



The Seminole Tribune

Voice of the Unconquered

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Brighton tree ceremony ushers in Christmas

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — The Brighton community gave a 28-foot nod to Christmas with a tree lighting ceremony and celebration Nov. 30.

The event, a first for Brighton, took place from dusk until about 9 p.m. on the vacant lot at the northwest corner of Harney Pond and Reservation roads.

Brighton Reservation Council Representative and special events coordinator Lewis Gopher was the emcee of the event. It featured a 28-foot Christmas tree from Oregon decorated with about 2,000 lights and ornaments, many made by students from the Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School.

The tree was expected to stay lit through the holiday season.

Vendors sold hot chocolate, pumpkin pie, fry bread, popcorn, chili, hot dogs, hamburgers, fries and ribs to hungry Tribal Members and visitors.

The all woman musical group Native Voices sang traditional Christmas songs including Silent Night, Little Drummer Boy and Joy to the World. PECS students also sang Christmas songs like Jingle Bells and Up on the Housetop, directed by PECS teacher Jade Osceola.

When it was dark and time to light the tree, Gopher introduced Jennie Shore to serve as the ceremonial person to turn on the power switch. The crowd of about 200 helped with a countdown from 10.

"We thought about who we wanted to get to light the Christmas tree," Gopher said. "We looked toward one of the matriarchs in the community — someone that's served the community for a long time and continues to serve," he said of Shore.

Shore, of the Otter Clan, was recently named National Indian Education Association Elder of the Year.

"This woman has dedicated her life to wake up every day to work to preserve our way of life," said Gopher of Shore's almost 40 years of service. "This woman is a prime example of a Seminole woman and the strength that we have."

Before Shore was taken to the area where she'd turn on the power switch, she briefly addressed those in attendance.

"I am very happy to have this opportunity to light up your Christmas tree. I feel honored to do this," she said.

Before the tree was lit, Brighton

♦ See TREE on page 6A



Damon Scott

The Brighton Reservation gathers Nov. 30 to light a 28-foot tree which featured many decorations made by Pemayetv Emahakv students.



Derrick Tiger

From left, Hollywood Board Rep. Gordon Wareham, Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola, Miss Florida Seminole Cheyenne Kippenberger and President Mitchell Cypress bring a present to a young patient at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital on Dec. 6 in Hollywood. Toys from the Seminole Tribe of Florida Inc. toy drive were given to several patients. Toys from the drive were also delivered and distributed to kids in Immokalee and South Bay.

Toy drive brings holiday cheer to kids

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor
and
DERRICK TIGER
Staff Reporter

Patients in a children's hospital in Hollywood and students at a nonprofit educational center in Immokalee and a South Bay elementary school received plenty of holiday cheer and toys thanks to the Seminole Tribe of Florida Inc.'s annual toy drive sponsored by Seminole Gaming.

Kyla Davis, STOF Inc. marketing director, said the drive brought in about 650

toys this year. Tribal and Gaming employees were among those who helped with the drive. Toys made it into the hands of kids in December, starting with young patients at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital on Dec. 6.

Each year many children in the U.S. have to spend the holidays in hospitals like Joe DiMaggio's. Whether it is for injuries, diseases, and/or other health related problems. A hospital is not the most ideal place to celebrate Christmas. By simply being paid a visit from Santa a child's outlook on their current condition can be improved, and help them in their recovery. A kind gesture of

holiday spirit, such as that provided by the toy drive, can help them during the season of perpetual hope.

President Mitchell Cypress and Santa Claus spread the joy of Christmas at the hospital with assistance from Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola, Hollywood Board Rep. Gordon Wareham, Miss Florida Seminole Cheyenne Kippenberger and Tribal employees as gifts were handed out to patients, many of them in bed. The gifts brought smiles to children of all ages as well as their families.

♦ See TOY DRIVE on page 7A

Natives keep watchful eye on ICWA developments

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

A federal judge in Texas ruled the Indian Child Welfare Act was unconstitutional in early October — something that's never happened since the law was enacted in 1978. Court appeals were immediately filed in response.

The ICWA was designed to prevent the separation of Native children from their parents and extended families by state child welfare and private adoption agencies.

Since the October ruling, Indian Country has kept close tabs on developments regarding the ICWA. Some of what has unfolded has been encouraging, although experts say the situation is still far from resolved.

In early December, the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals granted a stay on the ruling by U.S. District Judge Reed O'Connor of the Northern District of Texas. The stay means the ICWA is still the law of the land in all 50 states pending appeal.

"The critical work between states and tribes to apply the gold standard in child welfare by keeping Indian children with their family and community will continue," a joint statement released by five national Native American organizations stated soon after the stay was granted.

O'Connor's ruling argued that the ICWA "illegally gives Native American families preferential treatment in adoption proceedings for Native American children based on race." He found that the law was in violation of the Fifth Amendment's equal protection guarantee in the U.S. Constitution.

The Brackeen vs. Zinke case was brought by a Texas couple who sought to adopt a Native American baby — one whose biological parents were from the Cherokee and Navajo tribes. The couple fostered the baby from the time he was 10 months old to age two.

The couple initially sought to adopt the male child with the support of the baby's biological parents. But a family court in Texas prevented the plans, blocking the adoption on the grounds of the ICWA. The couple sued a year ago and were joined in the suit by the states of Texas, Louisiana and Indiana.

The Cherokee Nation and several others intervened as defendants.

♦ See ICWA on page 6A

Want to pitch a business idea to the Tribe? Start here.

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — When an organization blazes a trail of success and innovation like the Seminole Tribe of Florida has with its ventures, officials are often bombarded with business pitches — some good, some not so good.

Put another way: people both within the Tribe and outside of it want a piece of the action.

In order to corral the many business ideas that come its way, Seminole Tribe of Florida Inc. (STOFI) has rolled out a new process — Potential Business Opportunities, or PBO.

PBO incorporates a set of guidelines and requirements for Tribal members and non-Tribal members who want to officially pitch their business ideas to the board.

The process is led by Golden Johansson, executive director of operations for STOFI.

"The board is constantly being approached and solicited to do joint ventures," Johansson said. "And while we are interested in expanding the portfolio, we want to streamline the process."

Johansson said many times board members and Tribal leaders are approached with ideas unexpectedly at events or even through Facebook or LinkedIn messages. It can create awkward public interactions, and social media messages are often missed.

Preparation pays

The PBO process is now outlined on the STOFI website. Visitors will see the program's goals and intentions, including some ideas the board will not entertain.

The process begins by emailing application materials to pbo@semtribe.com. However, Johansson advises advance preparation.

"You'll want to have documentation for a formal presentation — basically all the stuff you'd find in a business plan," she said.

Once an applicant's materials are received, someone will ensure the packet is complete before a potential presentation is scheduled before a newly formed PBO committee.

"We'll review it and decide if it's a viable business idea for the board to consider," Johansson said.

Whether an idea is presented to the board comes after the committee does its due diligence — like research and background checks.

While PBO guidelines are the same whether the person pitching the idea is a Tribal member or not, Johansson said Tribal Members have access to help in organizing a business plan and preparing a pitch. Tribal Member's ideas would be looked at first, too.

The 'bottom line'

Ideas that could be considered include small franchises, partnerships or joint ventures, a restaurant concept or maybe a private label brand for certain products.

"We don't want to shy away from

exploring new ideas. That's why we've put this process in place," Johansson said. "We want to make sure it's a good business opportunity to increase the bottom line of the shareholders. If it doesn't benefit our shareholders, we don't want to entertain it. The board is very generous but also very business savvy."

Johansson also stresses that the board wants to hear ideas and that "no idea is a bad one."

"We'll help you make it stronger and better. If it's not good for the board, maybe it is for Council or Gaming," she said.

Johansson, who began work for the Tribe in August 2018, oversees operations for all the board's businesses, which include cattle operations, campgrounds, trading posts, credit and finance, Seminole Sugarcane, wholesale cigarette and distribution, retail smoke shops, Seminole Petroleum, water, industrial cleaning services and commercial construction.

The PBO process covers Seminole Tribal operations, not those of Hard Rock International, Johansson explains.

Johansson has worked in the banking and finance industry for her entire career, most recently at Legacy Bank of Florida and previously for Bank of America in Chicago. She's been a resident of Florida for nine years.

The full details of the PBO process can be found by going to stofinc.com and clicking on "Business Opportunities."



Contributed photo

Golden Johansson, executive director of operations for the Seminole Tribe of Florida Inc.

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Editorial

Meaningful legislation for missing, murdered Native Americans

• The Missoulian (Montana)

The U.S. Senate votes unanimously more often than one might think in these hyperpartisan times. Just this month, for instance, it unanimously passed an amendment to the Public Health Service Act dealing with maternity care, an amendment to allow the National Law Enforcement Museum Act to acquire and display firearms, and a requirement that the Federal Communications Commission establish a task force to study the technology needed to conduct precision agriculture.

It also, after slightly amending the legislation, unanimously passed Savanna's Act, a bill aimed at improving the Department of Justice's ability to track cases of missing and murdered Native Americans. The exact number of victims is unclear because so many cases go unreported or unresolved, but the available information points to disproportionately high rates of violence against Indigenous women and girls. The Montana Department of Justice noted in 2017 that 30 percent of missing women in Montana are Native Americans, even though they make up only 3.3 percent of the state's population.

In response, Savanna's Act:

- Directs the U.S. Justice Department to update its online reporting system.
- Allows reporting entities to include the victim's tribal affiliation.

- Standardizes protocols across law enforcement agencies.
- Provides training and technical assistance to tribes and law enforcement agencies.
- Requires communication and consultation with affected Indian tribes.

Introduced by outgoing North Dakota Democrat Heidi Heitkamp, the bill is named for Savanna LaFontaine-Greywind, who was eight months pregnant when she was killed in August 2017 by a neighbor who wanted to pass the baby off as her own.

Promisingly, [December's] Senate vote is being followed by a hearing on missing and murdered Native Americans called by the Indian Affairs Committee, of which both Montana's senators are members.

"We're holding this hearing to hear from the survivors and families affected by this epidemic and grill the folks who are supposed to be ending it," explained U.S. Sen. Jon Tester, D-Montana, a former Indian Affairs Committee chairman. "I plan on asking them the tough questions and getting some answers — because this is unacceptable."

"We face tragedies from across Montana where tribal citizens, particularly women and girls, go missing without a trace," said U.S. Sen. Steve Daines, R-Montana. "We must do all in our power to curb the crisis of American Indians and Alaska Natives who disappear and whose cases never see justice. I'm glad to see that the committee is treating this issue with the seriousness it deserves."

Daines further noted that the hearing will include testimony from people such

as Kimberly Loring HeavyRunner, whose sister, Ashley Loring HeavyRunner, has been missing from her home on the Blackfeet Reservation since June 2017.

Then it's up to the full Senate to take the next steps at the federal level. The committee has already passed — unanimously — the Securing Urgent Resources Vital to Indian Victim Empowerment (SURVIVE) Act to designate 5 percent of the money in a federal fund for crime victims for tribes that they can establish their own victim services. It awaits a vote on the Senate floor.

The Montana Legislature, of course, can do its part at the state level by passing five recommendations forwarded by the State-Tribal Relations Committee earlier this year. One of the recommendations is named after Hanna Harris, who went missing and was eventually discovered murdered in 2013. It would allow the Montana Department of Justice to designate a liaison to ensure good communication between the families of victims and investigators, and give the department the authority required to get involved with tribal cases.

With so much unanimous agreement taking place on the issue, it should be a relatively easy matter to pass meaningful legislation at the state and federal levels to significantly improve the handling of cases involving Native American victims. In fact, as reporting systems improve and it becomes clear that authorities are finally paying attention, it's likely that fewer Indigenous women will be made targets in the first place.

Curve Lake First Nation was right to look to future needs

• Peterborough (Ontario) Examiner

Curve Lake First Nation (Ontario) members scheduled to get nearly \$50,000 each when the Williams Treaties settlement is fully paid out are understandably pleased.

The Curve Lake band council, which had hoped to hold 30 percent of the band's \$164 million share of the settlement, isn't feeling so good.

It's a lesson in how a referendum can produce questionable results — in this case 100-percent gain for the individuals who voted and nothing for the collective community they live in.

The Williams Treaties settlement is unquestionably a collective issue.

The treaties were signed with seven First Nation bands in 1923.

Earlier this year a court ruled those treaties unlawfully stripped the bands of land and their legal rights to use it. The federal and provincial governments were ordered to pay \$1.1 billion in compensation.

In the nearly 100 years those treaties were in force many generations were deprived of their rights. It would be fair if the settlement benefits many generations to come.

It is not yet clear how all the seven bands will handle the cash being paid out. Curve Lake is the first to have come to a public decision.

Shortly after the settlement Curve Lake band council called a community vote. Perhaps to the council's surprise, the majority voted to pay all the money to individual band members.

When the provincial share arrived council had second thoughts. It informed band members they would get 70 percent of the money and 30 percent would stay with the community to fund future projects.

Faced with angry protests, the council almost immediately reversed course. Two weeks ago each band member got a check for \$19,000 and can expect another \$28,700 when the federal payout arrives in the spring.

In attempting to hold some of the cash for band purposes, the council referred to legal advice that it has a "fiduciary duty" to future generations.

The concept of fiduciary duty does carry legal weight. If that advice is correct, band members born 10 or 20 or 30 years from now could sue the council for failing to protect their interests.

At least one of the seven other band councils is exploring that situation before deciding how it will disperse money.

Legalities aside, there is a precedent at Curve Lake for a split decision, so to speak.

In 2012, Curve Lake was one of three area First Nations that shared a \$71 million settlement as compensation for flooding of their lands during 19th century construction of the Trent-Severn Waterway.

Band members received \$10,000 each. Financial statements show the total payout was \$38 million and most of the band's share was invested.

Today the band holds about \$28 million in investments, money available if and when the federal government finally comes through with its share of cash for a desperately needed water treatment plant. Other identified priorities include a seniors' home and a community center.

In 2010, Mississaugas of the New Credit members got \$20,000 each from a \$145 million land claim settlement; \$108 million stayed with the band, much of it designated for specific projects and services.

That could still happen at Curve Lake. Ottawa's \$98 million share won't arrive for months, which leaves plenty of time for the members and council to work out a collective sharing deal.

Calling on Native youth to participate in Model United Nations: Indigenous

• Nathan Balk King

Have you ever looked at photos of the big, golden General Assembly Hall at the United Nations and wondered what it's like to be there? Are you a high school student who wants to learn how to protect human rights and influence global affairs?

Native youth can learn how to participate in the United Nations and the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues through Model UN and the National High School Model UN Conference.

The high school UN conference is held annually in New York City over five days, is "The world's largest Model UN Conference" with over 5,000 students representing about 75 countries.

I was able to serve as a delegate at the National High School Model UN Conference in March 2018 because I'm currently living in Massachusetts and attending a school where we have a very active model UN club. It was an amazing experience, traveling to New York City, meeting delegates from around the world, and putting our months of hard work and preparation into action.

While the conference was great, there was a point when I realized I hadn't seen any other Native students. This saddened me, and it felt unfair that Native youth weren't participating in the model UN and learning the United Nations processes.

In response to this dire lack of Native representation, I was inspired to start Model United Nations: Indigenous (www.MUNindigenous.com). The purpose of the Model UN: Indigenous is to help establish model UN clubs for Native youth, and gather indigenous delegations to attend the annual conference.

MUN:Indigenous has been officially endorsed by the International Model UN Association, organizers of the national high school conference and model UN events around the world. They also have guidance

for starting Model UN clubs and facilitating conference preparation (registration. nhsmun@imuna.org).

In a great demonstration of support, IMUNA has reserved twenty seats for Native delegates for the March 2019 Conference. In addition: "This year, we are proud to be simulating the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues for the first time," said Chris Talamo, Executive Director of IMUNA, "and we are working closely with Nathan to ensure that Native American voices are included in this new space." Talamo says that IMUNA recognizes the disparity of opportunity at NHSMUN, in that the delegates from around the world are disproportionately privileged youth, and that IMUNA is working to diversify participation.

If you are interested in participating in Model UN: Indigenous or know someone who would be interested, now is the time to get involved. Preparations are already underway for the March 2019 Conference, so delegates for that event need to get started as soon as possible. Regular registration is closed and we have only twenty seats for Native delegates. Participation this year is on a first come, first serve basis, prioritizing high school seniors.

Students need to practice public speaking, in depth research, essay writing, and debate to prepare for the national high school conference. Within the UN Committee simulations, students build skills in collaboration, criticism, and the ability to look beyond one's own opinion. It teaches groups of students how to solve problems considering multiple perspectives.

Why participate in Model UN? Ban Ki Moon, UN Secretary-General (2007-2016) said, "You will have to represent countries in talks with States that have policies you may not agree with. It will train you to be open-minded and flexible. To analyze all of the positions, even those that you oppose. To propose constructive solutions that will benefit all parties. Developing these diplomatic skills will help you as you prepare for leadership in the future. Such skills have

never been more important."

When we arrived at the national high school conference and the first event was the opening ceremony, where thousands of other delegates from around the world gathered in one room. The speakers welcomed us to model UN experience and asserted how important our participation was, stating that we are the future leaders of the world. As Samantha Power, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations (2013-2017), said to the delegates in 2016, "I wish you could stand where I am standing right now, to be able to look out at all of you. Model UN really is enough to give one hope...to really inspire one...about what your generation is going to achieve in the world. We need you. That's my main message to you here this evening."

For the closing ceremony, I finally walked into the UN General Assembly Hall, which was overflowing with the thousands of high school delegates. We all had worked hard to get there, and we were congratulated for our accomplishments under the golden United Nations insignia.

Soon, the youth of my generation will be expected to be the leaders, the doers, and the change-makers that the world so needs. It's time for indigenous youth to be present in that room, to learn the diplomatic skills and put them into practice, and to add their voices to the advancement of global human rights.

Nathan Balk King is a senior at Sturgis Public Charter High School in Hyannis, Mass., and is a member of the Sicangu Lakota Oyate. MUN:Indigenous is currently looking for sponsors for its Native delegates to help with travel and registration costs. All donated funds will be managed by Model UN: Indigenous 501(c)(3) fiscal sponsor. Email: MUNindigenous@gmail.com Visit MUNindigenous.com for more information, resources directly from IMUNA, and their official letter of endorsement.

Report shows media must improve coverage of Indigenous people

• Yakima Herald-Republic (Wash.)

Law enforcement agencies nationwide were rightly criticized in November for a decades-long practice of not adequately identifying or reporting cases of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. A report issued by the Urban Indian Health Institute found 506 cases in 71 cities over the past eight years, though the Seattle-based nonprofit estimated the actual number may be much higher.

The group may never know the exact number, because some police departments in cities with significant Native American populations, mostly in the West, have refused to respond to records requests. Fortunately, Washington state enacted a law in June that requires the State Patrol to determine a better way to collect and share data about missing indigenous women.

It was heartening that the report, nearly a decade in the making, made front-page headlines in many outlets throughout the West and prompted some national organizations, such as NPR, to cover the story.

But one aspect of the report not widely reported last week — in fact, never mentioned in the Associated Press story that ran in the Herald-Republic — was that 95 percent of the 506 cases detailed in the UIHI's study were never covered by the national media. In fact, only a quarter of the cases, the report found, were covered by local or regional media outlets, and just 14 percent of those were covered more than once.

The media, often so adept at reporting on others, sometimes does not report on its own shortcomings. Such a dearth of reporting about indigenous women, the

study's authors conclude, "leads the general public to have an inaccurate understanding of the issue." Lack of coverage, the report adds, "limits our ability to address this issue at policy, programming and advocacy levels."

The group calls for "more sustained and in-depth" coverage from news organizations. It also reported that 31 percent of media outlets that covered missing-women cases used racist or misogynous language and stereotyping, with overt references to a victim's drug or alcohol use, history as a sex worker or previous criminal history — what the group calls "victim blaming."

Over the past year, the Herald-Republic has made a commitment to increase its coverage of missing and murdered Native American women, both on the Yakama Nation reservation and throughout the Valley. Since last November, the paper has published 21 stories, many of which were in-depth profiles and policy explanations written by Tammy Ayer. There is a paper-wide commitment to continue to aggressively — and humanely — follow up on the issue. But it also is important for us to report on other aspects on life among the Yakamas and other indigenous people in the Valley.

Focusing on diverse subject matter is vital to give a well-rounded picture. In its report, the UIHI scolded media outlets because, when they covered the indigenous people, they did so only about crime and not broader cultural aspects of their communities. Here, too, the Herald-Republic has worked hard to present an array of stories. Ayer and other reporters have written, among other pieces, about native music awards, native female students participating in summer STEM classes, the art of native weaving and a tribal member who wrote and directed a film.

♦ See MEDIA COVERAGE on page 6B

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Community

A

Tribal officials seek growth in TCD program

Clayton Simmons is latest graduate

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — An ambitious program designed to send Tribal members into management and executive positions within Seminole Gaming is looking for more participants.

The Tribal Career Development program (TCD) started about 15 years ago and has had about 100 enrollees since its inception. There are currently 16 participants in the program — eight of whom are from the Tampa area, including the program's latest graduate — Clayton Simmons.

"I think we've had different levels of success over the years," said Jim Allen, CEO of Seminole Gaming and chairman of Hard Rock International. "I just wish we had more people involved. I wish it was 160 instead of 16."

Allen spoke about the importance of the TCD program at Simmons' graduation at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood on Dec. 13. Allen and others say TCD is evolving and that they are looking at ways to make it more attractive and compelling.

"Ultimately that is the most important thing — to have as many individuals from the Tribe as possible know the business, so obviously they can continue to grow. I think this particular program allows that opportunity," Allen said.

How it works

Ervin Capricien is the director of the program and also a former graduate. She was head of human resources at the Seminole Classic Casino before transitioning back to lead TCD.

"There are five phases," said Capricien, who is from Big Cypress and a member of the Panther Clan. "First, you go into the casino and into every department — and then the hotel side. You get a general knowledge of the department you go into and learn what everybody does," she said.

That could mean you're a cashier for a week and then on the front lines with supervisors, managers and directors.

Put another way, trainees learn from a blend of on-the-job-technical training, specialized classroom training, seminars and workshops, best practices, mentoring and work experience. It's a paid program.

Phase one is three years. Phases two through five may take one year or more to complete (per phase) depending on a trainee's background, experience or how quickly they progress in certain areas.

'Greatest family business'

Allen said one of the reasons it's important for Tribal members to know the Tribe's different business facets and to be in management positions is that it ensures the longevity of all the moving parts.

"It's the greatest family business in the world," Allen said of the Seminole Tribe of Florida. "The more and more we can have people that love the business and understand the business from all aspects ... I just fundamentally think that's a great thing for the Tribe."

Allen said in the past there have been Native American casinos in the U.S. that have been primarily run by management companies with little or no tribal representation.

"You see many times they weren't actually looking out for



Clayton Simmons, of Tampa, is pictured with Ervin Capricien, the head of the Tribal Career Development program during its graduation ceremony Dec. 13 in Hollywood.

the best [interests] of the tribe," he said. "So the more people you can get in the business itself and find out: 'What the heck is that crazy Jim Allen doing?' or 'What's going on there? Why can't I have that?' I think that's healthy," he said.

Allen has been in casinos and hospitality for almost 40 years. He's been with the Seminole Tribe of Florida for almost 20.

New graduate — Clayton Simmons

Simmons has completed phase one and is now in phase two — working to gain supervisory experience.

The 30-year-old was born and raised in Tampa and is a member of the Panther Clan.

In addition to his work within TCD, he's been an employee on the community side of the Tribe, previously working in maintenance for the Tampa community.

"What appeals the most to me about this program is how many opportunities there are and the possibilities a Tribal Member has if they apply and complete it," Simmons said. "I always knew about the program, but I waited until I thought I was mature enough to see it through. Now in it for three years, I wish I started earlier."

Simmons, like Allen, said he sees the importance of knowing as much as possible about the Tribe's primary business — gaming and hospitality.

"How it is run, who is

managing it, and how it has been this successful," Simmons said.

Simmons will now work in either slots or table games as a front line employee for a year or two.

"After I have the knowledge and skills to move up I would go to the supervisor position. At the back end of the five years I'd be in a higher role as dual rate pit manager or assistant manager in slots," he said.

Mitchell B. Osceola, vice chairman of the Seminole Tribal Gaming Commission, commended Simmons on his accomplishment at the graduation.

"I want to congratulate Clayton on your achievement here, and to the TCD program for giving these Tribal members opportunity," Osceola said. "We need more individuals out here. We love Jim [Allen], but he's not going to be here forever. The Gaming Commission supports all Tribal members 100 percent," he said.

Allen hopes the program will build on its past successes.

"I hope that for decades to come, the Tribe never loses its focus on trying to promote and create career opportunities for members of the Tribe," Allen said.

For more

To be eligible for TCD, you must be 18 years old, an enrolled member of the Seminole Tribe of Florida and have a high school diploma or GED.

Trainees can be placed at any of the Tribe's six Florida casino locations: Seminole Brighton Casino, Seminole Casino Coconut Creek, Seminole Classic Casino, Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee, Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood and Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa.

For more information and to apply, contact Capricien via email at erвина.capricien@stfgaming.com or call (954) 364-2076. More information can also be found online at gotoworkhappy.com.

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Indian Country pleased with tribal provisions in Farm Bill

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

After months of delays and negotiations, the U.S. Congress approved the \$867 billion Farm Bill after a 386-47 vote in the House of Representatives Dec. 19. The Senate had approved the legislation the day before in an 87-to-13 vote. President Donald J. Trump signed the bill into law Dec. 20.

The bill is one of the largest pieces of U.S. domestic legislation and is one that has direct implications for Indian Country.

The five-year authorization allocates billions of dollars in subsidies to American farmers, among the implementation of other programs and agreements.

One of the reasons for the delay this year (the previous bill expired in October) were proposed stricter limits by House Republicans on the nation's food stamp program, also known as SNAP – the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Those limits were rejected in passage of the current bill.

Several Native American groups and organizations were pleased with the passage of the legislation and many of its provisions.

A consultant and lobbyist for the Seminole Tribe of Florida in Washington, D.C., who followed and tracked the legislation for months, was also optimistic about the new bill.

"The 2018 Farm Bill ... is a significant step forward toward respecting the sovereignty of Indian tribes in U.S. agricultural policy," said Jeanne L. Morin of Public Policy Advisors.

Morin said the bill provides greater flexibility for tribes and tribal producers in managing their natural resources through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and may make it easier for Seminole agricultural products to be sold into food assistance programs.

The EQIP provides cost-sharing, technical and educational assistance related to agricultural production and environmental quality and benefits.

"[The bill] also provides better access for tribes to the Department of Agriculture's disaster and commodity-insurance programs over the next five years. This is good news for Indian Country," Morin added.

Others expressing support for the bill included the Native Farm Bill Coalition, Native American Finance Officers Association, National Indian Health Board and the National Congress of American Indians.

"The Farm Bill recognizes the role tribal governments play in building healthy communities, feeding people, and creating agricultural jobs in rural America," said Tina Danforth, president of NAFOA in a statement.

Some Tribal economic development provisions from the Farm Bill that officials are hailing as positive include:

- Legalization of industrial hemp farming.
- Refinancing authority for some rural development programs.
- Providing for tribal priority, inclusion and access to broadband programs.
- Codification and expansion of the federal Tribal Promise Zone program authority.
- Tribal eligibility for the Local Agriculture Market program to help tribes grow, process and market Native foods.
- Increased support to include tribes in international U.S. trade delegations.
- Makes tribes eligible for microloans for local foods in food insecure areas.
- Creation of a tribal technical assistance office within the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development.
- Establishment of a tribal advisory council to the USDA.

More information is available online by clicking on "Farm Bill" at seedsofnativehealth.org.

Free dealer school offered

IMMOKALEE — The Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee is launching a free dealer school to prepare candidates for available career opportunities in its table games department.

Dealer school classes will run for eight to 10 weeks starting in 2019. Class times have yet to be determined. Candidates must be able to pass a basic math assessment, successfully complete the interview process, be proficient in English, and demonstrate exceptional guest service skills.

Applications can be submitted at gotoworkhappy.com.

Tribal leaders thank Tampa community for sacrifices

Massive Hard Rock expansion to be completed summer 2019

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

TAMPA — Last summer the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood celebrated a construction milestone, raising a ceremonial final beam at the site of its massive 450-foot guitar-shaped hotel to be completed in late 2019. A few months later it was Tampa's turn.

The Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa held its own "topping out" event Dec. 11 at the property located off I-4 at North Orient Road and Hillsborough Avenue, about 10 minutes east of downtown. "Today is what we refer to as a topping out ceremony, but it's really a thank you to the thousands of construction workers," said Jim Allen, the Chairman of Hard Rock International and CEO of Seminole Gaming.

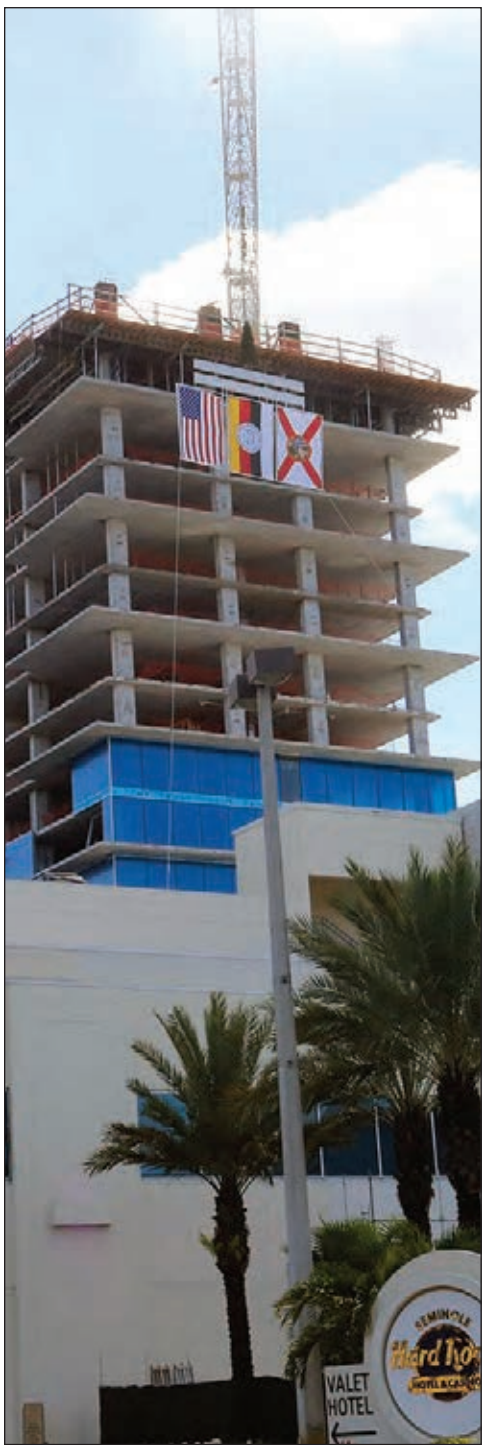
Tampa's renovation is expected to be completed in the summer of 2019.

"The Hard Rock Tampa is the most successful casino in the United States and fourth [most successful] in the world," Allen said. "And that's not an exaggeration, those numbers are factually based."

Allen not only thanked construction workers but also the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

"I think it'd be a real mistake not to thank the Chairman and Tribal Council and the members of the Tribe," he said. "Because frankly it's their decision to take our recommendations from a business standpoint and approve the funding and all the processes."

Allen said the funding is immense – a more than \$700 million commitment from the Tribe for Hard Rock Tampa renovations alone. When including Hard Rock Hollywood and other projects, he said investments are around \$2.2 billion in Florida. The Seminole Tribe employs about 44,000 people worldwide, Allen said.



The beam is hoisted to the top of the framework of the new hotel tower that is in the midst of construction. Attached to the beam was a small tree (part of a Scandinavian ritual) and the flags of the Tribe, state of Florida and U.S.

Nod to Tampa Tribal members

Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. thanked the construction workers for their "true dedication, diligence and effort to succeed."

"We're truly blessed to be here today at this gathering," he said. "The Tribe has been blessed for many, many years and will be for many, many years to come."

Other Tribal leaders at the event echoed Chairman Osceola's sentiments about the construction workers' efforts and also noted the sacrifices of the Tampa community, who once lived on the site where the casino is now located.

"You Tampa folk, you Seminole folk who once lived on this piece of land, we appreciate your sacrifice that you made for your Tribe so that this building could go up and [we could] keep building," Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr. said. "We're on the way to find you a place to live. Thank you for the sacrifice for your Tribe."

The Tampa community will soon have living options east of the city near Lakeland, where development is in the early stages for a residential neighborhood.



Before the ceremonial final beam was raised at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino topping out ceremony Dec. 11, a countdown ensued and Tribal leaders and Hard Rock executives were given air horns to help mark the occasion. From left to right are Hollywood Councilman Christopher Osceola, Hard Rock International Chairman and Seminole Gaming CEO Jim Allen, Seminole medicine man Bobby Henry, head of the Hard Rock design team Dave Miller, longtime Seminole employee John Fontana (retired), Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. and Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr.

"Thank you to the Tampa community for the sacrifice for your Tribe," Hollywood Councilman Christopher Osceola said. "We're seeing those blessings today across the board here. None of this would be possible without the sacrifices the Tampa community and Seminole Tribe has made."

Among the other dignitaries who were brought to the stage was John Fontana, one of the longest serving employees of the Tribe who recently retired after almost 40 years. Fontana is known as someone who was instrumental in development of the Hard Rock Tampa.

"He's truly a legend, not just working for the Tribe and at the old bingo hall, [but] at the origination of the Hard Rock. He's a main staple in the community," Allen said when introducing Fontana.

Fontana said he first met members of the Tribe when he was 12 or 13 years old. "It's been a big part of my life," he said. "Tampa is my baby."

The new president of Hard Rock Tampa was also at the event – Steve Bonner. Bonner recently moved to Tampa and has worked for the Tribe for the past 16 years, most recently at as the president of Seminole

Casino Coconut Creek.

One of America's largest casinos

The crowd then gathered to witness the tradition of the final steel beam hoisted to one of the high points of the property – in this case atop the new 15-story hotel tower which will house an additional 564 rooms and suites when completed.

Joining the beam were the flags of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the state of Florida and the American flag. There was also a small tree, part of an ancient Scandinavian ritual.

The beam itself contained signatures and messages of Tribal members from Brighton, Immokalee, Big Cypress and Hollywood, where it had traveled for about a month. Construction workers were also given the chance to sign it.

Officials say once the Hard Rock Tampa's expansion is complete it will be one of America's largest casinos with 5,000 slot machines and almost 200 gaming tables among 200,000 square feet of entertainment and gaming space.

The job numbers are also impressive.



At far right, Seminole medicine man Bobby Henry sits in the front row for the ceremony. Adjacent to him in the front row are Seminole Tribe leaders including Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola, Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr. and Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr.



Hundreds of construction workers with hardhats and orange and fluorescent green uniforms gather at the site of the topping out ceremony before the final beam is raised. The crane used to hoist the final beam can be seen in the background.

Damon Scott

Damon Scott

Damon Scott

Seminole Tribe pushes Smithsonian on repatriation policies

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

Led by the Seminole Tribe of Florida, a resolution has been passed concerning repatriation policies at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History.

The resolution was passed by the United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF) board of directors at its annual meeting in October at the Seneca Nation of New York.

The resolution calls for the Smithsonian to revise its repatriation policy to include "provisions for the repatriation of culturally unidentifiable human remains." It seeks other adaptations regarding human remains, as well as a revision of its dispute resolution process to "work with Tribal Nations more respectfully and engage in meaningful consultation to resolve the disposition of Tribal ancestors."

"The resolution was brought forward and led by the Seminole Tribe of Florida," Sisy Garcia, policy analyst for USET SPF said.

Garcia said her office worked on the resolution with Anne Mullins, assistant director of the Seminole Tribe of Florida's Tribal Historic Preservation Office. Mullins has collaborated with THPO collections manager Domonique deBeaubien on the issue as well.

"We've been working on and off with the Smithsonian for a number of years on repatriation," Mullins told The Seminole Tribune. "They don't have a policy [on culturally unidentifiable human remains], no procedures in place. The resolution pushes them to adopt their policy - every other federally funded museum has this policy," she said.

The Smithsonian has thousands of Native American remains it won't repatriate - more than 1,400 from the state of Florida, of which there are certain to be Seminole ancestors, Mullins said.

"We at least want to be part of the

discussion; know the history; how they're connected; and have [remains] potentially repatriated," she said.

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of 1990 is the federal repatriation law that all federally funded institutions or federal lands must follow, excluding the Smithsonian Institutions.

The National Museum of the American Indian has its own repatriation policy that was updated in 2014 to include guidance on remains that are culturally unidentifiable. But the Smithsonian policy specifically excludes culturally unidentifiable remains.

"The museum received the USET resolution [in early November] and I expect to have a meeting in the next few weeks with department staff to discuss a response to USET," Bill Billeck told The Seminole Tribune.

Billeck is the program manager in the repatriation office of the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History.

Requests for further comment from Billeck from The Seminole Tribune have not been returned.

deBeaubien said there are several scholarly articles written on the importance of repatriating culturally unidentifiable Native American remains.

"Museums across the county now view this as ethically vital to the health of their institutions," said deBeaubien, who herself has written about repatriation under NAGPRA.

"Tribes across the country consider the return of their ancestors and sacred objects of the utmost importance, and we hope the resolution passed through USET will help encourage that process," she said.

"We're not sure how [the Smithsonian] is going to react," added Mullins. "We're not sure why they haven't been more open to this process."

USET SPF is an intertribal organization comprised of 27 federally recognized Tribal Nations. The Seminole Tribe of Florida is one of the founders of the group.

Trail property changes hands

BY DERRICK TIGER
Staff Reporter

TRAIL — Representing the Seminole Tribe, Trail Council Liaison Norman Huggins proudly handed a property deed and a bouquet of various colored roses to Winter Dawn Billie on Nov. 9. Billie was one of two tribal members who won a lottery for a pair of vacant lots in the Trail Seminole community on U.S. 41 (Tamiama Trail). The property was acquired after a lengthy legal process.

"It used to belong to two other people, but they had it for 10 years and never did anything with it, so we took it back and got it transferred to other people's names," Huggins said. "Give somebody else a chance."

The new owners will be able to build a house or campsite on the lots.

Huggins sees this property shift as a step toward getting more land permitted for bigger projects in the future. One potential project is to build an official tribal office for the community.

The Trail community does not have a tribal office based near the community. The Trail office is currently located 22 miles east of the community in a small plaza on Tamiama Trail on the outskirts of suburban Miami-Dade County. The area where the

office resides has come to be referred as "East Trail."

Huggins hopes to get plans approved by the Tribal Council to start construction for a new office in the Trail community.

"We want to be here in the community," Huggins said. "Next to my family's property (on U.S. 41) there use to be an old church there. It's only two acres, but that was the only private land I could find, so when I first got here I got the Tribe to acquire it. The Tribe got that property about six years ago, so we've been fighting to get this thing done for six years. I've had to get the county to change their ordinances and everything else."

At two acres the lot would be a tight squeeze for an office building. There is also the issue of building and parking lot requirements that have to comply with legal standards.

"I'm trying to put the biggest building I can on it. Hurricane proof, hurricane shelter, and everything else," Huggins said. "If they don't scale it down it should be around 12,600 square feet."

Another prospect Huggins has in mind is to have the Council talk to the Bureau of Indian Affairs and request to have some land set aside for the construction of apartment buildings. The apartments would serve as a stepping stone for the younger generation. "Something they can handle," Huggins said.

Huggins' plans would have to be approved by the Council.



Derrick Tiger
Trail Council Liaison Norman Huggins gives Winter Dawn Billie the property deed and a bouquet of flowers on behalf of the Seminole Tribe.



Derrick Tiger
Trail Council Liaison Norman Huggins and Winter Dawn Billie view the one and a-half acre property.

Flea market in Big Cypress

BIG CYPRESS — The Big Cypress Flea Market will be held Jan. 12 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena on the Big Cypress Reservation. Items will include tools, jewelry, bicycles, home décor,

books, clothing, sports equipment, furniture, linens, utensils, kitchen appliances and more. For more information call the BC Council office at 863-902-3200.

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FSU's V-rak-ke-ce-tv ceremony honors graduates, relationship with Seminole Tribe

BY ZACHARY BOEHM
Special to the Tribune

TALLAHASSEE — Every December at Florida State University, as the air begins to crackle with a wintry chill and the libraries explode to life with hordes of finals-crazed students, hundreds of soon-to-be graduates gather for the V-rak-ke-ce-tv Cultural Graduation Ceremony—a time for reflection and recognition inspired by the university's special relationship with the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

During this year's ceremony, held on the evening of Dec. 14 in FSU's Oglesby Union Ballroom, students were encouraged to celebrate their accomplishments, give thanks to those who sacrificed on their behalf and invoke the wisdom of the Seminole Tribe as they move forward in their lives.

The product of a partnership between the university's Center for Leadership & Social Change, the Center for Academic Retention & Enhancement, the Student Government Association and University Housing, the V-rak-ke-ce-tv Cultural Graduation Ceremony is a bi-annual event designed to reinforce the strong ties between FSU and the Seminole Tribe of Florida. While not an official graduation commencement itself—no degrees are conferred during the ceremony—the program has become an indispensable graduation week tradition.

V-rak-ke-ce-tv, a Seminole Creek word meaning "to honor," serves as both the namesake and the guiding principle for the graduation ceremony. Associate Director of the Center for Leadership & Social Change Miguel Hernandez, who helped found the ceremony five years ago, said it was conceived of as a way to unite students of disparate backgrounds and experiences while showing respect to their shared Seminole identity.

"We have so many different and amazing identities, backgrounds, cultures and nationalities in our student body, so we decided that one way we could approach the celebration is by connecting with the Seminole Tribe of Florida," Hernandez said. "That is an identity that bonds all of us here at Florida State."

In order to ensure respectful representation of the customs and symbols of the Seminole Tribe, Hernandez and his team solicit the expertise of teachers throughout the tribal community. Each year since its inception, a member of the Seminole Tribe of Florida has served on the ceremony's planning committee — a vital source of guidance, said Hernandez, as the team incorporates tribal elements, themes and teachings into its larger program. This year, Tribal member and FSU alumna D'anna Osceola played that important role.

What began in its first year as a small service honoring 35 students and their families has since blossomed into one of the most anticipated and popular graduation week events. Now, Hernandez said, 225 students a year participate in the V-rak-ke-ce-tv ceremonies.

"The fact that students are interested — the feedback we get from parents in terms of the intimacy and the way it represents success and accomplishment — it's been gratifying," Hernandez said. "There are many lessons that the members of the Seminole Tribe, especially the elders, have taught us about language and about preserving their traditions and customs. It's been very humbling to learn from them, about how they continue to live unconquered, what their plans are for the future and how proud they are of our institution and our students. This ceremony is always a highlight of my



Courtesy photo
Richard Osceola shakes hands with Malcolm Robbs, a Florida State University senior who delivered the student address at the V-rak-ke-ce-tv ceremony Dec. 14 in Tallahassee. Osceola and Seminole Media Productions broadcasting manager Sunshine Frank, holding daughter Naomi Frank, represented the Seminole Tribe at the ceremony.

year."

During this year's ceremony, graduating students walked across an elevated stage and received a stole—a long, ceremonial shawl—from a family member, friend or mentor of their choosing. Each stole was emblazoned with the traditional Seminole red, yellow, black and white.

Speaking to those in attendance on behalf of the Class of 2018, graduating student Malcom Robbs urged his cohorts to use their accomplishment as an opportunity to renew their commitment to upholding the undaunted Seminole spirit.

"When you walk across that stage, you make a commitment to the support that got you here," he said. "You make a commitment to never stop fighting, to never stop lifting for those who can't lift for themselves. In this world, people need a rock more than ever. People need hope and shelter in the time of a storm."

Seminole Tribe of Florida representatives Richard Osceola and Sunshine Frank, who presented Robbs with gifts on behalf of Tribe Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr., said events like the V-rak-ke-ce-tv ceremony demonstrate the strong relationship and enduring good will between the Tribe and the university.

"It's humbling," Richard Osceola said. "We're overwhelmed by the work the university does. It's an honor throughout the community to be affiliated with the university

in the matters of culture and education and everything that comes with it."

Frank, broadcasting manager at Seminole Media Productions, remarked on the significant growth in the relationship between the Tribe and FSU over the past 30 years. She said she hopes the strong ties illustrated in the V-rak-ke-ce-tv ceremony can be translated into more Seminole Tribe members pursuing an education at Florida State.

"I went to school for hospitality, and there are a lot of kids now in the tribe that are getting interested in hospitality," she said. "I would love for them to come up here and explore the options that are available at Florida State. It would make the bond between the tribe and the school even stronger."



Courtesy photo
The Seminole Tribe colors are present at the ceremony, including those adorned by Paulene Marie Solis.

◆ ICWA From page 1A

While the ICWA does not bar non-Native families from adopting or fostering Native American children outright, in order for a non-Native family to succeed, they have to show "good cause" that the child

can't or shouldn't be adopted by other Native Americans — a main hurdle for the parents in this case, experts have said.

"The Fifth Circuit made the right decision. ICWA is not some new, unimplemented statute that can be set aside without repercussions. It is an Act of Congress, 40 years tried and true that is intricately woven into state and tribal child

welfare systems," said a statement by Native American Rights Fund staff attorney Dan Lewerenz of the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska.

"Its unraveling would have had serious and harmful effects on dozens, if not hundreds, of Native children. We're glad that the Fifth Circuit recognizes that," he said.

NARF was one of the groups issuing

statements supporting the stay that was granted.

"The ICWA is a great success we achieved in our past and it's under attack," said National Congress of American Indians President Jefferson Keel at the group's annual conference in late October. "We are in a war. We've been in one since 1492. We need allies on both sides of the aisle. With

this administration, we are in a war," he said.

Keel was referencing President Donald J. Trump and what he and others see as an overall lack of support for Native Americans by his administration.

Meanwhile, some experts believe the case could eventually make its way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

◆ TREE From page 1A

Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr. welcomed the crowd to the event.

"I heard a lot of you say we're a small community, we're family. Well let's live it. Don't talk about it, let's live it," Councilman Bowers said. "Make this time be the happiest time of the year. Have a great Christmas, thank you all."

Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. greeted the crowd after Councilman Bowers.

"Thank you to everyone who was involved in putting this together," Chairman Osceola said. "It's good to be part of something like this, a first, lighting a tree up."

Osceola reflected on the year that was 2018 for the Tribe. He said it had been a "great ride" and that a lot had been accomplished.

"And I appreciate all the support and hope to gain more support. Be safe on your travels wherever they may take you," he said.

Before the PECS students sang their Christmas songs for the crowd, Brighton Representative Larry Howard took to the stage to share a few words.

"At the end of the day [the holidays are] all about having fun, mutual respect and making sure we take care of all the kids on the Reservation," he said. "Merry Christmas to everybody."



Damon Scott
Jennie Shore, of the Otter Clan, has the honor of flipping the switch to light up the Brighton Reservation's community Christmas tree Nov. 30.



Damon Scott
Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School teacher Jade Osceola directs students in several Christmas songs before the tree was lit up.

Tribal Fair, Pow Wow to be held in February

FROM PRESS RELEASE

HOLLYWOOD— The Seminole Tribe of Florida will host its 48th annual Tribal Fair and Pow Wow at Hard Rock Event Center at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, Hollywood, from Friday, Feb. 8, through Sunday, Feb. 10, 2019. The cultural festival will feature a Native American Reel Cinema Fest highlighting Native American actors, alligator wrestling shows, Native American dance troupes, live Native American musical performances and more. The festival will be headlined by Grammy Award-winning country music superstar Gretchen Wilson on Sunday, Feb. 10, at 3 p.m. Doors open at 10 a.m. each day.

In addition to a lineup of Native arts, crafts, foods, and music, the Fair will host a Pow Wow dance competition open to all Native people across the Americas. The Pow Wow will feature a drum competition of northern and southern drums, a dance competition in northern traditional, southern straight, fancy, grass and chicken for the men and northern traditional, southern buckskin, fancy, jingle and northern/southern cloth combined for the women.

Wilson has also received awards from the Academy of Country Music, Country Music Association, American Music Awards and Billboard Awards. A nine-time Grammy nominee, Wilson's debut album, "Here For The Party," sold more than five million copies and spawned several five hits including, "Homewrecker," "When I Think About Cheatin'," and the title track, "Here For The Party." Her first single, "Redneck Woman," spent six weeks at No. 1.

Her second album, "All Jacked Up," hit platinum and saw more hit songs including, "California Girls," "I Don't Feel Like Loving You Today," and "Politically Uncorrect." Her third record, "One of the Boys," solidified her position as one of contemporary music's most original and multifaceted female artists. Wilson's first book, the autobiographical "Redneck Woman: Stories from My Life," landed her on the prestigious New York Times Best Seller List.

Wilson launched her own record label, Redneck Records, and produced several albums including, "I Got Your Country Right Here," "Right on Time," "A Night Under The Covers," "STILL Here For The Party," a live version of her debut album, and her most recent album, "Ready To Get Rowdy."

All events are free to the public. For more information visit semtribefairandpowwow.com or call the Tribal Fair information line at 866-625-5374.



Gretchen Wilson web site

Country music artist Gretchen Wilson will perform at the 2019 Tribal Fair and Pow Wow in Hollywood.

TOY DRIVE

From page 1A

The toy drive team began handing out gifts on the first floor and kept the holiday cheer moving to the upper floors. In true gift giving fashion Christmas cards with sentiments from different Tribal departments such as the Boys and Girls Club and the Seminole Police Department accompanied the toys.

Five days later the toy drive's caravan arrived in Immokalee, where toys were unloaded for the Guadalupe Center, an organization whose mission is to create "endless possibilities for the students of Immokalee through education and fostering personal and academic success that leads to economic independence."

The following day – Dec. 12 – it wasn't Santa's sleigh that arrived at Rosenwald Elementary School in South Bay, but rather We Do Recover's white Ford F350, which pulled into the parking lot with a trailer full of giant boxes of toys in tow.

"We like giving. We're blessed with what we have so we like to share with people who aren't as (fortunate)," said We Do Recover program supervisor Charlie Tiger, who was accompanied by other members of the program who helped set up tables and hand out toys alongside Board staff and Rep. Wareham.

Rosenwald principal Dionne Napier said the school was thrilled to be selected by STOF Inc., especially because a group of students had returned with rave reviews from a field trip to Big Cypress the previous month.

"Some of our students went to the reservation and visited the (Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki) museum in November. They loved it," Napier said. "So when my assistant principal Miss Matthews said she received the email (about the toy drive), I was very happy they thought of us because they honestly could have gone to any school. As you could see from the students' reactions, they were very excited."

Indeed, the students' faces lit up when



Kevin Johnson (2)

Above, Norman "Skeeter" Bowers and Billie Tiger hand out toys to girls at Rosenwald Elementary School in South Bay as part of the STOF Inc. toy drive which included assistance from the We Do Recover program. About 300 students received toys. At right, as William Jumper and Stanley Cypress look on, a Rosenwald Elementary School student shows his appreciation.

they saw tables full of toys and goodies. Every student in the school – from kindergarten through 5th grade – picked out one toy each and received holiday candy. The respectful students made sure to thank all who made it possible. In all, nearly 300 students received toys.

"We are a Title 1 school and we're 99 percent free and reduced lunch. Some of our students' families may have some hardships, but they send them with their best and we try to teach our students to be grateful for what they have and to always think about others," Napier said.



Beverly Bidney

Members of We Do Recover and the Guadalupe Center in Immokalee unload a treasure trove of gifts for local children Dec. 11. The Guadalupe Center's Jorge Perez carries two bikes with training wheels and Tribal member Johnny Jimmie wrangles two large boxes filled with goodies from the truck that was packed with more than 550 Christmas gifts. The Guadalupe Center serves more than 1,000 children from infancy through college.



Derrick Tiger

A new basketball is given to a young patient at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in Hollywood thanks to Santa and the Seminole Tribe of Florida Inc. toy drive.



Derrick Tiger

Former Miami Dolphins star O.J. McDuffie is joined by Santa and Tribal Council and Board leaders at the toy drive.



Derrick Tiger

President Mitchell Cypress and Miss Florida Seminole Cheyenne Kippenberger pose for a photo with the staff of the Boys and Girls Club at the toy drive collection area.

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

A PLACE TO LEARN, A PLACE TO REMEMBER.

Memories of the Big Cypress Reservation 1954-1956: Frank and Raquel Wood

BY MARY BETH ROSEBROUGH
Research Coordinator Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

In 2013 the Museum received a letter from Frank and Raquel Wood. Accompanying the letter was a DVD with pictures, taken on the Big Cypress Reservation, and pages of memories. The following is excerpted from those pages.

In August 1954 we arrived in our new home on the Big Cypress Reservation. We would be living in the teacher's house which had been built a few years earlier. The one room Bureau of Indian Affairs School, of which Frank would be the principal-teacher and Raquel [his wife] the dietician, adjoined this house. They were part of a cluster of BIA Affairs buildings that also included an older house, a bathhouse, and a garage-shop for road-building equipment, and several smaller buildings. Electricity was supplied by generator in the bathhouse. Water was pumped from a well into an elevated tank. There were no phones.

The people of Big Cypress were good to us during the two years we were there. We left because we were homesick for our own families, friends and religious community but with sadness at leaving friends behind.

We arrived toward the end of the summer

wet season so the ditches and much of the ranch land was still flooded. There were few houses along the road. In a few places the dikes had been built to permit the growing of tomatoes in winter. The first of this kind of agriculture was begun on the reservation during the years we were there.

The only road to the reservation in 1954 branched south from US 27 about 10 miles east of Clewiston. While we lived at Big Cypress, the BIA crew was completing and



Reservation sign

Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum



Big Cypress Store-Henry Osceola

Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

upgrading the road through the reservation and building side roads into the camps where families lived. Construction was also extending a road west that would eventually cross the west boundary and link up with a road to Immokalee. There was no Interstate 75.

We were told that the school building

had built as a stable for horses. The basic framework was that of a chickee, poles spaced so that in this case, shingles could be nailed to them to make the walls. Milled lumber had been used to transform the barn into a large single room. A small addition had been built onto one corner to house the kitchen. We ate lunch at a long table with Raquel at one end and me at the other. The boys sat on one side and the girls on the other. Early in our stay, an elder asked me about my use of Miccosukee words in student-generated stories. He politely explained that he and others wanted the children to learn English in school. As a result I restricted my use of Miccosukee words in school.

We made a number of field trips with the students. There was a fire tower along the road to the reservation. We learned that while the children had seen it many times, they never climbed it. So, we arranged for them to make a visit. We also made a trip to the beach near Ft. Myers. It happened to be a time when the hermit crabs were coming onto the beach to mate and everyone had fun catching them. The students told me this was the first time



Webster Wise's wife sews

Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

they had seen the ocean. Several times we took trips to swim in flooded marl pits. The students were enthusiastic bathers.

At this time most people lived in chickees with a platform supported by the poles about two feet above the ground. There were no sides, so people slept under mosquito nets. There was no heating other than the cooking fire, so on chilly days in winter students like to hang out at the school

building or in our house.

This short excerpt from Frank and Raquel Wood only tells part of the story of their time on Big Cypress. To see the pictures they took, please visit us in the Museum Library weekdays from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. or call 863-902-1113 ext. 12252 for an appointment. We are here, waiting to show you "the rest of the story"!

Princess portraits now part of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum décor

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Portraits of Seminole royalty now grace the same wall at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum where Tribal Council photographs are prominently displayed.

The formal portraits of Miss Florida Seminole Cheyenne Kippenberger and Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Allegra Billie were added Nov. 19 above the entrance to the theater for all museum visitors to see.

"We are very honored to have them up on the wall," said Paul Backhouse, museum director and Tribal Historic Preservation Office officer. "It's tremendous for our visitors to get a sense of who they are; they are amazing young women who represent the Tribe worldwide."

Princess pageant committee chairwoman Wanda Bowers had the idea for the photos when she and Kippenberger placed a collection box for the Princess Toy Drive at the museum.

"We were talking about the Council photos and I told Paul the princesses should be up there, too," Bowers said. "I took them to get their portraits made and gave them to Paul."

Bowers would like the princess' portraits to be displayed with Tribal Council every year. Backhouse would like to continue the new tradition. Tours, which already discuss the role of Tribal Council, now incorporate the princess program as well.

"As a sovereign nation, we always point out Tribal Council," Backhouse said. "Now we point out the princess program and why



Miss Florida Seminole Cheyenne Kippenberger and Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum Director Paul Backhouse display the photos of the princesses. At right, along with the Tribal Council photos, the princess portraits grace the wall above the entrance to the theater.



(left) Courtesy photo, (right) Beverly Bidney

it's important to the Tribe. It's an excellent opportunity to showcase them and it's a great way for Tribal members and children

to see it and maybe want to try out for the princess program themselves."

Backhouse believes the princess

program teaches the young women to be public figures, be positive role models and possibly be future leaders of the Tribe.

U.S. Mint unveils reverse side design for 2019 Native American coin

FROM PRESS RELEASE

WASHINGTON — The United States Mint (Mint) officially unveiled the reverse (tails side) design for the 2019 Native American \$1 coin in the 2018 winter issue of the National Museum of the American Indian's eponymous quarterly magazine.

The theme of the 2019 Native American \$1 coin design is American Indians in the space program. Native Americans have been on the modern frontier of space flight since the beginning of NASA. Their contributions to the U.S. space program culminated in the space walks of John Herrington (Chickasaw Nation) on the International Space Station in 2002. This and other pioneering achievements date back to the work of Mary Golda Ross (Cherokee Nation). Considered the first Native American engineer in the U.S. space program, Ross helped develop

the Agena spacecraft for the Gemini and Apollo space programs.

The reverse design depicts Ross, a renowned engineer, writing calculations. Behind her, an Atlas-Agena rocket launches into space, with an equation inscribed in its cloud. An astronaut, symbolic of Native American astronauts, including John Herrington, spacewalks above. In the field behind, a group of stars indicates outer space. Inscriptions include "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA" and "\$1." Mint artistic infusion program designer Emily Damstra created the design, which Mint sculptor-engraver Joseph Menna sculpted.

The obverse (heads) of the Native American \$1 coin will continue to feature the central figure "Sacagawea" carrying her infant son, Jean Baptiste, by sculptor Glenna Goodacre. Inscriptions are "LIBERTY" and "IN GOD WE TRUST." The year, mint mark, and "E PLURIBUS UNUM" are

incused on the edge of the coin.

The Native American \$1 coin program is authorized by Public Law 110-82 to recognize the important contributions made by Native American tribes and individual Native Americans to the history and development of the United States. The public law mandates that a reverse design, with an image emblematic of one important Native American or Native American contribution, be issued at a rate of once a year.

U.S. Mint (2)

The 2019 Native American \$1 coin features space program engineer Mary Golda Ross (Chickasaw Nation) on the reverse side. The obverse (heads) side, at far right, will continue to feature 'Sacagawea.'



Health



Healthy cooking preps Seminoles for holidays

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

IMMOKALEE — With the holidays just around the corner and families clamoring for some seasonal treats, 16 Tribal members attended a holiday cooking class in Immokalee Dec. 5 to get ideas and recipes.

Every participant had a hand in the cooking and baking. The group, including Allied Health staff that assisted the Tribal chefs, also made a healthy lunch of beef stew and colorful Asian slaw with warm ginger-lime dressing.

But the main event was the baked goods: chocolate biscotti cookies, amaretti cookies, soft amaretti cookies with lemon peel, pumpkin muffins and cranberry orange pistachio bread. The aroma of the hearty stew simmering on the stove mixed with the inviting scent of the baked treats filled the Immokalee culinary accelerator kitchen.

This was the second class Olivia Cypress took at the culinary accelerator. She enjoys learning to cook.

"I like tasting different foods I haven't used before," Cypress said. "It's very interesting, but baking cookies from scratch is the most interesting thing; I had no idea I could do that."

Under the tutelage of Tribal member and chef Lorraine Posada, Cypress and the rest of the participants were immersed in a slew of baking tips and facts. For example, salt isn't meant for flavor in baking; it brings out other flavors and assists the rising process.

"When you're cooking, you can play with the flavors," Posada told the group



Chef Lorraine Posada, center, mixes batter for cranberry orange pistachio bread as Laverne Thomas, Nicki Osceola and Lauren Posada watch her technique during the holiday cooking class at the Immokalee Culinary Accelerator Dec. 5.

as they baked. "Baking is a science and measurements are exact."

Posada also explained the function of gluten, a protein that is formed in flour when it is moistened.

"You need gluten in baking, it's like elastic," Posada said. "It's a network of proteins that act like a balloon and holds the gasses in to allow it to rise."

When the food was ready, the crowd sat down for lunch followed by a few treats. The rest of the cookies, muffins and bread

were packed up and sent home with the participants who worked so hard to create them.

"We want to emphasize that cooking can be healthy and food can be your medicine," said Andrea Kuzbyt, health nutrition counselor.

"Tribal members really enjoyed themselves," said Suzanne Davis, Allied Health program manager. "It's always good to get people from other reservations together."

Beverly Bidney



Beverly Bidney (2)

At left, hot from the oven, chef Lorraine Posada places 10 loaves of cranberry orange pistachio bread on a rack to cool. At right, Charlie Tiger slices food under the guidance of chef Reshma Tannasee at a prep station during the holiday cooking class.

What is the difference between mold and mildew?

BY KIRK TRENCHFIELD, CIE, LMA
Health Department, STOF

IMMOKALEE — Mold and mildew are similar in certain ways, but quite different in certain characteristics. They are both types of fungus and both may cause some health concerns if we are exposed to them. Both like warm, moist areas on which they can grow. Both can grow on a multitude of surfaces, from food to your shower to a sheet of paper.

But mold and mildew also have striking differences when it comes to size, color and texture. Mildew is a surface fungi that can

easily be identified as a patch of gray or even white fungus that is lying on the surface of a moist area. Mildew is easily treated with a household detergent cleaner and a scrubbing brush.

Mold, on the other hand, can be black or green and is often the result of a much larger infestation. Mold can appear "fuzzy," especially when it is found on food. It can appear "spotted" on certain items and even slimy in some instances. Mold is treated differently, depending on many factors such as moisture source and size of infestation.

In any case, homeowners do not want to see either one in their home.

Broward schools offer new water safety program

BY BOB LAMENDOLA
Florida Department of Health in Broward

IMMOKALEE — Small children look up to teenagers with awe. So who better than teens to teach kids about water safety?

That's the premise of SPUD (Students Preventing Unintentional Drowning), a new after-school project created by the Florida Department of Health in Broward County.

More than 300 teens at eight high schools have volunteered to act as "water safety ambassadors" during this school year and are learning about drowning prevention.

Drowning is the No. 1 cause of unintentional death among children under age 5 in Broward County. The best protections are for an adult to watch children exclusively every minute they are around water, and to set up "layers of protection" such as pool fences, locking gates, door alarms and rescue tools. Swimming lessons for children and adults help.

"Every drowning is a tragedy that could be prevented," said Dr. Paula Thaqi, Director of DOH-Broward. "The SPUD program is an innovative way to educate our teen-agers, as well as the small children and their parents."

The teens are spending months creating new safety messages that resonate with kids.

In the process, they learn a lot about water safety they can share with their families, friends and schoolmates.

As the school year progresses, SPUD teens will make presentations to younger students. The high schools where SPUD is active are Piper in Sunrise, Blanche Ely in Pompano Beach, Miramar, Stranahan in Fort Lauderdale, Coconut Creek, Coral Glades in Coral Springs, Boyd Anderson in Lauderdale Lakes and Deerfield Beach.

The DOH-Broward Drowning Prevention Program focuses on children age 4 and under, ages when kids are fascinated by water and most at risk. In 2017, eight children under age 5 lost their lives to water. Risks are elevated in Broward, with 125,000 backyard pools and miles of waterways.

Main messages to kids: Don't go near the water without an adult. Learn to swim. Get help immediately if someone is in trouble around water.

Main messages to adults: Assign an adult "water watcher" with a cell phone (ideally a strong swimmer) to watch kids every second they are in or near water. Learn cardiopulmonary resuscitation and how to swim.

For more information call 954-467-4700, ext. 5695 or cassie.mcgovern@flhealth.gov.

Public health emergency preparedness and response initiative

FROM PRESS RELEASE

The National Indian Health Board (NIHB) has announced a Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (PHEPR) initiative, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. As part of this project, NIHB will support capacity building of tribal governments to ensure effective and efficient emergency preparedness planning and response. This

will include sharing information, tools and resources with tribal governments across Indian Country to improve identification of best practices; supporting the implementation of evidence-based programs and services; supporting enhanced surveillance and data sharing between states and Tribes; and supporting engagement and partnerships between stakeholders to improve capacity of Tribal governments to prepare, respond, and recover from public health emergencies.

PEOPLE WITH MEDICARE - NEW MEDICARE CARDS

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will mail you a new Medicare card between April 2018 and April 2019. Medicare is removing your Social Security number from your card and is replacing it with a number that is unique to you. Your new Medicare number will contain a combination of numbers and uppercase letters. This change will help protect your identity.

Once you get your new card, safely and securely destroy your old card and start using your new card right away. Protect yourself by making sure no one can get your personal information from your old Medicare card.

Please make sure your mailing address with Medicare is up to date. If your address needs to be corrected, contact Social Security at ssa.gov/myaccount or 1-800-772-1213. TTY users can call 1-800-325-0778. You may also contact one of the Medical Social Workers at the STOF Health Clinic for assistance in updating your address.

Beware of anyone who contacts you about your new Medicare card. CMS will never ask you to give them personal or private information to get your new Medicare number and card.

Below is a sample of the new Medicare card:



THE FLU & YOU

What is influenza (the flu)?

The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs. It can cause mild to severe illness. At times, it can lead to death.

Who should get a flu vaccine?

Everyone 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine, especially if you are at high risk for complications, or if you live with or care for someone who is high risk for complications.

Your family may be especially vulnerable to the flu.

Influenza poses a greater risk to certain people, including pregnant women, children, and elders, who are all at high risk for flu-related complications. In fact, pneumonia and flu are a leading cause of death among Native elders. The flu also can cause certain health conditions, including diabetes, asthma, and heart and lung disease, to become worse. Pneumonia and bronchitis are examples of serious flu-related complications, which can result in hospitalization and sometimes even death.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF THE FLU

People sick with influenza feel some or all of these symptoms:

- Fever* or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue (very tired)
- Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults.

*Not everyone with the flu will have a fever. You can be sick and contagious without running a temperature.

HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD OF THE FLU

- Get a flu vaccine each year.
- Stop the spread of germs, including influenza viruses:
 - ♦ Cover your coughs and sneezes
 - ♦ Wash your hands often
 - ♦ If you're sick, stay home
- Take antiviral drugs if they are prescribed for you.

- Where to Get a Flu Vaccine:**
- Hollywood Health Clinic
 - Brighton Health Clinic
 - Big Cypress Health Clinic
 - Immokalee Health Clinic
 - Tampa Health Clinic
 - Grocery Store
 - Pharmacy
 - Physician's Office

PROTECT YOURSELF.
PROTECT YOUR PEOPLE.

SEMINOLE SCENES



Kevin Johnson

GUITAR WINNER: Joey Micco looks right at home with the guitar he won in the raffle at the Brighton Christmas celebration Dec. 13. The guitar was donated by country music star John Michael Montgomery, who performed at the event.



Kevin Johnson (2)

RED RIBBON WRAP UP: Above, the tribalwide Red Ribbon Week anti-drug events wrapped up Oct. 30 as Hollywood Preschool students led a march around the reservation. Below, from left, Sgt. Thomas Edler, Officer Christina O'Shields and Officer Ryan Carr get ready to join the procession.



Beverly Bidney

HISTORICAL REENACTMENT: Kevin Holata channels Chief Osceola as he prepares a meal and some holiday treats during a Dec. 5 cooking class in Immokalee. Although Osceola's knife held more important significance to the Tribe, Holata's knife helped to whip up a delicious meal.



Damon Scott

'TIS THE SEASON: An ornament featuring the Seminole Tribe of Florida hangs from the Brighton Reservation's community Christmas tree during a ceremony Nov. 30.



Courtesy photo

MERRY CHRISTMAS: A note from Wanda Bowers: I'm so proud to have had so many of my family from the Brighton and Hollywood reservations to have been at the Senior Christmas Party this year to have a Christmas family photo. From my family to yours we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, 2019.
 Back row: Eugene Bowers, Christine McCall, Norman (Skeeter) Bowers, Santa Claus, Richard Bowers, Edna Bowers.
 Second row: Wanda Bowers, Nancy Shore, Bobbie L. Billie, Nancy Willie, Martha Jones, Andrew Bowers Jr.
 Front row: Elsie Lara, Elsie Jean Bowers, Molly Jolly.



Kevin Johnson

ROCKIN' ALONG: Construction of the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood's guitar hotel continues to progress toward completion. Here's the view on Dec. 21.



Tribune file photo

FORMER FSU PRESIDENT PASSES: T.K. Wetherell, who served as Florida State University president from 2003-2010, died Dec. 16 at 72 following a lengthy battle against cancer. During the Seminole Tribe's Sports Hall of Fame ceremony on Feb. 7, 2006, President Moses Osceola, left, was joined by FSU football coach Bobby Bowden and Wetherell. Forging a stronger bond between FSU and the Seminole Tribe was one of Wetherell's lasting accomplishments, which was highlighted in an article on FSU's website. "... as president, he advocated a closer relationship with the Seminole Tribe of Florida. The university created a Seminole history course, began a new tradition of tribe members participating in every commencement ceremony and unveiled a bronze statue at the University Center depicting a Seminole family during the wars of the 1830s. In 2005, the Seminole Tribe of Florida approved a historic resolution supporting the university's use of the Seminole name and honored Wetherell with an invitation to the Big Cypress Reservation."



Beverly Bidney

FROG FINDING: Ahfachkee student Eli Hall may not have found any artifacts from 1855, but he found this cool frog and grub while looking for said artifacts during a THPO archeological dig in Big Cypress.

NATIONAL NATIVE NEWS

Blacked-out windows and secret police: North Carolina gambling ring raided — again, authorities say

In July, Robeson County deputies along with state and federal agents raided a network of what they called illegal casinos in rural North Carolina. Authorities said the raids netted gaming machines and 26 arrests, and broke up a gaming ring run by the Tuscarora Indian Nation, which claims sovereignty.

In early December, agents from the same agencies raided the Buffalo Ranch again, seized 40 slot machines and arrested four people, WPDE reported. Officers arrested Kendall Locklear again, the leader of the Tuscarora who still faces charges from the July raids.

Over the summer, the Robeson County sheriff said the raids at three casinos capped a yearlong investigation that found the Tuscarora Nation operated warehouses with blacked out windows and no clocks on the walls and filled with gambling machines.

The raids in July also found a marijuana growing operation and accused the Tuscarora Nation of running its own secret police force, according to a press release announcing the earlier raids.

The Tuscarora Nation is not a recognized tribe in North Carolina. The tribe does have federal recognition in New York, The News & Observer reported in July, and has been fighting for recognition in North Carolina since the 1970s.

Officers arrested seven people in early December on new charges connected to gambling and drugs, according to WMBF. The NC Alcohol Law Enforcement charged Locklear, James E. Blue Jr., Frederick Hawkins and Shania Harris in connection with running the casino, the station reported. A judge gave each a \$100,000 bond, WMBF reports.

Officers also arrested Herman Daniel Locklear, Jason Locklear and Ronnie Smith on charges related to selling marijuana, WPDE reported.

The Tuscarora have grabbed headlines on and off over the past decades as they argued for recognition in North Carolina. The tribe cannot operate casinos without federal recognition.

In the most notorious case, two tribal leaders took over the offices of the Robesonian newspaper in 1988 and took the staff hostage. No one was injured, but Eddie Hatcher and Timothy Jacobs were sentenced to 10 years in prison for kidnapping, The News & Observer reported.

Jacobs was arrested again over the summer for his alleged involvement in the illegal casinos, according to The News & Observer.

"This group openly expressed beliefs that neither the laws of North Carolina nor the United States applied to them, putting law-abiding citizens in danger. We hope today's arrests provide a safer community for them," Terrance Merriweather, head of North Carolina Alcohol Law Enforcement, said in a press release after the July raids.

- Charlotte (N.C.) Observer

Cherokee Nation citizens trying solar panels to lower utility costs

In July, Robeson County deputies along with state and federal agents raided a network of what they called illegal casinos in rural North Carolina. Authorities said the raids netted gaming machines and 26 arrests, and broke up a gaming ring run by the Tuscarora Indian Nation, which claims sovereignty. A Housing Authority of the Cherokee Nation pilot program is using solar energy panels on several tribal citizens' homes to save on their monthly utility costs.

The program is funded through an Indian Community Development Block Grant, which covered the cost of installing solar panels on 17 homes the housing authority was remodeling for elders. Installations began in October 2017, and so far, families living in the energy-efficient homes have saved an average of 50 percent on monthly electric bills.

"We know solar energy is both renewable and plentiful, and over time, more and more homes around the country are taking advantage of this resource," said Gary Cooper, executive director of HACN. "This pilot program gives us the opportunity to not only reduce utility costs for Cherokee families, but to study whether it is feasible to place solar panels on more homes in the future. So far, we have received excellent feedback from homeowners."

Electricity consumption, direct hours of daily sunlight, the size and angle of a home's roof, local electricity rates and the size of the solar panel system all play a role in determining how much a family can save on utility costs by using solar panels.

"The Cherokee Nation has been a trendsetter in Indian Country when it comes to its use of renewable energy, so it should not be surprising to see the HACN using this pilot project to find even more opportunities," said Secretary of State Chuck Hoskin Jr. "It is clear that Cherokee families who are participating in this program have seen great benefits to their budget, while our environment is also benefitting. That's the kind of win-win scenario we're always looking for in the tribe."

Cherokee Nation citizen Linda Gifford and her husband, Johnny, live in Spavinaw, a

small community of around 450 residents in northeast Mayes County. When HACN began a rehab project on the couple's home, the Giffords agreed to participate in the solar panel project. Like other participating families, the Giffords' electric bills have seen drastic reductions since the panels were installed.

"The impact of these solar panels has been quite noticable at our home," Linda Gifford said. "They have cut our utility bill each month. We relied on window air units to cool our house in the summer. In 2017, we paid around \$180 one month for our electricity bill, and in 2018 during that same month, we paid a little over \$70 with the solar panels installed. We are thankful for the opportunity to participate and appreciate HACN for approaching us about it."

Placement of solar panels cost an average of around \$19,780 per home, but varied depending on the home's location, the size of the solar panel system, agreements with utility companies and other factors.

The solar panels carry a 10-year warranty and will be monitored quarterly with rural Wi-Fi or a cellular network. The tribe is evaluating the results of the pilot program and is looking for future grant opportunities that would provide more solar panels for the homes of Cherokee families.

- Tahlequah (Okla.) Daily Press

Supreme Court considers the limits of reservation borders

Where does Native American authority over reservation boundaries end?

The question was at the heart of a feisty debate Nov. 27 at the Supreme Court that could determine whether a man on death row in Oklahoma lives or dies and whether the Muscogee Creek Nation still has authority over historic tribal lands.

Justice Sonia Sotomayor barely let Oklahoma attorney Lisa Blatt finish her opening statement before demanding to know the precise date of statehood and when the Creek reservation was supposedly eliminated.

"We don't have to give you a date," Blatt fired back, "Rome didn't fall in a day."

Blatt argued that Congress acted in steps to effectively strip the tribe of its reservation, first taking the land then their sovereignty by limiting tribal government. She said that by the time respondent Patrick Murphy committed murder in Henryetta, Okla., in 1999 the area was state soil.

But attorneys for the Creek Nation argued that Congress has never explicitly enacted legislation disestablishing the tribe and therefore it still exists. "The text is what governs," argued Ian Gershengorn, "and Congress considered [disestablishment] and rejected it."

But Oklahoma pointed to the transfer of hundreds of tribal criminal cases to state courts at the time of statehood in 1906 as a sign the reservation was being phased out.

"Everything was taken away," Blatt said of the tribe's sovereignty. "The only authority they had was to equalize allotments and sign deeds."

Deputy solicitor general Edwin Kneeder, supporting Oklahoma, warned that the consequences of recognizing the area as a reservation now "would be a dramatic change from how everyone's understood it for the past 100 years."

"There are earth-shattering consequences," Blatt added. She said as many as 2,000 prisoners in state custody could be released, including 155 murderers and 113 rapists. Such upheaval would be "traumatic" for victims, she said, with no certainty that all the cases could be retried successfully in federal courts.

Kneeder said clarifying tribal authority over 44 counties in eastern Oklahoma could also upend regulatory systems and impact businesses. Sales taxes, gas taxes, cigarette taxes currently collected by the state in those areas may be nullified. "The US is very concerned," he said.

The court's liberal justices were skeptical.

Justices Elena Kagan and Stephen Breyer noted that previous cases on tribal matters never talked about the notion of stripping sovereignty as a characteristic of disestablishing a reservation. "It's not there because we never thought a government trying to strip a tribe of powers was relevant to the existence of a reservation," Kagan said.

But Breyer was also skeptical that transfer of tribal cases to state courts amounted to a "big deal."

"Is it a big deal that they should have taken pending tribal cases and given them to federal courts instead of state courts?" Breyer wondered aloud. "That's not an abrogation of a reservation."

Kagan agreed, suggesting courts' decision to transfer the cases was not relevant. "How do we know what Congress intended?" she asked aloud.

Gershengorn explained that the state of Oklahoma and Creek Nation currently have co-jurisdictional agreements to govern the expansive reservation area and that affirming the lower court's ruling would not be as disruptive as the state predicts.

"The state's concerns are dramatically overstated," said Ian Gershengorn, attorney for the Creek.

- ABC News

Big Cypress celebrates Christmas in style (there was ice skating, too)

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — The Big Cypress community came out in large numbers Dec. 15 to celebrate Christmas at its annual gathering.

Tribal Members and families socialized underneath a huge tent filled with large round decorated tables at the Junior Cypress Rodeo Complex from about 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Lining the perimeter of the inside of the tent were rectangular tables with large tins of holiday popcorn and other goodies, including a wide variety of food for attendees to enjoy.

At the front of the tent was a large stage, where names were announced for those who won prizes and for entertainment, including a few rap performers.

Kids played inside the tent, but many made their way outside — where there were several carnival rides to enjoy throughout the night.

The celebration was sponsored by Councilman Manuel "Mondo" Tiger and organized by his office.

Part of the communitywide celebration of Christmas, included the creation of an "Ice Skating Village" for kids and families to enjoy a few days later.

The village, which was a first for Big Cypress, was open Dec. 18 from 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. in front of the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium.

The ice skating rink, which holds up to 50 people, wasn't actually made of ice, but special laminate flooring that mimics how it feels to ice skate.

The village had two winter bounce

houses — including a Disney "Frozen" themed one — face painting and a live DJ from All Star Events Miami. The Big Cypress Recreation staff grilled hotdogs and hamburgers as well.

"The feedback from the adults and youth was uplifting, full of excitement, and joyful just as the season," said Dessie Thomas, Big Cypress Recreation site manager. "I received comments from parents that they liked the set up and the event itself."

The DJ booth also had a special snow making machine (a sort of foam) which was turned on every now and then for the kids to enjoy. Some kids even tried to make snow angels in the simulated snow.

For those who weren't into the winter theme, Recreation provided putting greens, and some played basketball using the outdoor hoops.



Damon Scott

From left, Nikki King, Jamie Lawrence and Daisy Jumper get into the holiday spirit at the Big Cypress Christmas party Dec. 15.



Damon Scott

Barbara Billie, left, and Patricia Osceola work at the front table as guests arrive for the festivities.



Damon Scott

From left, Kathryn Billie, Kyla Motlow, Shauna Billie and Calijah Motlow enjoy the Christmas party.



Damon Scott

Kids enjoy a variety of carnival rides set up outside the main tent.



Damon Scott

Kids and adults hit the ice on an ice skating rink made of a special laminate flooring that was set up in the gymnasium parking lot.

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HOLLYWOOD, FL

Education



Ahfachkee students dig up past in BC pasture

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Pastures in Big Cypress contain a lot more than cattle; a treasure trove of Seminole history resides there.

With some help from Ahfachkee School students, the Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) found significant evidence that the U.S. Army's Fort Shackelford once stood in Moses Jumper Jr.'s pasture.

In 2017, THPO taught Ahfachkee students about archeology and brought them out to the field for some hands-on activities. After the students found artifacts that appeared to have been from the era of the Third Seminole War, 1855-58, THPO archeologists continued excavating the site one small piece at a time. They discovered posts and charcoal from the burned fort, that was likely about 40 feet by 40 feet.

"So far we found posts in four areas, with three to four posts in each," said Ben Bilgri, THPO field technician. "The fort burned in 1855 and was only occupied from February to June."

The fort was built to push deeper into Seminole territory during a time of so-called peace. The military's goal was to provoke the Seminoles and force them to go to Oklahoma.

After a few months, the soldiers left the fort and went to find the Billy Bowlegs camp. Once there, they burned his garden



Beverly Bidney

Ahfachkee students carefully excavate dirt from a square of earth identified by THPO for their archeological search in Big Cypress on Dec. 14.

and banana trees and continued north, where the soldiers were attacked by Bowlegs and his warriors. Thus began the Third Seminole War.

History came to life as THPO led a second dig Dec. 14 for Ahfachkee fourth, fifth and sixth-graders. The important

discovery at the site the previous year gave a heightened sense of excitement to the dig. The students rotated between activities including site mapping, artifact identification, digging and screening.

At the digging station, students carefully dug down a little at a time while examining the dirt for obvious artifacts. Then the excavated soil, which was put into buckets, was pushed through a fine mesh screen to find tiny objects.

At the mapping station, students sketched a previously excavated site which contained intact remains of posts at the bottom of the approximately 3-foot square area. At the artifact identification unit, students measured and identified previously found objects from the site and logged those details.

THPO management trainee Jack Chalfant told the students how he got interested in archeology. Raised in a camp in Brighton, he used to find flat rocks which he and his friends played with and broke all the time. Years later, in 2013, he met an archeologist there who told him those rocks were actually pottery and a part of history.

"That's why I work at THPO now," said Alice, 10. "I wanted to find out about our tribe and how far back things go."

Curious students asked questions throughout the day. One wanted to know how they knew the posts weren't just tree trunks.

"Trees don't grow in straight lines unless they are planted," said David Scheidecker, THPO research coordinator. "These are made of pine and this was an old pine flat. The heart of a pine tree is suffused with sap, which makes it more resilient to decay."

Students learned how to find clues



Beverly Bidney

Quanton Cypress works with Ahfachkee students as they sieve dirt through a screen in the search for artifacts.

to determine what an object is made of, including looking for rust and man-made shapes. The students were engaged in the activities and glad to have learned things outside of the usual classroom lessons.

"I think the posts were interesting," said Jaleesa Hill, 12.

"They had to dig far down to find them. The different colors in the sand show that there was charcoal there."

Alice Jimmie enjoyed the screening activity the most.

"You dig and then see what's in the dirt," said Alice, 10. "We didn't find any artifacts today. But it's nice to know things we didn't know before, like this is here on our land."

"Maybe we can find something

next time," said Nahdea Osceola, 9.

THPO field technician Nick Butler organized the dig with a two-fold objective; to teach the students about archeology and inform them about THPO's function for the Tribe.

"It's important that future generations learn this history," Butler said. "This is a large event in Seminole history."

Chalfant urged the students to be more aware of their surroundings.

"Everywhere you walk, there's someone who walked there before you," he said. "As you're walking around you need to open your eyes and notice things. We're supposed to be the ones telling our story. You need to look around and maybe you'll be out here teaching the kids."



Beverly Bidney

Ahfachkee students Nahdea Osceola, center, and Dallas Garcia, right, push dirt and grass through a fine mesh screen searching for artifacts during a THPO archeological dig in Moses Jumper Jr.'s BC pasture.



Beverly Bidney

From left, Shylah Walker, Jaleesa Hill and Curtis Smith sketch the location of excavated posts, circa 1855, as they get instructions from THPO field technician Ben Bilgri.

Santa visits Brighton Preschool



Kevin Johnson

Malayah Puente receives a gift from Santa during his visit to the Brighton Preschool on Dec. 12.



Kevin Johnson

Jaylee Osceola smiles for the cameras while visiting with Santa at the Brighton Preschool.

PJ party at Hollywood Preschool



Derrick Tiger

Atticus Osceola



Derrick Tiger

Nettie Stewart and Karter Stewart-Primeaux



Derrick Tiger

Santino Tiger



Derrick Tiger

Amari Torres

Center for Student Success and Services strives to increase reach, visibility

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

First things first: CSSS stands for the Center for Student Success and Services. It was formerly known as the Education Department. Some in the Tribe still refer to it that way, but the name changed in 2016.

Names and acronyms aside, CSSS spins a lot of plates for Tribal students and their families.

The department has 42 employees and five programs that service up to 1,700 students in any given year. Students are spread out on reservation, off-reservation and across the country.

The biggest of the five programs is K-12. Advisers make sure everything is in order for students, whether they are attending a Tribal school, charter school or private institution.

The other programs are higher education (students in college, technical school, adults earning their GED), tutoring, library programs and Tribal professional development (which include work experience programs).

Administration of the Tribal scholarship program is a big part of – but certainly not all – of what CSSS does.

CSSS director Randy Budde said one of the reasons for the name change in 2016 was because of the images “Education Department,” conjures – as in, Big Brother is watching.

“[We’re the] department that tracks students’ truancy and gets Tribal members in trouble,” Budde said. “The department that denies students access to private schools based on their low GPAs ... that processes payments to schools. And yes, in a way, the CSSS department still does these things, but it’s not our favorite part of the job.”

He said the favorite part of the job is meeting Tribal members face-to-face and sharing ideas to find the perfect educational fit.

Sarah-Joy Somarriba is a CSSS higher education academic and career adviser who helps students find that fit. She’s been in the position for two years.

“My biggest purpose is to help people live their best life – to discover what career satisfaction means for them and help them craft their legacy,” Somarriba said. “I do this by getting to know the student on an individual level through MBTI (Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator) career assessments and laying out career pathways that help navigate through the academics needed to pursue their path.”

Somarriba also provides job shadowing, resume help, internship processing and student marketing and branding.

Say hello again

Alvaro Perez, assistant director, said CSSS has tried to reintroduce itself to the Tribe in recent months. Perez has been at the



Damon Scott

Several members of the CSSS crew in Hollywood gathered for a photo before the Christmas holiday. Bottom row from left to right are Shayla English – homework help/GED tutor; Raysa De La Paz – CSSS office manager; and Kajir Harriot – student success coach. Second row from left to right are Sasha Rigg – homework help/GED tutor; Tracey Walton – Hollywood K-12 program manager; Unethia Brown – Hollywood K-12 adviser assistant; Kerliande Patterson – TPD program supervisor; and Charvelle McClendon – tutoring program supervisor. Third row from left to right are (back row, left side) Charlotte Urejonna – tutor coordinator; Randall Budde – CSSS director; and Yvette Payne – Hollywood K-12 adviser. Back row right to left are Alvaro Perez – CSSS assistant director and Melissa Forges – higher education program manager.

department for about one and a half years, starting out as the higher education manager.

“This year we’ve been working toward getting more information out, toward getting ourselves out there,” he said. “For a while there we were kind of in the Dark Ages. We’re now in an awakening. A lot of people don’t know the things that we do, who we are, things that we’re doing, the successes that we’ve had.”

Perez said sometimes the focus is on what CSSS isn’t doing.

“I think that there’s so much good that outweighs the bad, so we’re trying to figure out how to get that stuff out there,” Perez said.

For example, CSSS has moved from producing a newsletter strictly about higher education to an overall department one; it is updating the CSSS website more often; and its social media presence has increased – recently launching a Facebook page.

Perez wants to start highlighting students and staff through social media channels in 2019.

Budde said other changes he’s seen recently include a willingness of not

only the CSSS department, but many Tribal departments, to work together. The collaborative effort means working directly with Tribal liaisons at each reservation.

“I think the relationships that [CSSS] has built with our educational partners has flourished,” Budde said. “In the future I see [CSSS] as the department that works directly with the community members and our educational partners to find new ways of creating the future leaders of the Seminole Tribe of Florida.”

Budde was previously a Broward County Public Schools teacher, associate director of admissions at Florida International University and a director of the Kaplan Test Prep.

On the road again

It would be incorrect to envision CSSS staff sitting all day in big, stuffy offices staring at computer screens. Much of what the department does require being able to pivot for students and traveling to meet folks.

For example, even though the main offices are on the Hollywood Reservation,

Somarriba has met with students who don’t live close to Hollywood through methods like Skype and FaceTime.

“It doesn’t matter where they are,” she said. “We have a family right now in Iowa, a set of triplets, the moment the mom found out that we are a service to them, they reached out to us for everything – phone calls, setting up a college tour – they are even looking to apply for other scholarships and help with essays. We’ve done a lot through email.”

Somarriba has met with other students off site in Florida.

“I was at a University of Miami Starbucks last week to help a student. I was there for two to three hours at 8 a.m. helping her out with the transition to UM,” she said. “And I might go to Broward College to help a student with their classes, so I kind of step out of my office quite frequently – at least with the students locally who know me because of their proximity to me, she said.”

“That’s one of the things we’re trying to do is not set any limits,” added Perez. “If there were limits in the past we want to get rid of that.”

Stagnant isn’t a word people associate

Dominic Osceola, 12, serves as CEO for a day

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

At age 12, Dominic Osceola already has an impressive career entry for his resume; bank chief executive officer at BizTown in Tampa.

The Brandon Academy fifth-grader held the position for one day only, Dec. 3, as part of the Junior Achievement’s BizTown elementary school hands-on economic literacy program. As part of the program, students learned about various careers and how to interview for a job.

“Dominic wanted to be a cameraman, but the principal said he had more potential than that, so he applied to be the CEO,” said Connie Osceola, Dominic’s grandmother. “He’s outgoing, makes friends easily and is a natural born leader.”

Three weeks prior to participating in the simulated BizTown, classroom teachers taught a dozen lessons about financial literacy, community and economy, work readiness and

business management. After the academic portion of the program, the students went to town.

BizTown offered students a simulated real-world experience as they operated a bank, managed a restaurant, wrote checks and voted for mayor. One of the program’s goals is to help students connect what they learned in class and what they see in the real world.

Founded in 1919, Junior Achievement is the country’s largest organization dedicated to giving young people the knowledge and skills they need to plan for their future economic success. According to the JA website, its purpose is to inspire and prepare young people to succeed in the global economy.

Osceola said her grandson gained confidence from the program, which shows in his schoolwork and relationships with his peers.

“Three weeks can change a life,” Osceola said. “He wants to go to college and become the CEO of his own company.”



Beverly Bidney

The Immokalee 3- and 4-year-old preschoolers serenade family and friends during the preschool Christmas celebration Dec. 13.

Christmas show at Immokalee Preschool



Beverly Bidney

Chloe Baker and Claire Yzaguirre belt out Jingle Bells at the Immokalee Preschool Christmas show.



Beverly Bidney

Franky’J Concepcion and Santa share a special moment by the tree after the concert at the Immokalee Preschool Christmas celebration.



Beverly Bidney

Martha Davis leads the class of 3- and 4-year-olds as they make their way to the stage for the Immokalee Preschool Christmas concert.



Courtesy photo

Dominic Osceola serves as CEO of Junior Achievement’s BizTown for a day Dec. 3.

Seminole students sing in Disney's Candlelight Processional

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

Walt Disney World's Candlelight Processional is a holiday treat whose roots stretch all the way back to the amusement park empire's infancy in the 1950s.

Now, more than half a century later, three Seminole students can say they were part of the annual winter tradition.

University School's Kylie Drake, 14, and sisters Maryjane Osceola, 14, and Xiora Osceola, 16, were among the students selected from their school choir who performed Nov. 27 at Epcot's American Gardens Theater.

The Candlelight Processional features the story of Christmas as told by a celebrity narrator with an orchestra and choir. Shows were held Nov. 22-Dec. 30 with different casts.

According to Disney's website, "each night, a celebrity narrator tells the biblical tale of a savior born to a virgin in Bethlehem. All the while, gorgeous choral pieces are woven into the production as an orchestra and choir provide an inspirational backdrop with songs of hope and joy."

Maryjane and Xiora's father Everett Osceola said any nerves the girls had about performing at Disney didn't last long.

"They said when they were up there it felt good and that all their hard work paid off," said Osceola, who was among an estimated 300 spectators.

In addition to performing in front of a big audience, the Seminole trio also had a chance to perform with Alfonso Ribeiro, who served as the narrator. Ribeiro starred with Will Smith in the 1990s TV comedy "Fresh Prince of Bel-Air," and currently hosts "America's Funniest Home Videos."

Osceola said his daughters didn't know who Ribeiro is, but they are familiar with "the Carlton dance" thanks to seeing it on video games. Ironically, a few weeks after the processional, Ribeiro was in the news for filing a lawsuit against the makers of Fortnite and NBA 2K18 over the use of his "Carlton dance" which he mastered on "Fresh Prince."

The history of the processional's celebrity narrators dates back to a golden age of Hollywood (California) with the likes of Cary Grant, Gregory Peck, Jimmy Stewart and John Wayne. In addition to Ribeiro, this year's lineup included Whoopi Goldberg, Neil Patrick Harris, Pat Sajak and others.

Osceola said Maryjane has been in other choirs, but this is the first year Xiora joined a choir. Being invited to perform at Disney lived up to the expectations of a Christmas-time tradition, including the weather.

"It was cold, but it was fitting because it was Christmas," Osceola said. "When I got the email (that the girls would be singing), I told the whole family. It was really cool. I hope they do it next year, too."



Xiora Osceola, bottom row center, sings in the Epcot Center's Candlelight Processional.



Seminole students from the University School choir gather at their performance in the Candlelight Processional at Walt Disney World. From left, Kylie Drake, and sisters Maryjane Osceola and Xiora Osceola.



Singers in the Candlelight Processional form a Christmas tree of sorts as part of the performance.



Actor Alfonso Ribeiro, who gained fame from his character Carlton on the 1990s TV hit "The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air," serves as the celebrity narrator during the Nov. 27 performance.

FIU group seeks donations to build campus chickee

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

A group at Miami's Florida International University is raising funds to build a chickee on one of its campuses.

The FIU chickee is an initiative of its Global Indigenous Forum (GIF) and corresponding student club – the Global Indigenous Group (GIG).

The GIF has several projects and initiatives in work, primarily through the student group.

Construction of the chickee would take place at FIU's Modesto A. Maidique Campus. The campus is the original home of FIU, encompassing an entire five blocks between 117th and 107th on Tamiami Trail in West Miami-Dade.

Maidique, born in Cuba, was FIU's fourth president. He stepped down in 2008 as one of the school's longest-serving leaders.

Seminole and Miccosukee builders would construct the chickee. The cost is estimated at about \$40,000.

"The chickee itself is an important symbol of local Indigenous heritage that we aim to celebrate on our university campus," a recent message from organizers stated.

Efforts to raise funds began in earnest

on Nov. 15 when the GIF asked those participating in "Give Miami Day 2018" to designate their donations. The group is now continuing to solicit funds for costs associated with the project.

"This thatched palm covered and open sided building would be a gathering place for student/faculty events, meetings and [be] a place of solace," said Dennis Wiedman, associate professor in the Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies.

"This significant project reflects an architecture of survival, the continuance of traditions of storytelling and mentorship and a way of facilitating relationships with sovereign nations and their communities," he said.

Wiedman, who founded the GIF about five years ago, said the chickee would be a size big enough to accommodate multipurpose activities – possibly 20 by 30 feet – measured from outside its four corner poles.

Seminole and Miccosukee-made cypress benches would be able to be moved around the structure, depending on the type of event being held. It would have a concrete floor, electricity and lighting.

Student leaders from GIG addressed the FIU Student Government Association

during the fall 2018 semester about the idea. Wiedman said they received a welcoming response. The goal was first set at the April 2018 meeting of the GIF advisory council.

Wiedman said it was important from the beginning that the project involve Tribal members.

"With proper contributions, a location and specifications can ensure that the builders are truly Tribal members and that [FIU Facilities Management does] not subcontract out to non-Indian companies," Wiedman said.

A major donor, whether an individual or group, could possibly have their name on the chickee, Wiedman added.

The timeline for construction is dependent on how soon funds can be raised.

"If a contributor came forth tomorrow, then we can move on this very soon. If not, it will take a while," Wiedman said.

Those interested in contributing can mail a check to Juan Carlos Del Valle, executive director, FIU Foundation; Florida International University; 11200 SW 8th Street, MARC 5th Floor; Miami, FL, 33199.

Checks should be made payable to the FIU Foundation Inc. Write "Global Indigenous Forum" and "Chickee Initiative" on the check's memo line. Email Del Valle at jgdelval@fiu.edu for more information.

The GIF, in collaboration with the student led GIG, is a university-wide

initiative that connects faculty and students as well as local and global Indigenous leaders with "essential dialogue concerning all matters important to Indigenous peoples of the world."

The group is comprised of individuals who are "passionate about human rights, scholarship, activism and cross-cultural education."

More information is available online at indigenous.fiu.edu or at [facebook.com/GIGFIU](https://www.facebook.com/GIGFIU).

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Annual summary reveals details of cattle program

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Cattle owners convened at the annual cattle summary meeting in Brighton on Nov. 1 to get an update on how the Tribal cattle program fared over the last year. Natural Resources Director Alex Johns led the meeting and summarized the year with an abundance of facts and figures.

The Tribe's cattle program is a cow/calf operation and the bulk of the profit comes from the sale of calves every year. Johns reported on the expense of caring for the cows, calves and bulls and even had a five year amortization rate for the bulls. It takes one bull per 25 cows to ensure full "coverage" of a herd.

To raise and assure the animals thrive and remain healthy, owners must supply food and supplements and keep the pastures in good shape by mowing and fertilizing. Cutting costs in these areas can be detrimental to the bottom line.

"Cutting costs isn't always good for business because it affects production," Johns said. "Look at your cows as a piggy bank; you have to keep putting into your bank. The equity in your cow is the fat she carries on her back."

The cattle summary has been a fixture of the program for 14 years. It's where owners get the full picture of the past year and can plan for the future. Details of raising cattle were broken down and results discussed.

Average age of cows in the herds was once 9 years, now it is closer to 7 years. However, if a cow is still producing good calves, age doesn't matter. Johns urged owners to supplement grass consumption with feed and supplement-rich molasses, which affects fertility and body condition.

"Universal research says body condition is the single most important indicator of a cow's ability to reproduce," said Aaron Stam, University of Florida/Seminole Tribe of Florida Livestock and 4-H extension agent. "These are quantifiable numbers."

Other important numbers Johns examined were the average pounds of beef raised per acre, the average cost per cow, percentage of calf loss and pregnancy rate. The numbers painted a picture of the cattle program and Johns summed up a few salient points.

"More calves are always better than heavier calves," he said. "Pounds produced are what counts."

Johns detailed some key performance indicators. The numbers over the last five years show a steady increase in the number of cows and an increased pregnancy rate. However, the numbers also show the producers who cut costs by using less of the molasses supplement and mowing and fertilizing less frequently earned less per acre.

Calf loss to predators and mycotoxin-caused infertility issues is about 17 percent, but Johns believes that number can be reduced to 11 percent. Mycotoxins in the grass cause pregnancy rates to fall but since 2015, the molasses supplements have included Biofix to combat the risk.

The scientific data on Biofix in the molasses isn't complete yet but over the last two years, Johns has seen a significant difference. After two years on Biofix, the pregnancy rate in the test herd increased by 21 percent, animals were 28.7 pounds heavier, bred up at 10 percent better and had a half point better body condition score.

"The cows need to have it every day," Johns said.

Johns presented pregnancy rate comparisons based on fertilizer use, mowing frequency, weather conditions and molasses use. The results were clear; spending money on those things increases the pregnancy percentages. Cutting expenses affects the outcome adversely.

"You're in a production business and it takes money to make money," Johns said. "You can save money but be careful of what you cut. It's a fine line and it can hurt you in the long run. We want to show you how to get the most bang for your buck. If something isn't working, we'll get rid of it."

The meeting ended with annual awards for cattle owners.

Goal achievement-
Brighton- Beulah Gopher, Patty Waldron, Addie Osceola
Big Cypress- Joe Benjy Osceola, Michael Henry

Most pounds of beef raised per acre-
Brighton- Andrew J. Bowers, Jr.
Big Cypress- Michael Henry

Most profit per acre-
Brighton- Diane Smith
Big Cypress- Clarissa Bowers

Most improved cattle producer-
Brighton- Patty Waldron, Beulah Gopher
Big Cypress- Clarissa Bowers, Joe Frank

Cattle man/woman of the year-
Brighton- Diane Smith
Big Cypress- Clarissa Bowers

"Congratulations to everyone and the success of the cattle program," said Brighton Board Rep. Larry Howard. "Ranches on the outside wish they had this kind of data. My hat goes off to Alex and his team."

Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank, an award winner as most improved cattle producer, also appreciates the cattle program. "We've long been recognized as leader in Indian Country with our cattle program," Rep. Frank said. "We want to be the premier cattle program in the country, whether it's on or off reservations."



Derrick Tiger
Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola talks to Tribal members at the Hollywood Christmas party on Dec. 15 at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood.



Kevin Johnson
Pemayetv Emahkv Charter School students entertain the audience by singing Christmas songs in Creek at the Brighton Christmas party Dec. 13 at the Fred Smith Rodeo Arena.



Beverly Bidney
President Mitchell Cypress joins Peggy Cubis and Nancy Frank at the tribalwide seniors Christmas party at the Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee.



Beverly Bidney
Christine McCall and her mother Wanda Bowers enjoy the tribalwide seniors Christmas party at the Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee.



Derrick Tiger
Danielle Arnold and Darrell Tiger have a good time at the Hollywood Christmas party.



Carlos Fuentes
At left, Clinton Williams enjoys his gift while meeting Santa Claus at the Tampa Christmas party Dec. 5.



Carlos Fuentes
At left, Malani Huggins visits with Santa Claus at the Tampa Christmas party Dec. 5.



Derrick Tiger
Carmen and Stanly Cypress enjoying the entertainment at the Hollywood Christmas party.



Derrick Tiger
Kids from the Tribe become part of the entertainment act at the non-resident Christmas party at Disney's Hollywood Studios in Orlando.

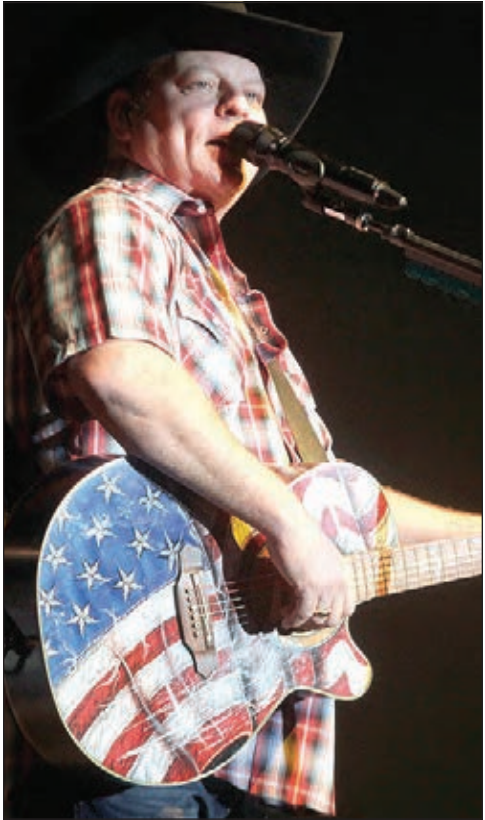


Kevin Johnson
Jaryca Baker and son Jherricko are in the holiday spirit at the Brighton Christmas celebration.



Kevin Johnson
Ciel Cypress, 5, left, and Serenity Bishop, 4, steer their boats through traffic in the amusement area at the Brighton Christmas celebration.

MERRY CHRISTMAS



Kevin Johnson

Country music star John Michael Montgomery performs at the Brighton Christmas celebration.



Mathus Goes

Antillis Stockton Jr. takes center stage with dancers during the Fort Pierce Christmas Party on Dec. 15 at Chupco's Landing Community Center.



Derrick Tiger

Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. addresses the audience at the Seminole Tribe's Christmas party Dec. 1 for Tribal members who live off reservation. The party was held at Disney's Hollywood Studios theme park in Orlando.



Derrick Tiger (2)

Above, Don Felder, former lead guitarist for The Eagles, and Spencer Battiest, below, provide musical entertainment at the Hollywood Christmas party.



Kevin Johnson

Boogie Johns, center, celebrates after she was named winner of the women's ugly Christmas sweater contest at the Brighton Christmas celebration.



Carlos Fuentes

Seminole medicine man Bobby Henry speaks during the Tampa Christmas party.



Kevin Johnson

Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr., left, and Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School Principal Brian Greseth join Santa and Mrs. Claus at the Brighton Christmas celebration.



Mathus Goes

From left in back row, Sereniti Smith, Anayese Stockton, Timothy Smith and Martavious Tommie, and in front row Makiyah Stockton, pose for a winter photo at the Fort Pierce Christmas party at the Chupco's Landing Community Center.



Beverly Bidney

From left, Joe Billie, Ollie Balentine and Jonah Cypress enjoy the tribalwide senior Christmas party.



Derrick Tiger

Nick DiCarlo and Tyler Harjochee pose for a Christmas party photo at the Hollywood celebration.



Beverly Bidney

Nancy Billie, Michaelene Cypress, Lonnie Billie, Rosa Billie and Corey Billie pose with Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. at the senior Christmas party.



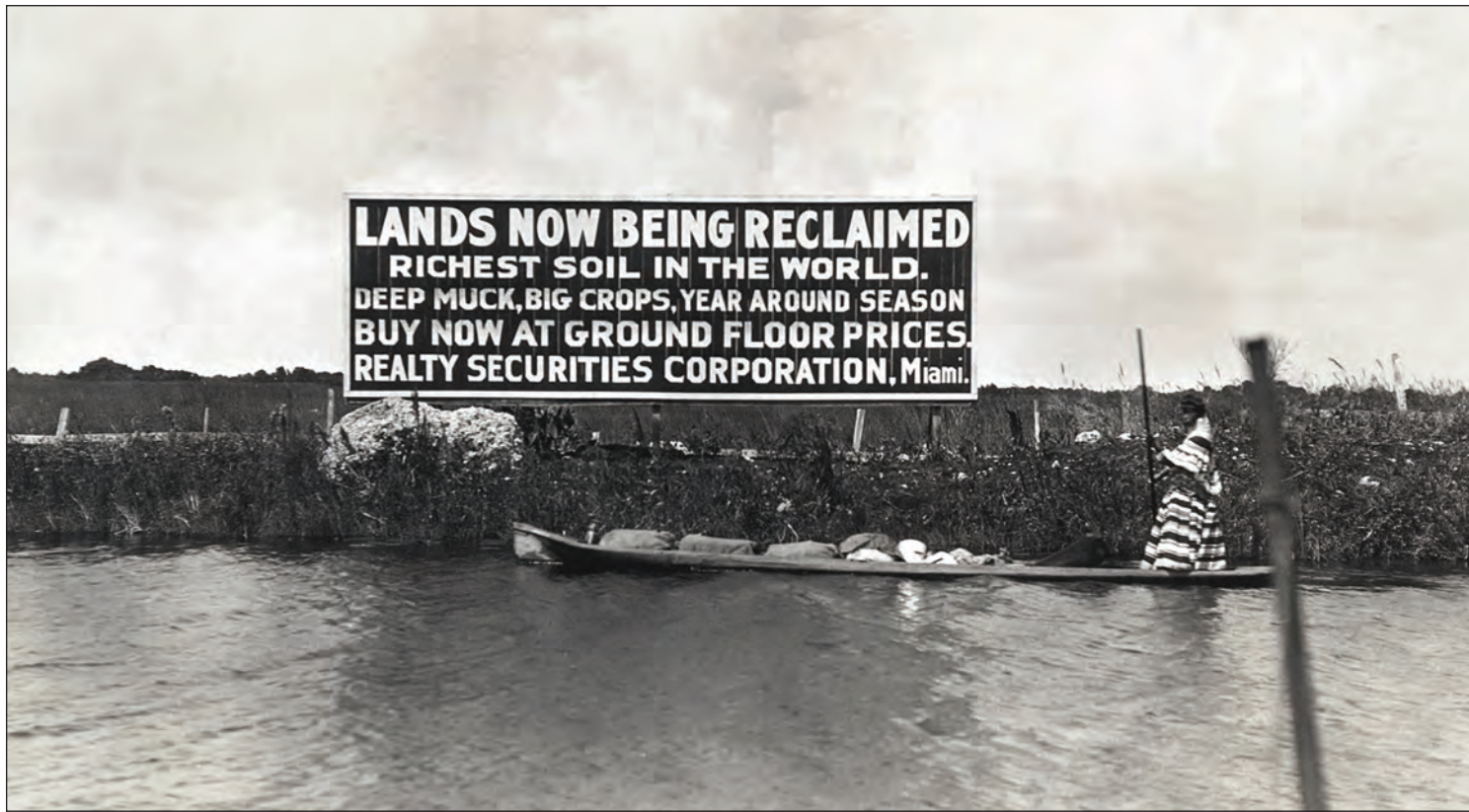
Mathus Goes

Kayden Tommie shows off all the moves on the dance floor while Kayla Mitchell sings at the Fort Pierce Christmas party.



Kevin Johnson

Chunk Osceola, left, and Tatiana Torres take a wild ride on an amusement attraction at the Brighton Christmas celebration.



A Seminole woman poles past a billboard advertising the sale of reclaimed land, circa 1920.



(top photo) Lawrence E. Will Museum of the Glades/Glades Historical Society; (bottom photo) Library of Congress
Above, a trip to "Upper Everglade Rich Farm Lands" is advertised on a boat, circa 1919. Below, Alligator hunting on the Tomoka River bank, circa 1880-1897.



Documentary: Human hands shaped Everglades, and thus Florida

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

Florida is a big and complex state with a big and complex history. And any conversation about that history and its complexity can't happen without a hefty nod to one of its most profound features — the Florida Everglades.

"The Swamp" documentary considers in detail the Everglades, which are comprised of tropical wetlands and act as a large drainage basin — part of the "neotropic eozone." The system begins near Orlando at the Kissimmee River and discharges into the vast and shallow Lake Okeechobee.

The documentary analyzes the history of the Everglades, man's attempt to "tame" it, and how that's shaped Florida. It is

scheduled to premiere on PBS on Jan. 15.

"The Swamp tells a dramatic and sweeping story about the attempt of humans to drain and conquer the Florida Everglades, known as one of nature's most mysterious and unique ecosystems," read a statement from American Experience, the creators of the documentary.

Filmmakers tell the story through the lives of a "handful of colorful and resolute characters, from hucksters to politicians to unlikely activists." One of those activists is Miccosukee Tribal member Betty Osceola.

"The best way it could be for the environment was how the creator originally intended it to be," Osceola said in the documentary. "But the white man came and thought he knew better."

Osceola, a member of the Panther Clan, also has connections to the Seminole Tribe

as her late mother, Mary Billie, was an enrolled member. Osceola has siblings who are Seminole as well.

Osceola consults with the Miccosukee Tribe on environmental and cultural issues and she and her spouse also operate an airboat tour company within the Miccosukee Indian Reservation, located in the Everglades.

The Seminoles and their connection to Florida and the Everglades are also explored in the film.

"To many, expanding efforts to drain the Everglades were signs of progress. To others, they were a menacing intrusion. In the early 1800s, the Seminole had found refuge from encroaching white settlement in the Everglades, fighting a series of bitter wars to resist removal from Florida. By the early 20th century, dredges crisscrossing the wetlands had upended the Seminole's way

of life," the filmmaker's statement said.

"The Swamp" further explores the repeated efforts to transform what had been seen as a vast and useless wasteland into an agricultural and urban paradise, ultimately leading to a successful campaign to preserve at least part of America's greatest wetland.

The documentary is especially apropos in light of Florida's recent hurricanes and worldwide climate change events.

"The Swamp tells an epic tale of man's never-ending attempt to control nature," said American Experience executive producer Mark Samels in a statement. "The story of the repeated efforts to tame the Everglades — and the often deadly results of those attempts — is a particularly cautionary tale in these days of increasingly violent natural disasters."

The film is partly based on the book

"The Swamp: The Everglades, Florida, and the Politics of Paradise" by Michael Grunwald.

The Swamp is scheduled to air from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. (EST). In addition, it will be available on DVD from PBS Distribution and can be purchased at shoppbs.org. Online viewing begins Jan. 16 at pbs.org.

"The Swamp" is one of three back-to-back "man vs. nature" American Experience episodes in January. Viewers can also watch encore broadcasts of "The Big Burn" (Jan. 22) and "Surviving the Dust Bowl" (Jan. 29).

American Experience has been one of television's most-watched history series for 30 years.

More information is available at pbs.org/americanexperience. A trailer of "The Swamp" is available on the site.

New Hard Rock Cafe opens at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood

BY DERRICK TIGER
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — The new Hard Rock Cafe at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood is the first model of the company's strategy to revamp its restaurants design. A grand opening, featuring Seminole Tribe leaders, was held Nov. 27. The restaurant debuted along with a finished area of the new casino floor, all part of the massive expansion project on the property.

The new 10,000-square foot cafe seats more than 250. The open floor plan puts the kitchen and its 7-foot artisanal brick oven in full view from almost anywhere in the restaurant. The walls are adorned with rock and roll memorabilia, a defining theme of Hard Rock that has been a tradition since 1979.

Hard Rock Cafe's menu includes some new additions including steak burgers made fresh daily in a new meat grinding room. The triangle bar is the center of attention as guests enter the restaurant. A redesigned Rock Shop where customers can purchase Hard Rock souvenirs and apparel is adjacent to the cafe.

The grand opening marked another step closer to the completion of Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood's \$1.5 billion expansion.

"We're probably about 45 to 50 percent of the way up in the tower with the glass going on. We are on schedule. We will be opening the guitar tower in the fall of 2019, but because this is a commitment to a long-term business philosophy we're going



Seminole Tribe leaders and Hard Rock executives celebrate the grand opening of a new Hard Rock Cafe on Nov. 27 at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood. From left, Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger, Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola, Jr., Stephen K. Judge, president of Hard Rock Cafe operations; President Mitchell Cypress, Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola; Back row, from left: Jim Allen, chairman, Hard Rock International and CEO, Seminole Gaming, and Jon Lucas, COO Hard Rock International.

to simultaneously renovate the existing structure from top to bottom," said Jim Allen, chairman of Hard Rock International and CEO of Seminole Gaming.

Due to the renovation some of the amenities in the original hotel building will be closed.

The grand opening, which featured

the traditional guitar smash, was attended by Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr., President Mitchell Cypress, Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger, Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola and other Tribal members.



Hard Rock Cafe's new triangle-shaped bar.



A drum set from the Goo Goo Dolls' Craig Macintyre is among the rock 'n roll memorabilia on display at the new Hard Rock Cafe in Hollywood.

'Seminole Art Scene from the Frontlines' highlights History Fort Lauderdale VIP event

FROM PRESS RELEASE

FORT LAUDERDALE — History Fort Lauderdale presented its first Art Basel VIP event Dec. 2 as part of "Seminole Art Scene from the Frontlines." The contemporary fine art exhibit honors the history of Fort Lauderdale and the legacy of Seminole Tribe ancestors. It features works from Elgin Jumper, Jimmy Osceola,

Jessica Osceola, Gordon Oliver Wareham, Brian Zepeda, Erica Deitz, Samuel Tommie and Stephanie Hall. The VIP event at the New River Inn at History Fort Lauderdale included an artist meet and greet, a gallery tour and a projection performance piece by Elgin Jumper. A panel discussion titled the "State of the Native Art Scene" was moderated by Adrienne Chadwick. The art exhibition runs through Jan. 28.



From left, Samuel Tommie (artist), Tara Chadwick (curator), Jessica Osceola (artist/ curator) and Jimmy Osceola (artist/ curator) with works by Jimmy Osceola in the background: 'Life in the Glades,' 'Breathmaker,' and 'Going Home.' The works are on view at History Fort Lauderdale through Jan. 28.



At left, 'Seminole Art Scene From the Frontlines' artist Brian Zepeda with his work 'Bandolier Bag' on loan from the collection of Ross Zepeda. At right, Gordon Wareham shares Native American flute music as part of the exhibition opening Dec. 2. Below, prior to the Projection Performance, Elgin Jumper shows Gordon Wareham, Stephanie Gabrielle Sneed and Jimmy Osceola some metal tabletop sculptures (studies) he's been working on.



♦ MEDIA COVERAGE From page 2A

The media need to be steadfast in not solely focusing on crime involving indigenous people, said Tristan Ahtone, the president of

the Native American Journalist Association. In fact, his organization recently produced a bingo card for "reporting in Indian County." All the clichés to avoid are listed, everything from "casino" to "diabetes," from "dancing" to "broken families," from "references to ancestors" to "something 'sacred.'" "Generally, when we're looking at non-

native media coverage on issues in Indian Country, the big problem is they don't do three-dimensional stories," Ahtone told us. "Typically, it's something really negative and bleak. Sometimes, in stories, the bingo card gets blacked out. The card is tongue-in-cheek, but helps reporters notice their rhetorical biases."

Don't misunderstand: Neither the UIHI nor Ahtone want to see non-Native American media outlets stop reporting on missing and murdered indigenous women. But what advocates would just like is more nuanced and balanced depictions of the community as a whole.

Just as law enforcement agencies must

be held accountable to help make sure underreporting cases of violence against Native American women does not continue, so, too, does mass media need to be vigilant in depicting life on and off the reservation in all its facets.

Sports



Ahfachkee girls, boys open basketball season

New head coach leads both teams

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

BIG CYPRESS — The Ahfachkee School opened its high school basketball season Dec. 5 with competitive games in a doubleheader against Donahue Academy of Ave Maria, but the Warriors came up short in both games.

In the first game, the Ahfachkee girls erased a 20-point deficit and led by one point with four minutes left in the game before Donahue surged ahead for a 65-60 win.

In the nightcap, the Ahfachkee boys trailed by as many as 14 points, but rallied to trim the deficit to five with less than four minutes left before the Warriors ran out of steam and out of players in a 59-50 loss.

The games marked the debut of Greg Stephens as head coach for both the Ahfachkee girls and boys teams. Stephens has previous coaching experience in Kentucky.

With small roster numbers, neither team has much depth on the bench. In fact, for practices, the girls and boys usually face each other because there's just not enough bodies.

"We're making it work out. It's not just me and the coaches; the kids are playing a part in it and making it work," Stephens said. "We weren't even sure we were going to have a program, and they're making it work."

Ahfachkee's girls featured a balanced scoring attack led by Alena Stockton with 22 points. Carlise Bermudez, Lele Gopher and Abby Tigertail each had 10 points. Donahue's Diondra Homer led all scorers with 27 points while Kellyanne Scanlan had 13 points.

After some early nerves wore off, Ahfachkee looked much sharper in the second half.

"We missed a lot of easy layups early, but once we started hitting them we were in."



Ahfachkee's Aleah Billie (00) and Carlise Bermudez provide tough defense against Donahue Academy in the Lady Warriors' season opener Dec. 5 at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium in Big Cypress.

In the boys game, Ahfachkee only had six players to begin the game — compared to 11 for Donahue — and the Warriors were down to four players in the final two minutes after two players fouled out.

Even before playing short-handed, Ahfachkee showed signs of weariness as a five-point halftime deficit ballooned to 13 early in the third quarter. But Ahfachkee found its groove from beyond the arc and made a run thanks to three consecutive 3-pointers (two by Les Gopher, one by Jeremiah Pickup) to get to within four points in the fourth quarter. Hopes of a comeback were dashed with foul trouble. Chanon Frye, who was a force at both ends of the court, fouled out with four minutes left and Pickup joined him on the bench two minutes later.

"Not enough numbers," Stephens said. "I thought we got tired. I thought we hung with them, we really played well with them. Until right there at the end, it was mostly a 5-point game."

Even though his team didn't win its season opener, Stephens saw plenty of positive things, including a determined effort from start to finish.

"I like that they didn't quit. I can live with any team and any loss as long as my guys don't quit and they keep playing hard," he said.

With a combination of scoring from inside and outside, Gopher led Ahfachkee with 22 points. Frye and Pickup each had 10 points. Quintin Fairchild was Donahue's top scorer with 19 points.

As for classification this year, Ahfachkee's boys team is in the Florida High School Athletic Association's Class 2A-District 7 with Atlantic Christian, Donna Klein, Glades Day, Grandview Prep, Hollywood Christian and Sheridan Hills Christian.

The girls are also in 2A-7, but with a smaller group that includes Atlantic Christian, Donna Klein, Glades Day and Grandview Prep.



Ahfachkee's Alena Stockton scores two of her 22 points against Donahue Academy on Dec. 5 at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium in Big Cypress. Donahue won 65-60.



Ahfachkee's Les Gopher tries to start a fastbreak against Donahue Academy on Dec. 5 at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium in Big Cypress.



Ahfachkee's Chanon Frye controls the ball during the Warriors' season opener against Donahue Academy on Dec. 5 at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium in Big Cypress.



Ahfachkee's Lele Gopher tries to wrestle the ball from Donahue Academy's Kellyanne Scanlan.



Ahfachkee's Carlise Bermudez scores on a layup against Donahue Academy.



Ahfachkee coach Greg Stephens gets his boys team ready to face Donahue Academy on Dec. 5 at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium in Big Cypress. From left are Les Gopher, Damien Fish, Dyami Koenes and William Smith. Donahue won 59-50. Stephens also coaches Ahfachkee's girls team.

Speedy PECS teams off to solid starts

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

BRIGHTON — It's an annual rite of passage: middle school basketball teams say goodbye to their 8th-graders who move on to high school. The replenishing crop that returns the following year can contain plenty of unknowns, but for this year's Pema yetv Emahakv Charter School boys and girls teams, two things are known. They are both fast and play tenacious defense.

"We're faster than last year, but last year we had a lot of bigs; this year we have a lot of speed," boys coach Preston Baker said after his team defeated West Glades on December 12.

Just how fast are the boys. Consider they were ahead by seven points at halftime before they accelerated into a higher gear in the second half. The result was a bevy of West Glades turnovers and a 30-point win, 56-26.

"I told them they took this team lightly and that you can't do that," Baker said.

Baker has a veteran squad with eight 8th-graders, but it was 7th-grade speedy guards Aundre Baker (16 points) and Bryce Baker (12 points) who led the team against West Glades. Eighth-grade guard Bryce Ward also contributed 12 points and Wyatt Hines had six points.

On the girls side, Jewel Buck is settling into her first year as head coach in fine fashion. The girls won two of their first three games, including a comfortable win against West Glades.

Buck was a standout player with the Tribe when she played in high school and college. She never thought she would be a head coach, but is glad to be at the helm after a couple years as an assistant on a team that went 25-3 and won two conference championships the past two years.

Her first team as head coach is a young bunch with just three 8th-graders (Javale Anderson, Giselle Micco and Shylynn Testerman).

"It's a wonderful experience. I'm learning right along with them," Buck said.

With six players from grade six, there's bound to be some growing pains along the way, but Buck said she's impressed by the squad's enthusiasm.

"I love that they're ready to go and jump in there. They want to play. I love that they're learning together as well," she said.

They are also learning to win together. PECS' defense suffocated West Glades on the way to a 33-15 win. Micco led the team with 12 points followed by Jana Johnson with nine and Carlee Osceola and Preslynn Baker with six each.



Pema yetv Emahakv Charter School girls coach Jewel Buck and boys coach Preston Baker guide their teams to victories Dec. 12 against West Glades Middle School.



Kevin Johnson

2018-19 PECS Boys Basketball

Head coach: Preston Baker
Charlie Armstrong
Aundre Baker
Bryce Baker
Pherian Baker
Jarrett Beecham
Liviticus Berry
Jace Brown
Wyatt Hines
Jordan Johnson
David King
Bryce Ward

2018-19 PECS Girls Basketball

Head coach: Jewel Buck
Javale Anderson
TT Anderson
Preslynn Baker
Willo James
Jana Johnson
Neela Jones
Cakiyah Koger
Candice Melton
Giselle Micco
Carlee Osceola
Shylynn Testerman
Nena Youngblood



Kevin Johnson

Bryce Ward scores two of his 12 points on this layup against West Glades on Dec. 12.



Kevin Johnson

Carlee Osceola leads a fastbreak for the Pema yetv Emahakv Charter School girls basketball team Dec. 12 against West Glades. PECS won 33-15.



Kevin Johnson

Wyatt Hines takes a short jump shot against West Glades.



Kevin Johnson

Cakiyah Koger, left, and Giselle Micco provide tough defense in the Lady Warriors' win against West Glades.



Kevin Johnson

Preslynn Baker dribbles away from traffic in a middle school girls game against West Glades on Dec. 12.



Kevin Johnson

Pherian Baker forces a turnover against West Glades.

Brighton fills up the court for Moore Haven, Okeechobee

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

MOORE HAVEN — Most high school-aged kids in Brighton either head northeast to attend Okeechobee High or south to attend Moore Haven High.

So when those schools meet on a basketball court, as the boys teams did Dec. 3 at a packed Moore Haven gym, there's bound to be familiar faces from the reservation facing each other.

Okeechobee, which has one of its strongest varsity teams ever, pulled away from a determined Moore Haven squad, 71-57. The Brahms, who feature guards Lucas Osceola and Silas Madrigal, were 9-1 before the holiday break.

Earlier, Okeechobee defeated Moore Haven in the junior varsity game. Leon Edouard poured in nine points for Okeechobee and Dakoya Nunez had three.

Sandwiched between the boys games was Moore Haven's girls varsity game against LaBelle, which the Terriers won 51-49. A trio of Seminoles led Moore Haven as Caroline Sweat scored a team-high 19 points followed by Alicia Fudge with 16 points and Burgundy Pierce with 11 points. All three players took command in the fourth quarter. Each scored five points in the last quarter that was close right up until the buzzer. Freshman Tafv Harris, who was a standout at Pemayetv Emahav last season, hit a 3-pointer.

After the victory, Moore Haven dropped three games in a row, but bounced back before the holiday break with two wins against Marco Island Academy and one against Seacrest.

Okeechobee will host the Moore Haven girls on Jan. 7.



Kevin Johnson

Moore Haven girls varsity's Caroline Sweat, Alicia Fudge and Burgundy Pierce take part in the pregame officials meeting before facing LaBelle on Dec. 3 at Moore Haven High School.



Kevin Johnson

Okeechobee varsity guards Silas Madrigal, left, and Lucas Osceola get ready to face Moore Haven on Dec. 3.



Kevin Johnson

Okeechobee's Dakoya Nunez heads toward the lane in a JV game against Moore Haven.



Kevin Johnson

Okeechobee's Silas Madrigal, right, battles for a rebound against Moore Haven in a varsity game.



Kevin Johnson

Moore Haven's Aleke Baker drives to the basket for a layup against Okeechobee in a varsity game.



Kevin Johnson

Moore Haven's Alicia Fudge gets ready to lay in two points against LaBelle in a varsity girls game.



Kevin Johnson

Moore Haven guard Ramone Baker controls the ball in a JV game against Okeechobee.



Kevin Johnson

Moore Haven's Tafv Harris launches a 3-pointer against LaBelle in a girls varsity game.



Kevin Johnson

Moore Haven's Jayton Baker shows good patience in the lane as he eyes the hoop in a varsity game against Okeechobee.



Kevin Johnson

Okeechobee's Malcolm Jones shakes hands with Moore Haven players after the Brahms defeated the Terriers in a JV game.



Kevin Johnson

Okeechobee's Lucas Osceola splits Moore Haven defenders, including Todd Pierce, at left, in a varsity game.



Kevin Johnson

Moore Haven's Caroline Sweat clutches the ball while battling LaBelle in a girls varsity game.



Kevin Johnson

Moore Haven's Jaytron Baker puts up a shot against Okeechobee in a JV game.

Seniors bask in the fun of Trike Fest

Big Cypress team captures championship

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Seniors from Big Cypress, Brighton and Hollywood sparred on the tarmac at the Big Cypress aviation hanger Dec. 7 for the 13th annual Trike Fest. The good-natured competition was fierce as seniors vied for position in the drag race, relay race, cone weave, maze and other challenging events on tricycles.

"It's nice to see the seniors compete," said Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger. "All Seminoles in general are very competitive by nature, so we like to compete against each other."

Fitting for the event's theme, Super Heroes, 37 seniors of all ages showed their super determination and skills on three wheels. Teams from each reservation wore different colored T-shirts and showed their solidarity by cheering for teammates.

"It's nice to see old friends," said Jonah Cypress of BC.

After a warm-up in the hanger, everyone headed out to the runway for the big drag race. Although there were no sounds of engines revving, this was a serious competition and seniors of all ages gave it their all.

"Competition is a good thing," said Esther Buster of BC. "I want to keep my reservation on top."

Buster did what she could to help her team, including strategically bouncing a tennis ball off the floor so it would bounce onto the target for the target toss. The move was legal, yet calculated.

Not every senior had to ride a trike to compete; some showed their skills in the target toss and ladder ball.

"Everything is challenging, which is a good thing," said President Mitchell Cypress, who did a fair share of practicing before the event. "We all enjoyed the day and had a good time."

Medals on beaded necklaces were awarded to winners in each event, Super Seniors, Golden Seniors and Diamond Seniors. Trophies were also awarded. The best dressed biker was Mabel Tichenor of Brighton; best decorated bike was BC's with their Batmobile, complete with the caped crusader himself; and the overall winning team was BC.

For the first time, guava sofkee was served along with breakfast and lunch. The sofkee was a group effort; Jennifer Billie of BC Culture made the sofkee using Truvia instead of sugar and the guavas were courtesy of Edna McDuffie. A special treat for dessert came courtesy of Lorraine Posada, who made a batch of rich chocolate covered red velvet truffles.



Beverly Bidney

As the puzzle master, Carol Cypress served as anchor of the relay race for the Big Cypress team during Trike Fest on Dec. 7 in Big Cypress. By day's end, the team won the relay and the title of best overall team.



Beverly Bidney

Minnie Tigertail chooses a beaded necklace that holds her medal for participating in Trike Fest Dec. 7.



Beverly Bidney

Rosie Grant, at right, speeds past Mary Tigertail as they pedal their hardest down the Big Cypress aviation runway during Trike Fest on Dec. 7.



Beverly Bidney

Mahala Madrigal gives it her all as she navigates the cones to complete the cone weave without touching one during Trike Fest.



Beverly Bidney

A group of helmeted bikers from the BC team await their turns to compete in the drag race on the runway during Trike Fest.



Beverly Bidney

If his Santa hat topped cowboy hat is any indication; Richard Bowers is definitely in the holiday mood.



Beverly Bidney

Members of the Big Cypress Trike Fest team gather around their winning decorated trike. The team also won the trophy for overall winner.



Beverly Bidney

President Mitchell Cypress uses the drive-through to get his steaming cup of guava sofkee served by Lorraine Posada at Trike Fest.

Co-ed teams hit the floor in Brighton tournament

BRIGHTON — The Chairman's Co-ed 4-on-4 Volleyball Tournament attracted about 20 teams to the Brighton Recreation gymnasium Nov. 16.

The floor was divided into two courts so games could take place simultaneously. The youth portion, which had about 16 teams, was held in the afternoon followed by the adults in the evening.

Many teams featured two males and two females.



Kevin Johnson

Malakai Garland delivers a serve during the Chairman's Co-ed Volleyball Tournament at the Brighton Recreation gym Nov. 16.



Kevin Johnson

TT Anderson lines up a serve during the tournament.



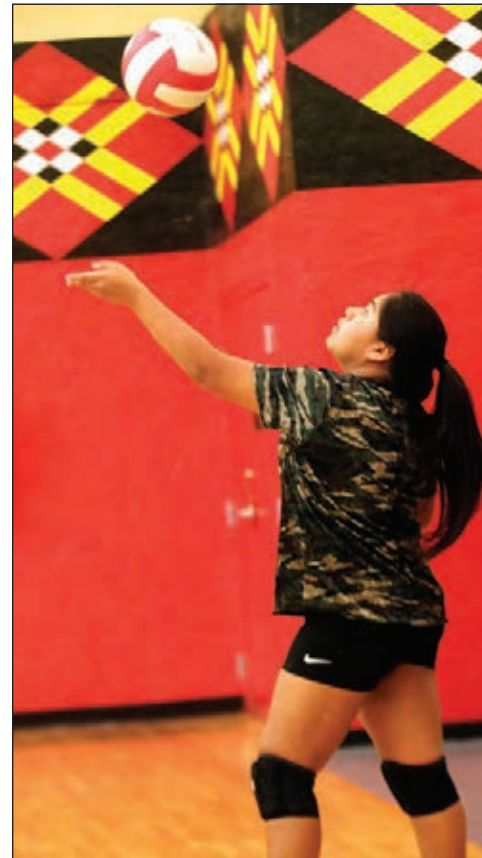
Kevin Johnson

Cordelia Snell sets the ball while teammates Naleah Billie, J.B Anderson and Preslynn Baker look on during the Chairman's Co-ed Volleyball Tournament in Brighton.



Kevin Johnson

Ramone Baker sends the ball across the net as teammate Kamani Smith looks on. Their team won their age group.



Kevin Johnson

Neela Jones keeps her eyes on the ball while delivering a serve.

Czech Republic's Pavel Plesuv wins poker title worth \$504,820

FROM PRESS RELEASE

HOLLYWOOD — At the conclusion of the Seminole Hard Rock "Rock 'N' Roll Poker Open (RRPO), Pavel Plesuv of Prague, Czech Republic walked away with \$504,820 after winning first place in the \$3,500 World Poker Tour (WPT) Championship. Plesuv bested 898 total entries in the series finale, taking home the trophy and a \$15,000 WPT Tournament of Champions entry in what marked the largest Championship tournament in RRPO history.

"The tournament was great," Plesuv said. "I really liked the structure. The field was big and it had great organization. The property is great, too."

Plesuv hails from Maldiva but now resides in Prague. He has been a professional poker player for 10 years and this score marks his third-largest career cash. Previously, he claimed three other tournament titles and finished runner-up at WPT Prague in 2015.

"I was heads-up in WPT Prague three years ago with a big chip lead," Plesuv said. "I lost. So I'm really excited to come back and win."

Championship Final Table Results:

- 1st: Pavel Plesuv (Prague, Czech Republic) \$504,820
- 2nd: James Gilbert (Philadelphia, Pa.) \$326,565
- 3rd: Jeremy Joseph (Buffalo, N.Y.) \$240,945
- 4th: Marius Gierse (Vienna, Austria) \$179,710
- 5th: Christopher Kennedy (Harrisburg, Pa.) \$135,505
- 6th: Ravi Raghavan (Northbrook, Ill.) \$103,310

The 19-tournament RRPO kicked off Nov. 14 with a \$360 buy-in Ultimate Re-Entry. The series opener drew 4,558 entries easily surpassing the \$1,000,000 guaranteed prize pool.

Poker action will return to Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Hollywood, Fla. in the new year with the Seminole Hard Rock Poker Lucky Hearts Poker Open (LHPO) on Jan. 10- 22, 2019, headlined by the Ultimate Re-Entry series opener with a \$500,000 Guarantee and the WPT DeepStacks Championship boasting a \$1 Million Guarantee.

Future tournament information and poker hotel rates are available at SHRPO.com.



Eric Harkins/IMPDI

Pavel Plesuv of Prague, Czech Republic won the World Poker Tour (WPT) Championship in November at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood.

Jingle Bell Jog 5K in Hollywood



Derrick Tiger

Youngsters get ready to take part in the Jingle Bell Jog 5K run/walk Dec. 19 on the Hollywood Reservation.



Derrick Tiger

Patrick Doctor shows the Christmas spirit by wearing a Santa hat in the Jingle Bell Jog.

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A Seminole Warrior on a Modern-Day Battlefield Park

A SHORT STORY BY ELGIN JUMPER

Lyncoya and his family had been touring the Loxahatchee battlefield on their own for two hours, being ever-respectful of the clash which had occurred there some one-hundred and fifty-eight years before, when, all of a sudden, Lyncoya heard the Seminole warriors' sad sounds of despair and pain from behind a large ancient oak tree.

"He's hurt," Lyncoya said, "See, look, he has a wound in his side." Now, of course, Lyncoya was concerned for the safety of him and his family - that is, his father, his mother, his brother and sister - but something inside him told him to help the Seminole warrior.

"Here, help me get him up and lean him against the tree," Lyncoya's father urged. "That wound doesn't look so bad from here. I think he's trying to figure out how he got here, as we are. . . Fair enough."

Lyncoya's father, a writer, had been working a modern-day Seminole myth, laboring for days and days over it, trying to get his imaginative inspirations going. He had been trying so hard to conjure up a Seminole warrior into his imagination, with few results when he had the wonderful idea to take his family to the nearest historic Seminole Battlefield park. But he hadn't factored in the fact that a real Seminole warrior from the past might miss his mark - his father's imagination - and land on an actual battlefield from the past. But there the Seminole warrior was moaning and groaning, snatched up from the past.

Lyncoya offered the Seminole warrior bottled water, even demonstrated how to drink from it, and the Seminole warrior had learned quickly and had downed the entire bottle, as if it were renewing, healing waters. Groups of visitors were passing by

and looking over, their expressions that of astonishment. Some had their smartphones in hand, taking videos which were speedily uploaded to YouTube. The Seminole warrior, with battle-seasoned eye, had on a weathered ruffled shirt of calico material, dark red, and he wore breech-cloth, leggings, and moccasins. He had an old tattered turban, also dark red, but it lay cold on the ground beside him. His hair was black and tangled and drenched in battle sweat. But Lyncoya and his family were undisturbed by his appearance, quite inclined to render him assistance if at all possible.

"Are you okay," Lyncoya asked "Do you understand?"

Lyncoya leaned in. The Seminole warrior did not respond, for he only had looks of misunderstanding.

"Is- Is he a battle reenactor, dad?" Lyncoya inquired.

"Well, he's a real Seminole warrior, I'll give him that,"

Lyncoya's father said. And then he added, "Hey, I've been looking for a Seminole warrior for my modern-day myth book, remember, and now this happens. . ."

Word had spread quickly throughout the battlefield park. The electronic grapevine of social media had made known that there was a Seminole warrior on-site somehow yanked from the past, hurled into the here and now and was being helped by a Seminole family, according to Facebook and Twitter. They claimed the Seminole warrior was bad hurt, but bottled water and picnic food were reviving him and the Seminole boy Lyncoya was the driving force behind the Seminole warrior's recovery.

"So much time has passed since the wars" Lyncoya declared. "We must help the Seminole warrior."

By now a large group had gathered and the Seminole warrior's presence had

become a wide-spread sensation on the interwebs. A good number of visitors to the battlefield were taking selfies with the Seminole warrior. Historians, Archeologist, Anthropologists, wanted to work with him. A movie director/ producer wanted him for her next project. A myriad of companies wanted him to endorse their products, cars, etcetera . . . Lyncoya was all smiles, his eyes alight, so proud of his new-found concern, who, at this time, was applying medicinal plant life to his cuts and bruises. Then Lyncoya heard the Seminole warrior utter something in his native language, which he couldn't understand.

Several drones had come up onto the scene, Lyncoya noted, and were evidently video-taping the Seminole warrior. Lyncoya alerted him and pointed up at them. The Seminole warrior was astonished to see them, having no concept of the technologies of the modern-day. Lyncoya then got the idea of hiring a photographer and charging a fee to have a picture taken with a real Seminole warrior and then donating the proceeds to the battlefield society for the preservation and upkeep of the historic site.

With the funds, the battlefields society would put up Seminole huts at strategic locations throughout the park, helping to facilitate the storytelling of the historic battle. Lyncoya then became the Seminole warrior's public relations director and began arranging press conferences and photo shoots. He needed all manner of acting and vocal lessons, Lyncoya reasoned, etiquette lessons and whatnot. Then the entire battlefield park started to glow with enthusiasm, with excitement. People came from all over the globe to learn firsthand of the battle. Lyncoya and the Seminole warrior became fixtures on the Loxahatchee Battlefield Park.

They got to know all the leading

battle reenactors of the day and worked closely with them on staging the best possible reenactments ever. News of these developments spread far and wide and the number of visitors increased exponentially, spilling past boundaries and halting all traffic on nearby roads. But Lyncoya could tell the Seminole warrior was missing something, his home and family, perhaps, and he didn't feel right without them.

Lyncoya noticed the Seminole warrior would disappear into the forests sometimes, as if into a dreamy mist, but would soon mysteriously reappear and with a different shirt or turban and plume. He was careful not to let on that anything was going on, that something was up and that things might soon change, as was the case in all things.

And then one day, as Lyncoya sat listening to the wind rustling through the trees, he swore he could discern a battle

raging in the top branches and leaves. Such an uproar in the ancient trees. And then the Seminole warrior was looking up, tears rolling down his cheeks. He pointed towards the ancient oak tree, where Lyncoya had first hear him groaning in despair. The Seminole warrior patted Lyncoya's shoulder, brushed the boys hair back with his palm, and then began walking towards the ancient oak.

Lyncoya knew the Seminole warrior had to return someday to his own time and place, though he would rather have adopted him into his family. He watched the Seminole warrior walk away till he got to the old tree and then in a magical mystical flash, which all present witnessed in awe and wonder, the Seminole warrior was gone, back into the past from whence he had come, the whole scene drenched in a warm, scintillating light.

THE END



Elgin Jumper

Courtesy photo

Big Cypress employees holiday party



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Eastern Regional Office
545 Marriot Drive, Suite 700
Nashville, TN 37214

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

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs

ACTION: Notice of Availability

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Eastern Regional Office has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the proposed BIA approvals needed for the removal and replacement of the HP-5 Culvert associated with the Herbert Hoover Dike (HHD) located on the Seminole Tribe of Florida's (Tribe) Brighton Reservation. The lead federal agency for the project is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the HP-5 Culvert project is just one of many critical maintenance projects needed to ensure the HHD meets safety standards. The culverts are needed for dike stability within the HHD system and the current conditions pose an immediate and significant risk of failure due to the loss of embankment material. Since the needed repairs to the HP-5 Culvert will be occurring on the Tribe's Brighton Reservation, there are approvals needed by BIA before the USACE can move forward with this critical project. Due to the need for federal approvals, this project was reviewed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act.

In order to determine the environmental impacts associated with the project in accordance with NEPA, BIA has reviewed and adopted the following documents:

- Environmental Assessment (EA) and all supporting documentation, dated May 2011, titled "Herbert Hoover Dike Culvert Replacement and Removal" prepared by USACE
- Finding of No Significant Impact, issued on May 13, 2011 by USACE for the Herbert Hoover Dike Culvert Replacement and Removal.
- Seminole Tribe of Florida's Environmental Resource Management Department Environmental Compliance Review [FERMD-08-2018-012(096)]
- Seminole Tribe of Florida's Environmental Resource Management Department Environmental Compliance Review [FERMD-07-2017-010412]

NOTICE: This is a Notice of Availability, that the Environmental Assessment, Environmental Compliance Reviews, supporting documentation and FONSI for the project are available for public review. The FONSI is a finding on environmental effects, not a decision to proceed with an action; therefore cannot be appealed.

For further information please contact Chet McGhee, Regional Environmental Scientist, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Eastern Regional Office, 545 Marriot Drive, Suite 700, Nashville, TN 37214, telephone (615) 564-6500.

Bruce W. Maytubby, Sr.
Bruce W. Maytubby, Sr.
Regional Director ACTING

NOV 29 2018

Date

FOR SALE

LAST SIX OF VIN#	YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILEAGE/ HRS	CONDITION	STARTING BID PRICE
720061	2006	CLUB CAR GOLF CART	VILLAGER - 8	N/A	Poor	\$544.00
A55627	2003	FORD PICKUP TRUCK	XL F150 REGULAR CAB (4WD)	83,210	Poor	\$1,518.00
230982	N/A	JOHN DEERE TRACTOR W/GRAPPLE	5310 & 540 LOADER & 78" GRAPPLE	1591 HRS	Poor	\$3,381.00
B17915	2006	FORD PICKUP TRUCK	F150 XLT SUPERCREW (4WD)	195,196	Poor	\$3,355.00

Note - Previously advertised items are not reflected on this advertisement, only new listings. For more information contact Fixed Assets Dept. 954-966-6300 ext. 20034.

NEW!! - Tribal Members only- access this information at the website: <http://semtribe.com/FixedAssets>. (Registration required)



Theodore Nelson Sr.

Licensed Clinical Social Worker, SW5813, Indian Child Welfare Consultant-Expert, Board Member National Indian Child Welfare Association, Licensed and Insured, Seminole Health Plan Provider

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