

# The Seminole Tribune

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Volume XLIII • Number 5

May 31, 2019

## HRI expands hotel footprint in Spain

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

Next up: Hard Rock Hotel Madrid. Coming soon: Barcelona joins the party. Hard Rock International keeps, well, going international. It announced its third hotel development in Spain – Hard Rock Hotel Barcelona. The \$223 million project is expected to open in 2022. Construction is set to begin later this year. Officials said Hard Rock Barcelona will be located on one of the last available seaside plots in the city’s metro area. Once completed, it will include 504 rooms with private balconies overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. The hotel’s amenities will include a rooftop terrace and bar with swimming pool, two specialty restaurants, a lobby bar and a music bar. “This is set to be another ambitious project for Hard Rock International alongside ASG,” Todd Hricko, SVP and head of global hotel development at HRI said in a statement. “Hard Rock Hotel Barcelona will bring the brand’s dynamic and vibrant hospitality to

♦ See SPAIN on page 7A

## Tribe honors its first Miss Indian World

Chairman: Truly an historic occasion for the Seminole Tribe of Florida

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

**HOLLYWOOD** — After proudly representing the Seminole Tribe of Florida on her way to winning the Miss Indian World crown, Cheyenne Kippenberger received a hero’s welcome as the Tribe showed how proud it is of this rising star who is eager to share with the rest of the Tribe and Indian Country her remarkable story of triumph over doubts and struggles. Hundreds of people, including Kippenberger’s family and elected officials, filled a banquet room at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood for a Sunday luncheon May 19 in Kippenberger’s honor. Lavonne Rose – Kippenberger’s aunt and the Tribe’s Secretary – emceed the two-hour ceremony. “Not only did she represent Seminole women and the Tribe, but she inspired many of us – from the little ones to the elders – with her friendship, kindness and positive attitude. “I can attest to how hard she worked at putting her heart and soul into preparing for Miss Indian World and the heart and soul she put into the whole week,” Rose told the audience. The Tribe’s elected leaders expressed their joy with each taking a turn at the podium. Here’s a sampling: Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr.: “This is truly an historic occasion for the Seminole Tribe of Florida. For something

♦ See HISTORIC on page 4A



Kevin Johnson

Cheyenne Kippenberger, the first Tribal member from the Seminole Tribe of Florida to be crowned Miss Indian World, joins the Tribal Council on May 19 at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood during a special luncheon in honor of her winning the title. With Kippenberger, from left, are Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola, Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr., Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr. and President Mitchell Cypress. Kippenberger was named Miss Indian World on April 27 in New Mexico.



Beverly Bidney

Ahfachkee School senior Thomlynn Billie vocalizes her appreciation as she receives her high school diploma from Principal Dorothy Cain on May 21 at Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee.

## 11 graduate from Ahfachkee

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**IMMOKALEE** — As the 11 members of the Ahfachkee School class of 2019 crowded the stage at the Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee on May 21, their families filled the enormous Seminole Center ballroom. The joyous event was a celebration of the students’ hard work and determination leading to their graduation from high school and their entry into adulthood. But first, they received words of wisdom from some veteran adults. “Your parents are probably wondering where the time went,” said Principal Dorothy Cain. “You are social and digital natives, you’ve grown up in a digital world. You have the ability to have the world at your fingertips and are ready to tackle whatever you choose to do.” Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger was impressed with the graduates and their

families. “This is a special day for you guys,” he said. “Parents, thank you for allowing your children to attend Ahfachkee. Students, you have the key to the world. Explore and enjoy life, but treasure tonight. It only happens once in a lifetime.” Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank told the students that as a graduate 47 years ago, he was sitting in the “hot, sweaty gym in Immokalee High School.” He urged them not to be afraid, but to be themselves. “The Creator has given you a mission in life,” Rep. Frank said. “Your ancestors gave you a legacy to walk comfortably among all people. The school’s staff provided you with all the tools you need to go forth through this century. Don’t be afraid; be yourself.” President Mitchell Cypress told the kids the Tribe will always have their backs. “The door is open for whatever you want to do,” he said. “We will back you up; it’s your turn to go out and explore the world.”

♦ See AHFACHKEE on page 5B

## Seminole share Tribe’s culture with Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — Two busses filled with 75 members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians made the trip from North Carolina to the Big Cypress Reservation for a cultural exchange May 21. Some Cherokees learned they had more in common with the Seminole Tribe than they realized. The cultural exchange began at Billie Swamp Safari where the group went on airboats and swamp buggies and watched Billy Walker wrestle an alligator. Before Walker began the show, he shared some of the Tribe’s history dating back to the Seminole Wars. When he mentioned Andrew Jackson, the Cherokees booed enthusiastically. As the United States’ seventh president, Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act of 1830 into law, which led to the Trail of Tears forcing thousands of Native Americans

to march west to Oklahoma. About 800 Cherokees remained in the mountains and avoided being relocated. Some of today’s 14,000 Eastern Band of Cherokee members are descendants of those who remained. The same Act provoked the Seminole Wars in which the U.S. Army forced all but a couple hundred Seminoles to Oklahoma. Those that didn’t go west fought the wars in the 1800s. Most of today’s Seminole Tribal members are descendants of those unconquered warriors. The Cherokees live in the mountains near Great Smokey Mountain National Park and they were excited to visit the Everglades. As with the Seminole seniors, this group chose where they wanted to take a trip and they picked the Seminole and Miccosukee Tribes. After the morning’s adventure, the group traveled to the Herman Osceola Gym for a luncheon and a chance to meet more

than 80 seniors from Big Cypress, Brighton, Hollywood, Immokalee, Tampa and Trail. The seniors got to know each other during lunch. Janice Osceola ran into a friend and NAYO softball teammate she hadn’t seen in 30 years or more. She and Virginia Johnson had a lot to catch up on and seemed to pick up just where they left off, with warm smiles and conversation. President Mitchell Cypress, Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank and Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger welcomed the group to the reservation and thanked the culture department for sharing their skills. Tables were set up on one side of the room with demonstrations of basketry, patchwork, beadwork, doll making and carvings for the Cherokee to peruse. After lunch, some of the Cherokee

♦ See CULTURE EXCHANGE on page 6A



Beverly Bidney

At right, Linda Beletso shows a bundle of sweetgrass to Sam Tiger and Gene Cunningham of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians during a cultural exchange in Big Cypress.

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# Community



## To-Pee-Kee-Ke Yak-Ne Community Center opens in BC

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — The newly opened To-Pee-Kee-Ke Yak-Ne Community Center is living up to its Ela-pon-ke name; it truly is “a place to gather” in Big Cypress.

Located in the old pool hall next to the Billie Johns Sr. Ball Field, the building was built by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the 1950s. The newly recognized Seminole Tribe held Council meetings in the building

Office, the center held an open house May 3 and welcomed community members to spend some time inside.

“This is a place to learn, a place to remember and preserve our community,” said Quenton Cypress, THPO community engagement manager. “We want people to know they can use this building as a community resource.”

The newly refurbished building features new flooring, renovated bathrooms, comfortable couches and chairs, pool tables, foosball, pinball and air hockey games. The

growing up who don’t really know about their history and this will be a good place to learn about it. We are very proud to tell our story; how we came from poverty to where we are today.”

Two permanent displays are already in place inside; one about the different reservations and the other about the Seminole cattle industry. The museum’s oral history office is located in the building, making it convenient for Tribal members to come and share their history with Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki’s oral history archive.

“Quenton and [Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki oral history coordinator] Justin [Giles] took an idea from Mondo [Tiger] and put it together,” said Paul Backhouse, senior director of the Heritage and Environment Resources Office and THPO Officer. “It’s good to see Quenton, who started at THPO as a SWEP [student work experience program] employee, in charge of this building. This space is for the community to have conversations, learn and talk about things going on around the Tribe.”

Tiger also remembered playing outside of the building as a child. There were a lot of firsts in the building, including the 4-H projects and cattle owners meetings.

“We lived in chickees with no electricity or water,” Councilman Tiger said. “This building had lights; coming here was like going to the big city.”

Virginia Tommie also grew up in BC and worked in the Head Start program in the 1970s, which was housed in the building at the time. Over the years, the building has been used for the culture department, senior center, for recreation activities and a pool hall.

“It was also used as a hurricane shelter,” Tommie said. “I remember being here during Hurricane Donna. Back then we were living in chickees so we had to come here to stay safe. I think it’s good that it will be useful again.”



Beverly Bidney

Virginia Tommie, Joe Frank, Quenton Cypress and Councilman Mondo Tiger listen as Justin Giles talks about the new To-Pee-Kee-Ke Yak-Ne Community Center in Big Cypress, which had an open house on May 3.



Beverly Bidney

The exterior of the To-Pee-Kee-Ke Yak-Ne Community Center in Big Cypress.

as Tribal children played outside.

“We used to come here to sit and listen, but we just wanted to play,” said BC Board Rep. Joe Frank. “We ran around and played games outside, but you’d hear the adults debating issues in there. The conversation was heated, but controlled. It’s good to see this building being put back to use to benefit our community and Tribe.”

Operated by the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum and the Tribal Historic Preservation

space can be configured in a variety of ways to accommodate different types of functions. Community events, graduations, birthday parties and meetings are just some of the uses for the To-Pee-Kee-Ke Yak-Ne. A few departments have already held meetings there.

“We’ve had a lot of tourists come through here and I thought this could be a good information center,” said BC Councilman Mondo Tiger. “We have kids



Beverly Bidney

Edna McDuffie talks to Theresa Jumper next to the displays of reservations at the To-Pee-Kee-Ke Yak-Ne Community Center open house.

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## 62nd Annual SEMINOLE PRINCESS PAGEANT 2019

SAT JULY 27, 2019 7:00PM  
Hollywood Executive Building Auditorium

Application Deadline is:  
5:00pm July 15, 2019  
*No Exceptions*

Community Dinner - 5:30pm

# Miss Indian World – Cheyenne Kippenberger – plans year with crown

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — The buzz has continued even if the dust has settled a bit.

Cheyenne Kippenberger — formerly Miss Florida Seminole and now Miss Indian World — has been riding a wave of excitement since being crowned April 27 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

It's the first time a Seminole Tribe of Florida member has been crowned Miss Indian World.

"I was very shocked, actually. My initial goal — you always have high hopes — was to get 'best' in any category. We haven't [even] had that before," Kippenberger said.

Kippenberger earned the crown — and two "best" awards — after four days of competition among 17 other contestants during the annual Gathering of Nations Powwow. She did it in front of sold out crowds and thousands of dancers and drummers from hundreds of Tribal Nations.

The 23-year-old from the Hollywood Reservation is the 36th Miss Indian World. She is the daughter of Joe and Susan Kippenberger. Kippenberger graduated from Keiser University in Fort Lauderdale with a degree in accounting.

Preparation for the competition happened in concert with Wanda Bowers who oversees the Tribe's princess program.

Bowers said she kept it to herself, but when Kippenberger was crowned Miss Florida Seminole about a year ago, she had a feeling Miss Indian World was very attainable.

"I knew she had a really good shot at it," Bowers said, although Kippenberger wouldn't decide to run until much later.

## Respected reputation

The Miss Indian World pageant — held since 1984 — takes place each year at the Gathering of Nations, the world's largest Native American powwow.

Native American women between the ages of 18 and 25 travel from around the U.S. and Canada to represent their tribes and compete in a series of categories.

The purpose of the journey and the title is to give the women a chance to showcase the culture and traditions of their tribes. The contestants serve as cultural ambassadors of their respective tribes and of Native Americans in general. They are expected to show poise, pride and positivity, and work to keep the diverse cultures of Native Peoples alive and thriving.

The Miss Indian World pageant has a reputation for crowning winners who have a deep understanding of their tribe's traditions, history, ancestors and culture.

Kippenberger hit all those markers and expectations.

"[We] look forward to working with Cheyenne Kippenberger this year as she travels Indian Country representing all Native women and the Gathering of Nations organization," Gathering of Nations directors said in a statement.

Throughout the four-day competition, contestants accumulate points based on how they do in public speaking, traditional talents, personal interviews, written essays and dance.

Kippenberger not only had the most cumulative points, but also took the award for best personal interview and best traditional



Damon Scott

Cheyenne Kippenberger, center, participates in the Grand Entry at the Gathering of Nations in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in April on her way to becoming Miss Indian World.

talent — a demonstration of a traditional Seminole hairstyling.

## 'Overwhelmingly happy'

After Kippenberger picked up the two individual awards, she waited with the other contestants on the floor of Tingley Coliseum to hear who would be runner-up and who would get the crown.

"I was praying really, really hard in my head and in my heart. I wanted to show my gratitude for the experience itself and be thankful for everyone carrying me through the experience," she said. "I thought: There's still a chance, there's still a chance."

The announcer soon said: "The next Miss Indian World comes to us representing the Seminole Tribe of Florida..."

"When I heard the 'Sem' I just started crying so hard. I tried to take a moment for myself, a moment to really take it in and put it out to the universe," Kippenberger said. "It was an overwhelmingly happy moment. And genuine surprise."

## Road to the title

Kippenberger is just a couple months shy of what would be her one year mark as Miss Florida Seminole. (She was crowned July 14, 2018). However, upon winning Miss Indian World, that title is relinquished.

Applications for the next Miss Florida Seminole pageant on July 27 are being accepted now.

Kippenberger said she didn't realize it at the time, but she'd been preparing for Miss Indian World even before she made the decision to send in her application.

"I was going around to each Reservation speaking [as Miss Florida Seminole]. When I finally did decide to run, I'd planned on doing the same [traditional Seminole hairstyling] talent, but how could I make it better? I was working hard on my dancing and was in full-on practice mode," she said.

Bowers was encouraging Kippenberger to submit her application and it was even posted on her bedroom door as a reminder. She kept it there until the end of January when she finally decided to run after consulting with her father.

Kippenberger immediately started working on her essay, portrait, and began to sell raffle tickets — which serves as a fundraising element for the pageant.

The fundraising was even more preparation for the competition, she said, because it forced her to step out of her comfort zone.

## 'That big smile'

Bowers has seen many girls pass through the princess program over the years. She isn't even sure how long she's been overseeing it.

"Twenty five or 30 years; I don't even count anymore," Bowers said with a chuckle.

Bowers and Kippenberger began their journey together without really knowing one another.

"Wanda is the heart and soul of the Seminole princess program," Kippenberger said. "It's not something everybody wakes up and says they want to do. It's hard. My experience with Wanda has been nothing short of amazing. She's become one of my best friends."

Bowers said Kippenberger's age was an advantage because she had already been on her own, had graduated college and was well versed in Native American issues.

"We hit it off," Bowers said. "We always had something we could talk about."

Kippenberger concurred: "We're so alike. It was always laughs and smiles. It's not easy in some of these situations. It's hard to navigate some of the things you have to go through, but much easier when you have someone like Wanda who knows the position and knows how to handle these things," she said.

Bowers isn't one to seek attention or credit.

"[Kippenberger's] a talker. She can talk to anybody about anything. She smiles and is very friendly and cordial. She's everything wrapped up into one package," Bowers said. "That big smile draws you in. She's so approachable. She worked so hard for that crown."

## Tribal pride

Since returning home to Hollywood, Kippenberger said she's received a great amount of support from Tribal leadership and Tribal members.

President Mitchell Cypress was the first person she spoke with after the competition.

"My dad said: 'You have somebody on the phone.' It was Mitchell. I'd run into him earlier that day. I've known him since I was a little girl. He was really kind and congratulating," she said.

Hollywood Representative Gordon O. Wareham wrote a letter of recommendation for Kippenberger to assist in her Miss Indian

World application submission.

"I've known Cheyenne Kippenberger for 22 years, and it's been a pleasure to watch her grow up from a cute little toddler to a very responsible adult," Rep. Wareham said in the letter he shared with the Seminole Tribe.

"Following in her grandmother's footsteps, Miss Florida Seminole Lawanna Osceola, Cheyenne has taken to her new role of ambassador for our people and Tribe with the confidence of a dignitary. She is a positive role model and leader for Seminole people and would be a great ambassador for the Native American community," he wrote.

## Making her mark

Like Miss Florida Seminole, Miss Indian World is a one-year term.

"It's not necessarily about filling the shoes of the girls before you," Kippenberger said. "I do have an idea of the goals I want for my reign."

Kippenberger wants to continue to promote Tribal mental health issues, including through her own personal experiences. She also wants to shed light on the lack of representation of Indigenous people in education, health care, mass media and more, she said.

Kippenberger said some barriers have been broken already, citing the first two Native American women elected to Congress last year.

"I think my plan is to push that momentum," she said.

## ♦ HISTORIC From page 1A

like this to happen to one of our individuals who represents us so well to now represent the world of Indigenous People is truly amazing and an honor."

Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola: "You've inspired a whole generation of young Seminole girls to actually get involved and try to pursue their goals and follow you in your footsteps and what you've been able to accomplish."

Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr.: "I was most impressed when I saw you at the Big Cypress foster home at Christmas time... You were there interacting with the children, handing out gifts, eating with them, playing with them. That was something I

will remember about you and I think you'll carry that trait throughout your life."

President Mitchell Cypress: "We're very proud of you. We all look up to you. We love you. Do your best for the Tribe; I know you will."

Brighton Board Rep. Larry Howard: "You came back unconquered."

After receiving praise from the officials and after everyone ate lunch and watched a 10-minute video that highlighted her capturing the crown in New Mexico, it was Kippenberger's turn to take the mic.

What followed were heartfelt, stirring and emotional words from Miss Indian World. The audience heard an inspirational address about the valleys and peaks Kippenberger, 23, has encountered on a path that ranged from temporarily dropping out of high school to battling mental health

issues to becoming the first Seminole winner of Miss Indian World.

"High school was a really hard time for me. I didn't realize it until later on, but I was really struggling with depression and anxiety," she told the audience. "Because I didn't have that self-awareness yet, I thought there was just something wrong with me."

But at stages along the way — support came to her in various ways, through family, the Tribe's Center for Behavioral Health, and even coworkers at an auto dealership.

"After dropping out of high school for a while, I decided to work full time," she said. "While working at this car dealership in North Miami... I found a really, really unconventional place of support. My coworkers, my managers pushed me to go back to school, and I still didn't want to go. I just didn't think it was for me. I didn't have the grades, I didn't have the work ethic."

But the seed was planted. "This group of people that just knew me as another coworker, as the girl that worked at the rental department for Lexus, pushed me to go back to high school. I was still hard-headed and I decided to go back for only one day a week. I started to go to school just on Fridays. In doing that, I ended up at this tiny high school off Davie Boulevard in Fort Lauderdale, and I ended up graduating. I walked across the stage as a high school graduate and I got my high school diploma in the most unconventional, wrong way there could possibly be, but I did it."

Kippenberger's path started to become smoother.

"I think I can do college," she said. Indeed. Not only did she do college; she excelled, graduating from Keiser University with a 4.0 GPA with an eye toward a career in accounting.

Kippenberger urged those who need

help to seek help, just as she did.

"If there's one thing I can tell you, use our resources. We are very blessed to have a Center for Behavioral Health on one of our reservations. Don't be ashamed. I was ashamed for so long, and because of that I was side-tracked from a lot of things that I could have done, maybe should have done," she said.

She plans to share that message with the rest of Indian Country during her year as Miss Indian World.

"As Native people, we suffer from disproportionate statistics of mental health and depression, anxiety, suicide. Because we don't understand these things, we turn to these really dark places, and I'm telling you, it doesn't have to be that hard and you're not alone in that struggle," she said.

Kippenberger also strongly criticized the way Native Americans continue to be depicted in media.

"We are always portrayed in these really negative ways," she said. "If it's not shirtless on horseback, it's playing the drunk Indian in a solid movie or something. That's got

to stop. I'm really tired of it. That's not who we are; we're a lot more than that. We're our culture, we're our languages, we're our clothing, we are our own people and we're all distinct."

Kippenberger reserved the final portion of her talk to thank those in attendance, including those who have helped her during her reign as Miss Florida Seminole, and ultimately Miss Indian World.

"Miss Seminole changed my life. I'm eternally grateful to [Princess Committee chairwoman Wanda Bowers], the Committee, my aunt, my sisters being behind me, my mom and dad being behind me," she said, "because I don't know where I'd be if I hadn't done that."

She concluded by thanking the Seminole community.

"Thank you to my people, thank you to all of you," she said. "I hope that through this year I honor you guys and I do you proud."



Kevin Johnson

Miss Indian World Cheyenne Kippenberger receives a gift from Martha Tommie during a luncheon in Hollywood.



Beverly Bidney

Hollywood Board Rep. Gordon Wareham presents Miss Indian World Cheyenne Kippenberger with flowers on May 19 at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood during the Tribe's celebration of Kippenberger winning the crown.

# Prospective princesses hone their skills at workshop

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — A group of eight future Miss Florida Seminole and Jr. Miss Florida Seminole contestants woke up early on Saturday, May 18 to attend a Princess workshop at the Big Cypress Boys & Girls Club auditorium. By the end of the day, they each realized it was time well spent.

Led by Cheyenne Kippenberger, Miss Indian World / Miss Florida Seminole 2018-2019; Cassandra Jimmie, Miss Florida Seminole 2010-2011; and Randee Osceola, Miss Florida Seminole 2017-2018, the purpose of the workshop was to prepare the girls for the Seminole Princess Pageant in July. The day was filled with information, exercises and team building meant to inspire and build their confidence.

"You are here today because you want to be here," said Jimmie. "You love the Seminole Tribe and this is your way of being part of history and making your mark. You never know where it will take you, but it will prepare you for anything."

The girls — Carlise Bernudez, Thomlynn Billie, Tehya Howard, Alexis Jumper, Arianna Osceola, Jordan Osceola, Lola Veliz and Patsy Veliz — were encouraged to ask questions throughout the day on May 18.

The current and former princesses shared their experiences and offered some practical tips- such as making eye contact while talking to someone- but also emphasized that the pageant is about more than just winning.

"The point of pageantry is to be the best you," said Kippenberger. "Show the best you and you will come out of this with friendships and memories; it isn't just about the competition. This is a sisterhood and you will always have it in your life."

This was only the second princess workshop; the first was in 2016. Wanda Bowers, Princess Pageant Committee Chairwoman, was approached by Kippenberger and Jimmie, who wanted to lead another one. They both wished they had this opportunity when they ran for the title.

"I said it's yours," Bowers said. "This is a great turnout; it's more fun with a group of girls. I hope to turn this over to the younger ladies when I retire. Now I can see this will go on."

There were plenty of basics the contestants needed to learn. Jules Meyer, PR Pageant Coaches founder and former Miss Florida Seminole pageant judge, has been coaching pageant participants for more than a dozen years. She came to the workshop to help guide the girls, offer advice and share insight as to what judges are looking for.

"I hope you are excited about this journey, which is about getting to know yourself," Meyer said. "Most people don't get a chance to do that, so this is powerful. By getting up and being here this morning, you are walking the walk."

An annual tradition the night before the Miss Florida Seminole pageant is a welcome banquet with the contestants and families, former princesses and the judges. The contestants are each expected to introduce themselves to the crowded room. When they are not behind the podium, the girls sit and dine with the judges and others at the formal dinner. Everything during the banquet is scored by the judges.

"This is an amazing opportunity to show your personality," Meyer said. "It is the judges' first impression of you. Show off who you are, make your time at the table really count and be careful what you talk about. Pretend your grandmother is at the table and will hear everything you say."

To break the ice and help the prospective princesses get used to speaking to people they may not know, the girls were paired off and had three minutes each to interview the other. It was the first of about half a dozen exercises to get them comfortable and thinking on their feet.

In those three minute interviews, the girls asked plenty of questions and learned a lot about each other. One girl loves pickles, someone's favorite animal is an elephant, another girl likes to sew, one wants to be

an artist and one wants to promote self-acceptance. Some shared some defining moments of their lives.

"I'm a tomboy, but when I watched the pageant and saw Allegra [Billie] win Jr. Miss [Florida Seminole], I knew I could do it," said Carlise. "Now I wear skirts more, I'm trying to educate myself and I talk more to the elders."

Meyer commended the girls on the information they gathered about each other, but wanted more.

"I'm looking for you all to be memorable," she said. "Whatever it is, whether someone like pickles or the color purple, something might resonate with the judges. Judges aren't looking for a perfect answer; they are looking for you to be perfectly you."

As a judge, it's difficult to remember everything about every contestant so it is critical to be memorable. Meyer had the girls write down 10 memorable things about themselves and then choose one to write



Miss Indian World Cheyenne Kippenberger poses for a selfie with the participants in the Princess workshop on May 18 in Big Cypress.

Beverly Bidney



Carlise Bernudez confers with Patsy Veliz during an exercise at the Princess workshop.

Beverly Bidney

Tribe and was pleased with the workshop.

"These girls can get along, help each other and work together as a family," Zamora said. "They don't see each other as envious. I love that; that's what we need."

One of the last exercises of the day was to write a brief introduction, stand behind a podium and deliver it. Some tips included to always smile, project your voice and speak confidently. Some of the group stood in the back of the room to make sure whoever spoke could be heard clearly.

When the first part of the workshop was complete, the girls went to the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum to learn more about Seminole history.

After a day of bonding and teambuilding, the girls forged friendships. What appeared to be nervousness and shy behavior melted away by the end of the day. Most didn't know what to expect, but were glad they participated and said they gained confidence.

"Life's going to throw you curve balls, but those are the things that will create who you are in life," said Jimmie. "Whatever you do, do from the heart. If you are scared to try things and don't, then you will never know what you are capable of. Go after it; grab life. The world will tell you that you can't, but you can."

The deadline to apply for the 62nd Seminole Princess Pageant is 5 p.m. on July 15, no exceptions. The pageant will be held July 27 at 7 p.m. in the Hollywood



Lola Veliz and Jordan Osceola share a laugh after creating sashes that describe each other during the Princess workshop.

Beverly Bidney

headquarters auditorium.

on a separate piece of paper. After being picked from a bowl, everyone in the room had to figure out who wrote it. Some of the more memorable facts included one girl is learning to play golf, another draws every day after school and another almost caught an alligator while fishing.

"You all have an equal chance at winning," said Meyer. "Judges watch and listen, but it's 90% about how you make people feel. The judges are going to choose the ones who make them feel the best about the situation they are judging."

Kippenberger, Jimmie and Osceola watched and listened intently before adding their advice and experience to the mix.

Before Kippenberger competed last summer for Miss Florida Seminole, she hadn't thought about it much and didn't think she had what it took to win. Her biggest fear was the interview with the judges. But she persevered and won the crown.

"This is the time to brag about yourself," Kippenberger said about the interviews. "But we aren't taught to do that, we are a very humble and reserved people. So I talked about what came from my heart."

When she competed for Miss Indian World, Kippenberger prepared more. She made a choice to surround herself with people who inspired her and lost some friends along the way.

"Choose the people around you that build you up, not bring you down," Meyer said. "If they are going down the wrong path, it's time to get new friends. Surround yourself with goodness; my light is only as bright as those around me."

After lunch, provided by Nadine Bowers at the Big Cypress senior center, the girls discussed the talent portion of the pageant. Osceola competed a few times for Jr. Miss before she won Miss Florida Seminole. She tried a lot of different things for the talent competition, including songs

and storytelling. Her advice went beyond the talent.

"The judges don't know much about the Seminole Tribe," Osceola said. "So show them something you already know, something you are comfortable with and can talk about. They want to see your confidence."

"Do something that is second nature to you," added Kippenberger. "Make it memorable."

While displaying a talent, it is important for each contestant to maintain her own personality. Jimmie, who loves history, chose to show how Seminole clothing transitioned from the traditional to the modern.

"Use the talent that you can still be you," Jimmie said. "You want to educate them, but be unique."

Meyer encouraged the girls to start thinking about their talent now, to practice a lot and present it in front of people to get more comfortable.

Jeni Nelson, of Lakeland, came along with her granddaughter Carlise.

"I'm very proud of her," Nelson said. "We were never allowed to be like that."

Elsa Zamora, Jimmie's mother, was proud of the way her daughter represents the

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Members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians enjoy the thrill of an airboat ride May 21 at Billie Swamp Safari.

Beverly Bidney

## ◆ CULTURE EXCHANGE

From page 1A

admired the arts and crafts and asked questions. The Cherokees took their time at the different tables as they learned about each craft.

Linda Beletso showed the sweetgrass to a group and told them how to find and gather it for baskets. One man remarked on how smooth and round the grass is. Lorraine Posada explained how palmetto fiber is used for the base of baskets.

The arts and crafts of the two tribes are very different, but similarities can be found in their values.

“Our spiritual and cultural things are

very much alike and that’s a good thing,” said Cherokee member Suzanne Hornbuckle. “The people here honor their elders, just like we do.”

“We learned about certain superstitions and we have the same ones,” said Valorie Welch.

The BC senior center gathered more than 100 handmade items to give as gifts through raffles. The items included patchwork skirts, shirts, handbags and vests, beadwork items such as visors and beaded jewelry, sweetgrass baskets, dolls and carved tomahawks.

The 75 Cherokees were given tickets, and with more than 100 gifts, about a third of them went home with more than one bag of Seminole swag. Two Hard Rock guitar gifts

including a dinner at Council Oak or Kuro were also raffled.

The manager of the Cherokee senior program Deb West thanked the Tribe for their generosity and presented a few gifts of their own including white oak baskets and a Pendleton blanket designed by a Cherokee tribal member.

After lunch, which included traditional fry bread and pumpkin bread, the Cherokees loaded the busses and headed to Hollywood to spend the night. The following day they headed south to visit the Miccosukee Tribe in Trail.

“It’s my first time here,” Naomi McCoy said. “We just want to see how other Tribes live, where they are from and the different terrain. To me that’s interesting.”



Beverly Bidney

Lorraine Posada explains how she makes sweetgrass baskets using sweetgrass and palmetto fiber to a group of Cherokees during a cultural exchange.



Beverly Bidney

After sharing lunch with Louise Osceola during a cultural exchange with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Naomi McCoy shows off the skirt she won during a raffle. Every one of the 75 Cherokees at the event went home with at least one hand-made Seminole treasure.



Beverly Bidney

Eastern Band of Cherokee Indian tribal members Louise Taylor and Toni Tahquette are happy with the patchwork skirts they won at the raffle during the cultural exchange luncheon.



Beverly Bidney

Billy Walker wrestles a feisty alligator at Billie Swamp Safari as a group of Cherokees pay close attention.

# Hard Rock’s second Reverb hotel lands in Sonoma County

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

Sonoma County in Northern California is well known for its winemaking and mild weather. Those traveling to the region will soon be able to experience a new Hard Rock hotel concept as well.

Reverb by Hard Rock Sonoma Wine Country is set to open in the summer of 2020 in Cotati, about 10 miles south of Santa Rosa.

The 150-room property will be Hard Rock’s second Reverb – the first is scheduled to open in Atlanta early next year. The Atlanta Reverb is being built near Mercedes-Benz Stadium, home of the National Football League’s Atlanta Falcons.

Cotati, with a population of fewer than 8,000, is located near dozens of renowned vineyards and wineries. Reverb Sonoma will

be the city’s first hotel.

The hotel will feature a slew of indoor and outdoor areas and amenities and is designed to cater to music fans in an area with an “eclectic musical background and first-class wine offerings.”

“The city of Cotati is the perfect location ... as it is known as a music town and features several music festivals throughout the year, along with its small-town charm,” Todd Hricko, SVP of global hotel business development for Hard Rock Hotels said in a statement.

Cotati is also home to Sonoma State University and the Green Music Center, a world-class musical venue.

The east side of Reverb Sonoma will feature a large 10,000 square foot plaza area where the community can gather for public events including musical performances by local and national acts.

The new property is expected to give

the city an economic boost by creating 50 to 60 new jobs and providing support to local businesses.

Reverb Sonoma is a partnership between Cotati Hotel LLC and Hard Rock Hotels.

“The Molinaro Family is thrilled to be partnering with Hard Rock Hotels in the creation of the game changing Reverb by Hard Rock here in Cotati,” Ken Molinaro, managing member of Cotati Hotel LLC said in a statement. “As a local family, we are dedicated to doing business locally and [are] very focused on creating an environmentally-friendly hotel. We are thrilled Hard Rock shares in our vision.”

Hard Rock International has 28 hotels in its portfolio across the globe. HRI’s parent entity is the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

More information about Reverb is available at [reverbhotels.com](http://reverbhotels.com).



Courtesy photo

Reverb’s “roadie bunk rooms” are designed for groups featuring six queen bunk beds and a karaoke machine.

# Hard Rock Heals Foundation awards grant to The Shelter

FROM PRESS RELEASE

The Hard Rock Heals Foundation, in partnership with Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee recently presented a \$5,000 grant 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 The Shelter’s 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.

In 2019, the Hard Rock Heals Foundation will donate a total of \$250,000

to local charities in support of their music-related efforts.

Founded in 1989, The Shelter for Abused Women & Children leads the community to prevent, protect and prevail over domestic violence and human trafficking. Thanks to unwavering community support and strong alliances with school, law enforcement, judicial and elected officials, The Shelter has grown from a renovated four-plex in 1989, to a 60-bed, state-of-the-art campus with seven transitional housing cottages and construction to begin soon on the Shelly Stayer Shelter in Immokalee.

Courtesy photo

Karen Locke, from Seminole Casino Hotel, left, presents a check for \$5,000 to Linda Oberhaus, Executive Director of The Shelter for Abused Women & Children



# Council, Board honors police, security for lifesaving act at Coconut Creek casino



Tribal Council and Board members pose for a group photo with Seminole Police Department and Coconut Creek Police Department officers on March 22 during a ceremony that recognized the officers' actions in an incident at Seminole Casino Coconut Creek.

Derrick Tiger

BY DERRICK TIGER  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — Officers of the Seminole Police Department and Coconut Creek Police Department, along with Security staff from the Seminole Casino Coconut Creek were honored March 22 at a Seminole Tribal Council meeting. The officers were presented with Florida Police Chiefs Association Lifesaving Awards.

The awards are given when an exceptional lifesaving act occurs that places the nominee's life in jeopardy.

The officers were awarded for their involvement in an incident that occurred Feb. 14 on the roof of the parking garage at the casino in which Seminole Police and Coconut Creek police officers prevented a man from committing suicide.

In a summary by the Seminole Police Department, officers responded to a call from casino security who reported "a man was acting strangely and that he climbed on the wall and indicated he was going to kill himself by falling the almost 100 feet to the ground below."

The summary also states that the man was armed with a box cutter and "flailed it from time to time to keep the distance between he and the police staff on scene."

A crisis negotiator from the Coconut Creek Police Department arrived on scene and "kept a constant dialogue with the suicidal subject—prolonging the safe time and allowing the additional officers and support staff to arrive, as the security

personnel redirected the public and kept a secure area so that the subject would not feel threatened and customers would not be injured."

The entire incident lasted for two hours. It was captured on video surveillance from the parking garage and SPD body camera. Clips of the footage were screened for Tribal Council and Board members. In the footage the man can be seen perched on a concrete barrier. The man threatened to throw himself over the edge several times. The footage from the camera is jarring to watch as the man decides to let his body fall over the barrier and officers leap to rescue him.

The top of the concrete barrier is all that can be seen as officers struggle to lift the man back up. At times the camera shifts, providing a glimpse of the steep 100 foot fall below. While not seen in the footage it was reported that "five officers suffered injuries from bites, scrapes, and leg and back strain injuries during the attempt to catch and then lift this person over the wall."

Even at risk of injury for themselves the officers persevered in their struggle to guide the man to safety.

"It was one of the most heroic actions I have seen in my life, where our employees put themselves in grave danger for a person they did not know," said Chief of Police John Auer of the Seminole Police Department. He also added that the officers showed an "appreciation of their unselfish dedication to the preservation of life."

During the Tribal Council meeting, the officers were congratulated by the Council and the Board.



Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. congratulates Coconut Creek Officer O'Meil Molyneaux.

Derrick Tiger

## NCAI applauds court's opinion

FROM PRESS RELEASE

The National Congress of American Indians applauded the U.S. Supreme Court's opinion issued May 20 in *Herrera v. Wyoming*, a tribal treaty rights case.

In a 5-4 decision, the Court held that the Crow Tribe of Indians' treaty right to hunt on unoccupied lands within the United States survives Wyoming's establishment as a state, noting that this right remains unless it is expressly repealed by an act of Congress or "a termination point in the treaty itself has been satisfied." The case was vacated and remanded for further proceedings consistent with the Court's opinion.

NCAI President Jefferson Keel stated, "Once again, the Supreme Court has affirmed that treaty rights are the supreme law of the land, and they continue in perpetuity unless expressly repealed by an act of Congress."

## ◆ SPAIN From page 1A

Barcelona's Mediterranean coast, injecting energy and world-class entertainment into the city's hotel scene."

The hotel is actually owned by ASG (ActivumSG Capital Management Ltd.) but will be operated by Hard Rock Hotels. It is the fourth project in ASG's Spanish hotel development portfolio following a surge of visitors to Spain, the statement said.

"Our agreement with Hard Rock International is an important milestone for this signature investment. It's our second collaboration with HRI's renowned hospitality brand following the announcement on the opening of Hard Rock Hotel Madrid," Saul Goldstein, ASG's founder and managing partner, said in the statement.

The Barcelona development is adjacent to the Fórum beach and marina in Sant Adrià del Besòs. It is near to subway and tram access to Barcelona's city centre as well.

The hotel is also located near the Parc del Fòrum and Parc de la Pau, both of which host a regular line up of events and festivals – something important to Hard Rock guests.

It was announced late last year that the Hard Rock would open its first Spain hotel in Madrid. That 159-room project is expected to be completed soon and open later this year.

The third hotel property is located on the Spanish island of Ibiza, which is already open and operating. Spain also has eight Hard Rock Café locations.

The future for Hard Rock outside of the U.S. continues to be a healthy one. About a year ago, HRI chairman and Seminole Gaming CEO Jim Allen said another signature guitar-shaped hotel and integrated resort would be coming to Japan.

The company's first guitar-shaped hotel is nearing completion in Hollywood, Florida, where it also operates one of its most successful casinos.

There are now 28 Hard Rock Hotels and counting. HRI is owned and operated by its parent entity, the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

# Plight of missing, murdered Native women gets increased focus

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

The ongoing movement to address the problem of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls has a momentum behind it that has perhaps never been seen to date.

What was once a virtually off the radar issue, except among certain groups and advocates, now has an almost daily mention in local and national mainstream media.

In late April, the founders and organizers of the Gathering of Nations powwow in Albuquerque, New Mexico, dedicated the Miss Indian World pageant (won by Seminole Cheyenne Kippenberger) to the issue as a way to help build awareness around it. A national awareness campaign was also promoted on a billboard near Tingley Coliseum where the powwow took place.

The White House issued a proclamation on May 3rd titled "Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives Awareness Day," while the U.S. Congress declared May 5th as a "National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls."

A big part of the increased focus goes beyond the dedications and declarations. It is due to the election of the first two Native American women to Congress in the 2018 midterms – Rep. Sharice Davids of Kansas (Ho-Chunk) and Rep. Deb Haaland of New Mexico (Pueblo of Laguna).

They join two existing Native Americans in Congress: Rep. Tom Cole, R-OK, (Chickasaw) and Rep. Markwayne Mullin, R-OK, (Cherokee).

Haaland has been at the forefront of a variety of bills to address the problem: that Native women and girls go missing at a rate much higher than the general population.

They are often never heard from or found again, and those who are found have many times been murdered.

According to a study commissioned by the Department of Justice, American Indian women in some tribal communities face murder rates that are more than 10 times the national average.

It's a problem that touches not only many Native American reservations across the U.S., but Indigenous populations across the globe.

"Congress has never had a voice like mine – a Native American woman who sees the blind spots that have existed for far too long. That's why I've been working on multiple bills and legislation to address this crisis," Haaland said on a recent media conference call.

One of the more significant and recent pieces of legislation addressing the issue is the reauthorization of the federal Violence

Against Women Act (VAWA). Due to the efforts of Haaland and her colleagues, the bill now includes better protections for Native American women.

The updated bill provides victim advocate services to urban Native Americans in state courts and expands information sharing between public safety departments throughout Indian Country.

The information sharing is key, lawmakers say. One statistic shows that of 6,000 cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women in the U.S., only 118 have been entered into the Department of Justice database.

Within VAWA is also the SURVIVE Act (Securing Urgent Resources Vital to Indian Victim Empowerment). It would address the need for tribal victim assistance by creating a tribal grant program within the Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime.

Another Native provision within the updated VAWA is one that seeks to ensure children and law enforcement in tribal communities are protected in instances of domestic violence. The Native Youth & Tribal Officer Protection Act reaffirms inherent tribal authority over child abuse and crimes that are committed against police officers and other justice officials who respond to domestic violence calls.

The updated version of VAWA was recently passed by the House of Representatives. Its fate in the Senate is still unknown.

### Savanna's Act

In May, a new version of the federal Savanna's Act was introduced in the House

◆ See NATIVE WOMEN on page 9A

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

A PLACE TO LEARN, A PLACE TO REMEMBER.

## Capturing a Seminole tradition: alligator wrestling

BY SIOBHAN MILLAR  
Exhibits Coordinator, Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

There are usually two sides to every story. Sometimes stories become woven together so tightly that it is difficult to untangle them over the course of time. The

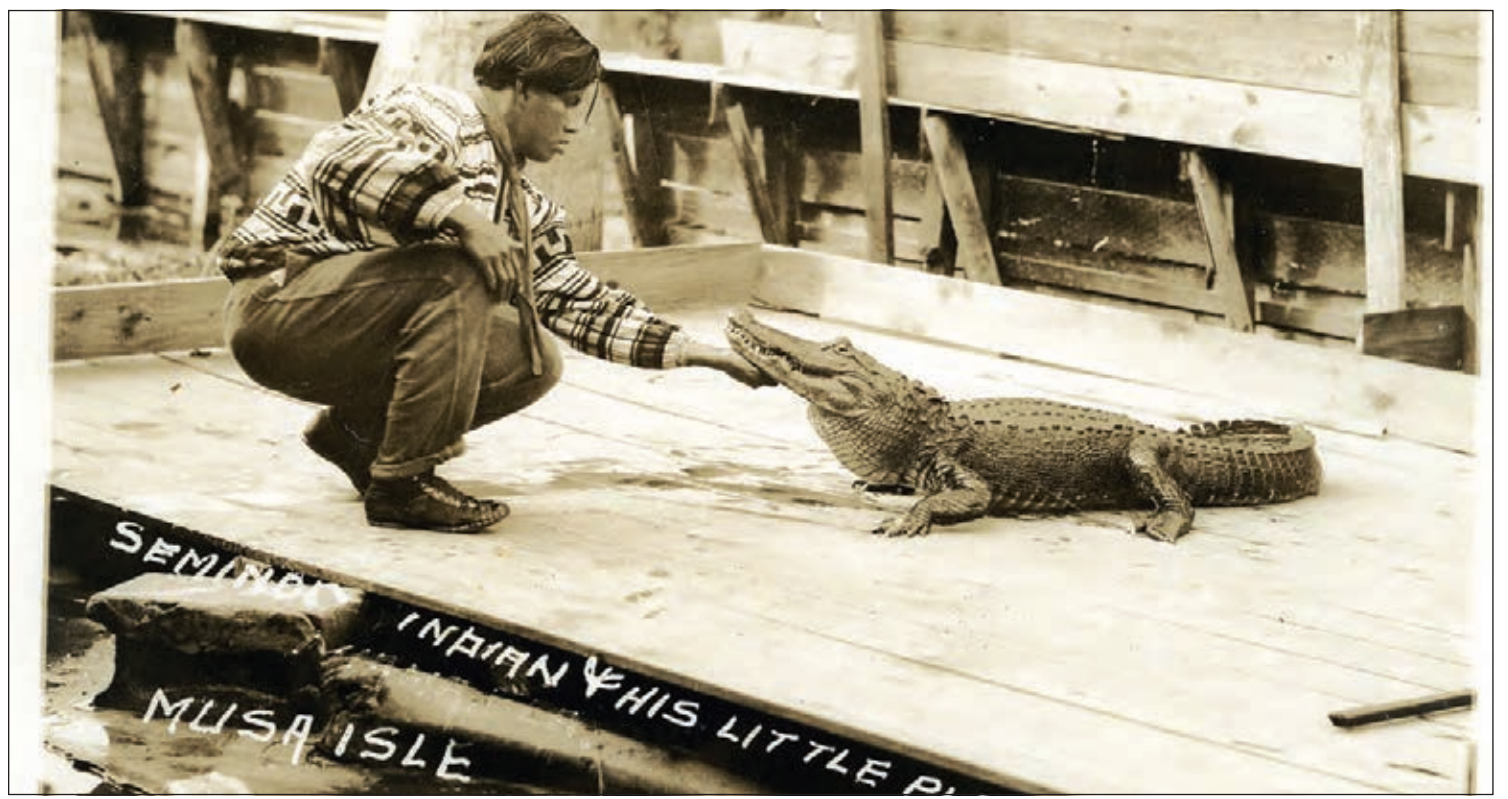
Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum's next exhibit about alligator wrestling is one of those stories.

Alligator Wrestling: Danger. Entertainment. Tradition. opens this December. Through the exhibit, the visitor will journey with two young Seminole children who are interested in alligator



State Archives of Florida/Bry

"Plate XXVI Killing Crocodiles," 1591 Theodor de Bry Engraving.



"Seminole Indian and His Little Playmate," Musa Isle, 1931

Photo postcard/Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

wrestling. Along the way, they realize that there is more to alligator wrestling than the entertainment value of the "sport." There are other aspects at play: the history of alligator wrestling, the cultural significance of the alligator, the Seminole warrior who carried the name Alligator, the importance of traditions, the animal's biology, dangers that come along with the practice, and the future of alligator wrestling in the Tribe.

Non-Seminoles think in a linear time frame, a specific date, an event, and a progression of circumstances. Leaving through the books in the Museum's archives, this format is obvious. Books written about the tourist camp decades ago suggest that Henry Coppinger Jr. is responsible for popularizing the sport and introducing alligator wrestling to the Seminoles. However, for Miccosukee men, hunting and handling alligators existed long before the introduction of tourist camps. Seminole ancestors hunted alligators as far back as the 1500s (depicted in the

reproduction drawing of Florida's Indians slaying a ferocious, crocodilian-like, reptile). Additionally, wood carved artifacts, found on Key Marco off the coast of Naples in the 1880s, serve as record to the long association between the early Indigenous Peoples of Florida and this reptile (whether appropriated for food or ceremonial practice).

In several interviews from the Museum's collection, Tribal members make a distinction between alligator wrestling and capturing. Jack Chalfant, a Tribal member and Tribal Historic Preservation Office employee (and sometime alligator handler) reinforces this idea. This places a slightly different twist on the Seminole history of alligator wrestling. Obscured are the popular, non-Seminole personalities who established Miami's early tourist attractions (i.e. alligator farms, Seminole tourist camps) and where alligator wrestling was performed. Instead, Jack Chalfant's story has an unknown passerby driving along a recently constructed Tamiami Trail, witnessing a Seminole man in a canoe, "capture, tie and drag" from the water, an alligator and afterward placing the tied alligator in a pen. (It is much easier to "catch" an already captured but live animal!) The passerby then threw money to the Seminole, commenting, "It makes for a great show." Asked about Henry Coppinger Jr., Chalfant says Coppinger watched the Seminoles capturing the alligators- and a

new money-making idea was born.

This version of the story is based on the simple need to survive and provide food for the family. But it is a fortuitous encounter that undoubtedly created a new economic outlet for the Seminoles at an uncertain time. There is some truth to the saying, "necessity is the mother of invention." Maybe it is a matter of who gets there first and tags it as their own.

As the exhibit team gathers the information, we are set on a path where the Seminole community is key to unraveling the evolution of Seminole alligator wrestling. In the new exhibit, traditional, cultural, and historical components will be shared with the non-Seminole visitor to enhance understanding of the Seminole perspective. The most insightful information has not been found on the pages of a book but from Tribal members themselves. Alligator wrestling is immersed in the Seminole culture, and it is largely theirs and the Miccosukee's own story.

If you are interested in loaning a shirt (that has had a close encounter of the alligator wrestling kind), objects or any other alligator wrestling stories, please contact Siobhan Millar, exhibits coordinator, 863-902-1113, ext. 12227 or Justin Giles, oral history coordinator, 863-902-1113, ext. 12227.

## Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki displays arts and crafts by Pemayetv Emahakv students

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — The Brighton Reservation's Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School (PECS) is known for its Creek language immersion program. But it's also unique for its instruction in traditional Seminole cooking and arts and crafts.

In fact, visitors from Native American schools across the country have traveled to PECS to see how their special programs operate.

The school's arts and crafts have gotten some additional attention recently with a special showcase at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum in Big Cypress.

All K-8 PECS students are given classes on traditional Seminole arts and crafts. The program is a hands-on one, and takes place throughout the school year.

On May 21, a group of students and instructors were at the museum for a special reception. Museum officials and the school collaborated on a display of the student's work. Several pieces were chosen by PECS lead arts and crafts instructor Marilee Johns Ringer. The pieces will be displayed at the museum through Aug. 18.

The pieces represent beadwork, sewing, basket making, doll making, woodcarving and more.

The goal of the program is to educate and help students develop practical skills that enhance their sense of cultural heritage. The hope is they will help keep Seminole traditions alive and well as they grow older.



Damon Scott

Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School students and instructors gather at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum on the Big Cypress Reservation for a reception May 21. Top row, from left, are April Wright (instructor), Serenity Lara (6th grade), Marilee Johns Ringer (lead instructor), Juanita Billie (5th grade), Carlee Osceola (6th grade), Deanthony Torres (5th grade) and Taylor Johns (instructor). Bottom row, from left, Elainna Fonseca (2nd grade), Stellar King (2nd grade), Khaal Cochran (3rd grade), Tehya Nunez (4th grade) and Waniya Fortner (4th grade). Not all students or teachers involved in the program are pictured.

represented by two pieces, putting the total at about 16.

### Why it matters

Other than a way to feature stellar arts and crafts, the underlying reason for the program is to keep Seminole culture in the forefront of Tribal life, said Ringer.

"It's not only our language that's dying, culture is dying with it," Ringer said. "It's not really being taught in homes anymore. Grandmas and great grandmas are all sadly passing away and they're taking all of that knowledge with them. That's where we step in."

Ringer said she always hopes that once students leave the program and move on, they'll keep what they've learned alive and thriving.

"It's exciting because you see some that do take so much pride in it and they're excited," she said. "And just to see their faces when they've finished a project — they are so happy to see it. That's what makes it all worth it."

### If you go

The Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum presentation of "Our Way School: Traditional Arts and Crafts" is an exhibit from May 20 to Aug. 18.

The museum is located on the Big Cypress Reservation at 34725 West Boundary Road in Clewiston. For more information, call (863) 902-1113 or go to [ahththiki.com](http://ahththiki.com).



Damon Scott

Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School fifth-grader Juanita Billie created this beaded jewelry.

"Teachers are proud of their student's accomplishments; students realize the importance of learning everything about their culture, keeping the unconquered spirit alive," reads part of a dedication sign at the museum display. "The community is proud of the school's dedication to the students, and encourages them to continue traditional ways by passing these practices along to future generations."

### Group effort

Ringer is quick to point out that her coworkers at PECS should be given a lot of credit for the success of the program — Taylor Johns, April Wright and Denise Welborn.

"They are the backbone that keeps our program going, and each help the children create beautiful pieces," Ringer said.

Ringer is from the Brighton Reservation and has been at PECS for about eight years — six of those leading the arts and crafts department. Her father is Marty Johns, who runs the Seminole Brighton Casino.

"The students have classes so they can learn their Creek language and then they rotate through my classroom as their arts and crafts class — they get to do all the traditional stuff," Ringer said.

The school has traditional cooking classes where students cook over fire, too — learning about traditional Seminole food.

"They get a little bit of everything. Some kids might not get it at home, [but] they can come to the school and get it and hopefully pass it on," Ringer said.

### Student pride

The projects on display at the museum are all the more impressive when you consider the students are only in arts and crafts class once a week.

Ringer starts choosing the projects that will be featured at the museum early in the year and she knows which pieces will be at the museum by February.

"You have to pick who has the best work ethic and who's really progressing and moving on," Ringer said.

She said a lot of the projects that were chosen were from students who were on their second or third creation.

Some students learn to sew and do it from beginning to end, also picking their own colors. They start with patchwork, then do potholders and book bags. Some have made skirts.

Basket makers go from a regular bowl-sized basket to a basket-bottom purse.

"We'll have small [palmetto] dolls and each gets bigger and bigger and they dress them and sew their clothes on them," Ringer said.

"They took pride in their work so it was

really easy to choose," Ringer said.

Ringer said each grade level is usually



Damon Scott

A variety of arts and crafts were created by students, including dolls and baskets. From left, the items are the works of Saniya Rodriguez, Carlee Osceola, Jrayko Billie, Cheyenne Lara and Serenity Lara.



# Health

## Mosquitoes are more than pests

BY SALLIE JAMES  
Florida Department of Health in Broward County

You're trying to fall asleep when you hear that barely-audible, high-pitched buzz that tells you a bloodthirsty mosquito is waiting to take a bite.

It can be annoying, but mosquitoes are more than just annoying. They can carry serious diseases like encephalitis (West Nile, St. Louis and Eastern Equine), yellow fever, dengue and malaria and Zika. Mosquitoes bite in the day AND the night, and their bites can be itchy and painful.

As mosquito season rolls into full swing, it's time to take preventative measures to safeguard yourself and your home.

The bug to watch for is the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, a small, black one with white markings on its legs and one in the form of a lyre on the upper surface of its thorax. These mosquitoes live close to people, right outside or inside your house. They specialize in biting humans, and stay active all day.

Preventing bites is the best way to stay safe and there are lots of easy ways to accomplish this. Most importantly, drain standing water in and around the house.

- Keep flower pots and saucers free of standing water
  - Check old tires, buckets, toys, and birdbaths for pooled water
  - Flush out water-holding plants like bromeliads with a hose every week
  - Discard items where rain or sprinkler water collects and clean pet water bowls twice a week
  - Check your house for torn window screens and keep windows and doors closed to prevent mosquitoes from coming inside
  - Use air conditioning
  - Cover cribs, strollers and baby carriers with mosquito netting
- "Mosquitoes typically breed in very shallow water, a cupful of water or a puddle behind a bush," explained Anthony Vomero,

Environmental Health Administrator for the Florida Department of Health in Broward County. "The average homeowner should make sure if they have potted plants they dump any water that collects and check anything that could hold water."

*Aedes aegypti* can even breed inside the home, in spots where water drips and collects.

Remember, as the weather gets warmer, mosquito activity increases. If you go outdoors on a buggy night, wear shoes, socks, long pants and long sleeves. Spray your skin and clothing with an insect repellent that contains DEET or other approved ingredients.

Draining standing water is the most effective way to stop them from reproducing.

"Mosquitoes multiply quickly, but you can stop them in their tracks," said Dr. Paula Thaqi, Director of the Florida Department of Health in Broward County. "Practice 'drain and cover.' When you dump standing water, you eliminate the breeding ground for mosquito larvae and getting rid of the source is the best way to avoid being bitten."

Mosquito eggs that are laid in shallow water can hatch in a day or two. The larvae grow fast, turning into a pupa that quickly develops into a full-grown mosquito. The life cycle, from egg to adult mosquito, takes eight to 10 days. The pupae become flying mosquitoes in two to three days.

Stop mosquitoes from breeding by draining standing water, and stay healthy.

Request information on mosquito control: DOH-Broward, 954-213-0607.

Report infestation on Seminole Reservation: Call Seminole Mosquito Control at 561-319-3983.

Report infestation: In Broward, County Mosquito Control will consider spraying your neighborhood if you have a large number of mosquitoes. 954-765-4062 or <http://www.broward.org/Mosquito/Pages/MosquitoServiceRequest.aspx>

## Cherokee Nation, OSU break ground on new medical school

FROM PRESS RELEASE

**TAHLEQUAH, Okla.** — Leaders from the Cherokee Nation and Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences gathered on May 20 in Tahlequah, Oklahoma to break ground on the 84,000-square-foot OSU College of Osteopathic Medicine at the Cherokee Nation.

The new, accredited medical school campus will be located on the W.W. Hastings campus in Tahlequah, and is the first tribally-affiliated medical school on tribal land in the United States.

"Health care in Indian Country took a major step forward today with the historic groundbreaking of the OSU College of Osteopathic Medicine at the Cherokee Nation," Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Bill John Baker said. "We believe this school will produce a new wave of medical students who will possess the medical knowledge and the mindset to reside and practice in northeast Oklahoma, positively impacting Cherokee Nation health care and other health care systems across the region."

The facility will feature state-of-the-art classrooms, lecture halls and cutting-edge technology such as computer-programmable manikins and medical simulation.

The college is slated to open with 50 students in 2020. The medical school is expected to serve 200 students when it becomes fully operational.

"The OSU College of Osteopathic Medicine and the Cherokee Nation have a shared vision of populating rural and underserved Oklahoma with OSU primary care physicians," said Kayse Shrum, D.O., OSU-CHS president and dean of the OSU College of Osteopathic Medicine. "I can't think of a better way to achieve this vision than by partnering with the Cherokee Nation to establish the OSU College of Osteopathic Medicine at the Cherokee Nation."

## NATIVE WOMEN

From page 7A

— a supplement to the Senate bill introduced in January by Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-AK. Like certain provisions in VAWA, Savanna's Act seeks to improve coordination among law enforcement offices, increase data collection and information sharing, and gives tribal governments more resources. Haaland said more than 70 Tribal Nations have endorsed the bill so far.

Former North Dakota Senator Heidi Heitkamp, a Democrat, named the legislation in honor of Savanna LaFontaine-Greywind, a member of the Spirit Lake Tribe who vanished in 2017 in Fargo while eight months pregnant. Her body was found eight days later in the Red River.

### (In)visible

In addition, Haaland, Davids and others have recently introduced the Not Invisible Act to establish a federal advisory committee on violent crime. The committee would consist of law enforcement, tribal leaders, federal partners, service providers



Courtesy photo  
Rep. Sharice Davids of Kansas (Ho-Chunk)

the Government Accountability Office to conduct a full review of how federal agencies respond to reports of missing and murdered Native Americans and recommend solutions based on their findings.

### States involved, too

Several states have made pledges to study the issue or have passed laws of their own in recent months. Here are a handful.

- Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey signed a bill into law in May that will create a task force to investigate and gather data on missing and murdered Indigenous women.
  - Oregon Gov. Kate Brown signed a bill in May that directs the state police to study how to increase and improve criminal justice resources on these cases.
  - In late April, Hanna's Act, a bill that passed in the Montana Legislature and was signed by Gov. Steve Bullock, creates a missing persons specialist within the Montana Department of Justice as well as a state missing persons database.
  - Also in Montana, Attorney General Tim Fox and U.S. Attorney Kurt Alme pledged to sponsor a joint training session in June for local, state, tribal and federal police officers and the public on missing persons cases across the state, focusing on Native Americans.
  - In May, a missing and murdered Indigenous women awareness day was held in Rapid City, South Dakota.
  - New Mexico and Wyoming have assembled task forces to address the issue.
  - Washington State is requiring its state patrol officers to establish best practices for investigating missing Native Americans.
- "This longstanding epidemic will take time, resources, and dedication to resolve and we will find solutions," Haaland concluded on her conference call.



Courtesy photo  
Rep. Deb Haaland of New Mexico (Pueblo of Laguna)

and survivors or their families. The goal is to make recommendations on best practices for law enforcement.

"This is a crisis that has gone on for far too long," Haaland said on the conference call. "Part of the problem is that this has been a silent crisis. No one is keeping track. It's not covered in mainstream media and data is lacking everywhere."

Other laws and provisions seek to get into very specific areas of concern. One is the Studying the Missing and Murdered Indian Crisis Act. It was recently introduced in order to improve cooperation between tribes and law enforcement by directing



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# SEMINOLE SCENES



Matheus Goes

**SEMINOLE STRONG:** A group of Tribal member employees gather outside the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood on April 29 during a break from a meeting. From left, Quenton Cypress, Tribal Historic Preservation Office community engagement manager; Cleofas Yzaguirre, Immokalee Youth Agriculture Ranch director; Michael Gentry, Okalee acting general manager; Leoma Poore, Treasurer's executive assistant; Aaron Tommie, Advanced Career Development participant; Sunshine Frank, Seminole Media Productions broadcasting manager; Jacob Osceola, Big Cypress Wildlife manager; Lee Zepeda, executive director of Administration; LaVonne Rose, Tribal secretary; and Derrick Smith, Tribal Community Development senior director of operations.



Kevin Johnson

**BC WELCOME:** Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger greets country music artist Gary Allan on May 11 before Allan's performance at the 124th Big Cypress Anniversary Celebration at the Junior Cypress Rodeo Grounds.



Beverly Bidney

**PREPARATIONS UNDERWAY:** Land is being cleared so construction may commence in the near future for a new Trading Post on the Immokalee Reservation.



Kevin Johnson

**REMEMBERING HERMAN L. OSCEOLA:** Trophies and backpacks were among the prizes awarded to teams at the 34th annual Herman L. Osceola Memorial Basketball Tournament in March in Big Cypress. U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Osceola, from Big Cypress, died at age 23 on March 24, 1984, in a helicopter crash during a military training exercise in South Korea. Seventeen other U.S. Marines and 11 South Koreans also died in the tragedy.



Beverly Bidney

**INDOOR CHICKEE:** Immokalee Preschool Center manager Michelle Ford and Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank huddle in the chickee which the preschoolers walked through May 1 on their way down the aisle for the preschool graduation.



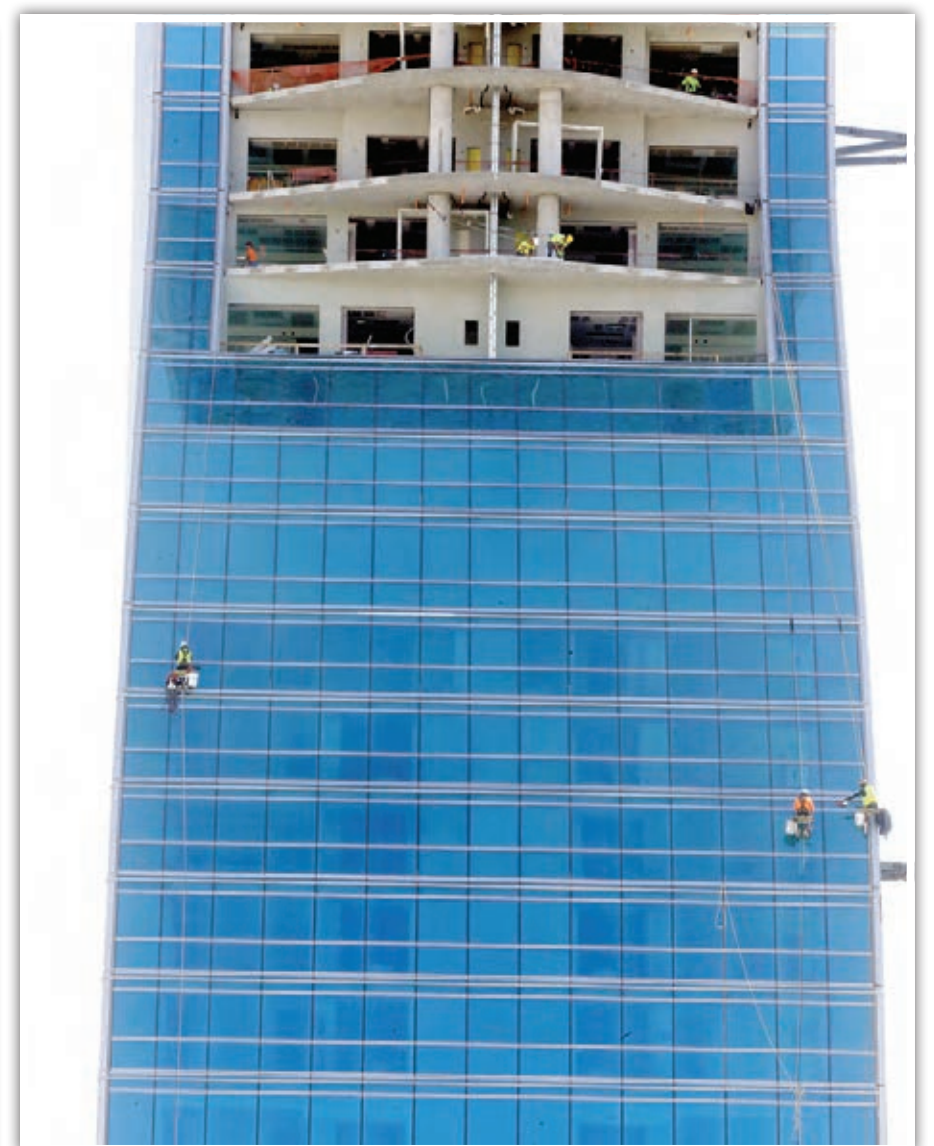
Kevin Johnson

**PECKIN' AWAY:** A red-bellied woodpecker pecks at a tree outside Sadie's on the Big Cypress Reservation on May 6.



Beverly Bidney

**BABY LOVE:** Susan Davis hoists her niece Jhene Baker, 6 months old, into the air in a show of auntie-love before the program begins at the Immokalee Preschool graduation on May 1.



Kevin Johnson

**RISE AND SHINE:** Workers descend on the south side of the new guitar-shaped hotel being built at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood on May 8.



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HOLLYWOOD, FL

# Education



## From Harvard to Yale, Tous Jumper Young Sr. embraces Ivy League education

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

**HOLLYWOOD** — Some grandmotherly advice has taken Tous Jumper Young Sr. on an academic path few grandsons — or anyone — can match.

The late Betty Mae Jumper's emphasis on education when Tous was a youngster and into adulthood is paying off. At age 43, he's found his education niche, and it's laced with ivy.

A few years ago Jumper attended Harvard University for a year as a visiting student. Last year he completed a six-month program from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School. This summer, he's been accepted to attend Yale University as a visiting student as he pursues a business degree.

"Now I can say I've gone to Harvard, I've gone to Yale and I've attended Wharton business school. No one can take that away from me," Jumper Young said. "I think if my grandma was here she'd be very proud because that's what she always pushed on us, go to school, go to school, go to school."

Jumper Young said his grandmother, who was the first and only woman to serve as chairman of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, always encouraged him to get as much education as possible and then come back and help the Tribe.

"The education is a tremendous opportunity and [to] come back to the Tribe and help in whatever capacity you can whether it's in office or a business capacity or teaching," Jumper Young said.

Jumper Young's mother, Scarlett Jumper, is a big fan of her son and his academic pursuits at some of the world's most renowned institutions.

"I'm very proud of him continuing on and pressing on with his education and with the goals he has set. I've been blessed with him with his drive for education," she said. "It doesn't matter what age you are to pursue whatever your dreams are, where you want to go. [Tribal members] have such opportunities to do this now whereas 50, 60 years ago it wasn't there."

Jumper Young's academic concentration centers on business. He's learning from the best. Harvard, Yale and Wharton are consistently among the upper echelon in best business school rankings. He said he's been working on five business plans related to some of Florida's biggest economic drivers: agriculture, travel, tourism, insurance and financial institutions.

Jumper believes those from the Tribe whose education focuses on business and economics can better serve the Tribe in dealings with vendors or business compared to outside sources.

"Those with the education and tooling can say 'hey, this is good for you or this is not going to be good for you,' 'this is good for our people or this is not good for our people' instead of having outsiders say this is good for you but really it's not ... because



Yale-bound Tous Jumper Young Sr. and a very proud mom Scarlett Jumper gather for a photo.

they're not really looking out for the people per se ... It's good to have our own people with the agenda of our people to grow and become successful and profitable," he said.

As a kid, about the only thing Jumper Young knew about Ivy League schools is that Seminole couldn't afford to attend them.

"I grew up in Hollywood in a double-wide [trailer home]. To step on the campus of Harvard was pretty amazing," said Jumper Young, who attended Driftwood Elementary and Hollywood Christian School. He was a quarterback for Hollywood Christian and faced off against Westminster Christian's quarterback Alex Rodriguez, who went on to become one of baseball's biggest stars.

After high school, Jumper Young attended the University of Miami on an academic scholarship, but he didn't graduate. He admitted that partying and drinking derailed his college career at that time, and his life.

"I was this poor Indian kid from the reservation and I went to the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida, and I was overwhelmed. I stepped into something I wasn't ready for. I went down that path. For 20 years, I struggled with alcohol and drug addiction and a lot of the bad stuff that comes from living on the streets.

"I'm going to Yale now, but I got a doctorate in hard knocks. I've seen stuff that I hope people never see in their life," he said.

Addiction was a big reason why psychology was his initial choice of a major when he resumed his academic career.

"That's why I wanted to go into

psychology so I could come back and try to help people who are struggling with that now," he said.

When he arrived at Harvard in 2015, his classes included neuroscience, memory recovery and abnormal psychology. He lived in Adams House on campus, a dormitory that has been the college residence of such notable figures as Franklin Roosevelt, Henry Kissinger, William Randolph Hearst, Robert Frost, Charles Schumer and John Lithgow. The school's Widener Library was Jumper Young's second home where he spent just about all his time when he wasn't in classes.

"Four to five times a week I'd get kicked out of the library because it was closing time," he said.

His academic focus has since shifted to business and economics. Last year he completed an entrepreneurship specialization certification program from Wharton. He said it was a six-month course that he finished in less than two weeks.

His summer courses at Yale will center on elective requirements that he will use toward earning a business degree. His course load is four classes and 16 credits with classes that include chemistry, logic and ethics. At the same time, he's taking another four classes virtually through Miami-Dade College. He's a participant in the Tribe's higher education program.

"I'm really thankful they've supported me," he said.

Jumper Young said he would like to use his business knowledge to pursue agriculture-related opportunities, such as opening a turkey farm. From there, he'd like to use profits and his past experience to help Native Americans who struggle with addictions.

"I have a dream of opening an all Native American rehab center that is free to Natives," he said, pointing to the far greater poverty, alcohol and drug rates that Natives deal with compared to the rest of the population.

In addition to his academic life, Jumper Young has nine grown children and four grandchildren.

"I'm kind of an empty nester. I don't have kids at home. I'm afforded the time where I can travel," he said.

He hopes his educational journey — from Cambridge to New Haven and beyond — can serve as a model for younger Seminole students just as his grandmother Betty Mae did.

"Trying to be an encourager of the young people to go to school and not just live on their dividend, but to grow mentally and grow their intellect, and being tooled and equipped to not just live on the rez but to conduct business on the outside with outsiders and be that front," he said.

When Harvard and Yale meet in sports, which they did last year in the Ivy League men's basketball championship, Jumper Young said he'll cheer for both teams.

"I'll have to get a house-divided shirt. One side Harvard, one side Yale," he said.



Damon Scott

From left, at the Weiss School are Dr. Tammy Ferguson, head of school; Lee Zepeda, executive director of administration for the Seminole Tribe of Florida; and the Purvis family: Ben Jr., Cyndl, Shannon and Ben Sr.

## Even the sky isn't the limit for this 5th-grader

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

**PALM BEACH GARDENS** — He met the governor at Florida Space Day in Tallahassee and has worked with Congressman Brian Mast. He was part of a presentation for the Seminole Tribe's executive director of administration, Lee Zepeda. He's been working with classmates on the launch of a satellite into space. And that's just a few of his accomplishments.

It's pretty clear Ben Purvis Jr. is not your typical fifth-grader.

On May 3, Purvis was part of an event at the Weiss School in Palm Beach Gardens where meetups and special TEDx presentations took place. It was all part of celebrating the students and the school's efforts in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and aerospace initiatives.

Zepeda and Dr. Tammy Ferguson, head of school, were on hand to hear presentations from the students, including from Purvis.

Purvis is a member of the Wolverine CubeSat Development Team (WCDDT) at the school. He's learning the ropes toward the launch of a high altitude balloon.

If it sounds a little complex, it is. But Kevin L. Simmons and his staff are used to seeing Weiss School students like Purvis shine.

Science educator Simmons is the force behind two Weiss School satellites, one that's already in space (the WeissSat-1) and one that soon will be (the CapSat-1).

Simmons came to the Weiss School about four years ago to create a program that would give students the chance to design, build and launch satellites. He teaches aerospace as an elective and meets each week with about 40 students involved in the satellite program.

Late last year, students launched the first small satellite on a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket. It was sent into space carrying extremophile bacteria. Students wanted to know if the bacteria could survive.

The launch marked the first time a satellite built by middle school students was sent into orbit. Purvis is expected to be more

directly involved in the second.

The second one — about the same size as the first and also approved by NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) — will have a different mission.

Instead of studying bacteria in space, students will test the efficiency of capacitors in space instead of regular batteries.

Purvis, whose parents are Shannon and Ben Sr., is looking forward to his evolving role in the program when he hits the sixth grade next year. Purvis' younger sister Cyndl also attends Weiss School. The family divides their time between Palm Beach Gardens and Okeechobee.

Purvis and his Weiss School team members meet regularly throughout the week. They went to Florida Space Day as part a policy team that is focused on the legislative efforts of the satellite program.

While at Space Day, Purvis attended a press conference with Gov. Ron DeSantis and met lawmakers in the Senate chamber.

He's gone to a number of events and has met with a slew of legislators to educate them about the importance of funding programs like the one at the Weiss School.

Purvis' group worked closely with Rep. Mast, a Republican, whose Florida 18th district covers an area from Fort Pierce to Palm Beach.

WCDDT members worked with Mast's legislative director to compose a resolution for increased funding for NASA projects such as its CubeSat Launch Initiative. Last year, Mast introduced a WeissSat-1 resolution in the U.S. House.

"We learned how to debate with senators, but my favorite part [of working on the legislative team] was we had to find solutions for problems that occurred. We had to work together as a team," Purvis said at the May 3rd event.

Meanwhile, now that the CapSat-1 satellite is launched into orbit, the students will use the information they gather to build a rover they hope will be sent to the moon.

No doubt Purvis will be involved in that project as well.

The Weiss School, located at 4176 Burns Road, is a pre-K through eighth-grade private school with about 300 students.

## PECS Students of the Month - April 2019

### Elementary School

Serenity Bishop  
Malieue Bonilla  
Bradley Villanueva  
Dylan Peak  
Kanae Jumper  
Aliyana Torres  
Travis Mitchell  
Brace Miller  
Juan Solis

Mikayle Summeralls  
Augustine Jumper  
Koni Osceola  
J. Wayoo Billie  
Jaelee Weimann  
Meleah Billie  
Landon French  
Jace Johns  
Hinton "JB" Anderson  
Steel Gopher

Tyler Peacock  
Ringo Billie

### Middle School

Madison Taylor  
Valentine Martinez  
Shylynn Testerman  
Lupe Mora-Lara



PECS Students of the Month for April 2019.

Courtesy photos

# Preschoolers celebrate graduation

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

After a few years in the comfort and safety of preschool, preschoolers around the reservations donned caps and gowns, said goodbye to what was and took their first steps into what will be their future.

## IMMOKALEE

One at a time, eight graduates proudly walked through a gauntlet of loved ones as they made their way down the red carpet and onto the stage May 1 for the Immokalee Preschool graduation.

"Teamwork between parents and teachers made this possible," said Michelle Ford, preschool center manager. "The school puts great importance on learning, culture, friendship and having fun. They have a strong foundation and we feel we have given them a great start in life."

The youngsters entertained the crowd with songs and skits. The dignitaries thanked the school and the parents for their efforts with the children. The personalities of the graduates came through as they walked down the carpet.

"This is such a great day for the Tribe," said Lee Zepeda, executive director of administration. "I think I see a future



An excited group of Big Cypress Preschool graduates make their way to the ceremony on May 15.



Autumn Jumper sings "America the Beautiful" at the beginning of the Big Cypress Preschool graduation program.



April Billie gives daughter Azaliah Billie a big kiss as she makes her way down the aisle to receive her Big Cypress Preschool diploma.



Twins Kaillin and Lillie Coleman get some help from mother Kalgary Johns as they make their way down the aisle to get their preschool diplomas at the Brighton Preschool graduation.



With tassel in hand, Jonathan Rodriguez proudly walks down the red carpet to collect his Immokalee Preschool diploma on May 1.



Graduate Elias Billie feels the love from his grandmother Cecelia Tigertail and mother Sonia Billie at the Big Cypress Preschool graduation.

chairman out there; he was busy greeting everyone."

Elected officials weighed in on the significance of the day.

"We have eight future leaders here," said President Mitchell Cypress. "I'm sure you will continue your educations and come back and work for the Tribe."

"I'm proud of the parents for keeping your kids in school here," said Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger. "This is just one



Immokalee Preschool graduate Nathanael Osceola gives Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank a high five as preschool center manager Michelle Ford, Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger and Immokalee Council project manager Ray Garza look on.



Hollywood Board Rep. Gordon "Ollie" Wareham, left, and Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola congratulate a Hollywood Preschool graduate.

of many graduations you will go to."

Ray Garza, Immokalee Council project manager, thanked the staff for preparing the children for the next chapter of their lives.

"Our kids are our future and you got them off to a good start," said Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank.

With that, kids found their families and enjoyed a celebratory luncheon together.

## BIG CYPRESS

In a room decked out with a Hawaiian theme, preschoolers prepared to take their first graduation walk toward the next phase of their lives. Parents, family and friends filled the Boys & Girls Club auditorium May 15 as they waited for the little graduates in their caps and gowns.

But first, a few words to get them on their way.

"The door is wide open to them for whatever they choose," said President Cypress. "I'm proud of every one of them."

Rep. Frank thanked the staff and parents for working together on a job well done.

"Enjoy learning, it's a lifetime trip," he said. "May this be just the first of many graduations."

The 10 graduates will attend the Ahfachkee School in the fall. Preschool manager Andrea Jumper plans to infuse more of the Ahfachkee culture curriculum



Wearing a shirt, tie, cap and gown, Kih'yon Hodge us all set to graduate from Brighton Preschool.

into the preschool going forward. The proud young grads made their way through the crowd to their diplomas, which came with handshakes all around, and then joined their families for a hibachi style lunch under the balloon palm trees.

## BRIGHTON

With 22 children, Brighton had the largest graduating class of any Seminole preschool this year. The crowded stage was echoed multiple times over in the audience as family and friends filled the Veterans Building to the brim on May 17 for the graduation.

The class of three and four year old students is a young one; they will attend Pre-K at Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School next year.

"Take care of these young ones because they are our future," said Brighton Board Rep. Larry Howard.

Colorful balloons and tablecloths created a festive atmosphere. The students said the pledge and performed the song "10 Little Indians" in Creek as well as acted as



Hollywood Preschoolers line up in their caps and gowns as the graduation ceremony comes to a close.



Hollywood Preschool graduates sing a traditional song with culture instructor Paul Buster.

illustrations for "Brown Bear" book, which was read by two students.

Each student walked to center stage and faced the crowded room alone and introduced themselves in Creek, with a little help



Jordan Rodriguez introduces herself to the crowd at the Immokalee Preschool graduation.

from language instructor Laverne Thomas. Individuals had their own relationship with the stage; some milked the time for all it was worth, others couldn't wait to flee.

After a trip down memory lane in the form of a slide show, the grads did what they came to do. Diplomas in hands, the triumphant young graduates joined their families for a festive lunch.

## HOLLYWOOD

The Hollywood Preschool held a royalty-themed graduation for the four-year-old class on May 22 at Seminole Estates. Family, friends, and the students themselves were dressed to impress. Attire consisted of formal and traditional clothing.

The little graduates were escorted down a red carpet into the ceremony by parents and other family members in royal fashion. Students all showed off their reading skills by reading a few sentences from a children's book. They also performed songs with culture instructor Paul Buster playing guitar.

All 17 students received a diploma and were congratulated by President Mitchell Cypress, Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola, and Hollywood Board Rep. Gordon "Ollie" Wareham.

Derrick Tiger contributed to this story.

# Tribal students at Sagemont share their inspirations

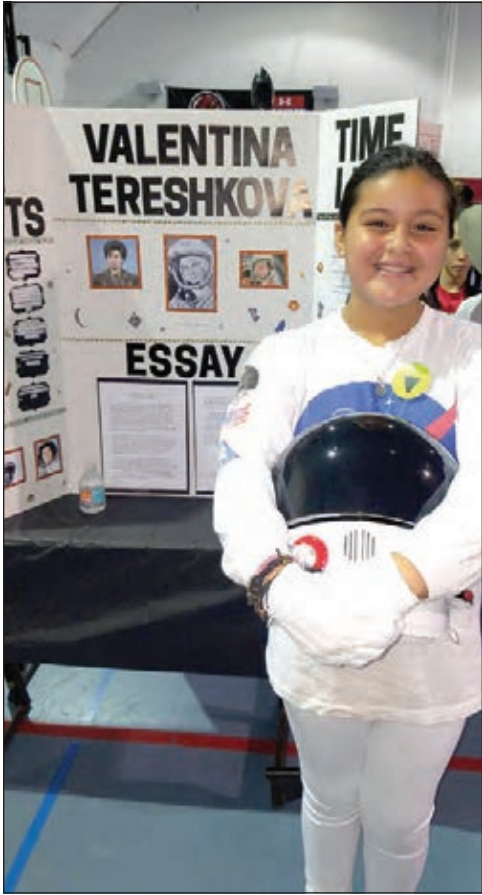
BY TRIBUNE STAFF

WESTON — Tribal students at The Sagemont School's Lower School researched, created and presented projects about famous people who have been inspirations to them in some way. As part of the Wax Museum program in April, the students not only did major research on their specific persons of choice but they also had to dress for the part. Represented were a Native American gold medal Olympian and Pro Football Hall of Famer (Jim Thorpe), a Native American war hero (Sitting Bull), an astronaut (Valentina Tereshkov), a First Lady (Michelle Obama), a civil rights leader (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.) and a saint (Mother Teresa).



Yvette Payne/CSSS

Sagemont student Kyngston Sanders provides information about Sitting Bull during the school's Wax Museum project.



Sagemont students Aiyana Crespo (Valentina Tereshkova), left, Kaydence Green (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.), above center, and Amirani Brooks (Mother Teresa), above right, dress their parts as they showcase what they learned about someone who inspires them.

Yvette Payne/CSSS (3)

Tribal students at Sagemont who participated in the Lower School's Wax Museum project included:

- |                  |                             |             |
|------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Kyngston Sanders | Sitting Bull                | Hollywood   |
| Erica Sanders    | Michelle Obama              | Hollywood   |
| Kaydence Green   | Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King | Big Cypress |
| Amirani Brooks   | Mother Theresa              | Big Cypress |
| Teena Marie      | Jim Thorpe                  | Big Cypress |
| Aiyana Crespo    | Valentina Tereshkova        | Big Cypress |



Yvette Payne/CSSS (2)

Sagemont students Erica Sanders, left, and Teena Marie, right, show their research on their inspirations, which were Michelle Obama and Jim Thorpe, respectively.

# Prom night for Ahfachkee at Hard Rock



Robert Kippenberger photo

Ahfachkee School's prom brought out sharply dressed students on May 3 at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood.



Damon Scott

Athena Bert, Gabby Puente and Marina Garcia enjoy their time at the Ahfachkee School prom.



Robert Kippenberger photo

Ahfachkee's royalty is represented by Prom King Bradin Jim and Prom Queen Thomlynn Billie.

## Free college guidebook available

The American Indian College Fund, with support from the Andrew Mellon Foundation, has published "Native Pathways: A College-Going Guidebook" for Native American high school students seeking higher education. The book

provides content related to how to get into college, choose a school, pay for it, and what to expect the first year in a way that speaks to Native cultures and experiences as students consider attending college. Students, school counselors, and

others can download the book for free on the College Fund's website. Hard copies may be available for some high schools. Email [nativepathways@collegefund.org](mailto:nativepathways@collegefund.org) for more information.



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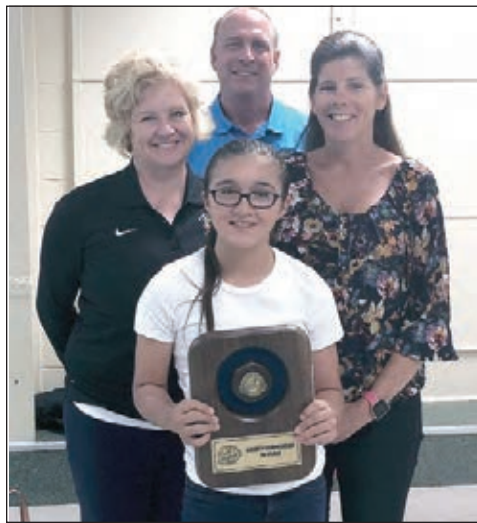
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# Alyssa Madrigal wins first place in 4-H/Tropicana Public Speaking Contest

BY TRIBUNE STAFF

**MOORE HAVEN** — Pemaetv Emahakv Charter School fifth-grader Alyssa Madrigal won first place in the 4-H/Tropicana Public Speaking Contest for Glades County on May 21 at the Doyle Connor Building in Moore Haven. Prior to this she also won first place in both the class and school competition. Her speech was titled “What My Dogs Think About.”

Alyssa, 11, is the daughter of Letty and Howard Madrigal. The contest helps young people write and deliver a speech. According to the Florida 4-H website, more than 150,000 students in grades 4-6 in over 50 Florida counties participate in the contest annually. Tropicana, which has sponsored the contest since 1969, provides classroom materials, medallions, trophies, scholarships and refreshments as part of the program.



Courtesy photos (2)

Above, Alyssa Madrigal holds the first place plaque she won on May 21 in the 4-H/Tropicana Public Speaking Contest for Glades County. With Alyssa are Pemaetv Emahakv Charter School teachers are her 5th-grade language arts teacher Michelle Pritchard, left, and her former 4th-grade teacher Rachel Jones. In the back is PECS principal Brian Greseth. In the photo at left, Alyssa receives the award.



# Heith Lawrence stars as the Tin Man in ‘Wizard of Oz’

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**MOORE HAVEN** — Heith Lawrence’s theater career has gone over the rainbow at Moore Haven Middle/High School, where he starred as the Tin Man in a two-night run of “The Wizard of Oz” on May 10 and 11. This was Heith’s second year on the stage; as a freshman last year he starred in “Little Shop of Horrors” and learned he loved to perform.

“It feels pretty good this year,” Heith said as he waited for makeup in the green room before dress rehearsal on May 9. “Last year I had more to worry about. Now I’m not the main character so it takes a lot off me.”

As a veteran performer, Heith is much more comfortable on the stage and most students recognize him. Although he said the role of Tin Man is more challenging.

“I put a lot more emotion into him,” said the 10th-grader from the Brighton Reservation.

The musical, based on L. Frank Baum’s children’s book “The Wonderful Wizard of Oz” written in 1900, follows the adventures of Dorothy, the Scarecrow, Tin Man and Cowardly Lion as they make their way to the Emerald City to ask the Wizard of Oz to grant their wishes. Along the way, trouble ensues in the guise of the Wicked Witch of the West. Munchkins, apple-throwing trees, poppies and flying monkeys all have time in the spotlight.

The 40-person cast was a large one and included about 25 fourth- and fifth-graders from Moore Haven Elementary School. The rest were middle and high school students. A crew of seven students managed the eight sets and the many set changes during the show. Music director Bryan Browning was proud of his entire cast, but had a lot of praise for the lead characters.

“These guys are very talented,” Browning said. “You just have to tell them once – you don’t even have to finish telling them and they know what to do.”

More than 500 attended the performances, which went off without a hitch.

Beverly Bidney

Heith Lawrence, center, plays the Tin Man in the Moore Haven Middle High School production of the “Wizard of Oz” on May 10-11.



Beverly Bidney

Heith Lawrence sits still as Jessica Browning applies his silver makeup to transform him into the Tin Man.

# Ahfachkee students rock the house at spring concert

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — After only four months playing musical instruments, Ahfachkee School students showed what practice and motivation can do as they performed a rousing, pop-inspired spring concert April 30 for family, friends and other students.

a song from the video game Destiny 2. He liked the music so took it upon himself to learn it.

“I learned it by ear and I got the music for it,” Richard said. “I like the way it sounds, but I listen to a lot of different types of music.”

The fifth grade, backed by the high school band on instruments, sang the Beatles’ “Let It Be” as many in the audience sang along with them. The show ended with



Beverly Bidney

Ahfachkee fifth-graders perform “Let it Be” by the Beatles April 30 at the school’s spring concert.

The students demonstrated their new-found skills on guitar, bass, ukulele, keyboards and drums on songs from the Beatles, contemporary artists and even a video game.

Music teacher Cesar Taveras joined the staff in January and set out to teach students to play the music they wanted to play. Student centered learning is the 21st century way of teaching, so under audience-friendly K-12 guidelines, Taveras let the students choose the songs they wanted to learn.

“I want them to learn to enjoy playing music and performing,” he said. “My number one goal is to have them enjoy playing other people’s music and then learn to create their own.”

Students from first, fifth, sixth and high school performed in the school’s first ensemble concert with instruments. Taveras, who has been a music teacher for more than 20 years, had them practice every day leading up to the concert.

“Students got to choose their instruments,” said Principal Dorothy Cain. “They are excited because they are playing things they like and hear. You get them playing that music and then you can open their repertoire and introduce them to other areas of music.”

Crystal Garcia chose bass as her instrument, which is the backbone of any rhythm section.

“I saw one of my favorite bands had a cool bass player and I wanted to be just like him,” Crystal said. “You have to keep up with the music; as soon as you stop you lose track of it.”

The theme of the concert was “From 12 bars to 32: A Celebration of Popular Music.” The show opened with Laylah Billie, Jade Billie and Tommie Stockton singing the classic Santana song “Black Magic Woman,” a 12-bar blues song.

“This was the first time I performed with a band,” said Laylah Billie, who has been singing since she was 5 years old. “It was really good and it’s awesome being here.”

First-graders took the stage next and sang Chuck Berry’s “Roll Over Beethoven” and the Beatles’ “Yellow Submarine” and “Octopus’ Garden.” Sixth graders sang a couple of newer songs, “Wanted You” by NAV and “The Night Begins to Shine” by B.E.R. The high schoolers followed them for “On Melancholy Hill” by Gorillaz.

“It’s fun and exciting being on stage,” said drummer Nushee Billie.

The stage cleared and Richard Billie sat down at the keyboard and played “Journey,”

band performing Metric’s “Black Sheep.”

“I thought it went very well for only four months of practice,” Taveras said. “It was very impressive. They liked what they were playing, which had a lot to do with it. I just make sure they have fun.”



Beverly Bidney

Emily Zicardo plays guitar with the band at the Ahfachkee spring concert.



Beverly Bidney

Pianist Richard Billie performs “Journey,” a song from the Destiny 2 video game.



Beverly Bidney

Jade Billie, Layla Billie and Tommie Stockton harmonize as they sing at the Ahfachkee spring concert.



# PECS honors its alumni with annual grad walk

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

**BRIGHTON** — Before they walk into the next chapter of their lives, former Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School students gladly returned to the school on May 22



Kevin Johnson

Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School principal Brian Greseth joins his former students for a selfie as the school honored its alumni from the class of 2019.

for an afternoon of appreciation, congratulations and reminiscing. It is an annual rite of passage each May at PECS as the pre-K through grade 8 school provides a classy hero's welcome to its alumni who are about to graduate from high school. This year's participants were seniors from Moore Haven High School (Andrew Fish, Kano Puente, Conner Thomas and Aiden Tommie), Okeechobee High School (Krysta Burton, Cady Osceola and Lucas Osceola) and Lake Placid High School (Raeley Matthews). Each donned graduation caps and gowns in their high school

colors. All plan to attend higher education institutions.

Despite it being an annual occurrence, emotions still fill the air; proof of that came from Principal Brian Greseth, who teared up a bit while telling the students how proud he is of them and their accomplishments. Other staff members provided similar sentiments.

The seniors sat back and enjoyed fond memories of their days at PECS thanks to a video made by teacher Quentin Pritchard. From field trips to culture days to athletics and everything else in between, hundreds of photos captured the spirit of PECS' class of 2015.

After they made a victory lap past all the school's classrooms, which had students and teachers lined up with cheers, high-fives and hugs, the students had two more send-off moments. They shared memories

with former PECS teacher Sarah Williams through a FaceTime chat and took a group selfie with Greseth for one final memory.



Kevin Johnson

This year's grad walk participants at Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School form a half-circle at midcourt in the school's gymnasium on May 22 in Brighton. The high school seniors are, from left, Cady Osceola (Okeechobee), Aiden Tommie (Moore Haven), Krysta Burton (Okeechobee), Kano Puente (Moore Haven), Raeley Matthews (Lake Placid), Andrew Fish (Moore Haven), Lucas Osceola (Okeechobee) and Conner Thomas (Moore Haven).



Kevin Johnson

Students and staff cheer for Krysta Burton and Raeley Matthews during the annual grad walk at PECS.



Kevin Johnson

High school seniors from the class of 2019 walk through a corridor at Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School, where they attended elementary and middle school.

## GRADUATION

From page 1A

The class of 2019 could be the largest Ahfachkee has graduated; no one could remember a larger one.

"This is part of history to see so many graduates," said Lee Zepeda, executive director of administration, in his keynote address. "Don't choose a career; follow your calling. Don't choose a position; follow your purpose. The decisions you make will shape you. Think about what comes naturally to you, where you feel most at home. Live with purpose and remember, you were made to be free."

An abundance of gifts were bestowed on the class. Councilman Tiger provided class rings, President Cypress provided gift bags filled with useful technology and Parent Teacher Student Organization President Lenore Roberts provided necklaces and other gifts.

"This is a huge accomplishment you've made," Roberts said. "It took three wars and a long time for us to get here and we are still here as the Seminole people. Carry that with you with a lot of pride. Honor all those people who sacrificed to get here; honor that every day. What steps will you take to remain the Seminole Tribe? Take giant steps for your people."

In a longstanding school tradition, graduates left the stage and presented gratitude gifts to their loved ones. Love and hugs ensued. A new tradition also began; honor cords for community service honors. Students who had 75-99 hours received a silver cord; those who served more than 100 hours received a gold cord to wear with their cap and gown.

The Warrior Award is presented to the student who demonstrated characteristics of being a warrior. Music teacher Cesar Taveras defined that characteristic as perseverance and presented the award to Crystal Garcia, who persevered during music classes and found her passion in the form of the bass guitar.

"This is what perseverance looks like," Taveras said.

Special cords were awarded to salutatorian Thomlynn Billie and valedictorian Janessa Jones, who gave the traditional valedictorian speech. The large size of the class allowed the students to form a strong bond.

"I'm glad we made it through together and am grateful to have a class that thrives on life," said Jones, 17. "We are here to celebrate our accomplishments. I hear graduation marks the end of this extraordinary chapter; it's bittersweet. We are all anxious to start the next one and it will be just as great or greater."

Jones will attend Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kansas, where she



Beverly Bidney

The Ahfachkee School Class of 2019 poses together before their graduation ceremony May 21 in Immokalee.

will study political science, Native American studies and business administration.

"We are the Tribe's future and I hope to

come back and work for our Tribe," she said.

"Thank you to the Tribe for investing in its youth; we are worth every cent."



Beverly Bidney

Janessa Jones hugs her brother as she presents him with a gratitude gift during the Ahfachkee graduation ceremony.



Beverly Bidney

Greeted by applause, Crystal Garcia proudly holds the Warrior Award she won for embodying warrior characteristics such as perseverance.



Beverly Bidney

Wovoka Tommie, Quenton Cypress and Glen Tiger sing the Seminole version of an honor song at the Ahfachkee graduation ceremony.

# Mother's Day



Derrick Tiger  
**Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Clarice Demayo poses for a photo with Dorothy Tommie at the Hollywood Mother's Day event on May 11.**



Beverly Bidney  
**Ashton Beer takes a selfie with daughter Maevy Beer and Elvis during the Big Cypress Mother's Day luncheon on May 8.**



Beverly Bidney  
**Mom Nikki Baker holds her daughter Jhene Baker, 6 months old, at the Immokalee Mother's Day luncheon on May 10.**



Beverly Bidney  
**Above, three generations came together for Mother's Day in BC, at right is Dale Grasshopper with granddaughters Johnnie Russell and Katherine Bert, who holds great-granddaughter Kiara Jackson.**



Derrick Tiger  
**Lawanna Osceola-Niles holds her great-grandniece Lucianna Tiger during the Hollywood Mother's Day event.**



Beverly Bidney  
**Cheyenne McInturff, Mary Motlow Sanchez, Priscilla Sigurani and Nancy Motlow try their luck at bingo on May 10 at the Immokalee Mother's Day celebration.**



Beverly Bidney  
**The Hall girls celebrate Mother's Day together in Big Cypress. Matriarch Moleana Hall, at right seated, revels in the company of her daughters Lily Hall, Deidra Hall and Liza Hall.**



Beverly Bidney  
**Mom Christina Bhagwandin, seated, is surrounded by her children Preeya, Clea and Hemchand Bhagwandin, Zain Yzaguirre and Leah Herrera at the Immokalee Mother's Day luncheon.**



Beverly Bidney  
**Mother's Day is a family celebration for Brydgett Youngblood, Elliana Maldonado, Micki Burton and Grace Youngblood at the Brighton luncheon.**



Beverly Bidney  
**Maverick Osceola gets in close to Myra Chapo at the BC Mother's Day event as she cuddles with their newborn baby Aero Osceola.**



Beverly Bidney  
**Mabel Tichenor, seated, celebrates Mother's Day in Brighton with Annette Jones and Gracie, Nevaeh, Linda and Claudia Gore.**

# Sports



## With coach Mary Huff at the helm, Okeechobee goes on surprising postseason surge

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

**PALM BEACH GARDENS** — A year ago it was pitcher Sean Osceola who led Okeechobee High School's baseball team on a postseason journey that surpassed expectations.

This spring two Seminoles played a big role in another surprising playoff push. This time it was the softball team. The Brahmins, with head coach Mary Huff at the helm and freshman Elle Thomas at third base, turned a mediocre regular season into a stunning postseason.

Nobody would have been surprised had Okeechobee, which was well under .500 all season, quietly exited the season in the district semifinals, but the Brahmins had other plans.

Okeechobee found its groove in the postseason. The Brahmins beat Martin County, 4-1, in the Class 7A-District 13 semifinals and then stunned South Fork, 6-2, to win the district championship.

Okeechobee kept the momentum going with a 2-1 win against Olympic Heights in a regional quarterfinal and a thrilling 8-5 regional semifinal triumph against Dwyer in nine innings.

"It's been amazing," Huff said after the Brahmins ousted Dwyer on May 14 in Palm Beach Gardens. "These kids have come together and have proved themselves. If you asked me if we were going to be here at the beginning of the season, I probably would have said 'we'll give it a good shot, but we're young and rebuilding.' But these kids have proven themselves and tonight was such a huge team effort. I'm so proud



Mary Huff, head coach of the Okeechobee High School softball team, second from right, talks to her players after the team's 8-5 win against Dwyer in a Class 7A regional semifinal May 14 in Palm Beach Gardens. The Brahmins finished the regular season with a 7-16 record, but then reeled off four straight upsets that included a district championship and two regional tournament wins.

Kevin Johnson

of these kids."

Thomas, who played for Pemaayev Emahakv Charter School the past few years, made the defensive play of the game in the bottom of the fifth inning. With a runner at first, Dwyer attempted a sacrifice bunt. A charging Thomas scooped up the ball almost in front of home plate. Her only option appeared to be to throw to first base in the direction she was moving, but she opted to try to nab the runner going to second. Throwing off her back foot while going in the opposite direction of the base, she made a SportsCenter-worthy play to get the out at second.

"That was a huge play," Huff said. "We practice that. Get up in their face. As soon as we know they're bunting, we want to get that lead runner. Everybody automatically thinks go one, get the sacrifice out and that was their plan, but we were one step ahead of them the entire way."

"She's never practiced throwing it off her back foot like that. That was some Derek Jeter stuff. That was a great play."

After Okeechobee went ahead with three runs in the top of the ninth, Thomas handled two grounders and fired them to first for the first two outs of a 1-2-3 inning.

Thomas also shined at the plate with a single, an RBI and a long fly ball out. In the district championship, she smacked a two-run double.

"She's putting some good swings on the ball," Huff said. "She had a base hit and put one on the warning track. She's a freshman. It's only up from here for her. I'm happy with where she's at."

Okeechobee took advantage of its chances and received solid outings from pitcher Haley Underhill.

"They follow Haley's lead on the mound," Huff said. "She's a great person to have on the mound. They want to have her back. She does well and they want to do well for her scoring runs."

Okeechobee's playoff surge ended May

17 with a 3-0 loss at home to Doral Charter in a regional final.

So the 2007 Okeechobee team, which Huff played for, remains the only Brahmins squad to reach the state's final four.

Huff hopes the experience and mojo

generated from the playoffs carries into next season.

"When they set the standard like this for going this far in the postseason, these kids aren't going to want anything less than that," she said.



Kevin Johnson

Freshman Elle Thomas has her eyes on a pop-up as she handles third base duties for the Brahmins during their playoff win against Dwyer.



Kevin Johnson

Okeechobee celebrates after knocking off Dwyer, 8-5, in nine innings in a Class 7A regional semifinal in Palm Beach Gardens.

## Triple Crown series wraps up in BC

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

**BIG CYPRESS** — Another Triple Crown Fishing Series wrapped up May 11 on the canals of the Big Cypress Reservation.

Ruben Anzualda and Frank Marrero

were rewarded for their consistency with the grand championship trophy.

They had two third-place finishes and one second during the series and finished with a weight of 45.32 pounds, three in front of runner-up Andrea Tommie and Tony Tommie. Allen Venzor and Ralph Sanchez

edged Ozzy Garza and Martha Suta by a fraction of a pound to claim third place.

Garza and Suta won the tournament's final outing with 16.92 pounds. Wyatt Osceola and Tyrell Osceola won the Sam Nelson Big Bass Award at 4.94 pounds.

Earlier in the season, Marie Phillips

and Fred Phillips won the Sonny Decarlo/Clyde Tiger Memorial Big Bass Award at 4.9 pounds.

Sarah Osceola and Dalton Koenes won the Josiah Johns Memorial Big Bass Award to start the season.

Sixteen teams of two competed in the

series. Results were tallied at the end of each event by Hollywood Recreation site manager Joe Collins at Moses Jumper Jr.'s dock.



Kevin Johnson

Triple Crown Series participants, including winners, gather on the canal shore near Moses Jumper Jr.'s dock in Big Cypress at the conclusion of the final fishing event of the series on May 11.

# Immokalee softball wins first-ever district title

*Ava Nunez pitches perfect game in semifinals*

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

**IMMOKALEE** — More than 20 minutes had elapsed since the final out was recorded in Immokalee's 2019 season, but the tears continued to stream down Jillian Rodriguez's face.

This season — her fourth and final one for Immokalee — carried plenty of significance and emotion, which is why it was so tough for her to say goodbye.

"This season meant everything to me," Rodriguez said as she fought back her emotions following the team's 2-1 loss to Mariner in a 6A regional quarterfinal on May 8 at Immokalee High School. "This team is my favorite team. I would do anything for these girls. They made it memorable, they made it historical. They came out and played their hearts out for us three seniors. I can't thank them enough for everything they've done for us and this team. I know next year they'll keep getting better and the years after. It's not going to stop anytime soon."

This year's team won the Collier County Athletic Conference for the second year in a row, but it also accomplished two things no other softball team at Immokalee had ever done: win a district championship and play



Seminole sisters Ava Nunez, left, and Jillian Rodriguez hold the Class 6A-District 12 trophy that their Immokalee High School softball team won. It was the team's first-ever district championship title.

Courtesy photo



Kevin Johnson

Immokalee High School senior Jillian Rodriguez (2) fires up her teammates, including her sister Ava Nunez (3), before facing Mariner in a Class 6A regional quarterfinal on May 8.

in a regional tournament game.

Rodriguez, a pitcher and outfielder who is headed to Nashville, Tennessee, to play for Tennessee State, won't soon be forgotten.

"She's a phenomenal softball player, but even a better person," said Immokalee coach Ruben Lucio, who coached Rodriguez in her final two softball seasons and one soccer season. "She's just one of those who is willing to do it all for the team, do the extra work that's needed."

Rodriguez and the team's other two seniors helped turn the program into one of the elite teams in Southwest Florida.

"You can look at the track record of this program and where it was and where it's come from, and it's because of players like her," Lucio said. "Players that are willing to work the extra hours and willing to do the extra little things that make a program successful at the end of the day."

Rodriguez's high school career has ended, but her sister's career is just getting warmed up. It didn't take long for Ava Nunez to establish herself as one of the top pitchers in Southwest Florida. She was named one of three finalists for the Naples Daily News

Softball Player of the Year (the winner had not been announced as of press time for this issue of the Tribune).

Nunez threw a perfect game in the district semifinals, a 12-0 win against Golden Gate. So smooth and quick was Nunez's outing that nobody realized her accomplishment until after the game.

"She just mowed people down that game," Lucio said. "I don't think it occurred to anyone that she retired 15 batters in a row with no one getting on. She's just a phenomenal pitcher."

She returned to the circle and fired a three-hit shutout as Immokalee captured its first-ever district title with a 4-0 win against Lely in the 6A-District 12 championship.

"She's always on her game," Rodriguez said about her younger sister. "Those past two games, she did her thing. She always comes in big for us. She's amazing."

Nunez has three more years left of high school ball. Immokalee should be strong again next year.

"We bring back seven starters. There's already eighth-graders itching to get up here. It's not stopping," said Lucio, whose team finished with an 18-7 record.



Kevin Johnson

Immokalee freshman ace Ava Nunez warms up prior to facing Mariner in a regional quarterfinal.



Kevin Johnson

Jillian Rodriguez gets ready to take a swing in a regional quarterfinal against Mariner.



Kevin Johnson

From left, Jalee Wilcox, Atley Driggers, Ashlynn Collins, Cyiah Avila and their horses get ready to compete in the Florida Junior High School Rodeo Association's finals on May 3 at Bergeron Rodeo Arena in Davie.

## For the love of rodeo, middle schoolers showcase their skills

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

**DAVIE** — They climb aboard horses with names such as Apache, Batman, Kicks and Toots.

Thanks to rodeo on TV and elsewhere, they know who the professional stars are, such as Hailey Kinsel, J.B. Mauney, Tuff Cooper and Jackie Crawford, hoping someday to compete on the big stage as well.

For now, Cyiah Avila, Ashlynn Collins, Atley Driggers and Jalee Wilcox are honing their horsemanship skills while being middle school students. They recently completed their seasons in the Florida Junior High School Rodeo Association.

Cyiah is Seminole; the others are descendants. All bring a similar love of horses and competition to arenas throughout Florida. They've been riding for as long as they can remember.

In early May, they were at Bergeron Rodeo Grounds in Davie for the association's finals with aspirations of qualifying for the

National Junior High Rodeo Finals that will be held in June in Huron, South Dakota.

The association features kids in grades 6, 7 and 8 who compete one weekend per month during the school year at arenas in LaBelle, Moore Haven, Okeechobee and the Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena on the Big Cypress Reservation.

"Most of the kids will move on to high school rodeo. It's kind of a stepping stone for them to move into high school rodeo and then a lot of them will move into college rodeo," said Matt Davis, president of FJHSRA.

The hard work the girls put in on a daily basis with caring for their horses — and they have multiple ones — while improving their riding skills as well as focusing on their academics tie into traits that can be used elsewhere in life.

"I put my granddaughter in [rodeo] because I think it will give her a goal in life," said Cynthia Osceola, grandmother of Cyiah. "It teaches them a lot of patience and responsibility."

Cyiah attended Ahfachkee School this year; Ashlynn, Atley and Jalee are home-

schooled.

Breakaway calf roping, barrel racing, goat tying, pole bending and ribbon roping are among the events they compete in against other junior high schoolers.

In the finals at Bergeron, Jalee finished first in barrels, ribbon roping and all-around. For the season, she finished third overall in barrels and second in ribbon roping, which earned her spots in those events at nationals. She also qualified in breakaway, which she finished second overall in the season. She came in second in the all-around category for the season.

Although the other three girls didn't qualify for South Dakota, Cyiah and Atley each notched their highest point-totals of the season in the finals, and Ashlynn had her best score of the season in pole bending.

The junior high season has ended in Florida, but the girls will continue to compete in other rodeos, including the Eastern Indian Rodeo Association where Cyiah and Ashlynn are part of royalty.

## Sean Osceola, Pasco-Hernando earn trip to NJCAA World Series

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

Pasco-Hernando State College needed two wins to keep its season alive and Sean Osceola, of the Brighton Reservation, put his team on the right track with a masterpiece.

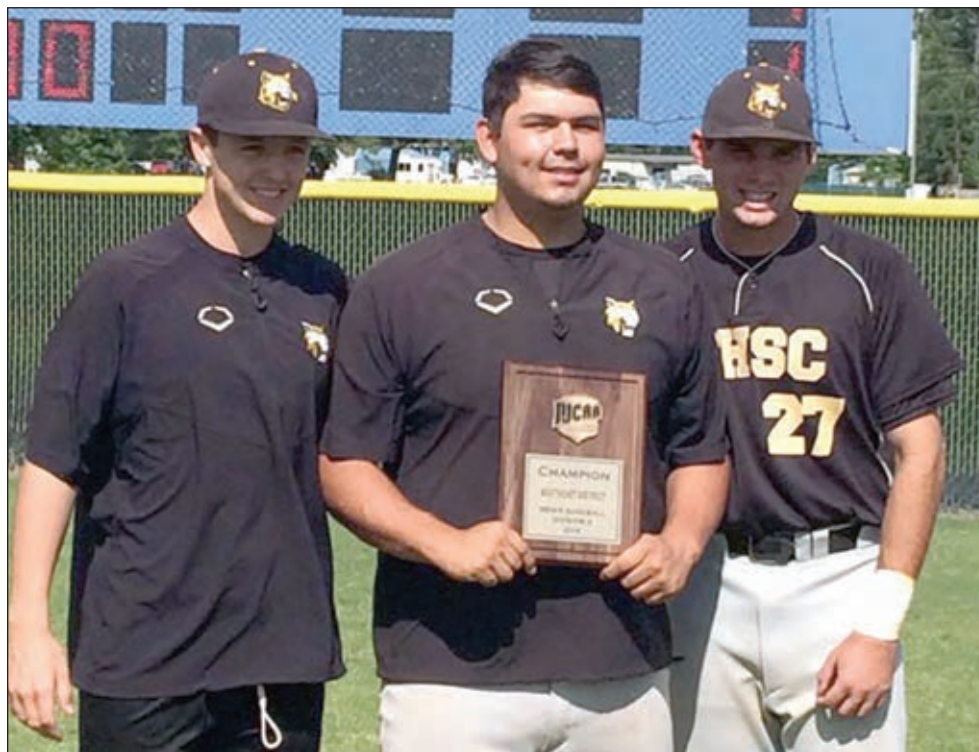
Having come out of the losers' bracket in the National Junior College Athletic Association Southern District tournament, Pasco-Hernando was in a win-or-go-home situation, needing to beat Brunswick twice.

Osceola, a freshman right-hander, took care of the first leg. The Okeechobee High graduate fired a complete game May 13 as Pasco-Hernando defeated Brunswick, 5-2, in North Carolina. In nine innings, Osceola allowed seven hits, fanned nine and walked two.

The next day Pasco-Hernando topped Brunswick again, 6-1, to win the district and earn a bid to the NJCAA Division II World Series in Enid, Oklahoma.

Pasco-Hernando opened the World Series with an 11-10 win against Lackawanna, of Pennsylvania, on May 25 in Enid, Oklahoma. Osceola started, but lasted only 2.2 innings. He allowed seven runs on five hits, but only four were earned. Pasco-Hernando committed four errors in the game.

(Editor's note: The double-elimination World Series was still going on as of press time for this issue of the Tribune).



SWFL Baseball/Twitter

Sean Osceola, center, and the Pasco-Hernando State College baseball team are NJCAA World Series-bound after winning the Southeast District Championship on May 14 in North Carolina.

## Former PECS volleyball standout signs with Florida Southern

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

Raeley Matthews' name appears on the lone undefeated volleyball team banner in the Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School gymnasium. That 'unconquered' 13-0 team was from the 2014-15 season.

Four years later, following a stellar high school career at Okeechobee and Lake Placid, Matthews' name will next appear on the roster of the Florida Southern College Moccasins volleyball team.

Matthews will be a student-athlete at the Lakeland college that competes in NCAA Division II. Her mom, PECS teacher Pam

Matthews, is a former FSC softball player.

"I'm excited. I hope to follow in her footsteps," Raeley Matthews said.

FSC reached the NCAA South Regional semifinals in 2018 and finished with a 22-11 record.

Matthews, a 5-foot-11 outside hitter, signed with FSC earlier this school year on a full scholarship. After playing three years at PECS, she played at Okeechobee High her freshman and sophomore seasons before shifting to Lake Placid High for her junior and senior years.



Raeley Matthews

# Esports' popularity grows within Tribe and beyond

BY DERRICK TIGER  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — Popular video games Fortnite, Call of Duty, and Super Smash Bros. were the center of attraction for a tournament called “Gamer Palooza” on March 28 in Hollywood. Tribal members ages 12 to 24 showcased their gamer skills in a competitive environment at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center.

The tournament was divided into two age categories (12-17 and 18-24). The gamers played in groups consisting of four to five players, starting with Super Smash Bros and then moving to Fortnite, and Call of Duty.

The community event was hosted by Hollywood Board Rep. Gordon “Ollie” Wareham, who, along with Board and Recreation staff, the IT Department and Brody Osceola, helped organize the tournament.

“Ollie approached me about setting up the tournament format and I immediately agreed,” Osceola said. “I’ve been trying to do events like this in the Tribe for as long as I can remember. Being able to finally see it come through is really awesome.”

Osceola, from Naples, has been a semiprofessional gamer for six years. He has competed in two major video game tournaments and many online tournaments.

In 2016, Osceola founded an esports (electronic sports) organization called RCG



Brody Osceola observes the Call of Duty match during Gamer Palooza at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center on March 28.

Derrick Tiger

which stands for “Rose Clan Gaming.” The main focus of the team has been the first person shooter Call of Duty: Black Ops 4,

but Osceola says that they hope to branch out into other video games as well.

“Starting the organization took a lot

of research on my part and working with my financial advisor to determine whether it was a viable investment of my time and

money,” Osceola said. “To be honest, I am still formalizing the legalities.”

According to multiple news outlets, esports organizations function as many other organizations do. For example, they have team owners, contracts, and generate sponsorships. An esports organization can have multiple teams that compete across different gaming platforms which brings more revenue. Last year the most valuable esports outfit was reported to be worth \$310 million.

Osceola’s esports team is the early stages but like other professional gamers the team has their own gaming house. A gaming house is basically what it sounds like. It is a house that is solely dedicated to gaming.

“It is a dream to not only have a house, but then to have one set up just for gaming, content creation and media is amazing,” Osceola said.

A project Osceola currently has in progress is putting together an all-Native American esports team.

“First, establishing an all-Native team is my #1 priority not just for Call of Duty, but any esports we enter. I see esports as an opportunity to showcase native athletes unlike other national sports leagues,” Osceola said. “I would rather raise money to put a jersey on the back of a Native gamer than to just sell our jerseys to our native fans. We planned on premiering our Native team in Anaheim this summer; however the team passes sold out immediately and we were unable to secure one.”



Derrick Tiger (2)

Above, Gamer Palooza winners in the 18-24 age category join Hollywood Board Rep. Gordon “Ollie” Wareham. At right, Tribal members play a game of Super Smash Bros. Mar. 28 at the Gamer Palooza event.



# PECS student-athletes honored with season awards

BY TRIBUNE STAFF

**BRIGHTON** — The Pemaeytv Emahakv Charter School handed out its annual sports awards on May 20 for the best-of-the-best from the 2018-19 academic year.

## Girls Basketball

MVP: Giselle Micco  
Seminole Award: Shylynn Testerman  
Offensive Player of the Year: Preslynn Baker  
Defensive Player of the Year: Carlee Osceola  
Rookie of the Year: Tiyanni Anderson  
Most Improved Player: Willo James

## Girls Volleyball

MVP: Giselle Micco  
Seminole Award: Winnie Gopher  
Offensive Player of the Year: Lexi Thomas  
Defensive Player of the Year: Tiyanni Anderson  
Most Improved Player: Saniya Rodriguez

## Softball

MVP: Lexi Thomas  
Seminole Award: Karlyne Urbina  
Offensive Player of the Year: Giselle Micco  
Defensive Player of the Year: Carlee Osceola  
Rookie of the Year: Preslynn Baker  
Most Improved Player: Neela Jones

## Boys Basketball

MVP: Bryce Ward  
Seminole Award: Pherian Baker  
Offensive MVP: Charlie Armstrong  
Defensive MVP: Aundre Baker  
Rookie of the Year: Wyatt Hines  
Most Improved Player: Jace Brown



Boys basketball MVP Bryce Ward



Volleyball and girls basketball MVP Giselle Micco



Softball MVP Lexi Thomas

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# Ahfachkee honors its student-athletes

## Haskell AD addresses fall, winter, spring teams

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

**BIG CYPRESS** — As the Ahfachkee School's physical footprint expands on its campus with the addition of a new building, so too is its athletics program.

It wasn't long ago that the small school on the Big Cypress Reservation annually wrestled with inconsistency. Some years it would field sports teams, but not other years, often wavering due to lack of participation and student eligibility struggles.

But in the past couple years, stability has become a most valuable player for the program. Coaches are not changing on an annual basis. Students are meeting grade requirements. Teams are competing in FHSAA districts, vying for chances to go to regionals and states. Games are far more competitive.

This season's slate of teams included cross country and volleyball in the fall, girls and boys basketball in the winter, golf and track and field in the spring.

The student-athletes were honored May 6 with an awards luncheon at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium.

"We're in the infancy stages right now and we plan to grow quickly," Principal Dorothy Cain told the student-athletes.

Athletics director Matt Beckham said the school plans to add softball next year.

Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank, who frequently attends games, told the student-athletes that he liked what he saw this year.

"What I saw this year was better coordination and teamwork. What I mean by coordination is working as a team," he said. "As you go through life, you'll see that



Kevin Johnson

Boys golf MVP Dyami Koenes has plenty of reasons to smile with two trophies.

teamwork will be very beneficial to you."

The student-athletes also heard from guest speaker Nana Allison-Brewer, who is the athletics director and volleyball coach for Haskell Indian Nations University in Kansas. She told the kids that it's great to have aspirations to play for colleges such as Florida, Florida State and Miami, but to keep in mind there's also the option of playing for Haskell.

"You guys have lots of Division I schools here that are on your televisions that are big and bright, but I also want to remember there's also an all-Native American school in Lawrence, Kansas. We've had several Seminole Tribe of Florida members come play for us," she said.

Allison-Brewer said Haskell offers two-and-four year degrees, including in sports-related fields that deal with health, fitness and recreation.

"We offer a degree so if you want to come back [to your reservation] and run your recreation centers, we can provide you with the degree to have those skills," she said.

In the early 1900s, Haskell competed in football against the nation's elite, such as Notre Dame, Nebraska and Texas. The school dropped football a few years ago, but plenty of other athletic opportunities are available with teams in men's and women's basketball, cross country, golf, softball and volleyball. Allison-Brewer said the school will add men's and women's track in the upcoming academic year.

Allison-Brewer (Navajo) also shared her inspirational story about how sports helped her overcome rough, racially-insensitive times while growing up in Farmington, New Mexico.

"In my town, when I was a little girl, probably fifth or sixth grade, you couldn't just go out for a nice jog without someone throwing a can at you saying 'You ugly Indian' or this and that. Really hurtful. My mom was a big runner and I went and jogged



Kevin Johnson (2)

Ahfachkee's Female Athlete of the Year, Abby Tigertail, left, and Male Athlete of the Year Jeremiah Pickup, right.

with her and she'd get so mad because she'd hear all these racial slurs all the time," Allison-Brewer said.

Farmington is the area where the book "The Broken Circle" delves into the 1974 murders of two Navajo men by three high school students.

Allison-Brewer said sports provided her an outlet and helped her overcome feeling fearful and intimidated. She went on to play volleyball at the University of New Mexico.

She concluded with a message for the Ahfachkee student-athletes which she applies to her own players as well.

"Show them what we're capable of doing. We carry ourselves with pride," she said.

### Ahfachkee School 2018-19 sports award winners

#### Cross Country

Jeremiah Pickup  
Up & Coming

Leslie Gopher  
MVP

**Boys Golf**  
Dyami Koenes  
MVP

**Girls Volleyball**  
Mya Cypress  
Offensive MVP

Janessa Jones  
Defensive MVP



Kevin Johnson

Ahfachkee's scholar athletes gather for a photo.

Abigail Tigertail  
Up & Coming

Lania Bert  
Sportsmanship

Leilani Gopher  
Rookie of the year

Aaliyah Billie  
Most Improved

Alena Stockton  
Best Server

Thomlynn Billie  
Most Inspirational

**Girls Basketball** – Two winners for each award

Abigail Tigertail  
Offensive MVP

Alena Stockton  
Defensive MVP

Carlise Bermudez  
Defensive MVP

Ramona Jimmie  
Defensive MVP

Destiny Cypress  
Up & Coming

Ayliah Billie  
Up & Coming

Thomlynn Billie  
Sportswoman Award

Leilani Gopher  
Sportswoman Award

**Boys Basketball** – Two Offensive MVPs

Jeremiah Pickup  
Offensive MVP

Chanon Frye  
Offensive MVP

Dyami Koenes  
Defensive MVP

Damien Fish  
Defensive MVP

Willie Smith  
Up & coming

Leslie Gopher  
Sportsmanship Award

#### Boys Track & Field

Willie Smith  
MVP

Jeremiah Pickup  
Up & Coming

#### Athletes of the year and a scholar athlete of the year

Male Athlete of the Year  
Jeremiah Pickup

Female Athlete of the Year  
Abigail Tigertail

Scholar Athlete of the Year  
Janessa Jones



Kevin Johnson

Ahfachkee's volleyball team is honored at the sports lunch.



Kevin Johnson

Ahfachkee's boys basketball players hold their trophies at the school's awards lunch.

# Annual basketball tournament held in memory of Lance Cpl. Herman Osceola

BY TRIBUNE STAFF

**BIG CYPRESS** — The 34th annual Herman L. Osceola Memorial Basketball Tournament was held in March at the gymnasium that is named in Herman's honor and memory.

The tournament is held each year on or around the anniversary of the death of U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Herman Osceola, who died on March 24, 1984 in a military helicopter crash in South Korea.

Results (team organizers in parenthesis)

**Legends Women:**

1st: Young Legends 1 (Geraldine Osceola)

2nd: Young Legends 2 (Myra Jumper)

**Legends Men:**

1st: Killer Whales (Jason Billie)

2nd: Legends (Sandy Billie)

**Adults Women:**

1st: Lady Hittaz (Kelcie Jumper)

2nd: Wide Open (Hali Garcia)

**Adults Men**

1st: Uncivilized Tribe (Byron Billie)

2nd: Darkside (Darnell Osceola)

**Men's 3-point shooting contest winner:**

Issiah Billie



Kevin Johnson (2)

At left, Darlah Cypress soars for a layup during a woman's division game at the 34th annual Herman L. Osceola Memorial Basketball Tournament in Big Cypress. At right, Herman's sister, Valdenia Osceola, and mother, Ruby Osceola, show a cake with Herman's photo on it. Lunch and dinner was provided during the event.



Courtesy photo

Ruby Osceola presents a check to Issiah Billie after he won the men's 3-point contest.



Kevin Johnson

The plaque that honors Lance Cpl. Herman L. Osceola outside the gym that bears his name.



Kevin Johnson

Nate Lane (24) wins a tip at the start of a game.



Courtesy photo

Mens' champion Uncivilized Tribe



Courtesy photo

Women's champion Lady Hittaz



Kevin Johnson

Teams battle in the paint during a women's division game.



Courtesy photo

Women's runner-up Lady Seminoles

## MMA Live comes to Hard Rock Event Center at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino

FROM PRESS RELEASE

**HOLLYWOOD** — Burt Watson Promotions' inaugural "MMA LIVE" will be held June 15 at 7 p.m. at Hard Rock Event Center at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Hollywood. The event will feature a 12-bout card with local, national and international standouts.

In the "MMA LIVE" main event, Miami's "Know Way" Jose Caceres (14-8-1, 1 NC), the only man to defeat current UFC welterweight champion Kamaru Usman and the brother of UFC star Alex Caceres, looks to kick off his 2019 campaign with a win when he battles Fort Lauderdale's Fred "Child of God" Moncaio (6-3) in a three-round welterweight contest. Moncaio has been on a streak, winning five of his last six fights.

Also featured on the card will be a combat jiu-jitsu match between Vero Beach's Igor Feliz and Miami black belt Enrico Cocco.

Making his return to action, Miami's Edwin "The Emperor" Sarria (5-2) looks to get back to business when he meets Dominican Republic's Wascar "La Avispa" Cruz in a flyweight contest.

A fearless competitor on fight night, veteran Gabriel "Stunna" Varona (3-5) makes his first start since 2012 when he battles fellow Miami lightweight David Gomez (1-2).

In featherweight action, Miami's Olivier "Warrior of God" Murad (3-0) puts his perfect record on the line against fellow unbeaten Shawn Brown (2-0) of Lantana.

Opening up the main card will be a clash of welterweights, as Miami Beach's Hernan Sosa (4-1) faces West Palm Beach's, "Bad Guy" Smith Amisial (4-5-1).

Tickets for "MMA Live" cost \$65, \$85 and \$205 and are available for purchase at ticketmaster.com.

## Native American Hall of Fame induction ceremony to be held at Hard Rock in Tulsa

FROM PRESS RELEASE

**GREAT FALLS, Mont.** — The National Native American Hall of Fame has announced the 12 individuals who will be inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2019. They will be honored at an Induction Ceremony on Nov. 2 at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The ceremony will celebrate these 12 individuals, their accomplishments, and what they have meant to Indigenous peoples across the globe.

The 12 inductees are:  
**Lucy Covington** (d. 1982), Colville;  
**Ada Deer**, Menominee;  
**Louise Erdrich**, Turtle Mountain Chippewa;

**Billy Frank Jr.** (d. 2014), Nisqually;  
**Forrest Gerard** (d. 2013), Blackfeet;  
**Hattie Kauffman**, Nez Perce;  
**Oren Lyons**, Onondaga;  
**Richard Oakes** (d. 1972), Mohawk;  
**Elizabeth Peratrovich** (d. 1958), Tlingit;

**Pascal Poolaw** (d. 1967), Kiowa;  
**Mary Golda Ross** (d. 2008), Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma;  
**Wes Studi**, Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma.

"Our board of directors and I believe that the 12 Native Americans who will be enshrined in the National Native American Hall of Fame are stellar examples of the individuals and level of accomplishment that our organization will be honoring this year, and in the future," said James Parker Shield, Little Shell Chippewa, chief executive officer and founder of the National Native American Hall of Fame.

"Our organization's mission is to recognize and honor the inspirational achievements of Native Americans in contemporary history," said Shield. "We join with all of our relatives across Indian country — and all Americans throughout the United States — in welcoming these exemplary individuals, some who have passed on to the spirit world, to the National Native American Hall of Fame."

To nominate other Native Americans in the future, the National Native American Hall of Fame is working on a nomination form that will be on the website ([www.nativehalloffame.org](http://www.nativehalloffame.org)). Until the form is online, send emails to: [info@nativehalloffame.org](mailto:info@nativehalloffame.org) with the name, short biography, and a digital photo of the individual being nominated as well as your contact information.

For more information about the 2019 Induction Ceremony and to become a sponsor, contact Chief Development Officer T.J. Hansell, Turtle Mountain Chippewa at [tj@nativehalloffame.org](mailto:tj@nativehalloffame.org) or (602) 885-4454.

## Elba Ramalho to perform at Seminole Casino Coconut Creek

FROM PRESS RELEASE

**COCONUT CREEK** — The Brazilian performer Elba Ramalho will take the stage in The Pavilion at Seminole Casino Coconut Creek on July 13 at 8 p.m.

Tickets priced at \$25/\$30/\$35 per person are on sale now via Ticketmaster locations, online at Ticketmaster.com, or by calling 800-653-8000. The Pavilion box office will also open at 1 p.m. on the day of the show for on-site ticket purchases and will-call pickup.

Ramalho, who is also a poet and actress, has won two "Latin Grammys" and 16 Awards of Brazilian Music.

In addition to her successful solo career, Ramalho has collaborated with a number of well-established Brazilian acts over the years including Alceu Valença and her first cousin, Zé Ramalho.

Ramalho, who hails from the Brazilian state of Paraíba, has performed at such major international venues as the Olympia in Paris, the Blue Note in New York, the Brixton Academy in London and at the Montreaux Festival in Switzerland.

Her shows bring together an eclectic audience of all ages as she is constantly playing at jazz, rock and forró festivals as well as business meetings and major events.

## Gatlin Brothers to hold holiday concert in Immokalee

FROM PRESS RELEASE

**IMMOKALEE** — Jay Goldberg Events and Entertainment will present country music legends The Gatlin Brothers in concert at Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee on Dec. 19 at 8 p.m. with doors opening at 7 p.m. Advance tickets are on sale now for \$69 and are available by phone at 1-800-514-ETIX or online at [www.moreinparadise.com](http://www.moreinparadise.com) or [www.jaytv.com/florida](http://www.jaytv.com/florida). Concert attendees must be 21 years of age or older.

The Gatlin Brothers will perform all their hits as well as favorite Christmas and holiday songs during this country Christmas concert.

Larry, Steve and Rudy, the Gatlin Brothers, are a Grammy Award-winning trio who have dazzled audiences for more than 60 years with a lifetime of notable achievements including: a Grammy for Best Country Song ("Broken Lady"), three ACM awards for Single of the Year ("All The Gold in California"), Album of the Year ("Straight Ahead"), and Male Vocalist of the Year for Larry Gatlin, along with five nominations for CMA Vocal Group of the year, Single, Album and Male Vocalist of the Year.

## Seminole Classic Casino guest wins \$177,258

FROM PRESS RELEASE

**HOLLYWOOD** — A Seminole Classic Casino guest (who wished to remain anonymous) hit a \$177,258 jackpot on April 14. The guest had bet \$100 on AGS' Diamond Lotto progressive machine before the resulting jackpot. The progressive jackpot was subsequently reset to \$100,000.

The recently renovated landmark casino is now home to more than 1,000 state-of-the-art, newest-title slot machines and other local favorites such as Diamond Lotto, Fort Knox and Pirate's Loot.

## Country singer Martina McBride to perform at Seminole Casino Coconut Creek

FROM PRESS RELEASE

**COCONUT CREEK** — Country singer Martina McBride will perform in The Pavilion at Seminole Casino Coconut Creek on June 29 at 8 p.m.

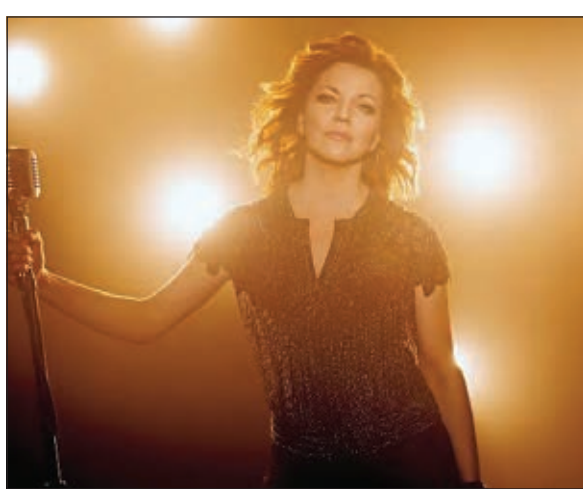
Tickets priced at \$40/\$50/\$60 per person are on sale now via Ticketmaster locations, online at Ticketmaster.com, or by calling 800-653-8000. The Pavilion box office will also open at 1 p.m. on the day of the show for on-site ticket purchases and will-call pickup.

McBride has sold over 18 million albums and won the Country Music Association "Female Vocalist of the Year" award four times as well as the Academy of Country Music "Top Female Vocalist" award three times. She is also a 14-time Grammy Award nominee.

A Kansas native, McBride

has produced a number of hits during her career, including "This One's for the Girls," "Where Would You Be," "Wild Angels" (her first number-one hit), "I'm Gonna Love You Through It," and "Independence Day" (which won two Country Music Association awards and a Grammy for Best Country Song).

Known for her soprano singing range, McBride released her debut album in 1992 and has since



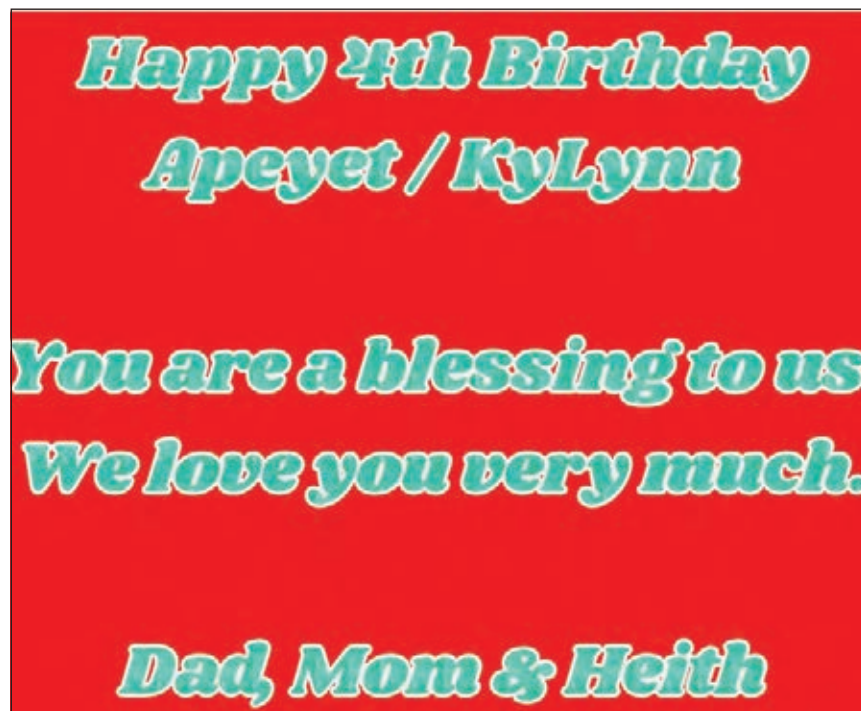
Martina McBride

Courtesy photo

recorded a total of 13 studio albums.

# Announcements

## Happy Birthday!



## Lacrosse MVP



Contributed photo

Congratulations on receiving MVP Offense for 8U Davie Lacrosse. Great job, Haash! You're awesome! We are so proud of you! We love you and you're always our MVP!

Mom, Gamy, and Logan

## Happy Birthday!

My dear princess Jazzlynn Leann, mommy wants to say how blessed I truly am on this day 5/20 my third princess was born. Mommy loves you so much and is so proud of you, how hard you try at school and you don't give up. Your my lil bubble gum, Problem Child "Nyny," mommy will always be here to the end, princess, and I hope you enjoy your special day and may all your little wishes come true.

We love you, Mommy, Teddy, Mariyah, Aaliyah, Jazzlynn, Baby j.; Grandmothers: Belen, Guadalupe, Barbara, Nancy, Claudia; Grandfathers: Alfredo, Felix, Encarnacion, Joe; Uncles: Joe, Alfredo Jr., Daniel; Aunts: Lillie, Alicia Nina, Brenda, Lory, Samantha, Lez, and all your cuzins. Family: Martinez/Alvarado/Garza/Faz



## Everglades City to host Independence Day celebration June 29

FROM PRESS RELEASE

**EVERGLADES CITY** — Historic Everglades City will celebrate Independence Day with its annual free family festival on June 29.

An opening ceremony will be held at 10 a.m. on the steps of City Hall (the former County courthouse) followed at 10:30 a.m. by a patriotic parade around the little city.

The theme this year is "Hats Off to America" and there are

prizes for the best entries which may be anything from golf carts to swamp buggies. And, new this year, there is a prize for the best hat. The celebration continues in McLeod Park when booths open at 11 a.m. featuring hot dogs, sodas, a bake sale, face painting, arts and crafts vendors, raffles, kiddies' best dressed contest, and playground games.

The event will conclude with a fireworks show at 9 p.m.

### FOR SALE

LAST SIX OF VIN#	YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILEAGE/ HRS	CONDITION	STARTING BID PRICE
B17252	2006	FORD SUV	EXPLORER XLT (RWD)	173,688	Poor	\$1,050.00
262181	2010	FORD SEDAN	FUSION SEL (FWD)	140,717	Fair	\$1,856.00
167543	2006	CHEVROLET SUV	TAHOE LT (RWD)	152,890	Fair	\$3,720.00
522443	2006	CHEVROLET STARCRAFT	C5500 BUS (RWD)	34,887	Poor	\$4,462.00
B3605	2010	FORD SUV	EXPEDITION - EDDIE BAUER (RWD)	154,423	Fair	\$4,975.00

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)



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