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EDUCATION, 5

GIDUWA CHEROKEE NEWS

YSG GWY A&P Official News Publication of the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma June 2023



SNAKE SAFETY

Woody Hansen educates students at Wickliffe Schools this past year about venomous and non-venomous snakes. Hansen is an outdoor wildlife educator in the field of snakes, particularly those of northeast Oklahoma. COURTESY PHOTOS

Snake handler Woody Hansen shares the importance of learning about local snakes.

BY LANI HANSEN
Senior Reporter

TAHLEQUAH – Many people do not know the difference between a poisonous snake and a non-poisonous snake. With warmer days and evenings starting, snake handler Woody Hansen educates on the types of reptiles plus what to do and what not to do when dealing with a snake bite.

Hansen is an outdoor wildlife educator in the field of snakes, particularly those of northeast Oklahoma. His hobby began in 1989, when a fellow Cherokee and a Seneca Cayuga man invited him to join them to travel out to Western Oklahoma (Okeene) to hunt rattlesnakes.

“Little did I know that the ‘trio’ that was formed on my first rattlesnake roundup would last for 33 years,” Hansen said. “Sadly, one of my mentors passed in December of 2022, now the ‘Fang Gang’ is now a duo. This past snake roundup was emotional as Calvin and I sat around the campfire without Ed with us.”

Hansen started educating the public after observing certain men of the Okeene Rattlesnake Association. They entered the “snake pit” an enclosure with up to 100 rattlers, handling and demonstrating the fangs, skin and rattles of live diamondback rattlesnakes.

“I began to imitate these men and the rest is rattlesnake history, 34 years later and I am still educating the public and enjoying it,” he said. He has presented at schools, camps, tribes

and many other places on the safety of snakes.

Through his years of handling snakes, Hansen has come across other species of poisonous and non-poisonous snakes. Commonly known snakes of Northeast Oklahoma are copperheads (ambushers), cottonmouth (territorial), pigmy rattlesnakes (small and hot tempered) and on very rare occasion the coral snake (red and yellow, hurts a fellow).

“All of these become partners of the menagerie of my traveling venomous educators, or the cat eyed and the triangle headed ones,” Hansen stated. “For balance, my program includes the non-venomous family of snakes who are all sleek and round eyed.”

Some of the non-poisonous snakes include the rat snake (climber), hognose spreading adder (acts like a cobra but harmless), blue racer (fast), water snake (crawdadd stealer) and others that may present themselves.

Hansen goes over what to do and what not to do, he said “snake handlers have a saying, it is not a matter of if you get bit, it is a matter of when you get bit.”

He said, it was 20 years of snake handling before he was injected with venom from just one fang piercing his finger. This bite sent him to the hospital where he stayed for three days. Another time he was bit by a copperhead in the palm area, which caused a lot of swelling but no overnight stay at the hospital.

SEE HANSEN, PAGE 3

Tribal member earns NAJA fellowship

Aspen Ford will participate in the Native American Journalism Fellowship.

BY LANI HANSEN
Senior Reporter

TAHLEQUAH – The Native American Journalists Association (NAJA) recently selected seven students to participate in their Native American Journalism Fellowship (NAJF) Class of 2023. UKB member Aspen Ford has been given the opportunity of a spot in the fellowship program.

Ford grew up in Tahlequah, attending school at Woodall and graduating high school from Sequoyah in 2018 as Salutatorian. She then attended college at Northeastern State University, where she served as a member of the President Leadership Class. Ford double majored in Spanish and Media Studies, with a minor in Applied Linguistics in graduating in May 2022.



Aspen Ford

“Whenever I was in newspaper, I had reached out to Mark Dreadfulwater to help edit a story of mine, and he’s the one who helped my interest in NAJA,” Ford said. “I am so glad I signed up for a student membership, because they have so many opportunities.”

It was at the end of her last semester at NSU, when she learned about the NAJA conference which was held at Arizona State University.

“Not knowing what to do after college, I signed up to go to this conference because I had been interested in ASU’s investigative journalism master’s program,” Ford said. “I thought it was awesome to see so many Native journalists. That’s where I met my current boss Ryan Sharp, who is the editor at The Oklahoman and informed about the fellowship program.”

After speaking with Sharp, Ford was hired on and moved to Oklahoma City where she began her fellowship.

“I have learned so much being in this fellowship with The Oklahoman,” Ford stated. “I loved the NAJA conference so much last year, I had to apply for their fellowship program which I did in February. And in order to apply I had to be a student so I applied at ASU and got accepted.”

The NAJF Program begins in June, the fellows will participate in a virtual curriculum with selected mentors representing broadcast, radio, print and digital media. This innovative experience will be designed to leverage the advantages of a digital newsroom while allowing fellows to strengthen reporting skills, pitch stories to news outlets, participate in the National Native Media Conference, and network with other Indigenous journalists.

“They’ll fly us out to the National Native Media Conference in Winnipeg, Canada, I am excited,”

SEE NAJF, PAGE 2

Echota Behavioral Health sets up Cave Springs drug prevention

In-school suspension students take a break from the classroom to visit the UKB.

BY LANI HANSEN
Senior Reporter

TAHLEQUAH – Students from Cave Springs High School who were in the “in-school suspension” program took a field day to the United Keetoowah Band complex for a day of learning and fishing.

Echota Behavioral Health is working with the school bringing the drug prevention education program to its ISS students.

The program started when Superintendent CD Thompson and a former teacher who is currently director of Outreach from Echota Behavioral Health, Jessica Thompson, spoke about what they could do to prevent students from using drugs and taking the wrong path, according to a release sent by Thompson.

“We’ve been going out working with some of the kids in the ISS program who have been in trouble for drugs or other things. We go over the dangers of drugs and finding other things,” Thompson said. “One of our

programs is the ‘natural high’ and some of the kids said they liked fishing.”

Thompson visited with Education Director Dr. Leslie Hannah at the complex one day, and he showed her the pond. She had mentioned some of the kids liked fishing, “I asked him if he would be interested in partnering with us and taking the kids fishing? And he said absolutely,” Thompson said.

Cave Springs was able to bring out four students from ISS and the peer mentor who has been working with the students also.

“It was nice giving student’s opportunities that they wouldn’t normally have, we got to watch a kid catch a fish that has never been fishing,” CD stated about the program.

On their visit at the UKB complex, the students got to meet with people who worked for the tribe such as the Education Department and Tribal Lighthorse. They also got to learn about the culture and history of the tribe by visiting the John Hair Cultural Center and Keetoowah Museum.

The drug prevention program just started at Cave Springs this past spring semester. According to Thompson’s research, the program emphasizes

SEE CAVE, PAGE 2



Cave Springs High School peer mentor Jessica Olvera holds fish caught during a recent trip by Cave Springs students to the United Keetoowah Band complex in Tahlequah. Echota Behavioral Health is working on a drug prevention education program at the school. SHAYLEY FOURKILLER/GIDUWA CHEROKEE NEWS



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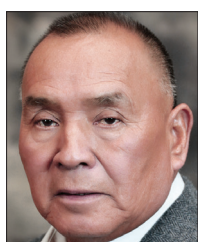
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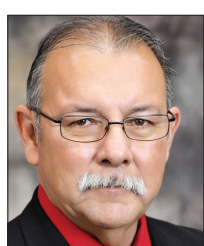
Treaties, mounds and tri-council

Si yo, ni ga da
June is here with many graduates this past May. Congratulations to all!
I missed the opportunity to be in the Stilwell Strawberry Festival parade as it was attended by Assistant Chief Wacoche, Secretary Joyce Fourkiller Hawk, Treasurer Sonja Gourd and tribal Reps. Junior Catron and Alvin Hicks.

I was at the Bacone College graduation where they had 20 graduates. That was a glorious sight to see Native kids graduating, walking the walk and preparing to become tomorrow's tribal leaders and professionals.

I attended a treaty right activity where the Fon Du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippawa's celebrated their annual treaty right. They cite the 1854 Treaty of La Pointe as when they ceded millions of acres of land to the federal government, and in return they would retain their hunting, fishing and gathering treaty rights in the ceded areas.

It is amazing, witnessing century's



Chief's Corner

JOE BUNCH
Principal Chief
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old tradition as we move into the 21st century. It makes me wonder, as we review our 1817, 1828, 1833 and 1846 treaties, that they clearly state we have had land on our reservation. Today, this is reinforced by the McGirt decision. Only Congress can award or remove a reservation and Congress has not removed our land.

In June, we celebrate the Keetoowah Mounds restoration, symbolic, as we as Native people never went away. The mounds have existed for thousands of years, and this is clear evidence of the Keetoowah existence. The Creator said

your name shall be Keetoowah forever.

We will come together for the tri-council meeting in Cherokee, North Carolina, this month. I am sure one agenda item will be the treaty right of a tribal representative in the House of Representatives.

This means, we will have a representative in all discussions that affect Native people. The representative will be a non-voting member and can serve on various committees, in the House of Representatives. We are excited. We have selected a tribal member, who also serves as our tribal prosecutor, to serve as our House Representative delegate. Her name is Victoria Holland, and we know she will represent the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians well.

Pray for an M Opinion from the solicitor general in our favor as we move forward.

I have a new cell phone number 918-772-0666.

Wa do, ni ga da, oo ne le nv, a do ls di, gi du wa.

June is Pride Month for LGBTQ people

Identity and gender have become topics of conversation across many platforms. At times, these conversations can become contentious.

Whether individuals simply do not understand the LGBTQ community, they are trying to understand, or they disagree with the community, the focus on the movement should be centered around inclusivity.

Among Native American communities throughout the world, the communal aspect of Native culture is the framework of Native American communities today.

When Native Americans connect with their cultures, they are far less likely to use substances and have depressive feelings about their lives.

Often, individuals who have been removed from their cultures, or they are forcibly exited, Native Americans find themselves recovering within the world of substance and alcohol abuse. The LGBTQ community, or the Two-Spirited community as it is known within Native American culture, is no stranger to abandonment.

In early Native American society, those who identified as Two Spirited were respected as spiritual leaders within the tribe. They dressed in both men's and women's clothing, and they often served special roles such as storytellers,



Echota Behavioral Health

counselors, and healers. In addition to being cross-represented between the male and female residents among the community, Two-Spirited people also served as mediators between the male and female camps. If there was a feud between the sexes, Two-Spirited individuals would provide the remedy to help resolve the conflict.

Sanj Cooper, a therapist at Echota Behavioral health, highlights some of the disparities within the LGBTQ and Two-Spirited community. Sanj offers group therapy sessions centered around the LGBTQ and Two-Spirited experiences. Echota Behavioral Health also offers individual therapy sessions for individuals who are LGBTQ and/or Two-Spirited humans who need support.

"LGBTQ and Two-Spirited communities are at risk for not receiving proper access and treatment for their experiences. Often, these communities are underserved within all spaces, but specifically within the rural areas."

Sanj, a non-binary member of the LGBTQ community, understands the need for both formal and informal support where these communities face a shortage.

"Both formal and informal support is necessary for the whole-health wellness of individuals who are members of the LGBTQ and Two-Spirited communities. Social, spiritual, and environmental support is necessary for these individuals to feel like beneficial members of the community instead of like disposable outcasts."

While there are some misunderstandings among individuals who are not fully aware of the plight the individuals within these community's face, what Native Americans do understand is a sense of community and the importance of community.

Within every Native American community, Two-Spirited people exist. These individuals are not only our relatives, but they are also our family members, our friends, and they are people who are loved. It is important to remember the sacred value their existence brings to Native American culture and lifeways. Without their presence, life would be less sacred.

nani'v yvwi detsatloyasdisgesdi.
Include everyone, all humankind;
however many.

CAVE: The program aims to motivate rather than punish and discourage.

FROM PAGE 1

the importance of setting a good example, of working with influencers to change the negative culture, and finding their natural high or passion.

"Students are more likely to abstain from drugs and alcohol when they discover their actual passions," she stated. "Those pursuits that inspire, uplift, and motivate them and are encouraged

to pursue them by their friends, family, school, and community."

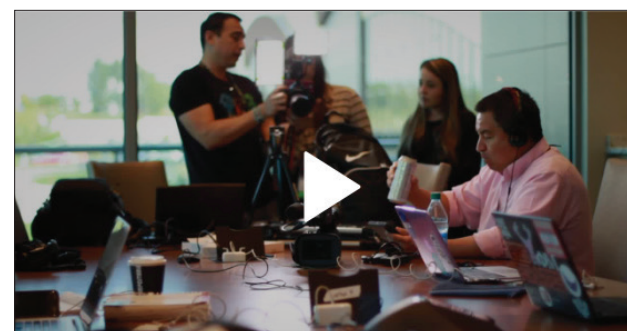
The program is to help students be positively involved in the conversation about substance usage and guided toward what motivates them rather than just being punished and discouraged.

With the goal of inspiring students, Thompson said they use the Natural High stories/videos (from their website) that empower students to discover their own "natural highs" and provide them with the tools they need to live fulfilling lives.

Thompson plans to continue bringing the program to Cave Springs. For more information, email jessica.thompson@echota.org or visit <https://www.echotabehavioralhealth.com/>. Echota Behavioral Health has three locations: 16414 W. 760 Road in Tahlequah, 2727 E. Admiral Place in Tulsa and 282 S Hwy 10 in Kansas, Oklahoma.



Cave Springs students roast marshmallows during a day at the UKB complex. COURTESY



Fellows have virtual training by Indigenous journalists. COURTESY

NAJF: Ford plans to attend Arizona State University.

FROM PAGE 1

Ford said.

During her fellowship, they will have virtual training by Indigenous journalists, work with their mentors and then present all their work at the conference.

After finishing the fellowship program, Ford will be attending ASU in the fall working on her master's degree in investigative journalism.

For more information about the Native American Journalists Association, please visit <https://najanewsroom.com/>

GIDUWA CHEROKEE NEWS

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Biden admin releases FY 2024 budget

The budget's request for Indian Affairs programs in FY 2024 is \$4.7 billion, an increase of \$690 million over FY 2023.

BY STAFF REPORTS

WASHINGTON – The Biden-Harris administration recently released the President's Budget for Fiscal Year 2024. The FY 2024 budget makes significant investments in tribal sovereignty and revitalization, providing new and expanded funding opportunities and resources for tribes to manage their lands and waters.

The president's budget request for Indian Affairs programs in FY 2024 is \$4.7 billion, an increase of \$690 million over FY 2023. This includes \$3 billion for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, \$1.6 billion for the Bureau of Indian Education and \$109.1 million for the Bureau of Trust Funds Administration.

"The 2024 budget request makes significant investments in Tribal sovereignty and revitalization, upholding our steadfast commitment to honor the nation's treaty and trust responsibilities and strengthen government-to-government relationships with Tribal Nations," said Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Bryan Newland. "This Administration's commitment to supporting the sovereignty of Tribal Nations and addressing long-standing disparities is unprecedented and will remain an important moment in our nation's history."

These proposed investments include:

Community Safety

• \$316.3 million for Criminal Investigations and Police Services programs, an increase of \$42.2 million above FY 2023.

• \$154.6 million, an increase of \$18.3 million above FY 2023, to support the operational needs of Indian Country detention and corrections programs encountering growing personnel, equipment, and technology costs.

• \$75.3 million for construction supporting public safety and justice programs, an increase of \$23.8 million above FY 2023.

Support for Families and Communities

• \$78.1 million for the Tiwahe Initiative, an increase of \$33.5 million from FY 2023.

• Tiwahe is an extensive and bold approach to furthering Indian self-determination and self-governance. It allows flexibility in the administration of key tribal programs to address unique community needs, supports tribal economic self-sufficiency, and strengthens tribal cultural connections. Tiwahe fosters systemic change in the delivery of services to children and families through the integration of tribal practices, customs, values, and traditions.

• The 2024 budget request further expands Tiwahe in the Social Services, Indian Child Welfare Act, Housing, Tribal Justice Support, and Economic Development programs.

Roads

• \$51.3 million to improve road maintenance, an increase of \$11 million, addressing a long-standing tribal priority.

• Poor road conditions directly impact the quality of life in many tribal communities, limiting transportation for public safety and emergency response, travel to school, and travel to work.

• Funding will also increase bridge maintenance and safety reviews of 1,100 bridges needed to inform prioritization, project selection, and planning to better implement construction funding available through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

School construction and classroom support

• \$1.6 billion for BIE programs and school construction, an increase of \$209.2 million above FY 2023, to provide a strong educational foundation for Native children to succeed. Indigenous students face stark inequities in access to education, many of which were highlighted and exacerbated by the pandemic.

• \$508.7 million for Indian Student Equalization Program formula funds, which provide the primary support for academic activities.

• \$416.2 million in annual funding for Education Construction, an increase of \$148.3 million over FY 2023 that will allow BIE to support seven school and facility replacement projects.

• \$189.6 million for postsecondary

schools and programs, including \$133.5 million for Haskell Indian Nations University and Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, Tribal Colleges, Universities and Technical Colleges and \$56.1 million for Tribal scholarships and adult education programs.

• \$98.7 million to fully fund the estimated requirement for Tribal Grant Support costs to cover the administration costs for Tribes that choose to operate BIE-funded schools.

• \$33.7 million, a program increase of \$5.8 million over FY 2023 to maintain support for distance learning and enhanced technology at BIE schools.

• \$7.5 million for Native language immersion programs.

Subsistence Management

• Subsistence practices are vital to the life ways of Alaska Native communities and people, who depend heavily on subsistence practices for their nutritional, social, economic, and traditional cultural needs. During tribal consultations and listening sessions participants have consistently pointed to the adverse impacts the changing climate is having on Alaska Native subsistence practices and Alaska Native communities, as well as the need to expand tribal co-management partnerships and the incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge into subsistence management.

In response to tribal recommendations heard through these engagements, the FY 2024 budget proposes to transfer the functions of the Office of Subsistence Management from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, along with a program increase of \$2.5 million for the program. The requested increases directly respond to comments received on ways to strengthen the program going forward.

Supporting Tribal Programs

• Contract Support Costs funding is a critical tribal sovereignty payment, which enables tribes to assume responsibility for operating federal programs by covering the costs to administer the programs. The budget proposes to reclassify Tribal Contract Support Costs from discretionary to mandatory funding beginning in 2024. The President's 2024 budget proposes mandatory funding totaling \$431.4 million.

Investing in Tribal infrastructure

• Providing resources to support the construction and maintenance of

critical infrastructure used in tribal communities, Section 105(l) of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act provides tribes and tribal organizations carrying out federal functions under a self-determination contract or self-governance compact may enter into a lease agreement with the Interior for the tribally owned or rented facility used to carry out those functions. This tribal sovereignty payment is allowing BIA to get tribes closer to meeting the full cost of program implementation and improve their facilities. The 2024 budget proposes to reclassify 105(l) lease agreement requirements from discretionary to mandatory funding beginning in 2024. The budget requests mandatory funding totaling \$82.5 million.

Native Language Revitalization

• \$34 million, a \$27.5 million increase over FY 2023, to expand BIA grant awards for tribal native language revitalization programs which are imperative to restore generational continuity and tribal culture which help to strengthen Tribal sovereignty.

Land Conservation

• \$12 million for the creation of a new Tribal Land and Water Conservation Fund land acquisition program. Tribes identified having direct access to Land and Water Conservation Fund resources for conservation and recreation projects as one of their top priorities. The funding will provide tribes the opportunity to acquire lands or easements to protect and conserve natural resource areas, which may also be of cultural importance to the tribe or have significant recreational benefits for tribal communities, and will further enhance the ability of tribes to address the climate crisis.

Indian Land Consolidation & Acquisition

• \$30.5 million for Indian Land Consolidation, an increase of \$22.5 million above FY 2023. The Land Buy-Back-Program for tribal nations made significant progress in reducing fractionation and achieving tribal majority interest, but additional funds are needed to sustain the progress of the program, and ensure Tribes are able to manage their lands.

• \$12 million to support the acquisition of lands for Tribal purposes including funding needed to support newly recognized tribes without established lands.



Woody Hansen holds a non-venomous hognose spreading adder. LANI HANSEN/GIDUWA CHEROKEE NEWS

HANSEN: If bitten by a venomous snake, call 911 for an ambulance or have a person transport you to the hospital.

FROM PAGE 1

"Afterwards was three very uncomfortable days and nights my swelling subsided, and I was able to conduct a snake safety program later that afternoon," Hansen said.

According to Hansen, when bitten by a snake do not cut an "X" or tie off the area, in contrary to what the elders were taught or what was seen in movies or television. Hansen said do not use any tourniquet methods. The most important and wise action is to either call 911 for an ambulance to transport you or have someone calmly drive you to the nearest hospital.

Other methods to do when bitten by a snake are stay calm, remove any type of tight clothing or jewelry, limit physical activity, keep the bite at the level of the heart and wash the wound with soap and water.

"A poisonous snake bite will typically show two entry points due to having two fangs, and it will be painful with a hot sensation," Hansen said. "Whereas the

non-poisonous bite will be U-shaped, with some stinging and surface bleeding. You want to make sure to wash with soap and water and treat with antibacterial ointment."

Hansen added that he was chasing after a garter snake (sharp teeth and non-poisonous) one day and it had bit him at least seven times.

He had treated it but a week later broke out in a rash and so he called the Oklahoma Poison Control Center.

He had it checked out and the doctor asked him about eating anything unusual, he said a garter snake as he laughed at the joke.

The Oklahoma Poison Control Center is a program of the University of Oklahoma College of Pharmacy at the OU Health Sciences Center. Hansen helps promote for the center when presenting on snake safety. They are staffed by medical professionals dealing primarily with poison situations.

It is important when bitten by a snake to call the poison control center at 1-800-222-1222.



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OBITUARIES

Nona Lou Burris

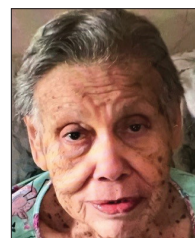
Nona Lou Burris, age 85 of Stilwell, Oklahoma, passed away on April 18, 2023, at her home in Stilwell.

Nona Lou Burris was born May 4, 1937, in Stilwell to Nola and Ada

(Gonzalis) Glass. She grew up in Chalk Bluff and Piney and attended the Piney School. Nona married Paul Burris in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, and the couple made their home in Stilwell. Paul preceded her in death on Feb. 6, 2017. Nona was a homemaker. She loved

flowers, animals and working in the yard.

Survivors include seven children, Darlene Glass and husband Bo Drywater of Tahlequah; Wynona Robison and husband James of Chalk Bluff; Paul Burris Jr. and wife Evie of Proctor;



Debbie Burris of Hulbert; William Burris and wife Sheila; David Burris and Paula Burris, all of Stilwell; one brother Nola Glass Jr. of Chalk Bluff; one sister Clela Fourkiller of Stilwell; 13 grandchildren and 20 great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband Paul, her parents Nola and Ada Glass, stepmother Juanita Terrapin and one brother Randy Glass.

Steven Lee Fields

Steven Lee Fields, or Mud" to his many family and friends, was born on October 8th, 1961 in Tahlequah, OK, the son of Tom P. and Frances (Reese) Fields. He was raised in the Briggs Community and grew up with six brothers and six sisters, Joy, James "Rex", Judy, Julia Belle "Bee", Thomas "Porky", Rita "Boo", Larry "Ducky", Johnny "Donut", Ella Mae "Saogee", Ludavene "Oopie", and Barbara "Dolly". He attended school and grew up in Briggs, where he enjoyed wrestling, running track, and playing football. When he wasn't in school, he loved time on the river swimming, fishing, and riding bikes. After leaving school, he began his working career at Midwestern Container farm. He met a lovely young lady and began flirting with Nora Claudette Reynolds. Before long, he asked her to marry him and they were united in marriage on August 14th, 1982 in Ft. Gibson, OK. Together they shared years of memories, laughter, and raised a family with their son, Dakota James Fields, their pride and joy. He was always working, first as a Cherokee County Mounted Patrol for 5



years, then at Briggs Public Schools as a bus driver for 13 years, finally as the grounds keeper and maintenance man at Keys Public Schools. One of his most treasured jobs was as a foster father to children needing him, from 2000 until 2005. When he wasn't working, he was feeding livestock or attending a livestock show. He never missed a baseball, basketball or football game. There was nothing better than a day at Barron Fork Creek fishing, camping and cooking out.

He liked his yard to look good and he enjoyed displaying his various collectibles, oddities and antiques. The gathering of the family was a wonderful event he loved, and he would make his special meat rub and smoke all day, this included his famous bologna, to share a meal, and fellowship with his family and friends. He was a teddy bear at heart yet knew how he liked things done and how they should be.

The driving force of his life was his family, his wife, son, and especially his grandchildren were what made him

complete. His grandchildren made his face glow with a sense of pride and love like nothing else could. A Christian by faith, Mud liked the old-time gospel songs and listening to Joyce Meyer on the TV.

For all the dreams he had for the future, the Lord called this kind and gentle spirit home from his many labors on April 26th, 2023 in Tulsa, OK, surrounded by those that knew and loved this wonderful man. He was 61 years old and leaves an empty chair that no one else can ever fill.

He is preceded in death by his grandparents, George and Bessie (Dreadfulwater)Reese and Edna Gritts, his Mother and Father, brothers Thomas and Larry Fields, four sisters, Joy Gobble, Julia Belle Foreman, Dolly Webster and Ella Mae Fields, and several nieces and nephews.

Those left to cherish his memory include his beloved wife, Nora Fields of the home, and his son, Dakota James Fields and wife Brittney of Perkins, OK, and his brothers and sisters, James "Rex" Fields of Lowell, AR, Judy Danford of Lowell, AR, Rita "Boo" Bigmeat and husband Moe of Cherokee, NC, Johnny "Donut" Fields

and wife Cynthia of Tahlequah, OK, Ludavene "Oopie" Hudson and husband Randell of Mannsville, OK, and brother in law, Gary Webster. He lives on in his grandchildren, Paizlee Jeanette Fields and Brayden Wesley Fields of Perkins, OK, and his daughter by choice, Bethany Metcalfe and her children, Briyah, Bryleig and Conor Metcalfe, as well as many nieces, nephews, cousins and a host of friends and loved ones too numerous to mention.

Funeral services for Steven Lee Fields were held on May 1, 2023, at Reed-Culver chapel with Pastor Rodney Chuculate officiating and Pastor DJ McCarter doing the eulogy.

The family received guest on April 30 at Reed-Culver Funeral Home. He was laid to rest at Pumpkin Center Cemetery along with his family.

Pallbearers for Steven include Doo Reese, Kirk "Hog" Reese, Billie Hiers, Joseph Hiers, Jon Mathis, Kristopher Mouse, Brandon Fields and Justin Wright. His honorary pallbearers include Danny Deckard, Billy Gibson, Frank Reese, Charles Hiers, Michael Mouse, Dewayne Crittenden, Darrell Hood, Lancer "Turkey" Reynolds and Rowdy Reynolds.

Francine (Galcatcher) Frogg

Francine (Kay) Galcatcher Frogg of Stilwell, Oklahoma, passed away in Stilwell, Oklahoma, on April 13, 2023, at the age of 65. Kay was born on October 21st, 1957, in Tahlequah, Oklahoma to Emma Ruth Teehee Galcatcher and Josh Galcatcher. Kay was one of five children and the only girl.

From an early age she learned to hold her own with her brothers and it made her a very strong woman in all ways. Kay was a very hard worker and held jobs at Greenleaf and CNI. Later in

her life she became a homemaker and put her heart and soul into her children, grandchildren, and husband. She was a member of Salem Baptist Church, a prayer warrior, and had a zest for life and compassion for people.

Many came to her for advice and prayer. Kay has often fed and given shelter to those who were without.

She firmly believed in the "Golden Rule" and loved and gave all she had to others, even if that meant she would go without.

Aside from helping others, Kay enjoyed spending time with her family

and going to church.

Kay had a love/hate relationship with cats. She did not like them but leaving them out in the cold just broke her heart.

Her family even put her picture on the front of a magazine they made and titled it "Feline Fancy". She was so mad, but it was all in good fun.

Francine (Kay) Galcatcher Frogg is preceded in death by her husband Leon



Frogg, her brothers Woodrow Galcatcher, Monroe Galcatcher, Marvin Galcatcher, and Johnny Galcatcher, her mother Emma Ruth Teehee Galcatcher and father Josh Galcatcher, and one nephew Chris Galcatcher.

Those left to cherish Kay's memories are her son Brian Frogg and wife Niki of Kansas, Oklahoma; her daughter Brandi Galcatcher of Stilwell, Oklahoma; and grandchildren Paul, Destinee, Tiana, Hunter, Zakkariah, and Brooklyn, and two great-grandchildren Roxanne and Steven, and a host of nieces, nephews, aunts, and uncles.

Janet C. Handle

Janet C. Handle was born in Rocky Mountain on August 21, 1946 to Levi and Maggie Handle. She passed from this life on April 15th 2023 at the age of 76 years, 7 months and 25 days.

She was preceded in death by both parents; brother Ellis Handle and other loved ones.

Janet was a daughter, a big sister,



an aunt, a cousin, a niece, a dumpling maker and most widely a friend to all who knew her. Her religion was everything to her; she grew up and continued to attend Echota First Baptist her entire life. She attended every service she could

and would even walk if she had to. She would also go and visit and sing at other churches as well as many other events.

Throughout the years she was a member of the Echota 4, secretary for the church as well as director of WMU, and when not in church she worked as a provider for many loved ones and was a super big fan of the Rocky Mountain rockets and would go see every game she could.

She was also a big fan of Walmart and usually had her brother take her multiple times in a day.

She is survived by her brother Tom "Levi" Handle of Stilwell, Oklahoma, cousins: Eugene Handle, The Ketchers, The Adairs, an aunt in Arizona, nieces and nephews, many cousins and friends as well as other loved ones.

Bill George Sawney

Billy George Sawney, age 69, passed away on May 2nd, 2023 in Bunch, OK. He was born on August 17th, 1953 in Stilwell, Oklahoma to John Henry Sawney and Pauline (Long) Sawney. Bill loved his family, friends and life.

He was a devoted member of the United Baptist Church in Metalton, Arkansas. He was an active member of the church community. He enjoyed

attending church, singing, playing his guitars and fellowship. He also loved and appreciated his friends; Dave, Steve, Dean, Gary and Jim.

Bill also had a passion for his farm, he loved his horse, Bill and his dogs, T & Elizabeth.

He is survived by his daughter: Jodie Kester and her husband Bobby of Bunch, OK, sisters: Martha Hendrix and husband Darrell, Tammie Prince and husband Hayward, both of Stilwell,

OK, Brenda Galbavy and husband Dan of Fayetteville, AR, his granddaughters: Leslie Jennings of Stilwell, Erin Elmore and husband Dolton & Brynnley Kester of Bunch, great grandchildren: Lexie, Gemma & Conner Elmore, Baker & Allyson Jennings.

Bill also leaves behind many nieces,



nephews, other relatives and friends

He was preceded in death by his parents: John Henry and Pauline (Long) Sawney, wife: Nina Sawney, son: Billy Wayne Sawney, sisters: Frankie Bartlett & Betty Jo Scott, brothers: Rick Sawney, Scott Sawney, Roger Sawney and Johnny Sawney.

A ceremony to honor Bill's life was May 8 at CC Camp in Stilwell, OK.

Mozelle (Buzzard) Turner

Mozelle Buzzard Turner was born on December 19th, 1945 in Tahlequah, OK, the daughter of Easley and Lydia (Swimmer) Buzzard. She grew up in a family with one brother and three sisters, E.J., Lucille, Shirley and Sylvia. She decided she was ready to start her family and married Roy Turner Sr on January 4th, 1965, in Tahlequah, OK. This union was filled with love, laughter and twelve children. Tammy, Lisa, Chooch, Sally, David, Maggie, Steven, J.R., Amanda Matthew, Lana and Lonnie. Mozelle spent her days caring for Roy and the kids, keeping house and cooking some of the most amazing fried chicken, biscuits and gravy, dumplings and the best Thanksgiving turkey and all the trimmings. The day started off with her morning cup of coffee and her cigarette, and the chores began, mixed with her favorite soap operas, As the World Turns, All My Children, One Life



to Live and General Hospital. She would watch wrestling religiously, "Stone Cold" Steve Austin being her all time favorite. She could be found listening to country music early mornings after watching the news.

She never ran out of chores to do, mouths to feed, scrapes and bruises to tend to, and grandbabies to love and tend. The good Lord blessed her with 35 grandkids and 32 great grandkids, and she loved each and every one of them. When she had a little spare time, she liked to go check out a yard sale or two or a good resale shop. She had a wonderful sense of humor and the best smile, always making those around her feel at ease.

She loved to have long conversations with everyone. She was also a good listener. She was funny and loved a

good laugh. She took care of her pride and joy Matthew, until her last days. Her heart belonged to the Lord she served and then the family she adored. She was happiest with all her animals she had throughout her life, especially Homer, her goose. And when she was surrounded by every child, grandchild, niece, nephew, cousin and friends she had.

She passed from this life on April 19th, 2023 in Tahlequah, OK, after reaching the age of 77 years. She leaves a vacant chair that can never be filled.

She is preceded in death by her grandparents, her mother and father, her beloved husband Roy, two sons, Timothy "Chooch" Turner and Roy Turner Jr "J.R." as well as two daughters, Tammy Wagnon and Sallie Budder, one brother, E.J. Buzzard and her sister, Lucille Samples.

Those left to cherish his memory include her children, David Turner and wife Glenda, Steven Turner and wife

Tami, Matthew Turner, Lonnie Turner and wife Misty, Felicia Foreman and husband Travis, Maggie Jones and husband Ricky, Amanda Chuculate and husband Hootie (Adam), and Lana Turner and husband Lance Nells, daughter in law, Sandra Turner, sons in law, James Wagnon and Rick Budder and Karen Bell companion of Roy Turner Jr. She also leaves two sisters, Shirley Fourkiller and Sylvia Wilson. She will live on in her 35 grandchildren, 32 great grandchildren, and a host of friends and loved ones too numerous to mention.

Funeral services for Mozelle Buzzard-Turner will be held on Tuesday, April 25th, 2023 at 2:00 PM at Reed-Culver Chapel with Reverend Jason Gann officiating.

Pallbearers include Jordan Wagnon, Jerrid Foreman, James "J.J." Wagnon Jr., Jacob Foreman, Eric Budder, and Shawn Budder. Mozelle's honorary pallbearers include her nephews, grandsons and great grandsons.

BURIAL ASSISTANCE

The United Keetoowah Band wants to be a source of comfort during a family's most difficult time. The UKB's Burial Assistane program can assist members with up to \$3,000 for funeral services or cremation costs. Please call 918-871-2800 from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday for a list of approved funeral homes we partner with and income guidelines for this program.

www.ukb-nsn.gov/human-services

info@ukb-nsn.gov

918-871-2800


2022-2023 GRADUATES

Mackenzie Buzzard
Ketchum High School



Mackenzie Buzzard is a member of Cooweescoowee District and will soon enter a new phase in her educational journey. Through her high school career, Kenzie has been a member of student honor roll, student of the month and was selected to join the National Society of High School Scholars. A member of the Lady Warriors fast and slow pitch teams earned her Player of the Year and Most Valuable Player awards. Kenzie will be attending Missouri State University, majoring in sports medicine. We are so proud of you as you continue this path God has planned for you!

Dr. Cassandra Cline



Doctorate of Education, Lamar University, December 2022

Dr. Cassandra Cline is the daughter of Frankie Smith, Timmie Smith Sr. and Norman Swake. She and her husband, Nathan Cline, are parents to Rylie, Nash and Ever Cline. Her dissertation, "A Mixed Methods Study of Experiences of Native American College Students in Online Learning Degree Programs," focused on experiences of Native American college students in fully online degree programs. She grew up in Stilwell and lives in Norman. She is an admissions counselor and coordinator of American Indian Student Recruitment of the University of Oklahoma.

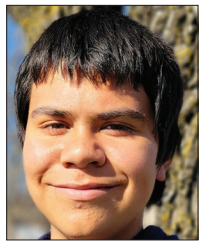
Ericka Fourkiller



Tulsa Community College, Associate degree in science, pre-veterinary medicine major


Ericka Fourkiller's plans are to attend the veterinarian tech program in the fall at Tulsa Community College.

Jonah Garza
Eighth Grade




Jonah Garza will attend McDonald County High School in Anderson, Missouri. He is a life-long member of New Life Church in Anderson, and a current member at Mountain Movers in Grove, Oklahoma.

Beau Grimmatt
Stilwell High School




Beau Grimmatt plans to go to the Institute of Technology after high school.

Teala Wildcat-Johnson
Sequoyah High School



Teala Wildcat-Johnson graduated from Sequoyah High School on May 19. She received an academic award in social studies for Native American Current Events. In her senior year she attended Indian Capitol Technology Center. She plans to continue her education at ICTC and earn her certificate in graphic design. ICTC has awarded Teala the Senior Scholarship. Teala was a member of Honoring Our Peoples Existence at SHS. Her first year she traveled with HOPE to educate local schools on American Indian culture. She is a member of a military family. Her family's last duty station was Fort Lee, Virginia. She is a United Keetoowah Band member.

Adriana Jones
Licensed Practical Nurse



Adriana Jones will graduate with her licensed practical nurse degree in June 2023. She plans to attend Tulsa Community College after to obtain an associate degree in science of nursing.

Rozlyn Hana Locust



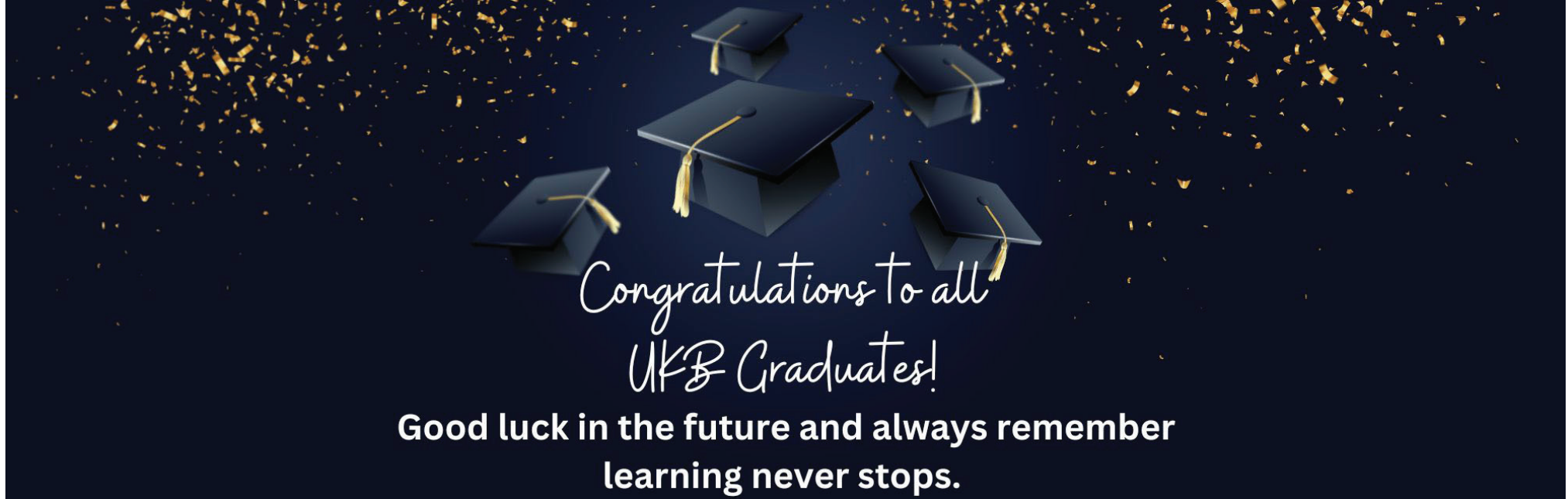
Northeastern State University, Master of Business Administration and certificate of Healthcare Administration

After graduation, Rozlyn Hana Locust plans to develop health resources to serve the Keetoowah people and continue her education.

Michiah Lewis Springwater
Ponca City High School




My Ponca name is "Haawh theh," which means (dusk is to begin to lose light or whiteness). Our last name in Keetoowah is Ah-mah-nu-goo-ee (water coming out). I'm a proud member of the United Keetoowah Band. My dad is 4/4 Keetoowah and my mother is half Ponca and half Navajo. My parents are Clifford and Jo Ann Springwater. Because of their commitment to the Lord, it has taken me to different Native reservations in the United States. I will continue my education at Northern Oklahoma College in Tonkawa and then complete my degree in computer animations at Oklahoma State University.



LUNCH MENU

The United Keetoowah Band's Title VI Lunch Menu for June 2023 in the Jim Proctor Community Center at 18419 W. Keetoowah Circle in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. For information, call 918-871-2800.

We have moved to a temporary building while our dining room is repaired. Park in the drive-thru so meals can be brought to you. Protect yourself by wearing a mask, staying 6 feet away from others, washing your hands and staying home if feeling sick. Meal service is from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Meals are free to Keetoowahs 55 and older, as well as their spouses. Members of other tribes and their spouses must show their CDIB cards and contribute to the cost of a meal. Guest meals are \$5, while meals for children 0-17 are \$3.

June 1 Stuffed Peppers Rice Pilaf Mixed Veggies, Roll Applesauce	June 2 Biscuit & Gravy Scrambled Eggs Bacon, Hashbrowns Mixed Fresh Fruit	June 5 Sloppy Joe Ruffle Chips Macaroni Tomato Jell-O Cup	June 6 Beef Tacos Spanish Rice Refried Beans Oatmeal Cookie	June 7 Lasagne Italian Green Beans Yellow Squash, Salad Garlic Toast, Fruit Cup	June 8 Chef Salad Potato Salad Crackers Waldorf Salad
June 9 Bologna Cheese/Wheat Potato Chips Pasta Salad Jell-O Cup	June 12 Goulash Broccoli/Cauliflower Garlic Toast Fruit Cup	June 13 Cold Cut Suyb Fritos Macaroni Salad Peaches & Cream	June 14 Meatballs over Rice Sweet Peas Salad, Bread Oatmeal Cookie	June 15 White Beans w/Ham Hominy Spinach/Cornbread Strawberry Shortcake	June 16 Corn dog Chips Potato Salad Cookie, Fruit Cup
June 19 Spaghetti w/Meat Sauce Italian Green Beans Garlic Bread Pudding Cup	June 20 Cabbage Roll Sweet Potatoes Fried Zucchini, Bread Fruit Cup	June 21 Chicken Salad on Croissant Potato Salad, Pickle Jello-O Cup	June 22 Catfish w/Tartar Sauce Black-Eyed Peas Greens, Hushpuppies Mixed Fresh Fruit	June 23 Philly Steak Sandwich Fried Zucchini Potato Chips Cherry Cake	June 26 Hamburger Stew Hominy Cornbread Fruit Cup
June 27 Taco Salad Spanish Rice Mexican Corn Oatmeal Cookie	June 28 Chicken Strips w/Gravy Steak Fries Salad, Hot Roll Jell-O Cup	June 29 Hamburger w/Fixings Potato Chips Birthday Cake Ice Cream	June 30 Kitchen Closed Cleaning Day		

Holcomb to teach 'Back to Basics' Series

Betty Holcomb is not one to rest on her accomplishments or experiences of the past. She remains regularly active with her family and tribe.

BY MARILYN CRAIG
UKB Museum Marketing Coordinator

TAILHOLT – Betty Holcomb grew up in the Tailholt community, in Adair County, Oklahoma. Keetoowah was the first language spoken in the home and she was a member of the Long Hair Clan.

She grew up as a tribal member of the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma and attended Sequoyah High School. Holcomb is a culture bearer for the Keetoowah tribe. One way she preserves the culture is through traditional cuisine.

Whether picking, cooking, or canning, Holcomb is knowledgeable about it all. Holcomb's mother taught her to cook at an early age. She learned how to cook for a family of 11. Holcomb was a middle child with six brothers and two sisters. When she had her own family, she was still cooking for a family of seven, which included her husband and five daughters.

Holcomb has cooked for large groups for decades. One of the places she worked at includes Sequoyah High School, where she served as the Food Service supervisor with a staff of 11 that prepared meals for 350 people three times per day. Other places she cooked for groups included Go Ye Village, Community Development Institute Head Start, and KIBOIS Community Action Foundation Head Start.

Holcomb also has been very active in her tribe, the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma. She has both cooked and served at the annual Keetoowah Celebration Free Feed and Hog Fry for many years.

She has also cooked for the UKB Elder Committee fundraisers, for district meetings, and for special guests and groups at the John Hair Culture Center and Keetoowah Museum. She is also known for her pies that always sell out at her booth at the Keetoowah Celebration.

Holcomb served on the UKB Tribal Council for several terms, representing the Tahlequah District. She was a hands-on councilor with a servant's heart. She was always helping tribal members to do better, whether they were in her district or not.

Another way Holcomb helps to preserve the culture is through her sewing. She started sewing when she was 16 and continued sewing for herself and her daughters. She has made and sold scores of tear dresses and ribbon shirts, and she has made quilts for over 30 years.

Holcomb is not one to rest on her accomplishments. She remains regularly active with her family and tribe. Holcomb continues to work on sewing projects.



Betty Holcomb shows off the Stilwell strawberries that she will be using to can jam this summer. Holcomb will be teaching how to make strawberry jam in the Keetoowah Museum's "Back to Basics" Summer Series. COURTESY



Betty Holcomb's jars of canned poke salad, mustard greens and spinach. COURTESY



Betty Holcomb hangs her states quilt that fits a queen or king size bed. She makes quilts and sells them. COURTESY

She cooks for special events, groups and camps. She also teaches these skills. She is committed to teaching others about her heritage, culture and lifeways.

Holcomb will be teaching two different subject areas during the "Back to Basics" Summer Series, beginning June 17 at the John Hair Cultural Center and Keetoowah Museum. The Summer Series group of

classes is "Canning for Beginners" and will meet June 17, July 8 and Aug. 12.

The Autumn Series group is "Quilting for Beginners" and will be held Sep. 9, Oct. 14, and Nov. 11. Holcomb will teach all six of these classes.

For information on the classes or to enroll, call Barbara Girty Foster at 918-871-2866.

INDIAN YOUTH SERVICE CORPS

Cherokee National Forest (TN)

July 10, 2023 to August 4, 2023



Apply today! Deadline is June 16th for the TN Trip.

Must be between the ages of 18-30. (35 if you're a veteran)
UKB preference but all tribal youth are encouraged to apply.

Call Acee Watt (918) 871-2852 for more information.



The UKB Historic Preservation is putting together an Indian Youth Service Corps crew to assist with environmental, historical conservation and preservation on ancestral Cherokee homelands in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service. COURTESY

UKB's museum joins Blue Star Museums group

BY MARILYN CRAIG
UKB Museum Marketing Coordinator

TAHLEQUAH – The United Keetoowah Band's John Hair Cultural Center and Keetoowah Museum is announcing their participation as part of Blue Star Museums. This partnership will provide free admission to active-duty military personnel and their families this summer from Armed Forces Day, May 20, 2023, through Labor Day, Sept. 4, 2023.

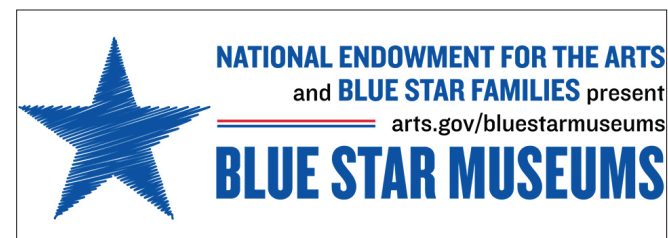
The free admission program is available for those currently serving in the U.S. military – Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, Navy and Space Force, members of the Reserves, National Guard, U.S. Public Health Commissioned Corps, NOAA Commissioned Corps, and up to five family members. Qualified members must show a Geneva Convention common access card (CAC), DD Form 1173 ID card (dependent ID), DD Form 1173-1 ID card or the Next Generation Uniformed Services (Real) ID card for entrance into a participating Blue Star Museum.

“Our museum is proud to be part of Blue Star Museums, a national appreciation program to thank our military families for their service and share with them America's cultural treasures. We are glad to have the opportunity to honor our military members and their families and are happy to meet them as they tour our museum.” Barbara Girty Foster, assistant museum director, said.

Blue Star Museums is a collaboration among the National Endowment for the Arts, Blue Star Families, the Department of Defense and participating museums across America.

“It is a well-known fact that Native Americans serve in the military at a higher percentage of any ethnic group. We are proud of all our warriors,” said Girty Foster.

The John Hair Cultural Center and Keetoowah Museum is open Monday to Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and on Saturdays by appointment. For more information, go to ukb-nsn.gov or on Facebook, or call 918-817-2866. For a list of participating museums, visit arts.gov/bluestarmuseums.



The partnership will provide free admission to active-duty military personnel and their families from Armed Forces Day, May 20, 2023, through Labor Day, Sept. 4, 2023. COURTESY

UKB Service Corps offers work, travels to Tenn.

BY MARILYN CRAIG
UKB Museum Marketing Coordinator

TAHLEQUAH – Are you interested in historic preservation and working with the U.S. Forest Service? The United Keetoowah Band Historic Preservation and Education departments are offering a summer program to work with the forest service.

The UKB Historic Preservation is putting together an Indian Youth Service Corps crew to assist with environmental, historical conservation and preservation on ancestral Cherokee homelands in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service.

The program is set for July. The IYSC program hopes to create employment, education and co-stewardship opportunities for tribal young adults. Some of the expected activities include implementing cultural resource surveys, timber/vegetation management, bald eagle habitat management and river cane restoration. Site visits to cultural sites include the Cahokia Mounds and Trail of Tears route, and many activities across other fields. The crew will work at the Cherokee National Forest in Tennessee from July 10 to Aug. 4.

Corps members must be between ages 18 and 30 (35 if a veteran). Lodging, meals and transportation will be provided. The pay range is \$15 to \$21 an hour.

Crew members will earn Public Land Corps hours that can be used as hiring preference within the USFS.

There will also be internship opportunities virtual or in person (GIS, Natural Sciences, Anthropology, etc.)

“This is the first Indian Youth Service Corps ever, and I hope this will become the template across the nation and not just between the UKB and Forest Regions 8 and 9,” Acee Watt, acting Tribal Historic Preservation officer, said. “We’ve participated in the past with programs such as YCC, but what makes IYSC unique and special is it was constructed from day one with tribal input, interests and perspective in mind.”

IYSC was essentially built from the ground with the focus of engaging Native young adults with interests in environmental conservation and historic preservation and will give them the opportunity to learn and work on ancestral homelands with the USFS.

The historic preservation built in opportunities with this program, including internships and possible future careers in environmental services and historic preservation with the USFS. This program prefers UKB, but all interested young adult Native Americans are encouraged to apply. Must have a valid driver's license. No prior experience is needed. Deadline to apply is June 16. Visit the UKB website for an application or email awatt@ukbnsn.gov or call 918-871-2852.

HASTAS

\$25 each S-3XL

Visit UKB Media office in the UKB Services building to purchase. (918)871-2800