



# CREEK CORNER

The official magazine of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians

OCTOBER 2023

I AM ALS:  
*Chad Klinck's  
Story*



**2023 Alabama  
Governor's  
Conference  
on Tourism**

More info on page 23



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**CREDITS**

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**MEGAN ZAMORA**  
Editor, Creek Corner

## FROM THE EDITOR

“**S**uccess. Prosperity. Rich. All these terms indicate a level of affluence and financial security that we all are “supposed to” be striving towards. But, is that really what the measure of success, prosperity, and rich should be? Spoiler alert...I hope not.

Yesterday, I had a conversation with my friend and colleague Brandy about success. Surprisingly, the discussion was prompted by her 15 year old daughter who asked her, “Mama, do you think you’re successful?” Needless to say, it got my wheels turning about how I think about things like success, prosperity, and how I will know when I’ve “made it” in life.

It made me remember an article I recently read about folks across the United States who have great jobs and are making six figures, but still feel like they aren’t rich. It went on to explain things like inflation and other factors. However, my key takeaway was that it challenged me to think more critically about how I view others as well as how I measure my own success. I believe it’s important for us to recognize that success is much more than just the size of your house or the amount of money you have in your bank account...or the appearance of such on social media.

More than ever, social media has made the window into each other’s lives too accessible. There’s research that talks about the damaging effects of comparing oneself to others based on social media. The fact is people can make their lives appear however they want it to look through the lens of social media.

So, perhaps it’s time for us to adjust our standards of success, prosperity, and richness to include things that are really substantive, without comparing your life to another’s, and focusing on what makes you feel successful, prosperous, and rich. For me, a successful day is staying on top of the copious emails I receive while making forward movement on at least one major project. To prosper is to have a family that is joyful, healthy, and at peace, with our needs attended to and most of our wants fulfilled. I am sublimely rich with a loving and supportive husband, and all the sweetest smiles, giggles, and snuggles that a 7 month old human could possibly provide to her Mama. My perspective has changed... and I think it’s for the better.

Here’s my hope for you: May you successfully contribute your gifts to your community in ways that are appreciated and make you feel satisfied and fulfilled. May your family prosper financially, physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. And, may your heart continually overflow with the richness of experiences, peace, love, and joy.

However you define success, may you have the courage to relentlessly pursue and achieve it.

*“...success is much more than just the **size of your house** or the **amount of money you have in your bank account...***”



# TRIBAL LEADERS

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

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

## TOP ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT)

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

## BOTTOM ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT)

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





**FROM OUR LEADERS**

# ROBBIE MCGHEE: TRIBAL COUNCIL UPDATE

*By Megan Zamora and Robbie McGhee*

**T**his month, I sat down with Vice Chair and Chief Government Relations Officer, Robbie McGhee, to discuss the latest updates from Tribal Council. Because he is heavily involved in the Tribe’s Governmental Affairs sector, it’s only fitting that he should provide an update that leans into this arena.

In true Robbie fashion, he finished up his lingering task and then we got straight to business. I asked, “Robbie, what’s going on these days with Tribal Council? I’m looking for an update that spans from August to October.” He responded, “Tribal Council has worked with Congressman Jerry Carl to introduce a bill.”

He went on to explain that this proposed legislation, known as the Poarch Band of Creek Indians Parity Act, is really significant because it does two key things for the Poarch Band of Creek Indians. First, it reaffirms our existing lands. Secondly, it allows the Tribe to submit additional lands into trust through the Department of the Interior. Both of these initiatives are really important for our Tribe as we look ahead and plan for our future. The bill is supported by key legislators such as Alabama State Senator Greg Albritton and Representative Alan Baker.

The Government Relations team also recently met with Tribal Council to discuss the 2024 legislative session strategy. Each legislative session, the Tribe discusses how it intends to move forward with certain issues including a lottery, expanded gaming in the state, and a state compact. In making these decisions, the focal point is always what the impacts to the Tribe will be as well as protecting the current and future benefits and status of the Poarch Creek Indians. PCI has remained very clear in previous campaigns surrounding any gaming initiatives in that the gaming industry should be highly regulated and any expansion should not have a negative economic impact on the Tribe’s current gaming operations.

***If you would like a copy of the bill, please contact Kennedy Green at [kgreen@pci-nsn.gov](mailto:kgreen@pci-nsn.gov).***

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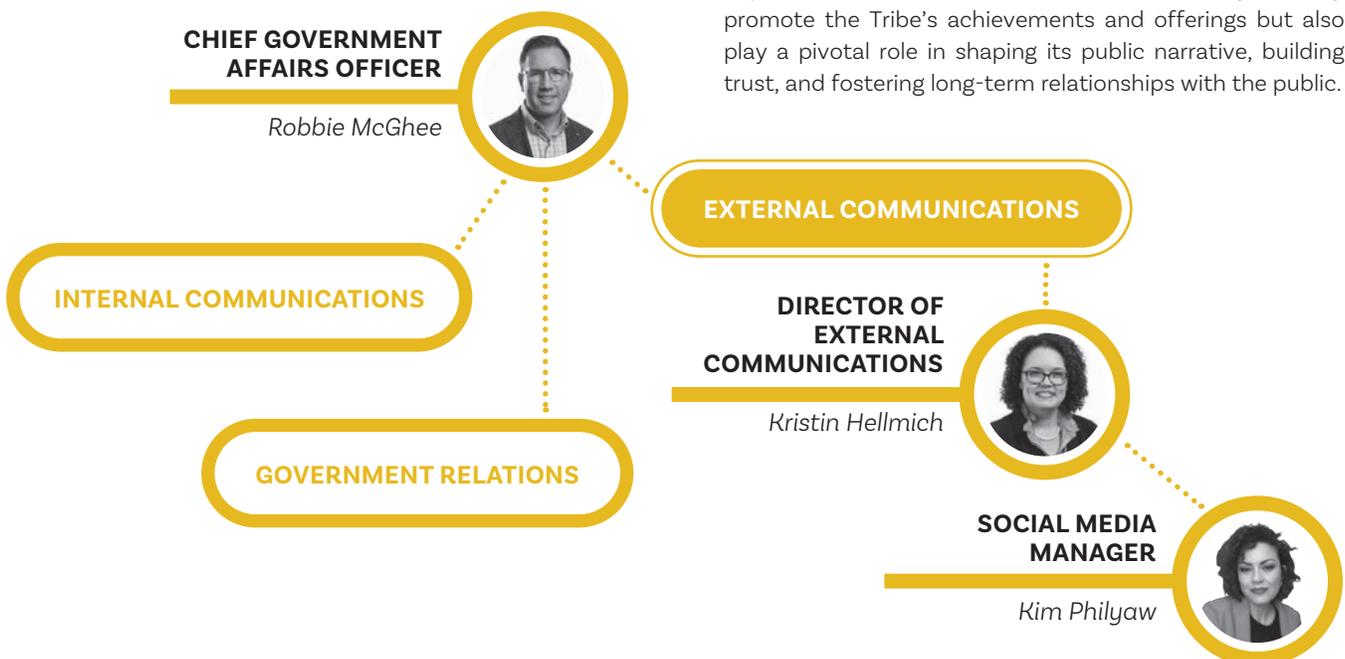
## DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT

# EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

By Ashlee Mothershed



**T**he External Communications Department is a crucial facet of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians Tribal Government. It's responsible for managing and directing the flow of information from our Tribe to the public. This department acts as the bridge between the organization and the general public, ensuring the Tribe's message is conveyed accurately, effectively, and in alignment with our values and objectives. Here is a closer look at the role and responsibilities of the External Communications Department:



### PUBLIC RELATIONS

This department ensures that the company's public image is positive and consistent. This involves managing press releases, handling media relations, and addressing any public crises.

### MEDIA MANAGEMENT

This involves establishing and nurturing relationships with journalists, bloggers, influencers, and other media personnel to ensure accurate and favorable media coverage.

### BRAND MESSAGING

Crafting consistent messaging that resonates with the company's brand values, vision, and mission.

### EVENT COORDINATION

Organizing, promoting, and overseeing events, ribbon-cuttings, press conferences, etc.

### DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

Managing online content, from our website to our social media profiles, ensuring brand consistency and engaging with the online community.

### CONTENT CREATION

Developing various types of content, including articles, blogs, videos, and other multimedia pieces, to communicate the Tribe's message to the public.

### MARKET RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

Understanding the market, the audience, and the latest communication trends to craft strategies that resonate.

### CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Preparing for and addressing any public relations issues or crises, ensuring they are handled promptly and effectively to protect the Tribe's reputation.

The strength of the External Communications Department is vital for our Tribe's reputation and public perception. With increasing importance of digital platforms and the rapid pace of information dissemination, this department's role is more critical than ever. They not only promote the Tribe's achievements and offerings but also play a pivotal role in shaping its public narrative, building trust, and fostering long-term relationships with the public.



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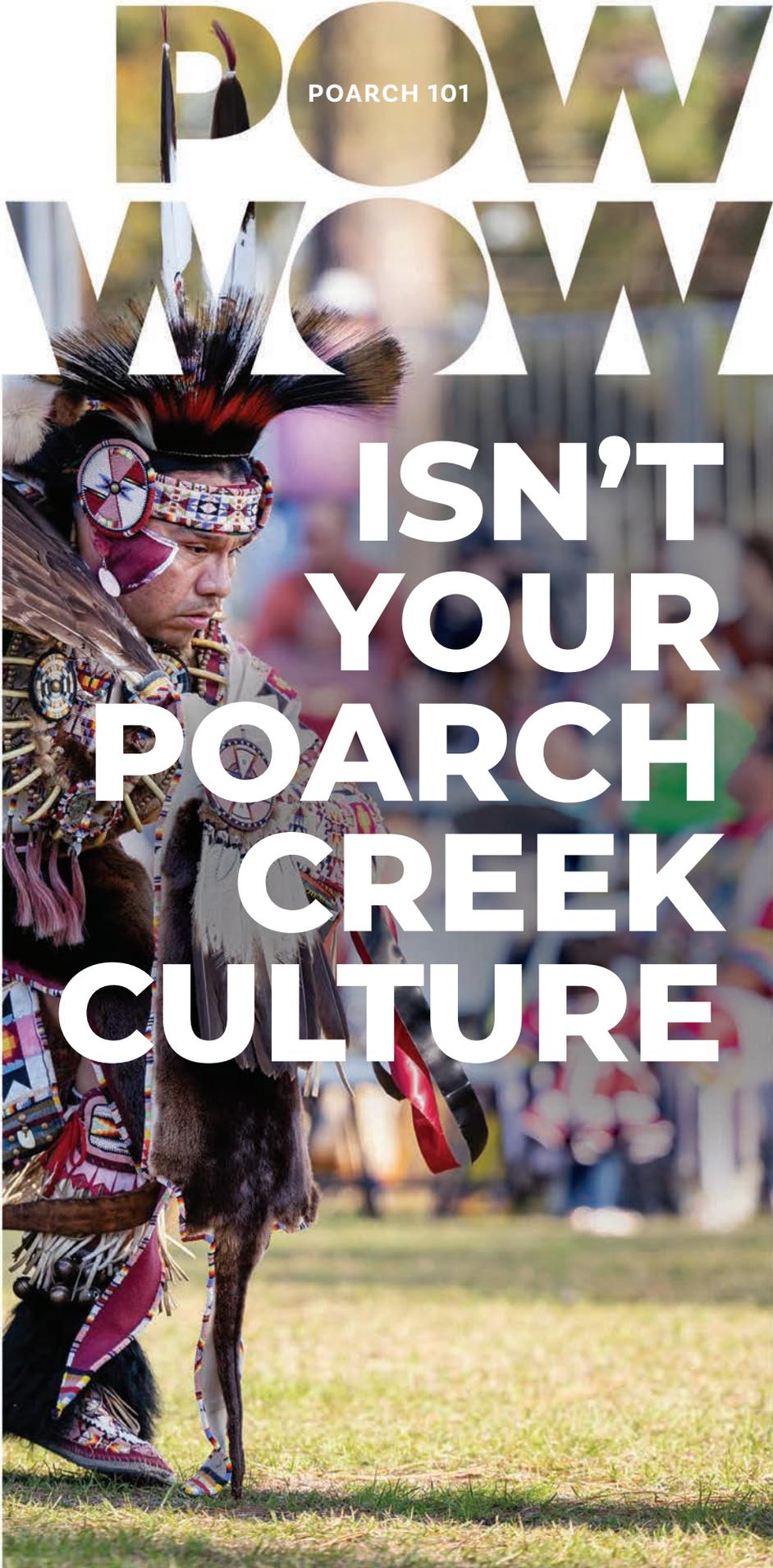


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Elizabeth Pickett, Au.D., CCC-A

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POARCH 101

POW WOV

# ISN'T YOUR POARCH CREEK CULTURE

*By Megan Zamora with contributions from Sandy Harris*

Pan-Indian is a term that refers to the political, philosophical, and at times, the cultural convergence and unity that occurs amongst Native American tribes. Movements such as the Dakota Access Pipeline and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples are considered pan-Indian in nature because they were supported by and represent more than just a single Native American tribe. Other examples include the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), United South and Eastern Tribes (USET) organization, and even Pow Wows.

While political unity amongst tribes has rendered positive results, it has also served to undermine the cultural and historical uniqueness of tribes in some aspects. The U.S. Constitution further deteriorates the individuality of tribes through its use of the terms “Indian” and “domestic dependent nation” throughout the governing document. But, it’s vital to our well-being as a tribe to hold on to our individual identity as the Poarch Band of Creek Indians.

Last year, we celebrated our 50th Annual Thanksgiving Pow Wow. It was a wonderful event, with a celebratory feeling in the air. I saw so many friends and family I hadn’t seen in years, and I’m sure many of you did also. Our Pow Wow has played a significant role in our



**SANDY HARRIS**

*Sandy is Ponca/Sac and Fox/Sicangu Lakota. Her traditional name is Wa tha Ton a Qua which means “Bright Lighting Coming This Way.” She is of the Thunder Clan of the Sac and Fox of Oklahoma.*

history of coming together as a community and also raising public awareness that our Tribe is here and exists, however Pow Wows are not our Poarch Creek culture. While Pow Wows are part of our Poarch Creek tradition and part of our modern Poarch Creek history, they do not reflect what our ancestors did - and it's critically important to recognize that distinction.

I've heard it said that pow wows are for everyone to come and enjoy, but as Creek people, we can't take ownership of them as our own culture...because they aren't. The truth is, Creek people traditionally and historically stomp dance. In speaking with my friend Sandy Harris, I learned that pow wow dancing has its historical origins with other tribes such as the Ponca, Omaha, Dakota, and Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara. And, these dances are culturally and historically significant for many tribes, and we must be sensitive to that fact.

Our Mvskoke Creek culture is beautiful and unique and I encourage you to reach deeper than what is available on a stereotypical or pan-Indian realm into what really belongs to us. Here's a litmus test for you: if you Google Indian, Native American, or American Indian, you're going to get images that include teepees, headdresses, dream catchers, and pow wow imagery. Those things are unique and culturally appropriate for some tribes, but not for Creeks. Images that represent Creek people include things like pucker-toe moccasins, bandolier bags, stickball, stomp dance, shell-carving, and much more.

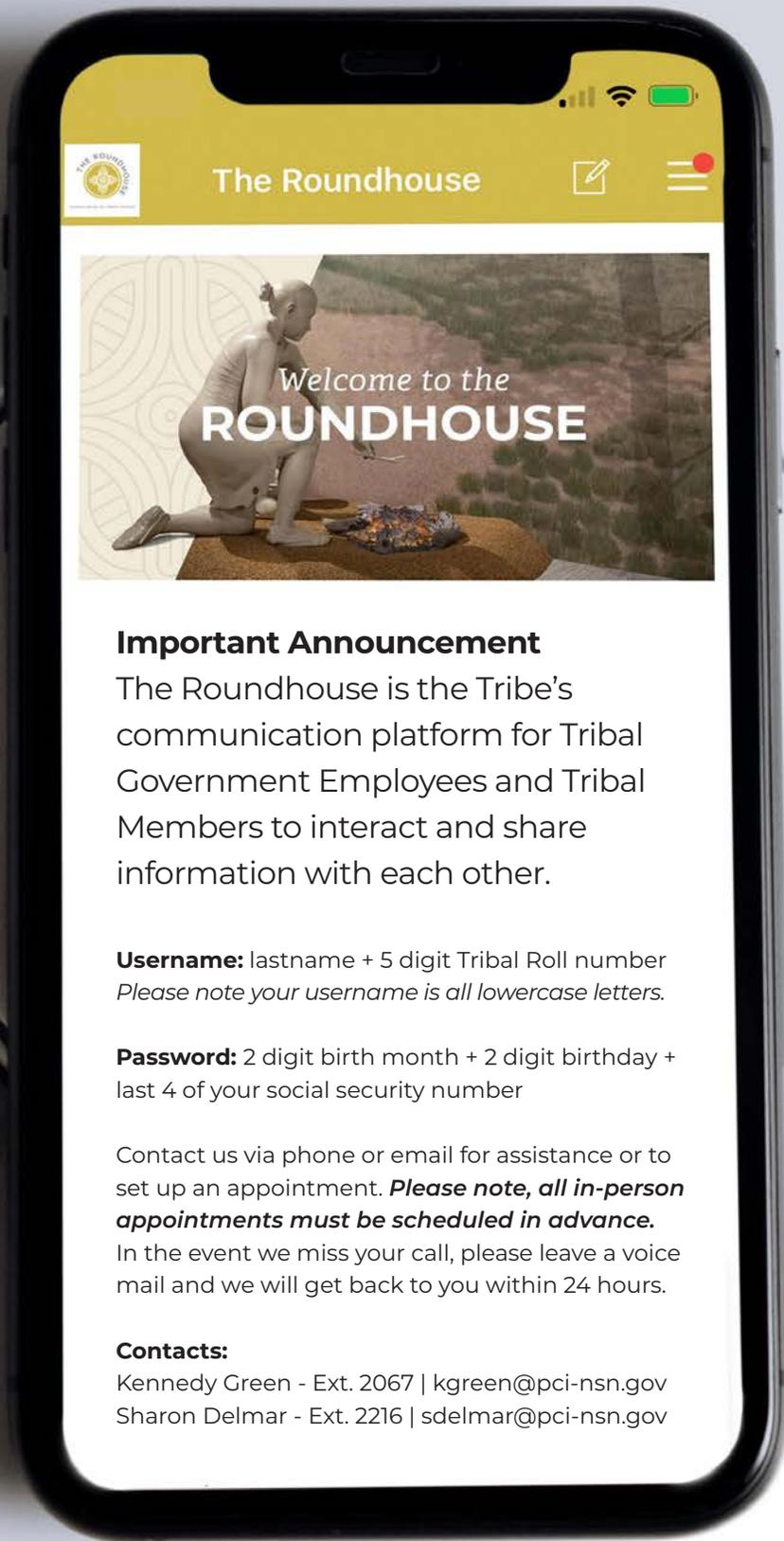
Let's work together to represent our own Creek people, and not contribute to long-standing stereotypes of America's Indigenous Peoples. You can do this by educating yourself on what belongs and does not belong to Creek people as well as using the correct images, verbiage, and culturally appropriate items for your Tribe.



*...pow wows are for everyone to come and enjoy, but as Creek people, we can't take ownership of them as our own culture... because they aren't.*



*To read more about Indigenous diversity, scan this QR code.*



The Roundhouse



**Important Announcement**

The Roundhouse is the Tribe’s communication platform for Tribal Government Employees and Tribal Members to interact and share information with each other.

**Username:** lastname + 5 digit Tribal Roll number  
*Please note your username is all lowercase letters.*

**Password:** 2 digit birth month + 2 digit birthday + last 4 of your social security number

Contact us via phone or email for assistance or to set up an appointment. ***Please note, all in-person appointments must be scheduled in advance.*** In the event we miss your call, please leave a voice mail and we will get back to you within 24 hours.

**Contacts:**  
Kennedy Green - Ext. 2067 | kgreen@pci-nsn.gov  
Sharon Delmar - Ext. 2216 | sdelmar@pci-nsn.gov



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## PODCAST

# A PLACE CALLED POARCH

By Ashlee Mothershed

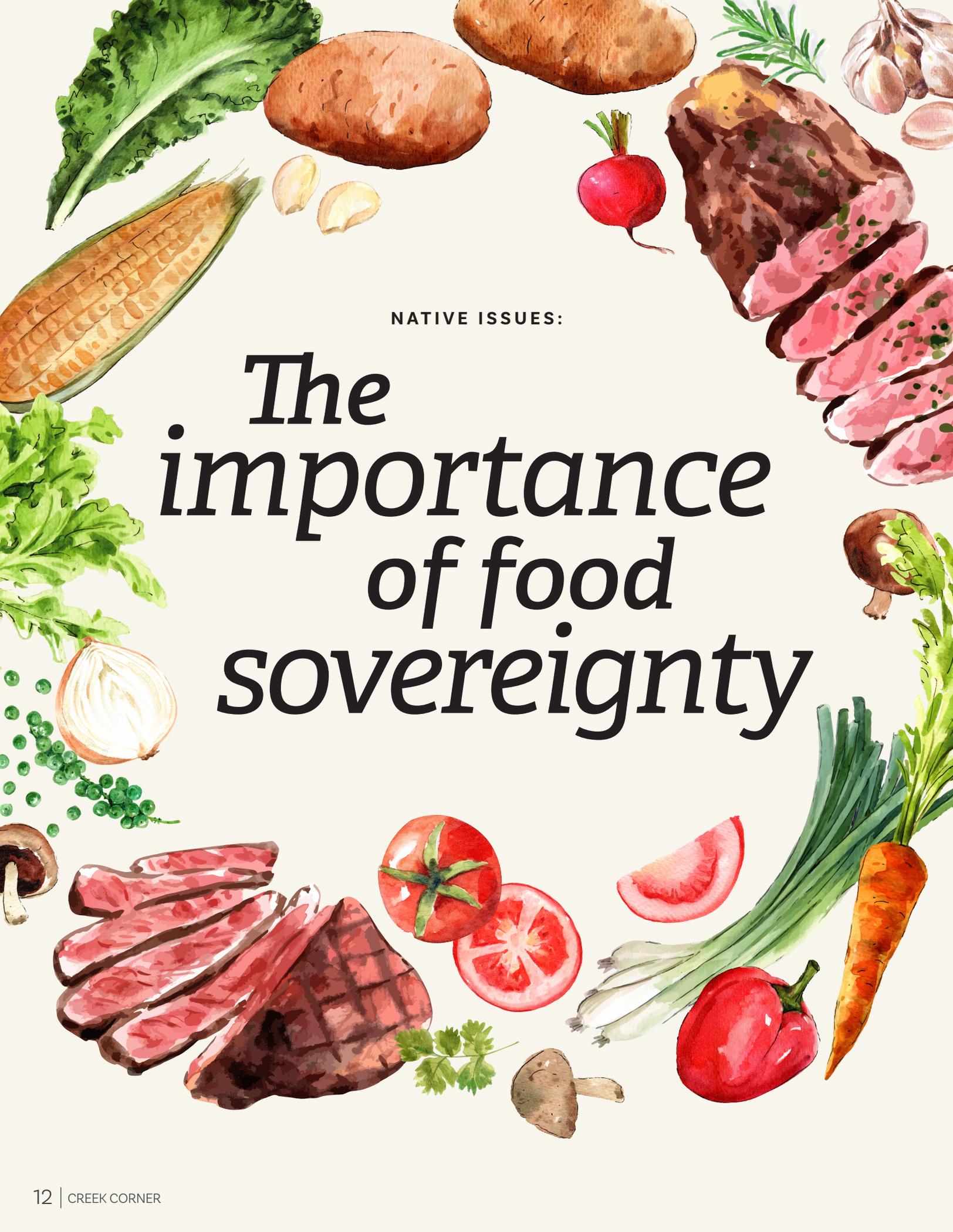
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A

Place Called Poarch” is a captivating podcast that dives deep into the heart of the Poarch Creek Indians, shedding light on its unique perspectives on Native issues. Each episode reveals the rich tapestry of history, culture, and tradition, intertwined with timely discussions on the challenges and triumphs faced by Indigenous communities. From Native history to contemporary debates, join us on this enlightening journey as we explore the depths of what it means to be a part of the Poarch Creek community in today’s world. Subscribe now and become a part of the conversation.

### LIST OF EPISODES

- 1 *It Takes A Village: Interview with Keith Martin*
- 2 *We Can Do More: Interview with Dewitt Carter*
- 3 *We’re a Tribe. We’re a Family.: Interview with Arthur Mothershed*
- 4 *Regaining Our True Identity: Interview with Robbie McGhee*
- 5 *I Will Never Stop Learning: Interview with Candace Fayard*
- 6 *We Took Care of Each Other: Interview with Charlotte Meckel*
- 7 *God Has Always Brought Me Through: Interview with Sandy Hollinger*
- 8 *I Had the Heart and Passion to Succeed: Interview with Stephanie Bryan*
- 9 *Keep Your Eyes on Your Own Paper: Interview with Terry Sweat*
- 10 *Being There for People When Things Are Tough: Interview with Lori Stinson*
- 11 *Entrepreneurial Arm of the Tribe: Interview with Chad Klinck*
- 12 *Success Is Not A Single Word: Interview with Brent Pinkston*
- 13 *We’re Gonna Get There: Interview with Cody Williamson*
- 14 *We Have to Be Genuine: Interview with Jay Dorris*
- 15 *I’m Just Handling the Grind: Interview with Dominic Cromartie*
- 16 *The Sky Is the Limit: Interview with Sandra Hiebert*
- 17 *Kerretv Cuko (Building of Learning): Interview with Brandy Chunn and Blake Crook*
- 18 *Break the Cycle: Interview with Amanda Montgomery*
- 19 *You Need An Advocate: Interview with Nancy Smith and Sandra Day*
- 20 *I Knew Who I Was: Interview with April Sells*



NATIVE ISSUES:

# *The importance of food sovereignty*

By Virginia McGhee

In a modernized society where food commercialization and methods of mass production of foods are the primary food source for many Americans, it can become hard to conserve cultural food habits and preserve food traditions that have attempted to withstand the winds of change for ages. In an effort to combat and preserve cultural food practices in an ever-changing society, Native American tribes around the nation have been known to practice a concept commonly referred to as Native Food Sovereignty. This can be described as the ability of tribal nations and communities to feed their own people on their own terms, as explained by the United States Department of Agriculture.

Additionally, Native food sovereignty has many benefits that work in an effort to not only preserve tribal traditions in food but to combat food security and the constant rise in prices of food around the nation- due to inflation that has significantly affected the prices of essential and nutritional food

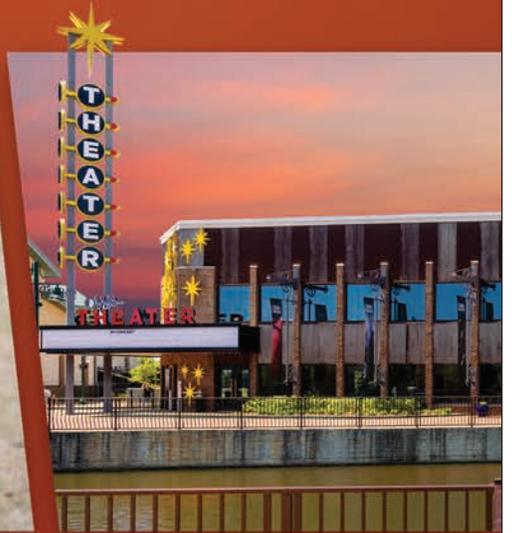
items. Inflation has been making it significantly harder for tribal and nontribal Americans to maintain a healthy diet because of costs and availability. All of these factors mark the importance of Native food sovereignty and why and how tribes having full autonomy over their food production and distribution is important to not only preserve cultural food traditions but to provide affordable and attainable nutritious food to their tribe and their families.

Our own tribe has set a notable example of practicing Native Food Sovereignty right at home in Atmore, Alabama. The Poarch Band of Creek Indians does its part by providing sustainable food resources through the Community Garden, our Food Distribution Program, and Perdido River Farms. The Tribe has also been working on a meat processing facility that is expected to be finished in 2024. This processing plant will provide a great sustainable food resource for Tribal Members and many families across the state of Alabama generating food sovereignty within our own Tribe that will benefit current and future generations to come.



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





# TRICKS, *Treats* & TRIBUTES

The Spice & Tea Exchange

Fun-Filled Fall is happening now at OWA! Join us on October 7 for Oktoberfest—then come back all month long for a full line-up of Halloween events and tribute shows. Bring your four-legged friend to Howl-o-ween on 10/14. Bring the kids for trick-or-treating on 10/28, 29 & 31. Dress up for our Monster Bash, 10/28, and visit the Nightmare Chambers (see calendar for dates). Enjoy musical tricks and treats at OWA Theater, with tributes to the Blues Brothers, Tina Turner, Led Zeppelin & Queen! Get showtimes & event details at [VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com)!

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## AMERICAN GENOCIDE

*A Podcast About the Crimes of Native American Boarding Schools*

Amidst an unprecedented federal investigation into hundreds of Native Boarding Schools and the 100,000+ children these institutions forcibly removed, one school has become the epicenter of controversy in America’s attempt to reckon with its dark history: Red Cloud Indian School. While today some see the school as a positive presence in the Pine Ridge Reservation, home to the Oglala Lakota Tribe, others cite it as a perpetrator of generational trauma. While the U.S. government is starting to admit its culpability in a church-facilitated campaign of genocide, the quest for justice is exposing tension throughout the Native community. In this new podcast from IllumiNative, series hosts Crystal Echo Hawk (Pawnee) and Lashay Wesley (Choctaw) hit the ground in Pine Ridge, South Dakota to chronicle the actively-developing situation for themselves, covering every twist and turn in this true crime story about the compounding intergenerational pain of Native American boarding schools and whether it’s possible for a community, Native peoples, and the United States to achieve truth, healing, and reconciliation.

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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).

Listen anywhere you get podcasts, or scan the QR code to the right.



# I AM ALS

## - CHAD KLINCK'S STORY

*By Jen Chism*

**T**oday, at Creek Indian Enterprises Development Authority, we have unfortunate news to share. In 2020, our beloved Chief Financial Officer, Chad Klinck, received a devastating diagnosis. He has been diagnosed with ALS, a debilitating disease that currently has no known cure. Patients typically survive for less than five years after receiving this life-altering news.

Despite the challenges he faces while battling ALS, Chad remains determined to live life to the fullest. He is an inspiration to all those around him as he bravely fights this battle. Moreover, Chad is using his position and influence to raise awareness about ALS, lending his voice to the cause.

In his journey to bring attention to this disease, Chad has teamed up with the phenomenal organization I AM ALS. This remarkable group provides support to individuals fighting ALS and has made significant progress for the ALS community in just five short but impactful years. They have quadrupled federal funding for ALS and have successfully advocated for FDA approval of three new treatments for the disease.

In a beautiful gesture of support for Chad and his efforts, the Poarch Band of Creek Indians has generously awarded a remarkable \$250,000 grant to I AM ALS in Chad Klinck's name. This contribution will undoubtedly make a tremendous difference in the fight against ALS.

Fortunately, Chad has a large support system, including his girlfriend Adrienne, their daughter Larsen, and Larsen's older brother and sisters; McKenzie, Meadow, and Mason.

Chad said his family gives him immense strength. He views himself as



lucky and not in need of anything. Yet, despite his struggle with the disease, he is compelled to be a champion for others who are not as fortunate as he has been.

Chad stated, "I've chosen a charity that helps patients with the disease and advocates nationally for patient funding and expanded access to medical trials."

His choice reflects a genuine commitment to making a meaningful impact in the lives of those affected by this disease.

We invite you to join us in supporting I AM ALS and its mission. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of ALS patients, their caregivers, and their loved ones.

Let's rally behind Chad and the countless others affected by this aggressive disease and work towards a future where ALS is nothing more than a memory.

*To read more about Chad's story, or to make a donation, scan the QR code below.*




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*We are pleased to share this article that was posted in the September 2023 Sweet Grown Alabama newsletter about the heirloom corn products we distribute during the monthly LFPA food distributions here at Poarch.*

**BAYOU CORA FARMS:**

# GROWING THE PAST TO HARVEST THE FUTURE

*By Joshua Higginbotham | Submitted by Janet Shultz*

**T**he story of Bayou Cora Farms heirloom corn began not long after the Civil War. James Phillip Lipscomb came to Baldwin County, Alabama in 1875 and brought with him a corn variety from Marengo County, Alabama. He settled in what is now the Vernant Park Community just outside of Magnolia Springs. There, he established a farm and began to plant the corn. Over several years, he built up a seed stock and was soon able to plant several acres. Some of the corn was used for eating during the milk stage, as many people did with field or sweet corn, but the majority of each year's crop was dried and used for cattle feed. This heirloom variety, commonly known as "Indian Corn", only changes into its multitude of red, yellow, orange, purple and blue colors after it begins to dry.

James Lipscomb grew the corn until the year he died in 1933 at the age of 80. James' grandson, Ira Lipscomb, saved some of the corn from his grandfather and continued to grow the corn along with his six sons: Lawrence, Edward, Claude, Sheldon, Oswald and Albert. Like his grandfather, Ira grew the corn until his death in 1979. Over the next eight years, the Lipscomb brothers grew the corn. But sadly in 1987, when the agriculture industry slowed, and many farmers had to downsize or get out of farming completely, the last two brothers farming full time, Sheldon and Oswald, decided to trim production and stopped planting their family corn.

One brother, Claude, decided to set aside a little of the corn, not much more than 1 pound, in an old barn freezer. There the corn stayed for 24 years until 2011 when Edward, Claude, and Sheldon pulled out that old heirloom corn which they called "Grandpa Jimmy's" corn and decided to revive it. Each brother planted only a handful, with Sheldon planting only 98 kernels. For the next three years they brought back the old family





corn, with each year's crop slightly bigger than the last. In spring of 2015, Sheldon planted 5 acres of the family corn, not quite knowing what he would do with the harvest. However, the brothers always had an idea that perhaps that old corn could be used for milling into cornmeal.

Sheldon's grandsons Josh and Jarred Higginbotham ground some of the corn into cornmeal, and Sheldon's wife Betsy made several recipes including cornbread. They soon discovered that the meal had a very unique, natural and flavorful taste.

After a trip to the local farmers market in July of 2015, and a sell out on the first day, Josh and Jarred quickly realized that the cornmeal fit right in with the interest for local and heirloom products. This led to Bayou Cora Farms Heirloom Corn Products, which now includes grits, corn flour, and fish fry, along with the cornmeal.

You can now find Bayou Cora Farms corn products on all Alabama Publix shelves, as well as on the menus of restaurants from New Orleans, Louisiana to Destin, Florida.

Visit our website at [bayoucorafarms.com](http://bayoucorafarms.com).



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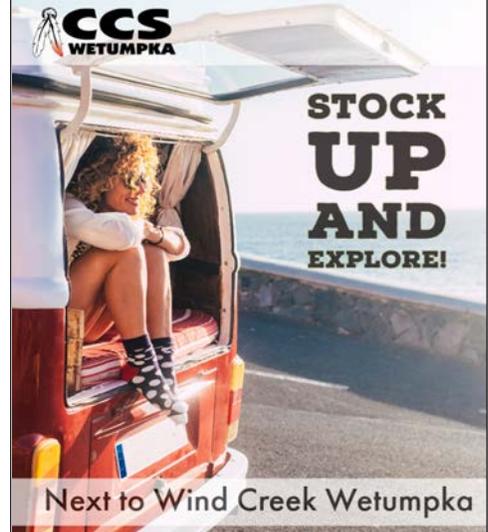
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# FUN-FILLED FALL AT OWA

By Catherine Hasty



F

un-Filled Fall is happening now at OWA! Help us welcome Autumn's return to OWA Parks & Resort this October with a schedule

of events designed to entertain all ages. From German food and beer games to trick-or-treating, we've got you covered this Fall!

Suit up in your finest dirndl or lederhosen and join us on October 7th for Oktoberfest! The Foley Sister Cities Commission will kick off the day by hosting its inaugural "Foley Sisters Cities, 5K Oktoberfest Run." Starting at 8 AM, come and support, run, or walk for a great cause that benefits the community! Following the 5K you can look forward to free Oktoberfest-themed live music, dancing, entertainment, games, crafts, and activities! In addition to OWA's shops, dining and entertainment, arts and crafts vendors will be featured throughout Downtown OWA.

Every weekend following, expect Downtown OWA to be fully immersed in Halloween-themed activities and entertainment! Be sure and enter your four-legged friend for the Howl-o-ween Dog Costume Contest on Saturday, October 14th. Then come dressed in your own costume for our Monster Bash Costume Contest on October 28. There will be cash prizes for the pups, kids, and adults for multiple categories! Don't worry, we didn't forget trick-or-treating! Bring the whole family to trick-or-treat throughout Downtown OWA on October 28th, 29th, and 31st. Finally, back by fearful demand, Nightmare Chambers haunted select weekends throughout the month! Check out VisitOWA.com for dates and times.

Get ready to toast to art appreciation right in the heart of Downtown as OWA as you stroll through the Arts & Craft Walk on Friday, October 27th. This time, it's bigger, bolder, and better than ever before! It's not just an art showcase; it's a sensory journey. Imagine yourself sipping on a delightful cocktail as you embark on an adventure of trinkets and masterpieces waiting to find a new home.

Enjoy musical tricks and treats at OWA Theater! Need a fun night of non-stop up-tempo hits and classic ballads? Experience



*...expect Downtown OWA to be fully immersed in Halloween-themed activities and entertainment!*

The Rock and Soul Review, A Tribute to the Blues Brothers and Tina Turner, on October 5th! Next, White Tie Rock Ensemble returns October 6th and 7th! This spectacular tribute showcases the hits of two iconic bands: Eagles and Journey. Prepare to be blown away by their electrifying performance as they take you on a nostalgic ride through the greatest hits of these legendary rock groups. Then ... Is this real life? Is this just fantasy? Close enough, its Absolute Queen, The Ultimate Queen Tribute show is at OWA Theater October 14th! In addition to these great tribute bands, enjoy Halloween 4-D Movie Nights October 13th, 27th, and 28th. Get showtimes and event details at VisitOWA.com!

Don't forget to check out all the shows at Brandon Styles Theater from the Variety Shows to Magic and even Hypnosis! Every Tuesday & Saturday throughout the month, laugh and be amazed as Brandon brings you comedy, magic, and 60 impressions with his Variety Show. In the mood for a classic, who done it? Check out his Murder Mystery Show October 5th! 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 October 27th! Tickets can be purchased 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 or by following us on social media @VisitOWA.**



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**Jessica Ascott-Williams**  
Soil Conservationist - Tribal Conservationist  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

5535 Poarch Road  
Atmore, AL 36502  
www.nrcs.usda.gov

Cell Phone: 334-658-1576  
jessica.ascott@usda.gov

**Tribal office is open from 8:30 am - 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday.  
Closed on Holidays.**

**\*Will be closed during field visits and while servicing surrounding counties.  
Please call to schedule an office appointment or field visit.**



# Environmental Quality Incentives Program

Natural Resources Conservation Service



## **Sign-ups are open for the 2024 Program Year**

### **Overview**

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides technical and financial assistance to producers to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, increased soil health and reduced soil erosion and sedimentation, improved or created wildlife habitat, and mitigation against drought and increasing weather volatility.

### **Benefits**

Through EQIP, NRCS provides agricultural producers with one-on-one help and financial assistance to plan and implement improvements, or what NRCS calls conservation practices. Together, NRCS and producers invest in solutions that conserve natural resources for the future while improving agricultural operations.

### **Who is Eligible?**

Farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners who own or rent agricultural land are eligible. EQIP assistance can be used on all types of agricultural operations, including:

- Conventional and organic
- Specialty crops and commodity crops
- Forestry and wildlife
- Historically underserved farmers\*
- Livestock operations

\*Increased and advance payments available for historically underserved producers (beginning, limited resource, socially disadvantaged, and military veterans.)



USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

# 2023 ALABAMA GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON TOURISM

By Amelia Tognoli

“  
With close to 400 attendees, we had a lot of record-breaking firsts this year.”

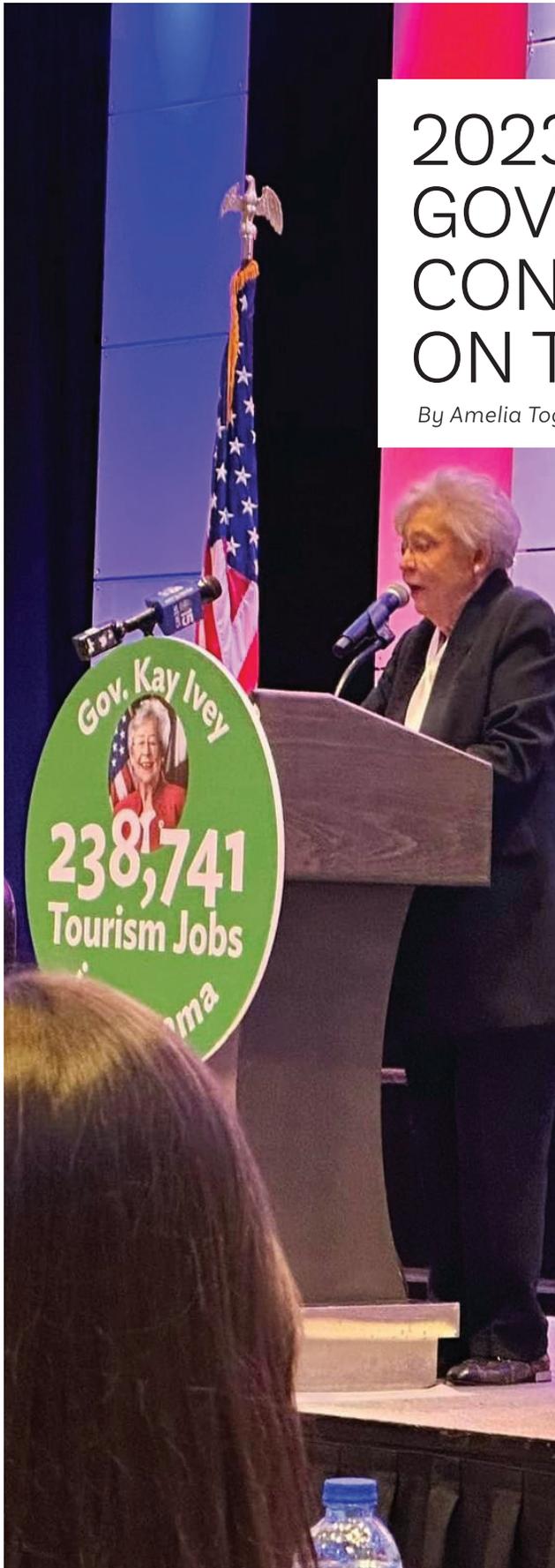
Wind Creek Hospitality, the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, and OWA attended the 2023 Alabama Governor's Conference on Tourism (AGCT) in August.

Hosted at the Grand Hotel Golf Resort and Spa on the Eastern Shore, the event connected like-minded individuals in tourism, hospitality, and municipalities across the state of Alabama. This year, the four-day event featured a presentation from Governor Kay Ivey, panel discussions led by tourism industry experts, trade shows, Alabama tourism reports, silent auctions, and more.

In addition to fostering tourism connections, the event also featured a Scholarship Luncheon—benefitting Alabama students who are actively studying hospitality and tourism. This year's event boasted the largest attendance for both the Scholarship Luncheon and Awards Banquet.

This year, an estimated \$24,400 was raised for the 2024 AGCT in Tuscaloosa—Lee Sentell and the Alabama Tourism Department vowed to match the amount—propelling the grand total to around \$49,000.

“With close to 400 attendees, we had a lot of record-breaking firsts this year,” said Trina Rackard, Director of Sponsorships and Events at Wind Creek Hospitality. “It was a great networking event that supports our tourism industry in so many remarkable ways.”





# TRIBAL MEMBER DENTAL & VISION OPEN ENROLLMENT

ENROLLMENT IS REQUIRED ONLY FOR THOSE WHO ARE MAKING CHANGES FROM THE 2023 COVERAGE.

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2024

All Poarch Creek Tribal Members of any age continue to be offered dental and vision insurance at no cost.

Tribal Members may also cover their **non-tribal dependents** for a **premium cost**. Dependents are defined as legal spouse and dependent child(ren) up to age 26.

**Family Vision: \$90/year**  
**Family Dental: \$600/year**

Family premiums will be deducted in an annual amount from January 2024 General Welfare distributions.

*Premium costs for multiple Tribal Members in a family will be adjusted accordingly.*



## HOW TO ENROLL:

Complete an enrollment application by scanning the QR link, visiting PBCI Roundhouse or obtain a paper application in Tribal Accounting.

**Enrollment applications must be completed by November 15, 2023.**

- ✓ DENTAL COVERAGE THROUGH BCBS
- ✓ VISION COVERAGE THROUGH VSP

## SCAN TO ENROLL



More Information available at:

[www.pbciroundhouse.com](http://www.pbciroundhouse.com) > Tribal Members > Tribal Member Accounting & Info

Edie Baker [ebaker@pci-nsn.gov](mailto:ebaker@pci-nsn.gov)





Emily Fayard, Dr. Deidra Suwane Dees, and Veronica Henderson are pictured at the Society of Alabama Archivists conference at Troy University in 2022. Photo by Croix Henderson

## SOCIETY OF ALABAMA ARCHIVISTS CONFERENCE IS COMING TO WIND CREEK

*By Deidra Suwane Dees, Ed.D. and Emily Fayard*

**F**or the first time ever, the Society of Alabama Archivists conference will be held at the Poarch Band of Creek Indians. Staff at the Office of Archives and Records Management is inviting the Tribal community to join us for our yearly conference on Friday, October 6, 2023, at Wind Creek Casino & Hotel in the Coosawada Ballroom from 8 to 5. You are also invited to join us for the bus tour of the reservation on Thursday, October 5 at 3:30 p.m. which will meet at the Wind Creek valet entrance.

For many years, the Tribe has been a member of the Society of Alabama Archivists which is an organization that helps archivists around the State of Alabama network with each other. The archivists share valuable techniques used in Records Management and Archival Preservation that help enhance our care for the records under our custody.

Office of Archives and Records Management Director/Tribal Archivist, Dr. Deidra Suwane Dees, was elected to serve as Vice President of the Society from 2022-2023. Records Specialists, Emily Fayard, was appointed to serve on the Awards Committee, also from 2022-2023.

The website says, "The Society of Alabama Archivists (SALA) was founded in 1977. Membership is open to any person and/or institution interested in the field of Archives, Manuscripts, Special Libraries, or a related discipline." You do not have to hold a membership to attend the conference. You can learn more by visiting [alarchivists.org](http://alarchivists.org).

Through this Society, Archivists are able to discover records held in other repositories across the state. These relationships with other archivists are beneficial to us here at the Tribe to help us locate records on Creek history that we do not have. For example, through our relationship with Veronica Henderson, the Archivist at Alabama A&M University, we rediscovered the Trail of Tears film in 2020 which had been mislaid for over forty years.

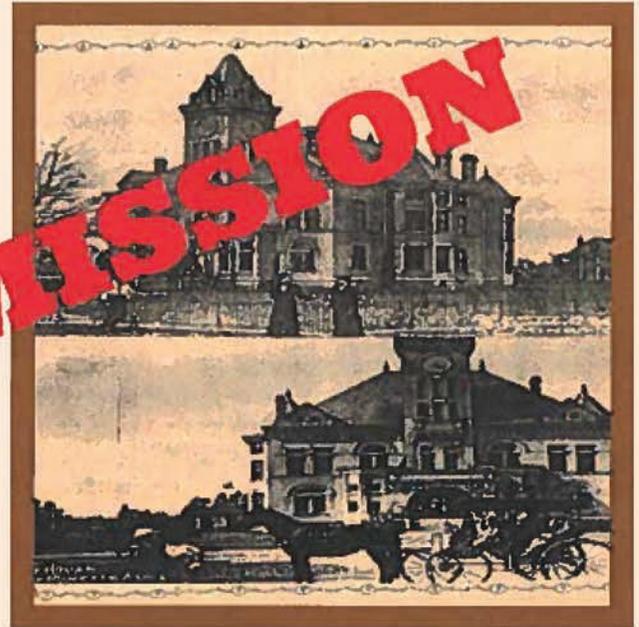
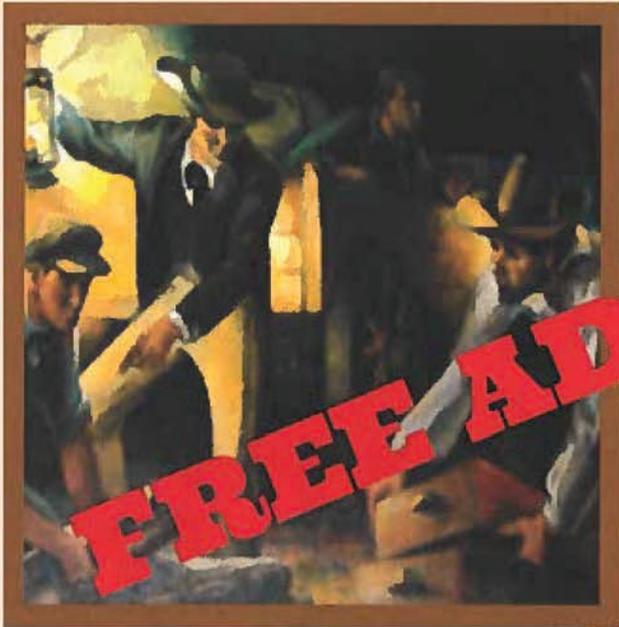
Dr. Dees and Ms. Fayard gave a presentation on this rediscovery with Ms. Henderson at the 2022 Society of Alabama Archivists conference which was held at Troy University. They told the audience that the film was digitized and shown to the Tribal community in several segments during the pandemic using the safe environment of the Internet. One segment was shown on Thanksgiving Day, 2020, in the place of our Pow Wow which was cancelled because of COVID-19. For the first time, the Tribal community was able to view the Trail of Tears film together which showcased Tribal Member families who had been asking about the whereabouts of the film for many years.

If you would like to attend the Society of Alabama Archivists conference and bus tour, for registration, please contact our new Administrative Assistant, Torisha Matthews, at (251) 446-4942. We hope to see you at the conference. Mvto.

WE CARE ABOUT HISTORY

# Removal Day Story Telling

REMOVAL OF THE BALDWIN COUNTY SEAT  
from Daphne to Bay Minette



Thursday, October 12, 2023  
5:30–7:30pm  
at the  
Courthouse Gazebo, Bay Minette

OPPOSING VIEWS

## STORY TELLERS:

Cliff McCollum, Robert "Bob" Wills, Al Guarisco & Lucy Cunningham

## OTHER ATTRACTIONS INCORPORATED INTO THE EVENT:

- Old Fashioned Dessert Baking Contest
- Period Attire Contest Age Groups (3-17), (18 & above)
- Food Vendor
- Games for the Kids
- Old Timey Music & More

*Bring your lawn chair and straw hat.*



## IT'S TIME TO UPDATE FOR THE TAHO PROGRAM

Tribal Members 21 years or older, interested in a new house, must come into the PCI Housing Department, and submit a new application even if you already have an application on file.

Listed are some of the items you will need to provide: a copy of 2022 tax returns; social security card(s) of all persons listed on the application; tribal ID card(s); Driver's License; letter of First Generation Indian Descendant; custody verification; homeless verification; substandard living verification; must have a credit score of 550 or higher; must live in the tribe's service area; must not have participated in any homeownership program for five (5) years; must qualify for low income and over income; must not have withdrawn for the TAHO Program or declined in the past twelve (12) months; plus other required documents.

**We will start accepting applications on Monday, October 2, 2023, and the last day to update will be Friday, December 15, 2023.**

# October Open House



Hearing Loss doesn't need to slow you down.  
This October, choose to hear BETTER with Beltone.  
Come see **Our Beltone Hearing Aid Specialist** at



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### Beltone makes it easy for you to re-connect with:

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# CREEK CORNER

## OCTOBER 2023 IMPORTANT DATES

<b>10.2</b>	<b>SUBMISSION DEADLINE</b> November Issue	<b>5:00 PM</b>
<b>10.2-3</b>	<b>MUSEUM GIFT SHOP CLOSED</b> Inventory	
<b>10.5</b>	<b>TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING</b> TC Chambers	<b>4:00 PM</b>
<b>10.6</b>	<b>OKTOBERFEST</b> Downtown OWA	<b>8:00 AM</b>
<b>10.19</b>	<b>TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING</b> TC Chambers	<b>4:00 PM</b>
<b>10.27</b>	<b>THE ART WALK</b> Downtown OWA	<b>12:00-9:00 PM</b>
<b>10.28</b>	<b>MONSTER BASH COSTUME CONTEST</b> Downtown OWA	<b>12:00 PM</b>