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THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE of the POARCH BAND OF CREEK INDIANS

creek corner

THE CHIEF

Behind the Headdress

**FORMER TRIBAL CHAIR EDDIE TULLIS
RECEIVES LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

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**Poarch Band of
Creek Indians’
Attorney General
Lori Stinson
Receives Prestigious
“Women Who Shape
The State” Award**

More info on page 22



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CREDITS

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MEGAN ZAMORA
Editor, Creek Corner

FROM THE EDITOR: PROGRESS NOT PERFECTION

“**O**ne of the things I really enjoy is following, supporting, and advocating for Native artists. The talent within the Indigenous community is simply extraordinary and I’m constantly impressed with the multitude of ways creativity is expressed within this arena. We have Native representation in so many facets of the creative industry now including: movies (Graham Greene, Paulina Alexis), shows (Reservation Dogs, Echo), filmmakers and producers (Steven Paul Judd, Sterlin Harjo, Jayne Myers), writers (Joy Harjo, Louise Erdrich), clothing (Lauren Good Day, Buffalotown), bead workers, seamstresses, painters, musicians, news outlets, and so on. (Please note, this is by no means an all-inclusive list.)

Even better, these artists’ works are easily accessible via social media, internet, and video streaming services. The opportunities and avenues available to advance our indigeneity and truths as Native peoples have elevated exponentially. Realistically, this means that when we look to mainstream media sources and content, we see a reflection of ourselves, our shared histories, and our cultures as Indigenous peoples.

As a little girl, I remember watching Disney’s version of Pocahontas repeatedly. It felt so good to see someone on my television screen that I could relate to as a Native American. While it seemed that Disney did everything “right” at the time (consulting with Tribes, hiring Native American actors, etc.), the movie has received its share of criticism as the narrative surrounding Indigenous representation has evolved (the Disney version of Pocahontas is inaccurate).

More recently, music artist Pharrell Williams partnered with world renowned brand Louis Vuitton and members of the Native American community on a fashion show in Paris. Watching the show brought tears to my eyes. Meanwhile, others criticized the “Wild West” “cowboys and Indians” theme of the show.

When I read the comments initially, I felt defensive. Then, I took a deep breath and tried to understand the critic’s perspective.

The Native community has made impressive strides towards raising awareness, dispelling stereotypes, and being the voice behind our own truths. However, our critics serve to remind us that you never truly get “there”. In anything done publicly, something will always be overlooked, inaccurately conveyed, or omitted due to limited resources or time restraints. We are ever trapped by our human limitations, no matter how smart and talented we are...and that is simply our reality.

In these instances, I find it really helpful to look back. When you review the history of Indian involvement in films for instance, you’ll learn that the actors in those movies (for example, John Wayne Westerns) were oftentimes not Native American; they were Italian, Caucasian, and Mexican (Source: Reel Injun, 2009).

Today, the film industry is diligent in its recruitment of Indigenous people for Indigenous roles.

We’ve made phenomenal progress, not perfection. Just like beauty, I’ve come to believe that perfection is in the eye of the beholder. The key, I’ve found, is to not allow your critics or the intimidation of getting it “perfect” hold you back from making the much-needed progress. Rather, use the criticism to improve your end product and add that perspective to your catalogue of “things to consider next time”. Then, keep courageously making progress.

The key...is to not allow your critics or the intimidation of getting it “perfect” hold you back from making much needed progress.



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.

TOP ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT)

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

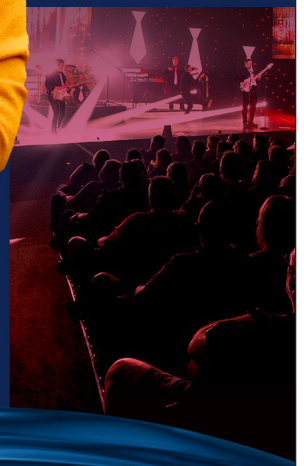
BOTTOM ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT)

At-Large Council Members:
Dewitt Carter
Sandy Hollinger
Keith Martin
Arthur Mothershed
Justin Stabler





JAMES BOND, COUNTRY MUSIC, RAINBOW RUN & *More* ICONIC FUN!



OWA Theater kicks the month off with a tribute to iconic Secret Agent James Bond—don't miss "Bonded: A Salute to the Music of James Bond" on 4/6! Come back on 4/20 for the stunning Women Icons of Country Music—then White Tie Rock Ensemble presents Prog Rock on 4/26-27! Our annual Rainbow Run hits the streets of Downtown OWA on 4/13, followed by the big Home & Garden Festival on 4/20! Get all the details at VisitOWA.com!

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PICTURED
Wind Creek Chicago Southland
exterior building rendering

FROM OUR LEADERS

Written by Arthur Mothershed, Edits by Megan Zamora

Greetings Fellow Tribal Members,

The last year has been both challenging, exciting, and busy in my corner of the world.

It's a pleasure to serve the Tribe as an At-Large Tribal Council Member and the Executive Vice President of Business Development and Government Relations at Wind Creek Hospitality (WCH). In these roles, my responsibilities include advocating for the betterment of the Tribe and its Citizens, overseeing business development for WCH, and monitoring gaming legislation in the states where we operate as well as in neighboring states. We continue to diversify our operations so we can provide elevated services to our Tribal Members. I'm pleased to provide the following updates:

UPDATES ON CURRENT PROPERTIES

In Alabama, gaming legislation has been one of the foremost topics discussed this session. As of March 5th at 3:29 PM, a gaming bill has passed the house and is being reviewed by the Senate. However, the version of the bill the Senate favors is different than what was passed in the House. By the time you read this, one of those bills will have passed or failed in the Senate. Proposed gaming legislation changes almost by the minute, and the Tribal Government Relations team, lead by Robbie McGhee, has been working hard to ensure the bill favors the Tribe. While we believe the final bill will benefit the Tribe, the votes are close, and it could quickly become negative. Overall, Alabama gaming legislation highlights the need to continue investments in other areas.

Pennsylvania is contemplating introducing a bill that would limit the number of skill games in the state. Those games are currently illegal there, however an estimated 60,000 - 80,000 of those types of games do exist across Pennsylvania. The bill would legalize skill games but limit them to 25,000. The bill helps us because it reduces the number of illegal operators competing with Wind Creek Bethlehem.

With the addition of Magic City Casino into our Wind Creek Hospitality family, Florida is an important priority for the Tribe that will provide



ARTHUR MOTHERSHED
At-Large Tribal Council Member



PICTURED
Wind Creek Chicago Southland
main entrance rendering

additional revenue, and more importantly, profit. Located just a few miles from Miami International Airport, this property sits on 30 acres of prime real estate and the possibilities are endless. Now that we have a significant presence in Miami, staying on top of Florida legislative issues is even more critical. Gaming expansion hasn't been seriously considered since the Governor signed the latest Seminole compact. Our strategy is to use the slow legislative period to maximize Magic City's potential. We ultimately want to improve the facility and brand it as a Wind Creek property.

At our Illinois property Wind Creek Chicago Southland (WCCS), we've been putting in long hours to get it up and running on time and in budget. Slated to open later this year, WCCS will add to our already impressive portfolio. As with the Miami property, the Chicago property adds to the revenue and profits for the Tribe. WCH's Chief Operating Officer Brent Pinkston and his team have been tasked with getting operations in line, while my team, led by Kevin Rackard, has been focused on the casino, hotel, and event center buildings. We are all really excited about what this property brings to the Wind Creek brand, our communities, and our Tribal people.

UPDATES ON NEIGHBORING STATES

Legislatively, we also keep a watch on what happens in Georgia. Because our Montgomery and Wetumpka properties derive a decent amount of revenue from Georgia, should legislation pass that would allow brick-and-mortar gaming, we would have an obligation to participate. Otherwise, we will lose a considerable portion of our revenue. To date, they have not been able to pass any legislation.

*As always, it's a pleasure to serve,
and feel free to reach out with questions.*

ARTHUR MOTHERSHED



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DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT

TRIBAL MEMBER ACCOUNTING

By Ashlee “Katie” Mothershed

The Tribal Member Accounting and Information Department plays a pivotal role within our Tribal Government, overseeing a wide range of responsibilities aimed at managing and enhancing the financial aspects of our Tribal Members’ lives. This department is integral in administering various programs and departments that directly impact the welfare and development of Tribal Members.

ADMINISTRATION OF TRIBAL MEMBER PROGRAMS

This involves the comprehensive management of programs such as the Disabled Tribal Member Health Insurance program, Crisis Loans, Housing programs, and more. The department ensures these programs are run efficiently and meet the needs of our Tribal Members, focusing on the accurate and sensitive handling of Tribal Members’ financial and personal information.

SUPERVISION OF THE TRIBAL MEMBER BENEFITS DEPARTMENT

This department oversees the operations of the Tribal Member Benefits department, ensuring that benefits are distributed fairly and in accordance with Tribal policies. This includes overseeing the process from application to distribution of benefits, addressing any issues that arise during the process.



OVERSIGHT OF THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT

It plays a pivotal role in supervising the Housing Department, which is responsible for providing adequate housing solutions for Tribal Members. This includes overseeing the processes for housing programs, including Tribally Assisted Home Ownership, Rental Homes, etc.

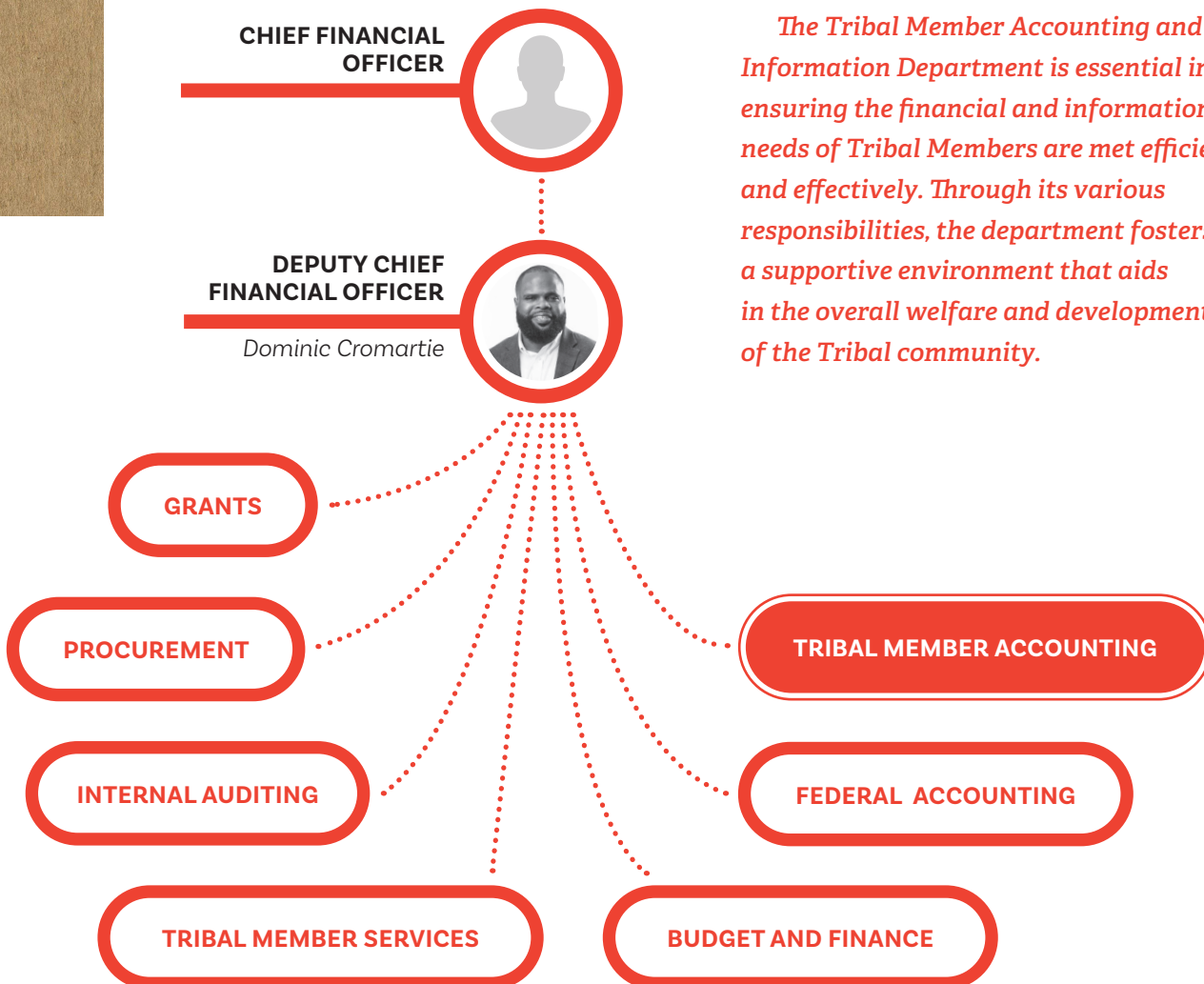
TRIBAL MEMBER LOAN REPORTING

The department is responsible for preparing comprehensive reports on Tribal Member loans. This includes generating loan statements and managing the overall loan process, ensuring transparency and accountability in the lending and repayment processes.

FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Oversight and management of the Tribe's Financial Literacy Program fall under this department's purview. The program aims to empower Tribal Members with the knowledge and skills to make informed financial decisions, promoting financial independence and well-being.

The Tribal Member Accounting and Information Department is essential in ensuring the financial and informational needs of Tribal Members are met efficiently and effectively. Through its various responsibilities, the department fosters a supportive environment that aids in the overall welfare and development of the Tribal community.





POARCH 101

Chief Calvin's Headdress

*By Megan Zamora with
consultation provided by
Billy Bailey, Brandy Chunn,
and Alex Alvarez*

Some of the most iconic pictures representing Poarch Creeks are of Chief Calvin McGhee and his beautiful headdress. One image that comes to my mind is the one that captures his meeting with President John F. Kennedy. However, at times the use of this item has created confusion regarding the historical accuracy of headdresses within the Mvskoke Creek and Poarch Creek frameworks.

Simply stated, headdresses such as the ones that Chief Calvin wore aren't part of our Mvskoke Creek culture or history. While there are head adornments and specific feathers, such as crane feathers, that hold symbolic meaning and cultural significance to Creeks, the long, flowing ornately beaded headdresses don't fall within those parameters.

So, how exactly did headdresses enter Poarch Creek's history and why did Chief Calvin resort to this significant object? The short answer is



...he decided to meet their expectations, no matter how flawed, by wearing generally accepted “Indian” clothing...



that he and other leaders used the Indian stereotypes of the time to their advantage.

Hollywood has repeatedly resorted to representing Native Americans as individuals with black hair, a dark complexion, and lots of feathers adorning their bodies from head to toe including headdresses or war bonnets. These “real Indians” are also clothed in leather, expertly ride horses, live in teepees, and have a constantly stoic expression on their faces. Apparently, the standard “Indian” greeting according to Hollywood is also “how”. Of course, this stereotype is one Native Americans continue to challenge and educate others about even today because, it’s just that: a stereotype that has caused harm to the efforts of Indigenous peoples everywhere.

During the time when Calvin was actively seeking acknowledgment from the government that Creeks existed in Alabama, it was imperative that he utilize all methods available to him, even when he knew those methods weren’t an accurate representation of Creek culture. Upon meeting Chief Calvin, even President Kennedy remarked, “I’ve never seen a blue-eyed Indian.” And, Chief Calvin responded, “Well, you have now.”

Given the need to meet the stereotypical image people and government officials would likely have in their mind, he decided to meet their expectations, no matter how flawed, by wearing generally accepted “Indian” clothing and items which were historically non-Creek. While his approach might be criticized in today’s era of heightened awareness to cultural appropriation, his strategy was none-the-less

effective. He stood out amongst the crowd, was noticed, and received recognition as an “Indian”.

Today, we do not encourage the wearing of headdresses, nor do we promote or approve of using them on any of our advertising or marketing materials that represent who we are as Creek people. To do so would be insensitive, inaccurate, inconsiderate, and is overall culturally inappropriate. Rather, we embrace our traditional Mvskoke ways which include recognizing that our historical head adornments include sēkv-likv [see-guh lay-guh] [“something that rests on the back of the head”] and head turbans or wraps that are worn by men.

Sēkv-likv were worn on the back of the head and were made out of horsehair, and may or may not have had a feather attached to the adornment as well. Head turbans and wraps would be the equivalent of wearing a top hat with a suit and was considered formal attire. Today, you may also see our Creek men wearing crane feathers attached to their hats.

When I see the pictures of Chief Calvin in his headdress and regalia, I see a man who was tenaciously focused on doing all he could to better his people however he needed to. While headdresses hold great cultural, historical, and traditional significance for other Tribes, our ties to this meaningful item must be understood within the context of what our leaders were striving towards: a better life, brighter future, and appropriate acknowledgment of us as Mvskoke Creek people.



PICTURED
Triston Harper's soulful rendition of "Cover Me Up" by Jason Isbell captivated both judges and audiences, earning him praise and admiration from the judges' panel.

TRISTON HARPER, FROM MOWA BAND OF CHOCTAW, WOWS ON AMERICAN IDOL

By Kaili Berg with Native News Online

On "American Idol" last month, 15-year-old Triston Harper from Macintosh, Ala., showcased his immense musical talent and highlighted his Indigenous heritage as a proud member of the MOWA Band of Choctaw Indians.

Harper said in an interview on the show that he faced tough times from a young age. When he was 12, his mother left an abusive relationship, leaving them homeless. But even through these hard times, he found comfort and courage in music. It became his guiding light, helping him navigate life's challenges.

His love for music started at the age of 10, sparked by the discovery of his grandfather's Johnny Cash records, laying the foundation for his musical journey, according to his audition. Along with his grandmother's love for Elvis Presley, he found inspiration in the stage presence of these musical icons.

Despite his youth, Harper's talent shined through during his audition. His soulful rendition of "Cover Me Up" by Jason Isbell captivated both judges and audiences, earning him praise and admiration from the judges' panel.

Pop singer Katy Perry was deeply moved by Harper's performance. She expressed, "You were so authentic, so

connected to yourself, singing from your soul. It wasn't perfect, but it resonated with me. It was really good."

Country music superstar Luke Bryan acknowledged some technical issues in Harper's performance but couldn't overlook his potential. He remarked, "Anything that you're doing technically-wise is because you're fifteen. I could have an afternoon with you and say 'Don't do that anymore!' Just like 'Don't do those two things,' and man."

And Lionel Richie, an icon in the music industry renowned for his ability to recognize genuine talent, was quick to commend Harper's emotional delivery, stating, "I'm impressed."

With all the judges giving their approval, Harper received a definite "Yes," securing his spot with a golden ticket to Hollywood. His outstanding performance not only pushed him ahead in the competition but also brought attention to the MOWA Band of Choctaw Indians, who are advocating for federal recognition in Alabama.

Now, as Harper embarks on the next phase of his journey, he's a figure Indian Country will be watching closely in the weeks to come, representing resilience, talent, and the power of music to unite and inspire.

— “ —

It was really good.

KATY PERRY

I'm impressed.

LIONEL RICHIE

— ” —

HERE'S WHAT INDIAN COUNTRY IS SAYING ON SOCIAL MEDIA ABOUT THE TALENTED YOUNG MUSICIAN

This young talented MOWA CHOCTAW, Triston Harper, has people that are so very proud of him on his shoulders. So let's rally behind this young man and support him by spreading his face and name throughout Indian country and to every tribe and get to the phones and vote.
ROBERT WEAVER

So proud of you my brother. Stay focused and keep doing your thing; we are proud of you to get the tribe federally recognized for everyone.
DREW PARTAIN

Seeing a Native American make it to Hollywood on American Idol is cool! Triston Harper representing the Choctaw Tribe out of Alabama! LFG!
ALEX WELLS

Sing as if you're talking to the great spirit Tris. It's a conversation just between you and him. Ok.
MARLI MILLER

Pulling hard for you! Proud Mowa and McIntosh man and having this opportunity right in front of you is AMAZING! God is good!
ALVIN WEAVER

Those Choctaw roots run deep. We are rooting for you! MOWA Choctaw proud.
THERESA V. FRANKS

Rootin for you cousin! Chikashsha poya! Chahta poya!
ALYSSA WOLVERTON



Are you interested in starting your own business?

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians TERO department has joined with the Alabama Small Business Development Center out of the University of Alabama to provide free quarterly seminars called *Building Your Business in '24*. The series will include seminars on planning, financing, starting, and marketing your business. Those wanting to move faster can receive no cost assistance from the ASBDC by registering at asbdc.org.

PLANNING
 March 5, 2024 | 11:00am-1:00pm

FINANCING
 May 7, 2024 | 11:00am-1:00pm

STARTING
 August 20, 2024 | 11:00am-1:00pm

MARKETING
 October 29, 2024 | 11:00am-1:00pm

TO REGISTER, email Jennifer Reynolds at jreynolds@pci-nsn.gov. All seminars will be held online and in-person at Building 200, First Floor Conference Room.

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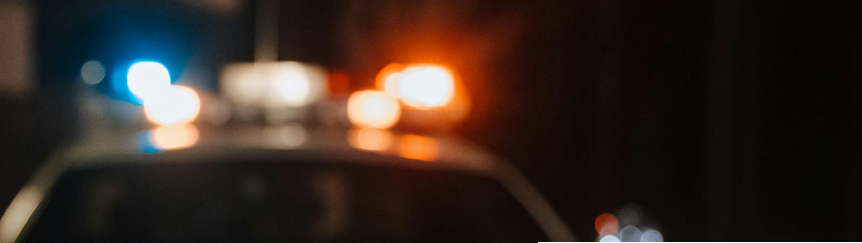
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CRIME ON THE RESERVATION

By Virginia McGhee

Crime rates are two to three times higher on Native American reservations compared with the national average according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics. The crimes within the bounds of Native reservations often are violent and usually aimed at, but not limited to, women. According to the text “Underlying Causes of Crime in our Native Communities” by Sylvia Wirba, a senior associate attorney of the Navajo Nation, a good portion of the violence in Native communities is related to substance abuse issues. As Wirba states, Native peoples are two times as likely to become addicted and more likely to die from an overdose compared to non-Natives.

The problem regarding the missing and murdered Indigenous women is related to the issue of increased violence on Native reservations, and is something tribes across the country combat. As derived from *Law and Economics of Crime in Indian Country* from the Law Journal Library by Professor Adam Creppelle of Loyola University, the murder rate of Indian women on some reservations exceeds ten times the national average. Indian women are going missing at such levels that Congress declared that violence against Indian women “has reached epidemic proportions.”

Additionally, according to Creppelle, violent crimes have also had negative impacts on men and children on Native reservations. Indian males have the highest violent victimization rate in the United States “with more than four out of five Indian men being victimized during their lifetime”. Indian children are victims of violence at rates higher than children of any other race. And these rates may not even fully capture the gravity of the situation. Indians compose less than two percent of the entire U.S. population, so Indian sample sizes are too small to provide reliable data. Contributing to the lack of data, since 1979 nearly half of death certificates for Indians have mislabeled their race.

The high crime rates in Native reservations are impacted by poverty, law enforcement funding, and jurisdiction. Native Americans are more than twice as likely to live in poverty compared to the general population according to Sylvia Wirba. Law enforcement faces difficulties due to funding issues on some reservations and geographic difficulties that can come along with understaffed police forces covering large reservations. In 2016, federal prosecutors failed to prosecute 54% of reservation cases. This failure is partially caused by jurisdiction issues. Depending on the level of crime, it is unclear whether federal or Tribal courts are responsible for prosecuting the crime. By addressing these issues at length it is possible to improve Native lands and create safer communities for families that live in them.



Indian males have the highest violent victimization rate in the U.S. with more than four out of five Indian men being victimized during their lifetime.



VIRGINIA MCGHEE
is a student at the University of Southern Mississippi



**In 2023,
the program
recycled
over 2 tons...
and diverted
over 328 tons
of material
from landfills,
setting a
new record.**



THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEPARTMENT RECYCLING IN RECORDS

By Andrew Daughtry and Kristi Weatherford

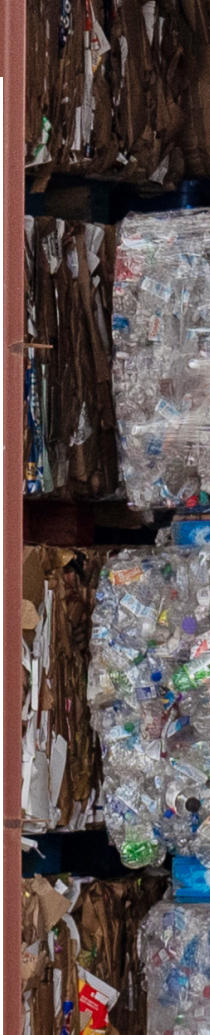
The Environmental Department initiated the Recycling Program in 1996, funded by a federal grant that facilitated the purchase of our very first baler. Initially, the program focused on collecting cardboard and shredded paper for a few hours once a week, operating from an open shed with two vertical balers and a forklift. Since its inception, the program has witnessed substantial growth over 27 years, continuously striving to enhance recycling efforts in the community. The program's evolution began in 2018, which included relocating the Recycling Center to 4449 Highway 21, Atmore, Alabama, which features a 4,800 sq. ft. Recycling Facility where recyclable materials are collected, sorted, processed, and baled for sale. The facility also includes a 1,200 sq. ft. building for storing baled materials until they can be shipped in bulk, and employing two full-time staff members to aid in material collection.

The range of materials collected has expanded

significantly to include all paper products, cardboard, aluminum, PET/#1 plastic (drink bottles), scrap metal, electronics, batteries, fluorescent bulbs, appliances, Mardi Gras beads, etc. The goal for the future is to expand our accepted collection materials to include glass, grocery bags, and plastics 2-7. To provide perspective on the volume of materials recycled, in 2023, the program recycled over 2 tons of plastic materials, equivalent to over 81,000 plastic bottles, and diverted over 328 tons of materials from landfills, setting a new record.

The program also actively participates in Tribal events, providing blue and green bins for collecting plastic and aluminum, and collaborates with event organizers to collect cardboard associated with gifts and food.

For those interested in contributing to the recycling efforts, there are two drop-off locations. The Community Recycling Trailer is located at the Poarch Creek Community Center and is accessible 24/7 for cardboard, aluminum/



metal, and plastic bottles. The PCI Recycling Center is located at 4449 Highway 21, Atmore, Alabama, and is open Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm to accept all approved materials. We request that plastic and aluminum cans be emptied and bagged, and cardboard be broken down with all packaging materials removed. For further information or questions about recycling, the Environmental Department is available for contact at environmentalinfo@pci-nsn.gov.

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INDIGENOUS MATTERS

EPISODE 1: THE HISTORY OF POW WOW

By Ashlee “Katie” Mothershed

In the first episode of our new podcast, hosts Brandy Chunn and Billy Bailey welcome a dynamic duo in the studio: Karla Martin Dawson, the Community Services Director, and Larry Haikey, the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer. This installment breaks the mold by focusing on a contemporary milestone in history—the 51st Poarch Band of Creek Indians Pow Wow, held on November 23 and 24, 2023, in a newly erected covered arena.

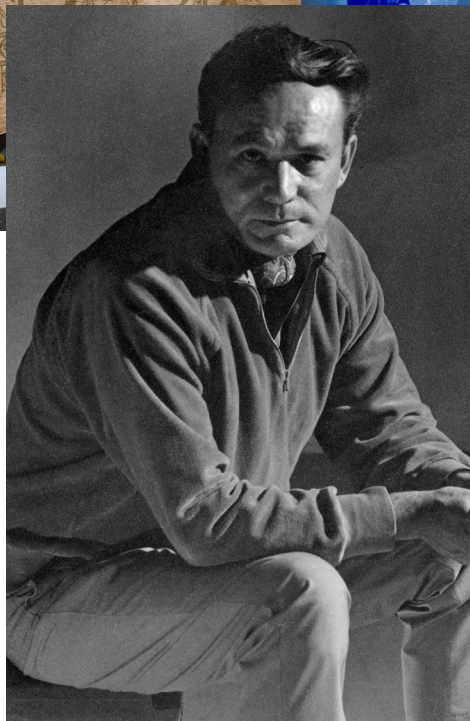
Karla and Larry join us to share insights into this significant event. The conversation begins with personal introductions, offering listeners a glimpse into the professional landscapes of our guests and the teams they lead. Larry provides a historical backdrop of the powwow grounds, enriching our understanding of this cultural cornerstone. Karla, touching on the involvement of the cultural department, sheds light on the planning and execution of the powwow, segueing into a discussion about the genesis of the covered arena—

its necessity, the vision behind its creation, and the benefits it promises for the community.

The dialogue navigates through the roles and responsibilities of Larry’s department in preserving and documenting Traditional Cultural Properties, especially when historical sites like the Historic School House are in close proximity to cultural celebrations. The episode also delves into community feedback—both the challenges and triumphs encountered during the arena’s introduction to the Tribe and community members.

► Available on *Apple Podcast*,
Spotify, or wherever you get podcasts.
Just search for “*Indigenous Matters*”.

LLOYD HENRI “KIVA” NEW



Pioneering Native American Art and Education

Lloyd Henri New (1916-2002), a member of the Cherokee Nation, made significant strides in Native American arts, transitioning from a celebrated fashion designer to an influential educator and co-founder of the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) in Santa Fe. His vision was for Native American artists to innovate within their cultural traditions, a philosophy that propelled the IAIA to become a pivotal institution for indigenous artistry. New’s legacy lies in fostering a space where Native American artists could blend tradition with modernity, ensuring their cultural expressions thrive in contemporary art landscapes.

To view pictures of his 2016 exhibition at IAIA, *Lloyd Kiva New: Art, Design, and Influence*, scan the QR code below on the left. For more information, you can purchase the catalog of his work, *Lloyd Kiva New, A New Century: The Life and Legacy of Cherokee Artist and Educator Lloyd Kiva New*, by scanning the QR code below on the right.



**Lloyd Kiva New:
Art, Design,
and Influence**



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Century: The Life and
Legacy of Cherokee
Artist and Educator
Lloyd Kiva New**

The Tribe is committed to doing its part to further Native arts through books, media, movies, fashion, and similar artistic outlets. We’d love to include your recommendation in one of our future issues. Please feel free to share those with me. Mvto!

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**POARCH BAND OF CREEK INDIANS' FORMER TRIBAL CHAIR
EDDIE TULLIS RECEIVES THE
ATMORE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

By Kristin Hellmich

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians is proud to announce that its former Chairman, Eddie L. Tullis is the recipient of the 2024 Atmore Chamber of Commerce Lifetime Achievement Award. This award recognizes successful leaders of an organization, company, or industry whose long-term, active engagement over the entirety of their career and life has had a significant, positive impact locally, qualities that Eddie Tullis exemplifies.

Over the past 40 years, Mr. Tullis has served on the Tribal Council of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, and he has traveled the United States working on its behalf. He was the Tribal Chairman for 27 of those years (from 1978-200), and he also served as Vice Chairman of Creek Indian Enterprise Development Authority (CIEDA). As Chairman, Tullis played a crucial role in the Tribe achieving federal recognition.

Tullis is also recognized as a national leader. He has been a tireless advocate for Indian Country and has served in several leadership roles over many years in which he advanced interests that impact the welfare of the Native Americans as a whole.

Tullis served as Vice President of the National Congress of American Indians; the first member of a non-federally recognized Tribe to serve in that capacity. He also served as Chairman of the National Advisory Council on Indian Education (OIE) and the National Indian and Native American Employment and Training Conference (NINAETC). Additionally, he was a Member of the Board of Directors for the Trail of Tears Historic Trail Commission, AmeriCorps, United Bank, Leadership Alabama, and Leadership Atmore.

In addition to serving his tribe, Tullis also served in the Navy as a young man. In the private sector, he was employed for more than thirty-five years with Monsanto Company until his retirement in 1991.

“Mr. Tullis has dedicated his life to improving and advancing his people and his community,” said Stephanie A. Bryan, Poarch Band of Creek Indians Tribal Chair & CEO. “It is an honor to have him represent us and our community by being a driving force in making Atmore, the Poarch Creek Indians, and the State of Alabama a better place to live and work.”

Tullis is also known for his steadfast commitment to philanthropy and has been a respected, effective leader advocating for Alabama 4-H, its programs, and the young people it serves. In recognition of his innumerable contributions of time, talent and resources to 4-H, Tullis was honored with an induction into the National 4-H Hall of Fame in 2022.

“Mr. Tullis has dedicated his life to improving and advancing his people and his community.”

STEPHANIE A. BRYAN



POARCH BAND OF CREEK INDIANS' ATTORNEY GENERAL

LORI STINSON RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS “WOMEN WHO SHAPE THE STATE” AWARD

By Kristin Hellmich

Lori Stinson, who serves as Attorney General and Chief Legal Officer for the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, was among 25 women honored at This is Alabama's 11th annual Women Who Shape the State event.

The Women Who Shape the State award honors those who exemplify leadership and demonstrate persistence and fearlessness. The 2024 class of Women Who Shape the State hail from all corners of Alabama and include CEOs, civic leaders, educators, entrepreneurs, and other notable women who have made their communities a better place to work and live.

In learning that she was one of the 25 recipients, Stinson said, “I consider my work for the Tribe and all the opportunities it has afforded me to serve my people, and grow as a professional, one of the greatest blessings in my life. I am incredibly honored and humbled to be part of this remarkable group of women from across our great state.”

As Attorney General for the Tribe, Stinson leads the enrollment department and an in-house team of attorneys who provide legal counsel to, and representation for, the Tribe, the Tribal Council, and all the Tribe's entities, which include its Tribal Government, PCI Gaming Authority (d/b/a Wind Creek Hospitality), and Creek Indian Enterprises Development Authority.

Stinson personally represents the Tribe in many pivotally important capacities. She has testified before Congress on the Tribe's behalf and has played a key role in drafting

— “ —
I consider my work for the Tribe... one of the greatest blessings in my life.
LORI STINSON

tribal, state, and federal legislation. Stinson also leads the Tribe's litigation as well as manages the Tribe's appellate issues in tribal, state, and federal courts including the United States Supreme Court.

Stinson has been highly effective in protecting the Tribe's lands and sovereignty, while also serving as a role model for Tribal Citizens and employees, especially young women.

Stinson is involved in many leadership organizations throughout the State, including her recent graduation from the Leadership Alabama Class XXXII. She was also recently inducted into the Atmore Area Hall of Fame for her outstanding contributions to the community.

In her hometown, Stinson is respected and revered. She is a member of the First Baptist Church of Atmore, Atmore Planning Commission, Atmore Historical Preservation Commission, Alabama Anti-Human Trafficking Alliance Task Force, Main Street Atmore's Economic Vitality Committee, and United Bank's Board of Directors. She is also a 2000 graduate of Leadership Atmore.

Stinson is the widow of Brad Stinson. She has two daughters, Bradleigh Anne and Bailey Catherine, and is the daughter of Billy Conn and Shirley Madison.

Women Who Shape the State is hosted by This is Alabama and the Alabama Media Group. The honorees were celebrated during a luncheon on March 7 at The Club in Birmingham. Visit thisisalabama.org for the full list of 2024 Women Who Shape the State winners.



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POARCH BAND OF CREEK INDIANS AWARDS \$250K GRANT TO MADISON VISIONARY PARTNERS

By Kristin Hellmich

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians (PBCI) today announced \$250,000 grant to Madison Visionary Partners (MVP) that will help fund a senior wing of the new Madison Community Center. The announcement came at a press conference held at Madison City Hall that was attended by the Center’s leaders and supporters from the community.

“We are so thankful to the Poarch Band of Creek Indians for recognizing the impact that the Center will have on our senior citizens’ quality of life,” said Melanie Thornton, Executive Director of MVP. “Thanks to this investment from the Tribe, our city’s growing senior population will have access to high-quality programs and services.”

The 34,000 square foot Madison Community Center, scheduled to open later this year, will house the city’s “Meals on Wheels” program, as well as multiple meeting rooms, arts and craft spaces, a music room, and a multi-use gym for Madison’s special needs community. An entire wing of the building will be home to Madison’s Senior Center which, once complete, will greatly expand opportunities for Madison’s growing, and active senior community.

“In our Indian culture, seniors are highly valued and respected, and they play an active role in the life of our community,” stated PBCI Tribal Chair & CEO, Stephanie A. Bryan. “It is very important to us that we support seniors and help provide ways for them to continue to live active, healthy lives and maintain their connections to others and to their community. We are honored to be able to be part of this truly visionary project.”

PBCI’s commitment to philanthropy has left a lasting impact on communities throughout Alabama. Actively supporting numerous charitable organizations, PBCI allocates funding to a range of initiatives, including the arts, youth sports, senior care, and emergency support services. This reflects PBCI’s dedication to addressing the diverse needs of the community.”

“We are incredibly grateful to the Poarch Band of Creek Indians for their support and donation to our Community Center; a project that directly benefits the quality of life for all residents in the City of Madison,” said City of Madison’s Mayor Paul Finley. “We also appreciate Madison Visionary Partners continued efforts in leading our Community Center Capital Campaign, they are truly making a positive impact.”



WIND CREEK HOSPITALITY

FEEDING THE STUDENTS OF DONEGAN ELEMENTARY

By Amelia Tognoli

Wind Creek Hospitality's Pennsylvania property, Wind Creek Bethlehem, maintains a commitment to supporting its neighboring community.

This commitment is exemplified by Wind Creek Bethlehem's relationship with a nearby school, Donegan Elementary. Located less than 5 minutes from the property, Donegan Elementary School educates Bethlehem area children—many of whom are related to Wind Creek Bethlehem Team Members. In addition to extending various forms of support to the school—including drives, assisting with projects, events, and volunteer efforts—the Donegan Breakfast Program has remained a successful initiative for close to seven years.

Established in 2017, the program has become a cherished tradition with Wind Creek Bethlehem Team Members coming together once a quarter to serve up a free, hearty breakfast to over 80 students. From French toast to eggs, sausage, and orange juice, the students at Donegan are treated to a nutritious start to their day. Setting the tone for a productive morning, students are also recognized for their participation, receiving an award to do so.

Trina Rackard, Director of Sponsorships and Events at Wind Creek Hospitality, reflects on the impact that the Donegan Breakfast Program has had over the years. "This program has remained a highlight for not only the students but also our Team Members," said Trina Rackard, Director of Sponsorships and Events at Wind Creek Hospitality. "Our Team Members look forward to engaging with the students and kicking off their mornings with positivity."

“

Our Team Members look forward to engaging with the students and kicking off their mornings with positivity.

TRINA RACKARD



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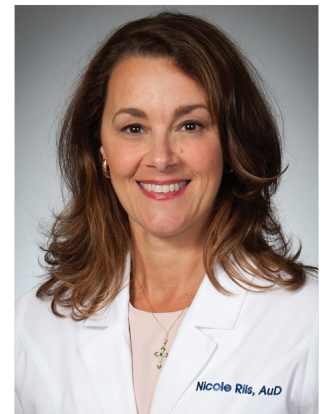
-Google Review (2022)



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Testing Testing...1, 2, 3

Let's do a sound check on your hearing.

Take our quiz below.

Is talking on the phone difficult for you? Yes Sometimes No

Do you have tinnitus or ringing in the ears? Yes Sometimes No

Do you experience dizziness or imbalance? Yes Sometimes No

Does it often seem as if people are mumbling? Yes Sometimes No

Do family members or friends often think you're not listening to them? Yes Sometimes No

Do you misunderstand conversations? Yes Sometimes No

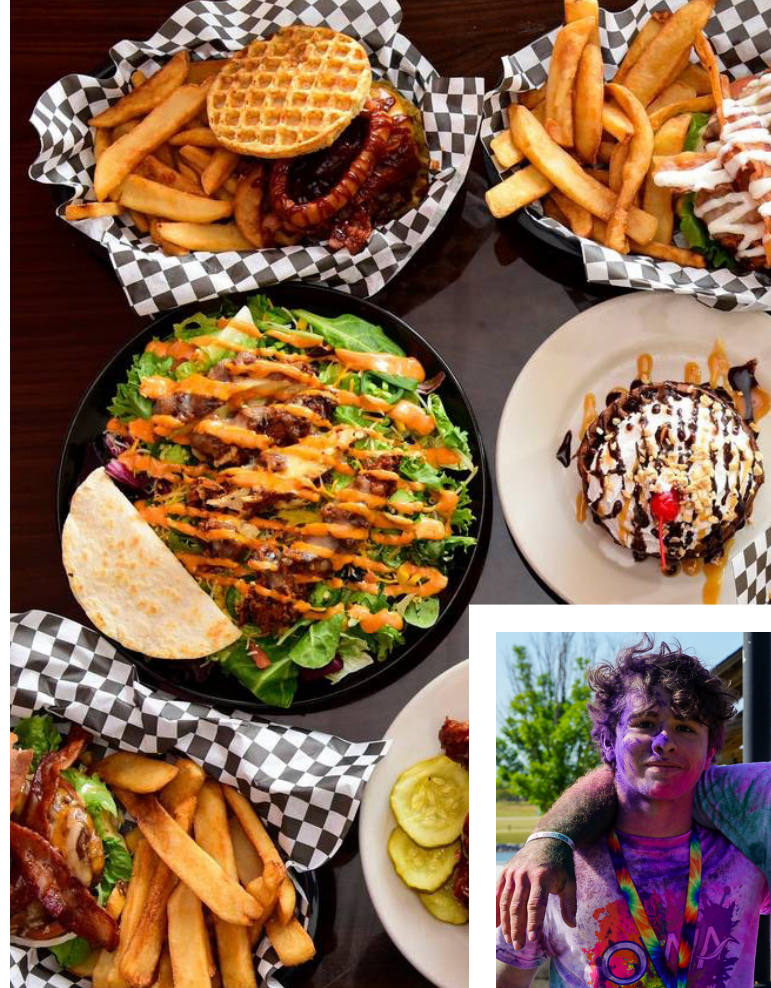
Do you have difficulty tuning out background noise? Yes Sometimes No

Answering "Sometimes" or "Yes" to any of the questions above could indicate a hearing loss.



Put Your Hearing to the Test!
Take our FREE 5-minutes hearing screener.





APRIL AT OWA

By Catherine Hasty

Join us for a fun-filled spring as we welcome the month of April with a line-up of family-friendly events, entertainment, and more!

Put your Smash skills to the challenge and win some major bucks at the third Tropic Takeover Super Smash Bros. Tournament at The Bohemian in Downtown OWA on April 5 & 6. Register today at VisitOWA.com to get your name in the running for a \$1000 guaranteed prize pool plus bonus prizes!

Save the dates and join OWA Theater for a line-up of must-see performances! On April 6, enjoy “Bonded: A Salute to the Music of James Bond with Jaimee Paul,” where Jaimee Paul takes you into the world of 007 with her soulful renditions of the iconic James Bond theme songs. Then, put on your boots on April 20 for “A Salute to the Music of Tammy, Loretta, Patsy & Dolly!” for a night of iconic country. Finally, on April 26 & 27, let White Tie Rock Ensemble rock the night away for an epic performance - Progressive Rock! From the sonic sounds of ELO to eclectic influences of Rush, Kansas, Yes & more, the show will be a wave of classical influences. Grab tickets online at VisitOWA.com.

Get ready to run! Lace-up your running shoes because Rainbow Run is back on April 13. This 1.5-mile run guarantees fun as rainbow-colored powder fills the air and covers participants as they jog, walk, skip, or sprint through the streets of Downtown OWA. Grab your friends and sign up today, and you'll also get a complimentary white Rainbow Run T-shirt. For full details and registration, head to VisitOWA.com.

Spring is here, and it's time to celebrate with the Spring Home & Garden Festival on April 20! This event will feature local garden clubs, home decor boutiques, lawn care services,



and more. It's a fantastic opportunity to show your support for our local merchants and discover the latest trends to refresh your home with a touch of spring! Learn more at VisitOWA.com.

Have you tasted the newest culinary gems in Downtown OWA? Whether you're in the mood for Mexican cuisine, classic American diner fare, or indulgent breakfast delights, Downtown OWA has you covered with new restaurants opening. From the vibrant flavors of Cozumel to the home-style cooking of Gussies and the wild waffles of Waffles R Wild, you're in for a treat!

Stay up-to-date on the latest events, entertainment, and activities by visiting our website at VisitOWA.com or following us on social media at @VisitOWA.



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Saturday April 27, 2024
8:00 am- 12:00 NOON

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THIS COLLECTION EVENT IS FOR HOUSEHOLDS ONLY

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

The Household Hazardous Waste items listed below will be accepted:

Paints	Household Cleaners	Pesticides
Automobile Batteries	Household Chemical	Flammables
Motor Oil	Fluorescent Bulbs	Corrosives
Antifreeze	Alkaline Batteries	

The Electronics listed below will be accepted:

Computers	CD Rom Drives	Radios
Monitors	Networking Equipment	Walkman Products Calculators
Printers	Fax Machines	DVD/Blu-ray Players Flat
Hard Drives	Digital Cameras	Screen TVs
Scanners	Audio or Video Equipment	<u>Limit 2 Tubed (CRT) TVs</u>
Power Supplies	Video/ Tape Recorders	Game Consoles Stereo
Battery Backups	Tape Drives	Equipment Cellular Phones
Rechargeable Batteries	Speakers	Phone Accessories
Toner/Ink Cartridges	VCRs	<u>Small</u> electrical appliances
Keyboards	Cables	

The following items are PROHIBITED:

Infectious & Medical Waste	Radioactive Materials	Fire Extinguishers
Medications	Compressed Gas Cylinders	Smoke Detectors
Biological Materials	Ammunition	Explosives

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

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90 Years Old and Still Getting Surprised

Betty Colbert Wood was surprised by her family and friends with a party for her 90th birthday. The celebration took place on February 24th, in Wausau, Florida although her actual birthday wasn't until February 29. The party was hosted by her four children, and there were over seventy people in attendance. When asked about it, she said " I could never imagine anything like this, it is wonderful that so many people showed up for me".

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CREEK CORNER

APRIL 2024 IMPORTANT DATES

4.1	SUBMISSION DEADLINE May Issue	
4.1-2	MUSEUM GIFT SHOP CLOSED Inventory	
4.4	TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING TC Chambers	4:00 PM
4.18	TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING TC Chambers	4:00 PM