



**Tribal youth attend summer camps**  
EDUCATION ♦ 1B

**Seminole Hard Rock in Tampa expands**  
COMMUNITY ♦ 3A

**Hollywood hosts basketball camp**  
SPORTS ♦ 1C



# The Seminole

Voice of the Unconquered



# Tribune

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## Seminole veteran Charlie Gopher's discharge status rectified

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER  
Special Projects Reporter

**ST. PETERSBURG** — An administrative decision by the Regional Office of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has cleared the way for the late Seminole Indian war hero Charlie Steel Gopher to receive the full burial benefits denied him and his family for the past 38 years.

"In the eyes of the VA, Charlie received an honorable discharge," said Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) Bureau Chief Marc McCabe, who spent nearly four years and thousands of miles of travel battling with both the VA and the U.S. Army to reverse their decision. "Now we just have to wait on the U.S. Army to follow suit."

The VA originally decided against Gopher's appeal in early July, and then, reversed their own decision the next day without comment. McCabe said fear of the potential intervention of U.S. Congressman C.W. Bill Young and VA Secretary Gen. Eric Shinseki may have forced Smith's hand: "There is a lot of validity to that reasoning," McCabe said. "She was the victim of a two-front attack. Here was *The Seminole Tribune* asking questions and getting ready to interview Congressman Young and there I was on my way to Washington to drop this whole case right on Gen. Shinseki's desk."

Congressman Young is a longtime supporter of veterans' affairs and a member of both the powerful Committee on Appropriations and the Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs. He is also Chairman of the Subcommittee on Defense. Gen. Shinseki is a decorated Vietnam veteran who served during the same years as Gopher and is a survivor of a land mine explosion that blew off part of his foot.

"Gen. Shinseki is a Vietnam combat veteran, and she knew I could get an audience with him," McCabe said. "Congressman Young approves the VA budget. The last thing these VA bureaucrats want is the U.S. Congress and the VA headquarters calling them up."

Gopher, an untreated victim of post-traumatic stress disorder, received an other-than-honorable discharge in 1974 after numerous desertions that were initially covered up by the Army, which kept confining him, restoring his status as a Team Leader and returning him to the front lines throughout his nine-year military career. (Read Gopher's tale on page 7A.)

Then, the desertions were used against Gopher

in denying his family U.S. Army benefits. McCabe recently filed a 32-page appeal (to upgrade Gopher's discharge) with the U.S. Army. It was quickly denied.

"They said the veteran himself had to be there," said McCabe, shaking his head at yet another turn of events. "I jumped on a plane and went to Washington, D.C., walked in and said, 'How stupid are you people? Didn't you read my report? The veteran is dead.'"

McCabe, a Vietnam veteran himself, said he has no idea how long it will take the U.S. Army to rule.

"It's very difficult to get the Army to reverse a decision made so long ago," he said.

McCabe works from an office embedded in the St. Petersburg Regional VA headquarters, but he answers to no government authority. He travels each week to the Brighton Veteran's Building to counsel and assist Seminole veterans in recovering the benefits owed them — more than \$3 million so far.

"No group was more mistreated by our military than American Indians after their service," he said. "I've got more work than a whole office of people could handle just right here among the Seminoles."

Rita Gopher McCabe, who was just an infant when her father died, approached Marc McCabe (no relation) when he began his counseling trips to Brighton. Her compelling story about her father gripped him, and he dedicated much of his time during the last 18 months to the Gopher case.

"It all looked like something that just was never going to be able to happen," Rita McCabe said. "But Marc and his staff are so smart. I know they will not give up."

"When we finally got my father's records, all the battles he fought and the medals he won, it was like a slap in the face the way he was treated. It was shameful. I felt like this is my dad and if I or my sister don't do something, the connection to him will just get less and less and less."

Marc McCabe and the VVA traveled to MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa to pick up the medals that were awarded — but never given — to Gopher. They are being arranged in a shadow box and will be presented to the family with the flag at a ceremony around Veteran's Day.

"At least that is the plan right now. A lot of people want to attend from all over the country," Rita McCabe said. "Hopefully, the Army will have made their decision by then as well."



## Fourth of July



Omar Rodriguez

The Naples community celebrates the Fourth of July with a beach barbecue. Seminole reservations across Florida enjoyed plenty of fun and games in celebration of Independence Day.

♦ See JULY FOURTH on pages 8 & 9A



Christine McCall



Beverly Bidney

The new bronze statue created in Herman L. Osceola's likeness was revealed during the rededication ceremony.

## Big Cypress rededicates Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — Herman L. Osceola may have lived a short life, but he left a long-lasting legacy for the youth of the Tribe. Before joining the Marine Corps, Osceola worked with children who were always happy to see him at the Big Cypress Gymnasium.

After renovations, the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium in Big Cypress was rededicated in his honor on July 5. A life-size bronze statue of Lance Cpl. Osceola now stands in front, watching over the kids as they enter through the doors.

More than 200 people attended the ceremony, including Osceola's family, Tribal members and

leaders, the Seminole Police Department (SPD) and the U.S. Marine Corps Honor Guard. The program included a ribbon cutting by Osceola's family, remarks by Tribal dignitaries and a flag presentation to Osceola's mother, Ruby Osceola. Among those who addressed the crowd were Chairman James E. Billie, Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger, Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr., Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank and former Chairman Mitchell Cypress.

"Today brings me back to 1984," Ruby Osceola said. "He was the smartest son and he always called me. I can hear his voice clearly today."

♦ See DEDICATION on page 6A

## Senior profile: Rachel Billie

BY JUDY WEEKS  
Freelance Writer

**IMMOKALEE** — A pacemaker, artificial knee, diabetes and arthritis may have slowed Rachel Billie down, but she is a long way from coming to a stop. Sitting at her sewing machine, this energetic 76-year-old recalled how she once sewed to feed her children and to keep a roof over their heads, but now she sews as a labor of love to put clothes on the backs of those same children and their offspring. Creating intricate Seminole patchwork patterns is a part of her daily therapy.

Rachel was born in the woods a short distance from Everglades City near the intersection of U.S. 41 and State Route 29, currently called Carnestown, on May 10, 1936. The youngest of five children belonging to Charlie Billieboy and Annie Billie, she is a member of the Panther Clan.

The 1930s and 40s were a transitional period for the Seminole people, and Rachel spent her early years living the traditional camp lifestyle off the land while her family adapted to economic, social and environmental change. Her father frequently drove the car for Deaconess Harriet Bedell as she made her bimonthly rounds of the camps along the Trail, administering to the sick, teaching the children and helping the women with the production and sale of their crafts.

Riding in the old car was always a wonderful adventure, but this wasn't their only transportation. Rachel has vivid memories of trips in her father's

dugout canoe to visit cousins deep in the Everglades when the water was high and the mosquitoes were as thick as clouds in the sky.

During her early years, Rachel's family moved around a lot following seasonal work in the tourist camps and fields. They would journey as far north as the Silver Springs attraction in Ocala with Charlie Cypress and then return to Big Cypress and Ochopee in time to work in the vegetable fields.

"I was small, but I remember my mother and aunts teaching me how to put my hair up in the traditional style while we were in Ocala," Rachel said. "We dressed up every day so that the tourists could come and watch us as we lived in the village. I used to watch the crowds gather around to see Bobby Tiger wrestle alligators when we stayed in Miami."

"We learned to work when we were very young," Rachel continued. "I watched my mother sew and make baskets. When she would move off to cook and do things, I would climb up to her old hand-crank sewing machine and try to make stuff. It was fun, and she encouraged me when she caught me trying to sew."

Lacking babysitters, whole families went to the fields, and the youngsters followed their parents up and down the rows of tomatoes, learning to pick the produce in the fields at Ochopee and near Big Cypress. Following the seasons and work, they set up temporary camps wherever they went.

♦ See RACHEL on page 14A



Archive photo

Rachel Billie (child on bottom left) watches as Alice Doctor, Suzie Doctor, Eddie Cypress, Rosie Billie and Annie Tigertail fix their hair and beadwork at the Silver Springs attraction in Ocala around 1940.

INSIDE:

COMMUNITY: A

HEALTH: 6A

EDUCATION: B

SPORTS: C

ANNOUNCEMENTS: 3C



# Community

A

## 4-H hosts end-of-the-year banquet



Andrea Holata

The New Sensation Horse Club members show off their awards during the 4-H banquet held on June 26 in Brighton.

BY ANDREA HOLATA  
Staff Reporter

**BRIGHTON** — To end a year of responsibility and hard work, Tribal 4-Hers were rewarded with a banquet on June 26 at the Brighton Veteran's Building.

Family and 4-H Club staff gathered in the auditorium to recognize the youth for their dedication to raising their projects throughout the 4-H season.

Imkokalee 4-H leader Melonie Hamlett welcomed the youth on stage to recite the 4-H Pledge and the Pledge of Allegiance before dinner.

For the awards portion, Hamlett introduced former Board Rep. and current cattle director Alex Johns, who thanked the youth for all their hard work and reminded them of the value of 4-H.

"I didn't know it at the time, but the

things that you learn in 4-H are going to be useful throughout life," Johns said. "Parliamentary procedure and learning about government are going to be useful life skills, so don't take it for granted."

Cattle owners and swine producers received plaques for producing the Grand Champion and Reserved Grand Champion steers and swine, and many others received awards throughout the night.

Graduating seniors and elected officers were also commended, as well as those involved with horse club, heifer club, record book, steer, swine and small animals. Specific recognition was given to those participating in the club for certain lengths of time.

"I am proud of the 4-H staff as they go beyond their duties from office to taking leadership to go that extra mile for the youngsters to make the 4-H program a

success," 4-H coordinator Polly Hayes said. "We all look forward to another great year."

Next year's show and sale will take place in Brighton in conjunction with Brighton Field Day from Feb. 10-12, Hayes said. There will be new restrooms and a new barn for the steers.

"The 4-H has been overhauling the old hog farm at Brighton with all-new, quality show stock," she said. "4-Hers will be able to pick out show-quality pigs in November to be ready for show in February."

Youth interested in raising steer projects are encouraged to check with cattle owners. Shipping will begin July 9, Hayes said.

For more information and for steer contacts, call the 4-H office at 863-763-5020.

♦ See more 4-H photos on page 13A

## Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki helps Roanoke-Hatteras Band reconnect with their past



Brett Daly

The Seminole Tribe reunites the Roanoke-Hatteras Band with a necklace made by their Tribe in the early 20th century.

BY BRETT DALY  
Senior Editor

**BIG CYPRESS** — The Seminole Tribe's Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum reunited the Roanoke-Hatteras Band of North Carolina with a piece of their history on July 12 by returning an early 20th-century shell necklace made by their people.

Museum employees, Seminole Tribal members and leaders, and Roanoke-Hatteras delegates met at the curatorial building conference room in Big Cypress for the exchange.

"It's very rewarding to do this and see the necklace find its home," said Tara Backhouse, Collections manager of the Museum.

The Museum acquired the necklace in 1997 when it purchased a collection belonging to Frank Speck, an American anthropologist and professor at the University of Pennsylvania who studied Native American Tribes. Backhouse said they purchased the 200-plus piece collection for several Seminole artifacts — including a

model canoe, turtle rattles and masks — and catalogued the items. When Backhouse researched the pieces, she discovered the necklace belonged to the Roanoke-Hatteras Band.

"We decided to deaccession it and reunite it with the Tribe that created it," she said.

In order for the Museum to deaccession pieces of any collection, they must get permission from the Tribal Council. Backhouse said they require this to ensure no piece of Seminole history gets lost.

"We are protectors of Seminole cultural history; deaccession is not something we do lightly," she said. "We only do it for a really good reason. We thought it was more important to find [the necklace's] owners."

Roanoke-Hatteras Council Chairperson Marilyn Berry Morrison accepted the necklace on behalf of her Band, which is affiliated with the Algonquian Indians of North Carolina Inc., a nonprofit organization comprised of people descended from the Roanoke-Hatteras and Mattamuskeet bands who are committed to keeping the heritage

and culture of their ancestors alive.

"Words cannot express my gratitude," she said. "We have lost a lot of our culture, tradition and heritage. Every time we get something of our heritage back, it connects us to our past."

As a token of her appreciation, she presented Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank with a shell necklace made by her Band.

"I truly feel our ancestors are pleased," she said.

The Museum, which houses more than 20,000 archival and artifactual items belonging to the Seminole Tribe of Florida, also returned artifacts to the Cherokee and the Catawba Indian Nations last fall. The Cherokees received seven items, including several buffalo fur masks, while the Catawba received 26 items, including several ceramic vessels.

"I believe it's the right thing to do," Rep. Frank said. "The more of the past you can retain, the better your future will be."

♦ See more MUSEUM photos on page 4A



Braudie Blais-Billie

Tribal seniors put on doll-making and palm-fiber-harvesting demonstrations for youth.

## Hollywood Reservation holds Community Culture Open House

BY BRAUDIE BLAIS-BILLIE  
Contributing Writer

**HOLLYWOOD** — In a room that smelled of wood and frybread, Tribal seniors and youth gathered to celebrate Seminole culture. It was the Hollywood Culture Department's Community Culture Open House on June 20, and a group of children from the reservation's summer camp came early that morning to visit. Spread around the room were sewing machines, patchwork, beads, a carving station, Indian dolls and baskets.

The event — open to anyone interested in the demonstrations, discussions and traditional foods — brought Seminole history into the limelight. Cultural director Bobby Frank said he finds it tremendously important to raise the youth's awareness of their identity and heritage.

"[This event] is the stepping stone," he said. "We guide them to ask questions."

Tribal members ages 6-13 learned the basics of their native language, Mikasuki, from LaToya Stewart (Bird Clan), a teacher for 5- and 6-year-olds at the Culture Department. The children learned how to say hello, thank you and the Pledge of Allegiance, as well as how to count. Paul Buster, teacher of 2-year-olds with the Culture Department, spoke with the Tribal summer campers about the importance of language. For lunch, Tribal members Myra Frank, Donna Turtle and Shannon Tiger cooked frybread, chili and sofkee over an open flame.

After the children left, Tribal member

Mabel Osceola held her own demonstration of how to harvest palm fibers from a palm tree. Using a small hatchet, she showed onlookers which pieces to use and which techniques to employ. Osceola then gave a brief history on how for generations before her, Indian dolls were made and sold during times of hardship for profit. They symbolized Seminoles' ability to survive.

"Culture should be kept alive," Frank said.

Frank aims to inspire the youth to be curious, ask questions and discover themselves in a cultural approach. He believes that passing time doing traditional activities and speaking with elders are the best ways to get in touch with Seminole culture.

"Ask seniors how they grew up, to elaborate on old days," he said.

The event showcased activities that youth were encouraged to participate in, such as fishing in the Everglades, picking sweetgrass for weaving baskets and harvesting palm fiber for constructing dolls. Frank said he wishes for the children to learn and understand the process of gaining such important materials — not just what they're used for. Such understanding leads the way toward the goal of the Culture Department: to pass on knowledge.

"Come over. We're here," Frank said as his ending remark.

Among the turquoise beads and unfinished baskets, the Seminoles at the Culture Department wear their culture with pride. They only hope their future leaders will do the same.

## Hard Rock Tampa expands: World's sixth-largest casino

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER  
Special Projects Reporter

**TAMPA** — There's something unusual about the new pool bar at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Tampa. A huge window wall stretches behind the bar, emitting natural light onto patrons sitting inside at nearby gaming machines. Outside, sunlight bathes a tropical scene of palm trees and margaritas, people in bathing suits, some swimming in the pool, others resting in unique poolside chickee cabanas.

"What is unusual is being in a casino and also being able to see outside," Hard Rock public relations manager Gina Morales said. "We are one of the only casinos in the world — Las Vegas, Asia, anywhere — that opens up and lets the outside in like this. It's beautiful out there. We are in Florida. We embrace Florida in all ways."

Also unique is the clock on the wall next to the new Rise Kitchen & Bakery.

"You don't see many clocks in casinos either," she said. "But we're different — in a real good way. We've had a very positive reaction to our expansion... We are Florida's ultimate entertainment destination."

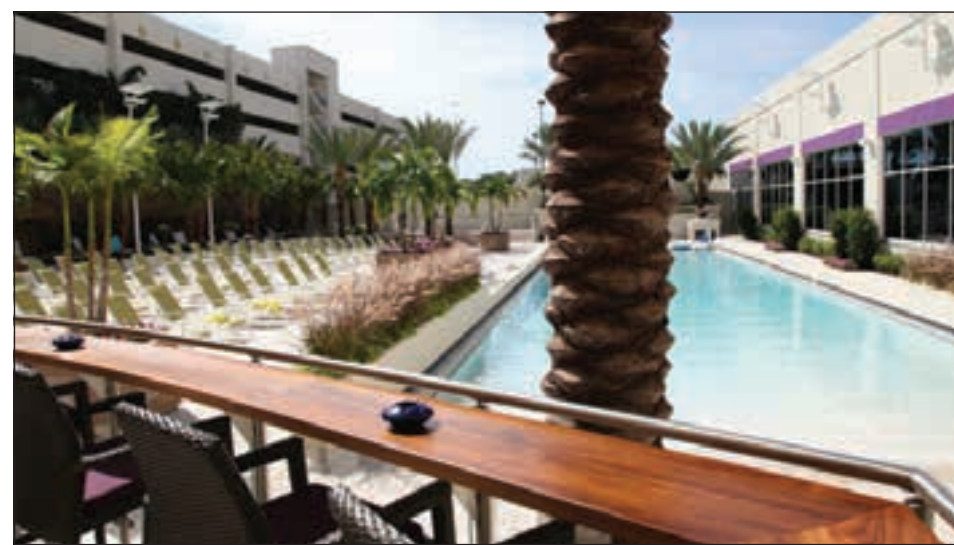
After a \$75-million expansion, the Tampa Hard Rock now sports a casino floor that is larger than five football fields

combined and features more than 5,000 slot machines, 110 table games and 50 poker tables. There is even an enclosed smoke-free slot room with 70 machines. A new restaurant (there are six on site), Rise, features American soups, salads, sweets and sandwiches made with 10 hearth ovens baking specialty artisan breads. The expansion also includes a new five-story, 1,300-space Winner's Way parking garage.

"Those who wonder why we put in these changes should know that our patrons requested all this," Morales said. "They have been asking for more space, more dining options and more parking."

One of the largest employers in Tampa Bay, the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino pays more than \$74 million annually in salaries and wages to local team members. The property employs more than 3,300 people, and the overall expansion project created nearly 1,000 jobs in construction and hospitality, two of the hardest hit job sectors in Florida. (Hillsborough County's unemployment rate is currently 8.4 percent and remains higher than the national unemployment rate of 8.2 percent.)

♦ See HARD ROCK on page 12A



Peter B. Gallagher

Pictured is new pool bar at Seminole Hard Rock Tampa.



Beverly Bidney

The Osceola Brothers Band performs for the Food Truck crowd. From left, Tyson, 14, Sheldon, 11 and Cameron, 15.

## Osceola Brothers Band perform at Hard Rock Food Truck Rally

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — Food, music, motorcycles and classic cars were on the menu at the Miami Food Truck Rally held at the Hollywood Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino on July 12. A party atmosphere pervaded the crowds of people wandering among the 20 food trucks while they decided what treats to eat. On the main stage, the Osceola Brothers Band entertained the crowd.

"This event brings people to the Hard Rock who normally wouldn't be here," said Jim Osceola, organizer of the rally. "They follow the food trucks."

The Osceola Brothers Band pleased the crowd with a set heavy with classic rock and blues. Lead guitarist and singer Cameron Osceola, 15, wrote an original song titled *No Sunshine*, which the band also performed.

Brothers Cameron, bass player Tyson, 14, and drummer Sheldon, 11, have played together for about a year.

"We all get along and are happy playing," Sheldon said.

The brothers' musical career began when Cameron learned to play guitar at 9 years old. Sheldon

got a drum set about a year ago and Tyson picked up the bass at the same time. Led by Cameron, the boys have played together ever since. Their younger brother Theron, 7, is learning to play the keyboard, so an expansion of the band may be imminent.

"The boys are awesome," their father, Terry Tartsah Sr. said, "but they are brothers and they have their ups and downs. They also play baseball and are always very busy with activities."

A lot of people came out to support the boys, including aunts, uncles, cousins and friends.

"They are just amazing," the boys' uncle Steve Osceola said. "They are also great athletes and good kids."

Around 2,000 people attended the event, and about 100 motorcycles and 20 cars were on display. Among the 20 food trucks were The Rolling Stove, Cheeseburger Baby, ChurroMania, Daddy's Grill, Don Mofongo and Fireman Derek's World Famous Pies. The event also included bar stations by Tequila Ranch and Renegade.

As the sun went down over the rally, the aroma of food wafted over the crowd, the music played, and it was clear that visitors were having a delightful evening out.



Beverly Bidney

Hungry people enjoy the food all evening.



Beverly Bidney

Cameron Osceola adjusts the microphone stand on stage.



Beverly Bidney

Amy Latchford watches the show with her baby Brayden.

## Tribal members register to vote



Beverly Bidney

Tribal Treasurer Michael Tiger holds the sample ballot for the Aug. 14 primary election as Tonya Edwards, Broward County voter education coordinator, answers his questions.

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — With election year in full swing, the Broward County Supervisor of Elections Office made it easy for people to register to vote by bringing the voter registration process to Tribal Headquarters on July 11. About a dozen new voters registered, and many others checked their voter status throughout the day.

"We have done this before," said Stephen Bowers, Liaison for the Governor's Council on Indian Affairs. "It was aimed at Tribal members and employees, but it was open to anyone, even a person walking down the street. We just wanted to make sure people have the opportunity to vote."

The registration table was stocked with sample ballots for the Aug. 14 primary election, information

on state and federal representatives and senators, precinct addresses and a machine to check individuals' voter statuses.

"I just wanted to do it," said Ruggy Jumper, who registered for the first time. "You can't say nothing about the outcome if you don't vote. I thought I'd vote and see if my judgment is right."

Registration is now closed for the primary election, but it is still open for the Nov. 6 general election. The general election will include president, U.S. senator and representatives in Congress, as well as a host of state and local offices.

The deadline to register for the November election is Oct. 9. People can register in person at any Broward County library or Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) office or by visiting [www.browardsoe.org](http://www.browardsoe.org) or calling 954-357-7050 for more information.



Photo courtesy of Travel Channel

Brighton Tribal members pose with Andrew Zimmern during the taping of *Bizarre Foods*.

## Bizarre Foods episode featuring Seminole Tribe to air in August

BY BRETT DALY  
Senior Editor

**BRIGHTON** — The episode of *Bizarre Foods* taped on the Brighton Reservation will air on the Travel Channel on Aug. 27 at 9 p.m.

The show features host Andrew Zimmern journeying across the globe searching for unique cultures and foods to showcase. Zimmern traveled to the Brighton Reservation from Dec. 7-8 to experience the traditional Seminole way of life and to sample authentic Seminole foods. The menu for his visit included swamp cabbage, turtle soup, frybread and guava sofkee.

"Watching traditional hunting, fishing, trapping and most importantly, cooking frybread and turtle with the women was one of the most beautiful and fulfilling days of my life and something I wish all

Americans could see, so I am grateful to be able to tell that story in my show," Zimmern said in an email.

Norman Bowers, Chairman James E. Billie's special assistant, helped organize the activities for the television show. Bowers said he took Zimmern on an airboat ride to catch mudfish and garfish, which they slow-cooked over the grill for hours with their "guts and everything." Despite their unappealing look, if prepared properly, Bowers said, the fish taste great.

Bowers enlisted the help of mother, Lorene Gopher; aunt Martha Jones; sister Charlotte Gopher; and friend Diane Smith to prepare the food in a traditional cooking hut on the reservation.

"If you watch the show, this guy travels the world," Bowers said. "For the Tribe to have the opportunity to show its traditional foods and show the world, you can't pass on it."

◆ More **MUSEUM** photos from page 3A



Brett Daly

Museum Collections manager Tara Backhouse presents Roanoke-Hatteras Council Chairperson Marilyn Berry Morrison the packaged necklace to bring back to her Tribe.



Photo courtesy of Travel Channel

Norman Bowers helps serve Andrew Zimmern food during the taping of *Bizarre Foods* in December.

# Jimmie Robert/Jr. Buster Memorial Music Jamboree held in Big Cypress



Kathryn Stolarz

Linda Beletso smiles with the Florida Blues Brothers at a jamboree in honor of her father, the late Jimmie Robert.

**BY KATHRYN STOLARZ**  
Copy Editor

**BIG CYPRESS** — Linda Beletso remembers waking up in the middle of the night to the sound of her father's guitar as a young girl. He wouldn't exactly tip-toe home after his evening performances.

"He'd come home and he'd still be singing," the Big Cypress Tribal senior said. "He'd wake us up."

She and her siblings would gather around the fire on their camp and listen to Jimmie Robert play Hank Williams songs into the wee hours. *I Saw the Light* was a favorite.

On June 16, she stood where those tunes once floated through the air, welcoming the crowd to the seventh annual Jimmie Robert/Jr. Buster Memorial Music Jamboree, while an old black-and-white photo of her father sat on a table nearby.

About 30 Tribal members came out to commemorate Robert and his cousin Jr. Buster, who played rhythm guitar with Robert since he was a teenager.

"They're both together now in heaven having a wonderful time in heaven with Jesus," Paul "Cowbone" Buster said in his opening remarks. "I'm sure that they've got good guitars there. God has the best."

Cowbone reminisced of his father's performances with Robert, recounting some of their history.

He then kicked off the day's musical performances with *Leaving on a Jet Plane* on a small, covered stage

set up where a chickee on Robert's camp once stood. He played a few more tunes, including a song he wrote for his grandfather, and wished everyone a happy Father's Day.

Big Cypress Tribal youth Natomah Robbins, a former Seminole Star Search winner, also performed during the jamboree. She sang songs by Taylor Swift and Adele and ended with the Tribal classic *Seminole Wind*.

In addition, the Florida Blues Brothers, dressed up as Elwood and Jake, arrived in the Bluesmobile and took to the stage to perform. Afterward, they posed for photos, signed autographs and even sang happy birthday to Tribal member Lorraine Posada, for whom a cake was brought out. Posada, the granddaughter of Robert, brought her three children from Immokalee to the jamboree.

The final group to take the stage was the Cowbone Jr. Band, led by Paul "Chunky" Buster. Despite a few rain showers, the show went on. Chunky sang a few songs memorializing the musicians and told some stories as well.

Family and friends from Big Cypress, Hollywood and Immokalee enjoyed the show and recalled the days when Jimmie Robert and Jr. Buster entertained with their music.

"From the stories [my mom] tells, I almost miss him even though I didn't get to meet him," Posada said. "I think he would have been a great grandfather."



Kathryn Stolarz

Lorraine Posada, the late Jimmie Robert's granddaughter, reflects with daughters Lauren, left, and Lindsey.



Kathryn Stolarz

Sherrie Robbins sits with daughter Redfeather while daughter Natomah performs at the jamboree.



Kathryn Stolarz

Alice Billie Gopher and granddaughter Thomlynn Billie share a hug. Thomlynn is the late Jimmie Robert's granddaughter.



Kathryn Stolarz

Paul Buster introduces his son's band, the Cowbone Jr. Band.



Kathryn Stolarz

The Florida Blues Brothers arrive in style in their Bluesmobile.



Kathryn Stolarz

Big Cypress Tribal youth Natomah Robbins wows the crowd with her vocals.



Atilano Nunez

Elgin Jumper poses in front of his art during his artist's reception on June 22.

# Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum showcases modern art

**BY BRAUDIE BLAIS-BILLIE**  
Contributing Writer

**BIG CYPRESS** — The Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum showcases Seminole life and tradition through artifacts and historical items spanning more than 300 years. But with the addition of contemporary Seminole artwork, the Museum has taken a modern twist.

Tribal member and artist Elgin Jumper has worked on original paintings for seven years. His oil-based, colorful collection earned him his first exhibit, "Colorful Warriors" shown as part of the Museum's Mosaic Art Series from June 8 to July 16.

"It's not really just playing around with style or anything like that," Jumper said during an artist's reception at the Museum on June 22. "It's more of a deep, intense investigation of style. Different styles to communicate what I feel as an artist [are] important."

With just one look at his collection, the concept of "investigating style" is understood. The vibrancy, abstract nature and boldness on each canvas reflect both tradition and personal flair. The subjects of his paintings — Seminole people and their community — are brought to light as cultural symbols that also eternalize that culture.

"I'm working for and with the Tribe," he said. "It's always good to share."

Jumper got the opportunity to showcase his work after visiting the Museum with his artistic

master, international sculptor Nilda Comas. She was researching Seminole culture for a life-size bronze statue of a Seminole girl she's creating. After treating their guests to the exhibits, the staff at the Museum insisted on viewing Jumper's paintings and featuring them on their Mosaic Art Wall. They were looking for Seminole artists to feature, and Jumper's creativity was just what they needed.

"He has amazing direction and amazing variety in his work," curator of exhibits John Moga said. "A marvelous facility with color."

Moga described Jumper's style as cubist because of his bold use of "an explosion" of colors.

He said he was happy to hear that Jumper went in an entirely new direction with his artwork, mainly focusing on landscaping.

Fellow Seminole artist and traditional arts coordinator Pedro Zepeda has known Jumper for years and has seen his work begin as sketches on paper. Zepeda expressed his excitement in seeing Jumper's studio art continue to progress.

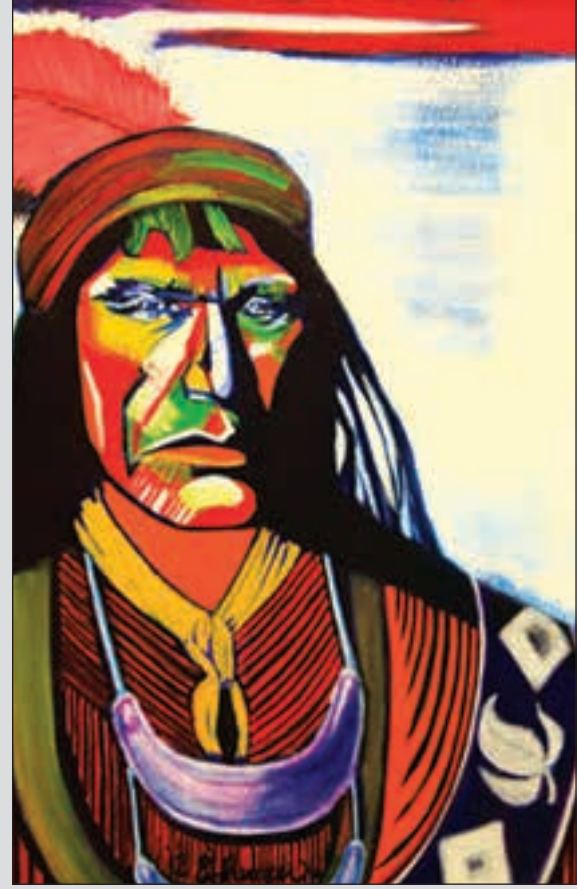
"[The art show] is a history of my development as an artist," Jumper said.

Jumper hopes his exhibit inspires others to express themselves and try out different styles of art, he said. He encourages Tribal members to participate in the arts, communicate their ideas and follow their dreams. For himself, contributing to the Seminole arts has been the most rewarding decision he has made so far.



Atilano Nunez

Attendees view Elgin Jumper's works of art during the reception at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum.



Atilano Nunez

Pictured are original works of art Elgin Jumper displayed at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum.



Photo courtesy of Kristine Frank

Back row, from left: Marissa Osceola, Ross Zepeda, Corrine Zepeda, Barbara Frank, Joel Frank II and Brian Zepeda. Second row, from left: James Riles, Joelli Frank, Nicole Slavik, Martin Slavik, Serena Zepeda, Christina Billie, Brandon Frank, Connie Slavik, Wanda Zepeda and Lee Zepeda. Bottom row, from left: Aspen Tommie, Briar Tommie and Sandy Osceola.

## Naples starts summer fitness program

BY CHRISTINE MCCALL  
Contributing Writer

NAPLES — At the start of July, the Naples community began its first summer fitness program with the help of Naples assistant Recreation coordinator Joel Frank Jr. and personal trainer James Riles.

The idea came along when parents expressed the need to keep the children active during the summer, as well as to establish healthy habits for the year. With the help of Frank and months of planning, the program began.

“We want to keep everyone motivated

and help everyone [get] to their top fitness potential,” Frank said. “I lost 12 pounds already, and my blood pressure has gone down.”

Meeting three days a week for three-hour sessions, the fitness program incorporates several activities to keep exercise fun and motivating for all participants. Beginning with stretching, the session continues on to speed and agility exercises, then a high-impact sport of Muay Thai kickboxing and ends with a game of basketball.

With the supervision of Riles, the fitness program allowed everyone to experience exercise at a level they could all

benefit from. Riles’ philosophy is, “I don’t care what age you are; you should be doing some form of exercise.”

The Naples community has responded enthusiastically.

“We do a whole array of things,” Tribal youth participant Corrine Zepeda said. “These fundamental activities keep us fit over the summer instead of sitting at home watching TV. It has been a wonderful experience.”

With such a great response, the community hopes the summer fitness program will continue to motivate and keep the youth active throughout the school year.

## Keep the body furnace burning

• Paula Bowers-Sanchez

How many times have we heard that eliminating carbs from our diet will result in weight loss?

Well, studies have shown that drastically cutting carbs, or totally eliminating them, can cut your thyroid function by 50 percent.

That’s not good.

Your thyroid acts as your metabolic thermostat by releasing hormones that play a major role in regulating both body temperature and the rate of caloric burn. So in order to keep your thyroid functioning properly, you should keep good carbs in your diet.

What are good carbs? Good carbs are foods like whole grains, vegetables and beans.

Another way to keep your metabolism up is by eating small meals every two to three hours. The meal should consist of one protein, one carb or fat (the portion should be about the size of your fist) and vegetables. Or you can substitute a “meal replacement” shake (protein shake) as a meal.

It sounds contradictory, right? But it’s true. You have to eat more frequently to lose weight. When you skip meals, your metabolism will slow down. So do not skip meals. By simply eating, you stimulate your metabolism by triggering digestion. And every time your body digests food, you are burning calories.

Think of it this way: Your body is a



furnace, and in order to keep that furnace burning, you have to keep the fire going with fuel.

Also keep this in mind: The more muscle you have, the more calories you will burn (even while you’re sleeping). So it’s very important to have some type of resistance (weight) training in your weight-loss plan.

Remember, we are only given one body, and it’s up to us to keep that body in good running condition. Treat your body like a prized possession. And most importantly, be mindful of what you’re putting in your fuel tank.



Christine McCall

Osceola family members pose with the bronze statue made in Herman L. Osceola’s likeness.

### ◆ DEDICATION

From page 1A

In March 1984, Herman L. Osceola was participating in a joint American and South Korean military exercise 200 miles southeast of Seoul when the helicopter he was in crashed in bad weather. Eighteen American and 11 South Korean soldiers perished that night.

“Herman was very outgoing and friendly,” his sister Veldina Osceola said. “He got along with everyone, especially kids. They were always so happy to see him, and he kept them out of trouble.”

Chairman Billie served in the U.S. Army during the Viet Nam conflict from 1965-1968, and he is well acquainted with military life. He believes growing up in the swamp helped toughen him up and honed his survival skills.

“Back in the 1980s, this young man Herman talked about joining the military,” the Chairman said. “A few of us were talking about how we thought the time was right to encourage kids to join the military. I told Herman how wonderful it felt to represent the U.S. He joined the Marines. Before he left, we had a last drink with him. And then

came that awful day.”

Struggling through tears, the Chairman recounted the story of the helicopter going down.

“Even though we lost him, I am still so proud of him,” he continued.

The SPD Honor Guard presented Ruby Osceola with the U.S. Marine Corps and the Seminole Tribe of Florida flags and Herman L. Osceola’s nephew Bradley Osceola with the U.S. Marine Corps K-bar fighting knife.

“It does not take someone dying in combat to be a hero,” SPD Sergeant Jack Nash said. “When you take the oath to defend this great nation, anyone at any time can be called forth to fight. We do it not to be heroes but to protect our way of life.”

Afterward, Tribal members lined up to wish Ruby and Bradley Osceola well.

“I knew Herman since he was young,” Rep. Frank said. “I want to thank his family for sharing him with us.”

Councilman Tiger shared a message of respect for him as well.

“When a young man gives his life for his country, it means a lot to us,” he said. “My hat is off to him.”

The first stage of renovations to the gym included the front exterior, entrance and the statue. The inside entranceway and a new roof will be done next, and additional

bleachers and a new floor may be added in the future, site manager Josh Jumper said.

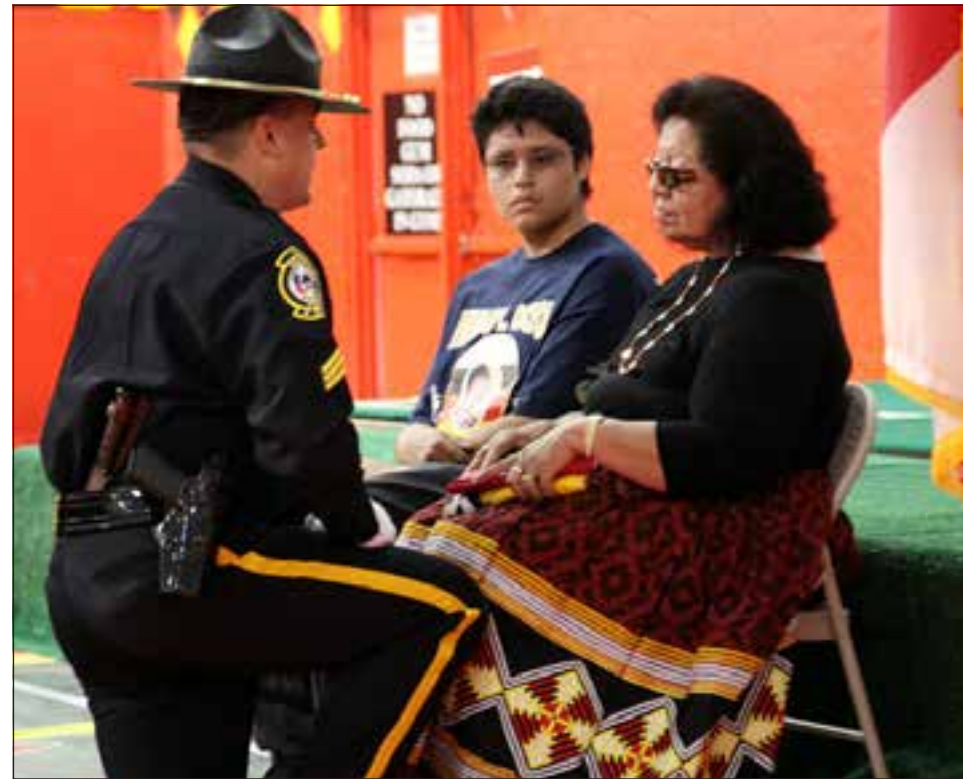
The statue in front of the gym was created by artists Bradley Cooley and Bradley Cooley Jr., who have made many sculptures for the Tribe, including those at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, Hollywood Headquarters and Tree Tops Park. Cooley has sculpted for 40 years, and his son joined him about 20 years ago.

Working from four family photographs, creating the 5-foot, 8-inch, 350-pound sculpture took about nine months. The artists first sculpted the clay, sending Ruby Osceola updates of the artwork to make sure the features were accurate. When they and the Osceola family were pleased with the likeness, they made a mold of the sculpture and sent it to a foundry in Colorado to have the bronze made.

“We are very proud to work with the Tribe,” Cooley said.

After the ceremony, attendees enjoyed a meal and reminisced about Herman L. Osceola.

“He was younger than me, but we used to hang out,” Janice Osceola said. “He would always do things with the kids; he really loved them. Herman was a good man and lived a good life.”



Beverly Bidney

SPD Sgt. Jack Nash speaks to Ruby Osceola after presenting her with the U.S. Marine Corps flag.



Beverly Bidney

Members of the late Herman L. Osceola’s family and Seminole princesses gather at the rededication ceremony.



Beverly Bidney

Osceola family members cut the ribbon at the entrance to the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium.



Beverly Bidney

Family members and princesses gather.



Beverly Bidney

Chairman James E. Billie addresses the crowd.

# Classified Army papers tell Charlie Steel Gopher's tale

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER  
Special Projects Reporter

**ST. PETERSBURG** — Personal documents and classified U.S. Army documents that were hidden for more than 38 years piece together the account of Charlie Steel Gopher's military career. The documents reveal an astounding timeline of heroic battlefield service mixed with mysterious desertions, all manipulated by an Army anxious — at all costs — to keep a top soldier on the front lines.

Gopher entered this world on Nov. 7, 1943 in a remote South Florida chickee, one of 10 children born to Maude and John Henry Gopher. He spent most of his life on the Brighton Reservation and worked as a ranch hand in the Seminole cattle industry. He graduated from Chilocco Indian School in Oklahoma in June of 1965, one month after the first U.S. Army Division left for the Vietnam War.

During the 10 years of the Vietnam War, numerous Seminole Indians enlisted for United States military service, more than at any other time in the Tribe's modern history. In fact, American Indians across the country comprised the largest per capita military service of any ethnic group — including whites and blacks — during the Vietnam era. Military recruiters, fighting an unpopular draft, concentrated on an impressive cache of strong, dedicated Natives more than willing to defend their country.

In this regard, Gopher was no different than most of his Tribe's men. He enlisted in the U.S. Army on Nov. 9, 1965 — five days before Ia Drang, the first battle between the U.S. and the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) — and was shipped off to basic training in Fort Benning, Ga.

It was the beginning of a wild and tragic military ride for Gopher, nine years full of incredible heroism and mystery that reflects the heartrending horror and confusion that marked America's controversial Vietnam experience. Quiet, he kept to himself and, friends and family said, never discussed his exploits on the battlefield.

By all accounts — statements from those who served with him and the list of medals he was awarded — Gopher was a powerful fighting machine, a fierce warrior trained in all types of warfare, including hand-to-hand combat. He was known throughout the Army, which kept moving him from Vietnam combat unit to Vietnam combat unit, wherever the danger was greatest and the fighting fiercest. He was a paratrooper, an M60 machine gunner and spent most of his career as a Team Leader. Three months after walking off the bus at Fort Benning, he was promoted to Private E-2; two months after that he was promoted to Private First Class E-3; and a month after that was awarded the Combat Infantryman Badge. Two months later, he was airborne to Vietnam with Company A, 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry of the 1st Air Cavalry Division — the famed "All the Way Brigade."

A month after walking into the Vietnamese swamps, he was promoted to Specialist E-4 and made Team Leader of his unit. A month later (Oct. 2, 1966), he and his men fought the Battle of Hoa Hoi, one of the war's most vicious confrontations. A month later, his entire unit was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for extraordinary heroism in combat actions; Gopher was awarded the Individual Air Medal for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight.

Gopher never actually received any of his medals.

There was no time for ceremony. His unit was dispatched to Kim Son Valley for what would become, by most accounts, the most ferocious campaign of the entire war. Some 32 American soldiers were killed and 120 wounded by a surprise NVA ambush. Mike McCoy, who served with Gopher at that battle, provided the Gopher family with a colorful narrative portraying Gopher as the hero who stayed in his foxhole, "head popping up and down" and firing his weapon to cover soldiers as they retreated to escape sure death.

At one point, McCoy said, a grenade exploded next to Gopher's hole.

"I yelled for Charlie but no answer," he said. "Five minutes pass and no Charlie. I curse a blue streak, and the guys thought the [NVA] killed Gopher. No way he could have taken that blast and lived. We are all fighting like hell and no longer care about survival. It's just how many can we kill before they get us. I stand up to see and start pounding the gun positions with my M79. I couldn't care less if they whack me now."

"Suddenly, Charlie pops up, gun blazing, and we are all elated. He is bleeding from the ears and nose but alive. No doubt, the concussion had knocked him out. I believe Charlie's actions prevented the NVA from overrunning us and killing us all."

Gopher was never the same after that event. The next time his mother saw him, "she knew something was wrong. He was different," said daughter Rita Gopher McCabe, who said her father was never awarded the Purple Heart for his injuries under enemy fire.

Known throughout the Army for his heroics on the battlefield, Gopher was promoted to Sergeant E-5 on Feb. 13, 1967 and awarded another Air Medal. By this time, there were nearly half a million U.S. troops overseas, an increase from the 60,000 that were there when Gopher enlisted. As the Vietnam Counteroffensive Phase III began, he was made Team Leader for Company C, 3rd Battalion, 325th Infantry.

After four more months of fighting, his Commanding Officer (CO) called him in and offered him a deal. The Army would give him an honorable discharge after only two years, six days service (instead of the required three full years for enlistees) in return for his immediate re-enlistment for a six-year term. There was a raise in pay and

a bonus involved as well. On Nov. 14, 1967, Gopher signed both honorable discharge (Convenience of the Government) and re-enlistment papers.

Years later the Army would deny benefits due to him from the honorable discharge. The reason: He did not serve the required three years.

Two weeks after he re-enlisted, on Dec. 2, 1967, he walked off his post, absent without leave (AWOL) for the first time. He was gone 28 days. There is evidence he found a flight back to the States and went home to Brighton. Then he flew back, walked through the jungle and resumed his duty. No explanation. Two days later he went AWOL again, this time for eight days. While he was gone, the Army officially declared Gopher a deserter. He would be arrested on sight.

But when he came back, he was restored to full duty and made Team Leader again. The bloody Tet Counteroffensive was about to begin, and they needed Gopher and his machine gun out in the field. He won another Combat Infantryman Badge "for actions against an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam."

"That's basically what it was. Charlie was such a great soldier that they were willing to overlook his other problems," Vietnam Veterans of America Bureau Chief Marc McCabe said. "He was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, and instead of receiving treatment, they sent him back out to the front lines — the worst possible move they could make for a person in Gopher's condition."

"They used to call it 'battle fatigue,' but it was just not a typical diagnosis back then. Whatever. Charlie Gopher was a classic case; he had all the markers."

Five months after the award, Gopher disappeared again. He was demoted back to Private and was gone for 78 days, much of that time spent in military jail. When he got out (Dec. 10, 1968), he was made Team Leader again and sent back out to the front lines. Two days later, his team received the Presidential Unit Citation for Extraordinary Heroism. Eleven days after that, he was AWOL for seven days. A month after that, he took off for three days and the Army began taking money off his paycheck. But they made him Team Leader again.

On May 23, 1968, he left again, this time for 74 days, according to official U.S. Army records. He was declared a deserter a second time. He was demoted again. But in the middle of his desertion, he showed back up on the battlefield, they threw him his weapon, made him Team Leader for Company A, 3rd Battalion, 50th Infantry and sent him back out to the front lines of the Tet 69 Counteroffensive with his team.

When they came back from the front, the Military Police (MPs) were waiting for him. He was thrown in the brig for 126 days (during which time he assaulted three soldiers, was demoted all the way back to Private E-1 and sentenced to 60 more days

hard labor).

But on Dec. 19, 1969, the Army suspended the hard labor and restored Gopher to full duty as a Rifleman for Company B, 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry.

"There was a war to fight and no one could do it better than Charlie Gopher," McCabe said. "They didn't want their top fighting machine pounding rocks in a prison yard."

For the next six months, there is no record of any odd behavior on Gopher's part. Then in June of 1970, his CO told him he was discharged by the Army. Gopher left immediately for Brighton, not bothering to pick up his discharge papers, as the CO suggested. At least that's the story Gopher told an FBI agent nearly four years later, when the government tracked him down at the Rollins Ranch where he was working near Brighton. In fact, Gopher was so

sincere that the agent decided not to arrest him. The agent called the next day and confirmed that Gopher was cleared and would get his official discharge papers soon.

Two weeks later, at 6 a.m. June 3, 1974, two Army trucks filled with MPs drove up to the ranch and hauled Gopher to jail. A ranch supervisor named Bill Vines wrote a letter of complaint (that made it to U.S. Army Command headquarters in Washington, D.C.) accusing the Army of harassment.

On July 17, 1974, after an Army physician examined him and found no psychiatric issues present, nine years and three months after enlisting, Gopher was officially discharged from active duty under other-than-honorable conditions.

He had served three years, 11 months, 29 days of active duty, almost every day of that time on the frontline battlefield during the most violent battles of the 10-year Vietnam War. Gopher won the Combat Infantry Badge, two Air Medals with a V, the Parachutist Badge with three Overseas Bars, the Vietnam Service Medal with five Bronze Stars, the Vietnam Campaign Medal, the National Defense Service Medal and the Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm Leaves. Regiments he led won three U.S. Army Presidential Unit Citations (Battles of Ia Drang/Kim Son, Pleiku and Hoa Hoi), the Vietnam Civil Action Honor Medal and the Valorous Unit Award for



Archive photo  
Seminole veteran Charlie Steel Gopher's family will be given the medals he never received.

Operation Fish Hook.

He saved the lives of hundreds of American soldiers with his trademark M60 machine gun. Day in and day out, he fired that gun from foxholes, hills and jungles for hours as return fire bullets and grenades flew by his eyes.

"He was without a doubt a true warrior," McCoy said. "He could move through the jungle without a sound. He had tracking skills that few others could ever hope to have."

Gopher never sought treatment or claimed any medical condition; after suffering the concussion at Kim Son, he was back on the ground fighting two days later. Military records indicate he said he never experienced excessive worry or depression.

Nearly two months after his discharge, at 2 p.m. on Sept. 13, 1974, Gopher hung himself at his home in Brighton. His war was over.

The Army and Veterans Administration refused to provide a military funeral. His family was refused all burial benefits, including the flag and the official Vietnam medallion for his headstone in the remote Ortona Cemetery.

Gopher was 30 years old. Seven months later, Saigon fell and Charlie Gopher's other war — Vietnam — was finally over.

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# Hollywood is all fun and games for July Fourth

**BY RAEVIN FRANK**  
Contributing Writer

**HOLLYWOOD** — On June 30, the Hollywood Reservation celebrated the Fourth of July at the Ball Field. More than 100 Tribal members showed up to the event to celebrate the nation's independence.

Some activities going on included face painting, waterslides, horseshoes and watermelon-eating contests.

"I enjoyed the big waterslide the most, and I'm having so much fun," 7-year-old Nettie Smith said.

The event also featured food trucks with custom cupcakes and barbecue dinners.

"I preferred the jerk chicken the most," Tribal member Brooke Osceola said.

Everyone enjoyed themselves and had a great time. Kids filled up water guns ready to battle, slid down the slides and ate fresh watermelon.

Hollywood Board Rep. Chris Osceola reflected on what Fourth of July meant to him at the event.

"Family, friends, food and fireworks," he said. "Also, just spending time together on a holiday."

Tribal member and Recreation coordinator Leon Wilcox agreed.

"July Fourth to me means hot weather and celebrating Independence Day with your family and friends," he said.



Raevin Frank

**Gabrielle Diaz wins the youth watermelon-eating contest during Hollywood's Fourth of July celebration on June 30.**

At the end of the event, many converged to watch the firework display light up the sky.



Raevin Frank

**Hailee Osceola, right, and Jennifer Holdiness battle it out at the Hollywood Fourth of July celebration.**



Raevin Frank

**Hollywood youth have some fun with water guns.**



Raevin Frank

**It's time for the watermelon race...but you can't touch it with your hands.**



Raevin Frank

**Jennie Osceola gets her hand painted during the Fourth of July event.**



Raevin Frank

**Tribal members get down and dirty in a game of kickball.**

# Fort Pierce focuses on family for Independence Day



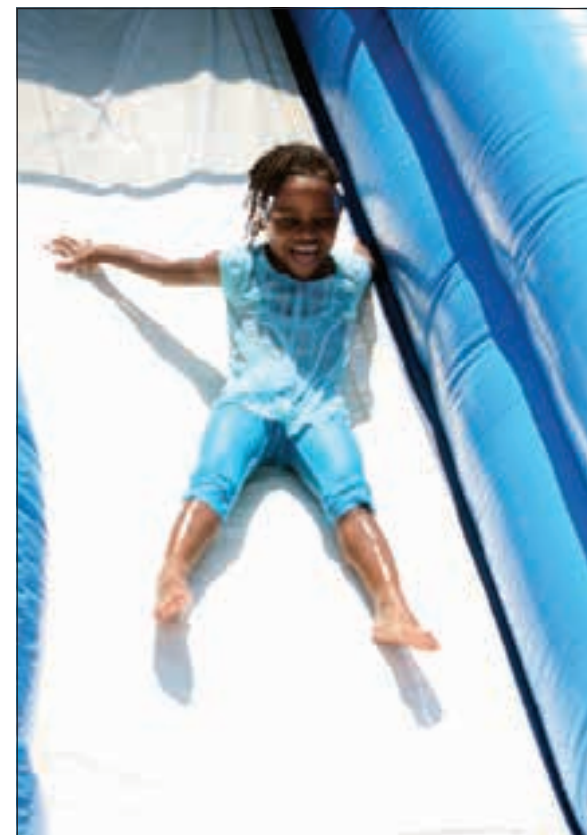
Rachel Buxton

**The Fort Pierce children entertain the adults with their dancing skills during the community's Fourth of July party.**



Rachel Buxton

**Fort Pierce Liaison Jane Stockton, left, and daughter Celeste Stockton make the Fourth of July complete with watermelon.**



Rachel Buxton

**Tammia Tommie is all smiles as she comes down the giant waterslide.**

**BY RACHEL BUXTON**  
Freelance Writer

**FORT PIERCE** — The Fort Pierce community celebrated the Fourth of July in true American style with a home-cooked barbecue feast held at Chupco Ranch on June 30.

The definite underlining theme for the celebration was simple: family.

"The overall point of today is definitely family," Fort Pierce Liaison Jane Stockton said. "Everyone coming together and it is the Fourth of July and it is something to do, something to do with family. To me, it is about family."

Although Liaison Stockton said they didn't throw their typical Fourth of July party, the community enjoyed their time together.

And as for the community members who attended, they could not have agreed more, including Liaison Stockton's daughter, Celeste, who helped out her mother with the Independence Day celebration.

"It doesn't really matter to me," she said in regard to having a traditional backyard barbecue. "They (the children) are having fun, and that is all that matters. As long as they are having fun, it is fine with me."

The kids were entertained with a giant waterslide that offered hours of fun and refreshment from the extreme heat.

"The most important part of the event would probably have to be activities for the children," Fort

Pierce community property manager Kathreen Martinez said. "So that they could be entertained, and at the same time, it is a hot summer, so we got them a waterslide so they can have fun, snow cones, cotton candy, popcorn."

She said they wanted to create a fun family environment.

Tribal member Shamy Tommie, who can be seen at all Fort Pierce gatherings, re-emphasized the meaning of not only the Fourth of July celebration but also of all Fort Pierce gatherings.

"All you really need is your relatives and friends and that is what makes your time anyway," he said. "All you need is family and love."

Tommie, along with his wife, Wanda, provided the meal for the Fort Pierce celebration through their independent catering business, Tomahawk Catering. They served Tommie's infamous barbecue ribs and Wanda Tommie's potato salad with community members packing up to-go boxes to enjoy later.

Following lunch, the adults relaxed under the chickee, catching up on family and community news. Exhausted from the slide and ready to dry off, the children put on a dance show for everyone, including Tribal elder Bessie Tommie. The kids moved to the music and even got their grandma Liaison Stockton to join in on the dancing fun.

"Today was all about getting everyone together — a time to mingle, a time to enjoy each other," Martinez said.



Rachel Buxton

**Jarvis Tommie has some fun on the waterslide.**



Rachel Buxton

**Shamy Tommie checks on his barbecue ribs.**



Rachel Buxton

**La'Shara Stockton visits her grandmother Bessie Tommie.**





# Brighton Reservation celebrates Fourth of July

**BY ANDREA HOLATA**  
Staff Reporter

**BRIGHTON** — From June 30 through July 4, the Brighton community celebrated Independence Day across the reservation.

Sponsored by the Recreation Department and the Brighton Council Office, activities were held throughout the week to entertain the community.

Activities started on the morning of June 30 with a fishing tournament for the adults and youth. The tournament started at 6 a.m., with the final weigh-in at 1 p.m.

With several age categories, everyone had a chance to win. The categories were based on the biggest catfish, mudfish, bass and the total weight of brim/specs caught.

To help kick off the holiday, there were also many activities held throughout the week.

Youth ages 5-17 had the opportunity to show off their basketball skills with three-on-three tournaments on July 2.

The next day, the community participated in a 5K walk, kickball tournament and co-ed softball tournament.

Then on July 4, the community enjoyed a fun-filled day of activities, including horseshoes, the game closest to the pin, a pie-eating contest, a watermelon roll, tug-of-war and cornhole for seniors.

The children enjoyed face painting, a balloon artist and Italian ice.

Following all the activities, attendees enjoyed dinner and a friendly game of bingo while they waited for the sun to go down.

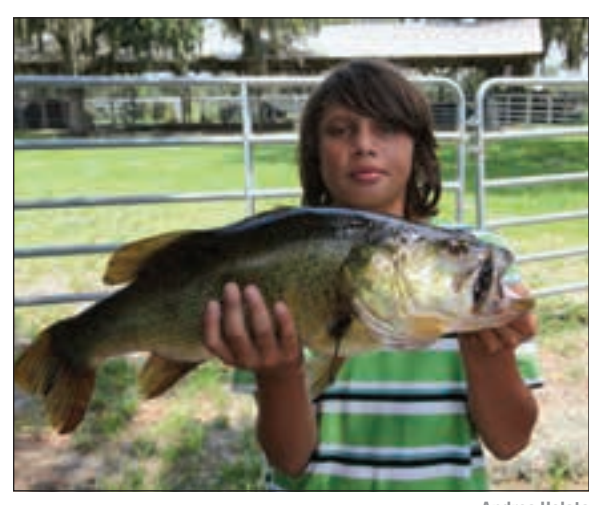
Although it rained sporadically, family, friends and neighbors ended the day with a beautiful fireworks display.

“This is what Fourth of July is all about: everybody coming out, having fun, smiling and laughing,” Tribalwide Recreation director Richard Blankenship said.



Andrea Holata

From left, Bobby Yates, Jack Turtle and Clint Bowers pull their way into first place during a game of tug-of-war.



Andrea Holata

Mason Sweat shows off the fish he caught during the Fourth of July fishing tournament.



Andrea Holata

Hollywood Council Rep. Marcellus W. Osceola Jr., Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr. and Brighton Board Rep. Larry Howard join in on the fun and participate in the pie-eating contest during the Fourth of July activities held in Brighton.



Andrea Holata

Summer Gopher attempts a basket while Jordan Johnson attempts a block.



Andrea Holata

David Gonzalez takes a swing during the co-ed Fourth of July softball tournament.

# Naples enjoys Independence Day at the beach



Omar Rodriguez

The Naples community gathers at the beach for their Fourth of July celebration on July 3.



Omar Rodriguez

From left, Eliska Slavik, Martin Slavik and Nicole Slavik play in the water.



Omar Rodriguez

Briar Tommie chomps down on some Fourth of July food.



Omar Rodriguez

Sandy Osceola grills up some lunch.



Omar Rodriguez

It is a sunny day during the Naples Fourth of July party.



Omar Rodriguez

Youth cool off in the water.



Omar Rodriguez

Jessica Osceola, left, and Marissa Osceola share a laugh during the Naples Fourth of July party on July 3.

# GUY SELIGMAN, P.A.

## Criminal Defense Attorney

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### NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

ACTION: Notice of Availability (NOA)

**SUMMARY:** The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is issuing a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for approving the construction and lease for a home on trust property for Seminole Tribal member Angela Tiger. The BIA has reviewed and adopted the following Environmental Assessment (EA), dated June 2012, prepared by the Seminole Tribe of Florida Environmental Resource Management Department:

- *Angela Tiger Proposed Home Site Lease, Big Cypress Reservation, Hendry County*

The EA above has been adopted and a FONSI issued for the approval of the home construction and lease of trust lands in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.

**NOTICE:** This is a Notice of Availability (NOA), that the EA and FONSI for the federal action of approving the proposed home construction and lease of trust property are available for public review. The BIA has approved and adopted the above referenced EA which addresses these proposals. The FONSI determination was based on review and analysis of the information in the EA. Based on a review of the EA listed above, it has been determined that the proposed actions will not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment, therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. You may obtain a copy of the EA and FONSI from the BIA Eastern Regional Office or the Environmental Resources Management Department of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, 6365 Taft Street, Suite 3008, Hollywood, FL 33024, telephone (954) 965-4380.

This FONSI is a finding on environmental effects, not a decision to proceed with an action, therefore cannot be appealed. 25 C.F.R. Part 2.7 requires a 30 day appeal period after the decision to proceed with the action is made before the action may be implemented. Appeal information will be made publicly available when the decision to proceed is made.

For further information please contact Cbet McGhee, Environmental Protection Specialist, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Eastern Regional Office, 545 Marriott Drive, Suite 700, Nashville, TN 37214, telephone (615) 564-6830.

Acting *Scott C. Menulty*  
Director, Eastern Region  
Bureau of Indian Affairs

Date: 06-29-2012

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# Hah-Tung-Ke: Ron Johnson

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER  
Special Projects Reporter



Photo courtesy of Ron Johnson

**Jacksonville folksingers Ron Johnson and Mary Mathews specialize in Florida historical music.**

JACKSONVILLE — A bunch of hurricanes swirled across and around Florida in 2004 and 2005, with several Gulf-born storms (Frances, Jeanne, Wilma) crossing the state to wreak havoc on Jacksonville. Perched on cold waters, this Atlantic Coast port city rarely gets so walloped.

“That’s what gave me the ideas for *Broken Promises*,” said Ron Johnson, a Florida songwriter whose family tree hails from Crestview pioneers.

“My roof was covered by a tarp, and I couldn’t get anything but promises from FEMA. And here comes the rain again. I started thinking, ‘What are the major broken promises in our lives?’ So, obviously, I thought of the one everybody knows about — the flag of truce that captured Osceola. I immediately began writing the song.”

According to the Seminole Tribe’s website, “Osceola’s capture, under a controversial flag of truce offered by Gen. Thomas Jessup, remains today one of the blackest marks in American military history. At the time of his death, Osceola was the most famous American Indian.”

On Oct. 21, 1837, Osceola was tricked by Gen. Jessup into attending a “peace council” with a promise that the great warrior would be protected under a white flag — the universal sign of truce. Soldiers seized and shackled Osceola, imprisoned him first in St. Augustine, then moved the Seminole leader to Fort Moultrie in Charleston, S.C., where he succumbed to malaria on Jan. 30, 1838, still a prisoner of

war.

Johnson, who works as a full-time clinical social worker in Jacksonville, combined a verse about Osceola’s capture with two other verses detailing “broken promises” in his own life: experiences with the VA as a Naval veteran and with FEMA regarding his hurricane-damaged roof.

Johnson and his singing partner, Mary Mathews, combined their songwriting talents to win the 2011 Will McLean “Best New Florida Song” award with a composition titled *Rescue Train*. The ballad details the story of a train full of bridge workers blown into the ocean returning from a mission to rescue Henry Flagler’s employees stranded by the Labor Day hurricane of 1935.

*Broken Promises* and *Rescue Train* can be found on Johnson and Mathews’ 2010 album, *Sunshine State of Mind*.

## Broken Promises

Song lyrics by Ron Johnson

1837, under a flag of truce  
Osceola and his men, they met in good faith  
But he was taken prisoner, threw him in a cell  
In St. Augustine, Osceola’s hell

Chorus

Broken Promises  
Shadow ‘cross this land  
Broken Promises  
Well they don’t give a damn  
People try to do the right thing  
What they get in return is  
Broken Promises  
When will they learn

1945 was the end of the War  
When the vets came home from that far

off foreign shore  
They did their duty, but when they looked to the VA  
It’s just “Fill out this form, boy  
“We’ll call you some day.”

Chorus

Such a simple thing, to tell the truth  
Was a time when a man’s word was his bond  
2004 and 5, so many hurricanes  
There’s a blue tarp where my roof used to be  
The FEMA boys came down and said it was a shame  
But my roof’s still blue. And it started to rain.

Chorus

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Identifying the Past



# Charlie Cypress’ canoe gets new home

BY TARA BACKHOUSE  
Collections Manager

In late June, the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum was proud to welcome a new addition to its collection, and this addition was a long time in the making. This 23-foot-long canoe was made by Charlie Cypress, one of the most accomplished canoe makers of the 20th century. He worked at the Seminole tourist village at Silver Spring between the 1930s and 1950s. He probably made the canoe at that village, and it was privately owned for many years. The Silver River Museum and Education Center acquired the canoe in 1998, and since then it was visited often by members of Cypress’ family, who wanted to see the canoe brought closer to their home. The Silver River Museum obliged and offered to donate it to the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum.

We happily accepted their offer. It’s not often that we get such a generous donation of such a valuable piece of Seminole culture and history. But you may be surprised to learn that we have spent the last year and a half preparing a place for the canoe at the Museum. We have a place to store canoes that we affectionately call the “canoe hallway,” and this hallway was already full of canoes. We had to find a

way to make room in the hallway for the new addition. We found a safe and secure museum-quality storage facility, and we moved one of our other canoes there. With one canoe moved, we had room for the new one.

And historic canoes are fragile. We wanted to transport the new canoe in the safest way possible, so we arranged for experienced art handlers to pack and transport the canoe 256 miles from Ocala to the Big Cypress Reservation. All in all, it was quite an extensive project, and it took the cooperation of many people in many places. We want to make sure to thank director Scott Mitchell and all the staff at the Silver River Museum for donating the canoe and for all their assistance planning and preparing it for transportation.

Do you have stories about this canoe or about Charlie Cypress?

Please call the Museum at 877-902-1113 if you would like to share what you know or if you want to see this or any of our other canoes; we also have canoes made by Bobby Henry and Leroy Osceola. For Tribal members who plan to attend the Museum’s upcoming 15th anniversary celebration on Aug. 21, be sure join a behind-the-scenes tour; you can see our canoes then. We hope to see you soon. We also encourage you to



William D. Boehmer

**Charlie Cypress, circa 1950.**

make an appointment to see the rest of our collection to continue helping us identify the past. Thank You.



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki  
**Art handlers and Museum staff unwrap the canoe in order to move it to its permanent shelf.**



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki

**Museum staff member Pedro Zepeda surveys the canoe, safely installed in its new home.**

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Peter B. Gallagher

Brighton's Red Barn is the only Seminole property to make the National Register of Historic Places.

# Red Barn stabilization to begin soon

BY CARRIE DILLEY  
Tribal Architectural Historian

**BRIGHTON** — In the upcoming weeks, construction crews will begin working at the Red Barn site to initiate a long-overdue stabilization process. Although the Red Barn — originally built in 1941 — has withstood many storms during the past 70 years and was even used as a hurricane shelter, the structure now shows many signs of age. Planned structural improvements will guarantee its survivability for years to come.

The Capital Improvements Plan, funded by the Tribal Council, is responsible for the administration and oversight of all capital improvements and will support the repair.

While a 2005 roof replacement helped add stability to the structure, the overall building condition is still declining at a rapid rate. As one of the oldest standing structures on the Brighton Reservation and a highly significant historic site for the Seminole Tribe of Florida, it is important to make the building as stable as possible to preserve the memory of the Red Barn, which symbolizes the roots of the modern-day Seminole cattle industry and the beginning of organized Tribal government.

The Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) hired a professional structural engineer to assess the condition of the building in 2010. TRC Worldwide Engineering Inc. concluded that the building's poor condition requires stabilization as soon as possible. The east

and west walls of the barn show the most damage because of age, weather and insect damage. TRC recommended that, in order for the building to be structurally stable, they need to repair the damaged wood, replace footers and foundation as needed, and replace the roof support posts.

TRC received estimates for the job from area contractors with experience working with historic buildings. Since the Red Barn is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, all repairs must be in accordance with the U. S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation to ensure repairs do not disturb the building's historic character. Building stabilization must be complete before any further preservation activities can be conducted.

This first phase of the Red Barn Preservation Project is planned to be finished by Oct. 6 in time for the Red Barn Dance celebration. Open to the general public from 1 p.m. to sunset, the event will feature a cattle drive conducted by the Seminole Cattlewomen's Association, the unveiling of both a roadside historical marker and a National Register of Historic Places plaque, a barbecue dinner, the raffle of a Red Barn painting by Dorothy Gardiner, the showing of a Seminole Cattle Heritage documentary and live Western swing music from Larry Mangum and the Cowboy Orchestra.

At that time, the THPO staff will seek input regarding the future of the site, featuring a display of various idea sketches by famed Hard Rock International director of design Rob Schaeffer.

## Hard Rock Hotel booked for RNC

**TAMPA** — Hard Rock officials are keeping mum regarding a report in the *Tampa Tribune* that the Republican Party has booked the entire 250-room Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Tampa for the duration of next month's Republican National Convention (RNC). Based on room rates starting at \$129 per night for mid-August, booking the five-day convention for all 250 rooms would cost \$161,250 in rate alone.

Hard Rock public relations manager Gina Morales, however, would not confirm the Party as the room procurer.

"We are not in a position to reveal the name of the person or agency that made that booking," she said.

Spokespeople for the RNC Committee on Arrangements, which booked about 150,000 area rooms for the convention in May, and the Tampa Bay Host Committee told the *Tampa Tribune* that they didn't make the reservation.

"...speculation is that it's being reserved for corporate high rollers, big donors or high-level GOP elected officials," the article said.

## Record \$3.6 million slots payout

**TAMPA** — Less than three days after the official opening of the \$75-million expansion of the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Tampa, an Orlando man won \$3,649,311 at a \$1 slot machine. He put three dollar bills into the Millionaire Sevens machine in the casino's newly expanded area and the bells and whistles began ringing. It's the largest single slots payout in state history. The man preferred to remain anonymous.



Peter B. Gallagher

Pictured is the lucky machine.

## HARD ROCK

From page 3A

The new addition, which increased the 200,000-square-foot casino/hotel complex another 32,000 square feet, includes a pedestrian walkway that features a moving sidewalk and museum-style displays depicting the history of the Seminole Indians along one wall and the history of rock 'n' roll along the other.



Peter B. Gallagher

The expansive dining room of Hard Rock Tampa's newest eatery: Rise Kitchen & Bakery.



Peter B. Gallagher

Hard Rock public relations manager Gina Morales shows the chickee-style cabanas at the pool.

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Andrea Holata

Youth recite the 4-H Pledge and the Pledge of Allegiance to start the night off. On June 26, the 4-H end-of-the-year banquet was held at the Brighton Veteran's Building.



Andrea Holata

Moses Jumper Jr., right, receives an award from cattle director Alex Johns for producing the Reserve Grand Champion steer.



Andrea Holata

Brighton 4-H assistant Donald Hayes poses for a picture with graduating seniors Erena Billie, left, and Lois Billie. The girls were recognized for their final year participating with 4-H.



Andrea Holata

Rosa Urbina is recognized by Donald Hayes for participating in 4-H for 10 years.



Andrea Holata

Nellie Smith, right, receives an award from cattle director Alex Johns for producing the Grand Champion steer.



Andrea Holata

Brighton 4-H assistant Donald Hayes poses for a picture with award winners Lois Billie, left, Aleah Turtle and Ruben Burgess, who were recognized for Best Kept Record Books for their swine projects.



Andrea Holata

The future 4-Hers and small animal club members from Brighton, Immokalee and Big Cypress show off their awards.

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# Identity theft is growing at an alarming rate



**BY WILLIAM R. LATCHFORD**  
Seminole Tribe Police Chief

Identity theft is growing in the United States at an alarming rate due in large part to the Internet and the utilization of credit/debit cards. Unfortunately, a person does not realize he or she has become a victim until quite some time after the identity has been stolen, and long after a thief has ruined someone's identity. Unlike other crimes, these challenge law enforcement officers because they are conducted anonymously and there are usually no witnesses or physical evidence. However, we recognize losing your identity can be more intrusive than other crimes because it affects a victim from an emotional standpoint.

Identity thieves obtain their information in some of the following ways:

- Rummaging through a trash can to obtain a bank statement that provides account information.
- Stealing mail or a wallet.
- Using trickery over the telephone or by email.
- Gaining access to computers that do not have proper security protection.

In most cases, a financial institution will reimburse a victim. However, consumers as a whole still suffer as the fees associated with identity theft are funneled back to the consumers.

There are ways to help combat becoming a victim

of identity theft, including the following suggestions:

- Do not provide your bank/debit card pin number to anyone.
- Frequently change Internet passwords on your accounts.
- Do not freely give out your credit card information unless you are sure who you are speaking with.
- Pick up your mail promptly.
- When making a purchase online, be sure you are on a secure site.
- Shred receipts and banking documents before throwing them in the trash.
- If you notice a credit/debit card is missing, report it right away.

Identity theft is a federal crime. Should you become a victim, you must file a police report immediately. This will help lessen the difficult process involved for a victim to recover from the theft. Being armed with this knowledge of how to protect yourself and take action will make the job of an identity thief more difficult.

Should you have any questions, please call your reservation's Seminole Police Department. We are here to assist you in any way we can.

I thank you for allowing me to be the Police Chief of Seminole Police Department in this noble profession protecting and serving those within the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

## ◆ RACHEL

From page 1A

"When I got older, I used to look around Big Cypress trying to find the place where we lived, but everything had changed so much," Rachel said. "One day, Jimmy Cypress told me that I couldn't find it because the clinic has been built on our old camp. About 1948, we moved to stay in Sunniland to be close to the farm work in Immokalee and Fort Myers."

Rachel is the mother of six children: Vincent, Frances, Michael, Miriam, Allen and Kattiria. Like most Seminole women of her era, she began having her children when she was quite young and devoted her life to hard work in an effort to raise them.

Despite a seminomadic lifestyle, she kept all her children in school as much as possible so they could have the education that she did not receive but recognized as a necessity for their successful survival.

"I owe a great deal to Ethel Frank," Rachel said. "She was in charge of the Immokalee community and helped me get a place to stay with my kids so that we

didn't have to travel around so much. First we stayed across the road, and then she helped me to get one of the HUD houses. It was the first permanent house we ever had, and it is still my home. She encouraged me to sew and make baskets and found a way for me to sell them to support my family when there was no field work.

"When people ask about religion, I tell them that God has always been a part of my people's culture and I was raised listening to stories about Jesus," Rachel said. "There is only one God, and he gave us life, brought us to this place and helped us to survive. I respect the beliefs of my elders and always go to the Corn Dance to worship him in their way, but I also believe in his son, Jesus, and worship as a Christian. Keeping our culture and heritage alive is very important.

"I have a lot of grandchildren and several great-grandchildren, and I talk to them in my language so that they will know it," Rachel continued. "I encourage them to go with me to Corn Dance to keep the ways of our elders alive and remember who they are and where they came from."

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# Education

# B

## Education Department hosts annual college tour

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

The Education Department designed its annual college tour to promote higher education while introducing students to a handful of schools every summer. It gives students an opportunity to see their options before deciding which school to attend.

"Our goal is to expose students to the world beyond the reservation and Florida," director of Education Emma Johns said. "We go to schools out of state and come back to Florida every fourth year."

For a week in June, around 20 students from grades nine to 12 toured Florida State University, University of North Florida, University of South Florida, University of Central Florida, Flagler College, Santa Fe College, Full Sail University and the Connecticut School of Broadcasting in Tampa. The group met with admissions representatives, housing directors, athletic directors and the president of FSU, Eric J. Barron.

While at FSU, the students got a behind-the-scenes view of the sports program.

They met with coaches; toured the stadium, athletes' workout facility and trophies; and went onto the football field.

"I saw my dream college for the very first time," said McKayla Snow, 15, of Brighton, who attends Okeechobee High School. "I always dreamed I'd go to FSU since I was 5 years old."

Jason Melton, 18, went on the college tour even though he will attend FSU in the fall. A graduate of The Sagemont School, he hasn't chosen a major yet, but he is thinking about film.

"This is my fourth college tour and my last one," he said. "Now that I'm about to start college, there is nothing to hold me back."

The students were exposed to a lot during the college tour, but their visit to the Connecticut School of Broadcasting was the most interactive. Students read scripts for radio, saw how to edit and sat at the anchor desk and read the teleprompter. They also listened and watched the results of their first time behind the microphone or on camera.

"The students had no idea what it takes to produce a broadcast and how much fun

it can be," Higher Education coordinator Paola MoneyMaker said. "Some of them fit right in, found their voices and saw it as a possible career choice."

Some students already have an idea of what direction their lives will take.

"I want to be a career officer in the Marines, then study psychology and Native American law. One day I may run for Chairman," said Tylor Tigertail, 17, of Big Cypress. "Everyone should come on a trip like this; it opens your eyes that college life is a whole lot different. It will take a lot of work, but I think it will be fun."

Sara Ramos-Huggins said she enjoyed learning about what to expect while attending college. She wants to study physical therapy, so she focused her attention on two schools that offer the program: UCF and USF.

Another positive experience for the students was to meet and bond with kids from other reservations in Florida and elsewhere.

♦ See COLLEGE TOUR on page 3B



Rodney Riser

Tribal high school students learn about Florida State University during a tour of the campus.

## Tribe offers Financial Literacy Seminar for youth

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — Taxes, credit cards, stocks, mutual funds, money markets, real estate — they are enough to make anyone's head spin, especially recent high school graduates and college students.

From July 12-14, a class of 42 of these young adults successfully completed an intensive three-day Financial Literacy Seminar to give them the skills necessary to survive in the financial world.

"This was our largest class," said Rita McCabe, of the Executive Administrative Office. "We offer the three-day course every summer, but we also have monthly courses anyone can attend throughout the rest of the year."

The Tribe has held these seminars for four years, and according to McCabe, this was the greatest turnout. Students came from Hollywood, Big Cypress, Immokalee, Brighton, Tallahassee, Tampa and Virginia, and instructor Brantly Chavis Jr., of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, taught them about the importance of understanding their finances and making their money work for them.

"It's a tough three days for them," said Chavis, who works for Cambridge Financial Partners in California. "But we want to make sure they are financially astute and savvy in their decision making."

Chavis explained how individual stocks are affected by the market. He used

Apple as an example and asked the students how many had an iPhone. Most hands went up. Then he asked how many had an iPad and quite a few raised their hands.

"About 75 percent of you have an iPhone and a lot of you have an iPad," he said. "Given how much they cost, about \$20,000 was spent on Apple products in this one room alone. That is why Apple's stock is doing so well. You guys are making Apple rich."

He also advised them to always research a company in the news before deciding to invest. Together they looked up Google, Facebook and Yahoo to track their earnings and news items.

"We are learning how to keep our money in our pockets," said Darion "Stitchy" Cypress, 17, of Pembroke Pines.

Emanuel Sukhu, from the Tribe's Treasury Office, discussed per capita distributions and explained the advantage of increasing the amount of withholding taxes to avoid a tax bill at the end of the year. He also advised them to put away half of their money in a savings account.

"We'll make smarter decisions now," said Tayler Cypress, 19, of Hollywood.

"And we are learning how to save and spend our money wisely," said Stacy Smith, 19, of Tampa.

For those Tribal members who want to brush up on their financial literacy by attending classes throughout the year, contact Rita McCabe at RitaG@semtribe.com or 863-763-4128 ext. 15403.



Andrea Holata

From left, Mallorie Thomas, LaShae King, Austin Thomas, David King, Temperance Williams and Ruby Osceola spend time painting.

## Brighton youth enjoy summer camp

BY ANDREA HOLATA  
Staff Reporter

**BRIGHTON** — With summertime in full swing on the Brighton Reservation and hundreds of youth out of school, Brighton has two summer camps with many activities to keep the youth engaged during their break.

The camp has no shortage of action, including media production, aviation building, arts and crafts, movies, health, volleyball, softball and football, just to name a few. The activities are offered by the Boys & Girls Club and the Recreation Department.

Recreation holds their summer camp from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., and all community youth are invited to participate.

With several Tribal members attending the camp daily, Recreation's main focus is on sports, but it also works with the Arts and Crafts Department to provide a craft hour for youth each week.

The camp also promotes an early morning fitness hour.

"It keeps them active, out of trouble and promotes healthiness," fitness specialist Ignacio Orozco said.

If youth participate throughout the week, they are treated to a field trip, such as ice skating, bowling and movies.

In addition to Recreation's youth summer camp, the Boys & Girls Club has a summer camp for youth as well.

Under the direction of Boys & Girls Club unit manager Derek Pierce, the summer camp, on average, has about 40 daily participants between the ages of 5-18. The camp focuses on keeping the kids' minds stimulated in a fun, structured environment.

"A lot of what we are doing is pretty heavy stuff, particularly with the music," Pierce said. "They write lyrics and learn time management in sort of a structured way."

The youth also do other things to help spark their interests. The latest projects

include rocket building and the home makeover of a doll house.

"These projects stimulate good conversation. It gets them thinking about their future," Pierce said. "They are related to science, to math, and we get to see where it goes from there."

The younger kids can choose from all sorts of fun activities, including arts and crafts, movies, tether ball, jump rope and kickball.

"I like coming to camp because we get to play all kinds of games," Jana Johnson said.

Pierce said he hopes everyone will give the camp a try.

"Kids got to have something to do over the summer — something that's structured, safe and fun," he said. "Sometimes parents want a break, and we provide those kinds of services to give the kids structure and attention that they deserve over the summer."

♦ See more CAMP photos on page 3B



Beverly Bidney

Instructor Brantly Chavis Jr. shares financial information with the class.

## High schoolers can get an edge at College Application Workshop

*This is the first time the Education Department is hosting the event*

BY BRAUDIE BLAIS-BILLIE  
Contributing Writer

**FORT LAUDERDALE** — For the first time, the Education Department will hold a College Application Workshop from Sept. 14-16 at the SpringHill Suites by Marriott.

Organized by Higher Education recruiter Robert Caruso and tutor coordinator Julissa Collazo, the event will focus on helping high school seniors understand every step of the college

application process.

"We are seeing a lot of applications being done last minute," director of Education Emma Johns said.

The workshop hopes to put an end to last-minute or incomplete applications, she said, and will also help prepare students for the college process in ways that their schools may not provide.

Seniors will arrive at the Marriott Friday night, and the college "boot camp" will commence Saturday morning. It will offer tutors for everything from SAT/ACT preparation to filling out the Common

Application, a free online undergraduate application. Since more than 400 colleges and universities, including Florida state schools, accept the Common Application, it is essential to understand.

"It's only going to benefit them," Caruso said.

Tutors will also help seniors with their college essays, which have become an increasingly crucial factor in admissions.

"Many schools, such as Florida State University, are looking heavily toward applicants' essays to make their admissions decisions," Caruso said.

The Education Department's staff hopes to familiarize Tribal members with essay topics that they may encounter on applications.

"We want to help create college-level essays," Johns said.

She said seniors who participate increase their chances of getting into their schools of choice. And because the staff is familiar with college admissions at many universities and colleges, they know what specific schools are looking for. The workshop will help students tailor their applications to those schools.

"Seniors are working hand-in-hand with Education," Johns said.

It's not a weekend at the beach, but the College Application Workshop will be an incredible resource for Tribal members wishing to attend college. Although a new program, the workshop will help change the way high school Tribal students approach higher education.

Students can RSVP to their local Education Department advisers no later than Aug. 17, and all seniors are encouraged to participate.

# Native Learning Center launches new online training courses

**HOLLYWOOD** — The Native Learning Center (NLC) announced the launch of a new series of online training courses, Kerretv Online (Kerretv means “learning” in Creek).

The center, which offers Native and Indigenous people the opportunity to gain knowledge and skills that improve quality of life through housing-related educational programs, said the courses will allow individuals to actively engage with educational materials based on their five focus areas: culture and language, financial wellness, grants education, housing strategies and Tribal government.

“I am excited that the Seminole Tribe of Florida Native Learning Center is able to deliver a powerful and free online learning management system, Kerretv Online, to Indian Country, so we can supply all Native Americans with educational materials and resources 24 hours a day, 7 days a week,” NLC executive director Georgette Palmer Smith said.

Kerretv Online is now live, and anyone interested in the courses can create a free profile by visiting [www.kerretvonline.com](http://www.kerretvonline.com).



**Kerretv Online will provide learners with information, resources and activities while providing Native and Indigenous people with knowledge and skills that improve the quality of life through housing-related educational programs.**

The Native Learning Center will present its “Tuition-Free Training – Getting Started with Investing webinar on Aug. 1 from 2-3 p.m. using Kerretv Online.

For more information, visit [www.nativelearningcenter.com](http://www.nativelearningcenter.com) or call 954-985-2300.

# Tampa community celebrates graduates



Ryan Watson

Tampa Liaison Richard Henry, right, holds a graduation dinner on June 26 at Council Oak at the Tampa Hard Rock to recognize all the hard work the students put forth to graduate.

# Big Cypress youth stay active during summer camp

**BY BEVERLY BIDNEY**  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — For kids, summer is all about having fun. No homework, no tests, no sitting still in a classroom for long hours at a time. Going to camp is about going outside, being active and having a good time trying new and exciting activities.

A group of about 35 Big Cypress kids spent July 10 at the Recreation Department’s summer camp fishing, playing billiards and enjoying swamp buggy rides.

“This is the first year of the summer camp,” said Josh Jumper, Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium site manager. “We start every day with a fitness class, and then we do sports, swimming, video game tournaments, billiards, wildlife programs and field trips off the reservation. The response so far has been great.”

The camp teams up with the Boys & Girls Club twice a week for activities and once a week for a fun-filled pool party. The combined camp went fishing at the spillway on Boundary Road and honed their skills with fishing poles, as well as with traditional gigs.

The gig, a long spear with multiple sharp prongs at the end, is used to spear gar and other fish in shallow waters. Wildlife

Department director Randall Osceola helped teach the campers how to use a gig.

“It’s very heavy when you throw it,” Mary Jane Vasquez said.

The fish were biting at the campers’ hooks as they cast their lines off the bridge over the spillway.

“It isn’t the biggest fish I ever caught, but it is the biggest anyone caught today,” said Elisah Billie as he prepared to throw his sixth catch of the day back into the water.

During the activities, kids have the opportunity to learn new skills.

“The kids get to explore the reservation with knowledgeable [Tribal] members,” said Tommy Doud, Big Cypress Boys & Girls Club manager. “We are fortunate the Wildlife Department takes them out here. It’s a great resource we have.”

Big Cypress Recreation coordinator Kelvin Robinson said the response to the camp has been great – they get more and more campers every day.

“Some kids are gamers who only like to play video games and don’t really like sports, but they all enjoy the activities with the Wildlife Department,” he said. “To see them enjoying the outdoors is very gratifying.”



Beverly Bidney

Illiana Robbins proudly displays her fish, which is a brim. This is her first time fishing.



Beverly Bidney

Jody Cabral gets familiar with a video camera as part of Big Cypress’ summer camp activities.



Beverly Bidney

Campers take a ride on a swamp buggy.



Beverly Bidney

Caleb Billie and Ramon Vasquez try their hands at gigging off the bridge.



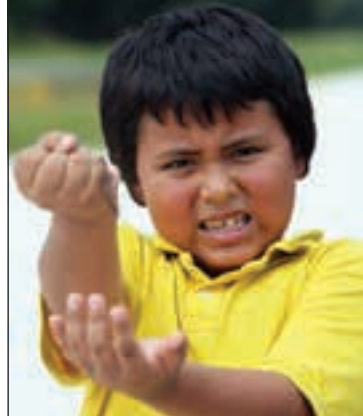
Beverly Bidney

Elisah Billie takes the hook out of the brim he caught. The campers released their fish back into the water.



Beverly Bidney

A.J. Vasquez racks ‘em up.



Beverly Bidney

Akira Cabral shows off a worm he is about to use as bait.



Beverly Bidney

Skyal Tommie watches the ball after taking a shot at pool.



Beverly Bidney

The campers learn to play pool. At the front table are Skyal Tommie, left, and his cousin Troy Yescas.



Beverly Bidney

Campers and counselors fish on the bridge over the spillway.

# Hollywood youth attend Summer Academic Enrichment Camp

◆ More **CAMP** photos from page 1B



Andrea Holata

Bridgett Koontz practices recording a song at the Boys & Girls Club's summer camp.



Andrea Holata

Instructor Temperance Williams enjoys arts and crafts with LaShae King and Richard Smith.



Andrea Holata

Lewis Gopher gets ready to throw a ball during dodgeball at the camp in Brighton.



Andrea Holata

Marci Osceola, left, and Mallorie Thomas jump rope during activity time at camp.



Andrea Holata

Instructor Temperance Williams enjoys arts and crafts with LaShae King and Richard Smith.



Andrea Holata

After a long, hot day outside, the children get ready for movie time.

provide breakfast and lunch daily, feeding all 67 children enrolled in the camp.

"It's better to keep them occupied," Work Experience camp assistant and recent high school graduate Cindy Osceola said. "Better than them getting into trouble."

Osceola helps with the children, ranging from kindergarten to eighth grade, as they learn math, reading and other basic skills. She said she loves the job. The counselors work with the campers through worksheets, word problems and most importantly, games.

"There are more games than textbook learning," second-grade counselor Linette Odon said. "It gets the kids more involved."

Learning games, such as dice or chess, teach them how to develop healthy relationships with one another, not just develop themselves academically.

"It's good because of the academics and games," Odon said. "The games that the Boys & Girls Club provides help with teamwork."

The merging of the Education Department, Boys & Girls Club and the Recreation Department brings the Tribe together, as well as the concepts of education and amusement. As the campers ran against time and each other through the Fourth of July relay race, they playfully competed as a team. Each egg fallen from a spoon or dive onto a slip-and-slide was teaching the Tribal youth what it means to play by the rules and cooperate with one another.



Braudie Blais-Billie

Youth participate in a flag-drawing contest in honor of the Fourth of July.

**BY BRAUDIE BLAIS-BILLIE**  
Contributing Writer

**HOLLYWOOD** — The Summer Academic Enrichment Camp, hosted on the Hollywood Reservation, is no ordinary education-oriented program. The trailer was teeming with children talking and giggling as they eagerly looked for their bathing suits. Glittery clay pots expecting to sprout seeds lined the windowsills of the camp's trailer, and a flag-drawing contest was held in honor of the Fourth of July. It was almost 11 a.m., and the morning of tutoring had passed. The time had come for the part all the Tribal children were waiting for: swimming.

"With the Enrichment Camp, the kids not only get recreational and athletic component, they bridge over to the next grade," Julissa Collazo, tutor coordinator, said.

With the junction of the Boys & Girls Club with the Education and Recreation departments, learning has been revolutionized into an easy, exciting and comprehensive summer program. The campers refresh and further their academic endeavors in the mornings, as well as have intense summer fun in the afternoons.

This is the first time that the three departments have come together to create an enrichment program that benefits Tribal youth.

The camp also provides special services, such as the Children's Center for Diagnostics and Therapy treatment team, that offer children language or behavior therapy.

"[The Tribal campers] are putting education first and learning good habits," Collazo said.

On Mondays and Wednesdays, Recreation provides activities and games in the afternoon, such as relay races and obstacle courses. The Boys & Girls Club organizes activities and games every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon. They also



Braudie Blais-Billie

Kids cool off in the pool as one of many activities planned for Hollywood's Summer Academic Enrichment Camp.



Braudie Blais-Billie

The campers gather in a circle for a game of catch.



Braudie Blais-Billie

Campers participate in an egg relay.



Braudie Blais-Billie

The summer camp includes Fourth of July crossword puzzles.



Braudie Blais-Billie

Campers get a lesson in math while enjoying a snack.

## ◆ COLLEGE TOUR

From page 1B

"The trip was a great experience," said Marissa Osceola, 16, of Naples, who attends the community school. "It was good to do it as a group and get feedback from others."

Money maker said these experiences are essential for the future of the Tribe.

"We are trying to shape future leaders," she said. "We need to make sure students are getting the best education possible so they will be able to handle the responsibility of running a multibillion-

dollar organization. Many of our current leaders have a bachelor's degree in business, which helps to strengthen the organization. They will need the degree, as well as leadership skills, in the future."

High school students are encouraged to go on the college tour every summer starting with freshman year. If they do, they will have seen about 15 universities by their high school graduation.

"We want to expose students to various different options," Money maker said. "They need to see how realistic going to college is for them. Getting an education is a way to better themselves and become well-rounded individuals."

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# Sports

C

## Tribal employee to be inducted into college Hall of Fame

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — An exceptional college sports career is something an athlete can be proud of for a lifetime. Tribal employee Charles Fisher, a James Madison University (JMU) graduate of the class of 1983, recently learned he will be inducted into his alma mater's Athletic Hall of Fame for the years he played on the school's championship basketball team.

"It's a great honor, and I am humbled by it," said Fisher, a contract specialist for the Buildings and Grounds Department. "I had a great career there, and I'm thrilled to be in the Hall of Fame."

Fisher attended JMU, in Harrisonburg, Va., on a basketball scholarship for four years. While an undergraduate, he played point guard and led his team to victory in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) tournament, Colonial Athletic Association division, three times. He was named Most Valuable Player in 1981 and, during his senior year, was the second leading free-throw shooter in the nation. Fisher said he averaged 12 points per game throughout his college career, was named the team's top defensive player and helped them average 23 wins per year.

While in college, he learned to balance athletics with academics. His coaches helped instill that discipline by putting the team in study hall 10 hours a week.

"That was where I learned good study habits and how to stay focused," Fisher said. "But you also needed good family and friends around you to keep you humble. It was challenging, but I love challenges."

Living the life of a student athlete prepared him for life after school, and Fisher credits his coach, Lou Campanelli, for keeping him on track.

"I believe my college experience helped shape the character and values I have today," he said. "I learned to make academics my No. 1 priority so I could be successful in life."

Drafted by the NBA's Philadelphia 76ers in the ninth round after graduation, Fisher played point guard for the team for one year. The difference between being on a college team and a professional team was huge.

"In the NBA, you know someone else wants your job, so you are always trying to perfect your craft," Fisher said. "You need to have a lot of confidence."

After being released by the 76ers, he had opportunities to play basketball in Europe and China, but Fisher chose to coach instead. He embarked on a 13-year career as a college basketball coach at Roanoke College in Virginia; Samford University in



Photo courtesy of James Madison University

**Charles Fisher, left, plays college basketball for James Madison University during the early 1980s. Fisher will be inducted into his school's Athletic Hall of Fame in October.**

Birmingham, Ala.; Radford University in Roanoke, Va.; the University of California at Berkeley; and Florida A&M University in Tallahassee.

In 2011, he was nominated the Colonial Athletic Association's Legend of the Year for demonstrating good character, values and sportsmanship throughout his college career.

After graduating with a degree in physical education, Fisher earned his master's degree in the same field from California State University, Fresno. Following his career as a college coach, he spent more than 15 years as a physical education teacher, coach

◆ See HALL OF FAME on page 2C



Beverly Bidney

Devin Osceola, left, and Krishawn Henry dribble through the obstacle course to the far side of the court.

## Hollywood basketball camp teaches youth fundamentals

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — Youth attending basketball camp at the Hollywood gym are learning a lot more than the best moves on the court; they are also learning skills that will ultimately help them succeed as adults.

Sure, the KCITY basketball program teaches kids the fundamental skills of the game, including dribbling, shooting, defense, conditioning, passing and scoring, but it also teaches them the value of good sportsmanship and teamwork.

"In basketball there are no losers," KCITY coach K.C. Cullins said. "As long as you play your hardest and have good sportsmanship, everybody wins."

The KCITY program attracts 20-40 kids each session, and the group takes to the court for some basic drills. During the camp on July 3, campers learned how to control the ball up and down the court, shoot baskets and dribble with their non-dominant hand.

"Basketball is my life," said Devin Osceola, 16,

who plays on his school team at Gulliver Preparatory School in Miami-Dade County.

"I love to play basketball and it's good exercise," said Mailani Perez, 16, who plays on the Jewish Community Center team. "I like to practice four times a week."

Cullins believes he is planting seeds that will teach the kids how to be productive citizens. He tells them not to be afraid to make mistakes; it is the best way to learn.

"The kids love this program," Tribalwide Recreation director Richard Blankenship said. "It isn't your everyday program; it's pretty intense. Our ultimate goal is to increase awareness of the basketball program, so we build multiple teams in multiple age groups for a Tribal league."

The remaining dates for the KCITY summer basketball program are July 31 and Aug. 2 from 4-7 p.m.

◆ See more CAMP photos on page 2C

## Youth perform in dance recital



Brett Daly

Preslynn JennaSue Baker, left, and Chaka Smith, third from left, show the audience their ballet routine during their June 16 recital in Okeechobee.

◆ See more DANCE photos on page 2C

## Athletic Department hosts coaching workshops

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

Participating in youth sports can have an enormous impact on a child. Perhaps the most important component leading to a child having a positive experience lies with the coach.

To ensure the volunteer coaches involved in the Tribe's sports teams are trained well, the Recreation departments of Hollywood, Immokalee, Big Cypress and Brighton recently held training workshops.

"We want to provide the best facilities and opportunities for our youth, but we also want to make sure they are getting proper coaching" said Richard Blankenship, Tribalwide director of Recreation. "We depend on volunteers, so we need to make sure they have as much knowledge as possible to coach effectively."

Coaching a game is only a small part of a coach's duty because more time is spent in practice than at games. Run by the Northwood University Sports Management Department, the coaching clinics taught volunteers how to set up and implement a successful practice by using time efficiently. The training was not about the rules of the game; it was about how to coach sports in general.

"A typical way of running drills is to have a group of kids do the drill while the rest of the group watches," Blankenship said. "The workshops taught how to get everyone involved all the time so no one is just standing around."

Usually, about 66 percent of practice time is spent standing around doing nothing and only about one-third of the time is spent practicing actual skills. Blankenship said. The goal is to reverse those numbers by having the entire team always engaged in practice. For example, during a standard baseball practice infield drill, the coach hits a ball to a player who then throws to first base. At the workshops, the coaches learned a better option is to make each drill a live game practice. Instead of the coach hitting to an infielder, the team members bat while the rest of the team is in the field with no idea where the ball will be hit. Everyone is involved in each play.

"The class was great," said Josh Jumper, site manager of the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium in Big Cypress. "We learned about other tools to use in coaching. They taught us how to coach large groups of kids by breaking them into smaller groups to keep them all active."

Armed with this training, the coaches can have a positive impact on their teams by the effective and efficient use of practice time. Ultimately, the likelihood of a kid having a great memory of a youth spent in sports is much higher.

"The simple point of the coaches training is that kids can be taught to do anything well with enough repetition," Blankenship said. "With enough reps, every kid will get better."



Beverly Bidney

K.C. Cullins observes David Channer as he learns to dribble the ball. In the background, Sabre Billie awaits her turn.

## Andy Girty wins Howard Tiger Memorial Award

SUBMITTED BY MOSES JUMPER JR.  
Contributing Writer

**LAWRENCE, Kan.** — After 56 years of service on the staff of Haskell Indian University, Cherokee Tribal member Andy Girty was awarded the prestigious Howard Tiger Memorial Coach and Teachers Award. The award — named in honor of Howard Tiger, World War II veteran and outstanding athlete of the Seminole Tribe — is sponsored by the Seminole Tribal Council.

The presentation took place at the university during the school's commencement and pow-wow. The award is given to a Haskell teacher, coach or employee who has shown outstanding dedication to the school and students involved in athletics.

Girty's career has included service to the school from 1956 to the present as a vocation teacher and coach of Haskell softball teams. He currently teaches the Cherokee language in the school's academic system. Girty's claim to his longevity and dedication to Haskell is his trust and faith in God.

Also during the festivities, Tribal member Moses Jumper Jr. was awarded a Pendleton Indian blanket from the staff at Haskell for outstanding alumni for 2012. Moses was a former student and athlete at Haskell and received his associate of arts degree from Haskell.

The awards committee thanked Tribal Chairman James E. Billie and Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr., both former Haskell students, for their support of the award given in honor of one of the Seminole Tribe's leaders, athletes and war heroes. Tribal Treasurer Michael Tiger is Howard Tiger's son.



Photo courtesy of Moses Jumper Jr.

Moses Jumper Jr. and Andy Girty receive Haskell Indian University special awards.

# Tribal youth showcase talent at Okeechobee dance recital



Brett Daly

Jetta Osceola, fourth from left, performs with her classmates during a June 16 recital, which showcased what she learned that year in dance class. She attends Leslie's Dance Studio in Okeechobee.



Brett Daly

Aiyana Tommie performs during one of her dances. "Dancing teaches me technique, and it's really fun," she said.



Brett Daly

Chaka Smith shows some attitude during her dance recital at Okeechobee High School. She attends Leslie's Dance Studio.



Brett Daly

Preslynn JennaSue Baker, second from left, and Chaka Smith, third from left, show the audience their ballet routine.



Brett Daly

From left, Chaka Smith, Preslynn JennaSue Baker, dance teacher Leslie Stokes, Jetta Osceola and Aiyana Tommie pose for a picture.



Brett Daly

The Okeechobee dance recital features dozens of dances, including routines by Seminole Tribal youth.

## ◆ HALL OF FAME From page 1C



Photo courtesy of James Madison University

Charles Fisher, left, plays college ball for James Madison University during the early 1980s.

and principal at schools in Miami Dade and Broward counties. Then, after retiring from education, he felt compelled to continue giving back to the community and joined the Seminole Tribe in October 2011.

"I see this as a great opportunity to contribute to the Seminole Tribe," he said. "This has been a great marriage."

Fisher, who earned his doctorate in Christian education at Jacksonville Theological Seminary in 2007, also serves as minister at the New Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Liberty City. He is also a motivational speaker and addresses school groups, using sports as a metaphor to get his message through to the students.

A family man, Fisher lives with his wife, Shirelle, and children Charles Jr. and Chanelle. His daughter Chauncie attends Florida State University.

The induction ceremony will take place at the university on Oct. 12.



Beverly Bidney

Fisher works for the Seminole Tribe today.

## ◆ CAMP From page 1C



Beverly Bidney

Mailani Perez and Darlah Cypress watch as Devin Osceola takes a shot.



Beverly Bidney

Tameron Wilcox tries for a basket as David Channer dribbles behind him.

# Announcements

## Congratulations

### Congratulations Cooper

We are so proud of the beautiful and wonderful young woman you have become. From the moment you were born you brought joy into our hearts. Through the many milestones beginning with preschool graduation we have watched you blossom into this smart, funny, caring person whom I'm proud to call my daughter. It seems like yesterday I was holding you in my arms all wrapped in a pink baby blanket. Now you (we) have reached 2 more important milestones in life, your high school graduation and your 18th birthday. Your life is steadily moving forward whether we're ready or not (tear) but you will always be our baby girl. We are confident that you will make good decisions in your life, even when the time comes where temptation is so strong and you may stray away from the good we tried hard to instill in you; you will always hold your head high, learn from your mistakes and move on looking back only to remember where you came from. People will always fail you and may try to bring you down but never forget that GOD will never fail you. HE will always be there for you, to love you, to forgive you no matter what. Life is about experience and now it is time for us to let you go...to experience all that the world has to offer. Take your time, life can't possibly happen any faster than it already is. Congratulations on your high school graduation & happy 18th birthday!!!

We love you!!!

Mom & Stepdad (Clea & Manuel Correa) sister (Marley) brothers (Shawnee & Lakota) Nana & Papa (Marie & Fred Phillips)

## Birthdays



Jade Lizett Tapia

When we first held you in our arms in 1997, you were a fragile little baby with a serious medical condition. You were the angel we had prayed for and God had answered our prayers. You have never let anything hold you back and have the strength to overcome all obstacles. You will always be our miracle child and the love of our lives.

As you celebrate your fifteenth birthday, you have blossomed into a beautiful flower and we share your dreams of happiness.

Love, Mom and Daddy  
(Juan Tapia and Sylvia Marrero of Immokalee)

Hope you had a happy birthday,  
my one and only son, Brandon  
Joe Osceola.

Love, Mom

(Twila Perkins)



Savannah Redbone-Osceola,  
Happy thirteenth birthday  
on July 16.

From your mother (Teena  
Redbone), brother Lyle and  
the rest of your family from  
Brighton and Oklahoma

## Poems

When I wrote this poem ("Together Again") it was dedicated to three close friends, but since then I have lost another brother in Christ and that is Wonder Johns. I want to say that these men will be greatly missed by family and friends. I will miss seeing their faces at church functions and truly the Seminole Tribe will miss them for their leadership and godly wisdom. Yet, I know that I will see these men again because of their faith and trust in Jesus Christ. This poem was written from my memories of them. I know Wonder was a true cattle man and loved the sport of rodeo as he would support his daughters who were great rodeo athletes. As they have journeyed on into the spirit world I know that they are together again.

— Moses Jumper Jr.

### "Together Again"

*This poem was written to honor Howard Micco, Roger Smith, Joe Lester Johns and Wonder Johns*

We honor 3 men who blessed us with laughter, friendships, and to many were the next of kin.

They have gone on to the spirit world where, with God they are all together again.

We will miss them for they were Indian cowboys like you and me.

They stood for a way of life and were proud of the lifestyle they wanted others to see.

I have got to believe their faces are shining down upon this show tonight

Their spirits with the saints in glory, oh, my it must be quite a sight!

It wasn't so very long ago that these Indian Cowboys rode their favorite horses across the reservation land.

They wore cowboy hats, wranglers and boots, and were never embarrassed to be known as an Indian Cowboy man.

They loved the Indian cowboy way of life for it was the way they wanted to be.

The horses, the cattle, riding their pastures where they knew a man could really be free.

These men stood for a way of life that many don't believe in today. God, family, and friends is how they lived their way.

Howard, Roger and Joe were to many family and a friend. That's why today I'm sure they are all together again.

We will miss them for we all have memories of them down here. The Indian songs that Howard would sing or riding his mule and complaining about that little gadget in his ear.

Roger was good at sports and rode bulls and rodeoed for awhile.

And there was no one Roger would greet without that familiar smile.

Joe Lester was a true rodeo cowboy who competed till the very end.

The Indian National Finals just last year was where he had been.

These three men had one thing in common besides the cowboy life they love.

That was their trust and faith in God above.

It's hard to believe we won't see their faces on this earth or

see them sitting tall in the saddle riding against the wind But I know across those glades in Heaven they are riding together again.

I'm sure they would say don't shed too many tears for me. For in this land I live its such an awesome place to be.

Yes, there are horses and cattle and no fences to repair. For the glades and rivers and everything here is beautiful beyond compare.

I believe in Heaven they have met family, and old cowboys, for too many they were a true friend. Imagine the joy of them all being together again.

These three Indian cowboys are truly home and their aches and pain are a thing of the past. Going to rodeos and raising cattle, riding the glades and prairies of Heaven where they are truly free at last.

No, I don't think they want to come back to a place with sickness, sorrow and sin. Today they are going through the gates of Heaven riding good horses on streets of gold and they are together with God again.

## Blast from the past



Pictured is Tribal member Billy Walker in 1988. Photo submitted by Billy Walker's mother, Frances.

## Letter to the editor

To: The Seminole Tribune

I really enjoyed the June 29 issue — especially the article "Seminole and Christianity." My father, Joe Colbert, was one of the Oklahoma ministers who traveled to Dania Reservation in 1936 and dedicated the First Seminole Baptist Church — which is now Hollywood. It was very interesting and somewhere in my collections of pictures, I have the group of ministers and the gathering of the Seminole that dedication day.

I always look forward to your

paper because I have many friends there including the Chairman, James E. Billie. My late husband, Scatty Harjo, considered him as his younger brother. Please give him (James) my best regards and get completely well soon because I still consider him as my family.

I have so many friends at all big or original reservations — Hollywood, Big Cypress and Brighton. I would like to say, "Hello" to everyone.

Thank you very much.  
Esther Harjo  
Lawrence, Kansas

### "The Seminole/Micosukee in Me"

Unconquered is the way, so in me I will never ever fear...

I will stand tall each and every year.

Florida is home.

Where the Unconquered roam...

Everlasting is what we be,

So the land we will never ever leave.

— Patrick Gator Doctor Jr.

## Classifieds



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Attention Seminole Tribal members,

To submit an announcement, please send your message along with your name, phone number, email, address, the names of your parents, children and grandparents and your clan (optional). Please include your mailing address if you'd like your photos returned.

Sign and date your submission and send it via:

- Email: BrettDaly@semtribe.com
- Fax: 954-965-2937
- Mail: 3560 N. State Road 7, Hollywood, FL 33021
- Drop-off: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.



# annual owners', meeting

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 4  
10AM**

**HARD ROCK LIVE  
SEMINOLE HARD ROCK  
HOLLYWOOD**

Get important news  
and updates about the  
Hard Rock International Brand  
and see what's in store  
for our future.

Questions? Please call **954.327.7684**.

All Seminole Tribe Members  
and their immediate families  
are welcome to attend.