

# CREEK CORNER

ISSUE 16

The official magazine of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians



Visit OWA for the  
**Rainbow Run**  
Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>

APRIL 2023

# TRIBAL LEADERS

The mission of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians is to protect our inherent rights as a sovereign American Indian Tribe, promote our culture and beliefs, to help our Tribal Members achieve their highest potential, maintain good relations with other Indian tribes and units of government, acquire, develop and conserve resources to achieve economic and social self-sufficiency, and ensure that our people live in peace and harmony among themselves and with others.

We bring a reservoir of expert knowledge to secure the health, education and well-being of all Tribal Members today and in the future. We act as role models who go beyond the call of duty and leaders who instill confidence in the fairness and wisdom of government decisions and actions.



Top Row (left to right):

*Stephanie Bryan (Tribal Chair), Robert McGhee (Vice Chair), Charlotte Meckel (Secretary), Amy Gantt (Treasurer)*

Bottom Row (left to right):

*At-Large Council Members: Dewitt Carter, Candace Fayard, Sandy Hollinger, Keith Martin, Arthur Mothershed*

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Grab your easter basket & join us for

## Bunnies & Baskets

Saturday, April 8th

10 am - 6 pm

Get your picture with  
the easter bunny!

More info on page 18.

Editor:  
Katie Mothershed  
akmothershed@pci-nsn.gov



# DIGITAL ARCHIVIST CHAD PARKER

## A MAN YOU SHOULD KNOW

“An easy way that I like to explain my job to my kids is preserving the Tribe’s history, from old documents... from paper formats to digital formats, so they are never lost,” Digital Archivist Mr. Chad Parker said to Dr. Deidra Suwanee Dees in his Oral History Program interview on January 27, 2023. He is one of our six-member-team of Records Warriors who take care of Tribal records.

Records Coordinator Ms. Cheryl Thrower, served as our videographer who documented the interview on video. Ms. Thrower holds the same position that Ms. Ellen O’Barr held in Archives, and who was employed for more than thirty-one years at the Tribe.



“You deal with the past; you have to deal with the present—history happens every day. So we try to do a good job of documenting it as it happens,” he said. “It takes teamwork.”

This oral history interview documents the history of the Office of Archives and Records Management pursuant to the Records Management Ordinance (TCO 2010-004; 1.2.1.F) which states, “All departments shall document their administrative history.”

It is Dr. Dees’ responsibility under the Records Management Ordinance to manage Tribal records “to ensure their proper preservation” (TCO 2010-004; 2.1). Conducting and recording this oral history interview is one way we can insure the proper preservation of historical data that comes from the vantage point of a Tribal employee.

Mr. Parker said he first started working full-time for the Tribe in the Recreation Department in 2012, after working part-time for a few years at Creek Indians Enterprises Development Authority. “I managed all the sports programs,” he said. “Anything with a ball—we did it!”

Mr. Parker began working in the Office of Archives and Records Management in November of 2019. “I’ve always had an interest in the history of the Tribe. I did not feel I knew everything that I maybe should have known, so this gave me an opportunity to venture into that side—the history of the Tribe—learning as much as I could,” he said.



*Ms. Cheryl Thrower video records Mr. Chad Parker's oral history interview for our Oral History Program  
Photograph by Dr. Deidra Suwane Dees*

Before becoming the Tribe's first and only Digital Archivist, Mr. Parker said he grew up in Mississippi, being raised by his parents, Mike Parker and Linda Gayle Rolin Parker. Throughout his childhood, he said he visited relatives in the Poarch community including his uncle, former Chairman Buford L. Rolin, and his maternal grandparents Tracy Rolin and Girlie Walker Rolin.

He said his grandparents were caretakers of Saint Anna's Episcopal Church which included maintenance of the building. "My grandad rung the bell every Sunday morning for church," he said. "Everybody that you talk to from back in those times remembers that bell ringing—on Sunday morning it would ring. My grandmother played the organ for the church for years."

Mr. Parker spoke fondly about his grandparents whose collection he digitized and donated to the Tribe. "I was going through my mother's attic. I found his [grandfather's] old pipe that he used to smoke." He said he found medicine bottles and over 350 pictures. "He loved his pictures."

Mr. Parker was awarded the Certificate of Recognition for going above and beyond the

call of duty. In 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic when Tribal employees had to work from home, he took his digitization equipment home and digitized his grandfather's pictures—a real treasure for the Tribe.

What exactly does digitization mean? It turns images on paper into digital images through an electronic document imaging system which provides standards for accuracy and durability of Tribal records pursuant to the Records Management Ordinance (TCO 2010-004; 9.2). Mr. Parker utilizes imaging equipment of different sized scanners for standard-sized photographs and for oversized documents. He uses a German-made machine called the Zeutschel Picture Machine to make digital images of books such as old bibles and large newsprint.

He explained that this imaging system provides higher definition and higher resolution. "You get a better quality of pictures," he said.

He uses facial recognition computer software which is "a fast research method for us," he said. He has placed over 150,000 photographs into the software program. "I tag the person who is in the

photo. It searches every photo that I have ever put in there.” He provides this data to patrons.

Our team likes making acquisitions of pictures we have never seen before. “I believe there are pictures out there of Calvin and Joyce McGhee that we have never seen,” he said.

Mr. Parker encourages donors to schedule an appointment to bring in their photographs, and he will digitize them. “The donor retains the originals,” he said. “I try to give them back in a timely manner.”

He removes pictures from sticky backing in photo albums from the 1970s and rehouses them. “They leave in a better condition than when we received them,” he said proudly.

Would you like to watch the full recording of Mr. Parker’s interview? Tribal Members can obtain a copy of the recording at no charge by calling us at (251) 446-4942. Mr. Chad Parker is a man you should know. Mvto.



*Submitted by Deidra Suwanee Dees, Ed.D.*

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# DIGITAL ARCHIVIST CHAD PARKER ARTICLE RETRACTION

This is a retraction from the article titled "Digital Archivist, Mr. Chad Parker: A Man You Should Know" which was submitted by Deidra Suwane Dees, Ed.D., and published in the Creek Corner Magazine on March 1, 2023. We are retracting the incorrect statement that Radio Rolin found a photo album in the dumpster. Staff has since learned that this information was incorrect. We apologize to the Rolin family. Mvto.



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# HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE & ELECTRONICS WASTE COLLECTION DAY

## WHEN:

April 22, 2023  
8:00 am - 12:00 noon

## WHERE:

Poarch Creek Fire Station #1  
Jack Springs Road

### THIS COLLECTION EVENT IS FOR HOUSEHOLDS ONLY

Large quantities from businesses, farms, or commercial operations will not be accepted.

### THIS IS A FREE SERVICE

Please use this opportunity to keep these hazards out of our waterways and natural environment!

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Everyone is invited to attend the

**LIBRARY NAMING CEREMONY  
AND OPEN HOUSE**

to dedicate the

**Leola McGhee Manac  
Special Collections  
Library**

**Wednesday, April 12, 2023**

Office of Archives and Records Management  
100 Brookwood Road, Atmore, AL 36502

Join Tribal Chair Stephanie A. Bryan  
for the ribbon cutting at 9 am.

Open House from 9am to 4pm.

**Questions?** Contact Ms. Emily Fayard Escobedo, Ms. Leasha Martin, Mr. Clayton Coon,  
Mr. Chad Parker, Ms. Cheryl Thrower, or Dr. Deidra Suwanee Dees at (251) 446-4942

# DECODING MVSKOKE

Katie McGhee has always been fascinated with language—with the many ways that cultures make meaning among themselves and with others. McGhee’s interest in the Mvskoke language was sparked when Katie started studying Spanish at school in Texas. McGhee hadn’t realized, until their father David McGhee mentioned it, that the Poarch Band of Creek Indians from which they descend, had their own language. McGhee went in search of a Mvskoke dictionary and began researching whatever background information could be found.

At first there wasn’t much. But a fascination with Mvskoke continued to build over time and into McGhee’s current undergraduate studies at the University of Texas, Austin, where Katie is majoring in linguistics. Decoding the language became an important and meaningful part of McGhee’s studies, and the subject of an exciting undergraduate thesis.

There are about 7,000 languages spoken in the world today, and experts believe that 90 percent of them will disappear in less than a century as cultures blend and indigenous tribes diminish in numbers. Half of the United States’ indigenous languages are already extinct, and others are classified by UNESCO’s Atlas of Endangered Languages in five degrees of endangerment from “safe” to “extinct.” With about 5,000 native speakers, Mvskoke falls in the middle range as “definitely endangered.”

Mvskoke originated in the Southeast across the Creek Confederacy and has been vulnerable to the same forces that have threatened or extinguished other tribal languages in the U.S. For generations, English-speaking settlers barred tribal practices and relegated indigenous children to boarding schools, where they were required to speak English exclusively and to assimilate into “mainstream” culture. In the process, these children lost touch with their native tongues, rendering many of them unable to speak to or even understand their parents.

Today, more and more indigenous people are seeking to reclaim their tribal languages and they are finding increasingly more expansive and accessible resources to help them do so. “People have all sorts of reasons for learning [the languages],” says linguist Ruth Rouvier of the University of California, Berkeley. “But it’s all about making their own choices. And for most of these communities, the loss of their language was not a choice they made. It was imposed on them. And so this is just one of the steps in reclaiming their sovereignty and self-determination.”

McGhee felt this same call to action, not just as a Poarch Creek Indian but also as a social scientist.



*The study of linguistics is not the same as the learning of a language, however. A broad field with many sub-disciplines, linguistics focuses on the science of language, the investigation of the properties of various tongues. Linguists like McGhee and Rouvier study not just sound, grammar, and meaning, but also the history of languages, how languages are acquired, and how language is processed.*



Entwined with the humanities and natural and social sciences, applied linguistics complements many other disciplines, including anthropology, sociology, biology, and even computer science, while also helping students better communicate in their own and different tongues.

Driven by an interest in both the culture and the science that underpins language, McGhee recently completed an internship that combined the two at the American Philosophical Society (APS) in Philadelphia, where Rouvier is a Native American scholar. The oldest learned society in the United States, the APS was founded in 1743 by Benjamin Franklin to “promote useful knowledge.” Today the society carries out that mission by engaging scholars in interdisciplinary intellectual fellowship, supporting research, and maintaining a library of historically valuable manuscripts and other collections. It was at the APS library that McGhee found an archival treasure trove, one that brought deeper insights into the linguistic interpretations of Mvskoke over the years.

What McGhee found were scores of old notebooks written in the early 20th Century in the hand of such notables as Franz Boas, the German-American scholar known as the father of American anthropology; Edward Sapir, a renowned linguistic scholar who was inspired by Boas to study Native American languages; and the noted American linguist Mary Haas. “American anthropology was basically synonymous with documenting indigenous people at the time,” says McGhee. APS’s mission has been to include more indigenous voices, languages and cultures and to improve access to these important documentary archives.



*“It was really interesting to look into these materials and fall down the rabbit hole of learning,” says McGhee, “to see that other linguists had done work on this, and to realize the complexity of the situation, and the documentation, and how everyone has their own spin on how they believe [the language] should be spoken and how they can best represent that.”*

McGhee is not fluent in Mvskoke but is able to discern the meaning of many words and embraced the challenge of trying to decipher others. “I was able to make out a lot of nouns,” they said. “I can tell if they are talking about clouds or rain or the color red, but I wouldn’t know exactly what’s happening because I’ve missed some of the verbs.”



Mvskoke has an alphabet of 20 letters similar to those of English, but most have distinctly different sounds. The letter r, for instance, is pronounced “thle” as in athlete. The letter c is pronounced not as an s or a k, as in English, but as “che.” And v, which is a consonant in English, is a vowel in Mvskoke, pronounced “uh.” (This is why English speakers pronounce Mvskoke as Muscogee.) At the same time, many concepts in English don’t directly translate. For example, there is no direct translation of “good morning.” Instead, a Mvskoke speaker might greet you with “Estonkon cukhayvtikv,” which translates roughly into “Did you make it through the night alright?”

“It’s very, very different from Romance languages and from English,” McGhee says. “It’s really just a different way of looking at the world that you have to train your brain to cope with. It’s also subject-object-verb, which is different from the English subject-verb-object, so you have to open your perspective to allow that.”

Despite the obstacles, scholars have long understood the importance of learning endangered languages. “It presents a way of seeing the world and the ways the brain or a culture can work and parse things around them,” says McGhee. “Languages preserve this really interesting aspect of humanity. And when you have people who are no longer speaking that language you lose that aspect of humanity and the human experience.”

***McGhee explains that language is an essential part of one’s sense of self: “For a lot of tribes in the U.S., being able to speak your language is a marker of your tribe’s identity and its survival. It’s incredibly important to maintain.”***

Despite the wealth of information the APS internship and university studies provided, McGhee still had to confront a significant barrier on the road to mastering Mvskoke: linguistic notation.



Phonetic linguistic notation is a standardized alphabet of symbols that can represent all sounds in the human language. The current standard is the International Phonetic Alphabet, but another system, Americanist Notation, was commonly used in the 20th Century in the U.S. Both are products of their times, McGhee says, with earlier versions accounting only for sounds common in European languages.

To compensate for these gaps, McGhee explains, early anthropologists often created new symbols for the languages of the communities they studied. Although this practice resulted in more accurate transcriptions, it also created countless different notation systems. So, when searching through archives, English speakers will find notes that not only look nothing like their own writing system, but also look very different depending on their source. This was what McGhee was trying to decipher when researching Mvskoke heritage at the APS.

To make the materials more accessible, McGhee has begun to create a program to decode the work of various linguists into a standard Mvskoke orthography. Using Jack Martin and Margaret Maudlin's "The Dictionary of Creek/Muscogee" as the guide for common spellings. To create the cipher, or code, McGhee collected word lists (from the APS archives) that have similar entries but were made by different linguists. For instance, the Mvskoke word for "bird" is fóswa in the orthography of linguist Mary Haas (1910-1996), fuswv in that of Martin's, and ošəwa in that of William Sturtevant's (1996-2007). McGhee has written a code to compare each symbol in each word to create patterns.

This work has sparked an even deeper passion for Mvskoke culture and language. "It was incredible to be going through the archives and to pull out a notebook and to have it be entirely in Mvskoke," McGhee said. "It has given me a lot more pride and connection to my ancestors and to my culture."

Artwork combines various Mvskoke language interpretations by linguists Vic Riste (1931), Mary Haas (1940), William Sturtevant (1951) and Jack Martin (2000).

*This excerpt on Decoding Mvskoke was taken from the all new Poarch Neighbors section of our website ([pci-nsn.gov](http://pci-nsn.gov)). Poarch Neighbors celebrates the power of community through real-life stories by providing us with a way to get to know our neighbors and for our neighbors to get know the Tribe. If you know of a unique Poarch story that should be shared with our neighbors, please submit those ideas to [communicationsinfo@pci-nsn.gov](mailto:communicationsinfo@pci-nsn.gov).*



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## WIND CREEK<sup>®</sup> HOSPITALITY

# WCH CORNER

Last month, PCI Gaming, d/b/a Wind Creek Hospitality officially announced an agreement to acquire Miami, Florida based Magic City Casino. This announcement followed an affirmative decision by the Florida Gaming Control Commission (FLGC) permitting the transfer of the assets and the existing gaming license held by Magic City owners to PCI Gaming wholly-owned subsidiary Gretna Racing, LLC.

**“We are excited to grow our footprint in another major metropolitan area, this time in Miami, Florida” said Stephanie Bryan, Tribal Chair & CEO of Wind Creek parent Poarch Band of Creek Indians. “Our expansions in Pennsylvania, Illinois, and now Florida provide us the ability to take care of and grow opportunities for our Tribe. We look forward to becoming a valued partner in the Miami community.”**

Wind Creek strives every day to provide its guests an escape from everyday life into a fantasy world of games and excitement. A brick and mortar facility in Miami allows the organization to expand those efforts for current guests to a new and vibrant market.

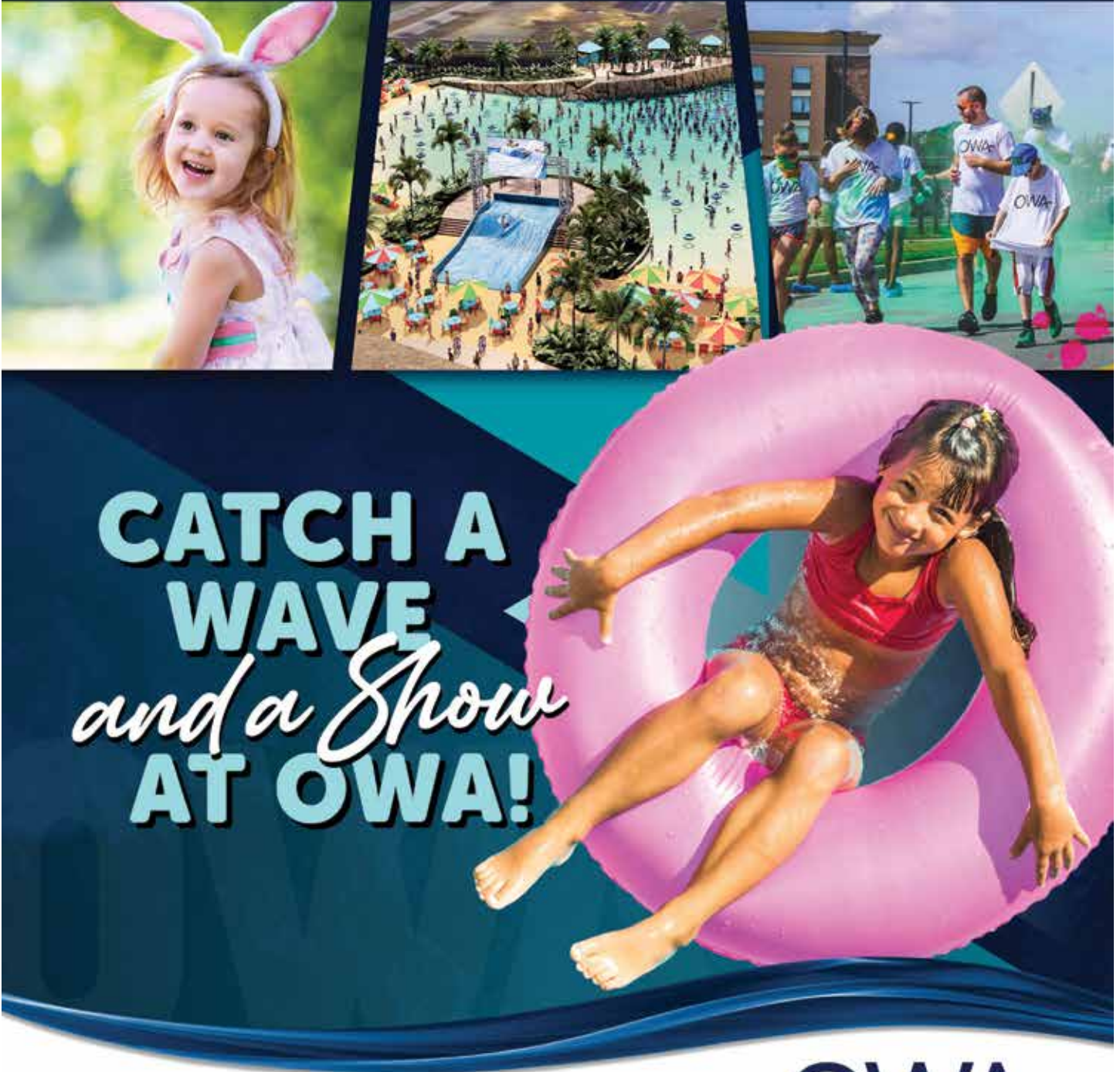
**“Southern Florida is a natural connection from our properties in Aruba & Curacao, our properties in Alabama and the Florida Panhandle”, observed Jay Dorris, CEO and President of Wind Creek. “With close proximity to Miami International Airport, the location is fantastic for players from all Wind Creek properties and gives Miami locals an easy way to experience the Wind Creek brand everywhere we operate.”**

The company is currently licensed by FLGC at two wholly owned and operated gaming facilities in Northwest Florida. Leaders from both Wind Creek and Magic City expect the transaction to close later this Spring. Wind Creek expects to fund the acquisition with a combination of existing cash on hand and new debt financing. Innovation Capital, LLC is acting as exclusive financial advisor to Wind Creek Hospitality, with Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP and Lockwood Law Firm acting as legal counsel to Wind Creek and Magic City respectively.

Wind Creek will continue to operate Magic City Casino in the near term with very few changes. Wind Creek plans to include Magic City players in the broader Wind Creek Rewards and Express Offers loyalty programs by the end of 2023.

Submitted by Amelia Tognoli





# CATCH A WAVE *and a Show* AT OWA!



Celebrate the opening of our all-new outdoor wave pool and surf simulator at Tropic Falls! It's just part of April's big splash—you'll want to come back for events all month long! Kick the month off with our Bunnies and Baskets Easter event on 4/8 with Easter Bunny pics, scavenger hunt and more. Live in full color at the Rainbow Run (4/22) and at Purple Madness: A Prince Tribute. It's just one of the blockbuster shows at the OWA Theater this month, including the Imani Miele Uganda Children's Choir and the Florida Bee Gees Tribute Band. Get showtimes, Tropic Falls tickets and more at [VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com)!

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## WHAT'S NEW at OWA

### Spring has sprung at OWA Parks & Resort! Join us this spring to experience a Spring Fling full of entertainment, events, and much more!

We are excited to announce the Grand Opening celebration of the newest phase of Tropic Falls on April 14 at 10am! **Big Water Bay** will wow guests with 30,000 sq ft of tropical wave pool action and surf simulator, known as Coastal Curl, where guests can catch the perfect wave, making OWA a truly one-of-a-kind and top family experience. We hope you will bring your families and enjoy this exciting new attraction!

Plus, don't miss OWA Theater featuring an array of fun tribute bands. Tickets available at [VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com):

On April 13, come out to see **NIGHTRAIN'S Tribute Show to Guns N' Roses** that has taken the U.S. by storm for years! The accurate vocals and hypnotic performance will capture your

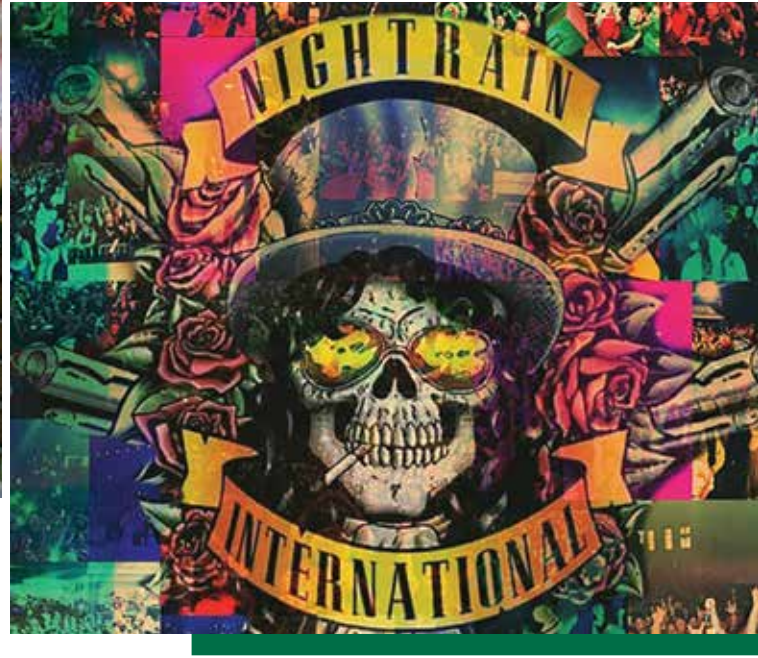
attention from the first beat down to the last note and encapsulate all things Guns N' Roses.

The "Purple Madness" is the ultimate celebration of the most widely beloved entertainer and profoundly influential artist of all-time. The **Prince Purple Madness Tribute Show** debuts on April 14 and 15, and they have all but perfected every nuance in recreating the sights and sounds of the artist Prince.

Put on your dancing shoes and get ready to experience Saturday Night Fever on April 28 and 29. The **Florida Bee Gees Tribute Show** presents a dynamic, interactive, and thoroughly entertaining live tribute to the multi-platinum kings of disco.



**OWA**  
Parks & Resort



On Saturday, April 1, from 10am-12pm, popular celebrity chef, author, and entrepreneur **Paula Deen** is set to visit her restaurant at OWA for a special book signing. She is scheduled to visit Paula Deen's Family Kitchen, located inside Downtown OWA. Doors are set to open at 9am and the restaurant team will hand out 250 meet-and-greet wristbands for guests to have a one-on-one experience with Paula Deen. To receive a wristband guests must purchase an item at the Paula Deen Retail store. Learn more at [VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com).

**Bunnies & Baskets!** This FREE spring event on Saturday, April 8 from 10am-6pm will be full of family-friendly activities, including a Golden Egg Hunt, Easter Egg Scavenger Hunt, and photos with the Easter Bunny. There will also be arts & crafts vendors throughout Downtown OWA, as well as

children's activities and an appearance by Tuki the Toucan from Tropic Falls. Are you a Vendor? Let's talk! Please submit your application on our website.

And finally, **Rainbow Run** is back for the fourth year! Let's get ready to run! The most colorful race in Baldwin County returns on Saturday, April 22. This 1.5-mile run guarantees fun as rainbow-colored powder fills the air and covers the participants as they jog, walk, skip or sprint through the streets of Downtown OWA. Check-in is at 7:30am, and the run begins at 9am. Purchase your spot today at [VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com).

You can keep up with the latest news on events, entertainment, and activities on our website at [VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com) or by following us on social media @VisitOWA.

**Book your tickets for these events  
and more online at [VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com)!**

# RECORDS COORDINATOR CHERYL THROWER

## A WOMAN YOU SHOULD KNOW

*“I lived the first year of my life on the reservation,” Ms. Cheryl Thrower said to Dr. Deidra Suwanee Dees in her Oral History Program interview on January 31, 2023.*

Ms. Thrower is a part of our six-member team of Records Warriors who care for and maintain Tribal records.

She was born into the Tribal community to Mr. Robert Glenn Thrower, Jr. (1961-2017) and Ms. Tina Rowell. She spent part of her childhood in Bratt, Florida, then moved to Atlanta, Georgia. She said she returned to Poarch often, especially in the summers, before returning here permanently in 2021 and taking the Records Coordinator position. She has two sisters, Racheal and Sehoy, who also work for the Tribe today.

Her father served as the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for many years. She has fond memories of her father and his interest in film. She remembers watching sci-fi movies with him and being taken to Oral History interviews inside the homes of Tribal Members such as Mr. Otha Martin. She recalled being given coloring books and being taught the importance of being quiet while her father was recording the interviews.

She also has fond memories of her grandmother, Ms. Gail Thrower (1948-2011), who served as the Tribal Archivist, among many other roles. She said her grandmother was a survivalist. She remembers visiting her house at Wiggins Lake in Walnut Hill, Florida and going into the woods to learn about nature. She received training on specific herbs that could be used for medicine and herbs that you should avoid.

*“We learned a lot from her,” Ms. Cheryl Thrower said. “Kids at school were talking about Pokémon and I was saying, ‘Don’t eat those berries from the deadly night shade. I know that’s poisonous!’”*

Ms. Cheryl Thrower said she had an unusual but “great childhood. I wouldn’t trade it.”

She brings her informal and formal education to her job as Records Coordinator, the same position that Ms. Ellen O’Barr held in Archives, and who was employed for more than thirty-one years at the Tribe. Ms. Thrower described





Robert Thrower Jr.,  
Cheryl's father.

credit: Jon Kłosinski

the work she did in processing the records in the Chairman's Vault Collection which was moved from the fireproof vault in Building 400 to the Office of Archives and Records Management in 2021. Many of these records were generated under the leadership of former Chairman, Eddie L. Tullis, hence the name, Chairman's Vault Collection.

In processing these records, she identified records that needed extra protection, organizational structure, and stabilization. These records are housed inside fireproof file cabinets under lock and key to safeguard them in perpetuity.

Ms. Thrower innovated the idea of conducting live oral history interviews and video recording the interviewees at our History Conference on November 4, 2022. Her idea proved to be very successful. She set up the interviews and captured historical data that otherwise may not have been collected.

***Ms. Thrower said, "The hope was that the conference would inspire others to tell their stories." It did just that. Donna Koehrsen, Clarence Rolin, Cecil Wayne Colbert, Adolfo Romero, Gabrielle Hurd, and Kay Archer were all interviewed by her—great interviews!***

She recalled a number of memorable moments from these interviews. She said Ms. Kay Archer's story about Chief Calvin McGhee stood out in her mind. She said Ms. Archer said she heard it

from a pastor who remembered the story of a young Calvin McGhee "who helped drive away a small group of Ku Klux Klan members from a spiritual revival that was going on in town. He came with a hand gun and threatened to harm them if they didn't leave—and they left!"

Ms. Thrower's talents are not limited to records preservation and oral history for she is also skilled in the conservation of artifacts.

***"I feel like my skill set in conservation is to stop any further degradation," she said. She cleaned and processed baby shoes from the 1920s. "So precious! So cute!" she exclaimed.***

"So interesting—history wise. We don't have a lot of children's shoes from that time period. You do not see them a lot—I know we were very poor. These are nice patent leather shoes" that belonged to baby Eugene "Buster" Rolin. They were donated by his daughter, Virginia Godwin.

***"Someone had very lovingly tried to preserved them" with 1950s' pink tissue paper, she said. "Someone really loved this child."***

Do you have items you would like Ms. Thrower to preserve? Call us at (251) 446-4942. You can watch the full recording of her interview. Tribal Members may request a copy of the recording at no charge. Ms. Cheryl Thrower is a woman you should know. Mvto.

# PICTURES OF CHIEF CALVIN & JOYCE MCGHEE

## JOHN & JENNIFER STEPHENS COLLECTION

An exciting new addition was brought into the Archives on February 10, 2023. "We found this old photo album in a closet in the house we bought," said Mr. John Stephens to Office of Archives and Records Management staff. He brought in the photo album to donate the scanned images of the pictures to the Tribe.

Staff looked through the pages and found a well-put-together album of pictures of Chief Calvin and Joyce McGhee, as well as other Tribal Members. The news of this treasured find reverberated through our office leading staff to express their delight in this priceless donation.

"I have never seen these pictures before!" exclaimed Dr. Deidra Suwanee Dees, Director of the Office of Archives and Records Management. "They are amazing!"

The collection was named the John and Jennifer Stephens Collection after John and his wife as is common practice in the archival world to name collections after the donor.



Digital Archivist Mr. Chad Parker is processing the collection by rehousing the pictures into an archival grade photo album and by digitizing the paper pictures. Once completed, he will return the pictures to the Stephens family.



Mr. Parker described the process of removing the delicate photographs from the album as akin to being like surgery. The photographs are over fifty years old and require professional handling by someone like Mr. Parker who painstakingly removed them from the sticky backing. "This was a very delicate process to get the photos removed but well worth the time," Mr. Parker said.

Mr. and Mrs. Stephens said they would like to find out who put the album together. "These photos have never been seen by anyone so finding their owner has become a priority," Mr. Parker said.

If you have information about this photo album, please contact Mr. Chad Parker at (251) 446-4965. Mvto.

*Submitted by Deidra Suwanee Dees, Ed.D.*



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# WITH WINGS OF AN ANGEL

***“But those that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” (Isa. 40:31).***

First Generation descendant, Winston Douglas McGhee, is running with the *Wings of an Angel* this year in memory of his late grandfather and Tribal Elder, Douglas McGhee (Papa), who left this earth in September of 2021 due to complications from COVID. Winston, a Junior at Spanish Fort High School, is setting course records and breaking tape as he runs in his grandfather’s footsteps, carrying his name, his memory and his legacy. Last weekend, Winston spent most of Sunday afternoon reminiscing with his uncle, Ronnie McGhee and his grandfather’s favorite and fastest cousin, Ricky Gibson. Winston listened for hours as Ronnie and Ricky told him colorful childhood stories of Douglas’s legendary Indian Foot Races in the fields of Atmore, Alabama back in the late 60’s and early 70’s.



“The dust kicking off the field in front of our house looked like the stirring of two horses barreling towards the finish line. As the two figures emerged from the dust, you would see the faces of, not two horses ... but that of my brother and cousin, Douglas and Ricky, in a barefoot foot race towards the finish,” laughed Tribal Elder Ronnie McGhee of Atmore. “Your grandfather was so fast, no one could catch him,” Ronnie told his nephew.

***“Back in the late 60’s, people referenced him as the fastest man in South Alabama,” Ronnie further stated.***

Ricky told Winston that Douglas started racing for money and most often walked away with his and everyone else’s. “We ran so much and so fast, we ran the soles off our feet. One afternoon, we clocked Douglas racing a car at 22 miles per hour,” said Ricky. As a young adult, Douglas was a frontrunning contender at a number of local and regional 5-10k events ... including his annual favorite, The Azalea Trail 10k. Douglas competed in the Azalea Trail 10k every year until a near fatal car accident ended his running career. McGhee was pronounced dead on his arrival at Thomas Hospital. He had survived the accident but doctors said he would never walk again. He was never able to compete again but was able to jog and walk. Douglas loved competing in races but he also loved watching ... especially Winston and his father, Brian McGhee, of Spanish Fort. “I can see him when I am running and it helps me push,” said Winston.

Following the death of his grandfather last year, Winston set the course record in the one mile at Spanish Fort High School. He was only a Sophomore and was clocked running a pace of 4:19. In addition, he selflessly carried the team to the 2022 State Championship in the 400x800 relay, a category McGhee does not compete in himself. This year, as one of the state’s top 10







ranked high school runners (in multiple events), the emerging phenom is ranked #4 in both Cross Country and the 800 meter. This Fall, Winston set another highschool course record in the one mile. McGhee set course records in three other categories including the:: 800m(1:58), the 1600 meter (4:19) and 3200 meter with a clocked speed of 9:50. Winston also had back-to-back victories and set course records two years in a row in the Battleship 12K. Winston is ranked in the top 100 runners in the entire southeast. He Junior is one of the fastest highschool runners in the southeast, according to milesplit.com.

In a recent interview, Winston's private coach and longtime family friend, Gregory Lynn Mann said, "Winston has the gift of both incredible speed and endurance. He got speed from his father's side and endurance from his mother's side of the family. I have known Winston since he was two. The first time I saw him run, I knew he was gonna be fast. He was born and bred a natural born runner. In addition to his genetic makeup, "Winston's dedication and unwavering willingness to work hard is SECOND TO NONE." Mann said, "For Winston, running is a way of life as well as a family tradition. I see great things for Winston in his future." Greg is former Alabama State University Track and Field Coach and the founder of Elite Running.

***Winston's father is a former Boston Marathon qualifier and front-runner in many 5-10k events throughout the nation. His maternal grandfather, Dr. Larry Rigsby, is a nationally***

***ranked ultra-runner and former mountaineer who has completed over 50 ultra-endurance foot races including events such Leadville Trail 100 (100 mile course), America's highest footrace. Winston's maternal Grandmother, Virginia Rigsby has crewed runners from all over the world in some of the toughest organized foot races in the world. Winston's mother, Amy McGhee is a former ultra- runner and has completed races such as the Leadville, Colorado Silver Rush 50, a 50 mile footrace.***

"I wish Papa was here now," Winston said with a smile. "Papa never missed a race and rarely missed a practice. I can still hear him telling me to run that first mile and settle into my pace." "Douglas used to sit on the front porch of our house counting Winston's loops and timing his speed. He was so proud," said Linda McGhee, Winston's Grandmother of Spanish Fort, Alabama.



Winston said that his running has given him comfort as he mourns the loss of his grandfather. He shared, "I run in Papa's memory and in God's name." "I know God has given me a special gift and I will always use these gifts to glorify him. I

hope that I can help and inspire others. Life is hard for today's young adults. Running has given me a strength I never had, allowing me to transcend adversity, peer pressure and other hardships," McGhee further stated. Winston closed with, "It's not my legs that carry me when I run . . . I run with the wings of God's angels. I know my Papa is one of those angels carrying me."

*"Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection we can catch excellence." Papa's favorite quote.*

Winston is an active member of Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)

Submitted by Amy McGhee



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# CREEK CORNER

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4/3/2023 - 4/28/2023	Registration Period	Fred L. Mcghee Early Learning Center	
4/6/2023	Tribal Council Meeting	Tribal Council Chambers	4:00 pm
4/12/2023	Library Naming Ceremony	OARM Office	9:00 am
4/20/2023	Tribal Council Meeting	Tribal Council Chambers	4:00 pm