

Tagged money

A compact requires the tribe to give 38 percent of its revenue from car tag sales to public schools. [EDUCATION, 15](#)

National treasure

Mitchell is credited for returning the knowledge of Southeastern-style pottery making to the Cherokee people. [CULTURE, 17](#)



Freedmen debate

Attorneys for the Cherokee Nation and Freedmen defendants debate the issue at the OU College of Law. [NEWS, 5](#)

April 2012 · cherokeephoenix.org

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Tribe to build homes again

Cherokee Nation's housing strategy has changed to include building homes.

BY JAMI CUSTER AND
CHRISTINA GOODVOICE
Reporter and Multimedia Editor

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. – Cherokee Nation Housing Services officials plan to build nearly 300 new homes per year for tribal citizens under a New Construction Home Ownership Program, which will begin taking applications April 2.

David Southerland, executive director of Housing and Community Development, said the housing strategy changed under the Bill John Baker administration.

“The biggest strategy change from the previous administration is to actually construct homes,” Southerland said. “We’re still going to have mortgage assistance, home rehab and rental

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Tribe begins taking new housing apps April 2
New homes to range from 2 to 4 bedrooms

assistance, we’re just adding the component of building new homes.”

Southerland said during the years there has not been a lot of new home development through the Mortgage Assistance Program.

“A lot of the homes that were newer have been bought, there’s just not a lot of development going on in the price range that we’re talking about of the folks we’re serving,” he said. “It’s tough when you move into a new house and six months later you have something that screws up and you have to fix something. We’re in the business of serving low-income folks. We think it’s important to put newer stock on the ground.”

Another change is that the tribe will not be relying heavily on federal money to build the homes, which means it can make applicant requirements somewhat more lenient, he said.

[See Homes, 3](#)



Workers brick one of three model homes at the Housing Authority of the Cherokee Nation complex along Highway 62 in Tahlequah, Okla. The Cherokee Nation, under the Bill John Baker administration, will resume building homes for CN citizens.
DILLON TURMAN/CHEROKEE PHOENIX

Carter Center releases its final report



A Cherokee Nation voter casts her vote at the Hulbert, Okla., precinct during the July 23, 2011, runoff election. ARCHIVE PHOTO

The report recommends the Election Commission and Tribal Council work on drafting election-related legislation.

BY JAMI CUSTER
Reporter

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. – In February, the Carter Center released its report regarding the Cherokee Nation’s 2011 principal chief race, suggesting both the Election Commission and Tribal Council make changes to CN election law and procedures before the 2013 council elections.

The report, titled “The Carter Center Limited Observation Mission To The Cherokee Nation Special Election for Principal Chief” states that it considered three purposes while observing the election: assess the quality of election processes and procedures and provide recommendations as to how these could be improved, increase voter confidence in the electoral process by serving as independent observers to the process and demonstrate support for the tribe’s efforts to enhance its democratic processes.

The report states that throughout the center’s observation, the EC’s work was strained by a series of last minute court rulings, but that the commission “managed the election in an inclusive manner that was in accordance with both the law and with professional standards for election administration.” However, the center recommended changes for the tribe’s election process.

[See Carter, 2](#)

CNB wins contracts worth more than \$100M

Cherokee Nation Businesses receives its largest federal contract for its Red Wing company.

BY STAFF REPORTS

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. – On March 21, Cherokee Nation Businesses officials announced they have received two Department of Defense contracts totaling more than \$100 million, including the largest federal contract ever awarded to the tribe.

This month, Cherokee Nation Red Wing, operating under CNB’s security and defense division, was awarded an indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity or ID/IQ contract with a ceiling of nearly \$18.5 million from the U.S. Army.

The contract is to provide materials and services in support of reset, modification and repair activities of Army missile and aviation systems, CNB officials said.

“This is a proud day for the Cherokee Nation and the Cherokee people,” said Principal Chief Bill John Baker. “These two contracts, including the largest ever awarded to a CNB entity, show the federal government’s confidence in us to provide the highest quality of work, while supporting the men and women who so bravely

[See CNB, 4](#)

CN reaches \$100M in gaming fees to state

Secretary of State Charles Head said these figures show that the CN is the primary economic force in eastern Oklahoma and the entire region.

BY TRAVIS SNELL
Assistant Editor

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. – Cherokee Nation Gaming Commission Director Jamie Hummingbird told the Tribal Council’s Rules Committee on Jan. 26 that in December the tribe passed the \$100 million mark in compact gaming fees paid to the State Office of Finance.

“As of the end of calendar year 2011, the Nation under the terms of the state compact has contributed in excess of \$100 million in fees paid to the state under the terms of that agreement,” Hummingbird said. “That to me is a major milestone, the effectiveness of what that document has been able to



Patrons play compact or Class III-style electronic games at the Cherokee Casino in Tahlequah, Okla. The Cherokee Nation has paid the Oklahoma government more than \$101 million since January 2005 for the right to play compact games.
ROBERT STINSON/CHEROKEE PHOENIX

bring into the Nation. This is what we have met our obligation to the state for, and for \$100 million to come from this tribe alone going to the state, I think, that’s a significant contribution on behalf of the Cherokee

Nation to the state economy.”

According to a February CNGC report, from January 2005 to December 2011 the Nation paid \$101,033,303 to Oklahoma in accordance with its gaming compact

with the state. As a comparison, in that same time frame, the tribe received \$197.7 million in dividend from Cherokee Nation Businesses, according to CNB records.

The report states that approximately \$71.3 million of the tribe’s fees went to state coffers, while more than \$6 million went to Fair Meadows, a Tulsa horse racing track, and \$23.6 million went to the Oklahoma Horse Racing Commission.

CN Secretary of State Charles Head said these figures show that the CN is the primary economic force in eastern Oklahoma and the entire region.

“The Cherokee Nation is very pleased to hit this \$100 million milestone,” Head said. “This result is a perfect example of how Cherokee Nation and the State of Oklahoma can work together to achieve results that are beneficial to each government. This truly is a win-win situation.”

Oklahoma officials said the state uses its proceeds for educational purposes and compulsive gambling programs. Fair Meadows receives a share of profits from Tulsa-area Indian casinos, which includes the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, instead

[See Gaming, 2](#)

Carter

from front page

- Better communication between the EC and the Tribal Council, particularly in regard to updating electoral legislation,
- More systematic and frequent updates to the voter registration rolls, which would require better communication between the EC and Registration Department,
- Revisions to the CN election code, including clarification of ballot acceptance procedures, permission for more poll watchers to be present during elections and implementing dispute resolution mechanisms to address alleged violations of voters’ fundamental rights,
- Implementation of more comprehensive voter education campaign throughout the Nation by the EC,
- More participation by the EC commissioners in technical processes pertaining to storing ballot information,
- Reconsideration for the use of absentee ballots for voters within the 14 counties of the CN, and
- Initiation of an inquiry concerning gross procedural errors made by notaries, which in turn disenfranchised voters who cast absentee ballots.

The Carter Center made recommendations based on its observations of the special election for principal chief. The report offered those recommendations to be considered by the EC and CN government.

Below are the recommendations directed to the CN government:

Communicate with the EC when drafting election-related legislation

“The Center strongly encourages both the CNEC and the Tribal Council to have timely consultations about the content of election-related laws. This would ensure that the laws drafted by the Tribal Council are practical and properly worked, the role and responsibility of the CNEC remains clear, and administrative procedures are realistic and protect the rights of Cherokee citizens.”

Require the EC to carry out voter education efforts

“As the administrative organ that oversees elections the CNEC would be best placed to carry out voter education efforts. Accordingly, the Tribal Council should update the code to require the CNEC take on this task and ensure proper budgetary provisions are in place that permit the CNEC to implement voter education.”



John Fair, left, holds a sign during a June 30, 2011, protest at the Cherokee Nation Election Services Office in Tahlequah, Okla. Fair, along other supporters of then-principal chief candidate Bill John Baker, protested while the tribe’s Supreme Court conducted a hearing regarding alleged election improprieties. ARCHIVE PHOTO

Ensure poll watcher can be present during all phases of the electoral process

“During the election, the Center noted that the CNEC permitted only one candidate watcher to be present each day, both at the commission in Tahlequah and in the polling stations. The Center would thus recommend the Tribal Council draft legislation that mandates the CNEC allow enough candidates poll watchers to be present so they can monitor all aspects of the process, provided their presence does not hinder the electoral process in any way.”

Clarify what identification voters must present on Election Day

“For purposes of promoting more streamlined and consistent identification of voters during electoral process, the Tribal Council should consider specifying what forms of identification are acceptable.”

Clarify the process for casting challenged ballots, particularly in regard to people who are noted to have requested absentee ballots

“As the code currently is interpreted, a voter who requested an absentee ballot can cast a challenged ballot on election day. If the voter swears via an affidavit that they never received their requested absentee ballot, then the voter’s challenged ballot normally will be counted. However, if they do not make this attestation, then the challenged ballot is not likely to be counted. A revised law could address this.”

Ensure that adequate dispute resolution mechanisms are in place

“The electoral code includes dispute resolution mechanisms for candidates who run for office. It explains in part that defeated candidates may file appeals related to events surrounding their attempt to run for public office. Though the code protects candidates’ right by providing judicial remedies, it would be enhanced by providing judicial and appellate remedies for specific violation of the rights of citizens.”

Consider creating a single constituency for the principal chief

“The Carter Center observers noted confusion on the part of Cherokee voters regarding which district or at which polling station they should cast the ballots. A single constituency for the principal chief election would make the voting process less complicated and more convenient for voters, allowing voters to cast their ballots at any precinct and might encourage increased voter participation.”

Regulate the use of absentee ballots

“For residents within the 14 counties, the right to vote by absentee ballot should be restricted to those who are unable

to make it to a polling precinct either because they will be away from home or are ill or otherwise incapacitated.”

The report also made specific recommendations for the EC:

Update the voter’s roll

“This would require the CNEC to ensure it remains in frequents communication with the Registration Department and makes use of its access to the Registration Department database so that it can maintain the most up-to-date voters list. The CNEC should establish some means as well for such persons to challenge the absence of their name on the list.”

Conduct a more robust voter education and outreach program

“Voter education efforts implemented by the CNEC should focus on important election deadlines, the use of absentee and/or challenged ballots, the voter identification process and other relevant voting procedures. The CNEC could make more effective use of broadcast and print media as well as include more up-to-date voter information on the CNEC’s website.”

Inform voters of the proper identification needed to vote

“The CNEC should make clear to voters what forms of identification they can present to authenticate their identity and eligibility to vote.”

Establish clear, written criteria for all aspects of the counting process – especially regarding challenged and outstaked ballots

“Observers noted that the process was greatly slowed by the CNEC’s absence of written procedures and a clear understanding of when challenged ballots should be accepted or rejected. Though the CNEC ultimately reached consensus and applied their methodology consistently, the tabulation process would have occurred more efficiently had this been considered in advance.”

Permit candidates to have poll watchers present during all phases of the electoral process, including counting and any subsequent review

“The CNEC should recognize the importance of candidate poll watchers being present to monitor all aspects of the electoral process – from registration to counting... In addition, poll watchers should be able to ask questions and have them addressed, as long as they are not interfering in the voting process.”

Participate more actively in the data entry process for absentee ballots

“Although the staff from AES (Automated Election Services) appeared to conduct themselves in an impartial and professional manner throughout the data entry process, the Center strongly encourages the CNEC staff to take a more active role in entering data from the absentee ballots onto the system.”

Advise appropriate authorities of the errors made by notaries

“Notaries have a duty to carry out their commission in accordance with the law. Those notaries who failed to do so should be notified promptly and admonished accordingly. In future elections, the CNEC might also consider verifying the credential of notaries who certify absentee ballots.”

To view this report in its entirety, visit www.cherokeephoenix.org.

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Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, in cooperation with Emory University, founded the Carter Center in 1982 to advance peace and health worldwide. The Carter Center sent teams of observers for all parts of the voting and counting process for the second principal chief election in September 2011.

Census shows increase in Cherokee respondents

BY TODD CROW
Reporter

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. – According to a Jan. 25 U.S. Census release, people claiming Cherokee lineage on their Census forms increased by more than 89,000 to 819,105 since the 2000 U.S. Census.

The release titled “The American Indian and Alaska Native Population: 2010” states that Cherokee descendants continue to make up the largest number of American Indians in the country.

Justin Godwin, Cherokee Nation Registration administrative operations manager, said the down economy and retiring baby boomers probably led to some of the increase.

“Probably in the last couple of years, because of the economy and its situation, we’re getting a lot of older people, or people that are retiring, that are coming in and applying for their (citizenship) cards, so that they can get medical services and things like that,” he said. “We’re still growing.”

According to CN Registration records, there were 202,210 CN citizens in January 2000.

Currently, there are more than 314,000 citizens.

That leaves more than 500,000 people who claimed to be Cherokee who are either enrolled in the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma, the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians in North Carolina or remain unaffiliated with any of the three federally recognized tribes.

“There’s some people out there that probably do trace back to an ancestor on the Dawes Rolls and are Cherokee by blood, but probably have never turned their stuff in,” Godwin said.

Godwin said there are several groups claiming Cherokee lineage that are not federally recognized that could make up some of that 819,000-plus people claiming Cherokee blood.

Also, according to the 2010 Census, there was a 26.7 percent increase in the overall number of American Indians and Alaskan Natives from 2000, with the total around 5.2 million people. The releases states that Cherokee respondents make up more than 15 percent of the country’s American Indian and Alaskan Native population, which consists of 566 federally recognized tribes. Results from the latest Census

were broken down into four categories. In the first category labeled “one tribal grouping reported” with no other race, Cherokee had 284,247 respondents. In the second category labeled “two or more tribal groupings reported” with no other race, Cherokee had 16,216 respondents. The total number of people who responded as Cherokee with no other race was 300,463, attributing to 34.7 percent of the total number.

In the third category labeled “one tribal grouping” with multiple races, 468,082 people responded with Cherokee. And in the fourth category labeled “two or more tribal groupings” with multiple races, 50,560 people responded with Cherokee. The total number of Cherokee respondents with multiple races was 518,642, more than seven times as many as any other tribe for 65.3 percent of the Cherokee total.

Cherokee numbers saw substantial increases from the 2000 Census in every category except multiple tribes with no other race, which had more than 2,000 less respondents.

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Gaming

from front page

of being allowed electronic games like Oklahoma City’s Remington Park. The OHRC uses its funds for horsemen’s purses.

According to the CNGC report, the Nation paid the most fees in 2007 with nearly \$17 million. The year with the lowest fees paid was 2005 at \$4.9 million.

According to the compact, 4 percent of the first \$10 million of the annual adjusted gross revenues or AGR from Class III electronic games goes to the state. On the next \$10 million of AGR, the state gets 5 percent and 6 percent over \$20 million. For non-house banked card games, the state gets 10 percent of the monthly net income.

Head said the tribe’s current gaming compact has proven to be fair and equitable to both the state and CN and that when it expires on Jan. 1, 2020, the tribe hopes to enter into negotiations to ensure its continuation “on a fair and equitable basis.”

Class III gaming authorized by the Oklahoma-tribal gaming compacts consists of electronic

amusement games, electronic bonanza-style bingo games, electronic instant bingo and non-house banked card games. Tribal Class I and II gaming do not require compacts.

According to the CNGC report, the eight Cherokee Nation Entertainment casinos have more than 3,100 electronic compact or Class III games, which make up 59 percent of all of CNE’s electronic games. The report also states that CNE has approximately 80 card/table games.

By paying these fees, the Cherokee Nation and the other 33 tribes that are compacted with the state have exclusive rights to operate Class III gaming. According to state records, from July 2006 to February 2011, the 34 compacted tribes paid more than \$569.4 million in gaming exclusivity fees.

In 2004, Oklahoma voters passed a state question that allowed tribes to enter into Class III-style gaming compacts with the state. According to federal law, tribes wanting to enter Class III gaming must compact with the government of the state in which it is located.

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CNB
from front page

serve our country.”

Additionally, CN Red Wing was awarded a modification of \$66.6 million to a contract awarded in 2011, increasing the period of performance to three years and bringing the total contract ceiling to \$84.25 million.

This contract is designed to provide the U.S. Army with hardware logistics services, supporting various missile and aviation systems.

“The Cherokee Nation is entering an exciting new era. Federal contracts like this allow us to diversify away from gaming into many new sectors of business and industry, showing that we are a leader among tribal nations,” Baker said. “By developing our non-gaming resources, we achieve two very important goals: create job opportunities for Cherokees in many different fields and fortify ourselves economically so we can better provide for our people.”

The new contracts expand on the current capabilities CN Red Wing already provides the Army and will create an additional 16 to 28 jobs, including mechanics, engineers, shipping/receiving personnel, program analysts and managers.

“The receipt of these contracts is a testament to CNB’s capabilities and reputation,” said Russell Claybrook, CNB’s Security and Defense Division president. “It’s extremely rewarding to have the federal government recognize all that we are capable of by awarding such a sizable and important contract.”

According to CNB’s website, CN Red Wing is a military service company based in Kellyville supporting war fighters with innovative, quality solutions for even the most challenging situations. With a focus on aviation weapon systems life-cycle support, the company maintains a presence at key commodity commands to provide critical sustainment/reset and repair services.

CNB is the tribally owned holding company of the CN, the largest Indian nation in the United States. The CN and its businesses employ more than 8,200 people. CNB owns companies in the gaming, hospitality, information technology, personnel services, distribution, manufacturing, telecommunications, environmental services and security and defense industries.

Veterans center at Tribal Complex nears next phase

When done, it will have space for veterans’ services, counseling offices, a kitchen area, library and community room.

BY WILL CHAVEZ
Senior Reporter

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. – Roof panels are now covering the Veterans Service Center at the Tribal Complex as the Cherokee Nation prepares for the next phase in the construction project.

Workers began securing the panels to the 8,700-square-foot building during the week of Feb 6-10.

When done, it will have space for veterans’ services, counseling offices, a kitchen area, library and community room. A special “Hall of Honor” museum will present the stories of individual Cherokee veterans, and in accordance with Cherokee tradition, the building will face east.

“It’s a unique building and it’s rather complex in several ways. There are a lot of roof transitions in terms of the pitches of the roof, so they’ve got to get those roof panels fitting just exactly right,” Robin Flint Ballenger, Flintco owner and board chairwoman, said.

Flintco Construction Solutions is donating construction management personnel to the project. Ballenger estimates her company has donated \$200,000 in personnel costs to the project.

In mid-February, Ballenger said Flintco would begin its “punch list” and inspect the building to ensure everything is working properly. The architect and the owner, which is the CN, goes over the punch list, she said.

“Right now we are now working both Saturdays and Sundays to take advantage of the weather and to try to hustle up the schedule,” Ballenger said.

She said workers are behind schedule,



The Cherokee Nation’s flag flaps in the background as Sam Bendabout, left, Markus Terrapin, middle, and Lenny Leach place structural insulated panels on the roof of the new Veterans Service Center, which is under construction on the Tribal Complex in Tahlequah OK. ROBERT STINSON/CHEROKEE PHOENIX

but should be handing over the “dried-in” or covered building to the CN by the end of February. The CN already has bids out for crews to finish covering the roof and to install windows, she said.

“We will be giving the Nation what we call a transition notebook, which will have all of the information that the Nation will need to take that building over,” Ballenger said.

After Flintco hands over the building, a CN volunteer coordinator will direct volunteers on site clean-up, framing, painting, plumbing, roofing, flooring, finish and millwork.

The center is a “ga-du-gi” project, meaning it is relying on donations of time, skilled and unskilled labor, funds and building supplies. Volunteers have pledged more than 29,000 hours, and the CN is providing \$500,000 for the project and labor through tribal programs.

People willing to volunteer can call Rogan Noble in the CN Office of Veterans Affairs at 918-453-5694 or

visit <http://veteranscenter.cherokee.org>.

Ground was broken on the veterans center in September 2009. Its cost has risen since envisioned more than three years ago from about \$800,000 to approximately \$2 million. Revisions and an increase in materials costs make up most of the increase, CN officials said.

Ballenger said Flintco has worked on many construction projects for the CN, and when the Veterans Service Center was proposed, she thought the project would be a good way for Flintco to give back to the tribe.

“Veterans have done so much for everybody in this country, not just Cherokees. I liked the idea of the spirit of ga-du-gi and all of us doing this together. It had an appeal for me on many different levels, but mostly it was because Flintco is Cherokee-owned and it was our chance to give something back to the Nation in a way we could do it,” she said.

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INDIGENOUS

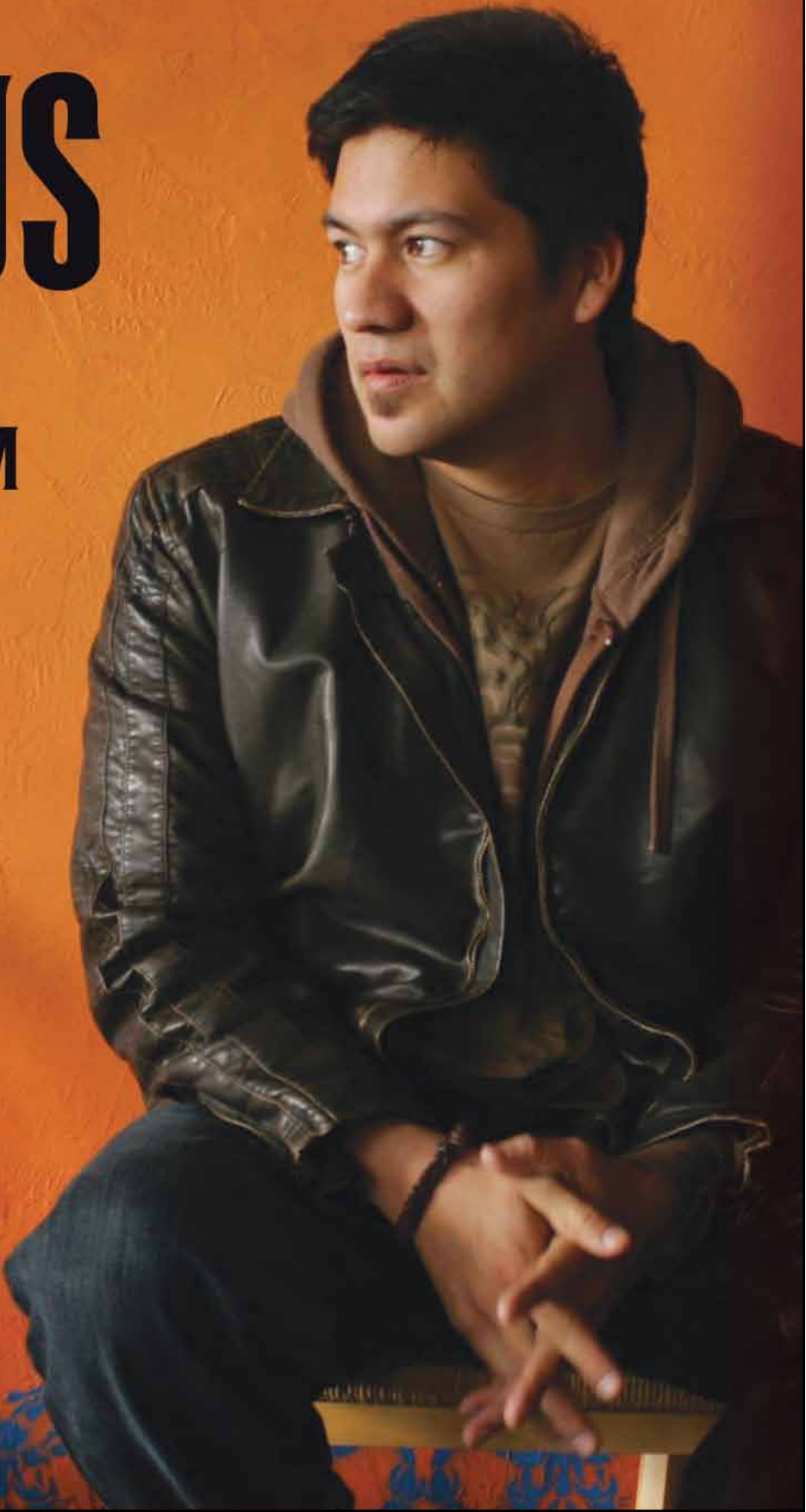
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Opposing attorneys debate Freedmen issue

Attorney General Todd Hembree says he doesn’t agree with an amendment that struck Freedmen citizenship, but believes the tribe can determine who its citizens are.

BY WILL CHAVEZ
Senior Reporter

NORMAN, Okla. – During a March 1 University of Oklahoma law symposium, Cherokee Nation Attorney General Todd Hembree spoke about carefully reading the wording of the 1866 Treaty that gave Cherokee Freedmen the rights of CN citizens.

“The Cherokee Nation has a long history steeped in tradition, deep in culture. As good and great as that history is, there is a stain upon that history. It is a stain that we share with the United States of America, and that stain is slavery,” Hembree said. “We were a large slave-holding tribe.”

Although the CN abolished slavery in 1863, two years before the U.S. did, the CN did join the Confederate cause, Hembree said. His great-great grandfather, Principal Chief John Ross, had sought neutrality, but a pro-Confederate faction forced the CN to side with the Confederacy. However, many, if not most, Cherokee warriors fought for the Union, he said.

President Abraham Lincoln actually signed the Emancipation Proclamation on Jan. 1, 1863, freeing slaves in the Confederate states, and the following month Chief Ross signed the Cherokee Emancipation Proclamation on Feb. 21, 1863, that freed all Cherokee-held slaves and abolished future slavery.

“Be that as it may, to re-establish our government-to-government relationship with the United States, we signed the Treaty of 1866,” Hembree said.

He said because of its Confederacy alliance, under the 1866 Treaty, the CN paid reparations and gave away land. Also, the CN agreed to give its former slaves and free blacks living within the CN the rights of Cherokee citizens.

“It’s that treaty that brings us here in 2012,” Hembree said.

After its government was dissolved because of Oklahoma statehood in 1907, the CN reformed in 1975 and approved a new constitution in 1976. The tribe’s highest court ruled in Allen (a Cherokee Freedmen descendant) v. Cherokee Nation in 2006 that the 1976 CN Constitution did include all people and their descendants who were on the Dawes Rolls and they were all eligible for CN citizenship.

“To show you how words mean things. It’s not Dawes Roll. It’s Dawes Rolls with a ‘s’. So, many can say a great part of this situation is narrowed down to the letter ‘s,’” Hembree said.

He said there are three rolls in the CN Dawes Rolls – Cherokee by blood, the Delaware and Shawnee (the CN adopted the two tribes in 1867) and the Freedmen.

“Our Supreme Court ruled that since our constitution included all of those rolls...descendants of individuals on the Freedmen roll were eligible for citizenship,” Hembree said.

Following the 2006 ruling, 2,869 Freedmen descendants enrolled through the CN Registration Department and became tribal citizens. Also, some CN citizens began efforts to amend the constitution to prevent Freedmen citizenship by requiring citizens to have Indian blood, he said.

Cherokee voters passed that amendment in March 2007, but the question arose, Hembree said, about whether CN could

amend the constitution in relation to the 1866 Treaty.

Hembree said he did not favor the constitutional amendment.

“I was asked to sign the petition to put it on the ballot. I refused to sign that petition. I was asked to vote in favor of the amendment. I did not,” he said.

He said if people are looking for someone to defend the amendment, he’s not their man. However, he said he would defend “vigorously,” the people’s right to amend the CN Constitution.

“The ability to determine the criteria of your own citizens is the cornerstone of sovereignty itself. Citing the case Nero v. Swimmer, Hembree said “a tribe’s right to define its own membership has long been recognized as central to its existence as an independent political community.”

“When constitutional amendments occur and individuals are disenfranchised, it’s tragic. It is emotional and oftentimes it’s unfair, but we have a right to do that when we exercise that power legitimately,” he added.

Hembree said both sides of the Freedmen issue claim to be fighting for Indian rights. He said he knows he is fighting for the right for tribes to be able to determine their citizenship requirements.

Freedmen attorney Jon Velie is correct, he said, about there being limits to what tribes can do based on treaties and what the U.S. Congress would allow. Reading Article 9 of the 1866 Treaty, Hembree said Freedmen and their descendants were given the rights of native Cherokees but not citizenship.

“It doesn’t say citizenship. It says the

Freedmen attorney Jon Velie questions whether tribal officials have the right to deny the birthrights of individual Indian citizens.

BY WILL CHAVEZ
Senior Reporter

NORMAN, Okla. – During a law symposium held March 1 at the University of Oklahoma College of Law, Cherokee Freedmen attorney Jon Velie said along with representing the Freedmen he is championing individual Indian rights.

Velie said those rights have come in direct conflict with sovereign tribes as they gain more power. He also questions how tribal powers are being used and how that power affects individual Indian people’s rights.

Velie told the audience who the Freedmen are and why they are in litigation with the Cherokee Nation. He said the Freedmen are Cherokees with African descent, are descendants of slaves who “were held by Cherokee masters” and part of the slave industry that was regulated by the CN.

There are likely 25,000 Freedmen descendants today. About 2,800 are officially registered with the CN, and the rest “are on the outside looking in,” he said.

“We have the Cherokee Nation in probably its most lucrative time period, and we have people really suffering on the financial side

CN to regain those rights, which they lost in 1983. Even though the United States had stated the 1866 Treaty was in “full force and effect” when it came to the rights of Freedmen citizens, Freedmen were not allowed to vote in the 2003 CN election.

Velie said the Freedmen sued because they were denied the right to vote, and after initially taking the position that it would not recognize the 2003 election, the federal government reversed its decision.

Disgraced lobbyist Jack Abramoff received \$120,000 from Cherokee Nation Enterprises (now Entertainment) to lobby on CN’s behalf, which influenced the government’s reversal, Velie said.

In 2003, Freedmen filed the federal case Vann v. Norton (now Vann v. Salazar because the Interior’s secretaries have changed). In November, a judge dismissed the case and transferred the last remaining lawsuit involving the Freedmen – Cherokee Nation v. Nash – back to the U.S. District Court in Tulsa where it awaits hearing.

In 2006, Freedmen regained their citizenship and the right to vote following a CN Judicial Appeals Tribunal ruling in Allen v. CN Registrar. However, the following year, Cherokee voters amended the tribe’s 1999 Constitution and the Freedmen lost their citizenship again. The amendment required CN citizens to have an ancestor with Indian blood on the Dawes Roll. Many Freedmen did not meet this requirement.

However, Velie said the U.S. government never approved the 1999 Constitution that was amended in 2007 to prevent Freedmen citizenship.

Through a 2007 tribal court injunction, about 2,800 Freedmen currently have citizenship and voting rights while they wait for the Nash case to be heard. It involves five Freedmen and the Secretary of the Interior, who the CN has sued. Velie is representing the Freedmen involved.

He said it’s “preposterous” that an Indian nation is suing its citizens in federal court for standing up for their rights.

He added that the tribe’s argument under former Principal Chief Chad Smith was “dangerous” because its attorneys were prepared to argue the 1866 Treaty was “abrogated” or repealed by the U.S. If so, then the other treaty components – the re-establishment of relations between the U.S. and CN and the establishment of CN’s current boundaries are also abrogated.

“It’s not just dangerous for the Cherokee Nation, but also dangerous for all Indian tribes because treaties sit as this relationship between nations,” he said. “A nation without a treaty has less power than a nation with a treaty, and you don’t see tribes argue against treaties very often.”

If the CN wins the Nash case using the abrogated treaty argument it would be dangerous for all tribes, he said. However, if the Freedmen win the case it could have implications for all Five Civilized Tribes – the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Muscogee Creek and Seminole nations – because those tribes all had slaves and subsequently their Freedmen were given citizenship rights in 1866, Velie said.

Though a 1906 case gave the Five Tribes the right to determine their tribal citizenship, it did not allow them to ignore treaties establishing citizenship rights for Freedmen members, he said.

Velie said in the late 1800s and early 1900s the courts reaffirmed the Freedmen’s civil rights, yet they are being forced to return to court to fight for their rights.

He said the questions could be: should a tribe have a right to determine its own citizenship and what gives an individual elected official the right to strip the birthright of another individual Indian?

“It’s something that should be thought of by people that govern Indian tribes.... Do we really want to have the absolute right to kick our own people out of our own nations?”

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The ability to determine the criteria of your own citizens is the cornerstone of sovereignty itself.

– Todd Hembree, attorney general

More of them are frustrated by the loss of their identity - being able to be Cherokee.

– Jon Velie, Freedmen attorney



Cherokee Nation Attorney General Todd Hembree, left, and Oklahoma City attorney and Freedmen attorney Jon Velie, right, took turns speaking about the history of the Freedmen issue and the implications the case may have on the CN and other tribes March 1 during the University of Oklahoma law symposium.
DILLON TURMAN/CHEROKEE PHOENIX

‘rights of native Cherokees,” he said. “I think it’s very important that we recognize what these words mean in these treaties because they are very important, but let’s not impose more than what’s in that treaty itself.”

Cherokee Nation v. Nash, the remaining Freedmen case that is waiting to be heard in the U.S. District Court in Tulsa is important to the CN and for Indian Country, Hembree said.

“I’m going to do everything I can to defend the right of the Cherokee people to determine their own sovereignty, to determine their constitution, and by implication, I’m going to defend the rights of all Native American tribes throughout Indian Country to do the same thing,” he said. “Whatever decision comes down, the Cherokee Nation has and always will follow the rule of law, and I look forward to seeing this case through fruition.”

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who do not get to participate in that,” Velie said. “And that’s just on the benefits side. More of them are frustrated by the loss of their identity – being able to be Cherokee.”

Velie also said the CN is one of the largest tribes in the country comprised of ethnic Cherokees, Shawnees and Delaware. He said because the CN chronicled its history better than other tribes, it’s known that Freedmen once held political power in the tribe, including on the Tribal Council.

“We see these people have been very important and have been a part of this tribe for a long time.”

Freedmen derived their rights from the 1866 Treaty between the CN and the United States following the Civil War, Velie said. The CN had sided with the Confederacy and the treaty allowed the CN to rejoin the Union with stipulations, such as giving rights of Cherokee citizens to former slaves and Freedmen living within the CN.

In 2003, a group of Freedmen sued the



LEFT: A Cherokee Nation citizen signs a petition calling for a special election regarding Freedmen citizenship after a Jay, Okla., community meeting in 2006.

RIGHT: Cherokee Freedmen protest in front of U.S. Rep. Dan Boren’s Muskogee, Okla., office in March 2008 to bring attention to their effort to regain permanent Cherokee Nation citizenship rights.
ARCHIVE PHOTOS





April 2012

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Published monthly by the Cherokee Nation with offices at the W.W. Keeler Tribal Complex, Tahlequah, Okla.

Mail subscriptions and changes of address to the Cherokee Phoenix, P.O. Box 948, Tahlequah, OK 74465, phone 918-453-5269. Please include the words "Change of Address" or "Subscription" on the envelope.

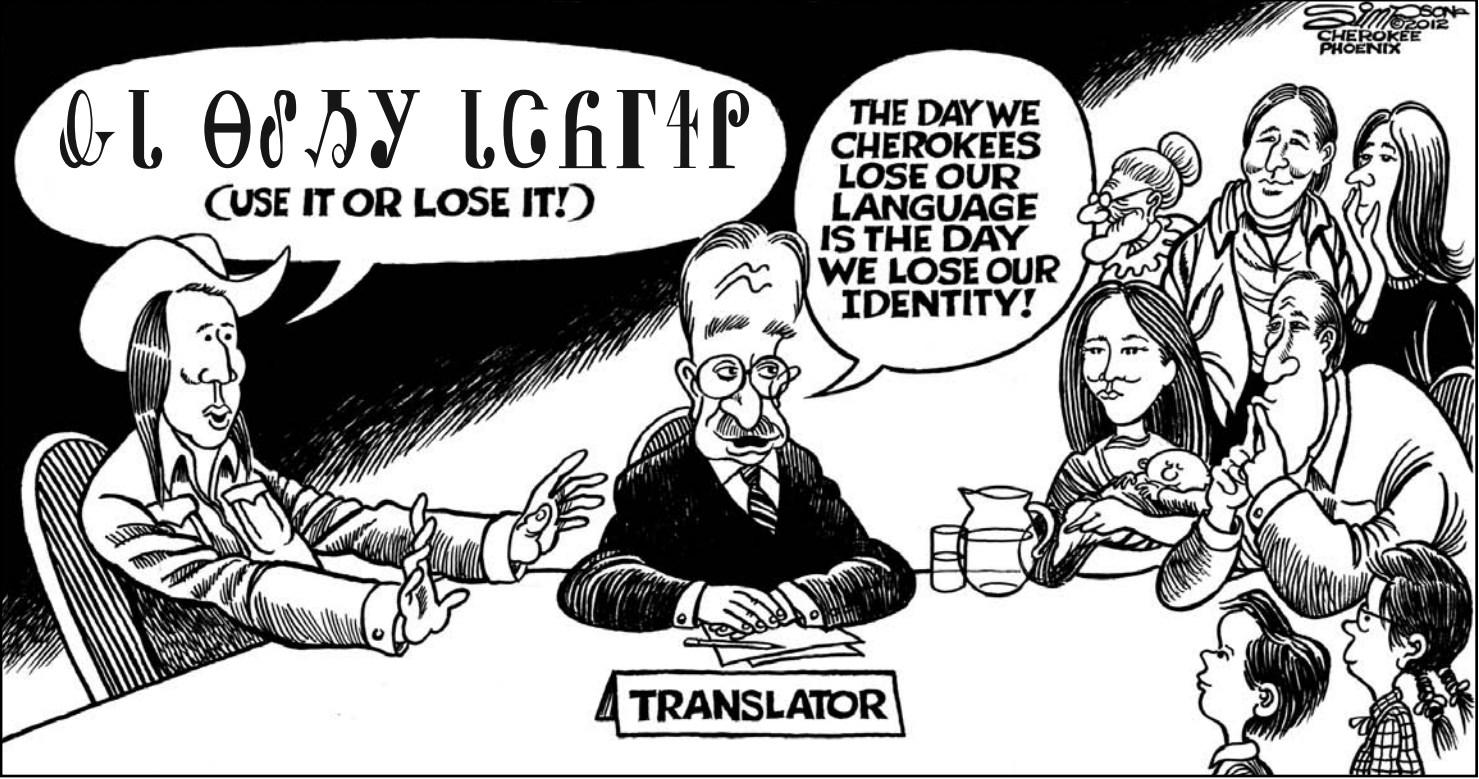
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The Cherokee Phoenix also publishes an In Memoriam section at no cost to families to honor Cherokee citizens who have recently passed away. That section includes the name of the deceased; age; birthplace and date of birth; place and date of death; and occupation.



Talking Circles

Letter drive request

I recently sent the following letter to the federal elected officials listed below. Cherokee Nation citizens who live in the Claremore Indian Hospital service area are quite often denied for outsourced contract health services.

The federal government in my opinion is not living up to the promise of good, quality health care for Indian people living in this coverage area. It's time to make our voice heard. I encourage you to call, write or contact these elected officials to encourage them to increase funding for contract health services at Claremore.

U.S. Sen. Thomas A. Coburn
100 N. Broadway
Suite 1820
Oklahoma City, OK 73102

U.S. Sen. James M. Inhofe
1924 S. Utica Ave.
Suite 530
Tulsa, OK 74104 –6511

U.S. Rep. John A. Sullivan
5727 S. Lewis
Suite 520
Tulsa, OK 74105-7146

U.S. Rep. Daniel Boren
431 W. Broadway
Muskogee, OK 74401

Concerning: Claremore Indian Health Service

I am informing you of a situation at Claremore Indian Health Service. The contract referral rate out of CIHS is underfunded and has been for years. This is a federal government hospital for all Native Americans. The federal government should be ashamed of the lack of funding for contract referrals out of CIHS.

Your immediate assistance to increase funding is requested. Furthermore, it has come to my attention that an MRI machine was delivered to CIHS and for some reason has been sitting in a crate for almost a year. This information was given to me by a physician.

For the past nine months, sitting at Claremore IHS, is an MRI machine (huge dollars) in a box. This great imaging machine has not been unpacked. The reason is unknown. This machine would save IHS millions of dollars in contract referrals. Yes, it will need a trained radiologist. Yes, most MRI machines need a lot of segregated room. And yes, it is needed for the Native Americans who utilized CIHS.

Your immediate assistance to rectify this situation is requested.

Dick Lay
Dist. 4 Tribal Councilor

Tahlequah, Wash.?

I have not lived in Tahlequah, Okla., for years but I still think of it as home. I know where, when and why it was named Tahlequah, so now I'm wondering if anyone there can tell me why there is a town in Washington state named Tahlequah. It is located on the southern tip of Vashon Island, which is in the Seattle and Tacoma area.

I think perhaps there is a story of someone going west during the gold rush days, and I hope someone can find the answer to why and publish it.

Lorena Hornett Hall
Commerce City, Colo.

Editor's Note: Tahlequah, Wash., is an unincorporated community on the southern end of Vashon Island in Puget Sound. It is best known for being the north end of the short Point Defiance-Tahlequah ferry route. According to the Vashon Island Heritage Association, the community got its name in 1919 from a young girl named Ethel Whitfield. She submitted the name for a contest to name the community and ferry route because she had heard the word and thought it meant "pleasant waters."

Defending John Ross

I am writing in response Mr. Wade's letter concerning Chief John Ross in the January 2012 Cherokee Phoenix. Wade accuses Ross of "not wearing moccasins," not knowing or living Cherokee heritage, education, status, "could hardly speak the language," "ruled the Cherokee Nation like a dictator" and "was only one-eighth Cherokee."

Wade also wrote: "I tried to walk in this man's moccasins..." Ross was raised 100 percent traditional Cherokee, wearing the clothes, speaking the language fluently, knowing and living the culture and he was one-quarter Cherokee, according to our family.

He established Cherokee schools with his own money. He had a deep love and concern for our people. He organized our tribe as a nation with its own constitution. He fought for our people's land, rights and culture.

When Grandma Quatie died on "The Place Where The Crying Began," aka The Trail of Tears, the military men put her body under a large rock as they made fun of her for being a

Native American. Grandpa John Ross was upset and he told them to stop, so they beat him badly and said evil things to him for being the chief and being of Native blood.

Ross suffered much, loved much, gave much and lost much. He was strict, loving, kind, giving and caring and was anything but a "dictator." I don't know what Wade did to think he walked in grandpa's shoes, but I can tell him one thing, he didn't walk that trail and see the love of his life stuffed under a rock and get beat to the ground for trying to save her dignity.

There has always been a "Cherokee blood law," and the things Ross did, according to our "traditional" blood laws, were in line. Anyone can write history about anyone, but that doesn't mean it is true. I don't know where Wade came up with his analogy on grandpa, but it is anything but true. I cannot let him be misrepresented by one of our own and not defend him.

Karen Adams
Manti, Utah

Crawler story is eloquent

I'm taking a moment to write a note on your eloquently written article (by Reporter Jami Custer) about (translation specialist) David Crawler, touched my heart. His story is a passionate one: loving his work, exploring his talents, never felt like work for him is the feeling of his story. I am inspired to get back to basics in my own work, maybe to recapture the passion.

Barbara Garcia
Chino Hill, Calif.

Don't adopt Adam Walsh Act

The Cherokee Nation should not be fooled into adopting the Adam Walsh Act for the sake of "sovereignty." The U.S. government has told states and Native tribes if they do not pass the AWA, they lose 10 percent in law enforcement grants. However, complying with the AWA will cost far more than you will lose. Texas, for example, found they would only lose \$2 million by not complying with AWA, but spend \$38 million to comply.

The Adam Walsh Act is riddled with flaws. It allows teens as young as age 14 to be listed on the public registry. It forces offense-based classification, meaning more registrants will be classified as "higher-risk" by criminal charge instead of through a battery of risk-assessment tests. That means the few who are more likely to offend are more easily hidden in the massive list of 748,000 registrants and growing.

In Ohio, the first state to pass the Adam Walsh Act (known as SB 10), the number of registrants roughly tripled overnight. Thousands of low-risk offenders were reclassified as high-risk, going from 10-year registration to lifetime registration. The state spent \$10 million in legal fees defending the bill, yet the law was ruled a violation of bans on ex post facto laws and separation of powers.

Five years after the Adam Walsh Act was steamrolled through Congress, only 15 states and a handful of Native tribes have adopted the AWA. Of those 15 states, two states (Kansas and Missouri) are contemplating opting out of compliance. A number of states, including Texas, California, Arizona and New York, have publicly stated they will not adopt the AWA.

The Cherokee Nation should join those saying "no" to the Adam Walsh Act. The registry does not protect children because 95 percent of sex crime arrests are of first-time offenders, while sex offenders have had the lowest rate of recidivism long before the registry existed. Adopting the AWA is more about money than sovereignty or safety. Do not be misled by your attorney general.

Derek W. Logue
Cincinnati, Ohio

At-Large citizen feels like an 'Outlander'

"Every decision I make, I'm going to look at how is this going to best serve the Cherokee people..." – Principal Chief Bill John Baker on TulsaPeople.com, March 2012.

After reading this quote from an interview with Baker, my questions to him are: Is silencing divergent voices the best way to serve the Cherokee people? Is cutting services with the so-called "Outlanders" good for the Cherokee people? Is limiting a councilor's ability to communicate with Cherokee citizens best for the Cherokee people?

These things are happening right now in the Cherokee Nation, especially to the At-Large citizens. Our roots run quite deep in the Nation and our family ties are strong. We love our Cherokee heritage and want to be a part of an informed citizenry, yet at every turn, under this new administration, we get word that our voices and our involvement are not valued.

I know I speak for many At-Large citizens. We do not want money; we want knowledge. We want to feel a connection to our homeland and learn all we can about our rich history, culture and language. I have participated in the history course, Cherokee Heritage Camp at Northeastern State University, numerous presentations sent out to California and local community group events. All of these have enriched my life as a Cherokee citizen. Hearing that these offerings are in jeopardy is not the best way to serve the Cherokee people.

Donna Wheelahan
Campbell, Calif.

Council to work on district maps again

The Rules Committee agrees to work on splitting the current five districts into 15.

BY WILL CHAVEZ
Senior Reporter

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. – Approximately a year has gone by since the Tribal Council cut the number of representative districts within the Cherokee Nation from nine to five. However, at the Feb. 23 Rules Committee meeting, councilors accepted a motion to split the five districts into 15.

The CN Constitution requires 15 equally apportioned council seats within the tribe’s jurisdiction and two At-Large seats.

Councilor Chuck Hoskin Jr. reminded the committee that the council had previously committed to revisit redistricting after it approved the five-district map in February 2011, near the filing period deadline for candidates seeking CN offices.

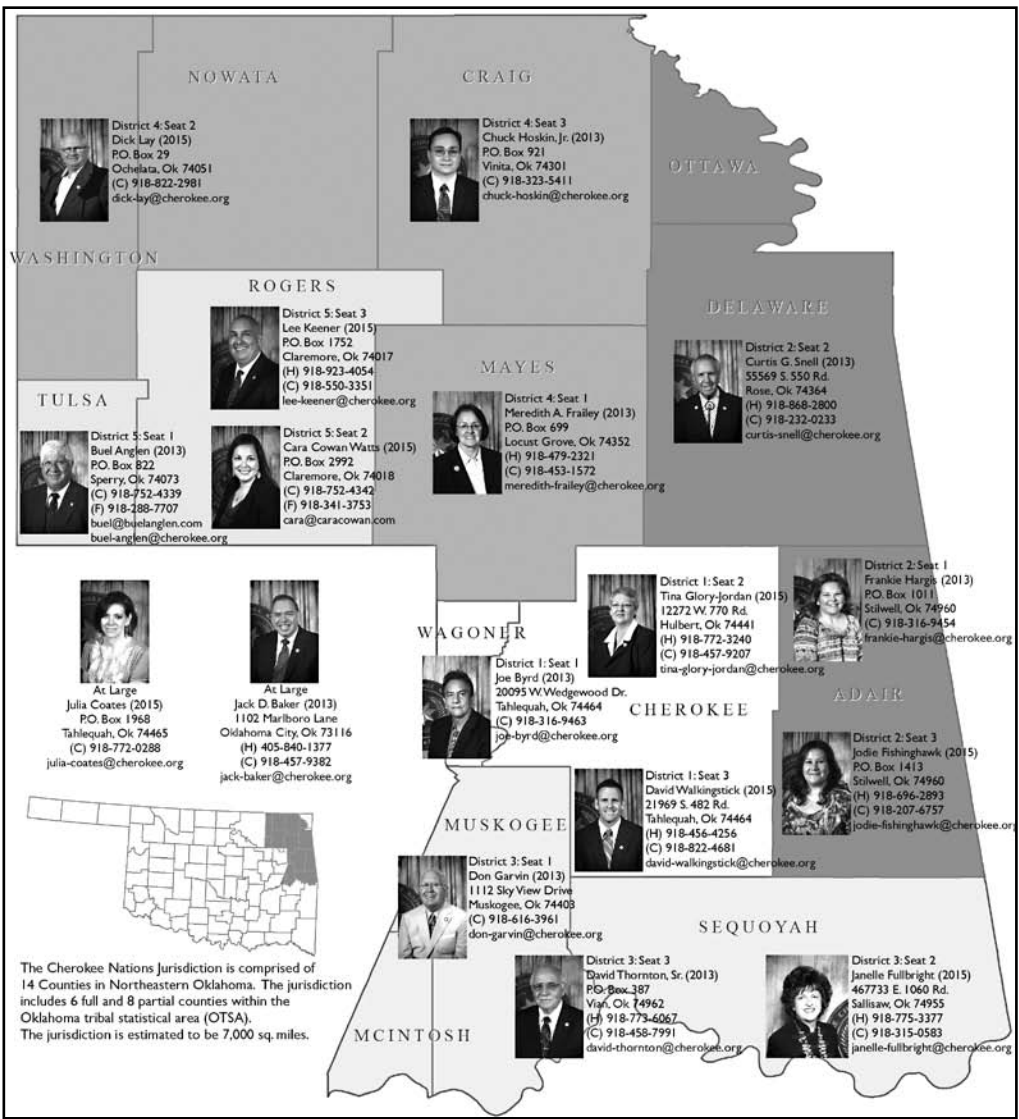
The late approval of that map caused confusion among CN voters about which candidates they could vote for and where to vote.

If a change is made to the districts, the Rules Committee has until July to do it, leaving eight months before council candidates have to file for the June 2013 elections.

During the Feb. 23 meeting, Councilor David Thornton recommended forming a sub committee to work with the tribe’s Geographic Information Systems to create a map of 15 equal districts.

GIS Administrator David Justice presented a packet to the Rules Committee containing citizenship data for each of the 14 counties in the CN jurisdiction. Using a “pro-portionment method,” Justice said 121,279 CN citizens live within the tribe’s jurisdiction in 81 zip codes.

Council Speaker Tina Glory Jordan said she fears the “pro-portionment” map would be challenged in court, like a previous 15-district map, and would not be accepted. “I think we, as a body, need to present



The Cherokee Nation’s current five-district representative map and the district’s respective councilors. COURTESY PHOTO

a map to our constituents that gives us 15 districts and gets it within deviations acceptable by the body and by the court,” she said.

Councilor Dick Lay, who is serving his first council term, said a new map could be completed by July if the council works together but voiced concern about it being challenged in tribal court and delaying the 2013 election process.

He said the current five-district map was completed too close to the 2011 elections. “I’m going to tell you folks something.

You confused the heck out of people out there. Not only that, I had to wait until January (2011) before I knew whose door I had knock on to go get votes as a person... who wanted to become a councilor,” Lay said. “I’ve still got people in Mayes County who say I can’t be their councilor. I live in Washington County. People are still confused about what district they’re in, and if we don’t get this done pretty quick people, we’re going to run into the same thing.”

Hoskin said Lay was voicing the frustrations of many CN citizens but

believes the council created a “good” 15-district map in a “timely manner.” However, it was successfully challenged and the council had to settle with the five-district map currently in use.

“Circumstances external to the council caused a lawsuit...but the council acted, I think, with some dispatch, and I think we got a quality map,” Hoskin said.

Thornton said he believes the five-district map is unconstitutional because it does not reflect “one man, one vote,” which he said would be provided in 15 separate council districts.

As an example, Thornton said if the three representatives for Dist. 3, which currently consists of Sequoyah County and parts of Muskogee and McIntosh counties, were all elected from Sallisaw in Sequoyah County then the western part of the district would not have representation.

Glory Jordan suggested the committee split up each of the current five districts three ways to come up with 15 districts.

“Does that not make sense? If they’re already in the acceptable deviation for each district, take a district and slice it up three ways. And it doesn’t confuse the people any more than they are already confused because we’ve just taken their district and cut it down a little bit more,” she said.

She said slicing the five districts into more manageable pieces could alleviate confusion and prevent court challenges because the population deviations in the five districts have been accepted.

Justice said Glory Jordan’s suggestion could be accomplished but splitting zip codes would be challenging.

“We can look at the scenario you are talking about and split this districts three ways. I just need to know what county road you want to use or state highway. Those are the kind of things I need to know,” he said.

Glory Jordan made a motion to use her plan of splitting the five districts into 15, which was accepted. The Rules Committee or a sub committee, if it is formed, will continue discussing redistricting and assist the GIS with establishing the 15 districts.

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Compensation Act change draws questions

Some councilors ask if the amendment paves the way for a monthly travel stipend.

BY WILL CHAVEZ
Senior Reporter

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. – At their March 12 meeting, Tribal Councilors amended the Cherokee Nation’s law dealing with elected officials’ compensation. The change drew questions from fellow councilors about whether it paves the way for a monthly travel stipend for legislators.

In January, several councilors attempted to amend the compensation act but failed. The act sets guidelines on how CN officials are compensated. Because the act failed, a revised travel expense policy establishing a \$700 monthly travel stipend for councilors could not be implemented.

At the March 12 meeting, Councilor Cara Cowan Watts asked if the latest legislation being considered allowed for the \$700 stipend.

Council Speaker Tina Glory Jordan said the legislation changes the compensation act but didn’t “have anything to do” with the travel stipend.

“This is just changing the wording from compensation to salaries and gives a definition of salaries as payment for services rendered,” Glory Jordan said.

In a follow-up question, Cowan Watts asked if the stipend was already in effect without the amendment or if the amendment was required to allow for the stipend.

Glory Jordan said the council’s Rules Committee had passed a separate policy pertaining to the travel allowance and revising the compensation act would change the wording in the act from compensation to salaries.

She added that the amendment also deals with a Citizen’s Committee, which previously made recommendations about the compensation or salaries of all elected CN officials, and that the change would limit the committee’s scope.

“They would only oversee the salaries of elected officials,” she said.

Cowan Watts said she was concerned about revising the compensation act because previously the Citizen’s Committee oversaw the entire compensation package for elected leaders.

Councilor David Thornton said he supported the amendment because the Citizen’s Committee has no right to oversee the council’s travel allowances. He added that the CN Constitution allows the council to set its own travel policies and procedures.

Glory Jordan never directly addressed the \$700 monthly stipend when asked by Cowan Watts and then later by Councilor Lee Keener.

The act passed 10-7 with Councilors Cowan Watts, Buel Anglen, Jack Baker, Julia Coates, Meredith Frailey, Don Garvin and Keener voting against it. Councilors Joe Byrd, Glory Jordan, David Walkingstick, Curtis Snell, Jodie Fishinghawk, Frankie Hargis, Thornton, Janelle Fullbright, Chuck Hoskin Jr. and Dick Lay voted for the amendment.

In other business, the council confirmed two people to the Election Commission. Stilwell resident Martha Calico, who has served on the EC for multiple elections, was appointed to a six-year term. Bill W. Horton, former superintendent of Moffett Public Schools in Sequoyah County, was appointed to serve four years.

According to CN election law, the Tribal Council appoints two of the five EC commissioners and the principal chief selects two. Those four commissioners then choose a fifth member who is subject to approval by the council and chief.

The council also increased the tribe’s operating budget by nearly \$436,000, bringing the comprehensive budget for the fiscal year to \$494.2 million.

Principal Chief Bill John Baker announced that the Five Civilized Tribes – the Cherokee, Muscogee Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw and Seminole nations – recently “reorganized” in Washington, D.C., to work together on common issues facing the tribes.

The group will be known as the Five Civilized Tribes Inter-Tribal Council.

Baker also reported that a new warehouse recently opened at W.W. Hastings Indian Hospital in Tahlequah that is expected to provide “desperately needed space.”

“When we built W.W. Hastings, it was designed for 30,000 patient visits a year. Last year, they had over 330,000 patient visits,” he said. “Every foot of space that we can make available is that much more we can use to treat our Cherokee citizens.”

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Councilors seek mutual censure after dispute

Councilors Jodie Fishinghawk and Julia Coates get into a heated discussion allegedly resulting in one of them throwing water on the other.

BY TESINA JACKSON
Reporter

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. – Two Tribal Councilors who were involved in a Feb. 23 altercation have asked Council Speaker Tina Glory Jordan to censure the other.

Following a committee meeting at the Council House, Dist. 2 Councilor Jodie Fishinghawk and At-Large Councilor Julia Coates argued in an office that allegedly resulted in one councilor throwing water on the other.

Glory Jordan said after reviewing the CN Constitution and the council’s governing rules, she found that neither document addresses nor provides authority for the speaker to independently censure a councilor.

Censure is a formal expression of disapproval.

“In the rules of procedure for the council, Section III (B) does discuss councilor conduct, defines when a councilor is out of order and what punishment can be a consequence of being out of order, which is decided by the council,” Glory Jordan said.

Both councilors have filed assault charges with the Cherokee Nation Marshal Service after providing written statements.

According to Coates’ statement, the incident occurred after the Education and Culture Committee meeting with only she and Fishinghawk in the office.

Coates stated that she felt there was a threat of bodily harm implied in Fishinghawk’s statements and movements toward her. Coates informed Fishinghawk that she wasn’t going to back away to indicate that she wasn’t intimidated.



Jodie Fishinghawk



Julia Coates

“Councilor Fishinghawk said ‘I don’t care if you back away.’ She turned away from me and turned toward the door of the office. I said ‘I’m not going to back off. It appears you’re going to handle this like we are 13 years old.’ Councilor Fishinghawk turned around quickly and threw a cup of water in my face and said ‘damn right,’” according to Coates’ statement.

According to Fishinghawk’s statement, Coates asked her to step into the office where Coates began making accusations and other statements of a derogatory nature toward her. “The discussion with Councilor Coates quickly escalated to her raising her voice and continuing to make unfounded and baseless comments

toward me,” her statement read. “She totally lost all control of her emotions and in this fit of anger she threw a cup of water in my face.”

Marshal Shannon Buhl said the case is under investigation. Once done, the Attorney General’s Office will decide if to press charges.

Glory Jordan said the council should wait on any disciplinary action until proper procedures are completed and the attorney general issues a decision.

“While councilors may have strong opinions and disagreements with each other, it is in the best interest of the full council and individual council members to work together and get past those disagreements in order for both councilors to show how the council of the largest tribe can work together, work out their differences and continue to work for the good of the Cherokee Nation and its citizens,” she said.

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It is in the best interest of the full council and individual council members to work together.

– Council Speaker Tina Glory Jordan



Cherokee Nation citizen Mark R. Pierce, left, owner and operator of Native Stone Water Works, builds columns for an entry way at Kilheran's Lodge in Muskogee, Okla., with fellow CN citizens Shane Pitts, background, and John Weston. PHOTOS BY JAMI CUSTER/CHEROKEE PHOENIX

No job too big or small for Native Stone Water Works

BY JAMI CUSTER
Reporter

BRAGGS, Okla. – Cherokee Nation citizen Mark R. Pierce owns and operates Native Stone Water Works, a stone and landscape company.

Pierce said he started Native Stone Water Works in 2007. And like many small businesses, it's had its ups and downs. He said every year he's been able to keep his head above water but has to watch what he does financially.

"We do anything from landscaping with stone to retaining walls, entryways. And we have done a lot of underpinning with stone for elderly's trailers and build steps for them. We also do fireplaces, outdoor kitchens and stuff like that," he said. "We like to also help the little guy. No job is too small. We don't try to rip their head off on prices and we are fair."

Pierce's current project is at Kilharan's Lodge in Muskogee. He and two workers, also Cherokee, are building entryways into the lodge.

"We're kind of dressing those up...we're putting some waterfalls actually in the columns in the corners (of the entryway). We are also preparing the existing waterfalls that are out here."

Pierce said a project such as this can take up to a month, give or take, as long as not a lot of changes are made during the construction process and the weather is good.

Darren Kilpatrick, the owner of Kilharan's Lodge and Hamlin's El Toro in Muskogee, said he and Pierce have a five-year work project established and is glad to have Pierce doing the work. "He is a local guy that does a really good job."

He said Pierce is also building a "massive fireplace" for a new meeting and overflow room being built at Hamlin's El Toro.

Along with stonework and landscaping, Native Stone Water Works also supplies stone in any form from boulders to gravel to decorative stone. He said his company does it all from selling to installation.

Pierce said his business is also Cherokee Nation TERO-certified. "They (Tribal Employment Rights Office) have been wonderful and help you anyway they can. We have completed one TERO project and we're looking forward to doing a lot more."

Like many businesses, Pierce said he would like



Mark R. Pierce, owner and operator of Native Stone Water Works, says no job is too small or too big for his company and that he keeps his prices fair.

to achieve goals and expand. One way he wants to do that is incorporate art into his waterfalls and bubbler kits.

"We want to really install the authentic tradition that is already instilled in the Cherokee Nation and the tribe. We would like to tell a story of what our elders went through on the Trail of Tears through our water features, through the bubbler kits or maybe have different scenes of the famous Indians, Cherokee Indians," he said. "People still don't realize what trials the Cherokee Nation went through and how far they have come today."

For more information, call 918-348-6035 or email rockmnp@yahoo.com. There is also a Facebook page with photographs of his work at Mark Robert Pierce.

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CNCS gets \$5.7M Air Force contract

BY TESINA JACKSON
Reporter

CATOOSA, Okla. – After receiving a \$5.7 million contract to renovate and repair Facility 722 at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware, Cherokee Nation Construction Services is 50 percent done with the design phase.

"Dover AFB and CNCS have had a great business relationship over the last few years," said Rick Rogers, CNCS general manager. "The business relationship works well because the CNCS crew and our subcontractors consistently deliver quality work for our clients."

CNCS workers are expected to design and renovate all interior and exterior areas of the facility and construct a new main entrance canopy.

After the renovation design phase, CNCS is expected to start construction in April. CNCS

will design and repair existing facility systems affected by the renovation, a new fire suppression system and an integrated fire/mass notification system. CNCS will also be responsible for any abatement of asbestos, lead base paint and/or mold discovered during the design of the project.

"CNCS is developing other relationships with other large firms to provide this type of support in order to grow our portfolio of business," Cheryl Cohenour, president of Cherokee Nation Businesses' environmental and construction portfolio, said.

For the project, CNCS has teamed with engineer and construction company CH2M HILL, a Colorado-based company.

"CNCS has a long-standing relationship with CH2MHill where they support our efforts at numerous locations," she said.

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MONEY MATTERS

Is a vacation in your budget?

BY KELLIE MCKINNEY
Self-Sufficiency Counselor



Would you like to take the family on a vacation but think maybe your finances are just too tight? Making vacation plans fit into your budget is sometimes as stressful as not vacationing at all. However, there are ways to not only reduce the stress of planning a vacation, but greatly reduce the cost of the vacation itself. Planning a vacation on a budget takes a little time but is well worth the effort.

Here are some ideas on how to enjoy a family getaway without breaking the bank.

Reserve rooms with savvy

Book your motel room in advance. Many websites offer discounted rooms. By booking your room several days in advance you can greatly reduce your costs. Many websites offer you the opportunity to "bid" your own price, while other websites offer savings that are not available to non-Internet users.

Dine out at a discount

Dining out is another big vacation expense but can still be managed on a budget. Visit websites of restaurants and coupon sites to get coupons for your favorite restaurants. Most food chains offer printable online coupons.

You can also reduce the cost of your vacation by packing an ice chest full of drinks. Another idea is to drink water with your meals when you eat out. Assuming a family of four consumes four soft drinks a day and that soft drinks cost an average of \$1.79 each: $1.79 \times 4 = \$7.16$ plus tax. Take that amount and double it and you have almost \$15 per day that you saved on soft drinks alone. This equation clearly reveals how substituting water for soft drinks will help reduce the cost of your vacation.

Think local

Another idea is to vacation closer to home. Many community events, state parks and theme parks within your area offer a great vacation for less money than those vacation spots hundreds of miles away. Always check to see what's going on in your own backyard.

Look for ticket savings opportunities

Plan ahead and get tickets to events and theme parks before you leave home. You may be able to take advantage of off-season pricing or group discounts or just by buying the tickets a few weeks early. Many theme parks offer reduced entry costs when you purchase certain products. Companies that market soft drinks and other products often advertise 2-for-1 entry prices if you bring proof of purchase to the theme park.

These are just a few examples of how to save money while still enjoying a great family trip. When budgeting for a vacation, remember to plan ahead, surf the Internet for savings and be creative. Have fun and send us a postcard when you get there.

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CN down to its last original enrollee

Registration officials say Lula M. Hickey Hall is the last surviving original enrollee listed on the tribe’s by-blood Dawes Rolls.

BY TODD CROW
Reporter

CLAREMORE, Okla. – From 1898 to 1914, Cherokee Nation citizens young and old were listed by federal agents on the Dawes Rolls to help determine land allotments and equitable division of monies for CN citizens.

The rolls – which were divided by by-blood Cherokees, Shawnee and Delaware citizens and Freedmen citizens – were later used to determine Cherokee citizenship.

As the years went by, original enrollees have died, and according to the tribe’s Registration Department, Lula M. Hickey Hall, of Claremore, is the tribe’s last living by-blood original enrollee.

Justin Godwin, Registration’s administrative operations manager, said Hall is the only confirmed living original enrollee from the Dawes Rolls.

She lives in the Claremore Nursing Home, where she’s been since 1994.

At 107 years old, Lula has difficulty speaking and hearing, so her son, Kenneth Hall, 78, told the Phoenix her story.

Kenneth said Lula was born Sept. 29 1904, in what is now Mayes County and raised south of Pryor. She, her father and her three sisters were each given 80 acres of allotment land, which her father sold to move the family to Colorado, he said.

He said Lula later moved back to Oklahoma and married Kenneth’s father. They had five of their nine children while living in the Hulbert area, but later moved to Los Angeles.

“She was a good mother,” he said. “She was a good cook, very religious, and a yellow-dog democrat from day one. She raised us kids to respect hard work and be honest.”

He said when Lula was young it was unpopular for people to promote their Cherokee heritage.



Kenneth Hall sits with his mother, Lula, at the Claremore Nursing Home in Claremore, Okla. According to Cherokee Nation Registrtrtion, Lula M. Hickey Hall is thought to be the tribe’s last original enrollee of the Dawes Rolls. Displayed on the table is their family tree. TODD CROW/CHEROKEE PHOENIX

He said though she spoke Cherokee and learned of her culture within the boundaries of her home, her Cherokee identity was taken from her when she attended Catholic school, a period she spoke about rarely.

“When she was young, and even when I was down there, you didn’t go around bragging about being Cherokee. It’s changed that much,” he said. “She never, even though she tells us she was sent to school and I think she could speak Cherokee, she can understand it now, but she never spoke Cherokee to us kids and never said anything to us about our heritage until we got older.”

Kenneth said his mother was an important part of the Indian community, and that many people came to her whenever they were ill. Though her healing practices were more contemporary than traditional, he said she never turned away someone seeking help.

“She worked with us kids in the fields, and then she would come in and she would cook dinner and whatever, she’s a good

cook,” he said. “She worked hard all her life, and (with) nine kids, I understand what she had to do. She seen that we got an education and what have you.”

Kenneth said his father was away working most of the time, leaving Lula to raise the children. When her husband passed away in 1972, Lula left California and returned to Oklahoma, where she’s lived ever since.

For years, the CN provided a gathering for original enrollees at the Cherokee National Holiday, but Kenneth said his mother was unaware of the events.

However, when Lula turned 100, former Principal Chief Chad Smith as well as other CN officials visited her.

During the visit, they gifted Lula with items such as ceramic plates, cups and a blanket. Kenneth said tribal officials visited her again on her 105th birthday.

Whether or not Lula is the last original enrollee, the tribe is on the verge of losing that generation.

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MINOR CHEROKEES BY BLOOD			
Name	Roll No.	Name	Roll No.
Harris, Troy	1022	Hendricks, Nina	2
Harris, George	1171	Hendricks, Albert	655
Harris, Violet	1172	Hendricks, Nelson L.	443
Harris, Kate	4422	Hendricks, Lonie C.	1148
Harris, Dovie May	4718	Hendricks, Mamie E.	1149
Harris, Walter	4089	Hendricks, Arretta M.	1150
Harris, Martha	4089	Hendricks, Andy	3085
Harris, William	4089	Hendricks, Charles	2997
Christofer	4595	Hendricks, Cora May	4927
Harrison, Hazel Leon	39	Hendricks, Harvey S.	1513
Harrison, Loyd C.	140	Hendricks, Viola	2525
Harrison, Laura Bell	63	Hendricks, Thelma Golda	2526
Harrison, Wm. Preston	85	Hendricks, Lorena	1451
Harrison, Marguerite E.	1776	Hendricks, Evan Morris	1452
Harrison, Vivian M.	352	Hendricks, Charles A.	2015
Harrison, Maud Ellen	1181	Hendricks, Rachel Ella	4975
Harrison, Harry	3233	Hendricks, Warren D.	1536
Harrison, Mary	4222	Hendricks, Martin	4882
Harrison, Edward	1289	Hendricks, Opal L.	1673
Harrison, Geneva	3380	Hendricks, Cleo	1987
Hart, Willie W.	3391	Hendricks, Myra	229
Hart, Jay L.	1540	Hendricks, William L., Jr.	21
Hart, May O.	4343	Hendricks, Cleston L.	2226
Hart, Offe E.	4344	Hendricks, A. V.	4473
Hart, Elmer G.	1051	Henson, Claude W.	1444
Hart, John H.	3204	Henson, Amy	3650
Hart, Helen G.	3205	Henson, Eliza	1582
Hart, Charley	3280	Henson, Washington	4995
Hartman, Louis L.	4770	Hereford, Blanche May	2537
Hartman, Theodore R.	4771	Hern, William Herbert	1585
Hartness, Mineola	3673	Herod, William M., Jr.	4217
Hartness, Buster	3674	Herod, Clara C.	4218
Hartsock, Tedie	2524	Herod, Grace	4219
Hartley, Clara C.	4252	Herrin, James R.	3688
Harvey, Mamie Irene	4679	Hester, Russell Porter	1072
Hastings, Mayme Starr	1064	Hewlin, Nancy	3521
Hastings, Suwayna	1169	Hewlin, Snow	3521
Hastings, John Rogers, Jr.	1170	Hibbs, Marion Lester	2534
Hathcoat, Floyd E.	1153	Hibbs, Edna May	2535
Hathcoat, Thaddeus L.	1154	Hickey, Louis M.	3883
Hathcoat, Horace	2480	Hicks, Daniel Arthur	254
Hattton, Maude	281	Hicks, Floyd	2387
Hattton, Essie	282	Hicks, Fay Carol	748
Hause, Benjamin F.	612	Hicks, Vivian Alfreda	749
Hawke, Martha	3140	Hicks, Mary	3422
Hawke, Tom	4941	Hicks, Dovie	3423
Hawkins, William E.	789	Hicks, Mary Bell	1575
Hawkins, Martha S.	4262	Hicks, Willard M.	1596
		Hicks, Viola	2338

The name Lula M. Hickey is on Page 440 of the Cherokee Dawes Rolls in the Minor Cherokees By Blood section. Her name is on the lower right side of the page. COURTESY PHOTO

The population roll to determine citizenship in the Cherokee Nation was concluded in 1914 by the Dawes Commission and is referred to as the Dawes Roll. No one can be added to the roll. Because Congress closed the roll and declared it final, the Nation cannot have an active roll, so it maintains tribal citizenship and voter registration lists. The Nation bases citizenship strictly from linear descent from someone listed on the Dawes Roll. The United Keetoowah Band does as well, but limits citizenship to those with one-quarter Cherokee blood or more.

- A Cherokee Encyclopedia

When she was young...you didn’t go around bragging about being Cherokee.

– Kenneth Hall
Cherokee Nation citizen

Carson top U.S. Army attorney

BY STAFF REPORTS

WASHINGTON – Cherokee Nation citizen and former Oklahoma Rep. Brad Carson was sworn in as general counsel of the U.S. Army on Feb. 9.

Under Secretary of the Army Joseph W. Westphal hosted the swearing-in ceremony in honor of Carson, the 20th general counsel of the Army, in the Hall of Heroes at the Pentagon.

“The variety of experience that you bring to the Army is critical as we manage the department through these very challenging times,” Westphal said. “Our entire Army will benefit from your intellect and vast legal expertise.”

The Honorable Jeh C. Johnson, general counsel of the Department of Defense, administered the oath of office to Carson during the formal Pentagon ceremony. In his remarks, Carson spoke about his appreciation for the opportunity to represent the Army and his commitment to soldiers.

“I’m very humbled to serve in this position and will strive to maintain the faith of the American people and the Department of the Army,” he said.

As the general counsel, Carson, 44, serves as the legal advisor to the secretary of the Army and the chief legal officer for the Army. In addition, the general counsel serves as the Army’s designated

agency ethics official. In that capacity, he is responsible for management of the worldwide Army Ethics Program.

Carson previously served as a professor of business law at the University of Tulsa. He also served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 2001-05. On Sep.14, President Barack Obama nominated Carson to serve as the general counsel of the Army. The U.S. Senate confirmed Carson by unanimous consent on Dec.17.

A Rhodes Scholar, Carson was a White House Fellow from 1997-98 and worked as a special assistant to the defense secretary.

Carson gave up his seat in Congress in 2004 to launch an unsuccessful bid for the U.S. Senate.

A member of the U.S. Navy Reserve, in December 2008 he was deployed to Iraq and served as an intelligence officer there with the Army on active military duty. For this work, Carson received the Bronze Star.

Prior to his deployment, Carson was the president, CEO and business development director for Cherokee Nation Businesses. He joined CNB in 2005, following a one-year fellowship at the Harvard University Institute of Politics.

Upon his return from deployment in 2010, he was elected to the CNB board.

He and his wife Julie have one son, Jack David, and reside in Claremore.

Litefoot named NCAIED interim president

BY STAFF REPORTS

MESA, Ariz. – The National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development on Jan. 30 announced Cherokee Nation citizen Gary “Litefoot” Davis as its interim president and CEO, replacing Eric Trevan, a Match-E-Be-Nash-She Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians citizen.

Davis previously hosted the NCAIED Reservation Economic Summit and served on the NCAIED board of directors before being appointed interim president and CEO.

In announcing the selection of Davis, NCAIED Board Chairwoman Margo Gray Proctor said, “Mr. Davis, a citizen of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, brings with him over 20 years of vast national business experience, which includes small

business management and operations, corporate consulting, tribal government relations, non-profit operations and working with federal agencies and programs. We are confident that he will add tremendously to our organization.”

In addition to his national business experience and skills, Davis, also known as “Litefoot,” is a Native American entrepreneur, musical performer, actor, author and motivational speaker.

His entrepreneurial spirit has guided him in several business ventures throughout Indian Country and beyond. Davis founded Red Vinyl Records in 1992 and, under the label, has recorded 11 award-winning albums that are distributed throughout the world. Beyond music, he founded the Native Style clothing and accessory line in 2001.

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At-Large Tribal Councilor Jack Baker serves attendees at 2009 Cherokee Community of Central California picnic in Bakersfield. ARCHIVE PHOTO

COTTA connects at-large Cherokees to culture

Program workers face issues while dealing with at-large groups due to a disconnect from things Cherokee.

BY TODD CROW
Reporter

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. – The Cherokee Nation’s Community Organization Training and Technical Assistance Program sends trainers around the country to build “bridges” and connect the cultural and governmental epicenter to Cherokee citizens at-large. Rick Gassaway, COTTA Program manager, said the program began with a grant under former U.S. President George Bush’s “faith-based initiative.” The grant provided CN three years to work with community organizations, primarily within its 14-county jurisdiction. Employees trained those organizations in capacity building, functionality and organization skills to better meet the needs of their home communities.

“COTTA was a tribally funded initiative that took what we had learned from that three years and expanded on and tried to improve on those lessons learned,” Gassaway said. He said at the end of fiscal year 2007, former Principal Chief Chad Smith told him that the budget of the at-large activities were being moved to COTTA. Today, Gassaway said COTTA works with 22 organizations outside of the jurisdiction, including some in Texas, California, Oregon and Washington. “Those epicenters, I’ll call them, of organizing were

identified from places where there was a high interest in Cherokee history,” Gassaway said. “We’ve sent out people with stickball, basket weavers. We’ve sent out cultural presentations. All of those presentations were tools, not only just for the educational value that they bring, but they were tools to bring people together to help them develop community.”

Gassaway said at-large communities are primarily made up of CN citizens based on COTTA rules set, but include non-Cherokees. He added that his team sometimes faces issues while dealing with at-large organizations, mostly due to a “disconnect” from things related to the Cherokee culture.

Ryan Sierra, a COTTA technical assistance specialists, said the differences between living in the CN and living where at-large organizations are located are as “night and day.”

“You come here, you live Cherokee. You feel it. You understand it, and then you leave and you go out there, it’s gone,” Sierra said. “It’s not there. You can tell. When I go, I feel it.”

Several times a year, Sierra and coworkers travel to at-large organizations to reconnect those Cherokees who, he said, are removed from the culture.

“We come together to socialize, to gather, to fellowship, to learn,” Sierra said. “So everything we send out has Cherokee written on it, and is from a Cherokee perspective, and we just kind of bleed the knowledge into them so that they can hopefully live Cherokee for four hours while we’re there, but then again incorporate it into their daily lives.”

Sierra said each time COTTA visits those organizations, program workers do some kind of presentation showcasing cultural aspects of what it means to be a CN citizen, whether it is through guest speakers or activities.

For more information, Call Rick Gassaway at 918-207-4916 or Ryan Sierra at 918-207-4952.

Sierra and Gassaway agreed that COTTA’s primary goal is to provide at-large organizations with accurate information regarding the CN and its history and culture because they are either receiving misinformation or no information at all.

“A wise person, being my grandfather, once said, ‘Where a vacuum exists, people will fill that vacuum with their own information,’” Gassaway said. “So if someone has the desire to be Cherokee, yet they don’t have an understanding of what that is, they’re going to fill that vacuum with whatever information they can find that seems appropriate, whether that information actually is appropriate.”

Sierra said he recently went to Seattle, and after his meeting with the local organization, a Cherokee woman whose Cherokee identity had been hidden from her for most of her life approached him.

“She just kind of came up to me and said, ‘I just really don’t understand. What is the Trail of Tears?’ You know, when you sit there and you grew up here in Oklahoma, and you know exactly what it is, and you hear it all your life, and then you’re out there and somebody asks you that question, you’re just kind of dumbfounded for a moment.”

Gassaway said no two at-large groups are the same because they are influenced by their region, but that “uniqueness” is just part of what it means to be Cherokee.

“It’s not an exact science, but it is about meeting people where they’re at,” he said.

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Human Services offering youths summer opportunities

BY DILLON TURMAN
Reporter

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. – The Cherokee Nation Human Services Group Employment and Training Department has a limited number of summer job openings for youths between the ages of 14 and 21. Applications will be taken from April 23-May 18 at CN Field Operations Offices throughout the tribe’s 14-county jurisdictional area. Because of the limited number of slots, applicants are encouraged to apply early. Participants will begin their jobs on June 4 and continue through July 27.

To be eligible, applicants must reside within the 14-county jurisdictional, meet the Department of Labor income eligibility requirements and verify citizenship in a federally recognized tribe.

Priority for employment will be given to applicants 16-21 years of age; and applicants 14-15 years of age will be given priority to participate in Basic Skills Training.

Each applicant should contact the office nearest his or her residence for information. Documentation required includes proof of residence, Social Security card, Certificate Degree of Indian Blood card, school identification card, work permit if under 18 years of age, Selective Service registration if 18 years old and family income for six months immediately preceding the date of application. A parent or guardian must accompany applicants 17 years of age and under during the application process.

Participating in the summer programs have paid off for several CN officials, including Principal Chief Bill-John Baker, Employment Programs Director Jeff Vance and Career Literacy Manager George Roach.

“I participated in the internship program. I did it full-circle. I had

to help pay the bills when I was younger because my mother was a single parent,” Vance said. “So this program helped me develop a sense of responsibility.”

For more information contact the following office nearest you. For Bartlesville, call the first and third Monday of each month at 918-256-8595. This is the same number for Vinita. For Catoosa, call 918-266-5626 on Wednesday only. For Jay, call 918-253-4219. For Locust Grove, call 918-479-5807 or 918-479-5808. For Miami, call 918-256-8595 on the second Wednesday of each month. For Sallisaw, call 918-775-6226. For Stilwell, call 918-696-3124. For Sperry, call 918-288-6390. For Warner, call 918-463-3694 on Mondays. And for Tahlequah, call 918- 456-0671, ext. 2422.

The tribe also offers an Internship Program. Applicants must have a 3.0 GPA, be a CN citizen, be between the ages of 18 and 21 be able to communicate efficiently.

The first two weeks of the program is for educating participants on their culture and what it is like to work for the CN as well as affiliated businesses.

“Within the first two weeks, it is mandatory to come to Tahlequah for training and information. The first week we teach about our tribal government, take them through history courses and a few language courses,” Roach said. “Basically we just teach them all about our tribal government in the first week of training.”

Roach said in the second week, participants tour the Tribal Complex, Cherokee Nation Entertainment and all of the CN programs. He said after the initial training, participants are expected to job shadow for the remaining six weeks.

The program is eight weeks long and participants are paid for working a 40-hour week.

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CN offers Healing to Wellness Court for at-risk children

BY DILLON TURMAN
Reporter

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. – The Cherokee Nation offers a Healing to Wellness Court with hopes of bettering the lives of at-risk children by having them deal with their substance and/or alcohol abuse and pursue sobriety.

According to www.cherokee.org, the tribe’s Healing to Wellness Court is designed where culture and tradition are utilized in the treatment. It empowers participants to work through their substance abuse issues through counseling, accountability and supervision, the website states. The court also considers the participant’s family to be the foundation for success.

The court consists of four phases of treatment lasting from 12 to 18 months. Participants work with court advocates, the court team and the judge, who has full authority over decisions made related to the plan for each phase, incentives or sanctions.

Participants are expected to be honest and cease all active drug use and/or alcohol abuse. Upon entry to the program, a participant will succumb to

an alcohol/drug screening and assessment. Participants receive counseling, are monitored by a court advocate specializing in viewing the participant’s progress in school performance and attendance. After completing the program, participants are placed in an after-program to ensure they are executing their sobriety.

While in the program, the participants commit to community service, participate in cultural activities and other activities that build character. The court’s objective is to ensure a major improvement in the participants they seek to help and allow them to grow into successful adults by overcoming unhealthy habits.

“Our goal is to get the kids really involved with our community. We want them to build character and we know they will blossom into great adults,” Fran Sims, Healing to Wellness Court supervisor advocate, said.

Participants must reside within the Cherokee, Adair, Mayes and Delaware counties and be between ages 12-17 and citizens of a federally recognized tribe.

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Contract Health Services confusing to some

Some of the service’s rules and aspects can be difficult to follow to some patients.

BY JAMI CUSTER
Reporter

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. – A function of the Indian Health Service, Contract Health Services is a specialty care for both inpatient and outpatient procedures and services for eligible Native Americans. However, Deborah Smoke, Cherokee Nation W.W. Hastings Hospital patient benefit coordinator, said she sees several people daily who are confused about CHS and what it offers.

What is Contract Health Services?
According to the IHS website, medical and dental care provided at an IHS or tribal health care facility is called direct care. CHS is for medical and dental care provided away from an IHS or tribal health care facility.
The site also states that CHS is not an entitlement program and a referral does not imply the care will be paid.
Bret Hayes, the tribe’s CHS director, said each year part of the tribe’s health budget goes to CHS, which was designed for citizens living in Indian Country.
“For a patient that uses our services in general, there is no co-pay or deductible or anything like that. If they have insurance, be it Medicare-Medicaid, then whatever we provide, we provide and then we basically write off the co-pay,” Hayes said. “If we bill \$8,000 for a four-day hospital stay and their co-pay was \$1,000, as far as Medicaid goes, they don’t even have to pay that. That’s a write off. That’s how it works for the bulk of things.”

Who is eligible for Cherokee Nation’s Contract Health Services?
According to the IHS website, If IHS is requested to pay then a patient must meet the residency and notification requirements, be a medical priority and use alternate resources. However, there are no income guidelines for the service.
Hayes said to use the tribe’s CHS a patient must be a CN citizen, live in the tribe’s boundaries and have a medical need.

Specialty areas where Contract Health Services is necessary:
Cardiology: the study of the heart and its functions in health and disease
Nephrology: the branch of medical science that deals with the kidney
Neurosurgery: surgery of the brain or other nerve tissue
Neurology: the science of nerves and the nervous system, especially of the diseases affecting them
Oncology: the study of cancer
Rheumatology: the study and treatment of rheumatic diseases
Dermatology: the branch of medicine dealing with the skin and its diseases

What to do if a patient is billed?
Hayes said most times patients are billed by the provider of services. After the patient brings the bill to CHS, it’s reviewed to see if there is a PO (purchase order) in the system so that CHS can get a claim back from the service provider.
“It’s always good to know that if a patient is in the hospital, say five days there is going to be anywhere from three to 30 different claims on that bill. Say radiology, etc., a lot of times that bill says that we need, for example, a PO from Tulsa X-ray,” Hayes said. “If they come out of Hastings then just take it back to the Hastings Contract Health Office. The plan is to have the people deal with the offices geographically closest to them.”

Hayes added that if a patient receives a bill they should not get upset. But if a patient receives a second bill then the patient should call CHS.
“Let’s say we turn it (the bill) into accounting (on) Friday. We are not going to get the check back from finance until the following Monday. It can be easily three weeks until a bill is reimbursed,” he said.

Notifying Contract Health Services about ambulatory/emergency services.
Hayes said this is an IHS policy the tribe’s CHS follows although the notification time can be extended if there are extenuating circumstances.
“This is an example. I’m watching the Super Bowl and I get overly excited and I think I have a heart attack and they call an ambulance and they take me to Muskogee Regional Hospital. Then I’ve got 72 hours to call and report that to set up an emergency call-in referral (via CHS),” he said.
He added that after CHS is notified and an emergency referral is created, CHS sends a denial letter and an appeals form to the patient.

“In the denial letter it says do this, this and this. After they tell me their story I tell them to write it down word for word,” Hayes said.
He said CN doctors would review medical records and compare it with the statements of what happened in the emergency.
“We review the records to make sure it was an emergency. If you’ve had a stomach problem for seven days and couldn’t stand it and finally went to the ER, we may not pay for that because you could have went to Hastings and you could have went to the clinic. And that happens frequently.”

Patients have the right to appeal a denial or bill from Contract Health Services.
Hayes said after running the numbers for approval through CHS, the department approves nearly 96 percent of the referrals. So 4 percent can be appealed and 76 percent of those that get appealed get approved. Patients can appeal a denial or bill up to three times.
CHS reviews anywhere from 950 to 1,000 medical



Dr. James Madison, left, of Tahlequah Medical Group, examines Mary Drake, a diabetic patient from Muskogee, during her checkup. Madison, who is a nephrologist and hypertension specialist, receives nearly 20 referrals a month from Cherokee Nation Contract Health Services. JAMI CUSTER/CHEROKEE PHOENIX

referrals a week, Hayes said. He added that if at all possible people should get health insurance because if a patient receives a referral it does not mean their bill will be paid.
“However, if it is approved then we will pay it. If it is an emergency referral than we can’t guarantee a payment. If you don’t tell us about a visit or a referral that’s when it becomes a problem for Contract Health,” he said. “Generally, if we stay within our network then the doctors in our area will know to contact us for payment.”
Hayes said a patient should follow up with a CHS specialist or provider after receiving a referral.
“The provider, regardless of what you will do, will send us a letter,” he said.
If a patient receives a denial letter, he or she can appeal and a team of physicians from CN Health will review it.
“Every denial letter we send has the appeal form with it and it has it laid

out (what to do) on there. They respond back with the appropriate records and the narrative and the medical review board reviews them once a week,” he said.

Contract Health Services’ areas
Rogers and North Tulsa counties: Claremore Indian Hospital
South Tulsa and Wagoner counties: Claremore Indian Hospital for outpatient procedures and Muskogee Creek Nation for inpatient procedures
Cherokee, Adair and Sequoyah counties: W.W. Hastings Indian Hospital
Muskogee County: Muskogee Creek Nation for inpatient procedures and W.W. Hastings Indian Hospital for outpatient procedures
Washington, Nowata, Mayes and Delaware counties: W.W. Hastings Indian Hospital for outpatient procedures and Claremore Indian Hospital for inpatient procedures
Ottawa County: Miami Indian Health Center
Craig County: Claremore Indian Hospital
McIntosh County: Muskogee Creek Nation

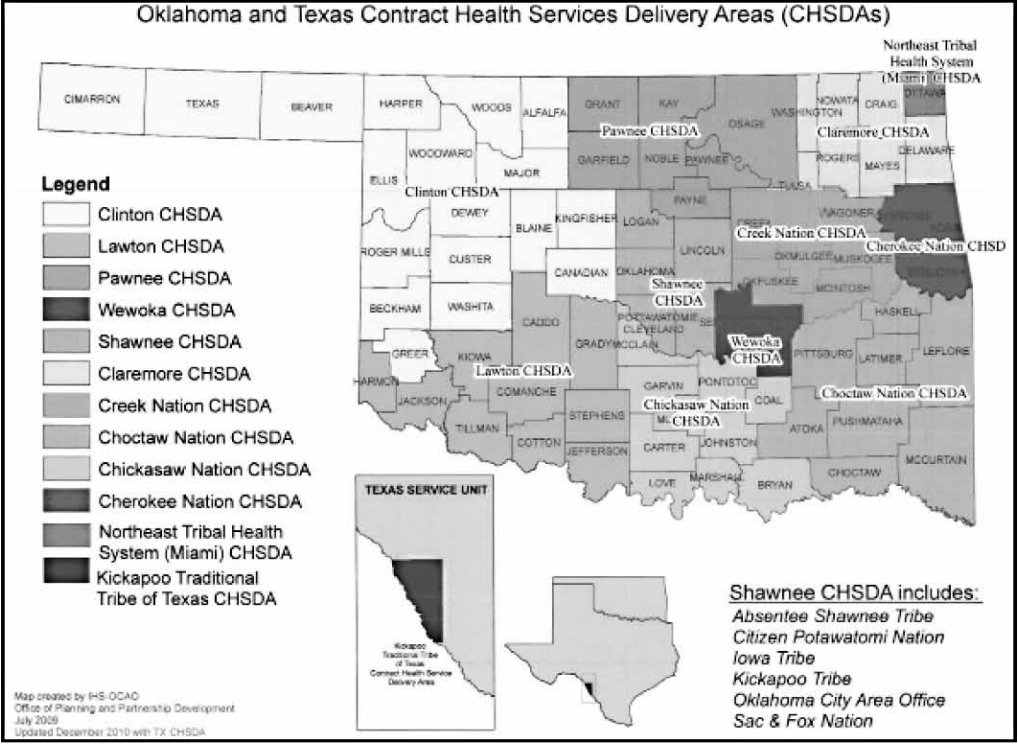
Hayes said referrals received from clinics or hospitals that are not in the patient’s service delivery area are sent back to the service area of the patient’s residence and will be considered for approval in that service area.
“The whole state of Oklahoma is considered one big Indian Country. There are 28 different jurisdictions in Oklahoma for Contract Health delivery areas. We have a mixture of about eight jurisdictions. The core is around Hastings and other hospitals. (Highway) 412 is the divider,” Hayes said. “If a patient lives in Muskogee County and they have an inpatient procedure, maybe they go to Hastings and then they go to Tulsa. The Creek (Nation) has that jurisdiction.”

How do I contact CHS?
For questions concerning CHS, call your local service area health facility and ask for Contract Health Services.

jami-custer@cherokee.org
918-453-5560

For a patient that uses our services in general, there is no co-pay or deductible or anything like that.

– Bret Hayes
CHS director



A map of the Oklahoma and Texas Contract Health Services Delivery Areas.
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Little Miss Cherokee advocates for children’s hospital

Cierra Fields uses her Cherokee Nation crown to call for contributions to St. Francis Hospital.

BY DILLON TURMAN
Reporter

TULSA, Okla. – Little Miss Cherokee Cierra Lynn Fields is a big advocate for donations and contributions to be made to the children of the St. Francis Children’s Hospital.

She passionately stumps for the hospital because she knows how many of the children in it feel. The little Cherokee ambassador is herself a cancer survivor.

“I had melanoma. Luckily it was Stage 1, so it was cured quickly,” she said.

Cierra’s mother, Terri, said most kids don’t even think about getting melanoma.

“They just want to play out in the sun and do all sorts of activities, and most of the time having little to no sun block on,” Terri said.

Cierra said through her struggle, she succumbed to a sense of compassion for the children at St. Francis, saying that most of the children are confined to their bedrooms with little to nothing to do.

“Most of the kids have to stay in their room. They have TVs, but that gets boring after a while.”

Cindy Bushnell, a St. Francis Health Systems account representative, said the hospital houses 119 kids a day on average. The number fluctuates due to children getting to go home because they have overcome their illnesses, she said.

Cierra said because of the large number of children in the hospital, there is a demand for activities, crafts and games. And that’s why the Little Miss Cherokee encourages people to donate and contribute to the children’s needs. She said she plans to help compile awareness for the needed provisions, including placing a drop box outside of the Cherokee First to collect materials at the first of May until the end of May.

She said some of items in need are crayons, coloring books, hairbrushes, card games, stickers, glue and glue sticks, Play-Doh and basic craft items.

Cierra began her compassion-based mission this past Christmas while visiting the kids at St. Francis and spending time with them. As an ambassador, CN officials condone Cierra’s work and encourage people to donate.

“There are over 100 kids that don’t necessarily have the proper provisions. If one person were able to donate just one thing it would make a difference,” Terri said.

Cierra said she hopes to collect enough materials for all the kids to enjoy at the hospital and seeks to make their stay more enjoyable.

dillon-turman@cherokee.org
918-207-4975



Little Miss Cherokee Cierra Fields sits near the statue of Saint Francis outside the Tulsa, Okla., hospital that bears his name.
DILLON TURMAN/CHEROKEE PHOENIX

For more information, visit <http://saintfrancischildrensfoundation.org>.

DIETITIAN’S CORNER

Spring clean your way of eating

BY RACHELLE HOLMAN
Registered Dietitian



I don’t know the history behind it, but I’ve always heard of “spring cleaning.” One look at my house and you’ll know that thought quickly changed directions this year. I began thinking about my kitchen and ways that as a family we could clean up our way of eating.

“Clean Eating” is not a new term. A Google search and you’ll find many books and cookbooks promoting the premise of eating and preparing foods the way nature intended or as close to its natural state as possible. For many people, this transformation would be a radical change. Here are the “baby steps” that can get you started.

1. Increase the fresh fruits and vegetables in your diet. This will become easier as the season changes and gardens come in. Identify your family’s favorites and

- start there. Buy in bulk when on sale and freeze the extras. Grow your own or visit the farmers market.
2. Limit processed meat products such as hot dogs, luncheon meats and canned meats. Meat products tend to be the most expensive items on our grocery list. Make sure that you are using your money to buy only the best and freshest meats without added solutions. Look into buying fresh meats from a local farmer or co-op. Dried beans are another great “clean” protein source.
3. Read your ingredients list. Are there items on this list that you can’t pronounce or identify? Do you really need partially hydrogenation oils in your peanut butter? Choose foods with the shortest list that limit additives.
4. Leave the “junk” food at the grocery store. The No. 1 basic principle of healthy eating is that you will eat what is available to you. Having chemical-filled snack cakes at home may prove too tempting when trying to make healthy changes. No one (even kids or grandkids) need these types of foods. I’d far prefer that my patients make

- a homemade batch of cookies using quality ingredients over eating a packed item made with questionable ones.
5. Avoid drinks with multiple ingredients, flavors and colors. Water, 100-percent juices and low-fat milks should be the beverages of choice.
5. Reduce exposure to toxins such as bisphenol A (BPA) and phthalates. These chemicals are found in food packaging material such as plastic containers, aluminum can liners and microwave popcorn bags. Growing evidence suggests that these toxins may disrupt hormones that control fat cells.
6. Cook more from scratch. Start with recipes such as pancakes, cornbread, popcorn, pasta sauces and salad dressings. Did you know that it takes the same number of steps to prepare cornbread from a packaged mix as from scratch?

It doesn’t require a kitchen overhaul, just a shift towards foods in their natural state, to improve your overall health.

Councilor questions Claremore Indian Hospital’s services

BY WILL CHAVEZ
Senior Reporter

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. – Dist. 4 Tribal Councilor Dick Lay is concerned about the lack of a magnetic resonance imaging machine at the Claremore Indian Hospital and how Contract Health Services are processed at the hospital.

In a letter to the Cherokee Phoenix, Lay stated that a MRI machine was delivered to the hospital nearly a year ago but has not been unpacked. He wrote the machine remains unused while costly MRI services for patients are contracted out via the facility’s strained Contract Health Services.

The Indian Health Service runs the hospital unlike W.W. Hastings Hospital in Tahlequah, which the Cherokee Nation operates. However, the CN does have a share in the Claremore facility because the facility serves CN citizens in the northern half of the tribe’s jurisdiction.

Lay questioned Claremore Service Unit Director George Valliere about the MRI machine during the council’s Health Committee meeting on March 12.

Valliere said the machine needs a room to itself and that construction designs for the room are now 65 percent complete, which allows him to bid the project to construction companies.

He said the bids would be reviewed and a contract awarded soon in hopes of having the room for the machine by the end of the year.

When asked by the Cherokee Phoenix about the MRI issue, Valliere said he could not answer questions and inquires would need to be sent to the IHS Oklahoma City office.

An IHS public relations representative in Oklahoma City said questions about the issue would have to be sent to an office in Washington, D.C.

Lay said he understood the MRI machine needs a, “segregated” room and a trained radiologist to operate it, but the process should have been handled better.

“A year later we still don’t have a

person (radiologist) hired for it. We at the Cherokee Nation had a \$48 million carryover in health this past year. I think we can build the room and hire someone to run it,” he said. “I’m not faulting anybody. I’m just saying if the Claremore Indian Hospital wanted it (MRI machine) they should have realized it was going to take more funding.”

Lay added that about half of the CN citizens living in the tribe’s 14-county jurisdiction have to rely on the Claremore facility for inpatient health care, which is underfunded by the IHS. The CN recently allocated 5 percent more of Cherokee Nation Businesses dividends to health care, which may alleviate some of the strain on the hospital, Lay said.

Complex health procedures not available at the hospital are contracted out to other health facilities that can perform the procedures. However, sometimes patients are denied contract health referrals due to a lack of funding or must wait months for a referral, he said.

As an example, Lay said he knows a Claremore Indian Hospital patient who waited nearly four months for a referral to have a stint placed in his heart.

“This is how things have been working. A heart stint, they tell me, is a fairly simple procedure anymore,” he said. “If you’ve got to wait three or four months on a contract referral out of Claremore for some types of cancer, that may kill you. Like I said, half the Cherokee Nation is going through this.

“We spend 60 percent of our budget on health, and it’s probably the most important and most obvious things we do for our people,” Lay added. “We need to figure out why Claremore’s contract health rate is so slow and so low. Is it funding or incompetence or a combination of both? I don’t know.”

Valliere said he couldn’t answer questions about the hospital’s Contract Health Services without IHS clearance.

will-chavez@cherokee.org
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Cherokee National Treasure Anna Belle Mitchell dies

BY WILL CHAVEZ
Senior Reporter

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. – Cherokee National Treasure Anna Belle (Sixkiller) Mitchell, who is often given credit for retrieving and rescuing the lost knowledge of making Cherokee pottery, died March 3 in Vinita. She was 85.

Mitchell was designated a Cherokee National Treasure in 1982 for reviving traditional, hand-built pottery among the Cherokee and for sharing her knowledge of pottery-making with others.

Cherokee potter Jane Osti, who mentored under Mitchell, called Mitchell a trailblazer for the research work she did in the late 1960s and early 1970s on the pottery methods and designs used by Native people who once lived in the Southeastern United States, including the ancestors of the Cherokee.

In 1967, Mitchell began creating objects from clay that she and her husband Bob found in a pond near their Vinita home. In an interview with the Cherokee Phoenix in 2001, she said there was no guide for creating Cherokee pottery, so she decided to reach back into the past with research to again create Southeastern and Eastern Woodlands-style pottery.

“I knew Cherokees hadn’t really done pottery since the removal. There wasn’t anyone doing it or people who knew how to do it, but I thought surely it could be done again,” she said.

The Cherokee people’s pottery-making knowledge was lost through assimilation, Mitchell discovered. And even after all her research, she said she wasn’t certain of what true Cherokee designs looked like.

However, she knew her designs were of the Southeast and Eastern Woodlands, and when she realized Southeastern pottery making was in danger of being lost, she became determined to preserve it.

“I believe without art you don’t have culture and without culture you don’t have art,” she said. “I want students to learn the culture when I am teaching them. I insist they learn it. They all have.”

Mitchell said there were times when she nearly walked away from making pottery, but “kept getting pulled back into it.” She continued searching for information on Southeastern Native peoples. A break came in 1973 during her first public showing while at the Indian Trade Fair in Tulsa. At the fair she was introduced to fellow Cherokee Clydia Nahwooksy, director of the Indian Awareness Program for the Smithsonian Institution Folklife Festival, who encouraged her to continue her work. Through this meeting Mitchell gained access to the Smithsonian archives.

Later she found the book “Sun Circles and Human Hands” while researching at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. This book provided background and knowledge on how to create Southeastern pottery and is still used by Cherokee artists.

Eventually, Mitchell became an authority on Southeastern and Eastern Woodlands art. She learned Southeastern art had been dormant long before Cherokee people were removed to Indian Territory in the 1830s. This was likely because the tribe had assimilated with white settlers much earlier than tribes in the West.

Mitchell created her pottery in a studio near her home and fired her pieces behind her studio using wood in an area



Master Cherokee potter and Cherokee National Treasure Anna Mitchell instructs a student how to finish a clay pot during a 2006 pottery class in Tahlequah, Okla.
ARCHIVE PHOTO

surrounded by bricks. The clay pieces were placed on a metal sheet above the fire for an entire day and hardened over the fire and gradually cooled as the fire diminished.

“I try to follow as much as possible what my ancestors did,” she said in 2001.

She decorated her pottery with leaves and other ornaments, which are placed on the outside of her pottery before firing. She also created unique clay stamps that she used to stamp different designs before firing.

She received numerous awards during the years and continued to show her work in area art shows, such as the annual Cherokee Art Market.

Mitchell was born in Jay on Oct. 16, 1926, to Iva Louise (Owens) Sixkiller and

Houston Sixkiller. Her three daughters, Victoria Vazquez and husband Bruce of Welch; Betty Mitchell and husband Bennett Parnes, of Englewood, Co.; and Julie McPeck and husband Mark of Crescent; 12 grandchildren and 19 great grandchildren, survive her. Four sisters, Pat Black, Ruth Bryant, Josie Jones and Priscilla Bell, and four brothers, Joe Hilderbrand, Johnny, Kenneth and Dennis Sixkiller, also survive her.

Donations can be made to the Cherokee Nation Foundation c/o Anna Belle Mitchell Memorial Scholarship Fund, 115 E. Delaware, Tahlequah, OK 74464.

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918-207-3961

Tilley reflects on time leading CHC

BY WILL CHAVEZ
Senior Reporter

PARK HILL, Okla. – After five years of leading the Cherokee Heritage Center, Executive Director Carey Tilley has left to work closer to his hometown by taking a job with the Cultural Heritage Museums of York County, S.C.

There, Tilley will help manage a system of museums with the most well known being Brattonsville, a 775-acre Revolutionary War site.

On March 3, the eve of his last day at the CHC, Tilley spoke about the accomplishments he and the CHC staff made during his tenure. He said when he arrived in 2006 he shared a vision that a lot of Cherokee people had for the CHC.

“It’s simply to tell the Cherokee story, tell it well, tell it accurately and then make sure we protected the artifacts, the archival material that represented that story, that illustrated that story.”

The CHC had just entered into a partnership Cherokee Nation when Tilley began at the CHC, and he said he began addressing the funding challenges the center faced. During his time as executive director, much-needed improvements were made to the grounds and the museum.

“The funding of the Cherokee Nation was critical for reaching some of the goals the historical society had, and so we had to find a way to make that partnership work,” he said. “I think working with our partners and our incredible staff, we’ve been able to accomplish quite a bit over the last five years.”

He said the CHC – which consists of the museum, Ancient Village, Adam’s Corner Rural Village and archives – no longer faces the financial challenges it did five years ago. Tilley said his proudest accomplishments with the CHC are the new Ancient Village, which is being built, and growing the center’s net assets by 250 percent.

Tilley said he is “excited” about the new Ancient Village being built adjacent to the current one. He said



Former Cherokee Heritage Center Executive Director Carey Tilley stands with his family in the center of a friendship dance performed in his honor by Cherokee citizens on March 3 in Park Hill, Okla.
WILL CHAVEZ/CHEROKEE PHOENIX

90 percent of its funding is in place and the village should be complete by September.

“I feel good about the staff that’s here, that they are united behind the mission,” he said. “I think we have the raised the bar since I’ve been here on what’s to be expected out of the heritage center. We definitely have found a way to work towards professional museum standards. At the same time we have set a standard for financial stability, being in the black every year I’ve been here, and I look to see that to continue after I leave.”

He said he and the staff have also found “innovative” ways to tell the Cherokee story, with the new Ancient Village being one of those ways. Thanks to information obtained by more recent archeological studies, that part of the Cherokee story will be told with more detail and accuracy, Tilley said.

Ryan Mackey, who led a March 3 friendship dance in honor of Tilley, said Tilley focused on preserving and promoting the Cherokee culture while he oversaw the CHC.

“We’re happy for him, but we couldn’t help but feel sad that he’s going to be leaving. We didn’t want him to get out of here without us showing in some way a little bit of our appreciation for the job he has done for our Cherokee people,” he said.

Tilley said he is also proud of is being able to unite the staff to carry

out the CHC mission.

“I think when I look back, I’ll think most fondly of the talents of the people around me and how that was able to translate into increased visitor numbers and at the same time we told the story in a much more accurate and professional way,” he said.

He said the move to South Carolina puts him closer to where he grew up in Georgia, which will allow his children to see their grandparents more often.

“It’ll be good being back in that area,” he said. “I’ve certainly enjoyed my time with the Cherokee people, and I’ve considered this home for the last five years.”

He said he has new appreciation of Cherokee culture after hearing numerous stories during the past five years and working with and interacting with Cherokee people. He said he plans to continue his study of Cherokee culture and history.

“I have a new dimension that really helps me put faces with the stories,” Tilley said. “Meeting people like Marion Hagerstrand and John Ketcher and having a chance to sit down with them and hear their stories, you really get an understanding of the Cherokee past. That’s something I will take with me.”

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918-207-3961

Ethnobotany Conference slated for May 24-25

BY JAMI CUSTER
Reporter

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. – The second Cherokee Nation Ethnobotany Conference will begin at 10:30 a.m. on May 24-25 in the Tribal Council Chambers at the Tribal Complex.

Sponsored by the tribe’s history course and Natural Resources Department, the program will feature Clint Carroll and Tony and Carra Harris. Carroll has a doctorate of philosophy in American Indian Studies, while Tony and Carra Harris are master gardeners from Marietta, Ga.

All three presenters are CN citizens.

Carroll will present “What We Know about Things that Live in the Wild: Cherokee Environmental Knowledge through Time.” His discussion will highlight the contemporary challenges facing those who strive to perpetuate Native American environmental knowledge and practices, Cathy Monholland, CN history and cultural curriculum specialist, said.

“Cherokees are familiar with many of these challenges, from restrictions on access to forest resources to the nagging sense that recent generations are not learning the old ways in the manner that many of our elders did,” Carroll said.

Monholland said Carroll would put his information into historical context to show how Cherokees got here and where they might go in the future.

“Discussing Cherokee environmental knowledge as it developed in the southeastern homeland and how it transferred to Cherokee land in what became Oklahoma,” she added.

Tony and Carra Harris have one of the largest collections of plants that are significant to Cherokees in the United States, Monholland said. She added that they became interested in Cherokee plants after taking the Cherokee history course in Rome, Ga.

Tony will present “If Plants Could Talk: A Cherokee Relationship,” in which he discusses how plants were used prior to the Trail of Tears for medicine, food, shelter, weapons and tools as well as for ceremonial purposes, Monholland said.

“Carra will then present ideas and resources on how to start your own Cherokee garden. They will also have some of these plants with them to help illustrate their comments,” she said.

On the conference’s second day, there will be a nature walk if the weather permits. Participants will travel by bus from the Restaurant of the Cherokees to Rocky Ford, a Delaware County community.

“The walk itself should take approximately two hours, and participants should not mind getting wet. On the return to Cherokee Nation, we will stop for lunch,” she said.

The events are free and open to the public. Transportation for the nature walk will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, call 918-453-5389.

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918-453-5560

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Barbara Neal, a Health Educator with the Cherokee Nation Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program shared some information about Inflammatory Breast Cancer (IBC) with Sequoyah Schools students. IBC which is a very aggressive form of breast cancer that can affect teenage girls.



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Stress Relief Exercises

Physical exercise is one of the most effective ways of relieving stress. Exercising the body regularly is very effective in managing stress, on its own or as a part of a stress management plan. Getting into better shape improves your mental health as well as your physical health. When it comes to stress management, every little bit of exercise counts. Don't think if you can't commit to a stringent fitness routine that it's useless. It's not. What motivates people to do more of something is to do little of something.

Exercises to Suit Everyone

From gentle stretching exercises to keeping up in a physically demanding aerobics class, stress relief can be achieved through a wide range of activities. Some people enjoy the solitude of walking alone. Other people need the stimulation of interacting with others, whether walking in a group or participating in a yoga class or other fitness class, or playing a sport such as tennis, racquetball, etc. Interacting with other people during exercise can provide additional stress relief.

Exercise in a Natural Environment Provides Additional Benefits

Obviously it is more relaxing to walk along a nature trail than to walk along a busy street. Natural surroundings trigger relaxation responses deep in the brain. Even mentally picturing being surrounded by mountains, trees or watching the waves roll in at the beach can have this calming effect.

*Exposure to daylight also has positive effects on mood - another benefit of exercising outdoors.



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Sharing important health information with our communities



Grand View School hosted a Parenting Fair that highlighted physical activity and parent involvement as a way to help fight off childhood obesity. One of the "biggest" visitors at the Parenting Fair was the OSU Telehealth Bus that offered basic wellness checks.



Greg Bilby, a Public Health Educator with the Cherokee Nation Comprehensive Cancer Control Program shares information with students from Indian Capital Technology Center in Tahlequah on how processed food can contribute to kidney failure, weakened bones and certain types of cancer. The culprit is phosphates in which there are 65 forms used in processed food, especially junk food.



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WINGS RACE SCHEDULE 2012

DATE	NAME OF RACE	LOCATION
April 14	Muskogee Run 15K & 5K	Muskogee
April 21	Will Rogers Memorial 5K	Claremore
April 28	Roland Run	Roland
May 5	Redbird Smith 5K	Sallisaw
May 12	Strawberry Festival	Stilwell
May 19	5K Run for Wellness	Muskogee
June 8	Moonlight 5K (evening)	Collinsville
June 16	Beat the Heat 5K	Salina
June 23	Port to Fort Adventure Race & 5K	Muskogee

*Races highlighted in yellow are Wings Race Series Races, which are sanctioned and organized by Cherokee Nation/Healthy Nation.

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