

# The Seminole Tribune

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## Council starts process to add Immokalee rep

BY BRETT DALY  
Senior Editor

**HOLLYWOOD** — Immokalee Reservation is getting closer to having a voting seat on Tribal Council. During its Nov. 13 meeting, Council unanimously approved to send a request to the Secretary of the Interior for an election that could amend the Constitution and Bylaws of the Seminole Tribe of Florida and add a sixth Tribal Council member to represent Immokalee. If the request is approved by the Secretary, who oversees the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), eligible voters tribalwide will decide whether to amend the Constitution and seat an Immokalee representative. "Immokalee people have spoken and they believe it's time for Immokalee to be on its own," said Immokalee Reservation administrator Reynaldo Yzaguirre III during the Council meeting in Hollywood. "We want to be able to make our own decisions." Yzaguirre said 350 Tribal members live in the Immokalee area, and "we are growing every year." Only 183 live on the reservation, of which only 118 are eligible voters, said Tribal Secretary LaVonne Rose. In comparison, Hollywood has 788 residents and 469 eligible voters; Big Cypress has 677 residents and 382 eligible voters; and Brighton has 643 residents and 350 eligible voters, Rose said. If approved, the BIA would conduct the election. Notices would be mailed to eligible voters, and Tribal members would need to register with the BIA to vote in the election. In order for the election to be valid, 30 percent of those registered voters must cast a vote by absentee ballot, Rose said. There will be no polling sites. If Tribal members vote to amend

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## HELP delivers hope for future homeowners

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**TRAIL** — A new program administered by the Housing Department is providing a different direction for Tribal members on the road to home ownership. Launched by Tribal Council approval June 12, the Home Expansion Loan Program (HELP) is proving to be the next best step for members previously denied mortgage loans to build financial stability and bolster chances for home loans in the future. "A lot of Tribal members apply for loans, get turned down and don't understand why. We give them a better idea of what banks want to see," said Carol Lowe-Chin, Housing Department loan manager. Training classes led by Native Learning Center (NLC) staffers began Aug. 18 with a hopeful group from Hollywood Reservation. On Oct. 28, training and development specialist Patti Kay Mitchell and curriculum design and development specialist Nathan Harris met with another group at Trail's Seminole Field Office in Miami. In less than four months, 13 Tribal members had achieved pre-approval for home loans and two loans were days from closing, Lowe-Chin said. "Members are asking to learn as much as they can. Folks are very excited," she said. Brighton hosted a training meeting Nov. 23. The next classes will be scheduled in early 2016. Rhonda Bain, of Hollywood, called the program "a bridge to a brighter future" for all Tribal members — "especially for

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Moses Jumper Jr. and Osceola (Brendan Carter) and his horse Renegade — joined by Seminole warrior riders and mounted law enforcement — lead the Nov. 13 Florida State University homecoming parade through the streets of Tallahassee.

## Seminole homecoming marks history, victory

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**TALLAHASSEE** — A flood of Seminole garnet and gold washed Tallahassee streets Nov. 13-14 during Florida State University's 67th homecoming weekend while an entourage of Seminole Tribe members dressed in brilliant patchwork shared the spotlight. Hailed among guests of honor at special events and ceremonies that peppered the two-day event, the Seminole Tribe's royal court and about 20 other Tribe members were received with appreciation and respect. "The deep relationship between the Tribe and FSU is why I always enjoy coming back to homecoming," said Panther Clan's Kyle Doney, an FSU Alumni

Association board member who planted Osceola's flaming spear at the 50-yard line at homecoming for the fourth time since 2005. Tribal member Justin Motlow, a redshirt freshman wide receiver for FSU, watched from the sideline as quarterback Sean McGuire rallied the team past the North Carolina State Wolfpack for a 34-17 victory at Doak Campbell Stadium. Doney and Tribal members Tomie Motlow, Norman "Skeeter" Bowers and Moses Jumper Jr. viewed the game from the end zone while others, including Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr., Louise Gopher and Charlotte Burgess, watched from the seventh-level FSU president's box. "There's so much excitement out here for our Tribe and our FSU family that even

at 65 years old I feel like getting out there on the field and tackling someone," Jumper said. According to FSU's Communications Department, the Seminole name was adopted by the school in 1947 and the first homecoming princess and chief were crowned in 1948. During the next several decades, the school's "mascot" Indian bore no resemblance to a real Seminole warrior. Osceola and his horse Renegade became revered icons for FSU athletic programs in 1977 with permission from then-Chairman Howard Tommie, who was assured that the great Seminole warrior would be portrayed with honor.

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## Past success helps fuel NIGA drive

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — More than 400 representatives from Tribes throughout Indian Country convened in Hollywood for the National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA) mid-year conference at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Nov. 2-4. The conference highlighted several legislative issues NIGA is tackling in Washington, D.C. and touted its 30 years of accomplishments on behalf of Indian gaming. "The leadership is here to discuss the matters at hand," said NIGA Chairman Ernest L. Stevens Jr. as he opened the meeting. After a welcome from Chairman James E. Billie, President Mitchell Cypress and Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank, the issues facing Indian Country took center stage. NIGA is addressing several legislative issues, including tribal government parity in the National Labor Relations Act (NRLA); Internet gaming legislation; implementation of the Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act of 2013; and restoration of tribal homelands — reversing Carcieri v. Salazar. Passage of the Tribal Labor Sovereignty Act (TLSA) would amend NLRA and bring tribal casinos on par with other commercial enterprises wholly owned and operated by governments within the U.S., including states, counties, cities, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories who by law do not have to allow its employees to unionize. According to

♦ See NIGA on page 2A



NIGA Chairman Ernest L. Stevens Jr., left, and Joel M. Frank Sr. address participants Nov. 3 during the NIGA mid-year conference at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood.

## Buckskin Declaration returns to Florida

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER  
Special Projects Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — In the unspoiled southern Everglades half a century ago, a group of Native men burned historic words into a Key deer buckskin, filling almost every available space with pronouncements of independence and freedom that rival the United States' Declaration of Independence.

They were the Mikasuki Tribe of the Seminole Nation, as they were known among themselves in the white man's tongue. "We have ... had your local Indian Agent interfering in our internal affairs and had your Secretary of the Interior tell us to change the form of government under which we have lived for centuries," the buckskin reads. "We have, and have had for centuries, our own culture, our own

customs, our own government, our own language and our own way of life which is different from the government, the culture, the customs, the language and the way of life of the White Man. "We do say that we are not White Men but Indians, do not wish to become White Men but wish to remain Indians, and have an outlook on all of these things different from the outlook of the White Man."



From left, Pete Osceola Jr., Virginia Osceola, Lee Tiger, Wayne Billie and Yolima Tiger examine the Buckskin Declaration of Independence that Miccosukee leader Buffalo Tiger brought to President Dwight Eisenhower in 1954. The declaration returned to Florida after 61 years in Kansas and will be on display at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum in Big Cypress in January.

The eloquent but powerful words stood squarely in opposition to the U.S. policies of the mid-1940s that sought to assimilate Native Americans. The inauguration of World War II hero Gen. Dwight David "Ike" Eisenhower to the U.S. presidency in 1953 put a military-style fast track on the policy. American Indians across the continent watched as their lands were gobbled up by soldiers, lawyers and eminent domain, their customs and culture made illegal and their children housed in boarding schools where they were punished for speaking their own language. In the Everglades, where the last Florida Indians hid for decades from cavalries of soldiers that eventually gave up trying to put them on the Trail of Tears, a few Native men decided to strike back. Hence, the famous 1954 Buckskin Declaration of Independence, which demanded Florida's Indian people and their land be left alone. "It was the birth, really, of Florida's Native tribal sovereignty," said Paul Backhouse, director of the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum. "The document predates federal recognition of either the Seminole Tribe of Florida (1957) or the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida (1962)." Instigated and translated by Miccosukee statesman Buffalo Tiger,

signed with the marked Xs of clan leaders Sam Jones Micco, Ingraham Billie, Jimmie Billie, Oscar Hoe, Frank Charlie, Jimmie Henry, Willie Jim, George Osceola and Jack Clay, the cured deer hide was adorned with feathers and carried by Buffalo Tiger on a train to Washington, D.C. There, with the help of Miami attorney Morton Silver, the Buckskin was delivered to Eisenhower's office. President Eisenhower was either unimpressed with the Buckskin or never saw it. He took no action to change the prevailing policy that dictated that the Miccosukees could only be recognized as a faction of the Seminoles, an arrangement the Miccosukee Indians had steadfastly refused numerous times, dating back to the 1940s. The Miccosukees stayed in the background when the Seminole Tribe of Florida received its federal recognition in 1957. In early 1959, not long after the rebel forces led by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara overthrew Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista, a group of Indians led by Buffalo Tiger flew to Havana at Castro's invitation. Castro met them at the airport in one of his first official duties as the new Cuban president. Castro offered the U.S.-rejected Miccosukees reservation land and sovereignty on Cuban soil. Years later, Buffalo Tiger recalled, "When Castro took over Cuba, he wanted us to come over as his guests. We went and were treated OK. When we got back, the United States said, 'OK, don't go back. Promise you won't, and you will be Miccosukees.' We needed our own power

♦ See DECLARATION on page 2A

# Editorial

## Zen and the art of Big Cypress fishing

• James E. Billie

Back in the early 1950s, Big Cypress Seminole Reservation was still undisturbed wilderness. Many water birds were abundant: curlews, iron heads, blue herons, diver ducks, mallards, different types of egrets. Turkeys and deer were plentiful.

The season's change would bring in the rains, which cause the Everglades to have flowing water like a huge and wide river. It flowed south into the Gulf of Mexico.

When the rains came and started flowing, my love for fishing developed.

In the cypress heads were deer, alligator and cattle trails. Water flowing in these trails made it convenient for fish to swim from one cypress pond to another. These trails were only ankle, or less than knee, deep.

While walking on a trail one day, I noticed a wake coming a short distance away toward me. It frightened me a little, so I climbed upon a cypress knee and waited to see what it was. To my relief it

was three or four gar fish passing by. Other times it would be a school of young bass or a mudfish (bow fin). From that time on, I would chase the fish with spears or gigs or machetes. We always seemed to have fish on the fire every day.

As this rainy season passed, the water would dry up only to be found in the cypress ponds. Fish could not travel so they always ended up in these ponds by the thousands.

The people at the village would make nets to scoop out what they needed, or gig them. If we were lucky, the pond could hold water for a while to keep the fish alive.

As the ponds dried up totally, we would fish in the nearby lakes and canals along the roads going to Immokalee or Clewiston. Several weekends I was dropped off along one of these roads to catch fish while the others went to town to do our weekly shopping.

By the time the folks returned, I had caught over 100 fish. It was so much fun! I did this for a while – what I thought was fun – until one day I realized I was the one cleaning all these fish! Sometimes I had

to fry them. It was a familiar story: no one wants to clean or fry the fish.

But they would eat the fish without a problem.

Realizing this, when I was dropped off to catch fish, I just caught what I thought was enough. Less than 20 fish. When I was asked, "Why so few fish?" I would simply say, "I think I caught them all last time."

The other thing I realized after all these years, the folks did not want me to go to town with them, for whatever reason, so I was dropped off to fish.

Today I enjoy fishing, but I only catch enough to eat, or go to the fish market where it is already cleaned. LOL.  
*Sho-naa-bish.*

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



## Words of the historic Buckskin Declaration

To the Most Honorable President of the United States of America Dwight D. Eisenhower

Our Most Solemn and Respectful Greetings:

We the General Council, being the governing body, of the Mikasuki Tribe of Seminole Indians in the State of Florida, have met in formal council in the Everglades in this time of decision to our Tribe and appeal to you as a great leader of your people to dispense the justice which will preserve our freedom, property rights and independence.

We, unconquered, have been at peace with your Nation for over one hundred years. Our history tells us that in the past treaties have been made with the Nations of Great Britain and Spain, recognizing and entitling us to vast portions of lands in what is now known as the State of Florida.

When your Nation in 1821 made a treaty with the country of Spain you agreed to recognize our property rights in such of those lands that at that time were recognized by Spain. Subsequently your Nation made treaties with our independent Nation, all of which were dishonored by your Nation either by failure to act or by provoked wars.

Under the last treaty your Nation made with our Nation we were entitled to all of those lands as shown by the "Map of the Seat of War in Florida compiled by order of Brig. General Zachary Taylor, principally from the Surveys and Reconnaissance of the Officers of the U.S. Army by Capt. John MacKay and Lt. J. E. Blake" in 1839; as well as the lands due us under various other treaties.

We, the Mikasuki Tribe of the Seminole Nation, have made no requests of any kind upon your government since the McComb Treaty of 1839. We have never asked for nor taken any assistance, in money or in any other thing, from your Nation.

We have for over one hundred years lived on lands in the Everglades, some of which were established as Indian Reservations, and for over one hundred years we have not been discontent with our relationship, because you let us alone and we left you alone. For over one hundred years we have not allowed the conduct we have received from your government to disturb us in spite of many insults to our Nation, chief of which has been the deliberate confusion of our Mikasuki Tribe of Seminole Indians, governed by our General Council, with the Muskogee Tribe of Seminole Indians in order to avoid recognition of our tribal government, independence, rights and customs.

Now, and for the first time in over one hundred years, we are obliged to address ourselves to your government.

There has been filed before the Indian Claims Commission in your government, without our authority, a claim, supposedly by us, and supposedly to compensate our

Tribe with money for lands taken from us by the United States Government in the past. We want no money.

The Congress of the United States we learn is considering laws to make us equal, supposedly to White Men and to take away what little tribal lands your government has left us, all under the theory that our Tribe wants to be or should be treated as White Men with the rights of White Men to own individual land.

We have expressed our wishes, our customs and our view as a Tribe through our General Council which governs us to your government officials but have been ignored, given little courtesy and much insult, had your local Indian Agent interfering in our internal affairs and had your Secretary of the Interior tell us to change the form of government under which we have lived for centuries.

We have, and have had for centuries, our own culture, our own customs, our own government, our own language, and our own way of life which is different from the government, the culture, the customs, the language, and the way of life of the White Man. We do not say that we are superior or inferior to the White Man and we do not say that the White Man is superior or inferior to us.

We do say that we are not White Men but Indians, do not wish to become White Men but wish to remain Indians, and have an outlook on all of these things different from the outlook of the White Man. We do not wish to own lands because our land is for all of us. We live on our land, which is the land of all of our Tribe, and we live from our land which is the land of all of our Tribe. We have failed to have your Indian Agent or your Secretary of the Interior or your other government officials understand our outlook.

We are therefore solemnly and respectfully requesting that you appoint a special representative to act for you, who is not connected with any branch of your government, who is fair and impartial, and who will be instructed by you to meet with us so that we may make ourselves understood to him, so that he may try to understand us, and so that a satisfactory agreement can be reached between your Nation and our Nation on the preservation of the lands to which we are entitled under all past treaties, under the law of nations, and under justice; and the recognition of our tribal government, the General Council, so that we and you may live together in this land which was all once our land.

Signed this 26 day of February 1954, by the General Council.

Sam Jones Micco, Ingraham Billie Jimmie Billie, Oscar Hoe, Frank Charlie, Jimmie Henry, Willie Jim, George Osceola, Jack Clay

Translated, interpreted and witnessed by Buffalo Tiger.

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the NIGA website, "current law singles out Indian Tribes as the only governmental entity subject to the NLRA – essentially making tribal governments second-class sovereigns."

The issue began in 2004 when the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), in *NLRB v. San Manuel Band of Serrano Mission Indians*, overturned three decades of its own precedent in ruling the NRLA applies to Indian casinos wholly owned and operated by Tribal governments. In 2007, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit upheld the NLRB decision. Since then, organized labor has targeted Indian gaming.

NIGA worked with Congress to introduce TLSA in the House of Representatives and the Senate, which would amend the NLRA to exempt tribal enterprises on Indian lands from unionization. But the bill needs more support to pass into law.

NIGA Executive Director Jason Giles said John Boehner's resignation as House Speaker has delayed the bill.

"The Boehner resignation threw a wrench in the plan and pushed our agenda back," Giles said. "Democrats will vote against it, but we have support from Republicans."

Federal attempts to legalize Internet gaming have been unsuccessful. The Internet Poker Freedom Act, which would allow Internet gaming for poker only, and the Restoring America's Wire Act, which would ban Internet gaming altogether, died in Congress in 2013. But both acts were reintroduced in June. While the bills languish in Congress, states are rolling out their own Internet regulations.

"There are two sides to their regulations; either ban it or put the states in charge," Giles said. "Indian Country shouldn't be left out."

NIGA is united behind the Principles of Sovereignty, which were developed by the NIGA Internet Gaming Subcommittee five years ago. According to NIGA, the principles "demand that any federal Internet gaming legislation treat Tribes as governments, that tribal Internet revenue not be subject to any form of outside taxation and that the bill respect and protect existing tribal governments' right to conduct Indian gaming under IGRA and existing tribal-state compacts."

"These principles have bonded us together," Stevens said.

NIGA is also focused on implementing the Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act of 2013 by the Department of Treasury and the IRS to protect tribal government programs from federal income taxation. Congress passed and President Barack Obama signed the act in September 2014 to mandate that the Internal Revenue Service not tax Tribal members on the services they receive from essential tribal government programs.

NIGA is working to reverse the 2009 *Carcieri v. Salazar* Supreme Court decision, which only allows Tribes that were under federal jurisdiction in 1934 to put land into federal trust under the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) and restore tribal homelands. The decision has slowed development of housing, education, health care and other services on Indian land.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit issued a decision in *Big Lagoon Rancheria v. California* in 2014 that stated California is under no obligation under IGRA to negotiate with the Tribe because they did not have jurisdiction over an 11-acre parcel put into trust under IRA in 1994.

"These decisions have created an atmosphere of uncertainty that has discouraged investment and threatens reservation jobs and economic development. The decisions also have paralyzed the administrative tribal land to trust process, making it impossible for tribes to rebuild their communities," NIGA wrote in a memo to members.

In June, the U.S. Government Accountability Office released a report on tribal gaming and recommended that National Indian Gaming Commission continue to obtain input from states on gaming control standards.

"The government spent a lot of money reviewing Indian Country and found out how efficient Indian gaming is," Stevens said. "They saw an amazing business function out there. The bottom line is we are responsible to our communities. We stand strong, spend millions to protect our industry and are stringent and assertive."

Tribes use revenue from Indian gaming to provide essential government services including health care, education, public safety and infrastructure.

### Unique history

During a session on tribal gaming's unique history and purpose, Joel M. Frank Sr. explained how the Seminole Tribe fought for the right to operate high-stakes bingo games. In 1979, cigarette sales drove the Tribe's economic development but the Tribe believed they had the right to open a bingo hall.

"We were on the verge of what I call a renaissance period of new prosperity," said Frank, chief operations officer. "We wanted to find a way for our families to become economically stable."

Frank said Chairman Billie went to 68 law firms to get legal opinions on high-stakes bingo. Every one of them said it could not be done because there was no law that said it could.

"We thought about that and decided to try it," said Frank, who was the tribal administrator at the time. "We can always ask for forgiveness later."

The Broward County sheriff tried to shut down the Tribe's bingo, but the Tribe sued the state claiming sovereignty protected them from state interference. In 1981, the case was decided in the Tribe's favor by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, which helped open the door for Indian gaming nationwide.

"We knew we would have an impact on Indian Country and said somebody had to do it," Frank said. "So we took it upon ourselves to push this issue."

Shortly after, tribal leaders invited other Tribes to Florida to discuss creating a regulatory process for Indian gaming. A committee was formed to develop standards; Frank served as vice chairman. A few years later, members of the committee served as the first leaders of NIGA.

"As a result, a lot of us have stable economic development on our reservations," he said. "I can't believe it's been 30 years. If it wasn't for gaming, we wouldn't have Hard Rock International. Imagine what you

can do when you set your mind to it."

NIGA Chairman Emeritus Rick Hill recalled that first meeting in a hotel room in Florida that led to the formation of NIGA.

"We gathered around a bed," said Hill, of the Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin. "We didn't have a meeting room; no one had any money. NIGA started with a shoebox full of records."

### Big business

Today, Indian gaming is big business. Of the 567 federally recognized Tribes, 244 participate in gaming and 184 are members of NIGA. In 2013, 479 Indian gaming casinos in 28 states earned revenue of \$28.6 billion, according to the 2015 Indian Gaming Industry Report by Nathan Associates Inc. The report stated the impact on surrounding communities and the general U.S. economy totaled approximately \$91 billion. The report also found that the industry supports 612,000 jobs and its employees earn \$28 billion in wages.

The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988 (IGRA) gives Tribes the responsibility for regulating their gaming operations. IGRA promotes tribal economic development, self-sufficiency and strong tribal governments through gaming revenues. The act also established the National Indian Gaming Commission.

In 1983, the Bureau of Indian Affairs coordinated with Tribes to form the National Indian Gaming Task Force. Leaders spent a year meeting with federal and tribal officials around the country to work out the details of what would become IGRA.

Members of the task force formed NIGA in 1985.

Attorney Sharon House, of the Onieda Tribe of Wisconsin, recalled her experience on the task force during the conference. They met with representatives of the BIA, state attorneys general and governors' representatives on reservations around the U.S. that did not have gaming.

"We really saw the people that needed help from a casino's money," House said. "One of the best things we ever did was to have meetings on those reservations. It took a year for them (the government officials) to realize we were real people with real issues."

House mentioned a meeting in New Mexico where the state attorney general asked tribal officials what they really wanted.

"They said they wanted sewers and bathrooms like you have," she said. "All along they (the government officials) thought it was all about the money; they couldn't understand the need."

Hill said the states "just didn't like Indians," but added that the task force was enthusiastic. When IGRA was created, Tribes had to deal with "lesser sovereigns – the states" to finalize compacts. Studies citing economic impact of Indian gaming were a turning point in the negotiations with states.

"It wasn't just about sovereignty; it was about money," he said. "That opened their eyes about how Indian gaming could help states' economies."

Even today, small Tribes are being challenged by states, Hill said. He cautioned that the war for tribal sovereignty continues.

"We have to fight fire with fire," he said. "Sovereignty is what this is all about so our kids can have a good education and a better life than we and our parents did."

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and we had to go to Cuba to get it."

Castro's invitation, as Lee Tiger wrote in his father's obituary last year, was "brought on by the country's remembrance of a treaty between the Miccosukee Tribe and Spain dating back to the 1700s."

Tiger presented Castro with his own buckskin, burned with words of praise for the rebel leader for fighting for the independence of the Cuban people. The trip was covered by the Miami Herald and the resultant publicity brought worldwide embarrassment to the "land of the free and the home of the brave." When Eisenhower's successor, John F. Kennedy, took office on Jan. 20, 1961, the nation's policy of American Indian Tribe termination and assimilation ended.

By Jan. 11, 1962, all the paperwork was completed and the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida was granted federal recognition. Buffalo Tiger became the first chairman, a post he held until 1985.

When he left office, Eisenhower brought the Buckskin Declaration home to Abilene, Kansas, where a new presidential library was forming.

It was found there in a box last August

after a nationwide search by Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum researchers.

"The Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library recently approved a year-long loan of the Declaration so it could return to South Florida as part of the upcoming exhibition 'Struggle for Survival,' which opens here Jan. 16," Backhouse said. "The exhibition will tell the story of the Tribes from the wars through to the fierce statement of sovereignty represented by the Buckskin Declaration."

A small group of the late Buffalo Tiger's extended family attended a special preview showing of the Buckskin Declaration at the Museum on Nov. 18.

"Amid tears of joy and wise words from the visiting elders, one observation really stood out," Backhouse said. "The Declaration fundamentally represents tribal sovereignty both then and now. It demonstrates a will by Florida's Indians to engage in government-to-government consultation, a political message that is central to the core philosophy of both the modern Seminole and Miccosukee Tribes. We hope Tribal citizens, as well as the public, will make a note to join us for the Jan. 16 opening and take advantage of the rare opportunity to see this powerful document."

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# Community

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## Museum goes inside out for annual art celebration

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum was open for busy days Nov. 6-7, but visitors also packed the parking lot, chickee village and nearby field for the venue's 18th annual American Indian Arts Celebration.

Nearly 1,800 turned out for the two-day happening that heralded everything Seminole plus artists and performers from other Tribes.

"It's the biggest event we have all year. Some people who have never been here check us out and some repeat visitors look forward to it year after year," said Museum operations manager Annette Snapp.

Organizers said about 500 more

guests attended compared to last year. In all, 44 clothing, craft and fine art vendors filled a marketplace. Seven booths offered information about the Tribe and Native American causes. Guests traveled from as far as Italy, France and Germany.

Tampa medicine man Bobby Henry opened festivities with a friendship Stomp Dance that encouraged guests to hold hands and move together as one force.

Snapp said the 2015 celebration offered several new surprises.

Festival-goers were greeted at the entry with free tastings of frybread and sofkee, which allowed Museum staff and Tribe representatives a chance to provide a warm reception. Unlike previous years, most guests eventually walked a path in both directions — to the festival and to see the Museum's permanent and temporary exhibits inside the Museum walls.

"We never realized there was so much to see," said Biliana Savov, of Jupiter, who visited with her husband, Peter, and children Sophia, 7, and Alex, 11.

For the first time since the yearly event began in 1997, a pop-up gallery was included. "Seminole Spirit," featuring photographic works captured in Big Cypress by fashion photographer Russell James, was expanded from a triptych in the Museum's Mosaic Gallery to a 20-piece showcase in an outdoor exhibition tent.

An early morning bird-watching stroll with Kim Willis and Rhonda Roff, of the Hendry-Glades Audubon Society, was another first. Roff said 24 bird species were sighted from the common grackle to the ruby-throated hummingbird.

Jon Yeager, of the Historic Hernando Preservation Society, said the bird tour inspired his first trip to Big Cypress Reservation though he has read about the Seminole Tribe since 2006.

"Looking into the cypress domes was like walking into a whole new world. It reminded me of what I read about the Seminoles and how they lived and still live here," Yeager said.

Bleachers were lined in front of a main stage where entertainment played throughout the day.

Tribe member Rita Youngman

performed original songs that retold stories passed down from elders and other songs that captured the essence of contemporary Native issues. Cypress Billie took up the guitar both days to play and sing tunes his father, Chairman James E. Billie, made familiar throughout the Tribe, such as "Big Alligator," or "Halapata Chobee."

Members of at least eight Tribes throughout Indian Country were recognized.

The Warriors of AniKituhwa, tribal ambassadors of the Eastern Band of Cherokee in North Carolina, provided interactive authentic dances and a game of chance using butterbeans that were tossed in a basket then counted for points.

"We talk to people and educate them about us. I hope they learn that even though we are all Native Americans, we are different. All Tribes are different," Micah Swimmer said.

All performances included information about the individual history, culture and plight of Tribes. For instance, the Big Cypress Martial Arts group performed dressed as 17th century Seminoles and Army soldiers. Led by Charlie Osceola, the group demonstrated how Seminoles used their knowledge of the environment and hunting tools as weapons against Army troops during the Seminole Wars.

Seminole members Jessica Osceola and Elgin Jumper were on hand to show and sell their fine art pieces.

Leonard Peltier's art was represented by his son Chauncey Peltier, of Oregon. The elder Peltier is in his 40th year of imprisonment on charges stemming from the 1975 killings of two FBI agents in Pine Ridge.

Last year, Chauncey Peltier began crisscrossing art shows throughout the United States collecting petition signatures to support a presidential pardon for his father, whose controversial imprisonment has been the source of several books, films and songs.

Other noted works on display included paintings by the late Rex Begaye, bronze sculptures by Bradley Cooley and his son Bradley Cooley Jr., and photographs from the collection of Woody Hansen.

Seminole Nation of Oklahoma Principal Chief Leonard Harjo popped in with his wife, Sheila, to reconnect with old friends and the land. Harjo, in South Florida for the National Indian Gaming Association mid-year conference, said he had not attended the arts celebration since 2007.

"There are 20,000 of us scattered all over the place. We're separate recognized Tribes, but we have shared ancestral lines and shared language. Coming to Big Cypress is like going to the homeland. We still get the feeling of being connected," Chief Harjo said.

Snapp said the Museum staff is already working on the 19th annual American Indian Arts Celebration, likely to be held Nov. 4-5, 2016.

"We were so fortunate to have had such a strong set of performers and artists of all kinds this year. People were so generous to come and participate that they made it happen. Now we are getting the calendar ready for 2016," Snapp said.



Beverly Bidney

Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola poses Nov. 4 with outgoing Gaming Commission member Truman Bowers, who dons a patchwork jacket presented to him by Councilman Osceola, during a farewell dinner at the Chef's Table at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood.

## Bowers says farewell to Gaming Commission

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — Truman Bowers, who served on the Seminole Tribe's Gaming Commission from 2007 to July 2015, commemorated his service surrounded by family and friends Nov. 4 during a celebratory dinner at the Chef's Table at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood. Bowers' term recently ended with the appointment of Mitch Osceola to the commission.

"I always liked the atmosphere of gaming," Bowers said. "There is always action and we're expanding all the time."

The commission is the Tribe's governmental agency with regulatory and oversight responsibilities under the compact between the Tribe and state. It aims to protect tribal assets, independently oversee gaming operations and control

Seminole gaming licenses for employees who handle cash in casinos. The commission issues, renews, suspends and revokes licenses.

"The biggest challenge was handling employees' licenses when they didn't follow procedures," Bowers said. "If their license is revoked, it affects their livelihood and they can't work in gaming anywhere in the country. But they should know the policies and procedures; they aren't children."

Neither the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) nor the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC) requires Tribes to establish gaming commissions, but Tribes must adhere to specific governmental responsibilities to engage in gaming under IGRA, according to NIGC's website.

◆ See TRUMAN BOWERS on page 7A

## Office manager trades desk work for livestock

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — For nearly 25 years Leoma Simmons ushered telephone calls and paperwork through the Seminole cattle program offices on Big Cypress and Brighton reservations.

On Oct. 30, Simmons left her desk as bookkeeper and office manager to concentrate on raising her own cattle — and doting on her grandchildren. Her retirement sendoff, held at the 11th annual cattle program summary session in Big Cypress Oct. 29, came with heartfelt appreciation from dozens of Seminole cattle owners and a cake dotted with plastic grazing cows.

"Prior to [Leoma] we were always trying to do what is being done now," said cattleman Stanlo Johns. "I gave her a hard time; we all did. But in her 25 years, Leoma probably learned more than anyone else. Now, she'll see if she can put what she knows to different work."

Simmons, of Brighton, began her career in the Natural Resource Department in March 1990. The grand-niece of cattle owner Morgan Smith and one of the Tribe's first cattlemen Happy Jones, Simmons was promoted from receptionist to office manager in 2001 when Onewa Baxley retired and joined Brighton's Culture Department.

Through her career, Simmons provided yearly income and inventory reports, coordinated cattle workdays, aided with staffing issues, played secretary to cattle owners committees and served as the right hand to the late Don Robertson through 2012 when Alex Johns took over.

But Simmons already had a decade of work experience as an employee of the Seminole Tribe of Florida before joining the cattle program team.

Two months after her 1980 graduation from Moore Haven High School, Simmons started full swing as a floor clerk at the Tampa bingo hall. In 1992 she went back to school at Indian River Community College, where she earned a certificate in computer introduction.

Simmons brought computer education from the classroom to the cow pen when she helped steer technology into the cattle ranching realm during the early 2000s.

In July 2007, her image pegged a spot in the Florida Memory project, the State Library and Archives of Florida website for digitalized historical and cultural photographs and information. Photographed during a cattle workday in Big Cypress, Simmons is shown inputting data into a laptop computer.

The illustration punctuated the Tribe's

◆ See LEOOMA SIMMONS on page 5A



Eileen Soler

Leoma Simmons is pleasantly surprised when her retirement is announced and her fellow cattle owners applaud her career of service Oct. 29 during the Tribe's annual cattle summary meeting in Big Cypress.



Eileen Soler

Cypress Billie belts out 'Big Alligator,' an original song by his father, Chairman James E. Billie, during the 18th annual American Indian Arts Celebration Nov. 7 at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum on Big Cypress.



Eileen Soler

The Warriors of AniKituhwa, tribal ambassadors of the Eastern Band of Cherokee in North Carolina, and spectators of the 18th annual American Indian Arts Celebration at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum on Big Cypress join in a harvest dance Nov. 7.

## Leaders tackle Indian Country issues at White House conference

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**WASHINGTON** — The challenges facing Native American youth and strengthening government-to-government relationships between Indian Country and the U.S. government were among the focal points Nov. 5 at the annual White House Tribal Nations Conference in Washington, D.C.

For the seventh consecutive year, President Barack Obama hosted the conference, which drew representatives from the 567 federally recognized Tribes.

During a conference call prior to the event, White House Domestic Policy Council Director Cecilia Muñoz said the Obama administration is working to ensure that the initiatives it enacted over the last seven years will remain in place through future administrations.

"We think about this very deeply," Muñoz said. "It's tremendously important that the progress we made should be a source of momentum."

The administration is working to institutionalize these programs and is committed to improving coordination across the federal government to promote strategic and efficient programing for Indian Country. For example, ConnectHome, a program designed to make high-speed Internet more affordable, was launched in

July during a visit by the president to the Choctaw Nation in Oklahoma.

"My expectation is whoever is the next president, they're going to see that we've been able to build, I think, some real trust with tribal nations," Obama said during a panel discussion at the conference.

According to a statement from the White House, the administration, through the White House Council on Native American Affairs, is reinforcing the message that all federal trust responsibility is held by the entire government and is developing cross-agency partnerships to promote information sharing and better leverage existing programs to promote meaningful outcomes for Indian Country.

"The conference is a reflection of the Obama administration's commitment to Indian Country," Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell said during the conference call. "We have bipartisan support in Congress for a lot of the work we are doing and that will help ensure the next administration does what Congress wants them to do."

During the last 18 months, members of the president's cabinet traveled through Indian Country and met with youth from 12 Tribes in nine states where they identified challenges and potential solutions to help Native youth reach their potential.

"We want to make sure young Native American leaders are connected to each other," Muñoz said. "We found there is

great value in learning from each other and many have developed their own youth groups to support each other. Connecting them to each other helps them grow into leaders in their communities."

During the conference, Obama met with a group of Native American youth in a panel moderated by Jude Schimmel, of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. The former University of Louisville women's basketball player is a member of Generation Indigenous, an organization the president launched last year after a visit to Standing Rock Sioux Indian Nation in North Dakota. Gen-I aims to engage youth and improve their lives.

"Even as we prepare our tribal youth to succeed in the 21st century, we also have to preserve and protect Native culture and heritage," Obama said. "As I've said before, if you start losing your language and your culture, your sense of connection to your ancestors and touchstones that date back generations, you can start feeling adrift. And if you're living in a society that devalues your culture, or perpetuates stereotypes, you may be devaluing yourself. So we have to preserve those bonds, break stereotypes."

With 14 months left in office for the Obama administration, Secretary Jewell said "the clock is ticking down but we are challenging people to use the clock to move forward."



Beverly Bidney

Seminole Hard Rock & Casino Hollywood reps present American Indian Veterans Memorial Inc. with a check for \$120,000 at Hard Rock Live Nov. 12. From left are President Mitchell Cypress, Chairman James E. Billie, Gerry Beckley and Dewey Bunnell from the band America, two Hard Rock girls, AIVMI President Stephen Bowers and his wife, Elizabeth Bates, Roy Murry of AIVMI, and Bill Wright, president of the Hard Rock Hollywood.

# AIVMI begins push for memorial funds

## Hard Rock Hollywood donates \$120,000 toward building Education Center in D.C.

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — American Indian Veterans Memorial Inc. (AIVMI) President Stephen Bowers and his wife, Elizabeth Bates, kicked off a major effort Nov. 12 to raise \$10 million toward building a Native American veterans' exhibit at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.

The AIVMI initiative began in 2010 as an effort to recognize Native Americans' contributions in the U.S. military with a statue near the memorial, but it has evolved into a campaign to build the Education Center at the Wall.

The project will cost \$80 million. The first check, for \$120,000, came from the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood and was presented by Chairman James E. Billie and President Mitchell Cypress onstage at Hard Rock Live in Hollywood before a concert



Beverly Bidney

AIVMI President Stephen Bowers explains fundraising efforts for the Education Center Nov. 12 to a crowd gathered at Hard Rock Live for the Three Dog Night and America concert.

featuring 1970s groups Three Dog Night and America.

"The Education Center will tell the story of Native American's involvement in wars," Bowers said. "The center can tell about it more than a statue can. People can go and learn what their Tribe's contribution was in wars and the significant part we played."

Chairman Billie served two tours in Vietnam starting in 1965 and President Cypress served in Germany from 1968-70.

"It means a lot to Native Americans to be recognized for serving," President Cypress said. "I'm an American citizen; I like freedom and I want the next generations to have it so I served to protect the younger generations. It's good that everyone here saw the big check go to the initiative."

Ticket sales from the sold-out concert and food and beverage proceeds went directly to fundraising efforts.

"Not a whole lot of people know about it, so this event will not only raise money but will also raise awareness for the project," Bowers said.

AIVMI is collaborating with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) to build the Education Center at the Wall, which will be located close to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Lincoln Memorial. To keep it from overshadowing the nearby memorials, the center will be built underground. The Native American exhibit will highlight the bravery, contributions and sacrifices of the American Indian, Alaska Native and Pacific Islander veterans.

In addition to raising funds for the project, AIVMI aims to collect missing photographs of all Native Americans who fell during the Vietnam War. During the conflict, 227 men from 30 states and territories served in all branches of the military and made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. The organization is also seeking photographs and remembrances of those who served in all of America's wars.

For information or to donate to AIVMI, visit [www.aivmi.org](http://www.aivmi.org).

# Honor, pride, valor among BC Veterans Day themes

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — Three generations of courage root the Josh family tree in military service.

Pvt. Coleman Josh, 19, currently serves in the Army reserves; his mother, Sallie Josh, 48, is retired Navy who spent 14 years as a corpsman attached to the Marines; and his grandfather Coleman Josh, 78, served in Vietnam during two stints in the Army from 1962 to 1968.

"I'm just always thankful that we have been able to serve. Today, I am very proud of my grandson and all of the Seminole veterans," the elder Josh said.

The Josh family gathered with nearly 100 guests and other veterans Nov. 11 at Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium in Big Cypress for lunch, gifts and accolades during the third annual Veterans Day Celebration.

"This is a special day for all of Native Americans to recognize our warriors. Our ancestors were used to going to battle for ourselves against the invaders of our land," said Moses Jumper Jr., master of ceremonies for the nearly three-hour event.

Jumper also acknowledged men and women of all races who come together in times of war and peace for the common defense of the United States. In words from his poem "What Veterans Day Means to Me," Jumper tied all of humanity into that brotherhood.

"This day reminds me of all the blood that has been shed. On the field of battle there is no color of skin for every warrior's blood is red," Jumper read. "...We honor you, the vets, for what you have given for us all. You have answered bravely to this country's call."

Army veteran Stephen Bowers, president of American Indian Veterans Memorial Inc., said the Tribe has sanctioned official Veterans Day events for more than three decades. In recent history, formal ceremonies were staged in the star-shaped Florida Seminole Veterans Building. But gatherings for vets had been occurring in small and large-scale, impromptu or planned on other reservations, he said.

Bowers credited President Mitchell Cypress, a Vietnam-era vet who served in Germany, for the earliest grassroots gatherings that happened around campfires in the early 1980s.

"They would meet at a ball field in Big Cypress and roast some hot dogs. Sometimes a six-pack of beer would find its way into the circle," Bowers said.

President Cypress said he, Jacob

Osceola, the late Roy Nash Osceola and other veterans would sit around the fire, near a flagpole, and tell stories. In 1983, they decided to create a larger event for the following year because Roy Nash's son, Herman L. Osceola, had recently joined the Marine Corps.

"Now, we look around here today and we see a picture of Herman on the wall," President Cypress said with his voice quivering during the recent Big Cypress event. "But do we see that he sacrificed his life?"

In March 1984, Lance Cpl. Herman L. Osceola, for whom the gymnasium is named, was killed in Korea with 17 other Marines during a nighttime helicopter training mission.

According to a 2014 U.S. Census Bureau report based on community surveys, American Indians and Alaska Natives accounted for 152,897 veterans nationwide. In January 2015, the Congressional Research Service reported that since the Korean War alone, 402 fully identified Native Americans have been killed while serving in war.

The most recent Native American warrior to die in battle was 39-year-old Army Master Sgt. Joshua Wheeler, a Cherokee, who was killed in October 2015 during a rescue mission at an ISIS prison facility in Iraq.

Seminole Veterans Day events are open to tribal and non-tribal vets.

Randy Coyle, of Clewiston, who served in Vietnam as a Navy sonar tech, said he only attends the Seminole events.

"I've been coming here for 25 years and I am always impressed — especially when I think that out of a couple thousand members so many have stood up to serve and defend this land," Coyle said.

Also honored at the event was Devin Osceola, a Miccosukee Tribe member and 2014 Gulliver Preparatory School graduate who recently enlisted in the Army.

President Cypress said tribal events will always be open to all vets.

"We look at each other as part of one big family. We're brothers and sisters — nationality has nothing to do with it when we are all fighting together for freedom," President Cypress said.

Miss Florida Seminole Princess Destiny Nunez, Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Skyla Osceola, Little Miss Seminole Victoria Benard and Little Mr. Seminole Gregory James II went table to table at the Big Cypress Veterans Day event thanking veterans. Nunez said those who serve should be honored every day.

"We need to let them know how we cherish what they have sacrificed for us. What they have been willing to do means so much to all of us," she said.



Eileen Soler

President Mitchell Cypress, a Vietnam-era veteran who served in Germany, gives an emotional speech Nov. 11 during a Veterans Day celebration at Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium in Big Cypress.



Eileen Soler

Seminole Tribe veterans display reverence while 'Taps' is played to honor veterans who have passed on. The event attracted nearly 100 tribal and non-tribal veterans and loved ones.

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# Seminole cattle program maintains upward trend

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

A business lunch featuring tender and juicy rib-eye steaks from the Tribe's own cattle ranches gave a clue for news to come Oct. 29 at the 11th annual Cattle Owners Summary.

Overall, the business of beef in Seminole country is up and rising, said Alex Johns, Natural Resource director and head of the Tribe's cattle program during the midday meeting at Big Cypress Community Center.

"Our program profit, without cost share, is significant and very important," Johns told dozens among the Tribe's 67 cattle owners. "Some things we are definitely doing right."

Johns reported highs and lows of the business starting at 2004 when the Tribe began to electronically collect and share cattle data through the current 2015 fiscal year.

The first electronic system – still used by the Tribe – allows the U.S. Department of Agriculture and cattle buyers to locate the origins and other initial data about individual livestock. Seminole Pride Beef's additional electronic reporting system tracks the entire lifespan, health and locations of cattle destined for consumer products, like rib-eye steaks.

"We know every step of our cattle's lives," said Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank, also a Big Cypress cattle owner. "That's how we and buyers know we are doing everything the best."

The up-to-date cattle business cost summaries were produced via Cow Sense, a software program used at the Tribe's cattle office to input data about cattle (age, weight, feed, location and other details) and then to extrapolate the information into business dollars.

Among the report's highlights is Brighton's overall rise in profits from an average \$82 per head through 2014 to \$240

per head in 2015. In Big Cypress, cattle owners went from an average annual loss of \$20 per head through 2014 to a gain of \$251 per head in 2015.

Johns attributed some of Big Cypress' jump to the addition of 100 head to herds of heifers, calf/cows and bulls on Big Cypress ranches. Additional livestock lowers costs overall, Johns said, because "it takes the same amount of money to work 100 head as it does 200 head."

Recent industry decreases in feed costs and increases in beef prices further fueled profit, Johns said.

"Efficiency at the ranch level is also cutting expenses. Owners are doing a better job with less," he said. "Genetics are improving, performance is getting better and we've trimmed a lot of fat."

On the meeting date, the combined Brighton and Big Cypress herds were roughly at 5,500 head. The Salacoa ranch operation in Georgia brings the Tribe's cattle count to approximately 11,000.

Cattle is also turning profit at the Georgia ranch where owners from Big Cypress to Texas traded hands Nov. 20-21 with nearly \$1.5 million for 250 cows, calves and bulls at the Fall Bull and Female Sale.

"But what is really selling here? Genetics," said Rep. Frank, who purchased two cows at the event.

Inside a barn at the top of the valley, buyers bid on the auctioned head, which was described before sales by sire and dam lineage, weight at calf age, current rib-eye ultrasound numbers, meat marbling score and other valuable science-based information.

Sales ranged from \$4,000 for a 6-year-old heifer to \$20,000 for a top breeding "power" bull. The average cost per head was \$5,942.

Tommy Perkins, the International Brangus Breeders Association executive vice president who holds a doctorate degree in animal science/animal breeding and

genetics, complimented the Salacoa sale.

"This is the first bull sale I've ever been through that has this many circles around the IMF (rib-eye marbling score)," Perkins said.

Executive chef Johnny Mitchell, who served Seminole Pride Beef for lunch and dinner at the events, said proof of superior meat is ultimately in the eating, but professional chefs can see, smell and feel the difference even before the beef sizzles.

"The breeding program for Seminole products produces super high marbling and so the super high-end of choice – you don't get that at the average grocery store," Mitchell said. "I love variety, but I also love a good steak and no one can get better than a brangus."

The income report of all Big Cypress and Brighton cattle owners showed all but three earned profit.

The "break-even" number per pound per calf is \$1.14.

"Not many ranchers (nationwide) have an idea or guess of what their break-even number is. We know to the penny what we need to break even," Johns said.

Owners were provided with their own privately coded business analysis to keep secret or share within the network of other ranchers as needed or desired.

Stanlo Johns, of Brighton, said much has changed in Seminole cattle ranching since he began nearly four decades ago.

"Then, about 69 people owned 5 to 25 head each. Today didn't just happen. We made it happen," Stanlo Johns said.

Currently, the Seminole cow/calf operation ranks seventh in the nation, according to the National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

Goals to ensure the Tribe's continued success and individual owner profits were also outlined at the meeting.

Johns asked owners to set sights on keeping herds 80 percent calves and 15 percent replacement heifers; maintain an average cow age of 7 years old; bring calves to average wean weights of 625; keep one cow per 2.75 acres of pasture; and produce 190 pounds of beef per acre.

He reminded cattle owners that the largest and always increasing cost on cattle farms will continue to be feed, fertilizer and land maintenance – even as calculations put Seminole ranching costs consistently below the national industry average.

"We can raise a cheaper cow than the national average because of our economy of dollars and our efficiency for the operation," Johns said. "But some things remain true in business; sometimes the more you spend the more you make."



Eileen Soler

A brangus bull is led by a cowboy Nov. 21 to a cattle transport truck after being sold at the Salacoa Valley Farms Fall Bull and Female Sale in Fairmont, Georgia.

## HELP From page 1A

our young adults and their children to come."

As far back as she can remember, Bain, 46, recalls standing in line on the Hollywood Reservation with other Tribal members. They were doled out rations of U.S. government commodity foods such as cheese and canned meat. Then, money and jobs were scarce.

"So maybe I didn't pay a bill on time. Maybe the car payment was late once too many times and I ended up with a credit record that stayed with me even when I paid the debt off. There is a stigma attached to debt that is hard to shake," Bain said.

Few knew that bad credit scores would haunt them years later when the Tribe found economic success and wealth.

The HELP program aims to rectify years of financial missteps for older members and guide young members who are just beginning to spend, save and invest.

Classes begin with the basics. Attendees share truths about how they prioritize spending and how much they devote to saving. Instructors lend advice for short-term, long-term and emergency reserve savings.

At the Trail seminar, Harris and Mitchell shared stories about their personal family situations. In Harris' case, his mother controlled the family finances but was generous to a fault. She loaned money to many relatives who never paid her back – so much that she drove her own household into financial failure.

For Mitchell, her father managed the money and her mother was left in the dark. When her father passed, her mother was easily tricked by predatory lenders into loans that were impossible to pay back.

"We all try to do good things for the right

reasons, but we have to see reciprocation. It has to come back to us in good ways," Mitchell said.

Tribal members can qualify for a mortgage loan up to \$350,000 to build, purchase or renovate a home on or off reservations. Some Tribal members can also get additional mortgage loans for architecture, engineering, site development, down payment and closing costs. The total of both mortgages can be no higher than \$500,000.

But first, prospective recipients must show proof of previous denial for a home loan through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Section 184 Indian Home Loan Program. The HUD program, established in 1992 to correct the lack of mortgage lending throughout Indian Country, boasted through 2014 nearly 24,000 loans that amounted to almost \$4 billion.

HELP also requires that Tribal members receive a certificate of completion for the first-time homebuyer education class from NLC and complete the Tribe's financial literacy and credit restoration programs. Credit problems will be assessed at the start of the credit restoration program and customized credit repair steps will be defined.

Bain said no one should be afraid to start. The classes are friendly, informative and filled with family and friends.

"You are not alone whether you screwed up in college and missed a car payment or worse. The classes are so helpful and I had someone walk me through step by step ... I never owned a house before, but by the grace of God, I will own one soon," Bain said.

Through HELP, Tribal members get three years to address all credit issues and refinance the HELP loan. In some situations the program can be extended another year.

"But the way the program is designed, payments are guaranteed through auto pay

out of dividends," Lowe-Chin said, making the mortgage payment a twice monthly priority.

As of mid-November, 400 Tribal members with homesites already assigned were on waiting lists to build homes of their own. HELP also extends to homeownership off reservation. Another 227 members were on rental property waiting lists.

"We're still barely scratching the surface," Lowe-Chin said. "But we want the Tribal member to know that we are not only here to assist with Section 184 loans or HELP loans, we are here to jump in and assist with any real estate transaction whatever and where ever."

The NLC's pre-homeowner classes are essential to understanding financial processes, Lowe-Chin said.

According to the HELP program overview, the Tribe is committed to helping members in financial need but insists that self-reliance begins with financial skills and independence – "a lack of personal financial skills results in families living paycheck to paycheck, failure to qualify for home mortgages and victimization of predatory lenders." Extremely high car loans and credit card interest plague many members – a direct result of poor credit history.

Though much of initial class time is spent on conquering debt, participants also learn how to manage budgets, turn bad credit around and maneuver the entire home mortgage process from application to approval, closing and payments.

Bain said the classes restored her confidence in the future.

"It gave me my financial backbone back. After being turned down for a mortgage once, I was very reluctant to try again," Bain said. "I am so, so thankful to the Tribe's strives to help. I pray and pray that everyone take heed, especially young adults. It's a unique opportunity. It's a bridge to a brighter future."



Beverly Bidney

Team of Life charity receives a check from the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood Nov. 18 in Fort Lauderdale. From left are Bill Wright, president of Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood; Team of Life's Essie 'Big Mama' Reed; Susan Renneisen, vice president community affairs and special events of Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino; and Luis Acevedo, senior analyst for the Board of Directors.

## President's office spreads holiday joy

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

FORT LAUDERDALE — President Mitchell Cypress, his office staff and the Seminole Hard Rock kick-started the giving season Nov. 18 with a donation to Essie "Big Mama" Reed's Team of Life organization, which donates food to the needy for Thanksgiving and toys for children at Christmas.

A \$5,000 check was presented to Reed at the charity's Fort Lauderdale headquarters by Bill Wright, president of Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood; Susan Renneisen, vice president community affairs and special events; and Luis Acevedo, Board of Directors senior analyst.

"This check means it will take care of a multitude of families for the Thanksgiving holiday," said Reed, whose organization serves 3,000 to 4,000 children in Broward County annually. "We will be able to get a lot of turkeys and all the trimmings for them."

Team of Life's mission is to "help others in need with a selfless passion for excellence in education, social advancement and community

involvement through values-based encouragement and programs," according to the organization's website.

Reed said Team of Life has served the community for 35 years.

"Two of the Hard Rock mottos are 'Take time to be kind' and 'Love all, serve all,'" Wright said. "Giving back to the community is so very important. Because of their work and selfless dedication to helping children in our community, the Seminole Hard Rock & Casino is proud to help Big Mama."

Team of Life and Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital will receive toys from the President's toy drive, to be held Dec. 3-5. President Cypress and Santa Claus will deliver toys to patients at Joe DiMaggio in Hollywood.

A second delivery will be made to Big Mama's Team of Life. Seminole veterans will volunteer at the event and also coordinate another delivery of toys to Clewiston and Moore Haven.

Donations of new, unwrapped toys can be made on every reservation or during the President's toy drive in the parking lot of Classic Casino at the corner of Stirling Road and U.S. 441 in Hollywood.

Call 954-967-3700 for details.

**"Two of the Hard Rock mottos are 'Take time to be kind' and 'Love all, serve all.'"**

– Bill Wright,  
president of Seminole Hard  
Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood

## IMMOKALEE

From page 1A

the Constitution and add a sixth Council member, the election of an Immokalee representative would depend on the timing of the secretarial election, Rose said. A special election could be held if the BIA approves the secretarial election quickly. If not, voting would take place during the general election in 2017.

"We are at the mercy of the government's timeline," she said.

Qualifications for candidates would be the same as Hollywood, Brighton and Big Cypress.

Tribal member concerns of adding

an Immokalee representative included too many voices on Council and deadlock votes.

Rose said without a majority vote, resolutions would die.

Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola said the disparity between the number of voters in Immokalee and the larger reservations should be something Tribal members consider.

"It's going to take four of my voters to equal one in Immokalee," Councilman Osceola said.

He said, however, and others agreed, that Tribal members should decide.

"Immokalee has been in limbo long enough," said Immokalee resident Benny Motlow. "Let the people decide."

## LEOMA SIMMONS

From page 3A

progression from a downhome cattle operation to a sophisticated business that uses electronic ID tags and other technology to track each animal's life and medical history. Technology also established cutting-edge marketing strategies that now include televised and online auctions nationwide.

Big Cypress Board Rep. and cattle owner Joe Frank thanked Simmons for helping evolve the program into the profitable beef production business Seminole Pride Beef.

"For the last couple of years, while we tried to transition and make changes, Leoma fielded a lot of phone calls to help get it done," Rep. Frank said.

Simmons said Tribal members were always asking why she did not own cattle.

"I was always giving advice to people and they would want to know why I didn't have any cows of my own. Well, I didn't have land for starters," Simmons said.

Simmons purchased her own head in 2012 when land became available in Big Cypress. She then began to consider retirement.

"It started to feel like I was in a weird situation, uncomfortable like a conflict of interest," she said.

Brighton Board Rep. Larry Howard said he "hated to lose" her.

"We'll miss you," Rep. Howard told Simmons in front of the room filled with cattle owners. "You multitasked just like all of us. You've been a teammate and can always come home. We'll have a spot for you."

Natural Resource Director Alex Johns bid Simmons farewell but doubted if his former assistant would really stay away.

"[Leoma] told me she finally felt comfortable enough with me in charge that she could turn me loose, but I'm not sure about that," Johns said. "She might be back next week asking questions."

Meanwhile, tears welled in the eyes of longtime coworkers and friends, including Emma Urbina and Margaret Williams who stood to offer goodbyes.

"I came three years ago and knew nothing about this tough and wonderful job. Leoma taught me so much – and she was a great sounding board," Williams said.

Rep. Frank said the fact that Simmons is a cattle owner ensures that she will not disappear from the cattle business. One way or another, her work is far from over.

"Welcome to retirement. See you in the pastures," Rep. Frank said.

For now, Simmons is enjoying every day as if she is on vacation – though her days include trips to Big Cypress to check that gates are secured, cows are where they belong and the herd is fed even on weekends.

"I don't think retirement has set in yet," Simmons said.

# HAPPY HOWLOWEEN



Beverly Bidney

Kathlyn Jo Kippenberger and Marsha Osceola share a laugh Oct. 29 as they wait to be judged in the 15-17 category of the costume contest at the Hollywood Fall Festival.



Beverly Bidney

Kinya Tommie aims for the target Oct. 30 during a cornhole tournament at the Fort Pierce Fall Festival at Chupco's Landing Community Center.



Jonathan Feld

Cody Tommie is desperate for candy during the Big Cypress Reservation's Fall Festival Oct. 30 at the Billie Johns Ball Field.



Beverly Bidney

Jimmy Fanning attempts to throw the football in the target as Roger Walters tries to block his pass during the Fort Pierce Fall Festival.



Peter B. Gallagher

Stephanie Martinez, as Little Bo Peep, and her puppy, Sheep the Cowardy Lion, show off their costumes Oct. 24 during Tampa's Halloween party at the Lakeland property.



Beverly Bidney

Sandy Billie Jr. dresses as Tex from 'Chocoo, one of his son's buddies. The costume was a winner; he took the top prize Oct. 22 at the Immokalee seniors Halloween party.



Jonathan Feld

Big Cypress toddlers line up for the costume contest during the reservation's Fall Festival at Billie Johns Ball Field.



Beverly Bidney

Charlotte Tommie, dressed as a pumpkin, shares a laugh with other costume contest participants, including Maxine Tucker Perez, Deloris Alvarez, Sandy Billie Jr., Lawrence Osceola and Paul Bowers Sr., during the Immokalee senior Halloween party.



Beverly Bidney

Willy Wonka, aka Sylas Billie, plays a jack-o-lantern disc game at the Hollywood Fall Festival.



Peter B. Gallagher

Tampa Seminoles Shane Clay, left, and Kara Clay, right, are about to take a chomp out of their brother Gavin Clay during the Tampa Halloween party.



Peter B. Gallagher

Ruby Motlow strikes a pose for the judges as the Tampa Reservation's very own Bat Girl.



John-L Voth

Spaghetti and meatballs, aka Asaiah Fludd, are on the menu Oct. 24 during the Brighton Reservation costume contest at the Fred Smith Rodeo Arena.



John-L Voth

Brydgett Koontz poses with niece Avani Smith during the Brighton Halloween carnival at the Fred Smith Rodeo Arena.



# Identifying the past in the present and into the future

SUBMITTED BY ERIC GRIFFIS  
 Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum featured an exhibit on the Tribe's oral history collection Nov. 16 to raise awareness of its ongoing oral history program. A reception for the exhibit is scheduled for Jan. 16.

The Museum's archives house many recordings of Tribal members that span several decades. In addition to overseeing the collection, we are always adding to it by recording new interviews. We constantly find past recordings stored in distant institutions or homes, and we acquire copies or originals to be stored at the Museum. This allows Tribal members to easily access information when they are researching a topic relating to the Tribe and ensures that history is not lost but is recorded and maintained.

The oral history collection differs from many of the history books in the library written by long-bearded, old professors sitting at their desks poring over tattered papers. They often wrote about things long past, like the Seminole Wars, by scouring old documents that included a few names and dates — with the rest of the details filled in from the writer's imagination. The oral history collection instead features many recordings (audio, video or written transcripts) of Tribal members telling their own stories of events they lived through or telling the stories passed down from their elders.

Many of the interviews are recorded in the speaker's native language, some translated, some not.

Collecting the interviews is an ongoing process. The Tribe is constantly breaking new ground in business, government, education, music and the arts, to name a few. When a Tribal member records an oral



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

Tribal children interview Moses Jumper Jr. The interview is archived in the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum's oral history collection.

history interview about one of the many events happening within the Seminole Tribe today, it adds to the scope of the collection and reflects the complex and vibrant diversity within the community.

Going into the future, the oral traditions of the Tribe will come full circle. We are now recording oral histories with high-definition cameras that have much better picture and audio quality than the older recordings, and we hope that someday soon the new Abiaki Learning Center will be part of the Museum's complex. This proposed building project would be carried out so that Tribal members can come and easily access

recordings. New technology will make it easier to connect to the past in much the same way it was done generations ago. One day grandchildren will be able to sit down with their elders in a "virtual" setting and hear the words straight from the source, the way it used to be.

The more people who participate in the program, the richer this community resource will be. History is happening right now, and you are a part of it. Contact Oral History Coordinator Eric Griffis at Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum to tell your story. Email EricGriffis@semtribe.com or call 863-902-1113, ext. 12213.

Betty Mae Jumper

Wisdom from the past

## The switch

The following column was written by Betty Mae Jumper and printed in the March 26, 1999 issue of The Seminole Tribune.

In the old days, our ancestors lived in clan villages out in the Everglades. After a couple married, they would decide which village they would live in. Sometimes the man would move to the woman's village. Many times, the woman would go with him to his village.

They would make their own chickee and begin married life. Of course, that would mean soon they would have children.

Back in those days, the Seminoles lived by strict rules. These rules were put down by the Medicine Man. Everyone knew the rules and everyone lived by them.

In those days, the uncles of children actually had a lot to do with the discipline. That's because each child received his or her clan from the mother. The father had to be from a different clan. Therefore, the mother's brother, being in the same clan as the children, was expected to discipline the children.

In my family, my great-uncle Jimmy Gopher was the ruler over my family. He would correct us and punish us when we were bad or misbehaved. Some of the techniques might seem harsh by today's standards, but they worked. The two ways most kids were disciplined were by a switch or by needles.

The switch was a branch from an oak tree that was kept under the chickee. The needles were sewing needles that were kept in a glass of water. When a child was bad, your mother or uncle or some family member would tell you to get either the switch or the needles.

The switch was simple. Someone would bend you over his or her knee and

you'd get switched with the oak branch. It hurt, but it was over quickly.

But, if they told you to get the needles, that was worse. They would take the water and wash off your skin, then take the needles and scrape four long scratches on both arms and both legs. Occasionally I'll still see an old scar on my arm from one of these punishments.

We would be punished whenever we broke a rule, such as talking back, bothering someone's property, sassing another person in the camp, etc. Usually, once you were punished, you would learn very quickly not to do that again. You learned not to repeat things you learned.

So, back then, children would mind the older family members and help them with chores in the villages. The boys were taught by their uncles and grandpa; girls were under the direction of the mother, aunts and grandmother.

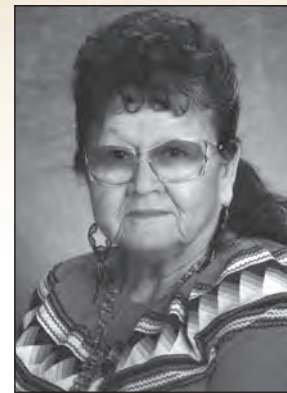
Today, I sit in my office in the beautiful tribal building and wonder what's wrong with the kids today. They aren't getting the discipline they need.

I recently went to visit an old friend and when I asked her a question, her grandson wouldn't let her answer. This child acted rude and wouldn't let us have a quiet conversation.

Things have changed a lot in my life. One of the things we lost when we came into the modern world was this discipline. We lost respect and manners to the people who are older.

I'm still upset that my clothing was stolen from the van, which was parked in front of my house. This wouldn't have happened in the old days. And, I'll give a reward to anyone who can provide any information on who took my things.

And, if I find out who did it, I'd like to give the thief something, too: a choice between an oak switch and a jar of needles.



# Seminole Restaurant Review

## Buca di Beppo: A recommendation made by Trishanna Storm

BY GORDON WAREHAM  
 Contributing Writer

DAVIE — It was a night of lasagna, baked ziti and house specialty bread (in other words carbs, carbs, carbs Italian style) at Buca di Beppo in Davie. My dinner crew for Oct. 14 was Trishanna Storm, Nancy Willie, Joni Josh, Diane Frank and Robin Osceola — a lively group willing to give their honest opinions about the food and experience they shared.

Buca di Beppo is a family-style restaurant, which means you better come with an empty stomach and a large group because the serving sizes are massive. A small plate feeds a group of two or more and the large services a group of four or more. Buca di Beppo is a franchise chain with locations across the country. The Davie restaurant we patron has been open for 14 years and offers a variety of Italian cuisine.

From freshly baked pizza with all the toppings to antipasti, pastas and desserts, Buca di Beppo's menu can satisfy any craving for Italian food.

Our waiter, who has been given the nickname "Amir is Always Here," warmly welcomed our group to the restaurant and was very knowledgeable about the menu. We started our dinner by ordering two appetizers, fried calamari, which was served with homemade spicy marinara sauce and was crispy, and mozzarella caprese, which is a dish of sliced vine-ripened tomatoes, mozzarella and basil drizzled with olive oil. Both appetizers were fresh and prepared our taste buds for the main course.

For our main course, we confidently ordered the large lasagna and large baked ziti with five large meatballs. The lasagna is four towering layers of meat sauce and ricotta, mozzarella, provolone and parmesan cheeses. When Trishanna was asked why she recommended the lasagna for the main course she answered, "It's giant; it's a gargantuan log of meat." Trishanna and the rest of the dinner crew gave out a loud chuckle.

"It's really good lasagna," Trishanna said. The ingredients for the baked ziti are mozzarella, provolone and rosa sauce



Gordon Wareham

The dinner crew, from left: Joni Josh, Diane Frank, Nancy Willie, Trishanna Storm and Robin Osceola.



Gordon Wareham

Baked ziti with meatballs.



Gordon Wareham

Four-layer lasagna.

topped with Italian-style bread crumbs and ricotta. We ordered five of their half-pound meatballs to be served with the ziti. Even with the big appetites of the dinner crew, the mountain of food was so overwhelming there was plenty food to take home.

"I had an awesome time with the dinner crew tonight and I [wouldn't have] wanted to have it any other way," Trishanna said.

Each of the dinner crew had their recommendations from the menu of Buca di Beppo. Robin Osceola said, "If you want something spicy, I recommend the spicy rigatoni with spicy sausage or the shrimp fra diavolo. Diane Frank recommends the bruschetta for an appetizer and pizza for a main course. Joni Josh said, "The lasagna

was delicious; it was the first thing I tried and the meatballs were awesome." Joni also recommends the chicken parmesan.

As the dinner was coming to an end, Nancy Willie informed the crew that the night was her first time at Buca di Beppo, and she said, "It was wonderful, never expected it to be like this." I asked Ms. Willie if there was something on the menu that she would like to try and she responded, the chicken alfredo.

We were all too full for dessert but our waiter Amir made the recommendations of the colossal brownie sundae or the tiramisu for our next visit. The food was absolutely delicious and the dinner crew was divine. I would have to agree with Trishanna's statement about the night: "I [wouldn't have] wanted have it any other way."

# Fire Rescue Honor Guard represents Tribe in Ocala

STAFF REPORT

OCALA, Fla. — Two members of the Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue Honor Guard team trained recently for five days at the Florida State Fire College in Ocala to achieve the highest standards of appearance, conduct and aptitude for ceremonial duties.

Firefighter/paramedics Anthony Berger and Donnie Murray, who were already serving on the Tribe's Honor Guard, then participated with scores of other program graduates and individual municipal public safety department officials in an annual ceremony at the Florida Fallen Firefighter Memorial located on the college campus.

The memorial, dedicated in 1992, honors firefighters who have died in the line of duty or from health issues associated with acts of sacrifice to save the lives of others.

The Tribe's Honor Guard is a volunteer group comprised of highly motivated and dedicated members of the Seminole Fire Rescue Department and the Seminole Police Department. The close-knit group is led by Public Safety Honor Guard Commander Jack Nash.

Hollywood Reservation-based District Chief Doug LeValley, who attended the

Fallen Fighter Memorial ceremony in Ocala, said the group of firefighters and police officers aims to continue to grow, train and drill collaboratively in service to the Tribe and surrounding municipal agencies.



Photo courtesy of Doug LeValley

From left, District Fire Chief Doug LeValley and firefighter/paramedics Anthony Berger, Donnie Murray and Kevin Pinkerton pose for a photo at the Florida State Fire College in Ocala.

## TRUMAN BOWERS

From page 3A

The commission meets monthly, plus once a year, with the state compliance agency overseeing the compact, Department of Business and Professional Regulation. Members of the Seminole Gaming Commission are Alan Huff, chairman; Gordon Ollie Wareham, vice chairman; Betty Cypress King, secretary; and Jarrid Smith and Mitch Osceola, commissioners.

Bowers believes the Tribe's gaming

operation is important to the state and will continue to move forward.

"The money made here stays in the state; plus we support all the vendors who do business with us," he said. "We were here before the state and we aren't going anywhere. We will be here long after they are gone."

Bowers said he enjoyed his time serving on the commission.

"Nothing stays the same," he said. "Things always change, mostly for the better."

Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola hosted the dinner and presented Bowers with a patchwork jacket.

# Health



Aaron Tommie

Health educator Jamie Diersing helps a community member with her vegetables Nov. 18 during the 3 Sisters Farmers Market in Big Cypress.

## Annual farmers market promotes healthy living, tackles diabetes

**BY AARON TOMMIE**  
Contributing Writer

**BIG CYPRESS** — Big Cypress kicked off the Tribe's 3 Sisters Farmers Market with a succulent spread of locally grown fruits, vegetables and materials aimed at promoting healthier lifestyles. The Allied Health program hosted the Nov. 18 event during National Diabetes Awareness Month to help battle diabetes within the Tribe.

For several years, the market has provided Tribal and non-Tribal members with exposure to fresh foods while encouraging positive habits.

"We have this event during Diabetes Awareness Month because it's a great time to let people know the importance of eating healthy," said Edna McDuffie, community outreach coordinator. "We're making sure people know what's going on."

President Ronald Reagan signed a proclamation on Nov. 3, 1983 making November National Diabetes Month. In it, he expressed his desire for people to "observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies and activities." Since then, organizations throughout the world have used November as a platform to educate people on the severity of diabetes.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) age-adjusted statistics from 2010-12, diabetes affected 15.9 percent of Native Americans, the highest percentage among all races.

The CDC lists diabetes as the seventh-leading cause of death in the United States. Complications with diabetes can lead to blindness, amputations and kidney problems. There are two main types of diabetes: type 1 and type 2. A third, gestational diabetes, can flare up during pregnancy. Type 2 diabetes accounts for 90 percent of all diabetes cases. Obesity, hypertension and inactive lifestyles can cause diabetes.

Suzanne Davis, Allied Health manager, said about 11 percent of Seminole Tribal members are diabetic.

More than 50 people, including community residents and employees, attended the market in front of the Frank Billie Field Office. Harvest-themed tables were decorated with green cloths, softball-sized pumpkins and brown and orange leaves.

Baskets overflowed with corn, green beans, bananas, tomatoes, mini watermelons and three types of squash (butternut, summer and spaghetti). Fruits and vegetables stabilize blood sugar and are high in fiber. Brochures and information sheets about diabetes were available for people when they signed in.

Recipes such as roasted butternut squash and green beans with lemon and garlic challenged the myths that healthy foods cannot appease everyone's tastes. Additional recipes and explanations of the foods' benefits were available on tables. A white chicken chili, cooked at the market, received good reviews.

"We try to encourage people to do more cooking. You don't have to have diabetes to benefit," Davis said.

The 3 sisters (squash, beans and corn) are vegetables that have been planted together for centuries through intercropping. The plants' roots and growth become intertwined, creating a more nurturing environment for the plants. The cornstalk provides stability for the beans and squash to grow on. The beans replenish the nitrogen in the corn uses, which is essential for plant growth. And the leaves from the squash protect all of the sisters from rodents and other things that can be harmful to them.

The market is not the only event that takes place on reservations to promote healthy living. Other events, such as 5K runs, Rez Rally and Pathways programs, offer individuals additional opportunities to get healthy throughout the year.

Davis said that past participants have mentioned they sleep and eat better as a result of the farmers market. Also, there have been less health-related trips to the emergency room.



Aaron Tommie

Jamie Diersing and Edna McDuffie prepare bags of fruits and vegetables, while Kristi Hinoje sets up cups of white chicken chili during the 3 Sisters Farmers Market in Big Cypress.

"I've been here a few times. It's good for our seniors who are not tech savvy," said Cathy Cypress, Big Cypress fitness site supervisor.

"It's good because in the long run we can make healthy foods for other Tribal members," said Big Cypress resident Regina Cypress.

Maverick Osceola, of Big Cypress, said, "I hope they keep doing stuff like this all the time."

Through proper diet, exercise, insulin therapy and medications, diabetes can be treated.

"We talk to people. Making these changes will help them with their health," Davis said. "We try to catch them early. Change has to come from inside."

## Convenience stores giving healthy options prominence

**SUBMITTED BY BOB LAMENDOLA**  
Florida Department of Health in Broward

A new partnership aims to help kids resist unhealthy temptations — including cigarettes, mini-cigars, candy, junk food and soda — at convenience stores.

The Florida Department of Health in Broward County, Broward Regional Health Planning Council and the YMCA of South Florida teamed up to create a youth-led program that enlists owners of stores near schools to emphasize healthy products and downplay unhealthy enticements. Six stores have signed up in the initial stage.

The Good Neighbor Store initiative does not ask merchants to stop selling unhealthy items, just to give healthier options more prominent locations on the shelves, said Dr. Paula Thaqui, director of DOH-Broward. Stores that cooperate fully may be eligible for grants of up to \$10,000 from the Health Foundation of South Florida.

"We want to give them a number of different incentives to make the stores a healthier environment for the community," Thaqui said.

The project will deploy teams of students to visit stores, assess the situation and suggest ways to reduce the negative influences of unhealthy products and kid-targeting advertising. Organizers hope merchants find it hard to say no to teens.

The project is part of the Eat Smart Broward movement in BRHPC's Transforming Our Community's Health

(TOUCH) Initiative, which is funded by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said TOUCH Director Teina Phillips.

The project began earlier this year and is being implemented in middle and high schools. Kids have been trained in "Go, Slow, Whoa" system, which rates foods on a scale of healthy (full of nutrition) to unhealthy (high-sugar or highly processed foods and beverages).

They also are members of SWAT (Students Working Against Tobacco).

TOUCH and DOH-Broward identified 40 stores near schools that could be targeted, including ones in

Hollywood near Seminole Tribe lands. The first six stores that signed pledges to participate are near Dillard, Boyd Anderson and Blanche Ely high schools, Lauderhill 6-12 School, Gulfstream Middle School in Hallandale Beach and in Fort Lauderdale's Sistrunk Boulevard area. More locations are coming later.

The next step is for a team of students to visit each store and make recommendations. Suggestions could include moving unhealthy food to the back of the store, offering more healthy foods in the front of the store and dropping or downplaying tobacco ads.

In January, each team plans to present their findings to the community and city officials.

For more information: Alena Alberani, 954-561-9681 ext. 1261 or AAlberani@brhpc.org, or Kiesha Edge, 954-467-4700, ext. 5803 or Kiesha.Edge@flhealth.gov.



## Report urges more tribal control over food systems

**BY MALLORY BLACK**  
Native Health News Alliance

The way food is produced, accessed and funded on tribal lands must be overhauled to combat the obesity and diabetes epidemics plaguing Native Americans, according to a recent report.

Feeding Ourselves, a report commissioned by the American Heart Association, analyzed American Indian and Alaska Native food systems and resulting health disparities and found that Native Americans are twice as likely as the rest of the U.S. population to develop a nutrition-related health problem.

More than 80 percent of Native American adults are overweight or obese, according to the Indian Health Clinic Reporting System.

Four-year-old Native American children have twice the obesity of their white counterparts, according to a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation study.

The report found that most of tribal lands are in food deserts, areas that lack access to healthy food. It detailed the historical and economic factors that have broken down the Native American food system.

"American Indians and Alaska Natives since time immemorial have relied on our traditional foods, or First Foods, to sustain us," said Brian Cladoosby, president of the National Congress of American Indians in Washington, D.C. "The ability of Indian Country to feed itself with healthy, local and

traditional foods is not only a critical part of a strong tribal community, it's vital to tribal sovereignty."

American Indians in the United States have never fully recovered from being separated from native food sources and subsequent federal government food programs, according to the report.

Improving the food system must also factor the loss of culture and poverty, as well as sedentary lifestyles.

One solution is for Native Americans to grow food on tribal lands and sell it to the federal government as part of federal feeding programs, said Janie Hipp, an author of the report and director of the Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative at the University of Arkansas School of Law in Fayetteville.

"We could use those lands to combat hunger, keep food local and alleviate hunger for tribal members regionally," Hipp said. "When you start to think of the potential of that, it gets very exciting."

The report also calls for more tribal control over the Native American food system, incentives for buying healthy foods and programs funded by the federal government and foundations to educate and enable Native Americans to make improvements.

Public health experts say a lack of data has prevented effective solutions.

Unless something changes, Native people will be continually left out of the conversations and strategies to address these issues, said Michael Roberts, president of the First Nations Development Institute.



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# Seniors show skills at military-themed Trike Fest

**BY BEVERLY BIDNEY**  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — Eight days after Veterans Day, military pride remained on display Nov. 19 as the theme of the 11th annual Senior Trike Fest. Forty-seven seniors from Big Cypress, Brighton, Hollywood and Immokalee showed their patriotism while competing for glory and trophies in Big Cypress.

"It's an annual social gathering, but at the same time we want them to have fun, some friendly competition and exercise," said Cathy Cypress, Big Cypress fitness site supervisor, whose department organized the event at the aviation hanger.

Events that kept participants busy included the cone weave, target toss, maze, puzzle challenge and team relay. Throughout the day seniors encouraged their teammates as they navigated the challenges. But the pinnacle event, the team relay race, brought out the competitive spirit; seniors weaved as fast as they could through the cones to the cheers of their teammates.

"You have to practice a lot to build up your strength and improve your health," said President Mitchell Cypress, who took fourth place in the cone weave. "I guess I didn't practice enough this year."

Seniors competed within their age groups: super seniors ages 55-61, golden seniors ages 62-68 and diamond seniors ages 69 and up. Those who couldn't ride bikes became "hikers" and competed in ladder ball, corn hole and target toss.

"Some of those people are really good," said Edna McDuffie, who competed as a hiker and took first place in ladder ball. "Some people like the competition, but I just come out to have fun."

Helene Buster participated for the first time. She had not ridden a tricycle until

a day before Trike Fest, but despite her inexperience, she took fourth place in the puzzle challenge.

"I'm a two-wheeler," she said. "It's harder to balance on a trike; if you go around a curve, you could go over. On a bike, you know how to balance."

Each reservation also created elaborately decorated trikes and vied to be judged the best.

The four trikes on display created a sea of olive drab and were festooned with military regalia. A member of each team described their reservation's trike to the crowd.

"Ours looks like it's been through the war," said David Jumper, of Hollywood, whose trike resembled a well-worn tank.

Big Cypress entered a trike inside a dome of army green camouflage netting, which represented a five star general's helmet.

Brighton's trike was a tank surrounded by the American and Seminole Tribe flags with the motto "Gone But Not Forgotten" painted on the side.

"We wanted to remember our soldiers," Alice Sweat said.

The winning trike from Immokalee featured a determined-looking mannequin soldier driving a jeep, with *Sho Na Bish* painted on the front bumper. The jeep pulled a large wagon adorned with photos of tribal veterans and the names of fallen tribal soldiers.

"This is for our fallen soldiers," said Linda Beletso, who competed despite having had surgery on her arm and hand just four days earlier.

Raffle prizes included baskets filled with electric guitars and other Hard Rock paraphernalia, bouquets of flowers and arrangements of beautifully presented fresh fruit.



Big Cypress' Jonah Cypress carefully negotiates the cone weave Nov. 19 during the 11th annual Trike Fest in Big Cypress.

Beverly Bidney

But the big win went to Big Cypress seniors, who took trophies for most participation and overall points.

"It was a tough competition," said Ruggy Jumper, of Hollywood, who took second place in the target toss and

corn hole. "But it's a nice social event. You get to see people you haven't seen in a while; it's always a good time."



Beverly Bidney

From right, President Mitchell Cypress, David Jumper and Jonah Cypress wait their turns at the target toss during the 11th annual Trike Fest in Big Cypress.



Beverly Bidney

Sandy Billie Jr., of Brighton, weaves his way through the cones at Trike Fest in Big Cypress.



Beverly Bidney

Ruggy Jumper, of Hollywood, delights in his second-place finish in the target toss at Trike Fest in Big Cypress.



Beverly Bidney

Mable Tichenor, of Brighton, shows off a few of her medals after the 11th annual Trike Fest in Big Cypress.



Beverly Bidney

Much to her dismay, Diane Smith, of Brighton, finishes the cone weave without a perfect score.



Beverly Bidney

David Cypress, of Big Cypress, and Maxine Tucker, of Immokalee, watch the 11th annual Trike Fest.



Beverly Bidney

The Big Cypress team celebrates its win for most participation and overall points at the 11th annual Trike Fest.



Beverly Bidney

Mahala Madrigal, of Brighton, weaves through the cones during the 11th annual Trike Fest in Big Cypress.

# SEMINOLE SCENES



**PECS PLAYTIME:** Students get rid of some excess energy Nov. 13 as they play a quick game of kickball after lunch at the Pemaayev Emahakv Charter School.

Beverly Bidney



**SPENCER IN PARADISE:** After spending a day recording a music video at The Swamp Bar, Spencer Battiest performs Nov. 12 at Center Stage at Seminole Paradise in Hollywood, where the crew continued filming. Battiest just released a new four-track album called 'Stupid in Love,' which is available on iTunes.

Beverly Bidney



**LEARNING THE ROPES:** Kyrin Billie, 1, hangs out with his grandfather John Billie, a chickee builder, during a rethatching workday Oct. 19 at Sadie's in Big Cypress.

Photo courtesy of Kristen Billie



**MOVEMBER MADNESS MOMENT:** The Seminole royal court and chaperones pose for a pretty and pretty funny picture wearing Burt Reynolds mustaches Nov. 14 in Tallahassee after the Florida State University Alumni Association's homecoming awards breakfast. From left are Francine Osceola, Miss Florida Seminole Destiny Nunez, Little Mr. Seminole Gregory James II, Wanda Bowers, Little Miss Seminole Victoria Benard and Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Skyla Osceola.

Eileen Soler



**BIRDS OF A FEATHER:** Briar Tommie, 8, of Hollywood, tries his hand at falconry with a bird of prey Nov. 7 on Big Cypress during the American Indian Arts Celebration at Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum.

Eileen Soler



**HAVING A BALL:** Preslynn Baker prepares to shoot during a halftime contest at the Pemaayev Emahakv Charter School girls basketball game Nov. 16 in Brighton. For one dollar, spectators shot free throws for a chance at winning a bottle of soda. The event served as a fundraiser for PECS' basketball programs.

Kevin Johnson



**SPECIAL INVOCATION:** Tampa maintenance supervisor Paul Simmons introduces Seminole medicine man Bobby Henry, who provided the invocation for the Nov. 4 Tampa city council meeting.

Photo courtesy of Kerri Enriquez



**CULTURAL EXCHANGE:** Nettie Stewart and Agnes Motlow present Joyce Walker and Gary Carter Sr., chairwoman and vice chairman of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Elders Council, with a doll, sweetgrass basket and carved alligator during a cultural exchange. The Pequot presented the seniors with a book and wampum beads that were used for trading. A group of 15 Hollywood seniors visited the Pequot Tribe in Mashantucket, Connecticut and New York City Oct. 16-21. They also saw a Broadway show, toured the Big Apple and dined with Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola at Gallaghers, a legendary New York City steakhouse.

Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Bridon



**HAMTASTIC:** Billie Tiger, Kevin Holata, Larry Tiger and Pedro Fuentes distribute 483 spiral hams Nov. 24 to Hollywood and off-reservation Broward residents on behalf of Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola just in time for Thanksgiving.

Photo courtesy of Hollywood Council Office



**BLUE HAZE:** Howard Jimmie, with Micah Jimmie on his shoulders and Milo Osceola Jr. at his side, participates in the Brighton Color Run.

Photo courtesy of Charlene Baker



**CALM BEFORE THE STORM:** Kano Puento takes a leisurely stroll during color stations at the Brighton Color Run.

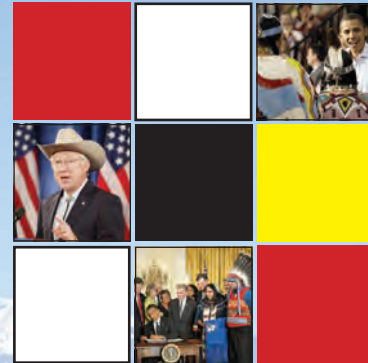
Photo courtesy of Charlene Baker



**COLOR RUN:** The green landscape turns Technicolor in Hollywood Oct. 27 as participants in the Red Ribbon 5K Color Run get covered in color while traversing the course through Seminole Estates.

Beverly Bidney

# NATIONAL NATIVE NEWS



## Micosukees oust leader over \$1 billion tax dispute

MIAMI — Amid accusations of misappropriating funds for his own personal use and poor leadership — depleting \$82 million from a reserve account set aside for paying back taxes owed to the IRS, mishandling a giant IRS tax case now totaling more than \$1 billion, having casino losses under his watch totaling hundreds of millions of dollars — the General Council of the Micosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida removed Chairman Colley Billie from office Nov. 10 with two years remaining on his term.

The impeachment petition declared: “Colley Billie has failed to perform the duties of chairman and protect the resources and follow the ordinances and laws of the Tribe.”

Neither Billie or the Tribe would comment further.

Billie has been replaced on an interim basis by the Tribe’s Assistant Chairman Roy Cypress Jr. The Tribe is scheduled to hold an election for a new chairman in 2017.

In November 2013, Billie defeated longtime Chairman Billy Cypress by 23 votes for the Tribe’s top leadership office. A spate of civil and criminal cases ensued, with the Micosukees accusing Cypress of stealing \$26 million from tribal bank accounts.

The feud and subsequent litigations exposed million dollar-plus income tax liabilities for each Tribal member regarding the distribution of gaming profits without the required submission of a “revenue allocation plan” with the Bureau of Indian Affairs; such a plan details the spending of gaming funds including income distributions to members.

Federal law holds that those dividends are subject to both withholding and personal income taxes, according to the IRS, which estimates Tribal members owe \$280 million in personal income tax and \$160 million in penalties and interest. IRS estimates the Tribe, itself, owes more than \$262 million in unpaid withholding taxes and an additional \$441 million in penalties and interest.

— Miami Herald

## Child welfare organizations show support for ICWA

PORTLAND, Ore. — Thirteen national child welfare organizations have filed an amicus brief in support of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) in the case of A.D. v. Washburn, a class action lawsuit filed in Arizona challenging the federal law.

The organizations represent the preeminent, national experts on child welfare. In the brief, the organizations state that “ICWA applies the gold standard for child welfare decisions for all children, and unraveling its protections could cause significant harm for Indian children.”

“We’re pleased to have the support of national leaders in child welfare,” said Sarah Kastelic, executive director of the National Indian Child Welfare Association. “The Indian Child Welfare Act provides an essential line of defense against outdated systems that still remove Native children from their homes and families in cases when it’s not necessary.”

According to research, Native children are four times more likely than white children to be removed from their homes upon their first encounter with the courts.

“We’re confident that the Arizona courts will find that this lawsuit is baseless,” Kastelic said. “While the Goldwater Institute and other ICWA opponents are motivated by politics, we in Indian Country maintain our focus on protecting our most vulnerable children using the essential tools that the Indian Child Welfare Act provides.”

— ICWA press release

## Census Bureau aims for progress in counting Natives

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — Native Americans can be difficult to accurately count, according to U.S. Custom officials. Many reservations contain vast areas of unpaved roads, scattered households, many with no electrical, phone or Internet service, no connection to any government lists and relative invisibility to almost everyone except their neighbors.

“To do an accurate census, it has to be done locally,” Census Bureau Director John Thompson told the Albuquerque Journal in November.

Thompson was in town to meet with various Tribes at one of eight regional “tribal consultations” intended to strengthen communication between the Census Bureau and 567 federally recognized Tribes in preparation for the 2020 census.

“We realized in 2000, and even more in 2010, the importance of having a local presence,” he said.

Thompson also mentioned that the 2020 census will be the first to use Internet and mobile digital technology, allowing Americans to complete census forms on computers, cellphones and tablets. But, in order to not repeat the debacle of the 2010

census, which underestimated Native American and Alaska Native populations by an estimated 5 percent, Thompson said the count will require house-to-house visits by census workers who know the geography and have the trust of Tribal members.

“We’re not happy with that,” he said of the 2010 census’ undercount of the Native American. “We certainly want to improve on that.”

Census data are used to draw the boundaries of state and federal election districts and to allocate about \$400 million a year in federal funding.

“To make sure that communities receive their fair share of these allocations, it’s really important to be counted,” Thompson said. “That’s why it’s so important to respond to the census and accurately respond.”

— AbqJournal.com

## Thanksgiving’s story in a vanishing Native language

PLYMOUTH ROCK, Mass. — The story of the first Thanksgiving in Plymouth Rock, Massachusetts is usually told in just one language: English. The voices of the Native Americans who were there — speaking in their own languages — are usually absent. The new film “Saints & Strangers,” which recounts the events surrounding the arrival of the Mayflower in the New World in the autumn of 1620, attempts to change that.

In this version, Native Americans are as much at the heart of the story as the Pilgrims. And those Native Americans are speaking in a Native tongue — a language called Western Abenaki.

“This was a huge challenge,” said Jesse Bowman Bruchac, 44, one of just 12 living fluent speakers of the language who coached the film’s Native American actors on how to deliver their lines in Western Abenaki, an amalgamation of a vast group of Algonquin languages once spoken throughout New England and parts of eastern Canada.

With the exception of one character whose role is to interpret for the Pilgrims, every line of Native dialogue is delivered in Abenaki, which becomes a character of sorts in “Saints & Strangers,” creating a living window into personality, history and culture. By giving voice to real historical figures (i.e. Wampanoag Indian Chief Massasoit, his counselor and head warrior Hobbamock and the Patuxet interpreter Squanto) the film is also a vehicle for growing efforts to keep endangered Native languages from extinction.

“I learned Western Abenaki from a chain of speakers that was unbroken going back to the time of the Mayflower’s arrival and long before that,” said Bruchac, who had just two weeks to work with the three main actors in “Saints & Strangers” and teach the cadences, rhythm and meaning of the language. “I felt my fluency was up to par and this was an awesome test.”

Bruchac grew up surrounded by people who spoke Abenaki in upstate New York. His father wrote books of traditional stories and history from various Algonquin Tribes. But it wasn’t until college that Bruchac began to take his interest more seriously.

He sought out fluent speakers and eventually moved to the Odanak Reservation in Canada, where he lived for four years and studied with a community elder and one of the last remaining Native Abenaki speakers. He spent so much time with the woman that other members of the reservation joked that he had become her boyfriend. Now, Bruchac has two sons, 5 and 7, and only ever speaks to them in Abenaki.

“It’s our secret language,” he said. “We never speak in English.”

There were thousands of Native languages spoken across the Americas at the time of the Pilgrims’ landing. As European settlement expanded across North America in the 17th and 18th centuries, Native languages began to vanish, blending with other languages in some cases and disappearing in others.

Eventually, the modern-day hybrid known as Western Abenaki emerged, an organic mix with thousands of years of stories, rituals, cadences and myths buried inside. Some modern English words have their origins in the many languages that eventually became Abenaki.

“Skunk” is one. “Michigan,” meaning the detritus of what has been eaten, is another.

“All the communities we see in this movie, their ancestors became part of the Abenaki nation,” Bruchac said. “As they traveled up into what is considered Abenaki country, they brought their bloodlines, and with them the language.”

— National Geographic

## Hard Rock hotel planned in downtown Atlanta

ATLANTA, Ga. — Hard Rock International announced Nov. 2 that it plans to build a 220-room hotel near the new Atlanta Falcons stadium in the Castleberry Hill neighborhood.

“We’re thrilled to announce our collaboration with Hard Rock International as part of the Castleberry Park development, an EB-5 project” said

Frank Chen, general manager of Bolton Atlanta LP, the ownership group for the Castleberry Park development project.

The EB-5 program is designed to encourage foreign investment in the U.S. by offering eligible entrepreneurs residency if they meet certain job-creation and investment requirements.

Jim Allen, chairman of Hard Rock International, broke the news during testimony before a legislative hearing on casinos in Savannah. Allen indicated the new Hard Rock Hotel will come to Atlanta regardless of whether casinos are approved.

— The Biz Beat Blog

## Hard Rock buys Elvis Presley’s gold piano

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Along with items such as Whitney Houston’s credit card application and a lock of Nirvana frontman Kurt Cobain’s hair, Elvis Presley’s 24-karat gold leaf grand piano was purchased recently from Julian’s Auction House by Hard Rock International as the company’s 80,000th piece of music memorabilia.

Odds are, right now, the piano will bypass Hard Rock’s Memphis location on Beale Street in favor of the Hard Rock Tampa.

“Hard Rock has a far-reaching connection to music history, and we’re always looking to add show-stopping pieces to our collection, such as the King’s priceless piano,” said Jerry Fraize, director of memorabilia for Hard Rock International and the winning bidder on the piece. “While we are still deciding where this piece will reside within our properties, the front runner at the moment would be the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Tampa, fitting for one of the most successful casino properties in the world.”

“Elvis Presley’s iconic gold piano has now become a cornerstone addition to our world-famous collection, and we couldn’t be happier to celebrate such a milestone with the King’s prized possession,” Hamish Dodds, CEO at Hard Rock International, told the Memphis Business Journal. “Hard Rock has been curating its priceless music memorabilia collection and sharing it with guests around the world for more than 43 years, and Elvis’ piano is an important piece of music history that we can’t wait to share with our guests.”

— Memphis Business Journal

## Sex traffickers targeting Native American women

FORT THOMPSON, S.D. — Every autumn hunting season, thousands of sportsmen from across the globe descend on rural South Dakota, known as the pheasant hunting “capital” of the world.

That’s good news for the state’s hotel, restaurant and sporting goods store owners. It’s bad news for victims of sex traffickers, some girls as young as 14, brought every year from as far away as Las Vegas — or as close as the nearest Indian reservation.

“If you are a trafficker looking for the perfect population of people to violate, Native women would be a prime target,” said Sarah Deer, an attorney, law professor and author of “The Beginning and End of Rape: Confronting Sexual Violence in Native America.” “You have extreme poverty. You have a people who have been traumatized. You have addiction to alcohol and drugs as a result of trauma. And you have a legal system that doesn’t step in to stop it.”

During hunting season, young women are exploited and prostituted in strip clubs and so-called “gentleman’s clubs,” some of which are open only during the hunting season, from October until early January.

Making matters worse, sparse law enforcement in rural areas, gaps in the law and conflicts over jurisdiction on Indian reservations mean that sex traffickers know they can get away with their crimes.

“Traffickers know who to target,” said Lisa Heth, executive director of the Wiconi Wawokiya (“Helping Families”) shelter on the Crow Creek Indian Reservation. “There are certain signs that I’m sure that they can see when a young girl’s self-esteem isn’t that great or she may come from a family where there is domestic violence or there’s alcohol or drugs, where she’s not getting that attention or love at home.”

“We’re also seeing traffickers coming into the reservation and selling drugs. Sometimes they get these young women to sell for them, and then if they end up owing these guys money, then the guys traffic them out for sex to get money back from them. If the girls resist, the perpetrator will beat them up, threaten them or their families, rape them or in some cases, have them gang raped.”

Forced prostitution of Native women also is a problem in oil fields, forestry projects or fracking operations such as the Bakken oil fields in North Dakota and Montana, where transient workers, almost exclusively male, are housed in remote “man camps” — a collection of trailers in a field, far from the prying eyes of law enforcement, fertile grounds for drugs, gambling and sex trafficking.

Elsewhere, for generations, Dakota

and Ojibwe women in Minnesota have been trafficked from their reservations onto boats in Duluth and prostituted in the international waters of Lake Superior. Some women are sold to ships’ crews and forced to remain onboard for months at a time.

There are shelters that offer housing to victims of abuse, but most offer residence for no more than 30 days.

“Thirty days to get your life back in order? That’s just not realistic,” said Sunny Red Bear, a former victim who speaks in forums about the tragedy.

The U.S. Justice Department reports that sexual violence in American Indian/Alaska Native communities is “epidemic.” Native Americans experience sexual assault at a rate of 2.5 times greater than other races. A third of all Native women will be raped.

President Barack Obama has pledged his support of a five-year plan to combat human trafficking in which the FBI will broaden community outreach to American Indian/Native Alaskan law enforcement agencies, community leaders and social service providers.

This year, the U.S. Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime awarded more than \$22.7 million to programs working to combat human trafficking and an additional \$8.1 million to a dozen victim service organizations across the country — among them, Wiconi Wawokiya.

— Voice of America

## Legal experts caution Tribes entering pot business

American Indian Tribes across the U.S. are finding that growing marijuana is a risky business.

Nearly a year after a Justice Department policy indicated federally recognized Tribes could grow and sell pot under the same guidelines as states, federal raids on tribal cannabis operations in California followed by a South Dakota Tribe’s move in November to burn its crop amid fears it could be next, combined by thin Justice Department guidelines and the spectre that marijuana is still considered an illegal drug under federal law, has flushed insecurity over a new industry confused about complying with Justice Department standards announced last December.

The uncertainty has led attorneys to counsel tribal leaders to weigh the risks involved before moving forward with legalizing and growing pot.

“Everybody who is smart is pausing to look at the feasibility and risks of growing hemp and marijuana,” Lance Gumbs, a former Shinnecock tribal chairman and regional vice president of the National Congress of American Indians, told the Santa Fe New Mexican. “But are we giving up on it? Absolutely not.”

“Industrial hemp, medical marijuana and maybe recreational marijuana present a lot of opportunity. But for now, the best advice is to proceed with caution,” said Michael Reif, an attorney for the Menominee Tribe in Wisconsin, where tribal leaders filed a federal lawsuit after federal agents recently seized thousands of hemp plants grown for research. “We’re seeing the ramifications of things being unclear in a way states didn’t.”

The Flandreau Santee Sioux in South Dakota — a state where marijuana isn’t legal — was the first to approve recreational pot under tribal law with a vote in June and was one of the most aggressive about entering the industry, with plans to open the nation’s first marijuana resort on its reservation north of Sioux Falls.

But after discussions with authorities who hinted a raid was possible, the Tribe announced in November it had burned all of its marijuana plants.

Anthony Reider, the Tribe’s president, told The Associated Press the main holdup centered on whether the Tribe could sell marijuana to non-Indians, along with issues over where the seed used for planting originated.

In California, the Alturas and Pit River Indian Rancherias launched tribally run marijuana operations that were raided by federal authorities, with agents seizing 12,000 marijuana plants in July. The regional U.S. attorney’s office accused the Tribes of planning to distribute the pot off tribal lands and that the large-scale operations may have been financed by a foreign third-party.

— SantaFeNewMexican.com

## New nickname for UND: Fighting Hawks

GRAND FORKS, N.D. — Sammy Sioux is dead. So is the Fighting Sioux cartoon mascot. And the beer-bonging American Indian head.

Decades of debate and turmoil culminated Nov. 18 in a 15-minute press conference in Grand Forks where University of North Dakota President Robert Kelley announced the school’s new athletic nickname, effective immediately: the Fighting Hawks.

The results of an online vote showed of 27,378 total votes cast by stakeholders, Fighting Hawks received 57 percent, beating out Roughriders. The winning name comes after more than a year of work by committees and three public

votes. The school has played simply as UND or North Dakota since retiring its Fighting Sioux name in 2012 because of the possibility of NCAA sanctions.

DeAnna Carlson Zink, the executive vice president and CEO of the UND Alumni Association and Foundation, acknowledged there will always be those who refuse to let go of the Fighting Sioux nickname.

“But this really is a historic moment,” she said. “It’s only our third nickname in history and now we move forward. We move forward with respect for the legacy and tradition of the Fighting Sioux and even the Flickertails and look forward to creating new traditions.”

Jesse Taken Alive, a member of the Standing Rock Tribal Council, was a proponent of retiring the Fighting Sioux name for years. He said in a text message that he looks forward to the full adoption of the new name and logo.

“It has been a long and interesting journey,” he said. “In our Lakota language we say, ‘Wopila’ (a heart given thank you).”

— Grand Forks Herald

## Billy Frank to get Presidential Medal of Freedom

OLYMPIA, Wash. — Late Nisqually tribal leader Billy Frank Jr. was named one of 17 recipients of the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Barack Obama Nov. 16.

“Billy Frank Jr. was a man whose voice will echo in the hearts and minds of both Native and non-Native people for a long, long time to come,” Fawn Sharp, president of the Quinault Indian Nation and of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, told The Daily World.

The White House’s announcement stated: “Billy Frank Jr. was a tireless advocate for Indian treaty rights and environmental stewardship, whose activism paved the way for the Boldt decision, which reaffirmed tribal co-management of salmon resources in the state of Washington. Frank led effective fish-ins, which were modeled after sit-ins of the civil rights movement, during the tribal fish wars of the 1960s and 1970s.”

“His magnetic personality and tireless advocacy over more than five decades made him a revered figure both domestically and abroad. Frank was the recipient of many awards, including the Martin Luther King Jr. Distinguished Service Award for Humanitarian Achievement.”

Billy Frank Jr. died of natural causes on May 5, 2014.

“My dad was a man who won many awards and honors, and he would have been humbled by this great honor,” said William Frank III, son of Billy Frank Jr. and vice chairman of the Nisqually Tribe. “But all the great things he did throughout his life were done for the good of his people and for the living heritage of our ancestors. He stood up, tall and strong, against the oppression our people faced and went to jail for it many times.”

Other Presidential Medal of Freedom recipients who were scheduled to be honored in a Nov. 24 ceremony at the White House included Yogi Berra (posthumously), Willie Mays, Emilio Estefan, Gloria Estefan, Itzhak Perlman, Stephen Sondheim, Steven Spielberg, Barbra Streisand and James Taylor.

— The Daily World

## Navajo Nation closes first bond deal

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — The Navajo Nation recently closed its first bond transaction, selling \$52.9 million of investment-grade tax-exempt general obligation bonds in a private placement.

The bond transaction, rated BBB-plus by Standard & Poor’s, represents the climax of a five-year process.

The 15-year securities will refinance a \$60 million loan KeyBanc made to the Nation in 2010 to finance judicial and public safety facilities.

Headquartered in Window Rock, Arizona, and covering 27,000 square miles of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah, the Navajo Nation is the largest federally recognized Tribe both in terms of the size of its reservation and by its population of 285,000 members. Tribes are historically reliant on federal funds for infrastructure needs and structure most projects to qualify for grants.

Navajo Nation Attorney General Ethel Branch said accessing the capital market provides the nation with more freedom to meet its infrastructure needs.

“It’s a fresh new expression of tribal sovereignty,” Branch said.

Unlike typical municipal issuers, American Indian Tribes are not exempt from the registration requirements under the federal securities laws. That means they can either issue their bonds under corporate bond rules or find another exemption. The Navajo bonds were placed under the Securities and Exchange Commission’s Rule 144A, which allows sales to qualified institutional buyers without triggering the registration requirements.

— BondBuyer.com

Compiled by special projects reporter Peter B. Gallagher.

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HOLLYWOOD, FL

# Education

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## Living the ACD experience: The beginning

BY AARON TOMMIE  
Contributing Writer

I was 17 years old when I first considered working for the Seminole Tribe of Florida. Linda Iley, the Tribe's Higher Education adviser at the time, had planted the seed during one of our many telephone conversations before I started college in 2007. She pitched the idea of working for the Tribe after finishing school. At first I was reluctant because I didn't know what I wanted to do professionally. But over the next few years, I decided that working for the Tribe was the route to go and the Advanced Career Development (ACD) program would take me there.



Beverly Bidney  
Aaron Tommie

While growing up in New York and North Carolina, my non-tribal mother would tell my twin brother, my older brother and me of her experiences with Seminole culture while we lived on the Brighton Reservation with my father. She stressed the importance of knowing our history and heritage. She taught us about Osceola, how Native Americans and black slaves helped each other during slavery and many other aspects of African and Native American history.

Although most of my life was spent outside the reservations and had nothing to do with my Native American roots, I always felt that I had to give back and represent my ancestors properly.

I grew up poor. The night my twin and I graduated from kindergarten, my mother took us to a restaurant to celebrate. My mother saved for several months just so she could afford to take us out to eat. I think the meal was like \$50. It took years for my brothers and me to learn how bad things were financially because my mother hid it from us. Despite the circumstances, we never lacked anything, nor felt there were limitations to what we could accomplish. As an adult Tribal member, those childhood years of struggle and scarcity seem a distant memory. We're so abundantly blessed that it can cause many to lose motivation and sight of the things that truly matter.

After graduating from high school, I left Kannapolis, North Carolina to attend Gardner-Webb University. I remember being so anxious and excited to go to college and thrive. I wanted to enjoy the freedoms (and responsibilities) that come with being an adult. But once I legally became one, things changed. Over the next couple years, I noticed that my drive to succeed was depleting. There were times I felt as if I were existing instead of living. I lacked direction in life. Relationships with friends and family began to change. I had poor money management skills. My grades suffered. I didn't feel worthy of having good things happen to me. I was extremely miserable. Then, after I became a father, things improved. I realized that many of the negative experiences I had in college, and in my life, originated with me. I had spent so much time blaming others and feeling sorry for myself that I failed to see how fortunate I was. This realization led to me loving myself more and letting go of those thoughts of self-doubt and uncertainty. I had more peace and joy. More money. And, most importantly, a truer sense of purpose. After earning my bachelor's degree, I was burned out from school. So for the next two years or so, I worked on building a stronger foundation in my life. I married, traveled and just relaxed. These things helped me get out of the despair I had grown so accustomed to.

While in college, Linda Iley believed that Seminole Media Productions would be the department I'd work well in because I was majoring in communications. Prior to moving to Florida, I did entertain thoughts of staying in North Carolina. Everything was starting to flourish while living there. In the end, I felt that working for the Tribe would be the better long-term decision. So, this past spring, my family and I moved to Florida.

I met with Alphonza Green, the tribalwide educational services manager, in August to discuss working in ACD. He heads the program, which allows Tribal members to work in the department that best caters to what they have a degree and an interest in. Over two years, they gain professional work experience throughout the various departments. I had briefly considered working for the Tribal Career Development program, the casino's management program offered to

## Four-year-old Tribal member among world's top 2 percent smartest people

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — A video of Jenna Billie at only 16 months old identifying letters of the alphabet could have been perceived as an awesome learning fluke — until three months later when she recited the alphabet in Spanish and sounded out each letter.

Fast forward to last month when Jenna, at age 4 and 1 month, was accepted into Mensa International, an organization for the top 2 percent most intelligent people in the world.

Her parents, Jennifer and Jonah Billie, of Hollywood, were not surprised — they were convinced.

"When she was a baby, she was learning to speak while learning the ABCs in English and Spanish. We knew there was something special about her," Jennifer Billie said.

Around age 2, Jenna began connecting the letters and sounding out words.

By 3, enrolled in her first preschool, Jenna was so intellectually advanced that teachers told her parents their little girl did not fit in — she had already taught herself to read.

"Jenna qualified for VPK (voluntary prekindergarten) and we were so excited, but even the teacher there said Jenna knew more than she could teach her," Jennifer Billie said.

A teacher suggested that Jenna undergo an intelligence test so better school choices could be made for her future. At the office of Pembroke Pines clinical psychologist Dr. David A. Lustig, Jenna tested above the 99.6 percentile of her age group.

"The doctor sat us down and told us that not only is she gifted, but in a typical classroom of gifted children, Jenna would probably be the most gifted," Jennifer Billie said.

Mensa International membership came next for the little girl with the irresistible smile who takes ballet and gymnastics lessons every Wednesday and Thursday.

According to the Mensa website, the organization boasts 120,000 members globally who range from age 2 through 100 years and older. Most are between the ages of 20 and 60.

Acceptance into Mensa is granted after a person proves he or she has scored within the upper 2 percent of the general world population in an approved and supervised



Eileen Soler

Jenna Billie, deemed among the top 2 percent of the most intellectually gifted in the world, is flanked by her mother, Jennifer Billie, and father, Jonah Billie, at the family's Hollywood Reservation home.

intelligence test (IQ test). Because some actual individual scores can vary depending on the many IQ tests allowed by Mensa, the organization uses population averages to qualify applicants.

Some tests are not valid for children younger than 16. Intelligently gifted children can be accepted after appropriate testing at school or through a private psychologist.

Now, two months past her fourth birthday, Jenna attends prekindergarten at Apple Tree Montessori School in Southwest Ranches.

The school follows the Montessori practice of encouraging children to learn independently at their own pace. Teachers provide learning environments rich with

academic and experiential opportunities in language arts, mathematics, geography, computers and science.

When she is not in school, Jenna rips through store-bought workbooks for first-graders and asks grown-ups a million questions, retaining all the answers. On a recent Saturday, because she likes planets, Jenna crafted a revolving model of the solar system for a school show and tell.

"We always have to find new challenges for her," Jennifer Billie said.

Jennifer and Jonah Billie admit they sometimes forget that Jenna is only 4. Her questions are constant and her conversation is dynamic.

Other times, she acts her age — like

during a photo shoot when she picked up a fistful of dirt and tossed it over a neighbor's fence.

So what does a pint-sized genius who loves monkeys and bananas, books about bugs and chocolate ice cream dream about becoming when she grows up? Jennifer Billie said her daughter can be anything she wants, from a ballerina to a doctor to an astronaut.

Jenna wants to be a princess.

"You are already a princess," her mother said.

But a Mensa child knows her limits — for now.

"No, mommy, I'm still just a little girl," Jenna said.

## AIAC brings museum learning outdoors

### Children by hundreds learn Seminole history, culture

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — For nearly 700 students from cities and towns that surround the Big Cypress Reservation, hours at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum's 18th annual American Indian Arts Celebration equaled one awesome out-of-classroom adventure.

"The culture, the alligators, the dancing, the crafts, the clothing — it was a really great and fun experience," said Sarah Jagesser, 11, of Girl Scout Troop 20024 in

Palm Beach Gardens.

Adult chaperones at the Nov. 6-7 event echoed Sarah's sentiment.

"Best of all for the children was the friendship circle dance ... they really loved the dancing," said troop leader Laura Brihn.

But on opening day, before the dancing began, Tampa medicine man Bobby Henry taught briefly about a handful of traditions that survived generations — and he dispelled myths.

Seminoles did not use drums to keep the dance beat, he told the first morning

group, and they used shakers instead. Some of the earliest jingle shakers that females concealed under dresses were fashioned from soda cans cut into small pieces, formed into conical shapes and then tied together and strapped to their legs.

"The leaders of the dance also used the rattle to make the rain," Henry told the crowd.

He revealed to the children that he, like many Seminole children who were raised in the Everglades 50 years ago, was never formally educated.

"Then, some of the children were sad because they don't go to school but our mothers said go in the woods with your bow and arrow, that is your school," Henry said.

Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank told dozens of Ahfachkee School students to welcome the other students. Ahfachkee children arrived throughout the day in classroom shifts and later on the heels of parents and grandparents.

"Make sure you kids say hello to the other kids. That's how we show fellowship and make friends. We want people coming back to visit on a regular basis," Rep. Frank said.

Shortly after, visitors abandoned bleacher seats and joined hands with Henry and other Tribal members in a serpentine line that circled and stomped through the stage area.

All the guest children toured the Museum to view permanent historic exhibits and the Museum's temporary shows, such as "It's Not a Costume — Modern Seminole Patchwork," which tells the story about the traditional Seminole garb as evolving fashion.

JanCarlos Braulio, one of 116 second-grade students from Eastside Elementary School in Clewiston, said his favorite part of the visit was watching Tribal member Billy Walker do tricks with a 6-foot gator.

"The alligator kept trying to bite the man. It was pretty amazing," JanCarlos said.

Walker taught the audience many alligator facts that included how to tell the difference between male and female alligators, how many babies can be born in one clutch and how mightily powerful the reptiles become in adulthood.

But most importantly, Walker told spectators that wrestling alligators for tourists evolved from days long gone when curious motorists would stop their cars along roadways on reservations to watch Seminole men wrangle the gators to their camps for food and hides for trading.

"When I was 6 or 7 years old I was already hunting alligator on the way to



Eileen Soler

Tribal medicine man Bobby Henry leads a serpentine line of students, teachers and Seminole Tribe members in a friendship stomp dance Nov. 6 at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum's 18th annual American Indian Arts Celebration.

## Charter School October students of the month



Photo courtesy of Michele Thomas

Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School elementary students of the month: Jenna Huff, Elainna Fonseca, Keshia Jenkins, Heidi Thomas, Lindi Carter, Serene King, Waniya Fortner, Hannah Platt, Miley Jimmie, Keanu Bert, Lason Baker, Neela Jones, Merielaysia Billie, Creek Gopher, Hannah Wilson, Tiera Garner, Terald Garner, Karlyne Urbina, Makya King and Caleb Burton.



Photo courtesy of Michele Thomas

Middle school students of the month: Leilani Burton, Ramone Baker and Kaleb Doctor.

# PECS students send taste of home to troops overseas

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BRIGHTON** — Traci Mendez's eighth-grade reading class at Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School recently learned how much magazines, letters and snacks mean to troops serving overseas when Gina Buhlmaier visited Nov. 13 to tell them about Loving Our Heroes.

Buhlmaier founded the nonprofit organization several months after her son Kory was deployed by the Air Force to Saudi Arabia in July 2014. Like any caring mother, she wanted to make his life a little more comfortable, so she sent him a package filled with nonperishable goodies. His response opened her eyes.

"He said so many guys don't get anything from home, so he let them take some of his stuff," said Buhlmaier, of Okeechobee. "He asked me to send two packages next time, one for him and one to share. That's how it all started."

She began sending about five boxes a week. In September 2014 she formed Loving Our Heroes to raise money to send more. Each box is sent through the U.S. Postal Service priority mail APO/FPO flat rate box, which costs about \$16 to mail and close to \$50 more to fill. The packages go to troops in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia in all branches of the military.

The class's involvement in Loving Our Heroes serves two purposes: to help troops and to participate in a contest that will be part of Celebrate Literacy Week in January 2016. The contest is for service projects that promote good citizenship and enhance literacy, while serving the community.

Buhlmaier did not arrive at PECS empty-handed; she brought five boxes already filled with candy, crackers, cookies, chips, drink mix, shelf-stable fruit cups and more. The students were prepared with magazines and letters, which they added to the packages.

Kamani Smith, 14, has a few cousins in the military and was happy to help. "We're helping

soldiers," Kamani said. "If my family wasn't able to send things, I'm sure they would appreciate it. Everyone loves a taste of home, no matter where you are."

Soldiers often reply to letters and put them, along with pictures and photographs, on a morale wall on base.

"They sacrifice and miss out on so much at home," Buhlmaier said. "Even if they don't know you, the packages and letters mean so much."

Loving Our Heroes sent 140 care packages last year and aims to send 340 by the end of 2015. Buhlmaier always seeks donations of healthy snacks, nonperishable food, microwavable food in its own bowl and toiletries. She said jerky is a favorite of the soldiers, but they also enjoy trail mix, granola bars, fruit cups, drink mix packages, peanut butter, tuna and Nutella.

The care packages go to specific people, who Buhlmaier finds through her son, his friends or other people who know soldiers serving overseas. Troops can also find the organization on Facebook and request a package.

"I think it's good because you are helping the soldiers and telling them you

**"Everyone loves a taste of home, no matter where you are."**

— Kamani Smith, 14  
Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School

care about them," said Kaleb Doctor, 13.

After the class activity, Buhlmaier left with the five boxes ready to take to the post office, plenty of magazines for future care packages and a check from the PECS Parent Teacher Student Organization for \$500.

For more information, visit [www.wwww.facebook.com/LovingOurHeroes](http://www.wwww.facebook.com/LovingOurHeroes) or [GoFundMe.com/LovingOurHeroes](http://GoFundMe.com/LovingOurHeroes).



Beverly Bidney

Students of Traci Mendez's eighth-grade class at Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School examine boxes Nov. 13 that will be sent to troops overseas. Instructional coach Stephanie Tedders, at right, shows students and Mendez, in center, what has been packed in the boxes.

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# Red Ribbon Week filled with camaraderie

**BY BEVERLY BIDNEY**  
Staff Reporter

Across reservations, in keeping with the Red Ribbon mission, communities gathered to present a unified and visible commitment to a drug-free future.

From color runs, poster contests, marches against drugs, pledges and promises, the Seminole Tribe stood strong against drugs and celebrated the week's theme, "Respect Yourself, Be Drug Free."

The Red Ribbon campaign and the tradition of displaying Red Ribbons as a symbol of intolerance of drug use began in 1985 after the killing of DEA agent Enrique (Kiki) Camarena in Mexico. The agent was kidnapped and murdered by drug dealers angered by information provided by Camarena that led to a Mexican army-led destruction of a 2,500-acre marijuana plantation.

To commemorate Camarena's battle against illegal drugs, family and friends began wearing badges of red silk, which later became ribbons. In 1988, the National Family Partnership held the first Red Ribbon Celebration.

Since then, Red Ribbon Week has been commemorated in schools and communities nationwide.

In Fort Pierce, activities began Oct. 9 after the message was conveyed loud and clear.

"This is to remind us to be aware of how drugs can hurt people," said Valerie Marone, Center for Behavior Health prevention specialist. "If someone asks you if you want alcohol or drugs, I want you to stand tall and say no."

Youth and adults enjoyed an evening of food, fellowship, karaoke and wearing silly accessories for portraits in a photo booth.

On Oct. 26 in Hollywood, preschoolers presented seniors with plants in decorated pots to symbolize their promise to remain drug free for life. The kids also sang and recited the pledge of allegiance in Mikasuki.

Afterward, children, teachers and parents marched through the reservation to show their Red Ribbon resolve.

On Oct. 27, the empty landscape of Seminole Estates in Hollywood was transformed with color. Participants of the third annual Red Ribbon 5K Color Run began with clean, white palettes and ended with color-laden T-shirts and plenty of laughs along the way to the finish line.

About 75 community members, ran, walked and wheeled through a gauntlet of bucket-wielding employees tossing handfuls of colorful powder on them. But first, Fire Rescue doused participants with water to make sure the color stuck.

The Hollywood community participated in additional Red Ribbon events that included a youth basketball tournament and talent show at the airnasium.

A parade Oct. 20 sent Pemaety Emahavk Charter School staff, teachers and students, plus dozens of tribal department employees, police and firefighters, to the street for a march against substance abuse. The fun continued the next day with a preschool Red Ribbon Get Fit event and Color Run much like the event in Hollywood.

A family poster contest, door decorating contest and community dinner rounded out Brighton Red Ribbon Week Oct. 19-22.

Immokalee Red Ribbon kicked off Oct. 19 with a "Take the Pledge" Color Run hosted by the Health Department. Youth teamed up in the Wipeout Challenge obstacle course, hosted by the Recreation Department and Council Office. A prayer walk through the reservation followed by dinner completed events in Immokalee.

In Big Cypress, Ahfachkee School students lined Josie Billie Highway to cheer on a parade of passing floats and vehicles that featured dozens of tribal leaders, department employees, children and teens decked in creative costumes to herald drug- and alcohol-free lives.

Big Cypress Councilman Cicero Osceola and his support team donned military fatigues and squirt guns to combat substance abuse. On the Recreation float, Big Cypress kids dressed like bananas, grapes, apples and other fruits to support healthy eating for fruitful living. Ahfachkee



Eileen Soler

Led by Ahfachkee School music teacher Jania Harden, students sing and dance to Aretha Franklin's 'Respect' during the Big Cypress Red Ribbon Week parade Oct. 20. The theme for this year's Red Ribbon Week was 'Respect Yourself, Be Drug Free.'

School's float sounded the Aretha Franklin song "Respect" while students dressed like 1960s hippies lip-synched and danced.

The Ahfachkee School float won first place in the reservation's Red Ribbon event best float contest.

President Mitchell Cypress, who candidly discussed his battle against alcohol in a 2013 Seminole Tribune article, told an audience at the award presentation to, "Just say no."

"We have a long way to go in this fight, but it's more than wearing red shirts and being in a parade. Drugging affects everyone and we, as role models, have to be the example. If we do it, others will. If we don't do it, they won't," President Cypress said.

Billie Cypress, who performed on the award-winning float, said children and teenagers should think about their families if they are tempted to take drugs or drink.

"Kids have to remember that drugs get you nowhere," Billie Cypress said.

Red Ribbon events tribalwide concluded Oct. 24 in Clewiston with the sixth annual Red Ribbon Benefit Golf Classic tournament hosted by Seminoles in Recovery to raise funds for the 2015 Florida Native American Recovery Convention.

Staff reporter Eileen Soler contributed to this report.



Beverly Bidney

Hollywood preschoolers and their teachers walk through the reservation Oct. 26 in solidarity with the Red Ribbon campaign.



Beverly Bidney

Salina Dorgan holds her great-nephew Maddox Newkirk during the Fort Pierce Red Ribbon event Oct. 9.



Beverly Bidney

Sereniti Smith has fun singing karaoke with backup dancer Fletcher Sanders during the Fort Pierce Red Ribbon event at Chupco's Landing Community Center.



Eileen Soler

Children from Ahfachkee School ride a float dressed in fruit costumes in the Big Cypress Red Ribbon Week parade. The kids rode home a message to eat healthy to lead a fruitful life.



Eileen Soler

Brenda Tommie and Wyatt Bruised Head, 8, toss candy from the Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena float during the Big Cypress Red Ribbon Week parade.



Beverly Bidney

Boys run through a puff of color Oct. 27 during the Hollywood Reservation's third annual Red Ribbon Color Run at Seminole Estates.

# Parents schooled on drugs, social media

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — The Education Department's Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting in Hollywood Nov. 17 educated parents about the dangers of social media and synthetic drugs.

"Broward County is exploding with flakka," said Seminole Police Department Capt. Kevin Tyrie. "It would be naïve to think it's not here on the reservation."

Synthetic drugs — flakka is currently the most widespread — are made from man-made chemicals imported from China. The primary ingredient in flakka is alpha-PVP, a volatile and unpredictable synthetic stimulant. Other synthetics are Spice, K2, Molly and bath salts.

Broward Sheriff's Office Lt. Ozzy Tianga showed parents videos of drug users exhibiting uncontrollable and bizarre behavior, psychosis and paranoia.

"Broward is the epicenter for synthetic drugs," Tianga said. "Flakka is the most popular one on the streets now, but that will change."

Tianga said between September 2014 and 2015 there were 58 deaths in Broward attributed to synthetic drugs, and hospital admissions of overdoses average about 11 per day countywide. Symptoms of overdoses include kidney failure, seizures and death.

"It is the most addictive drug there is," Tianga said. "The drugs kill quickly. It shuts their brains down and they become organ donors."

South Florida has long had a tradition of drug trafficking and addiction, beginning in the 1970s, Tianga said. Over the years problem drugs have included marijuana, Quaaludes, cocaine and pharmaceutical pills.

"We got rid of the pills but not the dealer or the user," Tianga said. "They were just waiting for the next thing and it is here. This is the testing ground."

Synthetic drugs all have methamphetamine as its base, but its chemical structure is tweaked to change the characteristic of each drug. The drugs mimic the effects of other illicit drugs including marijuana, cocaine and crack but cause unpredictable reactions and remain in the system for hours. Body temperature spikes immediately, sometimes up to 105 degrees, leading many users to crave water and tear off their clothing, Tianga said.

The drugs come in various forms including pills, capsules, powder, crystals and liquid. They can be swallowed, smoked, snorted, vaped and shot through a needle like heroin.

Parents learned that no two batches of synthetics are the same, even though some were sold in convenience stores in legitimate-looking packages. Scooby Snax, a version of Spice, was marketed to children, Tianga said.

Parents voiced concerns that their children do not understand the danger posed by the drugs.

"This is something I think the kids should see," Melissa Demayo said. "It's been marketed to them and it's scary."

Tianga blames rap music for the rapid rate in which synthetics infiltrated society. He played songs by Trick Daddy, Kanye West, Tyga and Rick Ross who all sing the praises of Molly. A video of LeBron James singing one of the songs during practice before a Miami Heat game showed how accepted the drugs have become.

"Explain to your Tribal members what is going on with these drugs right now," Tianga said.

A second presentation during the meeting divulged hidden dangers found in popular websites and apps. Michael Gordon, president of Dataveillance, showed parents what to look for and how to monitor their children.

"Kids ages 13-18 post the most and put stuff out there that they shouldn't," Gordon said. "Social media is the No. 1 activity online."

The three most popular apps for children and teens are Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, but they are also familiar with Snapchat, Ask.fm, Tumblr, Whisper, Yik Yak, Kik messenger and Poof. Gordon said all pose dangers because the sites allow users to remain anonymous. People are not always who they say and predators are not uncommon, he said. He offered an example of "Susan," who was a 42-year-old man posing as a 15-year-old girl.

"They just made plans to meet at a park," Gordon said. "Ill-intended strangers easily connect with young people. These apps aren't good for our kids."

Gordon said parents need to know what their children do online to protect them.

"You need to set up the settings," he said. "You need to look at their phones to know what sites they are on. Kids can always be tracked."



Beverly Bidney  
Alyssa Bowers and Maya Bowers learn to use a stethoscope from firefighter Vasile Mircea at the Nov. 17 Police Explorers meeting.



Beverly Bidney  
Firefighter Vasile Mircea reads the gauge attached to the cuff on Nettie Smith, who laughs as Kenyen Arriola takes her blood pressure during the Hollywood Police Explorers meeting.



Beverly Bidney  
Griffin Billie watches as firefighter Vasile Mircea looks at the gauge measuring his blood pressure, taken by Sheldon Osceola, during the Hollywood Police Explorers meeting.

# Police Explorers double as paramedics, investigators

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — Hollywood Police Explorers became paramedics and detectives for an evening as they learned how to check for vital signs and uncover important clues at crime scenes.

Seminole Fire Rescue and Police departments teamed up Nov. 17 to offer Explorers hands-on experience in their areas of expertise.

Paramedics brought equipment so Explorers could check each other's blood pressure. The youth also learned how to find a pulse to calculate heart rate and how to check the respiration rate of a patient.

"Look, listen and feel for 30 seconds," said firefighter/paramedic Mackinley

Pratt. "Then multiply by two to get the breathing rate. Normal is 12 to 20 breaths per minute."

The Explorers took each other's pulses by pressing on the artery at the wrist, counting the beats for 30 seconds and then multiplying by two again to find the number of heart beats per minute. The normal range is 60 to 100.

Next, they placed blood pressure cuffs on each other and listened carefully through stethoscopes for heartbeats that would determine the pressure, which was displayed on a dial gauge on the cuff. They also used a digital blood pressure machine to get the same results automatically.

After the paramedics packed up their equipment, Seminole Police Department Officer Kyle Boyd explained basic

definitions of crime scenes and evidence and engaged the group in memory games. He also outlined the protocol used at crime scenes to preserve evidence and interview witnesses.

During the memory challenge, Boyd showed a screen with 20 items and gave the group 30 seconds to memorize each one. Items were random and included a telephone, kite, hammer, plant, clock, scissors, ice cream cone and house. They had two minutes to write down all they remembered. The highest score of the evening belonged to Kaitlynn Gorney with 13.

"It shows you when a crime happens, you have to remember everything," Boyd said. "Things happen real fast, so you have to work hard to remember."



Eileen Soler

Students are awed Nov. 6 while watching an alligator wrestling show by Seminole culture teacher Billy Walker during the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum's 18th annual American Indian Arts Celebration at Big Cypress Reservation.

## ◆ AIAC From page 1B

school. No one would barely ever see me in shoes. Hardly any cars were on the road but tourists would stop and give us money to take pictures," Walker said.

Soon, he realized that tourists would pay more if he did tricks with the alligators — like kissing the alligator's snout. Walker did his first official alligator show in 1988 at age 13.

Van Samuels, an Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum tour guide, led the event program

as master of ceremonies. While introducing performances that included a hand-to-hand Seminole War fighting demonstration and traditional dances of the Cherokee Nation, Samuels weaved historical and cultural information about many Native American Tribes.

"It's a very huge responsibility for Native Americans to pass down the culture and traditions. It's also important for visitors to know we, like the Seminole Tribe, are a vibrant people," Samuels said. "Some people might think Native Americans are part of the past, but here we are in 2015 and we are very much alive."

## ◆ ACD EXPERIENCE From page 1B

Tribal members. Ultimately, I chose ACD because I wanted to utilize my degree.

Before I started working, some feelings of self-doubt resurfaced. I was very anxious to work. Was I prepared to work? How will my colleagues treat me? I decided that by doing my best, I couldn't go wrong. Cousins, friends and colleagues — and many others — have supported me, which has helped tremendously. I definitely feel as if I've been working in the Tribe for years. That's how comfortable people have made me feel.

My first few weeks were spent working in the Executive Operations Office, where I learned of different departments and their functions. But throughout my duration in the ACD program, I will primarily work in Seminole Media Productions, starting with

The Seminole Tribune, then Broadcasting and Business Marketing. After completing the program, I hope to be versatile in many aspects of media and business.

Learning even more about Seminole culture has helped me better appreciate the sacrifices our ancestors have made. Their selfless acts paved the way for the success we experience now. Many of them gave their lives fighting for what they believed. No matter how tough things seemed, they never quit. We are all born with that warrior spirit. It seemed as if they were always thinking of something greater than what they experienced and saw at the time. We are their descendants. Once I started to truly understand the magnitude of how blessed we Seminoles are, I knew I had to show my ancestors that I was truly grateful.

Working for the Tribe is my way of paying back, showing my respect and doing my part to help our people continue toward a bright future.

# Tiny scholars dive into big kid books



Eileen Soler

Big Cypress Preschool students Keifer Bert, Jason Billie and Hank Jumper peruse dozens of picture and first reader books Nov. 6 at the school's annual Scholastic Book Fair.



Eileen Soler

Jason Billie tries to decide which book he wants to read at the Scholastic Book Fair in Big Cypress.



Eileen Soler

Aubriana Billie is thrilled to read a book about Bubble and Cuddles during the Big Cypress Scholastic Book Fair. The weeklong event inspired reading and learning for the students.



# PRESKULL HALLOWEEN



Beverly Bidney

Alizayah Alvarado joins her Hollywood Preschool playmates at their annual trick-or-treat event to collect as much candy as possible Oct. 28 in the Howard Tiger Recreation Center gymnasium.



Eileen Soler

Teacher aide Beutaine Cohens escorts Lane Gopher and Zoey Calisce from Halloween trick-or-treat festivities Oct. 28 at the Brighton Preschool.



Eileen Soler

Isabella Virto happily shows off her Halloween trick-or-treat take after the Brighton Preschool Halloween party.



Beverly Bidney

Delilah Hall gets some help from her mom, Lily Hall, during the Hollywood Preschool trick-or-treat event.



Beverly Bidney

Hollywood preschoolers Liam Bowers and Jessell Young march across the ball field to go trick-or-treating at Howard Tiger Recreation Center.



Beverly Bidney

Aynn Holata leads her class of Hollywood preschoolers to the Howard Tiger Recreation Center where they filled their bags with treats courtesy of tribal departments.



Eileen Soler

Brighton Preschool students are engrossed with collecting Halloween goodies during the school's annual trick-or-treat event.



Beverly Bidney

Adorable little ghouls Peyton Cypress and Chaos Micco collect treats at the Hollywood Preschool trick-or-treat event.



Beverly Bidney

Treats in hand, Hollywood preschoolers head back across the ball field to school after a successful trick-or-treat at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center.



Eileen Soler

Children from the Brighton Preschool are excited to gather as much candy and toys as possible during a community giveaway at the school.



Beverly Bidney

Ava-Jae Cypress watches as her bag is filled with goodies during the Hollywood Preschool Halloween event.

# BOYS & GHOULS CLUB HALLOWEEN



Photo courtesy of Brighton Boys & Girls Club  
Leviticus Berry and Tammy Martinez complete a Halloween obstacle course Oct. 30 during the Brighton Boys & Girls Club second annual Fear Factor and Halloween party.



Photo courtesy of Immokalee Boys & Girls Club  
Jasmine Garcia and counselor Adriana Lara pose for a photo Oct. 27 at Immokalee Boys & Girls Club second annual Halloween dodge ball throw down.



Photo courtesy of Brighton Boys & Girls Club  
Willo James and Dakota Fish enjoy a Silly String fight during the Brighton Boys & Girls Club second annual Fear Factor and Halloween party.



Photo courtesy of Immokalee Boys & Girls Club  
From left, Josiah Arteaga, Denise Gonzalez, Amani Cummings and Tia Billie show off their costumes at the Immokalee Boys & Girls Club second annual Halloween dodge ball throw down.



Photo courtesy of Brighton Boys & Girls Club  
Brighton youth compete in a rat hole run by working as a team to get to the finish line before the other group. From left are Jaiden Gould, Greyson Johns, Brandon Gabbard, Kashyra Urbina, Tiyanni Anderson, Tammy Martinez, Dakota Fish, Jaydence Urbina, Briann Woodham and Jordan Johnson.

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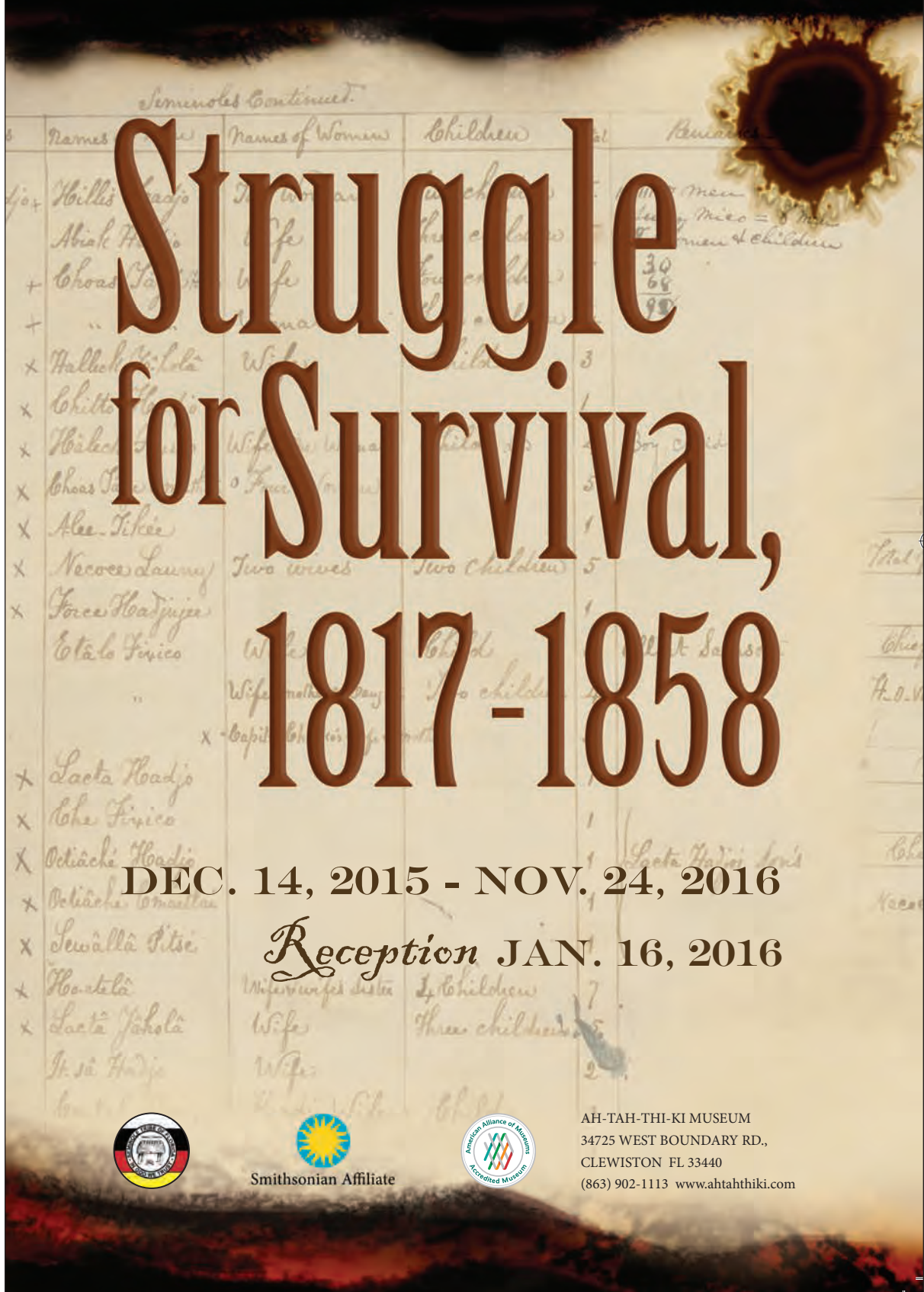


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## Strong Seminole contenders ride for Tribe at INFR

*Jobe Johns notches two top 10 finishes in Las Vegas*

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

**LAS VEGAS** — Indian National Finals Rodeo turned 40 in November, meaning it's been around longer than most of the cowboys and cowgirls who represented the Seminole Tribe of Florida at this year's event in Las Vegas.

More than a dozen Seminoles competed among Indian Country's elite in junior, senior and adult divisions from Nov. 8-12 on the dirt at South Point Equestrian Center. Most of the Seminoles qualified through the Eastern Indian Rodeo Association.

Jobe Johns and his cousin Jacoby Johns were the lone Seminoles who advanced past qualifying rounds in Las Vegas to reach the short go finals.

At 5-foot-8 and about 145 pounds, 17-year-old Jobe Johns ventured into INFR's adult division for the first time. Facing older and bigger competitors didn't faze Jobe, who produced the Tribe's most impressive performance by finishing sixth overall in calf roping and eighth overall in steer wrestling.

"It means a lot being 17 and roping with the big guys," said Jobe, a home-schooled high school senior.

Jobe, the son of Tara and retired rodeo champion Billy Joe Johns, made his first trip to INFR since 2010 when he competed as a junior at age 12. Spectators filled the 4,800-seat capacity arena, described by INFR as being "nearly sold out."

"It's just business; you're not out there to play around," Jobe said.

A top 15 average through three preliminary rounds earned Jobe and his horse Dalilah a spot in the calf roping short go round. The teen cowboy from Lake Placid and the 8-year-old gray quarter-horse from Texas thrived at the right time as they combined to turn in the second fastest performance in the short go. Jobe's time of 8.95 seconds boosted him a few notches up the final leaderboard.



Smith Rodeo Photos/Matilda Smith

**Jobe Johns, 17, of Lake Placid, gets ready to take down a steer during the Indian National Finals Rodeo held Nov. 8-12 in Las Vegas. Jobe, in his first INFR competing against adults, placed eighth in steer wrestling and sixth in calf roping.**

"She's a good horse. I got her from Texas about a year ago," he said. "She's easy, but she can be mean to other horses."

A leg wound kept Dalilah out of action earlier this year, but she fully recovered.

"Over the past five months, we've really started to click," Jobe said.

Jobe was one of only three calf ropers

to score under 10 seconds in short go.

"I had a good calf. I just went out there and scored good," he said.

In steer wrestling, Jobe again shined on the big stage in short go. He tackled the steer in 4.36 seconds, the fourth-fastest time out of the final 15 competitors and by far his best time in four rounds.

Although he was 2,300 miles from home, Jobe competed with the Tribe close to his heart, literally. The front of Jobe's competition shirts are adorned by a Hard Rock Cafe patch on his right shoulder and the Seminole Tribe of Florida patch on the

◆ See INFR on page 2C

## Darkside lights up Hollywood benefit basketball tournament

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

**HOLLYWOOD** — The opposing team was dropping 3-pointers from everywhere, yet Alonzo Wargolet was not concerned. His team — Darkside — fell behind by 14 points in the first half before finding their own scoring touch and storming past the Living Legends, 63-54, in the high school division championship game during the second annual Ballin' for a Cause Youth

Basketball Tournament in Hollywood.

"I wasn't scared; I was just like, 'We've got to calm down.' I know we were playing much better than that, but we just weren't getting out to their shooters. They were hitting everything," said Wargolet, who scored 19 points and seized command of the outcome in the final 90 seconds when he scored the game's final seven points.

The all-day tournament Oct. 24 served as a fundraiser for breast cancer awareness. Seventeen tribal and non-tribal youth teams

— including seven in the high school bracket — filled the Howard Tiger Recreation Center gymnasium.

Games were played simultaneously as the court was divided into two, but the full court was used for the main event: the high school title game.

Ethan Cypress and his Hollywood Hills High School teammate Spencer Douglas — along with Trevon Marks and Nelson Weir — combined for eight 3-pointers that gave the Living Legends a 31-17 lead in the

first half before Darkside went on a 12-2 confidence-boosting spurt to close the gap to 33-29 at halftime.

Cypress, who scored a team-high 15 points, made his third 3-pointer of the game to start the second half, but Wargolet answered for Darkside by hitting from beyond the arc and then seconds later completing a 3-point play.

Shelby Osceola, a 6-foot-2 forward from Westwood Christian Academy in Miami, led all scorers with 22 points. Osceola flexed his strength inside and outside on consecutive plays by scoring on an offensive rebound and then draining a 3-pointer that gave Darkside its first lead of the game at 42-39. Darkside never trailed again.

"Once we came back, it was over," said Wargolet, who attends Plantation's American Heritage School.

Moments after hitting his team's 11th and final 3-pointer that pulled the Living Legends to within two points, Weir (12 points) suffered an injury and did not play in the final seven minutes.

After the game, Darkside received the championship trophy and medals at midcourt. The tournament served as a warm-up for players whose high school basketball seasons will start in November.

"It's mostly about just coming out and playing," said Cypress, who organized the Living Legends squad that received the runner-up trophy.

Cypress was one of the stars of the tournament. In a semifinal victory, he scored a game-high 30 points and his Hollywood Hills teammate Daron Fulwood poured in 21 points.

The champion Darkside squad consisted of: Breezy Anderson, Ricky Garza, Conner Osceola, Darnell Osceola, Devin Osceola, Shelby Osceola, Jose Rodriguez and Alonzo Wargolet. Karlito Wargolet and Trent Cypress assisted from the sideline.

Elsewhere, Ballers Lyfe, coached by tournament organizer and Recreation aide Ashley Wilcox, won the 15U division, which featured five teams.

Delray Beach, which brought about 20 kids to the tournament, captured the 12U title.



Kevin Johnson

**Shelby Osceola tries to pass Ethan Cypress Oct. 24 during the high school division championship game in the second annual Ballin' for a Cause Youth Basketball Tournament at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center in Hollywood.**



Kevin Johnson

**Blevyns Jumper, from the Big Cypress Reservation, practices snapping Nov. 10 at American Heritage School in Plantation. Blevyns is in his second season as Heritage's long snapper. The Patriots finished the regular season ranked among the top teams in the nation.**

## High hopes for long snapper Blevyns Jumper

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

**PLANTATION** — While one of the elite high school football programs in the country practiced in early November, its head coach took a break on the sideline, gazed across the field and proudly brought up the variety of backgrounds that accompany his American Heritage School players.

"I've got a singer; I've got a bunch of dancers; I've got a cowboy; I've got a 4-foot-5, 95-pound running back," Mike Rumph said. "We're as diverse as it comes, and then every ethnicity you can think of: Bohemian, Jamaican, Seminole Indian, Haitian, African American, Jewish kids."

The melting pot in Plantation churned its way to an 8-1 record in the regular season before attention shifted to the state playoffs. For the second year in a row, 6-foot-5, 190-pound Seminole cowboy Blevyns Jumper is the long snapper for Heritage, which concluded the regular season ranked No. 1 in Florida's Class 5A poll and 11th in the nation by MaxPreps. Those hands from the Big Cypress Reservation used for lassoing steer in rodeo arenas proved handy on football fields, too.

"We barely have any issues on punt team or field goal because he's so good at what he does," Rumph said.

Blevyns' contributions also come on punt coverage when work remains to be done after the ball is kicked.

"Pretty much every time [Blevyns] goes out there, he makes a tackle or has an assist. He's a tremendous asset to us," said Rumph, whose team won a state title in 2013 with Blevyns' brother Andre on the squad and repeated that feat in 2014 with both brothers.

Even as state and national accolades accumulate for Heritage, Blevyns said the team's mantra is always to keep everything in perspective.

"Don't let that get to your head, saying, 'I'm the best because I'm at the best school.' Work your hardest at the best school, and then you will be the best," said Blevyns, who was honored along with his fellow teammates from the Class of 2016 during the team's senior night and regular season finale Oct. 30.

A year ago, Andre was among the senior night honorees. With Andre away playing football at Hutchinson Community College in Kansas, this time it was Blevyns' turn as he was joined by his parents, Josh and Andrea, and younger sisters Ahnie and Canaan in a pregame ceremony. The Patriots proceeded to cap off the night with a district-clinching 38-15 win against Hallandale.

"That was a good senior night," Blevyns said.

As a long snapper, Blevyns' main responsibility is to make sure snaps on extra points, field goals and punts are delivered promptly and accurately. It's a role he takes seriously.

"Don't get psyched out about what position you're in and how to do it; just go out there, take a deep breath and snap this," Blevyns said about his approach to snapping, which has worked.

Among senior long snappers, Blevyns is ranked No. 61 in the nation by Rubio Long Snapping. Unfortunately for long snappers, the position does not generate the same scholarship opportunities

◆ See BLEVYNS JUMPER on page 2C

# Blessed with height, Native freshman hopes now for reach

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

MIAMI — When he was a freshman in high school — with a frame of about 6-foot-5 — Nate Brown Bull received his first introduction to the Seminole Tribe of Florida on a basketball court. During the All West Native American Basketball Classic in Denver, Brown Bull's team faced a Seminole squad that included Trewston Pierce.

"I think the first time I played against him, he ended up dunking on me. I came off the floor and my coach told me I should have just let him go," Brown Bull recalled.

The game was about four years and 8 inches ago for Brown Bull, who began his college career this fall at Florida International University as a 7-foot-1 center.

Since their initial encounter, Brown Bull and Pierce have become good friends. After starring for Fort Lauderdale High School as a senior last season, Pierce is prepping for college ball with IMG Academy's national team in Bradenton.

"He's a great player," Brown Bull said.



Kevin Johnson

Nate Brown Bull, from the Oglala Sioux Tribe in South Dakota, poses for a photo Oct. 10 at FIU Arena. The 7-foot-1 center is in his first season on the Florida International University men's basketball team in Miami.

"I almost went to IMG with him."

Instead, Brown Bull, an Oglala Sioux from the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, landed in Miami where he is determined to be known for more than just a tall college basketball player. He wants kids in his Tribe to look up to him for reasons other than to tilt their heads way back.

"I'm one of the first [Division I] athletes to play basketball; we have another guy that plays for Southern Utah," Brown Bull, 19, said. "I want to set the bar now and set a really good example for everyone back home. It's possible; you can do it."

Home for Brown Bull is Kyle, South Dakota, where he grew up and attended Little Wound School, a K-12 school named after his great-great-grandfather Chief Little Wound.

Basketball is in Nate's genes. His mother, Norma Brown Bull, scored more than 50 points in a high school game, an accomplishment that places her near the top of the South Dakota state record book. Norma later played basketball for Huron University College in Ontario. Nate said his father, Darrell Brown Bull Sr., opted to join the Marine Corps rather than pursue basketball.

Kyle is located in Oglala Lakota County (formerly Shannon County), which borders Nebraska in southwest South Dakota.

"It's nice out there, but there's a lot of poverty," Brown Bull said. "We were the poorest county in the United States for a long time. A lot of people depend on the month-to-month government welfare checks and stuff like that."

As far as athletics, basketball is king on the reservation.

"There's football and other sports," Brown Bull said, "but basketball is life there."

Before he arrived at FIU for an afternoon practice on Veterans Day, Brown Bull visited the Seminoles' Hollywood Reservation for the first time. Jesse Heart, an Oglala Sioux who coached Brown Bull in high school and recently moved to the Hollywood Reservation, gave the FIU freshman a tour of the new Howard Tiger Recreation Center and its basketball gym.

"It was great. I really like it. I wish our Tribe had stuff like that," Brown Bull said.

As a senior, Brown Bull helped Little Wound reach the state tournament for the first time in eight years.

When he wasn't dunking and blocking shots, Brown Bull was hauling in touchdown passes as a towering wide receiver on the school's football team.

"My quarterback used to just throw it up there and let me go after it. The cornerbacks were little guys and they'd wait for me to catch it and then try to tackle me from there," said Brown Bull, who also

played safety and caught six passes for 112 yards in a state playoff game as a senior.

His football days are likely over, but his college hoops career has just begun. After signing his letter of intent in July to play at FIU, Brown Bull arrived on campus in August to begin workouts with the Panthers.

So far, it's been a smooth transition.

"He's handled it pretty well," said FIU coach Anthony Evans. "He's a pretty mature young man. That's one of the things we noticed about him when we first met him. He has a great sense of humor. I think he was ready for a new challenge, a new environment. He's done well."

Brown Bull suffered a knee injury in practice that was initially thought to be a torn ACL, but Evans said he was relieved when it was diagnosed as only a deep muscle bruise. Still, the setback kept Brown Bull on the sideline for about three weeks prior to the team's season opener in mid-November.

Before the injury, Brown Bull was going up against Adrian Diaz, a 6-foot-11, 230-pound senior who was among the NCAA's leading shot blockers last season and is the team's leading returning scorer.

"In practice in the beginning, you could see that Nate was bothering Adrian on the shots, and that's good because [Adrian] is only going to get better; he's going to be able to adjust to players who are bigger than him," Evans said.

As for Brown Bull, Evans has stressed defense in the early going.

"The defensive side of the floor is where I think he will make the most contributions because he can rebound the ball, he's 7-feet tall, he can block shots and he runs the floor pretty well," Evans said. "I think those things will be what we build off of. The offensive side will come, but the defensive side is where I've made my emphasis to him."

Early impressions of Brown Bull from Diaz, a Miami native who started his college career at Kansas State, have been favorable.

"He's doing pretty good," Diaz said. "He has a lot of potential. He has a lot of nice raw talent. He's very skilled for a young big man."

Diaz weighed about 200 pounds as a freshman. Since then, he's beefed up with an additional 30 pounds to become an inside force. That's a similar route Brown Bull is following in the weight room. He's about 15 pounds heavier than a year ago.

"I had a little more body fat when I first got here," he said. "I was about 220, just all like fat, then lost all that, then got back up to 220, all muscle, and now I just put on 5 more pounds recently, all muscle."

As for additional height, Brown Bull said he isn't sure if his growing has stopped. "I still get growing pains," he said.

◆ INFR  
From page 1C

left shoulder. He thanked all his sponsors and picked up two additional ones at INFR: the Washington Redskins Original Americans Foundation and Go Rope Clothing Co.

Jobe also partnered with fellow Seminole Blevyns Jumper in team roping at INFR. The duo didn't reach the short go but will continue to team rope together throughout the high school and EIRA seasons. They are determined to return to Las Vegas next year.

"It was a great experience. I've been there before, but not in the adult division," said Blevyns, a senior at American Heritage School in Plantation. "This is our first year and we both liked it. It's a big step up. We're going to be back."

Jacoby Johns, the 2013 and 2014 INFR Tour Rodeo bareback champion, finished 13th in bareback. His best outing came in the second round when his 72 points tied him for seventh.

Elsewhere, header Justin Gopher and heeler Naha Jumper barely missed qualifying for short go in team roping. After not scoring in the first round, they returned with 15th- and 14th-place finishes, respectively, but wound up 17th, two spots out of short go.

The Tribe featured two competitors each in ladies breakaway roping and ladies barrel racing. Trina Bowers-Hipp finished 19th overall, highlighted by the eighth-fastest time in round three (3.19). LeAnna

Billie's best round came in the third when she placed 20th in 5.64.

In barrels, both the Tribe's participants finished in the top 25 overall. Ashley Parks was 19th and Loretta Peterson was 23rd. Loretta's best time — 15.95 — was eighth fastest in the third round.

Kelton Smedley competed in three rounds of bull riding but did not score.

Logan Hyatt, who lives with Jobe Johns' family, missed qualifying for steer wrestling short go by one spot. He started with a 4.55 — third-fastest time in the first round — and finished 16th overall. In calf roping, Logan finished 21st overall.

In juniors, which featured two rounds, Ahnie Jumper, posted breakaway roping's 10th-best time in the first round with a 4.17. She didn't score in the second round.

Daniel Rodriguez competed in breakaway roping and bull riding. His best showing came in the second round of bull riding when he tied for 11th with 63 points.

Bull rider Jaylen Baker scored 69 points on his first ride, good enough for eighth overall. He didn't score in the second round.

Budha Jumper notched a pair of top 25 finishes in barrel racing. Budha's time of 16.97 was 22nd in round one. In the second round, she finished 23rd in 17.35.

Madisyn Osceola, another barrel racer, was 28th on day one in 17.96, and 29th on day two in 21.18.

In senior breakaway roping, Norman Johns didn't score in his first round but returned on day two and posted the 20th-fastest time in round three (3.19). LeAnna

◆ BLEVYNS JUMPER  
From page 1C

compared to other positions.

"A scholarship would be great, but it's very tough for that niche unless that school comes and that's exactly what they need," Rumph said.

Although scholarships for long snappers are rare, they do exist. An article about college recruiting on BleacherReport.com in April stated long snapper is "a position of importance that's gaining more and more traction in the world of recruiting..."

"I coached the Army All-American game last year and they had a snapper who was an All-American long snapper and he went to Western Michigan to long snap. He's on scholarship. It's there," Rumph said.

Long snapping isn't the only avenue Blevyns could take to college. He's competed in rodeo throughout the country nearly all his life, which is one reason Rumph allowed Blevyns to miss practices after the regular season

finale so he could compete at the Indian National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas.

"We had a bye week. I know that's his passion and I know that's probably another way for him to get into college," Rumph said. "I hope it opens up more possibilities for him."

Blevyns said he was scheduled in mid-November to meet with a rodeo coach from a college in Mississippi.

After football season ends, Blevyns said his focus will return to rodeo for the winter. As for next fall, Blevyns said being on a college rodeo team or college football team — or perhaps both — would be an ideal situation.

"I really like rodeo a lot, but it would be nice to play college football," he said.

After the regular season ended, American Heritage opened the Class 5A playoffs Nov. 13 with a 43-0 win against Westwood before being eliminated a week later by Hallandale, 27-20, in a regional semifinal. Heritage finished with a 9-2 record.

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# Luke Baxley Jr. wins district cross country

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

After exerting just about every ounce of energy, Luke Baxley Jr. completed a memorable 3.1-mile journey as an exhausted cross country runner, but also a champion.

In a field of 42 runners from seven high schools, Luke crossed the finish line first to capture the Class 1A-District 11 boys championship Oct. 24 at Holy Trinity Episcopal Academy in Melbourne.

Before he had a chance to celebrate, the junior from Fort Pierce's John Carroll Catholic High School needed time to recover.

"I was definitely out of it for about the first 15 minutes. I couldn't feel my legs for about five minutes," Luke said.

And then...

"Happiness, knowing that I worked for that championship," he said.

Entering the race, Luke was among the top contenders in district rankings, but



Photo courtesy of Angel Robinson

Luke Baxley Jr., John Carroll Catholic High School's top boys cross country runner this season, leads a pack of runners during a race.



Photo courtesy of Angel Robinson

John Carroll Catholic High School's Luke Baxley Jr., center, begins a cross country race in the 2015 season. Luke won a district championship in October.

the Seminole was not the favorite to win. "I felt I was well-prepared for it, but in the overall rankings I was about fourth," he said.

Pre-race advice from John Carroll cross country coach Chris Robertson proved helpful.

"Coach told me before the race that I might as well go for it," Luke said.

Luke stayed in the lead pack for about the first half of the race before he seized command.

"I decided to push with about a mile-and-a-half to go," he said.

That push propelled Luke to the lead, which he didn't relinquish. He finished 27 seconds in front of the runner-up and well ahead of most of the field. Only three runners came within a minute of Luke's time.

The victory was doubly sweet for Luke, whose time of 17 minutes and 29 seconds was a personal best that lasted all of one week. He set a new mark Oct. 31 by running the same course in 17:25 in the Class 1A-Region 3 race. He didn't win the regional, but his ninth-place finish out of 108 runners earned him a trip to the state final as an individual.

In the 1A state final, Luke said he hoped to break the 17-minute mark, but his race "didn't go as planned." He ran through the hills and woods at Tallahassee's Apalachee Regional Park in 18:30, good enough for 68th out of 180 runners.

Other highlights in Luke's season included third place at the St. Lucie County Championship in mid-October and 29th place in a race at the prestigious Mountain Dew Invitational that featured nearly 300 of the state's top Class 1A and 2A runners.

The John Carroll boys entered the season as a defending district team champion, but they lost several key runners to graduation. This season the team finished third at district and eighth at regional and did not qualify for states as a team. Most of the squad should be back next season with Luke returning as its No. 1 runner.

"I definitely think we will be stronger," said Luke, whose running skills will shift this spring to track, where he had a successful season a year ago that included a win in the 2-mile district race and runner-up in the mile.



John Hasler/Hasler Productions/Muskogee, OK

Fort Gibson High School tailback Jesse Sanchez dashes past defenders during a game from the 2015 season in Oklahoma. Jesse, a junior, rushed for more than 600 yards this season.

# Sanchez brothers boost both sides of ball for Fort Gibson

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

**FORT GIBSON, Okla.** — Just before the Fort Gibson High School football team played its final game of the season, first-year head coach Greg Whiteley challenged junior tailback Jesse Sanchez.

"I told him just before the game, 'Are you ready to carry the ball 30 times?' He said, 'I'm ready,'" Whiteley said.

Jesse proved he was more than ready to handle the heavy workload. The Seminole Tribe of Florida member rushed for a season-high 241 yards on 33 carries and ran for three touchdowns to send Fort Gibson out on a positive note as the Tigers walloped Stilwell, 62-18, on Nov. 5 in Fort Gibson, Oklahoma.

After most of its starters graduated from last year's team that reached the state semifinals, Fort Gibson shifted into somewhat of a rebuilding mode this season with a new head coach and a far younger squad, which included Jesse and his younger brother and fellow Seminole Sammy Micco Sanchez.

Fort Gibson finished with a 3-7 record and missed the playoffs, but the Tigers went 3-2 in the second half of the season to generate momentum heading into next year.

"We only had four starters back from last year's 12-1 team," Whiteley said. "We knew we'd have some growing pains. We got better and better."

Jesse and Sammy spent the season on opposite sides of the ball. Jesse started in the backfield on offense while Sammy, a sophomore, handled middle linebacker duties on defense.

After being a backup last season, Jesse thrived in a starting role. Similar to his team, he generated stronger outings as the season progressed and eclipsed the 100-yard rushing plateau in three games.

"Jesse had a productive year at tailback," Whiteley said. "He ended up with about 650 yards and six touchdowns."

In addition to putting up huge numbers in the season finale, Jesse shined in a late October game against undefeated Poteau, the No. 2 ranked team in Class 4A. Fort Gibson lost the game, but Jesse rushed for 109 yards and two touchdowns.

"Jesse has got real good quickness," Whiteley said. "He had a really good year. He ran the ball real well."

Stopping the run is one of Sammy's tasks as a linebacker. Whiteley said Sammy had a strong summer but was sidelined for five games early in the season because of an injury.

"In the preseason, Sammy was a leader on defense. It was unfortunate he got hurt," Whiteley said.

Despite the injury, Sammy finished with 35 tackles and should return as a key part of the defense again next season, Whiteley said.

"We expect great things from him. He's got a chance to play at the next level," he said.

Whiteley is also encouraged by seventh-grader Julius Aquino, a cousin of the Sanchez brothers. Julius is two years away from playing in high school, but Whiteley already likes what he sees at the middle school level.

"He's one of the best seventh-grade tailbacks I've ever seen in my life," Whiteley said.

As for the Sanchez brothers, both will hit the wrestling mat this winter at Fort Gibson before football practices resume in the spring.

"They're good kids. I love coaching them," Whiteley said. "They're impact players."



John Hasler Jr./Hasler Productions/Muskogee, OK

Sophomore Sammy Micco Sanchez handles middle linebacker duties for Fort Gibson High School during a 2015 game.

# Seminoles conclude volleyball seasons

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

Florida's girls high school volleyball season wrapped up in Orlando Nov. 13-14 as eight teams were crowned state champions. Here's a recap on Seminole players' seasons.

## Shae Pierce, Burgundy Pierce Hollywood Christian

For the second consecutive year, the Hollywood Christian School volleyball team reached the state playoffs. Hollywood Reservation sisters Shae and Burgundy Pierce helped the squad to a 16-10 record.

Shae, a junior, was the team's leader in digs and kills throughout the season. Burgundy, an eighth-grader, notched more than 50 service aces.

Early in the season, Shae and Burgundy combined to lead Hollywood Christian past Dade Christian in four sets. Shae had 15 kills, 10 digs and 6 assists, while Burgundy contributed 7 digs, 5 kills, 5 assists, 2 blocks and 5 aces.

Hollywood Christian finished runner-up in Class 2A-District 14 before being eliminated in the state regional quarterfinals Oct. 28 by Boca Raton Christian.

## Ahnie Jumper American Heritage

American Heritage School's volleyball season ended during its district tournament in October, but coach Lori Rembe was already thinking about next year. Heritage's 12-6 mark, one of their best records, came from a roster loaded with juniors, including the Tribe's Ahnie Jumper.

"As far as the record ... this was the best season we have had in several years," Rembe wrote in an email response to The Tribune. "Each season we get a little bit stronger and lot more competitive as we go. It will be exciting to see what they can accomplish as seniors."

Ahnie, of Big Cypress, was one of the team's two primary setters. Rembe said Ahnie finished second on the team in assists with 166 and delivered 14 kills, 18 aces, 58 service points and 59 digs.

Ahnie registered a season-high 31 assists in a five-set win against Somerset Academy in September.

Heritage's season ended with a 3-0 loss to Pompano Beach in the Class 5A-District 16 semifinals.

## Odessa King, Chyenne Nunez Okeechobee

The Okeechobee High School volleyball season ended Oct. 21 with a 3-0 loss to South Fork in the Class 6A-District 13 playoffs.

Okeechobee, which includes Brighton's Chyenne Nunez and Odessa King, and former Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School standout Raelley Matthews, ended its regular season on a high note by winning the Bulldog Dig Pink Tournament in Stuart.

The Brahmins captured the crown thanks to victories against Port St. Lucie, Key West, Fort Pierce Central and South Fork.

In the district playoffs, second-seeded Okeechobee cruised past Bayside in the quarterfinals, but the Brahmins were upset by South Fork in the semifinals.

Okeechobee finished with an 18-3 record.



Photo courtesy of Frank Cabal

Fort Gibson High School football players Jesse Sanchez, left, and his brother Sammy Micco Sanchez present their aunt, Rita Micco, with a 2015 helmet signed by the team's players and coaches Oct. 23 in Fort Gibson, Oklahoma. The helmet was a surprise birthday gift from the team for Rita, who flew to Oklahoma to surprise her sister, Alicia, earlier in the week.



Eileen Soler

FSU running back Dalvin Cook scores a touchdown during homecoming Nov. 14 against North Carolina State. FSU won the game 34-17.



Eileen Soler

Francine Osceola, Roberto Benard and Louise Gopher are familiar faces in the crowd of thousands that lined streets Nov. 13 in Tallahassee for the parade.



Eileen Soler

Miss Florida Seminole Destiny Nunez waves to spectators at the Florida State University homecoming parade.



Eileen Soler

Jr. Miss Seminole Skyla Osceola waves to thousands who packed the FSU homecoming parade route.

## ◆ HOMECOMING

From page 1A

“It’s fantastic that we continue our great relationship with the Seminole Tribe,” said FSU President John Thrasher during a pregame FSU Alumni Association awards breakfast. “We nurture it, honor it and cherish it.”

Wanda Bowers, chairwoman of the Seminole Princess Pageant Committee, said Gloria Wilson was the first Seminole princess to crown the FSU homecoming court during halftime in 1976. Per tradition, the chief’s turban and the princess’s crown are created by tribal hands.

This year, in front of 71,000 fans at the football game, Miss Florida Seminole Destiny Nunez and Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Skyla Osceola crowned homecoming chief Derrick Scott II and homecoming princess Jessica Dueno. Little Miss Seminole Victoria Benard and Little Mr. Seminole Gregory James II completed the pageantry.

Nancy Furr McGovern, 1984’s homecoming princess who marched in the parade with about 25 former chiefs and princesses, said she treasures the school’s Seminole influence.

“My family grew up here and my mother, aunt and grandparents always

felt the connection. After my aunt died, I opened her closet and there was a beautiful patchwork jacket – and every stitch was real,” McGovern said.

Jumper, dressed as a Seminole War warrior and riding one of his own horses from Big Cypress Reservation, led the mile-long, 60-unit parade alongside Osceola (FSU student Brendan Carter) on Renegade, and a posse of other horseback riders.

A cavalcade of convertible cars featured dignitaries that included Seminole royalty and the parade grand marshals, FSU men’s basketball head coach Leonard Hamilton and FSU women’s basketball head coach Sue Semrau.

Tribal members, seated in VIP bleachers along the parade route, were among thousands of revelers who cheered on the procession. Nearby, the first Miss Florida Seminole 1957, Connie Gowen, sold handmade beaded jewelry and patchwork vests.

Louise Gopher, who received an honorary doctorate from FSU in 2014 and is the mother of Carla Gopher Rodriguez, the Tribe’s first FSU graduate, joined more than a dozen in the VIP seats.

“I always enjoy coming up to Tallahassee. There’s a lot of very nice people here,” Gopher said.



Eileen Soler

Little Miss Seminole Victoria Benard and Little Mr. Seminole Gregory James II wave to crowds during the FSU homecoming parade in Tallahassee.



Eileen Soler

Miss Florida Seminole Destiny Nunez and Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Skyla Osceola wave to students and fans during the homecoming parade.



Eileen Soler

Miss Florida Seminole Destiny Nunez, left, and Jr. Miss Skyla Osceola, right, crown homecoming chief Derrick Scott II and homecoming princess Jessica Dueno during halftime.



Eileen Soler

Osceola (Brendan Carter) and Renegade charge the field at Doak Campbell Stadium during FSU’s homecoming game against North Carolina State.



Eileen Soler

Scores of majorettes twirl batons and march in unison during the FSU homecoming parade.



Eileen Soler

The first Miss Florida Seminole, Connie Gowen, displays Seminole jewelry and other items along the FSU homecoming parade route.



Eileen Soler

Panther Clan’s Kyle Doney, an FSU Alumni Association board member, plants Osceola’s flaming spear at the 50-yard line on homecoming game day.

# Julia Smith, Luzana Venzor lead PECS to successful debut

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

**BRIGHTON** — For nearly two quarters, the Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School girls basketball team fought a close battle against Moore Haven Middle School

during its first game in the school's new gymnasium.

Nursing a 9-8 lead, the Lady Seminoles suddenly found their shooting groove before halftime and went on to christen the new digs with a 34-11 victory Nov. 16.

PECS coach Tim Thomas said his young team shook off a few early nerves to win the season opener.

"It was time for them to start making some shots. They were missing a lot of easy shots at first. They had to shake the butterflies out," Thomas said.

With seven sixth-graders on the roster, it was no surprise that the team encountered a few hiccups in the first half. Eventually the Lady Seminoles settled down thanks to their most experienced players. Led by Julia Smith and Luzana Venzor — the team's only eighth-graders — PECS overwhelmed Moore Haven with a 25-3 spurt in the final 13 minutes.

With a game-high 14 points, Julia outscored the entire Moore Haven team. Most of her points came in the second half when the Lady Seminoles forced a bevy of turnovers, made smart passes and finished plays.

"[Julia] had a lot of open shots [in the first half], but she was trying to get everyone else involved. I needed her to score a little

bit before getting everyone else involved," Thomas said.

Despite being a point guard, Luzana took the game's opening tip against Moore Haven center Makayla Moise. A couple minutes later, Luzana carved her name into PECS athletics' lore when she scored the first points in the gym after she received a pass underneath the basket from Caylie Huff.

Luzana, who finished with eight points, and Julia showed why they're being counted on to lead the squad.

"Those are my captains. They have to be leaders on the floor and leaders in the classroom. I hold them accountable," Thomas said.

PECS received two points each from seventh-graders Caylie Huff and Haylie Huff. Caylie flashed defensive zone quickness by making a steal and driving the length of the floor for a layup that gave PECS a 15-8 lead late in the first half.

The team's large sixth-grade contingent also made its mark. Tava Harris excelled on the boards at both ends and scored two points. Elle Thomas notched four points, and Alliana Brady scored two points.

"I've got a very young team this year," Thomas said. "We had a lot of the sixth-graders come up, which is good for me because I'll get them ready this year, and next year they should be pretty good."

Remaining home games for the PECS girls and boys teams are: Dec. 9 vs. Clewiston, Dec. 15 vs. LaBelle, Jan. 13 vs. West Glades and Jan. 19 vs. Osceola.

## 2015-16 Pemayetv Emahakv girls basketball team

Head Coach: Tim Thomas

- 1 — Luzana Venzor
- 2 — Caylie Huff
- 3 — Karey Gopher
- 4 — Kayln Hammil
- 5 — Haylie Huff
- 11 — Elle Thomas
- 14 — LaShae King
- 15 — Alliana Brady
- 21 — Tammy Martinez
- 23 — Julia Smith
- 24 — Tava Harris



Kevin Johnson

Julia Smith launches a 3-point shot during Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School's first basketball game in the school's new gymnasium Nov. 16. Julia's game-high 14 points helped the PECS girls defeat Moore Haven Middle School 34-11.



Kevin Johnson

Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School center Tava Harris controls the ball against Moore Haven Middle School's Zorian Tullock during PECS' 34-11 win in Brighton. The sixth-grader excelled on the boards at both ends and scored two points.



Kevin Johnson

Jayton Baker battles for the ball Nov. 16 during Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School's season-opening 36-18 win against Moore Haven High School.

# Season starts with victory for big, fast PECS boys

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

**BRIGHTON** — Flexing perhaps its two strongest assets — speed and size — the Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School boys basketball team opened its season Nov. 16 with a comfortable 36-18 win against Moore Haven Middle School.

Coupled with an earlier victory by its girls, PECS concluded the school's first night of basketball in its new gymnasium with a sweep of Moore Haven.

The boys used a suffocating three-quarter and full-court press that frustrated Moore Haven. With a sea of bright white jerseys and flailing arms in their faces, the Terriers often struggled to move the ball past midcourt.

"We try to stress that in practice: get a tip, get your hands up, make it hard to pass. They did a good job of that tonight," said PECS coach Kevin Jackson, whose deep bench allowed him to maintain heavy pressure most of the night. "We have the quickness and the depth this year. We can plug a lot of guys in to make it work."

The depth extends to the big men, too. If opponents manage to break the press, they still have to deal with a towering trio that includes 6-foot-2 eighth-grader Robert Harris along with eighth-grader Kamani Smith and sixth-grader Jayton Baker, both of whom are about 6 feet.

"We have some size and speed," said Jackson, whose starting five were Robert, Kamani and guards Silas Madrigal, Dante Thomas and Alex Valdes.

Robert made an immediate impact. In the game's first minute, he grabbed a defensive rebound at one end and scored the team's first points of the season on an offensive board at the other end. He finished with five points.

PECS' hottest hands belonged to Silas, who brought rousing cheers from the crowd of about 100 by sinking four 3-pointers — including three in the first quarter — on his way to a game-high 17 points.

Silas' sharp shooting staked the Seminoles to a 17-5 lead at the end of one quarter. Silas opened the second quarter with his fourth 3-pointer.

When the starters needed a breather, PECS showed just how deep its bench extends with Ramone Baker, Jaylen Baker, Kai Osceola and Donovan Harris handling guard duty.

PECS led 22-11 at the break. The Seminoles' lead grew to 30-12 when Jayton

notched his first middle school points on a basket in the lane.

Donovan scored the game's final points on a 3-pointer from the top of the arc late in the fourth quarter.

Donovan echoed his coach's sentiments, noting that there's a lot to like about this year's squad.

"We've got a lot of athletic people and big guys," Donovan said.

Jackson expects his team will be competitive every night.

"Last year we were in every game," he said. "We lost a couple games by two or three points. I feel this year we'll be in every game."

## 2015-16 Pemayetv Emahakv boys basketball team

Head coach: Kevin Jackson

- 1 — Alex Valdes
- 2 — Dante Thomas
- 3 — Silas Madrigal
- 4 — Ramone Baker
- 5 — Jaylen Baker
- 10 — Donovan Harris
- 11 — Kai Osceola
- 23 — Kamani Smith
- 24 — Jayton Baker
- 25 — Robert Harris



Kevin Johnson

Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School guard Silas Madrigal dribbles the ball during the team's first game at its new gymnasium. Madrigal scored a game-high 17 points.

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# Announcements

## Gearing up for the toy run



Photo courtesy of Ollie Balentine

I ride with the Outlaw Motorcycle Riders on weekends, so they are my buddies. I am going to ride in the Toys in the Sun Run on Dec. 6. I'm getting ready, so I hope I see you all at the toy run at Markham Park.  
- Submitted by Ollie Balentine

## Remembering history

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

In 1970, Joe Paul Billie was a part-time student at American University in Washington, D.C. and worked in the office of the National Center for Voluntary Action. While he was there, Billie attended a dinner hosted by President Richard Nixon at the White House to honor the new organization's board of directors.

The independent, private, nonprofit organization existed in the 1970s to encourage Americans to engage in volunteerism in their communities. In 1979, it merged with the National Information Center on Volunteerism and in 1991 became part of the Points of Light Foundation.

"I was glad to be invited and meet the president," Billie said. "I just want people to know this was part of history."

Other attendees at the black-tie dinner were

Attorney General John Mitchell, Secretary of Agriculture Clifford Hardin and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development George Romney, who in 1973 was named chairman and chief executive officer of the National Center for Voluntary Action.

Billie didn't remain in Washington, D.C. for long.

Shortly after, he attended Colorado Mountain College, where he earned an associate of arts degree.



Beverly Bidney

Joe Paul Billie

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