and other culture activities as well as lunch and dinner. Above are Mark Holmes, Kaylin Henry, Alana Henry, Colleen Henry and David Frank.





Courtesy photos (2)

With their eyes on bullseyes are Aaron Frank, left, and Keith Simmons, right.



Courtesy photo

Gladys Guzman, Nevaeh Avelos Motlow and Kacey Avelos work on an activity during the Tampa/Lakeland Indian Day.

Rez Rally to be held Jan. 9



Kevin Johnson

The Rez Rally trophy sits in the administration building of its 2026 champion - Immokalee. The trophy will be up for grabs Jan. 9, 2027, when the Hollywood Reservation hosts the annual competition, which is one of the tribe's most popular events.

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Community



Immokalee culture hosts beading class

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

IMMOKALEE — Ricky Doctor came from Big Cypress to teach a beading class in the Immokalee culture department September 28, where he welcomed novices and those who knew how to bead but needed a reminder of how to do it.

Doctor has taught classes in Brighton and Hollywood but it was his first time teaching in Immokalee.

"We needed a refresher course, so we asked to bring him in," said Amy Garza, Immokalee resident and TW veterans affairs coordinator.

The class focused on beading bracelets on a loom. Amy Garza, Amara Martinez, Ty Martinez, Allegra Riddle and Mari Veliz set up looms on the table and got busy beading.

"I like beading but I forgot how to set up the loom," Amara Martinez said. "I want to get into it more."



Beverly Bidney
Tribal members attend a beading class given by Ricky Doctor in the Immokalee culture room Sept. 28.



Beverly Bidney
Mari Veliz works on beading a bracelet on the loom during the Immokalee beading class.



Beverly Bidney
Amara Martinez carefully gets a bead on the loom for her project.



Courtesy photo
Ricky Doctor shows the lighter case he is beading as Amy Garza works on her beading project.

Expanded off-road vehicle access proposed for Big Cypress National Preserve

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

The National Park Service on Oct. 1 proposed adding an additional 147,000 acres for off-road vehicles within the Big Cypress National Preserve. The measure would allow for more recreation, backcountry access, hunting areas and camping.

The new trail network will use existing historic trails in the preserve. Regulations for motorized off-road vehicles were established in 1979, before the 147,000 acres under consideration in the proposal, were added to the Preserve in 1988 bringing the size of the Preserve to 729,000 acres.

"At Big Cypress National Preserve, we are committed to balancing public access with conservation," said Big Cypress National Preserve Superintendent Tom Forsyth in a press release. "These proposed changes will help ensure the Preserve remains accessible for recreation and hunting on designated trails while protecting its unique natural resources."

The changes would allow the use of all nearly all types of off-road vehicles without propellers that disturb the water. Those include trucks, swamp buggies, airboats, hovercraft and any device capable of moving over land, water, marsh and swamps. Vehicles would be limited to designated routes in the Preserve.

The proposed rule change is available for a 60-day public review and comment period, which will be considered by the NPS before a final decision is made. Comments must be received by 11:59 p.m. EDT on Dec. 1, 2026.

To read the rule and submit a comment visit https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2026-20251 or visit www.federalregister.gov and search for "1024-AE54."

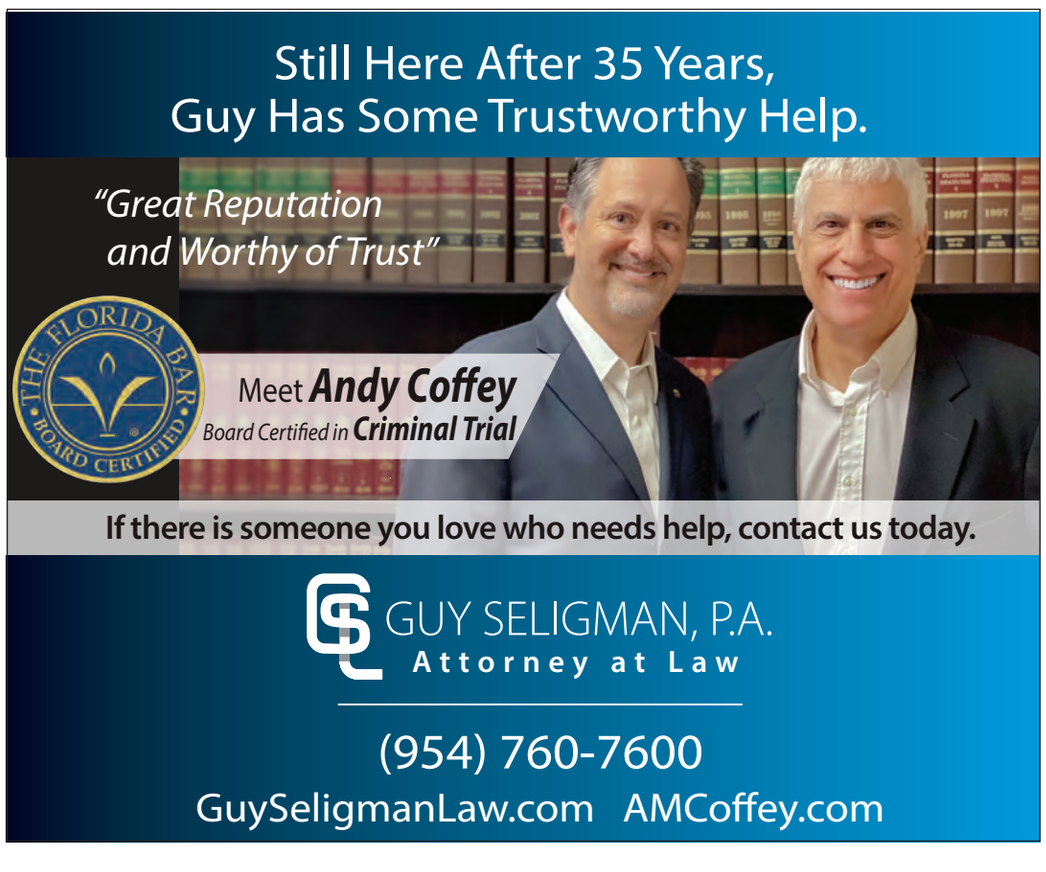
Hard Rock to showcase Latin American culinary

HOLLYWOOD — Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood will celebrate the flavors and culinary traditions of Latin America with Sabores de las Américas on Nov. 14 starting at 7:30 p.m. at the Hollywood Tower Pool.

Tickets are $100 and include unlimited food, drinks, and live entertainment. Guests must be 21+ to attend.

From Cuban favorites and Peruvian specialties to Mexican street tacos and Venezuelan cuisine, Sabores de las Américas will showcase the flavors that connect South Florida's Latin communities. Participating businesses will represent Brazil, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela, complemented by wines from Chile and Argentina.





✦ TRIP
From page 1A

The seniors became familiar with the Great Smoky Mountains, also known as the "Smokies," on a four-hour Smokey Mountain Railroad excursion after their visit to Cherokee Nation. In Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, President Holly Tiger shared and sponsored a meal at Paula Deen's Family Kitchen.

The Elder Services Department isn't limited to arranging long haul excursions—most are local. Holmes and Barnes provide tribal elders with opportunities to visit local restaurants and participate in activities.

"Just before we left for Cherokee Nation, we took our seniors to our local Dave & Buster's," Barnes added. "We're always prioritizing activities that keep our seniors active and happy."

Fire rescue firefighter and medic Emmanuel Quinones monitored each senior's vital signs, specifically their blood pressure and blood sugar, every morning.

The Ark Encounter, located in Williamstown, Kentucky, welcomed seniors and staff after a four-hour road trip from Tennessee. The museum features a full-size 510-foot-long Noah's Ark, based on the Christian biblical story.

"This has been my highlight for this trip," said Alicia Cabal, former Miss Florida Seminole Princess. "It's an incredible structure to witness in person."

It was only a matter of time before seniors and staff celebrated their last day away from Florida at Dollywood, an amusement park co-owned by Dolly Parton and themed around Parton's legacy and music. The country music star and entertainer passed away in August. The seniors savored Grist Mill's renowned cinnamon bread and Dollywood's kettle corn.

STOF Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. met with the tribe's seniors and staff to conclude their weeklong trip, sponsoring a dinner show experience at Dolly Parton's Stampede.

The tribal seniors in attendance were Bobby Henry, Annie Henry, Joanie Henry, Lina L. Henry, Barbara Henry, Nancy O. Frank, Connie Osceola, and Alicia Cabal. The tribal seniors were accompanied by activity coordinators Christopher Holmes, Lawanna Barnes, and Bailey Musgrave, as well as emergency medical technician Emmanuel Quinones and Seminole police officer Barry Dodge.



Daniella Hakim

From left, Barbara Henry, Nancy Frank, Connie Osceola, Joanie Henry, Bobby Henry, Annie Henry, and Linda Henry at Dollywood Amusement Park in Tennessee.



Daniella Hakim

Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. joins seniors and staff and Dolly Parton's Stampede, a dinner show expereicnce in Pigeon Forge.



Daniella Hakim

Lakeland/Tampa seniors and Department of Elder Services staff gather at Cherokee Nation in North Caroline for a cultural exchange.



Daniella Hakim

Bobby Henry at the Ark Encounter in Williamstown, Kentucky.



Daniella Hakim

President Holly Tiger and Linda Henry at Paula Deen's in Pigeon Forge.



Daniella Hakim

Frank Cabal, left, and Alicia Cabal, right, enjoying southern-style food at Paula Deen's, sponsored by President Holly Tiger.



Daniella Hakim

Barbara Henry stands against colorful hand-carved pumpkins at Dollywood Amusement Park in Pigeon Forge.

Hard Rock, Steve Cohen commit $10M toward new Queens youth community center

STAFF REPORT

The upcoming $8.1 billion sports and entertainment district Metropolitan Park led by Hard Rock International and Steven Cohen announced a $10 million investment in the new Jackson Heights community center of the Variety Boys and Girls Club of Queens in New York City. The investment is part of Metropolitan Park's more than $1 billion in community benefits and served as the seed funding for the community center's $33.8 million in total public-private funding.

In addition to Metropolitan Park's investment, millions in government funding was secured through New York Gov. Kathy Hochul, Council member Shekar Krishnan and the New York City Council, U.S. Senators Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, Congresswoman Grace Meng, Assembly members Jessica González-Rojas, Steven Raga and Catalina Cruz.

The future Boys & Girls Club will include a community pool, indoor gym and an auditorium-style theatre. It will serve as a hub for after-school and summer programs, senior programs, early childhood education, academic enrichment, workforce development, health and wellness initiatives, arts and cultural programming, recreational opportunities, and community events, creating opportunities for Queens families.

According to a press release from the governor's office, the venue will serve up to 10,000 kids.

"On behalf of Hard Rock International, the Seminole Tribe of Florida and Jim Allen, we are proud to make this $10 million investment and to stand alongside our elected officials, community leaders, and the Variety Boys & Girls Club to help turn a long-held community vision into reality," said Sean Caffery, Hard Rock International president of Casino Development and chief of staff, in a press release. "This investment can make a difference and transform the lives of New York residents and their families for generations."

"Metropolitan Park is about creating opportunities for Queens, and that commitment doesn't stop at the boundaries of our site," said Michael Sullivan, from Metropolitan Park, in the release. "Jackson Heights, Corona and East Elmhurst are some of the most vibrant communities in New York City and we heard loud and clear from our neighbors that they need a new community center to meet the area's growing needs."

"Every child in Queens deserves a place where they can learn, play, and thrive, regardless of their family's income or background. For working families in Jackson Heights, this $10 million investment means greater access to after-school programs, recreation, and a community pool right in their own neighborhood," Assemblymember Steven Raga said in the release.



Courtesy photo

Tre Boone tees off on hole number two at the Panther Run Golf Club in Ave Maria during the Justin Campos Memorial Golf Tournament held Oct. 17.



Courtesy photo

From left, Jimmy Wayne Holdiness and Jessica Caseres with Gil Yzaguirre and his winning raffle prize.

Celebrating the 2026 Justin Campos Memorial Golf Tournament



Courtesy photo

Elliott Young with Ivan Herrera at the Justin Campos Memorial Golf Tournament.

SUBMITTED BY JIMMY WAYNE HOLDINESS

AVE MARIA — On Oct. 17, in the middle of a rain-filled month, the sun shined gloriously upon us all as my family along with many old and new friends gathered at Panther Run Golf Club in Ave Maria Florida to honor and celebrate the life of my late son Justin Campos. This annual event brings together the people who knew and loved my son, Justin. It is always a very meaningful day of remembrance, friendship, and celebration to all involved. I am grateful beyond words to all who attended.

Thirteen years since Justin walked on, his memory remains deeply cherished by all of us whose lives he touched. The tournament is always a great day of shared stories, special memories, and a celebration of life not sadness as he continues to have a positive impact on his family and friends.

More than just a day on the golf course, Justin's memorial tournament is a heartfelt tribute to a beloved son, friend, and member of the Seminole Tribe of Florida and the community of Immokalee, both of which he loved dearly. With loved ones gathered in his honor, the event continues to keep Justin's memory alive.

On to the particulars. We hosted 13 teams this year. All worthy golfers. Now I promise that the fix was not in, this year. LOL, My team of Jimmy Wayne Holdiness, Elliott Young, Tre Boone, Chris Jensen and my grandson Ivan Herrera are your 2026 Champions. Score of 19 under par. Runners up were the team of Mondo Tiger, Mateo Jiminez, Kevin Osceola and Roberta Neves with a score of 17 under.

It is literally impossible, but I want to try and thank everyone that has continued to support us throughout these years. Tony and Paula Sanchez since day one. Chairman/ Vice President Marcellus Osceola Jr. and his amazing staff. Big Cypress/Immokalee Councilwoman Mariann Billie. President/ Vice Chairperson Holly Tiger. A huge thank you to Brenda Holdiness and Jessica and Priscilla Caseres for all of your hard work every year. Especially the breakfast tacos. Shonabesh Everyone , JW.



Courtesy photo

Jimmy Wayne Holdiness's grandson Ivan Herrera with the first place trophy that his team won.



Courtesy photo

Jimmy Wayne Holdiness with his nephew Mike Dunman from Missouri.

Advocacy and Guardianship Department promotes programs during National awareness month

BY CALVIN TIGER
Staff Reporter

To coincide with National Guardianship Awareness Month in October, the Seminole Tribe's Advocacy and Guardianship Department held open houses on multiple reservations to promote awareness about becoming a tribal foster parent and tribal member guardianship.

The advocacy program provides Seminole youth with a temporary home when their parents cannot take care of them. A tribal foster home can be a family, single parent, a relative or a non- relative who agrees to provide quality care for a Seminole child or children in need. Quality care includes providing security, stability and understanding, and the preservation of tribal culture with Seminole children.

Along with foster care, the open houses highlighted the tribal member guardianship program. The program collaborates with tribal community members to promote health, safety, and welfare of tribal members who are unable to make decisions and or manage their personal affairs. The program also provides services such as intensive case management, financial literacy education, service referrals, coordination of services, life skills-based coaching and bill pay education.

"The focus of the Guardianship Program during the open house is to encourage family members to become more engaged in the guardianship process, whether by providing additional support to their loved one or by considering the role of guardian themselves. There are numerous benefits and positive outcomes when families take an active role in the guardianship process, and our goal is to continue promoting and supporting meaningful family involvement," said Trecia McCleese, Advocacy and Guardianship assistant director.



Calvin Tiger

Guardianship Assistant Director Trecia McCleese, left, and Advocacy Assistant Director Shamika Beasley at the Advocacy and Guardianship Department's open house at the Native Learning Center in Hollywood on Oct. 7.

As part of Guardianship Awareness Week, the department held several daily activities that other departments could join Oct. 5-9, including fun office-related events.

KC & The Sunshine Band to perform at Hard Rock

HOLLYWOOOD — KC & The Sunshine Band will perform at 8 p.m. on Feb. 25, 2027, at Hard Rock Live at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood. Tickets are available at myHRL.com. KC and the Sunshine Band has generated several dance hits over the decades, including "Get Down Tonight," "That's The Way (I Like It)" and "Shake Your Booty."

✦ CAMPUS
From page 1A

Jumper said he was more than happy to share the stage with Wareham and share his art with new audiences.

"This is how it goes, it's putting art into sounds in more of an avant garde way . . . when you are blessed, you share," Jumper said.

Wareham and Jumper appeared earlier in the day for students at University of Florida in a controlled classroom environment. A pop-up display of Seminole artifacts, some dating back a century, was available outside of the Heartwood Soundstage venue for guests and passersby to view and learn. On Oct. 29, Wareham and Jumper showcased their talents during a private event featuring Jumper painting a fine art piece live.

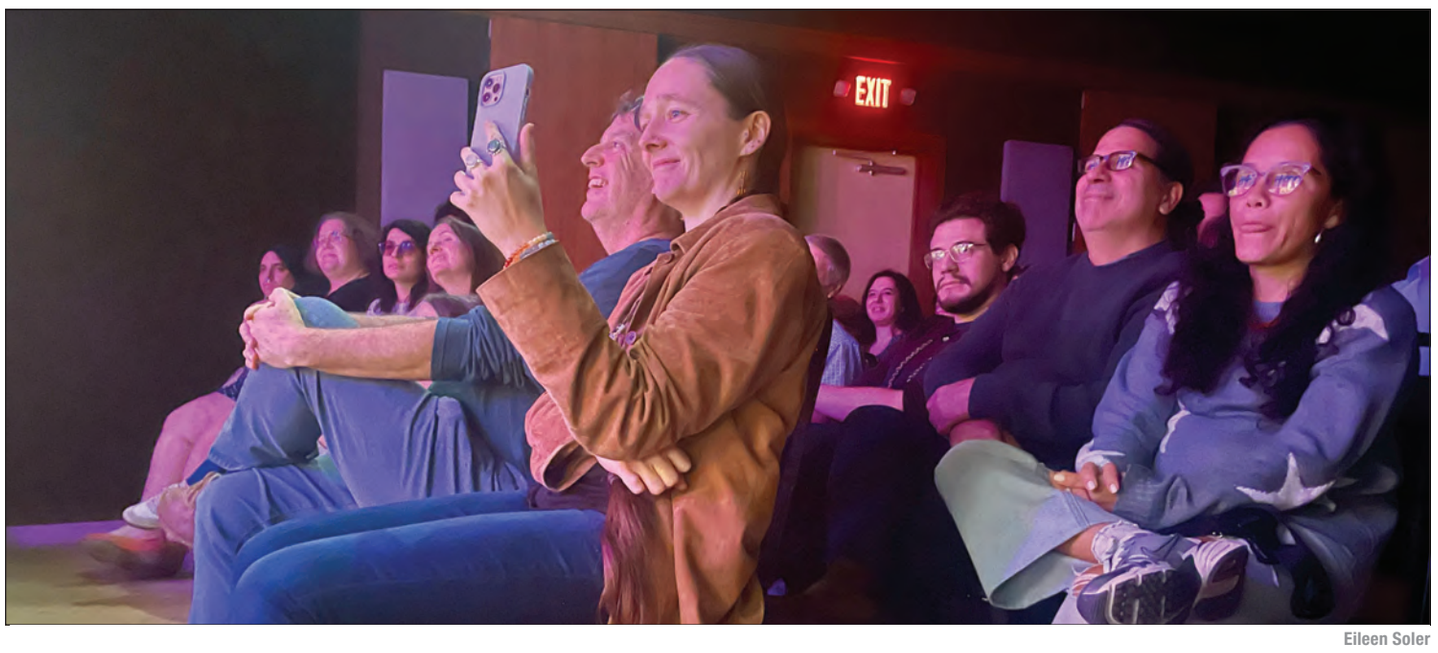
They also held a program at Florida State University's Native American and Indigenous Studies Center.





Eileen Soler (2)

Elgin Jumper, left, and Gordon "Ollie" Wareham, right, educate and entertain an audience of more than 100 people at Heartwood Soundstage on Oct. 27.



Eileen Soler

The audience in Gainesville enjoys the performance by Gordon "Ollie" Wareham and Elgin Jumper.

Smithsonian "Americans" exhibition comes to Okeechobee

BY JACOB COLON
Work Experience Program

OKEECHOBEE — The historic Okeechobee County Courthouse opened its doors to "Americans", an exhibition developed by the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian, on Oct. 17.

The exhibition, which runs until Dec. 4, offers visitors a glimpse into how Native American history, culture, and imagery are integrated in America, and the impact Natives have had in American history, including before and after the United States became a country. "Americans" is in the midst of a six-year national tour.

Several Seminoles participated in the opening day ceremony, including Miss Brighton Seminole Princess Hayden Nunez, Jr. Miss Brighton Seminole Princess Avani Smith, former Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr., veterans from the Seminole Color Guard, staff and students from Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School, and Lewis Gopher.

"The exhibit is one that is very near to us as Seminole people," Gopher said to the audience. "We invite people to come and enjoy as well as learn about the past of the Seminole people…"

Other participants included William "Popeye" Osceola, Secretary of the Miccosukee Tribe; Dr. Andrew Frank, director of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Center at Florida State University; and Okeechobee Mayor Dowling Watford.

Main exhibits focus on The Battle of Little Bighorn or "Custer's Last Stand", Pocahontas and her importance with the Jamestown colony, and the Indian Removal Act of 1830. Visitors can learn about the Trail of Tears, which forcibly sent Seminoles and other Natives to Oklahoma, and The Battle of Okeechobee, which took place Christmas Day of 1837 during the Second Seminole War.

The exhibition is hosted by Okeechobee Main Street and Okeechobee Historical Society. It is open Mondays through Fridays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The courthouse is located at 304 NW 2nd St. in downtown Okeechobee.



Jacob Colon

Tribal members and others help cut the ribbon to mark the opening of the "Americans" exhibit at the historic Okeechobee County Courthouse on Oct. 17.



Jacob Colon

Apolonia Nunez with her display at opening day of the "Americans" exhibit.



Jacob Colon

Visitors check out the exhibit on the first day.



Jacob Colon

A ceremony in the courthouse includes the Seminole Color Guard, Miss Brighton Seminole Princess Hayden Nunez, Jr. Miss Brighton Seminole Princess Avani Smith, Seminole youngsters, Lewis Gopher, and Dr. Andrew Frank from FSU.

Fashion show explains Native clothing

BY JACOB COLON
Work Experience Program

MICCOSUKEE — The Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida held a fashion show at the University of Miami on Oct. 15. The fashion show gave insight on how tribal clothing like jackets, shirts and dresses between Miccosukee and Seminole have progressed through the years going from traditional all the way to the modern look, even showing fancy-like clothing styles for events such as weddings or parties.

While the models walked the runway, a speaker provided historical background about why the jacket or dress was made the way it was and explained why a jacket had liner or not, or why the women wore a cape or didn't, or why the shirt was tucked in or let all the way down. Additional insight was given on clothing details like the colorways, ricrac and patchwork.



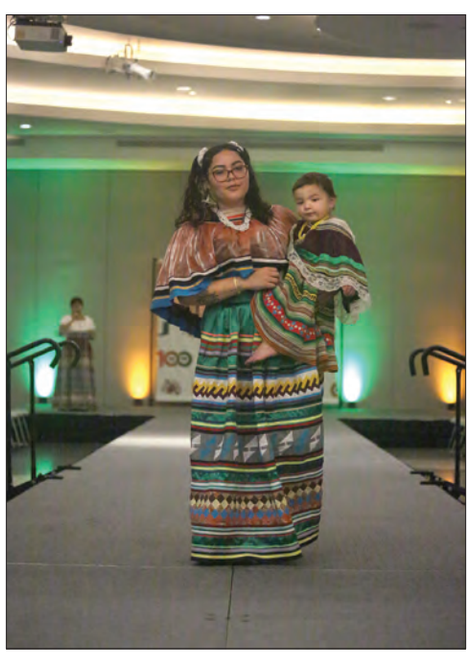
Jacob Colon

Janessa Clay



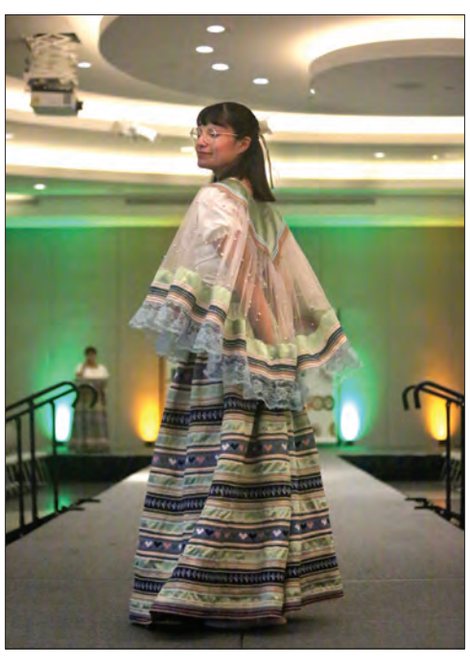
Jacob Colon

Andrea Sanders



Jacob Colon

Randelle Osceola and baby Johnnie



Jacob Colon

Darla Cypress

New Native documentaries to air on PBS, PBS World in November

FROM PRESS RELEASE

Vision Maker Media marks Native American Heritage Month with five new documentaries airing nationally on public television, alongside two new episodes of "First Peoples, First Stories", the new series showcasing short films from young Native filmmakers that premiered in the spring.

Nov. 9 at 10 p.m. (ET) on PBS; Nov. 13 at 9 p.m. (ET) on PBS World. "Medicine Ball" from Leya Hale and Minnesota PBS. Through basketball, Native athletes confront their campus's boarding school legacy. "Medicine Ball" follows Native athletes Lexus Redthunder and Leroy Fairbanks IV as they navigate college life and basketball at the University of Minn. Morris, located on the site of a former Native boarding school.

Nov. 19 at 7 p.m. (ET) on PBS World. "The Land Returns" from Margaret Jacobs, Kevin Abourezk, and Charles "Boots" Kennedye, chronicles a surprising new way that Indigenous nations are regaining their land: individual settlers, local governments, environmental organizations, and even corporations are returning stolen land to Indian nations as part of a growing grassroots movement of restitution and reconciliation.

Nov. 21 at 7 and 7:30 p.m. (ET) on PBS World"First Peoples, First Stories" two new episodes of the Vision Maker Media series. The four short films featured in episodes three and four of the series explore the determination of Native women on their journeys toward healing.

Broward seeks charter review commission nominations

FROM PRESS RELEASE

The application period for nominations to the Broward County Charter Review Commission (CRC) is now open. The Board of County Commissioners seeks interested constituents to submit an application to serve on the CRC by Nov. 13. Appointments are anticipated to be made at the board's first meeting in January 2027.

The Broward County Charter serves as the Constitution for Broward County Government. Article VI of the Charter establishes that at the first County Commission meeting in January 2027, and every 12 years thereafter, the County Commission shall appoint a CRC, which conducts a comprehensive review of the Broward County Charter and proposes amendments or revisions.

Plans for riverfront Hard Rock Hotel in Jacksonville presented to city board

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

The first public presentation about a potential new Hard Rock Hotel in downtown Jacksonville received positive feedback from a city review board.

During a workshop on Oct. 1, the Downtown Development Review Board (DDRB) heard from the project's developer and architect.

Michael Munz, from Florida Innovation Capital, provided details about the 30-story hotel with approximately 350 guest rooms and 152 residential units, a Hard Rock Shop, dining, pool,15,000-square foot main ballroom, meeting room spaces and live entertainment venue.

The proposed hotel's waterfront location is a vacant lot along the St. Johns River. It is on the Riverwalk, a 3-mile pedestrian-friendly area with art, retail, dining, museums, recreation and hospitality. The hotel would be neighbors with the USS Orleck Naval Museum – a destroyer that served in the U.S. Navy – and an 11-acre park scheduled to open in 2028.

"….we don't want this to feel just like it's just sitting on the riverfront; we want it to sort of activate this loop between what's happening along the riverfront with the park, with the Orleck, and really make this part of a bigger whole," project architect Sherri Guiterrez told the board. "We've also intentionally carved out space, underneath the tower for outdoor dining…and this is part of our whole Riverwalk experience."

A half-mile away is the NFL's Jacksonville Jaguars stadium that is undergoing a massive makeover with aspirations to land future Super Bowls, college football and basketball playoffs, marquee concerts and more.

The hotel would reflect the city's rich music heritage that includes the Allman Brothers and Lynyrd Skynyrd, which received positive comments from board members that spoke about it. The building's design would incorporate musical components, including an album-style protrusion.

Some board members praised the design's "two front doors" approach, one facing the Riverwalk side and the other facing Bay Street.

"As a board member and downtown resident, I'm looking forward to this project. I specifically like the idea of the interaction with the hotel and the Riverwalk. Having two front doors, one door at the river, one door at Bay Street, I think that's a great idea. And, to also echo the sentiments that, being a good neighbor as well with the structures we already have there, so I'm really looking forward to seeing this project through," board member Ivan Mote said during the meeting.

One board member described the project as "cool" and another said he was excited about it but wants the landscaping to have more of a Jacksonville appearance rather than South Florida.

Some board members also said they appreciated that the developer has established a connection with the Naval museum. Jim Webb, executive director of the museum, spoke in favor of the project.

"They'll be bringing a lot of people to my ship," he told the board.

There is no gaming component to the project.

Since the DDRB session was a workshop, no action was taken. The project will have to return for a formal presentation.



Hard Rock

A rendering of a proposed Hard Rock Hotel in Jacksonville.



Hard Rock Tejon

Tejon Indian Tribe Chairman Octavio Escobedo III and Seminole Tribe of Florida Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. participate in the groundbreaking ceremony for an expansion project that will add a 406-room hotel and other additions to Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tejon on Oct. 21 in Mettler, California.

STOF, Tejon Indian Tribe celebrate groundbreaking of expansion project

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Staff Reporter

The partnership between two Native American tribes took the next step in the development of a Hard Rock property in Mettler, California, on Oct. 21.

Seminole Tribe of Florida Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. joined leaders from the Tejon Indian Tribe in a groundbreaking ceremony for the next phase of the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tejon which will add a 406-room hotel and new gaming, dining, spa and resort amenities to the property that is 20 miles south of Bakersfield and 90 miles north of Los Angeles.

"To our partners at Hard Rock International, Chairman Osceola, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, thank you for believing in our vision and helping us bring this to life," Tejon Indian Tribe Chairman Octavio Escobedo III said to the audience. "What we're building here simply isn't about gaming, hospitality, or entertainment; it's about creating the resources to support our Elders, invest in our youth, develop housing, expand education, and strengthen our tribal government. That is what financial sovereignty means to us; not simply generating revenue but having the independence to shape our future on our own terms, and that we are no longer waiting for someone else to define the possibilities of our future."

Hard Rock Tejon's casino opened Nov. 13, 2025. The newest phase – scheduled to open in summer 2028 – is expected to create 1,500 construction jobs and an additional 350 permanent positions, increasing the total number of permanent positions at the venue to more than 1,700.

The expansion will include:

- 406 hotel rooms, including 119 suites
- 900 additional slot machines, bringing the property to 3,000 slots
- Addition of Council Oak Steaks & Seafood
- Two additional dining outlets in The Marketplace
- A new Center Bar
- Multi-use convention and event space, including three smaller meeting and conference rooms, pre-function space and an outdoor event lawn
- Two resort-style pools featuring cabanas and daybeds
- Rock Spa, featuring 13 treatment rooms.

Hard Rock wins Land-Based Operator of the Year award

FROM PRESS RELEASE

LAS VEGAS — Hard Rock International was named winner of the Land-Based Operator of the Year award at the 2026 Global Gaming Awards on Sept. 28 in Las Vegas.

The award recognized Hard Rock's exceptional growth and operational excellence over the past 12 months. Highlights included the successful opening of Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Ottawa, Hard Rock's first fully integrated resort in Canada; and continued progress at Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tejon, which completed phase one of development in Kern County, California, in November 2025.

Looking ahead, Hard Rock continues to advance several transformative projects, including the iconic Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Las Vegas featuring a new 42-story guitar-shaped hotel tower on the Strip; Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Athens, the company's landmark integrated resort development in one of Europe's premier gateway cities; and Hard Rock at Metropolitan Park in Queens, New York, in partnership with Steve Cohen.

"We're honored to once again be recognized by the Global Gaming Awards Americas. This recognition demonstrates how Hard Rock has built an unmatched gaming experience rooted in 55 years of music heritage and motivates us to keep raising the bar for our valued guests around the world," said Jeff Hook, chief operating officer at Hard Rock International, in a press release.



Hard Rock

Hard Rock International is presented the Land-Based Operator of the Year award at the Global Gaming Awards on Sept. 28 in Las Vegas. From left to right are Rick Arpin, KPMG; Jeff Hook, Hard Rock International chief operating officer; Sean Caffery, Hard Rock International president of Casino Development and chief of staff; Kathleen McLaughlin, Novomatic; and Mariya Savova, Global Gaming Awards.

Hard Rock International was runner-up in two Global Gaming Awards categories: Responsible Business of the Year, recognizing the scale of Hard Rock's responsible gaming and social impact work; and Property of the Year for Hard Rock Casino Tejon, developed in partnership with the Tejon Indian Tribe, which opened last fall and features 150,000 square feet of gaming space. The company also was shortlisted for awards in categories including Digital Operator for Hard Rock Bet and Customer Loyalty Program for Unity by Hard Rock.



Hard Rock Tejon

Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. speaks at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tejon expansion groundbreaking in California.



Hard Rock Tejon

A rendering of the expansion project that includes a 406-room hotel.





ATTK works to improve Smithsonian traveling exhibit about stereotypes

BY TARA BACKHOUSE
Curator

A Smithsonian traveling exhibit called "Americans" is currently making its way around Florida.

This exhibit confronts Indigenous stereotypes that are widespread in United States culture through products we use, holidays we celebrate and sporting teams we support, to name but a few ways. When the exhibition tour around the state was being planned, Florida Humanities Council, in partnership with Florida State University, reached out to the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum and the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida. They had noticed that the exhibit didn't talk much about the indigenous people in Florida and they wanted our help to change this.

For several months, representatives from the Seminole Tribe of Florida worked with representatives from the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida to remedy this situation. Together we designed a brochure that goes along with the exhibit, as well as a banner that greets people when they enter the exhibit. Both pieces of collateral introduce the two federally recognized tribes that are here in Florida. They share some history and traditions and have contemporary and historic images. With these additions, visitors will not only be able to contemplate the messages of the exhibit, but they will also learn that indigenous people are a large part of contemporary Florida.

If you'd like to see the exhibit, you have several options from now until the spring of 2027:

Okeechobee Historical Society, Okeechobee Fl – October 17–December 5, 2026

Edison & Ford Winter Estates, Fort Myers, FL – December 12, 2026-February 6, 2027

Sacred Lands Preservation & Education, St. Petersburg, Fl – Feb 13-April 10, 2027

Historic St. Andrews Waterfront Partnership, Panama City, Fl – April 17 – June 5, 2027

At the opening of the Americans exhibit in Okeechobee, the museum hosted an informational table at the festivities. The Historical Society also organized Seminole craft and food vendors from the Brighton community as well as the Miccosukee communities.



Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

This collaboratively produced banner is on display alongside the "Americans" exhibit in the Historic Okeechobee Courthouse until Dec. 5.

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



Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

Joseph Gilbert at the museum's booth in Okeechobee at the "Americans" opening event.

History Ft. Lauderdale to feature Seminole photographs and artifacts

STAFF REPORT

FORT LAUDERDALE — Presenting "Seminole Modern: Photographs and Artifacts from a Changing Florida," the New River Inn History Museum in downtown Ft. Lauderdale will run an exhibit in honor of Native American Heritage Month in November.

The collection is a visual narrative spanning two decades of tribal contributions to the region and will feature free-to-view black and white, color, and colorized photographs in addition to artwork and artifacts. Samples of traditional, vibrant patchwork fabrics and Native dresses will be displayed. The collection features objects and visual media of the Seminole Tribe of Florida from History Fort Lauderdale's archive spanning the 1950s and 1960s.

"To appreciate the present, we must understand our shared past. History Fort Lauderdale is deeply grateful for the cultural contributions and support of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, and it is an honor to present this notable exhibit honoring their legacy," Patricia Zeiler, executive director of History Fort Lauderdale, said in a press release. "This year's Native American Heritage Month exhibit visually illustrates how our indigenous ancestors have flourished and impacted Florida's ecological, economic, and cultural landscape during the mid-century period."

History Fort Lauderdale is open seven days a week from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. with docent guided tours, daily at 1, 2 and 3 p.m. Group walking tours are available upon special request. Admission is $15 for adults; $12 for seniors and $7 for students (through age 22 with a valid student ID). Admission is free for museum members, military and children ages six and under. For more information, call (954) 463-4431 or visit historyfortlauderdale.org.



History Fort Lauderdale

Seminole woman sewing, circa 1950s.



History Fort Lauderdale

One of the photos that is part of the History Fort Lauderdale exhibit in November.

AIAC runs Nov. 6-7 at museum's festival grounds

STAFF REPORT

BIG CYPRESS — The Seminole Tribe of Florida' Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum will host the annual American Indigenous Arts Celebration (AIAC) on Nov. 6 and Nov. 7 at the museum's festival grounds on the Big Cypress Reservation. The event will run from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on both days and admission and parking are complimentary. The festival showcases Native arts, culture and heritage.

The event will also be a final opportunity for visitors to see the museum exhibit space before it undergoes an extensive 18-month redesign project.

The celebration features a grand entry powwow led by Seminole Medicine Man Bobby Henry and tribal dignitaries, Native drummers, dancers, and hoop dance performers. The schedule also includes Pharaoh's Wildlife Kingdom critter show, alligator wrestling with Billy Walker, a hoop dance competition, Native fashion showcase, live painting demonstration by Seminole artist Elgin Jumper, and opportunities to meet Miss Florida Seminole Serena Zepeda and Junior Miss Seminole Dahlia Sanders.

During AIAC, admission will be free to the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, home to a collection of Seminole history and culture.

ARTIFACT OF THE MONTH

November 2026



Figure 1. Top view of beads

These beads are made from animal long bone shafts. The ends of the artifacts are mostly fragmented by nature, but some of the ends are smooth, showing where the maker sectioned off a piece of bone to make the bead. The center of the bone is cleaned out leaving it smooth on the inside so that string could be looped through. Seminole women wore necklaces made of heavy coiled beads weighing up to ten to fifteen pounds or more as part of the traditional Seminole dress. Seminole men also wore beads woven into traditional clothing like belts and garters with colorful patterns and designs (Skinner 1913).

Beads come in a variety of other shapes and sizes. They can be spherical, disc-shaped or whatever the maker desires. One example are the spheroid or discoid stone "seed" beads also found in Florida which come in sizes well under a millimeter in diameter (Glowacki 2012). How beads are made is up to the maker's intention. They can also be colored and additionally shaped with more intricate decoration, though the artifacts in this case show no outside design. The choice in material may give us clues of the intentions of the maker. Bone is a common material used to make a variety of other pieces of jewelry like pendants and rings. Bone can even be used to make tools. Other beads have been made using materials like wood, stone, shell, glass, ceramic, and metal.

Interestingly, beads are found in archaeological sites throughout the world. They are also widely exchanged as a trade good- further increasing their mobility and use. These artifacts tell us a lot about cultures because they carry special meaning dealing with ideas like luxury, wealth and concepts of beauty. Beads can be used for personal adornment or in tapestries and other decorative works. They are as versatile as they are beautiful.

In the past, like December 2018, beads have been the spotlight of the THPO's artifact of the month. This month's artifact was chosen because the source material makes it stand out. We believe that these artifacts are a set of five beads made from bone, though there is no way to be sure. It's possible that this was the standard bead before European contact. Today bone is a material we find less commonly.

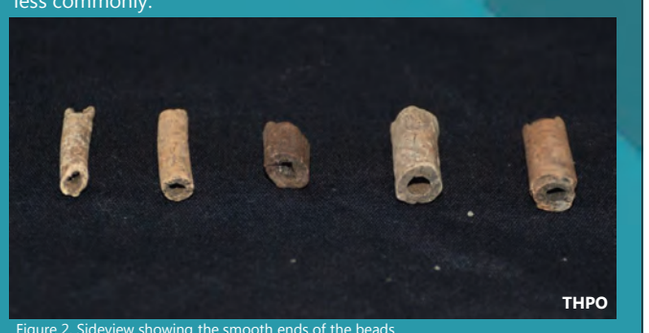


Figure 2. Sideview showing the smooth ends of the beads

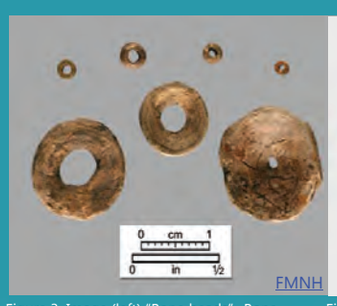


Figure 3. Image (left) "Bone beads"- Bone beads from Fountain of Youth Site in St. Augustine dated 1000-1550 period (FMNH 2026).



Figure 4. Image (right) "Glass beads"- Glass beads from Fountain of Youth site in St. Augustine but dated 1560-1570 period (FMNH 2026).

"Bone beads, Timucua". Florida Museum of Natural History Historical Archaeology Program, Gainesville. https://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/histarch/blog/artifact/097-bone-beads/

"Glass beads". Florida Museum of Natural History Historical Archaeology Program, Gainesville. https://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/histarch/blog/artifact/101-glass-beads/

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SEMINOLE HISTORY STORIES - NOVEMBER 2026

GIVING THANKS

Thanksgiving has been a cornerstone of colonizer mythology for centuries, telling a story about how the Pilgrims celebrated after struggling to survive in a place that was new to them. Of course, Indigenous people have a role in the story as guests invited to give thanks alongside the intruders. While there are kernels of truth woven into this myth – the local Wampanoag were on peaceful terms with the colonizers and may have been involved in feasts with them – the fact is that traditions of giving thanks among Indigenous people of the Americas has a long and deep history that continues to this day. The first Thanksgiving in North America did not involve colonizers. It happened thousands of years before colonizers and was entirely Indigenous in origin.

It's true that most societies throughout history, including those of Europeans, have had celebrations that give thanks, but in America, colonizers attempted to displace Indigenous traditions with their own. Traditions of showing respect for resources and giving thanks existed for millennia among Indigenous groups before the arrival of Europeans and formed an important part of Indigenous culture. The story of colonizer Thanksgiving also celebrates settler survival without acknowledging the important ways that Indigenous people ensured the survival of the colonizers – sharing knowledge and resources vital to existence in North America. In fact, all those foods that are associated with colonizer Thanksgiving – pumpkin, turkey, corn, potatoes, cranberries, etc. – were domesticated by Indigenous people in the Americas, not by colonizers. So, next time someone talks about the "first" Thanksgiving, remind them that it was Indigenous people and not the Pilgrims that celebrated it.



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

Artwork: A Timucuan Family welcoming each other, by Bobby C. Martin (Muskogee Nation)
From the *Visualizing Indigenous Florida* Project.

Health

Cold, flu, COVID or RSV? How to tell and when to call

SUBMITTED BY TERESA SNOW
Health Contributor

Linda woke up Tuesday with a scratchy throat and a stuffy nose. By lunch, her grandson Marcus had a cough too. By supper, she ached all over and felt hot to the touch.

She stood in the kitchen holding a mug of tea, wondering. Is this just a cold? Is it the flu?

Could it be COVID again? And with Marcus only 18 months old, should she worry about RSV?

If you have ever stood in that same kitchen, this one is for you.

Four Bugs That Look Alike

Cold, flu, COVID, and RSV are all viruses. They all go after your nose, throat, and lungs. That is why they look so much alike at first. Here is how each one usually acts.

A cold creeps in slowly. You get a runny nose, sneezing, and a sore throat. Most adults do not run a fever. You feel lousy, but you can still get through your day.

The flu hits hard and fast. One hour you feel fine. The next, you have a fever, chills, and body aches, and you can barely lift your head. Many people say it feels like a truck ran them over. COVID can look like a cold or like the flu. Some people lose their sense of taste or smell, which is a strong clue. The only way to know for sure is a test.

RSV acts like a cold in most healthy adults. It can turn serious for babies and older adults.

Listen for wheezing, a whistling sound when someone breathes.

Here is the honest truth. Even doctors cannot always tell these apart just by looking at you. A home COVID test can help. Your clinic can test for flu and RSV too.

Why Knowing the Difference Helps

Knowing which bug you have changes what you do next. Medicine for flu works best when you start it within two days of feeling sick. COVID medicine works best within five days. Wait too long, and those medicines may not help as much.

Some people need to move faster than others. According to the CDC, people at higher risk include adults 65 and older, children under 2, pregnant women, and people with weak immune systems or long-term health problems. Diabetes, heart disease, and lung problems all count. If that sounds like you or someone in your home, call your clinic on the first day you feel sick.

Call your clinic if a fever hangs on for more than three days. Call if you start to feel better, then suddenly feel worse. That second wave can mean a new problem, like pneumonia, which is an infection deep in the lungs.

Call 911 or go to the emergency room right away for:

- Trouble breathing, or breathing very fast
- Chest pain or pressure that will not go away
- Confusion, or being very hard to wake up
- Lips or face turning blue or gray
- A baby who will not drink or has far fewer wet diapers

That is a lot to hold in your head when you already feel awful. Take a breath. Most of the time, rest, fluids, and a little patience carry you through.

What To Do

- Stay home while you are sick. Go back to your normal routine once you feel better overall and your fever has been gone a full day without fever medicine.
- Keep a few home COVID tests in your cabinet. Check the dates on the box now, so you are not stuck with old tests on the night you need one.
- Drink plenty of water, broth, or warm tea all day long. Fluids help your body fight back and keep you from drying out.
- For five days after you go back out, wear a mask around others and wash your hands often. You can still spread the virus even when you feel better.
- Keep sick family members away from babies and elders when you can. If you care for them, wash your hands before and after you help.
- Write down the day and time your symptoms started. Your clinic will ask, and the answer decides which medicine can still help.

You Have Got This

Colds, flu, COVID, and RSV come knocking every fall. That does not mean you have to guess in the dark. You know the signs now. You know who needs extra care, and you know when to pick up the phone.

Here is your one job this week. Grab an index card and write down your tribal health clinic's number and your nearest after-hours or urgent care number. Tape it inside a kitchen cabinet door. The next time someone in your home gets sick at 2 a.m., you will be ready.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Respiratory Illnesses guidance, cdc.gov/respiratory/viruses.



Calvin Tiger

Walkers gather at the start of the annual Tracy Braford Miles of Meaning 5K Walk on Oct. 10 at Hard Rock Support Services in Davie.

Walking with meaning at Hard Rock Support Services

BY CALVIN TIGER
Staff Reporter

DAVIE — The 3rd annual Tracy Bradford Miles of Meaning 5k Walk took place on the grounds of Hard Rock Support Services building in Davie on Oct. 10. Families, friends, and team members from Hard Rock Support Services, Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino Hollywood, Seminole Classic Casino, and Seminole Casino Coconut Creek participated in the walk. The event is dedicated to cancer awareness and support, and coincides with Hard Rock's Pinktober campaign for breast cancer awareness throughout the world.

All proceeds from the walk benefit the American Cancer Society. Bradford is president of Hard Rock Support Services.

The following week, Seminole Gaming team members joined the South Florida community for the American Cancer Society's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk at Amerant Bank Arena in Plantation on Oct.17. The noncompetitive 3-to-5 mile walk brought together breast cancer survivors, individuals living with metastatic breast cancer, caregivers, families, and supporters.



Calvin Tiger

Walkers at the start of the Tracy Bradford Miles of Meaning 5K Walk on Oct. 10 in Davie.

FWC reports two panther fatalities

FROM PRESS RELEASE

The FWC has updated the Panther Pulse web page with mortality information through Oct. 15.

The remains of a 4-month-old female Florida panther were collected on Oct.15, on CR833 in Hendry County. The suspected cause of death is vehicle collision.

An injured 9-month-old female Florida panther was rescued on Sept. 20 with injuries consistent with a vehicle collision on County Line Rd. in Collier County. She had been undergoing treatment and rehabilitation but unfortunately due to complications from her injuries, was humanely euthanized on Oct. 7.

After the update, another panther fatality was reported Oct. 23 on Russell Boulevard in Collier County, bringing the total number of known fatalities to 15 in 2026.

Webinar focuses on how to protect Florida wildlife corridor

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

Since wildlife doesn't stop moving at the borders of the Florida Wildlife Corridor, communities need a plan to share the landscape as the human population grows.

A webinar held by 1000 Friends of Florida, "Beyond the Corridor: Transect Planning and Connectivity," was held Sept. 23 and addressed the issue of growth in areas of diverse habitats from wilderness to urban areas.

The webinar focused on protecting the 18-million-acre Florida Wildlife Corridor, which runs from southwest Florida to the Panhandle, and featured leading experts in conservation. The corridor consists of forests, rivers, ranches and farms that connect the Everglades to the Georgia and Alabama borders.

The expert speakers were Isabella Guttuso Browne (UF Center for Landscape Conservation Planning), Galina Tachieva (DPZ Architecture and Planning), Jay Exum (Exum Associates), and Kylie Paul (Center for Large Landscape Conservation).

The experts classify land into six zones including wilderness, rural, sub-urban, general urban, urban center and urban core. The gist of the seminar was that humans and wildlife are part of one ecosystem and need to coexist in balance.

They voiced plans and ideas about bridging the zones for biodiversity and quality of life for all those that inhabit the landscape, animal and human alike. Ideas included creating compact, walkable, mixed-use communities to avoid sprawl in urban areas and planning around natural systems.

The speakers agreed that conservation emphasizes the importance of unimpeded movement of wildlife, which is essential for healthy ecosystems. But that can be severely disrupted by unchecked human development. Strategies for local governments, who control the majority of non-federal land, should include mapping various habitats, protecting key areas and promoting smart growth.

Key themes of the webinar were the importance of wildlife crossings and the need for more federal funding. Florida is a leader in implementing the crossings using both purpose-built structures and existing culverts and bridges.

Environmental planning that is sensitive to both urban and wilderness areas can minimize the human footprint on the ecosystem and create thriving environments for people and wildlife, while conserving natural resources like the Florida Wildlife Corridor.

Tyler Henry's 'An Evening Of Hope and Healing' coming to Hard Rock Live

FROM PRESS RELEASE

HOLLYWOOD — Tyler Henry's "An Evening Of Hope and Healing" is coming to Hard Rock Live at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood on Jan. 24, 2027, at 8 p.m. For tickets visit myHRL.com.

Henry's goal has always been to aid in the grief process and provide comfort and healing through his one-on-one private readings, his shows, his books, his live events, and his virtual app. With over 750k people currently on his wait-list, Henry has taken a great deal of time to figure out the best ways to connect with his community.

Henry has two top 10 Netflix series: "Live From the Other Side" and "Life After Death with Tyler Henry." Henry is also a best-selling author with books about his journey of discovery and growth, and a study in spirituality harkening back hundreds to thousands of years.

Health partnership focuses on early ID of sepsis

FROM PRESS RELEASE

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) announced Oct. 27 a new partnership with the Indian Health Service (IHS) to strengthen the early identification and management of sepsis in IHS emergency care facilities. Together, the agencies will launch a quality improvement initiative designed around the needs, resources, cultural values and traditions of American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

AHRQ and the Indian Health Service (IHS) are partnering on a three-year initiative to strengthen the early identification and management of sepsis in IHS emergency care facilities serving American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

The initiative marks a milestone following three years of consultation with American Indians and Alaska Natives. The partnership builds on that engagement by combining AHRQ's expertise in evidence-based healthcare improvement with IHS's experience providing care in American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

Sepsis is the body's extreme response to an infection and can quickly become life-threatening. Early recognition and treatment are critical. IHS has identified a need to strengthen its ability to diagnose and manage sepsis across its network of facilities, many of which are in rural or remote locations where access to specialty expertise and other resources may be limited.



SEMINOLE SCENES



World Affairs Council Miami

GLOBAL PROGRAM: In September, Cheyenne Kippenberger, right, attended a program at Miami Dade College that featured Gitanas Nauseda, president of Lithuania, left. "Lithuania: A Contributor to the U.S. Global Role" featured a foreign policy address by Nauseda. He also held a discussion with college representatives and Aaron Rosen, president and founder of World Affairs Council Miami, an organization which Kippenberger serves as a director. The independent, nonprofit is a center for public education on world affairs in Miami.



STOFI

BOARD WORKSHOP: In October, directors from across the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc. Board's businesses came together for a directors' development workshop focused on strengthening leadership, encouraging collaboration, and sharing valuable insights. The workshop provided an opportunity to exchange ideas, build stronger connections, and explore ways to improve operations across the board's businesses. From left to right are Brighton Board Rep. Bryan Arledge, Board Executive Director of Finance Erum Motiwala, Big Cypress Board Rep. Nadine Bowers, Board Executive Director of Operations Jeffrey Reeder, President Holly Tiger and Hollywood Board Rep. O'Hara Tommie.



Courtesy photos (2)

DISNEY DISPLAY: Above, tribal employee Nigel Sankar, of the Information Technology Department, visited Epcot on Oct. 23 and was delighted to see this exhibit of Seminole artifacts from the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum in the American Heritage Gallery. Below, the exhibit includes a beaded necklace and hairpiece by Linda Beletso. The Creating Tradition exhibit began in 2018 and is a collaborative effort between the museum and Disney. The display rotates items periodically. The current display will be there until the end of March 2027.





Courtesy photo

PINK IN BC: The Big Cypress community held its annual Indigenous Pink Out Photo on Oct. 15 that coincides with Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Participants wore pink and gathered in front of the Frank Billie Field Office. The photo gathering is organized by Big Cypress Integrative Health.



TCD

AERIAL VIEW OF PROGRESS: Here's a view from the sky on Oct. 14 of the new Senior Center being built on the Hollywood Reservation.



Kevin Johnson

WALK WORK: A worker smoothes over concrete on Oct. 8 during installation of a new sidewalk near the entrance to Big Cypress New Testament Baptist Church on the Big Cypress Reservation. New sidewalks are being installed throughout the reservation along Josie Billie Highway.





Kevin Johnson (3)

FESTIVE FALL: Tribal administration buildings throughout the tribe are in the fall spirit with colorful lobby displays, including in Hollywood, left; Big Cypress, center; and Brighton, right.

NATIONAL NATIVE NEWS

Cherokee Federal Company awarded $99M contract to strengthen U.S. Navy fleet readiness

TULSA — Cherokee Nation Government Solutions, a Cherokee Federal company, has been awarded a $99.3 million, five-and-a-half-year contract through a competitive small business set-aside under the SeaPort-NxG contract vehicle. The award will support the readiness of protective and life-support equipment that U.S. Navy Sailors depend on to perform their missions safely and effectively.

The company will support the Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division (NSWC PCD) and fleet organizations worldwide, ensuring critical equipment is properly maintained, tested and ready when and where it's needed.

Cherokee Federal is the federal contracting division of Cherokee Nation Businesses — the economic engine of Cherokee Nation.

"When a Sailor's safety depends on the equipment we support, there's no room for error," said Tom Watson, president of Cherokee Federal, in a press release. "Our team brings the technical skill and discipline to keep that equipment ready, wherever the fleet needs it. We are honored to have the opportunity to support this important mission to help keep our Sailors safe."

The work supports the readiness and sustainment of critical equipment throughout its lifecycle, from inventory and maintenance to deployment and operational use. Cherokee Federal will provide integrated program management, logistics, asset sustainment, equipment inspection and repair, warehousing, kitting, distribution and global field support.

The contract encompasses a broad range of mission-critical equipment, including chemical, biological and radiological defense equipment; personal protective equipment; damage-control and firefighting systems; anti-terrorism afloat systems; and life-support systems. Cherokee Federal will support the inspection, fitting, testing, repair, tracking and distribution processes required to keep these assets ready for operational use.

- From press release

California sues to stop National Archives closure that tribes say came without warning

The state of California filed a federal lawsuit against the National Archives and Records Administration on Oct. 14 seeking to keep open a facility whose closure was abruptly announced with no tribal, state or local consultation.

In late September, the records administration announced the closing of two locations, the San Francisco and Chicago National Archives. Tribal governments depend on the National Archives for records relating to the Bureau of Indian Affairs including enrollment records, land records and deeds, federal boarding school records and more.

"Closing the National Archives at San Francisco … would irreparably harm California and its interests," reads the lawsuit, filed in the U. S. District Court for the Northern District of California. "Indeed, transferring the records … would not only take them away from the communities that rely on them most, but also would risk damage and loss of the items altogether, given their age and fragility. At the very least, transferring the records means they would be inaccessible for an unknown period of time, which could last years, during transit and processing."

California is home to 109 federally recognized tribes.

California's lawsuit asks the court to force the archives to halt the San Francisco facility closure. It was filed the same day as major national Native advocacy organizations slammed the planned closures in a letter sent to the former acting and current archivist of the United States.

Both the San Francisco Archives, which is located in neighboring San Bruno, and Chicago National Archives locations are slated to close at an unspecified date, though records could begin to move to other locations as early as next week, said California Attorney General Rob Bonta during a press conference Wednesday.

The National Archives and Records Administration did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Tribal leaders and historic preservation officers said they've been continuously left in the dark regarding the closures and that they were not consulted on the plans. Since the announced closures, however, the archive administration held two virtual "consultations," one on Oct. 13 and one on Oct. 15.

The virtual tribal consultations were structured more like a "listening session," said Sokaogon Chippewa Community Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Michael LaRonge, who added that a consultation is an important first step, and shouldn't be substituted with a listening session.

LaRonge and others in attendance said they felt that the closure decisions were already finalized.

"I'm getting a lot of non-answers," Fallon Carey, digital archives director for the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition to ICT. "It feels a lot like lip service."

Carey, a citizen of the Cherokee Nation, attended the virtual meeting on Oct. 15.

"I think there's a transparency issue here and there's a lack of trust, from what I gather," Carey said. "Tribal leaders and community members are really concerned."

For communities looking to heal from the trauma of the federal Indian boarding school era, losing access to these records is a major concern, Carey said. Many survivors are elders who don't have the time to wait for the records to become available again or the resources to travel and see them in person before they're inaccessible, she said.

"I have seen it with my own eyes, I've experienced it in my own life. Having access to these records can be deeply healing, having access to your own histories," Carey said.

Both LaRonge and Carey said National Archives leaders agreed to move the Bureau of Indian Affairs records last, but LaRonge said that doesn't change the fact that it is moving.

"[That's] great if you work for a tribe who has funds to send people down there, but we don't," LaRonge said. "They just kept dangling that carrot, like 'Oh, well, if you can just come to the reading room, the research room is open, you can just make an appointment.' But no, I can't… It doesn't feel like a good victory."

Additionally, leaders were told bureau records are not a priority for digitization as they contain private information, LaRonge said.

"You have a responsibility to digitize these records – it's part of your fiduciary responsibility to tribes under treaty law, a right to make those things available to us if we need them, and you're telling us that it's not a priority for you," LaRonge said. "How many times do the tribes have to be told this isn't a priority for us."

LaRonge said the Sokaogon Band submitted a letter to Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker's office to express its concern over the closure. Unlike California, there are no federally recognized tribes within Illinois. The state of Illinois has not filed any lawsuit against the National Archives.

"For Illinois, it feels like the tribes have been kind of left behind," LaRonge said.

Both affected archives locations contain records that could be crucial to federally terminated tribes seeking restoration or unrecognized tribes seeking recognition. In one case, the Chicago National Archives contains documents from the former Green Bay Agency which may be crucial in the ongoing fight to restore the Brothertown Nation of Wisconsin's federal recognition status, Chairwoman Phylis Tousey told ICT. The tribe was federally terminated by an act of Congress in 1839.

- Cal Matters (California)

Arizona and Hopi could see $181M in Biden-era solar grants after courts reverse Trump EPA

WASHINGTON — Arizona and the Hopi Tribe could regain $181 million for solar projects in low-income communities after two federal judges ruled the Trump administration unlawfully rescinded the Biden-era grants.

The Environmental Protection Agency awarded nearly $7 billion in April 2024 under the Solar For All program, part of the Inflation Reduction Act.

The Trump EPA terminated the program in August 2025. Only about $71 million had been disbursed at the time, according to an agency audit, though all of it had already been promised to the 60 or so grantees.

Arizona received $42,000 of its $156.1 million grant, according to federal records on USASpending.gov. The Hopi Tribe received $421,000 out of $25.1 million.

In September, federal judges in the District of Columbia and Rhode Island issued rulings days apart striking down EPA's termination. The rulings could clear the way for restoration of the grants, though neither judge directly ordered they be reinstated.

The EPA said in a statement that it is reviewing the rulings and considering whether to appeal.

The One Big Beautiful Bill, signed July 2025, repealed the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund created by the Inflation Reduction Act and rescinded all unobligated money. The Trump administration argued that the provision covered the unspent Solar for All money.

"EPA no longer has the authority to administer the program or the appropriated funds," EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin said in August 2025, asserting that Congress has provided "clear language and intent" to eliminate the funding.

Both the Rhode Island and D.C. judges disagreed, ruling that because the Biden EPA had promised the $7 billion and issued grant agreements, the funds were "obligated" and not subject to being rescinded under the One Big Beautiful Bill.

The Trump administration's stance "runs contrary to Congress's clear intent that already obligated Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund monies … not be disturbed by the repeal," U.S. District Court Judge Mary McElroy ruled Sept. 18 in the Rhode Island case, brought by the Rhode Island AFL-CIO and others.

McElroy is a Trump appointee.

The second ruling on Sept. 22 upheld a challenge by Harris County, Texas, home of Houston. The county stood to lose $54 million. D.C. District Court Judge Tanya Chutkan, an Obama appointee, also ruled that EPA overstepped its authority.

Arizona wasn't part of the cases in D.C. or Rhode Island but has also challenged the cancellation.

In October 2025, Attorney General Kris Mayes led a coalition of 22 states plus D.C. in a federal lawsuit filed in Washington state. They also argued the EPA was in breach of contract because the $7 billion in grants were already obligated.

That judge dismissed the suit in June on jurisdictional grounds, ruling that a contract dispute with the federal government belongs in the Court of Federal Claims, where Arizona and other states are also challenging the EPA decision. Trial in that case is set for Aug. 8, 2027.

Mayes' office declined to comment on the two recent rulings.

In a court declaration in May, Maren Mahoney, director of the Governor's Office of Resiliency said the state expected the program to help 11,232 moderate- and low-income households save $165 million in electricity costs.

The program would install rooftop solar panels and assist in using solar energy in rural areas not reached by the power grid. It also would provide training to meet increased demand for installers.

The governor's office projected that the grant would reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 96,000 tons per year. Mahoney told the court it would create thousands of green jobs, and allow the state to provide $33 million in loans for rooftop solar.

Nick Torrey, a lawyer at the Southern Environmental Law Center – which represented plaintiffs in the Rhode Island case – said the EPA misinterpreted the law.

"EPA just really got it wrong here," he said. "EPA did the opposite of what Congress was telling it to do. It acted unlawfully."

"They've got the money sitting right there," Torrey added. "It's time to get busy. … It's a real opportunity to provide relief to working families."

Adrianna Amato, spokeswoman for the Governor's Office of Resiliency, said the office was "cautiously optimistic" that the state will receive the funds the EPA promised it in 2024.

In addition to Arizona's $156 million allocation, the EPA granted $25 million to the Hopi Utilities Corporation to provide electricity for about 600 homes on the reservation, 35% of which lack access to electricity, according to a 2023 Department of Energy report.

Mahoney said in her declaration that 15,000 tribal households in Arizona lack any access to electricity.

Fletcher Wilkinson, the energy manager at Hopi Utilities Corporation, said he sees "a long road ahead" before the program can resume.

The corporation had finished planning and was ready to move to execution when the EPA cut off funding, he said.

"It was crushing," Wilkinson said, adding the tribe "has experienced for so long this severe, egregious lack of access to utilities that we take for granted elsewhere."

He pointed to $10.2 million from two other grants – funding earmarked for tribal projects in the Inflation Reduction Act – to expand access to solar power on the reservation.

But he said, that won't go nearly as far as the EPA funds the tribe was promised.

- Cronkite News (Phoenix, Arizona)

Arizona tribal energy summit highlights growing relationships between tribes and Arizona

PHOENIX — A bustling room of tribal leaders, state officials and community members quieted as Hopi Tribe Chairman Lamar Keevama began a prayer in the Hopi language to kick off Arizona's Tribal Energy Summit & Workshop.

Hosted by the Arizona Governor's Office of Resiliency and Arizona Governor's Office of Tribal Relations, the meeting sought to strengthen partnerships between tribal nations and the state. Held on Sept. 22 at the State Capitol Executive Tower, it was the summit's second year.

While last year's summit brought more than 200 participants, this year's group of about 70 allowed for more focused discussions and potential action on energy conservation efforts, community resilience, funding opportunities and disaster management, said Jason Chavez, director of Tribal Affairs for Governor's Office of Tribal Relations.

"The purpose and goal of today is to come together to share our vision for what energy future looks like in the state of Arizona, whether that be within the state, within state trust lands, or county governments or on the 22 tribal lands within the state of Arizona," Chavez said to attendees.

Experts ranging from adjunct professors to directors to group research managers spoke during the panels to share information, insight and possible solutions.

"These events are really important because it brings together people who aren't always in the room together to talk through some of the key issues that are arising and that create barriers to project planning and development," said Maren Mahoney, director of the Arizona Governor's Office of Resiliency.

Energy reliability, community resilience and water management conservation were among the topics discussed.

"Access to water is a critical health issue," said Ginger Sykes Torres, a Navajo Nation member and vice president of resiliency programs for Local First Arizona, a non-profit focused on equitable economic development. "I think we saw during COVID what a critical issue it is for our communities, and like you said, water is integrated so much with our energy systems."

Torres said water management integrated into energy systems could address tribes' water shortages. She said some tribal communities are already putting solar panels over canals, which preserves water and creates electricity needed to pump water to fields.

Gabe Lavine, director of Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs, recognized that each community has different challenges, from migration to emergency planning to power outages.

Another concern for their communities, tribal leaders said, is that they often are not part of solution discussions. In many circumstances of planning, tribal communities do not understand or know what is being planned so they resist the tribal leaders' solutions.

"Nothing happens until the (tribal) council says it happens," Pilar Thomas, adjunct professor at University of Arizona and Arizona State University, said. "So eventually, you have to educate the council on what you're trying to do. But nothing also happens if the community is not for it."

Thomas suggested involving three groups to educate on plans and developments: the tribal government, trusted councils and communities.

Some speakers touched on tensions between the state and tribal nations when it comes to tribal sovereignty. State Sen. Theresa Hatathlie, a Democrat who represents northeastern Arizona, asked why the state of Arizona does not give tax credits for nation-building activities.

"We talk about state and tribal relations in any conversation," Hatathlie said. "The response is we respect sovereignty, which is great, but that doesn't mean that we take a back seat and let the tribal nations flounder trying to ask the right questions."

- Cronkite News (Phoenix, Arizona)

Prediction markets 'undermine' Oklahoma tribal gaming compacts, association says

OKLAHOMA CITY — Prediction markets are infringing on the gaming exclusivity rights and revenue of Oklahoma's tribal nations, a state gaming association said.

Matthew Morgan, chair of the Oklahoma Indian Gaming Association, said prediction markets, which allow people to trade on the outcomes of virtually anything, are undermining the state's existing gaming compacts. Conversations, meanwhile, have stalled in the state Legislature over legalizing sports betting and how tribal exclusivity should fit into that.

"We view sports prediction market apps as undermining the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act and Oklahoma/Tribal State compacts by allowing illegal Class III gaming to infringe upon the sovereignty of Tribal nations, and as undermining revenue streams that are critical to Tribal government programs and services," he said of the association's 25 member tribes.

In exchange for having the exclusive right to offer gaming, Oklahoma tribes that have entered into compacts with the state pay a monthly fee to operate some electronic and table, which are classified as Class III, games. In the 2025 budget year, those fees generated over $221 million in revenue.

A growing number of states though have said the prediction market industry is skirting existing sports gambling regulations. The prediction market companies, such as Kalshi and Polymarket, have spent millions of dollars lobbying at the federal and state levels this year.

The platforms allow people to wager on the outcomes of anything, including the outcomes of sports games and Oklahoma elections, the weather, pop culture and even what Gov. Kevin Stitt would say in his final State of the State address.

Morgan said that while the association is aware that a few of the 575 federally recognized tribes across the nation have signed contracts to offer Kalshi-backed sports prediction markets, none are member tribes of the Oklahoma Indian Gaming Association.

Sen. Bill Coleman, R-Ponca City, said Friday that while he hasn't spoken to tribal nations about this issue, he has had conversations with Kalshi to discuss what other state shares of their transaction fees look like.

"If traditional sports betting comes around in the state of Oklahoma and Kalshi and Polymarket still exist, it'll be competitive and right now the prediction markets have the competitive edge because they're active and the tribes aren't," he said.

Coleman has spent years in the Legislature working to find a consensus to legalize sports betting in Oklahoma. But he said he's not yet sure what regulation of prediction markets could look like in Oklahoma.

"I think we're just gonna have to wait and see this go through the court system and see what the Supreme Court's final ruling would be," Coleman said. "Whether or not the predictions markets can continue as they are, or will they need to be changed or regulated or just made illegal."

Coleman said he's concerned about young people being able to use prediction markets before they're 21 years old.

But because prediction markets seem to be a federal issue, not many state lawmakers have expressed interest in regulating them, he said.

"I don't know what we as a state can do to legislate the prediction markets," Coleman said.

Tarek Mansour, CEO of Kalshi, in September wrote in an open letter that tribal gaming has generated record revenue alongside the growth of prediction markets.

"The reason is that these are fundamentally different products serving different kinds of economic activity," he wrote. "Tribal gaming is a destination and hospitality experience. Prediction markets are digital financial exchanges where participants trade positions on future events. One does not need to displace the other."

Among the tribal groups that have launched Kalshi-backed prediction markets are the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana, the Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town based in Wetumka, Oklahoma, the Greenville Rancheria in California, the economic development arm of the federally recognized Kletsel Dehe Wintun Nation in California and the Alturas Indian Rancheria in California, according to a Kalshi news release.

The Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town on [Oct. 6] denied a connection to Kalshi.

Jacki McGavick, a Kalshi spokesperson, said prediction markets fall under exclusive federal jurisdiction and Kalshi is always willing to "engage constructively" with lawmakers.

- Oklahoma Voice

Standing Rock Sioux Tribe files lawsuit to shut down Dakota Access Pipeline

The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe on Oct. 9 filed a new lawsuit to try to shut down the Dakota Access oil pipeline, continuing a decadelong battle over the project.

The tribe filed the case in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia against the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration and three federal officials of those agencies. The lawsuit seeks to overturn the Army Corps' May record of decision granting an easement for the pipeline's river crossing upstream of the tribe's reservation, among other actions.

"For ten years, Standing Rock's concerns about this pipeline have not changed, and for ten years we have fought to protect our water, our Treaty rights, and our people," Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Chairman Steve Sitting Bear said in a statement. "The Army Corps has now chosen to move forward without addressing those concerns. Until this pipeline is shut down, we will continue to defend what generations before us protected for our children."

In 2016 and 2017, thousands of people gathered near the project's Missouri River crossing to demonstrate against the pipeline, which the tribe views as a threat to its water supply from a potential rupture.

In 2020, a federal judge ordered a more rigorous environmental review of the pipeline's river crossing. In May, the Army Corps issued its record of decision granting the crucial easement for the pipeline, which has continuously operated since mid-2017.

The tribe said the final environmental impact statement issued by the Army Corps in December 2025 does not resolve issues surrounding the safety of the pipeline, spill response, threats to the tribe's sole source for drinking water, treaty rights and the federal government's obligations to the tribe.

The tribe also expressed concerns about the pipeline potentially increasing capacity to 1.1 million barrels of oil per day which the tribe said would change operational risks related to spill volume and emergency shutdown, according to court papers.

"We should not have to live with unanswered questions about the safety of our water," Sitting Bear said.

The pipeline transports an average of 500,000 to 525,000 barrels of oil per day from North Dakota's Bakken oil field to Illinois. The environmental review considered a capacity of up to 1.1 million barrels per day. The pipeline's operational capacity is 750,000 barrels per day, North Dakota Pipeline Authority Director Justin Kringstad said.

The federal pipeline safety agency declined to comment on the lawsuit. Officials with the Army Corps and pipeline developer Energy Transfer did not return emails seeking comment Oct. 9.

State and industry officials have said the pipeline is safe and needed infrastructure for transporting oil from North Dakota, the No. 3 oil-producing state in the U.S. Energy Transfer has said the pipeline is among the safest in the world, complies with regulations and crosses at least 95 feet below the riverbed.

The tribe argues a spill would threaten the health and welfare of the Standing Rock community. The lawsuit also seeks to rescind the federal pipeline safety agency's approvals of spill response plans, and block the transport of oil through the river section until spill response plans meet federal law, according to court documents.

"The Tribe files this action to require the defendant agencies to respect the Treaty rights and sovereignty of the Tribe and to protect the waters of the Missouri River and the ancestors resting at the water's edge," the tribe said in court papers.

In 2024, Standing Rock filed a federal lawsuit against the Army Corps over its ongoing environmental review. In 2025, a judge dismissed the case. The tribe appealed, but dropped its appeal earlier this year.

Other court cases still linger in connection with the protests, including Energy Transfer's lawsuit against several Greenpeace organizations and a Dutch lawsuit brought by Greenpeace International against the pipeline developer.

Last month, tribal citizens, council members and others who were at the protests attended a first-time renewable energy event at Standing Rock and reflected on the decade since the demonstrations and how they have moved forward, despite not blocking the pipeline.

- North Dakota Monitor

SOUTH FLORIDA'S ULTIMATE ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATION



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NOV 8
DANY OME AND KEVINCITO EL 13



NOV 10
IL VOLO



NOV 12
STARS & STRINGS



NOV 13
O.A.R.



NOV 15
UB40



NOV 18
LINDSEY STIRLING



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Education



B

Ahfachkee gets into the Red Ribbon Week spirit

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Founded in 1985, the annual national Red Ribbon campaign aims to educate youth on the importance of living a drug-free life.

Red Ribbon Week was founded after Enrique (Kiki) S. Camarena, a special agent in the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, was kidnapped and murdered while investigating a massive drug trafficking operation in Mexico. After his death, a program was created in his California hometown that emphasized drug-free living and featured red ribbons. It eventually grew into the national Red Ribbon Week campaign of today.

The Ahfachkee School took the message of the 2026 campaign, "Make a Difference. Be A Hero. Stay Drug Free." to encourage students to get creative by decorating the doors of their classrooms.

Ahfachkee invited Big Cypress Council Office assistants Cheyenne Billie and Heather Billie, Center for Behavioral Health Native Connections Program Manager Shamecca Dean and Miss Florida Seminole Serena Zepeda to judge the doors Oct. 23.

The group examined each door carefully and made notes as they judged them for creativity and originality, theme, materials and visual appeal. Any 3D elements earned extra points for the classroom.

The doors were bright and colorful and some featured the students' faces as comic book superheroes. Sayings on the doors included "Fly High Without Drugs," "Say No City" had a graphic of a city with images Spiderman on the buildings, "Show Your Hero Spirit, Be Drug Free."

The elementary School winner was Lynette White's third grade classroom 1-216; the middle and high school winner was Leandra Roberts' classroom 4-209. The winning classes each earned a pizza party as a tasty reward.

The Red Ribbon Week, held annually from October 23-31, is the nation's oldest and largest drug use prevention program. It is an opportunity for parents, educators and communities to present a unified commitment to a drug-free future.

See RED RIBBON on page 3B



Beverly Bidney

Miss Florida Seminole Serena Zepeda poses with a third grade class during Red Ribbon Week at the Ahfachkee School in Big Cypress.



Calvin Tiger

Orange was the theme for Hollywood Preschool's reading event Sept. 30.

Hollywood Preschool dons orange for book event

STAFF REPORT

BIG CYPRESS — In recognition of National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, the Hollywood Preschool hosted a live reading of book "Today is Orange Shirt Day" narrated by Kajir Harriott, Tribal Education Student and Professional Development Success Coach on Sept. 30.

Preschool staff and students wore orange t-shirts in honor of National Day of Truth and Reconciliation. The book, written by Phyllis Webstad, honors residential school survivors, their families, and the children who did not return home. The book also teaches that every child matters, historical awareness, cultural pride, and inclusivity.



Calvin Tiger

The Education Department's Kajir Harriott reads "Today is Orange Shirt Day" to the preschoolers.



Calvin Tiger

Abel Reyes shows he's proud to wear his orange shirt.

NIEA names new board

STAFF REPORT

The National Indian Education Association announced its new board of directors in October.

They are:

- President: Dr. Sylvia Hussey
- First Vice President: Rachel Watson
- Second Vice President: Mischa Jackson
- Treasurer: Kimberly Daingkau-Begay
- Secretary: Lydia Ruth Mansfield
- Parliamentarian: Alicia Begolin
- Ombudsperson: Dr. Lori V. Quigley

"We're grateful for their willingness to serve and the time and care they dedicate to NIEA's mission of Native control of Native education," the association posted on Facebook.



Glades County superintendent earns runner-up for national honor

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

Dr. Alice Beth Barfield, superintendent of public schools for Glades County, received national recognition in October at the National Association of School Superintendents annual conference in Oceanside, California. Barfield earned runner-up for the Superintendent of the Year award and she won two other honors.

The association named Thomas Scarice, superintendent in Westport, Connecticut, as its Superintendent of the Year.

Barfield earned the only finalist spot as runner-up. The association praised Barfield, noting that she "…has transformed outcomes and expanded possibility in Glades County through sustained, student-centered leadership. In five years, the district rose from Florida's lowest designation to an A rating, graduation reached 90 percent, career and technical offerings grew, teacher compensation improved, and students gained access to an associate-degree pathway. Her record reflects the persistence, adaptability, and belief in community that define an exemplary superintendent."

She received congratulations in Florida, too.

"Being named a finalist for the 2026 NASS Superintendent of the Year is a well-deserved recognition of her commitment to improving student achievement, expanding educational opportunities and serving the students and families of Glades County," Congressman Scott Franklin posted on Facebook.

"To be recognized among exceptional superintendents from across this nation is an extraordinary honor," Barfield said on Facebook. "Being named Runner-Up for National Superintendent of the Year is something I will treasure for the rest of my life. For our small, rural district, this is big. It brings national recognition to the work happening in Glades County classrooms every day to our students' achievements, our educators' dedication, and a community that believes in its children. I could not be prouder to carry our district's name onto that stage!"

Barfield returned with additional awards. She was named category winner in Finesse & Agility (understanding and managing responses to differing needs, expectations and viewpoints) and Power Leadership (demonstrating overall leadership excellence in a district of less than 2,500 students).

PECS second graders earn fun reward

STAFF REPORT

BRIGHTON — A group of Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School second grade bookworms celebrated their reading progress with a trip to the Brighton skate park Oct. 16. Students who met their first nine-week Accelerated Reader goal for books read were rewarded with the fun day on skates and skateboards.

Students in all grade levels are required to earn a certain amount of AR points during each nine-week grading period. Points are earned by reading books and then taking and passing a test for comprehension of those books.

PECS began the AR Points Club this year to encourage students to read books, reach reading goals and earn incentive rewards. The program aims to make reading fun for students through rewards which include pencils, stickers, bookmarks, temporary tattoos, bracelets, candy, T-shirts, book nook tokens, a stuffed book buddy and more candy. There will be an end of the year field trip for students who earn 250 AR points.



Jacob Colon

A PECS second grader gets ready to scoot down the ramp at the skate park.



Jacob Colon

Standout readers from PECS second grades and the staff enjoy their fun day which included games in the recreation gym on Oct. 16.



Jacob Colon

PECS second graders have fun on scooters and skateboards during their reward trip to the colorful Brighton skate park Oct. 16.

Hollywood Preschool's Halloween



Calvin Tiger

A young "police officer" receives treats during the Hollywood Preschool Halloween on Oct. 28.



Calvin Tiger

Abel Reyes has got Elmo's attention.



Calvin Tiger

Nokaiyah Osceola becomes friends with Cookie Monster.



Calvin Tiger

Joe Kippenberger hands out small toys to the preschoolers.

✦ RED RIBBON

From page 1B



Beverly Bidney

From left to right, judges Cheyenne Billie, Miss Florida Seminole Serena Zepeda, Heather Billie and Shamecca Dean mark down their scores for an Ahfachkee elementary school door decorated for Red Ribbon Week.



Calvin Tiger (2)

At left, Natalia Lang, and, at right, Amber Billie and Vanessa Golaub participate in craft events at the Hollywood Red Ribbon Week celebration on Oct. 28 at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center.



Beverly Bidney

The winning Ahfachkee elementary school door, which belonged to the creative minds in Lynette White's third grade class.



Calvin Tiger

Determined staff battle in a tug-of-war at the Hollwyood Red Ribbon celebration.



Calvin Tiger

Devonte Steve works on a project during the Hollwyood Red Ribbon celebration.

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Halloween 2026



Jacob Colon

Curmaya Smith 'clowns' around at the Immokalee Halloween event.



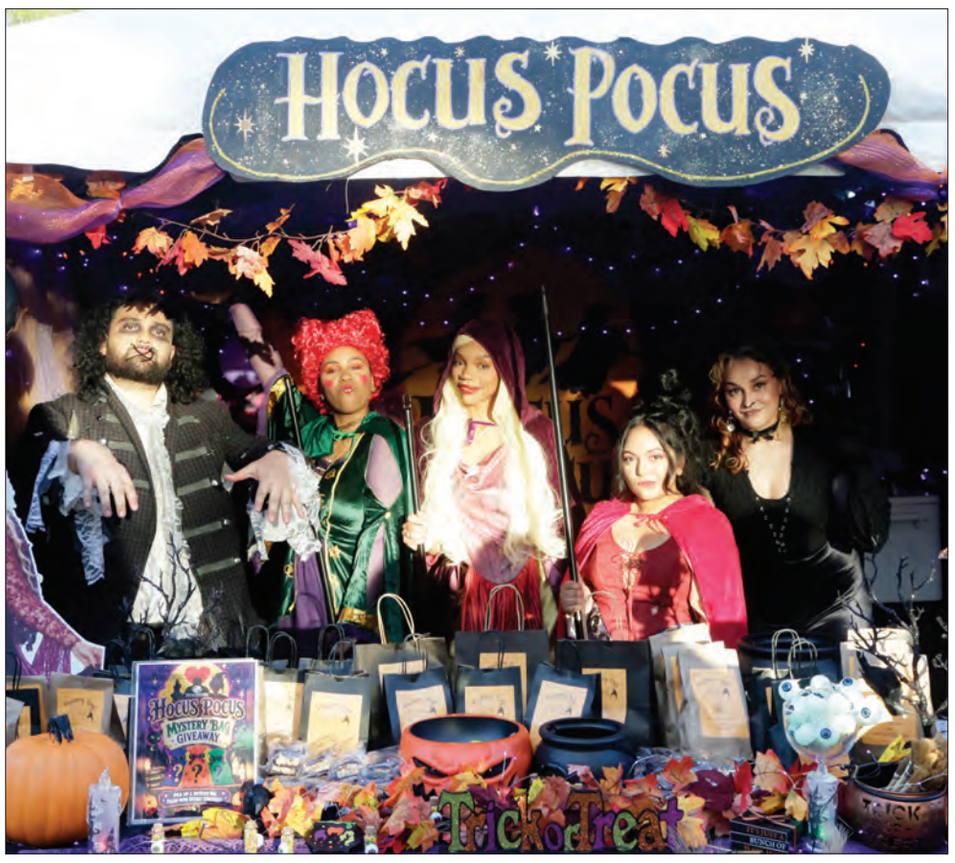
Jacob Colon

On the field and the big screen, festive costumes abound at the Big Cypress Fall Festival.



Jacob Colon

The Big Cypress community displays a wide range of characters during a costume contest at the Fall Festival.



Calvin Tiger

Staff from the Boys & Girls Club created a festive and scary booth at the Hollywood Fall Festival.



Calvin Tiger

The Center for Behavioral Health shifts into Harry Potter mode for the Hollywood Reservation's Fall Festival.



Jacob Colon

Peyton Hill, Laylah Billie, Emma Dicarlo and Emily Billie enjoy the Big Cypress Fall Festival.



Calvin Tiger (3)

Hollywood youngsters go all out with their costumes during the reservation's Fall Festival at Okalee Village.

Jacob Colon

Dolores Lopez, Bianca Serpas and Arielle Ruiz show plenty of creativity in their Beetlejuice-themed Halloween setup in Immokalee.



Jacob Colon

Big Cypress costume contestants line up for the judges.

John Anderson 1954-2026

‘From the Okeechobee all the way up to Micanopy’, STOF fondly remembers ‘Seminole Wind’ artist

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

Country music artist John Anderson, who endeared himself to the Seminole Tribe of Florida with his 1992 hit “Seminole Wind,” a swaying ballad that honors the tribe and the Everglades, died Oct. 21 at age 71.

Anderson performed for the tribe on numerous occasions over the years. In February 2025, he was a guest and featured artist at the opening of the Seminole Brighton Bay Hotel & Casino and performed at the Indigenous Arts and Music Festival on the Big Cypress Reservation.

“He was a good friend of the Seminole people,” said former Seminole Tribe Chairman James E. Billie, who met Anderson at the White Springs Folk Festival around 1987. “Whenever he was performing near Clewiston or LaBelle he would always make it down to my camp and we would sit around and play guitars. Once I was trying to play one of his songs and he said ‘give me that guitar before you hurt yourself.’ We will surely miss him.”

“He is a legend, I think he will never be forgotten,” said Brighton Councilman Larry Howard during an interview on WTIR Radio in Brighton. “We lost a good man, a good soul. You will be missed, but we are going to see and hear you through your music. M’dow, thank you for all you’ve done for us.”

A statement from Tribal Council reads “We are deeply saddened by the passing of country music legend, John Anderson. John’s love and respect for the Seminole people will forever hold a special place in our hearts. Through ‘Seminole Wind,’ he gave a voice to our history, our homeland, and our enduring spirit. His music and friendship will never be forgotten. May the Seminole Wind carry his spirit in peace. With heartfelt sympathy, Tribal Council Seminole Tribe of Florida”

Anderson’s 1992 hit “Seminole Wind” is beloved by the tribe. The song laments the damage done to the Everglades due to development and drainage, but celebrates the tribe’s survival in its homeland, the Everglades.

The “Seminole Wind” music video was filmed at the Billie Swamp Safari site and features Anderson singing by a bonfire as tribal members do a stomp dance around him. Views of tribal members including Chairman Billie and Medicine Man Bobby Henry, airboats in the Everglades and alligators are featured in the video.

The song is played regularly at tribal events. The Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School volleyball team uses it as warm-up music before home games. At Florida State University football games, the song is played on giant video screens with footage of tribal scenes and FSU athletics.

Anderson died at his home in Tennessee. His family announced his death on Instagram.

“It is with the heaviest of hearts that we share the passing of our beloved husband, father, grandfather, and best friend,” the statement said. “To the world, he was a gifted country music singer whose voice and songs touched countless lives. To us, he was so much more. He was the heart of our family, the one who made us laugh, loved us fiercely, and made every ordinary moment feel special.”

Born and raised in Apopka, Florida, Anderson moved to Nashville as a teenager, where he played his music in clubs and worked in construction.

In 1983, his song “Swingin’” became a No. 1 hit and was the Country Music Association Single of the Year. About 10 years later, he had another hit with “Seminole Wind.” His last record, “Years,” was released in 2020.

Anderson was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2024. At the ceremony he said, “It’s a long, long road from Apopka, Florida, to standing right here on this stage, but I must say, behind all of that there was a lot of adventure, and I got to choose my own way.”

Anderson was active in the country music scene, toured, performed regularly and appeared at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville. His last appearance was at the Country Music Hall of Fame on Oct. 18, where his friend Tim McGraw was inducted.

“I was talking with John Sunday night at the HOF ceremony,” McGraw wrote on Instagram. “He was in such good spirits. We talked, we laughed, we sang his songs that I loved so much together, just goofing off. I am completely heartbroken by his passing. There will never be a stylist in music, any music, that was so defining as his. It’s just devastating. All of our love goes out to his family and the country music community. He was and is one of the defining voices in country music. So great. I am completely shook.”

Other country music stars also expressed their feelings on Instagram after receiving the news of Anderson’s passing.

Blake Shelton wrote, “There is too much for me to say about John Anderson in just a statement. I am sick and I am stunned. But I am a very lucky man. I got the opportunity to find out that my hero wasn’t just the guy I hoped he’d be. He was so much more than that. John was my friend. I got to see him last Sunday and I don’t even know why but I told him I loved him. That is what fills my heart in this moment. My love and prayers go out to John’s family. This one really hurts.”

According to his obituary, Anderson is survived by his wife Jamie Anderson, his daughters Brionna Motsenbocker and Alexa McClish; grandchildren Stella, Everett, and Wyatt; brother Tim Anderson; and sisters Karen Kidd, Gail Morrill, Deanna Wall and Donna Anderson.



Beverly Bidney

John Anderson performs at the opening of Seminole Brighton Bay Hotel & Casino on Feb. 6, 2025.



File photo

John Anderson sings and plays guitar in this undated photo.



File photo

John Anderson performs on stage and is joined by then-Chairman James E. Billie.



Beverly Bidney

John Anderson shares a laugh with the Tribal Council in the front row at the grand opening of the Seminole Brighton Bay Hotel & Casino on Feb. 6, 2025.

“Seminole Wind”

Ever since the days of old
Men would search for wealth untold
They’d dig for silver and for gold
And leave the empty holes
And way down south in the Everglades
Where the black water rolls and the saw grass waves
The eagles fly and the otters play
In the land of the Seminole

So blow, blow Seminole wind
Blow like you’re never gonna blow again
I’m callin’ to you like a long-lost friend
But I know who you are
And blow, blow from the Okeechobee
All the way up to Micanopy
Blow across the home of the Seminole
The alligators and the gar

Progress came and took its toll
And in the name of flood control
They made their plans and they drained the land
Now the Glades are goin’ dry
And the last time I walked in the swamp
I stood up on a cypresss stump
I listened close and I heard the ghost
Of Oseola cry

So blow, blow Seminole wind
Blow like you’re never gonna blow again
I’m callin’ to you like a long-lost friend
But I know who you are
And blow, blow from the Okeechobee
All the way up to Micanopy
Blow across the home of the Seminole
The alligators and the gar



Beverly Bidney

John Anderson and Medicine Man Bobby Henry during the grand opening ceremony of the Seminole Brighton Bay Hotel & Casino Feb. 6, 2025.



Beverly Bidney

John Anderson plays and sings “Seminole Wind” as a rehabilitated panther is coaxed out of the crate and into freedom March 10, 2014.





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Sports



C



Kevin Johnson

Okeechobee High School libero Tehya Nunez lunges for a service reception in the Brahmans' 3-1 win against Suncoast in a Class 4A-District 13 quarterfinal on Oct. 13 at OHS.



Kevin Johnson

Large posters in the gym recognize Okeechobee High School volleyball team's two seniors from the class of 2027: Tehya Nunez and Kaylee Werk.

Senior Tehya Nunez, OHS volleyball conclude season

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

OKEECHOBEE — As a libero, Tehya Nunez specializes in defense. Her role is not the flashiest – you won't see her soaring above the net for a kill or block – but it is a crucial position that requires athleticism, anticipation and execution. Nunez thrived in all those facets this season.

She finished her senior season as the team leader in receptions with 317, more than 100 more than she had as a junior when she had 201.

Beyond the stats, Nunez will no doubt be missed.

"She's great. We love having her on the court. She's super quiet, but she's always full of energy and always willing to help somebody. We just love having her," Okeechobee coach Lauren Throop said after the Brahmans' final victory of the season, a 3-1 win against Suncoast in a Class 4A-District 13 quarterfinal on Oct. 12 at OHS. Scores were 25-19, 25-15, 23-25, 25-16.

Nunez had 13 receptions and eight digs in her final home match. Earlier in the season, she recorded a season-high 40 receptions in a 3-2 win against Somerset College Prep.

Two days after the Suncoast win, Okeechobee's season ended with a 3-0 loss to Legacy in a district semifinal. Nunez had 14 receptions in her final match as a Brahman.

Although Nunez won't be back next season, the roster should still be stocked with plenty of other Seminoles. Kulipa Julian led the team in digs with 3.1 per game and setter Jalene Smith was No. 1 in assists with 290, followed by Dahlia Grzech with 250. Juniors Melaine Bonilla, Dahlia Nunez and Bobbi Johns-Osceola round out the tribal players.

The team also has standout outside hitter Azariah Washington, who is not a Seminole, but is a Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School graduate. Washington's sensational sophomore season included leading the team in kills (328) and digs (217). The team suffered a tough blow this season with the loss of junior Olivia Bartels, another big producer of kills, who missed most of the year due to injury.

Okeechobee finished with a 13-11 record.



Kevin Johnson

Dahlia Grzech delivers a serve in the playoff game.



Kevin Johnson

Jalene Smith, the team's leader in assists, sets the ball in the win against Suncoast.



Kevin Johnson

With teammates Melaine Bonilla and Azariah Washington nearby, Kulipa Julian keeps her eyes on the ball against Suncoast.

Fresh Walters' catch helps propel Youngstown past North Dakota

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

A 33-yard reception by Seminole Tribe of Florida descendent Fresh Walters helped pave the way for Youngstown State to score the go-ahead touchdown late in the fourth quarter of its 31-28 win against North Dakota on Oct. 31 in Youngstown, Ohio.

Quarterback Beau Brungard's completion to Walters, a senior wide receiver from Port St. Lucie, gave Youngstown a first down at the North Dakota 22-yard line with 6:27 left in the game. Four minutes later, Brungard fired a touchdown pass to Lynn Wyche-El on 4th down and 19 that gave Youngstown a 31-28 lead with 2:09 left.

Walters finished with two catches for 54 yards and one rush for 3 yards.

Youngstown improved to 7-2 overall, 5-1 in the Missouri Valley Football Conference.

On Sept. 26 vs South Dakota. Walters had one catch for 28 yards in Youngstown's 47-28 win against South Dakota in front of 8,849 at Arnold D. Stambaugh Stadium in Youngstown.

Walters' catch on a pass from Brungard was a key play in the game. Youngstown was leading 26-21 early in the fourth quarter when Walters made a diving catch at the South Dakota 4-yard line that led to a touchdown on the next play that gave Youngstown more breathing room with a 33-21 lead.



Youngstown State

Youngstown State wide receiver Fresh Walters makes a tough catch in the team's 31-28 win against North Dakota on Oct. 31 in Youngstown, Ohio.

No banner, but PECS' season still impressive

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

BRIGHTON — All good things must come to an end, and for the Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School volleyball team that meant saying goodbye to both a successful group of 8th graders and the program's 61-match winning streak.

Many of the six 8th graders played key roles in keeping the streak alive the past two years, but after six unblemished years the streak ended with a three-set loss at home to Osceola Middle on Sept. 22. It was PECS' first loss since 2019.

PECS coach Monica Atwell said the loss was tough for her players. It prevented them from getting a banner next to the other undefeated teams on the gym's wall of fame.

"They took it hard. They know that was a good team. They went three sets with Osceola last year, so it's been a back-and-forth battle," she said.

Proof of PECS' success in volleyball under Atwell can be seen in area high school programs. Moore Haven and Okeechobee have been loaded with PECS graduates, and more are on the way.

"Very good group of girls," Atwell said about her 8th graders. "Some are going to Okeechobee, some are going to Moore Haven. I'm excited to see how they will fill some roles at those schools."

The 8th graders and their families were honored before the final home game, a 2-0 win against Clewiston on Oct. 8. The 8th graders are:

Jamelynn Anderson (undecided which high school she will attend)
Kaliyah Hodge – IMG Academy
Dalyse Baker – Okeechobee High
Kanae Jumper – Moore Haven High
Ameliana Osceola – Okeechobee High
Dylanie Peak – Moore Haven High

Even with the loss of this year's six 8th graders, the cupboards won't be bare. Atwell expects next year's team to have a dozen 8th graders. Some of the those players played on the JV team that, similar to varsity, lost only two games.

In the 8th grade parent night game, PECS defeated Clewiston, 2-0, on Oct. 8. The 8th graders and their families were honored in a ceremony.

The team lost only two games this season, both to Osceola.



Kevin Johnson

PECS 8th graders greet Clewiston for the coin toss and officials' meeting Oct. 8 in Brighton. PECS won its 8th grade parent night game.



Kevin Johnson

Coach Monica Atwell and the bench react to a play.



Kevin Johnson

Avani Smith delivers blasts a hit over the net.



Kevin Johnson

Dylanie Peak sets the ball for her teammates.





Kevin Johnson (2)

Dalyse Baker and her family, left, and Kanae Jumper and her family, right, were among those honored on 8th grade parent night in a ceremony before the game.





Kevin Johnson

At left, while playing defense, Moore Haven's Milo Osceola scoops up a fumble and returns it for a touchdown with Greg James providing blocks in the Terriers' 48-0 win against McGlaughlin on Oct. 22. At right, James prepares for his senior night game.

Greg James, Moore Haven enjoy senior night shutout

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

MOORE HAVEN — Seminoles Milo Osceola and Greg James set a triumphant tone early in the Moore Haven High School football team's 48-0 win against visiting McGlaughlin Academy from Lake Wales on senior night Oct. 22.

While playing on the defensive line in the first quarter, Osceola and James surged past McGlaughlin's offensive line, pressured the quarterback and forced a fumble. With James providing blocks, Osceola scooped up the ball and ran 15 yards into the end zone for a touchdown that gave the Terriers a 12-0 lead.

Osceola has made an immediate impact on the defensive line in his first season.

"He's one of our best D-lineman," Moore Haven coach Fred Hall said in an interview a couple weeks earlier.

The touchdown was among several highlights for Moore Haven's defense, which notched its first shutout of the season.

Other standouts from the tribe included lineman Andrew Williams, who had a solo sack, and Brayden Hunsinger, a freshman defensive end who was part of several tackles.

Williams and James have formed a formidable pairing playing side-by-side on the offensive line for most of the season.

"I've got two trench monsters. They're mean and nasty. I know the opposite team hates to be in front of those two," Hall said. "That's our strong side. When we need to move the ball, we know we're going to Greg and Andrew's side."

With a 42-0 lead at halftime, nine football seniors – including James – were honored in a ceremony with other fall athletes and their families. James, who was accompanied by his mother Charlotte Burgess, said he wants to attend FSU and would like to try to be a walk-on for the football team.

Moore Haven QB Tykeem Paseler threw four TD passes to lead a balanced attack that included TD catches by Zerrian Wyche, Jarion Halliburton, Cadarrian Hudson Jr. and Julian Morales. Rushing TDs came from Joe Crawford, Demarcus Brown and Jaquavion White. Halliburton, Aiden Kelly and Huck Honnerlaw had interceptions. The game's biggest hit was delivered by freshman Tony Goetting in an open field tackle.

Moore Haven (3-6) wrapped up its season Oct. 30 with a strong showing in a 29-14 loss at home against a solid First Baptist Academy team from Naples. The game was closer than the score indicated. The teams were tied 8-8 at halftime before FBA (7-3) pulled away late.

Moore Haven's victories this season came against Bonita Springs, Fort Meade and McLaughlin.



Kevin Johnson

Moore Haven freshman defensive lineman Brayden Hunsinger chases McGlaughlin's quarterback.



Kevin Johnson

Moore Haven lineman Greg James with his mom Charlotte Burgess on senior night.

Hurricanes edge Seminoles in double OT

STAFF REPORT

The Florida State University football team, which includes sophomore defensive back Zae Thomas from the Seminole Tribe of Florida, was a three-touchdown underdog against Miami on Oct. 17, but the Seminoles forced two overtimes before succumbing, 43-35, at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens. Miami moved from No. 3 in the nation to No. 1.

Thomas did not play. He was in uniform and wore what appeared to be a cast protector that covered his left wrist and hand. He did not fully participate in pregame warmups.

FSU (3-4) returns to action Halloween night for a home game against Clemson.

After its win, Miami (6-0) moved from No. 3 in the nation to No. 1.

Hard Rock Stadium is about nine miles from the tribe's Hollywood Reservation, casinos and hotels. The tribe owns the Hard Rock brand. In 2016, the tribe signed an 18-year stadium naming rights deal with the Miami Dolphins. The stadium's campus is also now home to the newly named Formula 1 Hard Rock Miami Grand Prix.

The Seminoles' next game turned out to be the final one for Mike Norvell, who was in his seventh season. After his team lost to Clemson, 36-24, and fell to 3-5, Norvell was replaced by Rick Stockstill as interim head coach. Thomas did see action in the game.

FSU's homecoming game, which annually features Seminole Tribe princesses crowning FSU's king and queen, will be Nov. 21 against North Carolina State. As of press time, kickoff time had yet to be announced.



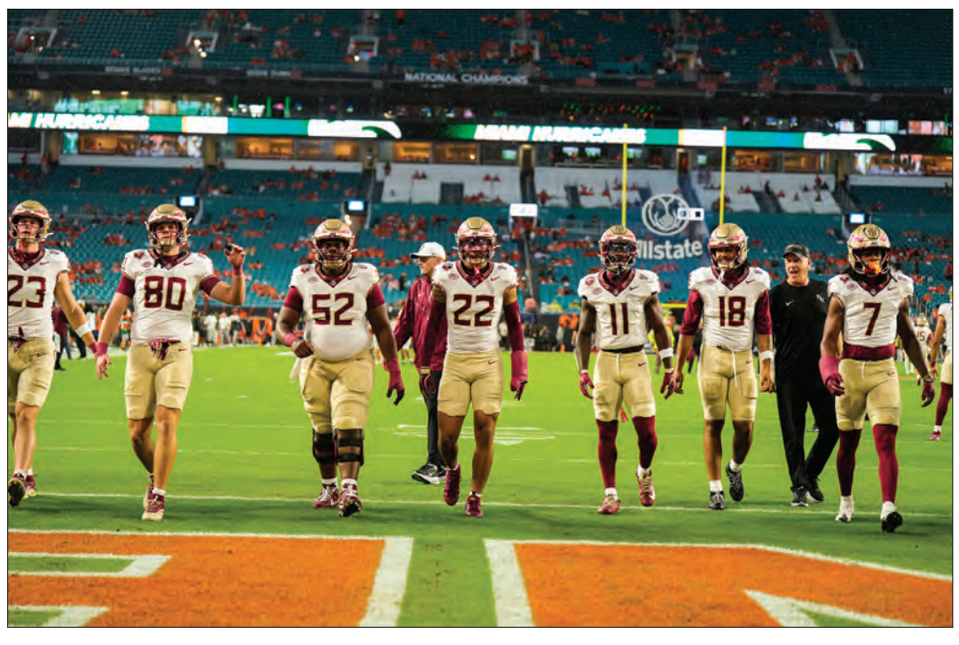
Billie Stier

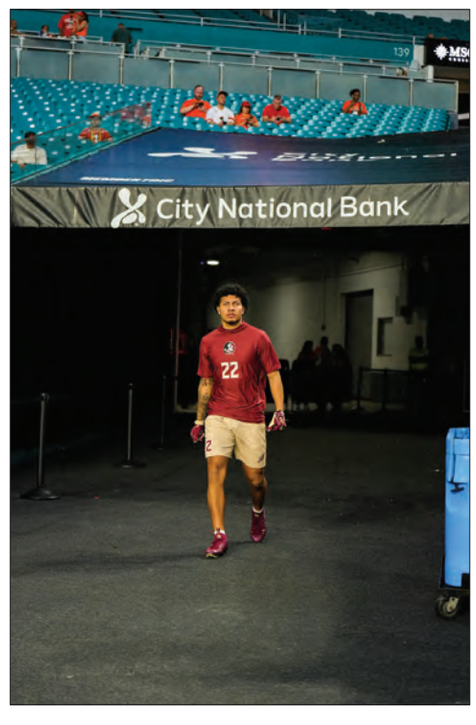
FSU sophomore Zae Thomas, who grew up in South Florida, warms up prior to the Seminoles facing Miami on Oct. 17 at Hard Rock Stadium.



Billie Stier

With the Hard Rock Stadium sign above, Zae Thomas warms up prior to the Seminoles-Hurricanes game.





Billie Stier (2)

Above, Zae Thomas (22) and his FSU teammates prepare to face undefeated Miami. At right, Thomas enters the stadium.



Calvin Tiger

Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School's Kaine Torres, Asaiah Fludd, Adrian Fonseca, Reid Trent and Isaac Osceola sprint across Brighton's Recreation field during the school's track and field day on Oct. 27.

PECS showcases athleticism at Field Day



Calvin Tiger

Kaillin Coleman, Nohea Collins, Sara Randolph, Kali Jumper



Calvin Tiger

Jaiden Micco, Lennox Bush, Eli Williams, Josiah Smith.



Calvin Tiger

Azalea Washington



Calvin Tiger

Dalyse Baker

PECS Track and Field- Intermediate/MS				
Race	Place	9/10	11/12	13/14
400m Girls	1st	Azalea Washington	Arrow Johns	
	2nd	Kaleyanita Moore	Myoni Puente	
	3rd	Khodie Osceola	Alijah Osceola	
400m Boys	1st	McCoy Gabbard	Drayton VanHouton	
	2nd	Evin Osceola	Kreed Snow	
	3rd	Eli Cummings	Emmett Johnson	
100m Girls	1st	Kaleyanita Moore	Jayda Torres	Willena Tommie
	2nd	Avaeh Ford	Sarah Randolph	Kaliyah Hodge
	3rd	Aiyah Severe	Kaillin Coleman	Graci Gopher
100m Boys	1st	Axton Baxley	Isaac Osceola	Maddox Osceola
	2nd	Jeremiah Ash	Asaiah Fludd	Miguel Estrada
	3rd	Maverick Gabbard	Adrian Fonseca	Alakai Bert
Mile Girls	1st			Kanae Jumper
	2nd			Kahniyah Billie
	3rd			NA
Mile Boys	1st			Marlin Ottiwell
	2nd			Tyse Osceola
	3rd			Daniel Nunez
200m Girls	1st	Azalea Washington	Jayda Torres	Willena Tommie
	2nd	Mileah Osceola	Arrow Johns	Dalyse Baker
	3rd	Kiara Jackson	Kali Jumper	Kaliyah Hodge
200m Boys	1st	McCoy Gabbard	Isaac Osceola	Maddox Osceola
	2nd	Jeremiah Ash	Asaiah Fludd	Koah Osceola
	3rd	Bentley Jones	Samuel Slocum	Alakai Bert
4X100 Relay Girls	1st	Whitleigh Huff Kaleyanita Moore Azalea Washington Avaeh Ford	Lillie Coleman Kaillin Coleman Alijah Osceola Jayda Torres	Gracie Gopher Dalyse Baker Kaliyah Hodge Kanae Jumper
	2nd	Henlee Chapman Kiara Jackson Eviana Nunez Khodie Osceola	Mahala Bishop Kali Jumper Ailynn Tommie-Smith Rowen Van Houten	
	3rd		Myoni Puente Aadilyn Castro Kailean Jones Jaisli Osceola-Broughton	
4X100 Relay Boys	1st	Jeremiah Ash McCoy Gabbard Bentley Jones Axton Baxley	Josiah Smith Kayne Torres Eli Williams Asaiah Fludd	
	2nd	Eli Cummings Maverick Gabbard River Leitner Manolo Orozco	Lennox Bush Adrian Fonseca Jaden Micco Reid Trent	
	3rd	Drayton Billie Arlo Jackson Stanlo Jackson Beckett Wells		
Softball Throw Girls	1st	Avaeh Ford	Javaiah Jones	Graci Gopher
	2nd	Leona Cochran	Jessa Davis	Kaliyah Hodge
	3rd	Whitleigh Huff	Mahala Bishop	Kahniyah Billie
Softball Throw Boys	1st	Maverick Gabbard	Drayton VanHouten	Nakoa Smiley
	2nd	McCoy Gabbard	Kihyon Hodge	Miguel Estrada
	3rd	Raiden Tommie	Samuel Slocum	Brace Miller
Broad Jump Girls	1st	Kaleyania Moore	Jessa Davis	Willena Tommie
	2nd	Azalea Washington	Jayda Torres	Arrow Johns
	3rd	Henlee Chapman	Rowen VanHouten	Amariah Lavatta
Broad Jump Boys	1st	Jeremiah Ash	Isaac Osceola	Marlin Ottiwell
	2nd	Axton Baxley	Asaiah Fludd	Maddox Osceola
	3rd	Drayton Billie	Kreed Snow	Tyse Osceola

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Navajo volleyball standout verbally commits to Miami

STAFF REPORT

Mikaela Lee-Tsosie (Navajo) is a standout high school volleyball player in Arizona, but she'll be heading east for her college career.

Lee-Tsosie announced in October that she has verbally committed to the University of Miami.

"I am beyond blessed and excited to announce my verbal commitment to continue my academic and athletic career at the University of Miami! This moment would not be possible without the incredible people who have believed in me, supported me, and helped me reach this milestone," Lee-Tsosie posted on social media.

Lee-Tsosie is a junior at Corona de Sol High School in Tempe. Her club team is AZ Storm Elite.

She is a 6-foot-3 middle blocker.



Courtesy photo

Mikaela Lee-Tsosie

Hard Rock Bet named presenting sponsor of "Wingmen with Matthew & Brady Tkachuk"

FROM PRESS RELEASE

HOLLYWOOD — Hard Rock Digital announced Oct. 7 that Hard Rock Bet has become the presenting sponsor of "Wingmen with Matthew & Brady Tkachuk," the podcast hosted by Florida Panthers forwards Matthew and Brady Tkachuk and produced by Wave Sports & Entertainment.

Headquartered in Hollywood, Florida, Hard Rock Digital has built its brand around a strong connection to the communities it serves. The partnership brings together a South Florida-based brand and two athletes who now call the region home, creating an authentic connection with local sports fans while reaching hockey audiences nationwide.

The sponsorship also builds on Hard Rock Bet's existing partnership with the Florida Panthers, extending the brand further into the fabric of hockey fandom in Florida. New episodes of "Wingmen" are released weekly on YouTube and major podcast platforms. Hard Rock Bet branding will be integrated into the show's key art, on-air mentions and social promotion across the show's channels.

"South Florida is home to Hard Rock Digital, and it's now home to Matthew and Brady, too," said Lauren Varnas, vice president of Brand Marketing at Hard Rock Digital. "That shared connection gives this partnership a level of authenticity that resonates with local sports fans. "Wingmen also gives us an opportunity to reach a national, hockey-focused audience through one of the sport's most popular media platforms"

"Hard Rock is such a big part of South Florida, so we're really excited to have Hard Rock Bet supporting 'Wingmen,'" said Matthew Tkachuk. "It feels like a great fit for us and for the show."

"Hard Rock Bet understands the fans and the sports culture down here," said Brady Tkachuk. "We're pumped to have them as part of what we're building with 'Wingmen.'"

As part of the partnership, Hard Rock Bet branding will also appear on-site as the show relocates production to a dedicated studio at the Baptist Health Iceplex in Fort Lauderdale.

Documentary about journeys of two Native college basketball players to air Nov. 9 on PBS

FROM PRESS RELEASE

"Medicine Ball", an hour-long documentary which follows Native college athletes Lexus Redthunder and LeRoy Staples Fairbanks IV as they navigate college life and basketball at the University of Minnesota Morris, will air on Nov. 9 at 10 p.m. ET on PBS, PBS.org and PBS app during Native American Heritage Month.

Directed by Dakota/Diné filmmaker Leya Hale, "Medicine Ball" follows the student-athletes' journeys, which reveal how basketball became a powerful symbol of resilience, hope, and pride – a way to carry forward culture, build community, and create joy amidst adversity.

"Medicine Ball is about more than basketball. It's about identity, belonging, and the ways Native young people carry history while creating their own paths forward," Hale said in a press release. "I hope audiences see the strength, joy, and cultural pride that live alongside the harder parts of this story."

Redthunder, from the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, is a graduate of the University of Minnesota Morris, where she was a standout player for the Cougars women's basketball team and earned degrees in Native American and Indigenous Studies and Political Science. Her connection to the story is deeply personal. Her great-grandmother attended the Morris Industrial School for Indians, a former Native American boarding school that was located on the present-day UMN Morris campus.

Staples-Fairbanks IV, from the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, is a senior at the University of Minnesota Morris, where he competes on the basketball and golf teams while pursuing a degree in Sport Management.

"Medicine Ball", presented by Vision Maker Media (VMM), has accumulated several awards, including the Audience Award Best Documentary Feature at the Spokane International Film Festival; Award of Excellence Special Mention: Native Peoples/Aboriginal Theme at The IndiFEST Film Awards; and Best Sports Film at the Toronto International Women Film Festival.



Ahfachkee, PECS set for winter sports

STAFF REPORT

The 2026-27 winter sports season is set to kickoff in November for the Ahfachkee School on the Big Cypress Reservation and Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School on the Brighton Reservation.

Ahfachkee (K-12 school) has boys and girls high school basketball teams and a middle school boys basketball team. Both high school teams are scheduled to play in a preseason tournament Nov. 9 and Nov. 12 at Deerfield Beach High School in Broward County. Their regular seasons start Nov. 17 with home games against Naples Classical.

Ahfachkee's middle school team's first game is Nov. 18 at Glades Day Middle School.

The basketball season for PECS (K-8) starts Nov. 9 for the boys team at home against Harvest Academy. On Nov. 10, both boys and girls teams will be in action at home against Yearling.

PECS and Ahfachkee will meet twice on the court: Jan. 6 at Ahfachkee and Jan. 13 at PECS.

PECS' coed soccer team – with 15 players on the roster – begins its season Nov. 10 at home against Harvest Academy.

All schedules are subject to change.











