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THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE of the POARCH BAND OF CREEK INDIANS

# creek corner

## *A Historic Visit*

**WELCOMING U.S. SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR DEB HAALAND**



**48 YEARS OF DEDICATION:  
GLENDA CARLTON'S RETIREMENT**

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**Tribal Council  
Member Sandy  
Hollinger Honored  
as a 2024 Woman  
of Impact by  
Yellowhammer News**  
More info on page 21



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## FROM THE EDITOR: CHECKING YOUR MINDSET



**MEGAN ZAMORA**  
Editor, Creek Corner

*...I've learned how to look more closely for the blessings that exist, even during the tough times.*

“ I don't remember an exact moment or pivotal event when I started doing this, but at some time during my adult life, I began to be intentional about spending some time in a state of gratitude. Even though I'm a self-proclaimed “Type A” personality, life happens and I'm currently not regimented enough to do this every single day. But, I try to exercise this mindset of intentional gratefulness more days than not.

The benefits to me have really been immense and I've learned how to look more closely for the blessings that exist, even during tough times. For me, this is key to curtailing depression, anxiety, and moments when things just don't go as planned (which happens more frequently these days it seems). Here's what it looks like in reality:

1. Flat tire? Well, it is very inconvenient, but maybe this inconvenience saved me from a car wreck down the road, and I'm grateful I have roadside assistance/the means to cover the expense and, most importantly, my family and I are safe.
2. Sick child? It's hard to see my baby not feeling the best, it's really stressful, tiring and demanding, and this really puts me behind at work, but I'm grateful to have this unexpected time with my child...time that I will never get back and time that I will long to have when she is older and doesn't need me this way anymore.

3. Tough day at work? I'm thankful for a job that provides for my family. What lesson am I being taught through this challenging time at work?

You may think it an overly optimistic or naïve way of thinking, but the truth is, fretting over things you have no control over lends itself to anxiety and making a tough situation even tougher. It's easier said than done, and it takes practice. But, the benefits are tremendous for your health and overall well-being.

I was taught that historically and culturally our Mvskoke people would begin their day by washing off and praying. Washing off is more symbolic than just cleaning oneself. It was a way of washing off the day before—including hardships, unwelcome news, challenges, and burdens—and beginning each day with a fresh, new mindset covered in prayer. Maybe they too practiced gratitude, or maybe it was just a physical act that tied to a mindful one. Either way, the takeaway is intentionally living a life that relieves your mind of unnecessary weights.

The more I learn about the cultural practices of our people, the more I see the immense wisdom that was layered into their everyday life. Whether you practice gratitude, washing off, prayer, all three or something else altogether, make sure you are being good to yourself and your mind.



# 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





## FROM OUR LEADERS: A MESSAGE FROM KEITH MARTIN

By Megan Zamora



**O**n February 7, 2024, I sat down with Tribal Council Member Keith Martin to catch up on some Tribal updates. We started the conversation by chatting about the gaming bill being proposed in Alabama. At the time of this article, the bill isn't looking favorable for the Tribe. In these instances, the Tribe's stance is to "kill the bill" unless the terms become favorable for PCI.

Seldom do I have a conversation with Councilman Martin that doesn't somehow include food sovereignty, and this time was no exception. You can tell this is an area he is particularly passionate about and that it's his personal mission to ensure the Tribe never goes hungry. In his own words, food sovereignty simply means "feed yourself", but the importance of this simple concept has become actionable for PCI in its use of community gardens, Perdido River Farms, and most recently, the development of the meat processing facility.

He shared that the vision for the farm is to increase our cattle from 500 to 1,000 and to birth the cow, feed the cow, and process the cow all on-site. Housing the cattle production process from beginning to end ensures that PCI knows exactly how the cow is treated and fed, and allows us to recoup our costs because we won't have to go through other farmers or a meat processor. The meat processing facility is also set up to accommodate shipping. While that won't be available for some time yet, credit is due to the forward-thinking efforts of the team leading this initiative. Additionally, thanks to grant funding and proper budgeting, he shared that we aren't in debt on the project.

***The overall goal for the Tribe's food sovereignty endeavor is to break even and be poised to feed our folks when and if another pandemic or similar event impacts the Tribe and community.***

The overall goal for the Tribe's food sovereignty endeavor is to break even and be poised to feed our folks when and if another pandemic or similar event impacts the Tribe and community. It was an eye-opening experience for Mr. Martin and he commented, "There will be another time when this happens. As leaders, we have to be as prepared as possible and have a game plan in place at the time of the event."

Another milestone project for the Tribe is the completion of the Wi-Fi broadband system. It currently services around 120 households in the community and was funded via federal dollars for \$5.5 million. With 13 poles, it covers 36 square miles and it's fast. Keith concedes that nothing beats fiber optics, but it's better than what was available in the area. He shared his thanks for the work that our very own Escambia Utilities (aka PCI Utilities) contributed to the success of the project. If you'd like to get signed up or check your eligibility for this service, please reach out to Rebecca Black or Kim Weatherford at (251) 446-1617.

Councilman Martin also mentioned the Tribe's plans to continue its improvements of the roads in the area, particularly Jack Springs Road and the bridge over Brushy Creek. There have been numerous car accidents on Jack Springs Road and this is an improvement that benefits not only Poarch, but the entire community by making the road safer for everyone. The plan is to repair the bridge, raise Jack Springs Road to prevent flooding, and fix the drainage. The Tribe is going after any and all grant dollars for this shovel-ready project.

While it looks like gaming legislation in Alabama might not be feasible, there are many other positive things going on in the Tribe, and that's progress we can all be proud of.



## DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT

# FEDERAL ACCOUNTING

By Ashlee “Katie” Mothershed

The Federal Accounting Department for the Poarch Band of Creek Indians plays a crucial role in managing and overseeing the Tribe's financial resources, particularly those originating from federal sources.

*Here are the key duties of this department:*

### MONITORING GRANT FUNDING

The department is responsible for tracking the allocation, utilization, and management of grant funding received from various sources. This involves ensuring that funds are used according to the grant's terms and conditions and monitoring the overall performance of grant-funded projects.

### RECOMMENDING FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

They actively seek and identify funding opportunities that align with the Tribe's needs and objectives. This includes recommending appropriate funding sources to different Tribal departments that require financial support.

### RECEIVING/DRAWING DOWN OF FEDERAL FUNDS

The department manages the process of receiving funds from federal agencies. This includes drawing down funds in accordance with federal guidelines and ensuring timely receipt to meet the Tribe's financial needs.

### COMPLIANCE OF ALL FUNDS ONCE RECEIVED

Ensuring compliance with federal regulations and guidelines is a critical function. This involves making sure that all received funds are used for their intended purposes and in accordance with any stipulations set by the funding agencies.



**REPORTING OF FUNDS' EXPENDITURES TO AGENCIES**

Regular and accurate reporting of how funds have been expended is essential. The department prepares and submits detailed reports to the funding agencies, showcasing the allocation and utilization of the funds.

**RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS**

The department is responsible for the reconciliation of funds, ensuring that the financial records accurately reflect the actual funds received and expended. This is important for maintaining transparency and accountability.

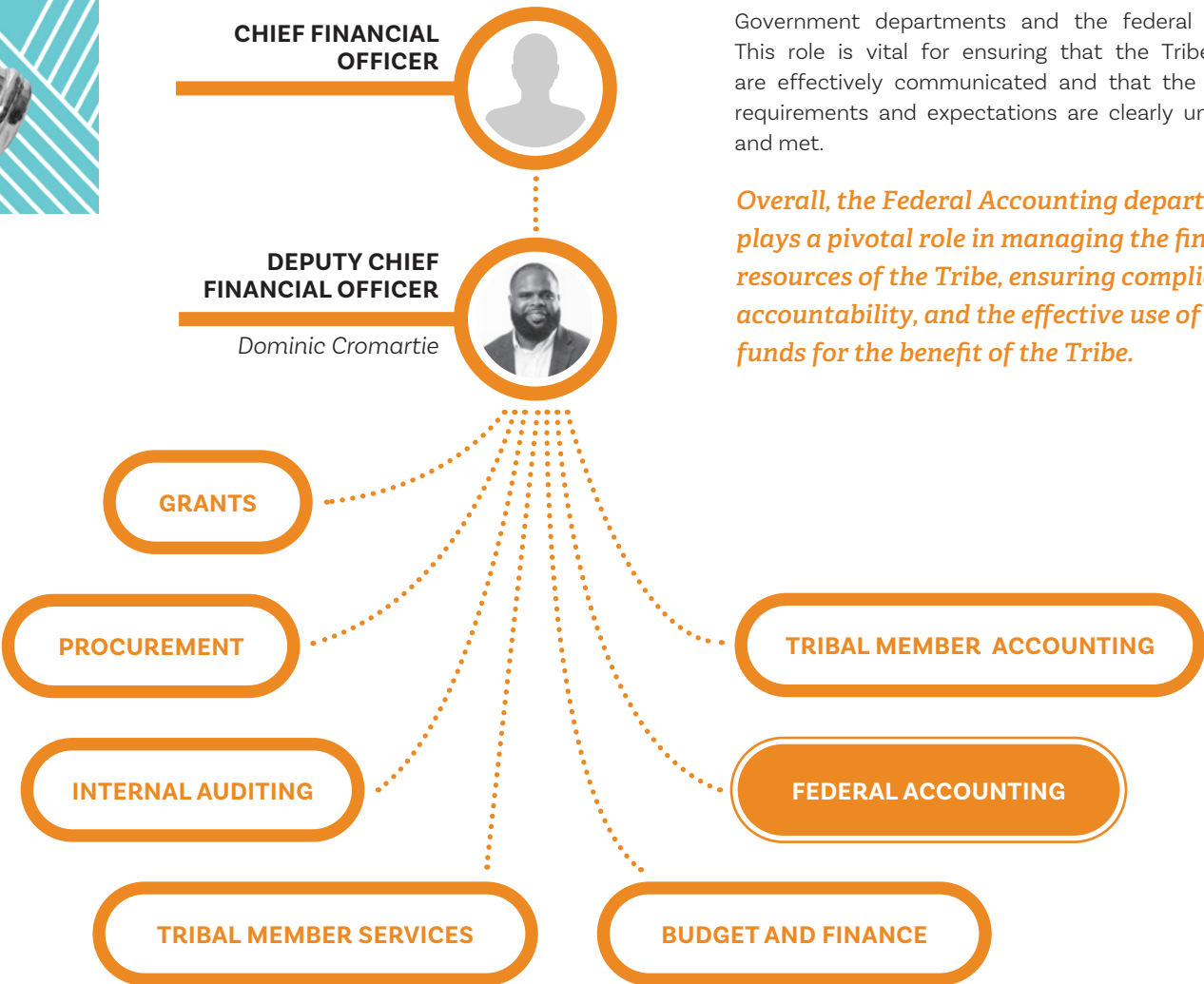
**CLOSING OUT OF FUNDS**

Once a project or funding period is complete, the department handles the closure of funds. This involves ensuring that all financial obligations have been met and preparing final reports for submission to the funding agencies.


**LIAISON BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENTS AND THE AGENCIES**

Acting as a bridge, the department facilitates communication and coordination between the Tribal Government departments and the federal agencies. This role is vital for ensuring that the Tribe's needs are effectively communicated and that the agencies' requirements and expectations are clearly understood and met.

*Overall, the Federal Accounting department plays a pivotal role in managing the financial resources of the Tribe, ensuring compliance, accountability, and the effective use of federal funds for the benefit of the Tribe.*





The background image is a photograph of the Minnesota State Capitol building, a large, ornate, light-colored stone structure with a prominent dome. In the foreground, there is a large-scale art installation. It consists of numerous red shirts laid out on the ground, many of which have white handprints or other markings on them. Interspersed among the shirts are cutouts of Indigenous women in traditional dress. Some of the cutouts have text on them, such as "Gizaagi'N" and "JUSTICE FOR MISSING + MURDERED". There is also a cutout with a biohazard symbol and the words "NAMES FORGOTTEN" and "LIVES NOT".

# UNDERSTANDING THE MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN CRISIS

*By Virginia McGhee*

Since the year 2016, there have been 5,712 reported cases of missing and murdered American Indian and Alaskan Native women causing immense loss for their communities<sup>1</sup>. There are many reasons why there has been such a high rate of violence in Indigenous communities but, according to the Native Hope Organization, the leading cause is issues stemming from the Indian Relocation Act and federal policies. Additional causes include generations of government policies of forced removal, land seizures, and violence inflicted on Native peoples<sup>2</sup>.



In the past years, this issue has cost many indigenous women and men their lives as well as caused much inner turmoil to survivors. Statistically, it has been stated that murder is the third leading cause of death for Indigenous Women by the Center for Disease Control. Indigenous Women are murdered at 10 times higher rate than all other ethnicities<sup>3</sup>. 82% of Indigenous men and women are victims of violence in their lifetime<sup>3</sup>. Specifically, Indigenous women have alarmingly high statistics of violence and human trafficking towards them.

All members of Tribes across the country are affected by the heartbreak of losing a valued family member or friend. It's important to spread awareness about this issue in hope to prevent any future victims and to honor and remember past victims through symbols and days dedicated to spreading awareness. The symbol of this issue is a red handprint over someone's mouth, used to honor the missing "sisters" whose voices are not heard after going missing and experiencing violence. This symbol is used as a form of protest due to the lack of reports from the media about the issue and a sign of those who may be suffering in silence that they are not alone.

As stated by the Native Hope organization there are two days in which people can honor and spread awareness on this issue. The first, February 14, is called the Missing

Murdered Indigenous Women (MMWI) National Day of Action and Awareness. On this day, activist groups organize marches across the country against violence against Native women and other pressing issues affecting Native communities.

Additionally, every year on May 5, known as Missing Murdered Indigenous Women's Day, Tribal members and people across the country honor the victims by fundraising, attending protests, and wearing red to stand in solidarity and fight injustice happening to Native men, women, and children and send a beacon of hope to those who may be suffering in silence.



1. Native Women Wilderness Organization
2. Bureau of Indian Affairs
3. Native Hope Organization



**VIRGINIA MCGHEE**  
is a student at the University  
of Southern Mississippi



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## U.S. SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR MAKES HISTORIC VISIT TO POARCH BAND OF CREEK INDIANS RESERVATION

By Kristin Hellmich

U

S. Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland on Monday made a historic visit to the Poarch Band of Creek Indians reservation in Atmore, Alabama. Secretary Haaland is the first Native American to serve as Secretary of the Department of the Interior, which has jurisdiction over a wide variety of governmental programs, including the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

In fact, this is the first time that any member of that Department has been to the Tribe's lands in Atmore, and Secretary Haaland's tour of Poarch's reservation was heralded as both an important milestone and a distinct honor for Alabama's only federally recognized Tribe.

"Secretary Haaland has been a tireless advocate for Tribes throughout her years of service to our country, both as the Secretary of the Interior and as a Member of Congress", noted Stephanie A. Bryan, Poarch Band of Creek Indians Chair and CEO. Bryan

continued, "She truly understands how critically important it is for us, as an independent, sovereign Indian nation, to maintain a strong government-to-government relationship with the United States."

As Secretary of the Interior, Haaland has advocated for Tribes to have a "seat at the table" when policies that affect Indian Country are shaped. As evidence to that, she created the Secretary's Tribal Advisory Committee (STAC) of which Poarch's Chair and CEO Bryan is a member. Formed in 2021 as part of the White House Tribal Nations Summit, STAC's mission is to further strengthen relations between the Department of Interior and Indian Country, and to ensure

**"...it has been both an honor and a privilege for me to have the opportunity to work with her and see her commitment to finding solutions to some of the toughest problems facing Indian Country."**

**TRIBAL CHAIR  
& CEO STEPHANIE  
A. BRYAN**





**LEFT**

Poarch Band of Creek Indians Tribal Council welcomes Department of Interior Secretary Deb Haaland on Historic Visit to Reservation. Pictured Left to Right: Tribal Council Member Sandy Hollinger, Tribal Council Member Arthur Mothershed, Tribal Vice Chair Robbie McGhee, Tribal Council Member Keith Martin, Tribal Chair & CEO Stephanie A. Bryan, Secretary Deb Haaland, Tribal Council Member Justin Stabler, Tribal Council Treasurer Amy Gantt, Tribal Council Secretary Charlotte Meckelthephanie A. Bryan (center left).

servant and our country is blessed to have her in this important role.”

During her visit to the Poarch Band of Creek Indians Reservation, Secretary Haaland met with the Tribal Council to hear first-hand about the Tribe’s journey and challenges. She was briefed on the Tribe’s recent multi-million dollar investment into reliable, high-speed internet service for the reservation and surrounding communities. Secretary Haaland toured several locations on the reservation including the Tribe’s Assisted Living Facility, Senior Activities Center and the Poarch Creek Community Center where preschool children shared with her a Mvskoke language presentation, she met several youth Tribal princesses

that Tribal Leader Members have direct, consistent communication with the Department’s executive leadership and staff.

Tribal Chair & CEO Stephanie A. Bryan, who has known Secretary Haaland for several years said, “Personally, it has been both an honor and a privilege for me to have the opportunity to work with her and to see her commitment to finding solutions to some of the toughest problems facing Indian Country. She is a true public

and watched a traditional stickball game. She continued her visit with a stop at the Poarch Creek Museum where she received an in depth guided tour of the Tribe’s history. At the conclusion of the visit, Poarch Creek Tribal Leaders and several Tribal Princesses presented Secretary Haaland with the Tribe’s book, *Woven Together*, to commemorate her visit.



**ABOVE**

PBCI Tribal Chair & CEO Stephanie A. Bryan, along with Tribal Vice Chair Robbie McGhee, brief Secretary Haaland on the Tribe’s pre-school and after school initiatives for youth living within the reservation and surrounding communities.

**LEFT**

Secretary Deb Haaland and Poarch Band of Creek Indians Tribal Chair & CEO Stephanie A. Bryan enjoy a Mvskoke language presentation by the Tribe’s 4K pre-school students and teachers. Pictured are Youth students enrolled in the Fred L. McGhee Early Learning Center along with their teachers, Secretary Deb Haaland (center right) and Tribal Chair & CEO Stephanie A. Bryan (center left).

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## POARCH 101:

# REPLACING THE TERMS “FRIENDLY CREEKS” AND “WHITE STICKS” WITH “NATIONALIST CREEKS”

By Megan Zamora

If you haven't been listening to our podcasts, you've really been missing out. I'm diligently listening through the Poarch Stories episodes now and have been learning some really intriguing information about our Mvskoke history.

In the Creek War Part 3 episode, the dialogue picks up with an in depth explanation of the two sides of the Creek War. Critically important are several inaccuracies and common perceptions that Dr. Alex Colvin, Mallory Gibson Beck, and Larry Haikey talk through, explain, and correct. Specifically, Dr. Colvin explains that the Creek War, also known as the Red Stick War, was a civil war that was fought Creek against Creek – it was not the United States versus the Creeks as some might believe.

The Red Sticks, called thus because “they were seen as people who raised the “red stick of war” [which is] a traditional weapon [and] symbol of war”, are often viewed as the “instigators of the war”. However, Dr. Colvin points out that placing the blame of the war on the Red Sticks is actually

unfair. The roots of the war are varied, but ultimately boil down to two opposing value systems.

### WHO WERE THE RED STICKS?

The Red Sticks were people who wanted to revert back to a traditional lifestyle and get rid of United

States and European influence on the Creeks. Experts disagree on the extent to which Red Sticks want to extinguish that influence however. For example, they might still want to use guns and metal tools, but the things, forces, and ideologies that are creating division amongst the nation, they want gone.

Others unite with the Red Stick faction not because of their convictions, but simply because they don't agree with the decisions the National Council is making. So, not everyone is a Red Stick for the same reason, but “they all agree that the United States is having a bad influence on Creek society.” This creates a Creek side that is dedicated to “defending Creek sovereignty, defending Creek culture, Creek society, and ousting U.S. influence... in hopes that they could protect what is traditional, what is Creek by their definition.”

### WHO WERE THE NATIONALIST CREEKS?

The term Nationalist Creeks is probably new for you (it definitely was for me!), but it's important that we are presenting our history in the most accurate way possible. This term captures the “other side” of the Creek War and is the preferred verbiage rather than the terms “friendly Creeks” or “White Sticks”. Again, Dr. Colvin goes to great lengths to share the facts surrounding all three terms. She shares that



*Menawa was one of the principal leaders of the Red Sticks. After the war, he continued to oppose white encroachment on Muscogee lands, visiting Washington, D.C. in 1826 to protest the treaty of Indian Springs. Painted by Charles Bird King, 1837.*





the term White Stick was first used by a historian because of the town system of red and white towns. The historian surmised that if one side is the warring “red stick” side, then the opposite of that is the peaceful “white stick” side. However, that is historically inaccurate. So, some others called them the “Friendly Creeks”, but that presents problems as well because this side eventually does ally with the United States. By calling them friendly, it automatically makes the Red Sticks seem bad, mean, or evil and the fact is that they simply had a different perspective.

The most accurate term then to use is Nationalist Creeks because these are the individuals who are supporting the National Creek Council. Their ideals align with the creation of a Creek nation and adopting the raising and use of livestock and agriculture. While they may not believe that the U.S. is the best influence, they do believe it is a “necessary relationship” and “is the best case for survival”.



*William Weatherford surrendering to Andrew Jackson. William Weatherford was a Creek chief of the Upper Creek towns who led many of the Red Sticks actions in the Creek War.*

In representing our history, I’ve found that you may never have all the information at your fingertips at one time. So, the best we can do is stay open-minded and willing to take in new research as it becomes available to us. In this case, I’ll be doing my personal best to refrain from using the terms “White Sticks” and “Friendly Creeks” when sharing the history of our Mvskoke people. Instead, I’ll opt for “Nationalist Creeks”, and I hope you will too.



*To learn more, scan the QR code to listen to an interview with Dr. Alex Covin, Public Programs Curator for the Alabama Department of Archives and History, on our podcast “Poarch Stories”.*



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PICTURED  
Glenda Carlton  
upon hearing the  
announcement of  
a scholarship fund  
in her honor at a  
retirement party  
hosted by PBCI.

# POARCH CREEK INDIANS' FIRST EMPLOYEE RETIRES AFTER 48 YEARS

*Ms. Glenda Carlton leaves a legacy of dedication and impact*

By Megan Zamora

**M**s. Glenda Carlton, the first employee to be hired by the Poarch Band of Creek Indians (PBCI), is retiring after 48 remarkable years of service. Her story is one of simple beginnings and an overwhelming desire to contribute her best talents to the people, community, and Tribe that she loves so much.

Hired seven months out of high school, Ms. Glenda began her tenure with PBCI on December 8, 1975 as its Project Coordinator. Former Chairman Eddie Tullis recalled interviewing numerous people for the position and deciding that Glenda Rackard Carlton was the best person for the job. As fate would have it, his first hire was probably his best one.

During that time, the Tribe had 18 Tribal Council Members but no actual employees. Through the efforts of folks like Mr. Eddie Tullis and Mr. Buford Rolin, the Tribe was awarded a grant which was focused on helping Tribes get organized and established. Equipped with her diploma from Escambia County High School, an exemplary work ethic, and her God-given intelligence, Ms. Glenda set about the task of implementing the grant through which she was hired.

In reminiscing about the Tribe's first employee Mr. Tullis shared, "She didn't get paid until after she had been employed for 6 weeks because it was a grant-funded position and it took longer than we planned for the funding to come through. But, Glenda's always been conscientious about doing what's right. If she said it, you could take it as gospel." As it turns out, that's exactly the type of person you want involved in your accounting department. To emphasize his comment, he shared a story about a time Ms. Glenda stayed up till midnight ensuring the books were balanced.

When he asked her how far off they were from being balanced, she responded with tears in her eyes, "Seventeen cents." He responded, "Glenda, go home and sleep on it. I can't help you much, but I'll be here at 8 o'clock in the morning to help you however I can. And, if we can't find the seventeen cents, I'll give it to you to make it balanced." She beat him back to the office, and they eventually found the discrepancy.

Since 2008, Ms. Glenda has worked as the Director of Finance at the Tribal Gaming Commission (TGC). TGC Administrator Daniel McGhee recalled his excitement when she came to work for the entity 16 years ago. The TGC was undergoing a restructuring that required the formation of its own Finance & Accounting Division. In true "Ms. Glenda" fashion, she took on the task of developing the division including the fiscal policies and procedures to operate and regulate in accordance with the standards laid out by governing bodies such as the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC).

Daniel recounted, "I never had to worry about the financial health of the TGC again. Ms. Glenda had it all under control. In her almost 16 years with us, we have never had a warranted financial audit finding or accounting issue. That has only been possible thanks to Ms. Glenda's dedication, knowledge, and expertise." He went on to say, "She has an impeccable eye for detail and an ethical nature that is beyond compare. She works hard and as long as it takes to make

sure everything and everyone is financially taken care of at the TGC. She will be irreplaceable!"

In sharing her thoughts on the retirement of Poarch's first employee, Tribal Chair and CEO Stephanie Bryan commented, "Ms. Glenda has contributed so much of her life to the Poarch Creek Indians and has made a huge impact



ABOVE  
Glenda Carlton moments  
after receiving a blanket  
as recognition for her  
many contributions to the  
PBCI community.

on the Tribe. Even though I would love for her to still be employed with the Tribe, it's time for her to enjoy the fruits of her work." The Chairwoman fondly remembered seeing Ms. Glenda at the Consolidated School building which became the Tribe's first office headquarters during the Tribe's early years. Even then, Glenda was well-known for her dedication and devotion to the Tribe, her strong work ethic, and her love for people.

Further, the confidence that well-respected leaders have in Ms. Glenda's abilities is a legacy worth noting. Tullis shared that in all of Glenda's interactions with federal officials, they always made sure to share with him how much they enjoyed working with her. Additionally, Tribal Chair & CEO Bryan confidently stated, "I would put Glenda in a room with any accountant, CPA, or anybody to manage money. John C. Maxwell said, "A leader doesn't need recognition as long as the job gets done" and that's Glenda. It's evident that things have always gotten accomplished under her leadership."

In speaking with the retiree directly, I was struck by the warm confidence she exuded. Never one to boast of her own accomplishments, she shared how a high school graduate started her career as a Project Coordinator, found her love for accounting, and is now retiring as the Director of Finance for the TGC of one of the most successful Tribes in the nation. She shared, "I've been blessed and fortunate. It's been my job, but I never dreaded it at all because I loved it. I never wanted to be on Tribal Council. I only wanted to help the Tribe in its goals and objectives through what I could do in accounting." Now, she's trading in her time balancing the finances for days, "spent with family and digging in the dirt."

*On behalf of all your friends, family, and colleagues here at the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, we are thankful for the way you've touched all our lives, the innumerable contributions you've made during your 48 years, and the legacy you're leaving for all of us to carry forward. Mvto. Thank you, Ms. Glenda.*

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\*All loans subject to credit approval, verification and collateral evaluation.  
184 Program is only offered to members on active tribal roll and in designated geographic areas. See a United Bank representative for complete details. United Bank NMLS# 494759

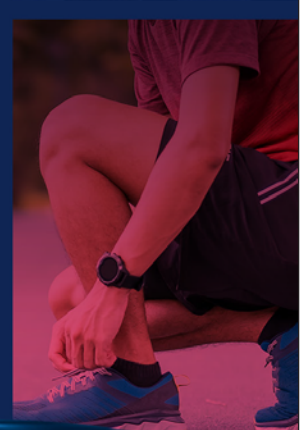


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# MUSCLE CARS, JOHNNY CASH, & *More* CLASSICS!

Start the month off with tickets to *Cashback: a Tribute to Johnny & June Carter Cash*, 3/1 at OWA Theater—then start your engines for the *Gulf Coast Mustang & Mega Car Show* on 3/9. Get ready for *Still Standing: a Tribute to Elton John*, 3/22-23 only, and come back for classic Easter fun with our *Bunnies & Baskets*, 3/23-30. Doing good for the community is always a classic—don't miss the *Diabetes Walk* (3/2) and *Ronald McDonald House Rubber Ducky Regatta* on 3/23! Get all the details at [VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com)!

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# KILLERS of the FLOWER MOON

Based on a true story, directed by Martin Scorsese, and starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Robert De Niro and newcomer Lily Gladstone, *Killers of the Flower Moon* is an epic western crime saga set in 1920's Oklahoma. Real love crosses paths with unspeakable betrayal as Mollie Burkhart, a member of the Osage Nation, fights to survive and bring to light the spree of greed-fueled murders committed against the Osage community after oil was discovered on their land.

Lily Gladstone is opening doors and breaking through glass ceilings for countless other Native American women in the world of acting. She is the first Indigenous woman to be nominated for and win a Golden Globe (for Best Actress in a Motion Picture-Drama) and is also the first Native American woman to be nominated for the Academy Award for Best Actress.

Gladstone paid tribute to the Blackfeet Nation by delivering part of her acceptance speech in the Blackfeet language. She expressed gratitude for being able to speak her native language in the entertainment industry, where Native actors were once required to speak their lines in English, which were then manipulated to sound like Native languages. Gladstone's win is historic and represents a significant moment for Native representation in film. She dedicated her award to every Native child with a dream, emphasizing the importance of seeing themselves represented in media.

People should watch "Killers of the Flower Moon" not only for its compelling story and strong performances but also to support and acknowledge the progress in Native representation in Hollywood. The film's recognition of Native voices and stories is a step forward in creating a more inclusive and diverse entertainment industry.

---

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!

**Share your recommendation**  
with Megan Zamora at [mzamora@pci-nsn.gov](mailto:mzamora@pci-nsn.gov).



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ANNOUNCING A NEW  
POARCH BAND of CREEK INDIANS  
PODCAST

# INDIGENOUS MATTERS

By Ashlee "Katie" Mothershed

Within the Poarch Creek Indian community, we honor our proud heritage and spirit, value our Tribal Members, and champion open communication and participation. We are excited to announce our new podcast Indigenous Matters which will serve as a platform for Indigenous voices to share their perspectives, experiences, and insights on diverse topics.

Through collaborative partnerships, respectful discussions, and community development opportunities, we aim to foster a deep understanding of Native American culture, history, and contemporary challenges. Our commitment is to be a supportive and welcoming community, breaking down stereotypes and amplifying the richness of Native American identities, thereby ensuring growth and understanding for all of Indian Country.

► Coming soon to Apple Podcast,  
Spotify, or wherever you get podcasts.



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](http://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](mailto:jreynolds@pci-nsn.gov). All seminars will be held online and in-person at Building 200, First Floor Conference Room.

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## TRIBAL COUNCIL MEMBER SANDY HOLLINGER HONORED AS A 2024 WOMAN OF IMPACT BY YELLOWHAMMER NEWS

*By Kristin Hellmich*

**P**oarch Band of Creek Indians Tribal Council Member Sandy Hollinger was honored as a 2024 Woman of Impact, a distinction that recognizes the women in Alabama whose contributions have earned the authority and power to move the needle in their industry. The goal of the award is “to illuminate the personal and professional advancements of 20 women across business, government, and non-profit sectors each year.”

Yellowhammer News, a business and political news outlet for the state, recognized Hollinger for her outstanding contributions to not only the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, but the communities surrounding the reservation and for her unwavering commitment to the well-being of Tribal Members.

Hollinger’s journey of service began long before her election to the Tribal Council in 2011. She is a passionate advocate for assisting families in crisis situations, supporting Tribal Members in their educational pursuits, and participating in community outreach projects through her church.

Hollinger has also served on key legislative issues through the Tribe’s Cultural Authority, Education and

Labor committee, and the Housing and Community Activities division. She is also involved in the Poarch Creek Indians Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance (TERO) Commission, the Boys and Girls Club, and the Legislative Affairs Committee.

In addition to public service, she is a devoted wife and mother. Her faith and family-centered approach serve as a guiding light in her daily work. Hollinger recently attended the formal awards ceremony on January 25th in Birmingham. We are so proud that Sandy is the recipient of Yellowhammer News “Women of Impact Award,” said Tribal Chair & CEO, Stephanie A. Bryan. “Sandy is an amazing leader who uses her time, talents, and faith at every opportunity to make a true impact on the Tribe and the surrounding community. We are so grateful for her commitment and dedication and we are better for it.”

**For the full  
link to the  
Yellowhammer  
news profile  
on Hollinger,  
scan the QR  
code below.**







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your appointment with  
confidence that you  
are well cared for.”*

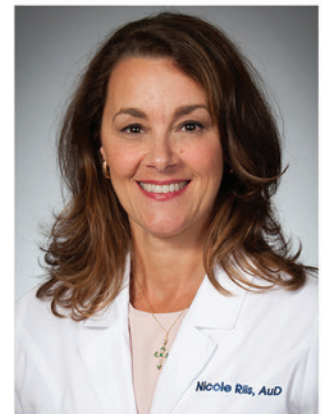
*-Google Review (2022)*

”

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Elizabeth Pickett, Au.D., CCC-A

Nicole Riis, Au.D., CCC-A, FAAA

# The Evolution of Hearing Devices

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**1600s**

The ear trumpet is invented.



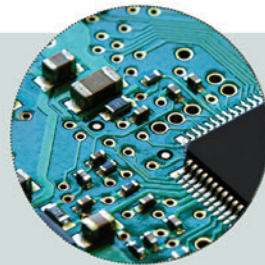
Miller Reese Hutchison invents the Akouphone, the first electronic hearing aid.

**1898**



**1920s**

Earl Hanson patents the Vactuphone, the first vacuum-tube hearing aid. It amplifies sound up to 70 dB but is bulky and challenging to carry around.



Microprocessors and compression hearing aids are invented, shrinking the size of hearing aids and allowing the amplification of some sounds more than others.

**1970s**



**1990s**

The first commercially available 100% digital hearing aid hits the market.



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# POARCH BAND OF CREEK INDIANS PARTNER WITH HELIOS ALLIANCE TO FIGHT OPIOID CRISIS IN ALABAMA

By Kristin Hellmich

**F**ollowing the successful Coastal Alabama Opioid Abatement Summit held on August 30, 2023, a new and transformative partnership has emerged on the horizon. The Helios Alliance is thrilled to announce its anchor partnership with the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, a collaboration that holds immense promise in advancing efforts to address addiction and the opioid crisis in Alabama.

The strategic partnership between Helios Alliance and the Poarch Band of Creek Indians is poised to create a powerful synergy that combines the strengths, resources, and expertise of both entities. This union aims to foster a holistic approach to tackle the opioid epidemic head-on and bring about tangible change across the state.

Stephanie A. Bryan, Chair & CEO of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, emphasized the Tribe's commitment to the partnership. "We are truly honored to join forces with the Helios Alliance in our shared mission to combat the opioid crisis and resulting problems associated with drug addiction. We believe that our mutual commitment to the well-being of all Alabamians, coupled with a shared determination to pursue innovative solutions to this complicated and

heartbreaking problem, can have a significant, positive impact on our communities."

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians has a longstanding tradition of supporting initiatives that enhance the lives of individuals and families within the state. This partnership signifies their unwavering dedication to addressing critical public health issues and investing in programs that promote healthier, thriving communities.

The collaboration will draw upon the unique strengths of both organizations, leveraging Helios Alliance's expertise in public health and addiction solutions and the Poarch Band of Creek Indians' deep-rooted commitment to community well-being. By working together, they aim to drive comprehensive strategies that span prevention, treatment, education, and recovery, offering a holistic and sustainable approach to addressing the opioid crisis.

By joining forces, Helios Alliance and the Poarch Band of Creek Indians are sending a powerful message that tackling the opioid epidemic requires a united and collaborative effort from all corners of the community.

Helios Alliance is a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering collaborations that drive positive change in public health. By uniting leaders, experts, and communities, Helios Alliance aims to address pressing health challenges and create healthier societies.

**ABOVE**  
Center right PBCI Vice Chair Robbie McGhee presents donation on behalf of the Tribe to Helios Alliance Board members during a press conference announcing the partnership.

***This union aims to foster a holistic approach to tackle the opioid epidemic head-on and bring about tangible change across the state.***

## 2022-2023 TITO DONATION TOTALS

**\$293,168** ▶

Wind Creek Wetumpka

**\$92,134** ▶

Wind Creek Atmore

**\$91,837** ▶

Wind Creek Bethlehem

**\$70,303** ▶

Wind Creek Montgomery

### WIND CREEK HOSPITALITY

# MAKE A CHANGE: TITO DONATIONS

By Amelia Tognoli

**R**aising over \$700,000 for local charities to date, Wind Creek Hospitality's TITO ticket donation program has remained a successful effort in philanthropy for the company.

Since 2022, this initiative has demonstrated a true embodiment of communities helping communities—all with a simple premise. After visiting the casino, Guests at Wind Creek Hospitality's Alabama and Pennsylvania properties were given the option to donate their unused gaming vouchers (commonly referred to as TITO tickets) earned from machine play. Donation bins were placed at each property's entrance/exit allowing for seamless drop-offs.

"We did not establish donation minimums either," said Trina Rackard, Director of Sponsorships and Events at Wind Creek Hospitality. "We wanted to ensure that we encouraged donations of every size."

While most unused vouchers were worth as small as a few cents, each property's aggregate amount typically totaled several (at times tens of) thousands of dollars each month. During the fiscal year 2022-2023, proceeds from the vouchers were collected and donated to over 55 organizations.

"It's been amazing to watch the smallest donations yield a grand total that's over half a million dollars," remarked Trina. "Through this program—and the generosity of our Guests—Wind Creek Hospitality has been able to offer abundant support near our Alabama and Pennsylvania properties."







# SPRING INTO FUN AT OWA

By Catherine Hasty

It's officially Spring at OWA Parks & Resort, so it's time for family-friendly live shows and outdoor events!

Kick-off March with a bang by securing your tickets to live shows at OWA Theater! Cashback - A Tribute to Johnny & June Carter Cash is taking the stage on March 1. This heartfelt tribute promises to transport you back in time with the timeless classics of these legendary artists, guaranteeing an evening filled with nostalgia and musical brilliance. Followed by Still Standing - A Tribute to Elton John on March 22 & 23. Prepare to be dazzled by an electrifying performance celebrating the iconic music of Sir Elton John. With spot-on renditions of his greatest hits, this tribute will indeed have you singing

along and tapping your feet all night. Tickets sell quickly, so purchase them at [VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com).

But the excitement doesn't end there! Rev up your engines for the Gulf Coast Mustang & Mega Car Show on March 9 in Downtown OWA. Whether you're a die-hard car enthusiast or appreciate the beauty of sleek automotive craftsmanship, this free event promises to be a feast for the eyes with an array of stunning vehicles on display.

Celebrate the classic Spring festivities with us! From March 23 to 30, join us for Bunnies & Baskets! This free event is full of family-friendly activities, including a Golden Egg Hunt in Tropic Falls, a Bonnet Decorating Competition, photos with the Easter Bunny, and much more! It's a Spring extravaganza you won't want to miss!





But it's not all about entertainment—March is also a time for giving back to the local community. Lace-up your sneakers for the Gulf Coast Diabetes WALK for Camp Seale Harris in Downtown OWA on March 2, where every step you take helps support children with diabetes on the Gulf Coast and awareness efforts for Type 1 diabetes. Register for this walk/run at [VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com). On March 23, make a splash for the Ronald McDonald House Charity of Mobile's Rubber Ducky Regatta, where rubber ducks race to the finish line in support of families in need. So, enjoy a fun-filled day of kid activities, games, and live music, and watch your duck race to the finish line to see who wins! Remember to adopt your duck at [VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com).

**For all the latest updates and information on these exciting events and happenings at OWA, check out our website at [VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com). Take advantage of the unforgettable experiences awaiting you at OWA Parks & Resort this March!**

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# HISTORIC PICTURE BOOK NOW AVAILABLE FOR TRIBAL MEMBERS

By Deidra Suwanee Dees, Ed.D.

**D**id you get your Picture Book in 2014? The Office of Archives and Records Management published the very popular Picture Book titled, *The Voice of Vision*, featuring Tribal Member families from the Tribal community. This book contains a collection of photographs and quotations from oral history that document elements of Tribal history by weaving images of the past with the voices of our community members. The quotations were collected by our Office and Dr. J. Anthony Paredes whose recordings were transcribed by the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program at the University of Florida.

We had a great Team that diligently worked on putting this book together in 2014, especially Ms. Ellen O'Barr. She tried to make sure that someone from each of the major Tribal families was represented. In addition to Ms. O'Barr, contributors included Dr. Deidra Suwanee Dees, Ms. Wendy Martin Phillips-Cox, Ms. Emily Fayard, Ms. Carolyn Peterson, Ms. Deloris Kelley, Ms. Judy McGhee, Mr. Robert Thrower, Ms. Jerin H. Almond, Ms. Gatsie Hanks, Ms. Danielle Thomas, Ms. Leomi Tuberville, and Ms. Meri Beth Shorter.

We mailed a book to each Tribal Member Head of Household in December of 2014. The book was so well-regarded that our Team received many requests for extra copies from Tribal Members. We have continued to get requests for this impressive book ever since then, but unfortunately, we did not have any available.

Because of these requests, our Team had this historic Picture Book reprinted in order to give additional copies to Tribal Members, so now it is available! We printed one book for each adult Tribal Member. You can pick up your book at the Office of Archives and Records Management at 100 Brookwood Road in Atmore from Monday to Friday between 8-5. If you live outside of the local area, please call our Administrative Assistant, Ms. Torisha Matthews, at (251) 446-4942 and she will mail your book to you.

We hope you enjoy this historical treasure. Mvto.

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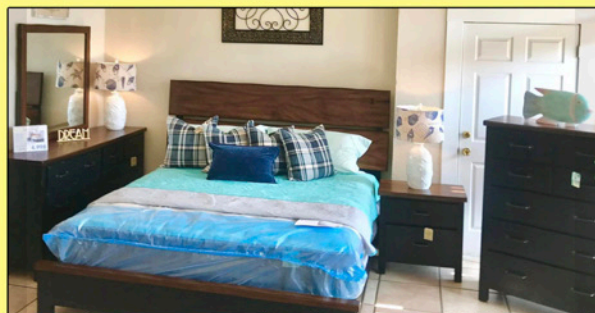
**Friday, March 15, 2024 from  
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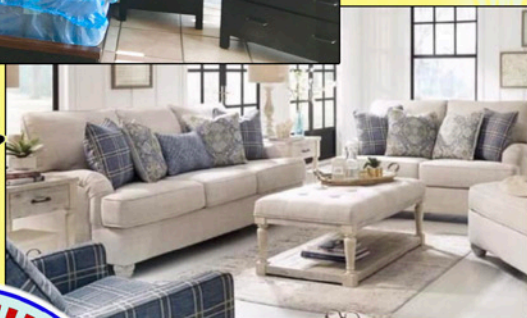
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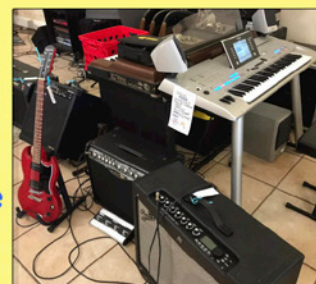
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# HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE AND ELECTRONICS COLLECTION DAY

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

POARCH CREEK FIRE STATION #1  
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OPEN TO ALL RESIDENTS OF POARCH AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

---

## 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

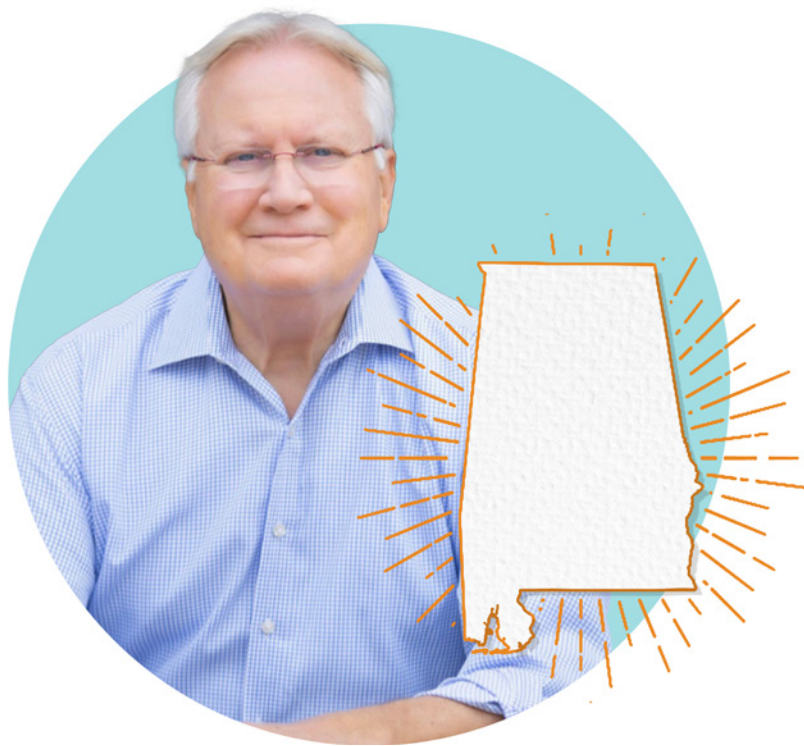
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## THIS IS A FREE SERVICE

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

---

**Sponsored by the Poarch Creek Indians Environmental Department**  
**5811 Jack Springs Road, Atmore, AL 36502 (251) 368-9136 Ext. 2683**



## A MESSAGE FROM CONGRESSMAN JERRY CARL

---

Serving you in Congress is the honor of a lifetime, and I'm proud to be your voice in Washington, D.C.

During my time representing you, I've fought to bring millions of your tax dollars back to Escambia County and the surrounding areas so we can invest them in health care, public safety, and infrastructure projects. I secured Sheriff Heath Jackson over a million dollars for a new radio system so all law enforcement in Escambia County can communicate and do their job safely, I secured nearly a million dollars for renovations to the Strand Theater, I secured funds for the Atmore Hospital to purchase new equipment, and I've been working to return millions more of your dollars for improvements to your roads and bridges.

In Washington, one of the subcommittees I sit on is the Indian and Insular Affairs Subcommittee, which oversees all matters regarding Native Americans and Alaska Natives. My colleagues and I work every single day to ensure freedom and economic growth opportunities for all 574 federally recognized Indian tribes and their roughly 2 million members.

Between the economic growth and the investments you make in our community, in our state, and across the nation,

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians has so much to be proud of. This is why I fight for you every chance I get, and I take your successes and opportunities very seriously.

As you know, the Tribe has been subjected to frivolous litigation over the status of existing trust lands since 2009. I was proud to introduce The Poarch Band of Creek Indians Act earlier this year to combat this. My bill reaffirms the Tribe's longstanding trust lands and ensures the Indian Reorganization applies to the Tribe, allowing you to exercise inherent sovereignty to provide for future generations.

I am grateful to the Tribe for always welcoming me and keeping me in the loop on priorities that matter to you, and I can promise you I'm never more than a phone call away.

If I can ever be of service to you, and if you ever need help with a federal agency, please do not hesitate to contact my office at 251-283-6280. It is my job to serve you and make the federal government work for you. That's a responsibility I do not take lightly.

Again, it's an honor to be your voice in Washington, and I humbly ask for your vote on March 5, 2024.





Government Relations  
and Public Affairs Office

5811 Jack Springs Road  
Atmore, AL 36502



# CREEK CORNER

## MARCH 2024 IMPORTANT DATES

<b>3.1</b>	<b>SUBMISSION DEADLINE</b> April Issue	
<b>3.4-5</b>	<b>MUSEUM GIFT SHOP CLOSED</b> Inventory	
<b>3.7</b>	<b>TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING</b> TC Chambers	<b>4:00 PM</b>
<b>3.16</b>	<b>WARRIOR MUD RUN</b> Magnolia Branch Wildlife Reserve	<b>8:00 AM</b>
<b>3.21</b>	<b>TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING</b> TC Chambers	<b>4:00 PM</b>
<b>3.29</b>	<b>TRIBAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES CLOSED</b> Good Friday	