



Ahfachkee students display science fair projects
EDUCATION ♦ 1B

Tampa holds Family Fishing Day
COMMUNITY ♦ 4A

Teams compete in Big Ballers Tournament
SPORTS ♦ 1C



The Seminole

Voice of the Unconquered



Tribune

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Beverly Bidney

Bags of donated goods wait to be loaded. At right, Pete Osceola goes to get more items as Jody Osceola brings bags of goods in from her car.

Native Relief Foundation makes Christmas merrier for Pine Ridge

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
 Staff Reporter

It's hard to imagine living below the federal poverty line of \$23,050 per year for a family of four. But on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, some families struggle to survive on \$3,800 per year.

In October 2011, a few Seminole Tribal members watched an ABC News documentary about the reservation from the comfort of their own homes and started texting and emailing each other immediately. Something had to be done.

"We were all touched emotionally; we were crying," Gloria Wilson said. "We knew we had to get together as a group and do something to help. And that's what we did."

The Native Relief Foundation (NRF) was created in November 2011 with the objective to provide assistance to non-gaming Tribes. In only its second year, the nonprofit organization completed three separate relief efforts for Pine Ridge this month. They delivered a truckload of goods to the reservation, including clothing, baby items, warm coats and jackets, non-perishable food and toys to various districts on the reservation; sent clothing and school supplies to students at Flandreau Indian School; and purchased new toys for students at the Wounded Knee School. Most of the items were donated by Tribal members or purchased by the foundation.

NRF member Bobbi "BJ" Billie drove the 20-foot truck to South Dakota along with NRF member Pete Osceola and Misha Winters, a Rosebud Sioux member from Pine Ridge. After a 36-hour drive, they spent a week delivering items to four of the nine districts on the reservation, which is larger than Delaware.

"There are so many communities up there who need help," said Billie, one of the founders of NRF, who lived in Pine Ridge for 12 years. "I've seen how they live firsthand. I don't know how to express it, but it means a lot to me to give up family time to do this."

The NRF is not funded by the Tribe, so it holds a variety of fundraisers throughout the year, including yard sales, raffles and collections through donation boxes on every reservation in which people have donated a large variety of items.

"The kids up there don't often have shoes without holes in them," NRF member Jody Osceola said. "This is poverty I don't think anyone in the Seminole Tribe can even grasp. There are no business prospects in Pine Ridge, and the land is barren and harsh. They rely on help from the government. It's really sad that in America in 2012 this kind of poverty exists."

Pine Ridge faces the following issues:
 • The 3,469-square-mile reservation is the poorest in the U.S. and is home to a

population estimated at 40,000 people of various Sioux Tribes.

• It is the eighth-largest reservation in the country.

• Only 84,000 acres out of the reservation's 2.2 million are suitable for agriculture.

• Unemployment is between 80-85 percent; 49 percent of the population live below the poverty level.

• There is little economic industry.

• It has the highest infant mortality rate in the U.S.

• Many families have no electricity most of the year and no telephone service, running water or sewers.

• Life expectancy is 48 years for men and 52 years for women, the lowest anywhere in the western hemisphere, except for Haiti.

"The drinking water isn't always safe, the youth centers are run down, the housing and community facilities are dilapidated," Wilson said. "We wanted to provide direct service to the people and make sure it goes to a lot of places on the reservation."

Led by Wanda Bowers, the Seminole Princess Committee helped collect clothing, baby items, linens and school supplies for Flandreau Indian School. The Culture instructor at the school is a judge for the Seminole Princess Pageant.

"We have been collecting clothing for the school since 2006; it's a year-round effort," said Bowers, also an NRF member. "We send them as soon as the boxes get filled up. As long as the clothes are clean, we will accept anything. We've sent everything

from prom dresses to pencils. They really appreciate the donations."

For the 124 students at the Wounded Knee School, NRF members Paula Bowers-Sanchez, Caroline Gama and Wilson went shopping for toys. Armed with names, grades and ages of each student, the threesome divided up the list and hit the toy aisles at Target.

Last year, they bought generic gifts for different ages. This year, they knew what the students wanted. Fifth- and eighth-graders requested radios. The shoppers found dark-haired Barbie and Monster High dolls, but most of the Disney princesses were blondes. Regardless, they filled baskets with the dolls, popular action figures, games, Legos and other non-battery operated items.

"Our focus is on the children," said Gama, an NRF committee member. "We want to give them a Christmas they will remember."

The NRF is in the application process for a federal 501(c)3 nonprofit designation, which should be finalized in the next few months. When that occurs, the organization will be able to solicit for and accept cash donations, as well as donations and merchandise from corporations.

"Just a handful of people conceived this and are now implementing it," Wilson said.

To get involved in the Native Relief Foundation or to donate goods for the holidays, email GloriaWilson2@semtribe.com, WBowers@semtribe.com or Jody@osceolaoperations.com.

♦ See more NRF photos on page 6A



Beverly Bidney

From left, Gloria Wilson, Caroline Gama and Paula Bowers-Sanchez shop for toys at Target for children in Pine Ridge.

Big Cypress celebrates Snake Road groundbreaking

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
 Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Snake Road has a shape so distinctive it can easily be identified from 40,000 feet in the air. With 34 curves, the narrow two-lane road clearly resembles a snake writhing its way from Interstate 75 to the Big Cypress Reservation over the course of 19.6 miles. A notoriously dangerous road, it will soon become safer thanks to a new construction project to renovate it.

About 100 people, including Tribal and federal dignitaries, attended a ceremonial groundbreaking for the \$4-million-plus project on Nov. 30 at Big Cypress. Many attendees have lost loved ones or know people who have been injured on Snake Road and hope adding safety features will prevent accidents in the future.

"It used to take all day to get here," Chairman James E. Billie said. "I remember Lady Bird (Johnson) wanted the straight road to be curved to make it more scenic. That road has injured a lot of people and took some lives. Hopefully, now it will be a safe road."

While on the campaign trail in the early 1960s, Lyndon and Lady Bird Johnson noticed the rundown and unattractive state of the nation's highways. When Johnson became president, Lady Bird pushed for beautification of the highways, which resulted in the passage of the Highway Beautification Act in 1965. Snake Road was built in the late 1960s as part of that program.

"If Lady Bird would have had to drive Snake Road, she would have changed her mind about the curves," President Tony Sanchez Jr. said. "If you live out here, when it is dark, it's a dangerous road. As the

Tribe grows, more demands will be placed on the road. We have the opportunity to correct the issues with the road."

The 4.3-mile project stretches from 100 feet east of the Junior Cypress Rodeo and Entertainment Complex to the northern boundary of the Big Cypress Reservation. Funding comes from the Federal Highway Administration and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The two current 10-foot-wide lanes will be expanded to two 14-foot-wide lanes with a 16-foot-wide paved median; a 5-foot-wide sidewalk on the east side of the road; and a 12-foot-wide multi-use path on the west side. An improved drainage system, including culverts and pipes, will be added, in addition to lighting, guardrails and protective crossing features. The schedule for completion is September 2014.

"This is a great thing for the Seminole Tribe," said M. Franklin Keel, director of the Eastern Region of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. "Across the nation, Indian roads are in disrepair and don't meet safety standards. This will give the Tribe a safe, well-maintained road. Safety factors are the most important issue here."

The Tribe has worked on obtaining federal funding for this project since 2005.

"This is a good moment," said Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank. "The community has looked forward to having good, safe roads for a long time. But this isn't the finishing point. All that money for federal funding takes lobbying."

The Tribe is working in conjunction with the Miccosukee Tribe to secure additional funding for the most dangerous and curviest part of Snake Road leading to I-75.

♦ See SNAKE ROAD on page 7A

President Sanchez attends Tribal Nations Conference

BY KATHRYN STOLARZ
 Copy Editor

WASHINGTON, D.C. — President Tony Sanchez Jr. took home new ideas for preventative health care and networked with Department of Energy officials regarding solar energy at the White House Tribal Nations Conference on Dec. 5. He joined 565 other federally recognized Native American Tribes, and Alaska Native Villages, invited to hear remarks from U.S. President Barack Obama and eight members of his cabinet.

"It's very important that we show up in D.C.," President Sanchez said. "We always need to have that presence."

Obama hosted the conference for the fourth consecutive year, continuing his 2008 election campaign promise to improve and expand dialog with Indian Country and prompting one Tribal leader to playfully introduce him as "the first American Indian president." The conference convened at the Department of Interior headquarters.

"Now three years ago, I was proud to see that this conference was the largest gathering of Tribal leaders in our history," Obama told the crowd. "And back then, an event like this was rare. It's gotten routine."

The overall message resounded throughout the day: the U.S. government has come a long way in its relations with Indian Country, but there's more to do. Tribal members voiced their concerns, and cabinet members expressed their desires to help.

"Just as America is going through a process of trying to deal with the economy, the unemployment, getting people more educated, those are the same issues [Native Americans] are dealing with," President Sanchez said. "We all have the same concerns, just on various degrees."

The day kicked off with a presentation of colors by the Native American Women Warriors, accompanied by representatives of the Navajo Code Talkers, including Peter MacDonald Sr., friend of the Seminole Tribe.

After a flag song and invocation, U.S. secretaries made opening remarks, representing the departments of Interior, Education, Treasury, Commerce, Health and Human Services, and Agriculture.

A midday breakout session divided Tribal leaders into five groups, giving Tribes an opportunity to help shape federal

policy. President Sanchez attended the session on *Healthcare, Education and Youth*. He said diabetes gravely concerns the Tribe, and he wanted to learn how other Tribes not only treat but also prevent such health issues.

"I want to understand what Tribes are doing across the nation," President Sanchez said. "We don't always need to reinvent the wheel...There are a lot of Tribes that are focusing on health in many aspects."

President Sanchez hopes to grow a closer partnership among the Tribe's Recreation and Health departments in the near future as a means of preventative health care.

"Recreation and Health need to be joined at the hip," he said. "We don't want to have to rely on medication."

Fort Mojave Tribe Chairman Timothy Williams shared how his Tribe participates in CrossFit, an exercise program that emphasizes cross-training.

"He's a great resource," President Sanchez said of the Chairman, whom he previously consulted about solar energy.

The other breakout sessions discussed the following topics: *Governance and the Nation-to-Nation Relationship; Law Enforcement and Disaster Relief; Economic Development, Housing and Infrastructure; and Cultural Protection, Natural Resources and the Environment.*

The President networked with several other officials at the conference, including Department of Energy staff regarding the Tribe's move toward solar energy and Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar.

He also took the opportunity to promote a product the Tribe recently launched: the tobacco-free Seminole Unconquered electronic cigarettes. He informally demonstrated the product to several attendees and hopes to meet with Obama and the first lady early next year to promote the only electronic cigarette made in the U.S.

Although he didn't get to speak with Obama at this year's conference, President Sanchez met him on three previous occasions and plans to attend Obama's inauguration.

"I think he has done a good job in enforcing the executive order that the federal government has consultation with the Tribe," President Sanchez said.

♦ See CONFERENCE on page 6A

INSIDE:

COMMUNITY: A

EDUCATION: B

HEALTH: 10A

ANNOUNCEMENTS: 7B

SPORTS: C

Editorial

A season of sadness and joy

• James E. Billie

Kind of neat sitting underneath this round chickee, by the old fire, my feet back in the old grass roots. Feels good. Smoke getting in my eyes and burning. Makes me know that I'm still alive. It's kind of neat inside my house, too, where we can smell the aroma of the cedar Christmas tree and its dying leaves. Man, that's good.

I just can't believe that Christmastime is here again. It's a little sad and joyous at the same time.

It's sad because it reminds us that a lot of our older Seminole people have passed on this year. It's sad that they are gone now. At the same time it is happy for those of us who are still here and can enjoy the many pleasures the Seminole Tribe can give us.

We are a lot more fortunate than most people in the world. I never dreamed the Seminole Tribe would ever be at such a prosperous state. That gives me some mental relief that no one is really going to starve in the Seminole Tribe.

At the same time, I still see newspapers and people writing stories about Christmas, but they do not use the word "Christmas." They say "Xmas." It continues to baffle me how some people don't believe in Jesus Christ, so they put a cross over Christ and call it Xmas. So, in my family we still have Christ in our Christmas, so I hope you people will do the same thing.

I saw a story set in California the other day where some town was banning the Nativity scene. I thought that was one of the oddest things I had seen in my life. What is this world coming to? Whatever it is, the residents still overcame the ban by using real live people instead of mannequins. They managed to have their Nativity scene. I have always enjoyed Christmas. The first

time in my life I ever got a present was at Christmastime. It was at the old First Baptist church along Stirling Road. And it was a sack of candy and oranges. I was about 4 or 5 years old when I saw that. It was such a happy occasion for me because, boy, I really loved candy. And all the sweet things that you can get ahold of. That was the only time that I remember getting a bag full of candy, so that was probably the first present I ever got.

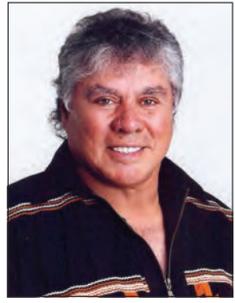
I remember when I first saw Santa Claus, he scared the living you-know-what out of me. I almost crawled underneath my grandmother's dress trying to get away from him. Nowadays, I wonder who that Santa Claus was. It was probably Sunny Claus. Back in those days, there was a Canadian Indian couple known as Sunny Claus and Shirley who used to come down here and minister to the Seminoles quite a bit last part of the '40s and '50s.

Hopefully, we will all have a good Christmas and start the New Year together.

So, I would like to say to everybody in the Seminole Tribe, as well as friends and employees and whoever reads this paper – even though I may not know you – Merry Christmas and have a good New Year.

Sho-naa-bish.

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



No time for cruise control

• Tony Sanchez Jr.

As the Seminole Tribe continues to grow, not only financially, but in all ways, including membership, there will always be issues that we have to address. We must make sure that we maintain our financial power, keep reinforcing the need for our youth to be educated and continue to address the ongoing challenges to our sovereignty. There will never be a time where we can say, "Let's put it on cruise control."

That was evident when I traveled to Washington, D.C. recently, to attend the Tribal Nations Conference hosted by the White House. My observations at this event made me realize, more than ever, how blessed we are. While back home the Seminole Tribe is wrestling with how to control its membership growth and better manage the financial success that we have, other Tribes were focused on making sure their health coverage – that they are entitled to by the trust responsibility of the United States – is continued.

It occurred to me, while very important, health coverage is just not one of the priority issues that we Seminoles talk about. With our success, we don't give it a second thought. The current status of the Seminole Tribe is well documented in Indian Country because of our success. We enjoy a certain notoriety. People always want to talk to me. They always want to know what is the secret to our success. Well, there has been a lot of trial and error. We have definitely made our share of mistakes along the way.

When I am asked, I tell Tribes, "First of all, you need to determine what it is you ultimately want to achieve. At that point, you will see what you need to do." They want to know our "secret," but they never ask me what mistakes we have made. I think that is more important, to learn from mistakes – not only your own but others as well.

The trip to Washington was – no matter how many times you have been there, no matter how many times you have met with various Cabinet members – enlightening. You are definitely reminded that, hey, as people in the administration change, our fight as Indians will always continue. I think the Obama administration has been very good about making sure that American Indian Tribes do have a serious presence.

For me, personally, I wanted to hear and further understand Obama's message for Indian Country and also to lend support for up-and-coming Tribes and those who are just struggling to survive, day in and day out. We accommodate other Tribes when we can, share our stories, offer our help, but, more importantly, we remind other Tribal leaders, "Hey look, we Seminoles have been very fortunate. We count our blessings. We don't take anything for granted. This is a fight that you have to fight as well."

Tribal members can take comfort in knowing that we are going to continue to be visible and continue to fight for our sovereignty.

The economy has had a lot to do with the current onslaught of legislative attacks on Indian sovereignty. States have budget deficits to deal with, so when the economy was good, hey, there was more than enough tax base to satisfy their budget requirements. That, however, is not the case today. What we are seeing today is just a symptom of the economic downturn.

Here in Florida, we will have to continue to fight the annual casino legislation battles. It would be nice if we didn't have to, but that is the environment that we are in today. However, given that issue, we have shown that we have still been able to protect our market. We don't necessarily view the state as a bad guy. They have the same issues as we do, trying to take care of the citizens of Florida without having to raise taxes or transfer burden to the business owners. In fact, we are looked upon by the state as an opportunity to help some of their problems.

In terms of dollars and cents, the Seminole Tribe pays more to the state than anybody around. It's because of our level of success that we pay so much. It's not exactly labeled as a tax. Because of our agreement with the state, we must pay for our privilege, and we pay more than anybody else around. But I think that, in order for us to continue what we have and protect what we have, that is a scenario that will continue to exist...unless the state feels it can do better by opening gaming up statewide.

At which point we would not have to pay them anything.

But the state has seen that even when they had given in to the pari-mutuels, gave them slot machines, what the state was promised never materialized. They have not delivered. On the other hand, we have been committed to the Compact and we have made our payments, on time, to the state. We are a known quantity, a proven quantity.

That is another factor that will go in our favor when it is time to renegotiate the Compact. Where other people come in and make promises, the Seminole Tribe delivers.

Gov. Rick Scott definitely has been very cautious around this issue. Gaming is a very touchy, sensitive subject, and I can understand the approach he has taken. It's not just a straight black and white issue. There are many different positions people can take. Scott has to

compromise; he has to deal with us and deal with them. I have had the opportunity to speak with him on two separate occasions when he came to visit us at the Hollywood Seminole Reservation. I take that as a sign that, hey look, if someone is willing to take the time and visit us and try to find out what we are, it can't be a bad thing.

While we are talking about the level of success we have had, the Tribal members need to know that with the Tribal prosperity, there is a cost associated with it, not only in terms of dollars and cents but also in terms of personal sacrifice. Someone has to be in Tallahassee. And someone has to be in D.C. And when you have to be in those places, you know what? You are sacrificing a lot of precious time away from your family.

All of us must understand it is no different than the sacrifices made by our ancestors. We are just continuing on the path that set us in motion. Just because we have to travel somewhere, it is not all fun and games; it's long hours, and it's personal sacrifices – I know this is what we signed up for. Sometimes I think that gets lost in everything that we do.

I think, at times, Tribal members understand what we are trying to do, and there are times when I get the feeling some people are waiting for the other shoe to fall off so they can see, "See, nothing's changed. It was just a show. Now, the real colors start to show up." Take a look at the people who are in there; take a look at their past. A leopard doesn't change its spots. As long as we continue to be transparent, however, some of those apprehensions that people have will eventually subside, maybe not completely, but they will subside.

I can understand where Tribal members question, "Hey, what are we doing?" because some of the things we are doing are things you can't touch or feel...changes in policies, administrative changes, not always something where you can walk out the front door and say, "Hey, I see it."

I can understand where some of the insecurity may come from. But, I think if the people took the time and really started digging in and really started looking at the changes that have been put into place, they would really be surprised. It is a testament to this administration. We are not in trouble. You don't see any stories where the Seminole Tribe is not able to fulfill our obligations.

Take a moment and just look back and see where we were at 50 years ago versus where we are today. Where once no bank would give us a loan, now we enjoy a level of success that has everyone lining up to conduct business with us. Once, we had to go knock on numerous doors before somebody would eventually open up and say, "All right. OK. I'll take a chance." We don't have to do that now.

Despite our internal challenges, we have managed to keep our heads above water and continue to be more prosperous. In order to keep the current momentum going, there is still a lot of work that needs to be done. We must continue to work on our social issues and educate our youth and position them to be the leaders of tomorrow.

That's not only a dream and a desire, it is our responsibility to make that happen.

This Board of Directors has been very adamant on keeping information flowing freely to our constituents – not only when we have good news to tell but also when we experience a rough patch. We will come in and tell you when we are going through difficult times, and we will balance that with a plan of action: Here is what we are doing to address this situation and start experiencing some positive results. As long as you keep that information coming, the less likely that people are going to start rumors or take the first thing they hear as gospel and start spreading that.

This is the time of the year where everyone tries to get a lot of work accomplished because of the upcoming holidays. We do it with the thought firmly in mind that we must make good decisions and not make hasty decisions. As the elected President, I have been very fortunate to have the current Board of Directors to work with.

That is not to say we don't have disagreements, but the disagreements create opportunities to discuss and explain the thought process, which may get someone to change his mind. This Board will continue to act with the Tribal members' best interests at heart.

As we finish up the year with the Christmas holidays, from the entire Board of Directors, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Be safe.

Sho-naa-bish.

Tony Sanchez Jr. is President of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc.



Seminole Unconquered electronic cigarettes will be first made in U.S.

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — The electronic cigarette industry is poised to become big business, and the Seminole Unconquered brand is preparing to be a significant player in the field.

"This is going to be life-changing," President Tony Sanchez Jr. said. "For me, this is about the humanitarian side; we will affect the world."

Tobacco-related illnesses kill nearly 6 million people every year worldwide, according to the World Health Organization. The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids reported that about 400,000 Americans die from tobacco use annually.

The Tribe is currently looking into building a manufacturing plant in Broward County. Virtually all electronic cigarettes are made in China, so the Tribe's plant will be the first on U.S. soil, said John Cameron, CEO of Safecig. In addition, Gaming recently passed a new policy that allows electronic cigarettes in all non-smoking rooms at the casinos, Hollywood Board Rep. Chris Osceola said.

The Tribe partnered with Safecig to produce the brand. In addition to Seminole Unconquered, the Tribe will seek out other businesses that want their own brand or private label and produce those as well. Examples include sports teams, businesses and hotels. The Tribe will manufacture all private-label brands.

"Native Americans gave us tobacco, and now the Seminoles are giving us electronic cigarettes," Cameron said. "A lot of people will be making electronic cigarettes, but we want to make the best and the safest electronic cigarette."

Cameron, who hasn't had a tobacco cigarette since January 2011, feels like an anchor was



President Tony Sanchez Jr. is with John Cameron, Safecig CEO.

taken off him when he started smoking electronic cigarettes. He no longer smells like smoke nor does he wake up in the middle of the night to smoke.

Electronic cigarettes provide nicotine without any harmful, carcinogenic chemicals. The ingredients are vaporizing fluid, distilled water, natural flavors, essential oils and nicotine, all of which are approved for human consumption. In addition, they mimic the physical act of smoking for the user.

"Electronic cigarettes are like having a cell phone connected to a donut," Cameron said. "They are electronic devices you consume."

Cameron believes that properly marketed electronic cigarettes will save lives. Those who use electronic cigarettes will continue to get the nicotine their bodies crave without being ostracized for their addiction.

"There is going to be a revolution in what people smoke," Cameron said. "We will impact more humans than penicillin did."

The Tribe plans a national launch of the product next year. Seminole Unconquered electronic cigarettes will be widely available at stores, smoke shops and casinos. They are currently available online at www.seminolecig.com. Once the brand is launched, a national marketing campaign will follow.

"We have to tell the world about it," President Sanchez said. "It can't be the world's best kept secret."



Beverly Bidney

Seminole Unconquered electronic cigarettes.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

I was more than a little disappointed at the low number of people who attended our Veteran's celebration at Brighton on Nov. 2. This was our annual Tribalwide event to honor and show our respect for our proud warriors. More people should attend this event.

*Moses Jumper Jr.
Big Cypress*

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Community

A



Eileen Soler

Tribal leaders at the Big Cypress Reservation cut the ceremonial ribbon on opening day of the new Agnes Cypress Boat Ramp.

Word's out on a fishing secret

Agnes Cypress Boat Ramp opens in BC

BY EILEEN SOLER
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Bass, snook, catfish, you name it. If a fish swims in the Everglades, it's as good as dinner on the Big Cypress Reservation.

"I'd eat (fish) all day long, especially if grandma made it," said Big Cypress Councilman's assistant Wovoka Tommie. Tommie said he could also fish all day long, typically hooking 5- to 6-pound catches out of a secret fishing hole deep off the fringe of cattle land owned by Agnes Cypress.

"We grew up fishing and hunting out here. It's part of our pastime," Tommie said. "But if there is a 'honey hole,' you don't talk about it."

On Dec. 5 at a ribbon cutting for the newly constructed concrete and rock-edged Agnes Cypress Boat Ramp, access to the best kept secret at the end of Huff Bridge Road was made easier to get to and was opened for the asking.

Only Tribal members are permitted to use the ramp, which is secured behind a locked chain-link fence. A key to the lock is available only as requested through the Seminole Police Department.

Tommie said Agnes Cypress donated the land for the ramp, which her son Shane Cypress suggested to Tribal leaders two years ago. The \$43,000 project took two years to complete from idea to approval, funding, land clearing and construction.

Agnes Cypress was unable to attend the opening ceremony because of illness and Shane Cypress was called away to help



Eileen Soler

The new Agnes Cypress Boat Ramp at the remote end of Huff Bridge Road on the Big Cypress Reservation lets the secret out about a formerly covert fishing spot.

another Tribal member, but Agnes Cypress' daughter Jeannette Cypress, director of the Big Cypress Traditional Preservation Department, spoke for her brother and mother.

"My brother wanted to give back to the community, and my mother was grateful for so much in her own life that she was happy to give the land. Both told me to tell everyone, 'Thank you,'" she said.

Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger said he was fortunate to have spent much of his youth also fishing off the land when it was hush-hush from many other people.

Then, the natural brush was thick and the land wet. Boys (and some men who spied to find the place) had to trek around

3-foot-deep marsh to launch flat-bottomed jon boats off the bank that, from years of discreet use, made a good enough slide into the water.

"Now, whenever a Tribal member donates land to the community, it means that we are all fortunate to use it," Councilman Tiger said.

Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank agreed — with a bit of pretend hesitation.

"We all grew up here fishing. We'd come out with a cane pole and whatever grasshoppers we could get," he said. "I hope more fishermen come out here to fish, and I hope they don't catch anything and leave all the fish for me."

Tribal members attend skateboard contest in memory of Alex Cypress

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

POMPAÑO BEACH — Alexander Blaine Cypress lived a short, but memorable life. Alex, who passed away unexpectedly in May at 21 years old from pneumonia,



Beverly Bidney

Tanoke Billie, 8, skates in the bowl during a contest held in Alex Cypress' honor on Dec. 1.

loved extreme sports and competed often in skateboarding contests. In his memory, his mother and aunts started the ABC Foundation to provide scholarships to other kids who are part of the extreme sports culture.

Alex spent much of his youth on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota with his mother, Bobbi "BJ" Billie.

"Alex was a guy who would give you the shirt off his back," BJ said. "He was family oriented; we were always a very close-knit family. If I didn't know where he was, one of his aunts did. He was very proud to say he was a Seminole, he went to the Corn Dance, and his hero was his grandpa. His first tattoo was a mural of my dad (Chairman James E. Billie) wrestling a gator."

The foundation sponsored the Alexander Blaine Cypress Memorial Skate Contest at the Circus Bowl skate park in Pompano Beach on Dec. 1. About 85 people came to watch 22 competitors, including a few Tribal youngsters, take their turns doing tricks on their skateboards. The family donated the prize money: \$200 for the intermediate category and \$300 for advanced skateboarders.

"We needed to show love and share memories of my nephew," said Tommie Billie, Alex's aunt. "This is what he loved to do. He taught all our children how to skate, and that's how they remember him." ABC Foundation will award

scholarships of \$5,000-\$10,000 to high school seniors in Broward County public schools who are involved in extreme sports. Both Tribal and non-Tribal students can qualify for the scholarships. Because most scholarships are given to kids in traditional sports, this will fill a niche that was previously unaddressed.

"Alex skated all the time, but I never saw him compete," said Edna Bowers, his great aunt. "I wish I did; I would have filmed it. He never told us when he was competing; he would just go do it."

Those who couldn't fit inside the compact viewing area of the Circus Bowl gathered under the tent outside to watch the action on a large flat-screen monitor. Musicians played outside, kids practiced their best skating moves in the parking lot, and people purchased T-shirts commemorating the event.

Alex left a 9-month-old daughter, Marilyn Annah-belle Cypress, who was born a month premature. BJ believes she was born early so she could see her father, who passed away one month later.

"He wasn't a traditional guy, but he always stayed with us," BJ said. "Every morning, he would ask if I was awake and say, 'I love you.' I don't get my morning 'I love you' anymore."

♦ See more SKATE photos on page 7A

Registration open for new workshop at NLC

BY BRETT DALY
Senior Editor

HOLLYWOOD — The Native Learning Center (NLC) will offer a free workshop geared toward Native Americans interested in starting a business and those who already own a Native business. Registration is now open.

The *Indianpreneurship* workshop will contain business courses that represent the challenges, experiences and opportunities for Native American entrepreneurs. NLC partnered with Oregon Native American Business and Entrepreneurial Network (ONABEN), the creators of *Indianpreneurship*, to offer the two-day workshop from March 5-6. According to their website, ONABEN provides curriculum, training and organizational consulting focused on developing entrepreneurship in Indian communities. Founded in 1991 by four Oregon Indian Tribes, ONABEN serves Indian business development organizations nationwide with a mission to increase self-reliance among Tribes.

"This particular curriculum is called *Growing a Business in Indian Country*," said Veronica Hix, executive director of ONABEN and a Cherokee Tribal member. "I can't say enough about continuous education, even if you've been in business for 10 years."

Indianpreneurship instructors will pull the most important concepts from the course's manuals and will touch upon business planning, marketing, financials and government contracting. Hix said the workshop is interactive, featuring many classroom activities.

"You're working together with your



facilitator, as well as with the participants," she said. "You're not being talked at; you're being pulled in."

Preston Steele, director of Training and Technical Services at the NLC, said the center decided to offer the workshop because they knew Tribal members had an interest in the curriculum. The workshop, however, will be limited to 30 attendees to allow for more one-on-one attention.

"If there is something they're interested in to sustain themselves and work for themselves, this is definitely a good way to do that," Steele said. "I think it's important for Tribal members to attend because [ONABEN] is an organization that's very keen on the types of grants available and how to secure those funds."

A portion of the workshop will discuss government set-asides available to minority-owned businesses, Hix said. She also mentioned that the workshop is a great networking venue and a great way to get some refresher courses in business.

"I think it's important for aspiring entrepreneurs and existing business owners to be aware of who's in their business area willing and wanting to help them with their business needs," Hix said.

Anyone interested in growing his or her business or starting a new business venture is encouraged to attend.

For more information or to register, call 954-985-2315.

Business profile: Sweetgrass & Serenity Spa Salon Boutique



Beverly Bidney

Crystal and Cory Wilcox are in Sweetgrass & Serenity Spa Salon Boutique.

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Crystal Wilcox wanted to start a business but wasn't sure what she wanted to do. While attending a 5-year-old's birthday party with her daughter at a beauty salon in Fort Myers, she was inspired to open a salon of her own in Big Cypress. That dream has become a reality with the opening of Sweetgrass & Serenity Spa Salon Boutique on Nov. 13.

"I wanted to open a business on the reservation for the community so they don't have to drive 30 minutes to get their hair done," she said. "Now, if we can only get a bank and a grocery store."

Crystal, a cosmetology student at iTECH in Immokalee, never saw herself in the beauty industry until now. Having a daughter, Jalee, 7, changed her perspective. Crystal enjoys helping other people find their beauty.

Owned with her husband, Cory Wilcox, Sweetgrass & Serenity is a full-service salon, spa and boutique. The salon, located in the old Bureau of Indian Affairs building, has separate rooms for hair, nails and facials and for the boutique. Before they opened, the Wilcoxes renovated the entire 1,000-square-foot building and put in new plumbing and electricity to prepare it for business.

"The initial startup was a challenge," said Cory, who also owns Native Land Works, which clears land in preparation for new houses. "Big Cypress has never

had a salon, and we are providing services and making people happy. Hopefully, the business will continue to grow."

Services offered include hair care for men and women, facials and peels, waxing, makeup application, manicures and pedicures. The salon offers specific services on different days of the week. Wednesday, for example, is barber day, and Tuesday, the esthetician is there to give facials. Future services will include massages and possibly chiropractic services. The hairdresser and nail technician are available daily.

The boutique also features Native American-made jewelry, handmade purses, flower arrangements and customized flip-flops and cell phone cases.

"Reactions from the community have been good," Crystal said. "We've been pretty busy, and people are glad we're here."

The Wilcoxes believe more businesses could do well in Big Cypress.

"Just follow your dreams and run with it," Cory said.

Sweetgrass & Serenity is located across from the Big Cypress Field Office at 31025 Josie Billie Highway. Hours are Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; weekends are by appointment only. For more information, call 863-902-1224 or email SweetgrassAndSerenity@aol.com.

If you are a Tribal member and business owner who would like to be featured in *The Tribune*, email BrettDaly@seminoletribe.com.

Tampa community gathers for Family Fishing Day



Peter B. Gallagher

Ruth Osceola "rescues" a catfish from the community pond. Most of the fish caught were released at another nearby pond, which the Tribe is trying to restock on the Lakeland property.



Paul Simmons gives Nigel Osceola some casting lessons.

Peter B. Gallagher



Peter B. Gallagher

Paul Simmons hug-hunches up a tree to retrieve an errant cast.



Peter B. Gallagher

Put a worm on the hook, cast the line, catch the catfish, reel it in. Tampa Liaison Richard Henry shows how it's done.



Peter B. Gallagher

Dominic Osceola-Lugo is a proud fisherman.



Peter B. Gallagher

Anthony Holmes is the youngest to catch a fish.



Peter B. Gallagher

It's Dorian Osceola's turn to hold the new puppy, Jonah.



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Senior profile: Hollywood resident Marcellus Osceola Sr.

BY KATHRYN STOLARZ
Copy Editor

HOLLYWOOD — World-class trapshooter, former Councilman and founder of the first Seminole smoke shop, Marcellus Osceola Sr. knows success.

"There's nothing I can't do," he said. Marcellus, 67, is a man of determination and focus who cares deeply about his Tribe and family. He also likes to kick back and have a good time, cracking jokes any chance he gets.

He didn't have it easy growing up, and he appreciates how far he's come.

On Oct. 22, 1945, Tribal members Charlotte and Bill Osceola arrived at Broward General Hospital, where Charlotte, Snake Clan, delivered their first child, Marcellus.

Living under an open chickee on the McDaniels Ranch just north of Big Cypress for his first five years, Marcellus remembers a simpler time with no air conditioning, no plumbing and no electricity. Kerosene lanterns lit the way, and fishing passed the time.

"When you don't have anything, you never think about it," he said.

His father operated a bulldozer on the ranch and his mother raised the children. She also made clothes, beaded and worked for the Miccosukee Independent Baptist Church in Hollywood and later as a secretary for the Tribe. It was a tough time for many Seminoles, and some worked alongside the migrant workers, picking tomatoes or oranges for little pay.

By the time Marcellus turned 6, the Osceola family moved into a one-room, reconditioned bath house in Hollywood to send their children to school nearby.

"My dad never went to school, so he wanted me to be better than him," Marcellus said. His mother's education ended in the sixth grade at an Indian boarding school in North Carolina.

Marcellus studied at Dania Elementary, Stirling Middle and McArthur High, where he graduated in 1964. He also enrolled in two trade schools, one for auto mechanics at Northeast High, and one for diesel mechanics in Miami.

Life had its own way of educating him outside the classroom. His father spoke mostly Mikasuki to him because he only knew broken English, and his mother spoke Mikasuki and Creek.

"I know a lot of it, but I don't use it enough," he said.

His parents also taught him about religion, raising him in the Miccosukee Independent Baptist Church in Hollywood, where he sang in the church choir and played guitar.

"They were hard-core Baptist," he said. But he formed his own thoughts through the years, deciding, "You don't have to go to church to talk to God."

In addition, Marcellus learned from his father how to hunt, shooting his share of deer and hogs and grabbing alligators out of the water with his bare hands at night. And, he still has all his fingers.

"If I needed advice, I'd always ask my dad until he couldn't help me no more," he said. He spent much of his time with his father, his brother, Raymond, and his uncle Jimmie Osceola. He also enjoyed hunting and fishing with Howard Tommie and Eugene, Truman, Paul and Dan Bowers.

Being an athlete was also important to Native Americans while Marcellus was growing up, so he played baseball, softball and bowling. He said sports were how Indians gained some respect from white society, even though whites discriminated against them and usually refused to play them.

"They treated black people better than they treated Indians back then," he said. "It wasn't all that great."

Marcellus experienced this firsthand, not just in sports, but also out on the streets.

He walked into a Hollywood gas station to find two bathrooms labeled "Black" and "White" with no option for Indians. Some stores wouldn't serve Indians either. But Marcellus wouldn't put up with disrespect.



Kathryn Stolarz

Marcellus Osceola Sr., 67, ranked among the top 50 in the world in trapshooting. He still competes today.

"I was always accepted because I made them accept me," he said.

His fearlessness also came out in a few hobbies he picked up. In his early 20s, he drag raced his brother's '57 Chevy, winning a couple trophies along the way.

Pictures from the past: rich history in black and white

BY EILEEN SOLER
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — A photography exhibit at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum provides a rare outsider's glimpse into Seminole Tribal life from more than a century ago.

For Tribal member Wanda Zepeda who attended the Dec. 7 opening of *Camera-Man: the Seminole through the lens of Julian Dimock*, the nearly two dozen duotone photographs taken in 1910 reminded her of her own childhood not too long ago.

"When I saw the canoes, so many memories came flooding back. We used to ride them all the time; we'd go to Corn Dances...It makes me want to do it all over again," she said.

Moments captured in time depict daily camp life before motor cars, concrete homes or store-bought conveniences; mothers and children washing laundry outdoors; women grinding corn; children playing in a canoe; men repairing camp chickees.

In other photos, families pose for the camera dressed in beaded and silver jewelry and traditional Seminole garb. Men were capped in turbans decked in feathers or European straw and felt hats. Chickees were surrounded by lush wetlands as far as the eye could see.

Familial surnames like Tiger, Cypress, Tommie and Billie are included in many photo captions.

On opening day, high school students from Ahfachkee School on the Big Cypress Reservation and middle school boys from Pematv Emahaky Charter School on the Brighton Reservation received a special tour of the exhibit.

"That's my grandmother," and "That looks just like my grandfather," could be heard in whispers as students huddled in groups to check out Dimock's work.

More Dimock photographs from 1910 are published in *Hidden Seminoles*, a 200-page book available in the Museum Gift Shop. The book was co-written and edited by former Florida Museum of Natural History curator Jerald T. Milanich and Nina J. Root, a former director of the American Museum of Natural History.

Milanich, on hand for the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki opening, said he received a call in 2008 from Root encouraging him to come see 200 glass negatives from the Dimock collection of nearly 3,000 negatives that were gifted to the American Museum of Natural History in the 1920s and then forgotten.

"I'd put the negatives in the scanner, and it was like magic. We were seeing the images for the first time in 100 years," Milanich said.

Dimock was the son of wealthy New York financier Anthony Weston Dimock who, after several successes and failures, enlisted his son as "camera-man" for adventure-driven expeditions from 1903 to 1913 in the United States' Deep South. Much of their travels were documented in magazine articles, which Anthony wrote and Julian illustrated using two cumbersome 6 1/2 by 8 1/2 cameras — a single-lens camera and a tripod-view camera.

In 1910, Julian was commissioned by anthropologist Alanson Skinner, of the American Museum of Natural History, to document the Unconquered Seminoles living in the Everglades.

Clothing and other artifacts collected during the expedition, such as silver pendants and sticks used for playing ball

games, are also on display.

Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki director Anne McCudden said the show, which runs through Dec. 9, 2013, serves many interests, including history, photography, geography and culture.

"It's the perfect example of what every museum wants to offer. Everyone would want to see it," she said.

Museum curator John Moga said the photos have inspired Tribal members to come forward with more information than Dimock originally provided. Names of previously unidentified people, locations of camps and cultural information have been added to prior descriptions.

Most of the photos were taken in what is now the Big Cypress Reservation. In fact, Brown's Boat Landing, where the 1910 expedition landed, was located less than a mile from the current Big Cypress Landing store and restaurant on Snake Road.

"I bet that through oral histories passed down from generations, all of the camps and all of the people, not only on Big Cypress but on Miccosukee (Reservation), can be identified," Milanich told Ahfachkee students. "It's a project, but it's one that can be done today in air conditioning."

Later, when students gathered between two rows of historic canoes, the Museum's Traditional Arts and Outreach coordinator Pedro Zepeda encouraged them to honor their heritage by learning the Seminole ways.

"But when you are learning to make a basket or play stickball or stitch patchwork, don't just learn about the object. Learn the origins, the history, the stories, the language," he said. "There is so much knowledge that goes with our culture."



Andrea Holata

James Sweat hands over the keys to Russell Osceola's new home.

Russell Osceola gets keys to new home

BY ANDREA HOLATA
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — The Housing Department handed over the keys to senior Russell Osceola's new home recently, after just a few months of the building process.

Osceola worked closely with the Seminole Housing Department from start to finish on the building process. The department helped by setting him up with project manager Al Huggins, who supervised the project.

"He helped me with everything," Osceola said. "He would suggest things like colors, door handles and light fixtures."

Prior to his new home being built, Osceola lived at the same homesite for 12-plus years in a modular home.

"Before that, my mother was still alive, so I lived with her," Osceola said.

Osceola needed a new home because his old house's base started to deteriorate, he said.

His new home consists of almost 3,000 square feet of living space, including three bedrooms, a game room,

two bathrooms, a large living room, a dining room, an inside laundry room, a carport and a screened porch. A far cry from the old modular, the new house's amenities include granite countertops, solid wood cabinets, stainless steel appliances, high-efficiency heating and air conditioning to keep monthly bills low, hurricane-impact-rated windows and doors, and a generator to power the home, if needed.

Osceola said he appreciates his new home and the extended space it provides for his family to visit.

"I have my sisters come up every once in a while, and my son Russell Jr. and his wife come by and cook me dinner," Osceola said. "We are all enjoying it."

He also said he had a good experience working with project coordinator Carrera Gopher and the Housing Department.

"It's hard when you are by yourself, so it's nice when you got somebody with you to suggest things," Osceola said. "A lot of people don't like to wait, but it's worth waiting for. If you are getting a home, put in for it and be patient; it will come around."



Andrea Holata

Russell Osceola's new home features granite countertops, solid wood cabinets and stainless steel appliances.



Eileen Soler

Visitors to the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum discuss historical photographs from the exhibit.



Eileen Soler

Former Florida Museum of Natural History curator Jerald T. Milanich examines original Seminole garb from 1910.



Eileen Soler

Students from Ahfachkee and Pematv Emahaky Charter School have a chance to check out historic canoes at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum.



Andrea Holata

Team Tampa celebrates after winning *Break the Ice*. The youth raced against other reservations to see who could unroll an iced shirt and put it on first.



Andrea Holata

John Jimmie, from Immokalee, races to be the first to put his potato in the bucket.

Brighton Reservation hosts third Police Explorers Field Day

BY ANDREA HOLATA
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — To keep youth engaged in positive activities, the Seminole Police Department held the third Police Explorers Field Day from Nov. 17-18 at the Fred Smith Rodeo Arena in Brighton.

About 60 youth ranging from ages 6-16 from Immokalee, Big Cypress, Hollywood, Naples, Tampa and Brighton met for a day of fun-filled activities.

"This event represents the Police Explorers and the camaraderie between the Tribal members and different reservations," Police Chief William Latchford said. "It promotes teamwork, discipline, and it gives time for the kids across all the reservations to fellowship with each other and interact with the police officers."

He said the friendly competition among peers will also allow the winning

reservation to have bragging rights.

After youth set up their camping tents, they were divided into teams by reservation and then competed against each other in team-building activities, including *Face the Cookie*, *Break the Ice*, *Potato Picker* and *Shirt Off My Back*.

They worked together to devise strategies to help their teams finish first place, an honor Tampa won. Immokalee and Hollywood tied for second, while Naples took third, Brighton fourth and Big Cypress fifth.

"Basically, [the Police Explorers] teaches life lessons; it adds on to what is already being done in the homes from the parent's standpoint," Chief Latchford said. "It gives [youth] an extra added tool for their life and whatever direction they go."

Brighton SPD Officer Colleen Hardin organized the event and said the Police Explorers program offers many lessons.

"It helps to build leadership with the youth and community involvement because they don't always get to see or spend time with one another on perspective reservations," Officer Hardin said. "These [youth] are going to be the future leaders."

Hardin said Field Day takes place quarterly and will be held on each reservation.

And even with 101 Tribal youth in the Police Explorers program, Chief Latchford encourages more to join.

"There are a lot of kids out there that we would love to have in the program," he said. "We would love to bring them into the Police Explorers program and open their minds and their hearts to not just law enforcement but to a world of service."

For more information about the Police Explorers program, call 954-967-8900.



Andrea Holata

Destiny Jimmie and Ashley Faz work together to keep the balloon from falling during one of the Police Explorers Field Day events.



Andrea Holata

Members of team Naples work together during the *Break the Ice* game. On Nov. 17, the Police Explorers participated in their third Field Day on the Brighton Reservation.

Red Barn celebration planned for Jan. 26

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER
Special Projects Reporter

BRIGHTON — Proud and precarious, like a lone weathered cowboy standing still in a gusty green field, the historic Red Barn withstands the ghostly fade of time.

Windswept, battered, craggy and gnarled, the cypress-planked barn was once bright red and full of community.

Built in 1941 by the Indian Division of the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Red Barn was the hallowed centerpiece of the Brighton Reservation, where the 13 stables held the top cowboys' horses, thick nails hung heavy leather saddles, hay was stored in the loft above, and the first flames of Tribal government were fanned at meetings and get-togethers among the poor Seminole Indians.

The beloved Red Barn, 16 years older than the organized Tribe itself, was the Seminoles' first town hall.

Seminole Indians have worked cattle since the fleeing conquistadors left their horses and cows. But the Seminole Wars and the depression that was Florida after the Civil War scattered the Indians and depleted their first industry. To jump-start it again, the Bureau of Indian Affairs sent a herd of Apache cows and Brahma bulls to the Seminoles in 1936. Five years later, the Red Barn was built, along with a water tower and troughs where cattle were treated for ticks and disease. Today, the Seminole Tribe of Florida maintains one of the largest calf-producing operations in the country.

The old Red Barn hasn't been regularly used since the 1960s.

The main part of the reservation has moved 3 miles east, and Hurricane Wilma took its original wood shingle roof in 1985. Worried the sacred barn might fall, the Tribe held it together with a shiny steel roof in 2005. Still, the elements of rot and disrepair robbed the grand icon of its splendor. It was home to termites and an owl that swooped from the loft to scare intruders. The doors fell off, the wooden walls pocked and developed holes, and the unforgiving

heat of the cruel Okeechobee sun took its toll. It was used as a haunted house during Halloween, and believing the barn harbors ghosts of old cowboys, children stay away to this day.

On Jan. 26, the Seminole Tribe is inviting Tribal members and the public to the Brighton Reservation to take part in a ceremony celebrating the planned rejuvenation of the Red Barn, including the unveiling of a roadside historical marker, a National Register of Historic Places plaque and conceptual sketches of several restored Red Barn scenarios created by Hard Rock International designer Rob Schaeffer. It may anchor a park, serve as a museum or even be restored as a working barn for 4-H students.

So far, only necessary structural repairs are planned for implementation.

"We want to hear from the community. We want to know what the people envision for the future of this precious historical structure," said Tribal architectural historian Carrie Dilley, who wrote the successful National Register application.

Scheduled is a midday program of music and history, beginning with a 10 a.m. cattle drive by the Seminole Cattlewomen's Association. Seminole Media Productions will present its film about the Seminole cattle program and interviews with Tribal cowboys who remember the Red Barn in its heyday.

A raffle/sale of Tribal arts and crafts and items donated by local businesses will be conducted, and prints from an original "en plein air" painting of the Red Barn by artist Dorothy Gardiner will be sold; all money collected will be earmarked for the Red Barn rejuvenation project.

There will be remarks by Tribal officials, a rib-eye steak dinner for all attendees and music from the Andy Buster Band.

Portions of this article were originally published in FORUM, the magazine of the Florida Humanities Council.



Photo courtesy of Peter B. Gallagher

Prints of this recent painting by artist Dorothy Gardiner will be raffled off at the Red Barn celebration on Jan. 26.

◆ More NRF photos from page 1A



Beverly Bidney

Gloria Wilson, Christine McCall and Wanda Bowers sort clothing in the storage unit.



Beverly Bidney

Jody Osceola throws a bag of goods to Pete Osceola on the truck.



Beverly Bidney

Bobbi "BJ" Billie gathers bags of donated clothing.



Beverly Bidney

Jody Osceola loads items donated by the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino.

◆ CONFERENCE

From page 1A

However, he would like to see more consultation with Tribes before enacting legislation that would affect Indian Country.

Also during the conference, Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Neal Wolin announced new proposals laying out broad exclusions of certain benefits from income that Indian Tribal governments provide to Tribal members; Tribes have developed programs to address their unique social, cultural and economic issues, and the new guidelines seek to provide certainty on what benefits fall under the general welfare exclusion from income.

"It's a win for Tribes across the country," President Sanchez said.

Closing comments came from secretaries of Transportation and Labor, and Obama capped off the conference with his address, highlighting his administration's strides with Indian Country.

"We focused on justice and Tribal sovereignty," Obama said. "Longstanding legal disputes like the Cobell case have been resolved. I signed into law the Tribal Law and Order Act, which is helping to fight crime. These are all important steps, but we've got more work to do."

Obama said he hopes to continue



Kathryn Stolarz

President Tony Sanchez Jr. holds a proclamation from U.S. President Barack Obama, in which he vowed to improve relations with Native Americans. Tribal leaders were given a copy at the conference.

improving Tribes' economies and quelling domestic violence. He asked federal officials to support small Tribal businesses and to improve federal protection of sacred sites, on which a report was released Dec. 6.

"We're going to keep working together to make sure that the promise of America is fully realized for every Native American," Obama said.



Photo courtesy of Tami Heilemann

U.S. President Barack Obama addresses Tribal leaders during the Tribal Nations Conference.

The Tribal Register of Historic Places

SUBMITTED BY CARRIE DILLEY
Architectural Historian

During the past two years, the Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) has worked to establish a Tribal Register of Historic Places. The department created the Tribal Register as a way to recognize the cultural resources – historic camps, buildings, structures, archaeological sites and other places where cultural practices and beliefs are recorded or are known through oral tradition – that are highly significant to the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

Having a Tribal Register also helps the department fulfill its duties as a THPO, as outlined in its Historic Preservation Plan required by the National Park Service.

Prior to establishing the Tribal Register, THPO had two ways of recording and recognizing historic properties: the Seminole Site File and the National Register of Historic Places.

The Seminole Site File (SSF) is an in-house repository of the cultural resource information (including information about historic, archaeological and architectural sites) on the Seminole reservations and other relevant lands. It includes hundreds of listings and has helped THPO preserve critical information for the Tribe. The SSF is a list of all recorded sites.

The National Register of Historic Places, administered by the National Park Service, is a list of properties of exceptional significance on the national level. THPO has completed two National Register nominations to date – the Red Barn in Brighton and the Council Oak in Hollywood.

However, many important Seminole sites do not meet the strict requirements of the National Register.

“The THPO realized the need for

creating a classification and descriptive system that mirrored the National Register but was in tune with the specific cultural nature of Seminole Sites,” said David Brownell, THPO research assistant.

Therefore, the Tribal Register of Historic Places was born.

The Tribal Register of Historic Places, maintained by THPO, serves to designate, protect and/or preserve the properties listed while increasing the awareness about the places of cultural significance for the Tribe. Listing a property requires extensive research, including Tribal member interviews, background studies and site visits.

By investigating the importance of these places, THPO can facilitate the designation, protection and preservation of these sites for future generations in a manner decided upon by the Tribe. Options could include simply documenting the site, installing historical markers or educational signage, or a full reconstruction of historic elements of the property.

These cultural resources help demonstrate the identity of the Seminole Tribe, and if they are not protected or recorded, their significance could be lost forever.

Some examples of properties listed are the Little Charlie Micco Camp, the Billy Bowlegs Camp, the Council Oak, the Old Hollywood Cemetery and the Red Barn.

Tribal Register information is not published to the outside but is readily available for Tribal members.

If you would like to suggest a property to be nominated to the Tribal Register or would like more information, contact Carrie Dilley at CarrieDilley@seminoletribe.com or 954-364-5210. Be sure to look for highlights from the Tribal Register in upcoming issues.



Beverly Bidney

Shovels in hand, dignitaries prepare to move the dirt signifying the start of the Snake Road renovation project.

◆ SNAKE ROAD

From page 1A

“We’ve watched this little road take lives for years,” said Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger. “Joe and I have worked together to get this done. The road hasn’t been worked on since the 1970s, and a safer road is needed for this growing community.”

Residents of Big Cypress will certainly benefit from the improvements, but it will also help the Fire Department, including the paramedics, respond to emergency calls more easily and safely.

“Lady Bird wanted to make sure every road built had an aesthetic value. Now we are finally able to make some changes to the road,” said Mike Tiger, the Tribe’s treasurer. “Before Snake Road, it used to take two and a half hours to get from Hollywood to Big Cypress. You had to go up and around Clewiston on two-lane roads. When you did it every day, it was a long, hard trip.”

U.S. Congressman Alcee Hastings sent a letter congratulating the Tribe on the groundbreaking. Representatives from

the offices of Sen. Bill Nelson and U.S. Congresswoman Debbie Wassermann Schultz spoke about the significance of the upgraded road to the Tribe’s safety. Members of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Federal Highway Administration and the Florida Department of Transportation also spoke at the ceremony.

“We want to preserve the quality of life during the project and after,” said Stan Rodimon, Chief Community Planning and Development Officer, who oversees the project. “The drainage system will cut down the mosquito population.”

Although some were nostalgic for the allure of Snake Road, safety is the most important aspect of the renovation.

“I’ll miss the road because I always enjoyed what Lady Bird did, but I also know the road well,” Chairman Billie said. “New people don’t know the hazards of the twists and turns. I’ve lost cousins and friends on the straight part of the road, too. At night, you’ll be driving and the next thing you know a 10-foot alligator, wild hog or deer will cause you to go off the road. You just have to go slow and be careful. For a guy that grew up and lives out here, I’ll miss it.”



Seminole Media Productions archive photo

An aerial shot shows Snake Road’s winding curves.

◆ More SKATE photos from page 3A



Beverly Bidney

Members of Alex Cypress’ family pose for a picture at the Memorial Skate Contest.



Beverly Bidney

A skateboarder does a trick at the Circus Bowl.



Beverly Bidney

From left, family friend Nicholas Andrews, Tommi Billie, Circus Bowl owner Jason Ranft, Bobbie Billie, BJ Billie and Mariann Billie are at the event.



Beverly Bidney

Seminole kids watch as a skateboarder grinds by on Dec. 1.



Beverly Bidney

Nushee Billie, 6, Alena Stockton, 10, and Tanoke Billie, 8, are at the event.



Beverly Bidney

Alena Stockton, 10, skates in the bowl.



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

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Seminole Moments: Cattle history



Andrea Holata

As part of the Seminole Moments series presented by the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, Community Outreach specialist Willie Johns speaks to employees at the Chupco Youth Ranch in Fort Pierce over lunch on Dec. 5. Johns explained the history of the Seminole Tribe’s cattle program and its importance to the Tribe.



Joshua L. Williams and Michael S. Sprouse, top row, second and third from right, are with their 284th Police Academy class.

Brett Daly

Seminole Police Department welcomes two more officers into their ranks

BY BRETT DALY
Senior Editor

DAVIE — The 284th Police Academy class graduated from the Institute of Public Safety on Dec. 5, and among the graduates were two new officers of the Seminole Police Department.

Michael S. Sprouse and Joshua L. Williams underwent 770 hours of training over a six-month period in the areas of physical, academic and firearms training to earn the honor of serving in law enforcement. During the ceremony at Broward College's Central Campus, Seminole Police Chief William Latchford presented the officers with their SPD badges.

For Sprouse, entering law enforcement was an easy choice. He's had an interest in the field since his childhood and always had a desire to serve the public. Despite the demands placed on him and his fellow cadets during the academy, Sprouse thrived. He served as his class treasurer — a position his class elected him to — and earned the runner-up title in academic proficiency with a grade point average of 97 percent.

"The police academy was very nerve-racking the first day," Sprouse said. "I can remember showing up and not really knowing anyone. We were able to bond and stick together. We came together and accomplished our goal."

Williams, too, always considered a career in law enforcement. He said he

looked up to a friend's father who was in law enforcement and was interested in a career that protects and serves. The Police Academy gave him that chance. Although he didn't know the other 14 cadets in his class, he quickly developed bonds with them all.

"We turned out to be brothers and sisters," Williams said. "The best part was the camaraderie and getting to know each other."

Broward County Commissioner Chip LaMarca addressed the class during the graduation ceremony, encouraging the cadets to remember the reasons they took the job: to protect family, friends and neighbors.

"We will demand much from you," he said. "We will expect you to protect us from those who may do us harm; we will expect you to be good role models to our children; we will expect you to protect our homes, schools and businesses. Our expectations will be high, but I am confident you will not only meet but exceed them."

Both Sprouse and Williams will serve on the Hollywood Reservation, and they look forward to the experience.

"That's one of the greatest benefits of working with the Seminole Department," Sprouse said. "It's such a small department and a close-knit community that they're there to support you. You're not just a number in the department; they know you by name."



Brett Daly

Police Chief William Latchford gives Joshua Williams his SPD badge during the graduation ceremony on Dec. 5.

Jackie Burdette retires after 18 years of service

BY ANDREA HOLATA
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Dispatcher Jackie Burdette, from the Seminole Police Department, retired after 18 years of service to the Tribe.

Coworkers, family and friends joined Burdette for a celebration in her honor to congratulate her at the Brighton Seminole Police Department on Nov. 30.

Burdette began working for the Police Department after the unfortunate passing of her husband forced her to look for a job. Prior to that, she focused on raising a family.

"There was an article in the newspaper and my daughter [saw] it, so I applied," Burdette said.

After a thorough background check and interview, Burdette was hired as a dispatcher for the Police Department.

In the position, Burdette took calls and dispatched officers when needed, and until recently, she dispatched for the Fire Department as well.

Burdette said it's a bittersweet retirement.

"I enjoyed the communication with the Tribal members," Burdette said. "Trying to help them whenever they needed it...I made a lot of friends out there...And, of course, I am going to miss my officers and coworkers."

She admits adjusting to retirement will be hard because she spent the last 18 years going out to the reservation to work every day. She does, however, look forward to catching up on lost time with her family.

"I love working in my yard on my flowers and spending time with my family," Burdette said. "I have two grown children who have children, and I missed out on a lot of that while I was working."

Burdette also looks forward to her free time.

"I look forward to enjoying the rest of my life and try and do what I want to do for a while."

Ring in the new year safely

SUBMITTED BY WILLIAM R. LATCHFORD
Police Chief

Where has the time gone? As New Year's Eve arrives, a night of fun to celebrate the beginning of a new year will too. Regardless of how you enjoy the festivities, please keep in mind the safety of you and your families. In the ever-popular arena of social media, it is fun to share your whereabouts and plans, but be careful about posting where you are, and especially take caution with advertising that you are not home.

Should your plans involve celebrations that include alcohol, remember to have a designated driver. Under no circumstances should anyone drink and drive.

Also, be on guard of your surroundings. Fireworks are a beautiful part of many New Year's Eve events, but please take precautions to keep young children safe around them. If hiring a babysitter for

the night, be sure he or she has CPR certification, has babysitting training and has verified references. This will allow you to enjoy your night knowing your children are safe and in good care. Remember, if something does not feel right, it probably isn't. Taking preventive measures is key.

My staff and I are honored and thank you for allowing us to keep each of you safe in our communities this past year. Seminole Police Department warmly wishes you and your families a healthy, safe and prosperous New Year. As you embark on making resolutions and plans for the coming year, remember to enjoy and appreciate the wonderful family and friends that surround you.



All Family Ministries offers variety of courses

SUBMITTED BY HOLLY BILLIE
Health Department Program Manager

BRIGHTON — All Family Ministries, located on the Brighton Reservation, is under the leadership of Pastor Bill Blomberg. The ministry currently offers several opportunities to further your education.

Finances: A course on finances is offered Sunday mornings. The materials for this course come from Financial Peace University, a Dave Ramsey presentation.

Relationships: This class is offered on Wednesday night and is titled *The Power to Love*. It was developed by John Glenn, of Freedom Ranch Ministry.

Bible College: This program is a three-

year Bible College course. The materials are purchased from Faith Bible Institute. The founder and instructor for these classes is John Yates. Faith Bible Institute provides a chronological study of the entire Bible and a Bible college diploma upon completion of all classes. More than 33,000 students worldwide have participated in this program, including Brighton residents.

Brighton residents Alice Sweat, Ivan Bruised Head and LeAnna Rae Billie graduated from Faith Bible Institute.

For more information on Faith Bible Institute or other classes offered through All Family Ministries, contact Reina Micco at 863-634-8046 or Rita McCabe at 863-634-4826.



Photo courtesy of Holly Billie
Alice Sweat.

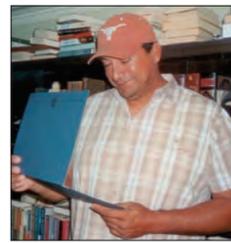


Photo courtesy of Holly Billie
Ivan Bruised Head.



Photo courtesy of Holly Billie
LeAnna Rae Billie.

Tampa Seminoles, YMCA form healthy partnership

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER
Special Projects Reporter

TAMPA — Marsha Roberts had a problem.

The Recreation director for the Tampa Seminoles had no facilities for either youth or adult Tribal members to work out, play games or participate in sports.

The smallest of the Seminoles' residential reservations, Tampa's community had been relocated from the actual reservation lands in 2004 when the Tribe's new Hard Rock Hotel & Casino occupied the entire footprint of the original trust land.

"People were living all over the place — Plant City, Brandon, Lutz, you name it," Roberts said.

More than 900 acres purchased by the Tribe in Lakeland is awaiting official federal recognition as trust land, a process that can take years.

"Someday, most everyone will be back living together in a community again. But until then, I felt we had to do something," she said.

Maureen "Mo" Chiodini offered a

viable solution.

The associate vice president of membership and programs for the Tampa Metropolitan Area YMCA came up with a unique partnership idea for the Tampa Seminoles — a regional membership that would allow any Tribal member to use any YMCA facility in Polk, Pasco, Hillsborough and Pinellas counties.

While YMCA corporate memberships are common, it is believed this is the first such arrangement between the YMCA and an American Indian Tribe, Chiodini said.

"They just walk up and show their ID cards and they can participate in anything. We've got kids in youth sports, gymnastics, dance," she said. "Parents can exercise in group and family programs as well. It's going real well."

The program began in October and has proven popular with Tribal families, Roberts said.

"Tribal members know the other Seminole reservations have gyms and pools and sports fields," she said. "Now, Tampa has them all over this part of Florida, easily accessible from wherever they are living."



Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue presents *New Year's safety*

Did you know that New Year's Day is the deadliest for pedestrians?

- Avoid the rush of traffic and arrive early to the destination for your New Year's Eve celebration. Make plans in advance to stay overnight in case you decide not to drive home.
- Designate a sober driver, rent a limousine or hire a taxi cab for the evening. Never allow an intoxicated person to operate a vehicle.
- Always wear your seatbelt, do not text and be cautious of other drivers because they may be under the influence of alcohol. Call 9-1-1 or *347 (FHP) to report a vehicle that is swerving on the roadway.
- Attend a local professional fireworks show as opposed to personally handling consumer fireworks. Even sparklers can ignite clothing and cause serious burns to children and adults.
- Celebratory gunfire (which is oftentimes confused with fireworks) produces stray bullets that strike the heads, shoulders or feet of innocent victims when firearms are discharged into the air.
- Make sure that your smoke alarms are working by pushing the test button.



"Smoke alarms save lives"



Historic Dania photographs featured in research notebook

SUBMITTED BY TARA BACKHOUSE
Collections Manager

In September's column, we introduced a recently acquired research notebook that originally belonged to Francis Frost White. White was an employee with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and worked on the Dania Reservation during the first half of the 20th century.

The notebook contains hundreds of items that date mainly from 1919 to the late 1930s. It consists of a variety of items, including research reports, newspaper clippings and photographs.

As we began to catalog the items in this notebook, we focused first on the photographs. The photographs document a wide variety of people, camps and events. Some of the people in the photographs are identified but not all of them. We would like your help in identifying some of the people in the photographs this month and in the future, as we continue our investigation.

This month, we have three photographs from the notebook. The photogenic man in a cowboy hat in Photograph 1 is Jack Osceola, and the photograph is dated March 18, 1935. It's fantastic and rare for

a museum to know the exact date of the photographs in its collection. This is not usually the case, as most photographers do not take notes or label their photographs.

We know the photographer of the other two photographs is Dwight R. Gardin, of Brighton, but the people of the photographs are not identified. We think that these faces are recognizable and that someone might be able to tell us who they are. If we have this information, we'll be able to provide the photos to family members who come and search the Museum's archives for pictures of relatives.

This is one of the most important services we provide, and we would like to help more people.

If you know who these people are, please call the Museum at 877-902-1113 and ask for the Collections Division. If you identify a member of your family, we can also give you a copy of that picture, and we will search the Museum's collection for other pictures of your family member.

If you would like to view the research notebook, to look for pictures of your family or to see anything else in the collection, please contact the Museum to make an appointment, or just drop by



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki

Photograph 1: Jack Osceola, March 18, 1935.

at your convenience and ask to speak to someone in the library.

Hah-Tung-Ke: John Paul Walters

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER
Special Projects Reporter

TALLAHASSEE — In the early 1980s, former Florida State University music therapy student John Paul Walters decided to leave Tallahassee for the hill country of Texas. A friend named Martha offered him a room at her house while he contemplated the move. She lived in the historical town of Miccosukee, an unincorporated community in northeastern Leon County not far from the Florida-Georgia line.

"I was mesmerized by the area," said Walters, a singer/songwriter who performed in the Meisburg & Walters musical duo for the previous five years.

"I was only planning to stay six months, but I stayed a year," he said. "I hated to leave."

His walks around the countryside, the stunning panorama views, the rolling hills dotted with ponds and lakes, the cool, still nights, the rural culture — "all the beautiful things about the area" — led Walters to put his thoughts on paper. The result: *Miccosukee in My Mind*.

During the 18th century, the town of Miccosukee (located at the junction of Veterans Memorial Drive and Moccasin Gap Road) was a major center of the Miccosukee Tribe, which often fought armed battles with white settlers. The town was originally mapped by the British in 1778 and first called Mikasuki with 60 homes, 28 families and a town square. Some 70 gunmen protected the town. It was the capital of the short-lived State of Muskogee.

In 1818, Gen. Andrew Jackson invaded the village, defeated village Chief Kinhagee and drove the Indians south. Eventually, the area had a U.S. post office, schools, churches and stores and became a center of Leon County cotton plantations. During the Civil War, soldiers from Miccosukee



Photo courtesy of John Paul Walters

Songwriter John Paul Walters.

enlisted in Company K, 5th Florida Infantry and Company B, 1st Florida Cavalry.

After the Civil War, the area reverted to farms. During the 1890s, wealthy industrialists established quail hunting plantations and large ranch estates, removing thousands of acres of land from agricultural production. The town essentially became a ghost town after the boll weevil infestation of 1918 and the Great Depression a decade later.

Walters no longer performs the song, which is only available on iTunes. For the past few years, he has suffered a rare disease called spasmodic dysphonia, a neurological disorder that causes spasms of one or more muscles of the larynx (voice box) during speech. *National Public Radio's* Diane Rehm, bluegrass guitarist Tony Rice and Robert F. Kennedy Jr. are among the notables who have suffered from this neurological disease.

"I really miss the performing and singing, but I have to accept the fact I cannot really do it anymore," Walters said. "But my passion, my real focus, is really in writing. Soon, I am going to move back to Nashville to be a staff songwriter. I'm not getting any younger. Why not give it my best shot?"

'Miccosukee in My Mind'

Lyrics by John Paul Walters

There's a sleepy little town
There just below the border
Nestled in between Florida and Georgia
It's a pretty little place, it helps me get by

Just about daybreak
Walkin' down a country road
Smellin' that sweet too
Everything is brand new
These are the things that help me get by
'Cause when I'm out on the road
I go to Miccosukee in my mind

Just about dinner time
Martha's makin' sweet tea
Hangin' laundry on the line
And singin' to her baby
These are the things that help me get by

Fishin' with my new plug
Out in the row boat
Dreamin' 'bout the big one
Cook him over hickory smoke
These are the things that help me get by
'Cause when I'm out on the road

I go to Miccosukee in my mind

Tired of livin' out of a suitcase
Chokin' on the fast food
Checked in the motels
Glued to the boob tubes
Smoky and his radar
Hiding by the highway
Got to get back where I can live my life my way

Just about twilight
Whippoorwill in the woods
Kicking my shoes off
Listenin' to the crickets talk
These are the things that help me get by

Rockin' on the front porch
Finally got the kids to sleep
Thankin' my lucky stars
Pray the Lord my soul to keep
These are the things that help me get by
'Cause when I'm out on the road
I go to Miccosukee in my mind



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki

Photograph 2: Two unidentified men stand next to each other.



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki

Photograph 3: Four unidentified young women sit on a stone wall.

Conquistadors: distant ghosts we won't forget

• Willie Johns

I always had a thirst, a hunger, for the history of my people. But when I was growing up, nobody talked much about it. There wasn't time for much besides survival. We lived in chickees on the Brighton Seminole Reservation. My family was dirt poor and spent most of our time working in the fields, working with cattle, anything we could find, even cutting palm fronds for the Catholics to use on Palm Sunday. As a kid, I would hear my uncles talk about when the Seminoles all lived in camps across Florida and how they missed the free hunting and trapping way of life. When they came onto the reservation, it was like a death sentence to them. A lot of them became migrant workers just to keep food on the table. The struggle to survive overshadowed the memories of the shooting and guns and wars and genocide of the past.

When I was a boy, I also spent time in the world outside of the reservation. At the age of 3, I caught polio, and they took me away for three years in a crippled children's hospital in Orlando. I remember when I finally came back. The first night I woke up in a chickee, I could smell the hog pens. I realized then that God had pity on me to put me on an Indian reservation because nothing was going to come to me; I had to get off my a-- and run it down myself. By 7, I had thrown my braces into a cabbage tree. I played four years of high school football at Okeechobee High, rode bulls, went out with the pretty girls. I was determined to make it. If there was ever any prejudice directed at me, I didn't know it.

As I got older, my hunger to learn about my people's history only got stronger. I started doing a lot of independent research. I asked questions. People would tell me stories passed down, but I knew there was more. The more I studied, the more I didn't understand the magnitude of what took place among my people. As time went on, I found out that other Tribal members really wanted to know the history, too. My phone would ring off the hook with others wanting me to find out historical information for them. Long ago, they began calling me a

Tribal historian. I've got a history degree. I've amassed a large library of books written about my people from every angle you can imagine. The past is very, very real to me. I am worried it could disappear unless we make a determined effort to preserve our history.

Last year, I signed on as the Seminole Tribe's representative in the Viva Florida 500 project [commemorating the 500th anniversary of Spanish explorers landing on Florida's shore]. I didn't do this to make a politically correct statement that will render everybody happy. I did it to make sure that the history of my people is represented. We are here to educate, not forgive. We are here to enlighten, not accuse. We want to keep very alive the memories of those days when the Europeans first came. We want to tell who the Spanish people were who came to our shores, and we want to educate people about exactly what they did.

People may not realize how many Tribes and Native peoples existed before being decimated by the disease and warfare brought on by the conquistadors. With the priests looking on, Spanish explorers took out the aboriginal Floridians with massacres in the name of God. And they sent the good news back to the king. But, we can only speak for ourselves. The Florida Indians of long ago could illustrate what happened, but they didn't write books and journals.

Indians all across America shared stories that were kept alive and passed down through the generations about what the European invaders did. That's how it was told to me: The truth of those days was kill the Indian — or give him a blanket, invite him to supper, sneeze on his blanket, then send him away.

Yet, we survived all of this atrocity. We actually learned from our attackers. We learned to practice slavery from them, and we even learned the behavior to sell out our own people. Creek warriors did real well in that regard; they would come down here and hunt down the other Indians the same way the white man did. They would sell Indians as slaves just like the white man did.

The Spanish brought in their culture and tried to make us a part of it. They were actually merciful in some ways. After

they put you in your place, enslaved and unarmed, they would Christianize you and make you a Catholic. Our cultures clashed, and the Spanish had the upper hand.

When I think of the past, I feel like we were always running. For hundreds of years, we were on the run. We ran here from all over. Some of us ran here earlier than others. We Seminoles believe we are descended from the indigenous Tribes of Florida, running and hiding like all the others. You had the Calusa, the Apalachicola, the Mayaimi along Lake Okeechobee, the Ais people of the Indian River Lagoon, the Tocobaga in Tampa, Arawak in the Caribbean, Timucua up in the northeast and the Tequesta in the southeast. The individual Tribes were too small to engage in effective warfare with the Spanish and their allies. So, they ran.

The Seminole Tribe of Florida has a Tribal Historic Preservation Department that is absolutely concerned with the accurate interpretation and preservation of our history — all the way back to the first peoples who occupied this land. Both the state of Florida and the United States, under the 1990 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), recognize the Seminole Tribe as the guardian of the ancient southeastern Tribes who were eliminated from their home lands. It becomes our official duty to handle repatriations, which can include re-burials of human remains and the return of funerary objects, sacred objects and objects of cultural patrimony. We have been involved in many, many of these cases.

While all Seminole people have respect for our culture and our ancestors, not all Seminoles agree on how we should relate with our neighbors. Some who have been quite active and vocal about these issues are Independent Seminoles who choose not to be enrolled members of the organized Seminole Tribe of Florida. They frequently speak at public meetings when issues arise where they perceive traditional Seminole culture is being wronged. Some of the Independents want to regain Paradise by loading every person in the state on a boat and then shipping 'em all out. But that ain't gonna happen.

I think education is the answer. Some

Independents argue that the city of St. Augustine should tear down the old fort (Castillo de San Marcos) because of the atrocities that occurred to Indians there 400 years ago. I look at it differently. I would rather it remain standing so the memories of those days would not fade away. Those who don't remember the past are doomed to repeat it.

For St. Augustine's 450th anniversary (planned for 2015), I made a suggestion that it would be cool if we could invite representatives of all the Native Tribes who were incarcerated there during and after the Seminole Wars, get them all together, and do a healing ceremony. But some Independents did not agree, so the Tribe refused to endorse the idea.

Many Seminoles would say, "Leave it all alone." They argue we shouldn't spend a whole lot of time, money and effort on worrying about the Spanish conquistadors — that today there are much bigger things we need to be worried about.

Maybe the best place to focus on the history is in the schools. I don't think the European invasion is discussed a lot in the classrooms. The conquistadors came over here 300 years before Andrew Jackson started chasing us. Students are taught more about the three Seminole Wars than the genocide performed by the Europeans and the Americans. In my home of Brighton, our charter school spends a lot of time on language, which is very important to us, and on taking the kids on cultural outings. The Spanish are part of the curriculum, but I don't believe there is much said about it. We have to change that in all Florida schools.

It's too bad we all haven't been talking about all this history all along. Maybe it would not have been so glorified.

In the end, I don't believe the Spanish were ever that happy with Florida. We just didn't have what they were looking so desperately for. They were basically gone by the Revolutionary War. Then, along came the American settlers. Wouldn't you know it, they wanted the Indians' land. They held their meetings. "How we gonna get the land? What are we gonna do with the Indians?" Somewhere, someone had an idea: "Let's hire Andy Jackson. He knows what to do: Write up failing treaties, spank

'em in a few wars, go after 'em, keep 'em on the run, put 'em out West somewhere."

When the Supreme Court ruled the Indian Removal Act was unconstitutional, ol' Andy Jackson just said, "Stop me," and rode off after the Indians anyway. If he defied the law like that today, the federal marshals would be all over him. To tell you the truth, Seminoles today despise Andrew Jackson more than the conquistadors.

But you know how they say, "Out of bad things, good things come?" When the Spanish sailed away, they left their horses and cattle here, and we used them to start the Seminole cattle industry.

In fact, for most of the past 100 years in Florida, the Seminoles have thrived in the cattle industry. We once sold the meat and hides to the Cubans, even loaded up cattle on the St. Johns River. People called us the Cow Creeks. Today, we are the fourth-largest calf producers in the country. After we stopped running, those abandoned cattle pulled us through. That was our first casino: the Spanish cow.

If it was paradise before the Europeans came, Florida was an absolutely horrible place to live after they left. Post-Civil War, you had outlaws, bandits, deserters, every sort of bad individual, all the problems of poverty, everyone hit hard. Before we got reservations, we were surviving in little camps all over the Everglades and Big Cypress Swamp where only the mosquitoes and gators were supposed to be. Our homeland had shrunk. But we weren't running anymore.

Our communities began to grow, and we began to organize. The Indians who settled in the "Glades became the Miccosukee and Big Cypress Seminoles. Those who lived to the north were Creek speakers whose descendants are the Brighton Seminoles of today. We survived nearly 500 years of genocide and atrocity with our culture and languages still intact. That is who we are.

The conquistador is a distant ghost. But we will not forget.

Willie Johns is Community Outreach Specialist for the Seminole Tribe of Florida. This article was originally published in FORUM, the magazine of the Florida Humanities Council.

Health

Safe holiday cooking with children

SUBMITTED BY NICHOLAS PERSAUD
Environmental Health Specialist

Holiday cooking with the family is a wonderful activity; these moments make the holidays special. It's important, however, to remember kitchen safety when cooking with kids. Just a few simple steps can keep the whole family cooking safely and happily.

Teach about the dangers

Instruct children about the dangers in the kitchen. Let them learn on non-electrical equipment, like a hand beater, before they progress to electric equipment.

Many appliances in the kitchen use heat, such as the stove, coffee maker and microwave. Remember that any kitchen equipment can retain heat for longer periods than what might be expected. Check for cool surfaces before allowing children near any appliance; also, explain to them what is sharp and what is hot.

Demonstrate safety

Roll up sleeves, tie back long hair and use oven mitts when handling hot food. Use caution when handling knives. Give children metal or plastic utensils, measuring cups and bowls, instead of breakable glass ones. Remember, children will mimic adults.

Supervise the kitchen

Cooking together offers a fun way to share valued life lessons with children. Assign age-appropriate tasks, and oversee their progress. Distractions occur while cooking, so make sure to stay aware of children and their activities. Also, remember that unattended cooking is the leading cause of kitchen fires, so keeping an eye on cooking food is by far the easiest, least expensive and most effective way to protect homes.

Keep a clean work area

Keeping a clean, clutter-free working area reduces the risk of accidents and spills. This includes countertops, sinks and stoves, as well as floors. Ensure there is adequate space to safely move around.

Unplug appliances after use

Unplug any kitchen appliances when not in use. Appliances still use energy when plugged in, whether or not they are turned on. Don't allow appliance cords to dangle or hang over counter tops or table edges and, better yet, unplug, wrap or tuck away cords for safekeeping; use electrical outlet covers when not in use.

Inspect cords for signs of wear or damage, as this could lead to shock or fire. Remember to remove cords by the plug;

reach up and pull the plug out of the socket, rather than yanking on the cord. Also, do not place cords underneath anything heavy; tuck them to a wall to get them out of the way.

Prep before cooking

Cleaning hands and food contact surfaces is important. Bacteria spreads easily between cutting boards, knives, countertops and hands. Therefore, wash kitchen towels after each use instead of hanging them up to dry, as they can readily harbor bacteria.

When cooking, be sure to avoid cross-contamination between fresh produce, raw meat, poultry and seafood. Think about labeling cutting boards for each use, and be sure to keep meat juices away from ready-to-eat foods.

To reduce the number of trips to the pantry and to prevent leaving children unattended while doing so, consider taking out all ingredients before beginning.

Accidents can happen quickly in the kitchen. Remember to keep a phone close at hand in case of emergency.

Please call the Seminole Tribe of Florida's Environmental Health Office at 954-985-2330 should you need more information about this subject.

Good diet and exercise habits shed the pounds

• Paula Bowers-Sanchez



We have so many choices when it comes to losing weight or preventing weight gain. We are constantly bombarded with the latest and greatest weight-loss drug or supplement, and I have to confess, I probably have tried most of them.

What the advertisements don't tell you is that, along with taking the "wonder drug," you must exercise and follow a low-calorie, low-fat diet.

It's in the fine print, barely visible.

Time and time again, I find that getting back to the basics is what works for me. I had to make a decision to follow my tried-and-true method of reasonable eating habits and regular exercise.

You may ask, "What are reasonable eating habits?" Well, for me, it's eating enough protein to maintain muscle, enough carbohydrates to maintain energy and a small amount of fat. A typical "weight loss" day of eating for me would be:

7:30 a.m. – Protein shake with at least 25-30 grams of protein.

10 a.m. – Egg whites and tomato slices (or sometimes I'll have a piece of toast).

Noon – Turkey sandwich (no mayo or cheese) or a salad with grilled chicken and either a low-calorie dressing or just a little of my favorite, Thousand Island.

2:30 p.m. – A meal replacement bar or an apple with a tablespoon of almond/peanut butter.

6 or 7 p.m. – Dinner is usually grilled chicken or fish with sautéed veggies; I sometimes include rice or potatoes.

I follow a plan like this when I need to drop a few pounds, keeping in mind that, along with a meal plan, I must incorporate resistance/weight training. Don't worry about "bulking up" because we females don't have enough male hormones to build big muscles. I tell women not to be afraid of weight training because research shows that resistance training can change your body, improve your mood and even keep you looking and

feeling younger.

If we want to lose weight or prevent weight gain, lifting weights is key. It's a fact that muscle burns more calories than fat, so your body becomes a fat-burning machine when you have more muscle. Incorporating weight training at least two to three times a week will not only change your physical appearance, but it can also make a difference in the way you feel emotionally. Personally, I always feel empowered after a rigorous workout.

Speaking of rigorous workouts, how often do you get uncomfortable in your workouts? By this, I mean that point where you are pushing yourself to go a little further, run a little faster, push a little harder. I find that it makes a big difference in the way I feel and in my appearance. Studies show that when we push hard and work out at high intensity, our metabolism can increase by at least 20 percent, and we continue to burn calories for several hours post-workout.

So, when you're exercising, try running a little faster than yesterday, try going a little faster on that spin bike or turning the knob so you have to push a little harder. Try holding on to a new speed or level for 20 seconds, and go back to your original rate. Do this every workout, and before you know it you will be working at higher levels.

With every accomplishment comes a new level of confidence.

Have a safe, happy and healthy holiday.

New Social Security and Medicare requirements for 2013

SUBMITTED BY CONNIE WHIDDEN
Health Director

If you are a Medicare or Social Security beneficiary, you must comply with two new requirements in 2013.

1. The U.S. Treasury will stop mailing paper checks to Social Security beneficiaries on March 1, 2013. So, if you are receiving a paper check from Social Security, you must switch to an electronic method of payment before the March 1, 2013 deadline.

The medical social workers from the STOF Clinic will be reaching out to you in the upcoming months to assist you in switching payment methods, or you may contact Social Security toll-free at 1-800-772-1213. The available options for payment are:

- Direct deposit into your bank account
- Direct Express card (debit card)

If you do not sign up for an electronic payment method, the U.S. Department of the Treasury may send your benefits via the Direct Express card program to avoid an interruption in payment.

2. Effective Jan. 1, 2013, you will be required to sign an "Appointment of Representative" form, which will authorize the Social Security Administration to release information to designated STOF Health Department staff who perform administrative duties such as payment of Medicare premiums. This will allow the STOF Health Department to obtain your current Medicare premium amount from Social Security so we can pay or reimburse you the correct premium amount. Please note that you must sign the "Appointment

of Representative" form if you want the STOF to continue to pay or reimburse you for your Medicare premiums beginning in 2013.

Again, our medical social workers will be contacting you to obtain your signature on this form.

In addition, you should receive a notice from Medicare or Social Security that will indicate your new Medicare premium. Please drop these letters or premium notices off at one of the STOF clinics to the attention of Kathy Wilson or Debbie DeHass, or you may give them to the medical social workers to ensure that we pay or reimburse you the correct amount.

If you have questions about the new requirements, please contact the medical social worker at your clinic.



Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue

presents



Winter holiday safety

Did you know that most residential fires occur during the winter months?

- Most residential fires occur during nighttime. Unplug holiday lights when leaving your home or going to bed and never leave burning candles unattended.
- Do not overload electrical outlets and extension cords. A maximum of three strands should be connected.
- Cut ½" off of the Christmas tree trunk and keep your tree stand filled with water for moisture. A dry tree can ignite into a blazing fire within a matter of seconds.
- Do not place your tree close to a heat source, by an exit or along the pathway of an exit.
- Place space heaters at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn, including decorations, furniture, curtains and clothing.
- Supervise children and pets at all times when space heaters or fireplaces are in use.
- Choose child-friendly holiday lights, decorations, ornaments and toys that will not harm children (no sharp edges and small pieces that are choking hazards).
- Make sure that your smoke alarms are working by pushing the test button.



"Smoke alarms save lives"

What are the benefits of psychiatry?

SUBMITTED BY DEBRA RAY
Family Services Assistant Director

What is a psychiatrist?

A psychiatrist is a physician first. Only medical doctors can be psychiatrists, and only psychiatrists (not counselors, social workers or psychologists) can prescribe medications or other medical therapies for the treatment of psychological problems. In many cases, these doctors work in conjunction with counselors, therapists, social workers, psychologists or other practitioners who provide talk therapy for the client.

How can a psychiatrist help?

A psychiatrist will first perform an evaluation in which patients answer questions regarding their symptoms. From the evaluation, the doctor will determine the severity of symptoms and how much they interfere with goals, relationships, work, school and quality of life.

Once the psychiatrist has a clear picture of the medical problem, he or she will discuss treatment options, which may include therapy and/or medication.

As with other experts, regular talk therapy sessions help patients articulate their emotional problems and teach new ways to change negative patterns and behaviors. Patients may also talk about unresolved experiences as a means to work through the past and move forward. If the problem is chemical, medications are brought into the mix to bring the mind and body into balance.

Because psychiatrists are medical doctors, they can make clinical judgments as to whether their patients may have a non-psychiatric medical condition. For example, sleep apnea, thyroid problems or anemia may all cause fatigue and low energy; they are also two common symptoms of

depression. Psychiatrists can also assess whether current medications are interacting to cause anxiety, insomnia or irritability.

What to expect from a psychiatrist

A psychiatrist can offer a broad spectrum of help related to mental, emotional and behavioral problems within an intimate relationship. They help identify the root of discord and also present treatment options, if appropriate. If patients already take psychiatric medications, psychiatrists have the background to explain the risks and benefits of those medications and any potential interactions with other medications.

Education and credentials

Training consists of four years of medical school followed by one year of internship and at least three years of psychiatric residency. Psychiatrists are required to have a valid license to practice psychiatry, and each state has different licensing requirements, but they all require applicants to pass a written exam.

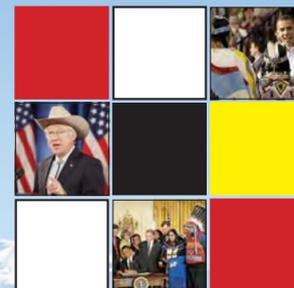
Most people who specialize in this field take examinations given by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology to receive board certification. Board certification is a good thing to look for because it presupposes the doctor has demonstrated sufficient knowledge in his or her profession.

The Family Services Department employs Dr. Bhadresh Parikh as their staff psychiatrist. He has worked for the department for the past several years and has office hours on the Hollywood, Big Cypress and Brighton reservations.

Should you wish to schedule an appointment with Dr. Parikh, please feel free to call the Family Services Department on your respective reservation.

Source: YourTango (2012).

NATIONAL NATIVE NEWS



Florida's Hard Rock to open hotels in China in 2015

HOLLYWOOD — Hard Rock International, the hospitality brand owned by the Seminole Tribe of Florida, is expanding its hotels into China, announcing plans for two Hard Rock hotels, both on golf resort properties developed by China-based Mission Hills Group.

Hard Rock plans a 280-room hotel in Shenzhen, the booming port city on China's southern coast, and a 250-room hotel in Haikou on Hainan Island, off southern China.

The two hotels are slated to open in 2015 at a cost of nearly \$143 million, the companies said.

"The expansion of Hard Rock Hotels into China is a momentous event," Hard Rock president Hamish Dodds said in a news release.

The Asian nation of 1.2 billion people is the world's most populous, with a fast-growing middle class increasingly traveling within their country. China also ranks as the world's No. 4 international travel destination by tourist spending and soon could top the list, according to reports from the U.N. World Tourism Organization.

Hard Rock has 18 hotels in the Americas and Asia. The group includes one in Macau, the former Portuguese colony that now is a special administrative region of China known for its gambling resorts.

— *Hard Rock*

Violence Against Indian Women Act filed

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Lame duck Congressional efforts to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) are halted more than seven months after the House and Senate passed separate bills. This has led Congressman Darrel Issa (R-Calif.), with co-sponsoring Native American Congressmen Tom Cole (R-Okla.), Mike Simpson (R-Idaho) and Patrick McHenry (R-N.C.) to introduce HR6625, the Violence Against Indian Women Act of 2012.

The Congressmen are seeking to use Tribal protections for Native women and families as a bargaining tool by lawmakers in a last-ditch effort to get the VAWA back on track. It stalled when Republican leaders objected to Native American protections offered in the Senate bill, including provisions that would give Tribal courts jurisdiction over non-Indians who commit crimes on reservations.

The passed House version does not include those Tribal court provisions, instead allowing for a battered Native woman – or a Tribe on her behalf – to file in U.S. district court for a protection order against her alleged abuser, whether Indian or not, who committed the abuse on Indian land.

White House spokesman Shin Inouye said the Obama administration still supported the Senate version of the bill.

Congressman Cole, a Chickasaw Tribal member, told *Indian Country Today Media Network* he supports the Senate version of the bill and has been trying to educate his colleagues.

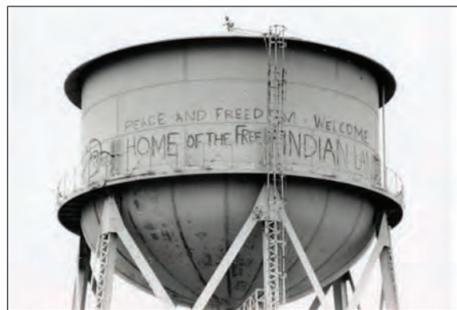
"I have had an opportunity to talk to some people who say this would be unconstitutional," he said. "It's not unconstitutional. It's clearly within Congress' purview to give Tribes the ability to have effective police power and protection of their own territory."

"There are 535 members of Congress, and 534 of them could go on the Sioux Reservation, commit a crime and not be subjected to local jurisdiction," Cole added. "If I did it, though, I would be because I'm an Indian. We trust Tribes to have jurisdiction over Native Americans. As long as you give people the right to appeal, they ought to be subject to Tribal jurisdiction."

"Most American communities have local jurisdiction; Native Americans do not. It's not right. I will vote with the democrats on this if an amendment or recommit is offered. I hope we can get it done this year."

— *Indian Country Today Media Network*

Alcatraz graffiti preserved



ALCATRAZ ISLAND, Calif. — Recently, when the water tower on Alcatraz Island was repainted by the National Park Service (NPS), its famous graffiti was documented before it was covered so it could be recreated. It was during the American Indian occupation of Alcatraz Island (1969-1971) that the words "Peace and Freedom. Welcome. Home of the Free Indian Land" were scrawled on the famous tower.

"We painstakingly documented the original graffiti on the water tower," Alex Picavet, Golden Gate National Recreation Area spokesperson, told *Indian Country Media Network*. "It's the same color paint; everything is the same."

About \$800,000 went into refurbishing and stabilizing the historic water tower, even though it doesn't work, and part of that process included a coat of fresh, moisture-resistant paint, a coat of paint that covered the historic political message, one the NPS thought was important enough to recreate.

"This is a really important part of Alcatraz's history, and this was one of the most visible ways that this history stays present on Alcatraz, so it was important to the National Park Service that all visitors...have the opportunity to learn more about

the occupation of Alcatraz," Picavet, who is Osage, said.

Native writer Dean Chavers was one of 78 college students who took over Alcatraz Island in 1969.

"The Indian symbols on the Alcatraz water tower may not mean anything to the National Park Service authorities, but they mean the world to us Indians who were there. It is part of history," he said, calling Richard Oakes, the Mohawk leader of the Alcatraz occupation "a true visionary."

Shot and killed in 1972, Oakes was remembered during the refurbishment of the water tower. Fawn Oakes, Richard's daughter, and Elijah Oakes, his grandson, helped in the restoration process.

"It was meaningful to the National Park Service to have this cooperative effort between the Native American community, whose history we share responsibility for preserving, and the federal government to repaint the messages," Picavet said.

The occupiers were protesting the poor treatment of Indians in schools and the U.S. government's "treaty termination" policy (reversed by President Nixon in 1970 as a result of the Alcatraz occupation).

Other evidence that is left of the Indian occupation include a graffiti on the dock when people arrive that says, "Indians welcome," and, "Indian land." The word "Free" is scrolled into a shield in the emblem graffiti above the main door to the cell house.

— *Indian Country Today Media Network*

NRC weighing uranium mine near Pine Ridge

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission has announced the opportunity for interested parties to intervene in Crow Butte Resources' application to expand its uranium mining operation to the Marsland site, located between the Pine Ridge Reservation and Crawford, Neb.

In 2008, the Oglala Sioux Tribe intervened to demand hearings on a previous proposal for expansion of the company's mining at the nearby North Trend site. The NRC also granted participation in those proceedings to the nonprofit Western Nebraska Resources Council, the nonprofit Owe Aku (Bring Back the Way) and its founder, Debra White Plume, who is Oglala Lakota.

The new opportunity for requesting a hearing or otherwise seeking approval to intervene in the application for the additional expansion was posted in the Federal Register. It gives interested parties until Jan. 29 to request a hearing, petition for leave to intervene or move for permission to file contentions. Instructions for doing so are included in the Federal Register notice. The NRC will determine eligibility.

Crow Butte Resources, a subsidiary of Canadian mining giant Cameco, wants to increase in-situ recovery (ISR) mining, which involves injecting a leach solution into wells drilled into an ore body, allowing the solution to flow through the ore body and extract uranium, then removing the uranium from the solution by ion exchange. Precipitation, drying and packaging into solid yellowcake uranium also takes place on site for shipping to nuclear power plants.

Interveners in the previous application argued, among other things, that "the current mine sites are within the treaty boundaries; that they possess water and mineral rights under the treaties, that infringement of the treaties would constitute injury."

The NRC did allow petitioners to argue their allegations about contamination of water resources and potential resulting environmental and health issues, as well as concerns over adequate consultation with Tribal leaders regarding a prehistoric Indian camp located in the region of the then-proposed expansion site.

Crow Butte Resources has been mining uranium for Cameco on the southern side of the Pine Ridge Reservation in Nebraska for 29 years. Cameco is one of the world's largest uranium producers, accounting for about 16 percent of international production. Its uranium operations span the globe with mining, milling and development assets in Canada, Australia and Central Asia, as well as the United States, where the Smith Ranch-Highland operation in Wyoming is another of its assets.

Located between the Crow Butte minefield and the Smith Ranch-Highland field is the proposed Dewey-Burdock uranium mine site, a project of the Canadian holding company Powertech Uranium Resources Corp.

— *Native Sun News*

Chaske Spencer of 'Twilight' is leader of the pack

NEW YORK — Lakota actor Chaske Spencer is one of the most well-known actors in the world. He and several other Native actors play Quileute Tribal members who happen to be shape-shifting werewolves in *The Twilight Saga*. Spencer reprises his role of alpha werewolf pack leader Sam Uley in the fifth and final film of the series, *The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn – Part 2*, which was released in late November and is in the movie scene now.

Spencer's journey to stardom took him from rural reservations in Idaho and Montana to the bright lights of New York, where he's now based. Recent work has taken him to Montana's Fort Belknap Reservation to shoot the film adaptation of the late Blackfeet author James Welch's *Winter In the Blood*; to Australia, where he filmed the well-received but canceled *NBC* pilot shot in Australia, *Frontier*; and to the San Carlos Apache Reservation to shoot the award-winning drama *Shouting Secrets*. Here is an excerpt from a recent interview with Spencer by *Indian Country Today Media Network*.

Q: How has growing up on various Indian reservations influenced your outlook on life?

A: I've lived on the Fort Peck, Northern Cheyenne and the Nez Perce reservations. I actually had a good time on all of those places and particularly enjoyed the family aspect of living there. There was a lot of poverty there and all that, and one of the reservations I moved to in the '80s I'll always remember had this horrible sulfuric smell in their tap water. I didn't think

much about it because I didn't know any better or even know about life off the reservation. But just like everywhere in the world where people grow up in a lower end economic tier, I really do appreciate what I have the more I move up. It's affected my political outlook as it's helped me see behind the smoke and mirrors of how the U.S. government propaganda works and what the media presents about American culture. So, I took that background with me when I went to New York and started working as an actor, and I carry that with me to this day.

Q: What made you decide to take a leap of faith to head to New York City from the rural Fort Peck Indian Reservation in Montana?

A: There was nothing going on in my life, really. I was just bumming around. I'd failed in school, I was drinking a lot, I wasn't doing anything except community theater, and so I really had nothing to lose. Things couldn't get any worse, so I decided to move to New York and gave acting a shot. I'd always wanted to try to see if I could do it, and, luckily, I've been fortunate enough to where it's worked out. I didn't try to hop in and be like, "I just want to be a movie star." I actually wanted to learn how it was like to be a real actor, so I started taking a lot of acting classes, hanging out with other actors and learning the artistic process of it.

Q: Looking back, what was it like just being part of the hugely successful *Twilight* franchise?

A: It's funny talking about it because *Twilight's* almost like an entity in its own. I don't think it's really hit me how huge *Twilight* was, but maybe it will down the road. But for now, I just think I was really fortunate to be able to get the job, that it was successful, and it gave me a career. I don't know, maybe three or four years down the road and I'll be blown away by being part of that franchise, but it's still too soon. It's like when something happens in your family – good or bad – you don't know how to comprehend it until it sinks in. I do know I enjoyed the work, hanging out with everyone, the travel, all the opportunities given to me and that the fans have really enjoyed the movies. There's a lot of talent in those movies, and everyone in them will continue to work and grow as artists.

Q: Why is it personally important for you to promote healthier lifestyles for young Natives for Michelle Obama's *Let's Move* campaign?

A: Natives overall are not healthy, but it's not like there's a bunch of health food stores on the reservations. I grew up eating junk and crappy food from a deep fryer or whatever the local gas station sold because there was nothing else to eat. I didn't even know what a vegetable was. So, we need to be aware of our health because diabetes and obesity are big problems in Indian Country, and we need to educate ourselves on eating right and getting lots of exercise. We should treat our body as a temple. If kids start becoming aware of maintaining healthy habits at a young age, it helps against health risks as they get older.

— *Indian Country Today Media Network*

Navajo Keyboard app now available

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. — An American Indian-owned small business from Arizona, Native Innovation, has finished groundbreaking work that will now allow Apple users to download the Navajo Keyboard app for their iPhones and iPads through iTunes. And it is free.

The Navajo Keyboard makes it possible for users to type in and removes many of the frustrations that users have with typing the Navajo language using the default iPhone and iPad keyboard. This application places an extra row of keys on its keyboard, allowing access to specific Navajo characters without depressing the letter. A slide bar is included that can be turned on and off to transition between the Navajo keyboard and the default iPhone and iPad keyboard.

"We wanted to provide something for our younger generations that is unique and promotes the language," said Jerome Tsosie, president and co-owner of Native Innovation.

"The performance of the Navajo Keyboard app supports sharing what you have written through social media apps such as Facebook, Twitter, messages, plus email. Overall, Navajo Keyboard is essential to all Navajo language enthusiasts because of its speed, usability and plain usefulness."

"Fewer and fewer Navajo children are speaking less and less Navajo. Almost all entering kindergarten children coming to school are monolingual speakers of English. The average age of Navajo speakers is increasing. Though about 56 percent of the 300,000 plus Navajo are speakers of Navajo, this is down from about 60 percent 10 years ago," said Florian Tom Johnson, who designed the layout of the Navajo Keyboard. "As a language planner, for Navajo not to become endangered, we must do everything possible so Navajo speakers continue to use Navajo with each other and with those learning to speak Navajo."

"Navajo language must regain its function in Navajo society for Navajos to continue using the language. This Navajo Keyboard is only one of many ways to do that," Johnson said.

The mission of Native Innovation is to provide revolutionary technology and education solutions to Native American communities with a goal to reinvest its profits back into the Navajo Nation by providing employment.

— *Native News Network*

Shale oil boom in North Dakota impacts Native Americans

FORT BERTHOLD, N.D. — From a quiet agricultural state, in just five years, North Dakota has become a rapidly industrializing energy powerhouse. By the middle of 2012, North Dakota was producing about 660,000 barrels of oil a day, more than twice as much as just two years before. That number makes North Dakota the second-largest oil-producing state in the United States, after Texas.

North Dakota's political establishment – democrats and republicans alike – view the oil boom as a huge success. The state's economy is surging.

Between 2008 and 2012, more than 41,000 workers were hired in North Dakota, which has the lowest unemployment rate in the country. All the oil pouring out of North Dakota has markedly improved U.S. energy security. As recently as 2005, the U.S. was importing 60 percent of the oil it consumes; today, imports account for 42 percent of consumption.

But not everyone is happy about the situation. Traveling across northwest North Dakota, it is not difficult to find farmers and ranchers who are outraged by what they are experiencing. Many North Dakotans view the oil rush as an assault on their communities and the places they love. The degradation of western North Dakota is especially poignant for the 12,000 Native American residents of the Fort Berthold Reservation, home of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara. The nations, known as the Three Affiliated Tribes, today live on a fragment of their historical territory. The Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851 affirmed a 12-million-acre reservation in the Great Plains, but by 1880, the United States had disposed of all but 988,000 acres, and, of these, non-Indian farmers and ranchers soon came to own about half.

In the 1950s, the federal government forced the Tribe to sell 175,000 acres of prime farmland along the Missouri River Valley for Lake Sakakawea. Today, the oil rush – more than 500 wells now pump oil on Fort Berthold and another 1,600-3,000 are planned for the next five years – is jeopardizing the remaining 400,000 acres of Indian land holdings.

The Three Affiliated Tribes' official position is that drilling benefits the community. One third of the Tribal members at Fort Berthold own some mineral rights, and the Tribe has established its own energy company with long-term plans to take over energy production on the reservation. Tribal Chairman Tex Hall said oil will bring the reservation "sovereignty by the barrel."

But the reality is that little oil money reaches most of the reservation. Activists Walter and Lisa Deville and Theodora Bird Bear, lifelong residents of the reservation town of Mandaree, said none of the oil money collected by either the Tribe or North Dakota comes back to their town. Earlier this year, the Devilles and Bird Bear did a survey of Mandaree residents to gauge their views on the oil boom. Of those they questioned, 84 percent said they do not receive adequate information on environmental impacts to air, water quality and land; 92 percent said they fear drilling-related spills.

Oil production is starting to displace the Tribal culture based around agriculture and grazing livestock. The intrusion of fleets of trucks on rural roads has degraded quality of life in western North Dakota. From exploratory drilling through completion, it takes about a thousand truck trips to frack a shale oil well.

"If you have a post box on the side of the road, it's full of dirt," Walter said.

Theodora Bird Bear, 61, remembers that before drilling arrived in the area, Mandaree served "as a refuge for endangered species, a sanctuary. But it's a fragile environment and cannot take continuous hits like this. Fort Berthold is our last historic land. This is it."

— *Earth Island Journal*

Obama remembers his Crow adoptive father



WASHINGTON, D.C. — The late Crow elder who adopted then-presidential candidate Barack Obama into the Crow Nation during the 2008 democratic primaries was memorialized by the president at this year's White House Tribal Nations Conference, an annual event sponsored by the Obama administration.

It was Hartford "Sonny" Black Eagle who gave Obama the Crow name Awe Kooda Bilaxpak Kuxshish, or "One Who Helps People Throughout This Land."

Obama's adoptive mother (and wife of Sonny for more than 60 years), Mary Black Eagle, said, "When (Sonny and I) adopted (Obama), I asked him to remember me when he made it to the White House. He said, 'Mom, you're going to be there with me, too.'"

True to his promise, the Black Eagles visited Obama in Washington, D.C. on several occasions, including during the 2009 inauguration.

At the conference, Obama spoke reverently about Black Eagle, noting it would've been his 79th birthday the day before.

"And while we can't celebrate that milestone with him today, we can celebrate his remarkable life and all that happened along the way because Sonny's story is not just one man's journey to keep his culture alive, but one country's journey to keep perfecting itself," Obama said.

The president recalled Black Eagle's tales of growing up in a time where he was struck for speaking his Native tongue in boarding schools and having to read signs that said, "No dogs or Indians allowed," to eventually living in a time when he was able to adopt a then-future president into his Tribe as a son.

"And over those decades, as Sonny went from being a father to a great-great-grandfather and as he taught his family the Crow language and his community the Crow customs; as he became a living symbol of the perseverance of the entire Crow Nation, Sonny stayed true to those fundamental values – to cherish the Earth and each other, to honor ancestors and preserve traditions," Obama said.

— *Indianz.com*



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Education

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Student spotlight: Rollie Gilliam III

BY KATHRYN STOLARZ
Copy Editor

LAKE WORTH — In an imperfect world, Rollie Gilliam III wants to help those who suffer.

The Tribal member aspires to become a social worker and, one day, the program manager of the Tribe's Family Services Department.

"I learned that people are hurting and people just need someone to listen," Rollie, 25, said. "It's just that simple. Especially in a down economy, if you're not hurting financially, you're hurting in another form, whether it's mentally or spiritually."

A sophomore at Palm Beach State College, Rollie is on track to complete his associate degree this summer. He plans to transfer to Florida Atlantic University to earn his Bachelor of Social Work.

Higher education administrator Linda Iley has watched him grow through the years and feels confident he will succeed in his endeavors.

"I have known Rollie while (he was) still in high school and have witnessed his progress academically, as well as personally," Iley said. "I can say he is a man who has not allowed obstacles to prevent him from becoming a responsible, matured and dedicated person. He is passionate about helping himself, his family and his community."

Rollie said he grew up in Fort Pierce stretched between two cultures: that of his father, Tribal member Rollie Gilliam Jr., and that of his mother, African American Doris Stokes. His grandmothers took turns helping raise him and his Tribal sister, Tomasina Gilliam; and Family Services counseled him through his "trials and tribulations."

Realizing how valuable counseling proved for him, he began his path toward becoming a social worker.

The Tribe's Work Experience Program helped jump-start Rollie's career, exposing him to the working world and to more of the Tribal community. He enrolled in the



Photo courtesy of Rollie Gilliam III
Rollie Gilliam III aspires to study social work.

program in 2007 as an office assistant for Fort Pierce's Education Department and then transferred to Hollywood in 2009. He helped with filing, phone calls and check requests, in addition to shadowing the department head on trips to other reservations.

Adult vocational administrator Marie Dufour said he provided insight on how to improve programs for Tribal members.

"His questions were always service related: 'How can we make these services better?'" she said.

Last summer, Rollie decided to diversify his experiences in the Work Experience Program by enrolling as a teacher's aide for the Hollywood Preschool. His responsibilities for the 4- and 5-year-olds' class included reinforcing curriculum, supervising field trips and preparing students for graduation.

"(In the Work Experience Program,) we can wear as many hats as we want as Tribal members," Rollie said. "We can work anywhere that we want (within the Tribe), so I wanted to take advantage of the various opportunities that we have as Tribal members to be as versatile and diverse as possible."

Dufour praised his professional curiosity, as well as his consistency with the program.

"His everlasting presence in the program has shown there are Tribal members in the program who are serious about their education and want to understand their departments better so they can one day run them and take them to the next level," Dufour said.

Rollie said he is grateful to the Tribe for the opportunity to participate in the Work Experience Program and for funding his education. He plans to give back by making his career within the Tribe.

In his personal life, Rollie is involved with his church, Jesus Ministries Family Worship Center in Dania Beach, and he enjoys playing basketball and fishing in his free time. He is married to Tracy.



Pre-K students from Renee Barry's class let out huge laughs during a demonstration about rubber elasticity when another teacher attempts to pop an air-filled balloon with the tip of a pencil.

Science fair means super fun at Ahfachkee School

BY EILEEN SOLER
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Students learned hands-on at the annual Ahfachkee School science fair that school is indeed cool.

On Dec. 4 at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium, 58 science fair projects were showcased by dozens of students who shared their discoveries and explored new ideas.

"I had fun using tools like pliers, and I got to do a lot of measuring. Now, I know how a roller coaster works," said Elise Brown, 11, who took second place among fifth-graders for her interactive project called Roller Coaster Marbles.

Children streamed to Brown's display featuring multi-colored marbles that, when released at the top of a miniature roller coaster made of twisted metal clothing hangers, would demonstrate scientific terms such as potential energy, velocity and kinetic energy. The exhibit also proved Brown's hypothesis that the roller coaster's starting point should be high enough to enable the marble to "loop the loop."

Other topics included the effects of gravity on human height, metal's reaction to cold and hot water, the use of natural ingredients for common remedies, and whether more or less water added to dish soap makes the most bubbles.

Some projects tackled everyday problems.

Charlie Osceola, 8, won first place among fourth-graders for her project, Bug Off, which determined that cinnamon oil could be used as a natural and safe deterrent against unwanted insects — especially ants.

Osceola cut a banana in half, put cinnamon oil on one chunk, and then put 30 ants and both banana pieces under glass. She observed within hours that the ants steered clear of the cinnamon half or died when they tried to eat it, while the ants on the plain banana ate carefree.

Other projects attacked issues.

Dasani Cypress, 13, took an entire

month to research, gather and compile laboratory results through the Big Cypress Environmental Resource Management Department and to establish results for her project, which evaluated phosphorus content in water flowing in and out of the reservation.

The seventh-grade, first-place winner said she did not care whether she placed in the competition.

"I just wanted to know that if things dumped into our water [are] ruining the life cycle...we don't want to kill our plants, fish or wildlife," Cypress said.

She hypothesized that naturally flowing water through Big Cypress National Preserve and the Everglades would be cleaner leaving the reservation than coming in because the reservation's miles of pristine vegetation acts as a natural filtration. She proved her hypothesis — the phosphorus levels in water leaving the reservation are lower and therefore less damaging to the environment.

Projects at the science fair included abstracts, problems, hypotheses, experiment documentation and conclusions.

By the end of the school day, first-, second- and third-place winners were named from grades four through 12. The top three overall winners from grades seven through 12 will be announced in January at the school's annual awards assembly. Those three winners will go on to compete at the National American Indian Science & Engineering Fair and Expo in Albuquerque, N.M.

Ahfachkee School librarian Gary Chaffin, who manned one of four science demonstrations during the fair exhibit, said he was impressed by the quality of student entries.

"We've seen some terrific, in-depth research. It's exciting to see the kids making hypotheses, guessing results and sharing conclusions," he said.

Chaffin was one of four school staff members at tables where children stepped up to experience science firsthand. He



Kindergarten teacher Vicky Rudolph gives children a demonstration about rubber elasticity by attempting to pop an air-filled balloon with the tip of a pencil.

showed kids how to use permanent markers and cloth to create colorful art. When rubbing alcohol, a solvent, was sprayed onto the marker designs, the colors spread through the fabric for a tie-dye effect.

Children also witnessed how elasticity in rubber works and how the human sense of touch is affected under freezing temperatures.

Kindergarten teacher Vicky Rudolph, who co-chaired the science fair with business teacher Tricia Jolly, said the event was fun for teachers, students and parents.

"As a teacher, I enjoy seeing the children go from stressed at the very beginning of the projects to so proud of their accomplishments later," Rudolph said.

♦ See more SCIENCE photos on page 2B

Charter School students get a lesson on bullying



Andrea Holata

Entertainer and motivator Chris Hollyfield stops by Pemaevt Emahakv Charter School to speak to youth about taking a stance against bullying on Nov. 14.

BY ANDREA HOLATA
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Students of Pemaevt Emahakv Charter School got a lesson on bullying on Nov. 14 when entertainer Chris Hollyfield stopped by to speak with students.

Students, teachers and staff watched a slideshow presentation showing how bullying can harm people, how to "speak up to bullying" and how to "be somebody or be nobody." They learned the importance of not letting a person stop them from living successful lives.

Hollyfield, who has been on World Wrestling Entertainment and has acted in the movies *Bad Boys* and *Little Giants*, spoke with students on his experience with bullying and encouraged youth to always do their best. Hollyfield may not be the tallest man, but he has a big heart and is stronger than most people; he can lift 330 pounds, weighing in at only 110 pounds.

"Never allow a bully to stop you from living your dreams," Hollyfield said. "Speak up and let your voice be your tools and not your hands. Today, you have a choice. You can be somebody or be nobody."

Students asked questions following Hollyfield's speech. They wanted to know if he had people to confide in when he was bullied.

"I had friends that I would talk to them about being bullied," Hollyfield said. "When I got bullied, it would be when my friends weren't around. We didn't always have the same classes."

Despite the challenges he faced, he has a new outlook now.

"I get comments made because people don't know who I am," he said. "At my age, I don't pay no mind to it because if I put my positive energy into their negative energy, then I am going to be the one who is losing, so I keep it going and move forward."

He also pressed the importance of not retaliating by use of force because it can change your life.

Hollyfield wrapped up his speech with an important note.

"Always have determination and desire to be a friend and not a bully," he said. "Believe in yourself and the goals that you set for yourselves. Always listen to your culture, teachers, principal and your parents."

♦ See more BULLYING photos on page 5B

Ahfachkee students tour Florida Gulf Coast University

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

FORT MYERS — The administrators at Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers believe their university makes a difference in the lives of their students by having small classes, requiring community service and getting every student engrossed in the learning process.

"Instead of a sage on a stage, our classes get the students more engaged," said Jim Wohlpart, dean of undergraduate studies.

To promote their unique academic environment, the university welcomed students from Ahfachkee to tour the campus on Nov. 13. The 16 students in grades seven through 12 spent the day hearing from university president Wilson G. Bradshaw, Ph.D., top administrators and student tour guides. The day capped off with a men's basketball game between Gulf Coast and the University of Miami, which Gulf Coast won 63-51.

"We like the students to have early exposure to colleges to see if they can see themselves there," said Paola Money-maker, education adviser. "There

is something about them experiencing the college environment and seeing students on campus that gives them the sense of an actual university community."

Gulf Coast stresses hands-on learning, as well as responsibility for the environment. A lot of learning occurs outside the classroom; every student must complete a service learning project in the community.

"We need more education in the future," Bradshaw said to students. "It's inevitable that your community will need you. I don't care where you go to college, I care that you go. Of course, I hope you come here."

Although actual classroom time at college is far less than during high school, expectations are high for students at any post-secondary institution, and Gulf Coast is no exception.

"When you get here, you have to work hard," said director of admissions R. Marc Laviolette. "It's a great place to come to get your education."

The students toured the sprawling campus and saw the athletic facilities, freshmen housing, classroom buildings, public spaces and the library before settling in for some pizza and the

basketball game. While walking through campus, Ahfachkee students took note of the older students as they rolled quickly by on skateboards.

"This is the first college campus I've seen," said eighth-grader John Robbins, 13. "It's kind of inspiring; I'd like to go to college."

"It's better than I expected," added eighth-grader Nashoba Gonzalez, 13.

During the tour, students gained insight into what it means to attend college and may be less intimidated by the prospect of leaving home for school.

"The students need to know the ins and outs of the admissions process," Money-maker said. "They need to get serious early. This tour gave them information about what GPA is required, what test scores they need to get in, sports recruiting and other criteria for attendance."

Senior Tyler Tigertail, 18, enjoyed the experience.

"It was very educational and informative," he said.

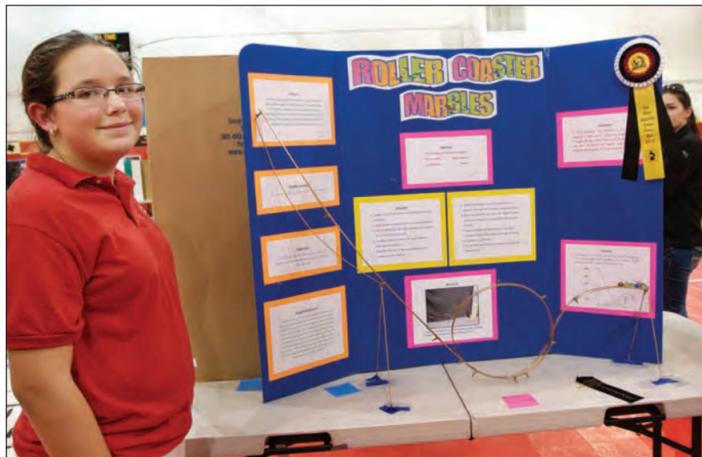
♦ See FGCU photos on page 5B

More **SCIENCE** photos from page 1B



Eileen Soler

Ahfachkee eighth-grader Selena Onco, 15, demonstrates her science fair project with smoke-filled bubbles.



Eileen Soler

Elise Brown, 11, shows her Roller Coaster Marbles science fair entry. The project looks at potential energy, velocity and kinetic energy.



Eileen Soler

Charlie Osceola, 8, of fourth grade, shows her Bug Off science fair display.



Eileen Soler

Ahfachkee students, staff and parents stream into the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium on Dec. 3 for the school's annual science fair.



Eileen Soler

Gregorio Reynosa, 11, and Damien Fish, 10, demonstrate how humans respond to the sense of touch when suddenly affected by frigid temperature.



Eileen Soler

Dasani Cypress, 13, tends to her first-place project about water quality in Big Cypress.



Eileen Soler

Mikiyela Cypress, 10, displays abstract art she created by drawing with permanent ink on a kerchief, then spraying it with rubbing alcohol.

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346686	2007	CHEVROLET	TAHOE (4WD)	156,931	\$8,562.25	
B17915	2006	FORD	F150 XLT (4WD)	145,678	\$8,198.00	
B34955	2006	FORD	F150 XLT (4WD)	154,350	\$8,255.25	
B17914	2006	FORD	F150 XLT (4WD)	160,133	\$8,111.50	
D72988	2006	FORD	F150 XLT (4WD)	183,461	\$7,761.50	
101852	2007	FORD	CROWN VICTORIA	82,868	\$5,665.25	
286927	2007	CHEVROLET	IMPALA	89,477	\$5,225.25	
228065	2001	DODGE	RAM 2500 (4WD) DIESEL	246,527	\$4,394.50	
A47563	2007	FORD	EXPLORER (4WD)	190,534	\$3,947.75	
294709	2005	FORD	TAURUS SE	52,917	\$3,947.50	
173826	2005	FORD	CROWN VICTORIA	82,628	\$3,821.50	
236761	2005	FORD	TAURUS SE	64,577	\$3,570.00	
260521	2005	FORD	TAURUS SE	65,153	\$3,512.25	
240420	2005	FORD	TAURUS SE	70,706	\$3,408.50	
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147933	2005	FORD	TAURUS SE	73,698	\$3,347.50	
193886	2004	FORD	TAURUS SE	73,589	\$3,210.75	
216509	2003	FORD	CROWN VICTORIA	79,711	\$3,180.00	
123748	2004	FORD	CROWN VICTORIA	94,291	\$3,141.25	
C14224	2003	FORD	EXPEDITION (4WD)	220,259	\$2,963.25	
173714	2004	FORD	TAURUS SE	83,667	\$2,910.75	
B70824	2005	FORD	EXPLORER XLS	121,328	\$3,021.25	
680599	2006	DODGE	GRAND CARAVAN FWD	118,676	\$2,855.25	
129275	2001	FORD	CROWN VICTORIA	91,960	\$2,791.50	
155876	2003	FORD	CROWN VICTORIA	99,406	\$2,727.75	
235227	2006	FORD	FUSION	138,684	\$2,506.25	
121539	2004	FORD	TAURUS SE	99,827	\$2,491.00	
286321	2007	CHEVROLET	IMPALA	160,612	\$2,298.00	
138620	2004	FORD	TAURUS SE	111,742	\$1,647.25	
B31592	2006	FORD	EXPLORER RWD	169,989	\$1,980.00	
A23549	2004	FORD	ESCAPE (FWD)	259,876	\$1,788.75	
A86204	1998	FORD	E350 CLUBWAGON	124,653	\$1,782.50	
138620	2004	FORD	TAURUS SE	111,742	\$1,594.25	
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Kids carve out a place for themselves in Tribal tradition



Beverly Bidney

Children and instructors engage in soap carving on Nov. 27.



Beverly Bidney

An Immokalee Culture instructor helps Kassiah Robbins, 6, carve a turtle.



Beverly Bidney

Kassiah Robbins proudly displays his first completed turtle.

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — The art of carving is being passed along to the next generation thanks to the efforts of the Community Culture Department. Vinson Osceola led a soap carving workshop at the Willie Frank Library in Big Cypress on Nov. 27.

The fresh smell of soap permeated the air under the chickees behind the library as Tribal youth learned to carve using the relatively soft medium and dull knives. Only after they hone their skills and learn to carve confidently will the children graduate to wood carving.

The technique for both is the same, but wood is significantly more difficult to carve.

With a lot of patience, Osceola and other members of the Community Culture Department taught the kids how to hold the knife and carve away the soap slowly and carefully. The kids chose whether to carve a turtle, canoe, dipper or dolphin. Most of the kids, whose ages ranged from about 6-11 years old, chose turtles.

"We only have an hour, but an hour is a

good start for this age group," said Osceola, of the Big Cypress Community Culture Department. "The turtle, canoe and dipper have historical significance since they are items we're exposed to and have always lived with."

Osceola said more Tribal members have picked up the art form Tribalwide.

"The younger ones start with soap, and now we have older ones who are starting to carve wood," he said. "They are advancing to more detailed projects; they want to challenge themselves. The skill is being handed down slowly."

Many of the kids under the chickee carved for the first time; others had experience.

"This is my second time carving," said Dylan Robbins, 7. He said he looks forward to carving again, but next time, he wants to use a more challenging medium. "Soap is easy; I want to try wood."

As with anything in life, confidence comes with experience.

"I've carved before," said Reginald Ling, 11. "But I'm doing much better today."



Beverly Bidney

Vinson Osceola guides Dylan Robbins' knife so he can feel how it should fit in his hand.



Beverly Bidney

Reginald Ling, 11, watches as Victor Billie shows him how to carve detail in the turtle.

Charter School recognizes November Students of the Month



Photo courtesy of Michele Thomas

Elementary school Students of the Month are Serenity Lara, Serenity Micco, Ferron Sampson, Josiah Johns, Jahdee Arnold, Tiera Garner, Jace Brown, Giselle Micco, Gabe Williams, Lake Goodwin, Dathen Garcia, Jahcole Arnold, John Beck, Haylie Huff, Alyssa Gonzalez, Kaleb Doctor, Alaina Sweat, Dante Thomas and Jarrett Bert.



Photo courtesy of Michele Thomas

Middle school Students of the Month are Alicia Fudge, Jalynn Jones, Kelton Smedley and Oscar Yates.

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Andrea Holata

PECS' girls' basketball team pose for a picture. Pemaaytv Emahakv Charter School held a pep rally for their basketball teams on Dec. 4 in honor of their first home games of the season against the Moore Haven Terriers.

PECS hosts pep rally to recognize basketball teams



PECS' boys' basketball team pose for a picture.



Andrea Holata

Sydney Cypress, guard for the Lady Seminoles, is welcomed by her peers.



Andrea Holata

Logan Ortiz gets pumped up during the PECS pep rally.

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Teacher profile: Nidia Carusotti

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Being in a room filled with tiny babies may not be everyone's idea of a good time, but for Hollywood Preschool teacher Nidia Carusotti there is no place else she would rather be.

"I've always loved working with the babies," said Carusotti, a teacher at the preschool since 1995. "We get to come to work every day and be happy."

As a child in Argentina, Carusotti spent time lining up her dolls and playing teacher. She always loved children, so she studied education in college and graduated with a degree from an Argentine university. When Carusotti moved to the U.S. in 1995, she took more classes at Miami Dade College and earned her state teaching certificate.

She enjoys sharing her knowledge and skills with the youngest children in the preschool and gets tremendous satisfaction from the simplest smile from one of the babies.

"A big smile to me is enough," Carusotti said. "When you talk to the babies and they

smile, you can melt."

She, along with two other teachers, has 12 babies in her room. During a morning in late November, the children played with small balls, square rattles and containers filled with raw oatmeal. It looked like play, but the babies got a full sensory experience where they learned colors and shapes, exercised fine motor skills and experimented with taste when the oats wound up in their mouths. Carusotti worked hard to make sure each baby received the entire experience.

"I want to share my skills with them," she said. "The best thing is seeing that they learned what you taught them."

She also enjoys watching babies grow and learn to walk. At any given moment in the spacious baby room, children test their legs by toddling around the room. The babies in the room range from six weeks to 1 year old, so by the time they walk well, they typically move on to the next classroom.

"The kids are beautiful," Carusotti said. "I think we have the best room. If you aren't having a happy day, the babies can change your mood. I cannot see my life without teaching, with no children around."



Beverly Bidney

Nidia Carusotti is with a baby in her classroom.



Beverly Bidney

Teacher Nidia Carusotti gets the attention of the babies with falling oatmeal.

◆ FGCU photos from page 1B



Beverly Bidney

Afhachkee students listen as Florida Gulf Coast University students explain the school by the classroom buildings.



Beverly Bidney

Afhachkee students watch the men's basketball team practice before the game against the University of Miami.

◆ More BULLYING photos from page 1B



Andrea Holata

Student Odessa King is all smiles as she poses with Chris Hollyfield.



Andrea Holata

Chris Hollyfield gives a firsthand account on bullying.



Andrea Holata

Chris Hollyfield, center, takes time to pose with Charter School students after his speech on bullying.



Beverly Bidney

The group listens to the tour guide while inside a two-bedroom dorm.



Beverly Bidney

Quenton Cypress, 17, left, and Tyler Tigertail, 18, lead the group from the library.



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Hollywood preschoolers prepare for Christmas season

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — The annual holiday season usually begins in front of a festively decorated Christmas tree in a face-off with a camera. The formal holiday portrait session can be a breeze or a catastrophe, depending on the age, mood and expectation of the subject.

At the Hollywood Preschool on Nov. 28, the mood ran from cheerful to tearful as children took their places in front of the tree while photographer Tim Taylor tried to make a pleasant holiday photo. Bedecked in their fanciest

clothes, the tiny tots did their best to sit still and smile for the camera as teachers and mom stood close by. In some cases, the moms were called upon to hold their cranky kids as Taylor worked to isolate the face and the background to give the illusion of sitting nicely in front of the tree.

Off camera, eager children attempted to wait patiently for their turns in front of the tree. Some kids were so distracted by the tree that they only had eyes for the colorful ornaments instead of the camera. It was a long day, but in the end, those photos will be a joy in the homes for which they are destined.



Beverly Bidney
Sisters Raquel LeBron, 2, and Relle LeBron, 4, are ready for their close-up in their best party dresses.



Beverly Bidney

This baby is focused on the camera.



Beverly Bidney

Teacher Nicole Taylor Terry finds the solution to Jayden Jumper's mood as she lifts him high for his photo.



Beverly Bidney

Maddox Osceola, 9 months, poses nicely while his mom, Cari Silva, holds him as the photographer takes a picture.



Beverly Bidney

These siblings are completely distracted by the Christmas decorations. Eagle Young, 3, stands behind his sister Jessell Young, 17 months.



Beverly Bidney

Shawnee Correa, 20 months, and his brother Lakota Correa, 6 months, try to pose without moving.



Beverly Bidney

These three siblings are in different moods during their photo session.



This baby is focused on the camera.



Beverly Bidney

Photographer Tim Taylor and teacher Nicole Osceola try to get students to smile for the camera.

Beverly Bidney



Beverly Bidney

While siblings Aubrey and Tyson Cypress, both 4, wait calmly in the background, Autumn Cypress, 2, tries to stop crying.

Announcements

'How Long Will They Mourn Me?'

Poem by Ike T. Harjo

How long will they mourn me when it's my time to ride?
Troy, Bill, Eli make sure it's poppin when your homie gets to the other side.

Lil homie Troy I remember us hangin out and having fun,
True warriors representing the Unconquered ones.

Just so you know I paid my respects to where you lay,
Lil homie I pulled the weeds and cleaned your area that day.

It's been a long time but we still miss you lil homie,
You will not be forgotten that's how it is and how it will always be.

Big homie Bill at that time it was hard to be optimistic,
When your homie is dead laying on the pavement twisted.

I couldn't believe my big homie took that fall,
But you know my dog rope is staked to the ground so for you big homie I handled that and stood tall.

We miss you big homie and I apologize for not being there,
A legend you are and much respect you get anywhere.

Now to my homie Eli it hasn't been long since you took that ride,
The photos, the letters are appreciated your wife also sent one you wrote after you went to the other side.

Your loyalty is unmatched as well,
Will another homie stake his dog rope to the ground for me only time will tell.

Until I breathe my last I will keep your memory alive,
We miss you homie just make sure it's poppin when I arrive.

My time will come because we are a dying breed,
But there is always hope that our warrior code of conduct will live on through our seeds.

I look forward to the day I breathe my last,
Once again hangin with my homies reminiscing of the past.

Who will miss me when I'm dead and gone?
Momma don't cry I'm an Unconquered warrior let me ride on.

How long will they mourn me after I take my last breath?
Just as my three homies this Unconquered warrior embraces death.

Warrior 4 Life
Ike T. Harjo
Sholooapathi Bolchunchahga
Koowaathi



Photo courtesy of Bobby Frank

From left, Jonathon Frank, Brent Frank, Arek Jumper and Justin Frank represent Team King Pins at the 2012 Broward County United States Bowling Congress Junior Scholarship Tournament.

Congratulations to Team King Pins

Congratulations to Team King Pins for placing second overall in the Team category, 401 – 599, handicapped division at the 2012 Broward County United States Bowling Congress Junior Scholarship Tournament.

Doubles, 201 – 299, handicapped
First – Arek Jumper/Brent Frank
Fourth – Jonathon Frank/Justin Frank

Singles, boys 101 – 149, handicapped
First – Brent Frank
Fifth – Justin Frank

All events, boys 101 – 149, handicapped
First – Brent Frank
Third – Justin Frank
Seventh – Jonathon Frank

Seminole Tribe honored during FSU Homecoming



Brett Daly

Editor's note: In last month's issue of *The Seminole Tribune*, Tribal member Kyle Doney was inadvertently blocked in the photo. We want to recognize him and his contributions to the Seminole Tribe and FSU's successful, ongoing relationship.

'In the Depths of Solitude'

Poem by Alex Tucker

I exist in the depths of solitude
Pondering my true goal
Trying to find peace of mind
Constantly yearning to be accepted
And from all receive respect

Never compromising but sometimes risky
And that is my only regret
A young heart with an old soul
How can I be in the depths of solitude
When there are two inside of me

This duo within me causes
The perfect opportunity
To learn and live twice as fast
As those who accept simplicity



Happy birthday, Jetta

Happy 5th birthday to our daughter Jetta Osceola on Dec. 20. We love you so much and pray for many more to come.

Love, Mom
(Brittney Eisenbrey),
Dad (Adam Osceola),
Clayson and Kamden

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Sports

C



Kathryn Stolarz

The Plainzmen play You Don't Want It in the Big Ballers Basketball Tournament during the men's semifinals on Dec. 8 at the Hollywood Gym. The Plainzmen won 49-45 and went on to take the championship title.

Big Ballers tournament and car show keep Randall Huggins' memory alive

BY KATHRYN STOLARZ
Copy Editor

HOLLYWOOD — For Kelvin Huggins, his brother Randall's memorial tournament is a celebration of a life that was taken too soon, which occurred on Kelvin's birthday.

"[The tournament is] more like my birthday than my real birthday," Kelvin, 29, said.

A dozen years ago on Oct. 29, Kelvin watched Randall, 21, pass during a sparring match at the former Warriors Boxing Gym on US-441.

Despite the tragedy, the Huggins family pulled together to commemorate Randall's life, joining two of Randall's loves into one weekend every December: the Big Ballers Basketball Tournament and Strictly Business Car Show. Here, Kelvin remembers his brother Randall's best days. Here, he can celebrate.

"It's a good thing for us," said Randall's mother, Kathy Huggins. "It keeps us together."

Kathy, her husband, Trail Liaison Norman Huggins; and children Marilyn, Kelvin, Adriana, Bianca, Kailyn and Lucas organized the basketball tournament for the ninth year. The tournament has built a

reputation as one of the biggest Native-only basketball tournaments on the East Coast, and possibly the country, Randall's father, Norman, said.

"They come out and help us keep his memory alive and help us celebrate his life," he said.

This year, the tournament drew about 280 ball players divided among 17 men's and 11 women's teams.

"Even with the economy, I was kind of surprised we had that many people," Norman said, referring to travel costs that could discourage out-of-state teams.

Players traveled from British Columbia, Washington, Oklahoma, Nebraska, North and South Dakota, California, Arizona, New Mexico and New York. Tribes represented included Choctaw, Seneca, Iroquois, Cherokee and Navajo.

"I think it blew up in year three," Norman said. "It kind of went national. How did that happen? Through friends and this thing called social media network and word of mouth...We don't look for people no more; they come to us."

Nadgelin Cliffe, of the Campbell River Indian Band, came from British Columbia to play with the Coastal Natives.

"It's a get-together with all of our close friends, and we get to play basketball," said

Cliffe, who returns to play in the tournament year after year. "What could be better?"

Norman said the hospitality and the big cash prizes draw people in and keep them coming back, and Cliffe couldn't agree more.

"It's definitely a treat to come here," she said, emphasizing how well the players are treated.

Throughout the three-day tournament, the Huggins family provided free T-shirts, free refreshments, free catered food (culminating in a home-cooked meal on the final night) and free admission, all in the warm spirit of Randall.

"He was full of life, always smiling, willing to help out any way he could," said Randall's cousin Savannah Huggins.

Norman prides himself on the generosity the family shows the tournament's players. This year, they offered free onsite chiropractic care and free massages.

"We've traveled the country going to different tournaments, and nobody's going to take care of you better than we do," he said. "We're known for our hospitality."

Big Ballers Basketball Tournament brings out competition

On Dec. 6, the Huggins family welcomed players and supporters to the Hollywood Gym for the first day of the

tournament. About 50 people filled the bleachers for the kick-off game, which pitted Nothing Fancy against the Redsticks.

"Let's get ballin'," Norman said, and the referee blew the whistle to begin.

The tournament continued on Dec. 7 with so many games scheduled that some were held at the Jewish Community Center in Davie. The excitement built as teams vied to make the championships on Dec. 8. There was particularly steep competition this year, Norman said.

"Every year is kind of unique in its own way," he said. "What I liked about [this year] was we had about five or six (men's) teams that could win it. Here, we're kind of known for competition. Even the women's, there were about three or four (teams) that had the chance to win."

In the end, women's team ABC, of Arizona and New Mexico, took the title for the second consecutive year against the Lady Ballers, 71-48.

"That game was kind of like a payback," Norman said, referring to how the Lady Ballers beat ABC by nearly 30 points in the quarterfinals. "They woke up in the championship game. They took control of the game early and just closed it out. They were hitting their 3s."

As for the men, the Plainzmen, of North

and South Dakota, last year's tournament runners-up, beat You Don't Want It in the championship game 66-52, closing out the tournament after 10 p.m.

"That was like an intense game from the get-go," Norman said. "You had to man up in that game or you'd be on the floor. They just went back and forth, back and forth. In the last five minutes or so, the Plainzmen took control, and they closed them out with 3-pointers, three or four in a row of them, and that was it."

Each year, the referees help Norman choose two MVPs.

"The MVPs that we gave away this year kind of came from the heart," Norman said.

The Plainzmen's Anthony Brown, a friend Randall grew up with, took the award for the men's division.

"Every time the team tried to make a run, it was him that either got a block or made a rebound or made a basket," Norman said.

ABC's RaeAnn West, of Arizona, won the honor for the women's division.

"She made some tough baskets inside," Norman said. "She'd rebound for them. Basically, she was their muscle. You could tell."

♦ See BIG BALLERS on page 3C



Beverly Bidney

Ahfachkee player Malari Baker, No. 15, dribbles the ball down the court.

Ahfachkee and PECS basketball teams face off

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — The basketball season is underway, and for the first time, the Ahfachkee Warriors and the PECS Seminoles met at center court. The Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium in Big Cypress was the site of the big games on Nov. 29 when the girls' and boys' teams each faced off. The atmosphere was vibrant with a crowd of vocal fans, family and friends of both schools' teams.

"This is our first time seeing them," said PECS eighth-grader Odessa King, 14. "We're pretty confident."

With a record of 3-0 for the season before this game, PECS girls had reason to be confident; Ahfachkee's record was 0-2. They beat the Ahfachkee girls 55-45.

In front of crowded bleachers, the Ahfachkee Scream Team led fans in

cheers and performed during halftime and timeouts.

"This is the first time we've played PECS," said Cicero Osceola, coach of the Ahfachkee boys' team, who had a 0-1 record before the game. "It's just like any other game; we're ready and are going to have some fun."

PECS boys were also ready for the match up. Their record for the season was 2-1 before the game.

"The boys are looking forward to playing Ahfachkee," said Ryan Tedders, PECS coach. "We're pretty excited."

The PECS boys' team was victorious; they beat Ahfachkee 47-32.

Perhaps a new rivalry or Tribalwide camaraderie was forged during the event. Only time will tell.

♦ See more FACE OFF photos on page 2C

PECS' basketball season looks promising

BY ANDREA HOLATA
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Pema yetv Emahakv's basketball teams have high expectations this season.

For both the girls' and boys' basketball teams, excitement fills the air for coaches, parents, students and the community when they take to the court.

So far, the boys hold a 4-1 record with one loss to their rivals, the Yearling Middle School Bulls, while the Lady Seminoles hold a 5-0 record (as of their first home game on Dec. 4 against the Moore Haven Terriers).

Lady Seminoles seek perfect season

"Our goal is to go undefeated this year, and I don't think we will accept anything less than that," head coach Tim Thomas said. "Last year, we had a lot of close games (because) of the free-throw line."

Thomas said the perfect season is attainable for the Lady Seminoles based on the level of leadership, enthusiasm and eagerness of the girls on the team.

"Our point guard eighth-grader Shae Pierce is one of the best players on our team," Thomas said. "She averages 20 points per game, as well as our guard Odessa King, averaging 9 points; and Sydnee Cypress, averaging a near 6 points."

Although King and Cypress are just starting with the team this year, they have stepped up as leaders on the court.

Pierce has played basketball since she was young and is no stranger to PECS' team.

"I have been playing with the Charter School for three years now and been playing basketball since I was about 5 years old," Pierce said. "I like to play basketball because I like to run; it's good exercise, (and) I want to carry it on for generations (because) my mom used to play."

In addition to the leading girls on the team, the Lady Seminoles has some sixth-graders who contribute to what may be one of the basketball team's most successful years yet.

"I have a few first-time players on the team," Thomas said. "Raeley Matthews has come a long way; she is dribbling better and becoming more aggressive."

Forward Alicia Fudge is another sixth-grader showing eagerness on the court.

"I like to play basketball because I get to run up and down the court, (and) I get my exercise," Fudge said.

Hard work and heart put into the games has contributed to the Lady Seminoles going undefeated so far, including the wins against Yearling Middle, 36-7; Lake Placid, 41-14; Moore Haven, 44-13; and Ahfachkee, 54-45.

The team's last home games this season are against West Glades (Dec. 20), Clewiston Middle (Jan. 8), Ahfachkee (Jan. 10), Glades Day (Jan. 14), Osceola Middle (Jan. 15) and Yearling Middle (Jan. 15).

Players include Raeley Matthews, Aleina Micco, Chyna Villareal, Sunni Bearden, Camryn Thomas, Deliah Carrillo, Raylon Eagle, Alex James, Alicia Fudge, Sydnee Cypress, Martina Herrera, Odessa King and Shae Pierce.

Boys' team shows promise on the court

Under the direction of head coach Ryan Tedders and assistant coach Stephanie Tedders, the boys' season is starting to look up for the Seminoles.

The boys' roster includes Kelton Smedley, Trevor Thomas, Richard Harris,

Lucas Osceola, Drayton Billie, Demetrius Clark, Robert Fudge and Logan Ortiz.

Although the boys lost their season opener at Yearling Middle School, 53-29, they are not letting that discourage them.

"Of course, everybody wants to win them all," head coach Ryan Tedders said. "Losing the first game was very difficult. They now want that to be their only loss and they can achieve that by working as a team and showing good sportsmanship."

Tedders said his team could have won the first game, but the boys got behind and got frustrated.

So far, the boys are maintaining their goal by having only one loss. Their wins include games against Lake Placid, 35-28; Moore Haven, 33-15; Ahfachkee, 47-32; and Moore Haven, 47-9.

With the leadership of three returning players, Demetrius Clark, Trevor Thomas and Drayton Billie, the Seminoles can guide their team to a winning season record.

"They lead by example (and) rarely out of position on defense," Tedders said.

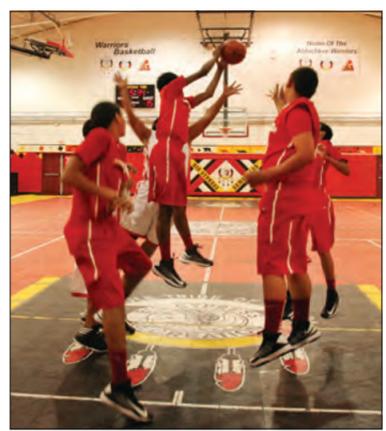
♦ See more PECS photos on page 2C



Andrea Holata

Demetrius Clark makes an easy jump shot against Moore Haven on Nov. 27.

◆ More FACE OFF photos from page 1C



Beverly Bidney

These young players are all arms and legs as they go for the ball.



Beverly Bidney

Shae Pierce tries to get around defender Dasani Cypress, of Ahfachkee.

◆ More PECS photos from page 1C



Andrea Holata

Kelton Smedley shows his athleticism as he goes in for a layup against Moore Haven during the first home game of the season on Dec. 4.



Andrea Holata

Deliah Carrillo makes a layup during the game against the Moore Haven Terriers on Nov. 27. The Lady Seminole defeated the Terriers 44-13.



Beverly Bidney

PECS player Demetrius Clark, No. 2, feels the pressure from Ahfachkee players.



Beverly Bidney

The Ahfachkee Scream Team cheers during a timeout.



Beverly Bidney

Ahfachkee player Nathan Anderson, No. 2, seeks safe passage to his team's basket.



Andrea Holata

Lady Seminole pose for a picture after their 36-7 win against their rivals, Yearling Middle School, on Nov. 20.

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Kathryn Stolarz



Kathryn Stolarz

You Don't Want It goes for a shot against the Plainzmen in the Big Ballers Basketball Tournament on Dec. 8. The Plainzmen won 49-45.



Kathryn Stolarz

Mercedes Osceola and children Presleigh and Draven Osceola-Hahn smile by her first-place 2004 Mercedes-Benz S430.

◆ **BIG BALLERS**
From page 1C

Strictly Business Car Show draws a variety of vehicles

On the final day of ball play, the Strictly Business Car Show was held just around the corner at the Hollywood Ball Field, open to the public.

Tribal member Eric Osceola, owner of Bigg E Customs, ran the event. Fifty-eight cars entered the show, coming from Brighton, Big Cypress, Pompano Beach, Miami and beyond.

"It's a good thing to get everybody together and pay tribute to Randall Huggins and the Huggins family," said Osceola, who used to play basketball with Norman and remembers entering his car in the first memorial Strictly Business Car Show in 2004, where Randall's car was on display.

Randall's father and siblings choose the recipient of the Huggins Family Choice Award each year, and this year it went to a souped-up, yellow 2005 Chevy Impala.

"The kids liked it because of the suicide doors and all the TVs and 30-inch rims," Norman said. "The guy put a lot of money into it... In the car show business, it's all trying to be unique. We just try to look for something that's unique."

Mark Furlong, of Big Cypress, recently updated his Nissan 350Z with a custom-made Panther Clan stencil and 135.7-decibel speakers for the show. Furlong has entered every Strictly Business Car Show and

has never lost, he said. "It's like playing poker," he said while waiting for the winners to be announced. "You know you got a good hand."

Sure enough, Furlong won first place in Import Wild, second place in Euro Mild, and most importantly for him, "bragging rights."

Tribal member Virgil Doctor, Randall's great uncle, of Hollywood, returned to this year's show with three types of wheels: a "Big Town" truck and a Miami Hurricanes-themed motorcycle and golf cart.

"[The show] gets bigger and better every year," he said.

Here's how Tribal members placed in the car show and SPL sound-off competition:

- Hollywood Board Rep. Chris Osceola's 1996 GMC Yukon won SPL Big Ballers and Highest SPL awards and placed third in SUV; his 2010 Chevy Camaro placed second in Domestic Mild.

- Justin Osceola's 2010 Nissan GT-R placed first in Import Mild; his 2010 Jeep SRT8 placed first in SPL SUV and 2nd in SUV.

- Lois Justine Billie's 2012 Dodge Charger SRT8 placed first in Domestic Mild.

- Mercedes Osceola's 2004 Mercedes-Benz S430 placed first in Euro Wild.

- Sandy Billie Jr.'s 1995 Dodge placed second in Classic Mild.

- Virgil Doctor's 2007 Dodge Dually placed second in Big Boy Toys.

- Adam Osceola's 2007 Mustang Shelby GT500 placed second in Domestic Wild.

In a close game, the Plainzmen beat You Don't Want It in the men's semifinals at the Hollywood Gym. The went on to win the championship.



Kathryn Stolarz

The Outlaws take control of the ball against the Coastal Natives, but not for long. The Coastal Natives won the women's semifinals.



Kathryn Stolarz

Tribal members and friends show off all kinds of wheels at the Strictly Business Car Show at the Hollywood Ball Field.



Kathryn Stolarz

Norman Huggins, son Kelvin Huggins and daughter Marilyn Huggins head back to the basketball tournament after visiting the car show.

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