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Natives call for Lolita's return

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

A 16-foot totem pole depicting the orca Tokitae made its way from Bellingham, Washington, to Miami in May, pausing at many stops along the way, including at Big Cypress.

The totem was part of a trek of Lummi Nation tribal leaders, tribal members and their supporters – including some Seminole and Miccosukee – to bring attention to the Lummi's request that the orca (or killer whale) at the Miami Seaquarium known as Lolita, be returned to the Salish Sea where she was captured decades ago.

"It is our sacred obligation to bring our sister, Tokitae, home to the Salish Sea to be with her family," Lummi Chairman Jay Julius said in a statement. "Tokitae was stolen from her family, from her people so many years ago. She is a precious part of our family and important to the Salish Sea ecosystem. We must bring her home to be safely reunited with her family."

Seaquarium officials say Lolita has received excellent care during her years in captivity since 1970, where she performs in shows. In a statement provided to The Seminole Tribune, Eric A. Eimstad, Seaquarium general manager, said Lolita would not be released.

"Miami Seaquarium has the utmost respect for the Lummi Nation and the services that the Lummi Business Council provides to its people. However, the members of the Lummi Business Council are not marine mammal experts and are misguided when they offer a proposal that is not in the best interest of Lolita the orca," Eimstad said.

Strategy, legal challenges

Lummi officials say they have a well thought out plan for Lolita's return to the Pacific Northwest, so she can live out her remaining years safely and in comfort. "We're not just going to take her back and dump her in the ocean," Lummi Councilmember Fred Lane told The Seminole Tribune.

Lane said the Lummi's have a "retirement plan," for Lolita, who is close to 50 years old, in concert with The Orca Network and other groups. It is part of a \$3.5 million project that

♦ See LOLITA'S RETURN on page 4A

Alex Johns named Florida Cattlemen's Association president

Johns is first Native American to lead the organization

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

ORLANDO — A new chapter has been added to the Seminole Tribe's storied history in the cattle industry. Tribal member Alex Johns was named president of the Florida Cattlemen's Association at its annual convention June 21 in Orlando.

Johns is the first Native American to lead the nearly 5,000-member organization.

"My family can trace its roots to 1541 when the cattle came to Florida," Johns, of the Brighton Reservation, said in his address to the convention. "Cattle and horses have always been a way of life for me. Cows always made sure we had money and food on the table. I've always been searching for a way to give back to the magical animal who gave so much to me."

During his one year term of office, Johns, who also serves as the Tribe's natural resources director, plans to promote the Florida cattle industry to create public awareness. The slogan is "Show Your Passion" and he wants every member of the FCA to embrace it.

"I know we are all humble and want to keep our heads in the woods, but the new social media is where millennials get their news," he said. "We as an industry have to get there as well. I want you to post the stuff you do every day at #showyourpassion. Tag me. This is the most efficient way to promote our industry."

The announcement got the attention of the estimated 2,000 conventioners and with enthusiastic applause, they welcomed their new president.

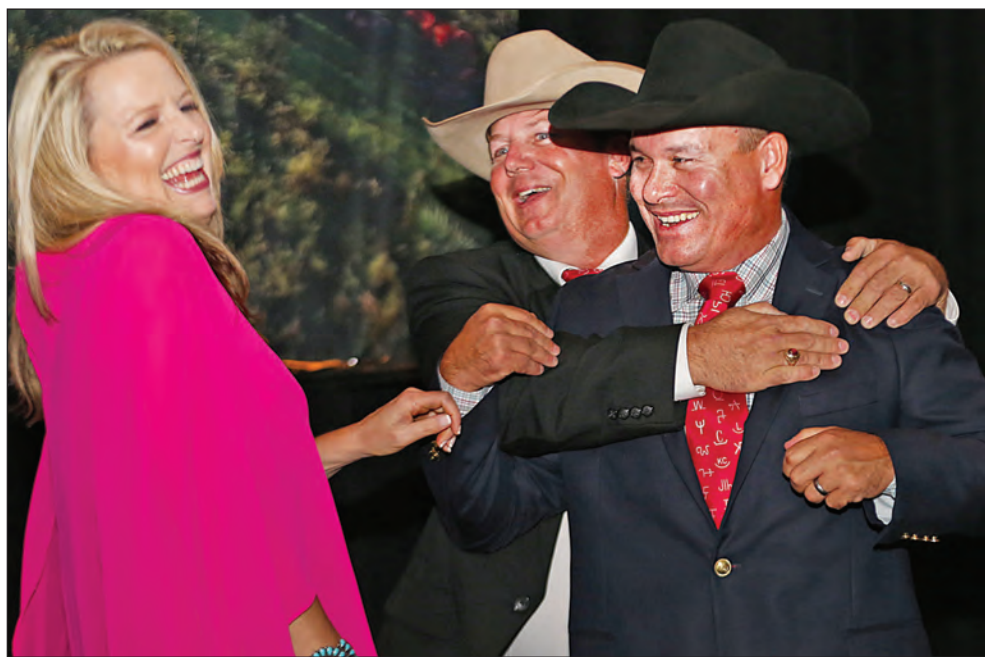
Seminole Tribal Board members Larry Howard, Joe Frank and Gordon Wareham attended the convention's banquet.

"It is a privilege for someone of Alex's caliber to represent the Tribe as the president of the FCA," said Howard, Brighton Board Rep. "For him to have that input in the state on behalf of the Tribe, we couldn't have anyone better."

"This is an exciting time for the Tribe," added Frank, Big Cypress Rep. "This will



Alex Johns addresses the Florida Cattlemen's Association as president for the first time at its annual convention and banquet June 21 in Orlando. He is the first Native American to lead the nearly 5,000-member organization.



Alex Johns gets a congratulatory hug from the newly elected secretary of FCA Pat Durden to the delight of his wife Liz after the FCA speeches concluded.

open the way for other Tribal members to go out for other state leadership positions. It's a good example for our youth."

The Florida cattle industry began in the 1500s when Spanish explorers brought the animals across the Atlantic. Native Americans' involvement can be traced to 1740s and the Seminole leader Cowkeeper's massive herds in northern Florida. By 1775, the Seminoles worked 7,000 to 10,000 head on Paynes Prairie near Gainesville and were cattle keepers until the Seminole Wars and Civil War decimated the Tribe and its herds.

It wasn't until the 1930s, after the Tribe was living on reservations, that cattle were introduced again in the form of about 400 malnourished animals. With time, the Tribe's cattle operation grew and by the 1990s it had become an industry leader. Today the Tribe's program is one of the top in the nation.

In his role as natural resources director, Johns has overseen and guided the Tribe's cattle program. In 2013 he urged the board to purchase Salacoa Valley Farms in Fairmount, Georgia, a successful seed stock operation. Johns knew that superior genetics would lead to a better beef product and he believes the Salacoa purchase has improved the quality of Seminole Beef produced by the Tribal herd.

For more than a dozen years, Johns has served in various leadership positions in the FCA. The nonprofit organization's membership, comprised of cattle producers and affiliates statewide, represents 900,000 to a million cows in the state and accounts for about \$700 million in calf sales annually.

The process of taking the FCA helm began for Johns with committee, county and district leadership positions. The path to the presidency was a six year process in which he served as secretary, treasurer, second vice president, first vice president and president elect. The process ensures the work that is started, which often takes years to be completed, is understood by everyone in leadership roles.

"Alex may be a once in a lifetime president," said outgoing president Ken Griner. "He has the history and heritage of the Seminole Tribe, which is the history of the entire cattle industry. Alex is so engaged in our industry there is no conversation he isn't fully engaged in. He brings a set of skills that's hard to duplicate. There are just

♦ See ALEX JOHNS on page 4A

Vickey Huff retires as Elder Services director

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — After spending the better part of 30 years making sure Seminole seniors had all their needs met, Director of Elder Services Vickey Huff has retired. Now she intends to pay a little more attention to herself, her family and her interests. Her journey began with a retirement party June 22 at the Big Cypress Senior Center.

"She's done a fantastic job and we kind of hate to see her leave," said President Mitchell Cypress. "But at the same time, you have to take care of your family."

One of Huff's favorite aspects of the job as director was doing the paperwork to assure all the seniors got their trips approved, had plenty of activities to do and fun parties to enjoy.

"I knew I was doing my job well by doing the services for them," said Huff, whose last day on the job was June 1. "It hasn't hit yet, I'm just trying to enjoy life. The best part is not having to wake up so early."

Huff spent more than 35 years working for the Tribe in various roles but when she began working as a secretary with the seniors,

she knew she had found her place. Over the years she moved up and six years ago applied for and was promoted to director.

Nadine Bowers, Big Cypress Elder

Hollywood site manager Joe Kippenberger also enjoyed working with Huff.

"She was very professional,"

Immokalee Elder Services site manager. "She always stuck up for her team and backed us up."

Huff believes it takes a certain set of skills to do the job well.

Rhonda Goodman, who has worked with the seniors in various capacities for 15 years, has replaced Huff as the tribal-wide elder services director. Goodman filled in for Huff for a few months when she was out on medical leave.

"It takes a lot of patience, dedication and compassion," Goodman said about the position. "Sometimes it's just sitting and listening. Being honest and communicating with the elders and your staff is also important."

Huff's future plans include staying home with her husband of 32 years, John Huff, traveling together, relaxing and just enjoying life. She also looks forward to spending plenty of time with her 13 grandchildren.

"I like having her home full-time," John Huff said. "I just like hanging out with her."

Huff's extended family attended the retirement party, which featured an interactive performance by an Elvis impersonator and plenty of gifts and well wishes staff. The overwhelming sentiment was repeated by many in attendance; she will be missed.



Vickey Huff, seated, is surrounded by her family Jimi Lu Jamison, John Huff Jr., Jarrett Beecham, John Huff, Ty Huff and Frank Huff at her retirement party at the Big Cypress Senior Center.



Vickey Huff displays the gift of a painting of herself and her husband John Huff at her retirement party June 22. Newly named Elder Services director Rhonda Goodman assists Huff with the gifts.

Services site manager, worked with Huff for six years.

"She was a good boss," Bowers said. "We are going to miss her."

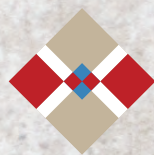
Kippenberger said. "It was a real learning experience."

"She was lenient and straightforward at the same time," added Demi Garza,

"Someone with a heart, who really cares for and respects the elders, should work with them," Huff said.

from seniors and sentiment was repeated by many in attendance; she will be missed.

Community



4-H wraps up successful year at annual banquet

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — The 134-member Seminole Indian 4-H club celebrated another year of accomplishments at its annual awards banquet June 4 at the Fred Smith Rodeo Arena in Brighton. Youth participants, adult volunteers and cattle owners were recognized for their work and commitment to the program.

“What we take away from this is teaching kids the responsibility of taking care of animals,” said Brighton Board Rep. Larry Howard. “It teaches them something powerful. This is part of the history of our Tribe and we are proud of what you’ve accomplished. It is something you will carry with you for the rest of your life.”

This year saw an increased number of activities, including the chicken, sewing, photography and cooking clubs. It also marked the first time the Seminole 4-H

attended the annual 4-H Day at the capitol February 22 in Tallahassee, where 15 kids learned about the workings of state government, took meetings with legislators and toured the capitol.

“We are expanding the horizons of 4-H,” said Lonnie Gore, 4-H special projects coordinator.

Participating in 4-H requires a serious commitment of time, resources and energy by the kids and their parents. The kids



Aaron Stam congratulates Summer Gopher as he presents her with the swine club participation certificate.



Eight members of the Baker family show off their 4-H certificates at the annual awards banquet. Standing are Ives, Jaylen, Pherian, Jaytron and Jayton Baker and Kimberly Clement. Seated in front are Preslynn, Alyke and Ramone Baker.



Tammy Billie, surrounded by Kimberly Clement, 4-H program assistant, and Aaron Stam, Florida Cooperative Extension agent, is honored for her work in 4-H at the Seminole Indian 4-H awards banquet on June 4.

learn to balance school, homework, sports and other youthful activities while raising steer, heifers, swine and/or small animals.

The work begins in July, when the steer are mere 500 pound calves, or in the fall when the young pigs are only 75 to 85 pounds. Until the show and sale in March, the 4-H’ers take responsibility for the care of the animals which includes early morning feedings, daily exercise and math. The 4-H program gives its participants real-life business experience and a mandatory log must be kept of every dollar spent while raising the animals. When the animals are sold the day after the show, the kids pocket the profit.

Children may join the 4-H Cloverbud program at age 5 and raise small animals. By age 8 they are ready for a hog and at 10 should have enough experience to handle a steer.

4-H is usually a family activity; it’s common for parents to assist the kids with their duties. Some families take it further by getting numerous kids involved. The Baker family of Brighton is an example of a fully engaged 4-H family; eight kids participated this year.

“My dad [Preston Baker] inspires us,” said Ives Baker, 18. “I’ve been in 4-H for 18 years. I’m leaving now, but I’ll stay in

agriculture and help my brother Ramone with his herd.”

Volunteers are the backbone of 4-H and each was honored and thanked by Florida Cooperative Extension agent Aaron Stam, who heads up the program. Graduating seniors were also recognized. Ives Baker, Troy Cantu, Dayra Koenes, Camryn Thomas, Cyrus Smedley and Samantha Veliz all left the program with their high school graduation.

The Herdsman Award is a surprise to its recipients, who have been secretly judged throughout the year for their leadership qualities. This year the awards were presented to Ramone Baker for swine and to Troy Cantu for steer.

Cattle owners were recognized with their own awards for providing the winning steer and heifers. The awards were presented to Mary Jene Koenes for the Grand Champion Steer raised by Dayra Koenes; Norman Johns ND Ranch for the Reserve Grand Champion Steer raised by Jacee Jumper; Cory Wilcox

for the Grand Champion Heifer raised by Jalee Wilcox; and Paul Bowers Sr. for the Reserve Grand Champion Heifer raised by Brianna Bowers.

Another new program will be kicked off in August when a few yearling wild mustangs will be trained by 4-H’ers in 100 days.

While looking back on the year, Stam was struck by how impressed the show’s judges were with the Seminole program. They each pointed out that the youth knew more details about their animals than kids outside of the Tribe did.

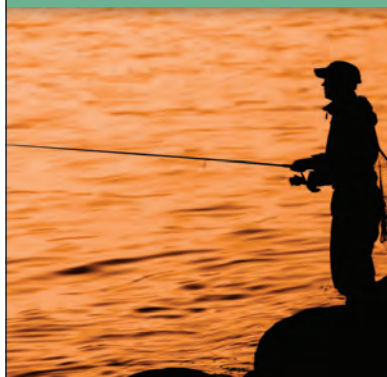
“This was a great year,” Stam said. “We had smaller numbers but the kids operated on a higher level than we’ve seen in a while. It’s a testament to the leaders and the kids. I’m real pleased with how the kids, parents and leaders worked together; that’s how it should be.”

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Tampa Hard Rock in midst of massive expansion

Officials look to mid-2019 completion

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

There's another Florida Hard Rock operation that has been making some big news lately.

While the huge guitar-shaped hotel at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood keeps taking shape and changing the skyline – another significant Hard Rock expansion in Tampa has been underway.

The Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa is undergoing an impressive \$700 million expansion of its facilities at 5223 Orient Road, about 10 minutes east of downtown.

The work began in 2017, but has begun to ramp up significantly this year, according to officials, in order to make its mid-2019 goal for completion.

The Tampa Hard Rock already boasts the largest casino in Florida, and is one of the largest in the U.S. So what exactly is being done to make things bigger and better? How about:

- 5,000 slot machines
- 200 gaming tables
- Approximately 200,000 square feet of entertainment and gaming space

The job numbers and economic development impact alone are impressive.

- 1,000 part-and-full time jobs.
- 2,000 construction jobs on-site.
- 1,022 indirect, permanent jobs.
- 2,268 indirect construction jobs.
- 6,000 additional jobs in all.
- \$2.4 billion in economic investment between Tampa and Hollywood.

The Tampa operation is already one of the largest employers in Tampa Bay with more than 3,500 employees, or “team

members.”
“Major expansion of the Seminole Hard Rock Tampa is further evidence of the Seminole Tribe’s commitment to the people of Florida that it will continue to increase the economic impact of its Seminole Gaming facilities,” Jim Allen, CEO of Seminole Gaming said in a statement.

Amenities galore

The centerpiece of the expansion is a new 15-story hotel tower, with an additional 564 hotel rooms and suites. When all is said and done, there will be 800 guestrooms and 88 suites. The top floor of the hotel tower

will feature a private gaming parlor for VIP guests, including private elevators to suites.

Other amenities will include three “ultra-lavish” new outdoor swimming pools adjacent to the second level of the hotel tower that will feature a 120-seat Pool Grille restaurant and bar.

Officials said the expanded pool and deck area, designed by landscape architecture firm EDSA, will measure the size of a football field and will host a variety of activities.

A new 25,000-square-foot Rock Spa & Salon will also open on the second level of the hotel tower and will offer pool-side services. The new spa will replace the existing spa and salon.



Courtesy Bitner Group

An expanded pool and deck area at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa, designed by landscape architecture firm EDSA, will measure the size of a football field and will host a variety of activities.



Courtesy Bitner Group

This is a rendering of the new atrium area of the complex. The total investment in the Tampa project is \$700 million.

◆ LOLITA'S RETURN

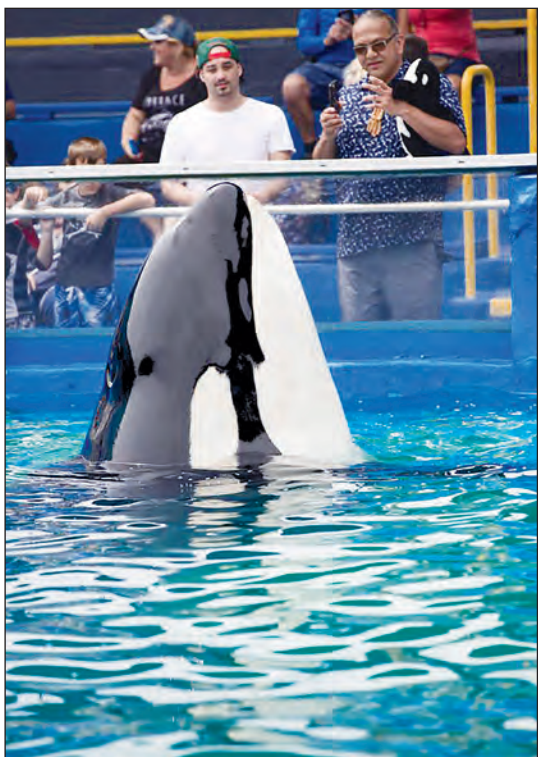
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includes the rehabilitation and release of the orca to a “sea pen” located in a protective ocean cove, where she would have access to plentiful food and the ability to interact with other orcas, including her remaining family members.

But securing Lolita’s release appears to be anything but certain. Earlier this year, the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Miami rejected claims by the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and other stakeholders who argued keeping Lolita in captivity violated the federal Endangered Species Act.

“The evidence, construed in the light most favorable to PETA, does not support the conclusion that the conditions of her captivity pose a threat of serious harm to Lolita,” the court said in the ruling.

However, Jared Goodman, the deputy general counsel for animal law at PETA, told the *Seminole Tribune* that there are still two legal actions pending. One is a request for a rehearing of the ruling from the 11th Circuit in Miami.



At left, Lummi Nation Councilmember Fred Lane takes a photo of the orca Tokitae, also known as Lolita, at the Miami Seaquarium. At right, along the trek, supporters lay hands on the totem pole created by Lummi Nation artist Jewell James.



Courtesy Lummi Nation Councilmember Fred Lane (2)



At left, supporters arrive at the Miami Seaquarium in late May with a canvas featuring messages to Lolita. The Lummi Nation and its supporters went to demand Lolita’s release. At right, Jewell James, left, and Everett Osceola, cultural ambassador for the Seminole Tribe, join arms at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum in Big Cypress in support for returning Lolita to her home.



Courtesy Lummi Nation Councilmember Fred Lane (2)

based on what Goodman said was the court’s failure to “analyze whether the conditions we alleged to be the case were supported.”

The other is a lawsuit against the U.S. Department of Agriculture, attempting to invalidate Seaquarium’s license to house Lolita. Goodman said the license should be revoked under the federal Animal Welfare Act. He said Seaquarium is in violation of the act because Lolita’s tank is too small and

March.

Show must go on?

The public’s enthusiasm for live orca exhibitions – made most famous at SeaWorld locations in the United States – has waned in recent years. Pressure to free orcas in captivity was ramped up significantly in the wake of the 2013 documentary *Blackfish*, which told

native tongue through song and drumming.

Lane said the group would be back in South Florida in September, and hope to be part of the Art Basel event in Miami Beach this coming December. He said the Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation was helping the group secure a spot for the totem to be displayed at the event.

◆ ALEX JOHNS

From page 1A

no holes in his knowledge.”

According to its website, the FCA is “devoted entirely and exclusively to promoting and protecting the ability of cattlemen members to produce and market their products.” To meet that goal, the organization’s leaders represent the membership to lawmakers in Tallahassee and Washington, D.C., FCA is a grassroots and inclusive organization.

“It doesn’t matter if you have 10 cows or 10,000, you have the same voice,” Griner said.

“On a federal level, most folks can’t go to D.C. to lobby for the farm bill or any other legislative issue that would affect the small

a lot of ability,” added Billy Kempler, 72, of Brevard County.

Johns plans to continue to work on issues the FCA has been addressing already, one of which is animal disease traceability. Since the FCA members produce food, the leadership believes they have a responsibility for it. If a problem arises, traceability will keep the problem local and make it easier to fix, rather than having to shut down the entire industry.

Public grazing is another important issue for the FCA, whose members help the state manage the land and make it productive through land leases. Many ranchers lease land since it can be difficult to own the vast amount necessary to raise cattle.

“Leasing is a win-win situation,” Griner said. “We provide a service to the state to reduce fire risk. If you aren’t keeping the land



Beverly Bidney

Tribal members, staff and members of the Brighton community pose with Alex Johns, the newly named president of the FCA.

producer,” said President Elect Matt Pearce. “The association represents them. We lobby for less regulation and for conservation.”

Griner believes one of the biggest challenges facing Johns as president will be time management. Since Florida is such a large state, making all the FCA meetings and going to Tallahassee and D.C. to address legislative issues is time consuming.

“It’s a lot of windshield time,” he said.

Prior to the banquet, at which he would take over the responsibilities of president, Johns socialized with FCA members at the President’s Reception. Although he claimed to be a bit nervous about the evening, he confidently greeted other cattlemen and cattlemen in the crowded room.

“It’s been a long time coming and it’s finally here,” Johns said. “I’m looking forward to it. I’ve got a good team, young leaders who are coming up [in the organization] and there are a lot of people I can call on.”

Bobby Yates, natural resources cattle foreman, has worked for Johns for years.

“I’m glad to see he got this, it means a lot to him and to the staff,” Yates said. “He’s one hell of a good boss; he’s a man’s man.”

Outside of the reception, a few longtime FCA members sat comfortably together. All were impressed with Johns and were looking forward to having him lead the organization.

“I don’t remember when I wasn’t a member [of FCA],” said Gillie Russell, 76, of Highlands County. “[Johns] is very well thought of.”

“He’s an exceptional young man and has

burned or mowed or chopped, you’re ripe for a fire. Active management, whether it’s state or private enterprise, reduces management costs, keeps the state more green and helps the cattle industry.”

The banquet featured awards, acknowledgements and guest speaker Red Steagall, who entertained the crowd with a litany of stories and original songs.

“Every now and then you’ll need a lawyer and every now and then you’ll need a doctor,” he said. “But three times a day, every day of your life, you’ll need a rancher and a farmer.”

Pearce believes it’s fitting that a member of the Tribe, as one of the first in the state to have cattle, will lead the FCA.

“Alex is very detail oriented, thinks things through, sees the bigger picture and has always surrounded himself with people who can get things done,” Pearce said. “We are excited for Alex to be our leader; he brings a lot to the table.”

Griner said the best part of the job when he served as president was interacting with members, seeing parts of the state he normally wouldn’t have had time for, being exposed to different ways of doing things and different opinions. He has no doubt that Johns will rise to the task.

“He’s an extremely talented, knowledgeable person, he’s got everything,” Griner said. “He’s young, intelligent and articulate; he’s got it all. We look forward to having Alex as our president, he’s a special guy.”

Native women set out to diversify political representation

BY LI COHEN & DAMON SCOTT
Copy Editor & Staff Reporter

Women have dominated political headlines since the beginning of 2018 as this year has seen a record number of females vying for political seats. From local governments to federal positions, thousands of women are setting out to make "her" story – AKA female history – as the sheer number of female 2018 candidates has broken 1992's record. Regarding just U.S. Congressional positions, the new "Year of the Woman" has seen at least 168 more candidates than in 1992. And as those women continue fighting their ways to the general election, one group of women is setting out to transform 2018 from "Year of the Woman" to "Year of the Native Woman."

Forty-eight Native American women representing 17 states are running for state and congressional offices. Three of those women are running for U.S. Congress: Sharice Davids, D-Kans.; Debra Haaland, D-NM; and Amanda Douglas, D-Okla. The three candidates represent the Ho-Chunk, Laguna Pueblo and Cherokee tribes, respectively.

While their success wouldn't be the first time Native Americans have held congressional seats – 21 men have been in the U.S. House and Senate since 1789 – it would certainly be a dramatic shift in representation. If any of these three women are elected in the Nov. 6 midterm election, it will be the first time in history Native American women will hold congressional seats.

Sharice Davids
Democratic candidate for Kansas'
U.S. House District Three



Sharice Davids is a member of the Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin and spent the majority of her life in Kansas. There, she was raised by her mom, who also served in the U.S. Army for 20 years. Davids' political career started after she graduated with her law degree from Cornell University. Seeking to focus on equity and fighting for underserved communities, she completed a year as a White House Fellow as the administration transitioned from Barack Obama to Donald Trump.

Debra Haaland
Democratic candidate for New
Mexico's U.S. House District One



Debra Haaland is a member of the Laguna Pueblo tribe and was the lieutenant governor nominee of New Mexico in 2014 after serving for one year as the Native American caucus chair for the Democratic Party. She was the first Native American woman in the U.S. to chair a state party. Haaland was also the first chairwoman elected to the Laguna Development Corp. board of directors, overseeing the business operations of the second largest tribal gaming enterprise in New Mexico. She has worked on many "get out the vote" efforts and volunteered full time for President Barack Obama's 2008 campaign. Haaland is a single mother who was raised in a military family. She earned her law degree at the University of New Mexico School of Law in Albuquerque.

Amanda Douglas
Democratic candidate for Oklahoma's
U.S. House District One



Amanda Douglas is a member of the Cherokee tribe has spent her entire life in Oklahoma, where she now resides with her husband and daughter. Originally a business analyst and consultant, she broke her way into politics after her daughter was born in 2016 as a way to help prepare a better future, specifically regarding education, for her child.

The Tribune spoke with these congressional candidates to find out a little bit more about their campaigns.

Q: Why do you think that Native American women running for congressional seats is so important?

A: Davids: "We should have elected officials that are more representative and reflective of what the country not only looks like in terms of the demographics, but also the experiences of a broader range of people in this country. When I think about that, I think about being a Native woman but I also think about my educational background, going from community college to my bachelors to Cornell for law school and having to work the entire time I was in college. Being raised by a single parent and even growing up in a military family, I think those kinds of experiences are things we don't see represented enough or see reflected in Congress."

Haaland: "We've never had a Native American woman in Congress before. When you think about me, or any woman looking at Congress, and not seeing them represented in those seats, it's evident that diversity is important and we need differing perspectives. Not all the answers come from a white male perspective. We need the perspectives of people who know what it's like to struggle, who struggle to find a job, who struggle to buy groceries and have those perspectives to help to solve issues."

Douglas: "I would like to be one of the first in the class of Native American females to serve [in Congress]. I'm a huge supporter of Debra Haaland of New Mexico and Sharice Davids from Kansas. It has a lot to do with not just overcoming the hurdles that minorities

have to face, but also the Me Too movement has gotten a lot of women ready to speak out and ready to fight for what they think is right. I think those are two of the catalysts that have led to Native American women running for office. I think it's fantastic and I hope that we can serve together as a caucus and as a team to work toward making a difference for Native citizens."

Q: What issues are you prioritizing now and if you are elected to Congress?

A: Davids: "In terms of what's important in this district, there's a lot of focus on public education which I can of course identify with since I feel like a lot of opportunities I've had in my life stem from my access to quality public schools and being able to go to state schools and the community college here in the third district. Access to health care is a big issue across the country and that's not just because people need to be covered by insurance, but also because there are a lot of people who, even when they have insurance, don't have access to quality or affordable health care. Immigration I feel like is one of the bigger pieces of what I end up talking to a lot of people about and what personally is just very important to me. And there's so many [conversations about] climate change and us figuring out ways to be better stewards of the land and trying to make sure that we're leaving a place for our children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren that's going to have clean air and water to drink."

Haaland: "We talked a great deal in our primary campaign about the environment, climate change and renewable energy. I want to move us toward 100 percent renewable energy. It affects a lot of our Native communities. Melting ice is affecting Native communities in Alaska, for example. I care a great deal about our environment and how we produce energy in our country."

Another issue is health insurance. Working families struggle to be insured and make ends meet, when minimum wage is \$7.25 hour. They struggle to find enough jobs to keep the roof over their children's heads. All of those things are important.

We need to find more equity in what people are doing. Education is tied to that. My daughter just graduated from college, and she already has a five figure student loan she has to figure out how to pay. And there's an attack on public education. We need to strengthen it – to allow every single student to have a quality public education. I'm against taxpayer money being used for a voucher system. And I know there's an issue with Impact Aid [Program] funding, which affects a lot of [American] Indian students.

Douglas: "My biggest issue is education. Right now in Oklahoma any politician that you talk to is going to say that education is their No. 1 priority because it's so important in our state right now. I like to explain to people that with a daughter that's about to be school-age and as someone who can't personally afford private school, I have a vested interest in turning education in this state around and I have a deadline because I only have so much time before I'm actually enrolling her in the school's that I want to improve. ... Sometimes people think that it's really only a state-level issue, but the budget proposal earlier this year from President Trump cut \$3.5 billion from Title I funds that are specifically meant for low income and special needs students. Betsy DeVos continues to push for voucher programs that funnel even more money from public education. ... I would like to fight to stop the cuts toward education and increase federal funding for Title I programs and I want to put a stop to those voucher programs. I would also like to push for the replacement of Betsy DeVos as the Secretary of Education. I think a lot of people did not want her confirmed into

that role and I don't believe she's qualified to be doing what she's doing."

Q: How do you plan to work with the Republican-led Congress to achieve your goals?

A: Davids: "What we're seeing now is just the top leadership of the party pushing against some of that and from what I've seen there are a lot of people who are Republican that are willing to come to the table and I think that as Democrats we need to be willing to come to the table as well. One of the nice things about hopefully having a massive influx of new congressional members is that there will be new action taken in a place where the status quo or the homogenous group of people ... when there's a shift in that I'm hoping there will be a shift in people who are willing to work together a little bit more."

Haaland: "I believe wholeheartedly that we have a big opportunity to flip the House. I think that's a reality. So I am going to work to that end, first of all. I am more than happy to work with any Republicans who will help Americans get health care and move the country toward 100 percent renewable energy."

Douglas: "My husband is a Republican and he has been since I met him and he's not changed his affiliation even to vote for me in the primary. I joke that we're a bipartisan household, but I'm also serious in that I do have to on a daily basis be able to listen and hear the opinions of someone who's politically different from me and process that in a way that is civil and leans toward progress. I think what we see now is people on the extreme left at people on the extreme right and really most people fall somewhere in the middle of that range. [We just need] people who know how to work with other people and aren't just out to push the national party principles. I want to put people before party. I am a Democrat and most of my ideals line up with the Democrat Party, but that doesn't mean my job as a representative is to further the Democratic Party. My job as a representative is to make sure that the people I represent are taken care of, whether that might be through legislation proposed by Democrats or proposed by Republicans or Independents. My job is to represent and care about the people I'm elected to represent. They are more important to me than party affiliation."

Q: How do you plan to help Native American tribes with your role in Congress?

A: Davids: "I think that there's a lot of room there for not only tribal interests but also the interests of folks who have to make decisions about the tribal federal trust responsibility. Having a member who is intimately aware of sovereignty and self-determination and the tribal federal trust responsibility can be really effective in terms of educating folks on those issues."

Haaland: "I'm always going to fight any decreases in funding. The U.S. government has a trust responsibility with tribes. Additionally, I want to make sure tribal leaders have an opportunity to have a seat at the table. When [House] Speaker [Paul] Ryan was passing the tax bill, tribal leaders wanted to speak on it and didn't have an opportunity. I'll fight very hard for that. It's a government to government relationship and they should have every opportunity to speak when these issues are being debated in the House. Native American tribes will be automatic allies when I'm elected. My door will always be open to the Seminole Tribe."

Douglas: "I really look forward to

reaching out for support from the tribes and really finding out what issues they are looking to push forward. As far as committees outside of the Native American community, I'd like to serve and help the committee on education and the workforce, which specifically align with my desire to improve education. I also think it would be really interesting to look into the committee on ethics since that one is a non-partisan committee looking at ethics within governing bodies."

Q: How do you think the federal budget can be improved?

A: Davids: "One of the things I really think about a lot is equity in everything. Equity in the way we distribute our federal resources, equity in the way that programs are developed, and I think that it's a concept not enough of us understand. We talk about equality a lot, but equity is something that's starting to seep into the conversation a lot more. It's something I'd like to see more widely used, how we integrate equity into our policies, because I think that will be the key to us having true equality in this country."

Haaland: "We can make everyone pay their fair share. We've been subsidizing corporations on the low wages of workers. When I worked at a bakery, my boss could afford to give us raises and health care, paid leave. It's almost as if small business owners can't afford to do that anymore. We're giving these tax breaks to give the CEOs million-dollar bonuses. It's so inequitable; I cringe when I think about it. Tax breaks should go to small business owners to be able to give their employees health care and a living wage. There's no reason on earth that one should get millions of dollars of bonuses."

Douglas: "One of the things we struggle with here in Oklahoma is that about 15 percent of our bridges and like 26 percent of the roads are considered structurally deficient or in poor condition. My favorite statistic that I read recently is that on average Oklahomans spend more than \$700 per year on maintaining their cars due to poor road conditions. I just had a rock fly up from the road and puncture the condenser on my radiator so now the air conditioning has gone out on my car and that's the second time that has happened with this vehicle, just because of the debris on the roadway. Part of the problem with that is that a lot of the funding for projects like that come from the federal motor fuel tax and that was determined like 25 years ago. It's not based on a percentage it's just a number percent of gallon per fuel sold so it hasn't really kept up as far as inflation's concerned and that's a big thing we need to address. ... We cannot continue with levies that are possibly going to fail if we have a heavy rain or have bridges that might fail while people are driving on them."

For more information on these candidates, visit their campaign websites: Sharice Davids at ShariceForCongress.com; Debra Haaland at DebForCongress.com; and Amanda Douglas at AmandaDouglasForCongress.com.

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Father's Day



Courtesy photo
Joshua Sneed shows off the fish he caught during the Fort Pierce Father's Day chartered fishing trip off the coast of Riviera Beach.

Damon Scott
"Uncle" Eddy Gonzalez holds Evianna Nunez during Brighton's Father's Day luncheon June 7.

Beverly Bidney
Johnny Jimmie, center, is flanked by two of his 12 children, Holama and Alice Jimmie, as they enjoy the Immokalee Father's Day party.



Beverly Bidney
Three generations of the Garza family celebrate Father's Day in Immokalee. From left are Manual, Mia, Josh and Milani Garza.

Beverly Bidney
Michael Alvarado and Gil Yzaguirre watch to see if the beanbag thrown by Alan McInturff hits the mark at the Immokalee Father's Day celebration.

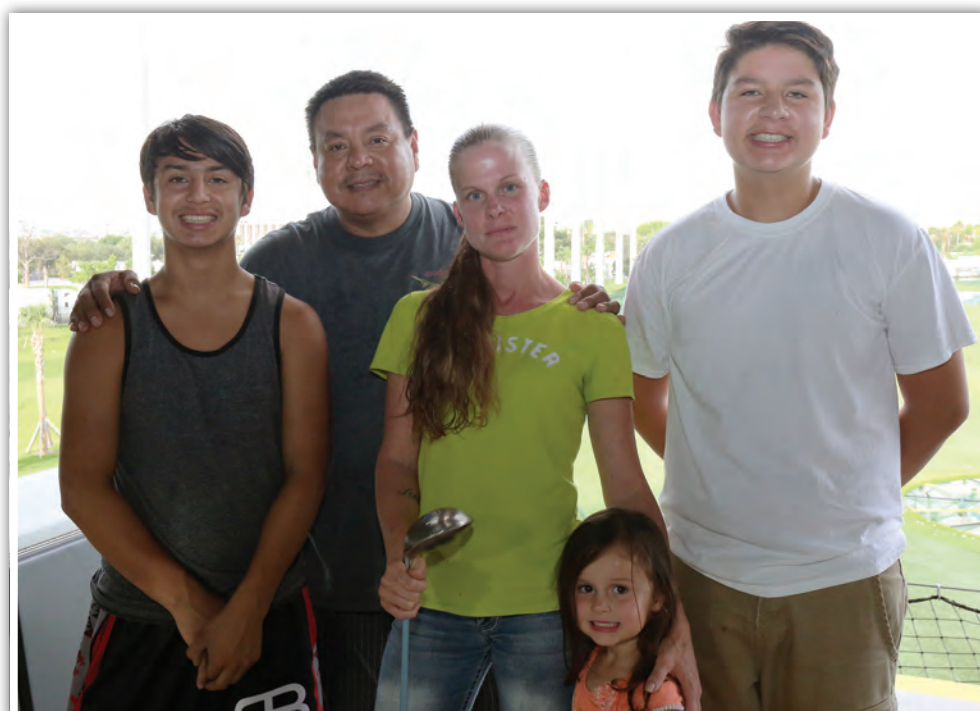
Damon Scott
In back, from left to right, are Steve Osceola, Jackie Thompson-Osceola and Luke Lamb. In front are Kyler Jenkins and Katana Lamb. The family celebrated Father's Day at Top Golf in Miami Gardens.



Damon Scott
Three generations of the Micco family gather at Brighton's Father's Day celebration June 7. From left, Mary Jo, Jaden, Mike and Bill.

Beverly Bidney
The Bowers family poses for a portrait at the BC Father's Day luncheon June 18. Seated are Eugene and David, standing are Phil, Liam and Nadine Bowers.

Damon Scott
The Holata family took part in the Hollywood Father's Day celebration at Top Golf in Miami Gardens on June 14. From left to right are Felicia, Maycee, Shyla and Jay. Auyynn, the youngest, is in front.



Damon Scott
The Osceola family, pictured from left to right, are Conchade, Mitch, Dawn, Gyanna and Byron. The family participated in Hollywood's Father's Day outing at Top Golf in Miami Gardens.

Beverly Bidney
Quenton Cypress is a happy dad as he holds his daughter Willow, 2, as Maria Vargas looks on at the BC Father's Day celebration.

Courtesy photo
Travelis Timothy reels in a fish during the Fort Pierce Father's Day chartered fishing trip.

Miccosukee gaming revenue up for federal taxation

Attorney vows Supreme Court appeal

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

In a published decision June 4, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit affirmed a trial judge's previous decision that the federal government could collect taxes from Native American tribal casinos and from tribal members who receive disbursements from those casinos.

"When an Indian tribe decides to distribute the revenue from gaming activities ... the distributions are subject to federal taxes," wrote 11th Circuit Judge Gerald Tjoflat.

The ruling affirms a decision by Miami U.S. District Judge Cecilia Altonaga, that defendant Sally Jim and the Miccosukee Tribe can be held liable for unpaid taxes.

The decision involves a dispute that has been reported on for almost two decades. In 2001, the federal government learned that Jim failed to report or pay taxes on \$272,000 in disbursements she received from the Tribe, which operates Miccosukee Indian Bingo and Gaming.

The government later learned that the Tribe had earned more than \$32 million from its casino operations, and had failed to withhold any taxes, according to court documents.

The government argued that taxes were due under the 1988 Indian Gaming Revenue Act, which was superseded by the Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act, which generally precludes taxation of tribal revenues.

But Altonaga and the 11th Circuit agreed with the government, saying that the TGWEA was not meant to override the IGRA.

"[P]er capita distribution of gaming revenue remains taxable income, even if the distribution arguably promotes the welfare of a tribe," Tjoflat said in the decision. "The distribution payments cannot qualify as Indian general welfare benefits under the TGWEA because Congress specifically subjected such distributions to federal taxation in IGRA."

Jim's attorney, Robert Saunooke, located in Miramar, maintains that tribes have the right to collect revenues and distribute those revenues as they see fit without being subjected to taxation.

"This is a very complex issue ... Suffice it to say that we are disappointed with the result and will be appealing to the U.S. Supreme Court. We are hopeful that some of the misleading language in the order will be clarified there," Saunooke said in an email to the Seminole Tribune.

Multiple attempts to reach the Miccosukee Tribe's attorney in this matter, George Abney of Atlanta's Alston & Bird, were unsuccessful.

Immokalee summer camp cooks up culture

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

Summer camp is more than games, sports and water fun. In Immokalee the campers also learned to cook a traditional Seminole meal in the cooking chickee June 13.

The day was plenty hot without the large fire raging under the grate in the chickee, but the kids endured the heat and successfully made a meal of spaghetti, macaroni and cheese, corn, green beans and fry bread. Boys gathered wood, girls made the fry bread and everyone enjoyed the meal together.



Beverly Bidney

Juanita Martinez, Immokalee Culture site coordinator, shows Arianna Rodriguez how to shake excess fry bread dough off her hands during the culture lunch June 13.

Kids have a splash at summer aquatics days

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

On June 12, the Big Cypress Recreation Department, along with the Boys & Girls Clubs of America and Big Cypress

Councilman Mondo Tiger, hosted a "Summer Aquatics Day Kick Off Party." Kids from across the reservation enjoyed a variety of activities, food and fun at the Big Cypress Community Pool.

Immokalee held their water day June 11.



Beverly Bidney

Jacynda Martinez, Madison Martinez and Jaylah Garcia vogue for the camera at the Immokalee summer camp kickoff.



Damon Scott

The water boats are a fan favorite as kids floated through a water jungle of inflatable animals in Big Cypress.



Damon Scott

Kids enjoyed refreshments such as these "make your own" snow cones in Big Cypress.



Beverly Bidney

Willie Collins and Elana Kendrick enjoy the water slide at the Immokalee summer camp kickoff water fun day June 11.



Beverly Bidney

Teamwork makes the work in the cooking chickee easier as campers and culture employees make an enormous amount of macaroni and cheese. Markayla Cummings, Ashley Faz, Cecilia Garcia, America Ramirez and Mary Jane Martinez are pictured.



Beverly Bidney

Learning to make fry bread dough can be an adventure but with help from Juanita Martinez, these girls figure it out.

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SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA
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 A PLACE TO LEARN, A PLACE TO REMEMBER.

Photographs show historic Fort Marion woven into Florida's Native history

BY TARA BACKHOUSE
 Collections Manager, Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

The Museum's historic collection consists of many types of things, from 19th century newspapers to patchwork clothing, to sculpture and paintings. However, the majority of the objects we care for are photographs. We estimate we have 150,000 photographs that range from the early 20th century to the present day. You've no doubt seen some of our photographs in other articles, at community events, or at the Museum. We often publish articles to ask for help in gathering information about them. We'll echo that request here, but we also want to share a stunning comparison.

Some of the most interesting things we discover in the collection involve comparisons of objects separated by decades of time. For example, by comparing an early 20th century wooden doll to a brightly colored palmetto doll from the late 20th century, one can see how styles and materials changed, as well as how Seminole artistry developed over 100 years. Another type of comparison often happens in our library. Our 19th century newspapers usually tell a deplorable and terribly sad story of an expansionist war, genocide and racist propaganda. However a 20th century newspaper such as this one tells stories of success and highlights happy occasions.

We recently ran across one such pair of

photographs. Both show Native American people at the Castillo de San Marcos in St. Augustine, AKA Fort Marion. The fort has a long history, as it was completed in 1695, and used by Spanish, British and United States forces throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, as each tried to wrestle control of Florida away from each other and the native populations who lived here. During the 19th century, many groups of

and forcibly removed even further away from their homeland. The heartbreaking photograph below, which is a copy obtained from the Florida State Photographic Archives, shows one such group at the fort in 1875. This strong and resolute group of people look determined to survive this unjust

System, Castillo de San Marcos welcomes thousands of people every year to learn about its history, including the part it played in the Indian conflicts. The Seminole Tribe took a trip to Fort Marion on January 31, 1998 in order to trace the path of Osceola, one of the great heroes of the Seminole War. He was

other trip? Were you perhaps there?

This group of Seminole visitors probably found it hard to learn about the darker days of the fort. Nonetheless such a visit illustrates how much has changed since the conflicts of the 19th century. Endurance, adaptability and acumen have formed the 20th century



Courtesy photo

A large group of Kiowa, Cheyenne, Comanche, and Arapaho chiefs and warriors were detained by the United States Army as prisoners of war at Fort Marion from 1875 to 1878.



Courtesy photo

A group of modern-day visitors to the Castillo de San Marcos find a park ranger and historical interpreter dressed as a Spanish soldier happy to pose with them within the walls that once imprisoned their ancestors.

Native people, including Apache, Arapaho, Cheyenne, Comanche, Kiowa and Seminole found themselves imprisoned in the fort during various conflicts with the presiding government. The years from 1886 to 1887 saw nearly 500 Apache prisoners living there. The living conditions were not good, and many did not survive. Others were taken

imprisonment, so far from their western homes.

In contrast, this next picture shows a very different group of visitors to the fort. No longer are the Seminole people or any other tribal groups subject to abuse and imprisonment there, and war no longer darkens its walls. As part of the National Park

first imprisoned there before being moved to another prison in Charleston, SC where he died. In 1998, the STOF trip continued to Charleston to experience and honor Osceola's journey. It's possible that this picture was taken on that trip. However there may have been other organized trips to St. Augustine. Do any of our readers know about this or any

with the community. We welcome questions, conversation and information. If you would like to help shine a light on history, come and work with us, there are volunteer and employment options here for you. Just contact the Museum at 863-902-1113, or stop by and see us anytime!

Seminole story. It's a good thing to see the smiles and prosperity in the modern photo, but many people think it's also good to remember the injustices and suffering of the past so they are not repeated.

These two photographs share the same stone wall backgrounds, and that presents both a haunting memory of the past and an optimistic view of the future. Part of the Museum's purpose is to find these stories and share them

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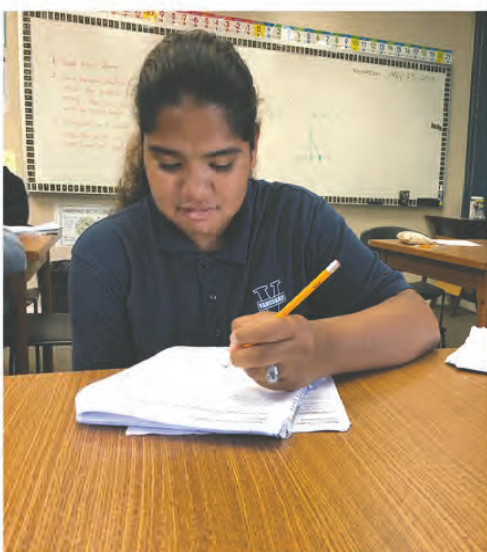
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SEMINOLE SCENES



COURTESY PHOTO
ON THE SEA: Anani Griffin, Karla Timothy, Remiel Griffin and Tristan Timothy enjoy their day on a chartered fishing boat during the Fort Pierce Father's Day event June 14 on the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Riviera Beach.



Photo courtesy Glades County
GLADES HONORS PECS EDUCATOR: The Glades County Board of County Commissioners honors Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School fourth-grade teacher Joy Prescott with a Teacher of the Year recognition at the start of the board's regular meeting May 29. Prescott is PECS Elementary Teacher of the Year and Glades District Teacher of the Year. Joining Prescott are, from left, Commissioner Donna Storter, Commissioner Weston Pryor, Chairman John Ahern, Commissioner Tim Stanley and Commissioner Donald Strenth. Prescott is one of five finalists selected for the 2019 Florida Teacher of the Year. The winner will be announced in July.



Ric Flair, Nature Boy/Facebook
READY TO RUMBLE: Wrestling legends Ric Flair, left, and Hulk Hogan meet at Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood on June 9. They were the main event participants in the Legends of the Ring program at the resort's Terrace Ballroom. It was billed as an evening of conversation about their careers and a Q&A with the audience. "The Mouth of the South" Jimmy Hart was the emcee.



Beverly Bidney
CLEANING CAMPERS: Jazmine Garcia, Arianna Rodriguez, Ayanna Villa and Mary Jane Martinez share the hose as they wash fry bread dough off their hands.



Beverly Bidney
SIGNED AND SEALED: Members of the Naples community traveled to Immokalee June 25 to add their signatures to the last beam that will be placed in the guitar-shaped Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood. The topping off ceremony will be held at the construction site July 9.



Hard Rock Hotel Desaru Coast/Facebook
HAPPY HARD ROCKERS: Hard Rock Hotel Desaru Coast holds an employee orientation event in June as the hotel prepares for its upcoming opening. The 365-room resort is located on the southeast tip of Malaysia, about 60 miles from Singapore.



Kevin Johnson
FLIPPIN' FRIENDS: Fort Pierce buddies Remiel Griffin, 8, left, and Knowledj Ervin, 7, show off their acrobatic skills by doing backflips June 23 outside the Chupco's Landing Community Center in Fort Pierce.



Kevin Johnson
PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE: With the rising Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood's Guitar Tower under construction in the distance, the historic Council Oak majestically sits June 22.



Kevin Johnson
NEW DIGS: The academic year has ended at Ahfachkee, but the construction work continues for the school's expansion project.

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Education

B

Ahfachkee graduates take the stage

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — The Ahfachkee School graduation May 24 was an intimate affair; just one high school graduate, Eyanna Billie, and one general education diploma (GED) graduate, Elisah Billie, proudly walked down the aisle to claim their diplomas.

The Herman Osceola Gym showed no sign of the boisterous youth and adults who usually inhabit the hardwood. Instead, it was transformed into a luxurious space thanks to many yards of drapery, soft lighting and flower arrangements on the tables. Those tables were filled with the loved ones of these two young adults, who were about to step into the adult world.

"It's an honor and a blessing to be here for this life changing event," said Sue Jane Cypress, who gave the opening prayer. "Be humble but not invisible and God bless each of you."

Big Cypress dignitaries also congratulated them on their achievement.

"This is a night you will always remember," said Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger. "I'm so proud of you, now get the rest of your education and come back and help the Tribe."

"This is a small class, but a proud one," added Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank.



Ahfachkee School Principal Dorothy Cain congratulates Elisah Billie and Eyanna Billie during the school's graduation May 24 at the Herman Osceola Gym in Big Cypress.

"This is a start, but you have a long way to go. We are fortunate that we have the resources

to help you achieve your goals. Aim high."

A h f a c h k e e principal Dorothy Cain told the former students she was proud of their

dedication, perseverance and hard work to get an education.

"Education gives us knowledge of the world around us and gives us the perspective to build opinions," she said. "Dream big, do something that tugs at your heart; you owe it to yourself to make your days count. Push yourself. With determination and the right tools, you can do great things."

The keynote address was given by

Lee Zepeda, the Tribe's executive director of administration. He told them the world is full of distractions, so they must stay focused.

"The future doesn't just happen by accident," Zepeda said. "Choose your calling, not just a career. Don't let others make that choice for you. The road to the future is not



GED graduate Elisah Billie gives his mother Shani Billie a gratitude gift and a hug during the Ahfachkee graduation in Big Cypress.

considered important in their lives.

English teacher Dr. Rona Olukolu presented Eyanna with the school's Warrior Award, which is given to a graduate who exhibits strength and endurance.

"Eyanna, you said you had to grow up quickly to be an example to your siblings," Olukolu said. "I admire how you used the pitfalls in life as a motivational force. You have toiled, you were tried and tested, but you prevailed and never gave up. You remained focused and committed to your purpose."

Olukolu ended her remarks with a quote from author Dan Millman, "A warrior does not give up what he loves; he finds the love in what he does." With that, she presented the school's highest award to Eyanna, who addressed the crowd.

"Some of us don't see education as essential," Eyanna said. "We should value it and show our appreciation. If you utilize our blessings wisely, many more of us can graduate and be a service to the community. We are the leaders of tomorrow and we must be ready. We need to educate ourselves to sustain the Tribe and our resources."

Cain awarded the diplomas as dignitaries and teachers lined up to shake Eyanna and Elisah's hands. A video of Eyanna was played, in which she said she was the first in her family to graduate high school and go to college. She will attend California College of the Arts in Oakland.

"I like to be the first to do stuff," she said in the video. "I hope all my siblings go for higher education."



At left, Eyanna Billie and Elisah Billie share the stage at the Ahfachkee School graduation. At right, after receiving her high school diploma, Eyanna Billie shakes hands with Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger with Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank and Executive Director of Administration Lee Zepeda among the well-wishers.



Beverly Bidney (2)

Energy surge marks end of school year in Brighton

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — A Hawaiian theme filled the Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School gymnasium June 1 as students participated in

end-of-year activities with teachers and staff in Brighton.

Among the glow necklaces, beach balls, (plastic) grass skirts and inflatable palm trees were groups of the 308 students in all grades at the school who made their way in and out of the gym for fun and dances.

"We call it 'Survivor Luau' because they all survived taking the [FSA] test," said Michele Thomas, administrative assistant at PECS. "It's just a fun way to celebrate the end of the test and the school year."

Students participated in line dancing (complete with the Macarena), a hula-hoop



At left, hula-hoops and leis don Tiyanni "TT" Anderson as she nears the end of the competition. At right, sixth-grader Wyatt Thornton poses before taking his shot in the basketball competition.



Damon Scott (2)



Students go low in the limbo line at PECS. From left to right are Jimi Jamison, student Adarius Ford and Jade Osceola.

contest, limbo line and a basketball shooting game, among other fun activities.

PECS culture instructor Jade Osceola was the "cruise director" for the day's festivities. Dressed in a Hawaiian shirt and pink hat, she emceed the event and led the kids through their dances and friendly competitions.

Starting bright and early at 8:20 a.m., students from the middle school took to the gym floor to do their dance, followed by the third, fourth and fifth grades.

Once those students wrapped up

activities at the gym, the eighth-graders prepared for their campus walk thru, passing by the classrooms of all the other grades around the school. The kids cheered them on as they walked around campus to the PECS Media Center for a reception and slideshow.

PECS is in its 11th year of operation. Construction began in the fall of 2006 and the doors opened in August 2007 to 123 students. In August 2010, PECS became a K-8 grade school.

Class of 2018



The Class of 2018 has made it known that they are destined for greatness. This year's graduating class is filled with future doctors, artists, educators and entrepreneurs who are ready to broaden their horizons and dive full-force into taking their industries by storm. The Seminole Tribune wishes the Class of 2018 the best of luck in their future endeavors.



Camryn Thomas

Lake Placid High School

Camryn will attend Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in Tifton, Georgia, where she will study agricultural education. After earning an associate's degree, she plans to transfer to the University of Florida to study agricultural business. Ultimately, Camryn would like to teach. She was inspired by her high school agriculture teacher and the 4-H program.



Ivess Baker

Moore Haven High School

Ivess has worked on cars most of his life and plans to carry that on to Immokalee Technical College where he will learn to become a diesel mechanic. Ivess's favorite memory from high school was playing baseball and basketball.



Elizabeth Frank

Nova Southeastern University School

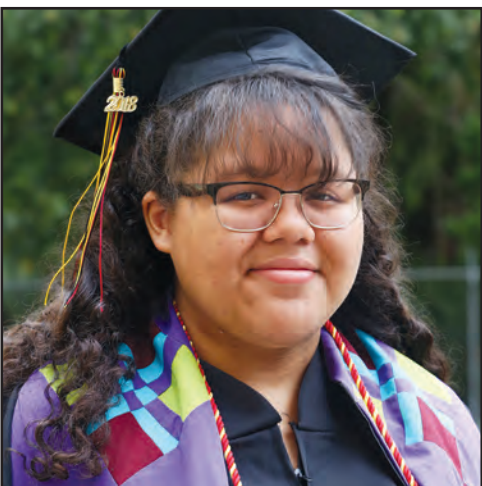
Elizabeth will attend High Point University in North Carolina where she will major in biology. She hopes to become a cardiovascular or neuro surgeon and looks forward to working with cadavers. Her teacher Mr. Northrop motivated her to finish high school, attend college and succeed in life.



Elisah Billie

GED

Elisah plans to attend Broward College and study clothing design with an eye toward producing his own line of unique skate wear that stands out. He likes to express himself with art, and while in high school, he learned not to judge people for their expressions and not to worry about those who may judge him. He's inspired by his mother Shani Billie and the rest of his family.



Eyanna Billie

Ahfachkee School

Eyanna will attend the California College of the Arts in Oakland to study illustration. Her goal is to create her own characters, comic books and television shows. She plans to carry her biggest lesson from high school with her to California, which is that not everything will go her way and she has to endure through that. She is inspired by her mother Eldean Billie and stepmother Jocelyn Billie, both of whom encourage her to do what she needs to do make sure her dreams come true.



Maia Shore

Thornton High School, Colorado

Maia plans to attend Arizona State University and major in forensic science. She said one of the reasons she chose ASU is that her uncle lives nearby and she really likes the school. Her favorite high school memory is running with the cross country team, which she was very close to. Her older brother Ryan inspired her to finish high school. She is looking forward to meeting new people in Arizona.



Sean Osceola

Okeechobee High School

Sean has signed to play baseball at Pasco-Hernando State College in New Port Richey. While there, he plans to study psychology. He is inspired by his parents Reno and Kelli Osceola, as they taught him to work hard and never give up on his goals. Sean's favorite high school memory was being part of the baseball team's surprising postseason run this year. He was the starting pitcher in a few upsets as the Brahms reached the regional finals.



Rodolfo Juarez

Okeechobee High School

Rodolfo, who fell in love with the theater in high school and says he is most himself in front of a large crowd, will study theater at Florida International University. The biggest lesson he learned in high school is that being yourself will lead you to your closest group of friends. Rodolfo is inspired by his mother Wendy Snow, who has always been supportive.



Demetric Billie

Micosukee Indian School

Demetric plans to take a year off to work around the Trail Reservation honing his skills and research trade schools. He plans to travel around the U.S. and hopefully other parts of the world. His mother and grandmother inspired him to finish high school, as did Lymire Marie, a teacher and administrator at MIS. Demetric's favorite memory was seeing the 2017 seniors graduate and going to the National Science Teachers Association with his science teachers his junior year in Los Angeles.



Jessi Harmon

Flagstaff High School, Arizona

Jessi will attend Virginia Military Institute to play Division 1 soccer and major in history and international studies with a minor in modern languages. She will attend on an NROTC Marine Option Scholarship and will be commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps after graduating from VMI. Her favorite memory is being the only girl on her high school's football team. She wants to take advantage of educational opportunities, travel and grow as an individual.



Trinity Bowers

Nova Southeastern University School

Trinity plans to continue with the NSU community and attend Nova Southeastern University to study English and library services and hopes to become a librarian. Trinity believes college is a good opportunity and is looking forward to the feeling of accomplishment graduating will provide. During high school, she learned that it's always good to ask for help and take breaks when they're needed.



Pernell Bert

Okeechobee High School

Pernell plans to join the United States Marine Corps. His best memory of high school is playing on the tennis team. Pernell is inspired by those around him and says that he is always learning from the different ways people solve problems.

Class of 2018



◆◆◆ IN MEMORIAM ◆◆◆ Jon Jimmie

Jon Jimmie would have graduated with his class at Immokalee High School on May 25, but he passed away in February. This letter from his mother Elsa Zamora, on behalf of the entire family, including father Jonnie Jimmie and their son and daughters, is a loving tribute to him. Jon would have turned 19 on June 15.

To my son Jon,

Congratulations, you finally graduated. Son, I am so proud of you. Having you here with us for 18 years was a blessing from God. Although we miss your smile, along with your laughter and hugs, you left us with beautiful memories. These photos remind us of how handsome you

looked, but you were also a gentleman with a kind heart who often helped others. Fishing and basketball may be your sports, but I was told that every time we hear thunder it is you playing basketball.

Happy Birthday my little Native son Jon Jimmie. We love you and miss you.



Jalynn Jones Okeechobee High School

Jalynn will attend Indian River State College and study graphic design. She enjoys drawing and wants to learn more about the technology used in graphic design. Jalynn isn't only motivated by a post-secondary course of study, she also wants to learn to speak Creek fluently. Jalynn's mother Ginger Jones, who works in the PECS Creek immersion program, inspires her because she never gives up, no matter how difficult her task may be.



Aldricia Cypress Immokalee High School

Aldricia plans to attend Immokalee Technical College and study early childhood education. She would like to open a day care center and work with children. Her favorite high school memory is having her baby, Marhz. Even though he's three months old, she says he has an old soul and inspires her.



Nicole Slavik Seacrest Country Day School

Nicole will attend Lesley University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to study fine arts and graphic design. She isn't sure what career path she will take, but she wants to represent the Tribe and show her Native American voice through art. She is considering art therapy, being an art teacher or a graphic artist as career choices. The biggest lesson Nicole learned in high school was to look past people's differences and is inspired by the artist Gustavo Rimada, whose art blows her away.



Gherry Osceola Immokalee High School

Gherry will attend Florida Gulf Coast University for pre-med. She's always been fascinated with how medicine interacts with the body and one of her high school teachers inspired her to pursue the medical field. The most important lesson she learned in high school is time management and her favorite memory is going to high school events and spending time with her best friends. Gherry's mother Geraldine Osceola and her sisters inspire her to be better.



Layne Thomas Okeechobee High School

Layne plans to go to Indian River State College for an associate's degree and then transfer to Florida State University or Florida Gulf Coast University to study business administration. A physical fitness enthusiast, Layne hopes to be a physical therapist, a trainer or open a gym. In high school he learned to not let the little things pass him by, as those are the things that matter. His father Jason inspires him and is the biggest role model in his life because of his hard work.



Kalani Bankston Nova Southeastern University School

Kalani is moving to Syracuse, New York, to study biology at Syracuse University. Eventually, Kalani would like to focus on genetics and was inspired to pursue the sciences by his high school chemistry teacher Mr. Boulos. Along with his teacher's encouragement, Kalani was motivated to finish high school and pursue college because neither of his parents went to college and they pushed him to seize the opportunity.



Franklin Jumper GED

In the fall, Franklin will begin his college career learning woodworking and carpentry at Broward College, although in the future he hopes to get a music degree. Even though he didn't attend Ahfachkee for his senior year, his favorite school memory was going to the school's prom. Franklin's mom and older brother inspired him to obtain his GED and the dedication and perseverance he learned along the way is a lesson he will carry with him into college.



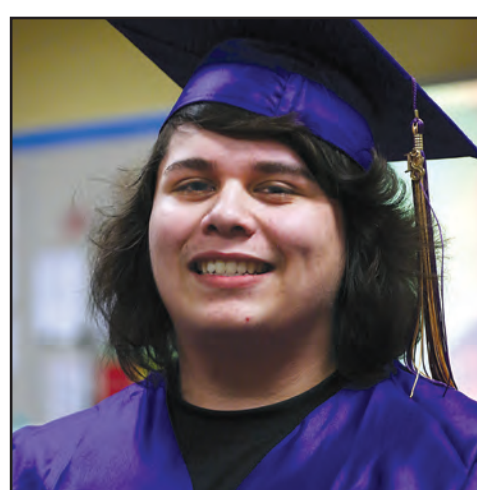
Leatrice Cypress-Cummings Immokalee High School

Leatrice would like to go to Florida State College and then possibly Haskell Indian Nations University to study Tribal government, as she hopes to be the first female president of the Tribe. While in high school, Leatrice learned that God always has a plan and that every barrier can be broken. She is inspired by her one-year-old son Kenai, who she says is full of life and encourages her to wake up every day and be happy.



Adrienne Bell GED, Oklahoma

Adrienne will attend Sheridan Technical College in Hollywood for culinary arts and hospitality management and will also pursue a bachelor's in entrepreneurship. She hopes to own a business and expand her sewing ventures to create traditional Seminole clothes. Her favorite high school memory is attending the pep rallies, where she said she was the loudest student singing all the songs. Adrienne's mother inspired her to finish school and gave her a needed "push."



Morgan King Okeechobee High School

Morgan plans to attend either Indian River State College or South Florida State College in Avon Park, where he will study business. He would like to one day turn his interest in golf into a business, possibly designing golf clubs. The biggest lesson Morgan learned in high school is to never work under pressure and stay on top of your work. His inspiration comes from his father Gilbert King, who he says is always there for him through the good and bad and keeps him humble.

Class of 2018



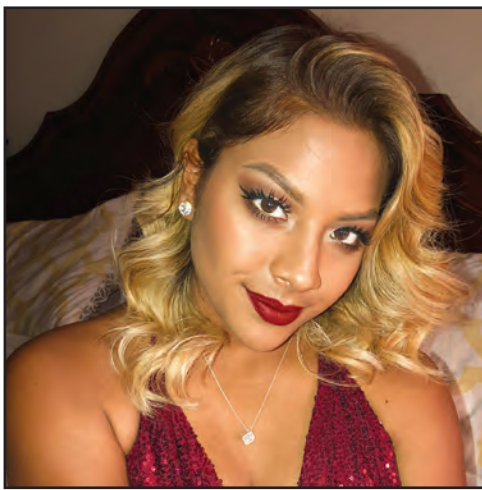
Julian Yescas
Fork Union Military Academy, Virginia

Julian will attend Lynn University in Boca Raton to study biology and run cross country and track. Julian's favorite high school memories are graduation and winning the state championship. His parents, friends and mentors inspired him to finish high school and go to college. Julian is looking forward to running cross country and track for Lynn University while he decides on future career plans.



Samuel Sanchez
Fort Gibson High School, Oklahoma

Now that Sammy has graduated, he wants to enjoy the summer in Florida while preparing to attend Oklahoma State University and major in psychology. He says a big reason he chose OSU is because the school offered him a chance to play football. His favorite high school memory is playing football with his older brother Jesse. Sammy's inspiration to finish high school and attend college came from his mom Alicia Cabal and stepdad Frank Cabal, coach Sammy Johnson and older siblings.



Amya Baxley
John Carroll High School

Amya plans to become a cosmetologist and will start beauty school in August at the Boca Beauty Academy in Boca Raton. Her goal is to own her own salon to help make other people feel and look beautiful every day. Amya said her parents inspired her to finish high school. Her favorite high school memories are when she hit her first homerun in a softball game her senior year and when her mom, sister and boyfriend attended her graduation.



Carrisa Colon
Miami Palmetto Senior High School

Carrisa said she plans to do some traveling first and then possibly attend Manatee Technical College. She'd eventually like to own a small business of some kind after college. Her favorite high school memory is saying goodbye to teachers and friends, although it was "bittersweet." Her family, friends and late brother inspired her to finish high school. She is looking forward to meeting new people, seeing new places and experiencing new opportunities.

Additional graduates

Anissa Billie
Pen Foster

Tyler Bilodeau
The Walker School

Marquis Fudge
Okeechobee High School

Spawn Loudermilk
Okeechobee High School

Kailani Osceola
Micosukee Indian School

Anthony Billie
Glenpool High School

Brian Bishop
Okeechobee High School

Kaitlynn Gorney
NSU University School

Jared McInturff
The Sagemont School

Shae Pierce
Glades County homeschool

Claireese Avila-Billie
Riverside Indian School

Dasani Cypress
NSU University School

Terance Danai Hill
Montverde Academy

Alyssa Osceola
Florida Virtual School

Donavin Spiva
Hollywood Christian School

Lanie Baker
The Vanguard School

Jason Cypress
GED

Annie Cypress Joe
The Sagemont School

Chahechom Osceola
American Heritage

Hunter Strickland
Okeechobee High School

Kyler Bell
Paladin Academy

Kasera Cypress
Hollywood Hills

Cecil Johns
Homeschool

Davena Osceola
Micosukee Indian School

Mason Sweat
Okeechobee High School

Asiana Briana Billie
American Heritage

Bly Davidson
Okeechobee High School

Arek Jumper
Hollywood Hills

Drew Osceola
Know It All Prep School

Maurice Tyler
GED

Cartaya Billie
Labelle High School

Jon Davis
GED

Tyrek LaSane
East Bay High School

Isaac Osceola
Liberty Christian Prep

Ross Zepeda
St. John Neumann High School

Maurice Billie
Rochester High School

Howie Drake
American Heritage

Bradley Latchford
NSU University School

Joseph Osceola
Liberty Christian Prep

PECS May Students of the Month

PECS Elementary

Miguel Estrada
Dylan Peak
Bentley Osceola
Zayden Pewo
Okalani Collins

Chance Madrigal
Kulipa Julian
Eri'Mya McQueen
Amalia Estrada
Sylas Rodriguez
Jaelee James Weimann

Marley Jimmie
Hannah Platt
Tehya Nunez
Dahlia Turtle
Ava Taylor
Chovi Weimann

Aaryn King
Serenity Lara
Jaydence Urbina
Kayden Warrior
J-Wayco Billie
Cordey Jumper

PECS Middle

Tiera Garner
Charlie Armstrong
Dakoya Nunez



Arts & Entertainment

Seminoles sign their names to final structural beam for Hollywood's new guitar-shaped hotel

BY KEVIN JOHNSON & BEVERLY BIDNEY
Senior Editor & Staff Reporter

A whitewashed steel beam has been making its way from reservation to reservation from June 18 to July 3 to give all Tribal members the opportunity to sign it. The beam will be the last one erected in the structure of the guitar-shaped Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood. A topping off ceremony will be held July 9 to commemorate the milestone.

The beam's first stop was the Brighton Reservation, where it arrived June 18 at the Fred Smith Rodeo Arena.

Arena manager Marvin Hines guided assistant manager Chester Surls as he

lowered the 20-foot beam from a tractor onto two metal sawhorses.

Seminole Tribal Gaming Commission Chairman and Tribal member Allen Huff, of Brighton, was the first person to sign the beam. He said it's a great idea to have Tribal members sign the beam for the Guitar Tower.

"Having all the Tribal members being a part of it is really neat. It tells them 'I'm a part of this,'" Huff said.

"Pretty awesome" is how Billie Tiger described the Guitar Tower after she signed the beam.

After three days in Brighton, the beam shifted over to Immokalee on June 21, 22 and 25 and then Big Cypress for three days before it was scheduled to return to Hollywood at the end of June for its final stop as part of the \$1.5 billion casino, dining,

entertainment, hotel and retail expansion.

It has long been a tradition when constructing a building to mark the "topping off" of the structure with a ceremony when the last beam is put in place, signifying the building is structurally complete.

The practice began in ancient Scandinavia when a tree was placed atop a building to appease tree-dwelling spirits who may have been disturbed during construction. Today the topping out ceremony is common throughout the world with trees, flags or streamers attached to the last beam.

Beverly Bidney

At upper right, Christina Billie signs the final beam that will be placed in the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood. Members of the Immokalee and Naples communities signed the steel beam in front of the Immokalee field office June 21-25.



Beverly Bidney

Leonardo Yzaguirre signs the beam in Immokalee as 3-year-old Claire Yzaguirre watches.



Kevin Johnson

Seminole Tribal Gaming Commission Chairman Allen Huff is the first person to sign the structural beam upon its arrival June 18 at Fred Smith Rodeo Arena on the Brighton Reservation. The beam will be part of the new 450-foot Guitar Tower being built at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood.



Beverly Bidney

Connie Slavik, of Naples, signs the beam in front of the Immokalee Reservation field office June 25.

Indigenous Music Awards 2018 winners



Courtesy Buio Assis/Indigenous Music Awards

Blaine Constant performs a music medley on his fiddle at the Indigenous Music Awards on May 18 as an opener for the announcement of this year's best instrumental album, which went to Jan Michael Looking Wolf.

The annual Indigenous Music Awards were held May 18 in Manitoba, Canada. The following winners were announced during the event. All nominations for each category can be found online at IndigenousMusicAwards.com.

Best Blues Album

Robert "Freighttrain" Parker

Best Country Album

Desiree Dorion

Best Electronic Music Album

Once a Tree

Best Folk Album

Buffy Sainte-Marie

Best Gospel

Callie Bennett

Best Hand Drum Album

Young Spirit

Best Inuit, Indigenous Language or Francophone Album

Shauit

Best Instrumental Album

Jan Michael Looking Wolf

Best Pop Album

Indian City

Best Pow Wow – Contemporary Album

Black Bear Singers

Best Pow Wow – Traditional Album

Northern Cree

Best Rap/Hip Hop Album

Supaman

Best Rock Album

Relic Kings

Lifetime Achievement Award

Pat Vegas

Best New Artist

Ansley Simpson

Best Radio Single

Carsen Gray

Best Music Video

Buffy Sainte-Marie

Best Producer/Engineer

Supaman

Best International Indigenous Release

The Imbayakunas

Best Radio Station Program – Promoting Indigenous Music

Indigenous Music Countdown

AH-TAH-THI-KI MUSEUM Seminole Discovery Days

Bring friends & family!

Get crafty, explore the Everglades, taste tradition, enjoy demonstrations and more!

June 16th: Art at Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki

July 28th: Seminole War Day

September 15th: We Are Here



All activities are free for Tribal Members, museum members, or included with your admission.

Hard Rock provides lifeboats for Atlantic City Beach Patrol

BY DAMON SCOTT
Staff Reporter

Editor's note: Staff reporter Beverly Bidney will provide full coverage of the grand opening of the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City in the July 31 issue of the Tribune and on the Tribune's social media.

Most of the media attention and fanfare has been on the June 28 grand opening of the new Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City with all its amenities and glitz. Understandably so.

Hard Rock renovated the former Trump Taj Mahal to the tune of \$500 million. Carrie Underwood and Pitbull were scheduled to appear. The property features 20 restaurants, a 120,000-square-foot gaming floor, 2,100 slot machines, 120 table games. You get the idea.

But leading up to the opening, Hard Rock officials also forged a partnership that will make guests safer on the beach and in the waters outside the property.

To coincide with Memorial Day weekend, Hard Rock and city officials joined with the Atlantic City Beach Patrol on May 28 to launch a custom-made lifeboat. The boat is one of two that were donated by the Hard Rock to be used off the beaches at Maryland and Virginia avenues for the summer season. Their purpose is to "guard the beach," along several city blocks, much of it in front of the new Hard Rock.

"Atlantic City has a unique demographic of visitors," said Atlantic City Beach Patrol Chief Steve Downey. "There tends to be a lot of non-swimmers, and the beaches are dense [with people]."

He said the boats are used to rescue swimmers who are caught in the rip tide, among other potentially dire situations. The boats carry a two-person team, including a rescue swimmer. The boat is decked out in collage-inspired "Born to Defy" Hard Rock colors, also featuring Atlantic City Beach Patrol lettering along the side.

Downey, who has been chief for four years and in Atlantic City for 30 years, said the donation by Hard Rock marks the first new boats his department has had in 11 years, due to tight city budgets.

"[The new boats] have been met with much joy," Downey said. "Just the Hard Rock coming here – this end of town has

been quiet for awhile ... it's going to breathe a breath of fresh air into this part of town."

Those at the event made note that the donation was a gesture that showed the Hard Rock is interested in being a part of the Atlantic City community at large.

Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City President Matt Harkness said it was a way to promote the "altruistic and philanthropic" work Hard Rock is doing.

At the Memorial Day christening, Atlantic City Mayor Frank Gilliam and Miss New Jersey, Kaitlyn Schoeffel, took a short ride into the ocean with Beach Patrol to lay a ceremonial wreath marking the occasion and partnership.



Courtesy Tim Louie

Atlantic City Mayor Frank Gilliam and Miss New Jersey Kaitlyn Schoeffel head out into the water with Atlantic City Beach Patrol to lay a ceremonial wreath in the ocean as part of an event that marked the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City's donation of new lifeboats.



Courtesy Tim Louie

Pictured with members of the Atlantic City Beach Patrol are Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City President Matt Harkness (suit jacket), Atlantic City Mayor Frank Gilliam and Miss New Jersey Kaitlyn Schoeffel.

Calendar of events

July 4

Freedom Festival
10 a.m. Miccosukee Resort & Gaming

Thunder On The Ridge
3 p.m. Lake Eva Park

July 6

Underwater Music Festival
6 p.m. Looe Key Reef Resort

July 7

Coke Zero Sugar 400
7 p.m. Daytona International Speedway

Saturday Night Rodeo
7:30 p.m. Westgate River Ranch Resort

July 11

Pensacola Beach Air Show
8 a.m. Pensacola Beach

July 12

Florida Supercon
11 a.m. Broward County Convention Center

July 14

International Mango Festival
9:30 a.m. Coral Gables

Swamp Stomp
4 p.m. Tallahassee Museum

Colin Jost
8 p.m. The Pavilion

Ft. Pierce Chili Cook-off
11 a.m. Havert L. Fenn Center

July 15

Legally Blonde, The Musical
2:30 p.m. Theatre Winter Haven

Sounds of Little Haiti
7 p.m. Little Haiti Cultural Center

July 17

Hemingway Days Festival
8 a.m. Key West

July 21

Palm Beach Winter Beer Fest
2 p.m. South Florida Fairgrounds

Water Ski Team Show
5 p.m. Lake Silver

Apollo Celebration Gala
5:20 p.m. Kennedy Space Center

July 22

Ice Cream Music Jam
6:30 p.m. Dade Battlefield State Park

July 27

Dave Matthews Band
8 p.m. Coral Sky Amphitheatre

July 28

Seminole War Day
1 p.m. Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

Scallop Festival
12 p.m. Kings Bay Park

Peru Independence Day Celebration
1:30 p.m. Orlando Museum of Art

Design selected for Smithsonian's National Native American Veterans Memorial

PRESS RELEASE

The jury for the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian National Native American Veterans Memorial has unanimously selected the design concept submitted by Harvey Pratt (Cheyenne/Arapaho) titled "Warriors' Circle of Honor." Groundbreaking for the memorial is slated for Sept. 21, 2019. It is slated to open late 2020.

"Through meeting thousands of Native American veterans, I learned most of all about the commitment these veterans have to the well-being of the United States," said Kevin Gover (Pawnee), director of the museum. "These veterans are perfectly aware that they are serving a country that had not kept its commitments to Native people, and yet they chose – and are still choosing – to serve. This reflects a very deep kind of patriotism. I can think of no finer example of service to the United States and the promise it holds."

Native Americans serve at a higher rate per capita than any other population group. Few outside the military and American Indian Nations know that Native people have served in the U.S. armed forces since the American Revolution and continue to serve today. The nation's capital is known for its grand monuments and solemn memorials, including many honoring the nation's veterans. Yet no national

landmark in Washington, D.C., focuses on the contributions of American Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians who have served in the military since colonial times.

Pratt is a multimedia artist and recently retired forensic artist, as well as a Marine Corps Vietnam veteran. His design concept is a multisensory memorial. An elevated stainless steel circle rests on an intricately carved stone drum. Listen to Pratt describe his design concept in detail. The selected design will undergo further development in partnership with the museum.

Congress commissioned the museum to build a National Native American Veterans Memorial that gives "all Americans the opportunity to learn of the proud and courageous tradition of service of Native Americans in the Armed Forces of the United States."

The museum worked with the National Congress of American Indians and other Native

organizations to create an advisory committee composed of tribal leaders, Native veterans and their family members from across the country who assisted with outreach to Native American communities and veterans. The advisory committee and the museum conducted 35 community consultations across the nation to seek input and support for the memorial. These events resulted in a shared vision and set of design principles for the National Native American Veterans Memorial.

The National Museum of the American Indian conducted an international competition to select design concepts for the National Native American Veterans Memorial. Don Stastny, an architect and urban designer, oversaw the competition. The design was selected through a juried, two-stage process.

For more information about the memorial, go to the National Museum of the American Indian's website.



Harvey Pratt, left, created the winning design of the National Native American Veterans Memorial, set to open in 2020.



Courtesy NMAI

Sports



FGCU volleyball clinic a big hit for Seminole girls

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

FORT MYERS — About 50 girls from Seminole reservations took over the Alico Arena at Florida Gulf Coast University on June 9 for a high level volleyball clinic led by FGCU's coach.

The girls made the "Nest" — the arena's nickname — their own for the day as they polished and practiced skills to make their games stronger. FGCU head coach Matt Botsford led them through a litany of drills including passing, setting, serving and hitting.

"They have a good foundation. I want to refine the concepts and ideas that will help them in the sport. I'm impressed that they've been taught all the right things; they're doing a really good job," said Botsford, whose FGCU team reached the ASUN Conference championship game last season.

It was the second year of the onsite FGCU volleyball program, but this year the Brighton Reservation invited the Chobee Volleyball Academy to participate with them. A few Tribal girls play for the organization, which has seven teams. The 14 and under team, which includes Karey Gopher and Elle Thomas, recently won the AAU South Florida Super Regional Tournament and qualified for the AAU National Volleyball Tournament.

"Last year the clinic really helped them," said Kelly Smiley, Brighton recreation office coordinator. "It refreshed their skills and



Florida Gulf Coast University volleyball clinic participants and coaches gather on the court for a portrait June 9 at FGCU's Alico Arena in Fort Myers. Most of the players were from the Brighton and Big Cypress reservations.

Beverly Bidney



Beverly Bidney

FGCU volleyball coach Matt Botsford shows the group how to line up behind the ball to return it, even if it means leaning a lot.

sharpened them up."

Stanley "Butch" Perchan, FGCU senior associate athletic director for external affairs, welcomed the group. The Tribe's relationship with the university goes back six years and has included volleyball, basketball, softball and golf.

"We just love having the kids from the Tribe here," Perchan said. "But there is a bigger part of this. Sports are meant to help kids finish high school and look at college or trade school. If not FGCU, then make it some other school."

The university also offers summer STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and dual enrollment programs for Native American students. Perchan said the plan is to make it a five-week residential program next summer.

On the court, the volleyball action was intense as the girls went through the drills.

"Make your hands cradle the ball, shape them like a ball," Botsford told the girls as he taught them how to set properly. "Get your forehead behind the ball."

Ball-handling "rapids," where three girls quickly set and then passed the ball to each other, were next.

"Everybody wants to hit, but hitting is irrelevant if you can't pass and set," Botsford said. "That's why we do this first and then get into hitting. The highest value to a team is these two skills."

Footwork and spiking the ball go hand in hand, so to speak. The coach explained that a three-step approach to the net and being able to rotate to gain momentum increases a player's attack velocity.

"Use your arms to jump and create momentum and you will always jump higher," Botsford said. "Undersized attackers can be really effective by perfecting these techniques."

During the serving drill, the players took turns hitting it over the net. Coach Botsford told them to avoid putting spin on the ball as they served.

"Zero spin makes the ball more difficult to pass," he said. "Spin makes the ball more predictable."

He told the group that most young players toss the ball too high or too far or to the opposite shoulder. The goal is to have as little motion as possible.

"Less motion equals better contact," Botsford said. "Toss, draw, contact, freeze. You should look like a statue when you're done. Stay balanced, frozen and square to the target."

The players worked hard on their moves and appreciated the tips.

"It's awesome," Canaan Jumper said. "I learned the importance of the mechanics of everything."



Beverly Bidney

Jordan Osceola returns the ball as Thomlynn Billie watches during the FGCU volleyball clinic June 9 at the Fort Myers campus.

"It was amazing and it will help us accomplish more," Lexi Thomas said.

"They really put us to work," added Akeelah Mitchell.

At the end of the day, Botsford reiterated the best advice he could give.

"Try to simplify the skill itself," he said. "Get rid of extra movements that don't add to the skill."

The young players will surely take those words and the day's workout to heart.

"I feel like I'll be more prepared and play better when practice starts in July," said Jordan Osceola, who has been playing on the Sagemont School team for three years.



Beverly Bidney

The footwork drill brought out the giggles for some of these girls, who attended the volleyball clinic to improve their skills.



Beverly Bidney

Carlise Bermudez gets ready to spike the ball over the net during a drill at the FGCU volleyball clinic.



Beverly Bidney

Jana Johnson has a ball as she hits one back during a drill at the FGCU volleyball clinic.



Kevin Johnson (2)

Above, Makari Tommie grabs an offensive rebound for the Fort Pierce team June 23 during the first Fort Pierce Reservation Summer Slam Shootout basketball tournament at Chupco's Landing Community Center. At right, Adrian Baker, from the We'll Be There team, takes a jump shot.



Biggie wins first Fort Pierce Summer Slam

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

FORT PIERCE — It didn't take long for excitement to be part of the new Fort Pierce Reservation Summer Slam Shootout basketball tournament.

The one-day adult tournament, which organizers plan to be an annual event, drew three men's teams to Chupco's Landing Community Center on June 23. It started with an opening game thriller.

Trailing by eight points with a minute left in regulation, We'll Be There somehow rallied to tie Biggie and force overtime. The "shot heard around Chupco" came from Al Fludd, who banked in a 3-pointer from the top of the arc with seven-tenths of a second left.

But Biggie responded like the champions they would become later in the day as they shrugged off the late rally and regrouped for an 87-80 overtime win.

Biggie was led by Eugene Joseph, who poured in a game-high 35 points. Joseph, a 6-foot-6 guard from Miami, averaged nearly 14 points last season for ASA College Miami. Biggie also received a big game from Choctaw's T.J. Ben (15 points) and Miccosukee point guard Charlie



Photo courtesy Remus Griffin

After going undefeated, the Biggie team shows off its prizes for winning the first Fort Pierce Reservation Summer Slam Shootout basketball tournament.



Kevin Johnson

Fort Pierce's Roger "Fresh" Walters takes a one-handed jump shot during the Summer Slam.



Photo courtesy Remus Griffin

From left, Alejandro Diez, Adrian Baker and Al Fludd show the trophy and shirts they won as runners-up on the We'll Be There team.



Kevin Johnson

Biggie's Chayton York takes a one-handed jump shot amid traffic against We'll Be There at the Summer Slam in Fort Pierce.

Osceola (12 points). Ben, a 6-foot-4 guard from Philadelphia, Mississippi, plays for Southwest Mississippi Community College.

Throughout the game, Biggie appeared to be ready to pull away but We'll Be There, captained by Adrian Baker, fought back several times to keep it close. Biggie led 34-30 at halftime and quickly opened a seven-point cushion in the second half but Fludd hit a pair of 3s and another trey from Alejandro Diez made it a one-point game.

A terrific pass from Osceola set up a layup by Ben that gave Biggie a 64-57 lead with less than five minutes left, but Baker drained his fourth 3-pointer before he was ejected on a double-technical with two minutes left.

We'll Be There featured balanced scoring. Fludd led the way with 21 points followed by 20 from Baker, 13 from Diez and 11 from Marquise Fudge.

Biggie went on to beat Fort Pierce and then topped We'll Be There again — this time overtime wasn't needed — in the championship game to claim the tournament's first title and some sleek championship jerseys. We'll Be There finished runner-up and Fort Pierce, which was captained by Antillus Stockton, took third place on its home court.

The Summer Slam was the second adult tournament held at Chupco's Landing

since the 18,000-square foot gymnasium/community center/pool opened in 2014. At the start of the day, five teams were scheduled to participate, but two teams didn't show up. The smaller field didn't dampen the optimism.

"It was a great tournament. Even though a couple teams dropped out, the guys still enjoyed themselves and the kids enjoyed watching it," said tournament organizer Remus Griffin of the Fort Pierce Recreation Department.

Griffin said a Thanksgiving tournament is being planned. Whether it's a tournament, or a rez to rez all-day basketball event or just open gym after school, Chupco's Community Center is playing a key role in the community.

"This facility is a great asset to our community," Griffin said. "It gives the kids something to do every day. They utilize it."



Kevin Johnson

Biggie's Charlie Osceola, left, reaches in to try to make a steal against Fort Pierce's Derrick Timothy.

Hollywood sports camp keeps kids active this summer

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

HOLLYWOOD — Watching sports, such as this year's World Cup soccer tournament, is one thing; being an active participant is another.

So while much of the world's eyes have been glued to Russia, the Hollywood Recreation Department is making sure youngsters do more than sit in front of a TV.

With movement being the core of its mission, the department's sports camp started June 11 and will run until Aug. 3.

"Our goal for this year is that it has to revolve around some type of motion, whether it's actual physical sports or activities," said Hollywood Recreation site manager Joe Collins. "We've eliminated movies and stuff like that where they're sitting."

The camp is filled with youngsters ages five to 12. Collins stressed that kids don't have to be athletic to be active.

The menu is loaded with sports such as archery, basketball, soccer, swimming, kickball, volleyball and much more.

"We're going to expose them to as many sports as we can, with a heavy emphasis on basketball," Collins said. "In the afternoon, every Monday through Wednesday from 1:30 to 3 they do a basketball clinic with Jay Garland, our fitness trainer. He puts them through drills."

After seeing some less than desirable



Kevin Johnson
Christian Schaffer scores a run during the Hollywood sports camp kickball game June 20 at Howard Tiger Recreation Center.

results at the most recent NAYO basketball tournament, Collins said it's time to re-energize the sport with youth on the reservation.

"Hollywood has always been king of basketball," Collins said. "We're really putting an emphasis on basketball. When we come out of summer, we're going to bring back our Itty Bitty program where we're aiming it at the five-and-six-year-old group. I want these kids walking around this facility or the reservation bouncing basketballs."

Two field trips per week are filled with motion, too, from ice skating at Pines Ice Arena to indoor skydiving at iFly. Even a day at the beach isn't necessarily a day at the beach.

"It's in the sand, so they're going to be playing volleyball and soccer. Everything we do is to try to keep them active the entire day," Collins said.

The camp does make time for educational breathers, such as trips to the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum and the Phillip and Patricia Frost Museum of Science.

The camp is also providing a summer of learning for five teens from the SWEP program. The kids are assisting in all facets of recreation and even attending staff meetings. "They'll get a taste of everything we do in Recreation," Collins said.



Kevin Johnson
Carter Wilcox tags out Lakota Correa during the Hollywood sports camp kickball game.



Kevin Johnson
Kickball took center stage for kids in the Hollywood sports camp on June 20 at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center.



Kevin Johnson
Dalina Rodriguez sprints to second base during a kickball game at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center.

A day at the ballpark for Hollywood seniors

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

MIAMI — Hollywood seniors received a taste of the Big Leagues on June 14.

The Hollywood Senior Center organized a trip to Marlins Park to see the Miami Marlins host the San Francisco Giants in a rare weekday matinee. Most of the 9,726

fans in attendance were kids from various organizations who arrived in large groups.

The Senior Center group, which consisted of about a dozen people, arrived on a bus driven by Joe Kippenberger. They sat in the final few rows of Section 23 on the left field side. They all had barely settled into their seats with their hot dogs and popcorn before Andrew McCutcheon and Mac

Williamson smacked home runs to give the Giants a 3-0 lead after an inning-and-a-half.

Thunder and rain started about 1 p.m., but thanks to the park's roof, there was no delay.

The Marlins clawed their way back into the game with runs in the fifth and seventh innings.

With the Marlins trailing 3-2 in the

ninth inning, the group decided to head back to Hollywood. The Marlins made sure there was more baseball to be played. They pushed across the tying run on a one-out sacrifice fly by Lewis Brinson. The game remained knotted at 3-3 all the way until the 16th when the Giants scored three times and emerged with a 6-3 win that lasted four hours, 49 minutes.

It was the longest game of the season for the Giants, and the second longest for the Marlins.

On deck for the Hollywood seniors is a trip to Hawaii in July.



Kevin Johnson
A group from the Hollywood Senior Center enjoys the action at the Miami Marlins game June 14. From left, front row: Lee Stewart, Nettie Stewart, Alice Tucker, Lawanna Osceola-Niles; middle row: Edna Bowers, Nancy Willie, Elizabeth Bridon, Vincent Billie; back row: Jayne Salgado, Cornelia Osceola, Trudy Osceola; far back: Joe Kippenberger.

