



# CREEK CORNER

The official magazine of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians

NOVEMBER 2023



*Origins*  
of the POARCH CREEK  
*Pow Wow*



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### CREDITS

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**MEGAN ZAMORA**  
Editor, Creek Corner

# FROM THE EDITOR

“

N

ovember. The month’s name brings to mind a multitude of thoughts and pictures in my mind including: our Annual Thanksgiving Pow Wow, turkey, chicken and dumplings, roasted corn, dancing, singing, “the first Thanksgiving”, pilgrim bonnets, headbands, and feathers made from construction paper, laughter, friends, and the list continues.

As I’ve grown in my knowledge, the Thanksgiving season has become a time of conflicting emotions for me. While the country is celebrating a made up holiday centered on a bundle of myths (read this article from Reader’s Digest for more or google “the truth about the first Thanksgiving”), our Tribe is having an authentic celebration. In some ways, I see it as a way we’ve been able to reclaim this holiday as our own despite the perpetuation of lies the day has been built around. In other ways, I view it as a nation who is actively ignoring its true history for the sake of a day off.

While I love our yearly homecoming at the Poarch Creek Reservation and look forward to seeing my relations from other Tribes and states,

*Scan the QR code to read the real history of Thanksgiving.*



*“...how do we challenge ourselves to be advocates of a changed narrative?”*

I also reflect on how I wish things were different here in America when it comes to the understanding the greater populous has about Indigenous peoples. More critically though is how do we challenge ourselves to be advocates of a changed narrative?

Currently, our government relations team here at Poarch Creek’s Tribal Government has launched an effort to update the curriculum being taught in schools so it is accurate, true, and a modern depiction of Native peoples including Poarch Creeks. That’s work I’m proud our Tribe supports.

You can help in this effort too. Respectfully, but firmly challenge inaccuracies that are shared about Native Americans, especially during this Thanksgiving season. If you have school-aged children who are involved in Thanksgiving plays, skits, productions, or crafting activities, advocate for the truth by sharing factual, historical information like the Reader’s Digest article mentioned earlier. I know it can be uncomfortable to right wrongs and challenge the popular narrative, but take courage in knowing you are not alone; there are many other Natives and non-Natives alike who are standing beside you in the fight to share and reclaim Native truths rather than perpetuate them. You can do this. The future of our successors is depending on you.



# 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

# CHARLOTTE MECKEL: UPLIFTING OUR ELDERS



By Megan Zamora

**M**rs. Charlotte McGhee Meckel is a highly active and dedicated member of the Tribal Council, serving as the Secretary and being the eldest and most energetic member. She attributes her energy levels to staying active and keeping busy with various responsibilities and activities.

Mrs. Meckel recently chaperoned the Senior Trip to Cherokee, NC, which was organized for the 24th Annual American Indian Elders Conference. During the conference, workshops addressed important topics such as scams targeting elders, elder abuse awareness, and the functioning of Medicare in relation to Indian Health Services. Additionally, she has been appointed as the alternate on the NICOA (National Indian Council on Aging) board.

She thoroughly enjoyed the Senior Trip to Pigeon Forge, where the group stayed at Dollywood. This trip provided an opportunity for community members to bond and share fellowship, especially for those who had not experienced such trips before.

Mrs. Meckel also serves as the chair of the records committee and is proud that Poarch is hosting the Society of Alabama Archivists (SALA) conference for the first time. She will also be attending the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums conference in Oklahoma City in October.

In her role on the Health Legislative Committee, she is focused on doing her part to address mental health issues. Additional staff, including two part-time counselors, are being added to the team this month, and efforts are underway to hire a substance abuse counselor. A medical massage therapist has been hired at the health clinic, and some areas within the Clinic have extended hours until 6pm. A new physician and a full-time dentist are also joining the team. Furthermore, Dr. Thrasher will be visiting the clinic once a month to assist with pulmonary needs.

Mrs. Meckel is also involved in the funeral committee, providing support during times of sorrow.

Lastly, she is passionate about helping seniors and has not given up on the new SAIL (Senior Activities, Interaction, and Learning) Center, despite it being on the back burner. She remains committed to pushing for its realization.

Mrs. Meckel expresses gratitude for the opportunity to provide annual trips for seniors, allowing them to interact and enjoy a vacation they may not have had otherwise. Her dedication to her community and its elders is evident through her active involvement in various committees and initiatives.

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## DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT

# INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

By Ashlee Mothershed



**T**he Poarch Band of Creek Indians thrives on unity, cohesion, and shared purpose. We operate efficiently through various departments; the Internal Communications department is central to fostering the Tribe's mission and values.

This department has a deep understanding of the cultural, historical, and current affairs of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians. With strong written and verbal communication skills, the ability to listen actively and empathetically, a keen understanding of modern communication tools and platforms, and exceptional problem-solving skills, the Internal Communications department plays a crucial role in ensuring that the Tribe's objectives are understood and embraced by our Members.

### Roles & Functions

#### INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

The department ensures that all Tribal Members are informed about essential Tribal decisions, updates, events, and opportunities. By doing so, it promotes transparency and ensures that Tribal Members are always in the know.

#### FEEDBACK COLLECTION

Communication is a two-way street. The department not only pushes information out but also collects feedback from our Tribal Members, ensuring that their voices are heard and integrated into the decision-making process.

#### EVENT PROMOTION

The Tribe hosts numerous cultural, educational, and recreational events throughout the year. This department plays a pivotal role in promoting these events to ensure maximum participation and engagement.

#### LIAISON ROLE

Acting as a bridge between Tribal government and our Members, the Internal Communications Department ensures that there's a seamless flow of information, fostering trust and understanding between both parties.

#### MEDIA AND CONTENT PRODUCTION

Modern communication requires diverse media. The department takes charge of producing newsletters, maintaining an interactive intranet, producing videos, and more. Their goal is not just to inform but also to engage and inspire.

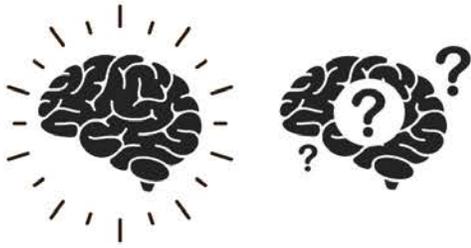
#### TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Recognizing the changing dynamics of communication, the department also invests in training its team and the rest of the organization in effective communication skills and the use of new media tools.

The Internal Communications Department, therefore, is not just a conduit for information but a vital component that ensures the Poarch Band of Creek Indians remains united, informed, and engaged in its shared journey towards progress and cultural preservation.



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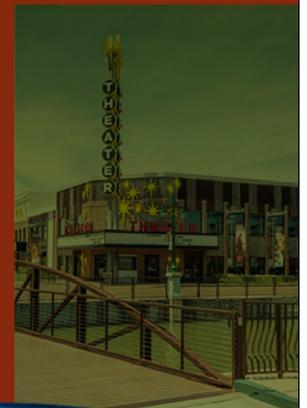


Elizabeth Pickett, Au.D., CCC-A

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



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## WELCOMING JOHN RIVERA

### CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER

---

*By Megan Zamora*

On behalf of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians Tribal Government, we are delighted to extend a warm welcome to our newest member, Mr. John Rivera, who has joined us as the Chief Human Resources Officer.

John Rivera brings a wealth of experience to our organization, having dedicated his entire career to the field of Human Resources. Prior to joining PCI, he made significant contributions to esteemed organizations such as Starwood Hotels and Resorts and Holiday Inn Club Vacations, Inc. We are fortunate to have someone with his expertise on our team.

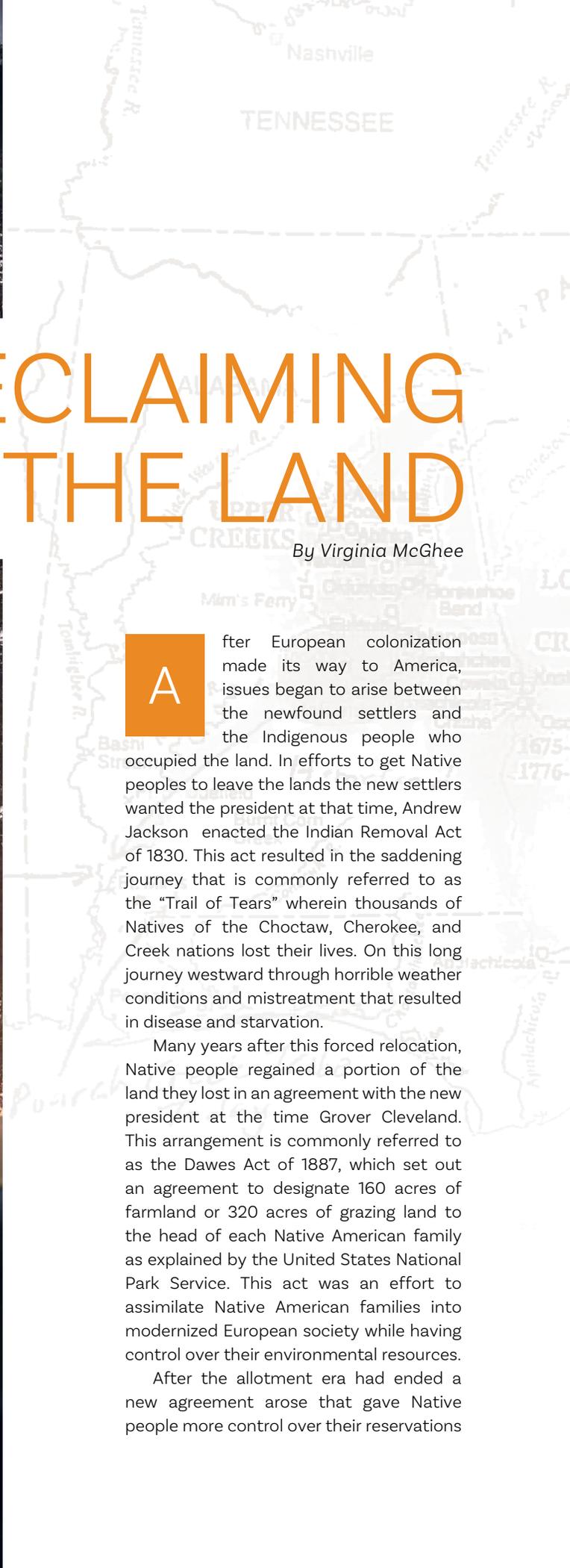
John hails from Ft. Lauderdale, FL, but was raised in Dallas, TX, where he pursued his undergraduate degree at the University of North Texas and later earned his MBA from the University of Texas. In 2003, he made the move to Florida and has been residing in Orlando since 2005.

John is not alone in this journey. He shares his life with his wonderful wife, Susy, originally from San Juan, Puerto

Rico. Together, they have two grown children, Paula and Luis, who have ventured off to NYC. Paula is pursuing her passion for acting, while Luis is embarking on his junior year at the NYU Film School.

Outside of their professional lives, John and Susy are avid music enthusiasts and passionate travelers. They also share a love for creative hobbies, with John enjoying playing the guitar and both of them indulging in the art of photography.

Please make sure to introduce yourselves as the opportunity presents itself and welcome Mr. Rivera to our community as he becomes an integral part of our PCI family. His knowledge and dedication to the field of Human Resources will undoubtedly be an asset to our organization, and we look forward to working together to achieve our shared goals.



# RECLAIMING THE LAND

By Virginia McGhee

**A**fter European colonization made its way to America, issues began to arise between the newfound settlers and the Indigenous people who occupied the land. In efforts to get Native peoples to leave the lands the new settlers wanted the president at that time, Andrew Jackson enacted the Indian Removal Act of 1830. This act resulted in the saddening journey that is commonly referred to as the “Trail of Tears” wherein thousands of Natives of the Choctaw, Cherokee, and Creek nations lost their lives. On this long journey westward through horrible weather conditions and mistreatment that resulted in disease and starvation.

Many years after this forced relocation, Native people regained a portion of the land they lost in an agreement with the new president at the time Grover Cleveland. This arrangement is commonly referred to as the Dawes Act of 1887, which set out an agreement to designate 160 acres of farmland or 320 acres of grazing land to the head of each Native American family as explained by the United States National Park Service. This act was an effort to assimilate Native American families into modernized European society while having control over their environmental resources.

After the allotment era had ended a new agreement arose that gave Native people more control over their reservations

known as the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 or more commonly referred to as the Indian New Deal, this act ended the policy of allotment. In addition, this act granted a new degree of autonomy to Native Americans in the United States, giving them greater control over their lands and allowing them to form legally recognized tribal governments as explained by the History Channel editorial staff.

In the present day, these lands or tribal reservations are run through a system called the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which as explained in the following definition of their duties is a federal agency charged with carrying out the United States' trust responsibility to American Indian and Alaska Native people, maintaining the federal government-to-government relationship with the federally recognized Indian tribes, and promoting and supporting tribal self-determination. Having this institution helps in ensuring the right to environmental resources on Native land. As well as the right to have sovereignty over the land wherein the ability to use its resources to care for people on the reservation in preserving and protecting its assets.



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

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“  
*The Natives are honoring the ancestors that survived their Trail of Tears.*”



# WALKING TO REMEMBER

*By Robert Perry*

Saturday morning of September 9 marked twenty-one years that the Natives and Alabamians’ gathered at Sheffield’s Tuscumbia Landing for a two-mile walk to Spring Park at Tuscumbia. This is more than a walk. The Natives are honoring the ancestors that survived their Trail of Tears. The Natives are coming from the West to the East in the direction of the rising sun and in celebration to connect with communities. Everyone walks to the continuous drumbeat and to hang a memorial feather to their ancestor. There is no better event to quickly learn about the Indian culture of the Southeast. Sponsors are Alabama Council of the Arts & Poarch Creek of Alabama.

This year marked the first ever extension to a 3-day Return Walk of Life over fifty miles to the communities of Leighton, Courtland, and Decatur. Historically, in 1838, the Cherokee in keelboats were offloaded at Decatur. They

were loaded on the TC&D railroad and hauled to the steamboat and keelboats at Tuscumbia Landing, there to be taken to Oklahoma, Indian Territory. The event was marked by about forty natives dressed in tribal regalia from Chickasaw, Mississippi Band of Choctaw and Poarch Creek.

Friday, Sept. 22 was a parade on Leighton Main Street ending at the Museum to join in Native dances and hear stories. Saturday, Sept. 23 was a walk with the Natives to Courtland’s Town Square. The rest of the day citizens could join in Native dances and observe the game of Stickball. Sunday, Sept 24 was a one mile walk from the Historic Union Railroad Museum with the Native drum and Natives in regalia, winding over the railroad and under the busy highway to Rhodes Ferry Park on the Tennessee River – the spot where the Cherokee were unloaded in 1838. The rest of the day, there was time to join the Natives and observe Native culture.



Compelling Stories is a non-profit organization from Tuscumbia seeking to tell the public about the Native Culture of Southeast tribes. We are headquartered in Tuscumbia. For more information, contact Annie Perry 256-414-0700 or Robert Perry 918-500-3467.



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# ARCHAEOLOGY FILLING IN THE GAPS IN THE TRIBE'S HISTORY

By Jamie Sawyer

**W**hen most of us think of archaeology, we think of scientists digging artifacts out of the soil. As Brandy Chun, of the Poarch Creek Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO), puts it, “Archaeology is 80% research and 20% dig.” Her office, led by Larry Haikey, the Tribe’s Historic Preservation Officer, spends a lot of time researching the history of the people they serve. Their office recently attended the first Conference on Public Archaeology in Pensacola, Florida. At this conference, the Tribal office participated on a panel with the University of South Alabama Archaeology Department to demonstrate how the two entities work together on Public Archaeology projects.

Haikey defines Public Archaeology as projects that generate information for public consumption. These types of projects help communities better understand their history. When the Bureau of Indian Affairs recently funded a road improvement project, the THPO uncovered indications of a Poarch settlement on private land near the reservation. The site dates back to the early 1900s, a period of time when the Tribe’s history and culture were not being extensively documented. The artifacts found on the site included fragments of pottery, glass, and primitive nails. While this may not seem like a major find, it fills in a historic void when most Poarch Creek Indians lived solitary, rural lives.

This is where research proved vital in determining that the land was inhabited by Poarch Creek Indians. Through the Federal Bureau of Land Management’s Government Land Office, the THPO determined that the land was originally granted to an ancestor of Tribal Chairwoman, Stephanie Bryan. Because the site falls outside of the boundaries of the Reservation, it comes under the jurisdiction of the State Historic Preservation Office. An archaeological survey of the road alignment was conducted for National Historic Preservation Act compliance. The THPO will partner with the Alabama State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to develop a plan for excavation since it is on private land. From there, the University of South Alabama will provide expertise and labor to begin the excavation.

The Tribe has built a strong relationship with the University of South Alabama over the years. Since Dr. Phillip Carr arrived at USA in 1999, he has been a friend of the Tribe and is now the Chief Calvin McGhee Professor of Native American Studies at South and oversees the Center for Archaeological Studies. Dr. Carr’s Center at USA has carried out over 1,000 survey and excavation projects during the last thirty years. In 2014, the Tribe donated funds to his department to start the Native American Studies program. Since then, the Tribe has partnered with USA on multiple projects. Many of those projects have led to exhibits at both the Poarch Creek Indian Museum as well as USA’s Archaeology Museum.



Creating exhibits from findings is a critical aspect of the THPO's mission. Larry Haikey explains, "Archaeology for academic purposes helps advance practitioners' understanding of their discipline. Public Archaeology puts that information in the hands of the people being studied so they can better understand their past." His hope is that the excavation he is currently working on with South will shed some light on the way Poarch Creek Indians lived at the beginning of the 20th century.

Another part of the THPO's mission involves raising awareness of archaeology as a career path. Each year, the Tribe invites youth Members to participate in an Archaeology Camp. This exposes young Tribal Members to the practice of archaeology and let's them get their hands dirty actually working on an excavation. Brandy Chun expects the current project to offer an opportunity for these youth to participate in a dig with professional archaeologists from South Alabama and the THPO.

Just as the US Department of Interior manages historic preservation for the United States, the Poarch Creek THPO acts as the sovereign nation's historic

preservation authority. Any sites designated on trust lands fall under the jurisdiction of the THPO. And, just as the US maintains a Registry of Historic Places, the THPO also preserves sites important to the Tribe's history. The Consolidated Indian School, established in 1949 to provide Indian children with a "separate-but-equal" education that terminated in sixth grade, is such a place. The school tells the story of the discrimination Poarch Creek Indians endured and the perseverance to pull themselves out of poverty.

With October being Alabama Archaeology Month, this offers a time to recognize the efforts of the Poarch Creek THPO and show appreciation for the relationships the office has built with the University of South Alabama as well as the State and Federal historic preservation agencies. Through these partnerships, the THPO continues to fill in the voids of the Tribe's rich history. This is a vital effort in maintaining the Tribe's standing as a sovereign nation and educating its Members about their ancestral history.

“  
**Archaeology for academic purposes helps advance practitioners' understanding of their discipline. Public Archaeology puts that information in the hands of the people being studied so they can better understand their past.**  
”



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## PODCAST

# A PLACE CALLED POARCH

By Ashlee Mothershed

E

very culture has a deep connection to the land. For Native Americans, this bond isn't just historical—it's spiritual, emotional, and critical for survival. Explore the complexities of tribal land rights with the latest series from A Place Called Poarch.

### TRIBAL LAND RIGHTS SERIES HIGHLIGHTS

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- Navigate the complex world of land rights. Attorney General, Lori Stinson, and VP of Compliance, Venus McGhee Prince, illuminate the intricate politics of land rights. Guided by host Megan Zamora, learn the distinctions between fee, trust, and reservation land.

Anchored in genuine stories, the “Tribal Land Rights Series” from *A Place Called Poarch* presents listeners an opportunity to resonate with the fundamental beliefs of Native American culture. Listen to tales of challenges, perseverance, and optimism, all stemming from the land that has supported many generations.

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## CREEK SURVIVANCE: ON THE PRESERVATION OF MEMORY AND THE STORIES WE TELL ABOUT OURSELVES

Reprint from Mosaic 2023: The Rural Issue, by Alabama Humanities Alliance

By Deidra Suwanee Dees, Ed.D.

**O**f Mvskoke (Creek) and Scottish heritage, I grew up in rural Alabama learning to suppress my Mvskoke heritage from outsiders. My family comes from the small town of Uriah—only one traffic light—situated on ancestral Mvskoke land. Coming from a low-income family, I learned survivance<sup>1</sup> as I picked cotton on our motherland, which I wrote about in poetic writings. These writings were published in the new anthological book I had the honor of contributing to, *On Work*, edited by Jen Knox<sup>2</sup>. It was a complete surprise when these same writings gained me the distinguished 2023 Editor’s Choice Winner by Unleash Press—a heartfelt honor.

In *On Work*, the poetic verse, “*I. Childhood Work: Sweat*,” documents the injustice of my Creek family working the cotton fields, while those around us would “sit in the shade of the house.” It draws a stunning conclusion that the reader does not see coming—a surprising and unorthodox ending. It demonstrates how the inequity of poverty can turn a person against one’s own self.

*I feel sweat watering my forehead  
and dripping below my brows in the middle of  
acres and acres of tall cotton stalks,*

*I feel smothered bending over searching for  
cotton near the ground  
as gnats and sweat blur my vision,*

*dirty sweat runs down my legs making me  
vulnerable to mosquitoes hiding  
in the shade of the cotton leaves,*

*the scorching hot sun is pressing the back of  
my head like a heavy mountain of granite;*

*the repulsive smell of my own body odor  
crowds my nostrils as I squat  
between the rows gasping in the heat;*

*seeing a sea of brown-skinned faces  
dotting the white cotton field  
while other kids sit in the shade of the house  
makes me hate my body—I hate myself.*

In this poetic verse, one of those “brown-skinned faces dotting the white cotton field” is my father, Otis Dees (1917-1984), a farmer, who helped me rise above internal hatred by teaching me the stories of survivance in our family

<sup>1</sup> Vizenor, Gerald Robert, *Manifest Manners: Narratives on Postindian Survivance*, Bison Books print (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010).

<sup>2</sup> Dees, Deidra Suwanee, “*I. Childhood Work: Sweat*,” in Jen Knox, Ed. *On Work*. (Reynoldsville, Ohio: Unleash Press, 2023), pp.4-10.

<sup>3</sup> “Trail of Tears” segment in Alabama Heritage documentary. Jim Robison and Elizabeth Sloan Ragland, producers. Alabama A & M University, 1978.

history; how Mvskokes survived stolen land and generational oppression. Daddy instilled in me the importance of preserving and documenting our family history that was passed down through oral history. Surviving oppression was so important to him that—long before I was born—he had volunteered to serve in World War II (1939-1945), like many other Native Americans, to help make a way in the world for justice to prevail over Nazism.

I carried Daddy's stories in my childhood memory from as early as I can remember, and then began documenting them at age twelve when my grandmother gave me a diary for my birthday. I did not even know what the word diary meant or how a diary was used. "You write about your daily experiences and family history," my family told me.

I found this newly learned concept so compelling that I jumped into writing in my diary and voraciously documented my family stories. I found a deep satisfaction in documenting daddy's word-of-mouth history, one that had never been written down before. I loved writing so much that I kept a journal from that day until this.

I brought this love of preservation to my job as Director/Tribal Archivist at the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, where I have worked for the past twelve years. I was asked to teach classes on "Creek History for Kids" by Stephanie Agerton, the Director of our Boys and Girls Club, as we pivoted to electronic classrooms during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. One of the classes I taught was on the importance of recordkeeping through the form of a diary or journal. This same passion I had for recording my family stories drives my pursuit in preserving our Tribal stories.

I work with a Team of Records Warriors in the Office of Archives and Records Management who have this same passion. We work together to document Tribal history through our Records Management Program. One record that our Team brought to the forefront is the documentary film on the Trail of Tears that was re-enacted by Creeks in our Tribal community in 1978. Our Tribal Council had developed a distinctive partnership with the Historically Black College, Alabama A&M University, to bring about this special film documenting the tragic forced displacement of Indigenous peoples from the American southeast to present-day Oklahoma in the 1830s, but also documenting the resilience of Indigenous people.

Unfortunately, the film became lost before it ever aired. Yet, through the years, it had remained the most requested item in the Office of Archives and Records Management. About a decade ago, the Records Warriors, again partnered with Alabama A&M University, working with Veronica Henderson, head of the university's Archives, and Elvin Jenkins, Director of the electronic media communications.

Together, we conducted painstaking research to locate this important film. In 2020, after more than forty years after it was lost, the Trail of Tears film was finally rediscovered! (Still frame image from film pictured below).

With great pride and gratification, the Records Warriors had the film digitized and provided three virtual film screenings on the Internet in 2020 and 2021 during the height of the pandemic. The Tribal community and viewers everywhere were able to safely access the *Trail of Tears* and share in this unique moment of rediscovery.

The historic rediscovery of the *Trail of Tears* film was analogous to daddy helping me rise above internal hatred in the cotton field by teaching me the stories of our family history. Because he helped me rise above this, I contributed to the preservation of my family stories through writing, and contributed to the preservation of the *Trail of Tears* film through rediscovery, both of which tell the extraordinary story about Creek survivance.



*You too can share in the rediscovery by viewing the Trail of Tears segment by scanning the QR code above, dramatically documented but without sound as the audio was recorded separately.<sup>3</sup>*

**POARCH 101**

# ORIGINS OF THE POARCH CREEK POW WOW

*By Megan Zamora*



This year marks the 51st year of our Poarch Band of Creek Indians Thanksgiving Pow Wow. Last month, I shared that pow wows aren't our Poarch Creek culture, although they have played a role in our history.

I sat down with Billy Bailey and Brandy Chunn, who are both integral components of the Tribal Historic Preservation Office, to dive into the origins of the Poarch Creek Pow Wow. The first thing I learned is, you don't get to the origins of the Poarch Pow Wow without first talking about the role of the pow wow dance groups.

... you don't get to  
**the origins**  
of the Poarch Pow Wow  
without first talking  
about the role of the pow wow  
**dance groups.**



In all the research that's been conducted, one thing rings true: dancing and pow wows were an intentional action used to send a message to Washington, DC and Alabama for Indian rights. In other words, we are still here, and you must pay attention to us because we are not going anywhere.

The most common pow wow dance troupe was the Headapeada Dancers. The dancers were formed before the pow wow ever came to Poarch because Chief Calvin and Houston McGhee recognized there was a need for awareness of the community of Indians in Alabama. I learned that this movement to raise awareness about our Indian community was born out of the Docket 21 lands claim fight. As a result, the Headapeada Dancers began performing throughout the region in order to demonstrate there were Indians in Alabama. Others like the Joe and Letha McGhee family dance group also used dance as a way to promote our Indian people.

In an August 28, 1972 interview with Dr. J. Anthony Paredes, Houston McGhee and Fields McGhee shared their stories about the origins of the dancing and how they began traveling to

bring recognition about Chief Calvin and what was happening with our Indian community.

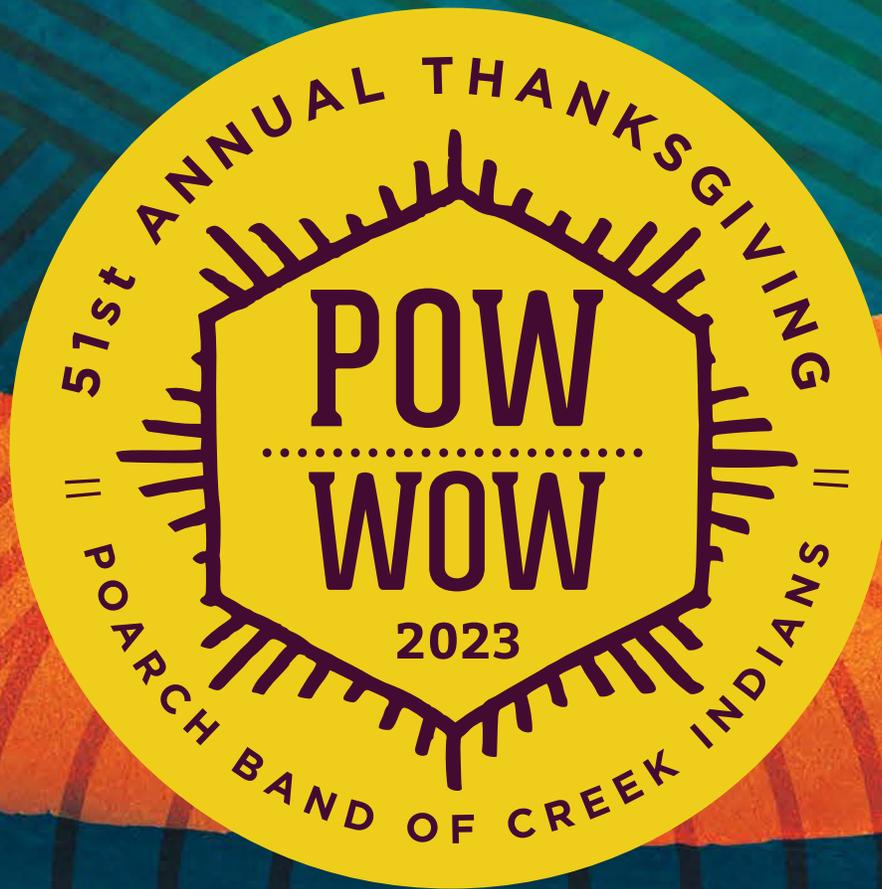
Interestingly enough, they started out with the dancing and using feathers because it's what people expected Indians to do. Further, they learned dances through Indian folklore books. Admittedly, many of the dances were interpretative and are not firmly rooted in Mvskoke Creek origins.

Eventually, they started visiting with other Native American people and going to pow wows. They learned by watching others, brought what they learned home, and started emulating the dance styles they watched as well as read about in the Indian folklore books.

The efforts begun in the mid-1900s culminated in Poarch's first pow wow that was held in July 1971. Now, we're hosting our 51st annual pow wow on November 23 and 24. This remarkable yearly celebration is now especially meaningful to me understanding the origins.

To hear the  
full interview,  
scan the  
QR code.





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ACTIVITIES ON THE MOUND 10:00AM  
PRINCESS CONTEST APPROX. 11:00AM  
GRAND ENTRY 1:00PM

**2023** **NOVEMBER 24**  
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 Women's: Northern Traditional / Southern Traditional /  
 Jingle / Fancy  
 1<sup>st</sup> \$1,000 | 2<sup>nd</sup> \$800 | 3<sup>rd</sup> \$600 | 4<sup>th</sup> \$400 | 5<sup>th</sup> \$200

**SENIOR ADULTS AGES 35-49**

Men's: Northern Traditional / Straight / Fancy / Grass / Chicken  
 Women's: Northern Traditional / Southern Cloth /  
 Southern Buckskin / Jingle / Fancy  
 1<sup>st</sup> \$1,000 | 2<sup>nd</sup> \$800 | 3<sup>rd</sup> \$600 | 4<sup>th</sup> \$400 | 5<sup>th</sup> \$200

**JUNIOR ADULTS AGES 18-34**

Men's: Northern Traditional / Straight / Fancy / Grass / Chicken  
 Women's: Northern Traditional / Southern Cloth /  
 Southern Buckskin / Jingle / Fancy  
 1<sup>st</sup> \$1,000 | 2<sup>nd</sup> \$800 | 3<sup>rd</sup> \$600 | 4<sup>th</sup> \$400 | 5<sup>th</sup> \$200

**TEENS AGES 13-17**

Boy's: Northern Traditional / Straight / Fancy / Grass  
 Girl's: Northern Traditional / Southern Traditional /  
 Jingle / Fancy  
 1<sup>st</sup> \$400 | 2<sup>nd</sup> \$300 | 3<sup>rd</sup> \$200 | 4<sup>th</sup> \$100

**JUNIORS AGES 7-12**

Boy's: Northern Traditional / Fancy / Grass  
 Girl's: Traditional / Jingle / Fancy  
 1<sup>st</sup> \$200 | 2<sup>nd</sup> \$150 | 3<sup>rd</sup> \$100 | 4<sup>th</sup> \$75

**TINY TOTS AGES 0-6**

Day Money

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 5<sup>th</sup> \$4,000 | 6<sup>th</sup> \$2,000 | 7<sup>th</sup> \$1,000



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 for Dancers  
 and Drums



# from CONSULTATION to CONSENT

*By Kitcki A. Carroll and Liz Malerba*

Beginning with the arrival of the colonists, who asserted a God-given right to dominance, and evolving over time to a position of superior sovereign existence, U.S.-Tribal relations continue to be marred by the deeply false narrative that tribal nations are incompetent and unworthy of genuine diplomacy. For centuries, tribal nations have been attempting to reverse this false narrative.

In its early formative years, the United States often took action within our lands only after securing our consent, including through treaty-making. As it became more powerful, as maintaining strong relations with us became less necessary, as greed took over and as the courts laid their legal groundwork through the Marshall trilogy, the United States quickly moved from an approach based on consent to an approach based upon the notion of domestic dependency and plenary authority.

The United States progressively moved away from the concept of “rights-ceded” by tribal nations (as was the approach during the formative

years of this nation) to a model of “rights-granted” by the United States to tribal nations. No longer was our consent necessary for the explosion of a capitalistic system. No longer were our rights within our own lands of concern or consequence. No longer were we going to be allowed to interfere with the execution and pursuit of manifest destiny. This is the summation of the deplorable actions taken in the name of progress that is most often missing from U.S. history books, but it is part of our story, which fuels our efforts to persevere and prosper despite the greatest of challenges. Despite all of this, tribal nations remain unified in our efforts to topple these foundational myths, as our perseverance and the sophistication of our governments reveal these to be falsehoods.

It wasn't until the passage of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act in 1974 that the United States began to move away from its centuries-old practice of setting policy that sought to diminish and eradicate our sovereignty via termination and assimilation.

While the U.S. has not returned to a practice of seeking the consent of tribal nations, the developing tribal consultation process begins to recognize our inherent rights and authorities when it comes to federal decisions that impact our citizens and homelands. Over the last eight years, federal agencies have been required to develop and implement tribal consultation policies in collaboration with tribal nations. While an improvement over historical practice, it requires constant monitoring and strengthening, and will always fall short as long as it fails to return to a model that requires consent.



Tribal nations continue to experience inconsistencies in consultation policies, the violation of consultation policies, and mere notification of federal action as opposed to a solicitation of input. Time and again, tribal nations have expressed a desire for consultation to be more meaningful. As major failures in the U.S.-Tribal consultation process begin to take the national stage, tribal nations are calling for a paradigm shift in the trust relationship, including in the consultation process.

The U.S. must move beyond an approach that merely “checks the box” of consultation. It is time for a tribal

nation defined model, with dual consent as the basis for strong and respectful diplomatic relations between two equally sovereign nations. In the short term, we must move beyond the requirement for tribal consultation via executive order to a strengthened model achieved via statute. In the long term, we must return to a model of tribal nation consent for federal action as a recognition of sovereign equality and as set out by the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Ultimately, Indian Country recognizes that dual consent results in prosperity for both parties, and that when abandoned and dishonored, one or both nations ultimately lose. The U.S. must join us in this conviction.

As the U.S. continues to issue federal Indian policy based on a false premise, it is more critical than ever for tribal nations to assert our inherent sovereign authorities and rights in order to provide for the well-being of our people and our lands. No longer can we accept a false narrative and legal fiction that was specifically created by another sovereign to impose its will upon us. Consultation must evolve and return to consent. The current trust model, which often works against us, must be replaced with a 21st century nation-to-nation relationship model and a genuine commitment to only take action aimed at strengthening this relationship and delivering on the trust responsibility in full.



**KITCKI A. CARROLL**

*(Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma) serves as the Executive Director for United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET) and the USET Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF), an inter-tribal organization representing 26 federally recognized tribal nations from Texas across Florida and up to Maine at the regional and national level.*

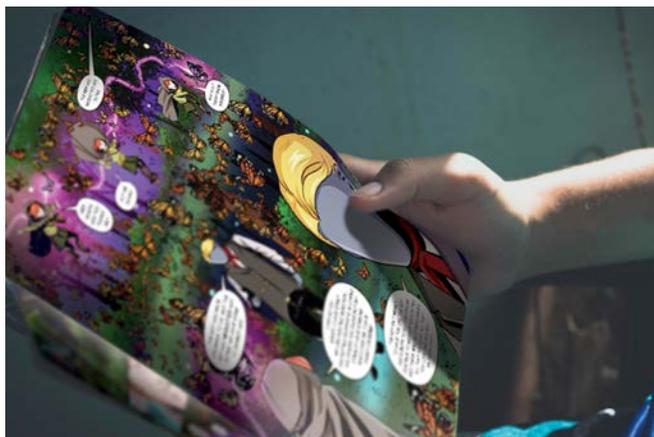


**LIZ MALERBA**

*(Mohegan Tribe) is the Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs for United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund. Located in Washington, DC, she works with congress and the administration to advance a comprehensive legislative and regulatory agenda on behalf of Member Tribal Nations.*

# POARCH CREEK CITIZEN CREATES A COMIC BOOK WITH A NATIVE AMERICAN HALF-VAMPIRE FEMALE HERO

By Vincent Schilling



*Scotty White's Native-owned Ninja Mop Studios' "Chronicles of Limbo" reaches Kickstarter funding goal, and the first two issues are going to print.*

In late August 2023, Poarch Creek Band of Indians citizen Scotty White issued a proclamation on his Kickstarter campaign regarding his comic book, "Chronicles of Limbo."

"We did it!" he exclaimed on his campaign page, meaning he had superseded his goal of \$2,500 with a total of \$2,829 provided by over 100 backers for his project.

## ABOUT CHRONICLES OF LIMBO, ACCORDING TO SCOTTY WHITE

As described by Scotty White and Ninja Mop Studios, the comic story is as follows:

Chronicles of Limbo takes you to Limbo to follow the story of Josephine DeSalle, a dhampir (half-vampire), and her cosmically powered toddler, Mop. While resting one night, their home is invaded, and this starts an adventure of a lifetime. This journey will take them to the Gate City of Valaris, where they will face Soul Stealing Hunters, Urban Necromancers, Vampire Assassins, a mysterious Government Agency, and the monsters that truly pull the strings in Limbo.

White, who also worked with fellow creators J.S. Walker, Guilherme Medeiros, Emily Carlin, Bev Johnson, Amanda Rachels, Danielle Caudillo, and Jessica LaPorte to create the Chronicles of Limbo comic, says he fell in love with comics as a kid.

"Comics has been an important part of my life as a teenager in the early 90s, I was a kid who fell in love with Marvel Comics trading cards and discovered comics through that. I fell in love with the X-Men. I have always loved science fiction genres. I was always the weird kid in my neighborhood who liked that stuff."

## HOW THE STORYLINE GOT STARTED

White explained that though his father is Poarch Creek, he was eventually adopted by his non-Native mother, who got remarried.

“As an adopted kid, the theme in my book is the story of a mother, Josephine, who is Poarch Creek. She’s of the wind clan from 300 years ago. She has been living her life in this mysterious realm at the center of the multiverse alone for a very long time until she meets a young girl named Mop. And together, She adopts her and becomes a mother.”

White says the comics industry is changing for the better and appreciates that more voices are being allowed into the mix, but he wants Native writers to write more than just for Native characters.

“A lot of times, comic book companies will say, ‘We have minority characters we want you to write for and give a voice for,’ which is good. I’m glad for that. But I also would like maybe I would also like to write Wolverine. And so, or in my case, I like Rachel Summers, (a mutant in the Marvel Universe). I would really love to write for her.”

White says overall, he is truly thrilled about the comic and looks forward to creating more.

“As a writer, part of the process of writing is being in your head, and the other process is putting it out on some sort of medium. The final part of that process is getting it to an audience. It doesn’t do any good to anybody if it still stays in your head or stays on the page.”

“We’re super excited.”

For updates to the Chronicles of Limbo, stay connected to Ninja Mop Studios on social media. Search for “ninjamopstudios” on Facebook, Instagram, or TikTok.

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).*



**VINCENT SCHILLING**  
is the founder and editor of  
Native Viewpoint



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# POARCH BAND OF CREEK INDIANS & DREAMCATCHER DEVELOPMENT JOIN FORCES TO EXPAND AWARD-WINNING HOTEL BRAND

This strategic partnership will open doors to numerous opportunities, including:

## ENHANCED HOSPITALITY PORTFOLIO

The collaboration with DreamCatcher Development will enable the Poarch Band of Creek Indians to expand and diversify its hospitality portfolio, offering an even wider range of exceptional hotel experiences to guests.

## EXPERTISE AND INNOVATION

DreamCatcher Development brings a wealth of expertise and a track record of innovation in hotel development. Their experience and forward-thinking approach will contribute to the creation of distinctive, world-class properties.

## COMMUNITY GROWTH

The partnership will not only result in the development of outstanding hotels but also generate economic growth and employment opportunities within the communities served by these establishments.

## GUEST-CENTRIC APPROACH

DreamCatcher Hotels is renowned for its guest-centric approach to hotel design and operations. Guests can look forward to elevated experiences that prioritize comfort, convenience, and quality.

“We are beyond excited to be a part of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians and their vision for the future of hospitality,” says Zeke Cooper, DreamCatcher Hotels President & CEO. “Partnering with the Tribe allows us to continue building on our award-winning DreamCatcher Hotels brand, while still providing our expertise on an array of hospitality projects.”

This partnership between Creek Indian Enterprises Development Authority and DreamCatcher Development exemplifies a commitment to excellence in the hospitality industry and a dedication to providing unparalleled guest experiences. Stay tuned for exciting updates as we embark on this transformative venture together.



DreamCatcher™  
Hotels

By Kristin Hellmich

In an exciting and strategic collaboration, Creek Indian Enterprises Development Authority (CIEDA) and DreamCatcher Development, an award-winning hotel developer, have forged a new partnership aimed at further expanding the DreamCatcher Hotels brand. This partnership represents a significant milestone in the evolution of both organizations and is poised to elevate the company’s hospitality landscape to new heights.

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians (PBCI), through their economic development division CIEDA, currently owns multiple hotels, both solely and through partnerships, in Alabama, Florida, and North Carolina. In their ongoing pursuit of hospitality excellence, the PBCI Tribe recognized the need for a full-service hotel development company to complement their existing portfolio.

“We are thrilled to embark on this journey with DreamCatcher Development,” said Cody Williamson, President/CEO of Creek Indian Enterprises Development Authority. “Our shared vision of delivering exceptional hospitality aligns perfectly, and we believe that this partnership will create lasting value for our guests, our Tribe, and the communities we serve.”



# REAL MEN WEAR PINK

*By Amelia Tognoli*



Last month, Wind Creek Hospitality sponsored the Real Men Wear Pink Vintage Affair Gala. Hosted at the Country

Club of Mobile, the event marked an official kickoff for the American Cancer Society's Men Wear Pink ambassador campaign.

Aimed at raising awareness and funds to support breast cancer research, the national program has raised more than \$40 million dollars since its inception. Poarch Band of Creek Indians Vice Chairman, Robert McGhee, serves as Co-Chair of the Men Wear Pink program—leading ambassador outreach, networking, and awareness initiatives. In 2022, the program raised close to \$11 million dollars—supporting the American Cancer Society's vision to end breast cancer, support ongoing research, and provide patient support.

"Every dollar raised helps the American Cancer Society save lives from breast cancer through early detection and prevention," said Trina Rackard, Director of Sponsorships and Events at Wind Creek Hospitality. "Wind Creek Hospitality is proud to support these lifesaving initiatives."

The event featured a night of fun, drinks, entertainment, giveaways, and a silent auction that raised over \$22,500.

"The gala was the perfect way to commence and celebrate the ambassador campaign and all of the remarkable ways it makes a difference in our communities," said Trina.



# CHRISTMAS COUNTDOWN STARTS AT OWA

By Catherine Hasty

**W**ith the holidays approaching, OWA Parks & Resort has the perfect November lineup to kick off the holiday season!

The American Heart Association will host their Baldwin County Heart Walk at OWA Parks & Resort on November 11, 2023. The Heart Walk benefits those struggling with heart disease, and the money raised stays in the community for awareness and treatment. For more information, visit our website at [Visitowa.com](http://Visitowa.com).

Tree Lighting is back on November 18! Bring your loved ones and be mesmerized by the holiday lights as they twinkle in unison with your favorite tunes to get you in the Christmas spirit! The festivities begin at 2:00 pm and continue throughout Downtown OWA until 8:30 pm. Activities range from various live performances, photos with Santa, tree lighting, snow flurries, fireworks, and so much more!

We are honored to participate in this year's 39th Annual Frank Brown International Songwriters Festival! Join us at OWA Theater on Friday, November 9 at 7:00 pm for The Heart Behind the Music as the world-renowned songwriters Cindy Morgan, Walt Aldridge, and Marcus Hummon sing and talk about the songs you know and love! Tickets for this event can be purchased at [OWATheater.com](http://OWATheater.com). Inspired by these genius songwriters? It's your time to shine on Saturday, November 10, at 7:00 pm! OWA Theater calls people of all ages for Open Mic Night to share a



song, spoken word, or instrumental solo. All acts are welcome for Open Mic Night for this family-friendly, free event!

What better way to kick off the holiday season than with the electrifying White Tie Rock Ensemble featuring music from the Trans-Siberian Orchestra? Taking center stage at OWA Theater on November 17 and 18 evenings, starting at 8 pm, is the perfect way to get into the spirit of the season. Tickets are available for purchase at OWATheater.com.

Don't forget to check out all the shows at Brandon Styles Theater, from the Murder Mystery Dinner Shows, Variety Shows to Magic and even Hypnosis! Come out November 2nd & 3rd for Bet Your Life- A Casino Murder Mystery Dinner Show presented by Brandon Styles & ICM Theatre Group! Brandon's Variety shows are every Tuesday & Saturday throughout the month. Want to be left feeling amazed and astounded? Check out his magic show on Wednesday, November 22! Finally, don't miss the chance for you or your

friends to get hypnotized at the "Stoked Comedy Hypnosis Show" with legendary hypnotist Terry Stokes on Friday the 24th! Purchase your ticket at VisitOWA.com!



**Keep up with the latest news on events, entertainment, and activities, plus new tenant openings in Downtown OWA, via our website at [VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com) or by following us on social media @VisitOWA.**

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# SEASONAL WORKER DEFICIT PROMPTS OUT-OF-THE-BOX SOLUTION

## ADDRESSING STAFFING SHORTAGES IN SOUTH BALDWIN

By Jen Chism

**T**he Poarch Band of Creek Indians and the City of Foley are proud to announce an \$18 million housing development project adjacent to OWA. This development of an International Residence Hall will house a temporary, seasonal workforce.

To capitalize on this workforce potential, the Tribe, overseen by Creek Indian Enterprises Development Authority (CIEDA) construction department, has teamed up with the City of Foley and Wisconsin-based Holtz Companies to develop a living facility for these seasonal workers. This partnership aims to create a comfortable and affordable living environment for these hardworking individuals and helps address shortages in the area's hospitality workforce.

The housing complex will offer college dorm-styled housing with personal living quarters plus common areas, including a kitchen, laundry, and other group gathering spaces. This facility will provide a safe and convenient

place for seasonal workers to live while they contribute to the local economy.

A groundbreaking ceremony for this development project took place on August 15, initiating the project's start. The first construction phase is expected to be completed in early summer 2024 and will house 600 students. The Tribe has also planned for future expansion, as the site has plenty of room to accommodate up to 2,400 seasonal workers if needed.

The partnership between the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, Holtz Companies, and the City of Foley has created the first seasonal housing campus in Alabama.

Poarch Band of Creek Indians' Chairman & CEO, Stephanie A. Bryan noted, "Our employees are the lifeblood of our businesses, and we are very proud to have found a cutting-edge solution to providing much-needed housing for the terrific seasonal workers who are vital to our businesses in Foley and to that community's economy."



Mayor Ralph Hellmich, City of Foley, echoed the sentiment stating, “Employee housing is a crucial piece of the employment equation in this area”.

Dan Bullock, President of the Holtz Companies, continued, “We strive to provide safe and affordable housing for seasonal guests that come from around the world and from the U.S.

This International Residence Hall is an exciting development that demonstrates the commitment of various public and private stakeholders to foster economic growth and address the deficit of seasonal workers in South Baldwin County.

### International Residence Hall Features and Amenities



**SECURITY**  
24/7 On-Site Staff  
Security Monitoring

#### ROOMS

Standard rooms host four residents and includes individual beds and lockers, private bathroom/shower, plus study desk and in-room refrigerator.



**COMMON AREAS**  
The facility includes a common kitchen space and gathering areas plus laundry facilities and wifi.

#### BENEFITS

Many of these workers are international students. This facility is anticipated to be both a successful business venture and an innovative solution to a labor shortage.



*Bring an entire Dean's cake to Thanksgiving!*



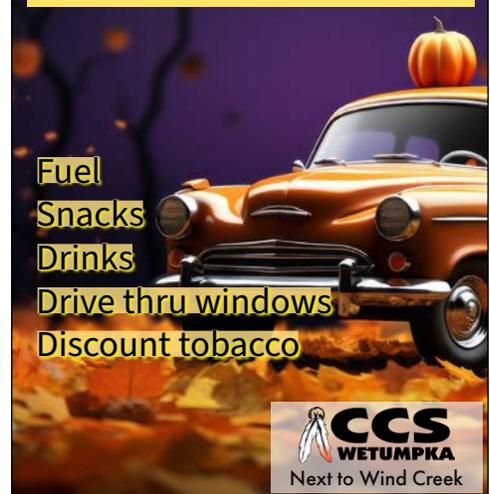
**Fall into a great new job**



[CIEJOBS.com](http://CIEJOBS.com)

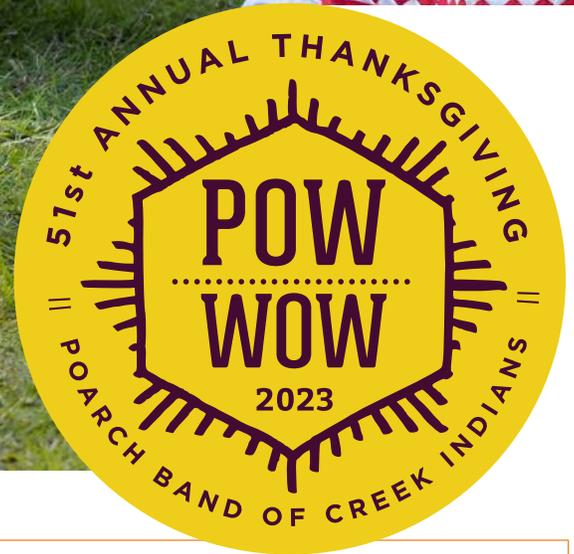
### HOLIDAY TRIP HQ

Fuel  
Snacks  
Drinks  
Drive thru windows  
Discount tobacco





# PRINCESS CONTESTANTS 2023-24



**ELDER DIVISION**



Bertha Sarah Ann  
Stacey



Jacqueline Lynn  
Malone



Linda J.  
Brooks



Linda Kaye  
Barnett



Sheila Rolin  
Odom



**SENIOR ADULT  
DIVISION**



Cassidy Hope  
Murphy



Christina  
Flint-Lowe

**SENIOR DIVISION**



Jayla Brooke-Lee  
Brown



Raleigh Sienna  
Gibson



Gracie Alea  
Buckhault

**JUNIOR DIVISION**



Neveah Marie  
Hall Griffey



Tenleigh Brooke  
Peebles



...CONTINUED  
PRINCESS CONTESTANTS 2023-24

ELEMENTARY DIVISION



Bryleigh Grace  
Rolin



Macey Faith  
Rackard



Magnolia Grace  
Smedley



Treacy Ella McGhee  
Tanner

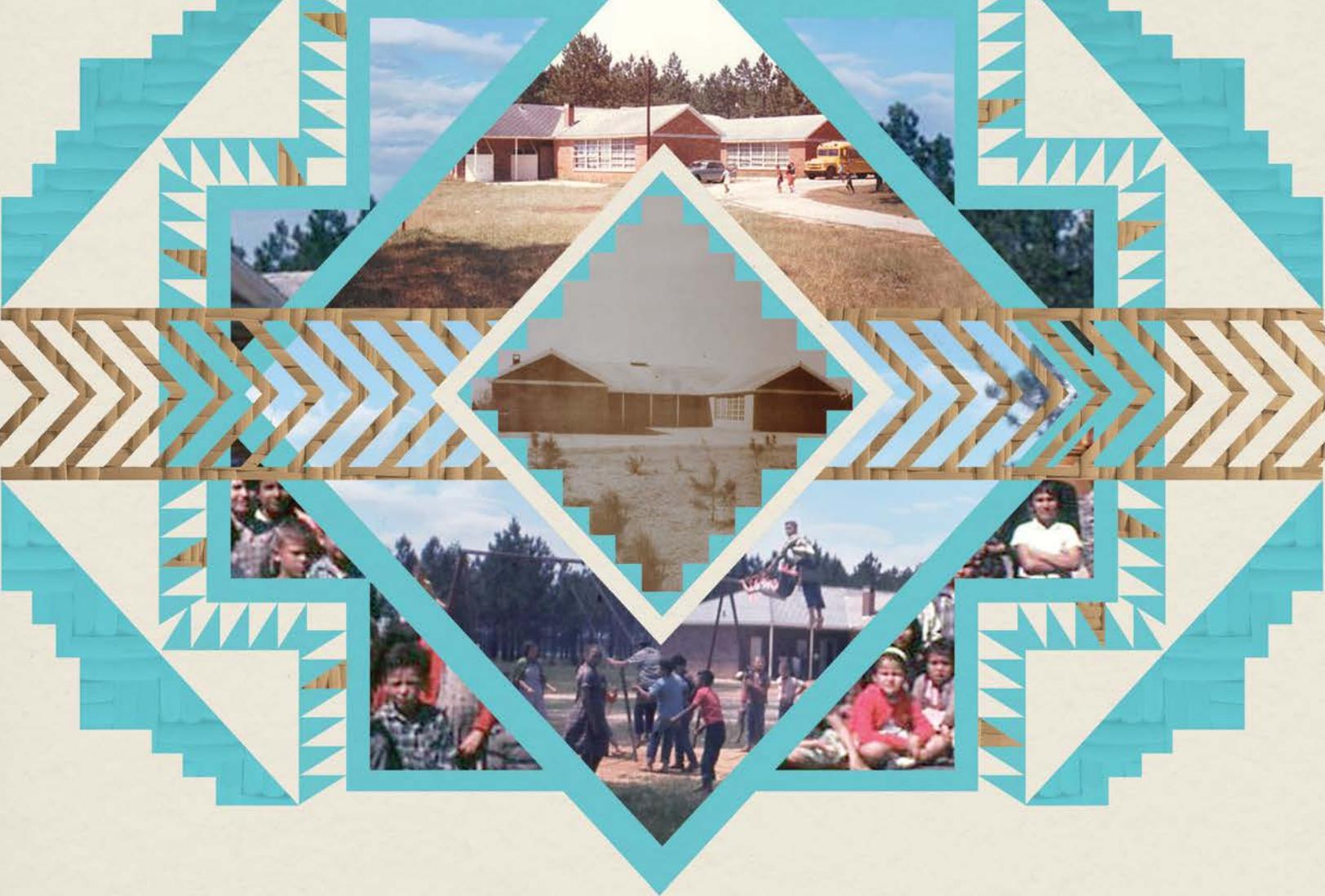
LITTLE MISS  
DIVISION



Jolie-Ann Marie  
Smedley



Rori-Kate Elise  
McGhee



POARCH BAND OF CREEK INDIANS  
TRIBAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
DEPARTMENT AND MUSEUM  
*p r e s e n t s*

For more stories from  
the Consolidated Indian  
Schoolhouse, check  
out the new season  
of Poarch Stories  
anywhere you listen to  
podcasts. Scan the QR  
code below to listen on  
our website now.

## POARCH STORIES *and* SUPPER

*Students of the Schoolhouse:  
The Consolidated Indian Schoolhouse*

November 7 | 6-8pm

Poarch Creek Community Center



This event is for Tribal Members and their  
immediate families. Tickets for door prizes  
will be given at the door. *Must be present to win.*



IN LOVING MEMORY



# Jake Bailey

05.30.1986 - 11.20.2020

It's so hard to lose a spouse. It's tragic to lose a father at a young age. It's difficult to lose a son, a brother, an uncle, a cousin, a friend. Each of us are still grieving. Although sometimes it feels like it just happened yesterday; it will be three years since Jake Bailey was taken from us on November 20, 2020. I'm always trying to remember his voice, his laughter, and his smile - the best memories. One of Jake's favorite songs was "Amazing Grace", he listened to it quite often in his shed. As you read these words, I hope that they give you a sense of peace and hope for what the future holds.

With Love & Remembrance,  
Liesl, Kadence, Poarcha & Elijah Bailey and Family

## AMAZING GRACE

*Amazing grace how sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me  
I once was lost, but now I'm found  
Was blind but now I see  
'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear  
And grace my fears relieved  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed  
Through many dangers, toils, and snares  
I have already come  
This grace that brought me safe thus far  
And grace will lead me home  
When we've been here ten thousand years  
Bright, shining as the sun  
We've no less days to sing God's praise  
Than when we first begun  
Amazing grace how sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me  
I once was lost, but now I'm found  
Was blind but now I see*

*Have a blessed day,  
each one is a gift.*



## TRIBAL MEMBER FAMILY PASS

Tribal Members are admitted free to Magnolia Branch Wildlife Reserve with proper identification, i.e. Tribal Member ID Card, Tribal Member Youth ID Card, or Tribal Member Family Pass. A Family Pass allows a Tribal Member, a Tribal Member's spouse, and all children under the age of 18 who are living in the household, to enter the park free of charge when presented at the front gate entrance; **if you do not have a Family Pass, you will be expected to pay regular admission charges.** All applicable fees apply for all additional park amenities.

Tribal Member families that had a Family Pass made last year will **not** be required to get a new pass this year unless there has been a change to the family makeup, i.e. divorce, marriage, birth of child,

child reaching age 18, etc. or if they have lost their Pass. A maximum of two (2) Family Member passes will be issued per household per year.

Effective March 1, 2011, the Tribal Member Enrollment Office will issue Family Passes on Friday's between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Be sure the bring all required documentation to your appointment; Passes will not be issued without proper documentation. Documentation required includes Tribal ID, birth certificates for all children under the age of 18 living in the household, and marriage certificate, if applicable. Please contact the Tribal Member Enrollment office at (251) 368-9136 ext. 2521 if you have any questions or to schedule your appointment.

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AND MUSIC**

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Government Relations  
and Public Affairs Office

5811 Jack Springs Road  
Atmore, AL 36502



# CREEK CORNER

## NOVEMBER 2023 IMPORTANT DATES

<b>11.1</b>	<b>SUBMISSION DEADLINE</b> December Issue	<b>5:00 PM</b>
<b>11.6-7</b>	<b>MUSEUM GIFT SHOP CLOSED</b> Inventory	
<b>11.7</b>	<b>POARCH STORIES AND SUPPER</b> Community Center	<b>6:00-8:00 PM</b>
<b>11.16</b>	<b>TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING</b> TC Chambers	<b>4:00 PM</b>
<b>11.23-24</b>	<b>TRIBAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES CLOSED</b> Thanksgiving	