



**Calves ship out from
BC, Brighton
COMMUNITY ❖ 3A**

**Students gain experience
thanks to SWEP
EDUCATION ❖ 2B**

**Seminole clinch spots for
INFR in Las Vegas
SPORTS ❖ 2C**



The Seminole Tribune

Voice of the Unconquered www.seminoletribune.org • 50¢

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Tribal members from far and wide attend non-resident meeting

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

ORLANDO — About 200 Seminole Tribal members who live off the reservations gathered at the Sapphire Falls Resort in Orlando July 17-19 for an orientation of sorts. The attendees came from within the state and as far away as Arizona, California, Colorado, Georgia, Hawaii, New Mexico, Minnesota and Oklahoma to learn what benefits and programs are available to them.

Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. welcomed the group July 18 and thanked them for taking time off to get together and gain useful knowledge about Tribal services.

“We want to help you have the ability to tap into programs that are available to you,” he said. “Ask us questions, we are here to work with you and assist you.”

The crowd wasn’t shy and almost immediately asked questions. Subjects varied during the open forum, including alternative ways Council is considering increasing revenue to the Tribe, how they plan to groom future Tribal leaders and how culture can be learned off the reservation.

Presentations and Q&A sessions for every Tribal department followed, starting with a gaming and Hard Rock update by Jim Allen, CEO of Seminole Gaming and Chairman of Hard Rock International. He talked about the success of the Hollywood and Tampa Hard Rock casinos and reported that Tampa brings in a sizable chunk of the Tribe’s total profit.

“The most profitable casino in Las Vegas is the Wynn, which makes \$400 million profit annually and is the number two casino in the U.S.,” Allen said before he noted that Hard Rock Tampa is number one.

Allen gave an update on the new construction in Hollywood and the continued expansion in Tampa. Hollywood will have 1,400 guest rooms, private villas, ample

◆ See MEETING on page 7A



Maury Neipris

After being named Miss Florida Seminole Princess and Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Princess, Randee Osceola and Kailani Osceola, respectively, are joined on stage in the Hollywood headquarters auditorium by President Mitchell Cypress, Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr., Miss Indian World Raven Swamp and royalty from other tribes during the 60th annual Miss Florida Seminole Princess Pageant on July 22.

Randee Osceola, Kailani Osceola crowned Seminole Princesses for 2017-18

BY LI COHEN
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD — With their heads held high and confidence glowing, three young women crossed the stage July 22 attempting to earn the crowns of Miss and Junior Miss Florida Seminole Princess. After a night full of talent, congeniality and intellectuality, the 2017-18 titles went to Randee Osceola and Kailani Osceola, respectively, during the 60th annual Miss Florida Seminole Princess Pageant at the Hollywood headquarters auditorium.

Kailani described her win as an

emotional experience that made her feel ecstatic for the future.

“There is no emotion to describe how I feel right now,” the new Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Princess said with tears in her eyes. “All of this hard work finally paid off.”

Emcee Wovoka Tommie, who is the older brother of the 2016-17 Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Princess Thomlynn Billie, explained that earning the title is more than a label.

“Whoever comes out here has to take on responsibility. They have to be on call, and sometimes they’ll even have to miss family events and that’s just one of the sacrifices

they may have to make,” he said. “But it builds them up for the future. They’re future leaders.”

Brighton resident Camryn Thomas, 17, also competed for Jr. Miss Florida Seminole. Although she didn’t win the title, she won an award for Best Essay as well as a trophy for first runner-up. She said it was a fun experience and plans to continue playing softball at Lake Placid High School and will apply to the University of Florida to become an agriculture teacher.

Randee, 18, and Kailani, 17, won their titles after acing three components of the pageant: Clothing, talent and Seminole-

related impromptu questions.

For the clothing contest, both young women sported traditional dresses. Kailani’s aunt created her dress, made of vibrant colors and unique patterns. Randee represented traditional medicinal colors with her dress, wearing red, white, black and yellow.

“There’s a lot of work that goes into these garments. You may see them and think, ‘Wow. That’s nice,’ but there’s more to them than that,” Emcee Tommie said. “You’re not going to go into a department store and find hundreds of them, and that’s the pride that

◆ See PAGEANT on page 4A

Seminole strike gold in Canada

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

TORONTO — As thousands of athletes filled up most of Aviva Centre, Team Florida’s Seminole colors appeared to be only a speck among the colorful, flag-waving masses that surrounded them. Compared to squads such as Team Ontario, Team British Columbia and Team Wisconsin — which brought hundreds of competitors — the two dozen young athletes from the Seminole Tribe were far outnumbered as the 12,000-seat stadium hosted the opening night ceremony for the 2017 North American Indigenous Games on July 16 in Toronto.

Florida athletes occupied about three rows while some of the larger teams required entire sections.

Despite fielding one of the smaller contingents, Team Florida spent the next six days not only competing in six sports, but often excelling as well. Coached in most sports by staff from the Seminole Recreation Department, Team Florida departed Canada with the proof of their success: four gold medals and one bronze.

Two gold medals were earned by Santiago “Echo” Billie, of Brighton, whose accuracy in rifle shooting made him the class of the field. Conner Thomas, another Brighton resident with pinpoint accuracy, captured gold in archery with an outstanding performance over three days. Wrestler Sammy Micco Sanchez of Fort Gibson, Oklahoma added to his gold medal collection by winning his weight class for the second consecutive NAIG.

Aubee Billie, the younger sister of Echo, made a lasting first impression by earning a bronze medal in her first archery competition.



Kevin Johnson

Rifle shooter Santiago “Echo” Billie proudly holds up the two gold medals he won in July at the North American Indigenous Games in Canada.



Kevin Johnson

Wrestler Sammy Micco Sanchez has two reasons to smile as he won a gold medal for the second consecutive NAIG.



Photo courtesy Rhonda Roff

Team Florida picked up two medals in archery at NAIG thanks to Aubee Billie, who won bronze, and Conner Thomas, who captured gold.

CBC broadcast several events. Electronic traffic signs on the busy 401 highway promoted the Games. Involvement included the city’s mayor, the Premier of Ontario, an energetic opening ceremony performance

from Taboo and appearances from famous indigenous athletes.

Threatening weather delayed the start

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Editorial

Racists and colonizing metaphors: Names and symbols that Native Americans struggle with every day

• Cleve Davis, Indian Country Today

In light of the current and divided political climate, which includes a travel ban from Muslim dominated countries and the building of the American Wall between the U.S. and Mexico, we must not forget about the ongoing domestic racism and discrimination towards Native Americans that has existed on this continent since 1492. Unlike other ethnic groups or races, the indigenous people of North America face a unique type and long-standing form of discrimination from other fellow Americans. Our discrimination originates from European colonialism, supremacy and racism which is, sadly, part of American culture and identity.

Although it is well known in Indian country that federal policy for the original inhabitants of North America included genocide, assimilation and oppression, discrimination against Native Americans continues to occur on many fronts. One place you can easily find discrimination towards Native Americans is through the everyday use of American English. For example, a racist and colonizing metaphor came recently from former Republican speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich, when he commented on the Russian Meddling issue. Gingrich referred to the FBI's investigation of Russia's attack on our American Presidential election system as, "an Indian hunting party...out looking for a couple of scalps." Although scalping is assumed by many Americans as a practice associated with savage Indians, the vicious practice of scalping and head removal was practiced throughout the world. It should also be noted that Europeans were known to offer bounties for indigenous scalps (red

skins) in North America, as well as across Europe and other places where Europeans colonized. However, scalping is a Native American stereotype, that is obviously perpetuated by even the influential, educated and wealthy elite of the U.S.

To provide another example from an elitist, Hillary Clinton used a colonizing metaphor during the 2016 Presidential race when she said, "I have experience with men 'off the reservation' like Donald Trump." Although this phrase is part of our language, most who use the phrase probably have never even considered its origins or that it is a slur. It originates from an early American assumption that whenever Indians are off the reservation they are behaving 'badly.' After all, Indians should never leave the reservation, right?

Derogatory names and symbols against Native Americans are also widely known and used daily by many American citizens and corporations. In fact, a recent Supreme Court opinion recognized the right of private parties to register disparaging names and symbols with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in the *Matal v. Tam* case. This case involved registration of a rock band's name *The Slants*, which the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office deemed offensive to Asians. The case was filed by Simon Tam, the lead singer, who ironically is an anti-racism activist. However, what has resulted from the case is that Supreme Court now recognizes that federal trademarks with disparaging names or symbols are protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. In the past, an individual or organization who was harmed by disparaging names and symbols could seek to prevent the trademark from being federally registered under a provision of the Lanham Act. Although federal registration with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office has some benefits

that include federal enforcement of illegal importation of infringing or counterfeit goods with the registered trademarks and right of the trademark holder to file infringement lawsuits, it does not mean disparaging names and symbols cannot be used.

The *Metal v. Tam* case will also likely mean trouble for the 2014 decision by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office that cancelled the federal registration for the pro football team *Washington Redskins*. The registration was cancelled due to a preponderance of evidence that the name was disparaging to Native Americans. The Native American petitioners, who originally sought the cancellation of the *Redskins* trademark, described the racial slur as "pejorative, derogatory, denigrating, offensive, scandalous, contemptuous, disreputable, disparaging and racist designation for a Native American person." To discuss one history of the term "redskin," Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz wrote in her book *An Indigenous People's History of the United States* that the term "redskin" was used to describe the dead bodies of Indian children, women and men of North America after their scalps had been taken by bounty hunters. Nonetheless, we all know that the *Washington Redskins* continued to use the name without the federal registration status and some Native Americans even support its continued use even though the *Redskins* name has a history rooted in genocide and colonization of North America.

Although the *Washington Redskins* cancellation received National attention in the media, there has been and continues to be long, substantial and widespread use of disparaging names and symbols in advertising or the promotion of support. Most of the institutions and individuals using disparaging and unregistered trademarks

maintain that the name or symbol has a secondary and more important meaning that harms no one, or worse, they simply do not care how it impacts Native Americans. For example, in my home state of Idaho, the town of Salmon has a public high school called the *Salmon Savages*. Salmon, Idaho is located at the epicenter of the Lemhi Shoshone civilization, and near the Lemhi Shoshone village where Sacagawea guided Lewis and Clark on the Corps of Discovery. Originally, the *Savages*' mascot included various depictions of an Indian head as the school logo. However, the Indian head logo was removed after the Salmon District school board decided not to engage in a costly antiracism legal battle with the National Coalition on Racism in Sports and the Media — not because it was disparaging to the local Native American population. Today, the name of the high school stands without the Indian head logo. Apparently, this is a victory for Native Americans.

Sadly, the Republican dominated state of Idaho has many examples of disparaging names and symbols, which includes depictions of an Indian lynching in the former Idaho courthouse and the use of derogatory place names such as "squaw" which are officially recognized by the U.S. Board on Geographic Names. In Idaho, there are a total of 51 creeks, buttes, camps, bays, bars, canyons, humps, gulches, flats, springs, and other places that use the term "squaw." What disparaging names are commonly used towards indigenous people in your state, province, or country?

Another troubling example of negative views towards Native Americans came from the U.S. military and CIA in 2011. During this year we learned that the name Geronimo was applied as the code name to the former al-Qaeda founder Osama

bin Laden. Although I am not going to say the name used was insensitive, it does give us some insight into how the U.S. military and CIA continue to view Native American resistance leaders. So, if you are Native American, don't get any ideas about "starting an Indian uprising"! Also, let us not forget that Geronimo's skull has not yet been laid to rest and remains, according to suit brought by the descendants of Geronimo, the skull was stolen in 1918 and kept in a glass case by the Skull and Bones secret society at Yale University.

These are just a few examples of racists and colonizing metaphors, names and symbols that Native Americans struggle with every day. Incorporation and use of racists and colonizing expressions into our language and world says something about American culture and identity. What does it say to you? At the very least, and history has shown, we can expect discrimination to continue to harm the physical and emotional being of Native Americans, as well as negatively affect Native American communities, education and economy. Furthermore, as the radical right has been emboldened by the election of Donald Trump, it is very likely an increase in hate crimes will be committed against Native Americans in the form of oppressive legislation and budget cuts to essential Native American programs, not to mention violence from extremists and those in law enforcement sworn to uphold a colonizing and imperialistic legal system. Also, Native Americans cannot rely exclusively upon the federal court system, as it only recognizes equal justice of the law created and passed by legislators that have no meaningful representation from Indian country.

Christie should abandon this tribal warfare

• South Jersey Times Editorial Board

South Jersey's most prominent Native American tribe has won a victory that keeps its legal quest for full state recognition moving ahead, while the mystery of how the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Tribal Nation lost its state designation in the first place remains unsolved.

A Superior Court Appellate Division panel revived the tribe's legal case last week, deciding that a lower-court judge had wrongly tossed out the case by accepting one of the state's key claims: that the Lenni-Lenape never had official recognition by the State of New Jersey.

There are more holes in that claim than in an initial Donald Trump Jr. account of a meeting with Russian operatives. In 1982, the Legislature clearly passed a resolution granting acknowledgement of the 3,000-member Lenni-Lenape as an official American Indian tribe. The tribal population lives throughout the Northeast, and its official headquarters is in Fairfield Township, Cumberland County.

The importance of the recognition isn't limited to the ability to stamp tribal craft items as "genuine," or to grant authenticity to the Lenni-Lenapes' open-to-the public South Jersey pow-wows. A state's official recognition of a tribal nation allows it to receive federal anti-poverty funds and preferred-bidder status for certain contracts.

As tribal officials tell it, the first they

learned of any problem was early in the Christie administration, when a federal inventory listed no official tribes based in New Jersey, even though the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape and two other tribes had been given the designation by the Legislature.

The state's reasons for withdrawing the tribe's official status remain opaque.

The state Attorney General's Office backed up the "no tribes here" claim in 2012, which is what sent the Lenni-Lenape running to court under civil rights and anti-discrimination statutes. Although a separate federal court suit is ongoing, a trial court in May 2016 upheld the AG's position in the state litigation.

What's never been clear is why the AG's office even bothered to defend the apparent de-listing. Official recognition mainly

qualifies a tribe for federal benefits, not state-financed ones that Garden State taxpayers pay for directly.

We see only two likely motives here, neither of which would speak well of the Christie and his administration.

One possibility is that the administration was carrying water for Atlantic City casino interests, who feared that the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape would claim rights to plop a competing tribal casino somewhere in Cumberland or Salem counties. And, although this is pure speculation, "Atlantic City casino interests" at the time could have included President Donald Trump.

At any rate, tribal officials have claimed to have no interest in developing their own gambling site.

Secondly, there is an alternate view among some local historians that too little proof exists that the Lenape who inhabit South Jersey are a legitimate tribe. But, that's just speculation, too, and American Indians should not lose tribal status based on blind acceptance of an unproved theory that turns generations of history books upside down on their spines. Every fourth-grader in New Jersey knows about the Lenni-Lenape.

Gov. Christie seemingly joined the "climate-change deniers" when he yanked New Jersey out of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). His administration's strange actions concerning the Nanticoke-Lenni-Lenape suggest he has a charter membership in the "Native American deniers," as well.

Change the Mass. seal by 2020

• The Mashpee Enterprise staff editorial

Massachusetts got a lot of things right in the mid-1770s. The state seal wasn't one of them.

In 1775, the same year that American patriots bravely fought and died at Lexington, Concord and Bunker Hill, the state Legislature adopted the state seal that essentially has come down to us to this day.

Starting things off in a circle around the seal is "Sigillum Republicae Massachusettensis," a Latin phrase for "This is the seal of the Republic of Massachusetts," a reasonable pronouncement.

The main part of the seal is a shield with a Native American standing with a long bow in one hand and an arrow in the other. In the upper left hand corner is a five-pointed star.

Fine so far.

But now matters begin to go downhill. To the left and right of the shield is a Latin motto, "Ense petit placidam sub liberate quietam," the loose translation of which is "By the sword we seek peace, but peace only under liberty."

Not the kind of saying that rolls off one's tongue, either in Latin or in English.

In a state historically renowned for its political speech, what committee of hamfisted writers put that one together?

You could make a case that the Legislature, in a convoluted way, was making the argument for liberty against and peace with the British crown and was prepared to take up the sword to do so. Or something like that.

But the real problem is what is found above the shield: an arm, bent at the elbow, holding a long curved sword, just at the moment before the elbow is straightened

and the arm comes down, to wound or kill whoever is in the way.

Taken together, the war sword, with the Native American immediately below, and the sword motto convey a different message: that we Englishmen entered this land and militarily vanquished the Indian, so that we could have peace and liberty.

That's what happened. But is this the kind of sad history that Massachusetts wishes to glorify or boast about?

Consider, too, how helpful Native Americans were to these Englishmen who, when they first arrived, were hard-pressed to even survive.

In that light, the seal is a case of the victors writing their version of history, leaving out the parts where they weren't so strong or secure.

So, with the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the Mayflower off Cape Cod just

three years away, the time has come for Massachusetts to show a generosity of spirit and change its seal into an emblem in which all the state's residents can take pride.

For starters, lose the sword-wielding arm. Put something else up there: maybe the Mayflower sailing over the waves.

Second, change the motto. The obvious choice: "We shall be as a city upon a hill," the words of the first governor of the Massachusetts Bay colony, John Winthrop.

The ringing words remain as alive today as when they were written four centuries ago. They are key bedrock in America's vision of itself.

Third, keep the Indian, a true picture of this state's historic roots, and the star, a nice touch.

Some in the state might voice concern

about the cost of suddenly replacing all those Massachusetts flags and repainting the seal on all those state vehicles.

The solution is obvious: adopt a new seal as the state's official emblem, but physically phase it in over time.

Symbols matter. The design of the American flag — with its 13 stripes representing the founding states and the 50 stars representing the nation's current states — matters.

The design of the Great Seal of the United States — with its eagle holding an olive branch and arrows in its talons and its motto, "E pluribus unum," that is, "From many, one" — matters.

Massachusetts should have a seal — and a flag — that matters.

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Community



Beverly Bidney (2)

Above, Natural Resource director Alex Johns helps direct calves into the scale at the marsh pens in Brighton July 13 during the annual calf shipping. At right, Emma Urbina counts calves as they exit a cattle trailer at the Brighton marsh pens.



Thousands of Seminole calves shipped out

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Tribal pastures in Brighton and Big Cypress are a bit less crowded now that 60 cattle owners sold nearly 4,000 calves during the annual calf shipping July 10-21.

The calves left the reservations about 80 to 100 at a time on large multi-level cattle trucks. It took 44 truckloads to complete the job during the 11 days. The calves were sent to feedlots in Colorado, Nebraska and Texas where they will spend the next nine or 10 months eating. When the cows reach about 1,350 pounds, they will be sent to market. The calf shipping has a positive economic impact on the cattle owners.

"Folks put their efforts into taking care of their cattle for a year and now they reap the reward," said Natural Resource Director Alex Johns. "You only get one crop a year. It's a lot of hot days and hard work."

The challenge for Johns is to get the calves into the pens before the days get too hot. The animals need time to rest before being loaded onto trucks for the trip west. Cowboys who work calf shipping typically awaken at 3 or 4 a.m., rest during the heat of the day and continue the job until dark.

"We do it because this is who we are, this is our heritage," Johns said. "It's a big responsibility; the cows depend on you for everything. It feels like God put you on earth to take care of livestock and feed folks. That's the satisfaction of it."

In Brighton, a few crews of cowboys brought the calves to the marsh pens where they were weighed and sorted by gender and size. The 9-month-old calves averaged about 520 pounds each.

With help from the cowboy crews, cattle owners herded the animals from their pastures to their own pens, where the calves were separated from the herd and loaded into cattle trailers. It sounds simple enough, but with the size of the pastures and the willfulness of the animals, the process can take time.

Norman Johns' herd was mostly settled into his southern pasture, but about 40 were grazing in the northern one. He joined two cowboys and a few dogs to get the cattle, but before they could be moved south, the rest of the herd meandered into the northern pasture. It took a few more cowboys and a lot more work to get them all together and in the pen for sorting.

The marsh pen was a noisy place July 13 with the bellowing of cows and the

mechanical sound of bovines trying to get their footing on the cramped scale. But Sheri Holmes' voice rose above the clatter as she yelled out to which pen each newly weighed calf would be sent.

While the calves were on the scale, computer chips in their ear tags were scanned and their weight was added to the database.

The holding pens fan out from a central hub. Once Holmes identified which pen a calf was destined for, a worker opened the gate to that specific pen and gave the animal only one direction to run. Steers had three pens based on weight; heifers were sorted into replacements, small or big.

"We are keeping more replacement heifers than usual to build up the herd," Alex Johns said.

After nine years on the job, Holmes did her job seamlessly as she simultaneously input data and filled the pens with similarly sized animals.

"The challenge is keeping everything straight," said Holmes, Natural Resource office manager. "We have all these pens and don't want to overload them. This week means everything; it is the end of the year for this group. The work is hard, but it's rewarding."

"Alex is such a great cattleman and keeps this well organized," added Lonnie Gore, 4-H special project coordinator, who made sure the proper calves were set aside for 4-H'ers to raise.

Joe Osceola has been working with cattle for more than a decade, the last three years in Brighton. Although he isn't a cattle owner yet, he aspires to get his own herd one day. He enjoys the work, the stories and the camaraderie on the job.

"I was raised around cattle, my uncles and grandfather all owned cattle in Big Cypress," Osceola said. "I love it and especially like when you see a cattle owner bring in good calves."

After a hot, humid and busy morning, a traditional cowboy lunch prepared by cattle owners was served under the trees. The feast included plenty of protein to fortify the workers for an equally busy late afternoon and evening.

After the last calf was loaded, the crew enjoyed a week off before coming back to start pregnancy testing, which will take another few weeks.

"People don't do this to get rich, they do it because they have a passion for producing food," Johns said. "It's a calling that not many people get to experience. It takes a rare breed of folks to take care of livestock; it's a close network of people, like a family."



Beverly Bidney

Cowboys Dayami Nelson, Todd Johns and Andrew Holmes move calves from pen to pen during the calf shipping in Brighton.



Beverly Bidney

Cattle owner Norman Johns in his Brighton pasture with some of his horses before rounding up calves for shipping July 13.

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◆ PAGEANT
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these women take into the garments.”

For her talent, Kailani demonstrated her sewing skills and explained how she put the garments together as her younger sister modeled a modern traditional dress Kailani made for her, comprised of three rows of patchwork and a sheer cape.

Randee sang the traditional traveling song, otherwise known as the spider song, which originated during the Seminole Wars. She explained that during that time, the women would stay behind when the men went off to fight battles. U.S. Army soldiers invaded their camps while the men were away and attacked them, so the women learned how to travel to various camps to protect themselves. They developed this song along the way.

Following the talent portion of the pageant, the contestants reached into a basket and each drew a question related to the Tribe and its history, culture, politics and traditions. Randee explained why the Tribe is known as the unconquered Seminoles and Kailani defined what it means to be a federally-recognized tribe.

The ladies' answers, combined with their talents, clothing and interviews from earlier in the competition, ultimately led them to success.

“I was so nervous throughout the whole pageant, but now I feel relaxed. Everything went so smoothly. It was such a great competition,” Randee explained. “I’ve wanted this for four years and I finally got it. It’s been a stressful week, but everything paid off.”

Hollywood Board Representative Gordon O. Wareham had nothing but kind words and congratulations for the former and new Seminole Princesses.

“Each woman plays a part in our tribe and touches our lives in a certain way. Over this year, I watched Kirsten [Doney] grow to what it means to be Miss Seminole. I got to see Thomlynn do the same thing,” he said. “To the contestants, this is your night, this is your experience. Take this in and remember what this night is.”

Kailani is most looking forward to visiting the various reservations, helping younger children — particularly with education — and attending the Florida State University homecoming game. While Randee is also excited about traveling, she is most excited about competing in Miss Indian World next spring.

Most of all, the girls emphasized their newfound confidence. They explained that the pageant committee and pageant coaches helped them break out of their shells and the pageant experience is just the beginning. The newly crowned princesses urged those who did not win or those who want to compete in the future to keep trying and maintain positivity and composure.

“Keep on going and have confidence,” Kailani encouraged. “Never stop believing in yourself.”

Randee agreed, saying, “It was a nice learning experience seeing all of us grow from our first day and seeing us come out of our shells.”

Miss and Junior Miss Seminole Princesses of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma joined the festivities. Miss Seminole Nation Melissa Sanchez, 19, and Junior Miss Seminole Nation Shelby Factor, 17, attended the pageant community dinner and the pageant. They explained that having a support system is fundamental to success. Kirsten and Thomlynn went to Oklahoma to see them crowned last fall, and now, the Oklahoma princesses are doing the same to continue building relationships.

“It’s great to support everybody through anything,” Sanchez explained. “You can do anything so long as you put your mind to it, and if you have a good support system behind you, it’s just great to have someone there to back you up.”

Factor said that holding the titles of Miss and Junior Miss Seminole Princesses are an honor that should be respected and appreciated.

“Being a Seminole Princess is staying involved with the tribe,” she said. “It’s



The 2017-18 Miss and Junior Miss Florida Seminole Princesses celebrate their wins with their families. Junior Miss Florida Seminole Kailani Osceola, left, joins her mother, and brothers and sisters. Miss Florida Seminole Randee Osceola, right, celebrates with her mother, sisters and aunt.

Maury Neipris (2)



Kirsten Doney formally crowns Randee Osceola as the 2017-18 Miss Florida Seminole Princess.

Maury Neipris



The newly crowned Miss and Junior Miss Florida Seminole Princesses are all smiles after winning the pageant.

Maury Neipris



2016-17 Junior Miss Florida Seminole Princess Thomlynn Billie laughs as she reflects on her year as royalty.

Maury Neipris

important to carry on traditions and give girls a role model to look up to.”

Winning these titles is just another chapter in Randee and Kailani’s books, as they both plan to pursue higher education. Randee, who just graduated from Immokalee High School, plans to attend Barry University in the fall to study psychology and criminology. When Kailani graduates next year from G. Holmes Braddock Senior High School, she plans to leave Miami and attend the University of Hawaii to study fashion design.

The event ended with farewells from the outgoing princesses, Kirsten and Thomlynn. After watching recap videos of each young woman’s past year as tribal royalty, the two gave their final adieus and left inspiring and emotional words for their successors.

“It feels as if I was crowned just yesterday ... this was an amazing opportunity for me to get out of my comfort zone,” Kirsten said. “Carrying this title becomes a reflection of the young woman who holds it. What the job entails is determined on how high she is willing to let herself soar as an ambassador.”

After thanking her “mama” for helping her stay fabulous and announcing she will return next year as a candidate for Miss Seminole Princess, Thomlynn joined in on the best regards, saying to the winners, “Go to as many places as possible. Go to show everyone that we are here, we are still standing and we are still growing.”

To request an appearance from Miss and Junior Miss Florida Seminole, contact Wanda Bowers, princess coordinator, at the Tribal Secretary’s office at 954-966-6300, extension 11468.

Visit SeminoleTribune.org to see more photos from the 60th Annual Miss Florida Seminole Princess Pageant.



Randee Osceola shows off her traditional clothing in a dress comprised of the Tribe’s medicinal colors — red, white, black and yellow.

Maury Neipris



Miss Indian World and visiting Seminole Nation of Oklahoma royalty enjoy the pageant. From left to right, Sr. Miss Seminole Nation of Oklahoma Dena Tiger-Kloehr, Little Miss Seminole Nation of Oklahoma Anjelica Gunville, Miss Oklahoma NDN Biker Princess Perla Gunville, Miss Indian World Raven Swamp, Jr. Miss Seminole Nation of Oklahoma Shelby Factor, and Miss Seminole Nation of Oklahoma Melissa Sanchez.

Li Cohen



Wanda Bowers presents Leila Baksh, both former princesses, with an award for her commitment to creating a successful Miss Florida Seminole Princess Pageant.

Li Cohen



Above, Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. presents Kirsten Doney with the customary trophy crown to commemorate her reign. Left, Kailani Osceola demonstrates her sewing talent.

Maury Neipris



Although she didn’t win Junior Miss Florida Seminole Princess, Camryn Thomas received awards for excelling in pageant categories.

Maury Neipris



Miss Florida Seminole Princess Pageant contestants and committee members gather backstage to finalize preparations for the 60th annual pageant.

Li Cohen

A lifetime of art with Elgin Jumper

BY LI COHEN
Staff Reporter

BIG CYPRESS — Elgin Jumper is no stranger to the art world. His latest pieces, on display at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum through Oct. 16, are only one collection of the hundreds of pieces he has created throughout his life.

Jumper, 53, started his journey with art when he was only 8 years old after he saw people draw what he described as beautiful creations. With only paper and pencils, he became addicted to an artistic escape. Although drawings were his primary outlet for most of his artistic tenure, he started expanding to more mediums about 12 years ago. Since then, he has become more skilled in painting with oils and acrylics and has even delved into written art with poetry, plays and essays.

Jumper does not have a preference of medium, he just says he wants to gain experience in as many aspects of art as possible.

“Art is very disciplined,” he said. “You can’t get too distracted.”

Driving inspiration from nature, life and others’ poetry, Jumper said that his work is a gateway to a life of positivity. Before his acquaintance with the passion, he was immersed in a life of trouble and difficult



Elgin Jumper discussed the inspiration behind his art at the artist reception on July 11.

Li Cohen

paths.

“Art led me away from a downward spiral of negativity,” he explained. “Art saved my life.”

This driving factor has led him to

creating hundreds of pieces focused on his many observations related to life and nature. At the current exhibit at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum — Jumper’s third exhibit at this location — his work is focused on Seminole culture and surroundings. He said that preserving the world through art is important in keeping perspective on the beautiful aspects of life.

“I see myself as a painter of the modern day, trying to focus on culture as well as other things,” he said. “There’s a whole world out there and painting the world keeps a record of history.”

To commemorate this new exhibit, the museum held an artist reception for Jumper on July 11. During that time, Jumper discussed the various paintings on-site, read some of his newest poems and complimented young artists.

While he is proud of his own works and accomplishments, he emphasized that younger generations need to be acknowledged for their efforts in preserving culture through art and language. Without acknowledging them on their successes, he explained that their drive and passion can dissipate.

“They’re really far-reaching in their ideas and subjects and with techniques they develop,” he said. “It’s really important to get involved with all aspects of culture.”

He finished the event by encouraging younger artists to stay committed to their work and not give up on their aspirations.

“It’s not an easy thing to do. It takes a lot of time and a lot of dedication,” he said. “You have to try to not get too distracted by social media and other things.”



Li Cohen

Two of Elgin Jumper’s more vibrant pieces, depicting Seminole warriors.

Spencer Battiest to perform at Smithsonian museums in NYC and Washington, D.C.

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

Award-winning singer and songwriter Spencer Battiest will perform at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian’s New York City and Washington, D.C. locations Aug. 3 and Aug. 5, respectively.

The mission of the NMAI is to advance knowledge and understanding of Native American culture, past and present, and Battiest’s concert will give the audience a taste of his award-winning take on pop music.

“I was contacted out of the blue by the museum,” said Battiest, of the Seminole Tribe. “It’s very special to be able to perform at a place that holds the history of all Tribes. They showcase some of the best Native talent in America. It’s an honor for me to do this.”

Battiest’s Aug. 3 performance in New York City is part of the Native Sounds Downtown concert series at the NMAI George Gustav Heye Center located at One Bowling Green near Battery Park in Manhattan. The open-air concert will start at 5 p.m.

Two days later Battiest will perform as part of the Indian Summer Showcase Concert at the Washington, D.C. museum, located on the east end of the National Mall. The concert is scheduled to start at 4 p.m.

“New York is one of my favorite cities and Washington, D.C. is so important,” Battiest said. “I will be able to share my voice and give my views on the world today and do it all through my songs.”

The last couple of years have been a whirlwind for Battiest, who won the 2016 Native American Music Award for Best Pop Recording for his album “Stupid in Love.” In 2015 he released the album and toured 25 U.S. cities to promote it, including a performance at Hard Rock Rising in Barcelona and Miami Beach. He signed



Courtesy photo

Singer-songwriter Spencer Battiest will perform at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian in New York City and Washington, D.C. on Aug. 3 and Aug. 5, respectively.

with Hard Rock Records in 2013, and with his brother Doc, won Best Music Video at the 2011 American Indian Film Festival for “The Storm.” As a teenager, he opened for Aerosmith and Sting at the 2007 Hard Rock Calling music festival in London. A natural performer, Battiest grew up singing gospel music and hymns in Mikasuki, Creek and Choctaw.

For more information on the shows, visit nmai.si.edu/.

Road construction update

HOLLYWOOD — The Buildings and Grounds Department is currently doing construction to improve Stirling Road. Through Aug. 4, the Florida Department of Transportation Broward Construction will

be closing up to two lanes in each direction of Stirling Road from University Drive to the Turnpike overpass to repave lanes. Construction will be conducted from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. nightly.



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USET moves forward after semi-annual meeting

BY LI COHEN
Staff Reporter

United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET) did not stop their momentum for change in Indian Country at the semi-annual meeting in Nashville last month. The organization is moving forward with actions that they believe will help Native Americans grow and progress.

The semi-annual meeting focused on programs and services that USET, Indian Health Service (IHS) and the Bureau of Indian Affairs provides to 26 federally recognized tribal nations in the south and eastern U.S. Unlike previous meetings, which tend to focus on legislative matters, the June meeting was intended to create a collaborating partnership between the three aforementioned groups.

As such, leaders from those groups, as well as Tribal representatives — two from every tribe — and federal partners discussed major issues affecting Indian Country: Opioid and substance abuse, the presidential directive on reorganization and the administration's prioritization of infrastructure. Substance abuse and federal reorganization were the main points of discussion, resulting in a new drug task force and plans for becoming more involved with federal affairs.

USET's new drug task force

After attendees heard numerous comments and stories about the prevalence of opioid and substance abuse, they decided to create a new drug task force at the suggestion of Chairwoman Stephanie Bryan from the Poarch Band of Creek Indians. USET Executive Director Kitchi Carroll said the force, built from a partnership between the National Congress on American Indians, will target and work with groups that are focused on getting funding to help and prevent drug abuse and other related services.

"Opioid is getting much of the attention right now, inside and outside Indian Country," Carroll said. "But what many of our board members were very clear to

share with us is that there all kinds of other substance abuse issues they are experiencing in their communities, such as heroin and methamphetamine."

Currently, the organizations are working with groups who are already known for advocating against opioid and substance abuse. Because there were already substance abuse programs in place, the force plans to further enhance their success and be available for assistance when they are needed. When an issue is resolved, the force will disassemble until they are needed again.

Carroll explained that oftentimes, federal groups ignore substance abuse in Indian Country. For example, during Health and Human Services Secretary Tom Price's May visit to Maine to hear about the effects of the opioid crisis, he did not acknowledge the local Wabanaki Tribe and their problems with the epidemic. After hearing about this, USET sent Price a letter expressing their disapproval of his inattention to a tribe that was next door to where he visited and suffering from the same problem as non-natives.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Tribal members are much more likely to suffer from substance abuse. Surveys conducted by the organization found that the average number of American Indians and Alaska Natives needing substance abuse treatment was even higher than the national average. Furthermore, 45.9 percent of the treatment referrals are by the Criminal Justice System, which is more than 10 percent higher than the amount of the same referrals for other races.

"This opioid epidemic is just as relevant to Indian Country as it is to non-native communities," Carroll explained. "We took the position that if they fail to deal with the crisis in Indian Country, there will continue to be a problem."

The Trump Administration's reorganization

With President Trump's plans to reorganize the executive branch of the government, USET decided it was time

to coordinate a strategy against doing so. Carroll explained that it is up to USET and partner organizations to ensure that Indian Country has the opportunity to voice their opinions prior to the administration making reorganizations to prevent any intentional or unintentional diminishing of the government's trust responsibility with Native Tribes. The organization already submitted their comments and concerns to the Department of Interior (DOI).

Carroll explained that Trump's March 13 executive order is not the first time the administration has tried restructuring departments and organizations related to Indian Country. Organization members believe that any restructuring that impacts the trust relationship with tribal nations should be dealt with professionally and uniquely so that the tribal and federal governments can work together to avoid the U.S. not fulfilling its core trust responsibilities and accountabilities.

"This was an overall administrative charge to reduce the federal bureaucracy to achieve greater efficiencies and streamline federal functions," Carroll said. "There are federal functions that cannot be contracted away. There are functions that should never be deferred to state or local communities for execution before the administration, whether it's in DOI or any other federal department."

A major issue USET constantly addresses within the region is the government's suggestion that the services rendered to the region could be handled by other regional offices. Previously, some services were contracted out to other regions, leaving many tribes feeling as though their needs are not a priority. Accordingly, the organization has been adamant about submitting comments to federal departments, even though, according to Carroll, each department is already supposed to reach out to Indian Country on related matters.

USET national infrastructure

Although this was not a main concern during the semi-annual meeting, Carroll assured that it is not a topic that went unaddressed.

Approximately 3 months prior to the meeting, USET sent a survey to all members about infrastructure plans and problems. The survey was based on the NCIA's national infrastructure report and asked questions about infrastructure needs and the costs associated, as well as questions about hospitals, clinics, roads, schools and more.

"It didn't get a whole lot of conversation at the meeting because that infrastructure initiative simply doesn't have any teeth or legs to it just yet," Carroll explained. "Nonetheless, we wanted to raise it as a conversation point so when that time does arrive, our region is ready to engage that space in a very specific way."

Moving forward with the Seminoles

While the semi-annual meeting is closed and on an invite-only basis, Carroll encouraged Seminole Tribe of Florida members to continue learning and staying aware. He said that it is imperative for Seminole leadership to respond to the needs of its members as it has done for decades.

"The Seminoles have gone through tremendous growth and maturation," he explained. "It's important that USET is well understood beyond the two representatives. It's important for the entire Seminole leadership to be aware what their organization is doing and we also contend that it's important for every Seminole citizen to be aware what this organization is doing as well. The only way to continue growing is making sure each one of its members is engaged and sharing ideas."

The primary responsibility of USET is to promote and protect the inherent sovereign rights of the Tribes within the southern and eastern tribes of the U.S. Carroll said it is crucial for every tribe in the region to understand USET's responsibility for tribal activities.

To stay informed, he recommended people visit the USET app, available on iTunes and Google Play, pay attention to the media and read annual reports that provide snapshots of activities and accomplishments.

The next USET meeting is scheduled for Oct. 8-12 in Cherokee, N.C.

Florida drops gaming lawsuit, settles with Tribe

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

The Tribe and the state of Florida settled a legal battle regarding violations of the existing gaming compact July 5. The settlement agreement will allow the Tribe's gaming operations to continue with blackjack and baccarat through 2030.

The agreement ends the state's federal lawsuit challenging the Tribe's right to keep blackjack and other table games in its Florida casinos. It also guarantees that the Tribe will continue to make monthly revenue sharing payments to the state.

Additionally, the Tribe and state agreed to prohibit pari-mutuels from operating designated player games, which in a 2016 federal court case were ruled to be banked card games and a violation of the compact. There is also a clause that the state must take "aggressive enforcement action against the continued operation of banked card games."

"This is the first time since 1979 that the Tribe hasn't had a lawsuit with the state," said Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola. "It will ensure the stability of the Tribe and sets the path for the next 13 years of the compact."

Since the 2016 compact violation ruling, which stated the Tribe no longer had to make payments to the state, the Tribe made those payments anyway to a state escrow account. The action was a show of good faith and was noted in the settlement agreement.

"The settlement is 100 percent in favor of the Tribe," said Jim Allen, CEO of Seminole Gaming and chairman of Hard Rock International. "All the leverage goes to the Tribe."

Officials agree the settlement ensures a stable future for Tribal members and employees.

"The state and the tribe are good partners," said Chairman Osceola. "We think this is a good thing for the state and it's definitely a good thing for the Tribe. We will continue to do our business, pay our bills and send money to the state so they can create jobs as well."

Summit to address climate change's impact on archaeological and cultural resources

BY LI COHEN
Staff Reporter

HOLLYWOOD – The Florida Climate Institute is taking a hands-on approach in addressing climate change and its impact on communities. On Aug. 4 and 5, the institute will raise awareness about worldwide climate change at the Tidally United 2017 Summit.

The summit will focus on the impact of sea level rise on Florida's archaeological and cultural resources. On Aug. 4, guests can take part in talks and panels from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., lunch provided, at the Seminole Native Learning Center, 6363 Taft St. in Hollywood. On the morning of Aug. 5, there is an optional off-trail walk through ankle- or knee-deep water at Everglades National Park led by a ranger. A tour at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum on the Big Cypress Reservation will follow the walk in the afternoon.

The importance of this topic comes from statistics surrounding Florida's cultural sites. According to the institute, the state has 16,015 sites that may be completely flooded if there is a 3-foot sea level rise. Most of

these places are neglected in resiliency planning. Tidally United will specifically highlight indigenous groups and individuals who speak about climate science, planning and cultural heritage.

Sara Ayers-Rigsby, director of southeast/southwest regions at the Florida Public Archaeology Network, said this event is a great opportunity for people to take part in climate-related discussions.

"People should come for a day of discussion about how climate change and sea level rise will impact archaeological and culturally significant sites," she said.

The Florida Public Archaeology Network, Seminole Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum and Florida International University Indigenous Forum are co-sponsoring the event. The summit is open to 100 people based on first-come, first-served, and is free for Tribal members and \$30 for non-members. Those interested in speaking at the event or who want more information should contact Sara Ayers-Rigsby of the Florida Public Archaeological Network at sayersrigsby@fau.edu or visit fpan.us/projects/tidally.php.

2017-18 SAT & ACT testing dates

The testing dates for the 2017-18 academic year are now available. For more information, contact the Tribe's Higher Ed Advisor at 954-989-6840. To sign up for the tests, visit collegeboard.org for the SAT and act.org for the ACT.

SAT

- October 7
**Register by Sept. 3*
- November 4
**Register by Oct. 5*
- December 2
**Register by Nov. 2*

- March 10
**Register by Feb. 9*
- May 5
**Register by April 6*
- June 2
**Register by May 3*

ACT

- September 9
**Register by Aug. 4*
- October 28
**Register by Sept. 22*
- December 9
**Register by Nov. 3*

- February 10
**Register by Jan. 12*
- April 18
**Register by March 9*
- June 9
**Register by May 4*

Tribal members become tribal leaders

BY LI COHEN
Staff Reporter

Leaders are not expected to be perfect, but with some training, those leadership skills can go to the next level.

From July 25-28, approximately 45 Tribal members had the opportunity to participate in free leadership training. Held at

the Native Learning Center, the 4-day event focused on increasing the understanding and awareness of effective leadership principles. Every day focused on a specific topic regarding the theme.

The Native Learning Center created the leadership training to provide Native American community leaders and members with interactive leadership training. Quechan Indian Tribe member Ron Sheffield, who has been an instructor at the Native Learning Center, instructed the event. With decades of leadership experience as a student, doctor of philosophy and author, he has worked with countless tribal communities to better their skills. The training is for everyone in the community who wants to better their leadership skills, not just those in active leadership positions.

"You don't have to have the title of a leader to recognize that in a split second, the community may need you," Sheffield said. "In that moment, I want that person in the room to feel confident that they can stand up and say, 'Hey I got this and we will be OK.'"

All courses taught during the training are highly interactive. Participants engaged in classroom settings, as well as individual leadership coaching. Each day of the training targeted on a specific topic, including leadership theory, identity, culture and synthesis. After being placed into smaller groups the first day of the event, attendees were able to discuss and create projects related to each topic as a large group and on a more individual basis.

As Sheffield explains in much of his speaking engagements, the fundamental concepts of leadership theory can easily be traced through the lineage and qualitative story telling within Indian Country. This was a common theme throughout the training and is what made this opportunity so significant for Tribal members.

"I've understood the general modern day idea of a leader and I've attached those elements back to data that exists in Native America," he explained. "Whenever we got to a place where the core underlying tone of that leadership concept or theory is Native, we talked about it. I want the students to get the greatest benefit of a fully-understood, digested and respected academic

background."

As part of this deeper understanding, participants had to get comfortable with being uncomfortable. According to Sheffield, multiple moral topics were discussed that can cause sensitive reactions. He said that the only way to get a firm grasp of the topic is to address basic elements, and not all of those are comfortable to discuss.

"Moral dilemmas are a bit touchy, but I want them to be a little uncomfortable and touchy on purpose," he explained. "When you're uncomfortable, you learn. We learn only when we're slightly uncomfortable."

Georgette Smith, executive director of the Native Learning Center, said that Sheffield has made a significant impact in previous trainings and is not only an amazing instructor, but also has outstanding qualifications. She further said that the training is a great opportunity for Tribal members who are interested in sharpening their leadership skills, expanding their networks and fostering unity across Tribes and Indian communities.

"Leadership training for our communities is a commitment to the advancement, promotion and development of the cultural, educational, social, economic or political welfare of our American Indian people," Smith explained about leadership. "Leadership is more than a position or a role, it is actually a part of an intricate journey that we are making whatever our career path may be, weaving exceptional parts of ourselves together for the betterment of our Native American people."

This is the first time the community has held a leadership training event. If it is successful and the community is interested, the Native Learning Center will likely offer the course again.

"My internal objective that anyone who attends this course walks away and questions...When you have knowledge, you have power," Sheffield said. "Power is something I want to deliver carefully, calmly, but most assuredly, to Native America. I want Indian Country to know how powerful it truly is. The only way that can happen is through some very basic knowledge...and the bulk of it comes from our native families."

NIGC finds increase in 2016 gaming revenues

BY LI COHEN
Staff Reporter

After reviewing 2016 revenue numbers, the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC) found that the fiscal year 2016 gross gaming revenue totaled \$31.2 billion, a 4.4 percent increase from 2015.

All of NIGC's administrative regions showed growth during the year. The following regions saw the corresponding increases: Sacramento — 6.3 percent, Oklahoma City — 5.7 percent, Portland — 5.1 percent, Phoenix — 4.4 percent, Tulsa — 4 percent, Washington, D.C. — 3.8 percent, and St. Paul — 1.1 percent. While Sacramento and Oklahoma City showed the highest increases, their overall growth rate declined by 1.7 percent and 1.5 percent, respectively. On the other hand, Portland, Phoenix and Washington, D.C. have continued to show steady progress since 2014. From fiscal years 2015-2016, the regions increased their gross gaming revenue by 1.9 percent, 0.7 percent and 0.5 percent, respectively.

This is the first time the gross gaming revenue was more than \$30 billion in Indian Country. Fiscal year 2015 was the closest prior attempt, managing to hit just under the mark at \$29.9 billion. The success came steadily, as in fiscal year 2014, the NIGC found miniscule growth across the regions, even negative growth in two of the regions. NIGC Chairman Jonodev Osceola

Chaudhuri said that that the success is partially due to the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act promoting tribal self-determination principals.

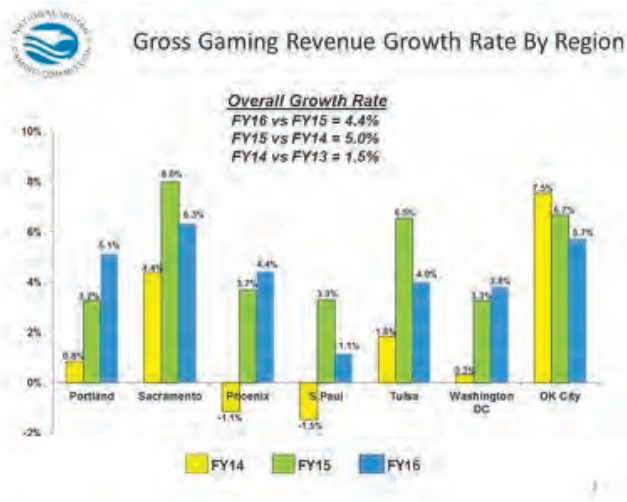
"The stable growth is reflective of a healthy and well regulated industry with

federal policy goal to promote tribal economic development, tribal self-sufficiency and strong tribal governments."

The NIGC calculates revenues by analyzing 484 independently audited financial statements from 244 federally recognized tribes from 29 states. To calculate the gross gaming revenue, analysts subtract winnings players earn from the amount wagered, as well as earnings before salaries, tribal-state compacts and operating expenses of casinos.

The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act created NIGC to support tribal self-sufficiency and to preserve integrity within Native American gaming. The four initiatives created to fulfill this purpose are:

- To protect against gamesmanship on the backs of tribes,
- stay ahead of the technology curve, rural outreach, and to maintain a strong workforce within NIGC and its partners.



a tremendous impact on local and state economies," Chaudhuri stated in a press release. "When Congress passed IGRA almost 30 years ago, it expressly cited in its findings and purposes the long standing

MEETING
From page 1A

meeting and convention space, a new Hard Rock Live, up to 55,000 square feet of retail space, a comedy theater and 14 restaurants. They estimate it will be complete in the summer of 2019.

Tampa's expansion is being done in two phases. The property will have 798 guest rooms, seven restaurants, nearly 8,000 square feet of retail and 57,000 square feet of convention space. A low rise should be completed in April 2018 and a tower is slated for completion in 2019.

Allen gave an update of the Atlantic City Hard Rock project, formerly the Trump Taj Mahal, which should open in May 2018. President Donald Trump spent \$1.2 billion to build the property in 1990. The Tribe bought it for four cents on the dollar in March.

Since the Tribe's credit rating was just upgraded, lower interest rates on loans are available which leads to millions of dollars in savings. Most U.S. gaming companies pay 4 to 5 percent plus on loans.

"The Trump Taj Mahal lost money every year not because it wasn't busy, but because the interest on the loans was 14.75 percent and 17 percent," said Allen, who noted the Tribe just borrowed money at a far lower interest rate. "That shows the investment community believes 100 percent in the Seminole Tribe, its leadership, the business, the exclusivity that we enjoy in Florida and obviously the ability to expand on a global basis."

Treasurer Pete Hahn followed with a presentation on personal finances. He said the Tribe's standard deduction is 25 percent of Tribal members' income for taxes.

"Each of you should be in a higher tax bracket," he said. "We can deduct more so you don't owe taxes in April. We can help you work out the best tax bracket for you."

Presentations about Tribal finances, the health plan, education programs, housing, business loans and a Board update filled the rest of the day's program. Throughout the day, people in the culture room kept busy beading, carving and making patchwork.

Sally Josh and her daughter Niki traveled from Anadarko, Oklahoma for the meeting. She was hoping to get updates on policies and procedures, see family and friends and learn more about culture.

"I learned more beading skills," Josh said. "I'm going to take back all this information to family members who were

unable to attend the meeting."

Megan Yescas has lived in St. Paul, Minnesota for five years and appreciated getting information about services and Tribal business activities.

"I'm proud to be a Tribal member and have access to all the opportunities they provide for us," she said. "I went to the Hard Rock Café in Iceland and was the first Tribal member to go there. The Icelanders knew all about us."

Julie Bush brought her son Conary Yescas, 16, to the meeting.

"He's enjoying seeing his family," said Bush, who is not a Tribal member. "He is interested in his Tribe and this has been very informative and good for him."

Carla Cypress of Pembroke Pines lives off the Hollywood Reservation because there are no homes available. She said the meeting was helpful.

"I'm picking up new things and learning what's available. I'm a new homeowner and need some advice and help," she said.

Naples liaison Brian Zepeda was pleased to see so many Tribal members from such far distances in attendance and said things are going in a positive direction for non-residents.

"That all the executives and leaders came shows the extent of the support. The Chairman made great effort to reach out to non-residents out of state. They are not forgotten," he said. "I was born a Seminole and I'll die a Seminole and I've never lived on a reservation."

Larissa Tucker and her son Kian Madrid traveled from Honolulu, Hawaii, the farthest distance of anyone. Despite living far from home, Tucker comes back often to Hollywood and Brighton, where she checks on her cattle. She had some issues addressed and was glad she attended the meeting.

"I'm glad I got to voice my opinion and they listened to me," Tucker said. "It's good to see everybody and connect with family and friends. I'm glad Council did this for us."

Chairman Osceola's goal for the meeting was achieved as information was shared and individuals' questions were answered.

"To see the smiles on their faces gives us gratification that we know we are making a difference," he said. "That's what we are here for, to assist Tribal members and make a difference in their lives."

Seminole Fire Department graduates six recruits

BY GRACE DUCANIS
Freelance Reporter

The Seminole Tribe Fire Rescue Department welcomed six new firefighters to the team at a graduation and badge ceremony on June 29.

Family and friends gathered to celebrate graduates Jose Cabañas, Rafael Diaz, Brandon Harris, Vincent Sovik, John Vilches and Devyn Williams, who completed the fire department's six-week training.

"It's not easy getting through school. We put them through the ringer...so I'm very proud of them," said Donald DiPetrillo, fire chief and director of the Seminole Tribe of Florida Department of Fire Rescue.

During their first six weeks of training, firefighter recruits learn medical and departmental protocols and undergo physical training. They also get specialized instruction in working with hazardous materials and dealing with snakes and other reptiles.

Firefighter, paramedic and graduate Devyn Williams called training "a grueling six weeks."

"I was honored to be [at the ceremony]," he said. "I was proud of myself. I was proud of all the guys. It's a big accomplishment for us."

All of the graduates were certified firefighters and paramedics before beginning the department's training.

"This process is not only renewing their skills but bringing them together as a group because some of them get trained at different locations but we want them to come together as a team," said DiPetrillo.

During their affirmation of oath, the graduates swore to serve and protect the Tribal members and their communities. Next, they'll be assigned to various members of the fire department to receive additional training during their probationary year.

"The training that they do is what keeps us safe and what brings them home to their families at night," said former Deputy Fire Chief Robert Brown.

Brandon Harris, one of the graduates, was excited about the opportunity to work for the department. Harris said it took him

five years to get hired.

"It's a remarkable feeling to be where I am right now," he explained. "I know what I'm getting into, I know that I'm going to have to work hard, I know that nothing is going to come easy and I know that I'm going to have to earn every ounce of respect I can."

he's looking forward to being able to help tribal members and their communities.

"They expect you to be that person that helps them when they call 911 and to be that person who can solve basically any problem or issue that they have," Cabañas explained.

Cabañas said he appreciated that the department hosted a graduation for the



Grace Ducanis photo

From left, firefighters Devyn Williams, John Vilches, Vincent Sovik, Brandon Harris, Rafael Diaz and Jose Cabañas take their affirmation of oath.

The ceremony opened with a presentation of colors by the Seminole Police and Fire Honor Guard and the Black Pearl Pipe and Drums – a ritual Harris said gave him goose bumps.

"I always get goose bumps at these kinds of ceremonies, just with the...honor guard, the drums, the pipes, everything...and the first time I ever felt that feeling I knew that this was something I wanted to do for the rest of my life, just because of how it made me feel from the inside out," he said.

Jose Cabañas, another graduate, said

recruits and their families.

"A lot of departments don't do that," he said.

During his brief speech at the ceremony, DiPetrillo stressed that the fire department is fortunate to be part of the Seminole family.

"Being in the fire service – it's a family, and the Tribe is just like that. It's a family. Even though they're spread out across the state...they still feel like they're family," said DiPetrillo. "They treat every one of us like family members and we try to take care of them like they're our family members as well."



Grace Ducanis

Surrounded by his classmates, Devyn Williams shakes hands with fellow firefighter Rafael Diaz.



Grace Ducanis

The graduation opened with a presentation of colors by the Seminole Police and Fire Honor Guard and the Black Pearl Pipe and Drums.

Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki scores well with secret shopper

BY LI COHEN
Staff Reporter

The Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum is known for its beautiful artifacts and nature boardwalk, but its latest accomplishment emphasizes the museum's service.

On June 30, the Florida Attractions Association (FAA) informed Museum Director Paul Backhouse that a secret shopper filed a score of the service she received at the museum. After visiting the museum on March 25, she scored the museum 98 out of 100 percent for her experience during the 2016-2017 membership year.

A detailed score report showed the museum received a 100 percent on cleanliness and truth in advertising and a 93 percent in hospitality. According to the report, the hospitality score suffered because of interaction at the admissions/ticketing desk; however, the secret shopper said everything else, including the phone call to the museum, was impeccable.

Backhouse said that the museum has been a part of the FAA for at least 5 years and that despite never knowing when a secret shopper plans to visit, they consistently perform at a high level.

"Having the standard operating procedures, policies and practices in place is the backbone of how you achieve these high scores," he explained. "Having a staff that's passionate, enthusiastic and that cares about the Seminole community is paramount as well."

According to the FAA, every attraction



Courtesy photo

Exterior view of the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum in Big Cypress.

that is a member of the association is secretly shopped once per year. During the experience, the shopper evaluates an attraction's hospitality, cleanliness and truthful advertising. The three components are a part of the FAA's Code of Practices, which also includes safety and complaint resolution, which the FAA handles directly.

Despite the lower hospitality score, Backhouse said the staff did very well and they are excited about the report overall.

"There are some areas we can bring to 100 percent...Hospitality is everything we're about," he said. "When people come through the door we want to make sure they feel welcomed and well-served."

RICHARD CASTILLO
FLORIDA CRIMINAL DEFENSE ATTORNEY
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The hiring of an attorney is an important decision that should not be based solely upon advertisement. Castillo worked as a Public Defender in Broward County from 1990-1996 and has been in private practice since 1996. In 1995, he was voted the Trial Attorney of the year. He graduated from Capital University in 1989 and was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1990, Federal Bar in 1992, and the Federal Trial Bar in 1994.

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Wow—What's the postage on that? The Tribe receives 230-year-old letter... again

SUBMITTED BY AH-TAH-THI-KI MUSEUM

2017 is an important year of anniversaries for the Seminole Tribe of Florida. It marks the 200th anniversary of the beginning of the Seminole Wars, which began in 1817. It is the 60th anniversary of federal recognition of the Seminole Tribe of Florida as a government and a business enterprise. During the year, this column will alternately explore key events of the so-called First Seminole War and highlight the great advances of the Tribe during the last 60 years. This month we reprint an article published in the Tribune on Jan. 13, 2006 about the Cowkeeper, an early leader of the people who came to be known as "Seminole." The article has been updated for reprint.

The Seminole Tribe's Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum has acquired a historical document that is of considerable significance to both the Seminole people and to Florida history. Dated Feb. 9, 1774, this letter was written by the lieutenant governor of the territory of British East Florida, John Moultrie. It is addressed to "The Cowkeeper and other Headmen and Warriors of the Creek Nation."

The Cowkeeper was the first known Tribal member to be called by the term Seminole — a term used for all Native Americans residing in Florida. He led a band of Creeks from the town of Oconee, in Georgia to Florida sometime around 1740. As a lifelong ally of the British, he aided General James Oglethorpe in attacking the Spanish at St. Augustine.

The Cowkeeper settled his people on the rich prairie lands south of Gainesville, Florida. He established a town there called Cuscowilla, or Alachua. This was the first settlement of the people who became known as the Seminoles.

At Cuscowilla, the Seminoles gathered stray Spanish cattle that roamed over the prairies. These cattle were the last vestiges of the old Spanish ranchos that once fed St. Augustine and the abandoned missions.

True to his name, the Cowkeeper had hundreds of head of cattle grazing on the prairies around Cuscowilla. These large herds were the envy of their white neighbors in Georgia. This led to a series of conflicts between the Georgians and the Seminole peoples. Cattle rustlers coming from Georgia under the guise of defensive military expeditions, returned home with hundreds of head of Seminole cattle.

Cowkeeper's family would remain in the area for the next 100 years. Payne's Prairie, just north of Cuscowilla, was named after the Cowkeeper's nephew, Payne.

Payne's nephew, Micanopy, had his name applied to the town that now sits on the ancient remnants of Cuscowilla. Micanopy's nephew was Billy Bowlegs. These men were famous leaders of the Seminole people and can be seen in the pages of the history books as the legacy of the great Cowkeeper.

This letter was written at such an early point in the history of the



2017 Year of the Seminole Anniversaries

Tribe that Moultrie still refers to them as members of "the Creek Nation." The term Seminole was not yet in common use.

At the time that the letter was written, a questionable land deal that involved 2.1 million acres of land that was claimed by both the Creeks and the Cherokees had led to an outbreak of frontier violence that was threatening to become open warfare.

The English government was concerned that the Creeks were going to unite with the Cherokee and Shawnee people against the English colonies. Thirteen white settlers and five Creeks had already been killed when this letter was written. The English wanted to know if the

the ground. The white people grew angry and killed some of them.

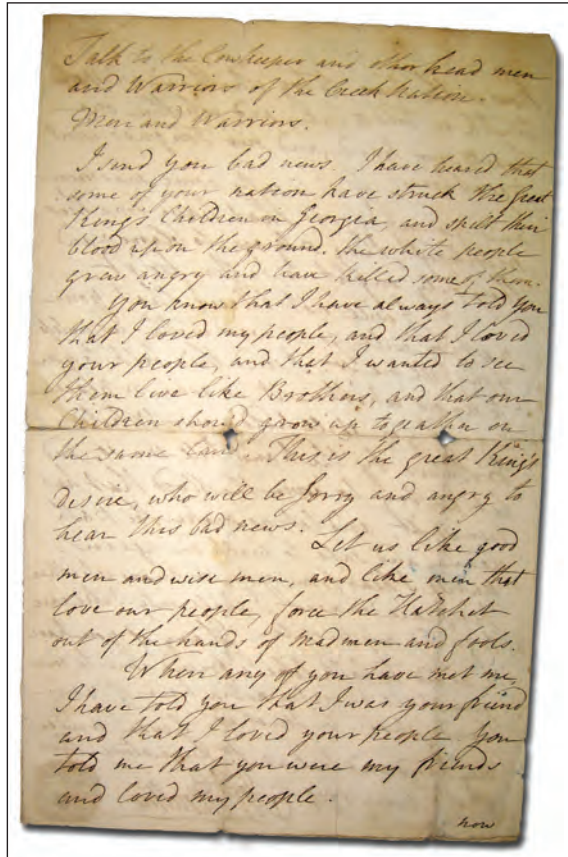
He reminded the Cowkeeper of the professed friendship between their people and went on to say:

Now is the time to try whither we spoke the truth or told a lie, and whither our hearts, our hands, and our tongues went together. If it is only some madmen and young fools that have done this mischief, they only are to blame; and they only ought to suffer for it. If you still hold your White brothers by the hand, tell me so, and let us try to cover the blood that has been spilt, and let us make the path clean, and safe to walk in again.

Until I hear from you, or know whither 'tis peace or war, I shall only take care to guard my people.

New Governor Patrick Tonyn arrived in March. On the 14th he met with the Cowkeeper and other leaders. Outright war with the Seminoles was averted, but violence continued to plague the frontier until the next year, when an overwhelming conflict, the American Revolution, engulfed the frontier in flames. Remembered as an international conflict, it was an Indian war as well.

The letter that the Museum has acquired appears to be the actual letter that was sent to the Cowkeeper. It was originally a folded, closed and sealed page. It has the equivalent of two written pages; is addressed on the outside and has a red



Cowkeeper's people were preparing for war. The British had a reason to be concerned. As a leader, the Cowkeeper had maintained the west side of the St. John's River as the "Indian shore;" or the national boundary of the Seminole Nation. Just before he died, the Cowkeeper claimed to have killed 86 Spaniards defending this land and that his only regret was not having killed an even 100. He asked his family to kill another 14 so that his soul might rest more easily. The threat of war with Cowkeeper was a cause for serious concern.

The letter that the museum has acquired was written during the brief period between the administrations of Governors James Grant and Patrick Tonyn, and hence was written by the Lieutenant Governor, John Moultrie. He began with...

I send you bad news. I have heard that some of your nation have struck the Great King's children in Georgia and spilt their blood upon

wax seal. They did not use envelopes at that time, instead they would fold the sheet of paper into a makeshift envelope.

Officials would keep copies of their correspondence in a letterbook, the carbon copies of their time. The letterbook copy appears to be located in the Colonial Office records of the British government in London, England. J. Leitch Wright refers to that letter on Page 108 of his book "Creeks and Seminoles."

The Cowkeeper is gone and the town he built is turned to dust. Many of the towns that his children and children's children built were burnt to the ground by waves of armies. It is an amazing thing that an object as frail as a piece of paper has outlasted all else. Like a letter long lost in the mail, this letter to the Tribe's leader and first government has been re-delivered.

SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA AH-TAH-THI-KI MUSEUM

A PLACE TO LEARN, A PLACE TO REMEMBER.

A glimpse of Florida's past arrives at the Museum

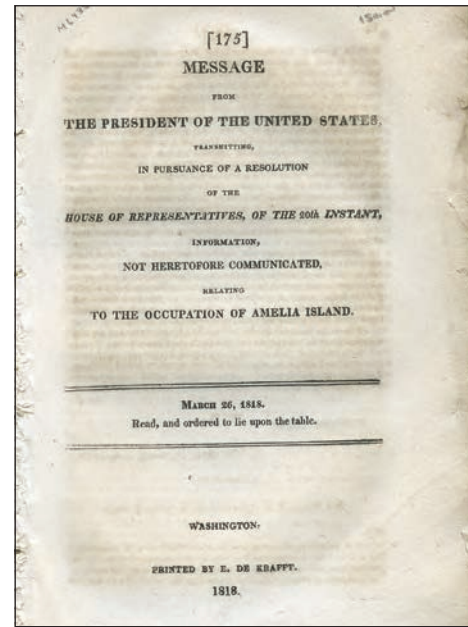
BY TARA BACKHOUSE
Collections Manager

Every four months, the Museum's Acquisitions Committee meets to review potential additions to our collection. It's always a tough choice because resources are limited, but everything we choose to acquire is well thought out, matching the Museum's mission, and serving the community in the best way possible. We always strive to collect objects that show the diversity and depth of the Seminole story. The best things show the past and present, struggle and innovation, continuity and change. These recent acquisitions are good examples of the range of objects we are looking for.

The first is a historic document that dates to 1818. While it's not the oldest document in our collection — we have to give that honor to a letter penned in 1794 — it's in the running. In 1818, a disparate group of native peoples had already been dubbed "Seminoles" by the colonial players in the southern U.S. and Spanish-held Florida. The first hostilities between the Seminole people and the U.S. government had erupted in northwest Florida, but had yet to affect all native peoples in Florida. The U.S. had its sights set on Florida. The Seminoles knew that United States' rule would differ from Spanish or British rule, which was preferable. Spain and England had a hands-off approach to Seminole and other native peoples in their colonial holdings while the United States operated under a model of Manifest Destiny, meaning that the lands they colonized were for their citizens only, according to a God-given right. Likewise, the U.S. wanted Florida in this unyielding way. Amelia Island, off Florida's

east coast, was a frequent setting for the power struggle between the U.S. and Spain over the control of Florida.

This document, entitled, "Message from the President of the United States in Pursuance of a Resolution of the House of Representatives, of the 23rd Instant, Information, Not Heretofore Communicated, Relating to the Occupation of Amelia Island."



Courtesy Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki

The newest addition to our archival collection, this government document is part of the larger story of both Florida and the Seminole people

Information not Heretofore Communicated, Relating to the Occupation of Amelia Island, 1818," describes plans for an attempt to loosen Spain's hold on that island. The story, filled with espionage and subterfuge, is interesting enough in itself. However, that does not make it relevant to the Museum's mission, which is to celebrate, preserve and interpret Seminole culture and history. It was a short mention of Native Americans that struck a chord with our committee, both in

an emotional sense and in the sense that it planted the acquisition firmly within the bounds of the Museum's mission statement.

When describing the planning that went into the military operation, the narrator notes that the general and his supporters intended to recruit troops from various locations, including "Tampa Bay, a fine harbor to the northwestward of Cape Florida, where they were to be joined by 1500 Indians already engaged ... to march across and attack St. Augustine." From that point, it was a short trip to Amelia Island. The 1817 campaign proved successful in the sense that it allowed the United States to maintain a continued presence on Amelia Island until it could officially take control of Florida from Spain in 1821. Did 1500 Native Americans really help? Were they Seminoles or their allies? The document doesn't give these specifics; however, wouldn't this be ironic, considering that the U.S. began to systematically erase them from Florida through removal or slaughter less than 20 years later?

This is just one piece of the Amelia Island story, which is a small part of the Florida story, and an even smaller chapter of the story of Native American struggle in the colonial "New World." The archive at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum has many documents just like this, which reveal part of the larger Seminole story. While the archives are currently closed for a renovation project, they will again be open to the public in fall 2017. If you'd like to conduct research on this or any other topic of Seminole history, just make an appointment with the Museum library (863-902-1113) and we'll be glad to assist you.

Big Cypress Tribal Oak Dedication and Celebration !

Thursday August 10th 2017

10am

**Unveiling Ceremony
with special speakers at
30901 Josie Billie Hwy
on the Big Cypress Reservation**

11am-2pm

**Reception at the Big Cypress Gym
Enjoy lunch
Listen to music
Look through historical photographs**

The event is open to the public

TIDALLY UNITED SUMMIT 2017 CALL FOR PAPERS

**Impact of Sea Level Rise on Florida
Archaeological and Cultural Resources**

August 4 and 5, 2017
Seminole Native Learning Center
6363 Taft St # 101, Hollywood, FL

The 2017 Tidally United Summit raises awareness about how climate change will impact archaeological and culturally important sites, as well as how the loss of these sites will affect communities. In Florida, 16,015 cultural sites would be inundated by a 3 foot rise in sea level, but archaeological and cultural sites are often neglected when discussing resiliency planning. This summit highlights indigenous groups and speakers on climate science, planning, and the importance of cultural heritage. Co-sponsored by the Florida Public Archaeology Network, Seminole Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, and the FIU Global Indigenous Forum.

Free and open to the public.

Interested speakers and for more information contact Sara Ayers-Rigsby of the Florida Public Archaeology Network (sayersrigsb@fau.edu) by June 15th, 2017.

Health

Tips for back-to-school immunizations

SUBMITTED BY ROBERT LAMENDOLA
Florida Department of Health in Broward County

Don't let too much of summer vacation slip away before planning to get ready for school again – including all childhood immunizations.

The best choice is to have children vaccinated by your family doctor. If that is not possible, you can visit the Tribal Health Department or county offices of the Florida Department of Health. DOH is offering free immunizations over the summer, including a big campaign at Lauderhill Mall in Broward County from Aug. 7-22.

Skipping the shots does matter. In South Florida and elsewhere in the U.S., a few unvaccinated children have come down with cases of diseases that previously were virtually eradicated, namely measles, chicken pox and whooping cough.

Florida law says children cannot start school unless they have received all vaccinations against nine contagious and potentially fatal childhood diseases. Back-to-school shots are especially important for children entering kindergarten and seventh grade, because different requirements begin at those grade levels. Don't let a missing vaccination mess up the first day of school.

Vaccinations required for school include:

- Diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (whooping cough): 4-5 doses of DTaP for babies and pre-schoolers. 1 booster dose, TDaP, before seventh grade.
- Polio: 3-5 doses for babies and pre-schoolers.

- Measles, mumps, rubella (German measles): 2 doses of MMR for babies and pre-schoolers.
- Varicella (chickenpox): 2 doses for babies and pre-schoolers. 1 booster dose before seventh grade.
- Hepatitis B: 3 doses for babies.

Parents are encouraged to consider additional vaccinations not required for school but recommended by federal health officials. These include vaccines against flu (yearly starting at six months old), rotavirus (3 doses for babies), Haemophilus influenzae B (3-4 doses for babies), pneumococcal disease (4 doses for babies), hepatitis A (2 doses for babies), human papilloma virus (2-3 doses starting at age 9) and meningococcal disease (2 doses starting at age 11).

Seminole tribal clinics give required back-to-school immunizations. Parents can make an appointment for their children and be ready for school in advance. For details, phone numbers and locations, visit semtribe.com/Services/Health.aspx.

Additionally, DOH gives free shots for back-to-school through the federal Vaccines for Children program:

DOH-Broward – Free health shots at two health centers. Also available Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Aug. 7-23 at Lauderhill Mall, 1267 NW 40 Ave. Evening hours 4 to 7 p.m. are available on Aug. 10, 14 and 17. An immunization and family fun fair is set for Aug. 12 when free vaccines for HPV and meningitis will be available. 954-467-4705 or broward.floridahealth.gov.

DOH-Hendry – Free shots available at health centers. 863-674-4041 or floridahealth.gov.

DOH-Okeechobee – Free shots available at clinic. 863-462-5819 or okeechobee.floridahealth.gov.

DOH-Collier – Free shots at health centers. 239-252-7300 or 8207 or collier.floridahealth.gov.

DOH-Hillsborough – Free shots at certain locations. 813-307-8077 or hillsborough.floridahealth.gov.

DOH-St. Lucie – Free shots available at health center. 772-462-3800 or stlucie.floridahealth.gov.

4th of July bike ride through Big Cypress



Courtesy photo

The Seminole Recreation Department sponsored a 'Rise 'n Ride' bike ride July 3 as part of the Fourth of July celebration in Big Cypress. Participants included, from left, are Paul Bowers, Marlin Miller, Cathy Cypress, Claudine Cypress and Ronnie Billie Sr. Prizes were awarded for best decorated bike and best dressed bicyclist.



Courtesy photo

Ronnie Billie Sr. shows off his highly-decorated bicycle while decked in full Fourth of July attire in Big Cypress.

Be on the lookout for heat advisories

The summer heat can be difficult to beat. Take caution outdoors when the National Weather Service issues heat advisories, as abnormal heat and humidity can cause serious health issues. Emergency Management recommends the following precautions: Drink plenty of fluids, stay in air-conditioned spaces and away from the sun, and complete strenuous outdoor activities early in the morning or in the

evening. If working outdoors during the day, schedule frequent breaks in shade or air condition, wear light, loose-fitting clothing, and drink a lot of water.

If heat exhaustion and/or a heat stroke occur, immediately move to a cool and shaded location and call 911.

For more information, contact the Emergency Management Disaster Hotline at 1-800-617-7514 and press option 3.

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If heat exhaustion and/or a heat stroke occur, immediately move to a cool and shaded location and call 911.

For more information, contact the Emergency Management Disaster Hotline at 1-800-617-7514 and press option 3.

Jill Kehaulani Esch chosen NICWA's Member of the Year

PRESS RELEASE

In April, the National Indian Child Welfare Association honored Jill Kehaulani Esch, Esq. as 2017 NICWA Member of the Year. NICWA's annual Member of the Year award honors and recognizes an individual or organizational member of NICWA who has demonstrated outstanding service, contributions and leadership in his or her profession, as well as involvement as a member of NICWA.

Kehaulani Esch has long been involved with promoting her Native Hawaiian culture. After moving to Minnesota nearly two decades ago, she became part of the Minnesota American Indian Bar Association as a member, board member and secretary, as well as fundraising for their Native law scholarships. NICWA said her appointment in 2013 as the Minnesota Ombudsperson for American Indian Families is testament to her commitment to native children and families. In this role, she investigates complaints for non-compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), the Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act, and statutes, rules and policies that involve child protection cases.



Courtesy photo

NICWA Member of the Year Jill Kehaulani Esch

Emergency Management Corner: Dealing with lightning

SUBMITTED BY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Seminole Police Department's Emergency Management Team is committed to keeping our Tribal Communities informed and prepared so that they will remain safe if disaster strikes. Keep an eye out for future articles and tips from the Emergency Management Team in the monthly Seminole Tribune's Emergency Management Corner.

When thunder roars, go indoors

- Avoid open areas, isolated trees, towers or utility poles: lightning tends to strike taller objects in an area
- Keep away from electrical equipment and plumbing: lightning can travel through wiring and plumbing if your building is struck. Do not shower or wash dishes during a storm as it can also carry a current
- Do not lie on concrete floors or lean against concrete walls
- Lightning often strikes outside the

area of heavy rain and as far as 10 miles from an area of rainfall

What you might not know

- Out of the lightning related deaths in 2017, 60 percent have occurred in Florida
- While not all lightning victims die, many survivors must live with permanent disabilities

If someone is struck

Cardiac arrest is the immediate cause of death for lightning victims:

- Call 911
- Begin CPR if you are trained
- If possible, move the victim to a safer place. Lightning CAN strike twice

If you have any questions or concerns, call The Emergency Management Disaster Hotline 1-800-617-7514, friend us on Facebook or visit our website at em.semtribe.com.

Join the Seminole running club

Every Tuesday and Thursday, Tribal members are encouraged to begin and finish off the day with a run/walk with the Seminole Running Club. The group meets at 6 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. at the Seminole

Estates and provides water for all runners and walkers. For more information, contact Kenny Bayon at 954-665-3299 or kenneth.bayon@semtribe.com.

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AH-TAH-THI-KI
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A PLACE TO LEARN. A PLACE TO REMEMBER.



SEMINOLE SCENES



Kevin Johnson

HANDS-ON LEARNING: Youngsters attending Mensa's annual gathering at the Diplomat Beach Resort in Hollywood on July 6 learn a traditional Seminole way of making sofkee by grinding corn. Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum educational coordinator Alyssa Boge provided instruction to the youngsters, who are members of Mensa by placing in the top 2 percent of IQ tests.



Li Cohen

BEHIND THE SCENES: Kailani Osceola finalizes her preparations for the 60th Annual Miss Florida Seminole Princess Pageant.



Beverly Bidney

HANGING AROUND: This tiny tree frog, who bears a striking resemblance to Kermit the Frog, was spotted playing on the Immokalee preschool playground July 12.



Kevin Johnson

PINS AND WINS: Team Florida's pin for the North American Indigenous Games in Toronto proved to be a much sought-after trading item with other athletes from throughout the U.S. and Canada. Team Florida won five medals, including four gold medals.



Courtesy photo Seminole Casino Coconut Creek

TRIUMPHANT TRIO: Seminole Casino Coconut Creek's 4th of July Celebration included a fireworks show with food, drinks and live entertainment by the Victory Belles.



Beverly Bidney (2)

INDOOR SUMMER FUN: With a heat advisory outside, the Immokalee recreation department found a way for kids to move around and have some fun indoors with a challenging obstacle course relay July 26 in the air conditioned gym. Girls warm-up by running and sliding laps around the gym. Having successfully navigated the cones, hoops and hurdles, Tony Billie prepares to crawl quickly under the noodle arches of the obstacle course.



Kevin Johnson

TWO KINGS: Team Florida's gold medal rifle shooter Santiago "Eecho" Billie and Los Angeles Kings hockey player Jordan Nolan, from First Nation Ojibwe in Ontario, pose for a photo after the North American Indigenous Games' rifle shooting awards ceremony July 20 at York University in Toronto.



Courtesy photo

NATIVE TALK: WLRN Radio's Topical Currents program on July 18 featured a discussion about the history of Florida's Native tribes. Participants included, from left, hosts Joseph Cooper and Bonnie Berman along with Samuel Tommie, Seminole Tribe member; Jorge Zamanillo, CEO of History Miami Museum; and William J. Osceola, Culture teacher at Miccosukee School. The program, which lasts 50 minutes, can be heard online at wlrn.org/post/floridas-native-tribes.



Beverly Bidney

SEEKING SUMMER SHADE: These Big Cypress reservation cattle seek shade under a generous tree on a sweltering summer afternoon in June as a flock of cattle egrets fly by.



Beverly Bidney

AND THEY'RE OFF: Norman Johns herds his horses across the pasture and through the pen he needs to put cattle during the Brighton calf shipping July 13.

NATIONAL NATIVE NEWS



State director gathering Native American input on Grand Mound

The scope of input is expanding on whether Grand Mound, a Native American burial site located west of International Falls, should reopen to the public.

"We'll continue to engage with the community up there, the International Falls community and people in Koochiching County. We'll continue to engage with Native Americans up in that area, but we'll expand the scope to native groups in Minnesota, as well as the larger region," said Joe Horse Capture, who is now overseeing the Grand Mound site.

Grand Mound is one of several sites that are now handled by Horse Capture, who was hired in December as the new director of American Indian initiatives at the Minnesota Historical Society. Horse Capture, an enrolled member of the A'aninin in Montana, has previously worked as the curator of Native American arts at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian.

After more than 30 years as a state historic site, Grand Mound was closed to the public in 2007 amid declining visitorship and concerns about treating a burial site as a tourist attraction. Grand Mound's use dates back to the Laurel Indians in 200 B.C., and it's considered the largest prehistoric structure in the Upper Midwest.

"I think it's important to get Native input on how we determine the future of the site where their ancestors are interred. I think a reasonable person would certainly understand that," Horse Capture said.

He said he hopes a decision can be made by spring of 2018. That will ensure enough time to gather input, renew relationships with people who have an interest in it and decide how to move forward "so that everybody's interests are served," he said.

The process to reopen Grand Mound has been ongoing for two years and a committee of Historical Society staff, Native American officials and Koochiching County officials, among others, met last year to discuss the topic. The Historical Society considered opening the site in a scaled-back operation, which the county board opposed.

Koochiching County commissioners have expressed concern in recent months that they've been left out of the process and weren't told of the change in who oversees Grand Mound. Their concerns were outlined in a May letter from board chairman Kevin Adee to state Rep. Rob Ecklund and then discussed at a June county board meeting.

At that meeting, the board unanimously approved a \$2 million bonding request for 2018 to reopen Grand Mound in a partnership between the county and Rainy River First Nations, which operates the Kay-Nah-Chi-Wah-Nung Historical Center at burial mounds across Rainy River from Grand Mound, according to meeting minutes. In its motion, the board noted that county officials and Native Americans in the area have continuously asked the Historical Society to reopen Grand Mound "for its protection and to share the cultural, spiritual and historical significance of the Native peoples who have inhabited this area for thousands of years."

At the June meeting, the board was told a meeting in Cloquet had been held to discuss the site and a decision had possibly been made. Horse Capture told the News Tribune that no decisions have been made yet about Grand Mound's future and the meeting in Cloquet was with the state's Tribal Historic Preservation Offices — the first in a series of meetings to gather input from Native American groups about whether to open Grand Mound. However, he said, "people may be under the impression that something significant like decisions were made and that's far from the case."

Horse Capture said he respects the opinions of people living in the area and he said he plans to renew discussions. He is also working in collaboration with Historical Society staff who previously led the process to determine whether to reopen the site.

He said he's planning to visit Koochiching County by summer's end to discuss the site and the input process. He said he doesn't know the outcome yet because he's still doing outreach to Native American groups, but he would be "more than happy" to talk to people in Koochiching County about the next step in the process.

— Duluth News Tribune

Native Americans say lifting protection of grizzly bear violates religion

HELENA, Mont. — Native American tribes, clans and leaders from seven U.S. states and Canada say the U.S. government's decision to lift protections for grizzly bears in the Yellowstone National Park area violates the groups' religious freedom.

They are suing to block the government from removing Yellowstone grizzlies from

the endangered and threatened species list, which would allow Montana, Wyoming and Idaho to hold grizzly bear hunts.

The Native American plaintiffs argue that trophy hunting for grizzly bears goes against their religious and spiritual beliefs. The lawsuit filed June 30 asks a federal judge to rule that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service must consider the Native Americans' beliefs and consult adequately with them before removing grizzly protections that have been in place since 1975.

"He is our relative. For us Bear Clan members, he is our uncle," Ben Nuvamsa, a former chairman of the Hopi Tribe in Arizona, said Wednesday. "If that bear is removed, that does impact our ceremonies in that there would not be a being, a religious icon that we would know and recognize."

The three states have not planned any hunts for this year but have agreed to quotas and to cease all hunting if the Yellowstone population falls below 600 bears. There are now about 700 in the region.

Basing a legal challenge of an Endangered Species Act decision on religious beliefs and inadequate tribal consultation has not been tried before, said the plaintiffs' attorney, Jeff Rasmussen. It's an argument that differs from those of the conservation and wildlife advocacy groups that have also filed intentions to sue over last month's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service decision.

"They don't feel like they've been listened to, both with regard to their religious beliefs and spiritual beliefs, and with regard to some of the issues in this case," Rasmussen said. "They feel the U.S. is not listening to them, and we're hoping to change that."

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services and Department of Interior officials declined to comment on the lawsuit. U.S. Department of Justice officials did not return a call or email for comment.

The government began the process of delisting the bears in March 2016 under the administration of President Barack Obama, and received 650,000 public comments. The Fish and Wildlife Service says on its website it offered an opportunity for government-to-government consultation to 53 tribal governments through letters, phone calls, emails and webinars during that time.

It is government policy to conduct direct consultations with tribes, which are sovereign nations, on Endangered Species Act issues.

The lawsuit alleges that government officials only contacted four tribes initially, and contacted the others only after the decision had been made.

"They promised us that they would consult with us before they made the decision," Nuvamsa said. "They renege on it."

The plaintiffs are 17 tribes, clans and individuals from Montana, South Dakota, North Dakota, Wyoming, Arizona, New Mexico and Canada. Rasmussen said two more tribes from Nebraska and South Dakota are being added.

— Associated Press

Native Americans Sue Frackers Over Manmade Earthquakes

Oklahoma has become one of the world's most notorious earthquake hubs. In fact, in 2014 for the first time, the number of magnitude 3 or greater quakes in the state surpassed California's total.

In terms of natural disasters, the place "where the wind comes sweeping down the plain" has historically been better known for tornados. That's changing. The increased seismicity is a relatively new phenomenon, simultaneous with the uptick in oil and natural gas activities in the state over the last decade. Though Oklahoma typically experienced zero to a couple magnitude 3 or greater quakes annually, the rate shot up to 20 in 2009. In 2013, the state had 109 such earthquakes followed by 579 in 2014, 903 in 2015, and 623 in 2016. In other words, the state went from some two sizable quakes a year to two or three a day.

Hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, has been a lightning rod for the blame, but it's not so much the fracking itself as the cleanup afterwards that's inducing these temblors. Fracking involves shooting a high-pressure stream of water, sand, and chemicals into the ground to release gas from shale. But in the process, hazardous fracking fluid and toxically salty water rise to the surface as well, so to dispose of this dangerous waste, companies pump it down a different opening deeper under the shale to rest permanently in a well of porous rock.

The thing is, when these wastewater injection wells are continuously filled, pressure builds up on geologic faults—enough to cause earthquakes when the two sides of a fault slip past each other, the U.S. Geological Survey acknowledges. In 2009, companies in Oklahoma pumped 849 million barrels of wastewater into wells. By 2014, that number hit 1.5 billion.

That's been a problem for Oklahoma's

Pawnee Nation and their advocate Erin Brockovich, the famed environmental activist lawyer, given that the tribe has endured some of the most devastating earthquakes in the state. On September 3, 2016, a magnitude 5.8 quake hit right near the town of Pawnee—Oklahoma had never experienced one more powerful—and was felt from Texas to South Dakota. Then on November 6, 2016, a 5.0 earthquake hit nearby Cushing. Exacerbating the danger, Cushing is the storage site of 60 million barrels of oil, the largest supply of crude in the world—a sticking point of concern for the Department of Homeland Security.

The Pawnee Nation has retained the services of law firm Weitz & Luxenberg, aided by Brockovich, to sue Eagle Road Oil LLC, Cummings Oil Company, and 25 other oil and gas companies for damage to its historic governmental buildings and reservation property resulting from what it alleges are human-induced quakes. The tribe's petition suggests the defendants were "knowingly causing" the quakes and that their actions "constitute wanton or reckless disregard for public or private safety."

At the damaged main communal building, a former school house built in 1878, white teachers used to teach skewed versions of Native American history to Pawnee students. Now oil companies are trying to school the Pawnee tribe in what they say is really going on with the seismicity, deflecting blame from the salt-water deposit wells. Eagle Road and Cummings did not respond to a request for comment for this article.

Still, the concerns in Cushing aren't just about the oil storage. There are massive amounts of fluids and gases that are pushed through pipelines in Cushing, and much of that infrastructure is aged—and just 20 miles from Pawnee.

Boak acknowledges the continued risk for major seismic events in the region but says there is scant data to predict them.

— National Geographic

McGuire bill seeks to boost Native American community college enrollment

A bill making its way through the California Legislature seeks to give low-income Native American students the same priority enrollment in community colleges as other low-income California residents.

North Coast state Sen. Mike McGuire (D-Healdsburg) said he introduced Senate Bill 164 to correct a "glaring oversight" in a piece of legislation in 2013 that gave California residents who receive benefits under California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids — also known as CalWORKS — priority enrollment in community colleges.

"But they left out Native American students," McGuire said last week. "I would call it an oversight, but it is a glaring oversight and it's simply unacceptable."

Senate Bill 164 would give the same priority enrollment to Native American students who receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families welfare benefits.

"What we have seen is those students who receive priority registration leads to faster degrees, faster certificate completion and we also know that priority registration helps students go on to a four-year college degree as well," McGuire said. "The North Coast is home to more Native American tribes than anywhere else in California. We also know that access to higher education is one of the best tools we have to break the cycle of poverty. That's why we want make it as easy as possible for Native American students to enroll in community colleges."

The Assembly Appropriation Committee's analysis of the bill released Wednesday found that 4,300 tribal members could benefit from the bill, adding to the nearly 10,000 Native American students the committee states are already attending community colleges.

College of the Redwoods Executive Director of College Advancement Marty Coelho said Wednesday that their college already gives priority registration to students in the CalWORKS program.

"[Our policy] does not currently address tribal members covered under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program, but we would support changing our policies and procedures to include priority enrollment for these individuals," Coelho wrote in an email to the Times-Standard.

The percentage of Native American students enrolled at College of the Redwoods has decreased since 2012, according to state data, changing from 7 percent to 5.7 percent in the 2015-2016 school year. Total student enrollment at the college has also decreased during this time from nearly 7,300 students in 2012-2013 to 6,962 in 2015-2016, according to California Community Colleges data.

College of the Redwoods recently began offering classes in the Del Norte County town of Klamath after forming a partnership with the Yurok Tribe, the state's

largest federally recognized tribe. Courses offered seek to prepare tribal members for college education as well as tribal government jobs.

According to the latest U.S. Census Bureau data, about one in four Native Americans and Alaska Natives lived below the federal poverty level in 2015, the highest rate of any race group. The national poverty rate was about 15 percent, according to the bureau.

McGuire said only 13 percent of Native Americans have completed a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 29 percent of the total U.S. population.

"In fact, 22 percent of native American students have not finished high school," McGuire said. "This is the lowest of any racial or ethnic or demographic group in California schools. California has a lot of work to do to increase college achievement levels within the native population."

The bill was placed on the Assembly Appropriations Committee's consent calendar in a unanimous vote on Thursday. The committee found the bill would result in minor costs to the community college system, and McGuire said it will be a significant benefit.

"More than any other corner of the state this bill will benefit Humboldt County and North Coast," McGuire said. "We believe that this will make college more affordable and accessible for Native American students and this will also open up additional enrollment for College of the Redwoods."

The bill was passed in the Senate with a unanimous bipartisan vote in April, and has yet to receive a no vote in the committee process, according to the state legislative information website. McGuire said he expects the bill to make it to the Assembly floor by September.

"Whether you're a Democrat or Republican, you know we must do better for California Native American students," he said. "Native American students deserve fast and easy access to community colleges."

— Times-Standard

BHSU honoring two local Native American Leaders

SPEARFISH, S. Dak. — Black Hills State University officials are honoring Native American leaders who had an impact on campus.

They are renaming one building while giving a new name to the Center for American Indian Studies.

The newest resident hall on campus which was named Crow Peak will be named after alumni Lionel R. Bordeaux; who is one the longest serving college presidents in the U.S.

The Center for American Indian Studies will change to the Jace Decory Center to honor her for the 33 years of teaching at the school.

This is a way for the school to honor Native American legacy.

Vice President of University Advancement Steve Meeker says the "school has really done great for a long time with our Native Americans. We have the highest percentage of Native Americans in the state system of South Dakota and so we really cherish our relationship with them and we work hard at that relationship to make sure we're one here at Black Hills State."

Formal naming ceremonies for both places will be held this fall.

— Kota Territory News

Native American Fashion Designer Bethany Yellowtail Makes Dresses With a Message

Native American fashion designer Bethany Yellowtail had an epiphany while attending the protests at Standing Rock in 2016.

"As I was in these spaces where I normally would not have been, I saw these friends, and women, and sisters, my relatives who maybe would not step into a leadership role," she says. "I saw them bloom and I saw them blossom into these women they were always meant to be. They stepped into their own power."

The Los Angeles designer channeled the moment of inspiration into the latest collection of her B.Yellowtail line, which she recently debuted at the World of Wonder Storefront Gallery in Hollywood. Among her brightly colored dresses and intricately patterned women's wear, she based a particular piece on ledger art. Originally drawn on tanned bison skin, then transferred to paper after the near eradication of the buffalo in the late 1800s, ledger art recorded everyday life for the Plains tribes, as well as battle exploits, relationships and the encroaching cultural changes — and erasure — brought by Manifest Destiny.

For what she says is her favorite of her latest collection, Yellowtail collaborated

with illustrator Wakeah Jhane to capture the ledger art style, depicting seven women of various ages sketched on a long skirt. Yellowtail says that the skirt has a deeper meaning. "Indigenous people think about their actions today and how they will affect our grandchildren and seven generations forward. Everything you do affects them," she says.

This forward-thinking design ethos is the core of Yellowtail's practice: She makes fashion with a message. "People get it, they get that what we're trying to do isn't just about creating beautiful clothes, selling jewelry, but it has purpose, it has meaning," she says. "It can be a catalyst for a message."

In a time where big retailers like Anthropologie and Urban Outfitters steal indigenous design, small-time "makers" on Etsy or Instagram are complicit in cultural appropriation, and the persistent Coachella headdress still summons groans across the internet, the importance of true Native American creators such as Yellowtail becomes even more pertinent.

Navajo/Diné model Siera Begaye, who showcased a flowing yellow dress during World of Wonder's step-and-repeat, emphasizes why authenticity is important to Native American design. "Native culture, when it's authentic, it comes from within," she says. "It comes from within your spirit. You put out something, when you make something. You put your spirit into it, and you give it life. And that's something I see in Bethany's work."

Yellowtail says that her design work "transcends normal fashion shows because of what we're trying to tell through our clothing and our stories." She uses tradition, history and her own lineage as a jumping-off point to create something new and distinct. "I'm from the Northern Crow and Cheyenne nations. This collection is inspired by old-style Crow and Plains beadwork. I love floral designs from the early 1900s, and a lot of our beadwork and traditional designs were influenced by that."

She also collaborates with other Native makers and designers to mash up cultural styles, bringing a contemporary feel to sometimes ancient art forms. "[We're] celebrating what's happening now, right now in indigenous America and indigenous communities."

By highlighting other Native American designers, Yellowtail amplifies the reach of their creative efforts, and together they can fight cultural erasure one dress at a time.

— LA Weekly

Man accused of murdering 11-year-old Native American girl wants to strike deal with prosecutors

ALBUQUERQUE, New Mexico — A man accused of kidnapping and killing an 11-year-old girl whose death stunned the nation's largest American Indian reservation and prompted new federal legislation is scheduled to change his plea in court.

Tom Begaye's change of plea hearing in federal court is scheduled for August 1 in Albuquerque. His attorneys said in court that he was looking to strike a plea deal, but it's unclear what he'll change the plea to. His federal defender did not return a call and email seeking comment. Begaye previously pleaded not guilty.

Begaye is facing murder, sexual abuse and other charges in the killing of Ashlyne Mike in May 2016. The case prompted federal legislation that would expand the Amber Alert system to tribal communities after it was learned that an alert of Mike's kidnapping didn't go out until the next day.

Begaye is accused of luring Mike and her brother into his van. He told investigators he sexually assaulted the girl and struck her twice in the head with a crowbar, and that she was still moving when he left her in the desert, according to court documents. The younger brother was able to escape.

Mike's father filed a lawsuit against the Navajo Nation for failing to have an emergency notification system that he says would have saved his daughter's life.

Republican Sen. John McCain of Arizona introduced legislation in April expanding the notification system to tribal lands. McCain said there are over 7,700 American Indian children listed as missing in the U.S.

"We must give Indian tribes the tools they need to help our children and put an end to this tragedy," McCain said in a written statement.

An Amber Alert system for the 27,000-square-mile reservation had been proposed years ago but was never implemented, despite the tribe having been awarded \$330,000 in federal funding as part of a U.S. Justice Department pilot project. Half the money was used to buy equipment such as megaphones and pop-up tents, but the rest went unspent.

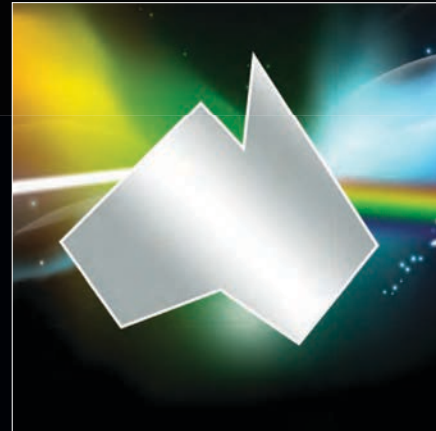
The Navajo Nation covers parts of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah.

— Idaho State Journal

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Education

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Summer of science greets Pemayetv Emahakv students

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — About 50 Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School students got an inkling of what the scientific method of discovery is all about during the school's four-week summer science program.

The program focused on fun with plenty of hands-on experiments, but it also snuck in additional learning through journal writing, data collecting and discussing the process. It was the school's second year hosting a summer program and the first to concentrate on science.

"We want them to learn the scientific method because it is something they need to apply by the time they take the Florida State Assessment fifth-grade science test," said instructional coach Vicki Paige. "The kids love the involvement, the messier the better."

During the program, students experienced hands-on projects at Brighton's Billy Osceola Library. One outing included making gummy worms swim. The secret was baking soda and vinegar. The students created lava lamp-type bottles as Alka-Seltzer made the colorful bubbles float to the surface. They also watched librarian Robin Hayes attempt to create a black snake from sugar, baking soda and lighter fluid.

Students donned aprons and safety goggles and tackled the tasks with gusto. Some experiments worked well, others took some extra effort, and one, the snake, was an abject failure. Hayes filled a bucket with sand, added the sugar/baking soda mixture

on top. She doused it in lighter fluid, lit it and voila.

Nothing happened. It burned, but didn't create the wriggling black snake it was supposed to. Hayes told the students that she may have gotten the measurements wrong. Regardless, it was another learning experience.

"That's science," she said. "Sometimes experiments don't work the first time and you have to try again."

After the failed experiment, they went back inside the library and talked more about the scientific method and ate cake. While they were enjoying the treat, Hayes showed them some library books with more scientific experiments they can do at home with their parents.

"Tell your parents to come and get these science books," Hayes said. "And read, read, read."

Science wasn't the only subject on the agenda during the PECS program. Students set their own reading goals and read daily for 15 minutes in class. Teachers helped them log their time for the school's Just Read Florida summer reading requirement.

Interactive experiments were done in the classrooms, along with reading and writing. Encouraging the students to talk about the science was an important component of the lesson. After each experiment, students and teachers discussed it to ensure they all understood.

A group of first-graders made colorful slime and then put it inside uninflated balloons to create stress balls.

Some third- and fourth-graders learned about density before they could conduct



Beverly Bidney

First-grader Josephine Snow Severino works with the icky-feeling slime at the PECS hands-on summer science program July 6.



Beverly Bidney

Kindergarteners Benjamin Smith, Marley Cypress and Rosalie Jones conduct a science experiment to make candy gummy worms swim in a concoction of water, vinegar and baking soda at Brighton's Billy Osceola Library during the PECS summer science program.

an experiment. They had to predict which candies would float and which would sink in a cup of water. They learned an object will float if it is less dense than the water and sink if it is more dense.

Paige instructed the students to write down their predictions before the experiment commenced.

"As scientists we record and collect data," she said. "We've been doing that all

summer in our logs. Part of scientific learning is you aren't always going to be right."

Clipboards in hand, candies were tested one by one. Peppermints, Smarties, Starburst, Twizzlers, gummy bears and more all sank to the bottom of the cup. Only a gumball floated and as it did, the outer coating of sugar dissolved. Students diligently recorded the data and compared it to their predictions. Right or wrong, they were all rewarded with

a piece of candy.

"Students found out that science doesn't always turn out how you expect it to," Paige said. "They have to understand that's how we learn. The teachers also enjoyed the program and we hope to get even more students next year."



Beverly Bidney

Josiah Gopher proudly shows off the slime he made at the PECS summer science program.



Beverly Bidney

PECS instructional coach Vicki Paige explains the next experiment to a group of third and fourth-graders.

Thanks to Creek immersion program, PECS wins Little Red Schoolhouse award

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

BRIGHTON — Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School won the 2017 Little Red Schoolhouse award in June for its Creek immersion program. Sponsored by the Florida Association of Elementary and Middle School Principals (FAEMSP), the award recognizes programs that make education engaging, challenging and meaningful for students.

"It's an exciting award that recognizes the hard work the culture department puts into the immersion program," Principal Brian Greseth said. "This isn't something that's on their radar; they are usually focused on assessments. Ours was the only culturally based entry and it really stood out."

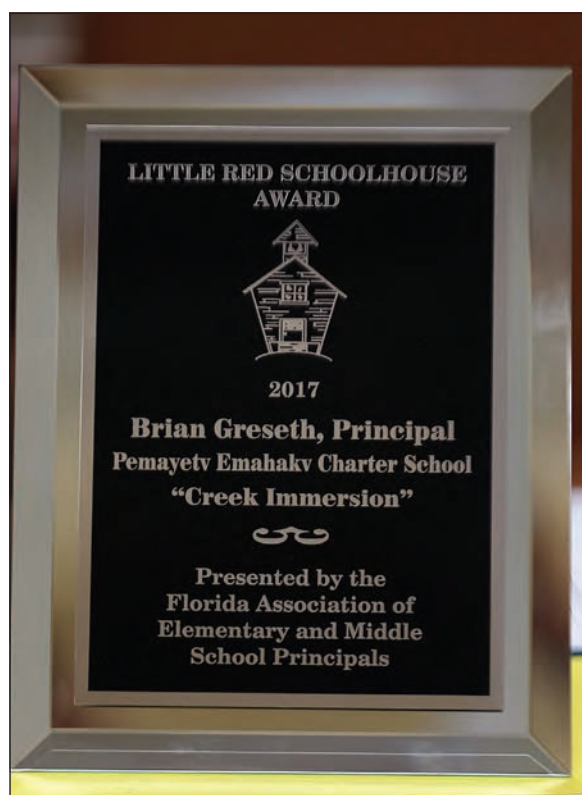
Greseth submitted a 10-minute video narrated by immersion program manager Marcus Briggs-Cloud with the application. The video began with a provocative opening statement.

"It is estimated that a language dies every 14 days. Ninety percent of the world's languages are expected to be extinct by the end of this century; the Creek language is no exception."

There are fewer than 40 fluent Creek speakers in Brighton and the immersion program aims to create more. Briggs-Cloud believes nothing is more effective than a language immersion program for babies to reverse the road to extinction.

"This is the only place on earth someone can go to hear the Creek language exclusively spoken through the entire day," Briggs-Cloud said in the video.

The video explained the benefit of having



six or more fluent speakers in one space, which generates conversation patterns and a passive listening context for students. It also exposes them to unique idioms representative of authentic Creek language and cultural ideology instead of generating a mirror translation of English. This is best represented in humor, as illustrated in the video by a group of four elders talking and laughing together in the classroom.

Founded

in 1971, the Little Red Schoolhouse award recognizes schools for their unique and creative way to meet the needs of students. Submissions are judged on originality, implementation, staff and community involvement and longevity during the school year. Programs at six schools were recognized in 2017.

"Creek Immersion by Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School was chosen because of its uniqueness," said Janet Knott, FAEMSP president. "It is a prestigious award that recognizes outstanding programs that exist within a school that focus on culture, achievement, positive behavior and/or a combination."

PECS' mission is to "provide parents, students and the community of Brighton with a school that meets high standards of student academic achievement by providing a rigorous student oriented curriculum, infuse with the Seminole language and culture, in an environment that is safe, nurturing, conducive to learning and designed to preserve Seminole traditions."

The award-winning immersion program is one crucial way the school works toward achieving its mission.

Fulfill your minor trust financial literacy requirement

The Office of Trust Management will host two series of financial literacy seminars this fall. The sessions will be held Oct. 21 and Nov. 18 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Native Learning Center, room 204. The seminars are open to all Seminole Tribal members up to 17 years old. Registration must be complete by Sept. 29 by visiting semtribe.com/signmeup. Attending both sessions will fulfill students' Minor Trust Financial Literacy requirements. For more information, contact Lisa Estopinan at 954-966-6300, extension 11442.

Tribalwide summer jobs keep students learning, earning

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY AND LI COHEN
Staff Reporters

Thirty-six teenagers gained valuable experience in the working world this summer through the Summer Work Experience Program (SWEP) sponsored by the Center for Student Success and Services Department.

Founded in 2005, the program aims to prepare students for the workforce and expose them to opportunities within the Tribe. The participants chose which department they were interested in and went to work June 12. The program ends Aug. 4. Just like any other Tribal employee, the SWEP students wake up early every day from Monday to Friday, clock in and perform their jobs.

"We want to make them more marketable," said Kerlande Patterson, Tribal professional development coordinator, who manages the program. "A lot of kids are still trying to figure out what they want to do with their futures and this gives them the chance to work in various departments."

SWEP students worked in a variety of departments including the Tribal Historic Preservation Office, Cattle and Range, preschools, the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, Seminole Police, Seminole Fire Rescue, Boys and Girls Clubs, Information Technology (IT), Culture, Recreation and Housing.



SWEP participant Lindsey Posada works in the classroom with Immokalee preschoolers July 12.

provocative, gritty and honest. The book is a team effort and will be written by Cancel, Carrie Dilley and Cypress.

"Alyssa is doing historic preservation by telling the history of Osceola in her own way," Cancel said. "We find different ways of storytelling so why not use a medium like a comic book to preserve and promote

perfect for her since she is studying early childhood education at Florida SouthWestern State College in Fort Myers and plans to be a preschool teacher. In fact, working at the preschool influenced Lauren's choice of major. She knows a lot of patience is necessary for the job and fortunately, she has it in abundance.



Beverly Bidney

Gherri Osceola creates patchwork as part of her SWEP experience at Big Cypress Culture Department.

like to work and thinks other students should take advantage of the SWEP program.

"You get paid and that's a good incentive," he said.

Moving out of the office, Morgan Yates and Conner Thomas are no strangers to cattle. Each has worked with cows in 4-H and in the pastures, but this was their first

trucks used within the department, the ins and outs of the rescue and ambulance and even how to help patients who need heart monitors and ventilation.

In addition, the two learned how to use ropes and tie knots and fire station operations, where they attended training class with professional firefighters. While Destiny favored the ambulance and services acquainted with it, Cachalani leaned toward the "Jaws-of-life," which is used by rescue personnel to save people who are stuck in vehicles after serious collisions. Despite their varying favoritisms, the girls agreed that working became like "being with family."

Cachalani, 15, said that the program is a great experience. She chose to work with the fire department at the advice of her older sister, who completed the SWEP program with the department two years ago. At 15 years old, she isn't sure if she wants to work as a firefighter professionally, but she plans to return to the fire station next summer to gain more experience.

"My favorite part is going on call with the firefighters and seeing how they handle and respond to everything," she said. "It's an awesome experience."

While Cachalani and Destiny were learning how to protect the city, Boryalys Cypress, Elizabeth Frank and Brent Frank spent their summers working as junior counselors with the Hollywood Boys & Girls Club. While the organization has a year-round teen mentoring/volunteer program, SWEP allowed the three students to assist with opening the clubs, daily game and activity preparation, cleaning, youth supervision, serving and cooking meals, escorting youth to and from programming, and mentoring. The program only requires the SWEP participants to work between 25 and 37 hours every week, but Rebecca Bryant, unit manager of BGC, said that they passionately volunteered outside those times.

Bryant explained that Boryalys, Elizabeth and Brent were all previously involved with the clubs, making the passion toward the jobs much stronger. While they have independently grown throughout the program, she has also seen them supporting each other and operating as a team.

"They have all been with us from previous summers and have grown tremendously," Bryant explained. "As a group, they work pretty well together and have developed a rhythm that allows each of them to showcase their strengths while learning ways to improve their weak areas from each other."

To challenge the group, Bryant regularly challenges them to work towards personal goals and also toward facilitating their own youth activity during the last week of the program. In doing this, they can demonstrate the new skills gained during the program and receive recognition for their hard work.



Lauren Posada makes sure these Immokalee 2-year-olds see the tiny frog perched on the playground equipment.

The experience the students acquired is as diverse as the individuals themselves. Randeon Osceola, 14, has always loved reading and writing so she opted to work at the Museum to hone those skills. An aspiring writer, she is using the resources of the Museum archives to research and write an article about significant people in Native American history since 1835, the start of the Seminole Wars.

"There is a lot more here than I thought," said the Sagamont School ninth-grader. "They preserve a lot of things and I learned that a lot of work goes into putting together the displays."

Randeon spends her time researching and learning more about Seminole history, which is fine with her since she would like to be a journalist or maybe write a book one day.

"It's not a burden. It's fun," she said. "The program gives you the opportunity to do something you choose. It's pretty much everyone's dream, to do what you want to do."

Budding artist Alyssa Osceola, 16, chose to work at THPO where she is using her own gritty style to help illustrate a comic book about Osceola's life. After she graduates from Florida Virtual School, where she is a junior, Alyssa will attend the Ringling College of Art and Design in Sarasota. The work she did during SWEP will expand her portfolio and the experience will help her to pursue a career in art.

"I'm getting used to working in an office and learning about deadlines, the planning process and publishing," she said.

Quenton Cypress, a former SWEP student and current THPO employee, mentored Alyssa during her time in SWEP. In his job as community engagement coordinator, Quenton has tried to get more youth and Tribal members involved in the Museum.

"I've always wanted to be someone kids look up to and be a role model," Quenton said. "Kids are watching and will follow, so I try to use that to do good things. We are achieving our goal of more community involvement."

THPO chief data analyst Juan Cancel supervises the comic book project and acknowledges that comic books can be

history? We want kids to come here and learn in different ways."

Gherri Osceola, 17, chose to work in the Big Cypress Culture Department to bring her closer to her Seminole roots. She was interested in crafts as a young girl, but hadn't made anything in a long time.

"I'm reconnecting with it again," said the Immokalee High School senior. "The ability to work for the Tribe helps me understand how things work inside the Tribe."

Gherri's workday included time at the sewing machine, where she made a patchwork pattern of her own design. Her advice to other students for next summer is simple: just do it. Gherri said she benefited from her time in SWEP and is sure other kids will, too.

Lindsey and Lauren Posada worked in the Immokalee Preschool. It was Lindsey's second summer at the preschool and third in SWEP.

"Working with the kids and helping them learn gives me a feeling of satisfaction," said Lindsey, 16, an Immokalee High School junior who is also enrolled at Florida SouthWestern State College. "It's good to know you are helping children in your own community."

A quick study, Lindsey learned that getting young children used to new things isn't as simple as it would be for an adult.

"They need encouragement and delayed gratification before they can do what they like," she said. "The strategy works out well most of the time. The kids are really great and they say the funniest things."

This was Lauren's fourth summer in SWEP and second at the preschool, which is



Beverly Bidney

SWEP student Randeon Osceola does research in the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum's archives for an article she is writing.

"This gives me good experience and will help me with my career in the long run," she said. "The kids make it enjoyable, they do something different every day so it's never boring."

Lauren, who works with the 2-year-old class, gets high praise from teacher Diana Garcia.

"The kids love her and always look for her in the morning," Garcia said. "She stays with them and engages them; she's a big help."

In Brighton, two-year SWEP alumnus Edward Gaucin, 15, spent his days surrounded by books at the Billy Osceola Library. Last year he worked at the Seminole Police Department and wanted something different this time around. His duties included helping Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School students complete science experiments as well as general library work.

"I like getting work experience and seeing how people do their jobs every day," said the Okeechobee High School sophomore. "Participating in the program last year made me more open to new experiences."

Edward admitted waking up early was not fun, but he liked learning what it was

year at SWEP. A typical day includes fixing fences and any other tasks that need to be done in the pastures and pens. Two intense weeks were spent helping to ship the calves, a major annual undertaking in Brighton and Big Cypress.

Morgan has worked with her father Bobby Yates in the cattle and range department for a few summers, but this was the first time she earned a paycheck. The Moore Haven High School ninth-grader said she enjoys the camaraderie, stories and jokes told on the job.

"Since I'm getting paid, I am more responsible for getting up and going to the job," said Conner, a junior at Moore Haven High School. "SWEP is a good opportunity. But if you're going to work here, you better have tough skin and be willing to work. It's a lot of fun, but it is work."

In Hollywood, students received a taste of other careers. SWEP participants Destiny Diaz and Cachalani Hayes Frank learned that careers are not confined to office spaces. The two participants spent the summer learning how to become firefighters with Seminole Fire Rescue. After initially learning how to conduct CPR and about fire behavior, the two progressed to learning about the various



Beverly Bidney

Alyssa Osceola works on a comic book about Osceola's life July 10 at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum where she is working as a SWEP participant.

Recent grads learn about the Tribe

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY
Staff Reporter

ORLANDO — Newly minted Tribal high school graduates traveled to Orlando July 16-18 for an education about the Tribe.

The mission of the program, held at Sapphire Falls Resort, was to provide an overview of what services the Tribe offers its members. About a dozen graduates participated in the program, at which executives from Tribal departments outlined what they do and how the students can take advantage of their services and programs.

Elected officials in attendance included Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr., Board President Mitchell Cypress, Big Cypress Councilman Mondo Tiger, Brighton Councilman Andrew J. Bowers Jr., Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola and Hollywood Board Rep. Gordon Wareham.

"Everything we do is for you, the future of this Tribe," Chairman Osceola said. "What we are going to show you is what you have the opportunity to be a part of. Regardless of where you go today, tomorrow you will still be a Tribal member. There are so many resources and opportunities to take advantage of."

The officials each greeted the grads and encouraged them to ask questions.

"That's what we're here for," Rep. Wareham said. "Pull us aside. We have a lot of knowledge."

President Cypress told the students the Tribe is behind them and will support them in their future educational endeavors. Councilman Osceola urged them to learn and get a depth of knowledge about what the Tribe does because "tomorrow you are going to be doing what we are doing today."

set up for the long term," he said. "And be careful with credit card debt."

Lewis Gopher spoke about the risk of the Tribe losing the connection to its culture. He told the grads it is everyone's responsibility to keep the culture alive.

"It makes us who we are," he said. "We're the remnants of 300 people that escaped in the 1800s. The blood we have in our veins comes from strong people who fought to survive. We still have teachers who have the knowledge and it's our job to go learn."

Gopher told the group that he still seeks out elders. He said they just want to talk and have someone listen to them.

"That's how we used to learn in a camp setting and it's still alive today," he said.

The Culture Department set up in an adjacent ballroom. Fabrics, rick rack, sewing machines, ironing boards and a cutting table made a complete patchwork lesson possible for those who wanted to learn. A large beading table was filled with beads of all sizes and colors.

Michael Jimmie of the Tampa area brought her nine children to the event.

"It's good for the kids to learn different cultural things as well as to meet kids from other reservations," she said. "We do this at home, but it's good to come together with other people."

Jim Allen, CEO of Seminole Gaming and Chairman of Hard Rock International, gave an update on the Tribe's gaming operation. He reported that since the Tribe bought Hard Rock International in 2007, the value of the company has more than doubled. There are 226 Hard Rock locations in 75 countries and growing. He called it the greatest family business in the world.

Allen has spent his entire career in the



Beverly Bidney (2)

Recent high school graduates attended a program in Orlando July 16-18 to learn about various resources and opportunities the Tribe provides to them. While some parts of the program were more discussion-based, other parts were based on fun. Above, students got to practice their intricate beadwork. Below, recent graduates got to enjoy their time learning new traditional instruments they did not get to learn in high school.



"Be proud of who you are and where you come from," Councilman Tiger said. "It's very competitive out there. The man outside wants to see you come to work every day and on time."

The departments used PowerPoint presentations to explain their function to the students. Suresh Geer, executive director of finance, gave a tutorial on the Tribe's budget, including resources that come in and how they are used for the benefit of the Tribe. He told the students the percentage of the Tribe's income that comes from gaming and used pie charts and other graphics to show how money is spent.

Treasurer Pete Hahn explained how a budget works.

"Assets are the money you put in your pocket, liabilities take that money out of your pocket," Hahn said. "Remember what you have coming in and don't spend more than that. People don't plan to fail, they just fail to plan."

Health Department representatives described the basics of insurance coverage. Education Director Randall Budde gave advice for post-secondary studies and assured the grads the department will help them navigate the opportunities. Secretary LaVonne Rose described the important functions of her office.

"Please register to vote," she said. "That's the key to sovereignty, to elect our own leaders." Housing Director Derrick Smith explained good financial management so they can eventually get a home loan. He suggested they save at least 10 percent of their income.

"The more you save, the better you will be

hospitality industry and urged the graduates to seek a work-life balance.

"Find a balance in life or you will always be working," he said. "You need family, friends and outside interests. Work can be fun if you find something you enjoy, that's the key. Be serious, but try to have fun."

Allen's advice to the grads for a successful career is to be patient, persistent and polite but the most important qualities to have are trustworthiness, honesty and integrity.

At the end of the graduate program presentations, more advice was doled out by Tribal officials.

"Being human means somewhere along the way, you are going to mess up," said Councilman Bowers. "Deal with it, learn from it and move on. Dare to be different; most people who are become leaders. Seek the truth. Don't think everything you read on social media is true. Don't be afraid to ask questions, that's how we learn. Be fiscally responsible and don't live beyond your means."

Graduates said the meeting was beneficial. "I'm learning stuff to help me through life," Candace Davis said. "I'm getting all my questions answered, specifically housing information."

"I learned all about the Tribal branches and the reality of our family business," Randeel Osceola said. "I had no idea how big it really is. I've only seen the Immokalee and Hollywood casinos. It makes me want to come to work for the Tribe. I'm grateful they did this for us."

Jenna Billie right at home with Mensa gathering

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

HOLLYWOOD — What is the capital of Wisconsin?
Stumped?

Jenna Billie wasn't. Even though she is only 5 years old, Jenna can name all 50 state capitals without much hesitation. The daughter of Jennifer and Jonah Billie from Hollywood knows a lot more than just the capitals, too. Jenna's high intelligence level is one reason why she will be starting the second grade this year well ahead of where peers her age are placed, which is kindergarten.

But Jenna has already graduated from kindergarten and with the blessings of her Montessori school and her parents, is bypassing first grade thanks to her exceptional academic skills. When she started kindergarten last year, she was already far ahead of the curve reading at a fifth-grade level.

"She learned how to read on her own, teaching herself to read," Jennifer said. "I never sat down and taught her to read. I taught her the alphabet. She learned quickly when she was 18 months old. I taught her the sounds of the letters, and with that, on her own with books and with certain toys, she basically taught herself how to read. She spends her days reading. When we go on far trips, she always wants books in the car."

Jenna quickly grasped multiplication tables to become a whiz in math. Ditto in history.

"She learned the states and capitals in less than three days," her mother said. "Her memory is incredible. She wanted to learn the states and capitals. She wanted the second-graders to know that she knows what they know. She doesn't realize they probably don't even know."

Skipping a grade is a perk that comes with a 140 IQ, which is what Jenna scored at age four. Another benefit is inclusion into Mensa International, an organization for bright adults and youngsters that requires a member to score within the top 2 percent of approved IQ tests.

Jenna, along with 1,800 other Mensa members known as Mensans, attended the organization's annual gathering July 5-9 at the Diplomat Beach Resort in Hollywood. A sampling of titles from the dozens of diverse sessions for adults ranged from "Addressing Urban Inequality and Poverty" to "Understanding Surrealist Art" to "Investing in Future Technologies."

With the event practically in her backyard, Jenna didn't pass up an opportunity to join fellow astute minds her age for the youth programs. Her small group for ages 4 to 6 included kids from Florida, California, Ohio, South Carolina and Texas.

"Our primary goal at Mensa is to provide social interaction," said Jamie Uphold, Mensa's gifted youth and leadership coordinator. "Our kids are different. They are exceptional in every sense of the word. They stand out. Mensa is a place where they fit in. Some of these kids are making friendships today that they will have for life."

An array of educational programs set up on the third day of the gathering allowed the kids to



Kevin Johnson

Jenna Billie, 5, center, wears and shows patchwork during a program about the Seminole Tribe at Mensa's annual gathering July 6 at Diplomat Beach Resort in Hollywood. The program for ages 4 to 6 emphasized the Tribe's culture and history and was led by Alyssa Boge, far left, education coordinator at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum. About 1,800 Mensa members, including youth and adults, attended the gathering. Acceptance into Mensa is based on high scores on IQ tests.

learn about pizza geometry, invasive species and wild animals, all in one morning. Another caveat, especially for Jenna, was a program about the Seminole Tribe's culture and traditions.

"Do you know who the Seminoles are?" Alyssa Boge, educational coordinator from the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, asked the group of eight kids.

"I'm a Seminole," responded Jenna, whose great uncle Noah Billie has artwork displayed at the Museum.

"She's a proud Tribal member," said mom Jennifer, who is not a Tribal member. "I don't think she really understands that she's gifted. She knows she's different. She's definitely a proud Seminole. Dad made sure to make her a very proud Seminole girl."

Boge spent the next 50 minutes explaining and demonstrating the important history behind the Tribe's patchwork designs, sweetgrass basketry, necklaces, clans, chickees, saw palmetto, sofkee, stick ball and the knee bone game. It was a hands-on morning for the kids, who grinned while grinding corn, smiled while smelling sweetgrass and played the knee bone

game with the knee bone of a cow.

When she began to consider which programs to offer the kids at the Mensa gathering, Uphold said the Seminole Tribe's name kept popping up on her searches for "Hollywood Florida culture."

She was thrilled to be able to include the Tribe in the day's youth menu.

"That's something I want our kids to be exposed to. They love to learn. They love new and different information," she said.

The Seminole program hit home with Jenna in many ways. When Boge started to explain about chickees, Jenna mentioned her family has a chickee in their front yard on the Hollywood Reservation. When the discussion turned to patchwork, Jenna became part of the demonstration by showing the patchwork design she wore.

As for those state capitals, when Boge casually mentioned she came to Florida from Wisconsin, Jenna, without any prompting, immediately provided an answer to a question that wasn't even asked.

"Madison is the capital," she said.

AH-TAH-THI-KI MUSEUM Seminole Discovery Days



Bring your friends & family for summer fun!

June 24th: Rodeo Day

July 22nd: Everglades Survival

September 9th: Art at Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki

Spanish Days

Habla Español? Join us for special programs in Spanish from 1-4pm on June 18th, July 16th, and August 13th!

All activities are free for Tribal Members, Tribal employees, museum members, or included with your admission.

Class of 2017

Graduating high school is a major accomplishment. The Class of 2017 is filled with designers, social champions, athletes, and many diverse personalities that are ready to take on the world. As high school ends, it is time for a new journey into adulthood to begin and graduates from around the Seminole Tribe of Florida are preparing for new adventures that lie ahead. Regardless of where these graduates go, what they do and how they choose their claim to fame, there is no doubt they will be successful. Below are some of this year's graduates. The Class of 2017 is a class to remember and The Seminole Tribune wishes them all the best of luck in their future endeavors.

Congratulations, Graduates!



Ahnie Jumper

American Heritage High School

Ahnie will attend Florida Gulf Coast University where she will play on the softball team and study early childhood education. Her favorite high school memory was winning the state softball championship three times. In the future, she hopes to run a preschool.



Savannah Redbone Osceola

Anadarko High School

Anadarko, Oklahoma

Savannah's staying true to her roots, as she will attend Southwestern Oklahoma State University to study psychology. Her younger cousins inspire her to be a role model and she plans to carry that into a career in counseling.



Morgan Bert

Florida Christian School

To support her family and remain close to Tribal roots, Morgan plans to study agriculture at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University in Tallahassee, Florida. Her younger siblings inspire her to always learn and to be kind to all whom she encounters.



Nashoba Gonzalez

Ahfachkee School

Headed to Johnson and Wales University in North Miami, Nashoba plans on studying hospitality management and tourism. Throughout high school, her parents inspired her to never give up and always keep trying. She plans on working in the travel and tourism industry.



River Osceola

Moore Haven High School

River plans to pursue a music career, already underway, as he looks forward to writing and producing songs. He intends to study business, perhaps at Florida State. River thanks his cousin Yo Osceola for helping keep him out of trouble in high school and credits other friends and family with help along the way.



Trevor Thomas

Okeechobee High School

Trevor plans to attend either Indian River State College or Warner University to focus on an agriculture-related major and hopefully continue playing baseball. His favorite high school memory was a walk off win against Martin County in a district semifinal this year.



Ditoyyo Billie

Devereux Glenholme School

Washington, Connecticut

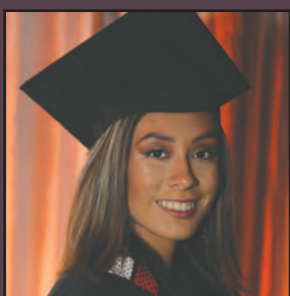
Ditoyyo will trade seasons for beaches in college, as he will attend Lynn University in Boca Raton to study hospitality management. His great grandmother valued education, inspiring him to work toward a career in the Tribe's gaming department.



Randee Osceola

Immokalee High School

Aside from reigning as the 2017-2018 Miss Florida Seminole Princess, Randee plans on attending Barry University in Miami to study psychology, a subject her mother also studied before her. She plans on going far in education to earn her doctorate to better serve the Tribe.



Michelle Garcia

GED

Michelle plans to enter the medical field and study nursing at Florida SouthWestern State College in Fort Myers. Her mother, who was a single parent raising six children, inspired her to never give up and taught her that she can achieve anything she sets her mind to.



Jeremiah Osceola Santiago

The Vanguard School

While taking a break from school, Jeremiah plans to get a job. He is still deciding upon a school and is considering entering the athletics field through sports medicine or a similar field. He knows that life can pass by quickly and he wants to seize every opportunity possible.



Rhett Tiger

NSU University School

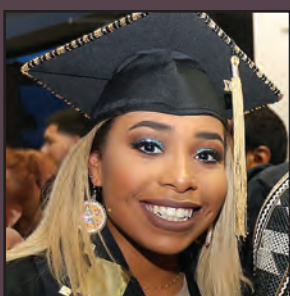
The Athletics field is calling Rhett's name, as he plans on attending Queens University of Charlotte to study in sports management. Whether he was playing sports on the field or studying in class during high school, his mother inspired him and he learned no one can take away his education.



Alexis Osceola-James

Montverde Academy

To challenge herself, Alexis will move out-of-state and attend the University of Alabama to study political science or communications. She is driven to stay focused and draws inspiration from Assata Shakur's books. She aspires to be a lawyer.



Sydnee Cypress

Moore Haven High School

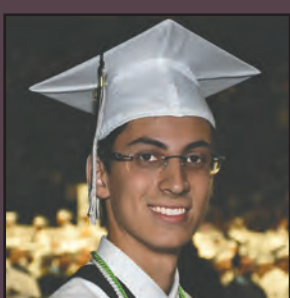
Sydnee wants to study psychiatry and play softball in college, hopefully in Melbourne, with an ultimate goal of coming back to open her own practice and help the Tribe. She attributes her success in academics and athletics to her mother, who taught her to do her best and never give up.



Nicholas Zepeda

Liberty University Online Academy

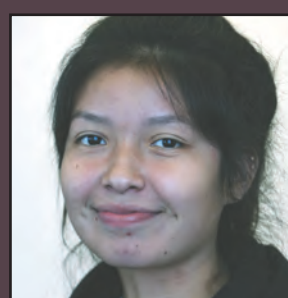
Hoping to own the next big film studio, Nicholas will attend Southeastern University in Lakeland, Florida to study film. He has made films since he was a child and is inspired by his father's work ethic, wisdom, leadership and love for God, which he values immensely.



Hunter Tiger

John A. Ferguson Senior High School

During high school, Hunter learned that confidence in himself is far more valuable than worrying how others view him. He plans on carrying that mentality to Miami-Dade College to get his associate's degree in business administration so that he can start his own company.



Rylee Osceola

American Heritage High School

While Rylee plans to continue her education from an online school, she does not yet have a set career path. She is considering becoming a pediatrician, but regardless of her ultimate decision, she plans on following the good example set forth by her father, Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr.



Mason Foret
Lennard High School

After taking time off to travel, Mason plans to enter the management training program at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa where he looks forward to learning the business and helping the Tribe.



Isaac Urbina
GED

Knowing he did not want to continue throughout life without an education, Isaac decided to get his GED. His family inspires him to succeed and continuously encourages him to be better and push farther than he thinks is possible. He plans to go to technical school and become a mechanic.



GraySun Billie
Ahfachkee School

Though undecided where, GraySun plans to attend college to learn video game design and coding. During high school, GraySun became inspired by art, as well as the support and dedication of his teachers, to follow his dreams and trust himself. He hopes to become a video game designer.



Chloe Smith
Hollywood Hills High School

Chloe plans to attend Florida International University, where she will study social work. The biggest lesson she's taken from high school is to never procrastinate and her family inspired her to achieve greatness. In the future, she wants to be a social worker so she can better the Tribe and help children.



Ivan Billie Jr.
Neshoba Central High School
Philadelphia, Mississippi

From his parents' inspirational messages throughout high school, Ivan plans to follow his dreams and study in game art at Full Sail University in Winter Park, Florida.



Trevon Marks
American Heritage High School

Entrepreneurship is in Trevon's future, as he plans to take business management courses online. He said only time will tell exactly what lies ahead, but he is confident that a business background will lead him to success.

Eric Jaden Puente
Moore Haven High School

Although undecided about college, Eric knows he wants to pursue a multimedia major. He already sells figures that he paints, molds and sculpts. Eric's parents helped make sure he stayed on track with his school work during high school, preparing him for his time in college.

Drayton Billie
Okeechobee High School

After being a standout wrestler for four years and receiving much support from his coach, Drayton plans to tackle an automotive-related career. He hopes to study at Universal Technical Institute with an eventual goal of starting an auto repair business.

Raylon Eagle
Okeechobee High School

Raylon is eying a career as a paramedic, which she will pursue at Valencia College in Orlando. Her inspiration to help people comes from Salina Dorgan, who also helps others and encouraged her throughout high school.

Dennis Gonzales
The Vanguard School

Dennis' future includes attending Florida South Western State College and studying criminal justice to become a game warden. Basketball played a big part of his high school life, which included many memories, including receiving support on and off the court from his coach.

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Cattle Country Sale
Written By: Rene Osceola 9/14/2016

The week of the sale
Has come and gone
The nights were short
And the days were long

Working together as
One big team
A slacker's nightmare but,
A cattlemen's dream

Working the cattle
From dawn till dusk
The chores we do
These things are a must

Cattle hauled in
Day after day
At night we would
Feed, water, and hay

Constructing pens on the
Rodeo arena floor
Carrying steel panels
'Till our bodies were sore

Bobby and his crew
Holding down Marsh Pens
Jerry, Gene, and Jessie
Hauling cattle again, and again

Kelsey on the road
Day after day
Loading and unloading
A bunch of bales of hay

Mark helping out
On punishment from school
Working at the arena
Making sure water troughs were full

Heith and Matt stacking
Cattle pen after pen
Ready for the day
When this nightmare will end

Keeping the records straight
A burdin the secretaries must carry
Talking about, Emma, Melissa, Margaret, and Sheri

Alex our boss
Working along with Phill and Chris
Planning the strategy
Along with AMS

Mark, Richard, Matt,
And Trey
An unbelievable crew
What else can we say

The sale they say
Was a huge success
It takes an unselfish crew
Nothing more nothing less

E3
JW
T
7
G3
KC
HP
Y
B
SF
Y

Fourth of July



Beverly Bidney
Richa Doctor flops right into the water to cool off from a hot day.



Beverly Bidney
Sammy Kershaw entertains the crowd with his signature style of country music at the Big Cypress Fourth of July celebration.



Kevin Johnson
Omar Ridley and Paige Tommie enjoy some fun on a water slide during Fort Pierce's July 4th celebration.



Beverly Bidney
Krystal Rodriguez plays bingo as her daughter Addylin Rodriguez finds something else more amusing to watch at the Immokalee Fourth of July party July 3.



Michael James
Susie Doctor relaxes with a magazine on her day off in Tampa.



Beverly Bidney
Ricky Doctor aims for the stake during a game of horseshoes at the Big Cypress Fourth of July celebration July 3.



Beverly Bidney
Carlise Bermudez, Madison Martinez and Denise Gonzalez cool off with some sweet snow cones at the Immokalee soiree.



Drew Osceola
Lana Gadson, left, and Brenda Cypress pose for a photo at the Seminole Estates in the Hollywood July 4.



Beverly Bidney
A steep slippery slide gives this boy some cool thrills at the Immokalee Fourth of July celebration.



Michael James
Anthony and Mark Holmes enjoy an amusement park ride for July 4th in Tampa.



Drew Osceola
David Jumper shows us his bowling technique at the Seminole Estates in Hollywood on July 4.



Beverly Bidney
Kids line up to show their mettle as they sit on an alligator at the Big Cypress Fourth of July party at the rodeo grounds.

Sports



Sammy Micco Sanchez brings home more NAIG gold

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

TORONTO — About 10 minutes after he won a grueling championship match in wrestling, Team Florida's Sammy Micco Sanchez was still breathing heavily as fellow Seminoles congratulated the two-time gold medal champion.

After breezing through two victories on the first day of competition, Sammy needed every ounce of his 192-pound frame to edge a larger Team Wisconsin's Brandon King, 5-3, in the 220.5-pound North American Indigenous Games' title match July 19 at the Toronto Track & Field Centre on the campus of York University in Toronto.

"We're bringing home another gold," declared Sammy's stepdad Frank Cabal as he held up Sammy's first gold medal in front of about 20 Seminole supporters who filled a set of bleachers next to the mat. Amid the fans in the front row was Sammy's mom, Alicia Cabal, whose presence provided additional inspiration.

"She just had surgery on her arm and it's been killing her to do anything," Sammy said. "Just the fact she wanted to come here and support me, it's amazing. That's why I do it all for her. All my medals go to her. Every medal I win I give it to her because if it wasn't for my mom I wouldn't be here participating."

As they do before every wrestling match and football game — whether it's at NAIG or Fort Gibson High School in Oklahoma — Sammy and his mom prayed.

"To come out winning for a second time is really a blessing. Me and my mother pray before every match and every football game. I feel like I'll lose if I don't pray with my mom," Sammy said.

Sammy's additional supporting cast, including Frank and his coach Sammy Johnson, has played key roles in both gold medals.

"If it wasn't for my coach, I wouldn't be the best I am today. I wanted to quit so many times, and he wouldn't let me; my stepdad Frank, too. I mean we have our ups

and downs, but I love him. I do it for both of them," Sammy said.

And Sammy does it for the Seminole Tribe. Before the start of the championship matches, all finalists gathered in an area away from the mats as they prepared for a brief introduction ceremony to start the session. Sammy wore a blank black tank top and shorts, but went back to his bag and returned with Team Florida's Seminole jacket. He tied it around his waist just in time for the introductions.

"I didn't just come here to represent myself; I came here to represent the Tribe. I had to run back and get it so they knew where I am from," he said.

Winning gold for a second consecutive NAIG proved to be tougher for Sammy than the first time three years ago in Saskatchewan. King was a rock solid opponent.

"I gave 30 pounds. He was strong. He was way bigger than me," Sammy said.

"We were kind of iffy on this last match because Sammy is weighing 192 and he's wrestling a kid that's 220 and the kid was stout and very muscular," Frank added. "We knew Sammy would be real competitive in it, but he even told me, 'Dad, I was sweating so bad that if I would have tried to get in there he would have got a good hold of me and flip me. Basically I could win it by points.' He played it safe."

Sammy fell behind 1-0 early in the match, but he didn't panic.

"I told myself I'm not leaving here without gold; silver won't cut it. I won it once, I can win it again. I repeated it over and over in my head," he said.

Sammy quickly changed the tone and the score as he took the lead for good with two points for a takedown. He scored additional points for pushing King off the mat and built his lead to 5-1 before King scored a couple late points to make the final 5-3 in a match that lasted the full two 3-minute rounds on a day when nearly every other championship match ended in the first round. The wrestlers spent most of the match on their feet.

"I thought we created the action the whole time," coach Johnson said. "We wrestled really well. It's a big match for us.



Team Florida's Sammy Micco Sanchez increases his lead against Team Wisconsin's Brandon King in the U19 championship match for 220.5 pounds in the North American Indigenous Games at York University in Toronto. Sanchez won the gold with a 5-3 win.

Hopefully that will carry over to football season and wrestling season back home."

Sammy's preparations for NAIG were limited because he spent part of the summer participating in football camps at Oklahoma State and Florida State. The middle linebacker on the FGHS team planned to shift his focus back to football when he returned to Oklahoma, but he cherished his wrestling victory in his final NAIG.

"He wanted to make his coach proud. He wanted to make his mom and I proud. He did; he always does," Frank said.



Team Florida's Sammy Micco Sanchez wins his second NAIG gold medal in wrestling.

Sharp-shooting Eecho Billie wins two gold medals

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

COOKSTOWN, Ontario — As he waited for his son to receive two gold medals during a ceremony on a sprawling open lawn at Toronto's York University, James E. Billie reflected on the path that helped make Santiago "Eecho" Billie a North American Indigenous Games champion in rifle shooting.

"When he was a little boy, he started out with a squirt gun. Next came the old BB gun. Then a pellet gun," said the former chairman of the Seminole Tribe. "So he's not ignorant of guns. I was not surprised by what he did. I'm proud of him."

Eecho, 15, will start his sophomore year at The Pine School in August. He plays lacrosse and baseball, but when he doesn't have a stick or a bat in his hands he usually has a rifle or rod.

"If you'd let him, he would hunt 24/7. If he's not hunting, he's fishing," his father said.

Eecho dominated the overall boys U16 rifle shooting at NAIG from start to finish at the Toronto International Trap & Skeet Club in Cookstown, Ontario, about a half-hour drive north of Toronto. He earned gold medals in 3P (3-position) and overall.

"This means a lot to come up here and do this," Eecho said.

Guidance came from coach Darren Marlin, from the Seminole Recreation Department, and coach/Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank, who peered through a scope behind Eecho to gauge his shots throughout the three-day event.

"They help me out and show me different techniques, how I should stand, how I should kneel," Eecho said. "They tell me where I'm aiming, where I'm shooting at. If I don't have a scope, they tell me where I'm hitting so I can readjust."

Eecho, the only rifle shooter from Team Florida, led a field of 14 each day. He finished with 1,586 overall points, which was a comfortable 104 points ahead of runner-up Jared Erickson from Team British Columbia. Included in Eecho's point total was 1,047 points for 3P, which is a cumulative category for firing from three positions: standing, kneeling and laying down. He excelled at all three.

"The whole team chemistry was good. He was able to shoot and relax and the results showed," said Rep. Frank, who also coached Eecho in the 2014 NAIG in Saskatchewan. "Three years ago we had all young kids. Even though they didn't have experience, we brought them out to Regina to get experience. Eecho was one of those that returned and he did good this time. Hopefully, three years from now, he'll have company."

Eecho made sure he prepared for NAIG



Team Florida's Santiago Billie competes on day one of North American Indigenous Games' U16 rifle shooting in Cookstown, Ontario. Billie went on to win the gold medal.

by honing his skills at home in Brighton

"I learned a bunch of different techniques on how to shoot and to do whatever I have to do up here. I've been practicing at home and whenever I get the chance to shoot," he said.

From toy guns to real ones, Eecho has been shooting "ever since I could walk."

"I've always loved shooting. I shoot game. I do any type of shooting I can get," he said.

Eecho's two gold medals in rifle shooting were only part of an impressive week in Canada for the Billie family. While Eecho's years of shooting experience paid off with gold, his sister Aubee won bronze in archery in her first-ever competition. The award ceremonies were held about the same time in venues far apart, so James attended the rifle shooting and his wife Maria attended the archery ceremony as the Billie children accounted for three of the five medals won by Team Florida.

"First time around for Aubee, that's great. Eecho, I would expect nothing less from him than what he did," James E. Billie said.



Team Florida's gold medal rifle shooter Santiago "Eecho" Billie is joined by some of Team Florida's coaches, staff and athletes after the North American Indigenous Games' rifle shooting awards ceremony July 20 at York University in Toronto. The coaches and staff include Jennie Busbin, Dessie Thomas, Stephanie Ecker, Darren Marlin and Big Cypress Board Rep. Joe Frank. The athletes include Dennis Gonzales, Nakai Alex, Kimora Alex and Kamani Smith.

Medal-winners Conner Thomas, Aubee Billie lead Team Florida archery

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

ANCASTER, Ontario — Conner Thomas isn't the type of teenage athlete who seeks the spotlight — he's too humble for that — but the Moore Haven High School junior from Brighton couldn't help but be the center of attention thanks to the way he dominated archery at the North American Indigenous Games.

In the male U16 division, Conner was the only archer in U16 compound to score 200 points or higher in a session. Nobody else hit that mark, but Conner eclipsed it a remarkable five times on his way to capturing a gold medal in the woods at the Hamilton Angling & Hunting Association site in rural Ancaster. His scores grew progressively better as he posted 194, 201, 202, 209, 208 and 210.

"The numbers Conner was popping, that's unheard of. He's an absolute machine," said Team Florida archery coach Joe Collins. "Three or four 11s in a round is fantastic; this guy is popping 11 or 12."

Conner said he's worked hard to get where he is now.

"I can go back home and say I've accomplished what I wanted to do."

Conner finished with 1,224 points during the three-day event, during which archers took aim twice per day at 20 stationary 3-D animals placed at the end of paths in the woods. Each animal station was separate, similar to holes in golf.

Warren Collins, from Team Alberta, finished runner-up with 1,155 points.

Conner, who is an offensive lineman for Moore Haven's football team, came into the Games fresh from a solid performance at the 4-H national archery competition in Nebraska.

"I told him coming in that he was an obvious legitimate contender for the gold and he just never let up," Collins said.

Conner's eye-popping scores were noticed even beyond the Team Florida camp.

"Other states and provinces were coming up asking about him. He was a celebrity," Collins said. "I traded one of my shirts with the coach from Wisconsin and he had Conner signing the shirt. They'll be looking for him in three years."

Conner's gold medal performance was just one of the highlights to a successful NAIG for Florida's archery team. At the 2014 NAIG, the team had only three archers. This year six teens represented Florida, with three each on the boys and girls sides.

Aubee Billie and Trevor Thomas — two of the newcomers — performed well beyond expectations in their first archery competition.

Aubee, who was interviewed by CBC



Kevin Johnson

Conner Thomas fires a shot during NAIG's archery competition July 18 in Ancaster, Ontario.

media during her day, surprised everyone by capturing the bronze medal in female U16 while Trevor just missed out on a medal and finished fourth in male U19.

"Aubee didn't miss a beat. She was a huge surprise," Collins said.

Before arriving in Canada, Aubee attended a performing arts camp in New York.

"Aubee decided to do it a few months ago so we got her the best damn bow we could get for her and what we consider the best instructor," said her father James E. Billie. "Aubee is into fine arts, Broadway shows, singing and dancing. To do this is a little bit out of line. For her to come up and get a bronze is great. She's a very focused kid."

Her overall score was 791 points with her best round coming in session 4 with 148 points.

Meanwhile, Trevor was in the hunt for a medal right up until his final few shots. He finished fourth, nine points from third and a bronze.

"I was two good shots away from third. It was really close," Trevor said.

Being in contention surprised Trevor, whose relaxing first two days of competition gave way to a more serious round in the final sessions.

"I wasn't expecting to do as good as I did so I was just kind of having fun with it," the 2017 Okeechobee High graduate said. "The third day rolled around and I was top four so I was a little more competitive that day."

Even though a medal eluded him in his final NAIG, Trevor said he was glad he joined the team.

"I liked the experience. All the guys I met out there were really cool," he said.

Florida also received strong efforts on the girls side from Raylon Eagle and Valholly Frank, who battled through the three days despite having a wounded finger, and Kyler Bell on the boys side, who competed in the traditional or instinctive division that features far less sophisticated bows than the compound division. Kyler was in contention for a medal. He racked up 587 points, good enough for fifth place.

With two medals, a couple of near misses and a dedicated roster of six, Team Florida's trip to NAIG proved to be one to remember.

"I'm proud of all of them," Collins said. "The [host] club out there thought the Florida team was well-behaved and knowledgeable. When you say that about my team, that's my medal."



Kevin Johnson

Aubee Billie is interviewed by Canadian media during the archery competition at NAIG.



Kevin Johnson

Team Florida's girls archery squad gets ready to start their opening day at the North American Indigenous Games on July 18 in Ancaster, Ontario. From left, Aubee Billie, Valholly Frank, Raylon Eagle and coach Joe Collins.

Young swimmers gain valuable experience in big-time environment

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

TORONTO — The first competitive swimming event for Kimora Alex and Talena Holata won't be one of 11-year-old girls forget anytime soon.

Big city, foreign country, international competition and a world class facility were on the agenda.

Their debut swimming with opponents in the pool for the first time came July 20 in the North American Indigenous Games in Toronto where they not only faced top Indigenous athletes from Canada and the U.S., but older ones as well. If that wasn't enough of an eye-opening encounter for two girls with no experience except practices, then swimming in the bright, sprawling, world-class Toronto Pan Am Sports Centre served as another jolt.

"It was scary," Talena said about swimming in a facility that hosted the 2015 Pan American Games.

Talena, from Brighton, and Kimora, from Hollywood, competed in the U14 category because that was the youngest age

group available. The first day of competitive swimming for the only members of Team Florida featured another caveat when they swam in the same 50-meter backstroke preliminary heat. Kimora lined up in lane 3 while three spots away was her teammate Talena in lane 6. Both wore red swim caps with the Seminole Tribe Recreation logo prominently featured. They didn't glance at each other at the start.

"We had to look up," Kimora said.

As expected, neither advanced out of the heat. Talena finished sixth in 1:02 while Kimora finished seventh in 1:08, but places and times are not what their experiences were about for this event or for the other heats that they swam. Stephanie Ecker, who coaches the girls with fellow Fort Pierce lifeguard Jennie Busbin, was thrilled with the girls' debut.

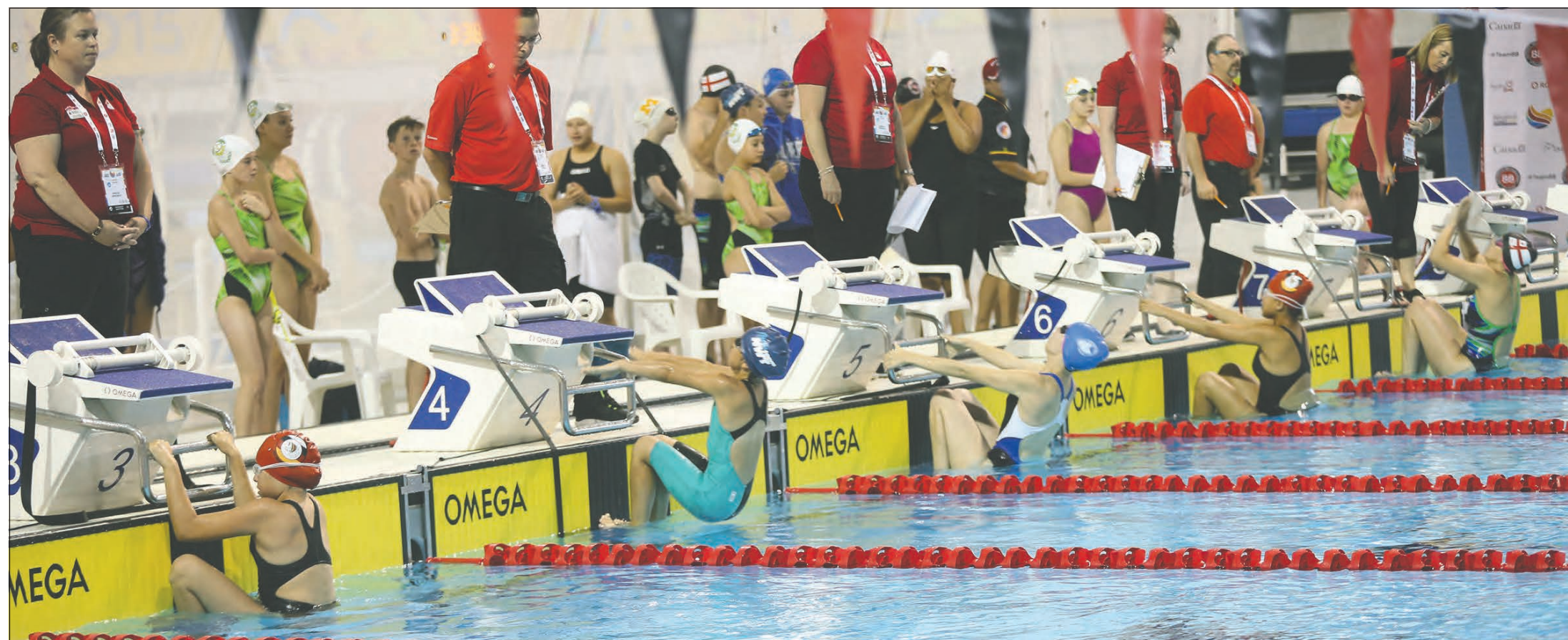
"They did fantastic. They've come such a long way," Ecker said.

Indeed, Kimora and Talena only started swimming under the guidance of their coaches about six months ago. The small team, which also included Shyla Holata,



Kevin Johnson

Team Florida's swim team gathers for a photo July 20 during the North American Indigenous Games at the Toronto Pan Am Sports Centre. From left, coach Stephanie Ecker, Talena Holata, Kimora Alex and coach Jennie Busbin.



Kevin Johnson

Team Florida's Kimora Alex, lane 3, and her teammate Talena Holata, lane 6, get ready to start a heat in the girls U14 50-meter backstroke at the North American Indigenous Games on July 20 at the Toronto Pan Am Sports Centre.

who was unable to attend NAIG, met Tuesdays and Thursdays in Riviera Beach for practices.

"I'd like to get them in the pool year round if possible and get them into competitions locally," Ecker said.

Ecker would also like to see more Seminole kids take an interest in swimming and has a goal of someday creating a Tribal swim team for kids from all reservations.

"Our hope is over the next three years to start building up a swim team within the Seminole Tribe. That may require us to travel a couple times a week, which we're fine with," she said.

"If they can build that team and get those swimmers then maybe they'll go on to become junior lifeguards and lifeguards in Recreation," said Recreation's Salina Dorgan, who watched the girls compete.

Team Florida hoops solid effort at NAIG

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

TORONTO — Even before they stepped onto the basketball courts in Toronto for the North American Indigenous Games, Team Florida faced an uphill battle.

The U19 boys, which deserve plenty of credit for being Florida's only basketball entry in the Games, never had a full squad for practices leading up to the event.

"We didn't have everybody at practice," said Eddie Redd, who coached the squad along with O'Bryan White. "There were about three kids that never came to practice, so it was kind of hard to put something together during the tournament."

It only took the opening 10 minutes of its first game for Florida to know they were facing well prepared competition. Team Saskatchewan employed textbook basketball by producing crisp fast breaks complete with pinpoint passing that left Florida reeling and staring at deficits at Tait McKenzie Center on the campus of York University in Toronto.

Slow starts plagued Florida, which went 0-4 in pool C with losses to Saskatchewan (101-53), New York (100-71), Eastern Door & The North (88-67) and Alberta (85-69).

"We got in that hole early," said Redd, whose team gamely battled back at times to slice into opponents' leads, but the early deficits proved to be too much to overcome.

"We didn't give up. We kept going," said Dennis Gonzales, one of the team's top scorers.

Florida fell behind Saskatchewan 26-7 after the first quarter. Florida battled back to narrow the gap to 10 points midway through the second quarter, but never got closer.

Saskatchewan led 42-24 at halftime.

Adam Souler, a member of the Mohegan Tribe from Connecticut who attends Lynn University in Boca Raton, joined Florida because there were no Connecticut basketball teams. Souler made an immediate impact as he poured in a team-high 23 points against Saskatchewan followed by Gonzales (10), Ethan Balentine (7) and Kamani Smith (6).

Similar to its opening game, Florida's second game against New York featured a spirited run sparked by hard-working point guard Ethan Balentine, who led the team with 21 points followed by Gonzales (20), Nakai Alex (13) and Soulor (13).

Florida fell behind by double digits early and then made a run to pull within eight points midway through the second quarter before New York pulled away for good. New



Kevin Johnson

Florida's Jon Jimmie, right, battles for position against Saskatchewan in a NAIG U19 opener July 17 in Toronto.

York led 59-36 at halftime. Florida made another charge in the third quarter to pull within 13 points, but New York controlled the final quarter.

New York went on to win bronze in the field of 15 teams. Washington captured gold with a 93-77 win against Minnesota.

Even though Florida went home without a win, Redd said he hopes his players, which

also included Leslie Gopher Jr. and Jon Jimmie, didn't leave empty-handed.

"The experience and learning to have camaraderie with your teammates," he said. "A lot of them are individually inside; play together. It's all about having fun and playing together."



Kevin Johnson

Team Florida's Dennis Gonzales keeps the ball in play with a behind-the-back pass against Team New York at NAIG on July 18 in Toronto.



Kevin Johnson

Team Florida guard Ethan Balentine soars to the hoop against Team New York in a pool play game July 18 at the North American Indigenous Games at York University in Toronto.

Seminoles tackle NAIG track and field events

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

TORONTO — The start of the North American Indigenous Games' track and field competition began with an impressive flash of speed from Team Florida's Julius Aquino, who provided a glimpse of his talent on the track before abruptly being felled by injury.

Running against older kids in a division above his own age group, Julius, 14, blazed his way to the fastest time in a heat for the 100-meter dash in the boys U16 division in York Lions Stadium on the campus of York University in Toronto. Julius's time of 11.69 seconds was better than the other 18 competitors from Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Nova Scotia and other provinces and states in the heat as the Fort Gibson (Okla.) High School freshman comfortably punched his ticket to the finals later that evening.

After he watched his uncle Sammy Micco Sanchez receive a gold medal during the wrestling awards ceremony, Julius shifted his focus to seeking gold himself in the 100 final. With a strong start, Julius appeared to be on his way to earning a medal and perhaps gold as he battled for the top spot against seven other runners. But with about 20 meters to go, Julius, who

was in good shape in first or second place, suffered a devastating injury. Despite being in tremendous pain from an apparent Achilles' injury, Julius bravely finished the race, crossing the line in fourth place in 12.21 before going to the ground. After a few minutes, Julius was helped up by Seminole Recreation coaches and placed in a wheelchair. The unfortunate mishap ended Julius's first NAIG in his first event. He was scheduled to run other events, but the injury prevented him from competing.

Julius was one of four track and field athletes for Team Florida, which was coached by Darren McPherson and Green Cummings. Silas Madrigal, 16, finished fifth in a field of 14 in the U19 800. He missed qualifying for the 400 final by one spot, finishing. He also competed in long jump, where he finished 16th out of 28 with his top jump of 4.94 meters out of three attempts.

Silas plays baseball and basketball at Okeechobee High School and would like to add track to his agenda.

"I want to keep doing track," he said.

Kaleb Thomas opted for longer distances. He ran the U16 2000 meter (8th) and the following day returned for the 800 (9th). Kaleb said after the 800 that he knew right away the 2000 had taken a lot out of him.

Niko Doctor ran the U14 80 meter (20th), 150 meter (21st) and long jump (23rd).



Kevin Johnson

Team Florida's Kaleb Thomas competes in a track event at NAIG in Toronto.



Kevin Johnson

Julius Aquino dashes off to a first place finish in a 100-meter heat at NAIG.



Kevin Johnson

Team Florida's Silas Madrigal soars through the air in the U19 male long jump July 19 during the North American Indigenous Games at York University in Toronto.

Seminoles wrap up EIRA season, ready for Vegas, INFR

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

BRIGHTON — The Eastern Indian Rodeo Association's 2017 season wrapped up the weekend of July 7-9 with a regional competition and banquet, but the work isn't done yet for some of its riders.

Adults and youth qualified to compete at the 42nd Annual Indian National Finals Rodeo that will be held Nov. 7-11 at South Point Arena in Las Vegas.

"It was a great year. We had good participation," said EIRA president Josh Jumper.

Especially encouraging was the turnout on the youth level throughout the season. "We were probably between 70 and 100 kids. It's probably one of the biggest sporting events we have for the kids," said Jumper's father, Moses Jumper Jr.

"Seems like we're building back up again. The kids are getting into it again," Josh Jumper said. "We're going to send a good crew of kids [to INFR]."

Jumper's advice to the rookies who will make their INFR debuts:

"Just go out there and do your best," he said. "That's a big stage for those kids to be in as far as being in Vegas and the lights and the sound system and people watching them. Go out there and do your best and try to take one go at a time."

The regionals at Fred Smith Rodeo Arena provided one final chance for a competitor — adult or youth — to turn an average season into a memorable one.

"A guy can have a bad year and turn around and win the average this weekend and go to Vegas," Jumper said.

Congratulations, EIRA riders, on qualifying for INFR

Jacoby Johns — Brighton
Bare Back Riding

Blevyns Jumper — Big Cypress
Steer Wrestling

Naha Jumper — Big Cypress
Calf Roping

Connor Osborn — Oklahoma
Calf Roping

Ahnie Jumper — Big Cypress
Lady's Breakaway Roping

Trina Hipp — Brighton
Lady's Breakaway Roping

Josh Jumper & Naha Jumper — Big Cypress
Team Roping

Jason Baker & Caitlin Tommie — Brighton
Team Roping

Ashley Parks — Davie
Lady's Barrel Racing

Jo "Boogie" Johns — Brighton
Lady's Barrel Racing

Kelton Smedley — Brighton
Bull Riding

Madisyn Osceola — Brighton
INFR Jr. Breakaway Roping & Barrel Racing

Budha Jumper — Big Cypress
INFR Jr. Barrel Racing

Jaylen Baker — Brighton
INFR Jr. Bull Riding

Norman Osceola — Brighton
INFR Jr. Bull Riding

Norman "Dad" Johns — Brighton
Sr. Breakaway Roping



Connor Osborn takes care off business in roping at EIRA.

Kevin Johnson



Action from lady's barrel racing at the EIRA Regionals in Brighton.

Kevin Johnson



Taylor Johns gets the EIRA regional underway with the flag entrance in Brig

Kevin Johnson



Let the rodeo begin as the grand entry starts off EIRA's regional.

Kevin Johnson

Sean Osceola hurls complete game shutout in national tournament

BY STEVEN WALTERS

EMERSON, Ga. — Sean Osceola, of the Brighton Reservation, threw a complete game shutout for SWFL Nation 2018 against the St. Louis Pirates, as his team advanced to the playoffs in the 17U WWBA National Championship in early July. SWFL left fielder Connor Berry walked with the bases loaded to score the game's first run, and they tacked on one more in the bottom of the sixth to cap a 2-0 win at LakePoint in Georgia.

Osceola carved up the Pirates lineup all morning and punched out nine batters over his seven innings of work. The 18-year-old allowed only three hits, which amounted to four 1-2-3 innings, and he never allowed a runner past second base. He was 81-85 mph

with his fastball and commanded it on both sides of the plate. The 6-foot-2, 230-pound righty needed just 79 pitches to finish off the game and seal the win for his team.

"Just getting ahead with my fastball and then when I got ahead, curveball just to keep them off balance," said Osceola on his approach in the game. "The first three batters, they were really aggressive, so I liked to start them off with a changeup or a curveball and then after that, I'd get them guessing, so I'd just look fastball away."

A first inning double was the only threat that amounted against Osceola, as the Pirates would go down quietly from there. Head coach Justin Karn said that Osceola has been their big game guy all season, and he was not surprised at the performance.

"That's kind of just typical Sean right there," Karn said. "He throws pitches with three strikes. He competes extremely hard. He's the guy every big game we know what we're going to get out of him just because he's such a competitor and he has good stuff on top of it."

While Osceola did his part on the mound, the offense needed to do their part at the plate. They would mount an attack in the third inning after Pirates started Hezekiah Goodman walked the first two batters of the inning, before a third would reach on an error. Goodman would walk in a run before being removed from the game. Although it was a great opportunity to add on, Pirates reliever Nicholas Rocco came in and induced two flyouts to escape the jam. One run would be

all the team would need though, as the at-bat by Berry proved to be a crucial moment.

"Their pitchers did a really good job of keeping us off balance," Karn said. "Threw a lot of strikes, and we've been pretty hot swinging the bat, and they kind of shut us down a little bit there. We were fortunate to put some balls in play when we needed to, and that's just our approach throughout the whole year so far."

Another run would cross the plate in the bottom of the sixth inning after Berry singled with one out in the inning. A walk to Kevin Szafran would set up the stage for Matthew Cedarburg who hit an infield single to score Berry.

"I saw that first fastball that I think I should've drove for a double in the gap or

something, but then I kept on battling, got another fastball, fouled that one off, and then he came back with another fastball and I just tried putting it in play, help my team out, and I got a hit out of it," Cedarburg said.

The run would provide insurance for Osceola on the mound, who set the Pirates down 1-2-3 to lock down the win. Although he was cruising, the run gave him that much more room for error.

"It made me feel really good for the seventh. I knew I didn't have to be too fine," Osceola said. "I just let them put the ball in play and then my defense can make the plays behind me."

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◆ **NAIG**
From page 1A

of the opening ceremony by more than two hours, but it proved to worth the wait as Native performer Taboo from the Black Eyed Peas performed an electrifying show.

"It was amazing," said Team Florida basketball guard Ethan Balentine.

The weather delay forced officials to alter the scheduled parade of athletes. Instead of all athletes parading on the stadium's court, a few from each squad did the honors. For Team Florida, Trevor Thomas held the Team Florida sign, Conner Thomas carried Florida's flag and Echo Billie proudly waved the Seminole Tribe flag.

Even with all the show's highlights, perhaps the biggest part of the night for most of the athletes came away from the court with the NAIG tradition of trading pins, which continued throughout the Games. Each state and province brought their own team pins. The athletes gladly traded, which proved to be an ideal icebreaker for the kids to meet each other. Time after time at the opening ceremony and other venues, athletes were not shy about asking for pins.

"The opening ceremonies were really cool," Florida archer Aubee Billie said. "I loved having everyone there, mingling, trading pins."

"It's fun," said Florida track and field athlete Silas Madrigal. "I made some new friends. I met them at the opening ceremony trading pins. They're from Ontario, Alberta, Saskatchewan."

Silas said the friendliness of the athletes extended beyond trading pins.

"They were good at sportsmanship. Before the race, they would shake hands and say good luck, and after the race they said good job."

Jordan Nolan, a First Nation hockey player for the Los Angeles Kings, shook plenty of hands as he doled out medals to rifle shooting's top performers, including Echo Billie. Nolan is a good example of an indigenous athlete whose dedication and skill has paid off.

"Work hard," said Nolan, who helped the Kings win the Stanley Cup in 2012 and 2014. "It doesn't matter where you come, a small community or a big community. I'm from a small First Nation in northern Ontario, about 1,000 people. I found a way to make it to the NHL and make my dreams come true. Just a lot of hard work and a lot of dedication."

For indigenous kids who are struggling with issues, Nolan is proof of what can be accomplished.

"I was overweight as a young kid," he said. "I had to lose a lot of weight when I was turning pro. I had a few off-ice issues. I've been sober for three and a-half years now, so I dealt with that. That's something for these kids to know, and realize that if you have a problem to seek help and talk with your family and friends. You definitely need a team to overcome it."

Champion Seminoles go undefeated in NAYO softball

BY KEVIN JOHNSON
Senior Editor

The Seminoles 8 and under softball squad started the NAYO tournament by making an immediate statement with an 18-1 win in its opener.

They enjoyed being in the winners' bracket so much that they never left it. The girls from Brighton went 5-0 in Alabama to capture the NAYO championship in late July.

"It was hot. Our kids were dripping sweat. They were tired, hot, dirty, but they were battling," said coach Daniel Nunez Sr.

The Seminoles followed up their lopsided win in the first game with another 18-1 win and then won 7-4, 12-11 and 14-5 in the championship game against the Diamonds.

"Our girls were pumped up. They were jumping around. For some of them, it's their first year [of softball]," said Nunez, whose team had five rookies. "We hit the ball really good and our defense made plays that we needed."

Staying in the winners' bracket made a huge difference, especially in such warm conditions. A year ago at NAYO, the team battled through the losers' bracket - which requires teams to play more games than on the winners' side - only to lose in the final.

"Last year we were exhausted coming from the losers' side," Nunez said.

This year the team edged the powerful Mississippi Sparks by one run to reach the final. After the game, Nunez declared free snow cones for everyone.

"That really helped," he said.

Flavored ice gave way to giant rings the following game, which was the reward the Seminoles received for winning the championship.

"They look the like the size of Super Bowl rings," Nunez said.



The Seminoles 8U softball team celebrates after winning a championship at NAYO in Alabama. Players and coaches received championship rings.

Courtesy photo

**Seminole 8U
NAYO softball champions**

Lason Baker
Serenity Billie
Waniya Fortner
Marley Jimmie
Charisma Micco

Cherrish Micco
Joleyne Nunez
Daliyah Nunez
Tehya Nunez
Truly Osceola
Kiera Snell
Ila Trueblood
Kashyra Urbina

Head coach: Daniel Nunez Sr.
Asst. coach: Cheyenne Nunez
Asst. coach: Lalo Rodriguez
Asst. coach: Carla Rodriguez

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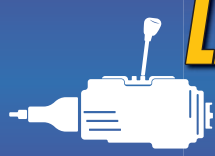
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Announcements



AMERIND Risk recognizes Joel Frank Sr. for outstanding service

PRESS RELEASE

AMERIND Risk recently recognized Joel M. Frank Sr., a Seminole Tribe member and former AMERIND Risk Board of Directors Chairman, for his outstanding service.

Frank currently serves as vice president on the American Indian Graduate Center (AIGC) Board.

Frank's distinguished leadership positions have included serving as president of the National Indian Gaming Association, president of the United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc., and as a member of the Florida Civil Right Commission, to name a few.

AMERIND's stated purpose is to create affordable and sustainable insurance products and services for Indian Country.



Joel M. Frank Sr., center, is honored by AMERIND Risk for outstanding service. The recognition came during the AMERIND Risk/NAIHC Conference and Tradeshow June 27-29 in Nashville, Tenn.

Photo courtesy AMERIND Risk Twitter

Hard Rock Café opens at Houston airport

PRESS RELEASE

HOUSTON — The Houston Airport System, Hard Rock International and SSP America celebrated the official grand opening of the new location for the Hard Rock Café restaurant and shop in Terminal B at George Bush Intercontinental Airport on July 12.

Capping the rollout of an expansive and new lineup of dining and shopping choices at Bush Airport, representatives from the airport system, Hard Rock International and operator and manager, SSP America, were on hand and capped the celebration with a ceremonial "guitar smash."

"We are thrilled to include Hard Rock Café in the new and exciting choices customers have for shopping and dining now at Bush Airport," said Randy Goodman, Director of Concessions for the Houston Airport System. "They bring an established, recognized brand both in merchandise and food, and are a good fit in our efforts to elevate our food and retail choices at the airport."

With venues in 75 countries, including 176 cafes, 24 hotels and 11 casinos, and, now, two airports, Hard Rock International is one of the most globally recognized companies. Beginning with an Eric Clapton guitar, Hard Rock owns the world's greatest collection of music memorabilia, which is displayed at its locations around the globe.

"Hard Rock has been looking forward to opening its second location in Houston after many successful years of operating in



A Hard Rock guitar smashing takes place during the official grand opening of Hard Rock Café on July 12 at the George Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston.

Courtesy photo Twitter

this iconic city," said Mike Liedberg, Area Vice President of Café Operations North America West. "We could not have asked for a better location to showcase our unique dining experience."

As part of the celebration, Hard Rock International and SSP America donated 10 guitars to United States Veterans Initiative

(U.S. VETS) branch in Houston. U.S. VETS is committed to the successful transition of military veterans and their families through the provision of housing, counseling, career development and comprehensive support. U.S.VETS-Houston serves over 500 veterans daily.

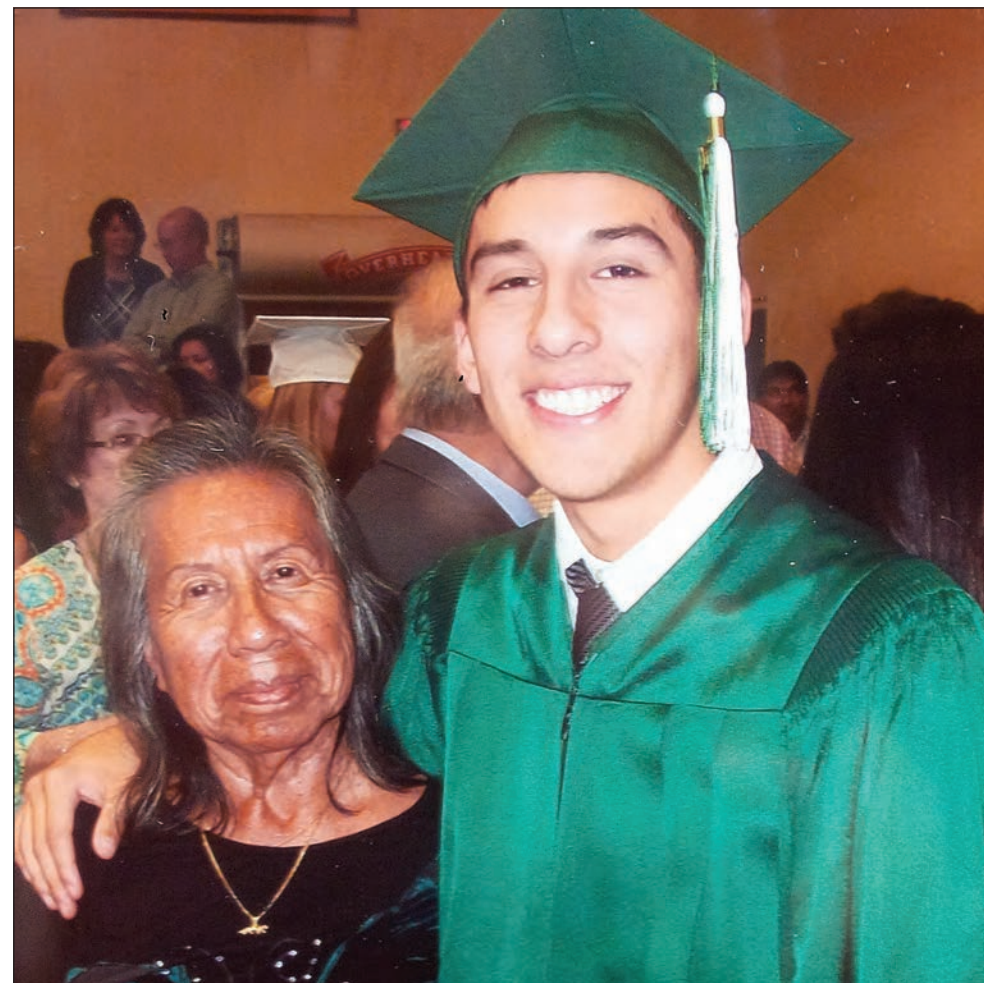


Photo courtesy V. Tommie

Virginia Tommie and Tai Numire Cypress celebrating his graduation from Glades Day High School

The best day of my life

BY VIRGINIA TOMMIE

Congratulations to my grandson, Tai Numire Cypress, a graduate from Glades Day High School. I wish him the best, whatever he chooses

to do with his education. He made his family and grandma proud.

"For I know I have plans for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and future." – Jeremiah 29:11

NYY Steak receives third straight Wine Spectator Award of Excellence

PRESS RELEASE

COCONUT CREEK — For the third straight year, NYY Steak in Seminole Casino Coconut Creek has been awarded the prestigious Award of Excellence by Wine Spectator for its menu of 200 fine wines.

"We're ecstatic that NYY Steak has been honored once again with the Wine Spectator Award of Excellence," said Dawn Lazo, Vice President of Food & Beverage at Seminole Casino Coconut Creek. "This award further solidifies NYY Steak as being an innovative and refined dining experience."

The Award of Excellence recognizes wine lists that offer interesting selections and are appropriate to their cuisine and appeal to a wide range of wine lovers. To qualify, the

list must present complete, accurate wine information. It must include vintages and appellations for all selections, including wines available by the glass. Complete producer names and correct spellings are mandatory, while the overall presentation and appearance of the list is also taken into consideration.

After meeting these basic requirements, lists are judged for one of the three awards. The Award of Excellence is offered for lists that feature a well-chosen selection of quality producers, along with a thematic match to the menu in both price and style. Typically, these lists offer at least 90 selections.

NYY Steak will be listed in Wine Spectator's annual dining guide in the Aug. 31 issue.

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