



# MVSKOKE NEWS

PRODUCED BY  MVSKOKEMEDIA

## FESTIVAL CELEBRATES MVSKOKE CULTURE AND PEOPLE

by **BRADEN HARPER**  
MANAGING EDITOR

SATURDAY NIGHT SEES ENORMOUSLY PACKED CROWDS



Mvskoke citizens and other Festival attendees shake shells and participate in the Thursday night social Stomp Dance. June 20, 2024. Okmulgee, Oklahoma. (Braden Harper/MM)

**MVSKOKE RESERVATION** - When the Oklahoma temperatures are at their hottest, and the sunsets are at their longest, that can only mean one thing, it is time for the Mvskoke Festival to commence. This year brought a slate full of fair rides, sports tournaments, rodeos, art markets and

food vendors. Tournaments began on Friday, June 14 and ran through Sunday, June 23.

The main weekend of Festival kicked off on Thursday, June 20 and started off with senior activities at the Mvskoke Dome in Okmulgee. In Tulsa at the River Spirit Casino and Resort the tribe

recognized five elders with one of the highest honors a Mvskoke citizen can receive; the Living Legend Award. Thursday's evening festivities served dinner before the annual social Stomp Dance while the fun fair delivered thrills and fun to the north of the fairgrounds. Tribal leadership including Principal Chief David Hill, Second Chief Del Beaver and various members of the National Council were present chatting with attendees. Likewise, attendees had the chance to meet the newly crowned Mvskoke Royalty; Miss Janaya McIntosh and Jr. Miss Olivia Beaver.

Rising and shining at Harmon Stadium on Friday, June 21, students competed in the Junior Olympics. This year's golf tournament moved up north on the reservation at the Page Belcher golf course in Tulsa. The annual Bull Bash Bull Riding event kicked off in the evening at the Bob Arrington Arena back at the fairgrounds.

Saturday, June 22 began with the 5k. In the afternoon Festival goers had the opportunity to brave long lines in order to meet the chiefs at the dome. Later in the evening saw past legends come together for the annual softball reunion.

Always a crowd favorite, Festival's live entertainment saw line-ups that included Locash, Joe Nichols, and the I Heart the Nineties Tour. Saturday night notably saw packed crowds, some reporting it took up to 45 minutes to get from the stop light intersection at Highway 75 and Highway 56 to a parking spot.

Sunday, June 23 concluded the main Festival weekend with the Fastpitch Tournament Finals, and the second annual Fourth Sunday on the Reservation, a worship event that featured gospel and hymn singing.

According to tribal leadership, they could not be more happy with this year's turnout and the

hard work that went in to planning the biggest event of the year for the tribe. This year marked the third year of the Festival since the Covid-19 Pandemic did not allow large crowds to gather in 2020 and 2021. "It finally feels like Covid is in the rear view mirror now," Second Chief Beaver said. "I know its never going to completely go away, but its not something people worry about. It seems like they feel more comfortable coming out."

This year saw Mvskoke citizens come out from all corners of the United States. According to Principal Chief Hill, his favorite part about Festival is meeting new faces. "When it's their first time coming and they just enjoy meeting us, but for me, I get to meet them and it just keeps growing," Principal Chief Hill said.

A photo gallery of the 2024 Mvskoke Festival can be found on pages seven and eight of this edition. The Festival Tournament results can be found on page two.

## FIVE INDUCTED AS LIVING LEGENDS AT 2024 FESTIVAL

THREE OTHERS ALSO GIVEN NEW CHIEF'S CHOICE AWARD



Dr. Negiel Bigpond Sr. stands with Principal Chief Hill and Second Chief Beaver as he is inducted at the Living Legends ceremony. (Thomas Jackson/MM)

by **THOMAS JACKSON**  
REPORTER

TVLSE, Oklv. - On June 20, the Living Legends ceremony took place to honor citizens of the Mvskoke Nation who have made an extraordinary impact on the lives of others in their community. In this ceremony, which was introduced by MCN Press Secretary Jason Salsman, five citizens of the tribe were presented with Living Legends awards, and an additional three were presented with the new Chief's Choice Awards for their service to the community.

The qualifications to become a Living Legend are as follows: citizens must be an enrolled citizen of the Muscogee Nation, they must be at least 55 years old, and they must have "brought recognition to and/or made outstanding contributions to the quality of life and development of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation on a local, national, or international level."

The first Living Legend to be introduced was Harry Monroe Beaver, a 75-year-old artist and teacher originally from Claremore, Oklahoma. He currently

resides in Okmulgee County on original allotment land. Harry has taught art and pottery classes, participated in fashion shows at Muscogee Festivals, and represented the Muscogee Nation as a teacher and demonstrator in various locations across the United States, such as the Smithsonian in Washington, DC, the Muscogee Monument in Macon, Georgia, and the Moundville Archaeological Park and Museum in Moundville, Alabama. He has also won four separate awards for his artwork, and has long been known as an advocate for Native American rights and recognition.

"I'm just doing what I enjoy doing: working with people and doing my art." Beaver said with a smile as he accepted the award.

The second Living Legend inductee was Dr Negiel Bigpond, a 74-year-old minister and teacher who is full blood Muscogee and of Euchee descent. He was born, raised, and continues to live on the Muscogee Reservation. Dr. Bigpond is known throughout the United States for his work as a pastor, evangelist, and leader. He has worked over 30 years as a minister, and has preached to people

in more than 200 Native American and First Nation reservations. Like Harry Monroe Beaver, Dr. Bigpond is also an advocate for Native Americans. He worked on the development of a joint resolution of apology to Native Americans for the horrific policies by the United States government. He was named one of the Ten Most Influential Christian Leaders of 2006 by Charisma Magazine for this and other work he has accomplished.

"I am proud to represent the Muscogee people, as well as the Euchee people, and it's been an honor to be around and to listen to the language of the Creek Nation. The Creek Nation is keeping that language alive, well, and kicking," Dr. Bigpond said after accepting the award.

The third inductee at the Living Legends ceremony was Rebecca Barnett, a teacher and translator, originally from Tahlequah, Oklahoma. She is a proud Muscogee citizen who comes from the Raccoon Clan and the Tokepvccce Tribal Town in Oklahoma. She has helped spread the knowledge of the Muscogee language, starting from when she was a young girl. The Mvskoke language is her first language, and the first language her family learned as well. She has worked as a teacher since 2009 where she taught the Mvskoke language at Connors State College for three years, and at the College of the Muscogee Nation, where she has been Mvhayv for 11 years. There she teaches both the Muscogee language and traditional cooking.

"I accept this honor for the people of the trail that brought it. I don't stand here by myself. My family and the people that

**LIVING LEGENDS**  
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## MVSKOKE FESTIVAL 2024 ANNUAL TOURNAMENTS BRING FIERCE COMPETITION

EACH TOURNAMENT SAW GREAT TURNOUTS WITH MANY SEEN ENJOYING PARTICIPATING



Citizens participate in this year's pickleball tournament at MCN festival. (Shayln Proctor/MM)

by **SHAYLN PROCTOR**  
REPORTER

OKMVLKE, Oklv. - The annual Muscogee (Creek) Nation Festival held many tournaments throughout the month of June. Although the weather was hot, most athletes appeared to enjoy playing in the competitive tournaments. Crowds were filled with excitement watching each team compete. The festival tournaments began June 14-16, then wrapped up June 20-23.

This year's competitions included a 5K, slow pitch and fast-pitch softball, tennis, co-ed volleyball, cornhole, horse shoes, junior olympics, golf and a new addition: pickleball. Each tournament saw a good turnout in those competing.

The co-ed volleyball and cornhole tournament had prizes for first through third place. The cornhole tournament for each level received a cash prize for those who placed. Co-ed volleyball third and second place winners received volleyball shirts, the first place

winner received a \$1,000 cash prize. Co-ed volleyball also featured a male and female MVP recognition.

According to the Nation, Festival organizers were pleased with the positive response to pickleball. In a statement from the Muscogee Nation's Facebook page it shared, "Kaylyn Baker hails from Edmond, Okla., and is this year's coordinator for pickleball. She said her coach, Jennifer Harjo, (Mvskoke) grew up playing tennis and wanted to introduce pickleball to the festival. Baker, who has hosted several pickleball tournaments, is happy with the turnout in its first year at the Muscogee Nation and thinks that it will continue to grow in the coming years."

Senior activities held on June 20 at the Mvskoke Dome included chair volleyball, men's and women's jacks, bean bag toss, basketball free throws, a hand quilt/machine quilt contest, a softke contest and

**TOURNEY RESULTS**  
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LIVING LEGENDS

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brought this language on the trail. That's why I have it, so I accept this honor on their behalf, or I wouldn't be standing here." Barnett said in closing.

After Ms. Barnett left the stage, the fourth recipient, Dean M. Hughes, was scheduled to receive his award. However, he was unable to attend due to an injury. As such, his award was accepted by James Jennings on his behalf. Dean Hughes was involved in teaching for decades ever since he received a teaching degree from the University of Oklahoma in 1973. He has served as a teacher and superintendent across multiple Native American reservations, including the Muscogee Reservation and the Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota. He has also served on the Muscogee Nation's Trade & Commerce Authority Board. Even after retirement he continues to help the Nation by serving on the Board of Regents for the College of the Muscogee Nation, currently serving as its Vice Chair.

The final Living Legends inductee recognized was Mona Lowe, also known as Koko. Mona is a prominent figure in the Muscogee Nation, being an active volunteer at many events such as pageants, fundraisers, competitions, and the Muscogee Nation Festival. She is a fluent Mvskoke speaker who enjoys working with the Muscogee Language Department and the Muscogee Language Camp. She also enjoys sharing her knowledge of Muscogee culture, including cooking traditional Native American food. She is also an active athlete, being a member of the Lady Legends Basketball team and a participant in the elder softball games during the Muscogee Nation Festival. Mona has worked with Muscogee Nation since the 1980s, and is more than happy to continue being active in her community. According to Salsman during the ceremony, "Koko truly has a servant's heart."

TOURNEY RESULTS

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an apron fashion show. The apron fashion show consisted of 20 participants who told the story of their apron and the inspiration behind it. Those who competed in the apron fashion show received a cash prize for showing their best apron.

Tournament Results:

Co-ed Volleyball CR8RS: 1st place From Mississippi=McCoy: 2nd place Storm Breakerz: 3rd Place Male MVP: Sean Gentry Female MVP: Carter Helmcamp

Horseshoe Men's Single Mitch Smith: 1st place Billy Vann: 2nd place Rusty Walker: 3rd place

Horseshoe Women's Single Sarah Hicks: 1st place Brenda Daniels: 2nd place Sweetleaf Pigeon: 3rd place

Horseshoe men's Double Mike Deer and Bunk: 1st place Billy Vann and Kato: 2nd place John Grayson and Rusty Walker: 3rd place

Horseshoes Women's Double Brenda Daniels and Sarah Hicks: 1st place Sweetleaf Pigeon and Faith: 2nd place Michelle Morgan and Jeremy Beaver: 3rd place

Cornhole Advanced/Elite Chipper Jones and Kaleb Kingfisher: 1st place Gage Foreman and Joseph Factor: 2nd place Jacob Foreman and Seth Fore: 3rd place Ashely Standridge and Landon Jiles: 4th place

Cornhole Competitive Alex Foreman and

Blayn Harlin: 1st place Summer Nelson and Ryan King: 2nd place Ricky Jones and Simeon Adair: 3rd place Nathan Ramaker and Austin Powers: 4th place

Cornhole Intermediate Vang Xiong and Capone Xiong: 1st place Tou Yang and Meng Maea: 2nd place William McLaughlin and Carl Crabtree: 3rd place Jared Hicks and Sergio Sanchez: 4th place

Cornhole Backyard Clinton Hicks and Tyler Brummett: 1st place Isaac Simpson and Joshua Simpson: 2nd place Brent Bruner and Devan Bruner: 3rd place

Women's Fastpitch Texoma Indians: 1st place Them Other Ones: 2nd place Sundancers: 3rd place

Men's Fastpitch Kansas Indians: 1st place Shades of Red: 2nd place War Chiefs: 3rd place

Pickleball Men's/Mixed Novice Division Jordan Permaul & Garrett Hack: 1st place Stephen Pattison & Dat Nguyen: 2nd place William Tobar & Joshua Permaul: 3rd place

Pickleball Women's Novice Division Eva Hooper & Cristine Hooper: 1st place Feather Twoshields & Kyla Scott: 2nd place Jenna Hack & Emily Permaul: 3rd place

Pickleball Men's/Mixed Advanced Division Eli Jones & Reeves Murray: 1st place

Brian Fong & Cy Harjo: 2nd place Adam Jones III & Adam Jones IV: 3rd place

Pickleball Women's Advanced Division Kimberly Royce & Jennifer Contreras: 1st place Casey Jones & Bailey Gilbert: 2nd place Jenna Hackand Emily Permaul: 3rd place

5K Overall Winners Women: Carrington Hessen Men: Brandon Payne

Senior Activities Results Chair Volleyball Glenpool Warriors: 1st place Muskogee Renegades: 2nd place

Quilt Contest Lillian Fixico: Hand quilt 1st place Addie Hicks: Hand quilt 2nd place Carol Tiger: Hand quilt 3rd place

Sarah Hicks: Machine quilt 1st place Irene Boatwright: Machine quilt 2nd place Amy Park: Machine

quilt 3rd place

Softke Contest Nellie Tiger: 1st place Don Tiger: 2nd place Lahoma Schultz: 3rd place

Men's Jack Bobby Lena: 1st place Doug Sharp: 2nd place Don Tiger: 3rd place

Women's Jack Nellie Tiger: 1st place Sally Lindsey: 2nd place Pam Davis: 3rd place

Men's Bean Bag Toss Jackie Tiger: 1st place Richard Isham: 2nd place Bobby Lena: 3rd place

Women's Bean Bag Toss Debbie Ridge: 1st place Anita Gree: 2nd place Great Buck: 3rd place

Men's Basketball Free Throw Kenneth Hill: 1st place Billy Hill: 2nd place Adam Fox: 3rd place

Women's Basketball Free Throw Tammy McFalls: 1st place Emma Lowe: 2nd place Dee Billy: 3rd place



A batter gets ready to hit a softball in the men's tournament at MCN Festival. (Meredith Johnson/MM)

LEGALS

JV-2024-09

Legal document for Case No. JV-2024-09. Includes court name (District Court of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Okmulgee District), case details, juvenile summons, and court orders regarding a hearing on September 24, 2024.

JV-2024-09

Legal document for Case No. JV-2024-09. Includes court name, case details, juvenile summons, and court orders regarding a hearing on September 24, 2024.

GD-2024-23

Legal document for Case No. GD-2024-23. Includes court name, case details, and an order and notice of hearing petition for appointment of general guardian.



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# MCN HOLDS 5TH ANNUAL HONOR WALK TO BRING AWARENESS TO HICKORY GROUND SACRED SITE

## RECORD NUMBERS WALK TO REMEMBER IN SWELTERING MORNING HEAT

OKMVLKE, Oklv. - The Muscogee (Creek) Nation held the 5th Annual Honor Walk to Protect Sacred Spaces on Thursday, June 20. The walk began at the Claude Cox Omniplex Pavilion at 10 a.m. and followed the circular Fairground Drive route. The morning walk was in observance of the National Day of Prayer to Protect Native American Sacred Places and was sponsored by the Department of Historic and Cultural Preservation and Hickory Ground.

The MCN has observed the National Day of Prayer to Protect Sacred Places since 2019 and has focused on bringing attention to the ongoing fight to protect the site of Hickory Ground in Wetumpka, Alabama. MCN Secretary of Culture and Humanities Raelynn Butler explained,

“The 5th annual Honor Walk is an observance of the National Day of Prayer to Protect Sacred Places which happens on the summer solstice each year. The Muscogee Nation’s observance has focused on protecting Hickory Ground (Oce Vpofv), a sacred

place in Wetumpka, Alabama that was the last tribal town location of Hickory Ground before the forced removal. This is also a burial ground and cemetery for Hickory Ground. The Poarch Band desecrated this sacred place by clearing the land and excavating 57 graves to make way for a multi-million dollar casino resort. The Muscogee Nation has been in litigation for more than a decade and we continue to seek justice for our ancestors. To date, Poarch has refused to allow our ancestors to be repatriated. This one is the worst acts of desecration in recent memory, and today we remember and honor Oce Vpofv and all the Mvskoke and Euchee sacred lands that need protection.”

In 2021 the Honor Walk was nearly rained out, yet citizens still plodded through puddles and rain to show support and unity for the protection of Oce Vpofv. This year, amongst the bustling preparations for the MCN 2024 Annual Festival and soaring morning temperatures, Mvskoke citizens and other tribal allies showed up in numbers. According to Butler, this year

by MEREDITH JOHNSON REPORTER

saw the highest in attendance.

Before the walk began, the event was initiated with speakers including Secretary Butler, Principal Chief David Hill, representatives from Hickory Ground, and Mary Kathryn Nagle (Cherokee). Nagle serves as an attorney in the litigation against the Poarch Band. She stated, “I look around here today and I see you, if you’re Muscogee Creek, the only reason you exist is because one of your ancestors or more, fought incredibly hard to survive the Trail of Tears, one of the worst genocides in human history, so you can be here today. When you look back on American history, it used to be they were trying to eradicate us, they didn’t want tribes to exist anymore. Now they don’t want to eradicate us, they want to be us. That’s the story of Poarch. They are trying to be you... They applied for federal grant funds to buy the original Hickory Ground site and they told the federal government ‘If you give us this land we will protect it for the Hickory Ground in Oklahoma.’ And one of the first things they did when they got the land was dig up 57 of your relatives and put them in storage bins in Auburn University. That’s why we’re here today. They built a 246 million dollar casino on top of your sacred site. That’s one of the most offensive things a human being could do, so we’re here today to fight for the right of your relatives to remain in their final resting place. We’re also fighting for all of Indian Country because our tribes are still in danger, it might be 2024 and not in the 1830s but if we lose our sacred sites, if we lose our culture, if we lose our language there are no more tribal nations.”

Chief Hill reassured attendees the administration’s work is ongoing and continuous. During remarks he stated, “We are going to continue to fight on what happened...We’re going to continue



Supporters of Hickory Ground make the honor walk around the Fairground Drive route on June 20. The annual honor walk is now in its fifth year of honoring Oce Vpofv. (Shayln Proctor/MM)

to fight, we will fight to the end, we don’t want this to happen to any other tribal town or tribe... We honor our ancestors today, Mvto.”

Mekko George Thompson, the traditional chief of Hickory Ground, told Mvskoke Media at the event, “Today is a monumental day. As we are here today to honor our ancestors who were forced to leave their homes in the southeast, you know they came on an incredible journey and hardships, but they managed to come here and they managed to create some of the things we enjoy doing today. As I looked out over the audience I was saying that to me, I saw a lot of people from different tribal towns that were present and that’s what this is about, coming together and honoring our ancestors. Hickory Ground is the number one exam-

ple of what can happen to your tribal town and you should be aware of it.”

The National Day of Prayer to Protect Native American Sacred Places began in 2003 on the summer solstice, and was organized by Suzan Shown Harjo (Cheyenne/Mvskoke) and the Morning Star Institute. The institute was a Native American rights organization devoted to the promotion of Native land claims and protection of American Indian traditional spaces. The day is commemorated with ceremonies, prayers, walks, and other intentional actions. Tribal governments, Native organizations, and community groups have participated in the annual observance since its inception with events happening all across the United States.



Supporters of Hickory Ground who were present at this year’s annual honor walk received Save Oce Vpofv tee shirts to wear in solidarity. (Shayln Proctor/MM)



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# FESTIVAL MEET AND GREET SEES RECORD TURNOUT

## CITIZENS SHOW UP FOR ONE-ON-ONE WITH MCN LEADERSHIP



MCN Principal Chief David Hill and Second Chief Del Beaver meet with citizens during the 2024 Festival Meet and Greet. (Meredith Johnson/MM)

OKMVLKE, Oklv. - The 2024 Muscogee (Creek) Nation Festival saw the return of many beloved events and activities. High on that list was the Principal Chief and Second Chief Meet and Greet. The event was hosted on Saturday, June 22, and allowed festival goers a chance to cool off in the Mvskoke Dome and get a one on one with Chief Hill and Second Chief Beaver.

A barbecue sandwich lunch was provided. Attendees also

received a take home tote. The event also coincided with the Festival’s health fair, which offered citizens an opportunity to learn about health and wellness services. Raffles for prizes and giveaways also punctuated the event with MCN Press Secretary Jason Salsman acting as emcee.

The event saw a large turnout as both the health fair line and the meet and greet line wound out of the court and through the lobby of the Mvskoke Dome. The event had a record turnout and accord-

by MEREDITH JOHNSON REPORTER

ing to Secretary Salsman had well over 500 attendees.

When asked what he enjoyed about the festival and the meet and greet, Principal Chief Hill shared, “Citizens coming in that first time coming. They just enjoy it, getting to meet us, but to me it’s just growing.”

It was estimated that 8,000 people attended the Thursday evening activities at the Claude Cox Omniplex. The attendance and growth has put expansion on the minds of leadership.

Second Chief Beaver shared the highlight of his festival experience was meeting citizens from all over the country. He said, “My Festival has been awesome so far. It just seems like every year, you know, we get a little bit bigger and bigger and bigger. Visiting with everyone. Florida, San Antonio, California, I mean just everywhere. The farthest was Seattle.”

Principal Chief Hill and Second Chief Beaver also spilled the beans on their favorite festival food. While Principal Chief Hill listed Indian tacos, meat pies and three-inch thick cowboy burgers as favorites, he also goes traditional with festival food. “It





just depends. I mean what do you want? You just can’t pick one. But, if they have traditional food, safkee or cvtvhaky, stuff like that, I would say that’s my favorite,” he shared.

Second Chief Beaver had a more dialed-in approach to festival fair. While Indian tacos and fry bread were mentioned, meat pies are his particular preference.

He shared, “Indian tacos, they’re always kind of hard to eat whenever you’re kind of on the move so I always got to have a meat pie. I had one Thursday after the Stomp Dance.” They don’t have to be hot though, he shared that his favorites are made with ground beef, a little onion and spices. “You know, some people like cheese. Keep it simple.”

**HOUSING ANNEX AND PAYMENT CENTER**

The Department of Housing Payments and Elderly Housing Rental Office has relocated to the new Housing Annex and Payment Center located at 3405 Martha Berryhill Ave., Okmulgee. The building is located north of the Elderly Housing Addition. The building will offer both a walk-in and drive-thru payment window and the Elderly Housing Rental Property office.

MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING



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## SOUR SOFKEE



Editor's Note: The following is a revived column submission by Mvskoke citizen Fus Yvhikv.

### Fixico Speeds Through Tulsa

Me and Fixico are headed downtown to the annual Tulsa Indian Club Powwow. We are riding in Fixico's rez car. It is a 1963 Plymouth Belvedere two-door hardtop. The car has a push button to change the gears. They are arrayed horizontally on the dashboard. There are buttons for drive, reverse, neutral, first and second gears. It appears the reverse gear has been selected yet, somehow, we are moving forward.

"Get a move on willya? You drive like an old lady," I say to Fixico.

"Bugger off, willya? We're going through a school zone," Fixico says.

"It's summertime. School's not in session," I reply. "And what's with the bugger off? Have you suddenly become a Creek Englishman?"

"School's out? Do kids today ever go to school? Still best to be safe rather than sorry when driving through a school zone."

"Dude! You drive like my grandma. Get a move on or we'll miss Grand Entry."

Suddenly Fixico's radio comes on. You never know when his radio is going to work. The radio has trouble picking up signals due to the car's lack of an antenna. Actually there is an antenna, but it's a wire coat hanger that has been

duct taped to the hood of the car.

A radio announcer states that there is breaking news. He says that the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled the City of Tulsa does not have authority to issue speeding citations to tribal citizens. Fixico and I listen intently.

The announcer goes on to state that in the case of Hooper v. City of Tulsa, Justin Hooper, a Choctaw citizen, was issued a speeding citation by the Tulsa Police Department in 2018. Hooper paid a \$150 fine. After the 2020 U. S. Supreme Court ruling in McGirt that declared the Muscogee (Creek) Reservation was never disestablished, Hooper filed suit against the City of Tulsa averring that Tulsa had no authority to cite him for speeding.

The Federal District Court ruled against Hooper, citing the authority granted to Tulsa under Section 14 of the 1898 Curtis Act. Hooper then appealed the district court's decision to the 10th Circuit. The appeals court reversed the decision of the district court.

The 10th Circuit noted that when Tulsa re-incorporated the city in 1907 under the new state of Oklahoma, the city relinquished authority over Natives granted under Section 14 of the Curtis Act. The 10th Circuit Court's ruling not only invalidated Tulsa's authority to issue speeding tickets to Natives but also declared that none of the municipality's ordinances apply to tribal citizens.

Me and Fixico are mesmerized by the news. Shock and awe is a better description. Fixico pulls his rez car over on a narrow street as we try to process this stunning news. Angry honking from a car behind us awakens us from our stupor. Fixico stomps on the accelerator and the recalcitrant car wheezes and coughs as it limps ahead.

"Did we hear that correctly? Tulsa can't ticket Natives for speeding?" I ask.

"Can that be true?"

A text comes through on my phone. A friend is forwarding a meme issued by Oklahoma Govern-

nor Kevin Stitt. The meme shows a speed limit sign. The meme reads, Speed Limit 75, Tribal Speed Limit 100.

"Ha! It is true. Even Gov. Bullstitt says that speed limits don't apply to Natives!"

"Speed limit? We don't need no stinking speed limits," Fixico says as he again floors it.

Fortunately we had just crested a large hill. The rez car gathers steam as we descend. We quickly reached 85 miles per hour.

"Yee haw!" we exclaim as we stick our heads out of the windows.

"I'm king of the world!" Fixico yells into the strong headwinds.

"Fixico! You are about to run a red light!" I shout above the rushing winds.

"What?" Fixico asks.

"I said you just ran a red light!"

"Ha! Ha! Nothing can stop us now, Fus"

Flashing red lights appear behind us. It's Tulsa PD. Fixico attempts to look in the driver's side mirror when it is suddenly ripped off by the fierce headwinds. At that moment, the car begins to list to the right and the back of the car dips toward the pavement. A bouncing tire skips by us on the right side of the car.

"Hey! Isn't that one of your bald tires?" I ask.

"Doesn't look like mine."

"Yes, it is. I can see your red duct tape on it."

"Heyluh!" we both scream.

The car smashes into one of the many potholes in Tulsa's streets. It flies high in the air, does a 360-degree spin, and comes down hard on its chassis. The remaining three wheels pop off as the car slides down the street. The rez car comes to a smoking halt next to a speed limit sign.

"License and registration," the police officer demands.

"License and registration?" Fixico says. "We don't need no stinking license and registration. We're 'skins and your laws don't

**SOUR SOFKEE**  
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## MUSCOGEE CITIZEN ZACH "PORKY" ROBERTS FINISHES 4TH PLACE IN BASSMASTER OPEN

THIS MARKS ROBERTS' FIRST TOP FIVE FINISH IN THE BASSMASTER OPEN



Zach "Porky" Roberts poses with two fish he caught during the St. Croix Bassmaster Open tournament. (Courtesy: Zach Roberts)

by **THOMAS JACKSON**  
REPORTER

EUFULA, Oklv. - A Muscogee Nation citizen recently made the top five of the recent St. Croix Bassmaster Open at Lake Eufaula during the MCN Festival weekend. Zach Roberts of Morris, OK, managed to take fourth place in the Co-Anglers competition with a weight of twelve pounds, zero ounces. Roberts, who goes by the nickname "Porky," is also an employee of the Nation, working in the General Services Administration, also known as GSA. This is Roberts' third time participating in the Bassmaster Open, and his first time placing in the top five. Roberts has competed in multiple tournaments across the state, including Major League Fishing in March, where he placed fifth in the Okie Division.

Roberts, when being interviewed, stated that one of his biggest memories of fishing was fishing with his father and his brother.

"People always ask me why you do it or what drives me. I don't know. It's just always been a dream of mine," Roberts said. "I remember growing up when I was little and my grandpa was still alive. Me, my dad, and my brother, we would go fishing. I just remember, you know, growing up watching the old timers, Billy Dance, Jimmy Houston and them, and always teasing my dad like 'Hey, I'm Bill Dance' or 'Hey, I'm Jimmy Houston'. And so it's little things like that (that drive me)."

Roberts went on to say it was a surprise that he did so well. "That tournament trail, the Bassmaster Open, that's like the cream of the crop, I guess you would say, of fishing. ... Going into it, I figured that if I could at least get six pounds as a non-boater, I would be set in contention going into day two. Never did I think that after day one, that I'd be leading the event!" Roberts said.

**BASSMASTER OPEN**  
Continued on Page 5

### THREE PRESENTED WITH CHIEF'S CHOICE AWARDS AT 2024 LIVING LEGENDS CEREMONY

NEW AWARD RECOGNIZES DILIGENT WORK OF MVSKOKE CITIZENS



Chief's Choice Award recipient Roy Roberts shakes hands with Principal Chief David Hill as he walks onto the stage to accept his award. (Thomas Jackson/MM)

by **THOMAS JACKSON**  
REPORTER

TVLSE, Oklv. - This year's Muscogee (Creek) Nation Living Legends Ceremony featured a brand new category. The second set of awards that were given out at the ceremony was the Chief's Choice Awards, which have the same criteria as the Living Legends, but are chosen by the chiefs.

The first person to receive a Chief's Choice Award was Jimmie Carole Fife Stewart, a Muscogee citizen originally of the Tukvpytce Tribal Town and the Raccoon Clan. Jimmie is a dedicated artist who uses her work to depict Native American culture and the MCN, having been inspired by her upbringing and by the stories, traditions, and culture of her tribe. Her art has been put on display at various locations around the United States, including the Daybreak Star Art Center in Seattle, WA, the Robins Air Force Base Museum in Macon, GA, the Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport's Native American exhibit in Atlanta, GA and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. She also enjoys attending events, both local and national, with her

family, including her sisters who are artists as well. These include the Southeastern Art Show and Market in Tishomingo, OK, the Mvskoke Art Market in Tulsa, OK, the Artesian Arts Festival in Sulphur, OK, the Southwestern Association for Indian Arts in Santa Fe, NM, and the IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, also in Santa Fe, NM.

"I want to thank my family. My brothers and sisters, my daughters, my grandchildren, my great-grandchildren, my nieces, nephews, cousins, friends, and everyone for the help," Stewart said. "The love, and the encouragement on my journey... As a child, my dream was to be Jim Thorpe when I grew up. I feel like I have finally made it. I did not become Jim Thorpe, but now I'm a living legend, and I am Jimmie Stewart."

The next recipient of the Chief's Choice Award was Roy Roberts, a full-blood Muscogee citizen who has worked as a rancher and welder for decades. A U.S. Army veteran, Roy's greatest achievement was his work on a set of softball fields, a rodeo arena, and a fence around 57 acres for the Muscogee Nation. He supervised

30 welders and workers from 1982 to 1984, completing what would become known as the Claude Cox Omnplex. He and his family are still very active in the community, participating in the MCN Rodeo ever since its establishment following the rodeo's construction, and is proud to have been a part of it. He would also play a key role in bringing back the All-Indian Rodeo to the Muscogee Nation, turning the tribe's rodeo into a national icon.

"I don't speak too good, but I want to thank my grandson for nominating me, and all my family for being here. My kids, my grandkids, my great-grandkids, my nieces and nephews. Mvto." Roberts said in a brief speech.

Justice Douglas L. Combs, the last recipient of the Chief's Choice Award, is an Oklahoma judge and a proud citizen of the Muscogee Nation. He has served as a Special Judge, District Judge, and Chief Judge for the Twenty-Third Judicial District, where he oversaw the first drug court in the Twenty-Third District and the fourth drug court in the state of Oklahoma. He has served on the Oklahoma Supreme Court since 2011. He served as Vice Chief Justice from 2015 to 2016 and Chief Justice from 2016 to 2018. Outside of his capacity as a judge, he continues to care for and maintain an interest in the land held by his grandmother, Beulah Doyle, who was an original allottee under the Dawes Act.

"I appreciate this honor more than you know," Combs said. "I become very emotional when I talk about family, and this day has made me think so much of my grandmother, and my great-grandmother who I never knew, but who I heard through the years to get her daughter, my grandmother, on the Dawes rolls. She was proud to be a member of the Muscogee Nation. I am proud to be a member of the Muscogee Nation."

### SOUR SOFKEE

Continued from Page 4

apply to us."

Me and Fixico laugh gleefully. We would have driven off but the rez car was without wheels. The police officer hands Fixico a speeding ticket. The ticket is from the Muscogee Nation, not the City of Tulsa.

"What?" Fixico meekly asks.

"It's called cross-deputization.

The Muscogee Nation has empowered Tulsa PD to issue traffic citations to Natives. Take that puppy to the tribe and pay the \$500 fine," the officer says with a chuckle.

"Heylul! It's not the lawless wild west out here after all. Gov. Bullstitt is wrong, yet again," I say.

"Mvtawvte! No more speeding through Tulsa!" Fixico laments. "Looks like I'll have to keep driving like an old lady."

### BASSMASTER OPEN

Continued from Page 4

Even with his fourth place finish, Roberts was overjoyed to have done so well, and being a competitive person, he hopes to do better in the future.

"And yes, the fourth place finish, man. That's just like I said, a dream come true," Roberts said. "A lot of people know my dad, he works for the tribe, and they don't see the emotional side and stuff. You know, after day one, after I got off the weighing stage, just seeing my parents and them giving me a

hug... Like if I can explain it... I mean, my watch was saying I had a high heart rate like five or six times. Just them giving me that hug, and that alone, that means so much."

Finally, Roberts took a moment to share some words of inspiration to those in the tribe who may be pursuing a similar career path or simply want to follow their dream careers. "If you dream it, pursue it. Don't let nobody tell you you can't do it. No matter finances or whatever it can be. If you really set your mind to it, you can achieve anything you want to."

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## MCNC SUBCOMITTEE

### HEW/LNC PASS PROPERTY PURCHASE TO FULL COUNCIL

PSO AGREEMENT FOR NEW OKFUSKEE COUNTY CHILD CENTER ALSO PASSES



The MCN HEW/LNC committees held a joint meeting on June 25. (MM File)

by **MEREDITH JOHNSON**  
REPORTER

MVSKOKE RESERVATION - On June 25, the Health, Education, and Welfare Committee and the Land, National Resources, and Cultural Preservation held a joint in-person meeting. Passed legislation will go on to the next full council meeting, unless otherwise noted.

The committees addressed the following legislation, the interpretation of which is attributed to language in the bills:

**TR 24-067** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief

to execute a real estate contract for the purchase of property in Okmulgee, Oklahoma passed with a vote of 9-0. It was sponsored by Representative Robyn Whitecloud.

The MCN Emergency management Department will utilize its land management funds for the purchase of the property. The purchase amount is \$30,000.

**TR 24-068** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute an Underground Electric Utility Right-of-Way agreement with Public Service Company of Oklahoma for the construction of the new Muscogee (Creek) Nation Okemah Child Development Center located in Okfuskee County passed with a vote of 9-0. It was sponsored by Representative Mark Randolph.

The agreement will be a 20-year term granting the Public Service Company of Oklahoma right-of-way access.

To view the full agenda, visit [mcnnc.com](http://mcnnc.com).

## FULL COUNCIL

### COUNCIL PASSES RESOLUTIONS FOR BRIDGE REPAIR AND CONSTRUCTION

CHANGES TO MCN ATTORNEY'S "MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS" FAILS

by **MEREDITH JOHNSON**  
REPORTER

MVSKOKE RESERVATION - The Muscogee (Creek) National Council held a regular session in person on June 29 at the Mound Building.

The MCN National Council addressed the following legislation, the interpretation of which is attributed to language in the bills:

**TR 24-062** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation confirming the nomination of Clarence Johnson to serve on the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Citizenship Board was adopted with a vote of 14-0-1, with Representative Anna Marshall abstaining. It was sponsored by Representative Leonard Gouge.

As noted previously, Rep. Marshall abstained due to family ties to Johnson. Johnson's term will begin upon confirmation and will end on June 1, 2029. There was no discussion on this piece of legislation.

**TR 24-063** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to apply for federal funding through the Bureau of Indian Affairs Tribal Transportation Bridge Program to fund ten replacement bridges within the Muscogee (Creek) Nation was adopted with a vote of 15-0. It was sponsored by Representative Galen Cloud.

Recent inspections indicate there are ten deficient and hazardous bridges within the reservation that need to be replaced. There was no discussion on this piece of legislation.

**TR 24-064** A tribal resolution



The Muscogee (Creek) National Council held a regular session in person on June 29. (MM File)

of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to apply for federal funding through the Bureau of Indian Affairs Tribal Transportation Bridge Program to fund two bridge constructions within the Muscogee (Creek) Nation was adopted with a vote of 15-0. It was sponsored by Rep. Cloud. There was no discussion on this piece of legislation.

The two bridges were identified as RT 148F-Bridge Number 05085 and RT 1330-Bridge Number 06526. RT 148F-Bridge Number 05085 is located in Okmulgee County, RT 1330-Bridge Number 06526 is located in Okfuskee county. The former will cost \$1,635,821.10 to repair, the latter will cost \$1,972,515.90.

**TR 24-066** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a Five Tribe Wildlife Management Reciprocity Agreement with the Cherokee Nation, the Chickasaw Nation, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, and the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma was adopted with a vote of 15-0. It

was sponsored by Rep. Cloud.

The Five Tribes have expanded more access to hunting and fishing privileges within the Nations' reservations in April 2023. This bill will continue to grant more privileges and permissions to Mvskoke citizens to hunt, fish and trap. During discussion it was stated that the other tribes are passing reciprocity agreements, thereby the Five Tribes will acknowledge others' hunting and fishing licenses. Seminole Nation is the only Nation who has not passed legislation, but is in the process.

**TR 24-067** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a real estate contract for the purchase of property in Okmulgee, Oklahoma was adopted with a vote of 15-0. It was sponsored by Representative Robyn Whitecloud.

The MCN Emergency Management Department will utilize its land management funds for

**REGULAR SESSION**  
Continued on Page 6

## THE MVSKOKE MARKET

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OBITUARY

ELIZABETH ANN TAYLOR

Elizabeth Ann Taylor, aged 73, a resident of Weleetka, Oklahoma passed away Monday, June 17th, 2024 in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Elizabeth is preceded in death by her parents, son, Larry Bryan Taylor Jr., and sister, Loretta Sue Parks.

Although born in Henryetta, Elizabeth spent her school years living in Carlsbad, New Mexico where her father worked in the potash mines.

husband, Larry, who was in the Navy. They would marry on December 31, 1968 in rural Oklahoma at Aztec Church.

Elizabeth loved gardening, whether it be houseplants, yard flowers, or vegetables. She would

even stop on the side of the road with her daughters and dig up wildflowers. Elizabeth loved her children, her family and had a soft spot for children.

Elizabeth was described as headstrong (by Larry) and always ran tardy. The clock never mattered to her, she ran on her own clock and was nicknamed "Mahale"

ley" after an aunt who was also always running late. Elizabeth's daughters have many fond memories of their mama.

Those left to cherish her memory are her husband Larry, her daughters, Sharon Corley and husband Jimmy, and Sarah Osborn.



Tyler Craig, Katelynn Craig, Bridgett Arnhart, Natalee Pak, McKenzie Grauberger, and Alyssa Grauberger.

FULL COUNCIL (CONT.)

REGULAR SESSION

Continued from Page 5

the purchase of the property. The location of the property is listed at Township Fourteen North, Range Twelve East and consists of two and a half acres, or less.

TR 24-068 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute an Underground Electric Utility Right-of-Way Agreement with Public Service Company of Oklahoma for the construction of the new Muscogee (Creek) Nation Okemah Child Development Center located in Okfuskee County was adopted with a vote of 15-0.

The agreement is a 20-year term granting the Public Service Company of Oklahoma right-of-way access. The location where underground electric services will be installed is Section 14, Township 11 North, Range 9 East in

Okfuskee County. There was no discussion on this piece of legislation.

TR 24-076 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a third amendment to Revolving Loan and Security Agreement with BOKE, NA DBA Bank of Oklahoma was adopted with a vote of 15-0.

This resolution adds a third amendment to the pre-existing agreement with Bank of Oklahoma and Bank of Oklahoma Financial. The expanded revolving line of credit will be increased to \$125,000,000.

TR 24-077 A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation amending TR 22-122 (a tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Executive Branch to prepare and submit grant applications to federal and

state governmental agencies and private foundations for both FY 2023 and FY 2024 and authorizing the Principal Chief to execute all necessary grant documents) was adopted with a vote of 15-0.

This resolution allows the tribe to submit applications for grants and accept grant money quicker than it would otherwise.

NCA 24-071 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation amending MCNCA title 14 § 1-203 entitled "Minimum qualifications" failed to be adopted with a vote of 7-8.

This law would have allowed the MCN to hire competent attorneys in good standing with the MCN Bar Association, but without licensing from the Oklahoma Bar Association for the positions of prosecutor and assistant prosecutor.

Native attorneys living in Indian Country outside the state of Oklahoma who are candidates for prosecutorial work with the Nation. She further explained that the candidates are unhireable because MCN code specifies MCN Prosecutors must be a member of the state of Oklahoma Bar.

MCN Ambassador Jonodev Chaudhuri spoke during discussion in favor of the bill stating, "Law is the purest expression of values within a governmental system... prosecutions in tribal law are internal matters based on Muscogee Nation law, so reference to the powers of state law is an artifact of days gone by."

NCA 24-074 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in the

amount of \$906,621 for the benefit of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Office of Environmental Services passed with a vote of 15-0.

The MCN Office of Environmental Services will use the grant to add one full-time employee and expand its Solid Waste Post-Consumer Materials Management Program.

NCA 24-075 A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation approving the FY 2025 Indian Housing Plan passed with a vote of 14-1.

The Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act Indian Housing Block Grant funds needs to be approved for the Indian Housing Plan in order to be submitted.

To view the full agenda, visit: mcnc.com.

LEGALS (CONT.)

AD-2024-13

Legal document AD-2024-13 regarding adoption of Gemma Novalee Jean Martin, Daren Drey Ryder Martin, and Jacob Alexander Haze Martin.

AD-2024-13

Legal document AD-2024-13 regarding adoption of Gemma Novalee Jean Martin, Daren Drey Ryder Martin, and Jacob Alexander Haze Martin.

AD-2024-13

Legal document AD-2024-13 regarding adoption of Gemma Novalee Jean Martin, Daren Drey Ryder Martin, and Jacob Alexander Haze Martin.

FESTIVAL PHOTO GALLERY



Housing Authority of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma

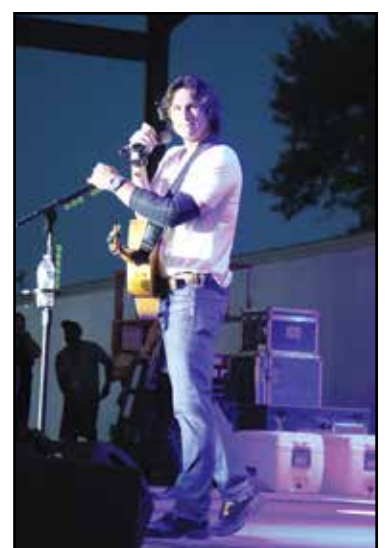
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