



# The Seminole Tribune

Voice of the Unconquered

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## Hendry makes new move toward FPL power plant

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**CLEWISTON** — Despite pleas from Seminole Tribe of Florida members and environmentalists to stop Florida Power & Light (FPL) again from building a massive electric generating plant on land next door to the Big Cypress Reservation, Hendry County Board of County Commissioners voted for comprehensive land plan changes that could make the power plant a done deal.

The three amendments were written and submitted by FPL, reviewed by the county's Land Planning Agency and then recommended to commissioners for the July 14 vote.

Commissioner Janet Taylor was not present for the 4-0 vote.

The proposed changes are now in the hands of the state land planning agency, also known as the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), to begin a state-required review process prior to adoption into law.

The recommendation to change county law came on the heels of a recent decision by the Second District Court of Appeal in favor of the Tribe. It was the latest win in the Tribe's continuing effort to stop the power plant from being built on the 3,120-acre site on County Road 833, also known as Sam Jones Trail.

Previous attempts to change and translate zoning laws for plant construction have been blocked by the Tribe's lawyers since 2011. Last year, following a weeklong court battle, a judge ruled that an ordinance passed by commissioners in 2011 to allow the plant was unenforceable because it conflicted with the county's land plan.

FPL and Hendry County's appeal to

toss the judge's ruling was denied June 5.

The commission meeting included a presentation for FPL by land-use planner Ethel Hammer, who explained the three new amendment proposals. Concerned citizens were then heard.

"It will require very few public services from the county but provide large economic advantages," Hammer said.

According to a study provided by FPL, the immediate economic impact to the county is \$2.2 million in property taxes for the first year and an estimated \$352 million in taxes over 25 years.

Hammer said a public facilities analysis indicated that the power plant would create no impact to public water, transportation, groundwater, public recreation or schools. She said more than 28 archaeological sites would be protected and that nine of 15 sites eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, including a possible historic trail, would be preserved.

Hammer also said the plan allows 925 acres of open land so that wildlife, including several endangered animals that roam through the land such as the Florida panther, can connect to the outside.

But during public comments, all but one of 25 who spoke asked the commission to vote against the amendment changes.

Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank, who lives just a few miles from the proposed site, said he has always been against the FPL power plant location next to the reservation because of wildlife, water and cultural reasons. Now he worries that if all three proposed amendments are adopted and become law, FPL will be in charge.

"You are putting the cart before the horse," Rep. Frank said. "You will guarantee

❖ See FPL on page 7A

## Battle to block Everglades bicycle roadway revs up

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK** — Just past the asphalt that makes up U.S. 41 from Krome Avenue in Miami to San Marco Road in Collier County lies wetlands rich with flora, wildlife, prehistoric secrets and scores of Miccosukee and Seminole families.

Beneath the highway, also called Tamiami Trail, is buried history from centuries before the 76-mile stretch became road and before seven national and state parks, forests and animal refuges were designated to protect millions of acres of the surrounding ecosystem.

"The road was built on burial grounds. We know that," said Miccosukee Tribe member Betty Osceola, who grew up in the wide open space called home to her ancestors and before that, the Calusa and Tequesta.

If a small group of bicycle enthusiasts from Naples gets its way, a second byway called the River of Grass Greenway (ROGG) will expand some of U.S. 41 by about 16 feet for a bicycle path. Other stretches will be built off the main road, sometimes up to a football field away, all connected by roads, boardwalks and bridges.

A \$1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation Transit in the Parks Program, won in 2009 by the National Park Service, has produced a feasibility study that outlines the plan proponents say could bring thousands of more visitors to the area to enjoy the scenery on bikes instead of vehicles.

Leading the charge is the Naples Pathways Coalition, which aims "to advocate for a full-integrated and safe pedestrian, bicycle and other non-motorized transportation network throughout the greater Naples area."

❖ See BIKE PATH on page 5A



Eileen Soler

Miccosukee Tribe member Betty Osceola, who opposes the River of Grass Greenway, walks along bear tracks in a prairie that teems with birds and plants significant to Native culture and history that could be interrupted by a roadway or boardwalk to accommodate bicyclists and other non-motorized transport through the Everglades.

## Royalty crowned



Beverly Bidney

Outgoing Miss Florida Seminole Brianna Nunez crowns her older sister Destiny Nunez as the new Miss Florida Seminole during the 58th annual Princess Pageant July 25 at Tribe Headquarters in Hollywood. Their cousin, outgoing Jr. Miss Cheyenne Nunez, right, helps adjust the crown.

## Nunez girls share family ties, royal titles at Princess Pageant

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — Destiny Nunez was named Miss Florida Seminole 2015-16 during the 58th annual Princess Pageant July 25, keeping the crown with Brighton Reservation for another year. The newly crowned Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Skyla Osceola hails from Hollywood.

Destiny's crowning was an emotional family affair as her younger sister and outgoing Miss Florida Seminole Brianna Nunez graced her with the coveted crown and sash.

"We all did well in practice all week; I was very surprised to win," said Destiny, 20, who last competed in a pageant when she ran for Little Miss Brighton. "I hope to represent my Tribe to the best of my ability. We are more than the Hard Rock; we are the Unconquered Seminoles and I hope to let people know that."

Destiny, an education major in her junior year at the University of Central Florida in Orlando, also won the essay and talent competitions. For her talent, Destiny told a story about a man and his son who discovered a friendly village had been massacred by the Army, which in turn helped them escape the same fate. She chose the story to demonstrate the Tribe's rich history, which Destiny fears is becoming lost among today's youth.

"They don't know why we are the Unconquered," she said. "It showed that yes, we are a strong people today, but a lot

of people had to give up their lives to get us to that point."

Skyla, competing in her first pageant, admitted that while nerves surfaced, she still felt well-prepared before going onstage.

"I didn't expect to win," said Skyla, 16, a

junior at American Heritage School in Plantation. "But I'm very happy and proud to be Jr. Miss Seminole."

Skyla plays basketball on her school's varsity team and on a travel team. Her mother, Francine Osceola, said her daughter did great, but the pageant scene is much different than the sports arena.

"It's all new to us, as we're a sports family," Osceola said. "I have to get sewing."

Skyla learned to sew from her mother. The training served her well, as she won the talent contest with an apron and sundress she fashioned for her cousin. She was also awarded the Miss Congeniality trophy.

The theme of the Princess Pageant, held at Tribe Headquarters in Hollywood, was "She

❖ See PRINCESS PAGEANT on page 4A

Beverly Bidney

Outgoing Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Cheyenne Nunez crowns the new Jr. Miss Skyla Osceola during the Princess Pageant.

## Immokalee families move home

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**IMMOKALEE** — Eight families returned home to the Immokalee Reservation June 26 after the completion and grand opening of new, long-awaited townhomes.

Raul Escobar, who has lived nearby off the reservation with his family for 16 years, signed his lease during the grand opening event and moved in the same afternoon with his wife and children.

"I've been waiting a long time to live here," the 34-year-old Tribal member said. "I had to wait until I had white hairs to live here. I'm happy to be on the reservation; it means a lot to us to come back. There is a

lot to do here. It will have a big impact on my family."

The 1,800- to 1,900-square-foot rental townhomes have three bedrooms, two or two-and-a-half bathrooms, tile flooring, granite countertops, window treatments and plenty of storage. Two buildings house six two-story units, and one building has two one-story Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant units. Similar townhomes were built in Big Cypress, Brighton and Hollywood with the intention of giving Tribe members who cannot secure mortgage financing access to the amenities of reservation living.

Seminole/Stiles designed and built the Immokalee townhomes.

"I'm happy we're growing and

expanding; it's been a long time coming," Council project manager Raynaldo Yzaguirre III said. "It's time for a new beginning."

About 50 people attended the grand opening and toured the townhomes, including Immokalee Board Liaison Dorothy Scheffler, President Mitchell Cypress, Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank, Big Cypress Councilman Cicero Osceola, Hollywood Board Rep. Steve Osceola and Council Liaison event coordinator Johnny Boone.

Adam Nelson, director of the Tribal Community Development Department, said that after they secured the funding,

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Fourth of July parties celebrate good-ol' pastimes.  
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# Community



## Horses, hoops provide summer fun with new CCDT programs

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

Two new programs offered through the Tribe's Children's Center for Diagnostics and Therapy (CCDT) are providing special needs children with fun ways to learn.

The youngsters can now shoot hoops during basketball clinics and straddle horses at the Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena all while receiving important therapy outside of a therapist's office, said Lisa Izenwasser, CCDT program manager. Therapists lead activities that focus on social and physical skills.

"Therapy is always fun and we work the goal into the play," Izenwasser said. "We work in a multidisciplinary fashion and look at each child's plan of care."

The equine therapy is based on standards of the American Hippotherapy Association. Participants ride a horse surrounded by a horse walker and therapists, while participating in activities that require communication and problem solving. The activities are tailored to individual needs.

"It is just another mode of treatment for the children," said Allison Mason, therapy service coordinator. "It's fun and exciting for them."

Hippotherapy incorporates the horse's movement, which provides motor and sensory input with physical, occupational and speech therapy. It is used for patients with a variety of special needs. Behavior analyst Christian Heinsler said equine therapy also teaches children to communicate to get what they want. For example, they have to tell the horse to walk or it won't, he said.

Two gentle and patient horses, Boo and Hawk, were ready for the children at the arena July 7. Ko'Oshee Henry, 13, couldn't wait to ride the horses that belong to his sister, Ayze Henry.

Ko'Oshee, who has autism, has a speech disorder called apraxia and has been in therapy since he was about 1 year old, said his mother, Brenda Tommie. He receives occupational, speech and cognitive therapy every week.

"Being around horses calms him down a lot," Tommie said. "It also gives him more confidence in himself."

Ko'Oshee sat tall in Boo's saddle while physical therapist Preston Olson walked beside him. Activity stations included using a racket to hit a ball hanging from a post, identifying a pronoun and placing it in a sentence, popping soap bubbles and catching beanbags. Throughout the activities, Ko'Oshee followed directions, reached for items, sounded out letters and spoke in sentences.

"Equine therapy is such a language stimulator," said speech therapist Lyndsie Fernandez. "Anything with animals takes kids out of their element and different senses are stimulated. Environmental changes are really good for kids."

Olson has known Ko'Oshee for five years. They bonded when he taught Ko'Oshee how to ride a bicycle.

"That was a milestone for him," said Olson, who has 14 years of experience as a physical therapist. "We developed a relationship; we clicked. Riding a bike allowed him to do activities with his family. It was a huge thing to accomplish."

Although Olson hadn't seen Ko'Oshee for about a year, the bond remains. Ko'Oshee was playful with him throughout the session.

Sam Two Shoes, 6, who had enough energy to fill the arena, rode Hawk during the equine therapy session. He chose the stations he wanted to complete but had to

be coerced to participate in the beanbag toss by the therapists, who threw it to each other to redirect his attention to the game.

"This is all about him increasing his communication to get what he wants," said Heinsler, who has worked with Sam for more than a year. "We're teaching him skills so he can communicate more effectively. We are building communication skills. He's shown tremendous progress at home and at school."

Sam also participated in the basketball clinic July 8 at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center in Hollywood along with brothers Tyler, 6, Nile, 4, and Logan Osceola, 3. Language skills are an important component of the clinic. The children must ask for the ball to be passed to them during a passing drill, said their mother, Natoshia Osceola.

"Their communication skills are improving," Osceola said. "They are also learning to be patient and wait their turn. I can see them using the skills; it's carrying over into the home."

Behavior therapist Corey Renken led a drill at the basket. The kids dribbled, passed, jumped and shot. When the boys followed directions, Renken hoisted them up to the rim to slam dunk the ball.

"They are getting structure and organization, following directions and having social interaction," Renken said. "In the long term, a lot of these skills translate into all facets of life."

The court was filled with kids and therapists running laps, completing drills and shooting at the basket.

"We like having a large group so they can model each other's behavior and learn from each other, which is always a positive," Izenwasser said.

Mabel Doctor brought her grandson Angelo Osceola Jr., 6, to the clinic. He's an active child who loves to run and she hopes he can learn to enjoy sports.

"He can get along playing with other kids, but his speech holds him back," Doctor said. "He's in speech therapy. CCDT is a good place for kids to get therapy. They are helping him out."

Equine therapy and basketball clinics will be offered during winter, spring and summer breaks from school.

CCDT hopes to expand the program tribalwide.

For more information or to register for the programs, call the CCDT at 954-985-2320.



CCDT behavior therapist Corey Renken lifts Nile Osceola to the net for a dunk July 8 during the basketball clinic at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center in Hollywood.

Beverly Bidney



Ko'Oshee Henry reaches for a ring while on horseback July 7 during CCDT's equine therapy at the Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena. Speech therapist Lyndsie Fernandez points out which ring he should take, while Ayze Henry controls the horse.

Beverly Bidney



Gordon Wareham

Joe Dan Osceola receives a key to the county from Miami-Dade community representative Denis Rod during a Calle Ocho Chamber of Commerce USA presentation July 16 in Miami. The award honored Osceola for his success in business and culture exchanges with other countries.

## Joe Dan Osceola: International Hero

BY GORDON WAREHAM  
Contributing Writer

MIAMI — The Seminole Tribe's Joe Dan Osceola, along with two other individuals, was presented the first International Hero Award July 16 by the Calle Ocho Chamber of Commerce USA.

The award honors businessmen who have excelled internationally in their trade for more than 25 years, exchanged culturally with other countries and set an example for future leaders.

Osceola was recognized for his service to the Seminole Tribe and United South & Eastern Tribes (USET), which is dedicated to promoting Indian leadership, improving the quality of life for American Indians, and protecting Indian rights and resources on tribal lands. Osceola served as president of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc. from 1967 to 1971 and served as the first president of USET in 1969.

"Over 30 years ago we began with only four Tribes: Seminole, Miccosukee, Choctaw and Cherokee," Osceola said during the event held at the Cuba Ocho Art

and Research Center. "Now it's 32 Tribes in the Southeast."

Osceola has been an entrepreneur since leaving government work. In 1979, he opened the First American Tobacco Shop, and in 1984, Osceola and his wife, Virginia, opened Anhinga Indian Trading Post, where they sell not only Seminole crafts but also authentic Indian arts and crafts from all over the country and Canada. He has operated a chickee-building business called Tiki Huts for the past 25 years.

To his surprise, Osceola also received two more honors; the first was a portrait of himself with the image of Osceola in the clouds created by Cuban-American artist Marcy Grosso. The painting is titled "Heritage." Osceola also received a key to the county.

The other two individuals honored were Prince Emmanuel Aderede from Nigeria, Africa for his ambassador work with his country and South Florida, and Luis Suarez, a Cuban-American who serves as curator of the Suarez Museum of Natural Science & History.

## Seminole calf sale exceeds expectations

### Kids' interest key to livestock livelihood

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

Another record-breaking calf sale made for busy days during the annual calf shipment July 6-17 in Brighton and Big Cypress, where nearly 3,000 calves were rounded up for transport to feedlots across the country, Seminole 4-H'ers and the Tribe.

The two reservations exceeded more than \$5 million in calf sales and weaned some of the heaviest calves the Tribe has ever grown, said Alex Johns, Natural Resource director and second vice president of the Florida Cattlemen's Association.

The cattle industry has long played an important part of Seminole heritage and identity, and today the Tribe is one of the top ranchers in the country. To keep the tradition alive, the 4-H program encourages youth to raise livestock to send to market.

When Aiyanna Tommie first met the 550-pound steer she will raise for the next eight months, they didn't immediately hit it off. The agitated steer ran in and out of the cattle trailer before Aiyanna finally corralled him inside for transport to the pasture.

"I did eight years of showing hogs," said Aiyanna, 15, of Brighton. "This is something new. I wanted the experience of getting dragged around the pen."

Like all 4-H youth raising cattle, Aiyanna will feed, water and walk the animal daily in preparation for the show ring. By the time of the Seminole 4-H Show and Sale in March, he will weigh more than 1,000 pounds.

Cattle owners traditionally provide calves to the 4-H'ers. Aiyanna's steer came from Diane Smith's herd, while Norman Johns gave steer to three of his grandchildren, Calgary Johns, Jacec Jumper and Riley Smith.

"I've been giving [4-H'ers] calves for 35 or 40 years," said Norman Johns, who made sure his children completed a 4-H steer project. "It's an education for them. They have to get up early and feed them; it's a lot of work. Some of them will go into the cattle business, but not all."

Hunter Strickland bought a steer and heifer from Lola Gopher's herd in Brighton. This will be Hunter's fourth time in the three-year heifer program. Participants in the heifer program don't sell their cows; they breed them to build a herd of their own. The steer, when sold at the end of the project, should cover the heifer project costs.

"I love it, but it's a lot of work," said Hunter, 15. "The first thing to do is break them. I'll put them in halters and tie them up for a few days to calm them down. Then you just work them until show time."

Youth who don't pursue jobs in the cattle industry still reap benefits from the program, Alex Johns said.

"It builds future leaders," he said. "Those kids will go on to leadership positions and politics in the Tribe."

The marsh pens in Brighton, which have been used since the 1930s, buzzed with activity July 10 as employees wrangled 9-month-old steer and heifers for shipment.

Once unloaded from the trailer, the animals were weighed and sorted into pens of 70 to 100 steer that would each fill a truck.

By the end of the day, five multilevel truckloads were filled with cattle on their way to Colorado, Illinois, Kansas, Nebraska, Tennessee and Texas. One truckload stayed in the neighborhood; it went to Okeechobee.

The Tribe purchased 400 calves,

# ◆ PRINCESS PAGEANT

From page 1A

is Seminole ... Beautiful and Proud." Pageant Committee Chairwoman Wanda Bowers said the pageant was anyone's to win.

"They are doing really great," she said. "They have all been here before except for two. I couldn't pick a winner."

The two rookies, Destiny and Skyla, took the crowns.

During the banquet July 24 at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood ballrooms, Bowers recognized the hardworking women who have served on the Princess Committee over the years. Three were singled out: Dorothy Tommie, Bobbie Lou Billie and Geneva Shore.

"These ladies devoted their time and energy to make sure there was a pageant," Bowers said.

This year's pageant was dedicated to the late Lorene Bowers Gopher, Miss Florida Seminole 1963, who worked to preserve the Tribe's culture and language. After a video tribute, her son Lewis Gopher spoke about his mother.

"She never worked for the reward," Gopher said. "She did it because that's what she loved to do. She saw her children graduate from high school and her granddaughter graduate from Florida State University. She loved her family, culture and education. Before she left us, she finished her dictionary in Creek. That was her life's work and it's going to carry on."

During the talent portion of the pageant, the contestants also demonstrated that the Tribe's culture lives on through their skills in patchwork, cooking, beading, poetry and storytelling. The traditional clothing presentation and impromptu questions preceded emotional farewell speeches by outgoing Miss Seminole Brianna Nunez and outgoing Jr. Miss Cheyenne Nunez.

"It's been a fun year," Cheyenne said through tears. "To the next Jr. Miss, just enjoy it. The year will go so fast. It's been an honor to represent my Tribe. I will cherish this forever."

Brianna thanked her siblings for sharing their mother, Deanna, who traveled with her all year, and her grandmother Alice Sweat, who taught her "everything I know."

"You are here to be an ambassador of your Tribe," she said. "Once you are crowned, you will understand the job, but I never felt like it was a job; it was so much fun."

After the pageant ended, "backstage grandma" Connie Gowen, the first Miss Florida Seminole in 1957, and Skyla shared a long embrace. Skyla is the granddaughter of the late Priscilla Sayen, Miss Florida Seminole 1964 and Gowen's close friend. Then the stage filled up with the princesses' family and friends for photos.

"I want to thank these ladies for stepping up," Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank said during the banquet. "It takes a lot of courage, and courage is the first step of leadership. Be ready, it's a long year of work."



Beverly Bidney

Jr. Miss Florida Seminole contestant Allegra Billie leads the others into the Tribe Headquarters auditorium July 25 to begin the 58th annual Princess Pageant.



Beverly Bidney

Talia Rodriguez fixes her hair backstage before the Princess Pageant begins in Hollywood.



Beverly Bidney

Outgoing Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Cheyenne Nunez presents Gherri Osceola with the plaque for best essay.



Beverly Bidney

Miss Florida Seminole contestant Alexis Jumper describes how to make traditional dolls during the talent competition.



Beverly Bidney

Jr. Miss contestant Rande Osceola demonstrates how to make frybread during the pageant.



Beverly Bidney

Jr. Miss Florida Seminole contestant Mari Veliz presents the patchwork she created during the talent portion of the pageant.



Beverly Bidney

Jr. Miss Florida Seminole contestant Skyla Osceola waves to the audience during the clothing presentation.



Beverly Bidney

Newly crowned Seminole royalty Destiny Nunez and Skyla Osceola pose with elected officials and Little Miss Seminole Victoria Osceola Benard and Little Mr. Seminole Gregory James II after the pageant ended in Hollywood.

# NCAI demands review of proposed oil pipeline through wild rice lands

BY ICTMN STAFF

The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) has passed a resolution calling for a full environmental impact statement on a proposed oil pipeline that would cut through indigenous wild rice lands.

The resolution, passed July 1, noted that manoomin – wild rice – is not only sacred to the Anishinaabe but also that Tribes in Minnesota are the largest producers of it in the U.S., making it an economic mainstay and a federally protected tribal resource. The White Earth and Mille Lacs bands of Ojibwe are opposing attempts to build the \$2.6 billion Sandpiper pipeline, which would snake across northern Minnesota on its way from the Bakken oil fields of North Dakota to Superior, Wisconsin.

“Tribal governments throughout Minnesota and Wisconsin have significant concerns that the development of, and any release from, Enbridge Corporation’s Sandpiper oil pipeline along its proposed route would have devastating impacts on unique spiritual and cultural resources, as the proposed pipeline route will cross directly through the most sensitive wild-rice producing lakes and rivers within the treaty-ceded territories in Minnesota,” the NCAI resolution read, calling for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to step up and advocate for Tribes.

“The NCAI calls upon EPA to engage with the Army Corps [of Engineers] immediately to stress concerns and advocate for the most thorough environmental review possible, including respect of tribal resources and environmental justice issues,” the NCAI resolution said.

Further, the “EPA must assist the appropriate Bands of Chippewa/Ojibwe to become designated as ‘cooperating agencies’ during NEPA review,” NCAI said, and must “urge that a joint federal-state environmental impact statement be undertaken to enhance coordination around

novel and complex tribal resource and environmental issues.”

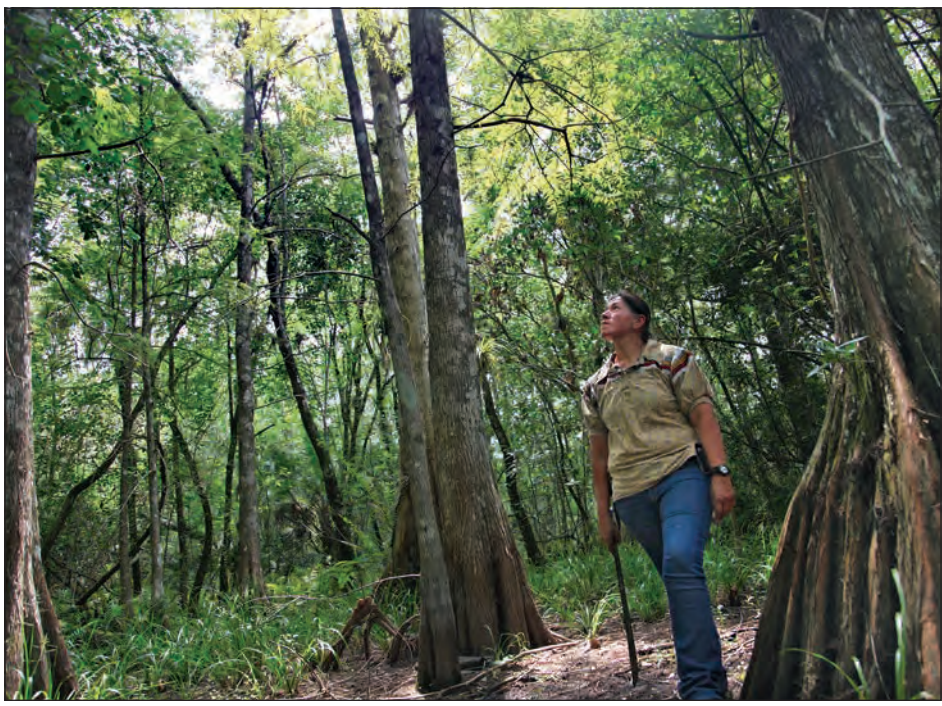
Besides demanding the federal-state environmental impact statement, the NCAI wants the EPA to look into any other federal permits that might be required, designate a high-level official to serve as a liaison between the government and tribal governments “on all aspects of the Sandpiper project,” and to meet with affected Tribes and bands in the wake of the June 5 MPUC hearing.

The Tribes, meanwhile, are continuing with action of their own. The environmental group Honor the Earth, founded and headed by activist and author Winona LaDuke, is planning its third annual Love Water Not Oil tour in August. It will wind its way nearly 250 miles from Madeline Island, Wisconsin to Bemidji, Minnesota, the route the pipeline would take.

“The proposed new oil pipelines in northern Minnesota violate the treaty rights of the Anishinaabeg by endangering critical natural resources in the 1854, 1855 and 1867 treaty areas,” said Honor the Earth in a media release July 9. “All pipelines leak, and catastrophes like Enbridge’s 1-million-gallon spill in 2010 on the Kalamazoo River, the largest inland oil spill in U.S. history and still not cleaned up, are not unlikely.”

“These pipelines threaten the culture, way of life and physical survival of the Ojibwe people,” LaDuke said in the Honor the Earth statement. “We will continue to work to protect our water and our rice, as our ancestors did before us.”

*This article originally appeared in Indian Country Today Media Network and was printed with permission from the publication.*



Eileen Soler

Miccosukee Tribe’s Betty Osceola, who opposes the River of Grass Greenway (ROGG), stands July 11 in a cypress dome significant to Seminole and Miccosukee culture and history that will be disturbed and possibly disappear according to the ROGG feasibility and master plan.

## BIKE PATH

From page 1A

Members Maureen Bonness, who is a botanist for Willow Run Quarry Preserve in Naples, and local historian Patty Huff, of Everglades City, came up with the idea in 2006 and spent the next few years promoting it to Collier and Miami-Dade county officials, federal agencies and local stakeholders.

Bonness and Huff now serve as co-directors of the ROGG Executive Committee.

Though the grant application made no mention of Native American interests that would be interrupted by the new road, the feasibility plan discloses “the Miccosukee and Seminole Tribes of Florida maintain a significant presence within the ROGG corridor.” The plan then describes how the disruption of the landscape could adversely affect archaeological resources, tribal land, historical landmarks and ceremonial ground.

Opponents say the plan was rife with problems from the beginning, such as referring to the project as a bike path.

According to the study, the public byway will require road infrastructure, about 28 bridges or boardwalks, turning lanes, parking lots, rest facilities, a transportation hub, electrical power and signage. Construction could cost \$600,000 to \$800,000 per mile – an estimated total of up to \$60 million.

John Bob Carlos, an avid cyclist and Everglades photographer who has pedaled most of the 400 miles of bike paths and levee accesses that already exist along the corridor, said he originally thought the idea for another bike path would be nice, but he quickly changed his mind.

“They’ll cut through cypress and pave over orchids with parking lots. How can it be right if it ruins what you want to see,” Carlos said. “And who will use it? You can ride for a week and see only a few others on bikes. People who ride through the Everglades already know where to do it.”

In March, a parade of opponents, including Carlos, walked the 76-mile stretch from Miami to County Road 92 in Collier carrying signs and banners to get the word out.

The five-day walk was led by Osceola and Bobby C. Billie, a spiritual leader of the Council of the Original Miccosukee-Simanoolee Nation Aboriginal People.

On July 1, they led a protest at Stephen P. Clark Government Center in downtown Miami. Although the roadway was conceived in Collier County and advocated by the Naples group, Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department took the lead with project manager Mark Heinicke at the helm.

Heinicke said the project is merely in the feasibility phase, a time when the proposed master plan is open for public comments. A Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study will come next, but who will take on the project is undetermined, Heinicke said. He predicts that Florida Department of Transportation

will likely take charge of the PD&E because of the complexities of the plan.

“It all remains to be seen,” Heinicke said. “It’s definitely a long-term vision project. These projects don’t happen overnight.”

During the PD&E phase, reports will be required from experts to address conservation, history, culture, wildlife, traffic and other concerns.

“That’s when the real feasibility will happen. A lot of questions will be answered,” Heinicke said. “This is by no means a done deal.”

But Frank Denninger, a Gladesman and member of the Everglades Coordinating Council, thinks the project should stop now before it goes any further. He said the road will “urbanize” the entire stretch.

Both Osceola and Billie said the proposed road is an invasion of privacy.

The feasibility study and master plan states in the introduction: “The ROGG will provide an opportunity for millions of residents and visitors of South Florida to experience the Everglades landscape and culture ...”

Billie, during an April interview with Miami New Times reporter Deirdre Funcheon, said, “I don’t need to be on display. I’m a person; I’m not an attraction. What, we’re in a zoo now?”

Stretches of road that would also allow strollers, wheelchairs and other non-motorized transport would be too close for comfort to homes, historic Native camps and ceremonial grounds, Osceola said.

“Some people who come already are very nice, but others, no matter what you say, will take advantage. You tell them that it’s not OK to take this or take that but they take it anyway,” Osceola said.

Along a stretch further east, plans put the path close enough for visitors to toss a stone through the back windows of six homes at Tigertail Camp.

Miccosukee Tribe Chairman Colley Billie, in a letter dated July 1 to Heinicke, went on the record with a litany of reasons for the Tribe’s opposition to ROGG: from dishonoring the Earth, to bringing unwelcome development to the doorsteps of Tribal members and sacred areas, to ignoring federal protection under the law.

ROGG stands to violate the Big Cypress National Preserve Addition Act, which protects the Miccosukee and Seminole Tribes “usual and customary use of these lands;” the preserve’s requirement to provide half-mile buffers around religious sites; and the Miccosukee Reserved Area Act of 1998, which gives the Tribe rights to live on and use land and water within the park.

“The Tribe is located in the heart of the Everglades, and our commitment to the Everglades and our way of life is unwavering,” Chairman Billie said. “Our top priority is to protect our homelands and our culture and customs.”

Osceola said plans are in the works for more demonstrations, perhaps in Tallahassee.

For more information visit the Stop ROGG Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/StopROGG](http://www.facebook.com/StopROGG).



Douglas Thompson, ICTMN

Pictured is a wild rice area in Minnesota.

## CALVES

From page 3A

which were sent to the Brighton feedlot for its Seminole Pride Fresh From Florida program. While there, they will gain about 2 pounds per day. When they reach 750 pounds, they will be sent to a finishing facility, slaughterhouse and then to the Tribe’s distributor, Cheney Brothers.

The Tribe’s cattle all have data-filled computer chips in their ear tags to help organize and track them. Owner name, weight, heifer breeding information and birthdate are on the chips. Not all ranchers equip their herds with chips, but the Tribe has used them for about a decade, said Norman “Skeeter” Bowers.

“With a chip, you can trace an animal from birth to burger,” he said. “If every rancher in the country had a chip, it would make things easier for inspectors, but they aren’t mandatory.”

Alex Johns said Brighton calves weighed an average of 543 pounds, while Big Cypress calves averaged 563 pounds. Lack of rain contributed to the animals’ larger than normal size this year, Stanlo Johns said.

“Cattle gain weight when it’s dry because there is more protein and nutrients in the grass,” Stanlo Johns said. “When it’s wet, that’s diluted. The cattle are about 50 pounds more this year compared to last year.”

According to the Cattlemen’s Beef Board and National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, more than 97 percent of U.S. cattle ranches are family owned. Diane Smith’s family is involved with her herd, but her daughter Amanda and son-in-law John Julian are the primary ranchers.

“Those whose families are in cattle tend to come back,” Smith said. “My husband, Roger, taught everyone in the family how the cattle thrive. Last year we got the 10-

year cattle producer award from the Tribe.”

The latest U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Census of Agriculture shows the average age of U.S. farmers is 58.3 years. The census also states the rate of new farmers entering agriculture is slower than those who retire, which worries Alex Johns.

“We have to keep our kids engaged,” he said. “It’s hard with all the revenue we receive to keep them involved in the hard work. 4-H kids know how much work it takes and that it’s part of our heritage. It’s in their blood.”

He believes even city kids can gain interest in ranching when they see their friends and “country cousins” get involved. Hollywood 4-H members Dyami Nelson, Cisco Rodriguez and Daniel Rodriguez

are all committed to the steer project. The animals are adjusting to their home in cow pens on the Hollywood Reservation.

Last year Cisco, 15, raised a hog but likes the challenge of a larger animal. On a recent Saturday morning, he stayed busy watering and feeding his steer.

“I chose a steer because it’s more fun,” he said. “It’ll be harder, but it will be worth it.”

The biggest thing the youth need to learn, said Alex Johns, is that the biggest steer is not the best for learning.

“They want one that’s docile,” he said. “They should get a smaller one they can manage. It’s not all about having the best steer; it’s about the experience and learning the skills to handle cattle.”



Beverly Bidney

Emma Urbina counts calves coming off the cattle trailer from Sydney Gore’s pasture July 10 during the annual calf shipping in Brighton.

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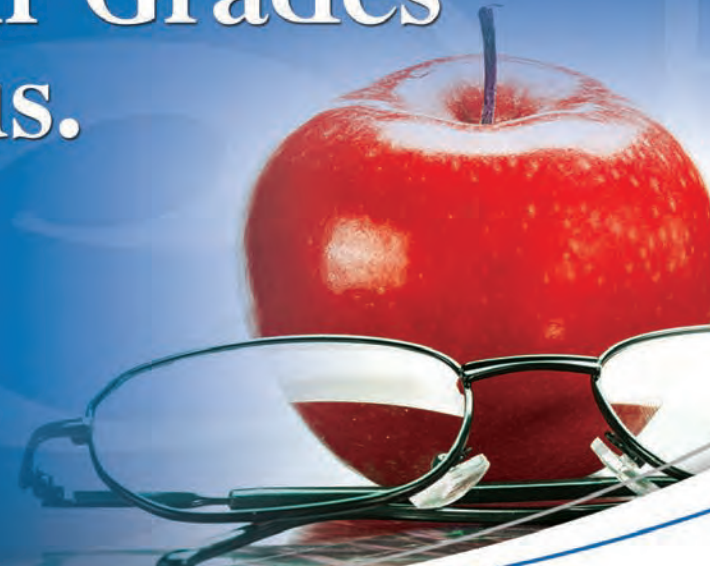
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# Fourth of July parties celebrate good-ol' pastimes



Sunny Ploch

Liam Patten, sporting a 'Captain America' T-shirt for the Fourth of July, enjoys a game of baseball during the Tampa Reservation July 4 celebration at the Lakeland property on July 3.



Beverly Bidney

Ky-mani Boyce, 7, and Luciano Boyce, 5, pose for a photo with mom, Tiffany Frank, before the start of the Firecracker 5K walk in Hollywood on June 30.



Kevin Johnson

Justin Gopher leads his tug-of-war team in competition with Vernon Baker, middle, and Lewis Gopher, anchor, during Brighton's Independence Day celebration July 4 at Fred Smith Rodeo Arena.



Beverly Bidney

Dray Crutchfield and his godson Amir Johnson, 1, enjoy the refreshing pool July 1 on a hot summer day during the Fort Pierce Fourth of July party at Chupco's Landing Community Center.



Sunny Ploch

Bobby Henry shows spirit during the Tampa Fourth of July celebration at the Lakeland property.



Beverly Bidney

This is what happens when an egg isn't carefully caught during the egg toss competition at the Big Cypress Fourth of July celebration.



Sunny Ploch

Amari Osceola shows patriotic spirit while playing with a red, white and blue beach ball during the Tampa Reservation Fourth of July celebration at the Lakeland property.



Beverly Bidney

Lauren Doctor, 11, makes bubbles for everyone to enjoy July 2 at the Big Cypress Fourth of July celebration.



Kevin Johnson

Daliyah Nunez, 5, waves while piloting a plane in the amusement ride section at Brighton's Fourth of July celebration.



Beverly Bidney

Kids frolic in the pool during the Fort Pierce Fourth of July celebration at Chupco's Landing Community Center.



Beverly Bidney

Adrian Cypress, 6, center, chows down during a watermelon-eating contest at the Big Cypress Fourth of July celebration. He won by eating more than anyone else in his age group in one minute.

# Federal recognition for Virginia's Pamunkey Tribe 'a long time coming'

BY VINCENT SCHILLING  
ICTMN

**KING WILLIAM, Va.** — After receiving a phone call in early July from Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Kevin K. Washburn informing them that the Pamunkey Indian Tribe would be federally recognized, the consensus among tribal members was: "It's been a long time coming."

It was a historic week as the Pamunkey Indian Tribe became the 567th federally recognized Tribe in the United States and the first Tribe to be federally recognized in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Pamunkey Reservation is in Virginia, midway between Washington, D.C. and Virginia Beach.

Assistant Chief of the Pamunkey Robert "Bob" Gray said receiving federal

recognition after a 30-year wait "feels great. It's been a long time and I am happy along with the rest of the tribal members."

Tribal member John Collins remarked that not only was he excited that the Tribe received federal recognition but was also glad that Washburn had said the Pamunkey "had one of the strongest petitions he had ever seen."

Pamunkey Museum Director Ashley Atkins Spivey, who is also seeking her Ph.D. in anthropology, said federal status will also give the Tribe potential access to funding to improve the Pamunkey Museum and cultural center.

"Finally we are going to be recognized for the separate nation that we are and have been by other entities, such as the state (of Virginia) and England. Now the United States government recognizes that. We are

looking forward to establishing and having that relationship," Atkins Spivey said.

Former council member and respected elder Warren Cook has been working on the recognition process for about 30 years. He called the process hectic, time-consuming and really crazy.

Cook said that though the Tribe achieved the goal of federal recognition, he is already aware of his identity.

"Well, I've already been recognized," he said. "The BIA doesn't do anything for me. We've been here for thousands of years just because they say... whatever... It doesn't mean much to me."

*This article originally appeared in Indian Country Today Media Network and was printed with permission from the publication.*



Beverly Bidney

Members of the Immokalee Reservation tour new townhomes June 26 at the grand opening event.

## TOWNHOMES

From page 1A

departments worked together to complete the project. Construction began in June 2014, but Councilman Osceola said the idea hatched eight years ago.

"These townhouses were in the pipeline for a long time," Rep. Frank said. "I'm glad the Board and Council worked together to get them off the paper and in the ground completed. Immokalee is in need of

more housing, and we can help alleviate the problem here."

About 200 people call Immokalee home, but the reservation is growing. Next, the Tribe will tackle the development of seven single-family homes on Alice Jimmie Circle. Infrastructure is underway and construction should commence by November.

"This is a proud moment for this side of the reservation," Liaison Scheffler said. "We lived in chickees here; it's nice to see people move back to the reservation after being off for so long."

## FPL

From page 1A

the power plant in black and white."

FPL also owns approximately 4,600 acres of land currently zoned for agriculture just north of the proposed power plant.

Attorney for the Seminole Tribe

Andrew J. Baumann said the fight against FPL and Hendry County has come full circle.

"It's been four years almost to the day that all of this began. I've seen almost every slide in tonight's presentation already. The Seminole Tribe was against it then and nothing has changed," Baumann said.

The first amendment adds a new

Hendry County future land use category called Electrical Generating Facility and it amends the county's industrial use category to allow power facilities less than 75 megawatts. It permits property owners to build large power plants in Hendry County but requires them to write and submit two additional amendments to make it happen: one for the specifications of the plant and the second to change the county's land map to include the location's new zoning.

Further, the amendment deletes a current future land use requirement, by use of a planned unit development (PUD) tool that demands compliance to the comprehensive plan, including a cultural resource assessment of the property by a professional archaeologist and an approval letter from the Florida Division of Historic Resources.

Hendry commissioners on July 14 voted to move forward with all three amendments, giving FPL a nod toward building one of the largest power plants in the nation on culturally and environmentally sensitive land.

In the specification amendment, FPL describes the development of a gas-powered, electrical generating plant, solar power plant or a combination of both, up to 15 stories tall and on 70 percent of the 3,120 acres. The gas-powered plant could consist of three combined cycle units each with three combustion turbines and one steam engine.

The amendment reads: "The

maximum estimated power generating capacity for the Hendry Next Generation Clean Energy Center is 4,300 megawatts ... related uses for the facility include processing, warehousing, educational and visitor centers and raw materials storage."

The state-required amendment review process could take up to four months before a final public hearing is held by Hendry County.

Here's how it works: The DEO must receive the proposals within 10 days of the last public hearing and then send the proposals to various agencies for comments. Reviewing agencies include the Department of Environmental Protection, Department of State, Department of Transportation, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and others. The DEO has 60 days to report back to the county with agency comments and their own objections or recommendations.

To adopt the amendments into law, the county must hold a final public hearing at least 180 days after receiving the DEO comments. If the county adopts the amendments, affected people can file a petition within 30 days with the Division

of Administrative Hearings to challenge the amendments on grounds that it is not in compliance.

But Baumann said it is possible the process from receipt of the proposed amendments in Tallahassee to Hendry County's final hearing and potential adoption of the amendments could be completed in as little as one month.

"Right now we are studying the amendments and monitoring what happens at the state review level," Baumann said. "From a legal standpoint, we can't challenge it now."

FPL spokesman David McDermitt said the commission meeting only "established parameters" of the plant, such as the maximum amount of megawatts that could be produced.

It did not give permission to build the power plant nor did it state that FPL would actually build it at all, he said. Those decisions would be made if the amendments are finally adopted.

"What could happen was proposed," McDermitt said. "This is not the end of a process, but a beginning. Now we need to come back with a detailed proposal."



Eileen Soler

Hendry County Board of County Commissioners listen July 14 while Seminole Tribe members and environmentalists speak out against the proposed FPL plant.

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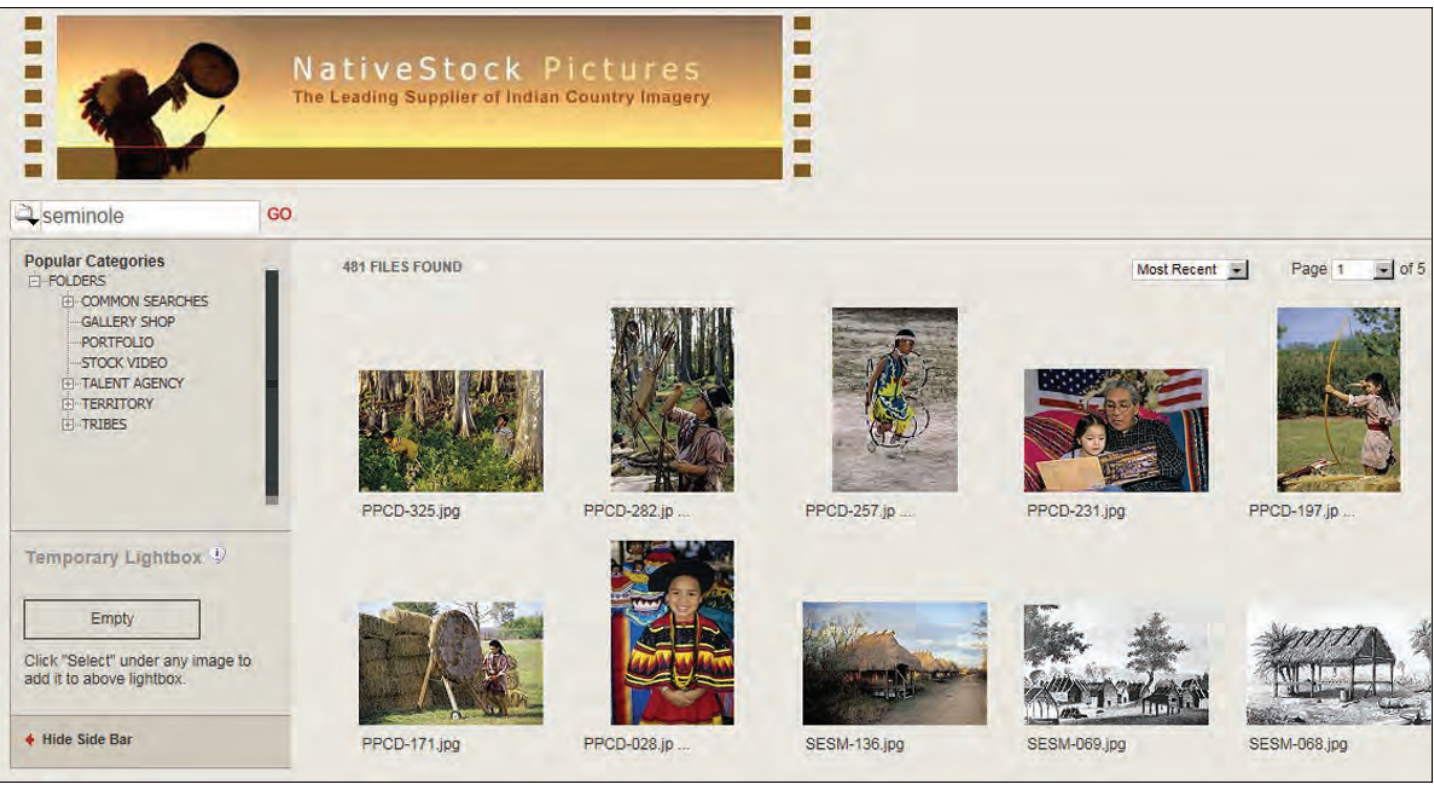


Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

The website NativeStock.com displays and sells images related to the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

# NativeStock website selling photos of Seminole Tribe

**SUBMITTED BY TARA BACKHOUSE**  
 Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

The Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum often writes about pictures in its collection and asks for help from Seminole Tribune readers in identifying the people and places in them. And there's a lot of that to be done. It's also fun to scan through the Museum's collection of historic photographs that ranges from the early 1900s to today to spot friends and family, or even yourself. So contact the Museum if you want to do that; staff members protect those photographs so you can enjoy them.

The Museum also serves the community by protecting the rights and privacy of the Seminole Tribe in any way possible. So this month the Museum is making readers aware of a website that sells images from throughout Indian Country. Whenever

images are sold, it calls into question whether the person selling them has the right to profit from the images. In order to have the right, vendors need permission of the photographer before attempting to make money off someone else's work. But secondarily, it's polite and sometimes legally necessary to obtain the permission of the subject of the photograph before it is sold.

NativeStock.com proclaims itself to be the leading supplier of Indian Country images. I visited the site to see what kind of images they supply and broadly searched with the term "Seminole." Hundreds of images relate to that search term. I recognized many of the people and places in the pictures. So I have been doing a little work to see if the subjects of the pictures know about this site and have given their permission. If you're interested in this

subject, you can visit the website and see for yourself. Just type this into the address bar of your search engine: <http://NativeStock.com/>.

At the main page of the website, you'll see a search bar, and you can do the same search for "Seminole" that I did. Then you can scroll through the results and see what you find. If you see a picture that you don't think should be there, just contact the site's administrator and tell her the number of the photograph you'd like removed.

It is a great thing to support a business that is treating its suppliers and customers fairly. But it also takes a community's vigilance to prevent injustices when they occur. I hope you can enjoy this website. But if you don't, we can also take action together to correct the problem. Please let me know if you require any assistance from the Museum. As always, we're here to help.

# Hah-pong-ke: Grateful Dead

**BY PETER B. GALLAGHER**  
 Special Projects Reporter

In hundreds of songs over a 50-year career, the Grateful Dead only used the word "Seminole" in one: "Lazy River Road," a slow finger-picking love ballad written by lyricist Robert Hunter and the iconic late guitarist Jerry Garcia. The song was first performed on Feb. 21, 1993, at the Oakland Coliseum Arena. ("Lazy River Road" appeared in the first set, between "Greatest Story Ever Told" and "Eternity.")

The fourth verse begins, "Way down upon Seminole Square/belly of the river tide/call for me and I will be there/for the price of the taxi ride." Seminole Square is one of three destinations or places mentioned in the song.

The others are Sycamore Slough and Shadowfall Ward. According to author David Dodd, in his "The Complete Annotated Grateful Dead Lyrics," "these three alliterative places appear to be fictitious, although there is a shopping center named 'Seminole Square' in Charlottesville."

The Grateful Dead formed in 1965 in Palo Alto, California and performed in many different forms ranging from quintets to septets, employing an eclectic style that often morphed elements of country, folk, bluegrass, blues, reggae,



Courtesy photo

The Grateful Dead pose for a promotional photo shoot in 1970. From left are Bill Kreutzmann, Ron 'Pigpen' McKernan, Jerry Garcia, Bob Weir, Mickey Hart and Phil Lesh.

rock, improvisational jazz and psychedelia for arenas full of "Deadheads," the name affectionately adopted by the band's loyal audience. The band was ranked 57th in the issue "The Greatest Artists of All Time" by Rolling Stone magazine and was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1994. The Grateful Dead have sold more than 35 million albums worldwide.

The Grateful Dead's final three shows at Chicago's Soldier Field, this July, had a sold-out attendance of more than 210,000. Phish guitarist Trey Anastasio took the place of Garcia, who died in 1995. Although "Lazy River Road" was never officially recorded, a live video of the song played at Chapel Hill, North Carolina on March 25, 1993, is on YouTube.

# 'Lazy River Road'

Words by Robert Hunter; music by Jerry Garcia

Way down upon Sycamore Slough  
 a white man sings the blues  
 selling roses of paper maché  
 with flecks of starlight dew.  
 I swiped a bunch and threw it your way  
 where hazy moonlight glowed.  
 Way down, down along  
 Lazy River Road

Way down upon Shadowfall Ward  
 End of the avenue  
 Run, hide, seek in your own backyard  
 Mama's backyard won't do  
 All night long I sang Love's Sweet Song  
 down where the water flowed

Way down, down along  
 Lazy River Road

Moonlight wails as hound dogs bay  
 but never quite catch the tune  
 Stars fall down in buckets like rain  
 till there ain't no standin' room  
 Bright blue boxcars train by train  
 clatter while dreams unfold  
 Way down, down along  
 Lazy River Road

Way down upon Seminole Square  
 belly of the river tide  
 call for me and I will be there

for the price of the taxi ride  
 Night time double-clutches into today  
 like a truck downshifting its load  
 Way down, down along  
 Lazy River Road

Thread the needle, right through the eye  
 The thread that runs so true  
 All the others I let pass by  
 I only wanted you  
 Never cared for careless love  
 but how your bright eyes glowed  
 Way down, down along  
 Lazy River Road

# Betty Mae Jumper

## Wisdom from the past

# Morgan Smith

The following column was written by Betty Mae Jumper and printed in the April 23, 1993 issue of The Seminole Tribune.

This is a story about Morgan Smith. I never met another person quite like him. At one time I spent many hours sitting and talking to him – and lots of times.

He was at my house many times because he was married to Katie, who was Moses' mother. To look at him you never thought he knew a lot of things, but he did. He would tell of things that had happened in the past or things he had heard of. He never went to school but knew a lot.

As a young man, Morgan worked with cattle people around the Lake of Okeechobee and learned how to take care of the "cows" as he called it. This is the reason why he was placed in charge on the Big Cypress Reservation when the cattle or "cows" were given to the Indians. He loved to care for the animals from day break to sunset. With this job he was to teach others how to tend their cattle to make a living.

He taught owners how to mark their herds; how to cut and make steers out of little bulls; and cut ears to mark them for identification. This was done because in those days there were no fences and

many cattle would be in the swamp. In this way the boys will know the value of animals, as they grow older they will also know it can give them many to take care of their family.

I never heard him say mean words to anyone, but smile whenever someone said a bad word or so. He only smiled and said, since I became a Christian I never felt like I use to. Both he and his wife, Katie, were faithful Christians.

There were no roads in Big Cypress at that time. People use to go in big trucks or do the best they could to go through pastures. We use to get stuck and spend hours trying to get a car out of mud or ponds where the ground was too wet and muddy.

Morgan worked many years in Big Cypress and never returned to his home land in Brighton.

Morgan Smith stuck with the cattle even though they lost a lot of them, for the cattle had to adjust to a new land and learn to eat different kinds of grass. I don't remember how long before the cattle settled down and began to eat to survive.

All Morgan used to say was give them time, it's new land for these cattle, but they will get use to it and they did. Today some of our Indians have cattle and are doing good.

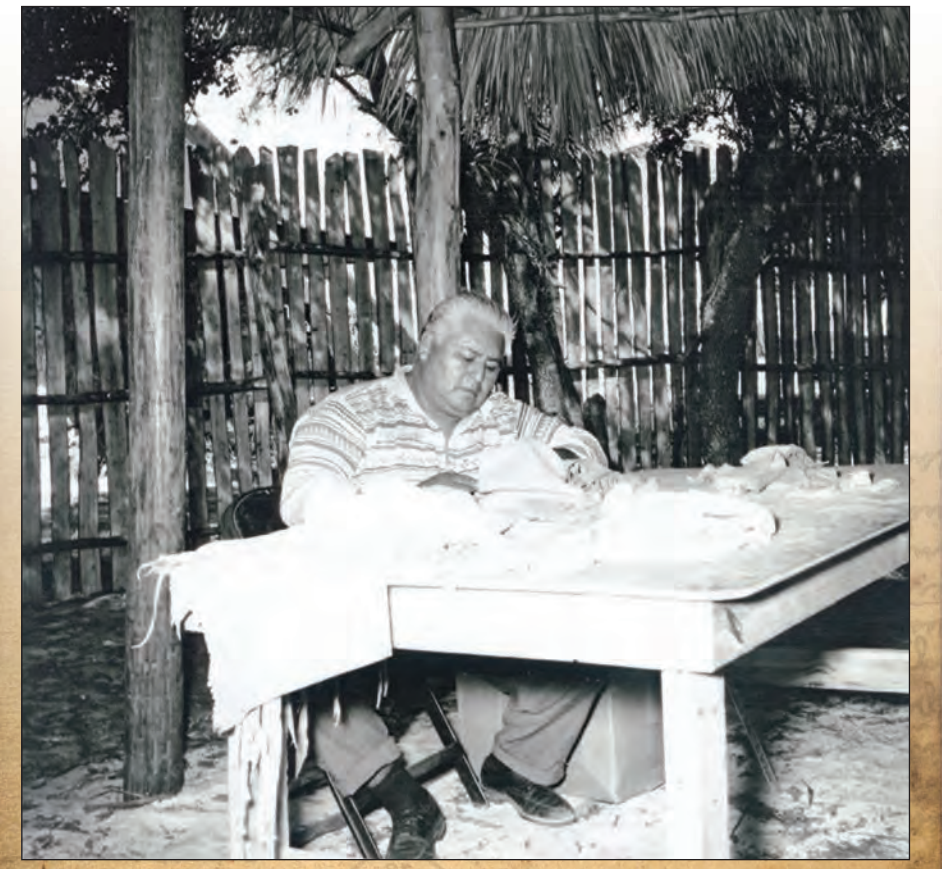


Photo courtesy of Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

Morgan Smith demonstrates the making of buckskin clothing under a chickee at the Seminole Okalee Indian Village on the Hollywood Reservation.

# Updates to begin at Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

**SUBMITTED BY ANNETTE SNAPP**  
 Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

**BIG CYPRESS** — The Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum will be closed from Aug. 17 until Sept. 24 while it undergoes improvements to enhance the visitor experience. Beautification plans include a fresh coat of paint to the ceiling and the walls of the Museum store and new carpet to freshen up several areas of the Museum. The improvements and some deep cleaning will be only the beginning to more substantive changes.

"Planned improvements will greatly enhance visitor experience," said Paul Backhouse, Museum director and Tribal

Historic Preservation Officer. "In addition to the cosmetic improvements, visitors will also be able to experience new elements in the galleries. They will interact with culture through a dedicated app and new touch and feel activity. In addition, a major new photography installation from renowned Australian photographer Russell James will add depth and allow us to share the Seminole story, both here on Big Cypress and with a global audience."

The Museum will reopen on Indian Day, Sept. 25, with a daylong celebration of special programming to welcome back visitors who will be able to experience the interactive components and see James' unique photography on the Seminole Tribe.



Seminole Tribune archive photo

The Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum will be closed from Aug. 17 to Sept. 24 for beautification plans.



# Health



Beverly Bidney

Camille Billie, 3, and Aniya Cypress, 10, collect seashells at sunset July 21 during the 22nd annual Wellness Conference at Hilton Marco Island Beach Resort and Spa on Marco Island.

## Annual Wellness Conference revitalizes mind, body, soul

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**MARCO ISLAND** — For 22 years, Seminoles in Recovery's Wellness Conference has provided the community with camaraderie and tools to make better choices for healthier lives, a fact Helene Buster hopes will make a 23rd year possible.

"I hope people see the fellowship of Tribal members and that there is sobriety in their community," said Buster, Family Services Department director. "For those who are part of it, they know the program works because they keep coming back."

Buster, who boasts 26 years of sobriety, coordinates the Seminoles in Recovery program and said she will continue to hold meetings and events to keep the community united. Nearly 400 attended the conference July 19-23 at Hilton Marco Island Beach Resort and Spa on Marco Island.

Wellness Conference sessions imparted information from professionals and those in recovery. Topics included "Relapse, It Doesn't Have to Happen," "Gratitude – Indian Style," "Forgiveness: Let Go and Move On" and "Health, Mind & Body." Fitness on the beach kept the body moving, including morning walks before sunrise that drew daily crowds of 100.

Alcoholics Anonymous meetings and personal testimonies rounded out the schedule.

Alex Buck, of Brighton Reservation, never believed he was an addict until he attended the Seminoles in Recovery convention in March. This was his first time at the Wellness Conference.

"Hearing from the people who walked the walk has more of an impact than reading it in a book," Buck said. "I never knew so

many Seminoles in recovery. It blows me away how much fun I have being sober."

Certified addiction counselor Sonya McKee discussed causes of relapse, including keeping secrets, euphoric recall, and people, places and things.

She said addiction is dangerously powerful.

"'I don't need help' is the last thing my husband said to me. He was found dead with a needle in his arm," said McKee, who has presented at the conference for nine years. "We have a disease we cannot fight alone. When we convince ourselves we can do it by ourselves, we're a goner."

Advice came from presenters and from personal testimonies of those in recovery. Denise Alley, a Native American storyteller and motivational speaker, told attendees that the Wellness Conference perpetuates the love they have in their hearts for family and community.

During personal testimony sessions, dozens shared their stories. Some said they were grateful to hear other Tribal members talk about their addictions.

"To me, that's what this whole thing is about, so our people can get together and share their stories," Buster said.

Programs geared specifically for youth conveyed the same lessons adults learned and kept kids active. Family Services' Fred Mullins led the program for ages 9 to 16. In one activity, children learned to braid, which demonstrated the power of three, he said.

"One may be easily overpowered, two can defend themselves but a cord of three cannot be broken," he said. "When we pull together as a team, we can accomplish great things."

The metaphor emphasized not walking alone through life, that everyone needs a strong team behind them, said presenter

Douglas Cox. At the end of the session, each child wrote a list of trusted people to be on their life team.

"If you are in the fifth grade, the drug guys are coming," Cox said. "You need a life team to face that stuff."

Conference sessions concluded with the annual sobriety countdown. By the end, more than 100 people stood in descending order of time sober, starting with 41 years clean and ending with 18 days. They represented 641 years of sobriety.

"We have to be intertwined together to make it," Buster said. "You young guys need to see who is in recovery so they can help you. Pick up the phone; these are your tribal friends who are here to help you."

Lila Osceola, clean for 16 months, is grateful to have found a new way of living through the program.

"I built a relationship and a family here," said Osceola, of Hollywood. "Now I sponsor women so I give back what was freely given to me. It's changed me a lot; I have my kids back and am able to be a parent. It's made me into a responsible, loving, caring woman."

President Mitchell Cypress has attended every Wellness Conference and said he finds it useful for the Tribe. He said he would like to see it continue, adding that the conference "doesn't need to be at a fancy place as long as you deliver the message."

Buster believes the Wellness Conference will continue for a 23rd year even if Seminoles in Recovery has to raise its own funds.

"We just have to figure it out," she said. "Maybe one day when people look for help they will remember something they picked up here. Whatever comes, we'll do what we have to, band together and do something. Everyone wants a No. 23."

## Help prevent spread of mosquito-borne illness

SUBMITTED BY BOB LAMENDOLA  
Florida Department of Health in Broward

They buzz past people's ears while they sleep. They swoop past the TV screen while the family watches in the evening. They may circle ankles outside the front door.

They are Aedes mosquitoes, a little black variety of biters with white spots that are common summer nuisances but also can carry serious diseases. In tribal lands and Florida neighborhoods, they live in close proximity to humans, even inside the house.

Aedes mosquitoes are in the spotlight because they can spread the tropical viruses called chikungunya (pronounced chicken-GOON-ye), dengue fever, West Nile virus and other diseases that have appeared in Florida recently. The number of cases is small, but the diseases can be serious if untreated.

As summer rains increase, Aedes and other mosquitoes breed in larger numbers. While elimination isn't possible, the presence of mosquitoes can be minimized.

"Everyone should be aware of mosquitoes and take steps to protect themselves," said Dr. Paula Thaqi, director of the Florida Department of Health in Broward County. "The best way to do that is to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes. We recommend a practice called Drain and Cover."

Drain standing water in and around the house. Eliminate even puddles because Aedes can breed in containers as small as a bottle cap.

Get rid of water collected in garbage cans, tires, buckets, roof gutters, pool covers, coolers, toys, flower pots and plants with pockets, such as bromeliads. Discard items where rain or sprinkler water collects. Clean bird



Photo courtesy of Florida Department of Health

Last year, 11 Floridians were infected with chikungunya from local mosquitoes, six contracted dengue fever locally and 16 contracted West Nile virus.

baths and pet water bowls twice a week. Inside the home, Aedes can breed where water collects, such as refrigerator ice makers, electric toothbrush holders and drips under sinks.

Cover the openings of homes. If outdoors when mosquitoes are active, wear shoes, socks, long pants and long sleeves. Spray bare skin and clothing with repellent (make sure it contains DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR3535). Close windows and doors, and repair damaged screens.

As of June 1, no Floridians have contracted a mosquito-borne illness this year unless they were bitten in another country. Last year, however, 11 Floridians were infected with chikungunya from local mosquitoes, six contracted dengue fever locally and 16 contracted West Nile virus.

Chikungunya did not appear in the Western Hemisphere until 2013 but spread quickly in the Caribbean and Florida last year. It spreads when a mosquito bites an infected person, gets the virus and then bites someone else.

For more information about mosquito-borne illnesses, visit [www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/mosquito-borne-diseases](http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/mosquito-borne-diseases).

To report mosquito infestation, call Seminole mosquito control, 561-319-3983.

## After rain, stormwater runoff causes pollution

SUBMITTED BY NICHOLAS PERSAUD  
Environmental Health Program

Progress and development on Seminole Tribe lands have resulted in more paved roads, concrete pads and driveways, which have created impervious surfaces. These impervious surfaces prevent rainwater from naturally soaking into the ground during rains, which becomes stormwater runoff. Stormwater runoff can pick up debris, chemicals, dirt and other pollutants and flow into a storm sewer system or directly to a lake, stream, river or wetland.

Polluted stormwater runoff can have many adverse effects on plants, fish, animals and people.

Sediment has the potential to cloud the water and make it difficult or impossible for aquatic plants to grow. It also can destroy aquatic habitats. Sediment is the most common pollutant in waterways.

Excess nutrients have the potential to cause algae blooms. When algae die, they sink to the bottom and decompose in a process that removes oxygen from the water, which may create low oxygen levels in waters. Bacteria and other pathogens have the potential to wash into swimming areas and create health hazards.

Debris – plastic bags, plastic multipack rings, bottles and cigarette butts – are washed into waterbodies and may harm aquatic life like ducks, fish, turtles and birds, and household hazardous wastes like insecticides, pesticides, paint, solvents, used motor oil and other auto fluids may poison aquatic life, land animals and people.

Follow these tips to help prevent stormwater pollution.

**Residential:** Recycle or properly dispose of household products that contain chemicals, such as insecticides, pesticides, paint, solvents and used motor oil and other auto fluids. Transfer stations located on the reservations will help with proper disposal of these items.

Don't pour them onto the ground or into storm drains.

**Lawn care:** Excess fertilizers and pesticides applied to lawns and gardens wash off and pollute streams. In addition, yard clippings and leaves can wash into storm drains and contribute nutrients and organic matter to streams.

Don't overwater lawns; consider using a soaker hose instead of a sprinkler. And use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly. When use is necessary, use these chemicals in the recommended amounts. Use mulch or safer pest control methods whenever possible. Compost or mulch yard waste, and cover piles of dirt or mulch being used in landscaping projects.

**Septic systems:** Leaking and poorly maintained septic systems release nutrients and pathogens (bacteria and viruses) that can be picked up by stormwater and discharged into nearby waterbodies. Pathogens can cause public health problems and environmental concerns.

Inspect systems every three years and pump tanks as necessary (every 3 to 5 years). Don't dispose of household hazardous waste in sinks or toilets.

**Agriculture:** Lack of vegetation on streambanks can lead to erosion. Overgrazed pastures can also contribute excessive amounts of sediment to local waterbodies. Excess fertilizers and pesticides can harm aquatic animals and lead to destructive algae blooms. Livestock in streams can contaminate waterways with bacteria, making them unsafe for human contact.

Rotate animal grazing to prevent over grazing and potential soil erosion in fields. Also, apply fertilizers and pesticides according to label instructions to save money and minimize pollution.

For more information regarding stormwater runoff pollution and best management practices, contact the Environmental Resource Management Department at 954-965-4380.



Beverly Bidney

Line dancers fill the dance floor during the Boots and Pearls dinner party July 22 to conclude the 22nd annual Wellness Conference. The five-day event featured wellness sessions, fitness walks and Alcoholics Anonymous meetings.

# SEMINOLE SCENES



Beverly Bidney

**COWBOY CUTIES:** Cousins Jace Johns, 6, and Thad Johns, 7, pass the time between events July 1 at the Cinco de Mayo Rodeo in Brighton.



Sunny Ploch

**THRILL RIDE:** Jayla Foster enjoys a swing during the Tampa Reservation's Fourth of July celebration at the Lakeland property July 3.



Beverly Bidney

**SEASIDE JAUNT:** The 22nd annual Wellness Conference held July 19-23 at the Hilton Marco Island Beach Resort and Spa on Marco Island offers attendees an opportunity for morning runs on white-sand beaches. Here, Rudy Martinez strides on the sand.



Sunny Ploch

**KUDOS:** Seminole Police Department Officer Tom Apsey congratulates Tampa senior Nancy Frank for completing the Firecracker 5K walk during the reservation's Fourth of July celebrations.



Beverly Bidney

**INTO THE LIGHT:** Participants walk through the tunnel to Seminole Estates June 30 during the Firecracker 5K in Hollywood.



Beverly Bidney

**SOARING SEMINOLE:** RJ Ealy, 11, seems light as a cloud as he takes flight on a bungee ride July 1 at the Fort Pierce Fourth of July party.



Gordon Wareham

**ROCK HARD:** Cameron Osceola, lead singer of the Osceola Brothers Band, performs July 17 during the Native Rock Celebration at the Hard Rock Cafe in Hollywood. The event was the first in a series aimed to break stereotypes of Natives in the music industry.



Beverly Bidney

**ROOST RULER:** A rooster rules the roost at the Chupco Youth Ranch in Fort Pierce. The horse doesn't seem to mind but keeps a close watch on his feathered friend.



Beverly Bidney

**CATCH OF THE DAY:** Kids continue fishing June 27 after the Take a Kid Fishing Tournament ended in Big Cypress.



Beverly Bidney

**BOY TALK:** Caden Abraham Jumper, 2, and his uncle Wildcat Naha Jumper converse on the sidelines of the Fred Smith Rodeo Arena July 1 between the Cinco de Mayo and Josiah Johns Memorial rodeos in Brighton.



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# Education

B



## Summer work program offers youth real-world experience

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

Thirty-nine teenagers are spending the summer working for the Tribe to gain real-world work experience thanks to the Education Department's Summer Work Experience Program (SWEP).

Through the program, which runs from June 15 to Aug. 7, SWEP participants wake up, clock in and work in departments as diverse as Cattle and Range, Recreation, Culture and Fire Rescue. The program, which pays an hourly wage, began in 2005 for high school students.

Participant Raevin Frank, 18, said her curiosity about Fire Rescue led her to choose that department.

"I thought it would be something I could use later in life," said Raevin, who will start her senior year at NSU University School in Davie this fall. "It's active; you are always busy and I get to see behind the scenes. I'm happy to be here. I really enjoy it."

Although she doesn't respond to calls with the Fire Rescue crew, Raevin trains with them daily and became certified in CPR and automated external defibrillator (AED). She is also learning useful skills such as performing the Heimlich maneuver, wrapping bandages, using fire hoses and tying secure knots. Along with members of the department, she attended a class on incident command and the art of reading smoke at the City of Hollywood Fire Rescue Department.

"We want her to learn something that will be useful at home, like CPR and other lifesaving skills," said Lt. Robert Vega. "You can't put a price on that. And she got to see what we do on a regular basis."

During a rope-tying drill, Raevin learned and mastered the complicated figure-eight knot.

"I've been teaching guys to do this for a long time and she got it on the second try," said battalion shift commander Capt. David Lugo. "It takes most people a long time to learn it."

"That's one of the toughest knots; everybody has problems learning it," added district chief Doug LeValley.

In Immokalee, students Jada Holdiness, 14, and Jillian Rodriguez, 14, are valuable aides for library assistant Dolores Lopez.



Beverly Bidney

Lt. Robert Vega, of the Fire Rescue Department, shows SWEP participant Raevin Frank medications from a medical box inside a rescue truck at the Hollywood Fire station July 14. The morning routine included checking medical boxes in all trucks to confirm all necessary items were on board and unexpired.

About 30 to 50 children enter the library daily for the summer reading program, and the SWEP students read to them and later ask questions about the books. They also find online activities and interact with the community.

"They are good with the kids," Lopez said. "Some kids make fun of others and they (Jada and Jillian) are real good about picking up the kids' spirits; being close in age helps. They are very responsible girls."

Brent Frank, 16, chose the Hollywood Preschool for the second year. He has experience babysitting young cousins and

knows what to expect from toddlers. At the preschool, he tends to the needs of the active 2-year-old class and keeps them busy.

"I wanted to have a little extra cash and I like to keep myself busy," said the Hollywood Hills High School junior. "Making sure they aren't upset is the hard part because when they are upset, there is no turning back. I wanted more experience with children so I will know what to expect when I have some of my own."

Raini Cypress, 16, is using SWEP to earn some income over the summer while padding her resume for college applications.

The junior at American Heritage School is working in Big Cypress Councilman Cicero Osceola's office.

"Everyone said to do it because you get to know things in the community," Raini said. "I also really need to learn how to properly communicate with people. You need to be able to communicate with others to be able to function in society."

Her responsibilities include answering phones, taking notes during meetings and voicing her opinions to Councilman Osceola.

◆ See SWEP on page 2B

## Toddlers, babies to learn Creek with pilot language program

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BRIGHTON** — A Creek language immersion program for children 4 months to 3 years old will begin Aug. 17 at the former Boys & Girls Club at Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School in Brighton.

The pilot program aims to teach children Creek in a homey environment. Culture language instructors Alice Sweat and Jenny Shore will run the program and will only speak Creek to children so they will learn the language naturally.

"We are trying to revitalize our language," said Sweat, director of traditional language and history. "We are targeting them because they haven't had any language yet. We will speak nothing but our language in the room and hopefully they will converse back to us."

Sweat said Chairman James E. Billie hatched the idea of the immersion program. Sweat then visited the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation in North Carolina to glean ideas from their well-established immersion program, which has 75 participants from 7 months to 7 years old.

Sweat said the program in Brighton will be modeled after the Cherokee's but with modifications to accommodate the Seminole Tribe's needs.

According to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, young children have a natural curiosity about learning. Beginning foreign language instruction early sets the stage for students to develop advanced levels of proficiencies in one or more languages. In addition, younger learners possess the capacity to develop near native-like pronunciation and intonation in a new language.

"Studies have shown repeatedly that foreign language learning increases critical thinking skills, creativity and flexibility of mind in young children," wrote Therese Sullivan Caccavale, president of the National Network for Early Language Learning, in the Duke University Talent Identification Program online newsletter.

The Creek immersion program will follow the school schedule and begin at 7:30 a.m. Parents who work may pick up their children at 5:15 p.m.; regular dismissal will be 3 p.m. In addition to Sweat and Shore, Charter School culture teachers Jade Osceola, Jimi Lu Huff and Myra Gopher will also participate in the program.

Sweat encourages all parents to have their children involved.

"Once the children are 3 years old, they can go to preschool," Sweat said. "We want parents to get involved and learn the language, too."

For more information or to register for the Creek language immersion program, contact Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School at 863-467-2501.

## Brody goes to Washington for president's Gen-I gathering

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**WASHINGTON** — President Barack Obama's push to improve the lives of Indian Country youth through his Generation Indigenous (Gen-I) initiative advanced midsummer when Native teens and young adults united in Washington, D.C. for the first White House Tribal Youth Gathering.

Seminole Tribe member Broden "Brody" Osceola Hagen, 16, of Naples, attended the historic youth summit with nearly 900 others — ages 14 to 24 — from 230 Tribes.

The July 9 gathering was a collaborative effort by the White House, the United National Indian Tribal Youth (UNITY) organization and the departments of Justice and Health and Human Services.

"I'm very excited and also a little bit nervous," Brody said before the event. "But I think my nerves will go away when it all starts to become real."

"Real" happened with a full day of frank discussions about severe problems summarized in the president's 2014 Native Youth Report. The report lists staggering disparities in education, economics and health among young Native Americans compared to youth of other races.

Facts: One in three Native children lives in poverty; only 67 percent of Native students graduate high school and only 53 percent who attend schools run by the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) graduate; suicide is the second leading cause of death among Native youth 15 to 24 years old; the prevalence of Type-2 diabetes among 10- to 19-year-olds is three times higher than the national average and five times higher than white kids.

And more: Substance abuse among Native students ages 12 or older is highest among all population groups — age, gender and race. In 2013, an estimated 40 percent of Native youth had a lifetime prevalence for substance abuse. In 2012, almost 69 percent of youth admitted into recovery



Official White House Photo by Lawrence Jackson

First lady Michelle Obama greets Elizabeth Ferguson, 21, of Kotzebue, Alaska, following her remarks July 9 at the Tribal Youth Gathering in support of the Generation Indigenous and Reach Higher initiatives in Washington, D.C.

facilities claimed alcohol as the primary substance of abuse.

Cecilia Munoz, the president's director of domestic policy, said in a telephone press conference July 8 that Gen-I aims "to expand educational, employment, health and social services" for Native youth

while their voices are heard, their culture continues and their futures thrive.

"(Native) youth represent the next generation of leaders making significant contributions to their tribal nations, to the cities that they live in, to the United States and to the world," Munoz said.

Also at the press conference were Secretary of Interior Sally Jewell, who heads the Bureau of Indian Affairs that oversees the Bureau of Indian Education, and Lillian Sparks, Commissioner of the

◆ See GEN-I on page 4B

**◆ SWEP**  
From page 1B

Raini said working in the office has already helped her gain more confidence. The things she has learned and the connections she has made are worth any social anxiety she may have felt, she said.

She looks forward to participating in SWEP again next year and encourages her peers to take advantage of all the Tribe offers youth.

"You need to recognize how lucky you are," Raini said. "No one can take your education away from you. Even if you don't have the best grades, if you tried your hardest, you shouldn't be upset."

Jaden Bankston, 15, and Satie Rico, 14, decided to work at the Hollywood Recreation Department camp because they thought it would be fun to play with younger children.

"Seeing how kids are in a big group and without their parents was interesting," said Satie, an incoming ninth-grader at American Heritage School in Plantation. "They are definitely different and don't listen as much. But I like SWEP and will do it again next year. It's a great experience."

"I learned how to communicate with them and had a fun time," added Jaden, an incoming ninth-grader at NSU University School in Davie. "But it's hard when it's time to sit down or change activities; they want to keep playing and don't always listen."

Despite the challenges, Jaden said he loves having fun with the kids and joining them on field trips.

Recreation site manager Joe Collins appreciates the students and makes sure they receive varied experiences over the summer, including camp and the community pool.

"The program gives them the opportunity to see what we do," Collins said. "They are a good group; they always check in with me and the kids like them."

Supervisors keep in touch with the Education Department to document the students' progress. At the end of the program, they will be evaluated. The records will be kept in the Tribe's Human Resources Department.

"The SWEP program is designed to provide participants with an opportunity to develop constructive work habits, a positive attitude and valuable job skills necessary to enter the workplace prepared and qualified to be a productive employee," said Brenda

Gillis, Education Department assistant director.

Brent said he is happy for the opportunity to earn those skills.

"Getting up early and coming to work prepares you for the real world," he said. "Not everything has to be relaxing; you have to keep active to maintain a healthy life."

**"No one can take your education away from you."**

— Raini Cypress,  
American Heritage School



Beverly Bidney

Dustin Osceola, 4, gets his shoe tied July 15 by SWEP participant Jaden Bankston as Gage Riddle and SWEP participant Satie Rico watch during the Hollywood Recreation camp at Seminole Estates.



Beverly Bidney

SWEP participant Brent Frank reads to the 2-year-old class July 15 at the Hollywood Preschool.



Beverly Bidney

Jaden Bankston and Satie Rico take charge of campers at the Hollywood Recreation camp July 15. Both teens are participants in the Summer Work Experience Program (SWEP).

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# First inter-tribal youth congress on climate change

## Teens learn how global warming impacts Tribes nationwide

BY EILEEN SOLER  
Staff Reporter

**SHEPHERDSTOWN, W.Va.** — Indian Country teens confronted a global problem during the first Inter-Tribal Youth Climate Leadership Congress at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center.

The 89 high school students from 28 tribal communities that span the nation from the arctic Alaska North Slope to the steamy Florida Everglades attended the June 28 to July 3 event in the woods of West Virginia.

Jim Siegel, a biologist with the Fish & Wildlife Service's Division of Education and Outreach who coordinated the event, said similar meetings since 2009 have been held for teens of all races but the most recent congress was called only for Native students because Native communities are most in danger of environmental devastation.

"It's ironic that the people who are most vulnerable to climate change are the least responsible ... and they are the people with the least political power," Siegel said.

Other sponsors included the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Geological Survey.

The six-day gathering featured many small cluster meetings for students to share firsthand accounts of environmental changes that affect their own traditions, land, food sources, medicine and culture.

In a video produced at the event, Navajo teens from New Mexico expressed worry about consistent and severe drought that continues to dry up water supplies and has virtually stopped family farming operations. Alaskan youths voiced concern about melting glaciers that cause flooding, which halts whale fishing for food, energy and commerce. Teens from Hawaii said that higher air temperatures will eventually force the extinction of all indigenous bird species — thanks to malaria-infected mosquitoes that are moving into ever-warming mountaintops.

"[Students] could see how climate change impacts communities differently but that they are all part of the same system," Siegel said. "It is powerful that they can now say, 'I have a friend whose family

depends on whaling in the Arctic Ocean and how the climate change impacts them and I have a friend in the Florida Everglades whose life is changing because of the same global system."

Marsha Osceola, of the Seminole Tribe's Hollywood Reservation, attended the meetings with teens Donavin Osceola and Morgan Bert, both of Trail. Tanya Williams, an Education Department acting adviser, was the group's mentor and chaperone.

For Marsha, connecting Alaska's melting glaciers to rising seawater along Florida's coast and subsequent salt water intrusion in the Everglades was a no-brainer.

"With water levels rising we're losing beaches on the coast, which means tourists might stop coming here; and in the Everglades, islands and groves that were above water and used for traditional reasons are getting harder to find," Marsha said.

Tourism, the state's leading economic engine, rakes in nearly \$82 billion per year but according to the Third U.S. National Climate Assessment, released in May 2014:

"Some of Florida's top tourist attractions, including the Everglades and Florida Keys, are threatened by sea level rise, with estimated revenue losses of \$9 billion by 2025 and \$40 billion by the 2050s."

Closer to home, climate change problems could pose economic threats to tribally owned tourist attractions like eco-adventure-based Billie Swamp Safari and the casino and nightlife-driven hotel resorts.

Marsha also cited man-made environmental problems in South Florida that, fueled by climate change, are diminishing habitat for native life and interrupting tribal tradition.

For example, the invasive Burmese python kills and eats indigenous animals that are critical to the ecosystem, such as bobcats, raccoons and birds, at alarming rates, according to a 2011 report from the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Invasive plants also wreak havoc. The Brazilian pepper bush, brought to the U.S. as an ornamental, is now spread throughout the Everglades making it harder to find its native lookalike, the dahoon holly, a traditional medicine tree.

Even President Barack Obama, during

an April 22 visit to Everglades National Park near the Miccosukee Reservation, acknowledged climate change as an imminent threat to the Florida environment and economy.

"We do not have time to deny the effects of climate change," Obama said. "Here in the Everglades you can see the effect of a changing planet."

The congress also featured lectures from 11 Native American professionals dedicated to environmental issues.

Speakers included atmospheric scientist Robbie Hood (Cherokee), who heads the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Unmanned Aircraft Systems; anthropologist Joe Watkins (Choctaw), who is chief of the American Indian Liaison Office at the National Park Service in Washington, D.C.; lawyer Anne Marie Chischilly (Diné), who sits on the Department of Interior's Federal Advisory Committee on Climate Change and Natural Resources Science; and hip hop artist Frank Waln (Sicangu Lakota), whose multiple award-winning recordings mix music with messages that bring Native environmental issues to light.

Students learned facts about climate change and how to build community resilience amid effects that are altering their lives.

Morgan admitted that it was difficult for her, at the beginning, to relate to the problems of teens from other Tribes whose daily lives depend on the environment — such as whaling in Alaska and farming in New Mexico.

"To be honest, as the other kids were telling how bad it is for them, I realized how privileged we are. While other Tribes are losing everything, we still have so much," Morgan said. "I learned so much from them that now I want to know more about our problems — and I will look into that."

Siegel said the students were all expected to devise plans to address environmental concerns in their own communities.

Marsha said the Seminole students hope to plan a social gathering for youth ages 13 through 21. There, they will show invasive plant and animal species and tell students how to get rid of them in their own backyards.

"The Burmese python is now at the top of the food chain and the only way to regulate that is to kill them. For the invasive plants? They take the water and smother the other plants; we have to find a way to kill them without using harsh chemicals," Marsha said.



Photo courtesy of Tanya Williams

Morgan Bert and Donavin Osceola check out a native flowering plant during an outdoor activity at the Inter-Tribal Youth Climate Leadership Congress that ran June 28 through July 3 in West Virginia.

**"I learned so much from them that now I want to know more about our problems ..."**

— Morgan Bert, conference attendee



Photo courtesy of Tanya Williams

From left, Donavin Osceola, Marsha Osceola and Morgan Bert pose during a break at the first Inter-Tribal Youth Climate Leadership Conference at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service National Conservation Training Center.

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**GEN-I**  
From page 1B

Administration of Native Americans.

Jewell said she finds it hard not to become angry when she thinks of the history of BIE schools and sees the dilapidated buildings. For decades, the system separated families and ignored Indian culture, she said. Now, BIE aims to improve and replace facilities while infusing rigorous academics with rich culture.

Currently, there are 183 BIE-funded schools on 64 reservations. Of those, 126 are tribally controlled and 57 are federally controlled.

The Gen-I initiative, launched by the president during the 2014 White House Tribal Nations Conference, is delivering goals. The new Native Youth Community Projects program provided \$1.4 million to seven tribal education departments for school improvements; the new National Tribal Youth Network boasts 1,500 members; \$1 million will go to 20 tribal colleges to create programs that will help students from 45 BIE feeder schools get into college; and the BIE has developed framework to make Native language critical to school curriculum.

Since 2013 the president, first lady Michelle Obama and members of the president's Cabinet, including Jewell and Education Secretary Arne Duncan, have conducted "listening" visits at reservation schools from Alaska to the Miccosukee Reservation near Miami, to help restructure the BIE.

Brody said a heartfelt speech at the gathering by Michelle Obama, who described her visit to Pine Ridge Reservation, was a highlight of the event.

"I know that you can all make the change you seek, day by day, vote by vote, eagle feather by eagle feather," Michelle Obama told the students while referring to SaNoah LaRocque, of the Turtle Mountain Band of the Chippewa.

LaRocque, a Harvard University pre-med freshman, fought her district school board for the right to wear an eagle feather on her high school graduation cap, though decorations were not allowed on graduation regalia. Arguing that the feather was not decoration but a cultural symbol of strength and honor, LaRocque won.

"The first lady was really emotional talking about [issues] with us," Brody said. "She was sincere."

Jewell credited the listening tours for furthering understanding between Tribes and the federal government.

"We're working to bring BIE schools' control back to the Tribes, recognizing that the people who care most about the young people in their communities are the people in those communities themselves," Jewell said.

From the visits came the Blueprint for Reform to restructure the BIE. An update on the blueprint, released at the youth gathering, calls to fix "inadequate socio-emotional support networks and an out-of-



Photo courtesy of Center for Native American Youth

Native American teens and young adults pose questions to a panel of senior Obama administration officials July 9 during the first White House Tribal Youth Gathering.

sync curriculum not tailored to tribal needs or 21st century learning."

New recommendations for the president's \$1 billion 2016 Indian education budget include BIE funding of \$59 million in 2016 for replacement construction at dilapidated schools; \$80 million to bolster programs that improve school operations and provide real life opportunities for students; \$10 million for projects important to individual Tribes, including \$3 million to help with Native language immersion; and \$13 million to fund 100 percent of administrative costs at BIE schools operated by Tribes.

When asked what one day at a White House youth gathering would do for a teen from South Florida or South Dakota, Sparks, a member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, said she expected the summit to make a huge difference in the lives of the students.

"I am really hoping that it will also inspire folks who will go back to their

communities, who will go back to their Tribe and assume leadership roles not only within their Tribe but also in their state and then hopefully national positions as well," Sparks said.

Brody said the tone of the gathering was sometimes tense when issues such as teen suicide were discussed. Panels made up of UNITY members posed difficult questions to members of Congress and Cabinet secretaries.

"Almost all of us in the gathering raised our hand to say we knew someone who committed suicide," Brody said. "There was an overwhelming request for more and better resources to be given to Indian health services so that youth have access to programs that can prevent teen suicide."

Jewell said much of her focus since her appointment in 2013 has been aimed at improving BIE services by taking leads from tribal leaders, students and educators.

"The key thing that will come out of

[the summit] is people meet each other whether they are from the Seminole Nation in South Florida or from Kotzebue, Alaska, and I think they will recognize they have a lot of issues in common, and I think that pipeline of connections to each other will be a gift that keeps on giving," Jewell said.

Brody, the son of Arlo Hagen and Tina Marie Osceola, was invited to the gathering after completing a community service requirement called the Gen-I Challenge. The St. John Neumann Catholic High School junior and varsity basketball player held an online yard sale with help from his coach Matt Paul, who also runs Bayshore Education Center, a local nonprofit service organization for low-income immigrant children.

Brody, described by his mother as a "sneaker head," donated his own shoes and clothing for the fundraiser, dubbed The Sho-Naa-Bish Challenge.

Paul told Brody about a teen basketball

player who had been wearing the same sneakers for several years. Paul found out when the boy showed up on the court one day with his shoes untied, he finally outgrew the shoes so much that he could no longer tie the shoelaces.

"It was kind of eye-opening to me, and sad, to find out that another kid needed help like that. He was in real need," Brody said.

Using the first \$300 earned, Brody and Paul purchased two pairs of gym shoes, one pair of Jordan slides and several pairs of socks for the boy. Brody said the charity experience and the youth summit in Washington, D.C. taught him a lesson to share with the Tribe.

"I think that as a Tribe and as a youth that we are really selfish and most of us don't take into account what's really going on in Indian Country. So many of us just spend money on ourselves but should be supporting charities that make a difference," Brody said.

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# Students reap academic accolades at incentive awards celebrations

**BY BEVERLY BIDNEY**  
Staff Reporter

Students like to spend summer in places far from the classroom, so the Education Department gave them cool reminders of recent academic achievements via a series of summer-fun inspired incentive awards celebrations.

Students from Trail, Hollywood, Immokalee and Tampa who met one of the 15 criteria outlined by the Education Department received awards. The awards included recognitions for advanced placement classes, honors classes, "A" honor roll, "B" honor roll, improved GPA, high school diploma completion, kindergarten completion, GED completion and perfect attendance.

"We need everyone to get educated," said Trail Liaison Norman Huggins at the Trail awards ceremony July 11. "Don't forget where you are from but get an education. It's mandatory in the outside world so work hard and go to school."

Water fun, beachy scenes and even trampolines made the parties special.

Trail celebrated with a luau and pool party at Seminole Estates. Eager to jump into the cool refreshment of the swimming

pool, students rushed to pick up awards.

At least one student is looking forward to next school year already.

"I like learning math," said Billie Cypress, 10, a recent fourth-grade graduate at the Miccosukee Indian School. "But I heard fifth grade is hard."

Hollywood students celebrated July 9 at Seminole Estates; Immokalee honored students July 16 at Sky Zone Trampoline Park in Fort Myers; and Tampa lauded kids July 14 at Jackson's Bistro on Harbour Island.

Tampa's only 2015 high school graduate, honor roll student Ricky Dillon, led the Tampa party. Azaria Simmons earned an "A" honor roll award and picked up an attendance award, while Maya Smith also made the "A" honor roll. Low attendance was likely due to rain, heavy rush hour traffic and the closing of the Harbour Island Bridge.

Education Department Assistant Director Brenda Gillis recognized the students during the ceremonies for their hard work and accomplishments throughout the school year.

*Special projects reporter Peter B. Gallagher contributed to this article.*



Photo courtesy of Education Department  
Waddie Jackson beams while showing off well-earned education incentive awards July 9 at the Hollywood celebration.



Peter B. Gallagher  
Ricky Dillon is congratulated for his award by grandma Barbara Cypress and girlfriend Kari Parkhurst during the Tampa incentive awards July 14 at Jackson's Bistro.



Beverly Bidney  
Adrian Billie, 5, retrieves an award for Paris Huggins as Education Department Assistant Director Brenda Gillis looks on July 11 during the Trail incentive awards at Seminole Estates in Hollywood.



Beverly Bidney  
Autumn Osceola, 4, receives cotton candy at the Trail incentive awards celebration at Seminole Estates in Hollywood.



Photo courtesy of Education Department  
Youngsters pose for a photo during the beach-themed Hollywood incentive awards celebration at Seminole Estates.

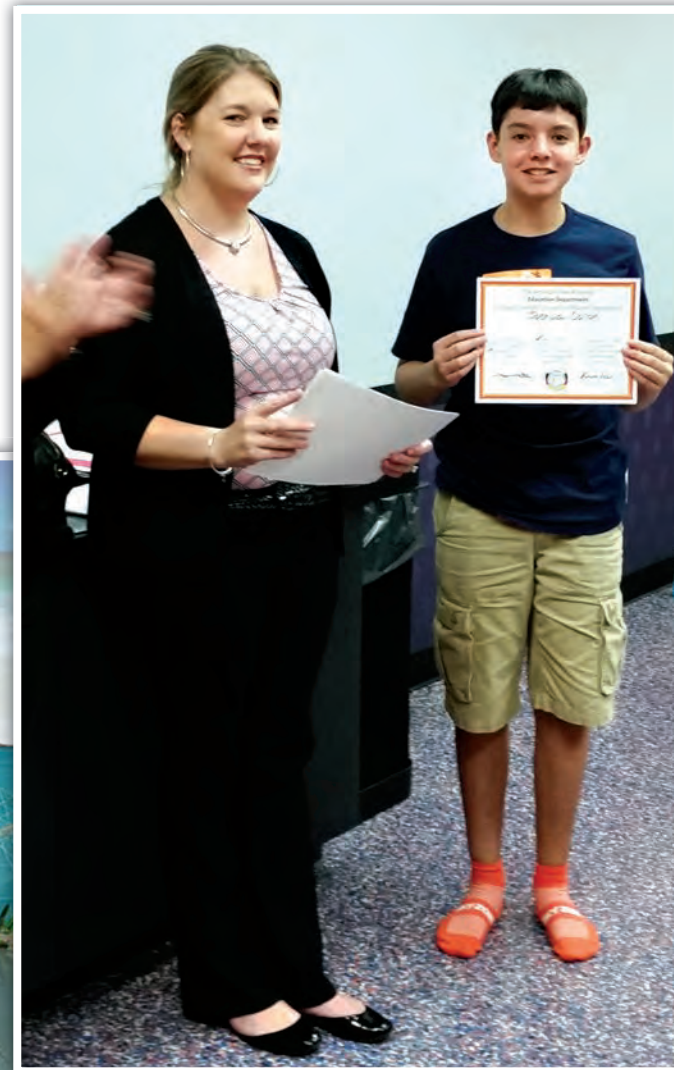


Photo courtesy of Education Department  
Joshua Colon poses with his award at the Immokalee incentive awards party July 16 at Sky Zone Trampoline Park in Fort Myers. Education assistant Victoria Soto looks on.



Beverly Bidney  
Trail students enjoy the Seminole Estates pool during the community's incentive awards celebration.



Photo courtesy of Education Department  
Hollywood students proudly display their hard-earned awards at the incentive awards celebration at Seminole Estates.



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# Sports



## Lady Seminoles work overtime to capture NAYO's 16-17 title

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

ATMORE, Ala. — For two days, the Poarch Band of Creek Indians softball and baseball fields in Atmore, Alabama were filled with hundreds of players, coaches, officials and spectators who sweltered as the heat index soared past 100 degrees, just a bunt away from the Florida Panhandle.

Seminole Recreation Department Director Richard Blankenship and his crew purchased 123 bags of ice and 60 cases of water to help keep Seminole players from nine teams hydrated.

From a weather standpoint, the coolest part of the day came early in the morning.

From a softball standpoint, the wee hours also brought the coolest part of the Native American Youth Organization (NAYO) Softball and Baseball Tournament for the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

Just before 2 a.m. on July 19, the Lady Seminoles' 16-17-year-old softball team concluded a grueling but satisfying day by capturing the Tribe's lone championship with a 24-2 win against the Cherokee's Rez Raiders.

After losing their first game of the tournament, the Lady Seminoles faced an uphill battle on day two to stay alive in the double-elimination format. To win the title, they needed to win four games in a row. They picked a perfect time to go 4-for-4.

The championship game lasted 2 hours and 25 minutes and featured two celebrations by the Lady Seminoles: the first after the third inning when nearly everyone believed the game was over and another celebration when it actually ended after seven innings.

Delaney Osceola tossed a four-hitter in her final NAYO game, something her Lady Seminole teammates used as fuel for determination in their championship drive. Richard Osceola, Delaney's father, coached.

"It's exciting for me because it was Delaney's last year," said catcher Lahna Baker. "She really wanted to play, so I'm glad we could come out and win."

The bats stayed awake long enough to belt out 19 hits. Led by Cheyenne Nunez,

seven Lady Seminoles notched multiple hits. Cheyenne was unstoppable out of the No. 3 spot with a 4-for-4 performance that included a walk, double and two RBIs. Other standouts included Tyra Baker (3-for-4, 4 RBIs), leadoff batter Lahna Baker (3-for-5, double, triple), Sarah Descheene (2-for-3, 1 RBI) and Deliah Carrillo (2-for-4).

The Lady Seminoles also received a boost from four Mississippi Choctaw players, including Raine King (3 hits) and Delaine McMillian (2 hits). They were late additions to help fill the roster before the tournament started.

"We came ready to play," Lahna said. "For us to be put together as a last-minute team, we did outstanding."

With a 14-1 lead after three innings, the Lady Seminoles, and just about everyone else in the park,

thought the game was over because of the 10-run mercy rule. The team hugged, hollered and shook hands with the Rez Raiders before finding out there was more work to be done. The championship must go seven innings, a tournament official told the team. After a lengthy delay, the game resumed, and so did the Lady Seminoles' dominance.

"We still stayed determined. We didn't let that make us fall back or anything," Cheyenne said after she and her teammates hoisted the championship trophy in the infield surrounded by die-hard supporters who stayed until the end.

About eight hours earlier, the championship trophy seemed like it would remain out of the team's grasp. The Lady Seminoles trailed the Seneca Strikers 1-0. Down to their final three outs, they rallied to win.

Cheyenne used her speed to beat out a leadoff bunt. She scored the tying run on a double by Raine. After Sarah walked, Delaney came through in the clutch by laying down a bunt that was fumbled by Seneca allowing the winning run to cross home plate.

"I knew the situation and knew that there was only one out," Delaney said about her decision to bunt. "I trust my hitting, but I don't trust it as much as my bunting. I'm not a fast runner, but I know I can get the ball down."

Moments after the thrilling victory and celebration, the Lady Seminoles shifted attention to the undefeated Rez Raiders, who needed just one win to capture the title. The Lady Seminoles needed to beat the Rez Raiders twice.

After falling behind 3-1, the Lady Seminoles scored five runs in the third to take a 6-3 lead. The Rez Raiders knotted it up at 6-6 in the fourth before the Lady Seminoles took the lead for good when Destinee Jimmie reached base on an error and scored the go-ahead run on another error.

The 11-7 win by the Lady Seminoles ended at 10:59 p.m. and set the stage for the winner-take-all game and an early morning celebration.

**"I'm proud of the whole team and how they pulled together. They didn't quit."**

— Richard Osceola, softball coach

"I'm proud of the whole team and how they pulled together," said coach Osceola, who was assisted by Daniel Nunez. "They didn't quit. When they were down, we had our last at-bat and they pulled through. I'm so proud of them. It was a team effort."

The championship team was comprised of Lahna Baker, Lanie Baker, Tyra Baker, Deliah Carrillo, Sarah Descheene, Martina Herrera, Destinee Jimmie, Raine King, Allison McMillian, Delaine McMillian, Cheyenne Nunez, Delaney Osceola and Tierra Phillips.

♦ See more NAYO coverage on page 5C



Kevin Johnson  
Lady Seminoles third baseman Cheyenne Nunez tags out a runner during the NAYO 16-17 championship July 19 in Atmore, Alabama.



Kevin Johnson  
The Lady Seminoles' eyes light up as they receive the championship trophy for winning NAYO's 16-17 softball championship July 19 in Atmore, Alabama.



Beverly Bidney

Jacob Johns manages to stay on the horse more than the required eight seconds July 1 and earns 78 points during the Cinco de Mayo Rodeo at the Fred Smith Rodeo Arena in Brighton.

## Brighton Rez hosts rodeo doubleheader

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — It was a long night July 1 in Brighton as cowboys and cowgirls rode a doubleheader at the Fred Smith Rodeo Arena. The previously postponed Cinco de Mayo Rodeo kicked things off and the Josiah Johns Memorial Rodeo followed.

Between the two Eastern Indian Rodeo Association (EIRA) events, Moses Jumper Jr. and Paul Bowers Sr. honored the late Josiah Johns with a poem and presented his children, Marty Johns and Lisa Osceola, with commemorative belt buckles.

Josiah Johns was an all-around rodeo champion and a founder of the Southeastern Indian Rodeo Association, which later became the EIRA. He was the first Seminole to compete in the Indian National Finals Rodeo (INFR) and was inducted into its Hall of Fame in 2012. Outside the rodeo arena, Johns was instrumental in building the Brighton Seminole bingo hall, which grew into today's casino.

"He participated in rodeos from Madison Square Garden to California and everywhere in between," Marty Johns said. "I learned from my father; he made me what I am. This is the life we live, this rodeo. I'm privileged to follow in his footsteps."

Jumper read a poem he wrote shortly after Johns passed away in 1983. Titled "Say it ain't so, Joe," the poem laments the untimely loss of the rodeo champion.

"Marty and Lisa were always involved in the rodeo," Jumper said. "The rodeo family coincides with our agricultural background. We have a deep history in cattle and horses; that's what motivates us to keep in the rodeo."

Before the second rodeo began, Justin Gopher and Josh Jumper spoke to the audience about the importance of preserving rodeo as part of the Seminole way of life. Both men grew up in the rodeo and still compete.

"This is who we are; this is our cowboy life," Josh Jumper said. "I want this to

♦ See RODEO on page 2C

## Basketball series unites reservations

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

BIG CYPRESS — Kyle Alvarado couldn't have picked a better time to soar through the lane and swat the ball away from an opponent in mid-air. The powerful highlight-reel rejection brought spectators in the bleachers and his teammates on the bench out of their seats.

The defensive gem would have been impressive in any basketball setting, but thanks to the new Recreation Summer Basketball Tournament, it came in front of players and Recreation staff from Brighton, Big Cypress, Fort Pierce, Hollywood and Immokalee.

"Our goal is that new friendships would start and give them the opportunity

to go to the other reservations and see what their facilities are like," said Salina Dorgan, Recreation Department project coordinator.

For four consecutive Mondays in June and July, youngsters age 5 through high school represented their reservations in the intra-Tribe summer league run by Recreation and Press On Sports. The series started in Brighton, shifted to Immokalee and Big Cypress and culminated July 13 with championship games at the Howard Tiger Recreation Center in Hollywood.

"It's a good thing. I really enjoy it. It keeps kids out of trouble and keeps them busy and active," said Kyle, of Immokalee, whose block against host Big Cypress came on July 6 when 11 teams and about 100 boys and girls filled the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium. "It's a new thing. You see all the different age groups playing. It's good meeting all the reservation people."

Kyle, who is headed into his senior year at The Vanguard School in Lake Wales, used the series to stay in shape while prepping for the upcoming high school season.

"Knowing there's other people better than you makes you want to push yourself and get better," he said.

Those sentiments were echoed by Brighton's Alicia Fudge, who started for the Admiral Farragut Academy girls varsity team in St. Petersburg as an eighth-grader last winter. She said facing teams from other reservations brings out the best in players.

"It's more intense. I have to work harder," she said.

With reservation bragging rights on the line, games featured plenty of emotion and incentive.

"We're all friends, but when it comes to a game, it gets competitive," said Ricky Garza, who scored the first two points of the game for Big Cypress in its win against Immokalee. Garza played for Ahfachkee School last season as a seventh-grader.

The series provided an

♦ See BASKETS on page 3C



Kevin Johnson

Immokalee's Kyle Alvarado notches a layup against Big Cypress during a summer youth basketball game July 6 at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium in Big Cypress.

# Tribe to host NASA softball in Stuart

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

STUART — Four months after it hosted hundreds of young basketball players in the Native American Youth Organization tournament, Seminole Tribe Recreation will roll out the welcome mat again, this time for throngs of adult softball players in the annual Native American Sports Association (NASA) tournament.

“Our goal is 50 teams,” said Recreation Director Richard Blankenship.

The tournament will be held Aug. 6-8 on five fields at Halpatookee Regional Park in Stuart, a venue familiar to Blankenship because he helped design the park about 15 years ago when he worked for Martin County.

“It’s designed for this type of tournament,” he said.

The park is about 30 miles south of Chupco’s Landing in Fort Pierce. St. Lucie County, which includes Fort Pierce, was considered early in the process, but Blankenship said field accommodations didn’t pan out.

“We wanted to do it in St. Lucie County to kind of correlate with Chupco, but they didn’t have the fields in one location that we needed,” he said.

As of mid-July, teams registered for the tournament include Seminole, Cherokee, Choctaw, Coushatta and Poarch Creek. Co-ed teams will kick off the tournament on the first day followed by the start of the legends, men’s and women’s divisions on day two.

“This will be the first time we’ve done the co-ed in conjunction with the others,” Blankenship said. “In the past, the co-ed was Memorial Day weekend and everybody else was in August. In the last few years, co-ed hasn’t had enough teams, so we decided to put them together.”

Players have the option of staying at hotels near the park or close to the Atlantic Ocean, about 20 minutes away.

“We’re able to offer some good rates not only on the hotels by the park, but we’ve got good rates on hotels in the intercostal and on hotels on the beach. So folks, if they want to, can make a vacation out of it — \$139 a night at the beach is not a bad rate,” Blankenship said.



Hayne Fulford clings to a sheep June 27 during the mutton busting event at the Youth Summer Series Rodeo in Big Cypress.

Beverly Bidney

# Rodeo kids lasso animals, points in summer series

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — Young rodeo riders from Big Cypress, Brighton, Hollywood and Immokalee reservations and surrounding areas, corralled June 27 at the Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena for the third annual Youth Summer Series Rodeo.

From mutton busting to goat tying, 182 youth contenders rode and roped feisty animals during the first of three summer rodeos in Big Cypress. Other events included pony, calf and steer riding, chute doggin, junior bulls, steer undecorating, breakaway, team and dummy roping, barrel racing, pole bending, goat untying, and junior and senior goat tying.

“Rodeo is like any other sport; they learn to help each other out,” said rodeo director Ayze Henry. “Obviously they have to practice, so it helps keep them out of trouble.”

Tribal kids and teens were represented in the winner’s circle.

Cariss Johns won pony riding and calf riding in the 7-9 age group. In barrel racing, the 9-12 age group was a tight race; Jalee Wilcox was just over half a second off the winning time and placed third. The 13-18 age group was also close; the first four cowgirls were only 1.1 seconds apart. Madisyn Osceola took third and Samantha Veliz placed fourth.

Mutton busting tested the youngest kids up to age 6, who struggled to stay on sheep. Hayne Fulford used a unique tactic; he hugged the sheep tightly, held onto its wool with both hands and stayed on for the full 30 seconds. It was a winning strategy — he took first place. Ada Bruised Head placed second.

Some of the kids compete in the Eastern Indian Rodeo Association (EIRA), but most compete in other junior rodeos in Hendry County, Okeechobee, Arcadia, the All Florida Junior Rodeo Association and the Florida High School Rodeo Association, Henry said.

Participants earn points in each of the three summer rodeos. At the end of the series, the competitor with the most points in each event will be named champion.

Prizes will be given for first through fifth place. The final rodeo is scheduled for Aug. 29.



Cariss Johns shows winning technique in the pony riding event during the Youth Summer Series Rodeo at Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena in Big Cypress.

Beverly Bidney



Jobe Johns wrestles a steer to the ground July 1 during the Cinco de Mayo Rodeo at the Fred Smith Rodeo Arena in Brighton.

Beverly Bidney

## RODEO

From page 1C

thrive. There are a lot of kids coming up in this Indian rodeo.”

The competition was fierce as cowboys and cowgirls racked up points for their EIRA standings.

Logan Hyatt and Jobe Johns battled in steer wrestling and calf roping. They claimed the top two spots at both rodeos. Hyatt won calf roping and Johns triumphed in steer wrestling at Cinco de Mayo. They flip-flopped at the Josiah Johns Memorial as

Hyatt finished first in steer wrestling while Johns captured calf roping.

Johns also lassoed two first-place wins as a team roping heeler, while Blevyns Jumper took first and second place as a header.

Johns’ 153 points leads the men in all-around points going into the regional finals rodeo; Leanna Billie’s 46 points land her in the lead for the women.

The July 1 events capped the six-rodeo EIRA season. Regional finals will be held Sept. 26 to determine who advances to the Indian National Finals Rodeo (INFR) Nov. 3-7 in Las Vegas.



Mackenzie Bowers guides her horse around the barrel during the Cinco de Mayo Rodeo.

Beverly Bidney

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# Kids reel in fish, fun at Big Cypress tournament

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — From boats or banks, 11 adults and 22 youngsters hoped the big one wouldn't get away June 27 during the Take a Kid Fishing Tournament along the Big Cypress canals.

"We catch a lot of fish together," said Zechariah Stockton, 7. "It's fun because we're together as a family. We usually fish for the big ones."

The Stockton family — dad, Kassim; and children, Zechariah and Michael, 9 — snatched first place with 15.3 pounds of bass, including the largest in the tournament weighing 6.7 pounds.

They also caught the biggest tilapia at 2.9 pounds.

The family fished on the Miami Canal but caught most of their fish at the spillway. They fish together regularly but rarely keep their catches.

"We release them so we can catch them again," Kassim Stockton said.

The Recreation Department-sponsored tournament started bright and early at 8 a.m. Weigh-in was 1 p.m. at Moses Jumper Jr.'s dock.

Valholly Frank and Harmony Cypress joined Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank on his boat to traverse the canals in search of fish.

They brought back 10.2 pounds of fish and the second largest bass of the day



Beverly Bidney

Valholly Frank, left, and Harmony Cypress show off their catch June 27 as Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank, Valholly's father, secures the boat after a morning of fishing during the Take a Kid Fishing Tournament in Big Cypress.

weighing 3.1 pounds.

"At first we didn't get any fish," said Valholly, 12. "We were too impatient. It was hard for energetic, young girls."

New fishing poles were awarded to

youth for most weight on five fish, biggest bass and biggest critters (tilapia, speck, brim, garfish, catfish and mud).

All youth competitors received new lures and hats.



Beverly Bidney

Michael Stockton, 9, takes two large bass from his father, Kassim Stockton, that they caught during the Take a Kid Fishing Tournament in Big Cypress.



Kevin Johnson

Fort Pierce's Willie Lewis smiles at midcourt as he breaks away from the pack July 6 during the Recreation Summer Basketball Tournament at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium in Big Cypress.

## BASKETS

From page 1C

opportunity for Willie Lewis, 12, to excel against his peers in the 9-12 age group and face older competition in the 13-18 division, all while making new friends from other reservations.

"I get to meet new people," said Willie, a Fort Pierce resident who scored 29 points

in one of his reservation's victories.

Willie also thrives on the youth football field as a slot receiver and cornerback for the Fort Pierce Seminoles. When it comes to basketball versus football, he doesn't have a preference.

"Whichever one I make it in," he said. "I'm even-handed and I'm even-sported."

Willie and his teammates, including Roger "Fresh" Walters, Robert "RJ" Ely and Timothy Smith, used nifty passing and quick hands to lead Fort Pierce past Hollywood in Big Cypress. Whenever Hollywood made a run — such as one that featured a 3-pointer from Chade Osceola and a fast-break layup from Shannon Osceola — Fort Pierce stepped up with a swarming defense and run-loving offense.

In just four weeks, Fort Pierce coach Lester Johnson said he saw remarkable improvement from his players.

"They've come a long way. You see the progress in them as far as attitudes and everything — hitting shots, playing defense. They're learning," Johnson said. "You see them making layups and 3-point shots. They're handling their assignments and keeping their heads in the game."

As for bragging rights, Brighton had the most to celebrate. Brighton reached championship games in all three age groups and won two of them (5-8 and 13-18). Fort Pierce captured the 9-12 championship against Brighton. Big Cypress was the 5-8 runner-up and Hollywood finished second in 13-18.

All tournament players received a medal and T-shirt. Team trophies were also awarded to the winners and runners-up.



Kevin Johnson

Fort Pierce's Carlise Bermudez provides tough defense against Brighton's Jayton Baker during a summer youth basketball game July 6 at the Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium in Big Cypress.

# Bows drive arrows during Big Cypress archery tournament

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — About a dozen young archers showed their skills and learned new ones June 26 at an archery tournament on the Big Cypress Driving Range.

The tournament was the culmination of archery lessons given by the Recreation Department throughout the year and was the last event until classes resume in the fall.

After a long delay because of a thunderstorm, the tournament began just before dusk.

Kids competed in a variety of events, including standard targets, balloon pop, 3-D range with animal targets, the William Tell, which included a Styrofoam head and an apple, and skee-ball, a target with four small bull's-eyes in the corners.

Competitors used compound and traditional recurve bows, but sights were not allowed during the competition.



Beverly Bidney

Valholly Frank retrieves the arrows she deftly shot at the bull's-eye during the archery tournament.



Beverly Bidney

Girls take aim during the archery tournament on the Big Cypress Reservation. The tournament was the culmination of lessons provided by the Recreation Department throughout the year.



Beverly Bidney

Big Cypress Recreation Department site manager Jacob Osceola watches as Julia Grasshopper aims the bow and arrow during the archery tournament.



Beverly Bidney

Wyatt Hines carefully aims his compound bow and arrow at the target June 26 during the archery tournament at the Big Cypress Driving Range.

# All Native pro b-ball team in works for upcoming ABA season

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

**HOLLYWOOD** — Basketball administrator, evaluator and recruiter are among the many titles that belong to Federico Brodsky. Finding players and building teams are part of the repertoire for the 2014-15 American Basketball Association (ABA) general manager of the year.

Brodsky, 44, has visited reservations enough times to watch “amazing untapped talent.” He said it’s one reason why he and Seminole Jerome Davis are forming a professional team comprised solely of Native Americans.

“The idea is to have 100 percent Native American players from all over the United States,” Brodsky said.

Brodsky said the team, whose name had not been unveiled as of late July, is

slated to play in the ABA’s Southeast Division with teams from Coral Springs, Gainesville, Jacksonville, Miami, Orlando and Tampa. The ABA featured 92 teams last year spread across the U.S. Brodsky said players are paid and most have other daily jobs.

“It’s a second-tier professional league in the United States. After the NBA and the D-League, this is the strongest one that I find in the market,” said Brodsky, who is also involved in the management of the Miami Midnites that reached the ABA finals last year with Davis in its starting lineup.

Brodsky said the Native team will be based in Florida and will play about a 30-game schedule starting in late October. A tryout in July was held in New Mexico. Although details were still being worked out, Brodsky said another tryout is slated for August in the Broward County area.

Brodsky would like to see the team play home games on Seminole reservations.

“My idea is to rotate the team in each reservation so everybody can see what this team can offer and also have the kids from the schools play in a preliminary game, cheerleaders, all that kind of stuff,” he said.

Brodsky is CEO and president of Press On Sports, which helps run youth baseball and basketball events, including on the Seminole reservations. He said the company’s nonprofit arm, known as Enhancing Communities Through Sport, will manage the Native team.

“We see this as a continuation from what we do with the young so we can show this is something they can do after they graduate from school and finish college,” Brodsky said. “They can pursue their professional careers through something in the community and help to mentor the young kids.”

Brodsky said the Native team would be the first pro basketball team in the United States comprised of all Native Americans.

“It’s one of the most exciting things I’ve done in my life,” he said. “I cannot sleep thinking about this because it’s a historic moment.”



Kevin Johnson/File photo

DeForest Carter guards Craig Anderson March 21 during the NABC-NAIA All-star Game in Kansas City, Missouri.

## DeForest Carter lands agents, seeks professional basketball deal

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

DeForest Carter took a couple more steps in July on his path toward playing professional basketball.

Carter, who concluded a record-breaking career at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in March, signed with an agent and attended three professional evaluation camps with the hope of inking a contract with a team this summer or fall.

“I just want to go somewhere where they want me and I can put the ball in the basket like I did at Embry-Riddle,” said the 6-foot-1, 220-pound point guard from Big Cypress after he returned to his residence in Daytona Beach following three days in Las Vegas for the camps. “A good start for me would be somewhere in South America. If I play well and produce, I’d get to go across the ocean.”

Crossing the Atlantic to play in a European league would mean better competition and more salary compared to

South America, but Carter said he’s not picky where his pro career starts. He also received an invitation from the National Basketball League of Canada to attend a combine in August and said playing north of the border is among his options.

In Las Vegas, Carter, who is Embry-Riddle’s all-time leader in assists and steals and in the top five in blocks and points, vied with pro players and other former college players trying to impress scouts and agents.

“I was excited and scared at the same time, but once the ball started bouncing it felt like another game,” Carter said. “It was a good mixture of pros trying to go back overseas and college guys coming out.”

Carter played in one or two games each day and attended seminars that offered advice on life as an international pro basketball player.

“Mostly we listened to a guy who told us about his experience playing overseas and how to manage your time going into a new environment,” Carter said. “It was good.”

A few weeks before the camps, Carter signed with agent Nathan Kingery from Kingery Sports Group (KSG) in San Diego. The agency also signed Carter’s former Embry-Riddle teammate Cesar Pastrana. KSG lists its clients from a mixture of previous college experience, ranging from NAIA to NCAA, including Arkansas, Auburn and Tennessee.

KSG clients have signed with teams in Argentina, England, Germany, Spain and others.

No matter where Carter ends up, he doesn’t want to put aside his pursuit of a diploma. He is seven classes shy of earning a degree from Embry-Riddle and plans to take classes online if necessary.

“I can continue my education. I don’t want to stop. I want to make both work,” he said.

If he does go to another country, Carter said it would be a good experience to represent the Tribe.

“I want to be a symbol for the Tribe in an international setting,” he said.



Kevin Johnson

After helping the Miami Midnites reach the American Basketball Association finals last season, Jerome Davis is expected to be part of a new all-Native squad in the league this fall.



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# NAYO runner-up honors go to two baseball teams

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

of them. They played their hearts out.”

## 16-17 division

Even the oppressive, humid air couldn't stop Tristen Wilcox and his new bat.

With the Seminoles' 16-17-year-old baseball team trailing by a run in the fourth inning of its NAYO opener July 17, Tristen drove a two-run shot over the fence in right-center with a bat he purchased a couple days earlier.

“He broke in his bat in the right way: dinger, opposite field, pretty deep, too, between 340-350 (feet),” said coach Jason Thomas.

Tristen, who recently concluded his senior season on the American Heritage School baseball team, arrived in Atmore as essentially a new player.

“Brand new bat, brand new cleats, new glove; still has the tags on it,” he said.

Although Tristen's blast gave the Seminoles an 8-7 advantage, the Road Warriors (Cherokee) regained the lead in the fifth inning before the 1 hour, 30 minute time limit ended the game.

The Seminoles earned the runner-up trophy the following day. They topped the Cherokee Carnage in the morning before falling to the champion Road Warriors.

The Seminoles made the most out of a thin lineup that included a few non-Seminoles to field the team.

“You do the best you can. You get out there and try to put the ball in play, force errors, get a walk when you can and play smart baseball,” said Thomas, whose son, Layton, played in his final NAYO tournament before embarking on his college baseball career at Florida SouthWestern State College in Fort Myers.

## 7-8 division

A pre-tournament strategy implemented by Jeanne Billie in Brighton paid off more than 500 miles away in Alabama.

Concerned about how her 7-8-year-old Seminoles baseball team would handle warm, early morning games at the NAYO tournament, Billie opted to hold practices to mimic those conditions.

“I was worried being so early in the morning that the boys would be lagging,” she said.

Thanks to active bats, her worries quickly evaporated. Bryce Baker led off the team's 8 a.m. opener July 17 with a single to center field. Ukiah Billie, Keenan Jones,



Kevin Johnson

While on his way to extra bases, Bryce Baker smiles as he rounds first base in the NAYO 7-8 baseball division July 17 in Atmore, Alabama.

Jaydence Urbina and JB Anderson followed with hits early in the Seminoles' 15-6 win against the Avengers (Choctaw).

No player smiled more than Bryce, who had plenty of reasons to enjoy the game as he hit for the cycle with a single, double, triple and home run.

Other key hits came from Quayton Billie, who belted a home run, and Jaydence, who notched a triple.

The Seminoles won their second game later in the day before being eliminated in the nine-team division with a pair of losses the following day, including a 16-8 setback to a Choctaw squad.

Leading up to the tournament, Billie said attendance at practices was nearly 100 percent every day, which mirrored the effort provided by her players. For example, in the loss to Choctaw, the Seminoles received a home run from Bryson Smith, but trailed by 10 runs entering the fourth inning. They needed at least one run to avoid the 10-run mercy rule, so they promptly delivered four runs behind RBIs from Jaydence, JB, Bryce and Alex Rodriguez. Quayton smacked a run-scoring double in the fifth before the Seminoles were finally ousted, 16-8.



Kevin Johnson

Dakoya Nunez blasts a base hit during a NAYO 9-10 baseball game July 17 in Atmore, Alabama.



Kevin Johnson

Yopalakiyo Osceola fields a throw at second base in a NAYO 16-17 baseball game July 17.

“I'm very proud of them. They practiced hard,” coach Billie said. “I'm very happy with my little squad. They're awesome kids.”

## 13-15 division

The Seminoles went winless in the five-team 13-15 baseball division with losses to

Choctaw and the Dirtbags (Cherokee).

“Pitching killed us,” said Lucas Osceola, who had a single and two walks in the final game.

“Pitching, hitting and fielding errors,” were the culprits, teammate Conner Thomas added.

# Lady Seminoles roar back to capture second

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Copy Editor

Determined to return to the championship round for the second consecutive year, the Lady Seminoles looked sharp as they won their first three games of the day. Ava Nunez pitched the team to a comfortable win against the Lady Dominators (Choctaw) in the first game.

The third game – an 11-3 triumph that eliminated the Poarch Creek – featured a strong outing on the mound from Janessa Nunez, who worked out of early inning jams without allowing a run.

Solid defense from the Lady Seminoles aided the victory. Shortstop Analise Jimenez set the tone early by throwing a bullet to catcher Jacee Jumper to nab a runner at the plate in the first inning.

The Lady Seminoles' bats erupted in the bottom of the inning with a leadoff triple from Analise, an RBI single from

Jacee, hard-hit singles from Charli Frye and Mallorie Thomas and a run-scoring groundout from Janessa.

In the second inning, the Lady Seminoles increased their lead to 6-0 thanks in part to a two-run double by Charli. Janessa and Mallorie also notched RBIs in the inning and Jacee and Canaan Jumper had singles.

After the victory, the Lady Seminoles still needed two wins against the MBCI Elite (Choctaw), the undefeated team that dealt the Lady Seminoles a loss in the tournament opener. But Elite proved to be a worthy champion as it claimed the title with a shutout against the Lady Seminoles, who sweated through four games in seven hours.

“I made the girls believe we were playing five games today. Unfortunately, we fell one short,” coach Nunez said.

The Lady Seminoles' hard work under grueling conditions was rewarded with the runner-up trophy. A few feet away, Elite celebrated with the champions' hardware.

“That's a tough team,” coach Nunez said. “These girls play year-round; that's their squad. Our girls play year-round, but they play on different teams. When we come to NAYO, they know how to play, but they just don't have the trust that they should have, but it's coming around. For most of these girls, this is their third year playing together.”

## 7-8 division

A marathon relay that involved nearly half the Lady Seminoles' 7-8 softball team contained all the right intentions even if it didn't result in an out.

“If that would have been an out, I probably would have done cartwheels,” coach Ramona Baker said.

The significance of the relay's journey – which in this case traveled from the right fielder to the second baseman to the pitcher and to the catcher – didn't go unnoticed. It was an example of the still-evolving skill development, thought process and teamwork that the Lady Seminoles showcased in the tournament's youngest division.

“We're trying to let them know there's more than just plays at first base. With them being 7-years-old, it's hard to teach them that, but they're learning,” Baker said.

The Lady Seminoles finished 2-2, which included an opening day win against Sweet Heat (Choctaw) and a loss against a Choctaw travel team.

“We played a travel ball team and that's a little more difficult. (Those) girls are going to the World Series when they leave here; we've only had a total of nine practices,” Baker said. “I will be starting these girls in travel ball soon, so we'll be able to hang a little better next year at NAYO.”

## 9-10 division

Using an orange bat to tap her cleats and then doing the same to the far edge of home plate, Adryauna Baker showed the type of mannerisms in the batter's box associated with pro players. Perhaps it was for good reason because the Lady Seminole played like a big leaguer in the 9-10 softball division at NAYO.

“She had a good tournament,” said coach Kelley Smiley, whose team went 1-2 in the five-team

division. “She's a hustler. She's always up for a challenge. She caught, she played shortstop. She was everywhere. She gives it 100 percent whatever she does.”

Adryauna belted a leadoff triple that triggered a four-run first inning in a 7-2 win against the Diamond Queens (Cherokee) on July 18.

She also smashed a double over the third base bag in the second inning.

The Diamond Queens notched two runs in the first inning but were held scoreless the rest of the way by Madison Jumper.

“She's usually not a pitcher, but she came out and threw strong this morning,” said Smiley, who also received strong pitching performances in the tournament from Haylie Huff and Elle Thomas. “The pitching was very strong.”

Right fielder A'nyah Baker scorched a double, but she also turned in a defensive gem when she threw out a runner at first base to start the second inning. Madison fanned the next batters to end the inning.

The Lady Seminoles made solid contact at the plate all game, including Jennie Osceola's RBI single that concluded the scoring.

“When we hit, we hit hard,” Smiley said.

Even though the Lady Seminoles were eliminated in their next game, which ended on a triple play, they departed with an optimistic outlook.

“We play NAYO every year, and every year we get better,” Smiley said. “We've just got to keep pushing, keep practicing and keep fighting.”

## 13-15 division

The Lady Seminoles used a fast start to win its NAYO opener against the Hurricanes (Choctaw) in the 13-15 softball division.

Alicia Fudge led off the game by slapping an opposite field single to left. She was among the standouts at the plate for the team in the tournament.

“Alicia was putting the bat on the ball,” coach Melissa Braswell said.

Alicia scored on a double by Dasani Cypress, who also had a productive tournament with the bat.

“Dasani hit well all weekend,” Braswell said.

Camryn Thomas followed with an RBI single that brought in Jillian Rodriguez. Pitcher Aleina Micco notched the victory for the Lady Seminoles, who went on to finish fourth with a 1-2 record among six teams.

“We did well for not having much time together and to get together,” Braswell said. “We ran ourselves out of a couple innings, mental errors on the base paths, that kind of stuff, but overall the team was a pleasure to coach. They had some heart.”



Kevin Johnson

Jacee Jumper tries to slide under a tag at home plate during a NAYO 11-12 softball game July 18.



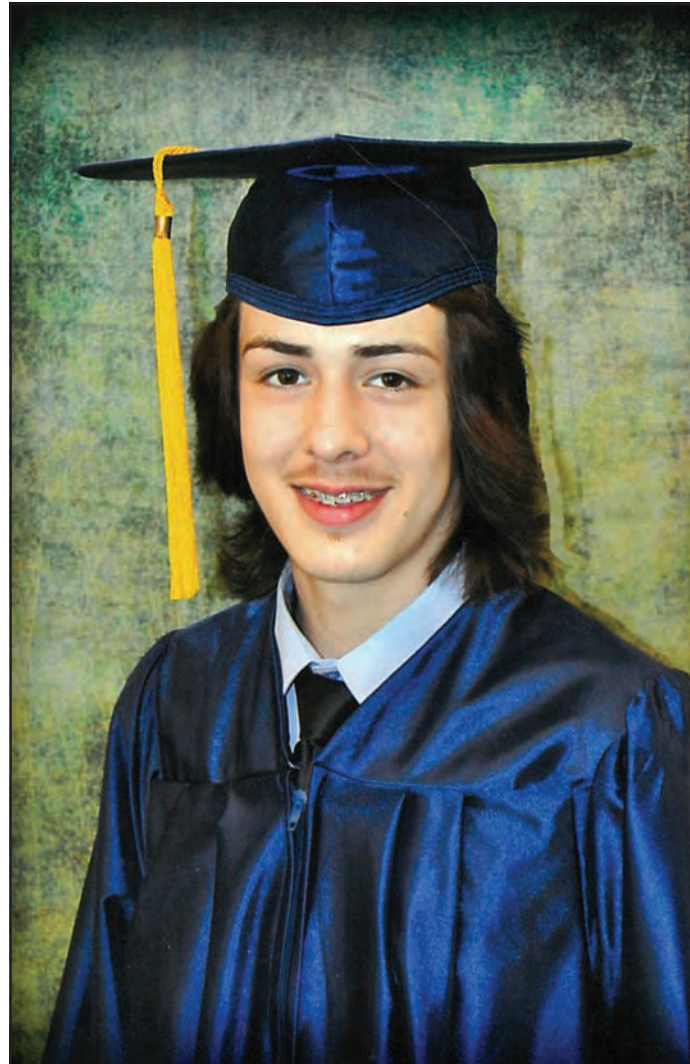
Kevin Johnson

Ava Nunez winds up for a pitch during a NAYO 11-12 softball game July 18 in Atmore, Alabama.

# Announcements



## CLASS OF 2015



### Congratulations, Ricky Dillon

We want to wish you a happy graduation and that you will have a wonderful life in everything you do. Most of all we are so happy and very proud of you and your hard work. Keep up with the good work you have done.

Parents: Rick and Chisa Dillon.  
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Grandparents: Barbara, Larry, Ricky, Debra, Jeff, Carol and all the families and friends.

We all love you very much and most of all we are so proud of you in everything you do with your life. God bless you.  
Love always,  
Grandma Barbara Cypress

### 'I am a Seminole'

I am proud to say that I am a Seminole.  
My language I hold dearly,  
The life of a warrior is all we know.  
Our culture is the most important thing.  
The Seminole Tribes status,  
Yeah we shining like bling, bling.  
The love for my people I hold high for the world to see.  
To The Great Warriors before us,  
Thank you for making a way for our people to walk free.  
We overcame time so sorrowful.  
With The Greatest leaders,  
We followed with a unity that was so powerful.  
The beauty of my people I will embrace until the day I die  
Much love to you,  
We salute the most high.  
Yeah we might laugh, we joke and play.  
But don't get it twisted,  
Because our hearts don't pump no Kool-Aid.  
With the stoic look of a warrior which everybody fears.  
We are moving forward,  
I ain't trying to shed no more tears.  
Haters are everywhere, we all know a hater is gonna hate.  
So let me put my haterblockers on,  
Cause The Seminole Tribe is here to stay.  
All my Seminole brothers and sisters ya'll keep ya'lls heads up  
Cause just like Drake said,  
We started from the bottom now we headed to the top.  
Well it's been fun but I got to run.  
I'm out,

By Eugene Myron Cypress

### 'Grasp'

Time flows like blood from a suicide wrist  
When we are unable to grasp the gist  
If the marvelous possibilities of being alive  
So much so that we only care to strive  
In the confines of our accepted fate  
Subdued and bound, thinking we are straight  
Living our life in an empty box  
Failing to realize that life itself never blocks  
Hopeful dreams of a greater life outside of our own  
Enslaved by our self-inflicted comfort zone  
Life cannot be lived within a confined mental space  
Evolving, revolving, stretching out to keep pace  
With a life that our minds can conceive  
Life is so much more than what we want to perceive  
Self-imposed limitations aren't acceptable any longer  
Life every minute towards making your dreams stronger  
Or would you rather be deceived?  
Thinking, the best of my life has already been achieved  
Time flows like blood from a suicide wrist  
When we are unable to grasp the gist

By Joey Wahoo Henry

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