

CREEK CORNER

ISSUE 13

The official magazine of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians



Photo Credit: High 5 Productions

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CELEBRATING
50
YEARS
ALABAMA
POARCH
POARCH CREEK INDIANS

JANUARY 2023

TRIBAL LEADERS

The mission of the Poarch 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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Editor:
Katie Mothershed
akmothershed@pci-nsn.gov



WHAT HAPPENED AT THE HISTORY CONFERENCE

“My uncle stopped the school bus to put the Indian Children on the school bus. He stood out in the middle of the road,” Ellen O’Barr said. Her voice recording was played at the History Conference hosted by the Office of Archives and Records Management Team on November 5 at the Poarch Creek Community Center.



Kay Archer

“The Whites always looked down on the Indians. We wasn’t allowed sometimes to do a lot of things as Whites,” she explained. “It was real hard back along then.”

This recording was from the Venus McGhee Prince Collection which was donated to the Tribe earlier this year after being misplaced for a period of time. Ms. McGhee Prince conducted interviews with Ms. O’Barr and other elders in the 1990s as a part of her Senior Thesis at Harvard. She wanted to document their history in their own words.

Our Team focused on oral history recordings and titled our conference, “Words Passed On Voices of Our Elders.”

The next recordings were played by Dr. Karla Martin Dawson and Dr. Deidra Suwanee Dees who interviewed elders for their dissertations.

The Torch Club and Keystone Club members served refreshments and helped our elders at the History Conference.

Members of our Tribal Council including Arthur Mothershed, Amy Gantt, Candace Fayard, Charlotte McGhee Meckel, and Robbie McGhee, served as panelists after the recordings were played. They discussed the importance of recording oral history. “It is imperative that you make a record of Creek history in your own words,” Robbie McGhee said.



Cecil Colbert

As a part of the History conference, Ms. Cheryl Thrower was conducting oral history interviews



The Torch Club and Keystone Club members served refreshments to our elders at the History Conference and are pictured with our Tribal Council panelists (L to R front row) Arthur Mothershed, Amy Gantt, Candice Fayard, Charlotte McGhee Meckel, Robbie McGhee. (L to R back row) Torch Club Advisor: Connie Crews, Isabella Rolin, Slayton Valinsky, Kadence Jackson, Kaydence Popejoy, Olivia Grimes, Lynn Crews, Keegan McGhee, Jackson Rolin, Keystone Club: Gracie Williams, Kelsey Koehrsen, Bella Crews, Abby Stephens, Nathan Case, Jonas Caraway, Keystone Advisor: Kaitlen Henderson

and video recording the interviewees. She captured historical data that otherwise may not have been recorded.



Gabrielle Hurd and Adolfo Romero, pictured here, attended the conference with Deborah Hendrix, Vasilius Kosmakos, and Angelica McGhee from the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program at the University of Florida. They worked on the Venus McGhee Prince Collection.

Ms. Thrower said, “The hope was that the conference would inspire others to tell their stories. Personally, I was going to be happy if we got one person to interview that day. Imagine how pleased I was when SIX people volunteered!

Donna Koehrsen, Clarence Rolin, Cecil Wayne Colbert, Adolfo Romero, Gabrielle Hurd and Kay Archer were all a pleasure to interview.”

“There were several memorable moments, but two that stand out for me were Mr. Clarence Rolin’s haunted house story and Ms. Kay Archer’s thrilling account about a young Calvin McGhee confronting a group of KKK members,” Ms. Thrower said.



Donna Koehrsen

“My final question for all the interviewees was, ‘What advice would you give to the future

continued next page...

generation?’ I had a few youth volunteers helping me that day and their answers were all the more potent as they addressed the next generation face-to-face. Answers ranged from ‘keeping faith in God’ and ‘don’t grow up too fast’, but every single one of those interviewed that day stressed the importance of education,” Ms. Thrower said.

She also said, “I would like to give a shout-out to my Keystone and Torch Club youth volunteers: Jonus Caraway, Slayton DeVilbiss, Kadence Jackson and Olivia Grimes. Oral history can be

a sensitive subject that even the most mature adults struggle with, but all of you knocked it out of the park with your compassion and professionalism that day. Thank you for your hard work. All of you did an amazing job!”

If you would like a copy of the oral history recordings, please contact Ms. Cheryl Thrower at (251) 446-4941. Mvto.

Submitted by Deidra Suwanee Dees, Ed.D.

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CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT



The Constitutional Amendment regarding enrollment passed; therefore, the roll is temporarily opened to those persons who have the required one-fourth (1/4) Poarch Creek Indian blood, if a completed application is submitted by March 3, 2023.

The Enrollment Department is taking one final look at the pre-applications to make sure they are complete. If all the documentation is provided, you will receive a letter that confirms your application is complete and will be presented to the Enrollment Review Committee. Those letters will be mailed next week. Presentations to the Enrollment Review Committee will begin after January 1, 2023. If approved, the application will be presented to the Tribal Council for final approval. After these presentations, you will receive official notification from Enrollment as to whether your application is approved or denied.

If your pre-application is missing information, you will be contacted and told what information is needed.

As a reminder, there is a one year waiting period after enrollment for all discretionary benefits, except for the burial benefit.

Also, please be aware that the Constitutional Amendment only opened the roll to those persons who have the required one-fourth (1/4) Poarch Creek Indian blood. Therefore, first generation descendants do not qualify for membership under the approved Amendment.

Contact: Enrollment Department - enrollment@pci-nsn.gov

Submitted by Lori Stinson





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POARCH CREEK INDIANS RECREATION DEPARTMENT

2023 ADULT FLAG FOOTBALL LEAGUE

TEAM REGISTRATION:
DECEMBER 1ST, 2022-JANUARY 7TH, 2023
\$150.00 PER TEAM
AGES: 16 & UP
7-ON-7 AFFL RULES

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE RECREATION DEPARTMENT @ 251-368-9136 EXT. 2256



2023 ARBOR DAY TREE GIVEAWAY!

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24
FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED

Pick up your trees around back of Environmental
Department building, located at:

957 MARTIN RD

****2 trees per HOUSEHOLD****

(Tribal Member Household or Tribal
Employee Household)

- You may pick up for only **ONE** other household but must **bring a note**- this is to accomodate pick-ups for the elderly, disabled, out of area people, etc.
- Trees will be pawpaw, chinquapin, Chickasaw plum, redbud, sassafras, dogwood, red maple, mayhaw, American persimmon, red anise, and native azaleas (orange and pink)

For more info, contact Sehoj Thrower:
(251) 368-9136 ext. 2398 strower@pci-nsn.gov

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ENVIRONMENTAL DEPT. SPAY & NEUTER PROGRAM

January 10–March 31, 2023*
9 am–4 pm Monday–Friday

Vouchers expire on June 30, 2023

* or until funding is depleted

The Environmental Department will be giving out spay/neuter vouchers for cats and dogs. Only one voucher per Tribal Member will be allowed. These are available on a first-come first-serve basis for Tribal Members only. Tribal Members must present their Tribal ID to receive spay/neuter voucher and at their veterinary office to receive services.

PCI Environmental
957 Martin Road
Atmore, AL 36502
(Down the road from PCCC)

If you have any
questions, please call
(251) 368-9136 ext. 2387



WCH CORNER

Last month, Wind Creek Hospitality announced a multi-year partnership with the Chicago Bulls as its Official Casino.



“As a new brand coming to the Chicagoland market, we believed it was important to establish a name for ourselves and a level of credibility with the local market as quickly as possible” says Brent Pinkston, Chief Operating Officer of Wind Creek Hospitality, parent company of the Wind Creek Chicago Southland Casino and Resort. “Being a native of the region, I can’t imagine a better way to accomplish that task than to partner with the Bulls organization and introduce ourselves to one of the largest and most loyal fan bases in professional sports. It lets us enter the market with a huge voice” Pinkston continued.

Through the partnership, Wind Creek will collaborate with the Bulls on in-game fan promotions and other entertainment options this year while the casino is under construction, which will expand in future years once the new Wind Creek facility opens its doors to the public in East Hazel Crest & Homewood.

“We are excited to partner with Wind Creek over the next few seasons to bring fans new in-arena competitions, social content and sweepstakes,” says Bulls Vice President of Business Development Mark Levitt. “This new partnership will support our ongoing efforts to further elevate the gameday experience for Bulls fans at the United Center and across our social platforms.” Fans who attend games at United Center or watch on local television will begin seeing Wind Creek signage immediately, with additional fan engagement elements to roll out in the coming weeks.



ALL NEW
Fun **FOR**
THE NEW
YEAR

Start the new year right at OWA! All-new entertainment is coming to the OWA Theater—like the Elton John tribute show Jan. 7 & 8 and Roman Street live on Jan. 14. Come back for the OWA Arts & Crafts Festival on Jan. 28 in Downtown OWA and catch a Super Smash Bros Tournament at Clash eSports & VR Experience, Saturdays at 6 pm all month long! See all the new entertainment options at VisitOWA.com.

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WHAT'S NEW AT OWA

The new year is here, and we welcome 2023 at OWA Parks & Resort with a host of fun for the whole family to enjoy.

Make plans to join **Brandon Styles Theater** in the new year for one of his magic and variety shows weekly in Downtown OWA. New to the theater is a **1920's Murder Mystery Dinner Show**. Set in a 1920's speakeasy, an artifact has been brought in to be appraised from the excavation of King Tut's tomb, but does his curse follow? Catch this Murder Mystery Dinner Show on January 5 & 6. Grab tickets today because this show sells out fast! Tickets can be purchased online at BrandonStyles.com.

OWA Theater is proud to present **Still Standing—A Tribute to Elton John** on January 7 & 8. Still Standing carries on the legacy and amazing music of the iconic Sir Elton John. Born and raised in Mobile, AL, Ben "Almost Elton" Frey has been referred to as the closest representation of Elton's look and vocals on the Tribute Circuit. Ben and his band of professionals are dedicated to working on every detail that makes for an incredible Elton John experience. Expect all the huge hits, including *Candle in the Wind*, *Rocket Man*, *Bennie & the Jets*, *Tiny Dancer*, *Your Song*, *Circle of Life* and *Crocodile Rock* among many others! Snag your tickets today at VisitOWA.com.

On Saturday, January 14, **Roman Street** will perform live at the OWA Theater. Roman Street, named for an old Roman street in the Alps where they studied guitar, is an internationally trained instrumental band specializing in improvisational fusion of Classical, Gypsy and Contemporary Jazz, Latin, and Nuevo Flamenco. Whether

Submitted by:
Cathering Hasty
Digital Marketing Specialist



performing as a guitar duo, or with a backing band, Roman Street astounds with music that appeals to fans of many genres. Purchase your ticket today at VisitOWA.com.

And finally, the **OWA Arts & Crafts Festival** is back for the third year! This outdoor marketplace event will take place on January 28 throughout OWA's immaculate Downtown entertainment district. Immerse yourself in the sights and sounds of local art, music, and handcrafted goods. This is a family-friendly event that is completely free to attend and enjoy. Stroll the pedestrian-only streets of Downtown OWA and experience a wide variety of local arts and crafts for sale. Are you a vendor? Let's talk! Please submit your application on our website. We'd love to have you join us.

Have you had the chance to visit our new indoor waterpark yet? OWA is proud to extend a complimentary **Tropic Falls** combination season pass to Poarch Band of Creek Indian Tribal Members with a valid PCI Tribal ID. Tribal Members will also receive additional benefits, including one birthday gift added to their pass during their birthday month, 25% off theme park passes, 50% off standard birthday party packages, and periodic promotions. For full details, please visit the Round House.

Keep up with the latest news on events, entertainment, and activities via our website at VisitOWA.com or by following us on social media @VisitOWA.



THE FORGOTTEN CREEKS

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – A new documentary about Alabama’s Poarch Band of Creek Indians premiered on Alabama Public Television (APT) on Thursday, Nov. 17, 2022. Produced by Jacksonville State University’s Longleaf Studios, *The Forgotten Creeks* can also be streamed from APT’s website and the PBS video app, or watch it on our website: pci-nsn.gov/about/the-forgotten-creeks

More than two years in the making, this documentary tells the story of the Poarch Creek people through their long and important history. It also traces how the Tribe has evolved from being an impoverished, isolated community to the independent, self-sufficient Indian nation it is today.

“We are honored that our Tribe was selected to be the subject of this documentary produced by Jacksonville State University and Alabama Public Television,” said Stephanie Bryan, Poarch Band of Creek Indians Tribal Chair. “We feel incredibly blessed to have this recounting of both our history and our lives today.”

The Forgotten Creeks recalls the history of Alabama’s Mvskoke Creek Indians from Spanish contact in the 1500s through the Indian Removal Act of 1830. The documentary explores what happened to those Mvskoke Creeks who remained in Alabama following the Trail of Tears and documents those ensuing years of poverty, assimilation and discrimination that nearly destroyed their indigenous identity.

It also traces how finally, in 1984, after more than 40 years of unwavering advocacy by Tribal Leaders, the federal government recognized the Tribe as a sovereign, or independent, Indian nation with ancestral lands in Atmore, Alabama and elsewhere in the state. Federal recognition was the beginning of a new chapter

in the Tribe’s history. Economic development brought self-sufficiency and the Tribe’s focus on educational opportunities, family values, and faith guided its transition to prosperity.

“As an APT commissioner, JSU employee and friend of the Poarch people for nearly 30 years, it was a real honor to connect these organizations and work together to produce such an important documentary,” said Pete Conroy, director of strategic partnerships and special projects at JSU. “I particularly thank Tribal Leadership for their trust and also JSU producer and director Seth Johnson for his mastery in telling this powerful story.”

Seth Johnson, who serves as distinguished professor of graphic design and assistant dean of the College of Arts and Humanities at JSU, said, “Producing this film was a rewarding experience. Our students were able to work alongside an accomplished film studio in the production of the film and gained valuable industry experience in doing so. We owe a significant thank you to the Poarch Creek Tribal Members who gave us their trust, welcomed us into their homes and allowed us to tell their story.”

You can watch the full documentary online at

<https://aptv.org/watch/alabama-public-television-presents/the-forgotten-creeks-s2bc3w/>





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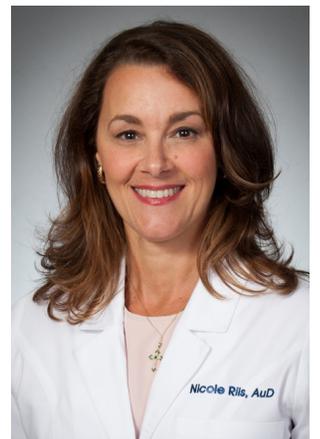
Questions regarding your Poarch Creek hearing aid benefit?

Contact Nioma Till, Case Manager, 251-368-9136, Ext. 2386.



Elizabeth M. Pickett, Au.D.
Audiologist

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Nicole Riis, AuD

Elizabeth Pickett, Au.D., CCC-A

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Government Relations
and Public Affairs Office

5811 Jack Springs Rd
Atmore, AL 36502

CREEK CORNER

JANUARY 2023

1/2/2023	Tribal Government Offices Closed	New Year's Eve	
1/3/2023	Submission Deadline	February Issue	5:00 pm
1/3/2023-1/4/2023	Museum Gift Shop Closed	Inventory	
1/5/2023	Tribal Council Meeting	Tribal Council Chambers	4:00 pm
1/10/2023-3/31/2023	Spay & Neuter Vouchers	Environmental	9:00 am-4:00 pm
1/19/2023	Tribal Council Meeting	Tribal Council Chambers	4:00 pm
2/1/2023	Submission Deadline	March Issue	5:00 pm