



Children get a lesson in traditional corn roasting
EDUCATION ♦ 1B

Tribal 4-H'ers compete at annual show and sale
COMMUNITY ♦ 3A

Slam dunk champion visits Brighton
SPORTS ♦ 1C



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Voice of the Unconquered

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Cattlegirls forge ahead, organized and determined

BY EILEEN SOLER
 Staff Reporter

One by one, the cattle from Shule Jones' pasture on the Brighton Reservation were led into headgates where they stood motionless from the neck down for annual inoculations, physical checkups and tagging.

The cattle were testy while a team of cowhands and a veterinarian pricked and prodded them, tagged and notch-branded their ears and shot milky white medicine into their mouths.

Every human cleared the way when bucking bovines, hooves flying, charged head first out of the chute back to freedom.

It's a messy process: Cattle slobber flew everywhere, there was blood and, at the end of the day, the workers were baked in sweat and dirt.

At the helm were a handful of women from the 2-year-old Florida Seminole Cattlegirls' Association who welcomed the hard work on the pasture that Jones, 83, has held in her family for four generations.

Melissa Gopher used an electronic wand to gather data from implanted microchips. She also administered tags. Lonnie Gore tracked procedures on a clipboard. The group's president, Emma Jane Urbina, transmitted data into a computer program that details the lives of every cow, bull and calf.

"It's up to the younger daughters now," said Happy Jones, 86, sister-in-law to Shule Jones and owner of her own cattle herd, also on the Brighton Reservation.

The elder women, the oldest among female cattle owners Tribalwide, were young when the Seminoles first took possession of 547 head of Hereford cattle from the U.S. government in the mid-1930s.

♦ See CATTLEWOMEN on page 12A

Agnes Motlow, Jean Fontana celebrate 40 years as employees

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
 Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Agnes Motlow and Jean Fontana remember when there were only about 40 employees working for the Seminole Tribe. Today there are about 17,000.

Both women witnessed enormous change in their 40 years as Tribal employees, and both have learned to adapt to the changes gracefully.

"Maybe a handful of people have been here that long," said Motlow, executive assistant to Tribe General Counsel Jim Shore. "There were so few employees, everyone knew each other."

"You had to be a jack of all trades," added Fontana, program director of Risk Management and Self-Insurance. "Whatever there was to be done, and if you were standing next to the person who needed it, you got the job."

Motlow was a young mother in 1973 when she took a job in the Tribe's Mental Health Department as a peer counselor. During those early days, the Tribe did not have any emergency medical technicians, so Motlow was sent to an EMT class with instructors from Miami-Dade County. She got certified and moved to Big Cypress to help establish emergency medical services in Big Cypress and Brighton.

"I ordered ambulances and supplies for the reservations and hired EMTs," Motlow said. "We had four on each reservation and they were available 24/7. The nearest hospitals were in Clewiston and Okeechobee, but we also drove patients to Hollywood. We stayed with the patients and then took them back to the rez."

Later, they had use of helicopters to transport patients.

"We were taught how to handle the patients and what to do," Motlow said. "It was a slow bubble helicopter and took 40 minutes to get to the hospital."

♦ See 40 YEARS on page 8A

Annual Shootout celebrates Seminole victory



Moses Jumper Jr., as the great Seminole medicine chief and war chief Abiaka, and his grandson Andre Jumper lead a charge against the U.S. during the Big Cypress Shootout.

Eileen Soler

BY EILEEN SOLER
 Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Duane "Handlebar" Decker was given important instructions before heading into a field dressed in 1837 militia garb to reenact a bloody United States versus Seminole battle at the Big Cypress Reservation.

"They told me to go out there, act like I'm scared and make sure I die," said Decker, of Apopka, playing the U.S. side at the 16th annual Big Cypress Shootout — Second Seminole War Reenactment.

Die, indeed. It's a matter of historic accuracy.

The March 1-3 event — with authentic U.S. and Native American camps, weaponry, clothing and the battle reenactment — had to

conclude correctly, said Moses Jumper Jr., on horseback as a Seminole warrior.

"What you will see is not John Wayne killing hundreds of Indians and then riding off in victory. This is our story and it is the truth," Jumper said to hundreds gathered on a grassy hill overlooking the battlefield. "We are the Unconquered."

Flanked by his son, Moses Jumper III, and grandson, Andre Jumper, 18, Jumper rode into battle as Abiaka, the great medicine man and war chief the Americans named Sam Jones.

"We came this far south in the River of Grass. We were pursued by the United States and told we were not allowed to stay. But we did not go to the Trail of Tears. We stayed and we fought until the last blood was spilled," Jumper said.

Fighting alongside the Seminoles were African-American freed and escaped slaves who had assimilated into Native American ways. Jumper called them "our black brothers."

Gunfire and cannon blasts filled the air with booms and smoke. Americans, as an expeditionary force complete with land surveyors, were shot down in one of many skirmishes that would lead to Seminole freedom.

About 1,500 Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, plus troop leaders and families, packed the spectator area. History buffs and photographers jostled for better views. Many in the crowd had camped out on the reservation for the three-day event.

Mike Law, of Lake Worth, attended with his wife, Kathy, son, Alex, 6, and

daughter, Elisabeth, 2. For the Law family, the event was about education.

"We had a good idea of how the reenactment would end. Getting to see our history happen is getting to know our country a little better," Law said.

For Mark Lynch, of Miami, it was a powerful reminder.

"The Indian people were screwed over by the government. They took the brunt of racism with the biggest screwing in the world — at least in the United States," he said.

Jumper said the land on which the battle was relived was the site of an actual skirmish led by Abiaka.

♦ See SHOOTOUT on page 9A

Brighton Field Day: From simple beginnings, a 'diamond' emerges



Victoria Osceola displays her hand-crafted beadwork jewelry during Brighton Field Day.

Eileen Soler

BY EILEEN SOLER
 Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Thousands turned out to celebrate the rich culture of the Seminole Tribe during the 75th annual Brighton Field Day Feb. 15-17.

"This is a great time for us — a diamond jubilee," Stanlo Johns told a packed house at the Fred Smith Parade Arena amphitheater during the opening rodeo on day two.

"Just think that so many years ago no one wanted this land, so the government said, 'Give it to the Indians.' We made this 34,000 acres what it is today. Otherwise it would still be swamp water," said Johns who has been the event's emcee for 45 of the past 75 years.

Now, 385 families call Brighton home, Johns said. And Brighton Preschool, established in 1965, boasts several generations of teachers who were once students there, he added.

Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr., recalled his first Field Day during the late 1950s, when participants were primarily Tribal members.

"It was simple then. People were in foot races, pole jump and high jump contests, but not in a competitive way," he said. "You had baby contests and clothing contests. No one registered. They showed up in their best clothes anyway."

Prizes were also simple: a bag of horse feed for men; a bag of flour or sugar for

women.

"Those were the finer days. It's something we've lost — simpler times and simpler principals," Councilman Bowers said. "Today we don't seem to do anything without the almighty dollar."

Chairman James E. Billie said the first Field Day was organized by early leaders to bring Seminoles from all over to one location to meet with government leaders and to discuss the official formation of the Tribe.

Chairman Billie's first Field Day memory is of pie.

"I was about 6 years old, and I loved the pie-eating contests. Back then, we didn't care if we won anything, we just wanted pie," he said. "We were humbler then. We couldn't afford much more than that."

Lifelong resident Sandy Billie said his earliest memories of Brighton Field Day take him back to being a carefree 8-year-old, but he admits he only became active in cultural competition in his 40s. This year, Billie won first place among peers in the men's clothing contest. He sported hunting clothes and a felt cap topped with a white feather plucked from an egret.

"When I was a kid, Field Days were about running wild and barefoot. Now that I am a grandfather, I realize it was always about the culture," he said.

♦ See FIELD DAY on page 7A

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Editorial

Little boy grows up to be a man of culture

• James E. Billie

Around 1982 or 1983, myself and several young men were wanting the world to know that Seminole Indians are still alive with their native tongue, their culture and their dances. And we are still thriving. One of the things we thought we could do to ensure that the Seminoles continued to enjoy their culture was during the Green Corn Celebration, about May 1982 or '83.

I had been Chairman about two or three years at that time. We decided to go to a place called Hilo-la, the old Green Corn Dance grounds north of Okeechobee Lake near Fort Drum, to erect chickee huts so our fellow Tribal members could spend four days there with some comfort. Usually, we would all go there and some of us had chickee huts and others had canvas-topped quick shelters that they stayed in. After four days, when we finished our Green Corn celebration, we would leave. And on this particular occasion, we had finished our chickee huts, and we were getting ready for the Tribal members to start arriving to begin the celebration.

As usual, days before the ceremonies began, an independent Seminole named Bobby Billie and his family were the nucleus of supervising or maintaining the medicine bundles there. It was during this period, before the real ceremonies began, that we were out there practicing dancing. We were doing some fun dances, "crazy dances" as they were called. And as we were doing that, here comes a little boy, maybe 5 or 6 years old. His father brought him on out and said, "This little boy is going to lead us. We want him to lead us in one of the dances."

And naturally it was exciting to see that little boy walk right out there with confidence as if he knew what the heck he was doing. We all watched him, surprised. Danny Tommie was there, Jeremiah Hall was there, Fred Hall, Johnny Hall, they were the crew building the chickees at the time. And there were other men.

And, sure enough, he gave the beginning yell to start the dance. When he did that, man, we all ran out there, got behind him, and as he sang out each verse we would echo back. I thought this was an exciting moment, not fully realizing the magnitude of the event to that child.

Every year after that, someone would always bring a little child out there to just do the dance. I believe the family wants to show that, at home, they

are teaching their children the Green Corn Dance songs.

Years have passed and I've watched this young man grow from little boy to manhood. As time went along, the proud father passed away. But his mother still works with the Tribe, teaching language. The little boy that bravely ran out and led us men in the Dance of the Green Corn is today approximately 35 years old. Time has gone by pretty quickly.

The way his father and mother perceived it, this young man has gone through his trials and tribulations, he has faced whatever might come that he had to face between the time he was 5 years old and 35 years old. He has now grown to a mature man and, as his father may have hoped, works for the Seminole Tribe, trying his best to influence the younger generation to maintain their culture.

It was interesting to sit and talk to this guy who I had seen grow up from a little child to a full-grown man, a Tribal member very concerned about his Tribal culture and our Tribal language. I could see he was maintaining the lessons of many years ago that he was taught by the elders.

I, personally, do what I can to pass on the songs, and whatever little I know about the dances, the medicines. I try to pass these things on to my younger generation while they are still young. I plant the seed so, as they grow older, they may use it or they'll have knowledge of our Tribe. Miccosukees and Muscogees are very different from other Tribes and that distinction needs to be passed on to our children.

Back to the young man who is now 35 years old: I could see that he is sincerely interested in maintaining his culture. I think his father would be proud of him. I know his mother is. It's not an easy role to try and maintain a culture and preserve your native tongue. It's got to be spoken, it's got to be taught, it's got to be spoken about. You got to live it, you got to breathe it.

So I hope other people are doing the same. Hats off to Lewis Gopher. Keep it going. Sho-naa-bish.

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



• Tony Sanchez Jr.

How does the Seminole Tribe of Florida want to position itself for the future? To answer that question requires a change in our thought process, a change in the culture of how our business is viewed. Yes, even the Seminole Tribe needs to be asking itself, "What is it that we are ultimately striving to be?" with an understanding that the answer will require an investment, not only in terms of the financial but also in terms of human resources.

And, hopefully, when we are talking about the human resources end of it, we are talking about hiring Tribal members to fill important positions. We need to seriously consider what we need to do, in a realistic time frame, to prepare our Tribal members to assume those key positions. Sure, we talk about it, but we don't actively do anything to identify those individuals who have the aptitude or particular capability for the job. And once we identify those individuals, how to we go about creating those opportunities?

I had a discussion with someone the other day centered around this thought: *If we truly believe that the next generation are the next leaders, then what have we done to prepare them?*

The answer, of course, is a combination of things. What resources are we willing to allocate to identify and train those potential leaders? And once you train those individuals, how do you give them the necessary practical experience? How far are we willing to go? There are going to be mistakes along the way. That's OK. You need to be able to make mistakes to gain experience. What sacrifices need to be made to ensure that the Tribe is always going to be around?

Talk about mistakes: I made them. But I had to learn by doing it. I did not have a mentor. I was thrown into it. There is no reason for that sort of training anymore. Me, Larry Frank, Danny, Clarence – we were thrown into the deep end of the pool and told, "Hey, swim." I don't think we need to take that approach now because we are in a much different position. And we have greater opportunities.

Now all of our young Tribal members – anyone who wants to get involved, who needs to be involved – have the opportunity to be involved. You don't go to the beach and start off in the middle of the ocean. You walk in at the shore and you go out as far as you want to go. Before, we were dropped in the middle of the ocean and told, "Now find your way back."

I have heard over and over that the per capita takes away the motivation. First of all, look how we treat those who do want to do something. They are often not given an opportunity. We kill their desire. I think any time a Tribal member steps up and says I want to work, I want to learn, we should embrace them. And what we teach them is Business 101, which is coming in to work, putting in the time, making personal sacrifices. If we teach them those skills, that is going to help the Tribe in the long run.

There are not enough positive role models, someone the young can relate to: *Hey, Jimmy or Suzie, who are in my same age group, they are doing something good. If they can do it, I can do something good, too.* The Tribe definitely has the resources to assist young individuals who are trying to find their way and give them the opportunity to get involved in something big. I think the Tribe should find a way to support them because when the time comes that you need to reach out to them, they are going to be your greatest advocates. They will be the role models you are looking for, not only due to their personal success, but the effect on other young Tribal members who want to know about their trials and tribulations and what they had to go through to be successful. That's what the young Tribal members want to hear.

The young Tribal members need to familiarize themselves with how the Tribe functions, the ways the Tribe interacts with other governmental agencies, the relationship with the state and federal agencies, the local and federal politics. I fear that not enough Tribal members know what is going on.

I would propose a system where Tribal members are educated on what the Corporate Charter is, what the Constitution says, the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC) regulations, the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA): Seminole Tribe 101. Before you can play the game, you need to know the rules. And the better understanding they have of those rules, the better they can play the game.

I'm not talking about just reading these documents. It has to be more than that. You must have a working knowledge of it. Not that I am looking for the next attorney, but if these individuals are becoming the next leaders, they have to understand.

When we say sovereignty, what does that mean? A leader should know the answer to that.

I remember when I became the Gaming Commission Director. The first thing I did was a quick study on the NIGC regulations and IGRA. I went through a certification process before I could effectively perform my duties. Back then, I had to go beyond our reservation boundaries to learn all that. Today we should be able to provide that training right here in our own setting. In this way, I think our kids will have a much better chance to really grasp the issue being taught.

Back when I was in college, you could count on one hand the number of Seminoles who were in school. Today, we have many students seeking degrees all over the place.

We have to recruit these students, just like any other business, and provide them opportunities. If a young Seminole graduates from college, returns to the Tribe and is ignored, what message does that send out to the others?

What I am hoping for is that through leadership training, they are going to be exposed to not only the rules and policies of the Seminole Tribe but also how to conduct themselves when they are being interviewed, how to work in team situations, self-discipline, body language, how to give an interview with the media, how to read a financial statement, what they can say and what they can't say – the skills they have to master in order to be effective leaders. The more time you can put someone in those situations, the more confidence you have that it will become second nature to them.

This is education. We have to educate because at the end of the day, the goal is to have Tribal members in all the executive positions, through and through, not just at the Tribal office, but everywhere and everything that we touch from Tribal government to Tribal enterprises.

Tribal members need to be in those key positions. We need leadership training. The reality is: I won't be around forever. And neither will the current elected officials. So we need to ask ourselves: *Is our next generation ready to lead?* If the answer is YES, I want someone to tell me exactly what we have done to prepare the next generation.

If you ask me, the answer is NO. We have done nothing. This is not something that can just be developed overnight. This must be developed with a long-range goal, something that will continue to change over time because our society is going to change, our whole environment is going to change and this leadership program will have to adapt to that. We should be willing to do whatever it takes to prepare the next generation.

If you are the next generation and you want to learn, call me. Right now. The first thing I will do, if someone comes to me like that, is ask, "Have you read the Tribal Constitution? Here, and don't just read it. Learn it." It would be very interesting to develop some sort of an exam on the Constitution. Everyone should take it, even us leaders who are already in office.

Just like when you go to get your driver's license, you can read the manual from cover to cover, but how do you prove to the state that you know what is in there? You take a test. This should be no different. When I was Immokalee General Manager dealing with the Title 31 Bank Secrecy Act – every year, anybody who had anything to do with the financials, who handled money in any capacity, we were all required to take an exam. Then here came Homeland Security, the Patriot Act, and we had to be familiar with those things. It is not only knowing what you know today. As our times and environment change, you have to keep up with new laws, new legislations, new rules. You just can't take the test one time and say, "I know it."

Long before our kids graduate, they need to be in a program like this. We need to know who they are, what they can do. They need to know who we are and what we can do for them. Just as I was recruited by the late Cecil Johns, you can't be afraid that the person you are recruiting may be replacing you. Hey, if that happens, you did your job. Can't be afraid of that.

What I am trying to do for all the Tribal members working under my umbrella: I hope they learn, in a short time, that first of all you have to come to work every day. The mindset of "I show up on Monday and then come back on Friday to pick up my paycheck" is gone. That culture does not exist today.

We were hired to perform a job and we are going to do that job. We have to be ready to go to work each and every day. I had a meeting with every one of them. It was the first meeting some of them had in 10 years. I told each person, here are my expectations and here's the environment, and if you can't meet those expectations and you want to leave, that is OK. No hard feelings. And some did leave. I felt like, well, those are the people who are not going to work out anyway.

And so people working there today, they come in to work knowing what my expectations are. If I can't get that point across and if we just take this laissez faire attitude, the nonchalant approach, that does not exist today in my office. I want to take that concept and expand it Tribalwide.

Don't get me wrong. There are disagreements. But disagreements are not a bad thing. A disagreement actually allows the administration to make good decisions. Healthy discussions don't mean that we are attacking an individual or his/her ideas. It means we are discussing the concept and trying to weave through various issues to come to a real clear decision.

I ask you: Is our next generation ready to lead? My answer is no. We have not done all we can do to prepare them. If I am wrong, please tell me, show me.

Our business will take care of itself. How does the Seminole Tribe of Florida want to position itself for the future? How are we going to train the next generation of leaders? Where will we be in 20 years? Sho-naa-bish.

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



James Richardson seeks relief from Florida legislators

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER
Special Projects Reporter

TALLAHASSEE — James Joseph Richardson, the migrant fruit-picker who was put on Death Row and 21 years later exonerated for the murder of his seven children, takes his fight for compensation to the Florida Legislature this session.

He has been seeking reparation for the wrongful arrest and conviction since 1989, when a *Seminole Tribune* investigation led then-Gov. Bob Martinez to assign a special prosecutor to look into charges that Richardson was railroaded.

That prosecutor, Miami-Dade State Attorney Janet Reno, conducted an extensive investigation that resulted in a *nolle prosequere* of the charges, a legal maneuver that immediately wiped the episode from Richardson's record and restored all his rights.

"He should never have been charged," Reno concluded at the time, in a decision that was heavily criticized in rural DeSoto County. It was in Arcadia, the county seat, where Richardson's children collapsed on Oct. 25, 1967, four in nearby elementary school classrooms and three at home with a babysitter. The story led CBS News that evening and brought in reporters from around the world.

Autopsies found the children had eaten a breakfast of head cheese laced with the deadly insecticide parathion. Richardson and his wife, Annie Mae, were miles away at the time, picking fruit. The babysitter, Betsy Reese, had prepared and served the children breakfast, but was never charged. Then-Sheriff Frank Cline and the late State Attorney Frank Schaub put together a case that accused Richardson of killing his children to collect money from an insurance policy he had just purchased.

The fact that Richardson actually did not have insurance was suppressed from both the grand jury and the trial jury; a deposition given by the local insurance man was hidden, among other exculpatory documents, in an assistant prosecutor's desk until the late '80s when *The Tribune* investigation revealed its existence. Richardson had been moved off Death Row in 1972 during a period when the state banned capital punishment.

He was denied parole several times – at hearings attended by Schaub personally – for lack of remorse. "How am I supposed to have remorse for something I didn't do?" Richardson said. "I don't know how to do that."

Because *The Seminole Tribune* came out only twice a month, *The Miami Herald* published the daily stories, as the case began to quickly unravel. The coverage culminated in a Dec. 11, 1988 *Herald Tropic* magazine issue titled *Poisoned Justice*. The reporters took their findings to Tallahassee and personally delivered them to Gov. Martinez.

After a historic, day-long court hearing in Arcadia – pitting Reno (who would later become U.S. Attorney General under President Bill Clinton) against Schaub, a 30-year veteran and one of Florida's most formidable state attorneys – Circuit Judge Clifton Kelly released Richardson. Twenty-three years later, Kelly's son, Lakeland attorney Jim Kelly, remembered that day, April 25, 1989: "It was the single-most dramatic day I have ever seen in any courtroom, anywhere, anytime. You could literally cut the air in that old courtroom with a knife."

Following his release, numerous efforts to gain compensation for Richardson were fought bitterly by Desoto County lawmen, bristling at sworn accusations from witnesses who said they had been beaten by police into testifying against Richardson. Those depositions included one by a former sheriff's deputy who admitted, matter-of-factly, to both *The Tribune* and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement that he beat several witnesses "because the sheriff told me to."

"This is very much like Pitts and Lee, for me," said Florida Sen. Geraldine Thompson, D-Orlando, who filed the original bill – SB 194, "Relief of James Joseph Richardson by the Department of Corrections." She was referring to Wilbert Lee and Freddie Pitts, who were convicted in 1963 by an all-white jury of killing two gas station attendants in Port St. Joe. They spent nine years on Death Row until proof of forced confessions and suppressed evidence led then-Gov. Reubin Askew to pardon the pair in 1975. The case was compounded by a 23-year, racially charged political battle to clear their names and obtain compensation (which they finally received – \$500,000 each – in 1998).

"I think that African-Americans, more so than other people, tend to be victims of this kind of rush to judgment," Thompson said. "So I heard about it and decided that I would file a claims bill. I'm known as a legislator that champions the underdog. I hate injustice."

♦ See RICHARDSON on page 8A

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Community

A



Eileen Soler

Marlin Miller applauds when Frank J. Billie blows out the candles on his birthday cake.

Frank J. Billie celebrates 90th birthday

BY EILEEN SOLER
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — As birthdays go, Frank J. Billie celebrated yet another that loved ones predict will take the eldest male senior on the Big Cypress Reservation into his centennial — if he is not already there.

"I'm happy to have made it to this year and I will be back next year," Frank said in Mikasuki, to reassure nearly 75 loved ones gathered Feb. 28 at the Senior Center for his 90th birthday.

With balloons, candles and two cakes that wished Frank a happy 9-0, the community celebrated his milestone — although no one really knows for sure, not even Frank, how old he truly is.

When Frank was a boy, in the days when his mother and father, Margaret Huff Dixie and John Billie, fled from U.S. troops in the Everglades, he and his sister Alice were assigned birthdays of Jan. 1, 1925 and 1923, respectively, by the government.

Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger and former Chairman Mitchell Cypress, who both credit Frank as the prominent father figure of their youth, said Alice is likely more than 100 years old already and that Frank is not far behind.

But the recent party was not about numbers, said Lydia Cypress, Frank's sister through Wind Clan lineage.

"It's to celebrate his entire life and more of it to come," she said.

Lydia Cypress laughed at a memory from her childhood, when she would trek down to Frank's variety store, collect glass pop bottles and then cash them in to buy Kool-Aid.

His nephew, Thomas Watts Billie, who is 72, said Frank was the family disciplinarian then, a fact that Mitchell Cypress, who admits to being trouble, remembered in detail.

"He raised me and he disciplined me...and one day he got tired," the former Chairman said.

He said Frank chased him with a stick through the village, through an open field, slipped like he was sliding into first base, got up and kept coming.

"He gave me a good whipping, but he gave me a home, a place to eat...we relied on him," Mitchell Cypress said. "Anyone can father a child, but not everyone can be a dad."

Councilman Tiger said Frank, who also worked construction for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, was a "big influence" and the reason he became a certified grade operator, just like Frank.

Councilman Tiger remembered a day a decade ago when he was driving from the Daytona 500 on Interstate 95, then got stuck behind a line of slow-moving traffic. Soon, he saw the holdup: It was Frank driving a tractor 45 miles per hour. Councilman Tiger called out to him — what was he doing driving a tractor so far away?

♦ See FRANK J. BILLIE on page 6A

Faithful gather to offer prayers for Tribal leaders, youth

BY EILEEN SOLER
Staff Reporter

IMMOKALEE — Chaplain Dan Harris, of the Seminole Police and Fire departments, prepared a guest for what was about to happen at the Seminole Tribe of Florida's 14th Intercessory Prayer Gathering.

"Get ready to receive the Holy Spirit," Harris said, as nearly 100 faithful flocked into Immokalee First Seminole Baptist Church Feb. 21.

Pastors and ministers from eight churches Tribalwide, congregants, friends and family members turned out at the annual spiritual rally to pray for Tribal youth and leaders.

The two-hour event was hosted by Pastor Josh Leadingfox of Immokalee First Seminole Baptist Church and led by Pastor

Salaw Hummingbird from Big Cypress First Baptist Church.

"We really need prayer in this day and time. And with prayer we need unity. We must be together and be strong," the Rev. Hummingbird said before introducing the first of many musical offerings.

Jonah Frank Cypress, of Big Cypress, kicked off the night of song-filled prayer with a rousing acoustic rendition of *Worthy is the Lamb*, followed by the sweet sounds of *Amazing Grace*. Members of Immokalee First Baptist Church choir, dubbed the Screaming Eagles, led congregants in the next several songs that included the soulful *Emmanuel*.

First Indian Baptist Church of Brighton, with Pastor Matthew Tiger, performed *Day by Day*, then mesmerized the assembly by singing another hymn in Creek.

"It means, no matter what comes and what will happen, we will continue on," Pastor Tiger said.

Pastor Paul Buster, of First Seminole Indian Baptist Church of Hollywood, accompanied The Gospel Train group in a lineup of hand-clapping, foot-tapping, southern gospel hymns. Native Voices, out of Brighton, performed songs in Creek.

Pastor Leadingfox, who came to serve the Seminole Tribe just 18 months ago, said the annual service was established in 2000 by then-Chairman Mitchell Cypress and Pastor Emeritus Wonder Johns, of the Brighton congregation.

"They got together because they did not like the direction that the Tribe's young people were going. On a weekly basis, they were burying young people who should not have died for another 50 or so years," Pastor Leadingfox said. "Prayer is the best ammunition we have. We use it to pray for the future of our youth and for our adult leaders, that they meet their responsibility."

Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger said he came "ready for the battlefield. I'm here to reload."

President Tony Sanchez Jr. and his brother, Immokalee Council Liaison Ralph Sanchez, joined Councilman Tiger before the altar where the assembly gathered around them, laying their hands upon them and praying for them.

President Sanchez said he was humbled by the experience. He said it reminded him again that he owes his service to elders who helped raise him since he was "knee-high to a grasshopper," and to all Tribal members.

"It touched my heart," President Sanchez said. "We're human like everyone else so we need support when we are out there putting our lives aside. I was fortunate to be elected to do this job but not because I'm into titles — because it's my time to give back."

Pastor Hummingbird reminded the congregation that without God, the path of the leadership could be harder than necessary.

"Proverbs 16:9 says, 'A man's heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps,'" he said.

Family bonds through sweetgrass basketry

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

IMMOKALEE — Actor Kevin Costner has two, Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones and comedian George Lopez each have one. Linda Beletso's sweetgrass baskets are so fine, they can be found in the homes of the rich and famous.

"My cousin went to a pow-wow in Orlando about 15 years ago," said Beletso, of Immokalee. "I sent some baskets with him and Kevin Costner bought two. Richard Bowers gave Jerry Jones a basket last year and Paula Bowers Sanchez gave one to George Lopez at a golf tournament a few years ago. They are all over the world; I don't know where they go."

Beletso's baskets are also on display in the Chairman's Office and at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, and are easily identifiable by the delicacy of the coils of sweetgrass used to make the basket.

Basketry is a family affair for Beletso, who taught the craft to her daughter, Lorraine Posada, and her granddaughters, Lauren and Lindsey Posada. But making the iconic Seminole baskets isn't as easy as picking up supplies at a local craft store. Sweetgrass must be found and harvested in the wild. Finding the sweetgrass, or *Muhlenbergia filipes*, is a challenging task.

The slender grass doesn't grow in clumps or in a large area. It is easiest to find in Immokalee, but it can be found in Brighton and around Okeechobee. The rainy season is the best time to find it, but the thin grass grows in individual strands among other foliage. About as thin as spaghetti, it is easy to overlook.

As land gets cleared for farming, sweetgrass has become harder to find. It's wild and cannot be cultivated; after a fire it grows back but once the land is cleared, the

grass is gone for good.

"When I learned to make baskets, they told me I need to learn to find my own grass," said Beletso, who was taught when she was 22 years old. "You get one at a time. It can take all day."

Ethel Frank and Margaret Cypress taught her the craft. Later, Harriet Billie showed her how to make the handles. All three women have passed away, but their legacy continues in Beletso's hands.

"I was always interested in baskets," Beletso said. "I had a hard time learning because I'm left-handed and they were right-handed. I had to figure out how to do it."

Lorraine Posada is right-handed, but she learned how to make the baskets from her left-handed mother.

"I learned to do it backwards," said Posada, who has been making baskets since she was 18. "I can't do it right-handed. Usually the dominant hand stitches and the other hand shapes the grass."

The Posada girls both create their own crafts. Lauren, 14, prefers beadwork and Lindsey, 11, enjoys making baskets. The entire family entered items in the Seminole Tribal Fair arts contest this year. Beletso and Posada each won first place in their age categories, 55 and up and 18 to 36, respectively.

Last year, Lindsey won first place in her age group but didn't enter a basket this year.

"I said I'd retire when Lorraine won first place," Beletso said. "Then I said I'd retire when my granddaughter won first place. She did last year, but I'm still doing it. I don't think I'll ever stop making baskets."

"It's hard to put it down," Posada said. "Starting a basket is the hardest part, but once you do, you don't want to put it down."

♦ See BASKET MAKING on page 6A



Beverly Bidney

Mother and daughter Linda Beletso and Lorraine Posada work on their baskets in Posada's dining room. Beletso taught her daughter and granddaughters the craft.

Despite chill, Chalo Nitka draws enthusiastic crowd

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

MOORE HAVEN — The Seminole Tribe has been an important participant in the annual Chalo Nitka Festival in Moore Haven since it began in 1948 to celebrate the paving of what was then Main Street, and they were out in force March 2 at this year's festivities.

A quintessential small-town celebration, Chalo Nitka — which means "Big Bass" in Creek — opened with a parade led by Hollywood resident Mingo Jones on horseback, followed by Moore Haven officials and Tribal leaders and royalty.

"It's an opportunity for Glades County folks, including the Tribe, to get together, have fun and meet old friends," said Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr. "It's a fun day for everyone and I'm glad to be part of it."

The newly crowned Little Miss and Little Mr. Seminole sat on the back of a convertible and waved to the crowd like pros — after all, it was their second parade.

"My hand got tired," said Little Mr. Seminole Choviohoya Weimann, 5.

"I was excited," added Little Miss Seminole Sarafina Billie, 6. "Everybody waved back."

The festival included traditional Seminole clothing contests, arts and crafts, a cooking chickee where women prepared frybread and roasted garfish and an alligator wrestling show.

There was a midway with carnival games and rides. Food vendors offered everything from Indian tacos to barbecue dinners, caramel apples, corn dogs and cotton candy.

The brisk early morning weather forced

families to bundle together under blankets while watching the parade. Along the parade route, a hand-cart vendor made his way down the road, but there were no takers for his frozen treats. By the time the parade was over, the temperature rose enough for people shed their heavy outerwear.

Entertainment was continuous on the stage in Chalo Nitka Park. After the cloggers and alligator cleared the stage, the Tribe held a clothing contest. All ages competed; babies and toddlers endured it, while adults relished the experience. The intricate patchwork outfits won crowd approval, judging from the applause.

♦ See more CHALO NITKA photos on page 8A



Beverly Bidney

Mingo Jones, of Hollywood, leads the parade down Avenue J in Moore Haven.



Eileen Soler

President Tony Sanchez Jr., his brother, Immokalee Council Liaison Ralph Sanchez, and Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger receive prayer from congregants during the 14th Intercessory Prayer Gathering on Feb. 21 at the Immokalee First Seminole Baptist Church.

Business profile: J-Cross Roping Cattle LLC

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Team roping is a popular rodeo sport. Roping cattle by the horns is the cowboy's job; raising cattle with the best horns for the sport is Moses Jumper Jr.'s job.

As a fourth-generation cattleman, Jumper has cattle in his blood. His company J-Cross Roping Cattle LLC raises small Corriente cattle and provides them to rodeos, arenas and local cowboys.

Jumper, who has always been involved in rodeos, started the business in 1984 with four or five cows because the rodeo needed cattle to rope.

"I leased the cattle to local cowboys so they could practice their roping skills," said Jumper, of Big Cypress. "We had a little arena where the airport was, but when it was torn down I built one at my home. People came to rope cattle and have cookouts. It brought the community together."

That small group of cattle grew to about 150 head at its peak; today, J-Cross has about 80 head plus calves. Over the years, Jumper sold cows and leased new bulls to ensure a large gene pool within the herd. As the herd grew larger, he needed more space. People let him use their land, which he fixed

up and fenced to keep the herd together.

Jumper's interest in the cattle is from a historical perspective and for their practical use.

Corriente cattle, also known as scrub or cracker cattle, came to Florida with the Spanish explorers in the late 15th century. By the 1700s, local Native Americans — who eventually became the Seminole Tribe — had herds with hundreds of head, which they traded with Cuba. The small, hardy cattle were well-suited for harsh Florida conditions.

Corriente are small, agile and athletic animals with great stamina, heavy horns and a gentle disposition.

"The cracker cattle are built for roping," Jumper said. "It's all about the horns; they have a good base for the horns. They aren't raised for beef. They are a recreational animal used in rodeos because of their size."

Both steers and heifers are used in rodeos. Their ideal weight is 400-500 pounds, which they reach at about 1 to 3 years of age. The horns are about 6 to 8 inches each. When the cattle get too large, about 600-700 pounds, horses cannot pull them and they cannot be used in the rodeo anymore. At that point, Jumper takes the cattle to market.

In addition to rodeo cattle, Jumper

raises cracker horses from the original Spanish bloodline, brought to Florida in the 1500s. Jumper said the horses, known for agility and speed, helped the Tribe evade the U.S. military during the Seminole Wars.

"They are a smaller horse and could go through the swamp easily," he said. "They are small-footed, don't eat much and have a lot of stamina. The U.S. troops had large horses that couldn't keep up."

Jumper's own history is rich with cattlemen and women. His mother, the Tribe's first female leader, Betty Mae Jumper, was from Indiantown, where her family raised cattle.

"That village was Snake Clan and mostly women," Jumper said. "They all raised cattle."

Jumper's father, Moses Jumper Sr., was a cattleman in Big Cypress; his grandfather, Josie Jumper, also raised cattle.

J-Cross doesn't advertise; the business thrives through word of mouth. Jumper believes he is the only Corriente breeder this far south in the United States. The biggest challenge of the business is finding enough land to raise the cattle. He said he currently has a couple hundred acres of scrub land.

"These cattle are very hardy. They will eat anything, more than a beef cow will eat," Jumper said. "Mine have adapted to the environment very well."

Jumper also raises Brangus beef cattle, a breed developed to combine the superior traits of Angus and Brahman, but not as part of J-Cross — the Corriente and Brangus are not allowed to cross-breed. His sons are involved in both ventures: Naha Jumper, of Brighton, owns half the Brangus herd, currently about 150 head. Josh Jumper, of Big Cypress, is a rodeo roper himself and owns half the J-Cross Corriente herd.

"Josh spreads the word around the cowboy areas," Moses Jumper said. "He does more selling than I do."

Jumper believes anyone can succeed in business if they are committed.

"You have to enjoy what you are doing," he said. "I started small and kept growing. For me, it's a labor of love. I love the cattle."

For more information about J-Cross Roping Cattle LLC, email LaquitaJumper@yahoo.com or call 954-931-7118 or 863-983-9234.

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



Beverly Bidney

Moses Jumper Jr., owner of J-Cross Roping Cattle LLC, is with some of his Corriente herd.

Seminole Tribe follows history on adventurous canoe journey

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

CHOKOLOSKEE — A traditional Native American canoe journey takes a group of people to distant destinations. In the Pacific Northwest, the watery treks can take weeks and cover hundreds of miles in the open ocean.

The Seminole Tribe recently completed its first modern canoe journey down the Turner River in Big Cypress National Preserve to Chokoloskee Island in Everglades National Park. Although it was only a 9-mile journey, those who participated agreed the nearly eight-hour adventure was unique.

"It was what I expected," said event organizer Pedro Zepeda, Traditional Arts and Outreach coordinator at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum. "It was a new experience going down the river, but it's a trip our elders took on a regular basis."

Several Tribal members participated in the journey on Feb. 24, and each one gained insight into the past along the way.

"It was awesome," said Celeste Billie, of Big Cypress. "I see what my people went through going from island to island in dugout canoes; it was an all-day journey for them."

The Turner River begins at U.S. 41 and meanders through a variety of habitats, including a cypress swamp, pond-apple forest, mangrove tunnels, prairie, open mangroves and open river. Along the way, the river was so narrow in places that the canoes and a large alligator couldn't pass side by side. Rather than playing a game of chicken on the gator's home base, the paddlers ceded the right of way, pulling off into the mangroves so the gator had plenty of room to pass.

At its end, the 11-mile river widens and empties into Chokoloskee Bay. The journey ended a short paddle from the end

of the river to the historic Smallwood Store, a former trading post dating to 1906, where family waited for the adventurers with food and drinks.

"The last half of the river was tough," Zepeda said. "It was a long trip, but I hope we'll do another one, maybe here or maybe somewhere else."

Billie and her fiancé, Juan Diaz Rodriguez, found the river challenging, particularly the alligators in the mangrove tunnels. To make matters more difficult, the incoming tide flowed against them and they had to paddle hard to make slow and steady progress down the river.

"I'm glad we made it," Billie said. "The current was tiring. But when we saw

the open water, we came to life and were more energized."

Amid an abundance of wildlife, the group stopped at the Turner River Site, a Calusa Indian shell mound listed on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places for its importance as a prehistoric population area.

Before they left, ranger Lisa Andrews, of Big Cypress National Preserve, gave the group an alligator safety lesson.

"We give them their space. We saw a lot of wildlife, including baby alligators on the mama gator's back," said Andrews, who led the group down the river. "The tunnels were beautiful; there were a lot of bromeliads and orchids and beautiful light. It was a great day for the trip."



Atifano Nunez

The group enters the slightly claustrophobic mangrove tunnel on the Turner River.



Beverly Bidney

Participants make their way across the Chokoloskee Bay during the Feb. 24 canoe journey.



Eileen Soler

Environmental Protection specialist Elizabeth Letts sets the location of a melaleuca tree sapling on a GPS device. The sapling will be removed as soon as possible.

At Big Cypress, invasive species on eviction list

BY EILEEN SOLER
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Several nonnative species of the green and leafy kind are not welcome at the Big Cypress Reservation, and the Seminole Tribe is sending the message loud and clear.

"As the reservation develops, so will the invasive (eradication) program," said Environmental Protection specialist Stacy Myers. "This is just the beginning."

The fight against exotic plants that infiltrate and rob the environment of wildlife habitats, native vegetation, water and food sources began in earnest in 2006. Then, the Tribe's Environmental Resource Management Department began using wetland areas overrun with exotic plants on the northwest side of the reservation as trade-off sites for wetlands developed for community business, municipal buildings or homes.

The restoration satisfies Florida's statewide wetland mitigation law that requires developers to replace land lost to development by restoring ecologically damaged wetlands, recreating new wetlands or paying a hefty price to "bank" for wetland projects elsewhere.

In the vast 82 square miles of Big Cypress, a 4,145-acre area on the reservation's southwest side is divided into six sections called Wetland Enhancement Areas (WEAs). So far, 2,718 acres within three WEAs have been treated to kill off the most damaging of exotics: melaleuca trees and saplings, Brazilian pepper plants and old world climbing fern.

The land that surrounds the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum and some canal banks throughout the reservation have also been treated.

Other plants on the eviction list are Caesar weed, Burma reed, arrowhead vine and air potato. All seven plants are designated by the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council as Category 1 species "that are invading and disrupting native plant communities in Florida."

Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger recalled his return to the reservation after living for many years out of state. Soaking in the environment of his childhood, he searched for a taste of the past — a swamp apple — but couldn't find a single one.

"My heart was broken. It was a real tearful realization of what we were doing to the swamp — we were missing the water," Councilman Tiger said. "I said then that I'd have to support whatever can be done to bring the water back in."

Hydrology, water's distribution and movement in relationship to land, has much to do with invasive plants, said Craig Tepper, director of the Environmental Resource Management Department. He said the problem likely began taking hold in the 1950s with the Central and Southern Florida Project. Authorized by Congress in 1948, the project allowed for a massive canal system to provide flood control and water supplies for cities and agriculture.

"They accomplished the mission of surface water capture and flow off the reservation, but they did not know the effect it would have," Tepper said.

The interruption of the land and the removal of the water created a new environment for nonnative species to move into and thrive.

Tepper cited the somewhat recent discovery of a native Laurel oak tree found growing on dry land near the construction area of a stormwater and detention reservoir for a citrus grove. Typically, the Laurel oak would thrive at the edge of a cypress dome, a type of swamp in which the trees at the center grow taller than those at the edge. When a Tribal member cut through the tree to examine its growth bands and perhaps tell its life story, the tree was dated back to 1968 — the same year the Interceptor, or L-28, Canal was dug out.

"That 16-foot-deep canal, 200 feet wide, broke through the natural aquifer and changed the environment 3 miles away," Tepper said.

According to the Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants at the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS), the Brazilian pepper was introduced from South America to Florida in the mid-1800s for use as an ornamental plant. Its bright berries and slightly pointed leaves led to its nickname "Florida holly."

The melaleuca tree, also called

the paper tree, was likely brought into South Florida in the late 19th century for landscaping and wood. Some research indicates that the species further spread in the 1930s by seeds dropped from airplanes for the creation of melaleuca forests to help soak up the Everglades swamp.

The old world climbing fern came from Africa through Asia and eventually, as late as the 1990s, into South Florida. Highly invasive, it is a severe threat to cypress swamps and Everglades tree islands, according to IFAS. Spread by microscopic spores, animals, clothing and equipment, it climbs into the tree canopy, shutting out the sun, smothering native vegetation and allowing fire to spread up its vines.

But the problem that took decades to grow will take generations to fix.

"It's never-ending management," said James Phillips, an environmental technician on Big Cypress.

The Tribe's Environmental Resource Management and Forestry departments apply for grants that help pay for eradication, said Alex Johns, director of the Natural Resources Department.

On a recent trek through one of the WEAs, Phillips and Environmental Protection specialist Elizabeth Letts scoured a wetland area already treated. Passing through large sections of dead and felled melaleuca trees, trained eyes caught glimpses of baby Brazilian pepper, melaleuca saplings and the first creeping of tiny Caesar weed. Letts used a GPS tracking device to pinpoint the invasive locations for removal later.

A short drive outside the designated area, on the north side of the Interceptor Canal, a wall of Burma reed separates the canal and land close to the reservation's wildlife preserve, where countless birds and small animals such as deer, boar and wild turkey live in their natural surroundings. Across the canal, a large patch of arrowhead vine covers the ground, and the trunk and canopy of native Laurel oak, cabbage palm and slash pine trees.

Letts said the arrowhead vines are a sure example of human-assisted invasion. Brought in from northern states where the hearty vine is a common houseplant, it was likely tossed onto the land by a resident.

Eradication methods vary for different plant species. Herbicides, certain insects or other biological organisms, and prescribed fires are effective to kill unwanted plants while preserving native vegetation and habitats.

Myers said residents can help by identifying exotic, invasive plants on their own property and reporting them to the Environmental Resource Management Department for proper removal.

Inside the WEAs, felled melaleuca and dead Brazilian pepper can be seen in swatches with new green growth jutting up from underneath. Some areas are ready for prescribed fires that will clear the way for even more new and diverse native growth.

"If we can bring the water back, we'll see the return of more native birds, quail, eels, mudfish, deer, traditional medicine, everything," Councilman Tiger said. "We used to catch 30-pound bass on the reservation. I'd like to do that again."



Eileen Soler

A melaleuca tree sapling forces its way into one of six Big Cypress Wetland Enhancement Areas.

Tribal 4-H'ers share spotlight with animals at annual show, sale

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Animals of all shapes and sizes were on display at the 27th annual Seminole Indian 4-H Show and Sale in Brighton Feb. 11-12. Heifers, calves, steer, pigs, bunnies, chickens, sheep, turtles and even a few puppies headlined the event; but the real stars were the hard-working youth who cared for the animals over several months.

About 100 4-H children, from 5 to 18 years old, learned a variety of lessons while raising the animals. Each had to keep a record book of expenses and feed, water and exercise the animals daily. Children caring for the pigs and steer had to sell them at market.

"The kids did very well," said Polly Hayes, 4-H coordinator. "We tell them this is a project and they don't get to keep the animal. The first step is getting them used to the fact that the animals are going to market. They know what that means and they don't like it at first. But they get used to the idea."

Peewees, the youngest 4-H kids at 5 to 7 years old, showed small animals. At age 8, kids can get a pig for 90 days. Once they have experience with the smaller animal, they qualify for either a heifer or a steer the following year.

Roger Walters, of Fort Pierce, had his first pig at the show. He went to Brighton with his mother, Sheree Sneed.

"It's fun to get to feed it and take care of it," said Roger, 9, who kept his pig at the Chupco Ranch in Fort Pierce.

Other Fort Pierce 4-H members participated in the program, but their swine did not weigh enough to qualify for the show.

"We were pleased Fort Pierce got involved this year," Hayes said. "They didn't all make weight but they are ready for next year."

The 180-day steer program begins in June or July, when each 4-H member purchases a calf from the Tribal herd of Brangus cattle. The calves weigh between 600 and 700 pounds. By the end of the program, the steer need to weigh more than 1,000 pounds to qualify for the show and sale.



Fort Pierce's Roger Walters stands with his pig. It was the first pig he showed at the 4-H Show and Sale.

The heifer program starts with a small calf and lasts four years. When old enough, the heifer is bred with a bull and brought to the show pregnant. The following year, the same heifer is brought back to the show with its calf. Five heifers were in the show; four had been bred and one had a calf.

"Kids who want to get into the cattle program usually start with heifers and breeding," Hayes said. "It keeps increasing the herd. [The calf] can be put back in the pasture to be part of the breeding herd or sold."

Kelton Smedley has participated in the

heifer program for four years and showed his heifer and her calf at the show. The 16-year-old has had both steer and heifers in the program but prefers heifers.

"They are easier," he said. "It's easy to teach a heifer to use the lead; she was already broke when she was a yearling. It's

a four-year program and you have to stay on top of it. Once she is bred, you have to make sure she's eating right and keep the coyotes away from the calf at night."

Before the show, kids bathed and groomed their animals, making sure to keep them comfortable while waiting for their moment in the spotlight.

Rayven Smith, 16, has been in the 4-H program since he was 8 years old.

"My mom likes it because it keeps me out of trouble," said Rayven, who showed a 1,123-pound steer in the show. "I also enjoy it. I like hanging out with my friends. It takes a lot of effort to feed and water and walk the steer around every day."

Breanna Billie, 16, a sixth-year participant, showed a 1,188-pound steer.

"The hardest part is getting them used to the lead rope. You have to train it to be led," she said. "The best part is bonding with it, even though you have to be ready to sell it."

Not everyone who starts the program qualifies at the weigh-in the day before the show. Drayton Billie, 14, didn't make it because his steer wouldn't follow the lead rope. Despite that, he stayed to support his sister Breanna.

Two seniors, Rosa Urbina and Jaryaca Baker, showed animals for the last time. Jaryaca, 18, a participant in the program for 10 years, felt a bit melancholy about going in the ring for the last time.

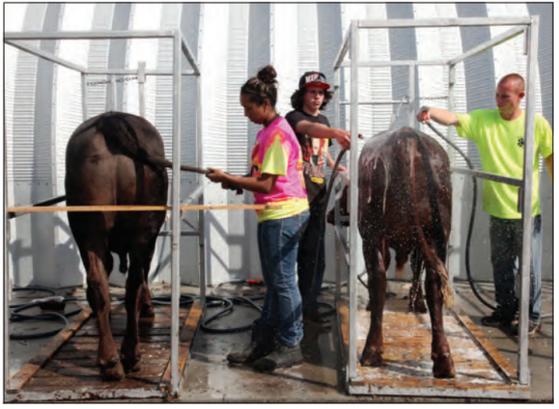
"It's a bittersweet feeling," the Okeechobee High School senior said. "Knowing next year I won't show is hard because I enjoy showing. It really hasn't hit me yet."

Hayes was grateful to the seniors, who the younger kids saw as leaders.

"They were little when they started out and now the little kids look up to them," she said. "It's very rewarding to see them grow up to become responsible people."

The day after the show was the sale, and every animal sold for a profit to Tribal members and outside vendors. Hayes credited the event's success to the diligence of kids and staff and to a small army of volunteers who help out annually.

Norman Johns, the event's ringmaster for 25 years, raised his children in 4-H, and now his grandchildren are in the program.



In the 'cow wash' are Jaryaca Baker, Cyrus Smedley and former 4-H member and volunteer William Bearden.



Kelton Smedley, right, is with his heifer, and Rayven Smith is with his heifer's 80-day-old calf.



Kids wait in the pig barn for their turn in the show ring during the 27th annual Seminole Indian 4-H Show and Sale in Brighton.



Rosalinda Lopez, of Immokalee, puts the show halter on her steer.



Halley and Hayzen Balentine, of Immokalee, bring their silky roosters to the show ring with their grandfather Paul Bowers Sr.



Peewee CeCe Thomas holds her rabbit Hopper before the show.



Peewee Jayleigh Braswell is in the show ring with Whiskey, her black-mouth cur puppy.



Courtney Gore, of Brighton, walks a steer out of the barn for a bath before the 4-H show.



Hunter Strickland, of Brighton, controls her heifer in the ring.



Beverly Bidney

Linda Beletso and her daughter, Lorraine Posada, pick sweetgrass on the Immokalee Reservation.



Beverly Bidney

Lauren and Lindsey Posada learn how to identify sweetgrass from their grandmother, Linda Beletso, and mother, Lorraine Posada.



Beverly Bidney

Another detail of the early stage of a basket is being worked on by Lorraine Posada.



Beverly Bidney

Linda Beletso displays some of her handmade baskets.

◆ BASKET MAKING

From page 3A

To get ready for Tribal Fair, both women spent hours every day for a few weeks completing their large baskets. Beletso usually works on a basket while watching TV or just relaxing.

"If I'm not working on a basket, I'm

biting my nails," she said. Whenever she travels, the first thing Beletso packs is her baskets, bundles of grass and thread. Both women said when they begin a basket, they have an idea of what colors they will use and a basic shape they would like to make. "You never know exactly what it will look like and you can't make two alike," Beletso said. "I made two offering plates for

my church and they are almost the same size." The tradition of sweetgrass basketry began in the 1930s as items to sell to tourists. Over time, the baskets were widely recognized as a legitimate Tribal art form along with patchwork and Seminole dolls. The grass is prepared by drying in the sun, then gathered into large bundles. The basket maker takes some grass, makes it into coils and stitches them

together with colorful embroidery thread as it is shaped into a basket. The bottoms of the baskets are made of palmetto fiber, which is also gathered in the wild. Not many people continue the tradition; just a few women do it now, Beletso said. "I'd be happy to teach people how to pull the grass," she said. "But it will have to be in the rainy season. It's too dry to find a lot now."

Posada said basket making is an art form. "I like taking raw materials and turning it into something you created," she said. "It's beautiful and you can say you did that." Beletso can always tell her baskets from other people's work. "I like to make smaller rows because I don't know where the next grass will come from," she said.



Eileen Soler

Frank J. Billie and Alice Billie are flanked by loved ones: from left, former Chairman Mitchell Cypress, Marlin Miller, Lydia Cypress, Eldean Billy and Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger.

◆ FRANK J. BILLIE

From page 3A

"I'm making my rounds," he told me," Councilman Tiger said. Everyone, including Frank, laughed at the story. The Rev. Salaw Hummingbird gave an invocation before lunch was served. The meal included traditional favorites like frybread, sofkee, lapale and chicken stew with cabbage. Pastor Hummingbird recalled 2001, when he began leading Big Cypress First

Baptist Church and had the pleasure of visiting Frank and listening to his stories about the past. "I always enjoyed listening to him at (Billie Swamp) Safari," the pastor said. "It's good to see our men out there who went through so much. It's because of the battles they fought that we have so much now. Even though his hair has long grown gray, there is so much wisdom there." Pastor Hummingbird thanked Frank for his life of service and told him that he was honored to be in his presence for his 90th birthday. "I know I'm just a young man," Frank said, smiling.

Beauty exists among the books at Willie Frank Memorial Library

BY EILEEN SOLER
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Artworks from nearly a dozen Big Cypress Reservation artists are on display at the Willie Frank Memorial Library in an exhibit created by Library assistant Claudia Doctor. Pieces include exquisitely beaded glassware by Richard Doctor, paintings by Elgin Jumper, beaded jewelry by Louise Osceola and Seminole dolls by Mary B. Billie and Peggy Billie. The exhibit will be on display through April.



Eileen Soler

On display now at the Willie Frank Memorial Library are works of art by nearly a dozen Big Cypress artists. The exhibit will be on display through April.

American Indian Veteran Memorial Initiative gathers support

SUBMITTED BY STEPHEN BOWERS
Liaison for Governor's Council on Indian Affairs

While serving in Vietnam, most of those in combat roles usually had to provide a daily or weekly situation report, referred to as "Sit-Rep."

This article is planned as the start of the "AIVMI Sit-Rep" for the American Indian Veteran Memorial Initiative (AIVMI) project, whose goal is to build a statue on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. that represents American Indian/Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian veterans. When talking to people about the project, it is often just called "AIVMI," or "the Initiative."

Also, sometimes the words "American Indian" are used, but in doing so, the intention of AIVMI is to have a statue built that recognizes all American Indian/Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian veterans. The goal is to write a monthly AIVMI Sit-Rep for *The Seminole Tribune* so that Seminole Tribal members and others throughout the country can follow AIVMI progress. The AIVMI Sit-Rep will also be emailed and sent by "pony express" — U.S. Postal Service — to the many people who have signed up with AIVMI to show their support for the project.

The Initiative first got its "legs" under former Seminole Tribal Chairman Mitchell Cypress, also a veteran,

in December 2010 when he had me send a press release to all American Indian newspapers. The AIVMI project was started with the idea of recognizing the service of the American Indian soldier in Vietnam. Now, however, after traveling throughout the country, we met so many Indian youth, and families of veterans who lost relatives in World War I, World War II, Korea, the First

Gulf War, Iraq and Afghanistan, that we felt we needed to redefine the AIVMI project to include American Indians who served in all wars in which the United States has been involved.

When asked about the change in AIVMI's mission, I said, "We will not forget the men who gave the supreme sacrifice in Vietnam. It was such an unpopular military conflict that those veterans need recognition. We are just expanding AIVMI to include the many veterans who served in the wars prior to Vietnam, and those veterans that have served after it. We must not forget that if it was not for the World War II Code Talkers from several different Tribes, Japanese might be the primary language spoken in America today."

When then-Chairman Cypress gave me the opportunity to spearhead this most important mission, he met with the Board of Directors of the United South and Eastern Tribes (USET) in Washington, D.C. at Legislative Impact Week in February 2011. As the sitting Chairman of the USET Veterans Affairs Committee, he was able to present a resolution requesting support for the Initiative. With overwhelming approval from the USET Board, I obtained USET's unanimous support.

In the May 2011 Seminole Tribe of Florida elections, then-Chairman Cypress was defeated by James E. Billie. Incoming Chairman Billie also gave me full endorsement for AIVMI. He provided me with names of former military brothers with whom he had served during his two tours in Vietnam, one of whom was Dr. Tome Roubideaux, a Rosebud Sioux and a former LRRP, or Long

Range Reconnaissance Patrol* team member who served five and a half tours in Vietnam. Roubideaux attended the dedication ceremony of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in 1982, and the dedication of the Three Servicemen statue at the Wall in 1984.

Another Vietnam veteran, Dr. Robert Primeaux**, a Standing Rock Sioux, reached out to me after reading an article about the Initiative in *Indian Country* magazine in fall 2011. Dr. Bob, as he is often called, was also at the dedication of Three Servicemen. The iconic memorial statue represents the Hispanic, Caucasian and African-American Vietnam veteran, but not the American Indian, which is the very reason why former Chairman Cypress helped start the Native American Veteran Memorial Initiative (NAVMI), now referred to it as AIVMI.

Then-Chairman Cypress had lost several school friends from the Chilocco Indian School in Oklahoma during the Vietnam War. In 2010, when he visited the memorial, he was deeply affected when he located some of their names on the Wall. As he passed by the Three Servicemen statue, which stands at the west entry of the Wall, Cypress noted, "No American Indian is represented in the monument even though the American Indian soldier served more per capita in Vietnam than any other ethnic group in this country."

In late 2011 and throughout 2012, the AIVMI team, comprised of Dr. Tome, Dr. Bob, my wife Elizabeth Bates Bowers, and myself, traveled to numerous Indian conferences, trade shows and pow-wows to spread the word about the Initiative. To date, I have received numerous resolutions of support for the Initiative from many Tribes, Tribal organizations and intertribal groups. The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), the oldest, largest and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization, passed a resolution of support at its Mid-Year Conference, held in Lincoln, Neb. in June 2012. At the NCAI closing conference meeting, Dan King of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin, a Vietnam veteran and co-chairman of the NCAI Veterans Committee, recognized my extraordinary commitment to build an American Indian veterans statue on the

mall. I had tears in my eyes and my heart was pounding. Dr. Bob and Dr. Tome were also moved by the outpouring of support. We knew we were on the right track with the Initiative, but at that moment, we felt it.

Non-Indian veteran groups who have provided support include the Broward County Veterans Council, Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 23 in Fort Lauderdale and America Serving Veterans Foundation Inc. in Vero Beach. Red Cloud Food Service in Chicago, which has clients throughout Indian Country, has also sent a letter of support.

In March, an AIVMI mail campaign will include sending letters requesting support from many individual Tribes and Tribal organizations, such as the Alaskan Native veteran groups, and some veteran groups in Hawaii. AIVMI members met with several leaders from California Tribes during the NCAI Annual Conference in Sacramento last October, and as a result, we anticipate receiving their resolutions of support in the coming year.

I and other AIVMI members expect to meet with members of Congress within the next few months to obtain sponsorship of a bipartisan bill to be presented on the floor of the United States Senate and the House of Representatives. As to the chances of getting anything done with this Congress, we are a long way from getting a veterans statue built, but we are a lot closer than when we first started in 2010.

I offer a big "thank you" to the students of Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School on the Brighton Reservation. With their continuous letter-writing to members of Congress, and to President Obama and the first lady, they may be with us in Washington, D.C. for the unveiling of a veterans statue memorializing the true sacrifice and service of American Indian/Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian soldiers of all wars.

We have received tremendous moral support for the AIVMI project. Now we need financial support to move it forward in a big way.

Stephen Bowers is a founding member of the Seminole Tribe of Florida Color Guard, President of the Seminole Veterans Foundation, and lifetime member of Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and



Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) Chapter 23, Fort Lauderdale. He is currently employed as the Liaison for the Florida Governor's Council of Indian Affairs and Office of Veteran Affairs for the Seminole Tribe. Anyone interested in helping with the AIVMI project can contact Bowers at 954-966-6300 ext. 11482 or email sbowers@semttribe.com.

*Thanks to Dr. Bob Primeaux for the title "Sit-Rep." Dr. Bob hosts two radio shows from his hometown in Reno, Nev. "The Warrior" show is about American Indian issues and concerns, and "Sit-Rep" or Situation Report is about veteran issues, both positive and negative. "Sit-Rep" is broadcast every Tuesday at 12:30 p.m. (PST) on renogaderadio.org and is live streamed on the Internet and Fox News in the Northwest. Both radio shows are heard on "Native Voice 1" nationwide; times vary on the different Indian radio stations in the country.

**LRRP teams were used as scouts for the U.S. Army, and were comprised of 4-5 members sent out to look for enemy movement and report back to their unit. LRRP members were highly skilled combatants but often not recognized for their efforts throughout the Vietnam conflict. Many of them today and others who served in Vietnam are suffering from PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), cancer, heart disease and Type-2 diabetes, while many others have since passed away from Agent Orange-related illnesses.

SUPPORT AIVMI
www.aivmi.org



Eileen Soler

Brighton Field Day Parade grand marshal Howard Tommie waves to the crowd gathered for the parade on Feb. 16.



Eileen Soler

A color guard made up of, from left, Seminole Police Department Detective Don Davis, military veteran Stephen Bowers, Sgt. David Billy and Detective Gary Negrinelli, display the flags during the opening ceremony Feb. 16 at Brighton Field Day.

FIELD DAY
From page 1A

Chairman Billie credits former President Joe Dan Osceola with making Brighton Field Day into a larger event that began to attract outsiders.

Councilman Bowers said another change came in the early 1990s when the event was switched from late summer to February to take advantage of tourist season. He said most tourists are curious about Seminole history and tend to spend most time in the chickee village where elders cook authentic foods and fashion beaded jewelry, baskets and clothing by hand.

A midway of vendor tents this year featured more clothing, artwork and other traditional items made by other Tribes from all over Indian Country, including Navajo and Lakota. Chairman Billie said the atmosphere could be reminiscent of old-time trading posts.

"Now we don't have to go around the country looking for good leather, furs and tools made with animal bone," he said.

Ginger Jones, of Brighton, who has attended for most of her life in the last three decades, said she enjoys the arts and crafts

the best.

"It's amazing that while traditions continue, every little thing is different. Nothing looks exactly the same because it is all one of a kind," Jones said. The outfit that her son Ross Jones, 2, wore in the clothing contest, handmade by herself, won a first-place ribbon.

Food choices ran the gamut, from Philly cheesesteak to Mexican tostados and Polish sausage.

But Councilman Bowers said no one could truly experience Field Day without a taste of Iona's Fry Bread at the lineup of Seminole food booths or any frybread cooked over a wood fire by elder women in the open chickee.

Linda Chang, of Brighton, who took first place in the parade's cowgirl competition, said the best part of Field Day is passing along traditions to her children and grandchildren.

"We have too many McDonald's in a world where we used to live off the land. Field Day gives kids a taste of the past," she said. "It's important for everyone to come out and learn the culture. It's modern tradition meets old tradition and it's good to see how much has changed and much has stayed the same."



Eileen Soler

Brighton royalty ride aboard a decorated float in the Brighton Field Day Parade.



Eileen Soler

Leanne Billie competes in the barrel race during the Field Day PRCA Rodeo.



Eileen Soler

Chairman James E. Billie addresses the crowd.



Eileen Soler

Minnie Doctor, of Hollywood, hand fashions a Seminole doll.



Eileen Soler

FSU's Renegade and Osceola (FSU senior Drake Anderson) wow the crowd.



Eileen Soler

Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr. waves to a cheering crowd during the Field Day Parade.



Eileen Soler

Diane Snow, Louise Gopher, Rose Jones and Jenny Johns compete in the clothing contest. Rose Jones won this age category.



Eileen Soler

Jeremy Mouton, of Scott, La., competes in the bareback competition during the PRCA Rodeo at Brighton Field Day.



Eileen Soler

Cowboys keep crowds entertained with daring competition in the PRCA Rodeo.



Eileen Soler

Dayne Billie rides a mechanical bull.



Eileen Soler

Winnie Gopher and Karey Gopher use Native American toys to watch Field Day.



Eileen Soler

Miss Florida Seminole Alexis Aguilar, Little Mr. Choviohoya Weimann, Little Miss Sarafina Billie and Jr. Miss Brianna Nunez pose for pictures.

40 YEARS
From page 1A

She continued to work in medical services, cattle, land use operations and smoke shops for about 13 years. Motlow then became executive assistant to former President Cecil Johns, where she stayed for four years. For the last 24 years, she has worked in the Legal Department.

"Working in Legal, I've seen a lot of changes in water rights, the Gaming Compact and more," Motlow said. "It's always exciting and new. When I look back, all the experience in the Legal Department has been very positive. I really enjoy working here."

Fontana was a single mother who needed a job when she answered an ad for a purchasing agent with the Tribe in 1973. Her background was in purchasing, but she also learned accounting, payroll, grants and finance.

"I used to go back and forth to Big Cypress with (former Chairman) Howard Tommie to furnish the HUD homes," Fontana said. "It was a big purchasing project - we got all the supplies from the GSA (U.S. General Services Administration). This was before Alligator Alley was built."

Later, Fontana got involved with risk management insurance and tried unsuccessfully to get insurance for Tribe employees; even Lloyds of London wouldn't write the insurance. The Tribe had about 75 to 100 employees by then, so Chairman James E. Billie sent her to a five-week course to learn about insurance.

When she came back, Fontana recommended the Tribe self-insure. They started with workers' compensation, which worked so well they added medical self-insurance. The Tribe is still self-insured, but since the beginning of this year, it is administered by United Healthcare.

"Everything I know, I learned from the Tribe," Fontana said. "It was all on-the-job training. I don't have a degree."

Even when Fontana worked in the Chief Financial Officer's office as assistant controller, she handled risk management. She spent time performing a variety of jobs, including three years as Human Resources director, but she ultimately landed back in Risk Management. Today she has 18 employees and reports directly to Tribe Chief Financial Officer Jim Raker.

"Over the years I monitored the Bingo Hall, helped negotiate the tobacco agreement with Tallahassee, went to Washington, D.C. every year to work on grants," Fontana said. "I could make a list of 3,000 things I did. I even worked on the menu for senior hot meals, since the nutritionist wasn't attuned to the Tribe's culinary customs."

The women are pleased and proud to have spent their years working for the Tribe. Motlow considers it an honor.

"I always felt like I was serving my people," Motlow said. "I'm Bear Clan, and our part is to make sure there is unity."

Although Fontana is not a Tribal member, she feels a very close connection.



Jean Fontana, left, and Agnes Motlow, celebrate 40 years, and counting, as Tribe employees.

"I have no brothers and sisters, so the Tribe is my family," said Fontana, whose two sons also work for the Tribe. John Fontana is the president of Hard Rock Tampa and Vincent Fontana is the storage manager for the Accounting Department in Hollywood.

Motlow and Fontana have been an integral part of the Tribe's growth and transformation since the '70s.

"The first dividend I ever did was for \$25 in 1975," Fontana said. "The dividend was from land leases, and I had to type each check."

"The biggest change has been the ability for families to take care of their children in a mainstream way," Motlow said. "Music classes, art, dance, sports. They are able to supply these things to the kids now, things I wasn't able to do because my parents couldn't afford them. It's great to see the direction we're going."

Building on their strong history with the Tribe, both women are now focused on the future. Motlow would like to see an upper management mentoring program for Tribal members. Fontana would like to see more young people pursue higher education.

"The Tribe pays for education, so parents need to teach young children to aspire to get an education," Motlow said. "The days are over that a high school diploma is enough to get a job."

Fontana takes that sentiment a step further.

"Look at what the Tribe is involved in," she said. "Young people need to get an education to run these programs."

Full of plans and enthusiasm to continue working on the Tribe's progress, neither of these dynamic woman plans to retire any time soon.

"My father is in his 80s and still working," Motlow said. "I hope to do the same. I would like to be here another 40 years."

Willie Johns talks canoes with Tampa

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER
Special Projects Reporter

TAMPA — Tribal Historian Willie Johns gave a Seminole Moments presentation on Seminole dugout canoes to Tampa elders on March 13.

"Growing up in Brighton and the Okeechobee area, my family didn't really use canoes. We preferred our cows and horses," said Johns, who showed an enlarged historic photo of a Seminole family - father, mother and child - poling a dugout canoe through an area that appeared to be the Musa Isle Indian Village tourist attraction on the Miami River in Miami.

"My mother remembered how you could take a cowhide and five pieces of wood and spread the hide across, and you could put something, even your baby, in there and push it across the water. But you could not get in it," Johns said.

The canoe builder Johns remembered the best was Tom Tiger, Betty Mae Jumper's

grandfather, who lived around Indiantown. Tiger was killed by lightning one afternoon while he was building his canoe.

"He made big, long canoes. So they sawed the canoe in half, put him in there like a grave," Johns said.

Henry John Billie, a Florida Folk Heritage award winner, was the most renowned of the Seminole canoe builders, Johns said.

"The Miccosukee were the ones who really used canoes," he said. "They traveled everywhere with canoes. They were the great gliders in the Everglades, but us Creeks, we didn't really go that way. Like I said, we preferred our horses."

"Most Brighton folks are cattlemen. They look at a 22-foot dugout canoe and they ask, 'Who is going to drive it?'"

Johns also described the process of making a canoe, which could take years.

"These guys would go out in the woods, find the perfect cypress tree and chop it down," he said. "Then it might stay

there two or three years until the swamp gets high and they float it out to the village or nearby where they carve them. Then it may sit there for years waiting for the tree to fully dry before they start shaping it."

An audience member asked how many people could fit in a Seminole canoe.

"They are all sizes and shapes and styles," John said. "I've seen an entire family, six dogs and a sewing machine in a canoe. They can really pack a lot on those things."

Johns pointed to the photo. "Understand, that's their car. That's how they got around. That's a Porsche."

Seminole ancestors put sails on dugout canoes and traveled to the Bahamas and Cuba, said Johns, who described a colony of Seminole ancestors who fled the state during the Indian Wars and sailed to live on Andros Island in the Bahamas.

Andros Island Seminoles have invited Seminole Tribe of Florida members to a celebration this August, Johns said.

Have fun, stay safe over Spring Break

SUBMITTED BY WILLIAM R. LATCHFORD
Police Chief

Spring Break has arrived, and kids are excited to have some fun. Parents also get a brief break from the hustle and bustle of taking the kids to and from school. Often this time can present challenges for parents in ensuring kids are safe and occupied.

No matter where your adventures take you, be cognizant of your surroundings. Remind your kids, regardless of their age, they should let you know where they are going and with whom. There are so many great ideas to enjoy quality time together, including the following:

• Choose an exciting travel destination. When staying in a hotel, keep doors locked

and do not allow strangers in the room.

- Explore an area park.
- Consider spending time off immersed in the wonderful culture of the Seminole Tribe by cooking ethnic food together.
- Check out a local historic site.
- Catch a movie.
- A day at the beach is fun for the kids and relaxing for parents. Remember to wear sunscreen and drink plenty of water.
- Get involved in some of the various opportunities offered by the Seminole Tribe's Recreation Department or Cultural Department.
- If you're the parent of a teenager, look into mentoring opportunities for your kids. Older kids develop leadership skills and younger kids spend some time with

someone they can look up to.

Parents may want to team up with other parents and chaperone a group of kids together on an outing, and have some fun during the event as well.

Creating family memories in quality time can last a lifetime.

Keeping kids engaged and active in sports, spending time outdoors or in other interests provide great opportunities to learn and grow. Being occupied also allows less time for children to possibly become involved in risky behaviors. There are fewer tendencies for kids to experiment with alcohol and drugs when they are occupied in a positive manner.

Enjoy a safe, fun and memorable Spring Break.

◆ **RICHARDSON**
From page 2A

Thompson also compared the case to that of store owner Tommy Zeigler, in 1975 in Orange County.

"(He) invited his wife and in-laws to the furniture store for a Christmas Eve party and killed all of them," she said. "He invited some black men who worked for him to come as well. He shot them and of course he told the police that the black guys killed his family. He had these insurance policies, and, well, he's in jail. This kind of thing happens all the time, unfortunately."

Despite the opposition to Richardson's past efforts to receive compensation, Thompson does not expect that to happen in the current legislative session. She is confident the bill, which asks for \$3 million, will pass.

"I think that because (so much) time has

passed, and people's reputations are not on the line - this was under someone else's watch - I don't see that kind of activism behind it...But I may be surprised," she said.

Richardson has been living in Wichita, Kan. since his release. In early March, he traveled to Tallahassee to join his attorney Robert Barrar and consultant Richard Pinsky in visiting legislators to lobby for his claims bill. Tears flowed down his face as he recalled the decades of abusive treatment he received, from guards and fellow inmates, as a "convicted child killer."

He said he deserves compensation "because I spent so much time in prison. It's not because of the children. It was the time I had to suffer. I had suffered a painful hate and I almost lost my life inside the prison...After I got off of Death Row, inmates were after me," he said.

Plans are now being made to bring Richardson back to Arcadia for a "healing

ceremony," said former Mayor and current City Council member Sharon Goodman, who was in class with the Richardson children on that fateful day.

"This town has suffered enough shame, over the years, over what happened to those children and their father," she said. "We need to move on. Arcadia is a much different place now then it was back in the '60s. It's a wonderful place and we want the world to know we are good people here."

Cline is still alive, but is rarely seen, in Arcadia.

Now making the rounds of committees, the compensation bill (a companion HB 549 was filed by state Rep. Shevrin D. Jones, D-West Park) is expected to come to the floor for debate in early April. Reno, who is suffering from advanced Parkinson's Disease, has promised to make herself available to legislators by phone.

◆ **More CHALO NITKA** photos from page 3A



Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr., right, throws candy to the crowd as Brighton Board Rep. Larry Howard waves to the crowd from his swamp buggy.



Junior Miss Florida Seminole Brianna Nunez, Miss Florida Seminole Alexis Aguilar and Brighton Seminole Princess Cheyenne Nunez form a line of Tribal royalty as they greet the crowd along the parade route.



Janelle Robinson makes frybread in the cooking chickee as a couple of extra-large garfish roast over the fire.



The audience contemplates the alligator.



Little audience members react to the alligator wrestling show.



Dalina Rodriguez doesn't know why she is in these clothes. Grandmother Linda Chang tries to keep her happy.



Sandy Billie Jr., left, celebrates taking first place in the male adult category with a winning pose.



Whitney Savoie, of Moore Haven, shops for a patchwork skirt for her daughter.



The adult clothing contestants line up onstage to be judged.

SHOOTOUT

From page 1A

Because the Seminoles' knowledge of the land gave them an advantage, their guerrilla tactics in conflicts often led to U.S. defeat, said Jacob "Jake" Osceola, head of operations at Billie Swamp Safari and an organizer of the Big Cypress Shootout. "Sometimes we would do an ambush to get supplies and shot (guns and ammunition). We had to because very few people would trade with us and we had to protect our land," he said.

At the end of each of three battles, the U.S. and Seminole reenactors lined up for a gunfire salute to veterans of all wars and U.S. troops serving now.

Thousands streamed through the historical encampments where reenactors showcased battlefield life in the 1830s using authentic tents, uniforms, animal hides and Army equipment.

Decker said nearly 100 turned out to relive the U.S. side. Some were members of the 11th Tennessee Brigade and the Sons of Confederate Veterans Camp 2150.

On the Native American side, Seminole Tribal members and people from all over Indian Country participated in the

reenactment.

Paul Morrison, as the historical Swamp Owl, said he is descended from the Mohawk Tribe and the Mayflower. His third great-grandfather was Hiawatha, co-founder of the Iroquois confederacy, he said.

"I've been doing this for 15 years to bring history to life so you can see it, hear it, smell it, taste it," Morrison said.

Gaha Halftown, a Seneca from Niagara Falls in Canada, said he tries to attend the Shootout as often as possible. This year, about 20 Seneca Tribal members participated.

A section for craft vendors showed off rustic period leather, wood and jewelry.

Hands-on activities included archery, tomahawk tossing and mock archaeological digs.

Sharon Downs, of Cherokee descent, said she brought sons Gehjoway Quincy Humes, 7, and Magua Tyler Humes, 13, to learn more about traditional ways.

Downs said her great-grandparents let traditions slip because they feared the government.

"We were told about our heritage but we kept it a secret," Downs said. "Now we learn as much as we can with our children, even moccasin and drum making, so that it can be passed down."

Stomp dancing, led by Traditional Arts

and Outreach coordinator Pedro Zepeda, was performed for the crowd. Later, more than 50 from the audience held hands with Tribal members in the Friendship Dance.

Necho Logan, 10, of Fort Myers Cub Scout Pack 761, said the "coolest" discovery for him was learning the difference between a crocodile and an alligator, both displayed at a live animal exhibit.

But the "most important" realization for Necho, of Cherokee lineage, came as he watched the Shootout.

"Back then the people had to work together to keep their land," he said. "I think I will always remember that when we work together, we can accomplish anything."



Eileen Soler

U.S. troops and militia take aim and fire against Seminole warriors during the Big Cypress Shootout – Second Seminole War Reenactment.



Eileen Soler

From left, three generations of Seminoles, Andre Jumper; his grandfather, Moses Jumper Jr.; and Jumper Jr.'s son, Moses Jumper III, ride onto the battlefield.



Eileen Soler

Traditional Arts and Outreach coordinator Pedro Zepeda leads spectators and reenactors in the Friendship Dance.



Omar Rodriguez

Ahfachkee School children Willie Smith, Charlie Osceola and Elijah Cook peruse Native American artifacts at an authentic 1837 encampment set up for the Big Cypress Shootout.



Eileen Soler

Taylor Tigertail, of Big Cypress, charges to fight on the battlefield during the Second Seminole War Reenactment.



Eileen Soler

Spectators pack a grassy hill to watch the Big Cypress Shootout – Second Seminole War Reenactment.



Eileen Soler

Seminole reenactors Tom Saber, Kenny Humes, Austin Humes, Tylor Tigertail and John Griffin prepare to attack U.S. troops and militia during the Big Cypress Shootout Reenactment.



Eileen Soler

Native Americans Jim Sawgrass, of the Creek Tribe, and Paul Morrison, of Mohawk and Seminole descent, prepare to take the battlefield.



Eileen Soler

History reenactors Duane 'Handlebar' Decker, of Apopka, and Wendy Hicks, of Flippin, Ark., keep warm at their 1837 encampment.

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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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Tribe celebrates Valentine's Day



Judy Weeks

Reina Rios creates a personalized valentine for a special someone in her family during a Valentine's Day party in Immokalee.



Beverly Bidney

Mary Jane Cantu, left, and Dianna Rose Cantu share a moment as the Trail community enjoys a Valentine's Day dinner at the Samurai Steak House on Feb. 12.



Eileen Soler

Smeagle Sanders plays with a cardboard heart place mat during dinner Feb. 11 at the Hollywood Recreation Department and the Boys & Girls Club's annual Valentine's Day Sweetheart Ball.



Eileen Soler

Children have a ball during a balloon drop Feb. 11 on the Hollywood Reservation at the Hollywood Recreation Department and the Boys & Girls Club's annual Valentine's Day Sweetheart Ball. The evening event featured dinner, games, bounce houses, face painting and more for heartfelt fun.



Emma Johns

Dalence Carillo shows off his moves during the sixth annual S.W.A.M.P. Valentine's Day Dance in Brighton on Feb. 9.



Emma Johns

Valentine's queen Cheyenne Fish and king Ridge Bailey proudly show off their goodies during the annual S.W.A.M.P. Valentine's Day Dance in Brighton.



Judy Weeks

'Our Valentine workshop is designed to inspire the creativity of the youth in the Naples Community,' Joel Frank Jr. said. 'Working together creates a powerful bond and through their projects they are learning that love and respect can be conveyed in many different ways.'



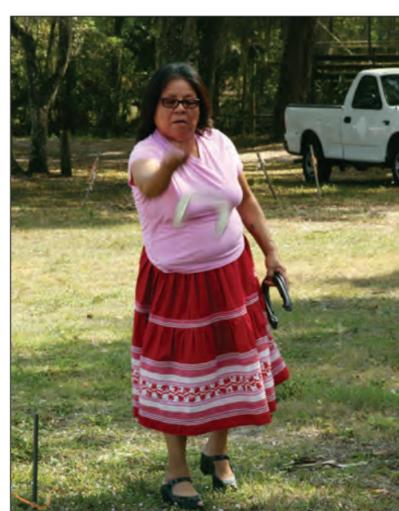
Photo courtesy of Mary Billie

Tana Bear-Osceola and son Tayton Osceola can't hide their mutual love during the Big Cypress Valentine's Day dinner.



Omar Rodriguez

Dressed for the day, Carol Cypress, of Big Cypress, takes part in the beanbag toss at Immokalee Valentine's Day festivities.



Omar Rodriguez

Mary Tigertail plays a game of horseshoes at the Immokalee Valentine's Day party.



Judy Weeks

Brandon Frank shows a valentine mailbox he made at the Juanita Osceola Center in Naples.



Eileen Soler

Talia Rodriguez and Dippy Debbie, the face-painting clown, share a smile Feb. 11 at the annual Hollywood Valentine's Day Sweetheart Ball.



Beverly Bidney

Hollywood Councilman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. talks to Rosie Grant and Sharon Osceola during the seniors' Valentine's Day luncheon on Feb. 12.



Beverly Bidney

Children receive Valentine's Day gifts, including beads, candy and cards, during the Trail Valentine's Day dinner.



Judy Weeks

Prevention specialist Fred Mullins, Family Services representative Tracy DeLaRosa and Education adviser Victoria Soto recognize Josiah Artega for his valentine creation during the Immokalee party.

Tribe member Spencer Battiest lands role in Native American play

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER
Special Projects Reporter

NEW YORK — Seminole Tribal member Spencer Battiest made his mark, singing and acting at the famed Off Broadway Players Theatre, earlier this month as a cast member of the first Native American musical play *Distant Thunder*.

"Amazing," Battiest said when he returned home to the Hollywood Reservation. "Just amazing. So many people came up to me who recognized me from *The Storm* music video. I had a great time. I learned a lot about this business. It's been fun and educational to be in on this project from almost the very beginning."

Battiest and brother Doc became nationally known in Indian Country as writers and performers in *The Storm*, which recently won the Native American Music Award as Best Music Video. A few months ago in Los Angeles, he participated in a reading of *Distant Thunder*, a play written by Shaun Taylor-Corbett, of the Blackfoot Nation.

During semiformal presentations, called staged readings (without real production, sets or costumes) actors read the dialogue. Much is left to the audience's imagination. This allows continued development of the script and is also a way for producers to see, hear and potentially finance it.

Distant Thunder takes the theatergoer on a journey with attorney Darrell Waters, a young half-Native, half-white outsider raised in Chicago who returns to his Blackfoot Tribe seeking reconciliation with his estranged father.

According to the event playbill: "There he finds himself in the middle of a Tribal crisis and unwittingly ignites a burning desire in his people to answer a dormant question: 'How can the Blackfeet claim their empowerment in an ever-changing America without sacrificing their past?' There is a need in all of us to return 'home,' whether it is a physical place or a cultural identity."

The play is unique in its effort to present an entire Native cast.

"Hollywood has been lax in casing Native Americans, even in roles that call for Natives," said Battiest, who has worked in seven stage productions since last July.

"What I've learned is no matter how talented you are, there is always politics," he said. "Hollywood plays games. And I am learning to play those games, making sure I have everything together, show up on time, learn my parts, don't give anyone any excuse to kick you out."

Born into a musical family, Battiest

said he is learning to read music, "because everyone up here reads. It's a necessary step along my career path."

Battiest was signed on for the first *Distant Thunder* reading by casting director Rene Haynes, who specializes in Native American castings.

"We did pretty well. There were only five songs in the performance we put on, but that increased to 16 by the time it was taken to New York City," said Battiest, who portrayed Tonto. "I was truly honored to be given this chance by Rene."

In New York, a flier for the play was created using Battiest and Marisa Quinn, a Lipan Apache, best known for her role as Huilen in *The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2*. Another well-known native personality, Joseph Firecrow, a Northern Cheyenne Grammy-nominated flute player and consistent winner of Native American Music Awards, also has a part in the play.

The troupe performed *Distant Thunder* three times that weekend, once for critics and investors.

"I have to admit I was a little nervous for that one, especially since my parts were toward the beginning," said Battiest, who welcomed his mother, June, brother and several friends who live in New York City.

"I haven't heard a word about what the critics thought or if they have found any investors," Battiest continued. "They keep all that real quiet, I am told. What I have heard, from the writers and the director, is we are going to the next step of development. I also met the guy who wrote some of the songs I sang, a guy who works in Broadway...He told me I brought his songs to life."

Despite his sojourns across the country



Photo courtesy of Spencer Battiest
Spencer Battiest participated in a reading of *Distant Thunder*, a play written by Shaun Taylor-Corbett, of the Blackfoot Nation, in Los Angeles.

following acting pursuits, Battiest said he has not abandoned his musical career with brother Doc.

"Doc calls me every day and we talk about our ideas, and work on our projects... We keep trying and trying, over and over again until we get it right. We keep working, building up our Rolodex and, don't worry, people will hear from us. And when they do, it will be perfect. I'll forever work with Doc. There's no other way," he said.

His Seminole Tribe family means the world to the budding actor.

"I made sure I told (Chairman James E. Billie) and the Tribal reps what I was doing and what I am planning to do," he said. "They were great. Very supportive. They gave me good feedback and told me to just keep being who I am."

Be proactive, thrive with diabetes

• Paula Bowers-Sanchez

April is National Diabetes Month. Diabetes is a metabolic disorder that occurs when a person's metabolic processes do not function as they should.

The body metabolizes food by breaking it down into its simpler components which are proteins, carbohydrates (or sugars) and fats.

But in a person diagnosed with diabetes, his/her body is either unable to produce insulin to convert glucose, or blood sugar, into energy (Type 1) or unable to use insulin to convert the blood sugar into energy (Type 2).

The latter is the most prevalent form of diabetes, and serious complications will occur if a diabetic ignores their eating and exercise requirements. Some of the complications can be irreversible.

When diabetes is uncontrolled, it results in either too high or too low blood sugar in the body. Blood sugar that is too high or too low can produce serious, life-threatening consequences, such as blindness, heart failure, kidney failure, limb amputation and even death.

People who control their diabetes can live a normal life, but if ignored, it can be more like a curse, with devastating

effects on your body.

Type 1 diabetes is incurable, while Type 2 is preventable, treatable and can be controlled by regular exercise and sensible eating. Diabetics should follow a special diet and can't eat whatever they want, whenever they want; they should not overeat.

Diabetics should also check blood sugar levels on a regular basis. Normal blood sugar level tested on an empty stomach, in the morning, should be between 80 and 120. Two hours after a meal, it should be 120-160. Finally, when tested at bedtime, blood sugar levels should fall between 100 and 140.

To control blood sugar levels, a diabetic should make certain lifestyle changes (i.e. stop drinking alcohol, quit smoking), get regular exercise, eat foods that help stabilize blood glucose and follow medication regimens.

Exercise should be part of a daily routine, just like brushing one's teeth.

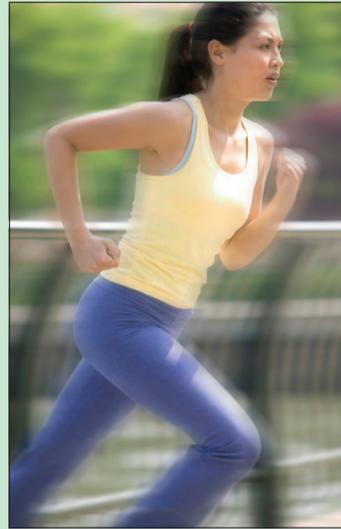
Research has shown that getting at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise daily is beneficial and will help manage diabetes. They key is to get active and stay active, doing things you enjoy.

I recommend a diet low in carbs because low-carb diets help control blood glucose levels and a diet low in fats and rich in vegetables, fruits and grains. The bottom line is this: Learn to eat well-balanced meals in the correct amounts, stay fit and take your prescribed medications, and you can thrive with diabetes.

I have direct experience with diabetes. My mother lived with the disease for years before succumbing to it in 2010. I witnessed firsthand the health issues that can and will arise from neglecting or ignoring doctors' orders.

Together, we can combat this disease by taking a proactive approach so we are not a society of diabetics.

If you are diagnosed with diabetes, follow your doctor's orders, maintain the suggested eating regimens and get moving.



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◆ CATTLEWOMEN

From page 1A

“At one time they were handing out cattle to families, so we signed up. Later, they bought a shipload out in trains. We bought about 50 head for \$5,000,” Shule Jones said. That was in 1954.

She never knew where the bulls came from, but they did their job as calves were produced. Still, poor grazing land did not provide enough nourishment and many of the initial heads of livestock perished.

“We had the cattle but no good pastures. We were always afraid we’d lose them,” Shule Jones said.

Keeping cattle was traditionally part of Seminole life, but Ollie Jones (Shule’s husband), Willie Tiger (Happy’s brother-in-law), Frank Shore, Charlie Micco, Naha Tiger and Willie Gopher were the first of the modern Seminole cattlemen.

For many years, the women’s role was to open and close gates for cowboys and keep the men fed. Only a few women owned cattle and pitched in to care for the livestock even as several epidemics threatened to wipe out entire herds.

Now, 33 Seminole cattle owners are women, which represents half of all the cattle owners in the Tribe, and the Tribe is the leading beef producer in Florida. Today, the cattle are primarily Brangus – a cross

between Brahman and Angus.

The women’s role is also now mixed. On the recent Monday when Melissa Gopher, Lonnie Gore and Emma Jane Urbina rode equal to men to tend Shule Jones’ herd, Judy Jones and Mary Jo Micco, Shule Jones’ daughters, toiled at kitchen stoves to prepare breakfast and lunch for workers. The lunch spread included traditional sofkee and lapale.

“The daughters are cooking today. It’s our service to them for their service to us,” Judy Jones said.

Most women, like Shule Jones, Happy Jones and Louise Gopher, took over herds left to them by male relatives who passed away.

“I learned about (cattle) when they landed in my lap. I always thought it was a matter of going out there and opening the gates for cowboys. No one ever explained the cycle,” Louise Gopher said. “It’s a man’s world and they don’t tell you anything unless you ask. I’ve been finding things out for 30 years.”

The cattlemen’s association began in Sept. 2009 with about 20 women. Carla Gopher, the association’s treasurer, said the first official meeting was held in December 2010.

Urbina credited cattlemen Polly Hayes, Beulah Gopher, Reina Micco and Louise Gopher for meeting first to glean ideas from Sarah Childs, membership chairwoman of Florida CattleWomen Inc., a statewide, all-female organization dedicated to promoting the beef industry.

“We wanted to make real money in the cattle business and we want to give back to the Tribe,” Urbina said.

The Seminole group, now about 35 members strong, aims to promote and perpetuate the legacy of the Seminole cattle business for future generations, regardless of gender.

The women share news and hints about what’s going on in the cattle industry at home and nationally. One year, Gopher attended the Indian Agricultural Council in Las Vegas, where the group set up a display booth.

“We were a big hit. No one could believe Seminole women actually had a women’s association,” Gopher said.

Most are out in the pastures daily, working the cattle by baling hay, filling water troughs, counting head, repairing fences and so much more. Urbina has been doing the work all her life.

“I grew up in the cowpens. I can’t say it’s been fun but it’s the truth that it is hard work,” she said. “You have to be tough and quick on your toes, otherwise you can get hurt.”

Shule Jones goes to the ranch several times weekly to spread alfalfa pellets, which seem to settle the herd down. Happy Jones, who admits to being a feisty cowgirl in her younger years, said that’s what she misses the most.



Eileen Soler

Shule Jones, 83, grew up raising cattle and is one of the oldest Seminole cattlemen.



Eileen Soler

Happy Jones, 86, is one of the oldest Seminole cattlemen.



Eileen Soler

Melissa Gopher watches a calf leave a containment device Feb. 25 during a herd’s annual health and tagging procedure in Brighton.



Eileen Soler

Melissa Gopher, veterinarian Dr. Jess Landra and Emma Jane Urbina put in a hard day of work tagging and vaccinating Shule Jones’ herd.

“I was more like one of the cowboys and always out in the cowpen counting cows and making sure I was in control so nobody overcharged me. Then my legs gave out. Now the grandkids do it,” she said.

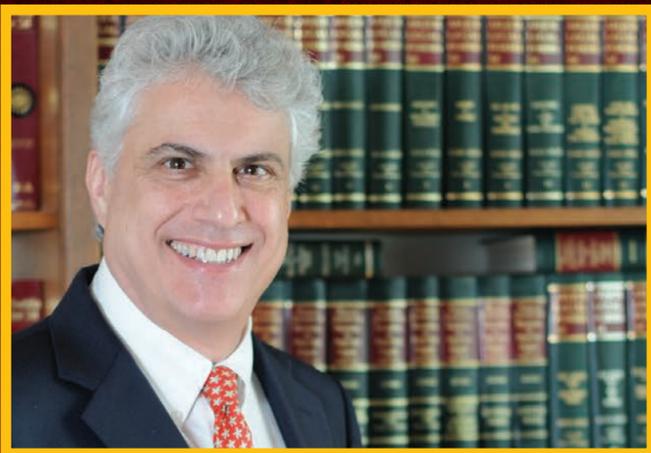
Happy Jones said female cattle owners of today have to be tough and business-savvy. Gone are the times when the Tribe would pick up costs for feed or veterinary care, she said. Now, a herd must produce an 80 percent ratio of calves to cattle for the owner to earn a profit. Last year was the first year that Happy Jones made more money than she spent. Shule Jones’ herd produced

100 percent this year – her best ever. “The cattlemen are doing OK. They are hard-working women, just like me. The best women – cowgirls all the way,” Happy Jones said.

On a recent Saturday, Judy Jones and her adopted daughter Elena Evans both joined the group.

“We all have an innate interest not just in having cattle but in working cattle,” Jones said. “When my dad was alive, we went out there and worked the cowpens. Now we have to learn more about it and be more responsible.”

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Boehmer Photograph Collection links Tribal members to families

SUBMITTED BY TARA BACKHOUSE
Collections Manager

In March, the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum highlighted one of its most important photograph collections, the Boehmer Photograph Collection. It's unique and very special, full of information about the Seminole Tribe in the early 20th century.

William Boehmer and his wife, Edith, began working on the Brighton Reservation in 1938. They both worked at the new Brighton Indian Day School, which officially opened Jan. 9, 1939. At that time, the school was managed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), so the Boehmers were U.S. government employees.

The Boehmers worked for the BIA for 28 years. They had a big impact on the Tribe and held a number of positions in the education field. William Boehmer eventually became the reservation's principal and the field representative of the Arts and Crafts Board in Washington, D.C., helping establish the Seminole Arts Guild on the Brighton Reservation.

William Boehmer was also an avid photographer. During his employment with the Tribe, he took more than 2,000 photographs of people and events, primarily on the Brighton Reservation, but also in other areas. He photographed nearly all aspects of life on Brighton and other reservations. His photographs include such subjects as housing, education, arts and crafts, celebrations and the cattle industry.

Not only is the sheer volume of photographs impressive, but Boehmer was also a wonderful record keeper. He wrote down the names, locations and dates of nearly all his photographs, and he typed the information neatly on index cards. There is an index card for every photograph, and the card often names the people in the photograph, as well as the date and place the picture was taken.

But some identifications are missing. The Museum would like to get the names of the people in every photo in order to find the right pictures to give to Tribal members who request them.

This has been an invaluable resource for the Museum and the Tribal community. People often come to the Museum looking for pictures of family members or well-known figures in Tribal history. The Museum has been able to fulfill many requests because of the dedicated efforts of Boehmer. The Museum has also provided copies of all the photographs to the Senior Center in Brighton, so you are invited to go there or to come to the Museum if you want to see the pictures.

If you would like copies of any Boehmer photographs, the Museum can provide them. Just contact Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki and give the names of the people you are



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki

An unidentified group of children play on a Big Cypress playground in 1960. The Museum needs the public's help to get the names.



Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki

Unidentified children are in a classroom at the Big Cypress Indian Day School in 1961. The Museum needs the public's help to get the names.

looking for. If you can identify any people in the photos with this story, please let the Museum know so more pictures can be provided to family members.

Anyone with information is invited to stop by the Museum Library Wednesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., call

the Museum at 877-902-1113 ext. 12246 to reach the Collections Division, or email TaraBackhouse@semtribe.com. This is often the quickest way to get the pictures you are searching for. As always, the Museum welcomes your visits and requests.

Hah-Tung-Ke: Bruce Springsteen

BY PETER B. GALLAGHER
Special Projects Reporter

A fascination with a little-known era of Seminole Indian history led singer-songwriter Bruce Springsteen to use the image of the Black Seminole Scouts of the mid-1800s as a backdrop for a poignant song about choices made by a black boy and his mother as they struggle to survive in the projects of the South Bronx.

The song *Black Cowboys* appeared on Springsteen's 13th studio album *Devils & Dust*, which debuted at No. 1 on Billboard in April 2005. In the song, the mother of young Raney Williams brings him Western-themed reading material and steers him to television programs on cowboys, hoping these tales of courage from a frontier far away will somehow protect the self-esteem he needs to keep from succumbing to the dangers of life in the ghetto.

The black cowboys in Raney's books were descendants of 1800s-era runaway slaves who were given refuge at Seminole camps in Florida. There were intermarriages and adoptions and the sturdy offspring, experts in warfare on horseback, were either recruited into the 40 years of Seminole battle against the U.S. Cavalry or chased from Florida during the Seminole Wars, to new lives out west and in Mexico.

There, the Black Seminoles were put to use as military scouts. They patrolled the Texas border, chased outlaws and kept down uprisings from other Indian tribes.

After the Army captured Geronimo in 1886, the activities of the "Seminole Negro Indian Scouts," as they were then called, were downgraded to policing cattle rustlers. In later years, they aided U.S.-based actions against Mexican

revolutionaries.

In 1914, the Scouts were finally disbanded and unceremoniously expelled from their settlement on Las Moras Creek, Texas. The expulsion of the Scouts, wrote Kevin Mulroy, author of *Ethnogenesis and Ethnohistory of the Seminole Maroons*, "was the ultimate expression of the deplorable treatment the United States government had dished out to the Seminole maroons since their return from Mexico."

The black scouts scattered about West Texas, eventually regrouping in the vicinity of Brackettville, where a community of descendants of the Seminole Negro Indian Scouts exists today and where the Seminole Indian Scouts Cemetery Association maintains a historic graveyard for scouts and their families.

The song ends with the mother giving in to "the Mott Haven (neighborhood) streets," and taking up with a drug dealer. Her emotional abandonment is too much for her son to take, so he steals \$500 from the dealer's hidden stash, runs away from home and jumps on a train to Oklahoma — seeking to regain strength, it would seem, from the great frontier and spirit of the Black Seminole Cowboys of his books and dreams.

"Springsteen has rarely referenced Native Americans in his songs," said Atlanta writer Mike Tierney, who has closely followed Springsteen's career. "In this case, Bruce's mention of the Seminoles might be connected to an immersion into John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, which was the inspiration behind his album *Ghost of Tom Joad*. The novel was set in Oklahoma, which contains the city of Seminole."

'Black Cowboys'

Raney William's playground was among Haven's streets
Where he ran past melted candles and flower wreaths
Names and photos of the young black faces
Whose death and blood consecrated these places

Raney's mother said Raney stay at my side
For you are my blessing, you are my pride
It's your love here that keeps my soul alive
I want you to come home from school and stay inside

Raney'd do his work and put his books away
There was a channel showed a Western movie everyday
And that brought him home books on the black cowboys of the Oklahoma range
The Seminole scouts that fought the tribes of the Great Plains

Summer come and the days grew long
Raney always had his mother's smile to depend on
Along the street of stray bullets he made his way
To the warmth of her arms at the end of each day

Come the Fall, the rain flooded these homes
In Ezekiel's valley of dry bones
It fell hard and dark to the ground
It fell without a sound

And they took up with a man whose business was the boulevard

Whose smile was fixed in a face that was never off guard
In the pipes 'neath the kitchen sink his secrets are kept
In the day, behind drawn curtains in the next bedroom he slept

And she got lost in the days
The smile Raney depended on dusted away
The arms that held him were no more his own
He lay at night his head pressed to her chest listening to the ghost in her bones

In the kitchen, Raney slipped his hand between the pipes
From a brown bag pulled five hundred dollar bills and stuck it in his coat side
Stood in the dark at his mother's bed
Brushed her hair and kissed her eyes

In the twilight Raney walked to the station on streets of stone
Through Pennsylvania and Ohio his train drifted on
Through the small towns of Indiana the big train crept
As he lay his head back on his seat and slept

He woke and the towns gave way to muddy fields of green
Corn and cotton and endless nothing in between
Over the rutted hills of Oklahoma the red sun slipped and was gone
The moon rose and stripped the earth to its bone

Tribal Historic Preservation Office hopes to use Billy Bowlegs III Camp as teaching tool

SUBMITTED BY MAUREEN MAHONEY
Tribal Archaeologist

The Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) used historic aerial photos, an archaeological survey, and interviews with Cultural Program director Lorene Gopher, Elsie Bowers and Martha Jones to compile details about the Billy Bowlegs III Camp for its listing on the Tribal Register of Historic Places.

The camp was established in the 1930s in a tree island hammock in the northern portion of the Brighton Reservation and was occupied by Bowlegs until his death in 1965.

Born Billy Fewell in 1862, the famed Tribal historian and grandson of Osceola took the name Bowlegs after the Seminole chief in the Seminole Wars.

The first recorded location of the Billy Bowlegs III Camp is on a 1930 map created by Roy Nash, special commissioner of the U.S. Office of Indian Affairs. While Bowlegs' camp shows up clearly on a 1940 aerial, it expands to an even greater size on both the 1948 and 1957 aerials.

The expansion in 1948 occurred when the six Bowers children moved to

the camp to be raised by Bowlegs, their great uncle, his sister Lucy Pierce, their grandmother, and her daughter Ada. Bowlegs' camp consisted of the central fireplace, three sleeping chickees, a storage chickee, a dining chickee, and a structure called a tuft that was used to dry corn and hold valuable objects.

The hammock also contained a garden in which Bowlegs grew corn, sweet potatoes, beans, peas and a potato that had purple skin and a white center. In 1953, the Bowers children, as well as Ada and Lucy, moved to another camp closer to school so they could catch the school bus.

Cultural material discovered during the archaeological survey of the hammock included a large number of animal bones, prehistoric pottery, historic glass bottles, whiteware ceramic shards, lithic — or stone — material and a rubber shoe sole.

While many of the items date to the historic use of the area by Bowlegs and his family, the other material highlights that the hammock was first used by people more than 2,000 years ago. In addition to this evidence, the camp was eligible for the Tribal Register primarily because it was home to Bowlegs — one of the most

notable Tribal members of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

As a hunter and tour guide, Bowlegs traveled across Florida advocating for the Tribe. His encounters with people throughout the state made him known as both a loyal Seminole and a friend to white settlers and travelers. Through his work, Bowlegs continued to advocate for Seminole rights and reservation lands. In nominating his camp site for the Tribal Register, THPO hopes to preserve his spirit and the important role he played for the Tribe.

Furthermore, THPO hopes the research at the camp will allow schoolchildren and Tribal members of all ages to engage with this important character. THPO will work with the Brighton Councilman's Office and the Brighton Culture Department on projects that will engage the Brighton community. One idea is to re-create the historic garden that was on the site and grow some fresh produce as Bowlegs did.

If you have an idea for the site, contact the Tribal Historic Preservation Office at 863-983-6549 or Lewis Gopher in the Brighton Field Office at 863-763-4128 ext. 15468.



Photo courtesy of THPO

As a hunter and tour guide, Billy Bowlegs III traveled across Florida advocating for the Tribe.



Photo courtesy of THPO

Pictured is a 1957 aerial photograph of the Billy Bowlegs III Camp.

Red Barn stabilization completed, restoration plans under way

SUBMITTED BY CARRIE DILLEY
Architectural Historian

BRIGHTON — The Red Barn has a new — well, actually it is old — look.

Armstrong Contractors Inc. worked diligently over the past few months to stabilize the historic structure on the Brighton Reservation. At first glance it's easy to see the new boards that cover the east and west facades, but Armstrong also conducted a great deal of work "behind the scenes," according to the plans of the structural engineer.

Armstrong replaced the decayed floorboards in the hay loft; installed new concrete footings and foundation as needed, plus added extra rebar for more stability; replaced the roof support posts to match the existing historic elements; and installed hurricane clips and straps throughout. The Red Barn, built in 1941 to serve the Tribe's cattle business, now exceeds the Florida Building Code.

General Contractor Skip Armstrong felt a special connection to project and attended January's Red Barn Celebration with his family.

"Unlike any other building that we have worked on, this old Red Barn has stood the test of time and mother nature," he said. "You can feel the history and life that it has held through the years. It was a privilege to be part of the renovation of something this special."

All the work done at the site was supervised by the Community Planning Department and guided by the Architectural Historian of the Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO). Since this is a historic building listed in the National Register of Historic Places, special care was taken to keep as much of the original fabric as possible in order to preserve the integrity of the barn. The building is now structurally sound and ready for the next phase in the preservation process.

THPO is planning for Phase II: a full restoration of the barn back to the 1940s era.

Based upon an existing historical photograph and oral histories, the Red Barn needs the following changes to get it back to its original condition: covering the hayloft



Photo courtesy of Carrie Dilley

Before: January 2012.



Photo courtesy of Carrie Dilley

After: March 2013.

on east and west sides; adding entrance doors on the front and back; repairing or replacing all stall doors on the interior and exterior; installing a wooden shingle roof; and repainting the exterior surfaces and trim.

THPO will be working closely with a historic preservation architect to carry out the restoration. Once Phase II is complete, THPO would like to bring the Red Barn back to the focus of the community by creating a park at the site.

THPO is seeking input about what elements Tribal members would like to see included in the Red Barn Park. Some possibilities are: wooden fencing around the property, cow pens, chickees, exhibits, gardens, footpaths and an amphitheater. The park facility would also include parking and restrooms.

If you have ideas for what you would like to see at the Red Barn Park, contact Carrie Dilley at CarrieDilley@semtribe.com.

Health



Beverly Bidney

Lucy Barrios serves salad to Judybill Osceola at the Hollywood Senior Center healthy cooking demo. They hope to make it a monthly event.

Senior Center serves up lesson in healthy cooking

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Seniors in Hollywood are served breakfast and lunch daily but are on their own for dinner. To promote healthy eating, the Elder Services and Health departments teamed up and gave a cooking demonstration on Feb. 26.

Right before lunch, the aroma of garlic sautéing in olive oil filled the Senior Center. On the menu were quick and easy, yet tasty and healthy dishes, including shrimp scampi with spinach and homemade ricotta cheese. "This is our first time doing a cooking demonstration, but we hope to have them monthly," said Debra Hampel, Elder Services site manager. "Today we have a healthy version of scampi, made without salt."

Nutritionist Lucy Barrios broke down the recipes and ingredients for the seniors and explained the benefits of each item.

"The pink in the shrimp comes from the beta carotene family," Barrios said. "The colors are protective for us and have anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. They help with diabetes and the pancreas."

Spinach, with its dark green color, is a 'superfood,'" she said, referring to foods with high nutritional content.

Mary Gay Osceola tasted shrimp for the first time.

"It's pretty good," she said. "I tried something new today. Maybe one day I'll try to make it."

Some seniors cook in the evenings, but many go out for dinner.

"When you make things at home, you are in control of it," Barrios said. "You can make meals more healthy, use less salt and butter and add spinach to make things healthier."

"Even though it's a lighter recipe, it still has a lot of flavor," Hampel added.

The ricotta cheese, although made with whole milk and cream, was served as an appetizer on a small piece of toasted baguette, ensuring a small portion to keep it healthier.

Judybill Osceola usually cooks spaghetti with meat sauce or meatloaf for her family but yearns for more vegetables.

"I want to learn to make vegetable lasagna," she said. "I love spinach. I think I could live on it all the time."

Shrimp Scampi with Spinach

- 3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 ounce Parmesan cheese, finely grated
- 8 ounces whole wheat pasta
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ½ cup prepared bruschetta topping
- 12 ounces peeled and deveined shrimp, thawed
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ cup reduced-sodium chicken broth or stock
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 4 cups baby spinach leaves

Cook and drain pasta, following package instructions.

Preheat large sauté pan on medium for 1-2 minutes.

Place oil and garlic in pan, cook 3-4 minutes or until the garlic edges begin to turn golden.

Add bruschetta topping, shrimp, pepper flakes, ¼ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper, cook and stir 1 minute.

Add broth, cook 2-3 minutes or until reduced by about half and shrimp have just turned pink and opaque.

Reduce heat to low, stir in butter, spinach, cheese, pasta and remaining salt and pepper.

Toss until butter and cheese melt and spinach wilts.

Serve.

Homemade Ricotta Cheese

- 6 ½ cups whole milk
- 1 ½ cups heavy cream
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 2 ½ tablespoons distilled white vinegar

Line a large sieve or pasta strainer with two layers of cheesecloth or paper towels and set it over a large bowl.

Bring the milk, cream and salt to a simmer in a large nonreactive pot over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Add the lemon juice and vinegar and cook, stirring, until the mixture curdles, about 1 minute.

Pour the mixture into a the prepared sieve and let drain, discarding the liquid (whey) from the bowl as necessary, at least five minutes or up to 30 minutes for thicker cheese. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to four days.



Beverly Bidney

Debra Hampel and Lucy Barrios make ricotta cheese.

Tribe unites in fight against heart disease

SUBMITTED BY BRENDA BORDOGNA
Health Education Coordinator

February is American Heart Health Month. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women, so to raise awareness, the American Heart Association hosts a campaign asking everyone to wear red in an effort to bring attention to the causes, prevention and care of heart disease.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, about 715,000 Americans suffer from a heart attack every year. About 600,000 people die from heart disease in the United States each year – that's 1 of every 4 deaths.

Controlling weight through a healthy diet and regular exercise, keeping diabetes and high blood pressure under control, and knowing the signs and symptoms for heart attack and stroke are just some of the ways to maintain a healthy heart.

To support Heart Health Month, the Big Cypress, Brighton, Hollywood, Immokalee and Tampa reservations wore



Photo courtesy of Brenda Bordogna

Pemaevt Emahakv Charter School students wear red to show support for American Heart Health Month in February.

red, participated in community walks and held fundraisers.

About \$400 was donated to the American Heart Association.



Photo courtesy of Brenda Bordogna

Hollywood residents take part in the Health Department's Heart Walk to help fight heart disease.



Photo courtesy of Brenda Bordogna

Tampa gets in on Heart Month action.



Eileen Soler

Residents and employees of the Big Cypress Reservation are decked out in their red, in support of the American Heart Association's Wear Red Day, before taking to the streets for a fundraising and awareness walk for the association on Feb. 22.

Seminole take part in March for Babies

SUBMITTED BY EDNA MCDUFFIE
Community Outreach Coordinator

OKEECHOBEE — On March 9, Team Seminole once again took part in the annual March for Babies walk in Okeechobee.

Started by community members of the Brighton Reservation, the team has been part of the March of Dimes walk for almost 15 years. The walk raises money to help children and families suffering from birth defects and premature births.

The 3-mile walk also is part of Tribal

members' exercise programs.

For the past two years, the walk has coincided with the Speckled Perch Festival Days, which makes it more exciting. As always, participation from the Brighton community and employees was high. This year, Seminole royalty joined in the walk. When Wanda Bowers found out the March of Dimes walk was the same day as the Speckled Perch Festival, she arranged for Miss Florida Seminole Alexis Aguilar and Little Miss Seminole Princess Sarafina Billie to walk. Sarafina's parents, Jo Jo Osceola and Byron Billie,

also came.

Team Seminole proudly accepted the award for the second-highest fundraiser.

Members of the team included: Jessica Billie and family, Grace and Brydgett Koontz, Suraiya Smith and Kamani Smith, Carla Gopher, Tristan Buster, Hilowa Garcia, Edna McDuffie, Barbara Boling, Wanda Bowers, Jo Jo Osceola and the Byron Billie family, Miss Seminole Alexis Aguilar, Little Miss Seminole Sarafina Billie, Albert Snow, Melody Kimsey, Kai Setty, Donna Hedrick and Juan Macias.



Photo courtesy of Wanda Bowers

Edna McDuffie, team captain of Team Seminole, left, and Wanda Bowers, Princess Committee chairwoman, pose for a picture after the March for Babies walk.



Photo courtesy of Wanda Bowers

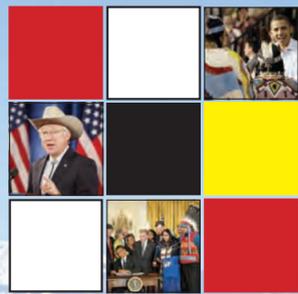
Team Seminole gathers in support of the annual March for Babies walk in Okeechobee. They have participated in the event for almost 15 years.



Photo courtesy of Wanda Bowers

Miss Florida Seminole Alexis Aguilar and Little Miss Seminole Sarafina Billie enjoy the day.

NATIONAL NATIVE NEWS



NIGA hosts presidential policy panel

WASHINGTON, D.C. — With regional resolutions calling for an Obama Native Nations Policy squarely on the table, the National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA), in cooperation with the National Museum of the American Indian, hosted a dialogue on presidential and congressional American Indian issues earlier this month.

The Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association, Coalition of Large Tribes, Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes, United Tribes of North Dakota, California Nations Indian Gaming Association and the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community all passed resolutions supporting the call for a new Presidential Native Sovereign Nations Policy Statement by President Barack Obama.

Other highlights:

NIGA Chairman Ernest L. Stevens Jr. opened talks by praising the late President Richard Nixon as a strong leader who ushered in the modern era of Indian policy.

"President Nixon is known for returning Blue Lake to Taos Pueblo, Yakama Forest to the Yakama Nation and the Indian self-determination policy. Nixon gave a special message to Congress on Indian self-determination, without termination."

As for Obama, Stevens had more praise: "President Obama did a great job in his first term, and we hope he will take the Native Nations policy to the next level in his second term."

Panel moderator, former White House special assistant under President Bill Clinton, Holly Cook Macarro, also pointed out that President Clinton's Executive Order on Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments was a milestone of Indian policy that promoted Indian sovereignty.

"Kennedy and Johnson sowed the seeds of the Indian self-determination policy, and Johnson opened the door to direct funding of Tribal governments under the war on poverty," said Michael Anderson, who served as principal deputy assistant secretary for Indian Affairs under Clinton. "He established the National Council on Indian Policy, which was chaired by the vice president and provided a forum on Indian sovereignty and economic development."

Former executive director of the National Congress of American Indians Suzan Harjo, of the Morning Star Institute, said, "No presidential policy can be complete without recognition of Indian language and culture...presidential policies are important for the protection of Indian sovereignty."

Kim Teehee, of Obama's Domestic Policy Council, praised her boss.

"President Obama has done a great job on Indian issues and he is personally engaged in Indian issues, including the Violence Against Women Act Indian provisions," she said. "The work of the Obama Administration would be strongly supported by a Native Nations Policy and executive order. It would put a cap on the work they are already doing."

— *Indian Gaming Weekly*



Navajo Marine killed in Afghanistan

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SHIR GHAYAZ, Afghanistan — Motor Transportation Chief Staff Sgt. Jonathan Davis, 34, was killed in combat Feb. 22, while serving as serving as a liaison to light infantry troops from the Republic of Georgia.

Davis, a Marine who trained at Camp Pendleton, Calif., "will always be remembered for his warrior spirit, can-do attitude and fighter-leader mentality," Marine Maj. Rudy Salcido said at the service in Afghanistan. Davis is the 14th Navajo citizen to die while serving in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Survived by a wife and son, Davis was buried March 2 in his hometown of Kayenta, Ariz. Davis "provided us with the greatest gift: his leadership. The fight goes on, just like Staff Sgt. Davis would have wanted it," Salcido said.

— *Los Angeles Times*

Florida gambling debate is back again

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. — It's not a question of if destination gambling resorts will arrive in Florida; it's a matter of when. That's the opinion of a group of Wall Street analysts, who predicted at least two or three resorts in South Florida — and double that statewide — will open for business by 2020.

That's the word from the Florida Gaming Congress, sponsored by Spectrum Gaming Group, which drew 150 industry executives, analysts, attorneys, lobbyists and government leaders to discuss the

state of gambling in Florida. It was clear that even though the expansion of casino gambling will not be on the agenda in the current state legislative session, discussion about the industry's future is heating up once again.

The analysts point to Genting Group, Las Vegas Sands and Wynn Resorts as the most likely players in South Florida.

"The Miami market is extremely attractive," said Greg Roselli, executive director of Credit Fixed Income with UBS Securities. "The defeat last year wasn't surprising. They're going to have to keep picking away at it."

Agendas vary widely among the big players: the Las Vegas and Asian gambling consorts, existing pari-mutuel facilities, the Seminole and Miccosukee Tribes and business groups like the Florida Chamber of Commerce and Miami-Dade County's Beacon Council.

The leaders of the Florida House and Senate put a moratorium on any gambling legislation this year, in order to conduct a thorough study of the issue. Former Senate President Mike Haridopolos, now an executive with the company that owns Gulfstream Park in Hallandale Beach is urging all parties to build consensus.

But if legislation is not approved in 2014 before Senate President Don Gaetz, R-Niceville, and Speaker Will Weatherford, R-Wesley Chapel, are out of power, Haridopolos predicts the window of opportunity will close. He singled out Sen. Andy Gardiner, R-Orlando, as a vigorous opponent.

The existing pari-mutuels, which stretch from Magic City Casino in Miami to the Isle of Capri in Pompano Beach, are willing to expand their facilities and add resort amenities, if they get a lower tax rate to justify the capital expense.

Carol Dover, chief executive of the Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association, and Mark Wilson, president and chief executive of the Florida Chamber of Commerce, both said they remain opposed to any expansion of gambling, including destination resorts.

"Residents and tourists can gamble everywhere they want right now," Wilson said. "What we need to do is figure out what do we already have, then down the road, consider expansion."

John Fontana, president of Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Tampa, takes a realistic approach: "The well of gaming revenue in the state is not bottomless," Fontana told *The Miami Herald*.

In 2011, Florida ranked fourth among the top states (California, Oklahoma, Washington, Florida and Connecticut) in terms of the percentage growth of Indian gaming revenue, increasing at a rate of 4.6 percent to reach \$2.16 billion. The state also saw the largest growth nationally in non-gaming revenue at Indian gaming facilities. That number grew at a rate of 23.4 percent to \$124.4 million. Florida also saw the largest absolute increase in table games during 2011 with the addition of 36 tables to reach 457 table games in Indian gaming facilities.

Nationwide, Indian gaming revenues in 2011 topped \$27 billion.

The Seminole Tribe's seven casinos, located in Big Cypress, Brighton, Coconut Creek, Hollywood, Immokalee and the two Seminole Hard Rocks in Hollywood and Tampa, have almost 13,000 slot machines. More than 1,900 gaming machines are located at the Miccosukee Tribe casino in Miami. Of the seven Seminole casinos in the state, the Seminole Casino Immokalee is the fourth-largest, in terms of slot machines and employees. Of the nearly 10,000 Seminole gaming employees in Florida, about 7.5 percent, or 750 employees, are in Immokalee.

— *Tampa Bay Times, Naples Daily News*

Alaskans object to VAWA provisions

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Declaring "All women deserve the right to live free from fear," President Barack Obama signed the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) last month, against the wishes of the Alaskan Native population.

Passed in the U.S. House of Representatives by a vote of 286 to 138, with a minority of Republicans joining Democrats to support it, the bill cleared the Senate by an overwhelming majority.

"This victory shows that when the American people make their voices heard, Washington listens," Obama said.

The bill's cross-the-board infrastructure, however, does not take into consideration special situations such as Alaska, where vast distances and more than 140 villages without state law enforcement, 90 without Tribal police, contribute to a situation where at least 86 percent of the victimizers of American Indian and Alaska Native women are non-Native men, according to the U.S. Department of Justice.

"It's nearly impossible to get a restraining order where there isn't a judge and you have to take a long ride on a snow machine, boat or airplane to get to court," said the Alaska Inter-Tribal Council. "Escaping a scene of violence can cost you hundreds of dollars, with nowhere to go for support. These facts make the

particulars of the passage of the Violence Against Women Re-authorization Act even more disturbing."

In addition to the Inter-Tribal Council, the Association of Village Council presidents and the Aleut community of St. Paul Island, the Tanana Chiefs Conference, Alaska Federation of Natives and the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) all spoke out against "anti-Alaska Tribal Provisions in the Violence Against Women Act," NARF wrote in a letter to Sen. Barbara Murkowski, D-Alaska. "Although Alaska Natives comprise only 15.2 percent of the population of the state of Alaska, they comprise 47 percent of the victims of domestic violence and 61 percent of the victims of sexual assault," NARF wrote.

"That's because Tribal courts do not have jurisdiction to prosecute non-Indian defendants," said *Washington Post* columnist Jonathan Capeheart. "In addition, federal and state law enforcement have limited resources and might be hours away from a reservation. And then there's this: According to a General Accounting Office report, federal prosecutors declined to take action on 52 percent of violent crimes committed on Tribal lands. Of those declined cases, 67 percent were sexual abuse and related cases."

"Add the statistics above to those in the chilling congressional findings in the Tribal Law & Order Act of 2010 and you'll see why the Tribal provision is needed in VAWA: 34 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native women will be raped in their lifetimes; 39 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native women will be subject to domestic violence."

— *Indian Law Resource Center, Huffington Post, Washingtonpost.com*

GOP freshman seeks Lumbee federal recognition

PEMBROKE, N.C. — Every year since 2003, a Lumbee federal recognition bill has been the first piece of legislation introduced by U.S. Rep. Mike McIntyre within days of a new session of Congress opening. This year, McIntyre, D-N.C., has handed his annual Lumbee bill duties to GOP freshman Richard Hudson, of Concord, N.C., whose 8th Congressional District is home to most of the Tribe's 55,000 members.

"Congressman McIntyre suggested that I take the lead since the Republicans are the majority in the House," Hudson said. "We are both committed to seeing this through."

The Lumbees have sought federal recognition since 1888. Congress recognized the Tribe in 1956 but denied its members financial benefits afforded to other federally recognized Tribes.

In 1989, the Lumbees petitioned the Bureau of Indian Affairs for full federal recognition. But the solicitor general said that because of language in the Lumbee Act of 1956, the Tribe could only be recognized through an act of Congress — which hasn't happened in more than 20 years, according to Arlinda Locklear, a Tribal member and lawyer who has spearheaded the Tribe's efforts in Washington, D.C. for years.

"Right now, the prospects are daunting," Locklear said. "Congress hasn't recognized a Tribe in over 20 years. And it's gotten more difficult to pass legislation."

Locklear said she thinks it is unlikely that any bill recognizing the Lumbees will pass through the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs or the Natural Resource Committee in the House.

"Indian legislation is particularly difficult because it is not deemed important enough for discussion on the Senate floor," Locklear said.

Another sticking point in the Lumbees' quest is division within the American Indian delegation. Congress members from western North Carolina, where the Eastern Band of the Cherokee is based, have opposed Lumbee recognition. Federally recognized Tribes fear that if another Tribe is added to the mix, their share of federal money will decrease.

A report by the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, looking at a 2009 version of the Lumbee recognition bill, said the Tribe would receive \$786 million over four years for education, health care and economic development.

Hudson said he plans to introduce legislation similar to McIntyre's past bills. But he does not give weight to the argument that other Tribes will receive less. Gaming is not included in his version of the bill, Hudson said.

Hudson said he hopes his good standing with key Republican leaders and Democrats in the House will help the legislation pass.

"The Lumbee Tribe has been treated different than any other Tribe. It's unprecedented," he said.

— *Fayetteville Observer*

Gaming director embezzles from La Posta Band

SAN DIEGO, Calif. — The former executive director of the Gaming Commission for the La Posta Band

of Mission Indians has admitted he embezzled \$57,000 from the Tribe, located on the edge of the desert east of San Diego.

Troy Teague, 38, of El Cajon, Calif., pleaded guilty March 8 to stealing the money during his time as gaming director, from 2006 to 2011, the U.S. Attorney's Office said, spending the money on gun club dues, an auto sound system, vacations, restaurants and night clubs.

He faces up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

— *CourthouseNews.com*

Wal-Mart to sell Native Threads

ESCONDIDO, Calif. — They said it couldn't be done.

But in a shocker to the retail sales world, one of Indian Country's only Native-owned and operated clothing companies has partnered with Wal-Mart to sell its Native-themed clothing line and now Native Threads merchandise can be purchased at nearly 130 Wal-Mart locations.

"I'll be honest, it is still very surreal," said Chris Rubio, a Chiricahua Apache and wholesale manager for Native Threads. "Every time I see our stuff in Wal-Mart I get that good feeling inside and can't believe it's really happened."

Rubio and Native Threads CEO Randy Bardwell, of the Pechanga Band of Luiseno, began talking about Wal-Mart in February 2011. They began talking with Pepe Estrada, Wal-Mart's director of corporate affairs and liaison to the Native American and Alaska Native community and began pushing the idea. Believing the process might take two or three months, the pair were shocked when they were told it would probably take three to four years.

"Native Threads is different because we aren't a Tribally operated business and we don't have financial backing from Tribes," Bardwell said. "We are a true entrepreneurship and went out to find money from the private sector as most entrepreneurs would."

Native Threads' first shipment went out the week before Thanksgiving, Bardwell said. Many of the additional stores that carry Native Threads are located in the Northwest, but Oklahoma has the most stores of any state. Wal-Mart is considering selling Native Threads merchandise on Walmart.com and Walmart.ca (Wal-Mart's Canadian online store). It is also designing a spring line for Wal-Mart, and operates an online store at www.NativeThreads.com.

Bardwell sees the partnership as a template for other Native businesses.

"For Native entrepreneurs to create a product and have it sold at Wal-Mart is a pretty big in Indian Country," he said.

— *Indian Country Today Media Network*

U.S. asks Sonny Skyhawk to be cultural ambassador

ROSEBUD, S.D. — Actor and activist Sonny Skyhawk, a Rosebud Sioux, has been asked by the U.S. State Department to serve as a cultural ambassador representing Indian Country around the world. His first visits will likely be to South America, the Caribbean, Canada and Mexico.

Skyhawk, the founder of American Indians in Film and Television and a veteran of 58 films and television shows, will be principally an educator, sharing all aspects of Native American culture with people in other nations, indigenous peoples or business communities of the countries he visits. He also aims to promote tourism and economic development by inviting people to come to visit reservations and traditional Indian lands in the United States.

Skyhawk has spent his career trying to improve the depiction of American Indians in media, as well as the treatment of Native actors in Hollywood.

"It is an honor to serve and represent my people, and I am humbled by the privilege," he said. "It is my hope to continue fostering lasting bonds of understanding amongst all indigenous cultures in the Americas and to nurture our ancient Lakota belief, which is 'mitakuya oyasin' — 'we are all related.'"

— *Indian Country Today Media Network*

Robinson Rancheria Tribal chair theft trial delayed

LAKEPORT, Calif. — The theft trial of the Robinson Rancheria Pomo Indians Tribal chair has been rescheduled to start May 15 because of medical issues faced by the defendant, Tracey I. Avila, 51, who pleaded not guilty to one felony count of grand theft.

Authorities allege she stole tens of thousands of dollars from the Elem Indian Colony of Pomo Indians and the federal government while working as that Tribe's fiscal officer between 2006 and 2008.

Attorney R. Justin Petersen, who represents Avila, told the court his client was recently diagnosed with kidney failure, inhibiting the defense's ability to be ready for trial.

— *Lake County Record-Bee*

Ecuadorian Tribe gets reprieve from oil intrusion

AMAZON RAIN FOREST, Ecuador — The Kichwa Tribe of Sani Isla, an indigenous community in the Ecuadorian Amazon, won a reprieve after building up an arsenal of spears, blowpipes, machetes and guns to fend off an expected intrusion by the army and a state-run oil company trying to secure exploration rights in their 270 square miles of pristine rainforest.

Community President Leonardo Tapuy said his Tribe was ready to fight to the death to protect its territory, more than a quarter of which is in Yasuni National Park, known as one of the most biodiverse places on Earth.

Before the expected confrontation with oil giant Petroamazonas, shaman Patricio Jipa said people were making blowpipes and spears, trying to borrow guns and preparing to use sticks, stones and any other weapons they could lay their hands on.

"Our intention was not to hurt or kill anyone but to stop them from entering our land," he said.

It is unclear why Petroamazonas backed off. Locals speculated that it was because of a reaffirmation of opposition to the oil company at a marathon community meeting.

— *The Guardian*

India's high court reverses ban on 'human safaris'

ANDAMAN ISLANDS, India — The Supreme Court in Andaman Islands has reversed its previous interim order to ban "human safaris" in the Andaman Islands, dealing a major blow to the campaign against the controversial tours.

The exploitative human safaris have been the target of a three-year campaign by Survival International and local organization Search, and caused worldwide outrage after they were exposed in the *British Observer* newspaper more than a year ago. Survival International, founded in 1969, helps Tribal peoples defend their lives, protect their lands and determine their own futures.

Before the interim order, hundreds of tourists traveled along the illegal Andaman Trunk Road every day in the hope of seeing the isolated Jarawa Tribe. Tourists would throw biscuits or force the half-naked Jarawa women to dance for food.

When Enmai, a young Jarawa man, was asked how he felt when outsiders took pictures of him, he said, "I don't feel good. I don't like it when they take photos from their vehicles."

The government's official Jarawa policy says, "No attempts to bring them (the Jarawa) to the mainstream society against their conscious will...be made." But Indian politicians have repeatedly called for their mainstreaming.

Numbering only about 400 in population, the Jarawa were largely isolated from the outside world until about 15 years ago.

The Andaman Islands are an Indian Ocean archipelago in the Bay of Bengal, between the Indian peninsula to the west and Burma to the north and east. Most of the islands are part of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Union Territory of India.

— *Survival International*

Odawa Tribe considers gay marriage

HARBOR SPRINGS, Mich. — It's now up to the Chairman. And Dexter McNamara said he needs time to study the situation.

The Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians inched closer to becoming the third Tribe in the nation to legally recognize gay marriage when a 5-4 Tribal council vote amended a statute to recognize same-sex couples. The Tribal Chairman can either sign the statute into law or veto the proposed changes. The Tribal council would need a seven-vote majority to override a veto.

The Odawa Tribe, located in the northern portion of the Lower Peninsula of Michigan, with headquarters centered in Petoskey, had previously considered the statute in 2012, only to have it narrowly voted down by one vote last July.

The Coquille Tribe of Oregon began recognizing same sex unions in 2009 and the Suquamish Tribe of Washington adopted a similar stance in 2011.

Non-native Michigan voters banned same-sex marriage in 2004.

— *Petoskeynews.com*

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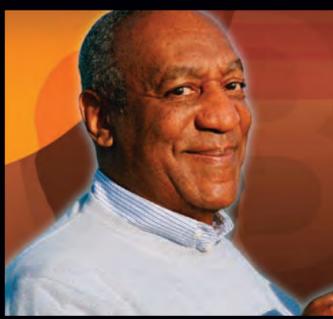
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Education

B

Student Spotlight: Jessica Motlow

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

TALLAHASSEE — Taking responsibility for her own life has been the biggest lesson so far for Florida State University freshman Jessica Motlow. Like most freshmen, she is away from home for the first time and trying to manage her schedule.

"Teachers don't care if you come to class, but it's still your job to get everything done and study," said Motlow, 19, of Tampa. "The class length is only a semester, so study time is very condensed."

An exercise science major, Motlow plans to become a physical therapist. She considered becoming a doctor but couldn't see herself going through the long process required; she finds exercise science and physical therapy more interesting and appealing.

"I've worked out my whole life and have always done some type of sport," said Motlow, who was on the rowing team in high school — she attended the prestigious Academy of the Holy Names — and did gymnastics and played soccer before that.

Motlow's dream job is to be a physical therapist for a professional or college-level football team. She was inspired by going to her brother Justin's football games and practices at Tampa Catholic High School.

"Seeing kids get hurt made me want to be involved and to help them," she said.

Motlow plans to attend graduate school before embarking on her career. Family has always played an important role in her life,

but she sees the benefits of living away from home to learn independence. She would like to go out of state for post-graduate studies, possibly to California, to also have the experience of living elsewhere.

Until then, she will do what it takes to graduate from FSU, including learning every-day skills. Motlow takes advantage of all the university has to offer pertaining to time management, including meeting with her academic counselor to figure out the best schedule to suit her needs and her major. Next semester she plans to take classes that are scheduled closer together for more convenience.

♦ See MOTLOW on page 5B

NLC hosts entrepreneur workshop

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — Owning a business sounds like a great idea to people with an entrepreneurial spirit. But learning how to open and operate a thriving business takes more than just enthusiasm: It takes guidance, knowledge and a thorough business plan.

From March 5-6, the Native Learning Center (NLC) held a seminar, Indianpreneurship — Growing a Business in Indian Country, offering the tools necessary to run a business.

"We knew there was a need in the community," said Jared Forman, NLC curriculum development specialist. "Tribal members were seeking guidance, so the NLC thought we could step in and fill the need to help people get started in business. We also offer follow-up and support."

The two-day program was a partnership between the NLC, the Small Business Administration, RedWind Consulting Resources and ONABEN, the creator of the Indianpreneurship program. Some of the Tribal members at the seminar already owned businesses, while others aspired to.

They shared memories of their first work experience.

"I started working at the smoke shop at age 10," Sunny Frank said. "I knew back then I'd have to work to get money to go to Toys R Us."

Everyone's experience was different, but all had a common theme.

"I remember wanting to work at age 3 or 4," said Robert North, originally from Oklahoma. "We lived in the country so I picked flowers and sold bouquets to neighbors. I used the money to buy candy. It was my first taste of freedom. I knew if you could depend on yourself, you'd have more freedom."

♦ See NLC on page 3B



Preschool students in the Hollywood cooking chickee watch as corn is roasted and sofkee is boiled. The students learned how to make apashkee, or roasted corn.

Beverly Bidney

Children get a lesson in traditional corn roasting

BY EILEEN SPIEGLER
Copy Editor

HOLLYWOOD — The smell of wood smoke wafted from the cooking chickee near the Hollywood Reservation baseball field on Feb. 7, in preparation for making apashkee, or roasted corn.

That morning, a lesson in the traditional roasting process was handed down to a very new generation. A class of 3- and 4-year-olds from the Seminole Preschool watched as Hollywood Cultural director Bobby Frank split wood to feed the cooking fire, then as elders parched raw corn in giant skillets on a grate over a roaring fire until it turned dark brown. Finally, it was fed and turned by hand in a shiny red grinder and sifted through woven baskets into bowls.

"This is apashkee," Hollywood Community Culture Department language instructor Letitia Foster told the rapt group of youngsters. "You'll have to learn how to make this. It's very important."

The Culture Department staff took turns stirring the corn with one hand while holding their intricately stitched patchwork skirts away from the fire with the other.

"Way back when I lived at the camp and my grandma was alive, I used to watch her do this," Culture Department staffer Bonnie Williams said as she guided the process with occasional gestures and a few quiet words of encouragement. "This is how we used to do it before there was electricity for the stove."

A giant pot of water also simmered on the cooking grate in preparation for what

comes after the corn preparation process is complete, which takes about an hour.

Nowadays, Williams said, apashkee is mainly used to make sofkee, although it is sometimes used for flour.

After sifting, the cornmeal goes into boiling water along with baking soda and is mixed well — that simple recipe creates the popular drink.

Frank provided most of the muscle, between cutting wood and turning the grinder. "Do it again," his young audience urged as he swung the ax into wood chunks with a satisfying crack.

In the old days, they used a mortar and pestle carved from a tree trunk to grind the corn, Williams said. Then people got mills. Because grinding corn the traditional way is hard work, two people pounded with the pestles, said Hollywood Culture Center manager Jo Motlow North. "Now they use the more new-fangled method," she said, waving to the waiting grinder.

"But you have to have strong arms, stronger than mine," she said.

After singing the *Traveling Song*, the preschoolers lined up to watch the parched, fragrant corn being poured into the grinder and come out in golden shavings. After Foster gave a demonstration, they all got a turn at sifting, tentatively shaking the flat-bottomed baskets of cornmeal into bowls.

"You see that stuff coming out of the bottom?" Foster asked. "[That's] what you use to make sofkee."

Tribal elder Paul "Cowbone" Buster observed the youngsters' enthusiasm and concentration on the lesson, new to them



Eileen Spiegler

Hollywood Community Culture Department staff member Letitia Foster gives preschool students a peek at the apashkee after sifting.



Beverly Bidney

Jateija Stewart sifts roasted corn in the basket, which prepares it for the next stage to make sofkee.

but done just the same for many generations before. The Culture Center language instructor and musician works diligently to share Seminole culture, both within the Tribe and outside, having ventured as far as Germany.

"These little kids probably won't remember what we said here today," Buster said, emphasizing that while formal education is necessary, the learning of traditions and customs at home is equally vital. "Parents must be the teachers."

Close Up Washington gives Tribal students intimate look at government in action

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Close Up Washington program is more than just a

sightseeing trip to the nation's capital. It is a tool that prepares high school students for leadership roles.

From Feb. 2-8, 17 Tribal students participated in the program, which

coincided with the United South and Eastern Tribes' (USET) annual impact meeting.

Students from different Tribes attended the program, where they learned leadership skills and how to become active participants in a democracy. USET held workshops for the students, including a mock Tribal council, in which they worked together with their peers from other Tribes. Students also met with the U.S. Department of the Interior's Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs Kevin K. Washburn and the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs to discuss issues facing Indian Country.

"We got to go to Capitol Hill and attend a meeting of senators who were discussing the debt ceiling and the Violence Against Women Act," said Alexis Aguilar, 18, of Immokalee. "They talked about the different versions of the bills. I feel privileged to have seen the process. Not many people get to see that."

The USET portion of the program also included a Tribal Action Initiative, an exercise in which the students had to identify an issue on their reservation and come up with a solution. The Tribes all face similar issues, including drug and alcohol abuse, high drop-out rates, lack of knowledge about Tribal government and the threat of losing their language and culture.

"A lot of our people are on drugs and alcohol right now," said Tyler Baker, 18, of Hollywood. "The problem is our youth [don't] have self-confidence in what they are doing. If we can get them to find their confidence and learn something they can be good at, they will get off the drugs."

The highlight for some students was the USET activities, while for others it was the chance to meet one-on-one with a U.S. Congress member at work.

Jonathan Frank, 17, and Brianna Blais-Billie, 16, were scheduled to meet Democratic U.S. Rep. Joe Garcia, of Florida's District 26, which covers Monroe and portions of Miami-Dade counties. When they got to his office, Garcia was on the House floor debating immigration policy. They watched on closed circuit TV and afterward ran into him in the congressional cafeteria. Garcia graciously talked to the students and took them on a tour of the underground tunnels that lead from the congressional office buildings to the Capitol building.

"He even let us ride on the congressmen's train," said Frank, of Hollywood and a senior at Hollywood Hills High School. "On the train, he told us about the history of the Capitol. When we got there, he went inside to vote."

♦ See CLOSE UP on page 2B



Photo courtesy of Bobby Frank

Jonathan Frank and Brianna Blais-Billie meet Democratic U.S. Rep. Joe Garcia, of Florida's District 26, which covers Monroe and portions of Miami-Dade counties.



Ryan Watson

Close Up Washington students and chaperones pose with Chairman James E. Billie, who had one-on-one time with the youth.

◆ CLOSE UP
From page 1B

“It was interesting to go through the tunnels where the public isn’t allowed,” Frank continued.

Blais-Billie was also impressed. “The experience was pretty crazy,” said Blais-Billie, of Hollywood and a sophomore at Pine Crest School in Fort Lauderdale. “It was scheduled wrong, but he talked to us on the way to his next meeting. It was surprising because it showed he really cared about what is going on with the Tribe and in Indian Country.”

Throughout the trip, students squeezed in some sightseeing at the monuments around D.C. and went to the National Museum of the American Indian as well.

“At the Native American museum, it was interesting to see how people outside of our culture see us,” Blais-Billie said. “It was nice to see a lot of people there and that they care about our people.”

Chairman James E. Billie also met with the students and talked to them at length

about Seminole history, responsibilities and involvement in their Tribe.

“Talking about being unconquered, 300-400 people survived and they call you Unconquered,” Chairman Billie said. “The truth of the matter is the soldiers got tired of chasing us and we survived in the swamp.”

He told the students if they don’t go to college, they should consider the military. He also talked about individual fiscal responsibility.

“You have to learn to use your money correctly,” he said. “A big ol’ fancy Humvee will get you there, but a [Ford] Focus will, too.”

Leadership was also on his mind. “There is someone in this audience who will start figuring out how to become the next leader,” Chairman Billie said. “One day something will happen and you will think you can help people better than those old goats...If you ever run for politics, you have to have the strength to face the challenge. Not everyone will like you, but you will have to get along.”

The Chairman’s visit resonated with the students.

“He gave it to us straight up and told us, to know where we are going, we need to know where we’ve been,” Aguilar said. “It’s important to know who our Chairman and President [are]; they do a lot for us and have a lot to do with our future. We had one-on-one time with our Chairman and that’s not something everyone in the Tribe can say they’ve had.”

The time spent with Chairman Billie also impacted Marsha Osceola, of Big Cypress.

“He told us even though we are teens, we are very important to the Tribe,” she said. “It made me have a self-esteem boost. Even though I’m young, I still have a voice in this community, this Tribe and this world. No matter how small you are, you can have a great impact.”

Education adviser Reggie Belizaire said the week’s message will serve the students for years to come.

“The students gained experience by seeing democracy in action and learned they can apply those things to their Tribal nations,” he said.



Ryan Watson

Close Up students meet on Capitol Hill with members of the Department of the Interior who discussed policy and procedures.



Ryan Watson

Close Up students prepare to give presentations about their Tribe to other students at USET.

Boys & Girls Club studies satellite communications

SUBMITTED BY DEREK PIERCE
Brighton Boys & Girls Club Manager

BRIGHTON — The Boys & Girls Club in Brighton recently completed a special project to learn more about satellite technology, particularly as it relates to the Seminole Channel on DIRECTV.

The project consisted of building a scale model satellite system that showed uplinks, downlinks, space satellites, launch vehicles and signal path models made of string. It was created to satisfy youth curiosity; many wondered why a satellite dish points toward the sky.

Discussion of the project covered the history of satellite communications, the need for the technology and its current uses, including TV, cellphones, radio, military and weather. The event also covered how modern digital compression works and how the Tribe uses this technology for the Seminole Channel.

“I had no idea how the dish worked,” Jaden Puente said. “Now when I see one, I realize how much is happening (that) we don’t see.”

The boys and girls showed interest in the project, and they participated in a brief description of the model and how a signal transmits to and from a satellite in space. They asked questions about signal speed, distance covered, channel capacity and how long a satellite lasts in space.

“The signal is going fast and goes thousands of miles before it gets to my house,” club member Derrick Smith said.

“The satellite goes up on a rocket and floats in space. Wow,” Kayven Emily added.



Photo courtesy of Derek Pierce

Kayven Emily, Marticella Garcia and Willow James work on a model dish.

The overview was followed by an opportunity for youth to make an exact scale model of a space satellite. The project inspired more conversation about the building process and launch process, as well as technology, space, engineering and future goals.

Some club members said they want to see a live satellite/rocket launch at Cape Canaveral’s Kennedy Space Center someday.

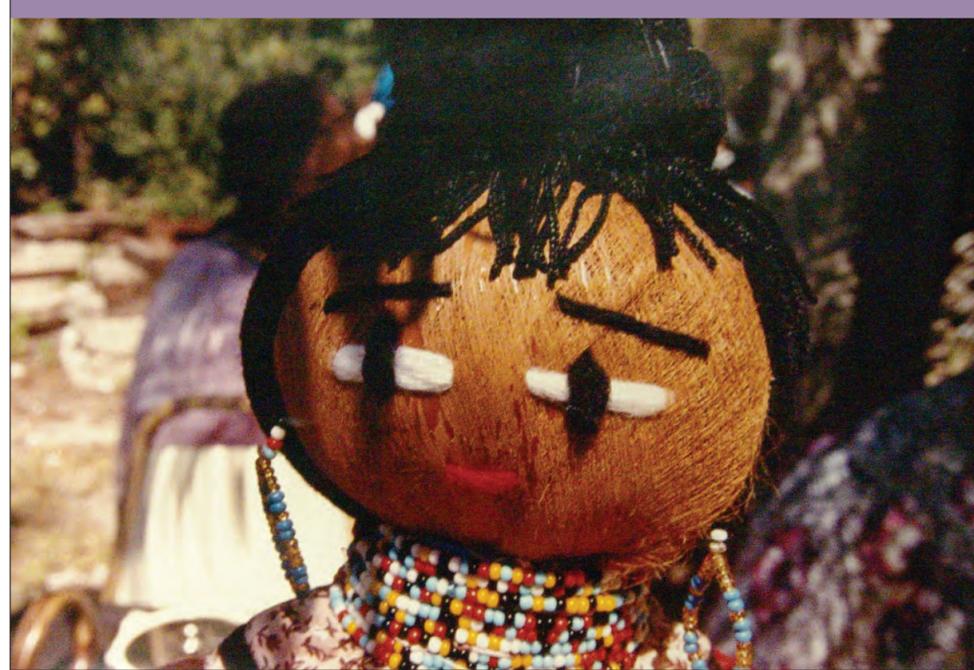
For more information, call the main Boys & Girls Club office at 954-964-5947.



Photo courtesy of Derek Pierce

Jaden Puente points at a model satellite dish in space.

Ahfachkee Values



Smile, it could brighten up someone’s day.

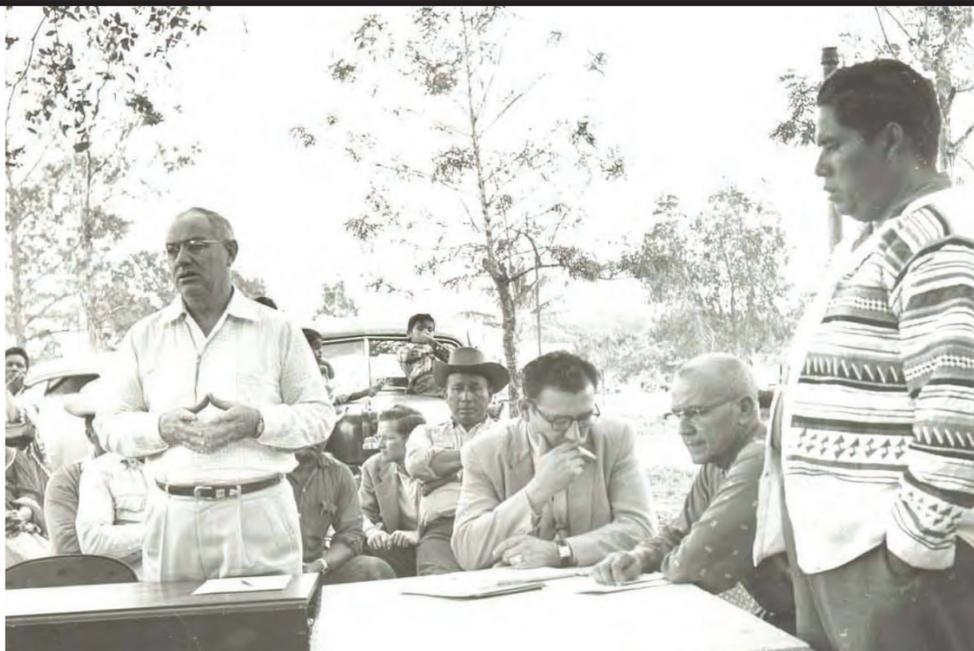
SMILE

Ashley Gonzalez, 11th Grade – I chose this picture because the little doll looks cute, and I used to play with them. They make me smile. The value I selected is Smile, I picked this because dolls make me smile and it reminds me of my childhood.

Speak up for what’s right. (:

LEADERSHIP

Marissa Sanchez, 11th Grade – I chose this picture because today’s meetings are held inside. It’s weird to see that back in the day meetings were held outside. I choose the value Leadership because in the picture they’re having a meeting. If you want something done or you want your opinion to be heard, then you have to stand up and be a leader.



Kid cops crack cookie caper

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

FORT PIERCE — The cookie caper in Fort Pierce proved not all crime scenes are violent spectacles of gore. Some can be a sweet mess.

A table in the back room of the Seminole Police Department, representing a home, was strewn with cookie crumbs, a juice box, straws and a large handprint in the middle of a white, powdery substance resembling sugar. Clues to the heinous crime were hidden in plain sight, waiting for the Police Explorers to reveal their secrets.

The cookie bandit had entered someone else's residence and consumed the tasty treats. The bandit left a mess, also known as evidence, for the young sleuths to find. Prompted by their fearless leader SPD Officer Tara Colleen Hardin, the explorers

learned how to piece together the many pieces of the sweet puzzle.

"A crime scene can be anything, even someone taking food," Hardin said. "To the victim, this is the biggest thing that happened to him today, so we treat him with respect."

The young detectives examined everything on the table, jotted down notes like veteran cops, looked up, looked down and all around, searching for telltale signs to solve the case. The "victim," SPD Sgt. Joey Chapman, answered questions on the scene. The fledgling cops noted the date and time, asked Chapman if anyone else lived in the house and how long he was out.

Explorer Krysta Burton, 11, of Brighton, found an empty cookie box in the garbage; Jimmy Fanning, 7, of Fort Pierce, noticed extra straws on the table. They dusted for fingerprints and looked

for footprints. Then Handsome Fanning, 9, of Fort Pierce, spotted a home security camera. After asking permission from the "victim" to view the footage, they watched the crime occur.

Once "suspect" Jaron Johns, 15, of Brighton, was brought into the police station, the detectives-in-training interrogated him at length. The crime was one of passion; the suspect smelled the cookies and wanted them. No one was home, the door was open, so he went in and ate the cookies.

"The crime was going into the house without permission," Hardin said. "He will be arrested and go to jail for it."

The Police Explorers learned to solve the crime by asking questions, taking notes and examining evidence. Hardin was impressed and praised the kids for their astute observation skills, finding the clues and solving the crime.



Eileen Soler

Seminole Police Department Officer Jeffery 'Scott' Akin, in charge of the Explorers Program for Big Cypress, and Explorer members Chanon Frye, Trinity Williams, Jalee Wilcox and Edie Robbins participate in a Crime Scene Investigation lesson Feb. 27.

Junior sleuths play CSI Big Cypress

BY EILEEN SOLER
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Picture the scene: A man is found dead in the desert, clutching a straw; he has no external wounds and there are no signs of any other human presence — no tire tracks or footprints.

How did the man get there?

Feb. 27 was Crime Scene Investigation night for the Police Explorers on the Big Cypress Reservation, and the group of seven children, ages 7 to 13, was allowed only 20 questions and 30 minutes to construct a theory.

Call it CSI Big Cypress. "Remember, you have to look for the details. The answers are in the details," said Fred Mullins, a counselor for the Family Services Department in Immokalee who helps out when called in by the Police Explorers Program.

But first, Seminole Police Department Officer Jeffery "Scott" Akin, in charge of the Explorers Program for Big Cypress, led the children on a quick-thinking, detail-seeking and child-friendly game ripped from the reality television crime program *The First 48*.

Photographs were projected on a screen in the auditorium of the Boys & Girls Club. Two photos, side by side, seemed exactly alike but contained subtle differences. Children had only 45 seconds to call out the differences and beat the clock.

Explorers Elisah Billie, 13, and Edie Robbins, 9, nearly jumped from their chairs while pointing and shouting changes at the screen. Other participants included Jalee Wilcox, 7; Trinity Williams, 7; Chanon Frye, 7; Carlee Billie, 11; and Illiana S. Robbins, 7.

In the beginning, the kids lost to the clock.

"If you were in FBI school, you'd have flunked out of class," Mullins said.

In real life, as seen on *The First 48*,

clue-gathering is a race against time, Akin said. Typically, if a case is not solved within two days' time, the chances of solving decrease by 50 percent.

At a previous Police Explorers meeting, the children learned how to lift fingerprints from a crime scene.

"Just like fingerprints, you have to get the facts as soon as possible," Akin said.

But by the third photo comparison, the junior sleuths had become fast enough to be considered "Rookies." By the fifth comparison, they were promoted to "Officers."

"Next time I get a (911) call, I'm going to call you all in," Akin said.

Akin reviewed other crime investigation pointers that were discussed during previous meetings: Establish a chain of command. Keep a crime scene log of everyone at the location and all details within the yellow police tape. Don't let anyone else inside.

Figuring out how the dead man came to rest in the desert provided intense CSI intrigue — and a common mistake among imaginative wannabe cops. Most of the children concocted theories before asking enough questions.

Elisah's theories included a camel, a biplane, a desert mirage and death by dehydration.

"It could happen," he said.

Yes, but not likely, according to the clues.

"It's fun to speculate, but you have to justify the theory," Mullins said. "The straw is a small thing, but it can be what breaks the case."

Further questions led the children to surmise that the straw was used somehow in connection to a hot air balloon, but time was up for guesses. The dead man was the fourth passenger in a hot air balloon that was losing altitude due to weight. Someone had to go and, apparently, the dead man pulled the deciding straw.



Beverly Bidney

'Suspect' Jaron Johns eats all the cookies.



Beverly Bidney

Handsome Fanning dusts the juice box for fingerprints.



Beverly Bidney

Handsome Fanning and Krysta Burton watch the video of the crime and take notes.



Beverly Bidney

SPD Officer Colleen Hardin shows Jimmy and Handsome Fanning how to dust for fingerprints to catch the culprit.

◆ NLC From page 1B

Every person in the room learned independence and freedom from working at a young age. Veronica Hix led the seminar and linked that early experience to critical aspects of owning a business today. The first thing any entrepreneur must do, she said, is write a business plan.

"A business plan is the story of your business," said Hix, executive director of ONABEN. "The plan is the foundation to build your business on. If you deviate from it, you can go back to the plan and work on it. The business plan can change as the market changes and your business grows."

The most common mistake made by entrepreneurs is not selecting the right business at the start, Hix said. She recommended that everyone test their idea and understand their target market.

"Sixty percent of new businesses fail in the first year," Hix said. "Talk to your competition. Sam Walton spent more time in his competitor's stores than in his office.

Employees at those stores knew him better than they knew their own bosses. He was the founder of Wal-Mart."

A strong business plan needs certain elements, Hix said: an executive summary, a mission statement and company description, description of products and services, marketing, operations and management, and financial statements. Hix and co-presenter Kyle Smith, of RedWind Consulting Resources, gave the students plenty of business tips:

- Know the market value of your product.
- Figure out how to make your business better than a competitor's, and sustain that.
- Create a difference that can be maintained.
- Overcome your inexperience with advice. Find mentors online or in the community.
- Specialty businesses do better than others.
- Don't sell yourself short.
- Understand your finances.
- Define success. Some business owners want to stay small, others want to expand.

Determine how large you want to get. Frank came to the NLC to learn how to write a business plan and how to research the demographics of a specific area.

"I want to start a company and get business from outside the reservation," Frank said. "I don't want to rely only on Tribal contracts; I want to build a larger market."

J.D. Bowers is in the process of launching a new cigar product. He has attended trades shows, special events and studied other cigars, soil, tobacco types and growers. What he needed from the seminar was a way to expand his market reach.

"We came up with a good idea and a niche," Bowers said. "Other people are copying us and they have more reach than we do. We need help getting into the market."

The group talked about networking, market research, trade shows and marketing opportunities. They also discussed maintaining enthusiasm.

"You need to have passion for what you are doing and believe in it," said North, director of the Boys & Girls Club and

owner of a Native American art marketing consulting business. "You expect to run into pitfalls — having passion helps you through it. Native artists are often taken advantage of. They have a hard time seeing themselves as entrepreneurs and business owners."

Jo North studied commercial and graphic art years ago and is now a painter.

"I want to get into more art shows," North said. "This course is a refresher and is making me think a little more."

Students learned the foundations of growing a business, which include having a grasp on time management, bookkeeping, overcoming the fear of failure and knowing the life cycle of a business. Businesses typically go through a pre-venture or planning stage, existence or infancy, early growth, expansion or sustained growth, maturity and decline.

"Every successful business goes through these stages," Hix said. "Think about choices and options in your business plan. Manage to grow by planning for it. When you create a business, plan an exit strategy. It isn't always bad to close or sell a business."

In order to explore finances in depth, the class broke into groups and formed businesses. Each one had to determine fixed and variable costs, production and marketing expenses and, ultimately, a price for their goods and/or services.

"Sometimes people have an aversion to numbers, but they help you keep score," Smith said. "The numbers show you the financial health of the business."

The class learned the three most important business management tools, from a financial standpoint, are the break-even analysis, the cash flow statement, and income statements and balance sheets.

By the end of the course, students had a head full of knowledge and a textbook to use as a reference tool going forward.

Ida Osceola isn't a business owner yet but knows she wants to be one.

"I was just going to start any business, but now I have more focus and understanding," she said. "I want to show my kids they can be more than what they see around them. I want to be a role model to show them they can achieve more if they try."

Pemayetv Emahakv recognizes Students of the Month



Photo courtesy of Michele Thomas

January Students of the Month: Elementary: Kamyah Fudge, Kobe Micco, Bryson Smith, Carriss Johns, Alton Crowell, Lexi Thomas, Karlyne Urbina, Dakota Fish, Deagen Osceola, Kalya Hammil, Angelie Melton, Landon Goodwin, Laila Bennett, Ramone Baker, Jagger Gaucin, Edward Gaucin, Jason Sampson, Aubrey Pearce and Aleah Turtle. Middle School Students of the Month: Alicia Fudge, Aiyana Tommie, Diamond Shore and Lanie Sedatol.



Photo courtesy of Michele Thomas

February Middle School Students of the Month: Gage Riddle, Chandler Pearce, Raylon Eagle and Spawn Loudermilk.



Photo courtesy of Michele Thomas

February Elementary School Students of the Month: Jordan Johnson, Kaylee Joe Gore, Juanita Billie, Talena Holata, Keiyana Osceola, Keenan Jones, Melina Steve, Mariana Mora-Lara, Tadan Santiago, Kaiden Sampson, Kobe Jimmie, Tafv Harris, Daven Buck, Heith Lawrence, Destiny Elliott, Araya Youngblood, Robert Harris, Waylynn Bennett and Caitlyn Olivarez.

Announcements

Thank you, Hollywood Culture Department



Photo courtesy of Norman Bowers

I would like to thank the Hollywood Culture Department for donating this patchwork jacket to the Brighton Field Day event. Megan Boswell, of Okeechobee, won the jacket in a XTREME Bulls Event raffle.

– Submitted by Norman Bowers

Happy Birthday, April Billie



I want to say happy 25th birthday to April Billie. I hope you have a blessed day on your birthday. Keep your head up. You'll be home soon. Love you, Mama.

Election announcement for immediate publication

Dear Tribal Citizens,
The Seminole Tribe of Florida and the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc., is announcing their Regular Election for the position of Tribal Council Representative and Board of Directors Representative for the Big Cypress, Brighton and Hollywood Reservations.

By our Tribal Constitution and Corporate Charter we are publicly announcing our Seminole Tribe of Florida and Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc. Regular Election to be held on Monday, May 13, 2013.

Attention Seminole Tribal members

To submit an announcement, please send your message along with your name, phone number, email, address, the names of your parents, children and grandparents and your clan (optional). Please include your mailing address if you'd like your photos returned.

Sign and date your submission and send it via:

- Email: BrettDaly@semtribe.com
- Fax: 954-965-2937
- Mail: 3560 N. State Road 7, Hollywood, FL 33021
- Drop-off: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

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President
TONY SANCHEZ, JR.
Secretary
PRISCILLA D. SAYEN
Treasurer
MICHAEL D. TIGER

MEMORANDUM

TO: Seminole Tribe of Florida Tribal Members
FROM: D. Preston Steele, Director of Education
DATE: Monday, March 04, 2013
CC: James E. Billie, Chairman
Tony Sanchez, Jr., Vice Chairman
Marcellus Osceola, Jr., Hollywood Council Representative
Manuel Tiger, Big Cypress Council Representative
Andrew Bowers, Jr., Brighton Council Representative
O'Hara Tommie, Executive Administrative Officer
RE: Education Department Announcement

The Education Department is dedicated to the advancement of education for Seminole Tribal Members through administering quality services and program. In an effort to strengthen these services, we are currently in review of our current policies and procedures. This review will ensure that the programs offered provide the very best in education services to Tribal Members.

As these changes are approved, Education Staff will be available for any questions, as well as out in all of the communities to discuss these changes. We welcome input from Tribal Members and look forward to serving your educational needs. As the Director of Education, I am committed to the advancement of all Tribal Members through our educational services. Education headquarters is located in Hollywood and has offices located on each Reservation, and is staffed with education personnel to coordinate and assist with the education services we provide.

Our programs include:

- K-12 Education Program, Robert Caruso – Program Manager
- Higher Education Program, Paola Moneymaker – Program Manager
- Tribal Career Development Program, Marie Dufour – Program Manager
- Library Services Program, Elita Kalma – Program Manager
- Tutor Program, TBD – Program Manager

In the coming months, the Program Managers and I will attend all Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings, as well as the Education Advisory Board (EAB) meetings. We believe it is very important to hear from the community in order to be successful with this effort. Please plan to attend your respective community meetings to provide any suggestions, comments or concerns. If for any reason you are not able to attend your respective community meetings, please do not hesitate to contact me via phone or email, or to request an individual meeting with me.

Thank you in advance for your patience and understanding as we seek to improve upon our service delivery.

Thank you,
D. Preston Steele, Ed.D.
Director of Education



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Charter School administrative staff epitomizes teamwork

BY EMMA JOHNS
Freelance Writer

BRIGHTON — Dropping children off at school, and getting them from kindergarten to graduation, is a process with which most parents are innately familiar. Parents get to know different teachers throughout their child's school years. But how many think about what or who makes the daily school routine run smoothly outside the classroom?

While teachers deliver direct instruction to students, other staff members provide a seamless learning environment. Often they go unnoticed, but their work is vital to daily operations.

At Brighton's Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School (PECS), several noninstructional administrative staffers set the bar for managing a successful school.

Administrative assistant Michele Thomas
Administrative assistant Michele Thomas, who has been with PECS since the school's opening in 2002, has a long roster of duties: planning field trips, planning staff conferences, assisting with daily operations, assisting with and being a member of the Parent Teacher Student Organization, serving on the Board of Trustees and assisting the principal with planning special projects.

Anyone who has ever been in the PECS office is aware she is often stepping up to fill the "other duties as assigned." Thomas brings with her the added value of being a community member and a Tribal member, which allows her to quickly assist with many situations that arise daily.

"The biggest impact to the school is my knowledge of (the Tribe) and Tribal culture," Thomas said. "I also feel the students feel a connection with me because I am a part of many of their lives here at school and in the community."

Throughout her career, Thomas has been employed with the Seminole Tribe in various positions. She said working at PECS is very different from direct work with the Tribal community and government because she is able to interact with youth and see the world through their eyes.

"My favorite part of the day is when I am invited into a classroom to watch students perform, recite, read, et cetera," she said. "They are so proud of the task they have mastered and I am proud to cheer them on."

Thomas believes the school has had a significant impact in the Brighton community.

"I feel our children are more confident, self-assured and willing to step outside of their comfort zones," she said. "I see the pride they have for their school and that warms my heart daily."

Guidance counselor Jeanine Gran

Every school employs school guidance counselors who spend their days advocating for students' academic, career, personal and social success. They assist students with class scheduling, special testing and college and career counseling. With budget cuts, counseling has evolved into much more.

Jeanine Gran serves as PECS Guidance Counselor for grades K-8. On a typical day, Gran assists with daily operations including opening gates, greeting parents and students, signing in tardy students, monitoring attendance, working on newsletters and the yearbook, preparing students for the FCAT, testing students, registering them, tutoring, and counseling students and parents.

"I feel like I make an impact with my abilities to reach out to the students, parents and faculty and be accessible whenever they need me," Gran said. "Keeping a positive and nonjudgmental attitude will go a long way when helping students in their everyday dilemmas."

During her years as a guidance counselor, Gran has worked with more than 780 students at one time. At PECS, she works with 257 students, which allows her to give more individualized attention.

"This is a great place to work. Many times I refer to it as home because that is the way it makes me feel," Gran said. "I love every part of my day, especially my mornings when I greet my students and receive some morning hugs."

As Gran sees the national graduation rate declining with little assistance at the state level, she feels strongly about creating an atmosphere that is conducive to helping every child succeed.

"There are some children who are academically challenged and need to look at vocations for their future. Hopefully, we will be able to offer such classes in our future," she said.

Gran said the class size and quality of teachers and paraprofessionals at PECS allow the school a tremendous advantage in ensuring each child reaches full potential.

Receptionist Pam Rhodes

At school, the first person you see is often a predictor of the rest of the experience. At PECS, receptionist Pam Rhodes is that person, and her position has earned great respect from other staffers. Constantly in motion, Rhodes is the central hub through which most of the school's daily happenings are channeled. She does it all without hesitation.

"I can tell you Pam has the hardest job and I find it difficult to juggle everything when filling in for her," Thomas said. "She does not have the ability to close the door to complete a task."

Rhodes finds working at PECS as a big change from her past jobs.

"I went from managing a busy office for nine years and dealing with a multitude of customers to entering a school filled with smiling little faces that has definitely provided me with a positive change," she said.

Bookkeeper Cecelia Thomas

With PECS' growth came the realization that a few staffers could not handle every aspect of the administrative process. The school recently hired Cecelia Thomas as its bookkeeper to maintain accounts, correspond with vendors, handle mail distribution, complete staff orders and keep records of school accounts.

Thomas, a Tribal member, also has children who attend PECS.

"I learned that this school is the best thing to happen to this community on many levels," she said. "I get to come to school with my own kids and go home with them. The uniqueness of this school is that we all know each other."

School Resource Officer Darryl Allen

Both PECS staff and the Tribe realize the importance of guarding children's safety. The Seminole Police Department's School Resource Officer (SRO) Darryl Allen watches over students and staff, monitors the camera system and participates in school events. Allen strives to let students and parents see beyond the uniform and get to know the man inside.

"Kids are exposed to way too much in and outside of their homes, and the trend is that society is adapting to this new generation instead of the kids adjusting to the old ways of doing things," he said. "I deal with this by staying true to my 'old school' way of dealing with students."

Allen believes in treating students with respect and expects the same in return. And while many school budgets no longer afford an SRO position, Allen said it is of great value.

"Far too many times we live with the attitude that it's never going to happen to us," he said. "I approach each day with the attitude that it can happen to us, and I think if other schools were given the option of an SRO, they would do so in a heartbeat."

On any given day, Allen will not only be keeping the school secure but will also be scheduling sporting events and coaching. He serves as PECS athletic director and girls' softball coach, and he enjoys the extra responsibility: "Sports allow kids to express themselves through physical activity. Sports can teach so many valuable tools and skills that can last a lifetime."

Principal Brian Greseth

Principal Brian Greseth is the glue that binds the PECS staff together. He joined the staff a couple years ago with an extensive and impressive resume—more than 30 years of experience in education, including 16



Emma Johns

Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School's noninstructional administrative staffers set the bar for managing a successful school.

years serving as principal at various schools.

Greseth's vast experience prepared him for his leadership role at PECS, but he acknowledges the unique situation.

"The Charter School has been a much more caring and nurturing environment for the students," he said. "Staff, students and parents work much more closely together than at other public schools I have been associated with."

Greseth's efforts toward developing and maintaining excellent teachers and staff and building a strong school community are evident.

"I think I would be called a servant leader," he said. "I try not to ask someone to do something I would not do myself. I think the staff work with me and not for me."

◆ MOTLOW From page 1B

Although Motlow's parents never went to college, they pushed her to strive for excellence and inspired her hunger for success.

"Freedom and independence is the best thing," she said. "But it's also one of the hardest things about being away from home. Doing everything on my own and starting my life without my parents trying to control things for me is really nice, but that's also what I miss at the same time."

Greseth said he manages based on a "Y" leadership style—leadership based on the perspective that people are assets to be valued and developed.

Many years ago, Greseth got some positive feedback from former Florida State University coach Bobby Bowden, who said, "I have been fortunate enough to surround myself with people who know as much or more about football than I do."

Remembering those words, Greseth has incorporated the same philosophy as a leader.

"At Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School, I am fortunate to have an excellent staff surrounding me," he said. "I feel this is a key to the success of our school."

Motlow advises high school students to do all they can to get a firsthand look at the college experience in order to make sure they know what it takes to be responsible and self-sufficient.

"Being on your own is the biggest challenge, besides the academics," she said. "If kids have any friends in college, they should go visit them and get a feel for what it's like. It's a much different experience than spending a night with a friend back home. At school you are completely on your own and are responsible for everything you do."

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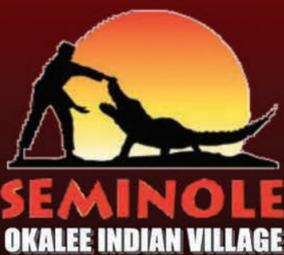
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Sports

C

Big Cypress ball field now bears name of beloved coach

BY EILEEN SOLER
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — No one knows for sure how many children Billie Johns Sr. coached on hardscrabble baseball fields at the Big Cypress Reservation — not even Johns himself.

“Twenty-five? Maybe 30,” he guessed. “All I know is I had my best times giving kids practice out there.”

On March 5, more than 50 turned out as a testament to Johns, 72, during the ribbon-cutting and dedication of the Billie Johns Sr. Ball Field.

Big Cypress Councilman’s assistant Wovoka Tommie said chatter began “a long way back” about naming the ball field that has, since the late 1960s, grown from one scrappy diamond to three fields complete with restrooms, dugouts and regular maintenance.

The name constantly repeated was that of lifelong Big Cypress resident Billie Johns Sr.

“Billie has always been a productive member of the community and a man of great integrity. When the sun was up, he was up moving and working,” Tommie said while hosting the dedication lunch and ribbon-cutting ceremony.

By day, Johns’ career included road and forestry work for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Later, he served the Tribe in the maintenance division by keeping the dirt roads smooth and the streets clean. Before long, Johns was made the water master for Water Resource Management, which demanded knowledge of the land and water needs. It was Johns who would open canal locks to determine when and where water would serve the Tribe’s needs until his retirement in 2008.

At night and on weekends, Johns was on the ball field shaping the lives of countless children.

“He taught us how to play ball, catch a ball and throw a ball,” Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger said. Tiger credited Johns with helping him become

good enough to play for Colorado State University and then for a semi-pro team.

Johns told the crowd how he and a few Tribal men started youth baseball on Big Cypress by simply gathering kids together and teaching them how to play. Johns had experience from playing for Sequoyah High School in Tahlequah, Okla. and at Cherokee High School in Cherokee, N.C.

The Big Cypress team played its first game against a Clewiston team. Johns said the Big Cypress team was nervous and downright scared.

“He calmed them down. He told them to go out there and use their skills,” Tommie said, translating Johns’ words from Mikasuki to English. “The next thing you knew, the team was winning and Clewiston didn’t want us to come back.”

Tommie said Johns never demanded respect — he earned it and deserved it.

Johns’ wife, Mary Louise Johns, said her husband was always concerned for children. The couple had two of their own and at least a dozen more that they helped raise who still call them mom and dad. They have seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Anita Johns, Billie Johns’ daughter, said she could not describe the feelings of happiness and pride that came over the family when they gathered under the newly painted Billie Johns Sr. Ball Field scoreboard during the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

“There are no words, no words,” she said.



Eileen Soler

Billie Johns Sr. speaks to family and friends gathered for the Billie Johns Sr. Ball Field dedication.



Beverly Bidney

Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School students stand very still as Kenny Dobbs dunks the ball. The slam dunk champion visited the Brighton Reservation on Feb. 15 to perform for students and to motivate them to follow their dreams.



Eileen Soler

Billie Johns Sr., center, and his wife gather for a family portrait during dedication day of the Billie Johns Sr. Ball Field on the Big Cypress Reservation. ♦ See more BILLIE JOHNS photos on page 4C

Youth face off on basketball court



Beverly Bidney

Krishawn Hendry, of the Panther team, aims for the basket as Miami Heat players try to block the shot. The Tribalwide Hot Dogg Basketball Tournament, held in Hollywood from March 8-9, was a memorial and a tribute to the late Dwight ‘Ike’ Jumper, a basketball lover.

♦ See HOT DOGG on page 5C

Native slam dunk champion visits Brighton

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Earsplitting sounds radiated from the Brighton gym on Feb. 15 as pop music played at top volume and students cheered their loudest.

They were wowed as a basketball took a circuitous route to swish through a hoop, thanks to the skills of internationally renowned slam dunker Kenny Dobbs, the man who controlled the ball.

Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School students were treated to a gravity-defying performance by the amateur slam dunk champion as part of Brighton Field Day. In addition to the impressive amount of time he spent seemingly floating in air, Dobbs gave students a motivational speech outlining how to achieve their dreams.

But first, kids and teachers alike became props for Dobbs as he set up what looked like impossible scenarios to make a shot at the basket. The show started small with just one student standing under the basket. Dobbs took off dribbling down the court at full speed, leapt over the student and easily dunked the ball in the basket to thunderous applause and cheers. With each shot, more students were recruited to stand under the basket — two, three and four at a time until he lined up six students. He told them to crouch and had a seventh student toss him the ball directly over the crouching students’ heads. No problem; Dobbs ran down the court, caught the tossed ball and

almost effortlessly dunked it through the hoop as the crowd roared in appreciation of the feat.

After the theatrics, Dobbs got serious and shared his story.

“The real reason I do what I do is to inspire you kids to make positive choices in your life,” said Dobbs, a member of the Choctaw Nation.

Known as “The Dunk Inventor,” Dobbs was drafted in 2012 into the NBA Development League team the Texas Legends, which is affiliated with the Dallas Mavericks. Dobbs has toured with the NBA and the Sprite Slam Dunk ShowDown as a celebrity dunker, performed in front of sold-out stadiums during halftime shows, celebrity games and NBA All-Star Weekends. He is popular on YouTube and has appeared on ESPN, Fox Sports and NBA TV.

Dobbs, from Phoenix, told the students he got into drugs and alcohol at age 11, dropped out of school at 15 and went downhill from there. At 17, he found himself facing jail on a robbery charge.

“I realized there is no loyalty on the street and in the end, the only people who will be there for you is your family and God,” he said. “I started to choose my friends more wisely, made positive choices and separated myself from the kids who got into trouble, even the music.”

Building on his new foundation, Dobbs set a goal to graduate high school, which he achieved two and a half years later.

“I realized I was having a negative impact on my family,” Dobbs said. “My younger siblings saw me as a leader. So I went back to high school and graduated. For the first time, my mom cried tears of joy instead of pain and sorrow.”

The feeling of accomplishment Dobbs experienced was so strong, he was emboldened to begin setting more ambitious goals. He’d never played sports in school but wanted to be a basketball player. He practiced and tried to get a scholarship to college, to no avail.

Dobbs attended an open gym at a Glendale community college in Arizona, where he was awarded a full scholarship based on his performance on the court. In 2008, he went to Los Angeles to compete in a slam dunk contest hosted by former Miami Heat basketball star Shaquille O’Neal, which launched his career competing in worldwide dunk competitions.

“Everyone there was bigger than me,” he told students. “I doubted myself, but knew I had talent.”

After Dobbs nailed a “crazy dunk,” people were impressed. He learned the lesson well.

“You should never doubt your ability,” Dobbs told students. “Don’t let things stand in your way, believe in yourself, set goals, make positive choices, choose your friends wisely and see yourself as a leader.”

♦ See more DOBBS photos on page 2C

More DOBBS photos from page 1C



Beverly Bidney

Kenny Dobbs jumps for a dunk as a student watches closely.



Beverly Bidney

Kenny Dobbs picks volunteers for his next dunk stunt.



Beverly Bidney

Kenny Dobbs talks to the crowd in the Brighton Gym.



Beverly Bidney

Kenny Dobbs is about to sink the ball, as students remain untouched.



Beverly Bidney

Kenny Dobbs takes the ball from a student and prepares to dunk it.



Beverly Bidney

PECS middle school physical education teacher Chris Goodwin and elementary teacher aide Erica Rodriguez take direction from Kenny Dobbs as they prepare to be props for his next dunk.



Beverly Bidney

Tribal member Sandy Billie Jr. holds the ball for Kenny Dobbs as he sets up for a dunk.

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Rack 'em up: Weekly billiards tourney offers big fun in Big Cypress

BY EILEEN SOLER
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Anyone with competitive spirit is invited to battle for bucks at weekly billiard tournaments on the Big Cypress Reservation.

Hosted by the Big Cypress Recreation Department at Big Cypress Billiards, the Thursday night pool tourneys are so far drawing about a dozen pool players. At the 10-table venue, there is room for more.

"It's a get-together," said Tony Bert, who started the tournament and for whom the Tony Bert Weekly Billiard Tournament is named.

"It's a subculture of people," said Nick Tiger, who runs the event for Bert and the Recreation Department.

"It's both," said Ildy Garcia, who comes armed with his own custom-made pool stick and chalk box with animal bone keychain.

Bert, Tiger, Garcia and Cody Bert make up the reservation's championship billiard team The Departed, or Rack My Balls, depending on who is asked. In two corners of the pool hall, tables are filled with trophies that attest to their ability.

Beginners to advanced players, male and female ages 18 and older, are welcome to play for a \$10 entry fee. At the end of elimination rounds, two male and two female winners get a share of the pot.

Billiard Congress of America (BCA) rules apply.

"We'll even teach people how to play. Lessons are available noon until 9 p.m. daily, except Wednesdays when we close at 6," Tiger said.

Smoking and alcohol are prohibited, but a free dinner buffet that includes spam and tomatoes with rice is served courtesy of Bert's mother, Sue Jane Bert.



Eileen Soler

Lonnie Billie eyeballs a break during the start of the Tony Bert Weekly Billiard Tournament at Big Cypress Billiards.

Free Wi-Fi, cable television, darts, air hockey, pinball, ping-pong and other games are also available.

Marcia Cypress and Celeste Kenyon were the only women who played on opening night, Feb. 28. Cypress placed first in the night's competition.

"I just like the game of pool. All the other women can stay home so I can win every week," she said.

Rob Landin took the top spot of the night for men, with Ildy Garcia in second

place.

Lonnie Billie, who also showed to shoot pool, said he is in it for the fun. Is he any good?

"No. But I won't give up," Billie said. Win or lose, the tournament promises a few laughs, good food, potential to win a few dollars and a chance to make new friends.

"Come out and hang out. Who knows? You might have the lucky stroke," Tiger said.



Eileen Soler

Celeste Kenyon aims for the win during the first night of the Tony Bert Weekly Billiard Tournament.



Eileen Soler

Alex Herrera racks billiard balls.



Photo courtesy of Stephanie Bowers-Hiatt

The Sioux Falls Seminoles, coached by Tribal member Stephanie Bowers-Hiatt, finish their 2012-13 basketball season with a second-place finish in a tournament in Yankton, S.D.

Sioux Falls Seminoles finishes successful basketball season

SUBMITTED BY STEPHANIE BOWERS-HIATT
Tribal Member

SIoux FALLS, S.D. — Defense. Rebounding. Possession. Points. This formula led the Sioux Falls Seminoles to success during their second season as they finished with a 20-13 record. The fifth-grade team, based in Sioux Falls, S.D., is coached by Tribal member Stephanie Bowers-Hiatt and her husband, Jon Hiatt. Their son, Tyler, is the starting power forward and led the team in rebounding for the second season.

"We struggled our first year as fourth-graders because we didn't have a clear focus as a team," Bowers-Hiatt said. "This year we intentionally developed our team motto."

This focus led to more consistency. "Kids obviously love to score points, but not everybody can lead the team in scoring, so we needed to develop a team culture that celebrated defense, rebounding and making good decisions on the court," Bowers-Hiatt said.

Getting the parents to buy into that was key, too.

"We communicated with the parents frequently that they needed to reinforce our motto," Bowers-Hiatt said. "They really started to buy into the system when the boys started playing together as a team."

The Sioux Falls Seminoles were sponsored again by Bowers-Hiatt's father, Tribal member Stephen Bowers. Bowers had an opportunity to address the kids in person during a trip to South Dakota last fall. He told the boys about the history of the Seminoles, as well as the importance of sticking together and having fun.

"When I was a kid, I played on a football team that was sponsored by a guy and I never forgot about that," Bowers said. "I guess this is just my way of paying it forward by sponsoring these kids."

Bowers also talked about the "Unconquered Seminoles" and taught the boys a chant they used before each game.

Bowers-Hiatt was quite the basketball player during her high school career, averaging 21 points and 12 rebounds per game during her junior and senior seasons at Bradenton Christian School in Bradenton.

"Tyler plays exactly like I did," she said. "It is almost scary how similar we are."

Their son Caleb, a third-grader, even got to play in the last tournament.

"We were short a player, so we gave him a uniform and he did great against kids two years older," Bowers-Hiatt said. "My husband was a really good defender in high school and Caleb inherited his defense genes. But hopefully both Tyler and Caleb will score like me as they grow older," she said teasing her husband.

Along with their 20-13 record, the Sioux Falls Seminoles had one first-place finish and three second-place finishes during their tournament season, including a 5-2 record against sixth-grade teams.

"We were very pleased with the progress of each player during the season, but we know that big improvement takes place by consistently doing a lot of little things during the off-season," Bowers-Hiatt said. "We are developing a homework basketball routine to challenge the boys with and reward the players who show the most dedication to getting better."

A ball for all and good memories at Virgil Billie volleyball tourney



Eileen Soler

Joel Billie serves during the fun- and family-focused 2013 Virgil Billie Volleyball Tournament. Billie created the tournament when he was 7 years old.



Eileen Soler

Teams battle at the net March 9 during the 2013 Virgil Billie Volleyball Tournament at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium. Maggie Puente, event organizer Joel Billie's mother, said her son decided at age 7 to hold annual sports events in honor of his uncle. Previous tournaments also included basketball and softball.



Eileen Soler

Megan Otero carts her daughter A'Zaria Perez, who wants to get in on the action, off the court for the umpteenth time during the 2013 Virgil Billie Volleyball Tournament.

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Recreation Department holds first Jr. Archery 3-D Shoot Out

BY EMMA JOHNS
Freelance Writer

BRIGHTON — The bow and arrow, once used for war and hunting, is still used by Seminoles today — mostly for the sport of archery, although bow hunting seems to be making a strong comeback.



Emma Johns

Echo Billie competes in the Shoot Out.

On Feb. 23, the Recreation Department hosted the first Jr. Archery 3-D Shoot Out in the woods on the Brighton Reservation to offer youth a chance to hone their archery skills through friendly competition.

Because the targets were life-size replicas of various game animals, competitors shot in "3-D." The replicas were constructed of dense foam and had scoring rings that indicate preferred shot placement for each species. The targets were placed strategically throughout the woods to emulate a realistic hunting situation, and archers stood at stakes placed at varying distances from the target. The archers shot from stakes according to their age.

Eecho Billie, 11, made his way through the course with great skill and technique.

"I like bow shooting because it helps kids that have never shot learn how to shoot," he said. "And it is important to shoot a bow because one day, if they stop making bullets, a bow would come in handy and it is also a part of our tradition."

There were three different class formats for the event: The first was bare bow, meaning participants had to use their fingers and no sight. The second was limited shooters, meaning participants had to use their fingers and could use a sight. And the last was unlimited shooters, meaning participants could use a release and a sight. No scopes, range finders or crossbows were allowed.

Aidan Tommie, 11, has only been shooting for about three months and has already decided his favorite bow is

a compound bow. Tommie was a top competitor at the shoot, placing in all three divisions.

Recreation employee and archery instructor Jason Tommie hopes the competition will trigger the interest of more youth and encourage them to get involved in the sport and other activities Recreation offers. He wants to make the Shoot Out an annual event.

"Our main goal is to get kids consistent with practicing and to hopefully form a team that can start shooting competitively," Tommie said.

Archery practices are held regularly. Contact the Recreation Department for more information.

Barebow Division Results: 6-8 years old: First place, Deagan Osceola. 9-11 years old: First place, Eecho Billie; second place, Connor Thomas; third place, Aidan Tommie. 12-14 years old: First place: Pernell Bert; second place, Jaden Puente; third place, Jathan Tommie. 15-18 years old: First place, Yopalakiyo Osceola.

Limited Division Results: 9-11 years old: First place, Aidan Tommie; second place, Eecho Billie; third place, Connor Thomas. 12-14 years old: First place, Raylon Eagle.

Unlimited Division Results: 6-8 years old: First place, Deagan Osceola. 9-11 years old: First place, Connor Thomas; second place, Aidan Tommie; third place, Drake Lawrence. 12-14 years old: First place, Raylon Eagle.

Brighton's Florida Seminole 12 & under, 16 & under Lady Seminoles going strong

SUBMITTED BY JO 'BOOGIE' JUMPER
Head Coach

BRIGHTON — The Florida Seminole 12 & under volleyball team, of Brighton, attended a trio of tournaments recently with strong results. In two Orlando tournaments, Jan. 26-27 and Feb. 23-24, the traveling players finished second place in their pool play. At a Port St. Lucie tournament March 9 at UpOnTop Volleyball Academy, the girls finished in second place and received medals for their hard work. The 12 & under traveling players include: Burgundy Pierce, Julia Smith, Alicia Fudge, Caroline Sweat, Alaina Sweat, Jacee Jumper, Krysta Burton, Ryanna Osceola, Jenna Brown and Alyssa Gonzalez. The girls are learning from each other and improving with each tournament.

At the three tournaments, the 16 & under Lady Seminoles also did well, including one first-place finish. In both tournaments in Orlando, the players

won third place in Gold Brackets. In the UpOnTop tournament, they were undefeated and won gold.

The Lady Seminoles, coached by Holly Johns, include: Courtney Gore, Tyra Baker, Cheyenne Nunez, Kalgary Johns, Kailin Brown, Odessa King, Shae Pierce Kylie Daum and Jacie Harvey.

For information on the teams, call 863-763-5020 ext. 15205.



Photo courtesy of Jo 'Boogie' Jumper

The 16 & under Lady Seminoles win gold in Port St. Lucie.

◆ More **BILLIE JOHNS** photos from page 1C



Eileen Soler

Mary Louise Johns and her husband, Billie Johns Sr., cut a ceremonial ribbon during dedication day of the Billie Johns Sr. Ball Field on the Big Cypress Reservation.



Emma Johns

Barebow Division winners pose with their trophies.



Emma Johns

Unlimited Division winners celebrate their wins.



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The Lady Seminoles kick off their 2013 softball season.

Emma Johns



The boys' baseball team look forward to an exciting season.

Emma Johns

Pemayetv Emahakv kicks off softball and baseball seasons



Emma Johns

Sunni Bearden waits for the perfect pitch during the team's game against Everglades City.

BY EMMA JOHNS
Freelance Writer

BRIGHTON — Spring is in the air, and so begins the time for softball and baseball players to dust off their gear and prepare for the new season.

Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School girls' softball and boys' baseball teams kicked off their seasons on Feb. 22 with a schoolwide pep rally to get them excited for that evening's home games against the Everglades City Gators.

At the pep rally an exciting introduction of each player was given by PECS athletic director and girls' softball coach Darryl Allen. Both teams left the rally feeling overwhelming support and encouragement from their friends, coaches, teachers and family.

In his dual role, Allen looks forward to a strong and productive season by both the boys' and girls' teams.

"I look forward to watching them

compete at a high level, week in and week out," he said. "[I enjoy] watching these student athletes grow and have success on the field and in the classroom."

The Lady Seminoles took the field as the first pitch was thrown at 5 p.m. by pitcher Diamond Shore. Diamond started the game strong, whirling strike after strike at the Lady Gators.

The Lady Seminoles took the saying "three up, three down" to heart, and within a few minutes were in the dugout gearing up to bat. They quickly racked up seven runs by the top of the second inning and held a strong lead over the Lady Gators throughout the game.

Their efforts as a team ended the evening with a 17-1 win. This year the Lady Seminoles are led by Allen and assistant coaches Kelley Smiley, Naha Jumper and Erena Billie.

The PECS boys' baseball team jumped ahead from the very first inning against the Everglades City Gators. Sean Osceola

found the strike zone with his first pitch and left the Gators struggling to get a base hit for the remainder of the evening.

On the occasion a ball was hit by an opposing Gator, the strong fielding by the PECS boys shut down any chance of it becoming a base hit. The PECS boys led the score all evening and were ahead 5-0 by the top of the fifth. A triple by Osceola at the bottom of the sixth gave PECS a 7-0 lead.

The Gators were finally able to squeak by with a run in the bottom of the sixth. The PECS boys proved to be a tough team to beat as they ended the evening with a 7-1 win against the Gators. The PECS baseball team is led this year by head coach Harry Tewksbury and assistant coaches Gene Thomas and Kevin Jackson.

Allen hopes the players leave with an understanding of hard work, commitment, dedication, structure and discipline.

"They can move mountains in their young teenage life that will carry them in to adulthood as well," he said.



Emma Johns

Sean Osceola puts his pitching skills to the test during the team's Feb. 22 game.

Hot Dogg Basketball Tournament honors Ike Jumper's love of the game

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — The Tribalwide Hot Dogg Basketball Tournament, held in Hollywood March 8-9, was a memorial and a tribute to the late Dwight "Ike" Jumper, a basketball lover.

"We all played basketball together growing up," said tournament organizer Michael Gentry. "All our friends who passed away are up there playing basketball. We just wanted all the kids to enjoy their time as young kids."

The tournament began with the 10 and under teams: Miami Heat, Panther and Hollywood. In the final game, Miami Heat defeated Panther 38-36.

The middle-school teams were Bad News Bears, Rez Boys, Big Ballers and Big Cypress. In the final game, Bad News Bears defeated Rez Boys 63-57.

High school girls' teams were ULS and Monstars. In the final, ULS beat Monstars 46 to 24.

High school boys' teams were Team Pierce, Immokalee, Brighton, Hollywood Boys and Team O. In the final game, Team Pierce defeated Team O 55-50.



Beverly Bidney

Hollywood player Teijo Smith threads the needle as he tries to dribble past the defenders on the Panther team.



Beverly Bidney

Daewon Huggins, of the Miami Heat team, dribbles down the court as the Hollywood team tries to keep pace.



Beverly Bidney

Panther player Krishawn Hendry goes down the court to his team's basket.



Beverly Bidney

Keshawn Tommie, of the Panther team, heads toward his basket with Miami Heat players in hot pursuit.



Beverly Bidney

Panther player Joseph Lee Sanders dribbles past Miami Heat defenders on his way to the basket.



Beverly Bidney

Krishawn Hendry, of the Panther team, goes up to shoot a basket.

Chippewa member: There's place for Native imagery in sports

BY PAUL LUKAS
ESPN Columnist

I recently wrote about the symposium on Native American imagery in sports that took place at the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C. Everyone quoted in the article was opposed to the use of such imagery, which led many readers to ask why I hadn't given equal time to the other side.

The answer to that is simple: I was there to cover the symposium, and every single speaker at the event – about three times as many people as I ended up quoting in my column – was opposed to the use of Native American mascots, logos and team names. (The Washington Redskins were invited to have a representative at the event, but they declined.)

But it's true that there are some Native Americans who are fine with the use of Native imagery in sports. In central Michigan, for example, the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe recently announced that it had no problem with a local high school whose teams are called the Warriors.

I was curious to learn more, so I contacted the Saginaw Chippewas and spoke with their public relations director, Frank Cloutier. Here's how our conversation went:

Uni Watch: First, for people who aren't familiar with the Saginaw Chippewas, please tell me a bit about your Tribe.

Cloutier: Our Tribe was formed with the ratification of our Constitution in 1936. We have 3,292 members, and we live in the territories called the Isabella Federal Indian Reserve in Mount Pleasant, Mich., just north of Lansing. We have the fifth- or sixth-largest Indian-owned casino in the Midwest, so we're rather successful when it comes to our economic growth and development.

But it's not just about gaming for us – it's about our culture. We have a very rich, diverse culture, which is showcased in a world-class, award-winning cultural museum on our reservation. So the situation regarding mascots and team names piques our interest.

Many of the people taking part in this debate see it as a black-and-white issue. Either they're completely opposed to all uses of Native American imagery, or they have no problem with any of it. What's your position, or your Tribe's position, on that?

It's very, very clear for us because we've worked with so many institutions in our area. Our position is that if it's not derogatory and it's being used appropriately, with an opportunity to share or cross-share our culture, then it's fine. There's nothing derogatory about "Warriors" or "Braves." There's nothing derogatory about "Indian." But terms like "Redskin" or "Half-Breed," those are derogatory terms to us.

So when the Michigan Department of Civil Rights recently filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, claiming that Native American mascots and nicknames are inherently harmful to Native children, you don't agree with that?

In the study they used, they said these Native children who go to these schools with these mascots are "marginalized." But if you look at generational trauma and the way Native peoples were treated 300 years ago, it wasn't until 1924 that we were formally recognized as human beings, and we didn't get the chance to vote until after women did. That's what makes these kids feel marginalized – the way their culture and their people were treated. I don't believe that a menacing-looking brave on the backboard of a basketball hoop is going to marginalize that child as much as that generational trauma.

That said, however, I believe that these schools using these images have an obligation to talk about the truth of Native American history. One of the largest genocides in world history happened right here on American soil, and it happened to Native Americans. So it's important to talk about the true history about the settling of the United States and to talk about those things that happened to Native Americans that are often not talked about.

If Native children are struggling, hopefully this kind of education and outreach can help identify why, instead of having us blame it on a mascot.

So when you say it's fine to use nonderogatory imagery as long as it's being used appropriately, you're saying that part of that "appropriate use" is educational content about Native Americans?

Yes. For example, in 2003 we entered into an articulation agreement with Central Michigan University (CMU) because they were the Chippewas. As part of that agreement, the Tribe and the university each has an obligation. Every year I go in and address every freshman athletic student about our culture and what it means to be a Chippewa, and about the proud, competitive nature of our people. We explain that it's not about war paint and fake feathers. It's about honoring the triumph of these resilient, competitive people.

They also have areas on campus that are dedicated to the presence of the Chippewa Nation. So it's a good cross-cultural exchange. And when they go out there and compete, they're Chippewas, they're fighting like a Chippewa, fighting to win. We've made that university our school of choice for Native Americans because our tribal community is close by, so we can help support those Native students.

What if a high school or university wasn't interested in doing these types of cultural exchanges and educational efforts? What would your feelings be about their use of Native imagery?

It would be completely different. If they're not willing to celebrate and show the culture, they shouldn't have the privilege of depicting it.

What about states that have already banned all Native imagery from their high schools, like Wisconsin and Oregon?

I think that's a missed opportunity for the type of cultural exchange and education that I just described.

How do you feel about the NCAA's regulations restricting the use of Native American imagery but allowing it when



Eileen Soler

In 1977, Bill Durham, of the Florida State University, asked then-Tribal Chairman Howard Tommie for permission to use Renegade and Osceola as the school's symbols. The program accepts no outside endorsements, makes no commercial appearances and never uses Renegade and Osceola to market the college.

permission is granted by a local Tribe, as in the case of Florida State University and the Seminole Tribe?

I think that's absolutely fine. That's basically what we do with CMU.

Many teams say that their use of Native American imagery is meant to be an honor, especially when they use team names like "Warriors," which is meant to symbolize American Indians' fighting spirit. But there are others who say this plays into stereotypes of Indians as savages who aren't good at anything except making war. How do you feel about that?

Once again, it goes back to the responsibility of the school. If they're using a menacing-looking Indian and trying to intimidate the other team because they might get scalped, that's inappropriate. But if they're using an image that evokes spirit and competition, and they've celebrated the culture, then they've done their job and they've earned the right to proudly display that logo.

Everything we've discussed so far is about schools, which can offer the type of educational programs you've mentioned.

But what about professional teams that use this imagery, like the Cleveland Indians and the Atlanta Braves. They're not in the education business. What's your feeling about them?

If they're not going to educate and they feel no obligation [to do so], then they have no right to use this imagery. They shouldn't have that privilege if they're not going to celebrate where it comes from.

As I'm sure you're aware, there's an increasing movement to have the Washington Redskins football team change its name. Any thoughts on that?

I think that would be most appropriate. **One of the most contentious issues that comes up in these discussions is whether white people's opinions – or any non-Natives' opinions – should even matter. Should non-Natives have a voice in this debate? Should we simply have a vote among Native Americans and let them decide?**

I have to chuckle when I hear that. We all live in this wonderful globe together. If there's a negative impact on any one group, that impacts all of us as a whole. I think everyone, collectively, can have a voice in

this. We have many brothers and sisters in various minority groups who know what it means to be marginalized, so of course we welcome their voices.

And that would also apply to white Americans?

Absolutely. If we're going to have this debate and bring it to a positive conclusion, we'd be doing ourselves a disservice by limiting it.

Last question: Have you had discussions with people in your Tribe, or from other Tribes, who see this as more of a black-and-white issue?

That's the wonderful thing about having our own free will and personal opinion. There are members of my Tribe who are very steadfast and who say, "Enough's enough – it's time to put a stop to this." And there are those who see, as I do, the opportunities for outreach and healthy dialogue. I celebrate that diversity of opinion because I think it makes us more well-rounded.

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