



# The Seminole Tribune

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## Tribal businesses have a shot with thriving Broward, Super Bowl

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — Seminole Tribe of Florida small business owners were recently reminded of some big economic opportunities that are currently in South Florida and on the horizon.

At the Chairman's Economic & Small Business Development Seminar, officials representing the upcoming Super Bowl in Miami, and Broward County Mayor Mark Bogen, laid out ways Tribal businesses can grab a piece of what they say is a big pie.

The first-of-its-kind seminar took place March 1 at the Native Learning Center in Hollywood. It was organized by Derrick Smith, senior director of operations in the Chairman's office. Smith said the main reason for the event was simply to promote the growth of Tribal businesses.



Damon Scott

Rashad D. Thomas, who is the Business Connect representative for the NFL, talks to some of the attendees at the Chairman's Economic & Small Business Development Seminar on March 1 at the Native Learning Center in Hollywood.

Bogen started out praising the Seminole Tribe's ongoing contribution to the county's strong economy to the roomful of attendees.

"[The Hard Rock] is one of the county and state's largest employers," Bogen said. "In addition to providing jobs, there is a huge indirect impact on our economy through the many businesses it owns and operates. The Hard Rock [Hotel & Casino Hollywood] is also a massive tourist draw which also benefits the surrounding businesses."

But this seminar was about business opportunities outside of the Hard Rock's operations.

Bogen let the attendees (which included a couple Tribal caterers and a construction company owner) know how they could do business as a vendor with the county.

He stressed that businesses must first go through a registration process to be an official vendor.

"Eligible contractors in Broward have to use 25 percent of small businesses as part of their contracts," Bogen said.

Bogen added that the recent "penny tax" for public transportation projects that voters recently approved will generate even more opportunity for small businesses in the future.

Sandy McDonald, the director of the Office of Economic and Small Business Development at Broward County, spoke to the group and said his office was available to answer questions or provide any assistance.

The programs throw around a lot of acronyms — CBE/SBE and DBE/ACDBE to name a few. But the bottom line is they amount to local and federal certification programs through the county, as well as free small business assistance and other opportunities.

♦ See BUSINESS on page 5A



Beverly Bidney

Seminole students discuss sovereignty statements written by other Close Up USET participants before the vote on which ones should be presented to the USET leadership March 6 in Washington, D.C.

## In D.C., Seminole students excel in Close Up USET program

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**WASHINGTON** — The Seminole Tribe of Florida had the largest contingent of students in the annual Close Up and United

South and Eastern Tribes program from March 2-8 in Washington, D.C. Out of the 98 high school students from 17 tribes who participated, 24 were Seminoles.

Although the students toured the U.S. Capitol and a variety of historic monuments, the Close Up USET program was much

more than a sightseeing trip. Students spent the week learning about U.S. and tribal governments while working together to address specific issues affecting their individual tribes as well as the meaning of sovereignty for all tribes.

In addition to Florida, Close Up USET

students represented tribes from Maine, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, Alabama, Louisiana and Texas.

Many Seminole youth wore patchwork

♦ See STUDENTS on page 2B

## Manatees were once important Seminole food source

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

Recalling his younger years, Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger puts it bluntly: "We were some poor people just trying to stay alive."

The time he speaks of wasn't really that long ago either.

Councilman Tiger said even though the Seminole Tribe's economic situation has clearly transformed in recent years, poverty was significant from before federal recognition in 1957 through the late 1990s.

He recently thought back on his years as a youth in the 1960s, and how he helped put food on the table by hunting and fishing. One source of food at the time was the manatee. He remembers how important the aquatic mammal was to sustain life.

"When you found a manatee, it was a blessing in disguise," Councilman Tiger said. "You could live on the amount of meat it provided for weeks. They were part of our diet."

Preservation was tough without refrigeration, however, he said.

"It's fatty, like beef. We would fry it or grill or boil it. If you could, you'd dehydrate it under the chickees and smoke it," Councilman Tiger said.

Manatee hides were also sold for coffee, sugar and salt. Some of the bones were used for traditional purposes, he said.

"I believe they blessed the carcass, giving thanks back. It was a means of survival back then," Councilman Tiger said.

### Struggle of the 'sea cow'

Manatees have been traced in the fossil record to 50 million years ago. They can be found in both saltwater and freshwater habitats.

Weighing 1,000 pounds or more, the "gentle giant" is symbolic of Florida and a draw for tourists. Manatees first appeared in the shallow bays and rivers of the state about 15 million years ago, according to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Populations dwindled over the years,



Florida State Archives

This archival image shows Seminoles using the manatee for sustenance.

not because the Seminoles hunted them for food, but because of fishery conflicts, habitat loss and boat collisions. Most recently the toxic red tide plaguing much of Florida's Gulf Coast killed scores of the "sea cows" — a nickname that comes from their diet of seagrasses and other aquatic plants.

In order to combat this, the federal Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 and the Endangered Species Act of 1973 was put into place to help protect the manatee. Due to overall improvements in numbers and habitat, the manatee moved

from an endangered status to a downgraded threatened status in 2016.

Today, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service think the Florida manatee (a subspecies of the West Indian manatee) number about 6,300. Aerial surveys in 1991 put the number at about 1,300.

### 'Manatee Mania'

Lindsey Gilbert Hinnrichs, the historical resources program assistant for the Citrus County board of county commissioners

at the Old Courthouse Heritage Museum in Inverness, recently organized a new exhibition focused on the manatee.

"Manatee Mania" runs through May at the museum.

Hinnrichs said it wasn't just the Seminole Tribe that historically used the manatee for food, but "all people in Florida."

The exhibition includes a "Coffee and Conversation" speaker series — one features Janie Gould on April 7 at 7 p.m.

♦ See MANATEES on page 8A

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# Editorial

## What kind of democracy? One where Native votes are counted

• Mark Trahant

What kind of “democracy” is the United States? Presidential candidate Elizabeth Warren asked the question in a big way.

“I believe we need a constitutional amendment that protects the right to vote for every American citizen and to make sure that vote gets counted,” she said on CNN. “We need to put some federal muscle behind that. And we need to repeal every one of the voter suppression laws ...”

Sen. Warren, D-Massachusetts, called for a national vote “and that means get rid of the Electoral College and everybody counts.”

These two issues: The mechanics of the Electoral College and the idea of counting every vote ought to be front and center in every election. The United States version of democracy is structured to make sure that we are not equal.

Start with representation. American Indians and Alaska Natives are about two percent of the population. Yet in Congress, even after historic wins, there are still only four Native Americans in Congress, a total of two-thirds of one percent.

But it's not just the Electoral College. It's the Senate. It's the districting system in the U.S. House of Representatives (and for that matter, in most state legislatures). The fact, yes, the fact is the structure of this democracy does not ensure a reflection of the country.

So every vote does not count the same. A vote from Indian Country, at least

measured by representation, is only one-third of one percent. And that is even less so in the Electoral College because the ballots are cast state by state and are not awarded by congressional district (except in Maine and Nebraska).

Then as bad as the Electoral College is ... the Senate is worse. Warren's place in politics is a democratic aberration. A voter in Wyoming has 70 times more say about the country's future than a citizen of California. Seventy times! When you think of the diversity in a country of 325 million, what kind of democracy allows a small rural state to have far more power than those states that are more reflective of the country and its population?

President Donald J. Trump was a longtime critic of the Electoral College until he won because of that very structural imbalance. “It's like training for the 100 yard dash vs. a marathon. The brilliance of the Electoral College is that you must go to many States to win,” Trump tweeted. “With the Popular Vote, you go to just the large States - the Cities would end up running the Country. Smaller States & the entire Midwest would end up losing all power - & we can't let that happen.”

But it's not an either, or. There are alternatives. The rest of the world already uses other systems of governance, systems that recognize the value of every citizen having a voice in the democratic process.

Take New Zealand. Many have been struck by the leadership of Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern as she and her government responded to an act of terror. Looking at that government action is also worth considering the political structure of New Zealand.

Maori have guaranteed representation in

Parliament that started in 1867. In addition, that country switched from a district based system like the U.S. House in 1993 to mixed member proportional representation. This increases the broad representation in Parliament.

Since the mixed member proportional system began “Maori representation in Parliament has remained at least proportional to the Maori share of the national population,” writes Dominic O'Sullivan, an associate professor at Charles Sturt University in Australia. “The Maori party advocated for greater tribal authority while in government. Maori voters will expect that advocacy to continue given they largely believe full citizenship is not realized through the state alone. In short, Maori people and policy influence New Zealand politics in ways that First Nations in Canada do not.”

And it's the same could be said in the United States.

What would proportional representation look like? Amber Ebarb, Tlingit, of the National Congress of American Indians has run the numbers. She calculates proportional representation would equal at least two members of the U.S. Senate and seven members in the U.S. House of Representatives.

That is what representative democracy looks like.

*Mark Trahant is editor of Indian Country Today, where this editorial appeared. He is a member of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. Follow him on Twitter - @TrahantReports*

## New dollars, sure, but same political game

• Niigaan Sinclair

In November 2005, in the waning days of a Paul Martin-led Liberal federal government, the Kelowna Accord was forged.

It was the result of an unprecedented 18-month consultative process between the federal government, provincial and territorial governments and all five major national Indigenous organizations.

The result was a \$5-billion commitment over five years, aimed at addressing massive inequities in Indigenous health, education, housing and infrastructure, economic opportunities, governance and the relationship between the federal government and Indigenous nations. Just to close the gap between Indigenous Peoples and Canadians.

Four days after forging this landmark agreement, Parliament was dissolved, with Martin eventually losing the next election to Stephen Harper and the Conservatives.

Harper's first order of business: scrap the Kelowna Accord.

Critics have pointed out faults in the accord — no provisions to address child welfare, for example — but it was an egregious answer to the egregious situation of overwhelming poverty, unsafe living conditions and porous infrastructure in Indigenous communities.

Zoom ahead to the federal budget of 2019, which offers \$4.5 billion in “new” money for Indigenous health, education and dealing with emergency situations such as tainted water.

Again, this is just to bring Indigenous Peoples to the same standard of living all Canadians enjoy.

Not beyond, just the same. It's 2005 all over again.

Imagine for a moment how much cheaper it would be if Indigenous Peoples weren't a passing political whim for whichever government is in office.

This year's budgetary commitments, according to the Liberals, will bring federal government spending on “Indigenous affairs” to \$17 billion by 2021-22.

Of that, around half goes to administer Indigenous Peoples via two departments (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Indigenous Services) and pay the salaries of nearly 5,000 employees. Again, 50 cents of every dollar for Indigenous affairs goes to bureaucrats, consultants and contractors — not Indigenous Peoples themselves.

So, what we're really talking about is close to the budget for New Brunswick (\$9 billion-plus). There are five times more Indigenous Peoples in Canada than the population of New Brunswick, but I digress.

There are several crucial elements in this year's budget that will make real-life differences.

The biggest swath of funding (\$1.3 billion over three years) is allocated to serve Jordan's Principle, a program that ensures First Nations children receive services such as speech therapy, medical supports and equipment and mental-health services.

There are other important investments, such as more than \$800 million to First Nations, Métis and Inuit education, and \$700 million to support education initiatives in northern communities.

There is also \$333.7 million over five years to support the proposed Indigenous Languages Act. (However, this must fund a new commissioner and office, so much of this money may go to bureaucracy.)

There are smaller, important commitments worth mentioning, such as \$30 million to recognize the contribution of Métis veterans of the Second World War; \$33.8 million to develop an online registry of residential school cemeteries so gravesites are respected; and \$60 million over five years for urban Aboriginal programs, including money for Friendship Centres and community programs.

All of these will have an effect in Manitoba — and virtually all would cost much less if Canada had previously committed to its responsibilities to Indigenous Peoples.

The word reconciliation appears an unprecedented 85 times in the 2019 budget.

Also unprecedented: Tory Leader Andrew Scheer and his party members decried the Liberals for not allowing MP Jody Wilson-Raybould further testimony on the SNC-Lavalin affair.

The Conservatives demanded Wilson-Raybould, the former justice minister, be allowed to speak publicly — even drowning out Finance Minister Bill Morneau while he was trying to announce the budget.

Conservative MPs screamed out “Let her speak her truth!” and “We want to hear Jody!” as they slammed their desks.

Let me say that again: the Conservative Party of Canada — the same one that cancelled the Kelowna Accord on a whim — tried to stop the proceedings of Canadian government to hear from an Indigenous person.

That's totally unprecedented. Unfortunately, what's the same is how Indigenous Peoples get used as pawns by political parties.

That much hasn't changed.

*Niigaan Sinclair is Anishinaabe and is a columnist at the Winnipeg Free Press, which is where this opinion appeared.*

## Reps. Haaland, Davids introduce resolution recognizing Native American women for Women's History Month

On March 6, U.S. Congresswomen and Native Americans Deb Haaland (D-N.M.) and Sharice Davids (D-KS) introduced a resolution that recognizes Native American women for Women's History Month. According to a joint press release from the offices of Haaland, Davids and Native American Caucus Co-Chair Rep. Tom Cole (D-OK.), it is the first time a resolution recognizing Native American women has been introduced in the U.S. House.

The press release also stated that “the resolution honors the heritage, culture, and contributions of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women in the United States. It also calls attention to the challenges that disproportionately affect women in Native communities including the wage gap disparity and domestic violence that contribute to the epidemic of missing and murdered indigenous women.”

Here is the resolution:

**RESOLUTION** Recognizing the heritage, culture, and contributions of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women in the United States.

Whereas the United States celebrates National Women's History Month every March to recognize and honor the achievements of women throughout the history of the United States;

Whereas American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women have helped shape the history of the United States since before its inception;

Whereas drawing on many Tribes and Native Nations' matriarchal practices, American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women played an important role in influencing early suffragettes in their advocacy, ultimately leading to the passage of the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote; Whereas American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women have broken glass ceilings in the fields of science, technology, and engineering, including—(1) Mary Golda Ross (Cherokee Nation), who was the first female engineer in the history of Lockheed Corporation, worked on the Agena Rocket program and other interplanetary space travel as an aerospace engineer and was recently honored on a special \$1 United States coin; (2) Floy Agnes Lee (Santa Clara Pueblo), who worked on the Manhattan Project during World War II and pioneered research on radiation biology and cancer; and (3) Isabella Kauakea Yau Yung

Aiona Abbott (Native Hawaiian), who was the first woman on the biological sciences faculty at Stanford University, and was awarded the Gilbert Morgan Smith medal from the National Academy of Sciences in 1997;

Whereas American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women activists led the fight for civil rights, including Elizabeth Peratrovich (Tlingit Nation), whose advocacy led to the passage of the first antidiscrimination law in the United States;

Whereas American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women have worked tirelessly for legal advances for American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian people despite real barriers in the legal profession, including (1) Eliza “Lyda” Conley (Wyandot Nation), the first Native plaintiff to present a case before the Supreme Court in 1909; (2) Emma Kailikapiolono Metcalf Beckley Nakuina (Native Hawaiian) who served as the first female judge in Hawaii; and (3) Diane Humetewa (Hopi Tribe), the first Native American woman to serve as a Federal court judge;

Whereas American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women have served on their respective Tribal Councils, court judges, and leaders, including Wilma Mankiller (Cherokee), the first woman elected to serve as Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, who fought for her Tribe;

Whereas American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women serve in the medical profession, stretching back to Susan La Flesche Picotte (Omaha Tribe), who was the first American Indian/Alaska Native person to earn a medical degree in 1889;

Whereas American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women have long contributed to the arts and culture of the United States, including Maria Tallchief (Osage Nation), who was the first prima ballerina of the New York City Ballet in 1942 and later a recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Kennedy Center;

Whereas American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women have accomplished notable literary achievements, including author Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins (Northern Paiute) who wrote and published one of the first Native American autobiographies in 1883;

Whereas American Indian, Alaska

Native, and Native Hawaiian women have been key to efforts of culture and language, including Esther Martinez (Ohkay O'w'ingeh Pueblo), who persevered to ensure the continuation of the Tewa language and whose legacy is honored in the “Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act”;

Whereas American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women have served and continue to serve the country in the military, with over 6,000 American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women in active service;

Whereas there are currently 28,000 American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women veterans;

Whereas American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women overcame significant historical barriers to women's enlistment in the military, including Minnie Spotted Wolf (Blackfeet Nation), the first Native American woman in the United States Marine Corps in 1943;

Whereas American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women struggle for equity and are paid just 63 cents for every dollar paid to White men;

Whereas more than 4 in 5 American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women have experienced violence in their lifetime, and more than half of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women have experienced sexual violence; and

Whereas despite significant challenges including the chronic lack of Federal funding in Indian Country and unequal pay, disparities in education, unmet health care needs, and civil rights violations, American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women continue to break through and thrive: Now, therefore, be it Resolved, That the House of Representatives (1) celebrates and honors the successes of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women and the contributions they have made and continue to make to the United States; (2) recognizes that policy and societal changes are needed to ensure that American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women live safely and freely and can realize their full potential; and (3) urges the United States Government and Congress to uphold its trust responsibility to American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women and to all Indian Tribes.

## VVA to President Trump: Help us heal our nation

*Vietnam Veterans Day is March 29. Here is a statement by Vietnam Veterans of America National President John Rowan that alludes to recent comments from President Trump about the late Sen. John McCain.*

On the eve of Vietnam Veterans Day, March 29, we are chagrined by the President's inability to let a fellow Vietnam veteran rest in peace.

Every day we live our founding principle, “Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another.”

We have succeeded in teaching our fellow Americans that warriors don't make policy. They have learned to separate the war from the warrior.

The era of spurning veterans is past. We have made sure of it.

Our experience has taught us how fear and hatred corrode the soul and imprison the spirit. We have forgiven those who have condemned us for answering our country's call. We have forgiven those who received educational and medical deferments from serving in the war.

We have forgiven Hollywood for its negative portrayal of veterans. We are proud of the warmth, respect, and honor that our newest veterans receive today.

And we are greatly saddened by the President's inability to let a Vietnam War hero rest in peace.

Mr. Trump, it's time to move on. Help us heal our nation and honor those who have served and sacrificed.

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### Correction

In a photo caption on page 6A in the Feb. 28, 2019, printed edition of The Seminole Tribune (Hollywood Senior Center holds Valentine's Day party) Rosie Grant is incorrectly identified as Verna Billie. The correction has been made in the online version of the issue. The Tribune regrets the error.



# Community



## Tribe, THPO continue to seek return of thousands of artifacts

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

WASHINGTON — The Seminole Tribe of Florida is fighting with the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) for the repatriation of remains of about 1,500 individuals and tens of thousands of artifacts. The battle isn't new; the Tribal Historic Preservation Office has been trying to get the items back for more than seven years.

"It's a shocking situation," said Paul Backhouse, THPO officer and director of the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum. "They don't want to give them back; they want to tell the Tribe's story."

The NMNH says the items, which range from thousands of years old to the 20th century, are culturally unidentifiable. Since there is no written record of the Tribe's existence from that time, the Smithsonian claims there is not enough evidence to say they belong to the Seminole Tribe.

Members of THPO, the Tribe and the NMNH staff met March 5 to discuss repatriation at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), during the United South and Eastern Tribes' Impact Week in Washington, D.C.

In October 2018, USET passed a resolution that called for the NMNH to revise its policies on repatriation to include provisions for the repatriation of culturally unidentifiable human remains and to adapt the policy to that of the NMAI, which requires repatriation of Native American ancestors to modern day Tribal Nations. Included in the resolution was language that addresses the specific issue the Seminoles have encountered including its "relationship to the ancestral, historic or aboriginal territories from where the human remains were collected."

Tina Osceola and THPO staff members Dominique deBeaubien, Anne Mullins, Quenton Cypress and Juan Cancel attended the NMNH meeting and reported on it to USET's Culture and Heritage Committee on March 6.

Also representing the Tribe at the NMNH meeting were Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr., Executive Director of Operations Andrew Jordan Bowers and



Courtesy photo

Paul Backhouse, Dominique deBeaubien, Tina Osceola, Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr., Anne Mullins, Quenton Cypress and Juan Cancel pose on the National Mall near the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. on March 5, the day they met with the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History.

Backhouse.

The Smithsonian uses published academic reports to verify claims, but according to Backhouse it doesn't give the same weight to oral histories. Thus, the Tribe's group reported the meeting did not go well. According to Osceola, NMNH repatriation office program manager Bill Billeck and Dorothy Lippert, case officer, called the funerary artifacts a "collection" and "specimens."

"It was a hard meeting to sit through," said Osceola, who was formerly a director of the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, board member of the Smithsonian Institution's NMAI and is currently Seminole Tribal Court associate judge. "How is their research contributing to humanity? How do they weigh their research with the harm it is doing to the Seminole people?"

Smithsonian policies were and still are influenced by William Sturtevant, an anthropologist who did field work for 18 months in Florida in the 1960s, became the Smithsonian's authority on the Tribe

and wrote the Smithsonian's Handbook of North American Indians. The Smithsonian claims the state was completely devoid of all Indigenous people in Florida during the eras the artifacts are from.

"They view the Tribe's movement into Florida as a singular event with Creek peoples descending into an empty state over a short period of time, rather than a process that started thousands of years ago when Creek descendants mixed with existing indigenous people to form what is now the Seminole Tribe of Florida," deBeaubien wrote in a statement to the Tribune. "By viewing the Seminoles as completely separate from their indigenous ancestors, the Tribe legally has no claim to them under current Smithsonian policy."

"This disallows a claim by anyone," Osceola said. "They define us all as Creek even though not all of us are."

THPO brought NMNH 10 years of archaeological research, including 10,000 shovel tests taken on Seminole land to bolster its claim and prove continuous occupation

of the Tribe's ancestral lands. Shovel tests are used to determine if there are cultural remains beneath the surface.

"We came to them from a level playing field, with the same scientific information, but they wouldn't even look at it," Osceola said. "They said they spoke to Florida archeologists and made their determination. They never came down to research with us."

During the meeting at NMAI, Backhouse suggested the NMNH help the Seminoles be the champions for all tribes.

"As a sovereign entity, the Seminole Tribe of Florida is asking for their ancestors back," he said.

In February, Tribal Council authorized THPO to pursue the repatriation.

"The repatriation has to do with regulations that apply to all tribes, but they could use modifications. I'm not sure they [Smithsonian officials] are willing to do that; it will probably take a lot more conversations to convince people," Councilman Bowers said. "They want one set of rules to apply to everybody but I'm not sure one set can

fit all tribes. We are trying to get them to cooperate. Council directed them to return them."

Osceola hopes THPO and the Tribe will develop a strategy to use national Native and professional organizations to spread awareness and garner support to convince NMNH to adopt humane policies for repatriation.

"The Council is behind us. They have unleashed THPO," Osceola said. "But we will need a partnership with other tribes to help. We are all fighting the same battle. There isn't a single tribe not affected by this."

"This is a human rights issue, not academic policy," said deBeaubien. "They need to be reminded of that, it isn't ethical without it."

Osceola pointed out a significant difference between western and Native American cultures.

"The way our ancestors are treated affects us directly. Western civilization doesn't have that," she said. "For Indigenous communities, it's a lot more than that. They are with us today; we are responsible for them. This is the battlefield. These wars are real too, these wars matter."

In a statement sent to the Tribune, NMNH's Billeck wrote the NMNH summarizes all the available information on the origins of the items in question, assesses cultural affiliation and evaluates whether the items fall in the repatriation categories. Under the NMAI Act of 1989, which governs repatriation of cultural items by the Smithsonian Institution, NMNH is required to use the best available scientific and historical information to make assessments based on the preponderance of the evidence.

"This effort to determine the cultural affiliation and if objects are in repatriation categories may take into consideration any available information, including geographical, kinship, biological, archaeological, anthropological, linguistic, oral traditional, historical, or any other relevant information or expert opinion. Consultation and information on cultural affiliation from Native American communities is an important part of the evaluation process. We have asked for any information that the Seminole Tribe can provide," Billeck wrote.

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# Jr. Cypress Cattle Drive & Rodeo remembers the past, honors the present



Janet Osceola speaks at the Jr. Cypress Cattle Drive, which recognized her father Joe 'Benji' Osceola for his work in the cattle industry.



Paul Bowers, left, and Andre Jumper work March 16 during the beginning of the Jr. Cypress Cattle Drive from west of Billie Swamp Safari to the Junior Cypress Arena.

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — The Seminole Tribe has a long line of cattlemen and cattlemen in its history. And there are still families in the Tribe who are involved in the industry (which originated on the Brighton Reservation). Cattle operations are still one of the enterprises of the Seminole Tribe of Florida Inc. to this day.

At the 23rd annual Junior Cypress Cattle Drive & Rodeo in Big Cypress on March 16 Tribal members honored and remembered those involved in cattle operations past and present.

### Cattle drive

On a calm and warm Big Cypress morning, Councilman Mondo Tiger and others waited next to a pen of about 12 young and restless cows for the horses and dogs to arrive so the cattle drive could begin — the first event in a day full of action.

The pen was set up about two miles west of the turn off to the Billie Swamp Safari where registrations took place, t-shirts were handed out and people gathered early to prepare for the day.

The cows were soon released for an



The cattle drive gets close to the end at the rodeo arena.

Councilman Tiger said. "And I miss him really bad." One of Billie's granddaughters — Claudia Doctor — recalled her grandfather as a generous man who would donate a cow to an area church every year for Christmas. She said he was also outspoken.

feed its own people, if necessary. "We have to keep growing more food. Ultimately with the way things are going and the loss of acreage to agriculture all around the world, we have to grow to produce enough here to feed our citizens and I'm hoping that our youngsters take that to heart," he said.

### 'Hardest working man'

Longtime Seminole cattleman and owner Joe "Benji" Osceola sat in the audience with several members of his family.

Paying tribute to him was his daughter, Janet Osceola, and his niece, Geraldine Osceola.

"I thank him and my mother every day for adopting me when I was three months old," Janet Osceola said. "I am who I am today because of my father and my mother. My dad is the hardest working man I know. He cares about his family; he's there for his family. It's a blessing to know that he's being honored this year as the honorary cattleman."

Geraldine Osceola remembered fondly growing up with her "Uncle Joe" with lots of early mornings and cooking duties.

"For as long as I can remember he's done cattle," she said. "He's rode horses and never missed an event when it came to cows. Looking back, those were the best days of our lives."

Other Tribal leaders recognized Osceola. Rep. Frank said he is one of the mainstays of the Tribe's cattle program.

"I always look up to him for his advice," Rep. Frank said. "I don't always like to hear what he has to say, but he tells it like it is."

### Action-packed day

After dignitaries and family members spoke, the second half of the cattle drive



Joe 'Benji' Osceola listens during a ceremony at the cattle drive.



President Mitchell Cypress and Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger speak about the two honorary trail bosses.



Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Clarice DeMayo rode one of the horses during the cattle drive.

commenced. Before the cattle made it to their final stop at the arena, an Eastern Indian Rodeo Association kids rodeo was beginning. The professionals started later and went on through the evening.

For those who had worked up an appetite, a barbecue dinner was offered.



Miss Florida Seminole Cheyenne Kippenberger and Moses "Big Shot" Jumper Jr. gather at the rest stop during the cattle drive.



Claudia Doctor and Betty King are the granddaughters of Frank J. Billie.

approximately six-mile journey to the Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena, flanked not only by the cattle drivers, but Tribal members on ATVs and in other vehicles, as well as police and emergency services and a Billie Swamp Safari buggy with a full load.

### Honorary trail boss

The cattle drive took place to honor two trail bosses — the Rev. Frank J. Billie — who passed away in 2008 at 96 — and Joe "Benji" Osceola. Both are members of Wind Clan.

At a stop off point on the way to the arena, families and friends gathered under a tent while the horses and cattle rested and got some water.

Moses "Big Shot" Jumper Jr. presided over a ceremony during the rest stop.

The Tribal leaders spoke and they were joined by Miss Florida Seminole Cheyenne Kippenberger and Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Clarice DeMayo.

President Mitchell Cypress reminded attendees that it was Billie who helped originally organize the Tribe and its Constitution. He was also the Tribe's first president and later a pastor at the Big Cypress New Testament Church.

"He was a good man — respected and admired," President Cypress said. "He paved the way for us to be here today."

Councilman Tiger, himself a cattleman, said Billie was someone who he was raised around and who taught him how to ride horses.

"We are missing a good legend,"

"He acted on what his beliefs were, what his ideals were. Maybe you didn't like him, but they elected him and he was true to his word," Doctor said. "He would get things done and you knew where you stood with him."

Another of Billie's granddaughters — Betty King — said she was grateful for her grandfather and it was good to remember the Tribe's elders and honor them.

Both remembered that unlike many cattle owners who would round up their herd in a more traditional way, Billie was known for honking the horn on his Jeep while keeping feed in the back.

"The cows knew to gather around when he did this," King said chuckling.

### Tribal sovereignty

Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank, said Billie was one of the "grandfathers" who started the Tribe and who was always "pushing for sovereignty."

"It's something that we need to keep going and something that we can't take for granted," Rep. Frank said, noting that the tent they were in was on one of Billie's former pastures.

"Most of the elders knew that for true sovereignty you have to be able to feed yourself, you have to be able to feed your people. With the cattle program we became organized and they knew we had to feed ourselves," he said.

Rep. Frank said the Seminole Tribe is one of the few that grows enough protein to



**◆ BUSINESS**  
From page 1A

“We want to thank all the work by the Seminole Tribe of Florida with all the great contributions you make to our community,” Bogen said. “Hopefully we can work together to make these opportunities a reality. We encourage you all to take advantage of what Broward has to offer.”

Broward is currently the 15th largest county in the U.S. with an annual budget of \$5 billion.

**Super Bowl LIV**

Most Tribal members already know that Super Bowl LIV (54) will be played at the Hard Rock Stadium in Miami on Feb. 2, unleashing thousands upon thousands of visitors to the area.

But what might not be immediately clear – especially for small Tribal businesses – are the local economic opportunities that come with hosting an event of this size.

Rashad D. Thomas, the vice president of Business Connect for Miami Super Bowl 2020, outlined a way for Tribal small businesses to connect with National Football League (NFL) partners in its Business Connect program during the run up to the Super Bowl.

The program launched Nov. 8 and is a program of the NFL that promotes diversity and inclusion of small business owners. For a business to participate, it must be at least 51 percent minority owned. The designation is for any minority, including Native American, women, LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered) or veteran.

In short, it's a way to position a small business to access contracting opportunities related to the Super Bowl.

The timeline for registration in the

program ended March 29. Selection of vendors takes place through April 30, when small businesses find out if they were accepted.

The Economic Seminar was the first of its kind for the Tribe. Smith said he and Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. hoped to host more such events in the future for the Tribe's small businesses.

**More opportunities**

Meanwhile, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc. (STOFI) rolled out a new process earlier this year – Potential Business Opportunities, or PBO.

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

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

Ideas that could be considered include small franchises, partnerships or joint ventures, a restaurant concept or maybe a private label brand for certain products. The PBO process covers Seminole Tribal operations, not those of Hard Rock International.

Those who visit the STOFI website (stofinc.com) and click on “Business Opportunities” will see the program's goals and intentions, including some ideas the board will not entertain.

The process begins by emailing application materials to pbo@semtribe.com.

**For more**

Go to [miasbliv.com](http://miasbliv.com) for more information about the NFL's Business Connect program or contact Thomas at (786) 907-4316.

You can access Broward County programs through [broward.org](http://broward.org).



Courtesy Hard Rock International

This rendering shows the exterior of the forthcoming Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Sacramento at Fire Mountain in California.

# Hard Rock set to open first hotel in Amsterdam

*Also, California casino holds ‘topping off’ ceremony*

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

of entertainment, and Hard Rock is thrilled to bring a music-inspired destination to the heart of this city,” he said.

Amenities at the new hotel include about 2,500-square-feet of meeting space, a fitness center, gift shop and music program. Guests can reserve their choice of Fender guitars to be delivered in-room for impromptu jam sessions.

Food and cocktail options are expected to include the Art Deco Café American restaurant and Bar Americain.

“We’re excited to expand the Hard Rock’s brand presence to this vibrant metropolitan hub. It only seems right to open a Hard Rock Hotel in Amsterdam, given the city’s energetic atmosphere and multicultural roots,” said Petr Suchanek, vice president and head of European hotel business development for HRI in a statement.

Leon Dijkstra, owner of the site, said in a statement that the brand will add an “extra dimension” to the Amsterdam hotel scene. Eden Hotels is his family-run company.

The hotel is surrounded by many local cafes, restaurants, theatres and bars. Guests can also explore some of Amsterdam’s most prominent museums, including the Rijksmuseum and the Van Gogh museum, both within walking distance.

Amsterdam currently has one Hard Rock Café location.

**Casino partnership reaches milestone**

Meanwhile, the Hard Rock Hotel &

Casino Sacramento at Fire Mountain held a “topping off” ceremony Feb. 13.

The ceremony is intended to mark a construction milestone – and to specifically thank construction workers. The hotel and casino is expected to open this fall.

The project is a new and unique partnership for the Seminole Tribe and Hard Rock International.

The partnership constitutes a management and brand license agreement. HRI will manage the operation, while the Enterprise Rancheria Tribe owns the property and licenses the brand from Hard Rock.

While other tribes are licensees and operate Hard Rock casinos, this is the first such deal with another tribe that involves management of a casino by HRI.

“This is truly a great day for our Tribe and community and for the workers, customers and business partners of our region,” said Enterprise Rancheria Tribal Chairperson Glenda Nelson in a statement.

“Partnering with Hard Rock and the Seminole Tribe is a real game changer ...,” she said.

The project is situated in the North Sacramento Valley, and will feature a hotel, large gaming facility and many amenities. The project is expected to support hundreds of short and long term jobs in construction and hospitality, with more than 1,000 full-and-part time employees upon completion.

More information is available at [hardrock.com](http://hardrock.com).



Damon Scott

Broward County Mayor Mark D. Bogen tosses a football around with Derrick Smith before the event began. At left is Bogen's assistant Ronald E. Lichtman.



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Beverly Bidney (2)

Above, Jacee Jumper uses her body to keep her steer from veering off course in the show ring during the Seminole Indian 4-H Show on March 22 at the Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena in Big Cypress. She was successful and took home Grand Champion Heifer and Steer awards. At right, Ashlynn Collins confers with swine judge Mick Culp during the hog portion of the 4-H show.



# Hard-working 4-H'ers and their animals show off in BC

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — After months of hard work and perseverance, about 70 4-H youth realized the fruits of their labor at the Seminole Indian 4-H show and sale on March 21-22 at the Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena in Big Cypress.

The kids, who received their calves last summer and their pigs last fall, learned to care for and raise them into show-worthy animals. The animals had to be fed, washed and walked daily. The heifers and steer had to be trained to walk on a lead and the hogs to respond to commands of the driving tool. A driving tool can be anything long and straight such as crops, canes or whips, which guides the hog around the ring.

The 4-H program also teaches kids the business of raising and selling livestock and requires them to keep a record book to log expenses. The 4-H'ers kept track of every penny spent on food, supplies and veterinarian costs. Like any other livestock producer, when the animals were sold the youth pocketed the profits.

During the show, the 4-H'ers vied for the top spot in their categories as family and friends cheered them on from the stands.

"The kids were awesome, as they always are," said Aaron Stam, federally recognized tribal extension agent. "They put on a great show."

For some kids, participating in 4-H is all about learning how to care for animals. For others, it's about facing their fear of animals. Ina Robbins did just that this year as she raised a hog named Fat Patricia and showed it the ring.

"I've been scared of it because it runs right toward me," said Ina, 11, as she and her sister Illiana Robbins washed the hog together while their grandmother Jeannette Cypress watched.

"It's a learning experience," Cypress said. "I tell her to just have fun. But the main thing is that when you start something, you will feel better if you complete it. I'm so proud of her."

Before the show, the 4-H'ers washed and groomed their animals so they would look their best for the judges. Making a good impression on the judges was an important aspect of the show, since the kids also competed for showmanship awards.

Alyke Baker, 17, has raised animals for six years. As a graduating senior, he groomed his final hog, named Porkahautis, before the show.

"They are a lot calmer than cows," Baker said. "She's really calm."

Heifers were the first group in the show ring. The heifer program is a three year commitment in which the youth raise and breed a heifer to start a herd of their own. The first year, they show a yearling heifer, the second year a bred heifer and the third year a cow-calf pair.

At the ripe young age of 10, Timothy

Urbina is another 4-H veteran. He started in the small animal group and has raised hogs for three years, but this is his first experience with a heifer.

"The best part is when I get to spend time with the animals," he said. "It's hard when I have to practice for the show. The heifer can be stubborn. The pig is easier, but she runs around the ring a lot."

His diligence paid off; Timothy earned the intermediate showmanship award in the heifer category.

Both judges for the show were nationally renowned with many years of experience behind them. Heifer and steer judge Cary Crow told Stam this was one of the best shows he's ever seen and was impressed with the Tribe's cattle program. Swine judge Mick Culp was also impressed with what he saw.

"He's a legend in the judging community," Stam said. "He said watching Connor Thomas say the prayer before the show began was one of the greatest things he's seen in a long time."

In the show ring, Crow examined each heifer and steer and spoke to each 4-H'er. He gave a detailed analysis of each animal before naming the first, second and third place in each class. For Jacee Jumper's first place yearling heifer, he praised the animal and gave some sage advice.

"She's getting a little fat," Crow said. "You've got to watch the feed bucket. When they get too fat, it's more difficult for them to get pregnant."

During the steer judging, Ila Trueblood took first place in her category and Crow summed up the winning steer aptly.

"That calf's got a lot of beef in him; he looks like he'd be good to eat," he said.

Khoal Cochran, who weighs 52 pounds, showed his first heifer, who weighed in at 1,147 pounds. It may have looked like 9-year-old Khoal was being dragged around the ring, but he finally got "Strawberry" to calm down and walk where he wanted her. His effort paid off; Khoal earned the Junior Showmanship award along with the Reserve Grand Champion honor.

Many more hogs took the ring than heifers and steers and just as the pigs ran around the ring, Culp had to keep up the pace. He too remarked on the attributes of the animals as he judged them with comments such as "there's a lot of muscle on this pig."

The end of the show meant the animals were ready to be taken to market. In this case the market came to the animals, the sale was also held in the rodeo arena the following night.

Lane Andrews, 10, raised his first steer this year.

"He's not that mean, you can pet him and stuff," he said while cleaning the animal's ears before the show. "I'm excited to sell him, but kind of nervous. I feel good, but don't want to leave him."

Such is the business of livestock and these resilient 4-H'ers have gotten a first-hand lesson.

## Winners:

- Grand Champion Heifer** – Jacee Jumper, Brighton
- Reserve Grand Champion Heifer** – Khoal Cochran, Brighton
- Jr. Showmanship** – Khoal Cochran, Brighton
- Intermediate Showmanship** – Timothy Urbina, Brighton
- Sr. Showmanship** – Canaan Jumper, Big Cypress
- Grand Champion Steer** – Jacee Jumper, Brighton
- Reserve Grand Champion Steer** – Alice Osceola, Brighton
- Jr. Showmanship** – Ila Trueblood, Brighton
- Intermediate Showmanship** – Creek Gopher, Brighton
- Senior Showmanship** – Harmony Cypress, Big Cypress
- Grand Champion Swine** – Norman Osceola, Brighton
- Reserve Champion Swine** – Taryn Osceola, Brighton
- Jr. Showmanship** – Hannah Platt Johns, Brighton
- Intermediate Showmanship** – Jarrett Beecham, Brighton
- Sr. Showmanship** – Kaleb Thomas, Brighton



Beverly Bidney

EIRA Queen Madyson Osceola and EIRA Jr. Rodeo Queen Cyiah Avila lead the group of 4-H small animal exhibitors in the 4-H pledge prior to the start of the show.



Beverly Bidney (2)

Above, Grayson Johns guides his hog around the edge of the ring in the first group of hogs. At right, Jeanette Cypress watches as granddaughters Ina Robbins and Illiana Robbins wash Ina's hog, "Fat Patricia" before the 4-H Show in Big Cypress.



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# Lake Okeechobee projects near Brighton Reservation still under study

*Commenting period remains open on overall lake issues*

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

Florida's massive Lake Okeechobee is a huge responsibility for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps is in charge of about everything having to do with it, and the decisions it makes has potential effects on a slew of stakeholders.

The Corps' Jacksonville District oversees the operation of the lake and the Okeechobee Waterway Project – part of a water management system known as the Central and Southern Florida Flood Control Project.

Lake Okeechobee issues are important to the Seminole Tribe for many of the same reasons they are to anyone else, but also because the Brighton Reservation isn't far from proposed infrastructure projects that are currently in the study phase.

Those projects include aquifer, storage and recovery (ASR) wells and a so-called "shallow storage" water project.

John H. Campbell, acting chief in the Corps corporate communications office, told the Seminole Tribune March 20 that more information regarding those projects was expected to be updated soon.

The water storage project is not being called a reservoir, but a "wetland attenuation feature." During heavy precipitation, it would help attenuate flows into Lake Okeechobee, Campbell said.

The Corps held three public meetings on the projects in the summer of 2018. Campbell said no construction has taken place so far.

"We'll have more info in April for what the road ahead will look like," Campbell said.

In addition, he said the proposed projects would still have to be authorized by Congress for funding appropriation approvals, putting any construction months to years away.

The development phase of the projects came to the fore in 2016 as a way to slow some of the water coming into the lake without storing it for long periods of time. The Tribe wants to make sure it doesn't encroach too closely to Tribal lands or have any negative environmental impacts.

"There is still coordination to do internally and externally," Campbell said, including updates to Tribal leadership.

## New overall guidelines

Corps officials have been traveling the state in recent months to hold public "scoping" meetings to develop a new Lake Okeechobee System Operating Manual (LOSOM).

The purpose is to "reevaluate and define operations for the Lake Okeechobee regulation schedule that take into account additional infrastructure that will soon be operational."

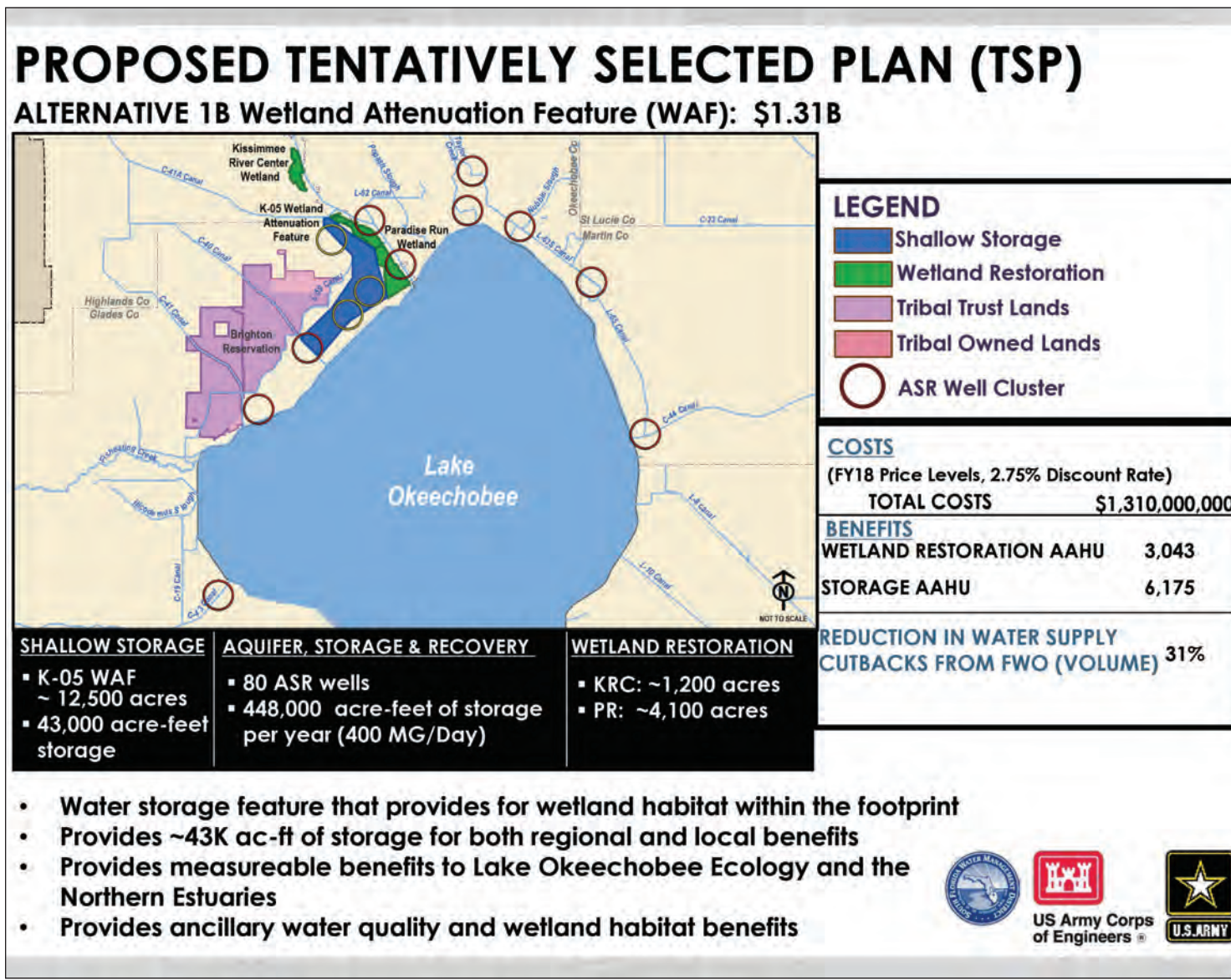
That infrastructure includes the Herbert Hoover Dike rehabilitation, Kissimmee River Restoration Project, as well as the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, which includes two reservoirs and a storm water treatment area.

Officials are asking themselves and the public key macro-level questions like: How do we want to run the lake in the coming years? What issues are important? What outcomes do you want? How would you measure success?

The new operating manual, which is not intended to propose new infrastructure projects, is a four-year effort that includes planning workshops and evaluations followed by draft reports and other public comment periods. The Corps expects a final report by 2022.

## Water politics

There may not be an issue in Florida



This is a previous graphic used by the Army Corps of Engineers and others that shows the proximity of previously proposed projects that are near to the Brighton Reservation.

more complex and more politically confounding than Lake Okeechobee and Everglades restoration – which are both intrinsically intertwined. Restoration efforts have been underway for almost two decades with minimal results.

There are huge environmental and economic impacts at stake, including flood risk management; water supply; agricultural irrigation for the Seminole Tribe, municipalities and industry; navigation; enhancement of fish and wildlife; and recreation.

The more dire issue over the past year or so has been the toxic green algae bloom and red tide that has particularly affected the west coast.

The red tide, thought to be exacerbated by industrial fertilizers, makes its way from lake discharges and heads east and west through tributaries. The red tide and algae blooms have killed untold scores of fish and other sea life including manatees and dolphins.

The problem has gotten the attention of residents, tourists and politicians – including Gov. Ron DeSantis and Republican Congressman Brian Mast.

Mast sends out an almost daily video and email update about the lake and the "toxic discharge situation," particularly as it affects his constituents who live in an area stretching from Fort Pierce to Palm Beach.

DeSantis made lake issues and Everglades restoration a big part of his campaign and that has continued through his early days in office.

The South Florida Water Management District also issues regular Lake Okeechobee email alerts to subscribers.

## In flux

Complicating the specter of any lake

projects being completed in a timely fashion are both the recent government shutdown and President Donald J. Trump's 2020 budget proposal.

The Miami Herald recently reported that Trump's budget slashes spending by the Corps by 31 percent. The budget also did not include funds for an Everglades reservoir that was aimed at reducing that polluted water flushed from the lake to coastal estuaries.

The proposal did include \$63 million to help restore Florida's wetlands and other ecosystems – including money to complete reservoirs east and west of the lake, including the restoration of parts of the Kissimmee River. But the \$63 million is also well short of the \$200 million DeSantis and legislators had requested for Everglades work.

Trump's budget also left out a 17,000-acre reservoir south of the lake to reduce polluted discharges. Corps officials recently said the 17,000-acre reservoir was left out of the budget because the SFWMD never made a formal request for it. SFWMD spokesman Randy Smith said no formal request was made because the state budgeted \$64 million for design efforts.

The SFWMD's governing board recently was overhauled at the behest of DeSantis.

For its part, the Corps says it's focused on completing projects that are already in work.

Meanwhile, the reservoirs themselves are not without controversy.

The Corps and others have questioned whether the 17,000-acre, 23-foot deep reservoir and its filtering marshes can even get water clean enough to pump south into Everglades National Park.

Original reservoir plans had called for a 60,000-acre shallow reservoir, but Florida lawmakers shrunk it by a third and ordered the SFWMD not to seize more land.

## Comments extended

The public meetings hosted by the Corps this year have brought out more than 2,000 people, according to Erica Skolte, public affairs specialist.

The Corps said it has been a way for officials to "absorb information."

At a public meeting held at the Broward County Main Library Feb. 26, there was a crowd of about 45 people.

Concerns related to the lake and its discharges that were brought up including effects on public health, real estate, tourism, drinking water quality and the overall health of the environment.

"It's very troubling what I've seen," said one commenter, Jason Tomes. "I'm just a regular guy who has seen his environment fall apart from agriculture and overdevelopment."

Public meetings and commenting were held throughout February and were set to end on March 31. However, the Corps recently decided to extend the commenting period until April 22, although the last public meeting was held in Key West on March 22.

Previous meetings were held in Lehigh, Okeechobee, Clewiston, Stuart, Fort Lauderdale, Miami Gardens and West Palm Beach.

"We heard a lot of feedback regarding the priorities and concerns of people from all around the lake," said Lt. Col. Jennifer Reynolds, Corps deputy commander for South Florida.

Comments can be submitted through April 22 by email at lakecomments@usace.army.mil, or by mail to Dr. Ann Hodgson, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Jacksonville District, PO Box 4970, Jacksonville, Florida, 32232-0019.

# ICWA fate in hands of Federal Court of Appeals

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

The future of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) has once again garnered attention from across the U.S. and internationally – this time in March.

Legal challenges to the more than four decade old law are now being reviewed by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans.

It's the latest stop in an unexpected journey for the ICWA – a law that proponents say is critical to protect the best interests of American Indian and Alaska Native children. It was designed to prevent their separation from parents and extended families by state child welfare and private adoption agencies.

Opponents of the law, including some adoptive parents, say it is racially motivated and discriminatory.

## How we got here

The legal wrangling began in late 2018 when a federal judge in Texas ruled the ICWA unconstitutional. It was the first time that a state has sued the federal government over ICWA's constitutionality. Court appeals were immediately filed after the ruling.

The Brackeen vs. Zinke case (now Brackeen vs. Bernhardt) was brought by a Texas couple who sought to adopt a Native American baby – one whose biological parents were from the Cherokee and Navajo tribes.

The couple fostered the baby from the time he was 10 months old to age two and initially sought to adopt with the support of the biological parents who had voluntarily terminated their parental rights. But a family court in Texas prevented the plans, blocking the adoption on the grounds of the ICWA.

The court denied their request after the Navajo Nation identified a potential home with a Navajo family in New Mexico. But the Brackeens got an emergency stay and sued – joined by the states of Texas, Louisiana and Indiana.

They adopted the boy in January 2018. While the ICWA does not bar non-Native families from adopting or fostering Native American children outright, in order for a non-Native family to succeed, they have to show "good cause" that the child can't or shouldn't be adopted by other Native Americans – a main hurdle for the parents in this case, experts have said.

Legal briefs filed on behalf of the Brackeens stated the Navajo Nation sought to have the child "removed from the home in which he had spent most of his life and given to an unrelated Navajo couple – simply because he was an Indian."

Meanwhile, the Cherokee Nation, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Navajo Nation, Oneida Nation and Quinault Indian Nation have intervened as defendants.

In addition, amicus briefs in support of ICWA have now been filed on behalf of a nationwide coalition of 325 tribal nations, 57 Native organizations, 21 states, 31 child welfare organizations, seven members of Congress and dozens of scholars of federal Indian law and constitutional law.

## 'Clearly erroneous'

The original ruling and the months that have followed since have rattled nerves across Indian Country.

Dr. Sarah Kastelic, executive director

♦ See ICWA on page 9A

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The hiring of an attorney is an important decision that should not be based solely upon advertisement. Castillo worked as a Public Defender in Broward County from 1990-1996 and has been in private practice since 1996. In 1995, he was voted the Trial Attorney of the year. He graduated from Capital University in 1989 and was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1990, Federal Bar in 1992, and the Federal Trial Bar in 1994.

**RICHARD CASTILLO**  
FLORIDA CRIMINAL DEFENSE ATTORNEY  
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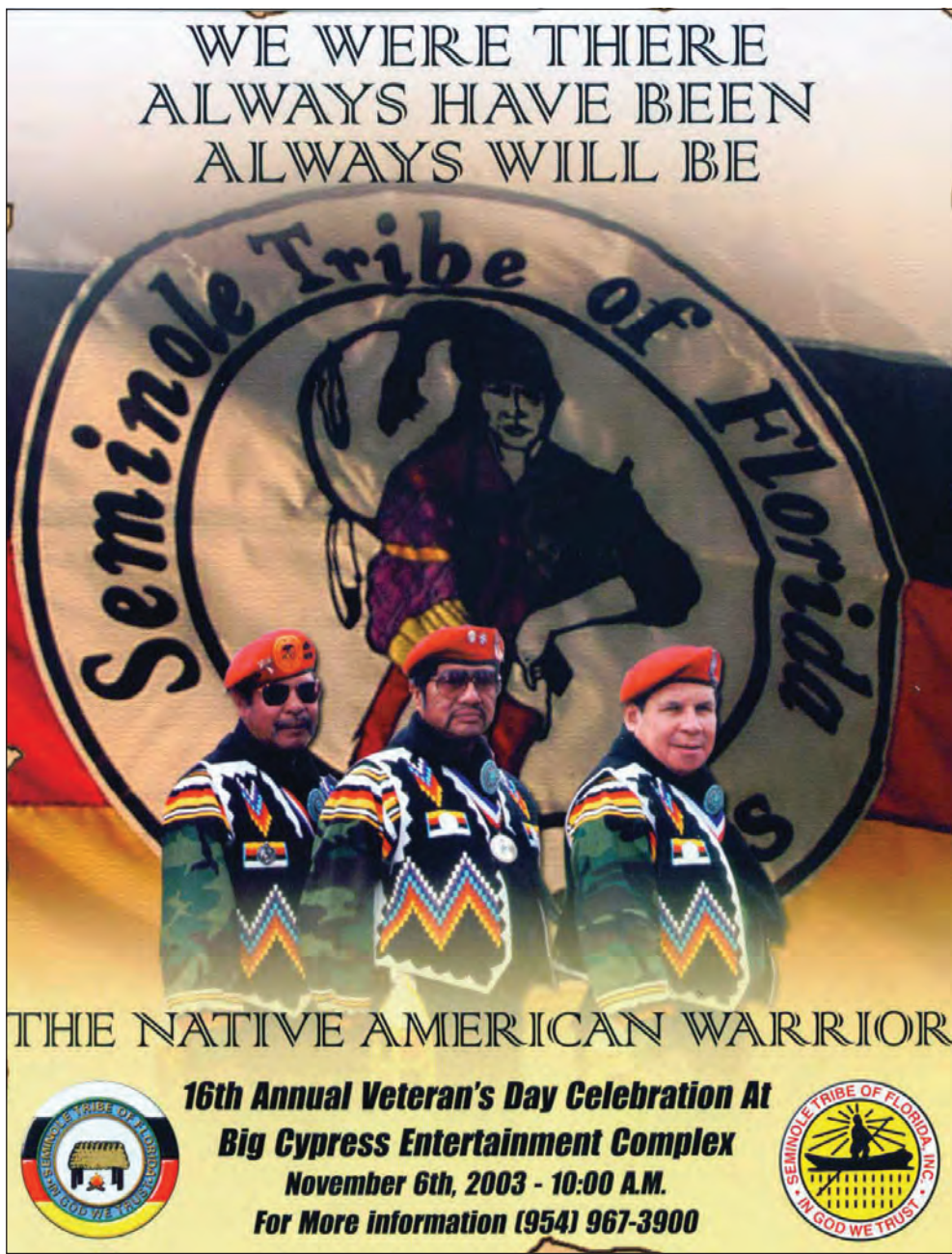


# SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA

# AH-TAH-THI-KI

## M U S E U M

A PLACE TO LEARN, A PLACE TO REMEMBER.



This poster from 2003 features Paul Bowers, Mitchell Cypress and Stephen Bowers. If you're a veteran and you have something you'd like us to exhibit in the Veterans section of the redesign, please let us know.

## ◆ MANATEES

From page 1A

Gould reinforces Hinrichs point in her presentation: "When Manatees Were Sea Cows: How Floridians Coped When Times Were Hard."

The presentation explores how Floridians resorted to inventive ways to put food on the table and survive during the Great Depression and the years following that era.

"Needless to say the menu could be more than a little creative in tough times," Gould states in her presentation description.

It's the first time the museum has done an exhibition on manatees. It was made possible with a \$5,000 grant from the Florida Humanities Council.

The Historical Society has erected several educational panels. There's a display of manatee bones, too.

### Ongoing environmental concerns

Hinrichs said that while the manatee population is doing well in Citrus County despite the recent red tide outbreak, water quality throughout Florida remains an issue.

It's a sentiment echoed by Councilman Tiger and others who want to see the manatee return to areas where they used to be. They want to see those natural habitats restored and a recovery of the Everglades to its former swampland state. A wetter Everglades could not only bring the manatee back, but other wildlife as well.

"When the Everglades were flooded, there were natural ponds and hammocks where you'd see the manatees," Councilman Tiger said.

An Everglade hammock is comprised of stands of trees, usually hardwood, that form

an ecological island on an elevated area (just a few inches high) surrounded by wetlands.

Councilman Tiger said those former wetlands, including in Big Cypress, aren't wet enough to support the manatees.

"When the South Florida Flood Control and the U.S. Army [Corps of Engineers] started digging canals, most [manatees] went down the canals or perished," Councilman Tiger said.

He said that was at least 40 years ago, and they haven't returned.

"It's sad; I used to see them south of the [First] Baptist Church in the deepest part of the Everglades. You'd have to get in a canoe to find these things in culverts from one side to the other," he said.

Councilman Tiger said overall environmental degradation has affected fish, deer and vegetation, too.

He said the size of bass caught today is very different than years ago. "The bass were huge," he said. "They'd feed a family for three to four days."

Councilman Tiger said the Tribe works with local municipalities to find restoration solutions so the hammocks and cypress trees start growing the way they used to.

"The way of life as it used to be has really, really changed. We need to restore the Everglades and need a lot more help from the state and governor. We need to clean the water quite a bit," he said.

Councilman Tiger said he remembers seeing the wood duck nearly everywhere on the Big Cypress Reservation – living in the holes in cypress trees. He notices a high number of cypress trees dying from the inside out now.

"We had swamp apples and natural flooding zones that brought the ducks and the geese. Come winter, ducks don't come this far anymore. It's too dry," he said.



Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

The new gallery about the environment will feature photos like this, that show what the Big Cypress area looked like before the Everglades were drained.

# We were there, always have been, always will be

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

Have you been to the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum recently? If not, I recommend visiting soon, and thinking about the changes taking place in the next few years. For over 20 years, the museum has been a wonderful place to learn about the Tribe. Most of the museum are we call permanent galleries. Not much in them has changed since the museum was built. Those galleries show what Seminole life was like in the late 19th and early 20th century. But what about the hundreds and thousands of years before that? And what about the nearly 100 years since then? Those are huge parts of the Seminole story. We have places in the museum where our exhibits do change and where more of the story can be told. On a visit last year you may have seen a big exhibit about

modern southeastern beadwork. But a few years ago, an exhibit about Seminole music was in the same gallery. It's great to have spaces to tell interesting stories about topics not covered in the permanent galleries. But there are many topics to cover, and we can only do a few at a time. This was the reason we decided to start the redesign. We're still in the planning phases, but we have a good idea of what it will all look like. At one end of the museum, the deep history of the Tribe will flow into the 19th century. Trade, camp life, the environment and war times will all be included, but it won't stop there. Tourism and economic development in the early 20th century will lead to the formation of the Seminole Tribe and its late 20th century successes. Modern artists and musicians will be featured. There will also be a large video wall near the exit where modern Seminole life can be experienced. It's a comprehensive plan, where we've tried

to fit as much of the story as we can into the limited space we have.

My role in this process is to find the best historic objects for the exhibitions. It is wonderful to be able to select such a wide range of things, and to know that so many objects we preserve will be enjoyed by our visitors. I think you'll be surprised about what ends up being on display. Not many people know we have such a wide variety of objects in our collection. Here are two examples, but please come and visit us if you want to see what we're planning. We are doing this for the Seminole community; it is your museum. Please tell us if you have ideas for the museum, or if you want to see more of what we have in the collection. We'll be happy to listen and help. Call the museum at 863-902-1113 and ask for the collections office.

## Professor's passion for history flows in Seminole lectures

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

JENSEN BEACH — Florida is a state steeped in unique history. It's much more than Disney World and spring break.

Ronald Grenville Frazer knows a thing or two about it and does his best to share the history not only with his students, but with anyone who is interested. It's been something of a decades long mission (and counting).

Frazer is a teacher at Port St. Lucie High School and adjunct professor in the humanities department at Indian River State College. He moved to Port St. Lucie 16 years ago from Worcester. It's immediately clear where he's from when you hear his western Massachusetts accent.

Frazer has made it a point to say yes to requests for his presentations on the history of Florida's first residents – early Indians and Native Americans. He does so for free; his talks often fill a room and he says he considers it all a public service. He estimates he does about 15 public lectures or presentations a year.

Most recently, he presented as part of the Florida History Lecture Series hosted by the Friends of the Martin County Library System. Frazer's March 9 talk at the Hoke Library in Jensen Beach tackled a sizable topic in about an hour: "Seminole Wars, Culture and Florida's Early People."

### Before the Seminoles

Frazer said Florida's original residents were here at least 13,000 years ago, and one of the earliest-known was the Ais (or Ays) Indians.

It was a trip to the House of Refuge Museum in Stuart where Frazer would immerse himself in the history of Florida's first residents and he'd discover information about the Ais.

He would end up being a volunteer there – one of 10 refugees that were built along the east coast of Florida for shipwrecked sailors and travelers.

He studied the food preparation sites, modes of transportation (dugout canoes) and hunting and gathering methods of the Ais.

"It's not unusual to find [Ais] clay pottery with intricate designs right in the river bed," Frazer said.

In fact, today's Indian River used to be called the Ais River, he said.

Frazer said the Ais primarily lived on Florida's Atlantic Coast (from present day Cape Canaveral to the St. Lucie Inlet). One of the earliest observations of the tribe was in the late 17th century by merchant Jonathan Dickinson.

But like the fate of so many Indigenous People, Frazer said disease, warfare and slavery brought by the Europeans would do them in.

### Seminole history

The history of the Seminoles would

begin years later with the Creeks who were from Georgia and Alabama and migrated to Florida in the 1700s.

Florida Indians would collectively become known as Seminoles in the 1770s, said Frazer, with the addition of runaway slaves who found refuge and joined them – known as Black Seminoles.

While the Seminoles faced "all kinds of issues and traumas," Frazer said they endured and thrived, even as their numbers dwindled to about 200 – those who managed to elude capture by the U.S. Army in the 19th century after the Third Seminole War ended in 1858.

Part of Frazer's Seminole section of his presentation goes into well-known warriors and leaders like Osceola (born Billy Powell), Sam Jones (known as Abiaka) and Chief Billy Bowlegs.

Those at Frazer's lectures get a brief overview of the three Seminole Wars, including its significant battles.

On surviving Andrew Jackson's army, Frazer said: "Seminoles knew the lay of the land. They could survive in the climate. They could hide in the Everglades. They used the cover of darkness."

### Modern day

Those in the audience can sense Frazer's amazement at how far the Seminole Tribe has come, not only through wars and battles, but up to and beyond federal recognition in 1957; from poverty to today's economic independence.

"Seminoles are a unique Tribe; unique to Florida culture and to the fabric of this state," Frazer said.

He thinks the Seminoles and other Native people have always been environmentalists, before it was cool: "Native Americans throughout our country and history always respected the lands; respected nature. It's not until the Europeans and whites began encroaching on the land that we began to have issues," Frazer said.

Frazer is a teacher and historian, and presents an objective view of events, but that doesn't stop him from having a visceral reaction about the horrific treatment Native Americans have received over the years.

"What's interesting about all the Native Americans in our culture going all the way back to before Christopher Columbus is their ancient ancestral lands they grew up on were taken away. Their cultural identity was taken away; they were pushed off the lands as the westward expansion took place," Frazer said.

The same will happen to the Seminoles. "They are pushed and pushed and pushed until there's a reaction and that reaction is a series of wars against the encroaching white men."

"The Seminole are The Unconquered People; a very proud people," Frazer said. "Think about it: the Native Americans of this country were the first Americans, and they are not given their credit."



Jimmy White Photography

This photo of a manatee is on display at the museum exhibit.



# Health



At left, Patrick Doctor, and, at right, Dorothy Tommie participate in the Heart Walk on Feb. 28 in Hollywood. The walk, hosted by Seminole Integrative Health, coincided with February being Heart Health Month.

## Dr. Tonemah stresses health as 'our first sovereignty'

BY DERRICK TIGER  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — Dr. Darryl Tonemah, a health psychologist and musician of Kiowa, Comanche, and Tuscarora descent, travels to reservations across the country to promote health and wellness, but rather than straight out telling people how to manage their health, he pitches the idea that “health should be our first sovereignty.”

“I recognize that without our health every other sovereignty doesn’t occur,” Dr. Tonemah said to a handful of Tribal members Feb. 19 at the Tribe’s health complex in Hollywood. “Because if I’m not healthy then I don’t have financial sovereignty because I can’t work. If I’m not healthy I don’t have political sovereignty because I can’t play with the political things. So health is my No. 1 sovereignty. Everything else trickles down out of that.”

Tonemah, who was born on the Tuscarora Reservation in Niagara County, New York, explains the definition of sovereignty – according to Wikipedia – as “the full right and power of a governing body to govern itself without any interference from outside sources.” And I thought ‘well how does that apply to health?’” Tonemah said. “If I have health sovereignty then I have the ability to make choices in my health. I don’t have an outside provider, I don’t have a machine, I don’t have medications making health choices for me, and so every day I do something to claim my sovereignty.”

Tonemah stressed that the only person who has the most influence on your health is you. Whether that message comes from Tonemah or another doctor or fitness trainer, the bottom line is change has to start with the person and what is he or she willing to change.

### ‘Negotiables’

Change – as Tonemah explained – does not necessarily mean to stop everything you eat and drink, but rather find your



Dr. Darryl Tonemah, standing at right, leads a health seminar in Hollywood on Feb. 19.

“negotiables” which can be something small such as substituting green tea for coffee, or increasing physical activity to burn calories gained from unhealthy items.

While working through the negotiables people may get the impression that switching from regular soda to diet soda can cut back on calorie intake, but research indicates diet drinks have their drawbacks, too. A recent study by the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association found that artificially sweetened drinks were linked to an increased risk of clot-based strokes and heart attacks. Other research also suggests that diet drinks were shown to have a link to dementia, type 2 diabetes, obesity, and metabolic syndrome.

“The research that I find most interesting about that is that people actually gain weight when they drink diet drinks,” Tonemah said. “They put things in there that affect your satiety; your inability to feel full, so actually drinking diet drinks can make you feel hungrier which is ironic.”

A suggestion for compensating sugar is to opt for other sweeteners or flavors like mint and cinnamon, both are also said to help

suppress appetite.

### Why change?

Research provides further proof about the toll poor eating habits has had on Native communities. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has found that Native Americans are more likely to get diabetes than any other U.S. racial group, and they have also reported that obesity was high among Native children.

Obesity can lead to all sorts of health problems. Kidney failure, for example, can force a patient to rely on a dialysis machine to remove toxins from the blood because their kidneys can no longer perform that basic function. According to the National Kidney Foundation, life expectancy on dialysis is five to 10 years, although, the foundation states that many patients have lived 20 or even 30 years on dialysis.

If you are planning to make a change in your health, but are not quite sure how to go about it, the Tribe has many resources that are available, including Seminole Integrative Health (formerly known as Allied Health).

## Hollywood’s healthy heart walk



Irissa Young strolls along with her nephew Santino Tiger during the Heart Walk.

### ◆ ICWA From page 7A

of the National Indian Child Welfare Association, said in a recent statement that the situation “misapprehends the government-to-government relationship between tribal nations and the federal government for over 200 years.”

Jefferson Keel, president of the National Congress of American Indians, recently called the ruling “clearly erroneous” and one that has “led to uncertainty” for all American Indian and Alaska Native children and their families.

“Today ICWA is needed more than ever to ensure that Native children, the future leaders and innovators of Indian Country are protected, and where possible, can

grow up rooted in their cultures, languages and communities,” Keel said in a statement.

Kastelic, Keel and other Native leaders point to the long history of Native children being removed from their families and communities without sufficient reason and often with little consideration of their rights.

Before ICWA was enacted in 1978, as many as one out of every three Native children was removed from their home. ICWA has helped to reduce those removal rates and keep more Native families together.

“ICWA is vital to the well-being of Native children and the stability and integrity of Native families today. We can’t afford to go back to the days when massive numbers of Native children were

forcibly removed from their loved ones and were often separated from their families with little hope of ever seeing them again. It’s not an option,” the Protect ICWA Campaign said in a recent statement.

### Next steps

Oral arguments began March 13 in front of the three-judge panel at the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals on behalf of two federal agencies—the Departments of the Interior and of Health and Human Services—and the five tribal nation defendants.

A decision by the Fifth Circuit is expected within a few months after the oral arguments are complete.

SUBMITTED BY DR. PAUL ISAACS

Executive Director, Department of Health and Human Services

### New Medicare Card Mailing Strategy

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is required to remove Social Security Numbers (SSNs) from all Medicare cards by April 2019. A new, unique Medicare Number is replacing the SSN-based Health Insurance Claim Number (HICN) on each new Medicare card. Starting April 2018, CMS is mailing new Medicare cards to all people with Medicare on a flow basis, based on geographic location and other factors.

These mailings will follow the sequence outlined below. Additional details on timing will be available as the mailings progress. Starting in April 2018, people with Medicare can get information about the mailings and sign up for emails about the status of card mailings in their area on Medicare.gov/NewCard.

### New Medicare Card Mailing Waves

Wave	States Included	Cards Mailing
Newly Eligible People with Medicare	All - Nationwide	April 2018 - ongoing
1	Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia	Beginning May 2018 <b>COMPLETE</b>
2	Alaska, American Samoa, California, Guam, Hawaii, Northern Mariana Islands, Oregon	Beginning May 2018 <b>COMPLETE</b>
3	Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Wisconsin	Beginning June 2018 <b>COMPLETE</b>
4	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont	Beginning July 2018 <b>COMPLETE</b>
5	Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina	Beginning August 2018 <b>COMPLETE</b>
6	Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, Utah, Washington, Wyoming	Beginning September 2018 <b>COMPLETE</b>
7	Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Puerto Rico, Tennessee, Virgin Islands	Beginning October 2018 <b>COMPLETE</b>



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# SEMINOLE SCENES



Beverly Bidney

**TOMAHAWK TEACHING:** Jacob Osceola demonstrates to a group of local elementary school students how to use tomahawks at the Seminole Shootout Reenactment in Immokalee on March 1.



Beverly Bidney

**RISING UP:** Here's a look on March 21 of the expansion project under construction at the Ahfachkee School in Big Cypress.



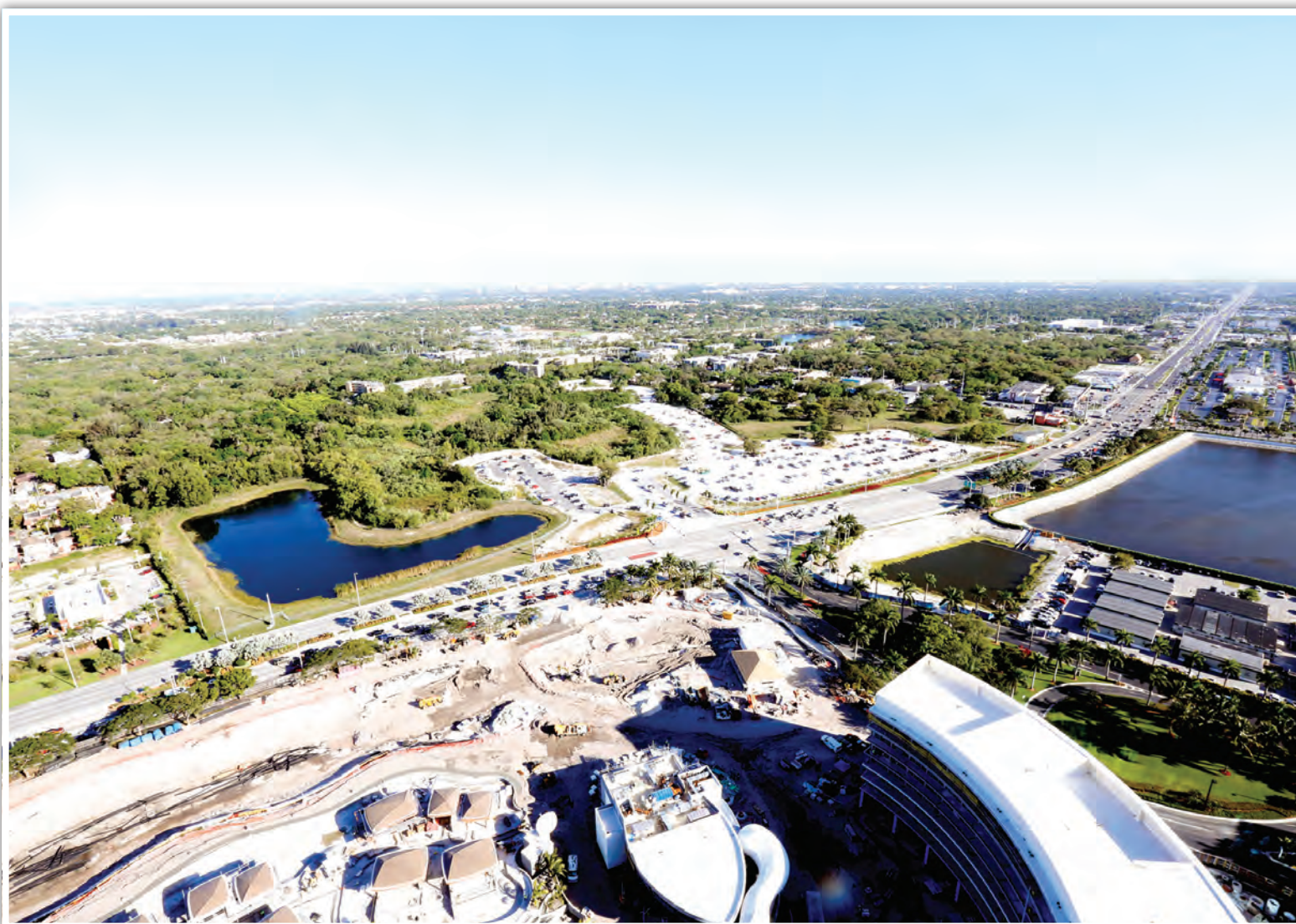
Hard Rock Atlantic City/Facebook

**WRESTLING LEGENDS AT HARD ROCK:** WWE Hall of Famers Ric Flair and Hulk Hogan chat on stage at Sound Waves at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City on March 1. The wrestling legends took part in a "Legends of the Ring" question and answer session with fans.



Beverly Bidney (2)

**CULTURE DAY:** At left, Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola is about to enjoy the luncheon at the tribalwide senior culture day at Billie Swamp Safari on Feb. 27 while, at right, with carved ladle in hand, Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger makes a point during the tribalwide event.



Kevin Johnson (2)

**VIEW FROM ABOVE AND BELOW:** Above, here's the view March 6 from near the top of the new guitar-shaped hotel being built at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood. At right, a look up at the hotel from ground level. The hotel is scheduled to open this fall. According to a Hard Rock press release, the expansion will include "638 luxury guestrooms to a first-ever, iconic, guitar-shaped hotel and 168 upscale guest accommodations in an adjacent hotel tower overlooking a lush, "Bora Bora" style, private cabana environment..."





# NATIONAL NATIVE NEWS

## Man who illegally dug up Native American remains sentenced

A South Lake Tahoe man has pleaded guilty to charges of excavation and removal of archaeological resources from public lands after federal agents found tens of thousands of Native American artifacts in his home, according to the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of California. Timothy Brian Harrison, 50, was sentenced Feb. 27 to a year and a day in prison, and was ordered to pay \$113,000 in restitution.

He was also charged with one count of misdemeanor count of unlawful possession of methamphetamine.

The arrest followed a years-long investigation in the Sierra Nevada where feds say Harrison dug the artifacts up illegally, CBS Sacramento reports.

A single snapshot entered into evidence shows what federal agents describe as a treasure trove of Native American artifacts looted from the archeological sites.

Miriam Hinman, one of the federal prosecutors that handled the case, spoke to CBS Sacramento about the case. Hinman also has a master's degree in archeology and chose to be on this case because of her passion for examining artifacts.

"The illegal digging, in this case, desecrated ancient sites that were important to the Washoe tribe, and were unusually valuable to archaeologists," Hinman said.

Court documents show Harrison spent more than a decade digging up more than a dozen sites in Alpine and El Dorado County ranging from hundreds to thousands of years old.

The area is the ancestral homeland of the Washoe tribe. Darrel Cruz, the tribe's director of historic preservation, told CBS Sacramento that "every time they take away an artifact, it takes away a piece of the history, the puzzle that makes up that history."

Federal agents were tipped to the illegal digging by hikers. Court documents show investigators then began following Harrison's movements by installing covert surveillance cameras around the archaeological sites. They also used GPS tracking on Harrison's truck.

Eventually, court documents show they found approximately 302 pounds of artifacts in Harrison's home. None of the artifacts were sold.

"He kept these things for himself, in his house," Hinman noted to CBS Sacramento.

After a decade of digging, destroying centuries of archeological evidence, Harrison has pled guilty and has been sentenced to a year and a day in prison.

The federal government is working with the Washoe tribe on finding the appropriate place to house those artifacts.

The massive investigation was conducted by the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, California State Fish & Wildlife Service, California Highway Patrol, and Alpine County Sheriff's Department, according to a press release from the U.S. Attorney's office.

- CBS News

## Congress votes to expand public land and create four national monuments

Congress has passed a sweeping public lands conservation package that would protect millions of acres of land and rivers across the country and create four national monuments and more than 1 million acres of new wilderness.

The Natural Resources Management Act, approved in a 363-62 vote in the House of Representatives, received overwhelming bipartisan support in both chambers. It now heads to President Donald Trump, who is expected to sign it. [President Trump signed it into law March 12].

House Natural Resources Chair Raul M. Grijalva, a Democrat from Arizona, called the legislation a "massive win for the present and future of American conservation."

"This bill represents Congress at its best and truly gives the American people something to be excited about," Grijalva said in a statement. "Everyone from inner cities to suburbs to rural communities wins when we work together to preserve the outdoors."

The legislation, which consolidates more than 100 public lands, natural resources, and water bills into one, protects large swaths of land from mining, designates 1.3 million acres of land in California, Utah, Oregon, and New Mexico as wilderness, and protects nearly 620 miles of rivers across several states from damming and other development.

The bill, which the Congressional Budget Office estimates will save taxpayers \$9 million, would also permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which expired last year. The program uses private offshore oil and gas revenues to pay for conservation of federal lands for outdoor recreation and provide grants for state and local governments to create green space and provide access to natural resources.

"This benefits every congressional district, every county, every state in this country," Michigan Rep. Debbie Dingell said before the House vote.

Since it was established by Congress in 1965, the program has funded more than 40,000 projects nationwide, according to the Democrats on the House Natural Resources Committee.

Mark Tercek, CEO of the Nature Conservancy, called the fund "one of the country's most effective conservation programs," and applauded lawmakers decision to reauthorize it on a permanent basis.

"For too long, LWCF has been stuck in a cycle of uncertainty that limited its potential," Tercek said in a statement. "The overwhelmingly bipartisan votes in the House and Senate to renew LWCF reflect our nation's longstanding commitment to conservation, ensuring future generations will benefit from LWCF."

The act expands the boundaries of several national parks, including Death Valley and Joshua Tree in California; Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park in Georgia; and establishes new national monuments in California, Utah, Mississippi, and Kentucky.

While the bill was championed by environmentalists and lawmakers on both sides of the aisle as one of the biggest conservation bills in years, some have taken issue with a provision that authorizes the privatization of hundreds of thousands of acres of federal land in Alaska.

The provision provides for the allotment of up to 160 acres to each Alaska native who served during the Vietnam War and missed previous opportunities to stake land claims under Alaska's old homesteading law.

"This is not a perfect bill," Natural Resources Defense Council President Rhea Suh said that while the group supports eligible veterans claiming the land because they were serving in the military, the provision could "open the floodgates for 4,000 or more other Alaskans also to acquire public lands."

"At the rate of 160 acres per person, the bill would create new entitlements that could privatize two-thirds of a million acres," she wrote. "That means lands that belong to the American people, that belong to you and me, could be lost — parceled off into subdivisions, commercially developed or sold for mining or oil and gas drilling."

Still, Suh said that single provision shouldn't eclipse the major environmental and conservation wins in the legislation.

"By and large, though, it's a giant step forward in the natural legacy we share today and will entrust to others tomorrow," she wrote.

- BuzzfeedNews

## Cherokee Nation contributes record \$5.7M to 108 school districts

**TULSA, Okla.** — The Cherokee Nation contributed more than \$5.7 million to 108 school districts during the tribe's annual Public School Appreciation Day on March 6.

School superintendents from across northeastern Oklahoma gathered at Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tulsa for a luncheon and to receive checks from the tribe.

Funds provided to the schools are from the sale of tribal car tags. The Cherokee Nation allocates 38 percent of car tag revenue each year to education, providing a boost to Oklahoma public schools and fill education funding gaps.

"Funds from the sale of Cherokee Nation car tags often act as a lifeline to local school districts that may be struggling financially to meet the needs of students and teachers," said Principal Chief Bill John Baker. "I am proud of the tribe's continued investment in our children. By being an invaluable partner to public education in Oklahoma, the Cherokee Nation is helping ensure a better future for our families and our communities."

School districts have total discretion on how to use the funding. In recent years, schools have used the funds to cover teacher salaries, operations, technology improvements or school programs.

Zion Public School in Adair County received \$43,813 this year. Zion will use funds to update its teaching curriculum and technology devices for students.

"There's definitely a direct and positive correlation between overall student success and the wonderful support from the Cherokee Nation, so I applaud the tribe's commitment to education," said Zion Superintendent Corey Bunch. "Cherokee Nation administration and other leaders from the Cherokee government have made a pledge to support kids and schools, and they are standing behind those promises year after year."

Bartlesville Public Schools in Washington County received \$115,834. Superintendent Chuck McCauley said the donation will help pay for teacher salaries.

"We truly appreciate the support from the Cherokee Nation for public education," McCauley said. "The money that we receive from the Cherokee Nation car tag sales will benefit all of our students. While we made progress last year in improving teacher salaries in Oklahoma, operational funding for education still lags behind. The additional support from the Cherokee Nation is much needed."

School districts receive money based on the number of Cherokee Nation citizens they have enrolled, though funding benefits all students.

Since 2002, the tribe has awarded school districts in northeastern Oklahoma \$56.3 million in education contributions from car tag revenue.

- NativeNewsOnline

## Native American casino group donates \$184K to cover funerals for Alabama tornado victims

A Native American casino operator based in Alabama says it will pay for all 23 funerals of the victims of a March 3 tornado.

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians, which through its gaming subsidiary Wind Creek Hospitality owns and operates gaming venues in Alabama, Florida, Nevada, Aruba,

Curacao, and soon Pennsylvania, has donated \$184,000 to cover the funeral expenses of all who died in the deadly EF-4 tornado.

"The coroner's office received word that they wanted to help and reached out to them and they agreed. Their first commitment was for \$50,000," Lee County Coroner Bill Harris announced.

The March 3 tornado that ripped through Lee County left a path of destruction nearly a mile wide. EF-4 tornadoes are classified as wind speeds ranging between 166-200 MPH, and an event that causes "devastating damage." Only EF-5 is more severe, defined as "incredible damage."

The Native American casino group is making its largest investment to date by way of Pennsylvania. The Poarch Band of Creek Indians and Las Vegas Sands announced a \$1.3 billion deal in March 2018 for the latter's Sands Bethlehem in Eastern Pennsylvania.

Wind Creek says it will invest an additional \$190 million in improvements and expansion once the deal is fully executed. That includes a \$90 million convention center and new 300-room hotel tower.

The remaining \$100 million is being earmarked for the adjacent No. 2 Machine Shop, an abandoned steel factory that has significant historical importance to the production of WWII weapons, warships, and airplanes. Wind Creek CEO Jay Dorris said the company is still considering what to do with the space, but recognizes it's "a very significant structure."

Of course, the Poarch Band of Creek Indians aren't the only ones invested in the gaming industry that regularly support their communities. The US Chamber of Commerce Foundation reports that gaming companies donated \$367 million last year, and their employees gave 422,000 hours of volunteer work.

Harris said of the tribe's generosity regarding the funeral donations, "I am so thankful for them to step up in this manner and help the families of this tragedy."

Not everyone is willing to benefit from the tribe's casino operations, which is predominantly responsible for funding the Native American group. A church in Alabama damaged by a tornado recently declined a \$25,000 donation from the Poarch Band of Creek Indians.

On Jan. 19, the First Baptist Church of Wetumpka was hit by an EF-2 tornado — classified as wind speeds up to 135 MPH.

"It wasn't unanimous, but the vote was overwhelming to return the donation," Rev. James Troglen told the Montgomery Advisor. "Certainly, we accept and recognize the spirit in which the donation was offered. Our hope is that the money can go to helping in the relief effort, and that's the desire we stated in the letter."

- casino.org

## Native American inmates win right to long hair in Texas prison

Three Native American inmates bested the Texas prison system in a lawsuit over religious liberties, winning the right to let their hair grow long despite arguments from state attorneys that it would pose a security risk and make it easier for inmates to escape from an understaffed facility.

The trio of long-time prisoners at the McConnell Unit sued the Texas Department of Criminal Justice in federal court, arguing that their Native American spiritual beliefs regard hair as an extension of the soul, something to be cut only when in mourning. The prison system's rules requiring men to keep short hair or face disciplinary consequences, the inmates and their attorneys argued, were an unfair violation of religious freedom.

"Religious liberty is a bedrock value," said Rob Ellis, one of the lawyers who represented the inmates. "It's also a nonpartisan issue so it's especially important for minority groups like Native Americans whose views aren't as well known or accepted."

Even though female prisoners are allowed to have long hair, attorneys for the state claimed that letting men do the same would cost too much money to police, that prisoners would get too hot in uncooled facilities, that it would make identifying inmates harder and that it could increase the number of inmate suicides.

But after a three-day bench trial last year, U.S. District Judge Nelyva Gonzales Ramos in Corpus Christi rejected those arguments.

"While we do not agree with the finding of this court, we fully respect the legal process," said prison spokesman Jeremy Desel, adding that the department was exploring the possibility of appeals.

Legally, the outcome of the case only impacts the three prisoners involved — but the same arguments could apply to future lawsuits involving any of the more than 5,000 other Native Americans spread across the state's 104 prisons.

The case first started in 2012, when Teddy Norris Grey Hawk Davis filed a lawsuit — without an attorney — in a Corpus Christi federal court. Later, other inmates at the Beeville prison joined the case and eventually the court agreed to appoint them all lawyers.

Even after Davis got out of prison, the rest of the men continued with their lawsuit. Now, the lead plaintiff is 55-year-old Robbie Dow Goodman, a Cherokee man from the Panhandle.

Raymond Cobb, a 42-year-old Walker County man of Native American descent, joined the case more recently as did 59-year-old William Casey, a Cherokee man who's now in a wheelchair.

They've all been behind bars for decades, serving time for serious crimes like murder and sexual assault. Now, they're all aging, and haven't caught major disciplinary

fractions in years.

And, in accordance with their religious beliefs, all three of the men realized they wanted to grow their hair long. Cobb wanted a braid, to avoid risking rejection from his ancestors when "crossing over" after death. Casey, meanwhile, believed his long hair gave him strength and Goodman said it connected him to his Creator.

"It's just like the roots of a tree," he said at trial. "It connects us."

Being forced to cut his hair feels like "getting beat up."

But prison policy mandates that male inmates have to keep their hair cut short around the ears or face disciplinary consequences such as loss of recreation or commissary privileges.

That's why the men filed suit under the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act, a federal law that protects prisoners' rights of free worship.

To raise a legal claim under that act, prisoners' beliefs have to be sincere; to fight a claim filed under the act, the state has to show compelling governmental interest for prohibiting the expression of religion, such as proof of a credible security risk.

State attorneys didn't dispute the sincerity of the prisoners' beliefs, but during trial, they raised a number of concerns. For one, officials worried about the possibility that inmates could hide contraband in long hair — and the contraband men smuggle tends to be more dangerous than the contraband women smuggle, attorneys argued.

"Although both male and female offenders have been caught with all types of contraband, the types of contraband that female offenders are most commonly caught with is cosmetics," the state wrote in court filings. "Male offenders are much more likely to smuggle contraband that is dangerous, such as cellphones, drugs, and sharpened weapons intended for stabbing."

On top of that, the department claimed, long hair can be dangerous in fights, if one inmate grabs another's head. It can symbolize gang affiliation, harbor lice, or increase the odds of overheating in uncooled prison units. And, officials fretted over whether long hair could increase suicide risk, because one time a woman in prison tried to smother herself with her own hair.

- Houston Chronicle

## Native American chef wins prestigious food award

**WASHINGTON** — A Native American chef has been awarded one of the food industry's highest honors for his efforts in revitalizing traditional indigenous food systems in North America.

On March 19, the James Beard Foundation (JBF) announced that Sean Sherman, a member of the Oglala Lakota Sioux tribe from the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota and founder/CEO of The Sioux Chef is to receive a Leadership Award for his work in helping Native Americans reclaim historic food and agricultural systems.

Beard awards, which Time magazine has dubbed "the Oscars" of the American food industry, are given out annually in a number of categories; the 2019 Leadership Award celebrates food system "visionaries" and acknowledges Sherman's extensive research into diverse Native American farming techniques, wild food usage and harvesting, land stewardship, food preservation, as well as tribal cultures and histories.

"We're trying to raise awareness of the history of the land and on how to live sustainability on what's around us," said Sherman, speaking to VOA by phone during a two-hour drive to Iowa to buy heritage seeds. These seeds of rare, heirloom and open-pollinated plant varieties could disappear if not cultivated and banked.

"Even non-indigenous chefs should be really excited to learn about plant diversity to utilize in their cuisines," he said.

- Voice of America

## Lindsey Graham pushes for Catawba Indian casino near state line

U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) introduced a bill [in March] that would put land off Interstate 85 into a trust for the Catawba Indian Tribe for the construction of a long-talked-about casino in Kings Mountain, North Carolina.

The Catawba Indian Tribe submitted an application in September 2014 to the U.S. Department of the Interior for land trust and casino rights for a plot off I-85 near Kings Mountain. Focusing on 16-acres off Exit 5, the application has been pending with the Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs for years.

The application called for a 1.8 million-square-foot facility, which would include a casino and a hotel. The complex could employ about 5,000 people, according to initial reports.

Graham's bill could bypass the Interior Department and have the tribe's trust approved by an act of Congress.

Kings Mountain Mayor Scott Neisler said he supports the move to push the proposed casino forward from either avenue due to its potential economic impact on the area.

"It is really going to be a great economic driver for our county," Neisler said. "It is documented that we have below-average income levels in our area. This will produce good-paying jobs for our citizens."

Neisler also said the city could provide utilities to the casino, which he said would help the keep taxes low for residents.

The new bill drew ire from the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, who released a statement encouraging the historically South

Carolinian Catawba Indian Tribe "to develop their on-reservation economy as it should be — in their community."

"While the tribe respects and encourages progress for other Native American communities, including South Carolina's Catawba Indian Nation, the recent filing of a bill in the U.S. Senate to give North Carolina land to the South Carolina tribe for an off-reservation casino is nothing more than a modern day land grab by the federal government of Cherokee aboriginal lands," the statement said.

Catawba Indian Nation Chief Bill Harris told WBTB that he has documentation showing that the proposed location is Catawba aboriginal land.

Neisler said he stands with the statement issued by Harris about the Catawba's native land.

"I'm convinced the Catawba were part of our area even though we're in North Carolina, and that they deserve the same chances the Cherokees in preserving their culture," Neisler said.

U.S. Sens. Thom Tillis and Richard Burr from North Carolina are co-sponsoring the effort.

- GoUpstate.com

## Arkansas Dem introduces bill to honor Native Americans instead of Confederacy on state flag

A lawmaker in Arkansas introduced legislation on Feb. 15 to nix Confederate symbolism on the state's flag.

State Rep. Charles Blake (D) filed a bill that would alter the design of the flag, but would amend language in the state's Constitution to mean a large star on the flag represents Native American nations instead, according to The Associated Press.

One of four large blue stars on the flag is meant to represent the Confederate States of America. The fourth star was introduced to the flag in 1923.

In the flag's current iteration, the Confederacy star is above the state's name, while three other stars that symbolize other key elements of state history.

Blake's bill would redesignate the star to honor contributions of the Quappaw, Osage and Caddo tribes that first inhabited the area.

The text of the proposal notes that the state's name itself is derived from a Native American word meaning "southern place."

- The Hill

## Bill seeks tribal consultation in Nevada issues

Yerington Paiute Tribe Chairman Laurie Thom announced in February during Nevada Tribes Legislative Day she and Assemblywoman Sarah Peters are collaborating on a bill draft request calling for tribal consultation in state and land issues.

The Nevada Tribal Consultation Act, Thom said, would ensure greater representation of area tribes in local, state and federal decisions in land management and resources.

"Each tribe has its own consultation process, but at least we can get an act together that states these tribal liaisons or even agencies that don't have them still will have to consult on whatever their issue is that affects them," Thom said Feb. 12 during Nevada Tribes Legislative Day. "And it's not a letter that shows up on a chairman's desk that says, 'Well, you have 30 days to respond. That's not consultation.'"

Thom said she and Chairman Amber Torres of the Walker River Paiute Tribe had attended a training hosted by the Substance Abuse and Mental Services Administration last year in New Mexico. SAMHSA, a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services agency, aims to lessen the use of substances and mental illness in American communities, including local tribes, and it had invited tribal leaders to a clinic addressing opioid addiction, Thom said.

Topics of conversation included determining where tribes fit into licensing needs for rehabilitation clinics. Thom returned and eventually began working with Peters on a BDR to institute a policy that would require Nevada's agencies to work with tribal liaisons in its various institutions.

Thom said Peters has been a special partner, and she was the one to introduce several tribal members at this year's Tribes Legislative Day.

"She's been our consultant on the Anaconda Mine issue and worked very closely with us," Thom said. "She told everyone that being a female leader ... gave her that incentive to go forward and become an Assemblywoman, and I was real proud of that and for our tribe."

Peters has worked with tribal governments for the past five years and recalled meeting Thom in 2015.

"She has been an incredible partner and leader in our fight to hold BP (America) accountable for cleanup of the poisoned groundwater and soil at the Anaconda Mine Superfund site," Peters said. "The cleanup process at the Superfund site has shed light on an important gap in communication among government agencies and Nevada's tribal communities."

In February 2018, Environmental Protection Agency head Scott Pruitt signed a deferral agreement to clean up the site near Yerington. Thom called the situation a "black eye" to the Native community who were not consulted during the process and ended up suing previous mine owners Atlantic Richfield Corp. and BP.

Peters said this BDR would strengthen processes for involving the tribe in future land matters.



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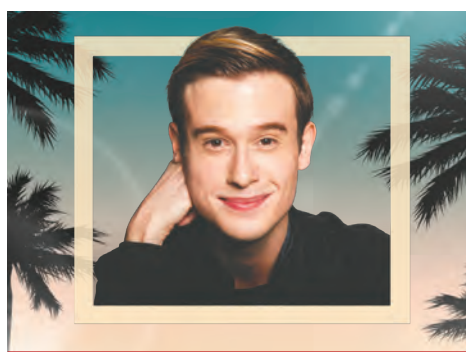
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# Education



B

## CSU incident spurs report to address Native issues on college campuses

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

**BRIGHTON** — More than a few eyebrows were raised last year when two Native American brothers were removed from a college campus tour in Colorado.

The Colorado State University incident drew comparisons to racial profiling incidents happening across the country. But it also was the impetus for a new initiative put together by interested parties and spearheaded by the American Indian College Fund.

In April 2018, brothers Thomas Kanewakeron Gray and Skanahwati Lloyd Gray, from New Mexico, visited the campus of CSU in Fort Collins. They had previously said the school was their top choice of universities.

During the tour the two brothers were pulled away from the group by campus police and patted down.

Police said a mother who was on the tour had called 911 saying she was worried because the brothers were quiet and wore dark clothing.

"The Gray brothers were confronted, detained, and searched by CSU police, leaving them humiliated, scared, and literally marginalized," said the Grays' attorney Sarah Hinger of the American Civil Liberties Union in a statement.

"This exercise of sanctioned police power magnified and legitimized the bias of an individual and created an injury beyond what a private individual could inflict alone. It is imperative to revisit both policy and training if the university hopes to prevent its police from being used as a tool of bias in the future," she said.

Hinger described the situation as an example of a "bias based" report.

The school responded by offering to pay the Grays' expenses for their trip and promised to take steps to prevent a similar situation from happening again, including the use of badges to identify guests on future school tours.

"CSU has repeatedly expressed its standing invitation to the Gray family to visit our campus to discuss the progress that has been made and the ongoing work underway ... We deeply respect their desire to ensure a more welcoming and supportive climate for Native people at Colorado State University ..." a CSU statement read in part after the incident last year.

### College Fund steps in

Dina Horwedel, the director of public education at the American Indian College Fund, said the CSU incident set the nonprofit into action. It organized an initiative to address social issues Native Americans face on campuses in order to make the environment safer and more welcoming for Native people.

To do so, officials met with a group that included experts in higher education, nonprofits, CSU officials, Native American students and other stakeholders. The result of the meeting was the publication of the report: "Creating Visibility and Healthy Learning Environments for Native Americans in Higher Education."

It was crafted at the Indigenous Higher Education Equity Initiative in Denver last August, an event that was hosted by the College Fund in cooperation with leadership from CSU.

Officials hope the report can be used as a tool for higher education institutions to "advance the visibility of Native American students at their institutions and to ensure that Native history, achievements and perspectives are respected."

The report highlights "scalable steps" in regard to recruiting, financial aid, student orientation, recognition of Native lands, curriculum creation, establishment of meeting places for Native people and work with local tribes.

"The CSU incident is what spurred the initiative, however, over the years, of course, many of our students have reported other incidents, and in the current climate we decided we needed to take action as it was obvious that things had not improved for Native students," Horwedel wrote in a February email to the Seminole Tribune.

### Why it's important

The College Fund points to reports that American Indians and Alaska Natives (AIAN) face a college access and completion crisis. Only 14 percent of AIAN people age 25 and older have a college degree — less than half the number of other U.S. groups.

"These efforts, along with financial

◆ See CSU on page 3B

## Firefighter gear study earns Edie Robbins first place at science and engineering fair

BY DERRICK TIGER  
Staff Reporter

Edie Robbins, of the Big Cypress Reservation, won first place in the Engineering category at the Heartland Regional Science and Engineering Fair on Feb. 14 in Avon Park.

Middle school and high school students from DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands and Okeechobee counties competed in the fair.

Robbins is a ninth-grade student at Clewiston High School. She was awarded for her work on a study — which took 10 months to complete — about firefighter turnout gear flame resistance and thermal protection. The basis of her study was to substantiate if after 10 years of active use is turnout gear deemed unsafe for use. Fire departments retire turnout gear after 10 years.

"After calling all around the country she got 12 fire departments to donate 118 pieces of turnout gear to her study," said Blake Monroe, Robbins' science mentor. "She collected gear as far away as Alaska and New Hampshire. Most of the gear came from Florida, including Disney World. She also contacted four of the major national manufacturers of turnout gear to see if they would donate new fabric samples, or even used turnout gear they might be willing to donate, and she got all four (Globe, PGI, Firedex, and Lion) to say yes."

Halfway through the study Robbins learned that North Carolina State University had a textile laboratory — the only independent textile laboratory in North America — that tests new fabric samples for manufacturers of turnout gear. Robbins contacted the university to ask for assistance

in her study the university expressed that they had always wanted to do such a study and accommodated her request by testing some samples of the used turnout gear she had acquired. The university did \$3,000 worth of testing for free.

Robbins' study concluded that age was a factor when it comes to performance of turnout gear. The older turnout gear becomes less reliable in terms of flame resistance and thermal protection.

Robbins received letters of recognition from the National Fire Protection Association president and CEO Jim Pauley as well as the International Fire Chiefs Association, Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. All of these entities have input in making the standards that fire departments must adhere to in order to be compliant with fire codes. "To our knowledge your work is the most comprehensive to date," Chief Otto Drozd, president of the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association, wrote in a letter to Robbins.

She received five additional awards: the United States Air Force Award, the ASM Materials Award, and the Florida Association of Science Teachers Award, and a nomination to represent the Heartland region at the Florida State Science and Engineering Fair in Lakeland.

Robbins was also selected as one of two senior division students to represent Florida and the U.S. in the Intel International Science and Engineering (ISEF) to be held in Phoenix, Arizona, in May. ISEF is a program of Society for Science & the Public and is the world's largest international pre-college science competition.

"We're all very proud of her," Monroe said.



Courtesy photo  
Edie Robbins, of the Big Cypress Reservation, stands in front of the project she did about firefighter turnout gear. The project won first place at the Heartland Regional Science and Engineering Fair.



Courtesy photo  
From left, science mentor Blake Monroe, student Edie Robbins, Edie's grandmother Jeanette Cypress and Camp E-Nini Hassee education administrator Gale E. Wire.

## Pemayetv Emahakv Students of the Month - February 2019

### Elementary

Kahnyah Billie  
Kalliope Puente  
Aries Serrano  
Nevaeh Johns

Jeremy Smith  
Cody Tommie  
Kamden Osceola  
Russell Osceola  
Noah Tubby  
Amalia Estrada

Jaelle Weimann  
Stellar King  
Lindi Carter  
Oddysse Sheets  
Zooey Bowers  
Dahlia Turtle

Bailey Bowers  
Airo Tommie  
Bryce Trammell  
Juanita Billie  
Jayleigh Braswell

### Middle

Merlaysia Billie  
Kendra Thomas  
Tvffolopv Leach  
Caleb Burton



Courtesy photo

Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School middle school students of the month for February.



Courtesy photo

Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School elementary school students of the month for February.



## ◆ CLOSE UP

From page 1A

all week, which provided a burst of color to the grey winter landscape of Washington, D.C., and nearby Alexandria, Virginia, where most of the workshops were held.

"I learned more about how the federal government works with our Tribe and our issues," said Mahala Billie-Osceola, 15. "My views have broadened; I'm more open to change, helping out and learning from each other so we can all grow as nations."

An important part of the week was learning and practicing leadership skills. Through workshops where the students worked together to write initiatives and sovereignty statements, they learned how to compromise, pare down large issues and listen to each other.

The initiatives and sovereignty statements were debated in small groups, written and rewritten and then presented to the USET leadership during organization's USET Impact Week. By the end of the week, students had experienced what it takes to tackle important issues together.

### Tribal action initiative

Each tribe brainstormed together March 4 to create tribal action initiatives built around a central issue facing their tribe, write a statement about it and offer solutions. First, each Seminole student wrote what he or she considered to be an important issue. The group discussed them all before deciding that a lack of involvement by youth in the Tribe would be the central issue.

"Social discrimination results in lack of involvement by the youth," said Jahniyah Henry, 15. "Community involvement is at an all-time low among Seminole youth."

The USET leader advised the kids to try not to be too negative, but to focus on ways the Tribe could improve their issue. The discussion veered toward culture, lack of communication and treatment of descendants. They agreed that without youth involvement in the Tribe's culture, it would disappear.

"Sometimes descendants know more than we do because they make an effort to learn," said James Mora, 18. "The Tribe must work together to get youth involved. Culture is the most important thing."

"Youth involvement is our generation's thing," said Krishawn Henry, 16. "One day descendants will know more than we do because we don't participate in culture and traditions. I don't want to get to that point."

Some mentioned the Tribe's decision to stop sending kids to Camp Kulaqua – a summer program that has resumed this year after a hiatus – and the cancellation of the wellness conference, which were both activities that brought together a large number of youth from all reservations. They noted that sports tournaments are also ways to gather together and those are promoted well by the Tribe. The conversation led to the importance of communication with youth. Instagram and other social networks kids use frequently were mentioned as effective ways to reach them.

From these discussions, the Seminole students' issue statement, solutions and examples were written and displayed with those of the other tribes at the USET reception that evening.

"We want to take it to the Chairman," said December Stubbs, 17. "The adults want to know what we think and how they should change things. People like the idea of us trying to do this so the culture doesn't die out, like it has in other tribes."

"I feel like the youth are very important," said Destiny Diaz, 17. "We need to share our opinion and voice; we are our best advocates."

The Seminole tribal action initiative statement was "Lack of involvement of Native youth is a tribalwide epidemic as a result of minimal sense of culture due to lack of communication."

Some solutions offered were youth groups, informal announcements, community events, use of social media to advertise and holidays. Examples given were youth communications, flyers/posters/social media, sports tournaments, Tribal Fair and Pow Wow, along with field days and adult community meetings.

At the reception, crowds perused each of the boards and asked the students about their initiatives. At the Seminole table, Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr. and Andrew Jordan Bowers, executive director of operations, asked students about their initiative and how they planned to implement it.

"Communication," Krishawn said. "We want to come to Council and have our voices heard. We can make a difference."

Andrew Jordan Bowers noted the inclusion of a youth council on the display board and asked if having one would allow them to elect representatives to speak on everyone's behalf. It was clear the students didn't want to wait until they were 18 to participate in the conversation with tribal leaders. The group was serious about starting youth councils on every reservation to get all Seminole youth involved.

"There are things affecting us now," Krishawn said. "A lot of money is wasted when kids drop out of private schools. I'd rather have our kids graduate from school and have a basis so we know we can be something."

"You have done something really tangible here," Bowers said. "This is one of the largest groups we've had here. How do we double the numbers for next year?"

"Communication," Krishawn said. "We all have the energy to do this; we are devoted to it and want to be able to help our Tribe. This is just the beginning."

"It's exciting to feel the energy and see how intelligent and involved you all are," Bowers said. "It gives us a sense of comfort that the Tribe is in the right hands for the future."

### Capitol Hill

After posing for the traditional Close Up USET photo op with the distinctive Capitol dome in the background March 5, the group walked to the Dirksen Senate Office Building to meet with staff members of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs.

All 13 members on the committee hail from states with Native American tribes. The committee is charged with studying the unique problems of American Indian, Native Hawaiian and Alaska Natives and proposing legislation to alleviate those

was doing about legislation in regard to missing and murdered Indian women. The first question set the tone for the session; it was clear the students did their homework. The answer was somewhat complicated. The committee held hearings in December 2018 and hopes the Savanna Act, named for a 22-year-old woman who was murdered in North Dakota, will be passed during the current session of Congress. The bill would require the Department of Justice's U.S. Attorneys meet annually with Tribes to report sexual violence against women and other violent crimes, give training and technical assistance to tribal police and share

worked extensively on the issue and said it was important to make sure students have the resources they need to get to school and thrive at school, including food, housing, access to healthcare and transportation. Making sure schools expect students to succeed and having quality educators at those schools are equally important components for success.

Chandler Demayo, 18, asked if the committee had plans to address climate change in Indian Country. Although the committee doesn't address that directly, Co-Chairman Senator Tom Udall's key areas of expertise are climate change, environmental regulation and reform. There is no pending

sovereign nation. Pardilla told the group that sovereignty is about possessing, asserting and carrying out distinct rights of a person and a nation of people. It is a legal status with inherent rights and powers which cannot be granted or taken away.

"Sovereignty is God-given," Pardilla said. "We have to protect our status as sovereign nations. As tribal citizens, we have a responsibility and rights. Your parents will be looking to you for the future to protect sovereignty."

A brief overview of where sovereignty came from followed. Pardilla explained that the 15th century Catholic church's papal edicts empowered European monarchs to "claim our land because we weren't Christians."

"There were 60 to 100 million of us living in North America, yet explorers claimed our lands and treated us as occupants with no authority," Pardilla said. "It is called the Doctrine of Discovery and it is embedded in federal Indian law. We don't learn about this in state educational systems and probably not in your tribal schools either."

Federal agencies still have trust responsibilities over tribal land throughout the U.S.

"It is inherently offensive that we can't monitor our own land," Pardilla said. "We are treated as incompetent and imbeciles who are incapable of handling our own affairs. These outdated concepts still exist in federal Indian law and policies. Every generation has the responsibility to maintain who we are and control and protect who we are as sovereign peoples."

With those words in their heads, the students buckled down to write their sovereignty statements. A methodical process with specific steps and activities was used to help them organize their thoughts. Exercises such as stating the first word that pops into their minds when they think of sovereignty, defining sovereignty in their own words and listing what they discussed throughout the week about the topic helped them mold their sovereignty statements.

Sovereignty has many meanings, so the definitions were varied among the students and the groups. The students gave thoughtful consideration to the issue of sovereignty as they came up with ideas for the statement.



During a tour of the U.S. Capitol on March 5, students stopped in the rotunda with the guide who explained some of the paintings, sculptures and architecture of the expansive circular room.

difficulties. Issues include education, economic development, land management, trust responsibilities, healthcare and claims against the United States.

The committee also works with other committees to encourage them to take Indian Country into consideration for all bills.

All 98 students, their chaperones and Close Up USET leaders filled the stately hearing room. On one side of the high-ceilinged, wood paneled room was a large u-shaped conference table around which were committee chairs. Behind those large executive chairs was a bench along the wall, where the staff members sit during hearings. On this day, the staff sat at the long table in front of the committee chairs and faced the group.

After introductions, the staff invited the students to ask questions.

One wanted to know what the committee

crime data.

The committee tries to work in a non-partisan fashion, since most issues affect everyone. Indeed, the victimization rate against women is the highest in the U.S. in Indian Country.

Clarice Demayo, 15, asked what the committee was doing for tribal poverty rates.

The committee looks at what economic development tools are available to tribes and provides tribal leaders with information. It's up to those leaders to decide what avenues to pursue. One opportunity is Native American business incubators and grants to help entrepreneurs turn their ideas into businesses. The committee also supports investing in workforce development, including education, as a way to help future generations achieve economic prosperity.

A discussion about how to keep kids in school and off drugs ensued. One staffer had



Krishawn Henry, December Stubbs and other students explain their tribal action initiative to Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr. and Andrew Jordan Bowers, executive director of operations, before the USET reception March 4.



With the iconic dome of the U.S. Capitol behind them, Seminole students pose for an informal photo March 5.



Clarice Demayo asks a question during a session with to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs.

legislation that addresses climate change.

The staffers talked about what it was like to be a Native American working on Capitol Hill and told the students to get involved with their Tribes and get to know their federal representatives and senators.

The students adjourned for lunch in the Senate cafeteria, followed by tours of the U.S. Capitol, Supreme Court and Library of Congress.

### Sovereignty statement

For the final project of the week, students wrote a sovereignty statement. They were divided into six workshop groups comprised of students from various tribes. Each workshop collaborated on an overall statement and addressed three key topics: education, economic development, and culture and language. At the end of the day the large group would vote on which of the six statements would be presented to USET.

Before the students started working, USET Director of Environmental Resource Management Jerry Pardilla began the discussion with some frank talk about sovereignty.

There are 573 federally recognized tribes in the U.S. and each one is a

They talked about who is impacted by a lack of sovereignty, what would happen if their tribes were to lose it, what sovereignty looks like now and in the future and what can USET do to ensure it is maintained. These questions were answered in each group's final sovereignty statement. Once the statements were written, each workshop elected a representative to speak for the group at the USET meeting.

The group convened in a ballroom lined with tribal flags and set up in a large U so everyone had a clear view of each other. Group leaders read the sovereignty statements, the groups discussed the merits of each and they voted on which ones would be presented at the USET Council Session the following day. USET adults sat in the audience and observed the process.

At the USET Council Session the following day, March 7, the sovereignty statements were entered into the USET record and will be included in its annual report. In remarks to the students, USET leaders told them how impressive they are and urged them to share what they learned with their peers at home.

### The takeaway

Students worked hard all week as they learned. True to their tribal action initiative, the students plan to share the knowledge they acquired and encourage their peers to get involved in the Tribe. Here's what a few students had to say about their participation in Close Up USET:

"The best part of the week was speaking to people from other tribes and seeing how their conflicts compare to ours. I saw how privileged Seminoles are and how we as youth sometimes take advantage of that. It's been a real eye opener," said Carlise Bermudez, 14.

"The process of writing and being on the panel when we shared our sovereignty statements was important. That's how adults get things done; they get together and share their opinions. I like that the youth got to do that," said Lena Stubbs, 16.

"I liked the Indian Affairs Committee. We were able to get answers on problems we wondered about. It expanded my knowledge on the subject," said Skye Stubbs, 14.

"Writing the sovereign statement was the highlight. Everything we learned throughout the week was incorporated in that one statement and activity," said Clarice Demayo, 15.

"I want to become more involved in politics, but Washington is too busy. Maybe I'll run for youth council. I want to get youth more involved with decisions the Tribe makes and give a youth perspective. The youth is the future foundation of the Tribe," said Leanne Diaz, 15.





Photos courtesy Josh Bertalotto, CNAY communications coordinator

The Center for Native American Youth's Champions for Change are, from left, Autumn Adams (Confederated Tribes and Bands of Yakima Nation), Shandiin Herrera (Navajo Nation), Madison White (Akwesasne Mohawk), Charitie Ropati (Central Yup'ik, Village of Kongiganak) and Adam Soulor (Mohegan).

## New class of 'Champions' embarks on slew of Native youth initiatives

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

Each year in Washington, D.C., the Center for Native American Youth (CNAY) at the Aspen Institute honors a group of young and inspirational Native leaders.

The five "Champions for Change" choose their own personal platforms and issues to advocate for on behalf of Native youth across the country and abroad.

Organizers choose the winners because of their track record of involvement, high goals and expectations of a far-reaching influence in their communities and beyond.

The five youth were in D.C. in February for a week-long series of events that culminated in a ceremony honoring their achievement. This year marked the seventh class of Champions – all under 24 years old.

"There are so many things we can do to make life much, much better for Native American youth," said former U.S. Sen. Byron Dorgan of North Dakota, the founder and chairman of CNAY, at the final day of activities on Feb. 12.

Former Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell (2013 to 2017) was a featured guest at the event and praised the youth for their achievement.

"You've all experienced difficult things and you know what it's like to be responsible for others and yourself, inspiring others like you, and those of us in the room," Jewell said.

### Ambitious programming

The Champions program is designed to highlight positive stories of impact from Indian Country. It was inspired by a 2011 White House initiative to develop young Native leaders through experience based learning and tailored advocacy training.

"Too often the conversation about

Native youth focuses only on seemingly insurmountable problems," CNAY organizers said in a statement. "This is why we provide platforms for youth ... where they can build their own narratives that focus on their strengths, culture and the positive things they're doing to improve lives in their community."

Champions receive leadership and communications training, meet with their elected representatives and develop plans to implement their initiatives throughout their one-year term.

They are asked to serve on the CNAY youth advisory board and play a significant role in its work throughout the year.

Champions have access to ongoing opportunities where they can contribute to a national dialogue on critical issues affecting youth in Indian Country.

As part of the Generation Indigenous (Gen-I) initiative launched by President Barack Obama, CNAY also manages the National Native Youth Network. The network includes more than 2,300 members and continues to grow.

### Meet the Champions

The following are edited profiles of the five Champions for Change honorees.

- Adam Soulor (Mohegan Tribe), 20, wants to work with youth in his community to get them involved in youth councils. He also focuses on cross-culture shares, learning from other tribes and having youth share the Mohegan culture with different Indigenous peoples.

- Charitie Ropati (Central Yup'ik, Village of Kongiganak) was born and raised in Anchorage and is attending Service High School as a 17 year old senior. She serves as student representative on the Native Advisory Committee within the Anchorage School District. Ropati has been working on

an initiative to incorporate Indigenous regalia in graduation ceremonies. Decolonizing the Western standard of education is of her priority. She will soon attend Columbia University to study civil engineering.

- Shandiin Herrera (Navajo Nation), 21, is a senior at Duke University. As a Diné woman and an advocate for Indigenous rights, Herrera has a passion for public service. Her platform is dedicated to engaging Native youth in the political process. As an intern, Shandiin worked in the office of U.S. Sen. Tom Udall, D-NM, assisting his policy advisers on the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs.

- Madison White (Akwesasne Mohawk) is the oldest of 13 siblings. She is the great granddaughter of the last living Mohawk Code talker, Levi Oakes and relative of the late Native activist and leader of the Occupation of Alcatraz, Richard Oakes. White wants to create a support group for victims of sexual assault and establish a full immersion language school that has a teaching certification option and resource center for adults.

- Autumn Adams (Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation), 22, is a senior at Central Washington University. She plans to advocate for the children impacted by the Indian Child Welfare Act. Due to the recent attack on ICWA, she believes it is imperative for the voices of those affected to be heard.

### For more

CNAY works with Native youth – 14 to 23 years old – on reservations and in urban areas across the country to improve their health, safety and overall well-being. The group has a special emphasis on suicide prevention.

More information is available at [cnay.org](http://cnay.org).

# Maya Cifuentes earns National Honor Society status

BY TRIBUNE STAFF

SANTA FE, N.M. — Maya Cifuentes was recently inducted into the National Honor Society.

Maya is an eighth-grade student and Seminole Tribal member who attends St. Michael's High School in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Since middle school, Maya has held a cumulative 3.84 grade point average and has excelled in her classes.

This scholar is currently enrolled in three Honors courses and is earning high school credit during her eighth-grade year. St. Michael's affirmed Maya's academic achievements by inducting her into the National Honor Society in March.

Maya is the child of Shannon Cifuentes



Maya Cifuentes

## Country singer Gary Allan to perform at BC Celebration

FROM PRESS RELEASE

BIG CYPRESS — Country music singer Gary Allan will headline the Seminole Tribe's 124th anniversary of the Big Cypress Celebration on May 11 at the Junior Cypress Rodeo and Entertainment Complex.

Tickets for the event (which will include Native American dancers and an alligator show) and the concert are \$40 per person and are on sale at [bccelebration.com](http://bccelebration.com). They will also be available at the Junior Cypress Rodeo and Entertainment Complex the day of the event. Parking is \$5 and gates will open at noon.

With the allure of a modern day outlaw, Allan has won over fans, peers and critics with his signature blend of smoldering vocals, rebellious lyrics and raucous live performances.

His most recent album, Set You Free, topped the Billboard 200 (Pop Chart), a career first. The album also made its debut at the top of the Billboard Country Album chart and produced his fifth number one country radio chart topper with "Every Storm Runs Out Of Rain."

The California native released his first album, Used Heart for Sale, in 1996 and since then has released eight additional studio albums selling over seven million albums, been certified platinum on three back-to-back albums, and been certified gold five times.

Joining Allan in the performer lineup will be fellow country artists Jimmie Allen, High Valley, Corey Smith and John Conlee.



Gary Allan

For more information about the Big Cypress Anniversary Celebration visit [bccelebration.com](http://bccelebration.com).

## Hard Rock Heals Foundation to award grant for Shelter for Abused Women & Children

FROM PRESS RELEASE

HOLLYWOOD — Hard Rock Heals Foundation, in partnership with Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee announced Feb. 27 a \$5,000 grant to be awarded to The Shelter for Abused Women & Children as part of its commitment to improving the lives and resiliency of local communities. The Shelter for Abused Women & Children is one of 50 local grant winners around the world to get support from Hard Rock International's charitable arm. The Shelter's mission is to lead

and collaborate with the community to prevent, protect and prevail over domestic violence and human trafficking through advocacy, empowerment and social change. Funding provided through this grant will allow The Shelter for Abused Women & Children to purchase equipment needed to incorporate music therapy into its healing arts program. Today, some 67 full and part-time staff members of the shelter provide services in Naples, Immokalee and Bonita Springs through residential and outreach services, as well as The Shelter Options Shoppe.

"As part of our effort to improve lives through the power of music, our yearly grant program provides the opportunity for each Hard Rock team to nominate a charitable organization in their community," said Kellie Brown, manager of global philanthropy for Hard Rock International. "With properties in more than 75 countries, this process allows us to serve diverse, local communities through trusted partners that share our belief in the universal healing power of music."

### CSU From page 1B

access to college and tools for academic and social success, can

increase the number of Native Americans with a college degree, resulting in increased opportunities for graduates, their families and communities," College Fund officials said in a statement.

To learn more about the College

Fund and to download the report, go to [collegefund.org](http://collegefund.org). You can also request a printed copy by emailing [info@collegefund.org](mailto:info@collegefund.org).



Take advantage of the services that private insurance, Medicaid, and Medicare offer to boost your mind and spirit.

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Seniors enjoy an airboat ride at Billie Swamp Safari on Feb. 27 at the tribalwide senior culture day.

Beverly Bidney

## Seniors' excellent adventure at Billie Swamp Safari

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — Seminole seniors played tourist for a day when they gathered Feb. 27 at Billie Swamp Safari in Big Cypress for an adventurous senior culture day.

Airboat rides, swamp buggy tours, alligator wrestling and a traditional Seminole meal including freshly-caught garfish were on the agenda for the day, as well as friendship and fellowship with peers from every reservation.

As the crowd gathered in the shade of tents and chickees, Tribal leaders welcomed them.

"It's always good to see the elders talking about old times," said President Mitchell Cypress. "I might be president, but today I'm just a senior."

Although he has a way to go until reaching his senior years, Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. was awed by the seniors in front of him.

"I hope I'm still able to enjoy myself as they do," he said. "We are fortunate to be where we are today and put this together for our seniors. This is a true test of how we keep our culture enriched and together."

"You paved the way for us," said Brighton Board Rep. Larry Howard. "Without you, we wouldn't be where we are and I appreciate every one of you."



Beverly Bidney

Mahala Madrigal, Diane Smith and Molly Shore take in the outdoors from an airboat during the tribalwide senior culture day in Big Cypress.

Activities took place throughout the day. At the gator pit, Billy Walker showed off his skills and courage as he ventured into the water to retrieve an ornery alligator, which was recently caught and added to Billie Swamp's collection. Clearly the gator

wasn't used to being handled by a human and resisted strongly. However, Walker prevailed and put on an exciting show.

"I like people to get together anytime and socialize, like folks used to do a long time ago," said Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr.

Groups of seniors filled the swamp buggies to brave the wilds of Big Cypress, where they encountered bison, antelope, wild hogs, turkeys, reindeer and other creatures from the comfort and safety of the cushioned seats.

"These are the people carrying on the culture and they get together to celebrate it," said Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola. "The young people need to learn the culture too; it's where it's at."

The piercing sound of airboat engines could be heard all day as seniors experienced the thrill of a high speed romp in the swamp.

Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum set up a table with old photographs under the tent, hoping someone could identify some of the people pictured. Billy Johns Sr. found a photo of his mother Ruby Cypress and grandmother Nina Cypress in one of the photo albums.

"It's awesome to see the seniors get together," said Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger. "This culture is what makes us or breaks; it's important to keep it going."



Beverly Bidney

David Jumper, Billy Johns Sr. and President Mitchell Cypress look through albums of photos to try to identify people in them. Johns found a photo of his mother Ruby Cypress and grandmother Nina Cypress in the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum albums.



Beverly Bidney

Seniors check out the wildlife from the safety of a swamp buggy in Billie Swamp Safari.

## Sweet pickins for Immokalee sweetgrass

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**IMMOKALEE** — Seminole sweetgrass baskets are an iconic part of the Tribe's culture, but can be challenging to make. First and foremost the all-important sweetgrass is difficult to find and can't be bought in a garden store.

The grass used to be abundant in the state, but with land development sweetgrass has all but disappeared. However, a few acres of scrub land in Immokalee is such a good site to find sweetgrass that a group from the Hollywood culture program crossed the state on March 20 just to gather bunches of the thin, green strands.

Culture instructor Donna Frank shared her experience and wisdom as she walked through the land filled with saw palmetto, which is where the elusive sweetgrass grows best. The rainy season is the best time to find sweetgrass.

"It takes a good eye to find it," Frank

It's important to learn and pass it down."

Once the sweetgrass is gathered, it is washed and set out to dry for a few days. When the group left the brush, they washed the sweetgrass in a combination of dish soap and bleach, rinsed it well and put it on tables to dry.

"It's exciting to see young ones come out to pick grass," said Frank. "Today is a hurry-up world; you can drive up to a building and they hand you food out the window. This takes time. I know Seminole sweetgrass baskets will be here when we are gone."

At age 12, Frank didn't want to go with her mother into the woods to get sweetgrass, but she did.

"I always complained," she said. "But she gave me such a wonderful gift."

Frank teaches the art of basket making in Hollywood; she usually has about 15 to 30 students.

"When someone finishes a basket I take photos and make sure the family sees it," she said. "It's quite an accomplishment and I feel so proud for them."



Beverly Bidney

The Hollywood culture department brought a group of women to pick sweetgrass in Immokalee on March 20.

said. "When you see a green patch, run your hand through it like it's hair and then pull. Sometimes you have to pull them one at a time."

The expedition included three culture department employees, two CSSS work experience participants and three who just came to learn. It turns out that most of them had little experience in the field and were all eager to learn.

The art form, technique and the process of procuring the materials to make the baskets has been passed down through generations of families. This day was no different. Amelia and Marcela Osceola joined the expedition at the direction of their father Charles Osceola.

"He wants us to learn to make baskets," said Amelia, 13.

Seminole basket making began in the 1930s and were sold to tourists. Over time, they were accepted as a legitimate Tribal art form along with patchwork and Seminole dolls. A host of baskets are always displayed for competition in the annual Tribal Fair and Pow Wow fine arts show, also along with patchwork and Seminole dolls.

"I came to learn an important cultural trait and get more involved with my people," said first time sweetgrass picker Cassandra Jimmie. "I will learn to make baskets, too."



Beverly Bidney

First-time sweetgrass picker Cassandra Jimmie proudly displays the bunch of sweetgrass she picked.



Beverly Bidney

Donna Frank and Marcela Osceola wash sweetgrass before laying it out to dry. An abundance of the grass was found even though it isn't the rainy season.



Beverly Bidney

Amelia Osceola, 13, pauses to examine some of the sweetgrass she picked in an Immokalee field.





Derrick Tiger

Filmmaker, writer, actor Montana Cypress participates in a panel discussion in February at the Native Reel Cinema Festival in Hollywood.

## Film career blossoms for Miccosukee Tribe's Montana Cypress

BY DERRICK TIGER  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — Montana Cypress' fascination with film began as a young child who had, as he describes, devoted parents who would drive from the Miccosukee Reservation — in the middle of the Everglades — to movie theaters in Miami.

"I remember seeing 'Saving Private Ryan' when I was only nine, 'Escape from L.A.' and things like that. I probably wouldn't advise it now, seeing those kinds of movies with kids," Cypress, of the Miccosukee Tribe, said during a panel discussion in February at the Native Reel Cinema Festival during the Seminole Tribal Fair in Hollywood. "Nonetheless, I think it paid off just a little bit."

Indeed it has paid off for Cypress, whose film career has taken him far from South Florida. He now lives in Los Angeles where he studied acting at the New York Film Academy's Burbank campus. Since moving to California, he has produced, written, directed, and acted in several short films.

Three short films starring Cypress were screened during the Native Reel Cinema Festival. "Thunderdance," "Two Brothers," and "Christmas in Ochopee" were all written by Cypress, who is also credited as director of latter two of those films.

"Two Brothers," which was filmed in the Everglades near the Miccosukee Reservation, was previously screened at the Miami Film Festival. "Thunderdance" won second place in a contest by AT&T in which contestants were given the opportunity to film their projects on a lot at the Warner Brothers Studio. Cypress has also written a full-length play titled "Hurricane Savage" that was selected by the Native Voices First Look series to receive a publically staged reading at the Autry Museum of the American West in Los Angeles.

In an interview the day after the Native Reel Cinema Festival, Cypress reflected on how much his life has changed from the precariousness of "Rez Life" — a term that some Natives use to describe their disquiet lifestyle — to riding a golf cart through the backlot of Warner Brothers Studio.

"It was one of the craziest feelings of my life," Cypress said, "because we had to park and then they take you on a golf cart to the set, and I was just like 'I could have been dead 10 years ago,' when you're thinking about all the days on the Rez staying up all night, etcetera. I was like how did I end up here, and I work with a lot of people who never knew that side of me."

As for the exploitation of Native culture in American cinema, some filmmakers such as Taylor Sheridan have received praise for showing support and appreciation for Native

Americans — although his 2017 film "Wind River" does have the "white savior" aspect — but other filmmakers tend to appropriate Native culture and subjects.

"They're all writing it, (non-Native filmmakers) it's from their view," Cypress said. "I don't think in their minds they're using the word exploited their more thinking like 'oh this is a great story I'm going to go do that' and then they turn it out real quick because they can, whereas vice versa a Native to get millions of dollars for a movie is an uphill battle."

The film industry has always suffered from a lack of cultural diversity. Only in the past few years has the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences reevaluated the actors and movies that they nominate for awards, mainly due to backlash they received for not including more content made by and starring actors of color.

Cypress believes that even though there have been injustices for Natives and other races in general in the entertainment industry some Native filmmakers too often use their platform to convey blame or throw a "pity party." A characteristic that occurs throughout Cypress' stories is that they are not centered on Native American topics; rather they are stories that involve Native Americans. That's not to say that the stories lack any substance. For example, "Christmas in Ochopee" is a comedy about a young Native man who brings his white girlfriend to his family's Christmas dinner. The cultural difference is what makes for most of the comedy in the short film, but also works as a subtext about race. The film stars Kholan Studi — son of Native American actor Wes Studi — as the brother who has been recently released from prison. "Two Brothers" is set during the Seminole Wars, but the film focuses on two Native brothers who are coping with their transition into the afterlife.

Most of Cypress' work is originally written for stage which he later adapts to film. Writing is what he says he does the most, but he doesn't mind working multiple jobs on set. He says he will most likely take the Woody Allen route — career wise — of filmmaking since he already writes, directs, and acts in his own films.

During the closing of the final panel at the Native Reel Cinema Festival someone in the audience asked what non-Natives could do to help support Native artists. There was a short period of silence. For a moment, it was like these Native artists were not sure how to respond to support outside of their own.

Finally, a few suggestions were tossed around, but one suggestion that all agreed on was that Native Americans need to tell Native American stories. When asked what advice they had for the other Native artists Cypress said "read more books."

## Discovery Shark Week slot machines debut at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa

FROM PRESS RELEASE

**TAMPA** — Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa is the first casino in the country to offer Everi Holdings Inc.'s newly licensed Discovery Shark Week theme on Everi's Empire Arena. The six-pod arrangement is located in the new casino expansion area next to L Bar and Rise Kitchen & Bakery.

Empire Arena is designed to fully immerse the player in a unique digital experience that peers into an undersea world filled with sharks and other sea life swimming around a brightly colored coral reef. Sea life transitions seamlessly across 55-inch top screens while players engage with three base games through touch-capable 27-inch LCD bottom screens.

"We're excited to be the first casino in the country to offer Everi's newly licensed Discovery Shark Week game theme on its Empire Arena platform," said Vice President of Slot Operations Dan Ingster. "Our goal is to deliver a premium gaming experience to our patrons and Discovery Shark Week™ enables us to do just that."



Courtesy photo

Shark Week slots can be played at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa.

# Activists, Natives issue new call for orca Lolita's release

## Next Seaquarium totem journey to begin

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is using the occasion of a change in leadership at Miami Seaquarium's parent company to push once again for the release of the orca Lolita.

Lolita is one of the few remaining orcas in captivity. She has performed in shows at the Seaquarium for decades.

Parent company Parques Reunidos recently renamed a former CEO to lead the organization — José Díaz. Díaz is returning after a five year absence and PETA said a lot has happened since then that they hope will sway him to their position.

The animal rights group, which is against the use of animals for entertainment, said awareness and activism has grown around orcas in captivity at marine parks in recent years.

PETA sent the CEO a letter in February urging him to not only release Lolita, but move orcas in the company's other marine parks, located in France, to seaside sanctuaries.

"Lolita has spent nearly half a century in a cramped tank, where she's been without the companionship of any member of her own species since 1980, when her tank mate, Hugo, died in an apparent suicide after ramming his head into the tank wall," PETA said in a statement.

PETA was set to confront Díaz at the company's annual meeting in Madrid, Spain, March 28. The group also said it purchased stock in Parques Reunidos in 2017 specifically so that it could influence management decisions and communicate with shareholders.

Seaquarium spokesperson Maritza Arceo-Lopez told the Seminole Tribune via email March 12 that nothing had changed regarding the release of Lolita and that the Seaquarium had no further comment on the matter.

### Totem journey to start

PETA isn't the only group working to free Lolita.

Lummi Nation tribal leaders, tribal



Courtesy Lummi Nation Councilmember Fred Lane.

Along the trek in 2018, supporters lay hands on the totem pole created by Lummi Nation artist Jewell James.

members and their supporters work throughout the year to have Lolita, called Tokitae, returned to the Salish Sea. It was the Salish Sea in northwest Washington State where Tokitae was captured in 1970.

Lummi artist Jewell James originally created and donated a 16-foot totem pole depicting Tokitae. Last year, to raise awareness, it traveled from Bellingham, Washington, to Miami — making several stops along the way including at the Big Cypress Reservation.

Tribal leaders have planned another trek this year. They expect to have support from Seminole and Miccosukee members as they did last year.

The Lummi said it is a sacred obligation that Tokitae, who they consider a family member, be released and returned. They said they have a plan for her reintroduction and call her important to the ecosystem of the Salish Sea.

Seaquarium officials have previously said that Lolita has received excellent care since she arrived decades ago. They said her release now would be too dangerous.

"Miami Seaquarium has the utmost respect for the Lummi Nation ... However, [they] are not marine mammal experts and are misguided when they offer a proposal that is not in the best interest of Lolita the orca," Seaquarium officials said last year.

Lummi officials said they have a well thought out plan for Tokitae's return to the Pacific Northwest, so she can live out her remaining years safely and in comfort.

### Long journey

Lummi Nation Councilmember Fred Lane and Dr. Kurt Russo of its Sovereignty & Treaty Protection Office told the Seminole Tribune that the journey is set to begin from Bellingham in late May or early June.

There are stops planned in many cities along the way, including Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Flagstaff, El Paso, Dallas, Baton Rouge, Tallahassee, Gainesville and Miami.

The final stop, after an almost 3,500 mile journey, is set to be the Seaquarium, where a ceremony will take place within earshot of Lolita's tank.

### Shows ending

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 the story of the orca Tilikum, who performed at SeaWorld Orlando. The documentary showed the complex and often damaging effects of keeping orcas in captivity.

Tilikum, who died in 2017, was involved in the deaths of two trainers and a trespasser.

SeaWorld decided in 2016 to end its orca breeding programs and phase out live shows. It is thought that the decision was made at least in part because of the fallout from the documentary and continued public pressure from animal rights groups like PETA and activists like those within Native tribes.

## African-American Research Library & Cultural Center celebrates Seminole Tribe

BY JENNA KOPEC  
Special to The Tribune

**FORT LAUDERDALE** — The African-American Research Library and Cultural Center in Fort Lauderdale celebrated the Seminole Tribe as part of their Destination Fridays programming on March 8 featuring exhibits, music, food and presentations.

Although the themes of these events held on the first Friday of select months are usually travel-based and focus on cultures in other areas, the library decided to dedicate this month to the Seminole Tribe.

The center filled its display cases with texts focusing on the Seminole Tribe and how they fought against oppression. Many of the texts included or focused on the history of the Black Seminoles and the relationship between Africans who fled slavery and built alliances with the Seminole Tribe.

"Tonight, we are honoring the Seminole Tribe. We put together what we thought would be an experience for you all," said Cultural Heritage Librarian Senior



Jenna Kopec

Adakai Robbins gives a presentation on Seminole culture March 8 at the African-American Research Library and Cultural Center in Fort Lauderdale. Part of the presentation was on misconceptions about Native Americans.

"It's not so much [about] a destination as it is an understanding of a culture in the

community we already live in" said Lynda Nation, owner of Travel Nation and partner with the library, during her seminar focusing on Native dances.

The night ended on a high with Tribal member and Hollywood Hills High School student Adakai Robbins giving a presentation about the Tribe's history and traditions along with his own experience on staying connected with the culture.

Robbins displayed great wisdom in his talk, sharing with the audience that he wants to sharpen his Elaponke skills to help keep the language alive. He also shared his knowledge of Tribe history, bringing the night full circle by recounting once more the relationship between the Seminoles and African slaves.

"To me, it's a beautiful example of how two cultures were able to come together and live peacefully," Robbins said.



Jenna Kopec

Attendees view the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki exhibit, which includes patchwork and other Seminole crafts.

Ramona La Roche, as she opened the night's festivities.

The night was catered by Billie's Swamp Water Café showcasing favorites such as alligator, catfish, rice, beans, chicken, and — of course — fry bread.

Alyssa Boge, education coordinator at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, hosted exhibits for patrons to learn about Seminole history and culture including a water color station to learn about Seminole art, a survival simulation game to educate about the tragedy of the Seminole Wars, and an exhibit of patchwork and other traditional Seminole items.

Boge later hosted a trivia game to help the crowd learn about the Seminole's history. The questions ranged from chickee basics to little known facts about Betty Mae Jumper.



Jenna Kopec

Attendees gather in the lobby of the African-American Research Library and Cultural Center to learn about and celebrate Seminole culture.



# 'Heartbeat of Wounded Knee' enjoys early acclaim

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

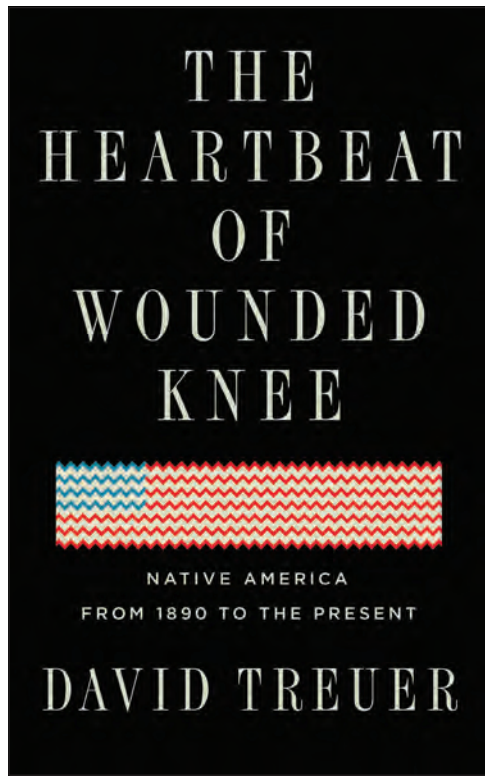
A new book published in late January about Native American life has gotten a broad and healthy dose of early positive reviews.

"The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee: Native America from 1890 to the Present" is the latest work by David Treuer (Leech Lake Ojibwe), a professor of literature at the University of Southern California.

The book is described as a different way to look at and think of Native American history; a surprising, exciting and hopeful take on modern Native Americans.

If part of the title reminds you of another book, that's not by accident. Treuer's 528-page tome is supposed to act as a bit of an alternative to the seminal 1970 work of author Dee Brown: "Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West." Brown's book looks largely at the devastating effects of relentless warfare against Natives and their forced relocation during American expansionism.

The New Yorker calls Treuer's book "A rebellious new history of Native American



life," and the New York Times: "A new history of Native Americans responds to 'Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee.'"

"The book is about Native American life – what we've been up to since we were to have all died off in 1890 after Wounded Knee and the close of the frontier," Treuer said in an email to the Seminole Tribune. "I really wanted to dispel the myth (held by us and by outsiders) that all we've done is live in a perpetual state of suffering – in America, but not of it; outside of history, (more or less as ghosts)."

Treuer said that history often acts as only a record of what's been done to Native Americans. He wanted to show, to prove, that Natives have been making history, too.

"That we have been historical actors in our own lives," he said.

Treuer's been somewhat critical of certain work that he has previously described as "the precious way that Indians are portrayed in even the most well-meaning books and movies" – citing notable works from authors like Sherman Alexie ("The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven," adapted into the movie "Smoke Signals") and Louise Erdrich ("The Plague of Doves").

He said too often such work perpetuates stereotypes and misrepresents historic culture.

And, again, he pushes back on the way Native American history tends to be framed only through tragedy and loss.

"Since this book is about Native American life rather than Native American death, I needed to go back to the written record and recover a better version of the past," Treuer said. "To go out and talk to Native folk all over the country to hear from them what their lives are like."

Treuer said he doesn't think of history in the past, but as living inside people and continuing to act through them.

"I needed to look at myself, my own life. It wouldn't be fair to ask people to talk about themselves, to risk it, without asking the same of myself," he said.

Treuer wants people to buy his book not as a public service to Natives, but to truly learn about the country because he says, "You can't understand America unless you understand Native Americans."

Treuer has published novels (his first "Little" in 1995) and nonfiction work, which includes 2012s "Rez Life: An Indian's



Courtesy photo

David Treuer is the author of 'Heartbeat of Wounded Knee.'

Journey Through Reservation Life." "Heartbeat" is his seventh major published work.

# Seminole Shootout captivates crowds in Immokalee

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

IMMOKALEE — Hundreds of history buffs, schoolchildren and tourists watched history come to life at the second annual Seminole Shootout Battle Reenactment from

March 1-3 at the John Jimmie Memorial rodeo grounds in Immokalee.

Tribal and non-tribal reenactors played out a scene from the three Seminole Wars, which ran from 1816-19, 1835-42 and 1855-58. The wars against the U.S. Army forced Native Americans further south and

deeper into the Everglades. Using guerilla warfare, the Seminoles were able to survive and ultimately defeat the soldiers. The three wars were considered the most expensive conflicts in the removal of Native peoples in U.S. history, costing thousands of Seminole and American soldiers lives, as well as



Beverly Bidney

Moses Jumper Jr. leads the Seminole reenactors into battle March 1 at the second annual Seminole Shootout Battle Reenactment in Immokalee.



Beverly Bidney

French tourists Allain Daguine and Libby Leyrer receive a lesson in grinding corn for sofkee the old-fashioned way from Camisha Cedartree.

millions of dollars in arms, medical costs, and armed forces.

Although most of the Seminoles were killed or moved to Oklahoma, a group of a few hundred survived. The Seminole Tribe of Florida is descended from those survivors.

"The Seminole wars were really one long war fought over 40 years," said emcee Pedro Zepeda. "More than 50,000 U.S. troops tried to remove the Seminoles; that's how good our military was. The odds were 10 to 1 against us and we were able to fight off the enemy. We had a military before any European set foot on this continent."

The reenactors use source material to stage the battles at reenactments with the goal of passing along history from all perspectives, not just that of the army.

"Seminoles always picked the battlefields," said Steve Creamer, who has been a reenactor for 35 years. "They used asymmetrical warfare and their knowledge of the land and everything in it to defeat the enemy. It gave them a home field advantage."

In addition to the reenactment of the Seminole Wars in the 1800s, visitors got a taste of Seminole culture, learned how to throw a tomahawk and saw how settlers and Seminoles lived during the battles. Campsites, which were erected with authentic artifacts from the era, were manned by folks in period clothing who were eager to share their knowledge.

Large yellow school buses filled a

field across from the shootout on March 1 as more than 750 students from schools in South and Southwest Florida came for a fun, educational experience. That night, about 150 Boy Scouts set up tents and spent the night in the Immokalee culture camp.

Surrounded by hordes of students, Jacob Osceola gave some history of and demonstrated how to use a tomahawk.

"Tomahawks are for hand to hand combat," Osceola said. "I like to use two, that way I can work from either side. Every culture has had these; they are a tool and a weapon. It isn't a good idea to throw them in combat because if you miss, you lose your weapon."

With that, a couple of teachers from each school group learned how to throw them at a target. Osceola said it is like throwing a baseball; the rotation can be controlled by holding it close to the blade.

Medicine Man Bobby Henry got things going with a traditional friendship dance, which was followed by the U.S. soldiers losing to the Seminole warriors, alligator wrestling and a critter show with plenty of shopping, food and historical displays.

On March 1 and 2, a variety of bands performed, including Bajo Zero, Hatley Band, Jordan Davis and One Night Rodeo. Native American hip hop artist Supaman gave a special performance on Saturday afternoon.



Beverly Bidney

Medicine Man Bobby Henry leads a friendship dance at the Seminole Shootout Battle Reenactment.



Beverly Bidney

Reenactors talk to students after the "battle" at the Seminole Shootout in Immokalee as Moses Jumper Jr. watches on horseback.



# Sports



## Tribal trio helps Sonic Blast win GHSL championship

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

**PEMBROKE PINES** — The Sonic Blast youth soccer team enjoyed a perfect ending to a perfect season.

The team, which features a trio of players from the Seminole Tribe (Sam Josh, Xiya Osceola, Xavier Osceola) and is coached by Tribal employee Kenny Bayon, capped off an 11-0 season March 10 with a 2-0 victory against the Tsunami of Sunny Isles in the Greater Hollywood Soccer League's U14 winter league championship game at Pembroke Pines Recreation Center.

The Sonic Blast, which received two goals from forward Yoelkis Rodriguez, kept the Tsunami off the scoresheet thanks in part to flawless goaltending from Josh, who posted his sixth shutout of the season, and tenacious defense from Xiya Osceola in the backfield. (Xavier Osceola did not play in the game).

Although the game was evenly played, there were portions when Sunny Isles applied strong pressure and Josh needed to be sharp to keep them scoreless. He batted away a couple corner kicks.

Josh stepped up for the team by stepping into the role of keeper at the start of the season.

"He was playing wing and we needed a goalie. We tried him at goalie and he played awesome," Bayon said.

In front of Josh was a rock-solid defense that included Xiya Osceola, one of five girls on the team in a league that features nearly all boys. In the championship match, she won physical battles for the ball and didn't get beat all game.

"She didn't play a lot at the start of the season, but she earned a starting position on defensive wing," Bayon said. "She's not intimidated. She's got good speed. She's athletic and powerful. It's her first year with us and she played very good defense."

Xiya's brother Xavier, who also plays basketball, provided plenty of scoring punch during the season. He scored three goals in a game against Miramar. In another game, the Sonic Blast trailed by a goal, but rallied for a 2-1 that Bayon said was due in part to Xavier's strong passing.

"He's good at dribbling and passing. His basketball skills show on the soccer field. He's sort of the point guard of our team," Bayon said.

Bayon, whose son Kenden plays on the team, said he was proud of the entire team's effort throughout the season. Even though it's a recreation team, the Sonic Blast sought tournaments where it could face travel teams in order to prep for the playoffs.

"We entered a lot of tournaments to get ready," he said. "The kids worked really hard. I told them 'you guys earned this.'"

The team is sponsored by the Davie Police Athletic League.



Kevin Johnson (2)

Above, Xiya Osceola, one of five girls on the Sonic Blast, competes against the boys from Sunny Isles in the GHSL U14 winter league championship game March 10 in Pembroke Pines. Below, Sonic Blast goalie Sam Josh sends the ball away. He notched a shutout in the championship game.



Kevin Johnson

The Sonic Blast, with Tribal members Xiya Osceola (front row, fourth from left), Sam Josh (back row, second from right) and Xavier Osceola (not in the photo) and coach and Tribal employee Kenny Bayon, celebrate after winning the Greater Hollywood Soccer League's U14 winter league championship March 10 in Pembroke Pines.

## Big Cypress celebrates opening day for T'ball

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

**BIG CYPRESS** — Hot dogs, music, team photos, new uniforms, live anthem singers, a ceremonial first pitch. Indeed, all the ingredients needed for a baseball opening day were present at Billie Johns Ball Field in Big Cypress as the Outlaws and the Braves opened the 2019 T'ball season March 7.

As each player was introduced, he or she sprinted from the infield to home plate to shake hands with Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger, who also threw out the ceremonial first pitch. After the ceremonies, the teams played one game.

Remaining games are scheduled for April 4, 11 and 25.

Here are the rosters:

**Outlaws**

- #1 Messiah Gallagher
- #2 Cheyenne Walker
- #3 Zane Carter
- #4 Ja'Niya Motlow

- #5 Jovonnie Gore
- #6 Josephine Billie
- #7 Karma Koenes
- #8 Little Tigertail
- #9 Ma'at Osceola
- #10 Marilyn Osceola
- #11 Ollie Balentine
- #12 Shannon Cypress
- #13 Damon Cypress

**Braves**

- #1 Abigail Billie
- #2 Amasiah Billie
- #3 Aurbriana Billie
- #4 Caiden Motlow
- #5 Cali Osceola
- #6 Chaaya Osceola
- #7 Cyla Motlow
- #8 Kylie Billie
- #9 Decklan "ACE" Tiger
- #10 Allekeako "Chobee" Billie
- #11 Julius Billie Jr
- #12 Kasyn Hannahs
- #13 Kota Osceola
- #14 Cody Motlow



Kevin Johnson

At left, Chaaya Osceola smiles as he stands on third base before scoring a run for the Braves on March 7, opening day of the Big Cypress T'ball season. Above, the Outlaws gather for a team photo.



Kevin Johnson

Above, Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger throws out the ceremonial first pitch to start the T'ball season March 7 at Billie Johns Ball Field. Below, the Seminole Lightning softball team works concessions as part of a fundraiser.



Kevin Johnson

Julius Billie Jr. keeps his eyes on the ball as he takes a swing for the Braves.



Kevin Johnson

Above, the Outlaws' Ollie Balentine, Jovonnie Gore and Ja'Niya Motlow focus on pre-game warmup drills. At left, the Outlaws in action as they field a grounder.





# Another state title for Stubbs sisters

*American Heritage dedicates championship to injured Tiana Stubbs*

**BY KEVIN JOHNSON**  
Senior Editor

**LAKELAND** — American Heritage School athletic director Karen Stearns had just placed a state championship medal around the neck of December Stubbs.

Stearns then put a second medal around Stubbs.

“And one for Tiana,” Stearns said to December.

Indeed, the Patriots’ 58-40 win against Bishop Kenny (Jacksonville) in the Class 6A girls basketball state championship game Feb. 28 was “one for Tiana.”

Tiana Stubbs, who forms one-half of the team’s Seminole duo with her sister, was unable to attend the championship game at RP Funding Center in Lakeland because she had surgery the day before to repair a torn ACL and meniscus, a season-ending injury she suffered during a regular season game a few weeks ago.

The surgery prevented her from traveling, so she stayed at home while her teammates comfortably took care of business by winning their second straight state title.

“We dedicated the championship game to her,” said Heritage coach Greg Farias.

Thoughts of Tiana were never far from the team. There was texting and FaceTiming by the team with her throughout the day and even at the final buzzer.

“We’ve been in communication with her all day and she knows that this is for her,” said December Stubbs, who started at guard and had a game-high five steals along with six assists and five points. “We had to pick it up because she wasn’t here. We had to pick it up. We had to play for her.”



Kevin Johnson

American Heritage guard December Stubbs controls the ball in the Patriots’ 58-40 win in the Class 6A state championship game against Bishop Kenny on Feb. 28 at RP Funding Center in Lakeland.

Even without Tiana, Heritage still generated yet another impressive postseason rout thanks to a mixture of size, speed and ferocious defense. The Patriots, who played the toughest schedule of any team in the class, won their three regional and two state playoff games with an average margin of victory of 28 points. They roared to a 20-6 lead after the first quarter against Bishop Kenny, which had lost only two games, and

maintained a double-digit cushion the rest of the way except for a brief moment when the lead was trimmed to nine late in the first half.

December Stubbs assisted on the first points of the game, a layup by forward Paris Sharpe. It was just the beginning of a big night for Sharpe, who had a game-high 23 points (11 of 15 from the field) with five rebounds and a block. Forward Taliyah Wyche had 11 points and guard Daniella Aronsky scored eight points.

December only took two shots from the field and made one of them, a layup off her midcourt steal that put Heritage up 18-2.

When an opponent swiped the ball from her early in the third quarter Farias pulled her out for a few minutes. She returned with renewed focus and immediately forced two turnovers that helped Heritage’s 21-8 run in the quarter.

Her value to the team extends well beyond her scoring as shown with her passing, stealing and leadership abilities, to name a few.

“She’s the heart and soul. That young lady will take any challenge,” Farias said. “She’s a point guard; she covers 1, she covers 2. She’s an amazing young lady. It’s been her best year. She’s an unbelievable part of this team. She’s my leader in practice. She’s my only captain who is a junior.”

When Heritage returns to action next season, the possibility of a three-peat will accompany them. They’ll lose two starters — Sharpe and shooting guard Jenna Laue — but most of the rest of the team will be back, including the Stubbs sisters. Farias, whose team finished with a 21-9 record, said Tiana’s surgery went well.

“She’ll come back stronger,” he said.



Kevin Johnson

For the second year a row, December Stubbs is a state champion with the American Heritage girls basketball team which defeated Bishop Kenny on Feb. 28 in the Class 6A state championship game at RP Funding Center in Lakeland.



Kevin Johnson

American Heritage athletic director Karen Stearns places a second state championship medal around December Stubbs’ neck, this one for December’s sister Tiana, who was unable to attend the championship game in Lakeland due to surgery.



Kevin Johnson

The American Heritage girls basketball team celebrates moments after defeating Bishop Kenny 58-40 in the Class 6A state championship game Feb. 28 in Lakeland.

## Annual fishing series kicks off in Big Cypress

**BY TRIBUNE STAFF**

**BIG CYPRESS** — The triple crown isn’t just for horse racing.

The annual Seminole Sportsman’s Triple Crown Fishing Series started March 9 with the Big Bass Fishing Tournament held on the waterways in Big Cypress. The first tournament in the three-tournament series drew about 30 participants.

The top fishing duo of the day was Ralph Sanchez and Allen Venzor. They won first place by bringing back 18.5 pounds worth of fish.

Sarah Osceola won the Big Bass honor for catching the day’s biggest fish. Her top catch came in at 5.56 pounds.

The series continues April 13 with the Howard Tiger Memorial Fishing Tournament. The series wraps up May 11 with the Sportsman’s Championship. Competition is open to Tribal members, community members and STOF employees. Each team needs at least one Tribal member. Cost is \$50 per boat.

For more information contact Moses Jumper Jr. at 954-931-7118, Joe Collins at 954-931-7793 or email bigshotsports@aol.



Courtesy Joe Collins (2)

First-place team winners Ralph Sanchez and Allen Venzor, left photo, and second-place team winners Tony Tommie and Andrea Tommie, right photo, hold their prizes March 9 at the Bass Busters Fishing Tournament in Big Cypress.



Courtesy Joe Collins

Participants gather on opening day March 9 in Big Cypress for the Seminole Sportsman’s Triple Crown Bass Busters Fishing Tournament.

## Chairman’s Horseshoe/ Cornhole Tournament



Derrick Tiger

Leon Wilcox winds up for a toss in the Chairman’s Horseshoe/Cornhole Tournament on March 9 in Hollywood.



Derrick Tiger

Nancy Willie competes in the cornhole tournament.



Derrick Tiger

Stanley Cypress releases the horseshoe in the Chairman’s Horseshoe/Cornhole Tournament.



# Lexi Foreman, Anadarko win Oklahoma state championship

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

There's a good reason Anadarko High School girls basketball coach Jeff Zinn describes sophomore guard Lexi Foreman as one of the most versatile players he's ever coached.

Foreman, daughter of Alicia Josh Foreman and Matt Foreman, recently capped off a memorable season in Oklahoma as she played a key role on Anadarko's Class 4A state championship team. Contributions from the 5-foot-9 guard came in just about every aspect of the game and at both ends of the floor: first on the team in rebounds and steals, second in assists and third in scoring.

That versatility combined with an increase in confidence and determination can make for long nights for opposing teams. Case in point came in the postseason. Zinn said Foreman entered the Area tournament with a mindset of "we're not going to lose."

Indeed, Anadarko didn't lose thanks to a career-high 33 points, including six 3-pointers, from Foreman, who also snagged six rebounds in a 69-66 win against Classen SAS on March 1.

"We needed every one of her 33 points. She's always had the ability, but the confidence kicked in," Zinn said.

The victory earned Anadarko a spot in the state tournament where the Lady Warriors knocked off Newcastle by 19 points (Foreman had 11 points and six rebounds) and Victory Christian by 14 points (Foreman had nine points and six rebounds) to set up a championship tilt against undefeated Muldrow on March 9 at the Fairgrounds in Oklahoma City. Playing in a state championship game is where Foreman has wanted to be for a long time.

"It's always been a dream since I was little," Foreman said in an email response to The Seminole Tribune. "I wasn't too nervous because I always say to myself 'No Fear' before games. I went into the championship game knowing I had to seize the moment and if I wanted it I had to take it, that it wasn't just going to be handed to us. Plus the atmosphere and all the support we had was everything."

In 14 of its previous 15 games, Muldrow eclipsed the 50-point plateau, including putting up 60-plus in two state tournament games, but Anadarko's defense, which Foreman said was the biggest reason for the team's success this year, shut down



Courtesy photo

Above, Lexi Foreman kisses the Oklahoma Class 4A girls basketball state championship trophy after she helped Anadarko High School win the title with a 54-49 win against Muldrow on March 9 in Oklahoma City. Foreman scored a team-high 12 points. At right, after scoring a career-high 33 points, she holds the Area championship plaque that Anadarko won March 1.



Muldrow.

Anadarko won 55-49. Foreman shined with a team-high 12 points. She also had five steals, five assists and three rebounds.

"The key to our success had to be our defense," Foreman said. "We definitely ain't the biggest team, but our defense causes the other teams to turn it over by speeding them up and getting into their heads. Like

everyone always says, 'offense sells tickets, but defense wins championships.' Also, we pride ourselves on having the best defense."

Foreman made the all-tournament team. Her teammate Averi Zinn, one of the coach's three daughters on the team, was named tournament MVP.

The victory wrapped up a 27-3 season for Anadarko. The squad will lose two seniors,

but the core of this year's sophomores, including Foreman, will be back to try to defend its title.

"We will still be a contender for another state championship," Foreman said. "We're a young team, only losing three seniors; two of them being starters, but we have a strong bench ready to step up."

With a state championship now on her

resume, Foreman will try to add another title in April when she plans to play for the Seminole Tribe when it hosts tribal teams from Alabama, Mississippi, North Carolina and New York for the NAYO tournament in Hollywood.

## Mo Ballin in Hollywood

BY TRIBUNE STAFF

**HOLLYWOOD** — The Mo Ballin Tour came to Hollywood for two days in March.

Led by former New Mexico State University basketball player Monique Bribiescas, the tour provided training in all phases of the game at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center.

Bribiescas was an Adidas Top 10 All-American and Player of the Year in high school in the early 2000s in Arizona.

After being a high school coach for six years, she started Mo Ballin Training. She works with WNBA, overseas, college, high school and junior high school players.



Derrick Tiger

Monique Bribiescas, CEO of Mo Ballin Basketball Training, coaches young Tribal members Mar. 9 at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center in Hollywood.



Derrick Tiger

The youth basketball players celebrate with a group huddle.



Derrick Tiger

Participants in one of the age groups gather for a group photo with Monique Bribiescas.

## Elijah Foreman wins state championship in powerlifting



Courtesy photos

The Foreman household had plenty of reasons to celebrate in March. Not only did Lexi Foreman win a state championship with the Anadarko High School girls basketball team on March 9, but two days earlier in Anadarko, her brother Elijah Foreman won Oklahoma's seventh-grade junior high school state championship in powerlifting in his weight class (220). He won by a margin of 50 pounds with a total of 800. He squatted 320, benched 155 and deadlifted 325.

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# Sean Osceola off to fast start with Pasco-Hernando

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

DAVIE — When Sean Osceola takes the mound, the Pasco-Hernando State College baseball team pretty much knows it will be in a game into the later innings regardless of the team's offensive production.

As a freshman starting pitcher, Osceola has adjusted well to the college game after graduating from Okeechobee High School last spring.

He reached late March with a 5-3 record and has become a reliable arm for Pasco-Hernando coach Lyndon Coleman, who said Osceola has been providing the team six or seven solid innings nearly every outing.

"That's a huge confidence booster for our team," Coleman said. "He's been pitching great for us all year. Every time he steps on the mound he gives us an opportunity to win a game."

That's exactly what Osceola did March 15 when Pasco-Hernando faced Broward Community College in an afternoon game only a few miles from the Seminole Tribe's headquarters.

With his parents Reno and Kelli in the stands, Osceola fanned six, scattered eight hits and, as usual, had command of the strike zone as he issued just two walks in six innings, although he went deep into counts in the early innings and gave up a solo home run. He said after the game that it wasn't his sharpest performance.

Osceola fanned two batters each in the second and fifth innings.

Pasco-Hernando's offense never found its rhythm with six hits and no runs in a 3-0 shutout.

After he helped lead Okeechobee all the way to the regional finals as a senior — outdueling some of prep baseball's pitchers along the way — Osceola has fit into the Pasco-Hernando program nicely, Coleman said.

"His work ethic is one of the best on our team. He shows up early. He really works



Pasco-Hernando State College freshman pitcher Sean Osceola, of the Brighton Reservation, delivers a pitch against Broward Community College on Feb. 15 in Davie.

Kevin Johnson

hard," Coleman said.

That hard work has paid off on the mound for Osceola, who led the staff in wins (5), strikeouts (42) and innings pitched (51). One of Osceola's highlights early in his college career came Feb. 16 when he tossed a one-hit gem in a 9-2 win against Lake

Sumter Community College. Osceola held Sumter hitless for six innings before giving up a hit in the seventh. He was removed right after the no-no was spoiled, but it was still a memorable outing.

Always known for his control, Osceola's pitches have impressed Coleman in less than

a season's work.

"He has a really good breaking ball, one of the best I've seen in college baseball," Coleman said.

As for the team, Pasco-Hernando regrouped after being shut out by Broward and had won six in a row as of March 26,

its longest winning streak of the year. The team upped its record to 19-15. During the streak, Osceola picked up a win against IMG Academy with six innings of two-run ball with one walk and five strikeouts.

# No sophomore slump for Cheyenne Nunez

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

After an outstanding debut with State College of Florida a year ago, Cheyenne Nunez hasn't missed a beat this season.

As of late March, the former Okeechobee High School standout from the Brighton Reservation led SCF in several offensive categories, including batting average (.347), on base percentage (.446), at bats (118), runs (34), hits (41) and stolen bases (24). She's also been plunked by pitches a team-high nine times.

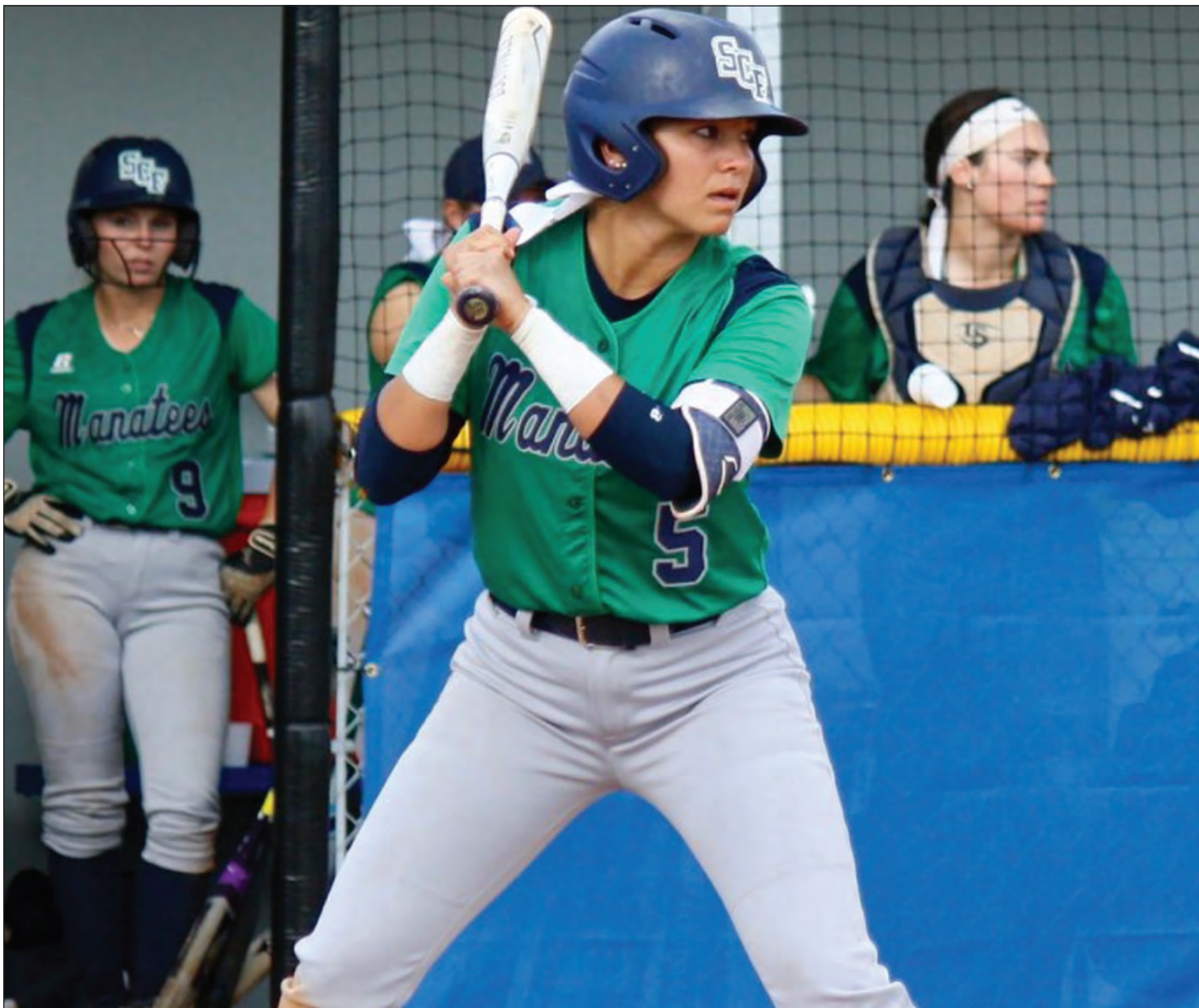
Nunez has been a steady bat at the top of the lineup, hitting safely in 28 of her 38 games.

Some game highlights of her season so far include:

- Jan. 26: 2-for-3, 3 RBIs, stolen base vs Pasco-Hernando
- Feb. 15: 2-for-3, triple, stolen base in 4-3 win against Eastern Florida
- Feb. 16: 1 hit, 3 runs, 2 RBI, 2 stolen bases vs Miami-Dade
- Feb. 24: 1 hit, 3 runs, 2 RBI, 1 stolen base vs Abraham Baldwin
- March 4: 4-for-7, 3 RBI, 2 stolen bases in doubleheader vs Kalamazoo Valley
- March 12: 3-for-4, 2 runs vs Hillsborough
- March 14: 3-for-3, 2 runs, 1 stolen base vs South Florida State College

Nunez's contributions have helped spur SCF to a 29-11 record, which included a 12-game winning streak in March.

SCF will face Florida SouthWestern State College, the No. 1 ranked junior college team in the National Junior College Athletic Association, for a doubleheader April 11 in Fort Myers



State College of Florida leadoff batter Cheyenne Nunez, of the Brighton Reservation, led the squad with a .347 batting average as of late March.



Kimberly Benavidez

Cheyenne Nunez, center, celebrates with teammates at State College of Florida.

# Sydnee Cypress starring for ASA

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

Sydnee Cypress was nearly unstoppable in the batter's box during a three-game stretch in March. Cypress, a freshman for the ASA College Miami softball team, batted 7-for-11 with a home run, double and two RBI. The impressive stretch came in mid-March in a win against Rainy River Community College and a pair of losses against Pasco-Hernando State College.

Through 16 games, Cypress, a former Moore Haven High School standout from Brighton, led the team in home runs with two. She upped her batting average to .373 with 19 hits, 4 doubles and 4 RBI.

ASA College Miami's Sydnee Cypress



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# Rodeos take center stage on reservations

**BY BEVERLY BIDNEY**  
Staff Reporter

**IMMOKALEE** — Cowboys and cowgirls came from as far away as Tennessee to compete in the John Jimmie Memorial Ranch Rodeo March 8 and 9 in Immokalee. Crowds filled the stands both nights to watch the action.

A ranch rodeo is a far cry from a typical rodeo; there are no bulls or barrels at all. Instead, competitors show off the skills they have mastered and use on ranches every day. Events included simulations of calf branding, stray gathering, team doctoring, team sorting and actual bronc riding.

Twenty-one teams competed for a piece of the \$25,000 purse, the richest ranch rodeo in Florida. All five team members, four men and one woman, worked on the events to put up the highest scores. Bronc riding was the exception with just one team member competing.

"This is a good thing to do for the Tribe and the Immokalee community," said Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger. "The last one we had here was in the 1990s. This community needs more activities and events."

The 2J Ranch team could have been called Team Jumper; Josh, Naha, Andre, Blevyns and Ahnie Jumper made up the team. Bar Triple C included Tribal members Justin Gopher and Cat Tommie.

The event was organized with the help of Clint Raulerson, a fourth generation Southwest Florida cowboy, who thanked Tiger, Immokalee council project manager Ray Garza and everyone else who lent a hand to make the rodeo happen on his Facebook page.

The overall winner of the ranch rodeo was the team from Trinity Ranch/Bob's Barricades, consisting of CJ Carter, Dalton Boney, Ty Brand Bennet, Frankie Syfrett and Jed Gray. Second place went to Bit Land and Cattle and the team from Superior Livestock took third place.

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The John Jimmie Memorial was part of a busy stretch of rodeos on Seminole reservations in February and March.

The Eastern Indian Rodeo Association kicked off its 2019 season with the Betty Mae Jumper Memorial Rodeo on a new setup on the Hollywood Reservation. The EIRA kids rodeo was mostly rained out, but by the weather cooperated by evening. Betty Mae's son Moses Jumper Jr. handled commentary duties for the night rodeo, which included a video tribute to Betty Mae on a large screen. The facility was built in the southeast corner of Seminole Estates.

Some of the same competitors returned to Hollywood the following weekend for the Bill Osceola Memorial Rodeo, which served as an Indian National Finals Rodeo Tour stop. Jacoby Johns, of the Brighton Reservation, won bareback riding. Other winners included Shelby Osceola (lady's breakaway roping), Britt Givens (senior breakaway roping, senior team roping), Dontre Goff (calf roping), Canaan Jumper (junior breakaway roping), Aaron Tsinigine (team roping), Ty Romo (team roping), Spider Ramone (senior team roping), Sallye Williams (lady's barrel racing), JoJo Fischer (junior barrel racing) and Caden Bunch (junior bull riding). Bunch and Jaylen Baker tied for first in bull riding.

Brighton's Fred Smith Rodeo Arena welcomed the pros from the PRCA for the rodeo portion of the Brighton Field Day from Feb. 15-17. Tim Pharr, of Georgia, finished first in tie-down roping and captured All-around cowboy honors.

Senior Editor Kevin Johnson contributed to this story.



Beverly Bidney

Cat Tommie tries to rope the leg of a steer as Justin Gopher, who roped the head, keeps his rope taugth on the animal's horns at the John Jimmie Memorial Ranch Rodeo.



Beverly Bidney

Miss Florida Seminole Cheyenne Kippenberger, Immokalee Council Project Manager Raymond Garza and Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger stand for the national anthem that opened the John Jimmie Memorial Ranch Rodeo in Immokalee on March 8.



Beverly Bidney

Morgan Yates flies the Seminole flag as she rides around the ring March 8 to open the John Jimmie Memorial Ranch Rodeo in Immokalee.



Beverly Bidney

Naha Jumper attempts to lasso the calf as teammate and brother Josh Jumper keeps a strong grip on the steer's horns.



Kevin Johnson

Moses Jumper Jr. provides insight about the EIRA rodeo and his mom during the Betty Mae Jumper Memorial Rodeo on Feb. 2 in Hollywood.



Beverly Bidney

The Lakota Women Warriors Color Guard present the flags at the PRCA rodeo at Fred Smith Rodeo Arena as part of the opening ceremony Feb. 15 at the Brighton Field Day and Rodeo.



Beverly Bidney

EIRA Rodeo Queen Madysyn Osceola, EIRA Rodeo Princess Ashlynn Collins, Miss Florida Seminole Cheyenne Kippenberger and Miss Indian World Taylor Susan greet the crowd at the opening ceremony of the PRCA rodeo in Brighton Feb. 15.



Kevin Johnson

Norman Osceola stays aboard a wild ride during the Betty Mae Jumper Memorial Rodeo on Feb. 2 in Hollywood.



Beverly Bidney

Jesse Troyer manages to stay on the bronc during the bareback riding competition at the PRCA rodeo in Brighton.



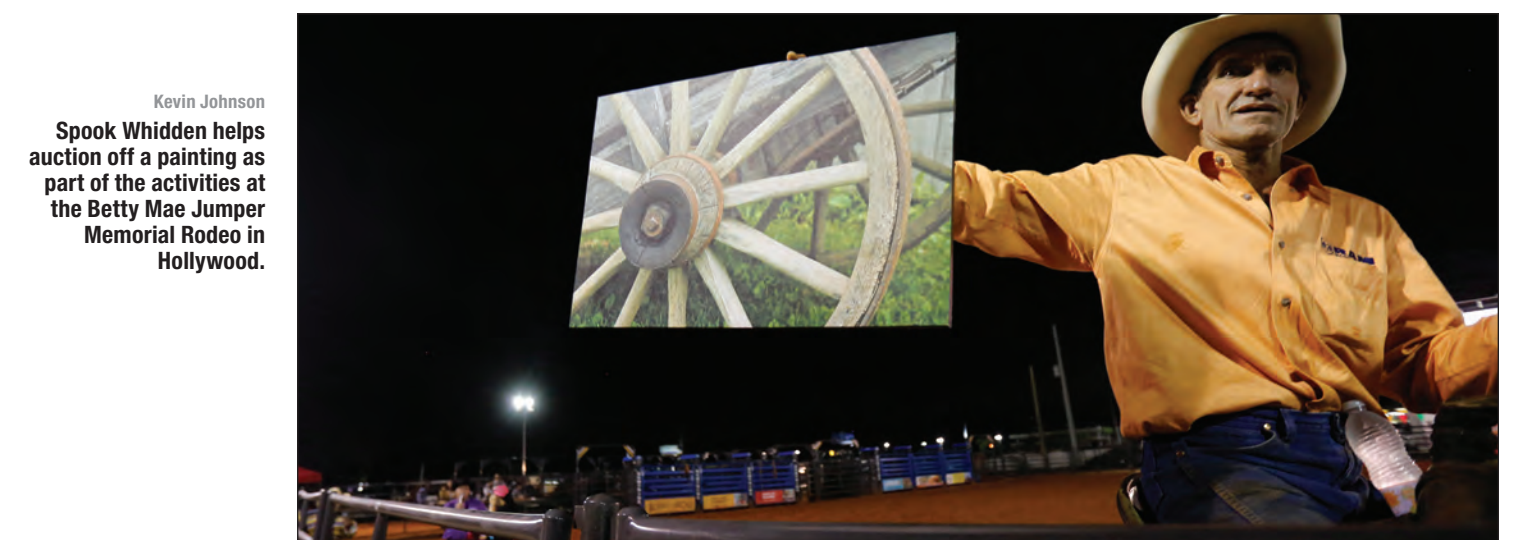
Beverly Bidney

EIRA vice president Mackenzie Bowers rides the American flag around the Fred Smith Rodeo Arena during the opening ceremonies of the PRCA rodeo.



Derrick Tiger

The wild world of relay races came to Brighton for Field Day on Feb. 16.



Kevin Johnson

Spook Whidden helps auction off a painting as part of the activities at the Betty Mae Jumper Memorial Rodeo in Hollywood.



# Hard Rock Stadium a big hit with tennis stars

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

MIAMI — Less than a year before it becomes the center of the universe on Feb. 2, 2020 for the Super Bowl, Hard Rock Stadium hosted the biggest stars in tennis for the Miami Open.

Serena Williams, Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic – winners of a combined 58 Grand Slam titles – gathered March 20 at the 14,000-seat stadium court inside Hard Rock Stadium for the opening ceremony of the tournament, which is in its first year in Miami Gardens after being played for the past three decades in Key Biscayne.

They cut the ribbon alongside Naomi Osaka, the No. 1 ranked women's player in the world, tournament officials, local elected officials, Dolphins and stadium owner Stephen Ross and Tom Garfinkel, the team's vice chairman, president and CEO. The temporary stadium court was built on a portion of the football field and featured some of the marquee matches while outside nearly 30 new courts comprise the tennis facility in an area that previously was used for parking.

The stadium within the stadium drew rave reviews.

"Now that we're here in this new stadium, it's super amazing," Williams told the tennis fans and media.

Federer described being in the tournament's new home as a "very important moment in our sport's history."

Positive sentiments about the setup and experience were echoed throughout the field.

"I think the stadium is beautiful," said two-time Australian Open winner Victoria Azarenka. "I think the logistics here work out pretty well. I feel the expansion of the tournament was, first of all, really necessary. I think they have done a great job with organizing and, you know, looks like incredible fan experience, as well, here for players. There is a lot more room. There is a lot better facilities. So I'm pretty happy."

In August 2016, the Dolphins and Hard Rock International, which



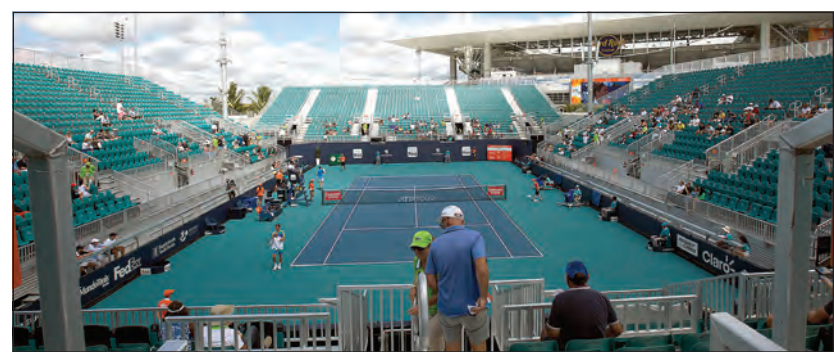
During a ribbon cutting ceremony for the Miami Open at Hard Rock Stadium, Serena Williams talks to the media March 20.

is owned by the Seminole Tribe of Florida, announced an 18-year naming rights agreement for the stadium, whose upcoming menu also includes the Rolling Stones on April 20 and college football's national championship game in 2021.

Williams, who has won the tournament eight times, didn't make it past the first weekend. Citing a left knee injury, she withdrew after playing just one match, but

the sudden exit didn't lessen her impression of the new setup.

"It was an amazing experience to play at the Hard Rock Stadium this year and would like to thank the Miami Open for putting on an amazing event. I hope to be back next year to play at this one-of-a-kind tournament in front of the incredible fans here in Miami," Williams said in a statement.



The grandstand court is the major court among the courts outside the stadium.



Tennis stars Naomi Osaka, Novak Djokovic, Serena Williams and Roger Federer, Miami Dolphins and Hard Rock Stadium owner Stephen Ross and other elected, team and tournament officials gather March 20 for a ribbon cutting ceremony for the Miami Open at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens.



The new tennis complex at Hard Rock Stadium, which has more than a dozen courts, features a giant screen, fountains and food options for the Miami Open.

## Announcements

### Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa announces new Fine Dining director, Rez GM

FROM PRESS RELEASE

TAMPA — Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa announced Feb. 27 new positions for two team members in the Food & Beverage department. James Manuel, general manager at The Rez Grill, has been promoted to director of fine dining. Christopher Lynn, assistant manager at The Rez Grill, will succeed Manuel's former position.

Originally from South Africa, Manuel served as general manager at The Rez Grill, Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa's premiere restaurant since its opening in 2017. During his tenure, The Rez Grill was listed in "Top 50 Restaurants in Tampa Bay" by the Tampa Bay Times. Previous to his time in Tampa, Manuel joined Seminole Gaming in 2014 as banquet manager at the Coconut Creek property, where he grew the team to more than 40 staff members.

As director of fine dining, Manuel will oversee the daily operations of all fine dining



Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa fine dining director James Manuel



Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa Rez Grill general manager Christopher Lynn

establishments at the property, including Council Oak Steaks & Seafood, The Rez Grill, in-room dining, the Plum Lounge and the new Italian dining option slated to open later in 2019. He will also oversee the mixology and wine departments.

In 2016, Christopher Lynn joined the Seminole Gaming family where he served in the banquets

department and, later, as assistant general manager at NYY Steak in Coconut Creek. Prior to his time at Seminole Gaming, Lynn worked as banquet manager at Woodfield Country Club in Boca Raton.

In his new role, Lynn will oversee the daily operations at The Rez Grill.

### Council Oak to host wine-pairing dinner

FROM PRESS RELEASE

TAMPA — Council Oak Steaks & Seafood, located at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa, will welcome, Madelyn Reed, a Penfolds wine specialist, to host the April wine-pairing dinner April 17.

The dinner will consist of four courses, plus an intermezzo, accompanied by wine pairings. Creative Culinary director Frank Anderson and chef de cuisine Matthew Zappoli will please palates with new American preparations featuring prime beef

and seafood following a 6:30 p.m. welcome reception. Guests will begin dinner with a first course of snapper and shrimp ceviche with aji amarillo, avocado, jalapeno and crispy tortilla, paired with Bin 51 Eden Valley's 2017 riesling. The second course will feature rabbit served with cavatelli pasta, mushroom and pea, paired with Bin 311's 2016 chardonnay.

For the intermezzo, guests will cleanse their palates with a pisco sour granita in preparation for the rest of the meal.

The third course, paired with Bin 28 Kalimna's 2016 shiraz, is

mixed grill BBQ served with lamb belly, ribs, sausage, cornbread and pickles. Dessert will commence with tarte tatin plated with cheese, fruit, mache and black pepper, paired with Bin 389's 2016 cabernet blend.

The ticketed dinner is priced at \$150 per person (tax and gratuity included). Guests must be at least 21 years old to consume alcohol at the event.

For reservations call 813-627-6630. Limited seating available. For more information, visit [Seminolehardrocktampa.com](http://Seminolehardrocktampa.com)

#### FOR SALE

LAST SIX OF VIN#	YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILEAGE/ HRS	CONDITION	STARTING BID PRICE
65348	N/A	VALLEY COUGAR POOL TABLE	COIN OPERATED 7FT POOL TABLE	N/A	Poor	\$100.00
75371	N/A	VALLEY COUGAR POOL TABLE	COIN OPERATED 7FT POOL TABLE	N/A	Poor	\$100.00
TC5205	N/A	VALLEY COUGAR POOL TABLE	COIN OPERATED 7FT POOL TABLE	N/A	Poor	\$100.00
79562	N/A	VALLEY COUGAR POOL TABLE	COIN OPERATED 7FT POOL TABLE	N/A	Poor	\$100.00
B40529	2006	FORD PICKUP TRUCK	F150 XL SUPECAB (4WD)	185,551	Poor	\$1,025.00
A79805	2004	FORD SUV	EXPEDITION XLT (RWD)	186,951	Poor	\$1,040.00
A42970	2005	FORD CARGO VAN	ECONLINE E250 SUPER (RWD)	161,286	Poor	\$1,070.00
A19650	2005	FORD CARGO VAN	ECONLINE E250 SUPER (RWD)	165,237	Poor	\$1,167.00
269046	2013	FORD SEDAN	FUSION SE	173,169	Poor	\$1,363.00
B37600	2005	FORD SUV	EXPLORER XLT (RWD)	96,596	Fair	\$1,769.00
B00377	2006	FORD SUV	ESCAPE LIMITED (FWD)	98,171	Fair	\$2,209.00

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

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



### Theodore Nelson Sr.

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

Are you unhappy with your current counseling/child welfare services? Now there are alternative services for you and your family. Philosophically, we all have difficulty balancing social life, culture, health, substance use/abuse, self-esteem, sense of belonging, emotions, our hopes and dreams.

I offer 20 years of professional experience as a qualified therapist working with children, teens and adults in a confidential, private setting in your home or my office. I am available for individual counseling, dependency/custody cases and tribal court; services are available for all reservations.

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