WCH SOUTHLAND GROUND BREAKING

Photo provided by Wind Creek
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 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, Candace Fayard, Sandy Hollinger, Keith Martin, Arthur Mothershed
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Editor:
Katie Mothershed
akmothershed@pci-nsn.gov
Stepping Stones, the Tribe’s new Sober Living Facility that will be part of the new Drug Prevention/aftercare program for Tribal Members and First Generation Descendants, had its Grand Opening May 23, 2022. The Sober Living Facility’s “official” name was chosen by an anonymous survey from Tribal Members who were asked to submit names for the facility. “We are excited to add the new Stepping Stones facility, as it will be such a benefit for our Tribal Members who are working to overcome addiction,” Stephanie A. Bryan, Tribal Chair and CEO, Poarch Band of Creek Indians commented. “This has been a long-awaited program that our people have asked for, and I know it will help change many lives for the better.”

The Sober Living Facility will be overseen by the Tribal Court Administration and will offer a clean, safe, healthy, supportive, alcohol and drug-free environment for those in recovery from drug and/or alcohol addiction and who are ready and willing to transition back into the Tribal community. It will be primarily used to provide housing to people who have just come out of rehabilitation or are completing a recovery program. Stepping Stones will promote individual recovery by providing an environment that allows the residents to progress in individual recovery programs and become self-supporting.

Keesha O’Barr Frye, the Tribal Court Administrator stated, “The Tribal Court Administration staff are very excited and eager to see the results this program will bring to the community. We are going to do our best to live up to what Wes visualized for this facility.”

The facility and program was the vision of Wes Hayles, the Tribe’s Addiction Counselor for thirteen years, who passed away on April 12, 2021. It has been in the making for quite a while, and it’s a program that Tribal Members have asked to have on the Reservation. The goal is that anyone who starts this program will successfully overcome drug addiction, and have the tools to succeed in life so they can live a fulfilling life and be a productive member of the Tribal community.
The new facility is located in Building 400 on the Poarch Creek Tribal Government campus which has been retro-fitted to accommodate participants. The program will accommodate a limited number of participants and will last a maximum of one year. Every participant will need to meet certain criteria to be eligible to participate in the program. The Facility opened almost at capacity, so the need for this type of facility is evidently great within the community.

If you or someone you know needs assistance with overcoming addiction, please contact Gina Harbison, Case Manager at (251) 368-9136 Ext. 2657 or Keesha O’Barr Frye, Tribal Court Administrator at (251) 368-9136 Ext. 2653.

Written by Sharon Delmar, Project Manager, Internal Communications
Your family fun begins now.

Whether it’s a big competition at Strikes Bowling Alley, a hit movie night at Cinema or a memorable dinner at FIRE Steakhouse, we’ve got excitement for all ages. So grab the whole family or plan a date night, and make it unforgettable at Wind Creek Atmore.

Escape every day at Wind Creek.
Congratulations to Ms. Marylan Laviolette, winner of the Before & After Photo Contest!

The Office of Archives and Records Management announces Ms. Marylan Laviolette as the winner of our 2022 Before and After Photo Contest. Ms. Laviolette submitted these before and after photographs of her childhood and today—great pictures!

In addition to being published here in the *Creek Corner Magazine*, Ms. Laviolette will receive a professionally framed picture of her winning photographs which could become keepsakes to pass down in her family for generations to come.

In the May 2022 issue of the *Creek Corner Magazine*, we announced our Before and After Photo Contest to help us build our collections of photographs from our community. All Tribal Member and Tribal employee households were eligible.

In the March 2022 issue of the *Creek Corner Magazine*, we announced our Best Newspaper Clippings Contest to help us build our collection of newspaper clippings. We were disappointed that we did not receive entries in this contest by the deadline.

Digital Archivist Mr. Chad Parker oversaw all of the contests in our Photo Contest series. Mr. Parker said, “We appreciate Ms. Laviolette for taking the time to enter our Before and After Photo Contest.” These photographs have become part of our permanent collection of photographs.

The Before and After Photo Contest concludes our 2022 Photo Contest series. If you would like a copy of any of the photographs from our contests, please contact Mr. Chad Parker at (251) 446-4965, and he will be happy to provide a copy for you. Mvto.

*Written by Deidra Suwanee Dees, Ed.D.*
#WINNINGMOMENTS ARE COMING TO ILLINOIS

Last month, representatives from Wind Creek Hospitality and the Poarch Band of Creek Indians marked the start of Wind Creek Chicago Southland’s construction and celebrated local leaders who provided support throughout the application process. Slated to open in 2023, Wind Creek Hospitality’s newest property will be built in the south suburban communities of East Hazel Crest and Homewood—located just outside of Chicago, Illinois. The 70,000-square-foot casino will feature 1,350 slot machines, 56 table games, entertainment, dining, and a 22-room luxury hotel—generating 800 jobs and bringing revenue to the area. The Fund will distribute $150,000 per year to the combined recipients for the first five years of operation to provide scholarships for disadvantaged students and health services for the south suburban region through partnerships with South Suburban College, Prairie State College, and Moraine Valley Community College, the Ingalls Development Foundation and Advocate South Suburban Hospital. Once the Fund corpus reaches $20 million, the Fund will distribute $1,000,000 annually.

"Wind Creek doesn’t just build casinos, we truly build communities. We’re so very thankful for the support of community leaders, local organizations and residents of the south suburbs who helped get us to this point—and look forward to working with you to ensure that the benefits associated with this project are experienced by the entire region."

Stephanie Byran
Tribal Chair/CEO
Poarch Band of Creek Indians

"Our commitment to this community has already begun and will only be strengthened as we move our focus to job creation and finalizing the details of the Southland Public Benefit Fund."

Jay Dorris
President and CEO
Wind Creek Hospitality
“People across the Southland have been waiting for this casino and the community investment that comes along with it, and we’re happy to be taking concrete steps to see this dream realized.”

Jay Dorris
President and CEO, Wind Creek Hospitality
Celebrate Independence Day and Caribbean Day (July 16) with us at OWA! Chill out in our island vibe indoors and out—the all-new Tropic Falls Indoor Water Park is now open (reserve your tickets online!), and Dash for the Cash comes to Gravity Island Watersports (July 16)! From 4th of July Weekend events to Thirsty Thursday drink specials and live music on Saturdays, this is summer at its best—get all the event details online at VisitOWA.com!
2021 Graduate of Excel High School, Hannah Newsome, daughter of Tribal Member Melissa Newsome, has been selected for the All-State regionals team in Mississippi. Hannah has completed her freshman year of college with a 3.9 GPA. Hannah has been named as an ambassador for Southeastern Baptist College. She was on the Dean’s List last semester and the President’s List this semester. Hannah plans to pursue a career in Sports Medicine and Orthopedics.

Submitted by Melissa Newsome
The Poarch Band of Creek Indians is participating in the Summer Food Service Program. Meals will be provided to all Boys & Girls Club members without charge. Acceptance and participation requirements for the program and all SFSP activities are the same for all regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability, and there will be no discrimination in the course of the meal service.

May 27—August 5
Monday—Friday
Breakfast  7:30 –9:00 AM
Lunch  11:00– 2:00 PM

Location of service is
517 Martin Road, Atmore.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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Congratulations!

Flomaton High School’s Jalia Lassiter, Danielle Shriner, Briana Stuckey, and Kamyrn Langham are 3A State Champions in 4x100 Relay!

Submitted by Cassie Lassiter
Last month in the Creek Corner Magazine, the Office of Archives and Records Management announced the children’s book launch of Singy the Cow by Tribal elder, Ms. Roberta McGhee Sells (1917-2002). The book features the Mvskoke and English languages as well as artwork by the Boys and Girls Club. Mr. Marcus Briggs-Cloud provided the Mvskoke translation from English.

This exciting book tells the true story of Ms. Sells and her mother, Bessie McGhee, trading biddies for a sick cow that they doctored when Ms. Sells was a little girl. Office of Archives and Records Management Director, Dr. Deidra Suwanee Dees, recorded the story in 2001 when she was collecting oral history interview data for her dissertation at Harvard. She then donated the recording, along with others, to the Tribe.

Our team at the Office of Archives and Records Management put forward the idea of developing elders’ stories into a Children’s Book series. In 2019, the Children’s Book Committee was formed and guided the development of the first book in the series. The Committee consisted of Dr. Deidra Suwanee Dees, Dr. Karla Martin Dawson, Carolyn White, Mindy Jackson McGhee, Stephanie Agerton, Sandra Hiebert, and Leasha Martin. Although delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee finally received the book in hand from publisher, Bluewater Publications, in May 2022.

For our book launch, staff passed out one book to each Tribal Member head of household who lives in the Atmore ZIP Code at the Election Day/Chief Calvin McGhee Memorial Day event on June 4th at the Pow Wow Grounds. For those who live outside the Atmore ZIP Code, the publisher is mailing your book to the address on file at Tribal Member Benefits.

The Committee held the Children’s Book Reveal with our Tribal Council on May 26th in our Tribal Council Chambers. Our Committee and Tribal Council viewed the book together for the very first time. No one except the publisher had seen the book before we opened it together. Digital Archivist Mr. Chad Parker passed out the book to each attendee and we looked at this amazing piece of history in unison.

Vice Chair, Mr. Robbie McGhee, said to Dr. Dees, “It has always been a blessing to have you in the Archives, not only to protect what we have, but also to create ideas and concepts to help us move forward in this fashion. This is not just available to Tribal Members but to everybody.”

Tribal Council Secretary, Ms. Charlotte McGhee Meckel, said, “It is so nice to hear Aunt Roberta’s words; to see that she said something about my Uncle Mal and her son, Harold. It is really nice to look at this book.”
Ms. Sandy Hollinger said, “Congratulations to the Team. It is so cute! I can’t wait to read it. I have a thirteen-year-old daughter at home. Maybe tonight we can sit down and read it. I know it is a beautiful story.”

Tribal Council Treasurer, Ms. Amy Gantt, said to Dr. Dees, “I want to thank you for the time you did spend with my grandmother. That meant a lot to her and to our family. Thank you for keeping her memory alive.”

Dr. Dees responded, “It was an enjoyable time in my life collecting this data. It goes beyond the Tribe. I think her memory will be amplified.”

Mr. Robbie McGhee said, “Thank you to the Book Committee and your hard work.”

For Atmore residents who were unable to pick up the book at the book launch on June 4, please contact Mr. Chad Parker at (251) 446-4965 and we will make arrangements for you to pick up your book. Mvto.
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THE AMERICAN KESTREL

The Tribal Youth Conservation Corps (TYCC) began a project concerning the American Kestrel. The American Kestrel is a bird of prey that inhabits the United States. It migrates south of the Canadian border during the winter, and can travel as far as the Caribbean. They are seen in a variety of habitats, including tropical lowlands, deserts, urban areas, and agricultural fields. Their eating habits consist of insects and other invertebrates, along with small rodents and birds.

We (TYCC) built and set out 7 different American Kestrel boxes throughout our Tribal properties, including Magnolia Branch Wild Life Reserve. We have teamed up with the Alabama Fish and Wildlife Services to hopefully band these birds in the near future. This would be a great opportunity for us to get more youth involved in protecting and learning about the different species of Raptors. It will also help teach the youth about the importance of banding and why it is important to keep track of these birds.

Article Written by Justin “Bobo” Rolin, Tribal Youth Conservation Corps Lead

Youths Trinidy Williams and Grant Gades help hang American Kestrel boxes on Tribal lands.
WHAT’S NEW AT OWA

Gear up for a summer of fun this July at OWA Parks & Resort. Grab your family and friends and help us make our biggest splash yet with events to help beat the summer heat!

Have you heard the news? Our newest addition to Tropic Falls, the indoor waterpark, opened June 27. OWA is proud to extend a complimentary Tropic Falls combination season pass to Poarch Band of Creek Indian Tribal members with a valid PCI Tribal ID. Tribal members will also receive additional benefits, including one birthday gift added to their pass during their birthday month, 25% off theme park passes, 50% off standard birthday party packages, and periodic promotions. For full details, please visit the Tribal Member portal.

Join us for our weekend-long Independence Day Celebration on July 1-3. We have plenty of activities planned to get you into the holiday spirit, including movie night, kids’ crafts, live music, and more! Be sure to stick around for our Fourth of July fireworks on Saturday, July 2 at 8:50pm.

Grab your bathing suit and get ready to Dash to the Cash, on July 16, at the Gravity Island Aqua Play with a total of $550 in cash prizes up for grabs!
Use your Aqua Play skills to compete and see who is the swiftest at completing the Aqua Play courses. Participants will split into four different age categories, and all participants must pre-register before the competition begins. Pre-register today at VisitOWA.com.

Cast your cares away — the 3rd annual Caribbean Day is back and bigger than ever on Saturday, July 16! Come sway to the breeze and appreciate the rhythm of traditional Caribbean music, try your hand at the annual drum clinic, and enjoy family-friendly activities. That’s not all! Our sidewalk chalk art competition is always a crowd favorite, and we invite artists of varying age groups to compete for prizes like cash and tickets to the theme park! It’s always amazing to see the vision of our competing artists skillfully play out and come to life before our eyes.

Calling all live music fans! We heard you loud and clear and are pleased to announce the return of OWA Live this summer. The event kicked off Saturday, June 18, and continues through August 6 with all your favorite genres of music. Mark your calendars as fan favorite Southern Approach returns to OWA Island on July 25. A complete lineup of all live entertainment can be found online at VisitOWA.com/events. Keep up with all of the latest news on events, entertainment, and activities via our website at VisitOWA.com or by following us on social media @VisitOWA.
The PCI Recreation Department recently completed the 2022 spring league ball season. Our spring leagues consist of Baseball, Softball, T-Ball, and Wee Ball. We had two Baseball teams, four Softball teams, four T-Ball teams, and three Wee Ball teams. Each team played a full schedule of games that began in April and ended in May. We would like to say Thank You to all the coaches who volunteered their time to coach our spring league teams. We had a great season and look forward to next year!
Think you may have noise-induced hearing loss? Schedule an appointment to find out today!


Make use of your amazing zero out-of-pocket hearing aid benefit.

Call 251-272-8975 To Schedule An Appointment.

Questions regarding your Poarch Creek hearing aid benefit?
Contact Nioma Till, Case Manager, 251-368-9136, Ext. 2386.

Elizabeth Pickett, Au.D., CCC-A

Nicole Riis, Au.D., CCC-A, FAAA
In 2017, after the beloved Julia Ann (McGhee) Stacey passed, an unfortunate event occurred. Before Julia Ann’s passing she picked a burial plot for herself beside her late mother. But unbeknownst to her or anyone else, this plot had already been taken. Johnnie McGhee, Julia Ann’s uncle, was put to rest in that exact same spot. His gravesite had been marked by a concrete slab that had become covered by underbrush over the years, making it invisible to passersby.

Johnnie McGhee passed away at a young age and his present-day relatives knew very little about him. His grave would have been disturbed while the grave diggers dug the hole for his niece’s grave, if not for the concrete slab found covering it.

Ms. Stacey’s burial was a wakeup call for the Tribe as it is not an isolated event. Judson, Huxford and New Home Cemeteries have been Tribal cemeteries since the 1840s. Since that time many of our ancestors have been buried in unmarked graves because it was not financially possible for their loved ones to give them headstones or permanent markers at the time of their burials.

Today, the Tribal Historical Preservation Department (THPD) is responsible for finding the locations of these unmarked graves and giving them a marker.

In 2020, the THPD contracted a Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) survey of Judson and Huxford cemeteries. The survey was conducted in 25cm (approximately 10 in) intervals to identify the shapes and sizes of buried objects. The data was processed and images of buried features were mapped. The GPR identified 341 potentially unmarked graves at Judson and 225 unmarked graves at Huxford.

The Tribal Council has provided funds to the THPD to place markers on these locations to protect the other “Johnnies.” Plans are well under way to start marking these locations this summer.
Tribal Council has provided funds to the THPD to place markers on unmarked graves in traditional Tribal Member cemeteries of Judson, Huxford, and New Home to ensure they can be honored in future and left undisturbed.

Did you know Hearing Loss can affect your Physical and Mental Health?

Studies Show that untreated Hearing Loss can increase the risk of Alzheimer’s disease, Dementia and Depression in older Adults.

Come see Dr. Austin Black, Au.D., Beltone Audiologist at the Buford L. Rolin Health Clinic on Friday, July 15, 2022 from 8:00am - 4:00pm for all your hearing needs. Please call us TOLL FREE for an appointment at (888) 593-4327.

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<td>Tribal Government Offices Closed</td>
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7/1/2022 Newsletter Deadline August Issue 5:00 pm

7/4/2022 Tribal Government Offices Closed 4th of July

7/7/2022 Tribal Council Meeting Tribal Council Chambers 4:00 pm

7/8/2022 Family Court Tribal Court Office 10:00 am

7/11/2022 - 7/12/2022 Museum Gift Shop Closed Inventory

7/12/2022 Tribal Court Tribal Court Office 9:00 am

7/21/2022 Tribal Council Meeting Tribal Council Chambers 4:00 pm

7/22/2022 Family Court Tribal Court Office 10:00 am

7/26/2022 Tribal Court Tribal Court Office 9:00 am