



SEPTEMBER  
2024

No. 33

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE of the POARCH CREEK INDIANS

# creek corner

THE *Artistry* THAT  
*Weaves Together*  
CREEK PAST AND PRESENT

**LIKEPVS CI (WELCOME)  
TO OUR NEW THPO**

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**FIRST INDIGENOUS  
MISS UNIVERSE CROWNED**

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**The Forgotten Creeks  
Documentary  
Continues to Leave  
Big Impact**

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## CREDITS

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# FROM THE EDITOR



**MEGAN ZAMORA**  
Editor, Creek Corner

***“...asking for help  
doesn’t just benefit me.  
In relying on others, I’ve  
created opportunities  
for them to grow,  
gain experience,  
and contribute in  
meaningful ways.”***

“ I t’s always been hard for me to ask for and accept help. Maybe I’m like this because I value independence; maybe it’s because I’m a prideful, untrusting Capricorn; or maybe it’s because I just don’t like to be an inconvenience or burden to someone else. Regardless of the “why”, even when I’m clearly struggling or feel extremely overwhelmed, I will still often take the option of inflicting more stress and hardship on myself rather than reach out to another.

However, I’ve had to get over myself and ask for help repeatedly... especially lately.

In May, my family of three blossomed into a family of four as we welcomed a son. He was so anxious to join in the fun, he arrived a few weeks ahead of schedule. The maternity plan that I’d been working on (procrastinating about) was still sitting in my draft emails when I came back to work from having him. Nonetheless, the fantastic folks I work with kept the train on the tracks, made sure my office plants were watered, and ensured I didn’t need to worry about a thing. I can’t thank my Communications and GR Team enough for all they’ve done on my behalf while I’ve been away the last few months. I’m so grateful for all they do, their kindness and patience, and the way they embrace change and jump into action at a moment’s notice. Mvto.

Now, as a mom with two babies under two years old, I’m getting very comfortable with asking for help. I’m still not great at it, it doesn’t come naturally for me, and I play and replay a dialogue in my head of how I’m going to ask before the words come out of my mouth, BUT I’m following through with the simple act of asking.

Through reaching out to others, I’ve learned a lot of things. First and foremost, I should have done this a long time ago. It’s allowed me to unburden myself and remove some unneeded and unwanted stressors from my life. Asking for help enables me to be a better wife and mama. It’s allowed me to focus on what’s most important both at work and at home.

I’ve also realized that asking for help doesn’t just benefit me. In relying on others, I’ve created opportunities for them to grow, gain experience, and contribute in meaningful ways. By asking, I’ve witnessed other people feel needed, included, and helpful. Through the vulnerability that asking creates, trust is built and lives are enriched. Overall, this simple act has strengthened my relationships and bonds with others in unexpected, beautiful ways, and I’m very grateful for that.

September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month and serves as a reminder that asking for help includes considering your mental well-being as well. If you are struggling with your mental health or thoughts of harming yourself, please don’t hesitate to reach out for help by dialing 988 or visiting [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org).

Until next month, be well, practice gratitude, and engage in the act of asking for help when you need it.



# TRIBAL LEADERS

The mission of the Poarch Creek Indians is to protect our inherent rights as a sovereign American Indian Tribe, promote our culture and beliefs, to help our Tribal Citizens 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







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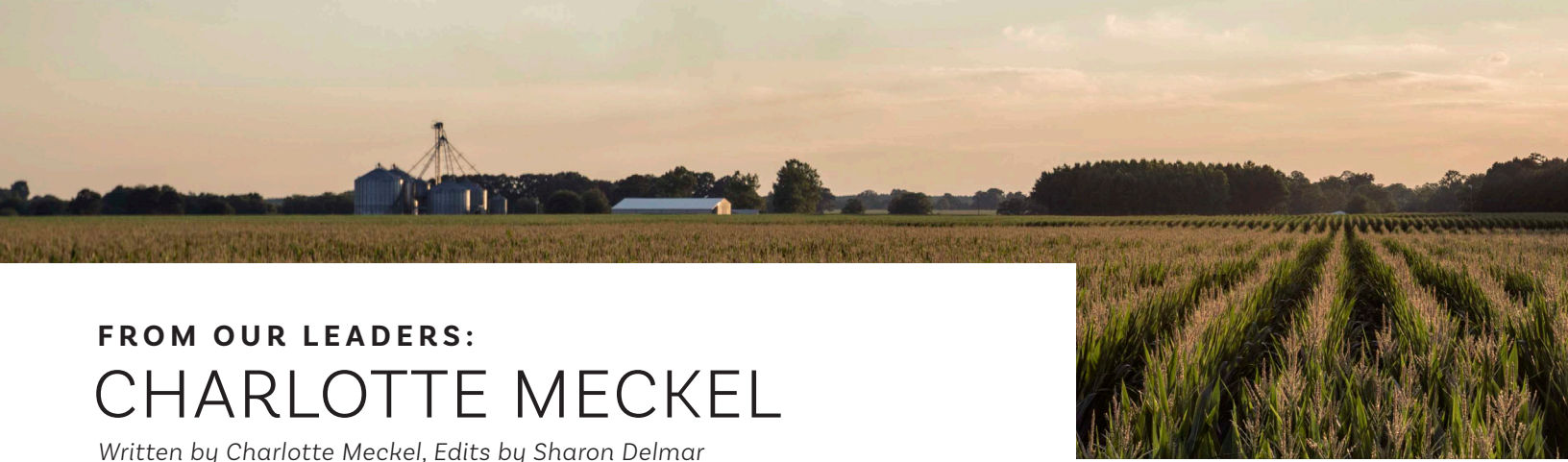
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FROM OUR LEADERS:

# CHARLOTTE MECKEL

Written by Charlotte Meckel, Edits by Sharon Delmar

*Hesci, Tribal Citizens near and far,*

Each of you are very important to me and to all of the Tribal Council. As I look back over the years when I first became a Tribal Council Member, it is amazing to see the growth and the programs that we have been able to offer our Citizens, no matter where you reside.

Being an elder myself, my passion is about helping people, especially the elders, so whenever possible, I enjoy visiting the residents at Lavan Martin Assisted Living Facility (ALF) especially participating in the monthly “potluck” to taste their specialty dishes. Helping out at the SAIL Center, when they are short-handed, handing out lunches, and greeting Tribal Citizens that I do not get to see often is always a blessing.

Each year, we have more Tribal Citizens and their spouses participating in our senior activities and I am pleased to say there are two exciting senior trips planned—a road trip and a cruise. These trips take a lot of teamwork. The Family Services Department and the SAIL Center do an amazing job putting together all the special events designed specifically for our Citizens.

On a daily basis, we have Tribal Council Members traveling throughout Indian Country looking for ways to diversify and to ensure the programs we currently have in place are sustainable for future generations. We have investments in the State of Alabama and other parts of the United States in order to provide each of you with the highest quality of life as possible. We are engaged in daily business ventures to provide each of you with the most valuable benefits and to increase programs for all of our Citizens.

I must admit, the beginning of the year was very challenging because we did not know which way our Senators and Congressmen would vote on the gaming bill. You could say we dodged a bullet this time, but we still have to do our due diligence to protect our rights and maintain what we currently have.

In my work here at the Tribe, I enjoy Chairing the Tribal Records Committee which meets quarterly and oversees our Tribal records. In my capacity as Chair, I attended the Society of American Archivists Conference in August and conducted research on the Chicago Indian Conference that Chief Calvin McGhee and the Creek delegation attended at the University of Chicago in 1961. We hope to find some treasured records on Chief McGhee that we can copy and bring home to share with everyone.

I am proud to announce that we will be celebrating our fortieth anniversary of Federal Recognition on October 5, 2024 at our History Conference at the Wind Creek Casino which is put on by the Office of Archives and Records Management, the Tribal Historic Preservation Office, and the Kerretv en Cuko Poarch Creek Indians Museum. I invite everyone to come out and join us from 8 to 3 in the Coosawada Ballroom for an exciting celebration [see announcement on page 37 for details].



**CHARLOTTE MECKEL**  
*Tribal Council Secretary*



“  
*As I look back over the years when I first became a Tribal Council Member, it is amazing to see the growth and the programs that we have been able to offer our Citizens, no matter where you reside.*

TRIBAL COUNCIL SECRETARY CHARLOTTE MECKEL

In November, I am presenting with staff at the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums Conference in Palm Springs, California, where I will be one of the panelists speaking on the making of The Voice of Vision book that was given to each Tribal Citizen. This book, produced by the Office of Archives and Records Management, could be used as a model for other tribes to follow. I am delighted that the Poarch Creek Indians is a recipient of the Guardian of Culture and Lifeways Award for Archives Excellence, a distinguished medal that was awarded at the conference in the past.

I also serve on the Land and Natural Resources Committee which is constantly looking for land we can purchase that is next to the reservation property so that we can expand our footprint. The Committee is also looking to increase our cattle and food distribution operations. Like everything else, it takes a strong team and we have just that—dedicated employees who strive daily to improve our campus and our community.

Additionally, I serve on the Health Legislative Committee which enables me to play an intricate part in our health system. The Committee endeavors to improve benefits we offer to our Citizens. Just recently, we had to say farewell to our dentist of long standing, Dr. Gus Bahos, who was a great asset to the dental department. Now, we welcome our new Chief Dentist, Dr. Andrea Talley, who is making major strides in the department. Soon, we will have another full-time dentist who specializes in pediatric dentistry which will be a great asset to our Tribal families. This will enable us to offer significant improvements to our dental health in the future. Please be patient while we make improvements to the dental department over the next three months as we are growing to serve you better!

Another change coming is in our lab which has outgrown its current space. Construction will begin soon to relocate the lab to the front of the Buford L. Rolin Health Clinic. This relocation will make it easier for wheelchair patients to access, and will enable the lab to serve our patients more efficiently with greater privacy. This construction project will take four to five months to complete, but the current lab will remain operable throughout the upgrade.

We have innovative changes planned and wonderful programs in place. I encourage each of you, and your family, to take part in the events offered throughout the year.

It is an honor to serve you. Remember that my door is always open and I would love to hear from you with any suggestions or concerns you may have. You are always welcome to call me any time at (251) 368-9136 extension #2960 or (251) 359-5974. **Mvto.**



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## DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT

# COMMUNITY SERVICES

By Ashlee “Katie” Mothershed

*The Community Services Division (CSD) plays a vital role in administering a wide range of programs and services designed to benefit Tribal Citizens, First Generation Descendants, Tribal Citizen households, members of other federally recognized tribes, Tribal employees and their children, and the broader local community. This inclusive approach ensures support for individuals of all ages.*

---

## EDUCATION

The Roberta McGhee Sells Education Department is dedicated to enhancing educational opportunities and outcomes for the community. Its primary focus is on the following:

- Adult Education: Programs aimed at improving basic education skills among adult Tribal Citizens and First Generation Descendants.
- Child Education: Initiatives to boost academic performance for eligible Native American children.
- Employment and Training: On-site work experience opportunities with Tribal Government operations and support for academic and technical training for eligible participants.
- Tuition programs for Tribal Citizens and First Generation Students





**RECREATION**

The Recreation Department promotes health, wellness, and physical fitness among Tribal Citizens and community members. It manages various recreational facilities, such as:

- Gymnasium
- Pool
- 24/7 Fitness Center
- Sports Complex: Featuring two T-ball fields, two Softball fields, two Baseball fields, and one Football field with an asphalt track.

**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB (BGC)**

Established in 2011, the BGC was the first Native American Boys & Girls Club in Alabama. Its mission is to empower young people to achieve their full potential as productive, caring and responsible citizens. The BGC provides a safe environment for children aged 5-18 to learn and have fun after school and during the summer. It serves children who are Tribal Citizens, First or Second Generation, Tribal Citizen households, and children of Tribal Government employees.

**CULTURAL**

The Cultural Department is responsible for all aspects of cultural education and events. It manages the Pow Wow Grounds and various cultural programs, activities, and events. The Department has an amazing language and traditional art programs. The staff teach traditional arts, history, and language through the Pow Wow club, Tribal Youth Council, Tribal Princess Program, and Tribal Elder classes that are managed in this department.

*The Community Services Division remains committed to fostering a supportive and vibrant community through its diverse range of programs and services.*



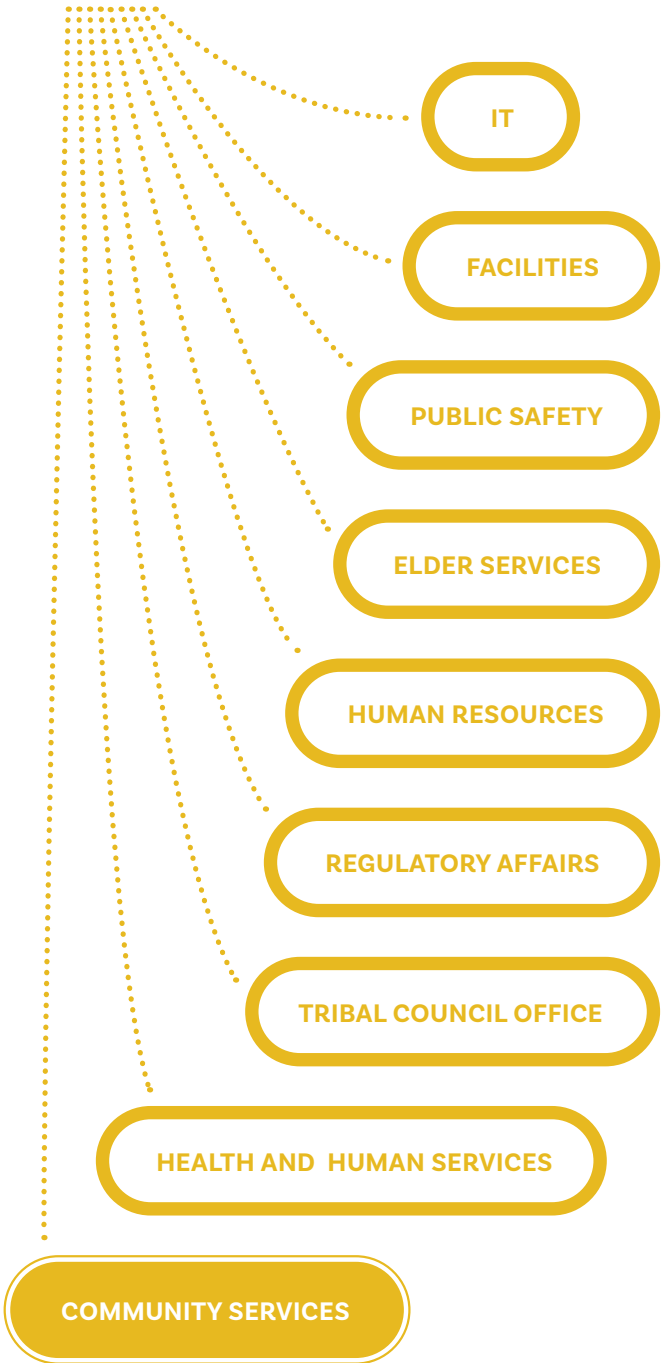
**TRIBAL CHAIR**

Stephanie Bryan



**CHIEF OF STAFF**

Terry Sweat



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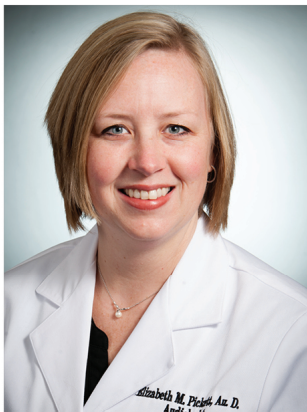
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*“You will leave  
your appointment with  
confidence that you  
are well cared for.”*

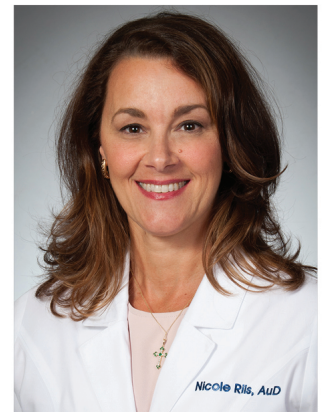
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”

Questions regarding your Poarch Creek hearing aid benefit?  
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Mobile, AL 36609



Elizabeth Pickett, Au.D., CCC-A

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



POARCH 101:

# Exploring MVSKOKE CREEK Basketry

*By Megan Zamora with knowledge shared from Mary Smith*

I became acquainted with Mvskoke basketry for the first time when master basket weaver and teacher Mary Smith came to Poarch. She taught us many basketry techniques and unselfishly shared her knowledge and stories with us. These interactions have left a lasting impression on me to this day.

I reached out to Svmpv Mvhayv [sum-buh muh-hi-yuh] (Basket Teacher) Mary Smith for her expertise and insight on Creek baskets. While many tribes have baskets that are traditional to them, Creek baskets have some specific features. She shared that Creek baskets have a “single element twill plaited weave” and are preferably finished with a “double false-braid rim”. They have no lids, and baskets with handles and/or dyed splints are rare. The Creek baskets have squared bottoms and rounded openings and are made with split cane or hickory.



**Creek  
baskets were  
purposeful  
and Mvskoke  
Creek people  
relied on them  
every day to  
accomplish  
tasks and  
meet needs...**



Traditionally made with the river cane plant, our Creek baskets are intricate and beautiful. Also, because river cane is scarce, we now use binder cane to make our baskets. Creek baskets were purposeful and Mvskoke Creek people relied on them every day to accomplish tasks and meet needs such as processing corn. Four types of baskets were used to process corn and include: a winnowing basket, a sieve, a sifter, and a catch or utility basket.

Sadly, it's literally been years since I've tried my hand at basket-making. However, I remember the basics, and thankfully, Mary, other basket weavers, and cultural educators in our community are only a call, text, or Facebook message away when I have a question. I extend my deepest gratitude to each person who contributes to our cultural arts and traditional knowledge and teachings. **Mvto.**





**THE WINNOWING BASKET** is shallow and looks like a tray. Sometimes, it will have a scoop on one end that aids in tossing shelled corn and cleaning the husks and debris away, which is its intended purpose.



**THE SIEVE BASKET** was used as a strainer, and while similar to a sifter, its holes are smaller than that of the sifter basket.



**THE SIFTER BASKET** was used to separate cornmeal from pounded corn as well as husks and debris. It also sifted out the largest kernels of corn for the purpose of having seed for the following year's crop.



The last basket in the corn processing set of four is **THE CATCH BASKET** or utility basket. This basket was used for storage and to hold the corn once it had been removed from the cob.

You can see all four baskets at the Poarch Creek Indians Museum.

**FUN FACT**  
The set of four baskets was made with river cane!

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# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: *A path to* PROSPERITY *for* NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES

By Ashlee “Katie” Mothershed

**E**conomic development initiatives among Native American tribes have proven to be a transformative force, breathing new life into tribal economies and fostering community growth. From gaming enterprises to tourism ventures, these initiatives have not only created jobs and generated revenue but also revitalized cultural pride and community well-being.

## GAMING: A MAJOR ECONOMIC DRIVER

The advent of tribal gaming has been a game-changer for many Native American communities. The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988 established guidelines for tribes operating casinos on their lands. Despite the restrictions imposed by IGRA, some tribes, such as the Poarch Creek Indians, have prospered, turning gaming into a significant economic driver that supports their communities and contributes to broader regional economies. This move was not merely about creating a new revenue stream; it was about sovereignty and self-determination. For many tribes, gaming has become the backbone of their economies, funding critical services such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure development.

Tribal gaming operations, like those of the Poarch Creek Indians in Alabama, the Seminole tribe in Florida, and the Mohegan tribe in Connecticut have set benchmarks in the industry. The revenues generated have enabled these tribes to not only support their citizens but also contribute to local and state economies through job creation and partnerships.

However, the success of gaming varies among tribes, with some facing challenges such as market saturation and regulatory hurdles.

## TOURISM: SHOWCASING CULTURE AND NATURAL BEAUTY

Tourism is another vital economic pillar for many Native American tribes. Tribes have leveraged their rich cultural heritage and stunning natural landscapes to attract visitors. The Poarch Creek Indians in Alabama, for example, offer a range of cultural experiences that enhance both cultural pride and economic development. These include the free Poarch Creek Indians Museum and Welcome Center, which educates visitors about their rich history and heritage, and the annual Thanksgiving Pow Wow, a vibrant celebration of traditional dance, music, and crafts. Additionally, community screenings of their Emmy award-winning documentary, “The Forgotten Creeks,” provide an intimate look into their story and resilience. From the cultural experiences offered by the Navajo Nation in the Southwest to the scenic beauty of the Blackfeet Nation in Montana, tourism has provided tribes with a platform to educate the public about their history and traditions while generating income. Cultural tourism initiatives often include guided tours, traditional arts and crafts, cultural festivals, and educational programs. These endeavors not only boost the local economy but also promote cultural preservation. By sharing their stories and heritage with the world, tribes can maintain their cultural identity while fostering mutual understanding and respect.

## BEYOND GAMING AND TOURISM: DIVERSIFYING TRIBAL ECONOMIES

While gaming and tourism are prominent, tribes are increasingly exploring diverse economic ventures. Agriculture, renewable energy, and technology sectors are areas where tribes are making significant strides. For





instance, the Poarch Creek Indians in Alabama have made notable progress in government contracting, the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota has invested in sustainable agricultural projects, and the Red Lake Nation in Minnesota is developing solar energy initiatives.

Economic diversification is crucial for long-term stability and resilience. By investing in various sectors, tribes can mitigate the risks associated with reliance on a single industry. These efforts also create a broader range of employment opportunities for tribal citizens, fostering skills development and economic independence.

#### CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Despite the successes, economic development in Indian Country is not without challenges. Regulatory complexities, limited access to capital, and infrastructure deficits can hinder progress.

However, these challenges also present opportunities for innovation and collaboration. Federal programs and partnerships with private entities can provide the necessary support to overcome these barriers. Furthermore, tribes can leverage digital technologies to expand their reach and streamline operations, enhancing both gaming and non-gaming ventures.

Economic development initiatives among Native American tribes are a testament to their resilience and ingenuity. Through gaming, tourism, and diversified economic ventures, tribes have taken significant strides toward self-sufficiency and prosperity. While challenges remain, the potential for growth and success is immense. By continuing to invest in their communities and exploring new opportunities, Native American tribes can pave the way for a brighter, more sustainable future.



ENVIRONMENTAL DEPT

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# Likepvs Ci (Welcome) to OUR NEW THPO

By Deidra Suwanee Dees, Ed.D.

*...who we are;  
who I am...  
It is important for  
our whole Tribe.  
It is part of  
Creek culture.*

**WILLIAM "BILLY" BAILEY, JR.**  
TRIBAL HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION OFFICER



**WILLIAM "BILLY" BAILEY, JR.**  
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer

**I** want Tribal Members to understand that I take this job seriously. I take representing them seriously," said our new Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), William "Billy" Bailey, Jr.

He was promoted to the THPO position on July 1, 2024. He said it feels good to get to this point after all of his hard work. "I put in a lot of work to get to this position. The pressure is relieved. But now there is new pressure—good pressure—to do this job well."

He spoke about the importance of his new position in an interview with Dr. Deidra Suwanee Dees on July 15, 2024. "The preservation of our history is a very important part of the Tribe's duty," he said.

As THPO, his first order of business was to meet with staff to get their opinions, he said, and to find out what they think about the way things are going. He emphasized the importance of listening to staff. The THPO has four direct reports including Museum Manager, THPO Specialist, NAGPRA Technician, and Administrative Assistant. Under the Museum Manager, there are four staff members and one summer intern, he said.

According to the National Association, "Tribal Historic Preservation Officers advise federal agencies on the management of tribal historic properties and strive to preserve their tribe's cultural heritage and preservation programs."

Bailey's priority is "to button up projects already open." He said he will manage preservation projects, both long-term and short-term, including the Bell Creek Road Realignment Project. Working with the Facilities Department, he said they are realigning the road and there is an archaeological site at the big curve. "It appears to be the homeplace of William Bart Gibson," he said. "They have found some artifacts: marbles, old nails, ceramic pieces."

He said he is "in talks to possibly have a historical marker erected at a historical site that is significant to Poarch Creek history." He did not identify the location because, he said—smiling—he wants it to be a surprise for everyone.

The THPO position has been around for a while. According to the National Parks Service, "In 1966, federally recognized tribes were given formal responsibility for the preservation of significant historic properties on tribal lands." In 1990, the federal grant program was established which enables our Tribe to receive funding over which Bailey manages. The grant funding, initially, established twelve THPOs across the country in 1996. Today, this number has grown to a total of 222 THPOs nation-wide.

Bailey is the son of Cheryl and William Bailey, Sr. Cheryl Bailey said, "My son has grown up knowing his Native culture. He has worked very hard to get where he is today. His daddy and I are so very proud of him."

William Bailey, Sr. said, "My son has come a long way in his life and has always been proud of his culture. He started dancing at the age of three and look at him now—working to preserve our culture and heritage."

Directed toward his son, Bailey, Sr. added, "So proud of what you have



**PICTURED** Billy Bailey (top)  
and Jon Hiebert (bottom)  
on archaeological dig.



become.”

The Tribal Historic Preservation Office is housed under the Regulatory Affairs Division which celebrated Bailey’s promotion with a luncheon at the old Fred L. McGhee Building on July 9, 2024. Regulatory Affairs Division Director Russell Martin said, “Billy’s promotion is a testament to his unwavering dedication, exceptional skill set, and the positive impact he has made within our division. We are proud to celebrate this milestone with him and look forward to his continued success in his new role.”

As his parents said, Bailey learned about cultural preservation when he was a child. His early years included stomp dancing, called opunkv haco, and Pow Wow dancing. He said his Pow Wow dance styles include fancy dance, grass dance, traditional dance, and straight dance.

“I watched him grow into a young man at Hvsossv Tvllahasse,” said Henehv Douglas Kelley, second chief. “He is really into the culture of stomp dance. He did what was asked of him. He is a really good stomp dance leader,” Henehv said. “He grew up, had a family, and his kids dance with him.”

Stomp dancing demonstrates “who we are; who I am,” Bailey articulated. “It is important for our whole Tribe. It is part of Creek culture.”

He said that stomp dancing has been taking place since time immemorial. It is a rigorous dance that has been documented through “archaeological reports of stomp dance grounds, ceremonial grounds, writings that speak of ceremony, old reports on stomp dances” that go back for hundreds of years, he said.

Some of these accounts come from writers such as William Bartram, Captain Basil Hall, David Lewis, Jr., and John R. Swanton. “It seems to have been usual to hold three of these dances in the spring and early summer,” Swanton wrote, “a month apart, the series paving the way for, and leading up to, the second ceremonial, the ‘busk’ [green corn], which was the great annual ritual,” he said. “They dance until about daybreak,” he added.

In addition to stomp dancing at an early age, Bailey said, “Since I was real young, I followed Daddy around. I watched Daddy work with Robert Thrower. Daddy worked on the preservation of Mims Island, working with Robert. I did not know about the position, but I knew I wanted to be in preservation,” he said.

Robert Thrower, Jr. (1961-2017) worked for the Tribe from  
...continued on next page





1991 to 2017 when he was tragically killed in an automobile accident. He served as THPO for thirteen years from 2004 until the time of his death. Bill Day (1932-2003), who worked with the Jena Band of Choctaws of Louisiana and the Tunica Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana, served in that capacity prior to Thrower.

"Bill Day trained Robert Thrower," former Chairman Eddie L. Tullis said in a telephone interview with Dr. Dees on July 22, 2024. Day was contracted in 1998 as our first THPO and served for a few years.

He was a respected anthropologist who was very dedicated and involved in many lawsuits that benefited tribes, Tullis said. "He inspected cell phone tower sites along the interstates including I-10, I-65, I-55, and I-12. He made sure there were no artifacts at the sites. Sometimes, they had to relocate the towers because of his findings."

Day was heavily involved in the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) legislation and "testified before Congress numerous times," Tullis said.

According to the U.S. Department of the Interior, "NAGPRA was enacted on November 16, 1990 to address the rights of lineal descendants, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations to certain Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony."

Day's expert training of Thrower served the Tribe well. Matter of fact, former Regulatory Affairs Division Director Carolyn M. White described Thrower's essential work. "The late Robert Thrower and I worked together for several years before his untimely death. I learned so much from him."

"As THPO, it is a critical Tribal role," she said. "The Tribe appointed me as Acting THPO and I served in that role for almost two years from 2017 to 2019. It was a tremendous responsibility to continue his valuable work for the Tribe and preserve his legacy. He was well-known throughout Indian Country and among state and federal agencies. He was highly respected for his knowledge, commitment,

and dedication to protecting Creek history and ancestral properties of the Poarch Creek Indians."

"It was my honor and privilege to serve as Acting THPO during this period," she added.

Following Ms. White, Larry Haikey was contracted as THPO in 2019 and served in this capacity for five years. He was commissioned to train Tribal Citizen apprentices to do the THPO job. In an interview with Dr. Dees and Brandy Chunn on July 23, he said when he started as THPO, one of the first things he began was the recording of oral history. He provided training to Bailey on historical documentation of what was happening in the Tribe, he said. They were "trying to capture history as it's being made," he added.

The THPO apprentice position under Haikey was advertised while Bailey was serving as a police officer at the Poarch Creek Police Department, a position he had held for nine years. Prior to that, he worked for eight years at Fountain Correctional Facility, Bailey said. When he saw the advertisement, "I put in for the THPO apprentice," he said. "Something I always wanted to do. I made a career change."

Just as Day trained Thrower, under Haikey's guidance, Bailey developed hands-on skills and acumen for the job. Simultaneously, Bailey studied at the University of South Alabama where he took a pivotal course in archaeology fieldwork which produced an even greater interest in the field, he said. "I liked working in the woods in archaeological excavation."

One of his professors, Dr. Philip J. Carr, said, "Billy Bailey's hard work and dedication, and especially his desire to help his people and work toward the goal of becoming the Poarch Creek Indians Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, made him successful. His major in Anthropology—the study of people—and the subfields of archaeology, biological anthropology, and cultural anthropology, provide the broad background needed for the position. His minor in Native American Studies—and by the way, he is the first USA student to graduate with the minor—provided him with broad knowledge of Native American people across North America and addressed concepts of decolonization, indigeneity, and settler colonialism that serve the work of a THPO." The Native American Studies Program was initiated by Tribal sponsorship in 2014.

"He brought his life experiences to his classes," Dr. Carr said, "and enriched others, both students and teachers, with his perspective and knowledge. He was inducted into the USA Jaguar Senior Medallion Society, which recognizes student leaders for their achievements and contributions to the University of South Alabama community, and signifies the highest level of achievement for student engagement and leadership."

"I am honored to have taught and learned from him," Dr. Carr added. Bailey graduated from USA in 2022—a year early—earning his Bachelor of Science degree.

*Likepv5 ci (welcome) to our new THPO, Billy Bailey. Mvto.*





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MAGNOLIA BRANCH WILDLIFE RESERVE:

# A Hidden Gem<sup>IN</sup> Alabama's Wilderness

By Jamie Sawyer

**M**agnolia Branch Wildlife Reserve is not just a sanctuary of natural beauty but also a testament to the vision and dedication of Poarch Creek Indian Tribal Elder Billy Smith. In 2004, Billy recommended to the Tribal Council that the Tribe reacquire the land that would eventually become Magnolia Branch Wildlife Reserve for the Tribe from a private owner, essentially transforming it into a public haven for relaxation by 2006. His vision for this site extended beyond preserving nature, it was about fostering community and instilling Tribal values for those who visited.

Billy Smith was a highly respected figure within the Tribe. He helped initiate the startup of Pow Wows on the Poarch Creek Reservation, often using his own money to buy regalia for younger participants and ensuring the continuation of social cultural traditions. He also founded the "Warpath on Drugs" program which emphasized the importance of education and respect for the land to help guide the next generation of Tribal leadership. Although Billy has since passed away, the Poarch Creek Indians remain committed to honoring his legacy by maintaining Magnolia Branch as a place where nature, culture, and community thrive in harmony.

Today, Magnolia Branch Wildlife Reserve is a sanctuary of natural beauty and serene landscapes waiting to be discovered by both Tribal Citizens and the public alike. This 6,000-acre treasure trove of wilderness offers an unparalleled escape, making it the perfect destination for nature lovers, adventure enthusiasts, and families looking for a peaceful retreat. With a blend of modern amenities and pristine natural environments, Magnolia Branch is a hidden gem that promises an unforgettable escape for a day, a weekend, or until your heart is content.



Whether you're an avid camper, an adventurous hiker, or enjoy water sports, this unique site, located just off Exit 57 on I-65, has something for everyone. For those who enjoy the rustic charm of camping, Magnolia Branch offers well-maintained campsites equipped with modern conveniences, including hot showers, laundry facilities, and notably clean restrooms. For those on their way to and from Alabama's beaches, the reserve provides RV sites with full hookups, making it a great stop-off to unwind along the way.

convenient for visitors to bring their horses and enjoy a day of riding in the great outdoors.

The true allure of Magnolia Branch Wildlife Reserve lies in its untouched natural beauty. The reserve is a sanctuary for a wide variety of wildlife, making it a prime location for birdwatching and wildlife photography. From native birds and butterflies to white-tail deer, the reserve is teeming with animals in their natural habitat. The landscape of Magnolia Branch is incredibly varied, ranging from dense forests to



*With a blend of modern amenities and pristine natural environments, Magnolia Branch is a hidden gem that promises an unforgettable escape...*

Exploring the reserve's extensive network of trails is a must for hiking enthusiasts. The trails wind through diverse habitats, including hardwood forests, pine groves, and along the banks of the Big Escambia Creek. Each trail offers unique views of the local flora and fauna, making every hike a new adventure.

One of the standout features of Magnolia Branch is its pristine waterways. Kayaking and canoeing are popular choices, allowing visitors to paddle through calm waters while enjoying the tranquil surroundings. For those seeking a bit more excitement, the reserve also offers tubing, a refreshing and fun-filled way to cool off on a hot day. Fishing enthusiasts will find plenty to love as well. The lake is well-stocked, providing excellent opportunities for both novice and experienced anglers. Whether you prefer to fish from the shore or a boat, the serene environment makes for a relaxing day on the water.

*The reserve offers a variety of programs and guided tours that highlight the importance of conservation and the unique ecosystems within the reserve.*

For horse lovers, at certain times of the year Magnolia Branch Wildlife Reserve offers access to its well-maintained horse trails that wind through some of the most scenic parts of the reserve. These trails provide a unique way to explore the wilderness with your horse, allowing riders to experience the natural beauty of the area. While horses aren't available onsite, the reserve does offer stable quarters making it

open meadows and serene wetlands that include pitcher plant bogs. The reserve's commitment to conservation is evident in the well-preserved natural areas, which provide a refuge for native plants and animals. Seasonal changes bring a dynamic aspect to the scenery, with spring wildflowers, autumn foliage, and the occasional winter frost creating a picturesque backdrop for outdoor activities.

Magnolia Branch is also dedicated to promoting environmental awareness and education. The reserve offers a variety of programs and guided tours that highlight the importance of conservation and the unique ecosystems within the reserve. These educational opportunities are perfect for school groups, families, and anyone interested in learning more about the natural world.

While the natural beauty of Magnolia Branch is its main draw, the reserve also ensures that visitors have access to modern amenities to enhance their stay. Scattered throughout the reserve are numerous picnic areas, complete with tables, making it easy to enjoy a meal amidst nature. For larger gatherings, the facility offers several pavilions that can be reserved for family reunions, birthday parties, or corporate events. These covered spaces provide a comfortable setting for socializing and dining, with the added bonus of stunning natural views.

In a world where natural beauty is increasingly hard to find, Magnolia Branch Wildlife Reserve stands out as a beacon of conservation and outdoor recreation. Plan your visit today and discover the magic of this hidden gem in Alabama's wilderness.



photo/Wikimedia

# DOI RELEASES FINAL REPORT ON THE TRAUMATIC LEGACY OF INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS

By Jenna Kunze  
for Native News Online



**PICTURED** Little Girls Praying Beside Their Beds, Phoenix Indian School, Arizona (1900)

The U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) today released its second — and final — report following a three-year investigation into the “traumatic and violent” legacy of Indian Boarding Schools that the U.S. government operated for a century and a half.

The 105-page report, penned by Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs Bryan Newland (Bay Mills Indian Community), builds on the first volume of the Interior’s Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report, published May 11, 2022. The initial report detailed for the first time an official list of Federal Indian boarding schools across the United States, explained the policy justification the government used to establish those institutions, and detailed institutional conditions and the intergenerational impacts schools had on Indigenous People.

Today’s second volume of the investigation adds to previously-reported figures to paint an increasingly clearer picture of the Indian boarding school system: Between 1871 and 1969, the federal government paid more than \$23.3 billion in inflation-adjusted dollars to fund the federal Indian boarding school system as well as other similar institutions. Of the 417 boarding schools across 37 states identified in the investigation, about half were run by a religious institution, and most “used the manual labor of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children to compensate for the poor conditions of school facilities and lack of financial support from the U.S. Government.”

At those schools, the investigation identified at least 18,624 students entered the system, and at least 973 students died while at school. The investigation also found that at least 74 school burial sites were associated with

these institutions, though DOI expects that the number of students, student deaths, burial sites, and funds spent on the schools to be “far greater.”

The DOI also identified more than 1,000 federal and non-federal institutions that didn’t fall under its definition of “federal Indian boarding school” but advanced the policy of assimilation. Those institutions — including Indian day schools, sanitariums, asylums, orphanages, and stand-alone dormitories — worked similarly to assimilate Native youth into white society.

“Make no mistake, this was a concerted attempt to eradicate ‘the Indian problem,’—to either assimilate or destroy Native peoples altogether,” Interior Secretary Deb Haaland (Laguna Pueblo) said in a press briefing on Tuesday. “Thankfully, the federal government failed. It failed to annihilate our languages, our traditions, our life ways. It failed to destroy us, because we are still here.”

During the press briefing, Haaland said she expects President Biden will read the investigative report, and believes that the Department of the Interior “will have conversations with the White House moving forward.”

The Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative was launched by Interior Secretary Deb Haaland (Laguna Pueblo) in June 2021, with the goals of identifying boarding school locations, burial sites, and the names and tribal affiliations of children interred at each location.

The same month, Haaland announced the Road to Healing tour, a yearlong commitment to travel across Indian Country to collect oral histories from boarding school survivors and their descendants—a task that concluded in November 2023, and took her and her staff to 12 communities. Much of that testimony was incorporated

into Newland's most recent report, where he drew themes from survivors' testimonies, including the weaponization of food, the generational impacts across families, and the loss of language and culture leading to a spiritual wounding.

"One of the most prominent shared experiences of survivors across the country was the grief and trauma that resulted from Native languages loss from the Federal Indian boarding school system," the report reads. "The punishments for speaking Native languages instead of English, even when children could not understand or speak English, commonly involved their mouths being washed with lye soap or varying types of corporal punishment that ranged in severity."

According to the DOI, the federal Indian boarding school investigations "lay the groundwork for the continued work of the Interior Department to address the intergenerational trauma created by historical federal Indian boarding school policies." To complete the full investigation, DOI staff and contractors reviewed approximately 103 million pages of U.S. Government records.

In his final report, Newland made eight recommendations for steps forward, including: for the U.S. government to formally apologize for the legacy of Indian boarding schools; federal investment in the present-day harms caused by boarding schools;

***"Make no mistake, this was a concerted attempt to eradicate 'the Indian problem'.... [the federal government] failed to annihilate our languages, our traditions, our life ways. It failed to destroy us, because we are still here."***

**INTERIOR  
SECRETARY  
DEB HAALAND**

the erection of a national monument to commemorate boarding school survivors, and those who lost their lives; to identify and repatriate children who never came home from boarding school; and for the government to strengthen international relationships with nations who have similar histories with their Indigenous Peoples.

In his opening letter to Haaland, Newland acknowledges that Indian Country has seen a change in America's understanding of Indian Boarding schools in the last three years.

"Survivors and leaders have begun efforts to explain the legacy and impacts of Indian boarding schools on local communities across Indian country," he wrote. "Universities and other institutions have begun their own actions to redress for [sic] their role in the Federal Indian boarding school system. Popular books, television shows, and films have discussed these institutions, and humanized this history for wide audiences. Courts and

members of Congress have engaged in a dialogue on the policies and laws advanced by this system."

Newland wrote that he hopes the report does not mark the end of the U.S. Government's work to acknowledge, understand, and heal from the impacts of these boarding schools.

"Instead, our shared work should mark the beginning of a long effort to heal our nation—after all, these schools were used to pursue a policy of forced assimilation over a century and a half," he wrote. "Our work has occurred over just three years."



## Are you interested in starting your own business?

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

### PLANNING

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

### FINANCING

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

### STARTING

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

### MARKETING

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

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

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“Representation truly matters because when one of us wins, we all win.”

ASHLEY CALLINBULL  
MISS CANADA UNIVERSE 2024



photo/Instagram

## ASHLEY CALLINBULL FIRST INDIGENOUS WOMAN CROWNED MISS CANADA UNIVERSE

By Kaili Berg for Native News Online

A

shley Callinbull, an accomplished model, actress, and television host from the Enoch Cree Nation, has made history by becoming the first Indigenous woman to win the title of Miss Universe Canada.

Callinbull was crowned on July 27, 2024, in Windsor, Ontario.

“This is the most surreal feeling. I’ve been chasing this dream for years and I’m still in awe that it really came true.” Callinbull wrote on Instagram. “Representation truly matters because when one of us wins, we all win. Rez kids really can do anything! This win is for all the dreamers out there.”

Callinbull, who is also an in-game host for the NHL, CFL, and NLL, has a long history of breaking barriers and advocating for Indigenous rights. She became the first Canadian and Indigenous person to win Mrs. Universe in 2015 and was the first Indigenous woman to model for Sports Illustrated in 2022.

Her acting credits include roles in the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network series *Blackstone* and *Tribal*, where she has portrayed strong and complex Indigenous characters.

Beyond her achievements in modeling and acting, Callinbull is widely recognized for her activism, particularly her efforts to raise awareness about Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP).

According to a report by the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Indigenous women are 12 times more likely to be murdered or go missing than any other demographic group in Canada.

Callinbull has participated in the “Red Dress Campaign,” which raises awareness of MMIP through art installations and community events. She has also been involved in policy discussions with government officials, advocating for the implementation of the National Action Plan on MMIP.

In addition to her work on MMIP, Callinbull is passionate about empowering Indigenous youth and fostering pride in Indigenous culture and heritage. She frequently engages with communities and schools to inspire young people to pursue their dreams and embrace their identities.

As she prepares to compete for the Miss Universe title in Mexico this November, Callinbull plans to continue her advocacy work. She aims to launch a charitable foundation that will create more opportunities for at-risk youth, an area she feels are critical for the future of Indigenous communities.

Callinbull’s reign as Miss Universe Canada promises to be a platform for positive change, bringing attention to critical issues and celebrating Indigenous cultures. Her success is expected to inspire change in the media and fashion industries, promoting greater inclusion and diversity.



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# WIND RIVER

By Ashlee “Katie” Mothershed

**W**ind River is a gripping thriller that brings to light the harrowing issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women. Directed by Taylor Sheridan, the film is set in the stark, snow-covered landscapes of the Wind River Indian Reservation in Wyoming. It follows the story of Cory Lambert (Jeremy Renner), a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service tracker, and Jane Banner (Elizabeth Olsen), an FBI agent, as they investigate the mysterious death of a young Native American woman. The narrative unearths the deep-seated struggles and injustices faced by Indigenous communities, particularly the often-overlooked and underreported cases of violence against Native women. Through its intense and emotional storytelling, *Wind River* not only captivates viewers but also sheds light on a critical social issue, prompting a broader conversation about justice and the need for systemic change.

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 Katie Mothershed at  
[kmothershed@pci-nsn.gov](mailto:kmothershed@pci-nsn.gov).

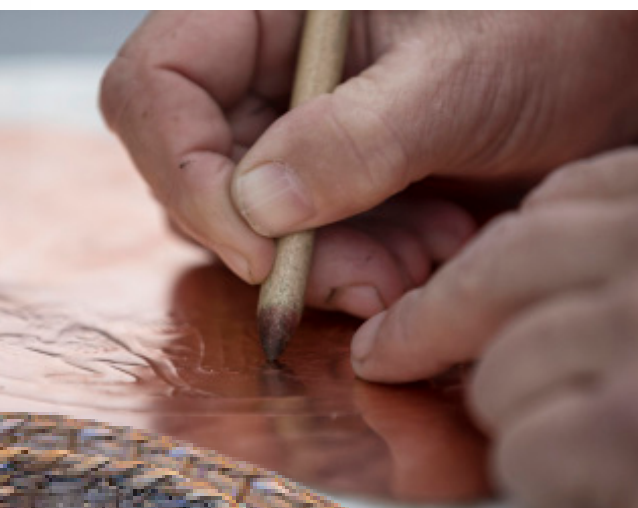




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## October 5, 2024

**WIND CREEK | 8 am – 3 pm**  
**COOSAWADA BALLROOM**

Join us for "Our Story of Federal Recognition: Commemorating 40 Years of Sovereignty" on October 5, 2024, from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Wind Creek Coosawada Ballroom. Attention certified Tribal artisans:

Don't miss this opportunity to sell your art. If you are not a certified Tribal artisan, fill out the form at the link provided below, and email Brandy Chunn for the Vendor application. Someone from the THPO Department will contact you.

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**Artisan Application**



**Questions?**

Contact Brandy Chunn at 251.368.9136 ext 2076 or [bchunn@pci-nsn.gov](mailto:bchunn@pci-nsn.gov)



“

*It brought me to tears. Seeing what they had to go through to become an independent nation is incredible.*

DALE ASH



## THE FORGOTTEN CREEKS DOCUMENTARY CONTINUES TO LEAVE BIG IMPACT

By Lauren Giddeons

**D**uring the last year, several communities across Alabama have had the opportunity to take a glimpse inside the rich history of the Poarch Creek Indians. Community screenings of the Emmy award-winning documentary have garnered a big impact on adults and school-aged kids alike as they have learned about the hardships and dedication of the once impoverished, isolated community.

To bring the Tribe's history to life, the documentarians interviewed, among others, Tribal Elders and descendants of the Tribe's forefathers, who led the successful years-long drive to have the Poarch Creek Indians recognized by the United States as a sovereign Indian Nation.

Many who have been a part of viewing the documentary have been deeply impacted. Dale Ash, who oversees the Strand Theater in Atmore where several of the screenings were held, was personally moved by the documentary. She has hosted numerous screenings for the community along with partnering with local schools to share with students ranging from 2nd through 12th grade. Ash has helped more

than 1,000 students experience the true history of the Poarch Creek Indians. Her passion is to continue showing the film to as many students as possible due to its rich history lesson and story of resilience.

"It brought me to tears," said Ash, who personally knows several of the Tribal Citizens featured in the documentary. "Seeing what they had to go through to become an independent nation is incredible," she added. "The kids have been so attentive and interested in learning about the Tribe. Everyone also really enjoys the Q&A portion with the Tribal Citizens featured in the documentary at the end," said Ash.

Joan Harrell, Director of Inclusive Excellence in the Dean's Office at Auburn University, also held a screening on Auburn's campus this past Fall. "Having the opportunity to share the documentary with our university students and the external community members of Lee County was an enlightening, educational experience for all," said Harrell. "Many students and neighbors had never heard the personal narratives of the trials and tribulations of the Poarch Creek Indians. Hearing the historic stories of the ancestors and



the current day intergenerational lived experiences of resilience and success 'overcoming poverty to prosperity' are cultural stories that help enrich the minds of our students and teach them about Alabama's Indigenous people," she furthered.

*For more information on the The Forgotten Creeks documentary or to inquire about hosting a community screening, visit [poarchcreekindians.org](http://poarchcreekindians.org).*

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## FUN FILLED FALL AT OWA

By Catherine Hasty



W

elcome to a Fun-Filled Fall at OWA Parks and Resort! With cooler temperatures on the way, OWA has a variety of activities planned for the whole family to enjoy.

Plan a day of fall fun at OWA and end your evening with free movies at Island Movie Nights on OWA Island on select Saturdays in September. Arrive early for themed activities including games, crafts, and prizes! Bring a chair, blanket, or towel, and enjoy the outdoor experience on the lawn. Discover the full lineup of family-friendly films and activities at [VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com).

Community Safety Day returns to Downtown OWA on Saturday, September 28th! Come meet the first responders, public safety officers, and local non-profit groups who work hard to keep the community safe. This complimentary event will have a fire truck, interactive demonstrations, and activities for all ages!

Experience an unforgettable night out at OWA Theater! On Friday, September 6th & 7th, enjoy the White Tie Rock Ensemble's Tribute to Yacht Rock. This smooth, melodic genre from the late 1970s and early 1980s blends jazz, R&B, and rock, and evokes a laid-back, upscale coastal lifestyle.

The fun doesn't stop there! On Saturday, September 28th, be captivated by An Evening with Roman Street, showcasing classical and jazz influences performed by two talented brothers. Grab your tickets at [VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com) before the tickets sell out!

Comedy, magic and 60 impressions! Catch the Brandon Styles 1-Man Variety Show, Tuesdays and Saturdays. This show toured the US and is now voted the Gulf Coast's #1 Variety Show! Brandon will awe you during this Variety Show with nearly 60 different singing and speaking impressions of your favorite celebrities ranging from Frank Sinatra to Justin Bieber while he mixes in the perfect amount of comedy, dance, audience participation, ventriloquism, and award-winning magic in a fast-paced, 70-minute show for all ages! For more details, visit Brandon Styles under "Entertainment" at [VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com).

Experience a cozy fall retreat at Tropic Hideaway RV Resort at OWA! This 190-lot luxury RV resort offers everything you need for a perfect autumn getaway. Choose from back-in, pull-through, or premium sites, and enjoy





amenities such as an open-air clubhouse, pickleball courts, a putting green, a dog park, and a cardio-focused fitness center. Book your next fall stay at [TropicHideaway.com](http://TropicHideaway.com)

Autumn is the locals' favorite season, and for good reason! Enjoy the wonderful weather and a variety of family-friendly events that fill our fall calendar.

*Explore our schedule of exciting fall events coming up for a Fun Filled Fall at [visitowa.com/fun-filled-fall/](http://visitowa.com/fun-filled-fall/).*



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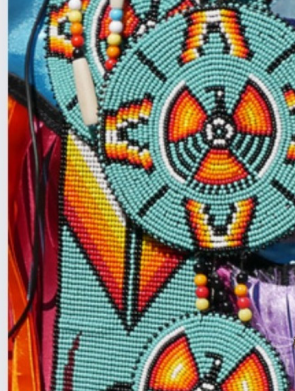

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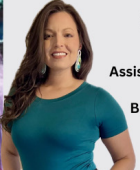
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## CELEBRATING NANCY LOWREY ONE OF POSITIVE MATURITY'S "TOP 50 OVER 50"

*By Lauren Giddeons*

**T**he Poarch Creek Indians are pleased to announce the induction of Nancy Lowrey into Positive Maturity's Top 50 over 50. The 2024 Top 50 over 50 honorees were recognized at the organization's gala event in Birmingham, Alabama.

Nominated by their fellow citizens, co-workers, family and friends, these honorees are changemakers, and Lowrey is no exception. As a founding partner of FS Advisors, Inc., Lowrey has more than 20 years of experience in the banking industry. Additionally, she is a registered investment advisor and a licensed insurance agent. Her firms provide investment management, finance, benefits administration, and insurance services exclusively to Native American tribes.

Prior to establishing FSA in 2005, Lowrey was a partner of Financial Solutions, Inc., a financial services company that provided investment and insurance services to high-networth individuals and small business owners. She has worked in various areas of bank management and as an economic development planner for the Poarch Creek Indians. She also had the honor of serving as a Tribal Council Member for the Tribe and as a board member of the PCI Gaming Authority.

"We are thrilled that Nancy is being recognized by Positive Maturity as a recipient of its prestigious Top 50 over 50 award," stated Tribal Chair & CEO, Stephanie A. Bryan.

"Nancy exemplifies the concept of 'positive maturity'. She is a beloved leader in our Poarch community—not only for her service with the Tribal Council but also because of the vast financial knowledge she brings to the Tribe that helps so many individuals and families in and around our home in Atmore."

The Top 50 over 50 event was created in 2014 by Positive Maturity to recognize older adults in the community who find opportunities to make a difference and become a catalyst in the world. As one of the first senior organizations established in Jefferson County, Ala., Positive Maturity was originally created to assess and meet the needs of the aging population.

"Every year we look forward to the night when we get to publicly recognize these outstanding citizens for their community and philanthropic achievements," said Penny Kakoliris, Executive Director. "It's full of fun and special memories."

Honorees are chosen based on one or more of the following: volunteer/civic engagement and community impact; business or lifetime of achievements; caregiving, medical, or social services professions; education or a lifetime of achievement in this category; individuals from Alabama who may no longer live in the state, but whose impact deserves recognition.

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## POARCH CREEK INDIANS RECEIVE \$725,000 GRANT FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

By Amelia Tognoli

G

overnor Kay Ivey recently awarded more than \$725,000 to the Poarch Creek Indians to install two duo-port electric chargers at Creek Travel Plaza, located at 4740 Jack Springs Road, near Interstate 65.

This grant is among 14 others that were awarded by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) in an effort to ensure the state is ready to accommodate electric vehicles as they continue to increase along Alabama roads.

The latest grants are part of nearly \$79 million from the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Program allocated to Alabama over several years for electric vehicle chargers.

Funds for the grants come from the Federal Highway Administration to strategically locate electric vehicle charging stations within reasonable charging distances for electric vehicles.

“Having strategic electric vehicle charging stations across Alabama not only benefits EV drivers, but it also benefits those companies that produce electric vehicles, including many of them right here in Alabama, resulting

in more high-paying jobs for Alabamians,” said Ivey. “This latest round of projects will provide added assurance that Alabamians and travelers to our state who choose electric vehicles can travel those highways and know a charging station is within a reliable distance on their routes.”

**For additional information on  
the grant, scan the QR code.**





**Regulatory Affairs Division at the Poarch Band of Creek Indians**

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**with Dr. Christopher D. Haveman**

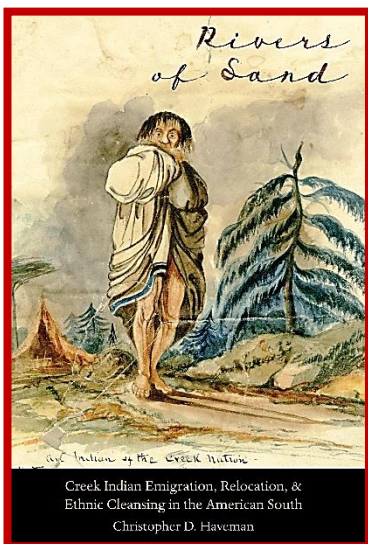
Tuesday, September 10, 2024 @ 6:00 p.m.

Elloie J. Bradshaw Training Center

6541 Jack Springs Road, Atmore, AL 36502



While most people are familiar with the Cherokee "Trail of Tears," fewer know that approximately 23,000 Creek Indians were also forced from Alabama and Georgia to Indian territory, west of the Mississippi River, between 1827 and 1849. This Book Talk explains how federal officials relocated Creeks (including removing those who fled to the Chickasaw, Cherokee, and Seminole Nations) and discusses the Creeks' experiences as they traveled over dusty roads and along frozen rivers to present-day Oklahoma.



**ABOUT THE SPEAKER**

Dr. Christopher D. Haveman is associate professor of history at the University of West Alabama and the author of *Rivers of Sand: Creek Indian Emigration, Relocation, and Ethnic Cleansing in the American South* and *Bending Their Way Onward: Creek Indian Removal in Documents*.



Learn more at [aub.ie/draughtonseminars](http://aub.ie/draughtonseminars)

Questions? Call Dr. Deidra Suwanee Dees (251) 446-4940 or (251) 253-9181 cell



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## WIND CREEK ATTENDS

# BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS BACK TO SCHOOL BASH

By Amelia Tognoli

**W**ind Creek Hospitality's Sponsorship and Events team volunteered at the Big Brothers Big Sisters Back to School Bash in Mobile, AL on Saturday, July 27th. Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Central Gulf Coast is a one-on-one mentoring program that has made a difference in local communities for the past 20 years by connecting Littles with Bigs, creating a promising future, and making a difference one mentorship at a time.

Bigs, Littles, and their immediate families gathered for a fun-filled day of games, arts and crafts, and activities for community and school-based matches. Each child also received free school supplies at the event.

Wind Creek's Senior Staff Accountant, Jennifer Hursey, volunteered and attended with her assigned Little— providing a heartwarming testament to the Big Brothers Big Sisters organization and the long-lasting (sometimes lifetime) connections Big and Littles have.

"I am so thankful to work for an organization that genuinely cares about our community, so when I learned Wind Creek was sponsoring an event that my Little would benefit from, I jumped at the opportunity to volunteer," Hursey said. "I've been a Big since February 2023, and it has been such an incredible experience. I was so proud that my Little got to experience the kindness and generosity of my employer and our team members."

Now an official corporate Big, Wind Creek Hospitality's recent donation helped fund computer sleeves for children. Trina Rackard, Director of Sponsorships and Events at Wind Creek Hospitality, reflected on giving back to a great organization.

"The opportunities to do good feel endless when corporations and communities generously donate their time, energy, and love to impact a child's life," Rackard said.

“

*The opportunities to do good feel endless when corporations and communities generously donate their time, energy, and love to impact a child's life.*

**TRINA RACKARD,  
DIRECTOR OF  
SPONSORSHIP  
AND EVENTS  
AT WIND CREEK  
HOSPITALITY**



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## OUR STORY OF FEDERAL RECOGNITION: COMMEMORATING FORTY YEARS OF

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### Saturday, October 5, 2024

**WIND CREEK COOSAWADA BALLROOM | 8am–3pm**

**Southern Style Breakfast at 8 am | Indian Taco Bar Lunch at Noon**

Everyone is invited to celebrate our 40-year anniversary of Federal Recognition. Hear from our 1983-1984 Tribal Council and keynote speakers, Dr. Kelly Fayard and Mr. Tom Tureen. Enjoy traditional stomp dancing, Elder Hymn Choir, cultural presentations, and shopping at Tribal artisan booths. Bring the whole family. *Mvto.*

### Questions?

Contact Planning Committee Chair: Dr. Deidra Suwanee Dees at (251) 446-4940 desk; or (251) 253-9181 cellular

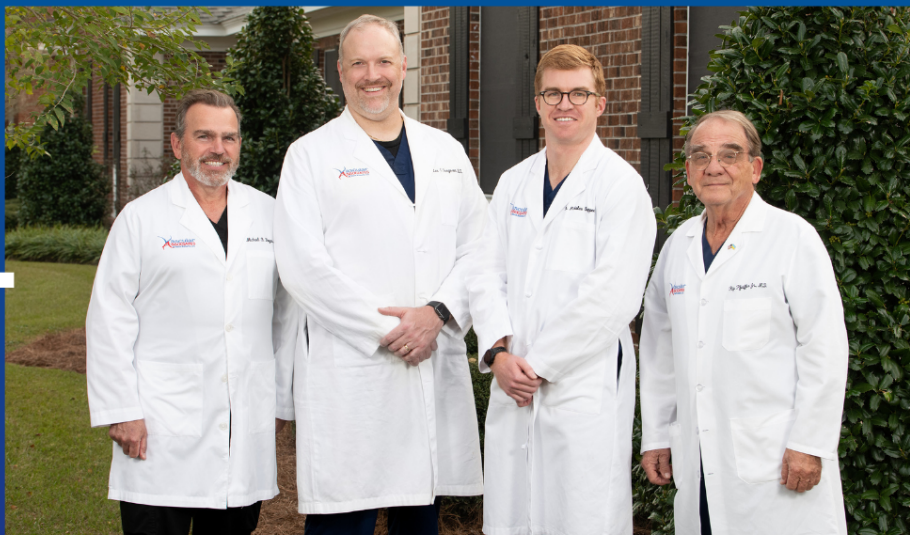


*Chairman Eddie L. Tullis introduced Congressman Jack Edwards who announced our Federal Recognition at the Thanksgiving Day Pow Wow on November 24, 1983. Federal Recognition became official the following year on August 11, 1984.*

*Photo credit: Dr. J. Anthony Paredes*



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**CONGRATULATIONS**  
**KAYSEN MCGHEE**  
**PROUDLY**  
**REPRESENTS POARCH**  
**AT SOUTHEAST**  
**POW WOWS**

Kaysen McGhee is the son of Tribal Citizen Jeremy McGhee and Angel Stacey McGhee. Kaysen's nickname at Poarch as many of y'all know is Booga. This summer in May and June of 2024, we are very proud to say that Kaysen placed twice in the northern junior boys traditional category. **Kaysen placed 3rd at the 23rd Annual Tunica-Biloxi Pow Wow** in Marksville, Louisiana in May and **4th at the 27th Annual Choushatta Pow Wow** in Kinder, Louisiana—the largest in the state of Louisiana! Kaysen is very passionate about carrying on the traditions of Pow Wow dance—representing his great Tribe and enjoys being a member of the Poarch Pow Wow Club. Kaysen hopes to see everyone at this year's upcoming 52nd Annual Thanksgiving Pow Wow!



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# CREEK CORNER

## SEPTEMBER 2024 IMPORTANT DATES

9.2	<b>GOVERNMENT OFFICES CLOSED</b> Labor Day	
9.3	<b>SUBMISSION DEADLINE</b> October Issue	
9.5	<b>TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING</b> TC Chambers	<b>4:00 PM</b>
9.9-9.10	<b>MUSEUM CLOSED</b> Inventory	
9.19	<b>TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETING</b> TC Chambers	<b>4:00 PM</b>
9.28	<b>COMMUNITY SAFETY DAY</b> OWA	