Osage Nation programs thrown into the fray as the Osage Nation Congress and the Chief battle over 2010 budget

One-twelfth restriction threatens to cause Nation to lose millions in grants

By Benny Polacca and Shannon Shaw Osage News

The Principal Chief and the Osage Nation Congress still have not come to a compromise on the 2010 fiscal year budget which is nearly three months in, and now nearly $20 million in grants are in jeopardy of being in non-compliance.

What keeps calling the two entities back to the table is the projected revenue number from the Nation’s gaming enterprises. During the Tzi-Zho session in September, Congress received the Gaming Enterprise Board’s gaming plan of operation which set the Nation’s projected revenue at $27 million. The Chief’s budget was at $32 million and he was asked to lower it to $27 million. He then asked Osage Nation program directors to trim 10 percent from their budgets and by doing so they lowered it to approximately $29 million.

Members of Congress now say they have received new information and the Nation’s projected revenue is $25 million, despite the fact that the gaming board announced a new projected revenue at $31.3 million.

Members of Congress in the majority of the opinion to lower the projected revenue at $27 million. The Chief’s budget was at $32 million and he was asked to lower it to $27 million. He then asked Osage Nation program directors to trim 10 percent from their budgets and by doing so they lowered it to approximately $29 million.

Osage Nation Supreme Court rules in favor of Congress

Court’s ruling says lower trial court lacked jurisdiction to hear case on constitutionality of the Independent Press Act of 2008

By Shannon Shaw Osage News

The Osage Nation Supreme Court has decided its first case and has ruled in favor of the Osage Nation Congress.

“We’re delighted,” said Osage Nation Congressional Speaker Archie Mason. “I know that it was a first time experience, a historic event as well for the Supreme Court to render their first decision and again, it was just a good feeling to be a part of something for the first time and we in congress are just elated and feel very good that the court ruled in our favor and we’ll proceed from there.”

The Supreme Court, in its 12-page opinion filed Dec. 11, didn’t rule on the constitutionality of the Independent Press Act of 2008, but whether or not Osage Nation Principal Chief Jim Gray, or any subsequent chief, has the right
Historic Cobell case settles for $3.42 billion

The Cobell litigation centers on the Interior Department’s vast 

mismanagement of Native American oil, gas, grazing, timber and other royalties since 1887.

The settlement also would set up a $2 billion fund to buy fractionated trust or restricted land back from individuals to reconsolidate it. Much Indian land, first divided into 40- to 160-acre parcels by the Dawes Act of 1887, was passed along and divided into tiny, unusable parcels, often owned by hundreds or even thousands of people.

As well, it would establish a fund, not to exceed $60 million, for Indian scholarships to attend vocational schools and colleges.

That money would come from contributions the United States would make based on its success with the “Trust Land Consolidation Fund.”

The total cost of the settlement to the federal government: $3.42 billion.

Osage Chief Jim Gray said tribal lawyers are still studying the settlement agreement and that, while “cautiously optimistic” about it, would decide after that analysis whether it was good for Osage shareholders, other Osages and the Nation.

The settlement explicitly exempts Osage headrights from the settlement, meaning that it will have no effect on the much larger Osage trust case, which also appears to be poised for a decision or settlement thanks to the friendliness and willingness of the Obama administration to settle claims.

To register to receive notice of the settlement’s progress, IIM account holders and those who own trust or restricted land should visit www.cobellsettlement.com.

Editor’s Note: This story was originally published in The Bigheart Times and is used with permission.

Health Benefit Card applications to be mailed out the end of this month

Applications will be mailed to address on file with Nation’s CDIB office

Osage News

The health benefit card applications, which tribal officials hoped would arrive in mailboxes last month, are tentatively to be mailed out by the end of this month by Mutual Assurance Administrators, Inc.

The negotiations with MAA delayed the contract’s completion but MAA has since signed the contract and tribal officials are working with MAA to complete the applications as soon as possible, said Matt McDonald, Osage Nation Executive Branch legal counselor.

“The Nation is still on track to meet the deadline, and our office is working very diligently to avoid any delays,” McDonald said.

The applications will be mailed to the address that the Nation’s CDIB office has on file for each tribal member. Once tribal members receive their applications they are to fill them out and send them back to MAA. Once MAA receives the completed application they will process it and send the tribal member an encoded debit card worth $500.

The debit card allows payment for all items that the Internal Revenue Service considers tax-deductible medical expenses. The debit card covers most medical expenses except for abortions, which the Osage Nation Congress declined to fund.

Some of the items on the IRS-approved list includes eyeglasses, dentures, braces, wheelchairs, alcoholism treatment, insulin treatment, surgery (except cosmetic procedures), hearing aids, medical transportation expenses, prescription costs, some over-the-counter drug costs, vaccines, X-rays, home repair if medically needed and other items. Reimbursement for eligible medical expenses will also be available.

Osages must spend the entire $500 by the end of the calendar year, Dec. 2010—there is no carry-over of unspent funds to the next year.
Tribal employees publish articles on Nation’s Web site about dismal circumstances brought on by one-twelveth spending restriction

By Shannon Shaw
Osage News

Osage Nation programs being affected by the continuing resolution that holds down the Nation’s spending to one-twelfth of the 2009 fiscal year levels have spoken, and it’s not good.

“Right now, the staff at the Osage Nation Social Services Department are all feeling a bit like George Bailey [from It’s a Wonderful Life] because they are faced with the reality of looking at a Christmas without adequate funding to serve Osage children in tribal custody, Osage children in pre-adoptive placements, Osage children on the Family Preservation Program caseload, and Osage children identified as needy during child welfare investigations this past year,” said an article on the Social Services Department’s site published Dec. 4 on osagetribe.com.

“Another thing to remember is these kids are where they are today through no fault of their own.”

Programs such as the Women, Infants and Children program (WIC), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (TANF), the Osage Nation Police Department and many more have all published stories on how the one-twelveth restriction is affecting their departments.

WIC, the only WIC office in Osage County, currently serves more than 2,700 Osages as well as non-Osage participants and the number grows every day. WIC is a federally funded program and since they have already received the grants to provide WIC services to Osage County residents, the State of Oklahoma does not have a WIC office in the county.

“Now what’s to say that with all of this mess with Congress, the funding agency and the State of Oklahoma agree that we can no longer manage these funds and we lose this grant?” said Renee Harris, WIC director, in the article. “What will happen to the ability to order special formulas for special needs children?”

The TANF program published two anonymous letters from some of their employees with a similar situation Dec. 4.

“The TANF program published two anonymous letters from some of their employees with a similar situation Dec. 4.

“On a daily basis our office is flooded with calls from people in desperate situations asking us for help and we have to tell them that we can not help them at this time,” wrote a TANF employee. “We have one crisis family that is homeless; they do not know what they are going to do for Christmas, better yet where they are going to sleep each night.”

The Osage Nation Police Department is having their problems with the one-twelveth restriction. If they exceed the one-twelveth restriction they will no longer be able to pay for the incarceration of adult prisoners; they won’t be able to purchase new equipment to replace old or broken radios and other equipment, and they won’t be able to send officers to training in accordance with State law because their certifications have to be up to date to make arrests.

“If the price of fuel (which we have no control) exceeds our monthly 1/12th restriction (not to mention possible costly body damage repairs) we could lose our fuel contract with Wright Express,” said the article on ONPD’s site Dec. 4. “This could severely disrupt our ability to purchase fuel during the officer’s shift and decrease our ability to patrol.”

The Osage Nation Congress has called the one-twelveth restriction a “band-aid” and a “temporary fix.” Both Congress and Osage Nation Principal Chief Jim Gray have
to sue the Osage Nation Congress over the constitutionality of a law without successfully showing an injured party. The Supreme Court ruled he did not, reversed the decision of the lower court and gave instructions to the lower court to dismiss Gray’s suit for lack of jurisdiction.

The opinion, delivered by Supreme Court Justice Meredith Drent, came nearly four months after the Supreme Court met for the first time August 19. The Supreme Court has three justices; Drent, Chief Justice Charles Lohah and Justice Jeanine Logan.

Gray alleged that by being forced to sign the Independent Press Act he would be “violating his oath by executing a law he believes is unconstitutional.” Such an injury, according to the opinion, is institutional in nature to the office of the Chief and was not a personal injury. The opinion also said that Gray doesn’t decide what laws are constitutional, that power is vested in the judiciary.

“To allow the type of injury alleged by Chief Gray to be judicially cognizable would be to authorize the Principal Chief, and conceivably any member of the Executive branch, to refuse to execute, administer or enforce a law because they believed the law was unconstitutional, without asserting more,” according to the opinion. “It would open the doors to any member of the Executive to file a claim requesting an opinion on the constitutionality of any given law.”

Gray alleged in his suit, filed July 14, 2008, ONCA 08-07 the Independent Press Act, written by Congresswoman Faren Anderson and passed into law by the congress after a veto override, attempted to regulate the structure and the content of the Osage News and that the act would also leave the Osage News subject to legislative control through its appropriation power. The lower court ruled in favor of the chief and ruled the act null and void.

Congressional Speaker Archie Mason filed an appeal seven days after the judgment was made, followed the court’s rules of filing an appeal and filed a Post-Judgment Motion to Intervene and the motion was denied by the trial court as untimely filed. Mason then filed an Amended Petition in Error to include the court’s denial of the motion to intervene as grounds for appeal. According to the Supreme Court rendering, Mason had 30 days to file the appeal, and having done so seven days after the judgment was made, filed in a timely manner. The Supreme Court’s opinion instructed the lower court to reverse the lower court’s denial of his appeal.

“I am disappointed that the Supreme Court has chosen to adopt the use of ‘standing’ and ‘case and controversy’ doctrines. These legal requirements have been developed over many years and many cases by federal and state courts as a means of reducing their case loads,” Gray said in a statement. “It was my hope that our court would play a larger initial role in resolving conflicts and defining the authority of the branches of our newly reorganized constitutional government.”

What does this mean for the Osage News?

Since the lower court’s ruling has been reversed, the Independent Press Act has been made into law and establishes an Editorial Board that will be made up of three qualified journalists. The law dictates that the principal chief will appoint a member to the board; the congress appoints one member to the board and the two appointed will select the third. The board will also have the job of appointing an editor for the Osage News.

The Supreme Court’s opinion did not address whether or not ONCA 08-07 was constitutional but said that the Editorial Board or a member of the Osage News staff could seek recourse if they feel the newspaper’s independence is in jeopardy.

“In the future, should such an event occur, the newspaper may have the opportunity to seek recourse,” said the opinion. “Similarly, there could be available recourse to address constitutional defects in the Act should the newspaper’s editorial board or staff find that it impairs or infringes on the newspaper’s independence.”

—Continued from Page 1

Dismal Circumstances

—Continued from Page 3

blamed each other for the situation the programs are currently in.

However, an e-mail sent by Congresswoman Debra Atterberry to her fellow members of Congress had a different tone. “I listened to this morning’s short session [Dec. 4] and heard Congressman [William] Supernaw’s concerned comments regarding the employee Christmas bonus. He stated that the Congress has done everything we can to allow the bonuses to be paid out to the employees,” Atterberry wrote. “I disagree. We haven’t passed the budget - - we’re the problem!”

Chief Gray sent out an Executive Message Dec. 4 detailing exactly what would be affected by the one-twelfth restriction. To view the report visit www.osagenews.org.
Tribal members write messages on their cars to ‘Pass the Budget!’

By Benny Polacca
Osage News

While Pawhuska locals were using washable paint pens Dec. 3 to scribble “Go Huskies!” on their vehicles and business windows, a few Osage tribal members were using the same tool to promote a different message: “Pass the Budget!”

“We’re not trying to be radical,” said Osage tribal member Peaches McKinley, who along with others, was writing messages on her car windows. “But this has gone on long enough.”

Other messages written Dec. 3: “Osage People deserve better,” “Stop the hypocrisy,” “For the people,” and “A House Divided Will Not Stand!”

The tribal members parked their vehicles in the southern end of the ALCO store parking lot at 12:30 p.m., took out several colored paint pens, brainstormed and wrote these messages referring to the yet-to-be-passed 2010 fiscal year budget for the Osage Nation’s Executive Branch and its government operations.

Writing the messages “was done on our own time, with our own resources,” said Osage tribal member Jennifer Tiger. “We’re just trying to be a little more vocal the best we can. It really should be everybody that should be concerned.”

Osage Nation government operations, that are functioning under a continuing resolution, have a spending restriction which limits Executive Branch departments’ expenses to one-twelfth of the FY 2009 levels per month. The restriction could hurt operations or projects requiring funding surpassing the one-twelfth limit.

“It just puts everyone in a huge bind,” said McKinley, who was hearing of departments struggling to keep running despite the spending limit. “We didn’t do this to embarrass anybody, this was already out there anyway.”

This article is a condensed version of the story that appeared on osagenews.org Dec. 3

Letters to the Editor Submissions

If you’d like to submit a letter to the editor, mail it to the Osage News, Attn.: Shannon Shaw, 627 Grandview, Pawhuska, OK 74056; email sshaw@osagenews.org, or fax to (918) 287-5563. Letters must be respectful and informative to the reader, and may be edited for grammar, clarity and space.
Osage boxing his way to victory

Ben Cottingham Jr. is currently 3-0 and looking forward to his next match

By Shannon Shaw
Osage News

After the first round of Ben Cottingham's first boxing match, his opponent wouldn't come out in the second.

At first glance he seems like any average Osage teenager walking around Pawhuska, mild-mannered, quiet and kind. Not too tall and definitely not a hulking figure. But one wouldn’t suspect he’s lightning fast, full of non-stop energy and relentless in the boxing ring, said his Boxing Coach Earl Gilkey.

“He has marvelous talent, he’s improved a heck-of-a-lot from when he first started,” Gilkey said. “He’s developing his punches...he’s very coachable and willing to learn.”

Troubled youth

Cottingham, an 18-year-old junior at Pawhuska High School, said that he got interested in boxing at the age of 13. He was getting into trouble at school, his grades were falling and he was involved in more than a couple of fights. He was attending the Osage Nation Boys and Girls Club after school when Earl Gilkey visited the club to give some lessons in boxing and karate.

“Boxing helps me take out my aggression and it makes it to where I don’t want to fight on the streets, I can just take it out on the punching bag.”

Cottingham kept up with it for a while, then quit and started back up again. Now he’s committed to the sport and trains year round.

“He has a real good future and we want to keep him on the right track and keep positive stuff in his life,” Gilkey said. “He’s a good kid and he got hooked up with some bad stuff earlier in his career but we’re trying to remedy that from happening again, just keeping the positive in his life.”

Cottingham is now making his grades to play sports, takes Osage language at the high school and hopes to acquire traditional Osage clothes so that maybe someday he...
projected revenue to $25 million are Eddy Red Eagle, Doug Revard, Mark Simms, William “Kugee” Supernaw, Anthony Shackelford, Faren Anderson and Jerri Jean Branstetter.

Congress members Debra Atterberry, Shannon Edwards, Raymond Red Corn, Mark Freeman and Archie Mason have made attempts to pass the budget or pass a continuing resolution without the one-twelfth restriction.

$20 million in grants in jeopardy of being lost

What is causing concern among employees is the continuing resolution that was passed in late November with a one-twelfth spending restriction which has affected many programs that rely on federal funding for services and jobs. The resolution was designed to be a “band-aid” or “temporary fix” so the Nation could keep afloat while Congress and Chief come to a compromise.

Currently, both entities are at a stand-still, with Congress going into session for sometimes only two days a week and only voting on whether or not to send letters to Chief Gray to lower his budget to $25 million.

Christmas bonuses still not paid to employees, branches disagree on legislation passed

One hot topic in the budget impasse is the legality of ONCA 10-15, a continuing resolution sponsored by William “Kugee” Supernaw, which authorized Gray’s office to pay out the employee Christmas bonuses. Gray said he pocket vetoed ONCA 10-15 while the majority in Congress say the bill is still alive. Gray is not recognizing it.

Congress passed ONCA 10-17, a continuing resolution to extend the Nation under a one-twelfth spending restriction till Jan. 30, in which Gray agreed to sign. However, under the continuing resolution ONCA 10-17 there were no exemptions for Christmas bonuses or any other service or program.

On Dec. 8, the Osage Nation Congressional Committee on Appropriations questioned the Nation’s Treasurer John Jech about the employee Christmas bonuses and the legality of ONCA 10-15. Both government branches are holding firm to their positions about the situation.

“What is stopping you from paying the Christmas bonuses?” Congressional attorney L oyed “Trey” Gill asked Jech who appeared before the committee during the morning meeting.

Jech said the Executive Branch’s interpretation of ONCA 10-15 is “[it] is not a valid bill.”

Jech said he consulted with Tosha Ballard, the Executive Branch’s attorney, after receiving a Dec. 1 letter from Speaker Mason, requesting that Jech pay out the Christmas bonuses.

Mason sent a letter to Jech asking him to “please pay the Christmas bonuses immediately” because ONCA 10-15 is valid and would allow the Christmas bonuses to be given out.

“The bottom line is we need a 2010 appropriation because this isn’t solving any problem,” Jech said. “Paying out the Christmas bonuses may be nice for the employees but we still have constituents, people who are relying on services that are now probably not going to be receiving services because this one-twelfth restriction is causing problems for our departments.”

Congressman William “Kugee” Supernaw, who asked Gill to participate in the meeting, questioned Jech on what Congress could do to address concerns about items such as federal funding at risk, tribal scholarships, and the Christmas bonuses – “short of passing a budget that’s not ready to be passed.”

“Like I said earlier, the solution that I would recommend is that we approve a 2010 appropriation budget,” Jech said.

“But we can’t do that in the time we need to... we may not get a budget passed this month,” Supernaw said in response to Jech. “Do we need to make another amendment to 09-61 (the emergency appropriation bill now extended to Jan. 30)?”

“Its up to congress to make that decision, my recommendation would be to approve the 2010 budget. It makes everything easier for everyone,” Jech said. “It’s cumbersome now for us to try to account for this one-twelfth restriction. We basically have two sets of books.”

The Executive Branch has released a list of departments and their grants impacted by the one-twelfth government spending restriction, which Jech referred to. “Directors are out there – they don’t know if they can go to Walmart (to purchase products for clients) because they don’t know how much money they have to spend,” he said.

“Well it’s inconvenient for everybody, but that’s something we got to live with,” Supernaw said before asking Jech again what Congress could do to address federal funding, higher education costs and the Christmas bonuses.

“I don’t know what to tell you. We’re in the middle of December and [the budget] should have been approved in September,” Jech said.

Congress starts its 23rd Special Session

Congressional members returned for another Special Session on Dec. 14 after Chief Gray issued another Executive Proclamation.

That day, Congresswoman Shannon Edwards introduced ONCR 10-05 which is a resolution to set the Nation’s projected revenue amount at $33.1 million, but motions to fast track the resolution onto first and second readings were unsuccessful.
Osages on RSU cheerleading squad
to compete at national level in 2010

‘Hunter the Hillcat’ also played by Osage student, competing with other university team mascots at national level

By Benny Polacca
Osage News

Four Osage tribal members are on this year’s Rogers State University (Okla.) cheerleading squad which will compete in Daytona Beach, Fla. this spring for a national title, and bragging rights. These students will start working on a competition routine after the Christmas break with hopes that their energized team spirit will win high marks from the judges.

“I don’t know if it’s anything like ‘Bring it On,’” sophomore Garrett Irons said of the 2000 film about two high school cheer squads competing for a national championship. “It’s the first time I’ll compete and I’m pretty excited about it.”

Irons and three Osage cheerleaders are among 13 RSU cheerleaders who will perform a 2.5-minute routine at the National Cheerleaders Association Collegiate Cheer and Dance Championship to be held April 7-11. “Hunter the Hillcat,” the school mascot played by another Osage student, will also compete at the Florida event.

Freshman Mary Ramirez, 18, said the RSU squad won a silver partial bid to nationals while she and her cheer colleagues competed during a NCA Cheer Camp this summer.

“I thought it was really neat,” the Hominy High School graduate said of the opportunity to compete against larger schools “that are intimidating” including Texas Tech and St. Mary’s universities. The RSU squad won several awards at the cheer camp held in Lawrence, Kans., including the Spirit Award and placed high in the Game Day and Rally Routine divisional competitions, according to the RSU Hillcats Web site.

Ramirez describes cheerleading as “very dangerous, opposed to what other people may think of it as a sissy sport” because of its routines and stunts which could cause injury if not performed correctly.

Freshman Tori Deal, 18, says she enjoys competition and the adrenaline rush of it. “I may get nervous right before, but then it goes away.”

Deal, who graduated from high school in Keller, Texas, is one of the squad members who performs aerial stunts, also called a flier.

“I hope they catch me,” Deal said when asked what goes through her mind when she is a flier. “But I’m not really nervous, I trust everybody” on the squad.

Irons, 19, is in his third year of cheerleading after getting his start during senior year at Pawhuska High School. Last year, he attended Coffeyville Community College in Kansas, where he also cheered on the school’s squad before transferring to RSU’s Claremore campus.

“I was supported by my family,” Irons said of his decision to pursue cheerleading while at PHS. “I didn’t get much negativity because everyone already knew me,” he said, adding he previously played high school football, tennis and was on the wrestling team.

Irons asked fellow Huskie John Parker if he would try out for the squad.

Parker, a 19-year-old freshman, always wanted to cheer but instead participated in other student activities and sports while he attended PHS. Since being selected for the squad, Parker says he’s been working on improving his moves and routines like his other squad colleagues.

“At that time, I couldn’t do a back handspring, now I can physically do it,” said Parker, adding male cheerleaders do a lot of lifting when working with fliers. Weight lifting is part of cheerleader training for Parker, who adds he is considering yoga exercise “to become more flexible.”

All four cheerleaders and their other colleagues train with their coach Katie Belcher who has worked for Claremore Public School’s cheer teams and was a cheerleader while at the University of Central Oklahoma, whose squad competed at the NCA nationals.

RSU team mascot will also compete for an NCA national title

Brian Kirby, a 20-year-old junior, has worn the “Hunter the Hillcat” mascot costume for the past three semesters during school
Chief Gray appoints Elizabeth Lohah Homer to Gaming Enterprise Board

Elizabeth Homer, who has been serving as an attorney for the Osage Nation Gaming Commission, was appointed Nov. 24 to serve on the Gaming Enterprise Board, replacing the board’s chairman Tom Slamans.

“I didn’t excuse Slamans from the board, their appointments were actually up Sept. 30,” said Osage Nation Principal Chief Jim Gray. “I can also carry over appointments and I have decided to carry over George Pease and Frank Oberly.”

Homer’s appointment is for three years and is subject to confirmation by the Osage Nation Congress in the next regular session which would be the Hun-Kah session in March.

“I look forward to Liz [Elizabeth Homer] serving on the Board of Directors of the Osage Nation Gaming Enterprise,” Gray said. “Her vast experience in tribal gaming combined with her legal knowledge and business judgment will be a tremendous asset.”

Homer, Osage, grew up in Hominy and is the founding partner of Homer Law, Chartered, where she is also the current managing partner in Washington, D.C. She is also the daughter of Osage Nation Supreme Court Justice Charles Lohah.

According to a prepared release, Homer is a nationally recognized pre-eminent authority in regulatory compliance issues at the tribal, state, and federal levels; and has provided legal, regulatory, and business advice to her numerous tribal gaming clients for numerous years.

Among her many other responsibilities at Homer Law, she has provided legal counsel to the Osage Gaming Commission for the past three years. Prior to accepting her interim appointment, Elizabeth will be stepping back from her regulatory oversight role with the Osage Gaming Commission, according to the release.

“I am honored to be appointed by Chief Gray to serve the Osage Nation in this capacity,” Homer said. “It is my hope that my knowledge and experience in the gaming regulatory arena will prove to be a useful resource to the Gaming Enterprise Board, and I look forward to making a professional contribution that is beneficial to our gaming operations.”

Homer has also served as Vice Chairman of the National Indian Gaming Commission; she has been the Interior Department’s Director of the Office of American Indian Trust. She began her legal career with the Office of the District Attorney for the Second Judicial District of New Mexico; she later joined the Criminal Division, U.S. Department of Justice. Her work to increase the investigation and prosecution of crimes against children in Indian Country earned her one of the division’s high—

See HOMER APPOINTED —Continued on Page 12
games and squad performances. He is the first RSU team mascot to have a name and describes his role as being a “happy, go-lucky guy.”

“In high school I thought it would be cool to be to be a team mascot,” Kirby said. “I like being at the games up close and personal (with the fans) and I like being with the kids.”

Kirby wears a mascot head that weighs about 10 pounds which he describes as “very light” adding an important part of playing a mascot is to stay hydrated because wearing the costume is “like wearing a coat.”

Like the RSU cheerleaders, Kirby competed at the NCA cheer camp this summer where he won awards including Best All-Around and Best American. He also won a bid to compete at the national championship in Florida and is one of 20 university mascots nationwide competing.

“I’m not real nervous about it,” Kirby said. “I’m going to work hard for it, I’m there to have fun and that’s all that matters.”
Osage-English signs make the Nation’s first language more visible

More bilingual signs likely to be built around the Nation’s campus

By Benny Polacca
Osage News

The sign in front of the former Superintendent’s residence on the tribal campus in both English and Osage languages is one of a few across the reservation aimed at making the tribe’s first language more visible. Plans to add more dual language signs are being mapped out.

“Signs are everywhere and are a key of identity for the Osage language,” said Rebekah HorseChief, a recruiter and instructor for the Nation’s Language Department. She approached the Nation’s Properties Department about incorporating the language orthography into signs on the present campus as well as the master plan for a new campus, which is still in the works.

“Because the campus is the property of the Osage Nation, we have the power and sovereignty to implement our language objectives,” she said, adding she’s also worked with the Nation’s Palace Grocery store on making signs to identify food and merchandise and “anything we can label.”

Bruce Cass, the Nation’s Properties Department director, said the sign in front of the former Superintendent’s residence, and a few others recently put up around campus, are made with temporary materials so the signs can be easily altered if a department needs to relocate.

“They can be changed as needed,” Cass said. “We’re experiencing a lot of growth as everyone knows and when (tribal departments) need to move due to growth, it’s inexpensive to change,” he said.

HorseChief said similar efforts by Indigenous people worldwide, including other Oklahoma tribes, helped fuel plans to make the Osage language more visible so it can be recognized, and spoken.

“I’ve seen the potential of what

See OSAGE-ENGLISH SIGNS
—Continued on Page 12
Got Milk? We Do!

If your child is under 5, if you are pregnant, breastfeeding an infant, or just had a baby, you should come see us. Just bring in proof of income and address, as well as identification on the child and/or mom.

We offer foods including cheese, eggs, cereal, juice, beans, and peanut butter for children and moms. For infants, we offer formula, infant cereals, and infant juices.

Need a special formula?
No problem! Just call us to see if we offer the formula you need. In most cases, we can help. We will require a doctor’s request for most special formulas.

Need help nursing?
Breastfeeding can be tough, but with a little help you can be a success. We offer lots of help and support with breastfeeding. We even have a hotline for breastfeeding questions and concerns.

Come in and see one of our clerks: Abbey, Brandy, Shannon, Donna, Dana, or Cheryl; our Office Manager, Debbie; or our Director, Renee, at WIC and we'll get you fixed up.

Our main office is located at 1301 Grandview in Pawhuska. Office hours are Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. or just give us a call at (800) 460-1006 to see how we can serve you!

WIC Clinic Schedules

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pawhuska</td>
<td>Monday-Friday</td>
<td>8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skiatook</td>
<td>Monday, Tuesday, &amp; Wednesday</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.-4 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fairfax</td>
<td>Every Thursday</td>
<td>9 a.m.-4 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hominy</td>
<td>Wednesday &amp; Thursday</td>
<td>9 a.m.-4 p.m.</td>
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<td>Newkirk</td>
<td>1st &amp; 3rd Thursdays</td>
<td>10 a.m.-1 p.m.</td>
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<td>McCord</td>
<td>2nd Wednesday</td>
<td>1 p.m.-4 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tulsa</td>
<td>3rd Tuesday</td>
<td>4-6 p.m. School Year, 1-4 p.m. Summertime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartlesville</td>
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<td>3 p.m.-5:30 p.m.</td>
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The Pawhuska Skatepark is nearing completion. Here is a photo of its construction progress on Dec. 16.
Osage Johnson O’Malley program students celebrate Native American Month

By Avis Ballard, JOM Coordinator

The Osage Nation Johnson O’Malley Program (JOM) promoted cultural awareness across the reservation as students celebrated Native American Month with events for their school and communities. The JOM parent committees at Pawhuska, Skiatook and Hominy sponsored these annual events for their students to enjoy and take pride in their Native heritage. Native American students need to be proud of their culture and feel confident in order to succeed in all aspects of their lives.

Students from every school in Pawhuska filled the Oren Terrill Fieldhouse stands to listen to the guest speaker, Litefoot, talk about his entertainment career. He is known as the first Native American rapper and has won several Native American music awards, including “Artist of the Year”. Litefoot also appeared in several movies and television shows including: Indian in the Cupboard (1995), Mortal Kombat: Annihilation (1997), Song of Hiawatha (1997) and C.S.I: Miami. He discussed the determination he felt to succeed and how this helped him to overcome negativity within his own community. Afterwards, he signed autographs and posed for photos to the delight of the students.

Young Osage girls, dressed in their traditional clothes, filled the Wakon Iron to participate in the JOM honor dance for the crowning of the new princesses. Ciera Cheshewalla, Allison Jones and Jaycie Bighorse accepted the honor of serving as the new 2009-10 Pawhuska JOM princesses. The outgoing tiny tot princess, Eva Harden, sponsored a junior girl’s cloth contest and awarded trophies to the winners. The Pawhuska JOM parents felt pleased to host this event for their students and happy that it went so well.

The following weekend brought many visitors to the Skiatook community for the 6th annual Skiatook JOM powwow. This event featured an afternoon gourd dance, Indian taco dinner and competition dancing. The Skiatook JOM parents also use this event to honor their graduating seniors with gifts and recognition. This annual tradition is important to the Skiatook JOM program and attendance grows every year.

The Hominy JOM committee also celebrated Native American month by sponsoring the annual heritage day event. The program began at the elementary in the morning and finished at the high school in the afternoon. The students participated in hand games, intertribal dancing and fun activities throughout the day. This event usually happens in May; however, the parent committee felt the need to celebrate Native American month and hosted this event for that purpose.

The Osage JOM community celebrated November as Native American month with events that showcased Native American culture and heritage. These special occasions are important to the Osage students that may feel outnumbered or insignificant in mainstream society. It helps them to feel confident and proud of their identity as Native Americans. Please contact Avis Ballard at 918-287-5545 for more information about the Osage Nation Johnson O’Malley Program.

Motivational speaker and performer Litefoot gets the full attention of youth of the Pawhuska schools at the Pawhuska JOM Native American Day held on Nov. 12 at the Oren Terrill Field house. Litefoot has starred in such films as, “The Indian in the Cupboard.”
Chicken & Dumps

Recipe submitted by Paula Stabler

I am not sure that chicken and dumplings would be considered a traditional Osage food or just a southern favorite, but they sure are popular in our traditional Osage feasts. We roll them out for hours. There is usually a small crowd watching to see your technique, how you handle the dough, what makes them tender.

This was a family favorite when I was growing up. I grew up in a family of six children and pots of stew and chicken and noodles were always part of the winter flavor. I followed my mother’s instructions, who followed her mother’s instructions and neither of them are Osage; but they both know how to roll out “noodles” as we called them in our house. For me, the difference between noodles and dumplings is simply the shape you cut them, square or long.

I really have only been called into my own as a “dump” maker in the past couple of years. I am from the Pawhuska District. Just since the retiring of Olivia Lookout, our past “queen of chicken and dumps and biscuits” have I been called to service. When you work as a cook on the dance committee, there is a hierarchy, a place or position for each cook. I have spent many years (and proud to do so) as a table setter, dish up organizer, table wait staff organizer, dish dryer and, well, you get the picture.

Those that attend the dances know that the meals are our blessings and our hospitality to our visitors. I have cooked for my grandmother’s camp (the first time it took me two days to make a No.2 tub of meat gravy), and for Marion Cass and Liz Ricketts, head cooks on the dance committee. These women organize up to 30 cooks at a time, it has become a synchronized army. Each cook has a specialty, but all fill in where needed and you never say you can’t do something to a head cook. Each district takes great pride in their head cooks, it is a great responsibility and one of highest respect for a woman in the In-Lon-Schka.

At committee dinners, we serve about 350 to 400 and at funerals it has run up as high as 500. We run our own camp at our home in Pawhuska Village and there I am always head cook.

But, let’s get to it. I have made this dish with all yolks intact, half yolks and half whites, powered eggs, all purpose flour, self-rising (when I didn’t read the front of the package), with salt, without salt. But they always come out and my nephews don’t think it’s In-Lon-Schka without them, even if it’s 100 degrees in the shade.

Chicken and Noodles

• Chicken breast and thighs

Fill a stock pot about 2/3 full with water, garlic salt and bay leaf. Bring to full boil until chicken is done. Remove chicken from pot, debone and place aside.

• On a board or in a bowl, place three cups of all purpose flour

• Add a dash of salt and stir in.
• Add 6 whole eggs and enough whole milk to make a heavy batter. You should be able to stir the batter but not to liquid.

On a heavily floured board, pour out about a cup of batter. Fold flour into the batter, folding half and again half and again half until you have a dough ball. This is a light kneaded process, don’t wallow the dough or add too much flour at a time. The ball should still hold a yellow color.

Gently roll out the dough, no less than 1/4 of an inch thick. It’s best to be a little thicker than thinner here. Remember that the egg whites will call the dough to rise and the salt will leaven it out.

• Cut into squares or long noodles.

At this point, letting the noodles set and dry if fine. Unlike bread, the air is good for them. If you are in a hurry, go ahead and start putting them in a rolling pot of stock. I usually dredge them with flour and scoop up all of it at one time. The extra flour on the noodle will thicken the stock. Separate the noodles as you drop them in the pot, the gluten from the flour will cause them to stick if you dump them in by the handful.

Continue to roll out and drop in the pot until the pot is full. Add the chicken pieces back to the pot. Continue to boil (about 15 to 20 minutes depending on the size of the pot) until the noodles are done. They will plump up. Taste them to make sure they are done.
Osage Nation Enterprises five-year plan in jeopardy

By Freddie Ferrell, Osage Nation Health Executive Director

Osage Nation Enterprises recently approved and announced their comprehensive 5 year plan for expanded health related services for Osage county and surrounding counties. Those plans include a commitment to begin providing as soon as possible hospice services to the same area that is now being provided home health services. However, due to the lack of appropriations within the Osage Nation, these expanded service plans may not happen during this term of elected Congress.

Osage Nation Enterprises chair Cecelia Tallchief, stated “ONE, Inc. is one of the few Osage Nation entities which are self sufficient and actually makes money. Hospice services compliment home health care and will provide a diversified revenue source for ONE, Inc.”

ONE, Inc. was hopeful to start the hospice initiative by year-end and begin seeing patients within the first quarter of 2010. Now, those plans are in question. Of course, it is with the support of the Osage people that we are able to continue to offer and expand medical health services that will help meet the needs of our communities.

Osage Home Health serves the health needs of Osage Seniors.

What are Home Health Services? Home Health services are medical services prescribed by your doctor to be conducted in your home while you recover from a recent illness or surgery. These services include skilled nursing, therapy and nurse aide services.

What are Hospice Services? Hospice services provide care to those who have received a diagnosis and a prognosis that will result in the end of their life from a physician. No doubt most, if not all readers, has had a loved one receive this devastating news from their physician. Hospice, through the services of skilled nurses, aide services, chaplain services, or social programs, assists the patient and their family through this difficult time. These services are not paid for by the patient or their family. They are usually paid for by insurance or Medicare services and occasionally by donations and by volunteer services.

ONHPO begins Osage Book Club

By June Carpenter, Historic Preservation Office NAGPRA Assistant

The Osage Nation Historic Preservation Office (ONHPO) will begin a book club in January 2010 to learn about Osage history and culture. The first books selected will provide general overviews of Osage history; over time the reading selections will become more specialized. The January and February book is The Osages: Children of the Middle Waters by John Joseph Mathews. The January discussion will focus on Sections One and Two; Sections Three through Five will be discussed in February. The first book discussion is scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 28 at 6 p.m. It will be held at Nehemiah’s Wall Coffee Shop, located at 521 Kihekah Avenue in Pawhuska. The Osages is currently out of print and may be difficult to find if you do not have a copy. We suggest looking for it online or ordering it from your library. The ONHPO has one copy that is available to read on-site; contact the ONHPO to schedule reading time. To RSVP or for more information, please contact the ONHPO at (918) 287-5328 or 627 Grandview, Pawhuska, OK 74056.
Cultural Walk brings Osages together

More than 30 Osages from across the country join together to participate in symbolic walk of their ancestors

By Shannon Shaw
Osage News

In late October, 32 Osages participated in a two-day Cultural Walk that took them through the very same lands their Osage ancestors passed through 134 years ago, before they were forced to leave Kansas.

“This was something that the Osage Cultural Preservation Committee wanted to do for Osages everywhere,” said Vann Bighorse, Wah-Zha-Zhi Cultural Center director. “The [25-year] Strategic Plan called for more culture, something to bring people back to the reservation and we had families from Texas and Washington that came for this walk.”

Around 30 Osages of all ages met at the Wah-Zha-Zhi Cultural Center the morning of Oct. 24, bringing their camping gear for their overnight stay. The group was taken to Crossbell Ranch, the property of Katsy Mullendore, which sits in the Osage reservation.

The property is host to the lands some 3,150 Osages traveled through in 1875 and still has the original stone marker that marks the 96 degree west longitude line and 37 degrees north latitude line on the Kansas-Oklahoma border, where they crossed, according to Louis Burns’, “A History of The Osage People.” Out of the Osages that traveled to Indian Territory, 92 percent of them were full-bloods.

Osages mourned their way of life when they left Kansas.

Many factors went into the Osages forced removal from Kansas. The construction of a railroad, fertile farm lands, plentiful buffalo, encroaching farmers and ranchers,
all wanting to stake their claim, led to the Osages eventual departure.

Osages in the late 1860’s were still hunting buffalo, practicing their religion and living under their clan system of government, according to Burns. But since the Osage reserve was so vast, and the Osage so strong, they were the last tribe made to leave from Kansas by the United States.

Through years of negotiations with the United States government and the Cherokee, the Osage finally reached a deal and bought their land from the Cherokee.

According to Burns, the Osage chose the land around, what is now known, the Indian Villages of Pawhuska, Hominy and Grayhorse because a thick layer of limestone lay beneath the land’s surface, making it impossible to farm. They wanted to live somewhere where they knew settlers would not want to live and so hoped would limit encroachers.

When the Osages left Kansas and made the 300 mile journey, they were depleted in numbers. A large faction of the people had gone for one last buffalo hunt on their Kansas lands, according to Burns.

“The Act of 1870, providing for the Osage removal from Kansas, was barely signed before the demonstrations of sadness commenced,” wrote Burns. “As the Board of Indian Commissioners described it, ‘At dawn on the day after the treaty had been signed the air was filled with cries of the old people, especially the women, who lamented over the graves of their
CULTURAL WALK

children, which they were about to leave forever . . . .”

They also left their old form of government. The Osage’s Indian Agent, Isaac Gibson, made them change their form of government into a council with one chief, Joe Pawnee No-Pah-she, or Governor Joe, according to Burns.

Discussion educates Cultural Walk participants

Once the small group of Osages reached their camp site on Crossbell Ranch, camp was set up and a traditional meal was cooked by Addie Thomas and Cherokee Cheshewalla, both Cultural Center instructors. She cooked frybread and dried corn over a fire and every person was served as many helpings as they wished in the cool October air. Fires were constructed as the night progressed to keep the participants warm as people told ghost stories, stories of their ancestors, played handgame and enjoyed each other’s company.

Once the sun rose the next morning many participants rose before dawn and prayed as the sun came up. Thomas and Cheshewalla served breakfast to the participants and many took turns getting photos with the historical marker that marked the Osages crossing in 1875.

“I think it’s so important that we remember our ancestors and what they had to give up when they came here,” said Mary Bighorse, a participant on the walk. “I just want to be respectful and remember them today as we do this.”

After breakfast the group assembled under the arbor that the men of the camp helped cover with tarp the night before. Vann Bighorse led an educational discussion about the events that led to the Osage’s departure from Kansas. Dr. Andrea Hunter, director of the Nation’s Historic Preservation Office, talked about the Osage’s origins, their societies and way of life before the move.

“This walk has to do with our tribe, our identity and who we are,” Hunter said. “This is just the beginning, this isn’t just a one time thing. We’re going to do this on a larger scale next year and hopefully there will be more tribal members who come.”

Participants make commemorative walk

The group set out on the 3.5 mile walk late in the morning Oct. 25. People went at their own pace as the country rose, dipped and curved through the countryside. The fall foliage and wild horses provided a surreal backdrop, and the occasional clearing of trees displayed breath-taking views.

The participants reached their final destination, the Mullendore family home, and were greeted by Kathleen Mecom Fogerty, Katsy Mullendore’s daughter. Osage elders Leonard Maker and John Henry Mashunkashey met the group at the house and later Maker spoke of his ancestors Black Dog and Wah-tian-kah (pronounced Wah-tine-gah).

Wah-tian-kah was the adviser to Black Dog, Maker said. He had a

See CULTURAL WALK
—Continued on Page 19
Editorial: The Trip Home

By Ruby Murray

One Saturday afternoon this October a small group of Osages began the trek over a rounded hillside on the Crossbell Ranch in northeastern Oklahoma toward their campsite at the Kansas border. I joined the event sponsored by the Osage Nation’s cultural department that invited tribal members to follow part of the 70-mile trail that brought the tribe from its home in Kansas to present day Osage reservation.

The human figures lost in the expanse of open space made me think of our ancestors traveling the same country in 1870, each thinking his or her own thoughts on that last sad walk from home. A herd of horses appeared, running across the horizon, manes and tails flying, bringing me back to the present.

I flew with my husband, David Vik, from our home on an island in the Columbia River in Washington for this event. Over the years I have come back to Oklahoma to visit Morton and Rosa Lee Murray, David Arthur Murray and to be named by Preston Morrell and attend the dances.

My ancestor, Maria James, was taken from her family in the last Claremore raid, lived at Dwight Mission and made her way back to the Osages at Pawhuska late in her life. My father was born near Pawhuska but moved to Denver in the 1920’s when my grandmother tried to separate her family from the alcoholism around her.

I wanted to meet other Osages and walk the route Maria would have followed with her brother, Wah-zhe-pe-zhi, if she could have. I wanted to hear stories that passed down about her and other Osages who were separated from family in the chaos of the 1800’s.

Being outside even for one day and night was relaxing. I watched the sky at twilight, and the stars in the morning when we prayed at dawn. The moments I felt closest to our ancestors were when we tried to get help for a participant who became ill, when we shared stories across the firelight, and when Addie and Cherokee cooked meals over the fire.

What comes back to me now, weeks later are sounds: low voices talking, Frank Redcorn telling me the difference between bluff paint and war paint; Mary Bighorse describing the ghost she had seen tending fire one night, then later hearing “you never spend the night outside at Grayhorse;” the rhythm of the drum in the Osage handgame.

Sunday morning we sat on hay bales, guests on land that once belonged to the Osage tribe. My relative, Leonard Maker, talked about Black Dog and Wantanka’s vision for their people.

Maria James spent the years she wasn’t with her tribe praying for them. I too live far from my people but feel connected. I am grateful to have had a chance to return and visit with Osages, who carry the history of my family and tribe from that brutal time into the future.

CULTURAL WALK

—Continued from Page 18

vision about the Osages traveling through the land to go to Indian Territory and recognized it because they had hunted there many times before. He spoke of hardships the Osages faced in the move, sickness and malnutrition among them.

“You saw how difficult it was with the road, imagine getting all of your belongings and making a [300 mile] journey on foot,” Maker said. “It wasn’t exactly the Trail of Tears, but it was difficult.”

The participants of the walk were fed a barbeque dinner by the Mullendore family, exchanged contact information and made their journeys home.
OSAGE BOXER

can participate in the In-Lon-Sch-ka dances, he said.

TKO

When Gilkey starts to talk about Cottingham’s matches and training, his voice gets excited and he begins to talk rapidly in boxing lingo, firing off names for punch combinations and describing his opponents’ startled expressions by Cottingham’s quickness.

“He’s a right hander, we try to start out all our matches with a jab,

“He has marvelous talent, he’s improved a heck of a lot from when he first started...

he’s developing his punches...he’s very coachable and willing to learn.”

–Earl Gilkey, boxing coach

and everything’s off the left jab,” Gilkey explains. “And sometimes he falls off of that and we tell him to go off the jab. Sometimes he’ll throw the jab first and then he’ll come with a hook or a right cross to the body.”

Cottingham’s first match was against a 24-year-old Tulsan who started out the match stronger than Cottingham, but he “put on the pressure” and relentlessly threw right hooks into his face and body and his opponent wouldn’t come out in the second round, Gilkey said.

His second fight was against a 26-year-old man that was a good match for Cottingham and they went the full three rounds with Cottingham winning by decision.

His third opponent was Cottingham’s same age and Cottingham knocked him down immediately with a jab, right hook, and repeated hooks to the opponents body that forced the judges to call the match a knock out in the first round.

“I work out every day, I go to boxing Tuesday and Thursday for two hours and at school I work out, lift weights for basketball practice,” said Cottingham, who is now playing for the high school’s basketball team. “I run every Tuesday and Thursday, I run to Subway and back and on Wednesday at school I run the track pretty much two miles, which helps build up my endurance and stamina.”

But Cottingham’s favorite workout is sparing with other boxers. Gilkey said a U.S. Marine just came back from the Iraq War and gave Cottingham a pretty good workout, “They were really going at it.”

A Native American boxing association out of Riverside Indian School has asked Cottingham to attend a competition in New York City next year as a part of a team of Native boxers and Gilkey will be raising money for the trip, he said.

Something else Gilkey wants to do for Cottingham is to get some sponsors to host a boxing tournament in Pawhuska so the community can watch Cottingham box.

To find out more about the fundraising efforts for Ben Cottingham or the dates of his upcoming matches, call Gilkey’s Gym at (918) 287-2663.
News in Brief

Department of Education scholarship program application deadline extended

Deadline for the Osage Nation Department of Education Scholarship Program Application has been extended to January 31, 2010. Applications may be retrieved from the Department of Education’s Web site www.osagetribe.com or by calling (918) 287-5300. Scholarship Applications Due no later then January 31, 2010.

First annual Osage Princess pageant announced

The American Indian Exposition is presenting an Osage tribal princess pageant to be held March 20, 2010, in conjunction with the Osage Nation Princess Sorority’s 6th Annual Honor Dance to be held at the agricultural building, fairgrounds, Pawhuska, Okla. Applications are available online at www.osagetribe.com or call Julia Lookout or Jacque Jones at (918) 287-5555.

Osage Tribe wanting tribal member input on health services

The Osage Tribe is evaluating the health services of the tribe. We need your input. Adeline Yerkes, RN, is conducting the evaluation and will be conducting interviews about the health services. The interviews will be confidential and will take 10 minutes of your time.

Interviews will take place in Barnsdall, Fairfax, Hominy and Pawhuska. The interviews will be conducted January 25, 26, and 27. See the January Osage News for exact times and places.

Again, we need your input.

U.S. Census Bureau hiring 2010 survey workers
Census worker testing to be held Dec. 15, 22 and 29 in Pawhuska at Cultural Center

Osage News

The U.S. Census Bureau is seeking people in Osage County for short-term jobs conducting the 2010 survey.

The bureau is looking to hire more than 40 people who would work as numerators and go door-to-door to collect data for the survey, said Charley Hare, an assistant manager for census field operations in Enid, Okla.

Numerators will work flexible schedules for 30-40 hours each week during the job period, which runs from March until June, he said. The pay is around $10.25 to $12.75 per hour, Hare said.

Those interested in a census job are required to pass testing which will be given at the Wah-Zha-Zhi Cultural Center, 1449 W. Main St., in Pawhuska on Dec. 15, 22 and 29. The testing will be conducted at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. on those days and lasts 30 minutes.

The test is multiple-choice and covers basic skills such as reading, math, map reading and following written instructions. A practice test is available on the census bureau Web site. Census workers must also pass a background check and will be fingerprinted, Hare said.

The Census Bureau will conduct three field operations in Osage County which will employ anywhere from 40 to 80 people, Hare said.

The numerators will conduct door-to-door operations, follow-up with residents who have not responded or mailed out their forms, Hare said. The workers will also visit facilities such as nursing homes, hospitals and jails. Field workers will also be reimbursed for their mileage.

For more information, call (866) 861-2010 or go online to www.2010.census.gov.

New Sylvan tutoring assistance applications for Osage students

By Cherise Lookout, Osage Nation Education Outreach Coordinator

The Osage Nation Education Department is now taking applications from any Osage student in need of academic tutoring. The Osage Nation Sylvan Tutor Program is an Osage tribally funded program designed to serve Osage students across the nation. The intent of the program is to serve as many Osage students in 1st-12th grades as possible that are at risk of failing required subject areas, where Sylvan tutoring centers are available. Eligible students should complete the provided application.

Students receiving services through the Sylvan Tutoring Program will receive funding of $200/month for one subject of tutoring services, excluding the initial testing and enrollment fees of the student. Please note that applications will be processed on a first come first serve basis. Applications are available on the Osage Nation website www.osagetribe.com/education. If you have any questions or would like to be mailed an application please contact Cherise Lookout with the Osage Nation Education Department at (918) 287-5544 or toll free 1-800-390-6724.

Student Eligibility Requirements

1. A student must be a member of the Osage Nation and provide a copy of their membership card with the application.
2. If a student does not have an Osage membership card an Osage CDIB card will be accepted provisionally for one semester while they secure their Osage membership card.
3. A student must be enrolled in the 1st through 12th grades.
4. A student must be receiving a grade of “D” or below in a required subject area.
The Lord’s Prayer

This is not an alphabet. The symbols represent sound only. Practice writing and pronouncing these symbols everyday. For more information, please contact the Osage Nation Language Program at (918) 287-5505 (Pawhuska), (918) 642-3185 (Fairfax), (918) 287-5583 (Hомiny), (918) 287-5547 (Edmond), and (918) 287-5547 (Skiatook) or visit us on the Web at http://www.osagetribe.org/language.

Happy Holidays!

Osage Nation Language Program

www.osagetribe.com/language

Dates to Remember
Spring 2010 Classes will resume on January 12
Spring 2010 Classes will end on April 27

Pawhuska • Grayhorse • Hомiny • Skiatook • Edmond

Main Office: 918-287-5505 or Recruiter: 918-287-5683

www.osagetribe.com/language

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Christine Wood to graduate from OSU

Christine Wood graduated Dec. 12 from OSU in Stillwater with a Bachelor in Psychology. Christine started her courses at Haskell Indian Nations in 2004, and graduated with an Associates in Liberal Arts in 2006. She is the first in our family to have such an honor and we are very proud of her.

Christine is the daughter of Alycia Supernaw-Francis, the granddaughter of John and Pat Supernaw and the great granddaughter of Lawrence “Ick” Supernaw and Opal Lord and Orville Gerhardt.

Happy second anniversary to Supernaw-Francis

David and Alycia Supernaw-Francis will be celebrating their second wedding anniversary on Dec. 13. Their children are David Wood, Christine Wood, Kristoper Wood, Jennifer Smith and Dylan Francis. Their grandchildren are Hayden Wood, Jacob Wood, Kayleigh Wood, Jonathan Wood and Natalie Wood. Parents are John and Patricia Supernaw and David and Barbara Francis.

The family would like to say congrats to the couple.

Happy first birthday to Natalie Rae Wood

Natalie Rae Wood will be turning a year old on Dec. 27. Natalie is the daughter of Kristopher and Shawna Wood. She is the granddaughter of Alycia Supernaw-Francis and Rick and Cindy Taylor. She is the great granddaughter of John and Patricia Supernaw. Happy birthday, Nana loves you.

Happy first birthday to Cortlynn Presleigh Jech

Cortlynn Presleigh Jech celebrated her 1st birthday on October 1, 2009. The family wishes their little girl a very happy birthday.

Cortlynn is the daughter of John Jech and Melissa Moler. She is the paternal granddaughter of Cora Jech and Glen Jech and the maternal granddaughter of Sheryl Adams and the late Marvin “Butch” Moler.

Happy second birthday to Kayleigh Ann Wood

Kayleigh Ann Wood will be turning 2-years-old on Dec. 31. Kayleigh is the daughter of David Wood and Laura Freeman-Wood. She is the granddaughter of Alycia Supernaw-Francis and William and Kelly Freeman. She is the great granddaughter of John and Patricia Supernaw. Kayleigh has three brothers: Hayden, Jacob and Jonathan. Happy birthday, Nana loves you.

Happy fifth birthday to Hayden Lane Wood

Hayden Lane Wood turned 5-years-old on Nov. 30. Hayden is the son of David Wood and Laura Freeman-Wood. He is the grandson of Alycia Supernaw-Francis. He is the great grandson of John and Patricia Supernaw and William and Kelly Freeman. Hayden has two brothers: Jacob and Jonathan and one sister: Kayleigh. Happy birthday, Nana loves you.

Happy second birthday to Dalton Reed

Dalton James Reed celebrated his 2nd birthday on Oct. 24 with his family and friends. His mom and dad would like to say thank you to everyone who showed up. Happy birthday Dalton, we love you.

Happy birthday to Jennifer Renea Smith

Jennifer Renea Smith is turning 14-years-old on Dec. 20. Jennifer is in the 8th grade at Skiatook Middle School and plays soccer for the West Side Alliance Club (OPL) in Sand Springs, Okla. Her parents are Alycia Supernaw-Francis of Skiatook and Joe Smith of Sperry. Her grandparents are John and Patricia Supernaw of Tulsa. Her great grandparents are Lawrence “Ick” Supernaw and Opal Lord and Florena Gerheardt and Bill and Betty Smith. Jennifer has three brothers: David Wood, Kristopher Wood and Joseph Smith; three step brothers: Ronnie, Christopher and Dylan; two sisters: Christine Wood and Shelby Smith.

Happy birthday, the family loves you.

See BIRTHS AND CELEBRATIONS —Continued on Page 25
Terri Gillett
Theresa Gail “Terri” Gillett passed away Sunday, December 6, 2009 at her home following a courageous battle with cancer. She was 51 years old.

Terri was born May 27, 1958 in Nebraska, the daughter of Bruce G. and Susie D. (Bartlett) Cosby. On May 30, 1999, she married Shelby Dean Gillett in Grand Prairie, Texas. Terri worked for the Osage Nation for thirteen years, serving as the Director of Child Care for the past two years. She had also worked a number of years for the Department of Human Services. Terri loved spending time with her grandkids. She enjoyed the outdoors, her flowers, hunting, fishing and sewing. She was well known throughout her family and friends as an excellent cook, and was an avid supporter and participant in the ways of the Osage Culture.

Surviving are: Her husband, Shelby D. Gillett; son Bruce Cass and wife, Dana; daughter Danielle McCartney; mother and father Susie Starr and husband, Brite; Bruce G. Cosby and wife, Jerry; seven stepchildren Shelby, Shawnna, Brad, Dusty, Candace, Amanda and Shelby Lynn; brothers and sister Michael Cosby, Monte Cosby, Lori Upchurch, Corlin Cosby and Brite Starr; numerous nieces and nephews and a host of other family and friends.

Traditional services were held Thursday, December 10, at 8 a.m., followed by funeral services at 10 a.m., all at the Wakon Iron Chapel. Interment was at the Gillett home located East of Pawhuska.

McCartney’s Johnson Funeral Home of Pawhuska was in charge of arrangements.

Dorothy Hodges
Dorothy Mae Hodges, 88, a Douglass, Kans., resident for 65 years, died Sunday, November 22, 2009. Dorothy was born at Burbank, Oklahoma in 1921 to William and Ruby Logan. She attended Burbank Elementary School and graduated from Kaw City High School in 1938. She was a homemaker and the most beautiful and loving Mom and Grandma who enjoyed camping, cooking, fishing, bingo and her family. Dorothy was preceded in death by her husband of 68 years, Francis “Tige” Hodges and is survived by her son Kenny and his wife Darlene of Hot Springs, Ark.; daughter Linda Hamilton and husband Leon of Augusta; 6 grandkids; 12 great-grandkids; 3 great-great grandkids; brother, Kenneth Logan of Houston, TX; niece Betty Gentz of Houston, TX. Casketbearers will be her grand and great grandsons, Brad Lane, Tyler Hodges, Gary and Clayton Hamilton, Matt Kiser, Bryan Smith, James Looper.

She was a member of the Osage Tribe of Indians. The viewing was Friday, Nov. 27, 2009 with family present at Hilyard-Smith Funeral Home in Douglass. Graveside service was Saturday, Nov. 28, in Grandview Cemetery, Kaw City, Okla. In lieu of flowers, memorials will be sent to the First Baptist Church, P.O.Box 647, Douglass, Ks., 67039.

Chetopa E. Revard
Chetopa E. Revard, age 83, passed away Sunday, November 15, 2009 at his residence in rural Elgin, Kansas.

He was born November 10, 1926 near Bartlesville, in Osage County, Oklahoma to Manuel E. and Mary B. (Bockius) Revard. He was raised by his grandparents from the age of two. He attended school at the Buck Creek School in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. He graduated from Bartlesville Central High School in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. He served in the United States Navy and was honorably discharged. He married Evelyn Sumner and they later divorced. After living together since 1967, he and Patricia (Rickman) Waller married on October 23, 2004 in Elgin, Kansas. He worked in construction for Haniford Construction out of Tulsa, Oklahoma until his retirement. He was a member of the Osage Indian Tribe and was very proud of his heritage.

He was a member of the VFW Post 6373 of Sedan, Kansas and the Scottish Rite Society, Washington County Chapter of Oklahoma. He loved to hunt raccoons; he enjoyed ultra light airplanes, outside work and telling war stories.

He is survived by his wife, Pat Revard of the home in rural Sedan, Kansas; four sons, Gary Revard and wife Norma, Ron Revard and wife Retta, Tony Revard and wife Denise and Brad Revard and wife Michelle, all of Dewey, Oklahoma; four step-children; Diana Maples of Bartlesville, Oklahoma; Duane Waller of Pawhuska, Oklahoma; Debbie and Larry Kirchner of Sedan, Kansas; David and J. Waller of Sedan, Kansas; one half-brother, Charles Tayrien of Okesa, Oklahoma; fifteen grandchildren; twenty-nine great grandchildren, one great-great-grandchild and a niece, Mary and husband Gene Threadgill of Alma, Arkansas.

He is preceded in death by his parents and two brothers.

Graveside services were held at 2 p.m., Thursday, November 18, 2009 at the Oak Grove Cemetery in rural Elgin, Kansas with Earl Tresner of Peru, Kansas officiating. Military Rites were performed by the United States Navy Honor Guard.

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**Congratulations Jonathan Ryder Wood**

Jonathan Ryder Wood was born on Sept. 14 to David Wood and Laura Freeman-Wood. He was 19 inches long and weighed 6.2 pounds. He was welcomed into this world in Tulsa, Okla. He has two brothers: Hayden and Jacob Wood and one sister Kayleigh Wood. His grandparents are Alycia Supernaw-Francis and William and Kelly Freeman and John and Patricia Supernaw.

Congrats from the family. We love you.

**Happy 46th anniversary to the Supernaws**

John and Patricia Supernaw will celebrate their 46th wedding anniversary on Dec. 10. They were married in Pawhuska in 1963. The couple resides in Tulsa, Okla. John is the son of Lawrence “Ick” Supernaw and Opal Lord. Patricia is the daughter of Florena Berkley and Orville Gerhardt. The couple has two children: Michael Supernaw and Alycia Supernaw-Francis. They have five grandchildren: David Wood, Christine Wood, Kristopher, Jennifer Smith and Julia Supernaw. They also have five great grandchildren: Hayden Wood, Jacob Wood, Kayleigh Wood, Jonathan Wood and Natalie Wood.

With love from your daughter.

**Congratulations Geoffrey Charles Bighorse**

Byron and Jennifer Bighorse of Tulsa are proud to announce the birth of their son Geoffrey Charles Bighorse, born October 20, 2009. He weighed 6 lbs. 14 oz and was 20 inches long at birth. Geoffrey has an older brother, Dylan and an older sister Courtney Bighorse. Maternal grandparents are Geoffrey and Julie Standing Bear of Pawhuska. Paternal Grandparents are Anthony and Freda Bighorse of Tulsa. We are all very excited and thankful for the wonderful addition to the family.

**Holiday wishes**

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone from the Osage Nation Archives Department.

**Sending out extended birthday wishes**

Lee Burnett will be celebrating on Dec. 2, Charles Rector on Dec. 12, Rhonda Wallace on Dec. 21, Frances Williams on Dec. 23, Pam Barlow on Dec. 27 and Jared Davis on Dec. 28. Have a wonderful happy birthday from friends and family.

**Happy birthday to George Shannon**

The family of George Shannon celebrated his birthday Dec. 13 in Skiatook, Okla., with his wife Elnor. George is a proud husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather. He has danced in the In-Lon-Schka his entire life and loves everything Osage. We love you very much.

**Cass Family celebrates December birthdays**

Birthday wishes go out to all the Cass family members celebrating this December: Cynthia Cass Pradmore and Danielle Cass McCartney celebrated on Dec. 1, Sheridan Nicole Reed on Dec. 3, Jason D. Cass on Dec. 4, Michelle Pradmore, Leah Harris Bighorse, Emily Nicole Hanna on Dec. 5., Renee Conley Harris on Dec. 6., Daniel N. Cass on Dec. 15, Joyce Lyn Cass Marshall on Dec. 19 and Newton D. Cass on Dec. 28.

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Rebecca Fish
ICW Adoption Specialist
(918) 287-5338
Thank you for beading on broadcloth class

I want to thank Vann Bighorse and those responsible for the beading on broadcloth class.

It is inspiring that there are those that want to share their knowledge of our customs, traditions with others that hunger for knowledge and do appreciate it so much.

One of the outstanding promises in these classes is there was always someone available to help each student immediately and answer our questions.

I want to say a special thank you to Mary Bighorse, Jacque Jones, Dana Daylight, Dava Daylight, Robin Rulo, and Allison Jones for their patience and teachings.

You have some very special people working with you including those that offer their knowledge to teach those interested in learning about our artistic cultures.

You have made all this possible and helped to inspired so many people. We, the people look forward to more classes for those unable to attend these recent classes.

Sandra Akins
Pawhuska, OK
Understanding of the new Osage Nation government will bring us together

By Raymond Red Corn, Osage Nation Congressman

A few summers ago I was leaning on the back of a bench during the Grayhorse dances when another elected official joined me. Gesturing to the dance, the official asked why things “on the hill” couldn’t operate as smoothly as our dances.

My answer was simple: everyone participating in our June dances knows their role.

Water boys, head cooks, committee men and women, firetenders, drumkeepers, drumwarmers, and others all know what to do and when to do it. They know their roles and responsibilities and how to properly fulfill them.

While our In-Lon-Schka committees have had over a century of experience, our new government has less than four years experience in a system that represents a radical departure from the system that existed from 1906 to 2006.

While the roles defined in our constitution give some clear guidance, we are without jurisprudence (court decisions) to clarify concepts such as separation of powers between the legislative and executive branches of our government. This has resulted in a running battle between those two branches that will continue until (a) court decisions settle the issue or (b) officials are elected that understand and respect the role of each branch of government.

This conflict between branches has taken several forms, but by far the most noticeable is the budget process. The Oklahoma state legislature budgets by setting lump sums in a particular department for salaries, administrative costs, non-administrative costs, and benefits when applicable. The Governor and the respective departments have the authority to operate programs in ways they feel best serve the needs of citizens and the state.

The process adopted by the Osage Nation Congress is infinitely more detailed, and includes specific line items for equipment, copying, artwork, attorney fees, professional fees, etc. The Properties budget, for example, lists each individual construction project. Program plans and budget justifications that accompany these budgets drill even deeper to specific purchases.

Offering this level of detail to the Congress has resulted in minute budget adjustments made by committees and on the floor. Last year two individual salaries were targeted; this year five have been targeted in floor amendments, four with reductions and one for an increase. This has led to charges of Congress “micro-managing” the nation via the budget.

The recent controversy over budget extensions that limit individual programs to 1/12 of their annual budget per month is part of the same debate. This restriction, insisted upon by a majority in Congress, has wreaked havoc on some programs, especially those which see spikes in demand around the holidays. When Congress reduces specific individual salaries by $20,000/year and tells programs not only how much they can spend, but when they can spend it, Congress is clearly assuming powers of the Executive branch.

The Executive branch is not without sin in this matter. Last year income from gaming was directed to the nation’s holding company, Osage LLC, bypassing the appropriation process until Congress objected. Also, lawsuits continue in Osage courts over Congress’ right to operate an Office of Fiscal and Performance Review (similar to the U.S. Congress’ General Accounting Office) and to legislate a free and independent press.

These events along with others have sorely tested the patience of Osage citizens and Osage Nation employees these last few years, and even more so the last few months. The supposedly co-equal legislative and executive branches continue to debate, litigate, and frustrate each other over control of this government. If the Congress and the Executive had advisers, as do each of the I-lon-schka dance committees, would we listen to and learn from our elders? If we knew our roles by heart, like head cooks, would governing be this difficult?

It will take years, perhaps decades, for our roles in this new, tri-partite government to be resolved. While the courts continue to define those roles through case-by-case decisions, Osage voters will choose leaders they feel have the best understanding of their job description. Year in and year out, these two forces will shape our nation and its leadership until the branches of our government understand their limitations as well as their obligation to work with each other, not against each other.

The problems you see in this young government are not incurable. Proper solutions, however, are entirely dependent upon an involved and interested citizenry that understands how three-branch governments are supposed to work and chooses its leaders accordingly.

Letters to the Editor Submissions

If you’d like to submit a letter to the editor, mail it to the Osage News, Attn.: Shannon Shaw, 627 Grandview, Pawhuska, OK 74056; email sshaw@osagenews.org, or fax to (918) 287-5563. Letters must be respectful and informative to the reader, and may be edited for grammar, clarity and space.
A message from the Principal Chief

By Jim Gray, Osage Nation Principal Chief

As the Nation ends this calendar year and we anticipate celebrating the upcoming Christmas holidays with friends and family, I want to take this opportunity to address the Osage people and comment on a few significant issues impacting the Osage Nation.

An Appropriation for Christmas?

Ten days to Christmas and the Osage Nation Congress has yet to fulfill its duty to pass an annual operating 2010 appropriation for the Executive Branch. Just when we thought we had answered all of the Congressional majority’s objections they changed their demands—again:

- First complaint, the Executive Branch budgets were late, so they could not be expected to complete their work on time, but now they’ve had the Executive Branch budgets for three long months.
- Then they didn’t like the total we proposed, so we cut 10%, or roughly $3 Million.
- Then the revenue projections should only include gaming revenues. The Osage Nation Gaming Board, in an effort to help resolve the impasse, went back through their Plan of Operations and identified ways to increase dividends to the Nation. We should now run in the black by over $1 Million and this is without all available projected revenues, regardless of revenues retained in our bank accounts.
- Congress is now attempting to create an Executive Branch budget target (since this can no longer be called a revenue projection). They are arbitrarily and unnecessarily attempting to allow no growth in services although the need is rising.

When fellow Osages are being assailed by a weak economy, Congress proposes to curtail services. What does this mean to Osages with real needs in dire times? What has happened to our Osage values?

Treasurer, Mr. John Jech, was called on by Congress to solve the employee Christmas bonus issue. He reported that Christmas bonuses were caught in the 1/12th spending restriction but moreover this restriction was wreaking havoc on grant compliance, potentially placing the financial health of the Nation in jeopardy. He strongly recommended Congress pass the 2010 annual operating appropriation, which would not only solve our Christmas bonus issue, but also our federal grant issues, and most importantly our current crisis in providing services to our neediest citizens.

Join me in demanding that Congress pass the appropriations needed by the Nation to meet its commitments and obligations to the Osage people and communities. Further delay will not only cause harm to Osage people, but also jeopardize tens of millions of federal dollars potentially leading to impacts on minerals development. Congress must pass the appropriations bills now!

An Historic Visit

On November 5th, 2009, the largest meeting of Indian tribes ever assembled in U.S. history gathered in Washington D.C. by special invitation of President Barack Obama.

We were optimistic, given that President Obama had included tribes in the over three billion dollars in federal stimulus funding, doubling usual funding which has benefitted Indian communities by allowing for repair of houses, construction of Indian health and education facilities, increase in energy availability and efficiency, and improvement of roads, social services and law enforcement.

Of course there was only one question on my mind, is the United States ready to sit down with the tribes and settle our trust fund lawsuits. Secretary Salazar respectfully stated the President will keep his word with Indian people in settling these cases.

Cobell Settlement

The Obama Administration announced a proposed settlement to the Cobell v. Salazar litigation providing $1.412 billion to Individual Indian Monies (IIM) account holders, less attorneys fees and other costs, and $2 billion to solve land fractionation, all of which requires legislative approval of the settlement by December 31, 2009.

One provision within the Settlement Agreement addresses the Osage Headright Owners:

Osage Headright Owners.

The members of the Historical Accounting Class and the members of Trust Administration Class do not include Osage headright owners, except to the extent individual Osage headright owners have, or have had, (i) IIM Accounts in which their Osage headright payments have been deposited, (ii) IIM Accounts for funds other than Osage Headright monies, or (iii) beneficial ownership interests in trust land. Nothing in this Agreement releases claims of individual Osage headright owners regarding their headright interests, except to the extent monies from such headright interests beneficially owned by such individual Indian have been deposited into an IIM Account for the benefit of such individual Indian.

The Cobell settlement is different than the Osage Nation’s lawsuits against the United States for mismanagement of Osage trust funds and assets.
As of December 5, 2009 the Osage Nation Congress and the Office of the Chief of the Osage Nation have not come to any solution to resolve any issues with the 2010 budget. The Chief is daily blaming Congress for delays and Congress is blaming the Chief for ongoing delays. Chief Gray says that he pocket vetoed ONCA 10-15 which holds the 1/12 restriction on the FY 2009 budget for use now and allows for the employee Christmas bonuses to be paid. The Osage Nation Congress is saying that ONCA 10-15 became law due to the fact that the bill was passed on November 12, 2009 and the 21st Special Session of the 1st Osage Nation Congress did not adjourn until November 17, 2009.

In this heated deadlock where does the blame really lie? The 2010 budget process began back in February 2009 and all the programs of the Osage Nation began to work on their budgets for FY2010. Congress set deadlines for budgets on June 15, for the first delivery of proposed budget reviews. Unfortunately, no budgets arrived for Congress to review. Congress then set another deadline for July 15; again no budgets arrived for Congress to review. Congress then set a third deadline for August 15, and once again no budgets arrived. Finally, just three days before the September 8, 2009 Tzi Zho session began the budgets did arrive. In the business world outside of Indian Government three months is ample time for a director, manager or administrator to prepare a proposed budget and still manage their departments. Granted, during this time period there was a change in the Director of Operations position within the Executive Branch. However, the process of preparing budgets should not have been delayed due to the change in personnel.

Playing the “he said, she said” blame game does not resolve any issues. What it does do is cause positions to be defended resulting in the creation of the deadlock problem that currently exist in the Osage Nation government. Could it be that the problem could possibly lie in the administrative management of the daily operations of the Osage Nation? Why were these deadlines not met? All directors, managers and administrators were notified of these important dates. Does the gag order from the Executive Branch create so much fear that very important budget deadlines cannot be met? The Accounting Department of the Osage Nation should be responsible for working with the Director of Operations in setting priorities and deadlines that need to be met. If this communication is not implemented then we have a breakdown in the process which causes delays. Departments which may have some difficulties should have access to the appropriate personnel during this time to have any issues addressed before the Congressional deadline. Questions and concerns that are not acknowledged will again result in another breakdown in any process. The scenarios mentioned above are what could or could not have occurred, but there was a breakdown, otherwise the budgets would have arrived on schedule.

Who are the ones that suffer while these delays continue? The Osage Nation employees have yet to receive their Christmas bonus. This is just one example but it affects over 300 employees who rely on this bonus to enjoy Christmas with their families. Many other services and Osage people are also affected by this ongoing delay in the budget. Where does the solution lie? It certainly doesn’t lie in the playground tactics of pointing fingers and accusations of secret meetings.

We are now in the month of December and the 2nd Special Session of the 1st Osage Nation Congress and could possibly have a third Special Session to try again to resolve this budget crunch. The Osage Nation Constitution clearly states in Article VI, Section 23, “The annual budget shall not exceed projected revenues.” Should the annual expenditures exceed the incoming revenues? This can and will create problems in the present and the future.

I will leave you with this thought. Two negatives do not equal a positive and leaders who have their people at heart are always willing to resolve issues with actions and not empty words and lawsuits.

God bless and Merry Christmas.

Mark it on your calendars!
Opinion

June 2010 Candidate Messages

Carl “Chico” Sellers
Candidate for Principal Chief

Ha-we. My name is Carl “Chico” Sellers, of the Buffalo Bull Clan, Strike Axe Band. My vision as Principal Chief of the Osage Nation is to contribute to the rewarding efforts of all Osage elected officials, employees, and tribal programs by delivering the determined leadership our citizens deserve.

Beginning with strategic improvements in our professional communication and technical capabilities, I plan to oversee the implementation of the following developments for the sake of the Osage Nation’s growth and stability:

• Increasing the opportunities for success available to our students, tribal industries and entrepreneurs
• Institutionalizing an evaluation of annual performance, including a comprehensive forensic audit.

Roy St. John
Candidate for Principal Chief

Many greetings and well wishes have been written that express the meaning of this season better than I could ever hope to put into words. I find this season to be a season of hope and promise. My wish is that this season brings joy and happiness to each of you. May you find a way to share this joy with others.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

–By Roy St. John

Cecelia Tallchief
Candidate for Assistant Principal Chief

The Osage Nation has lost its direction toward the people we are supposed to serve. A government by the people and for the people is the one of the basic principles for which this great country was founded. Today, the ability of our Osage government to clearly communicate and have compassion for our citizens is lacking.

Communications between our government and our constituents must be better defined to allow our citizens access to information they need and want. I’m always open to hearing from constituents and look forward to developing a mechanism which will allow greater information flow.

Compassion for the needs and desires of our people should set precedent...
on how we manage our government. In my opinion, the Osage Nation exists to serve the needs of the people. It’s that simple. George Washington Carver summed it up like this: “How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the ages, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant of the weak and strong. Because someday in life you will have been all of these.” We all need to remember who we are and where we come from.

–By Cecelia Tallechief

JENNY MILLER
Candidate for Osage Nation Congress

And so it was that a child was born 2,009 years ago.

Let us not forget His birth, and let us not lose ourselves in the fray of this very special time. Light a candle in remembrance of our Savior Jesus Christ, give thanks to God for his precious gift and pray for peace on earth. It is then that the pressures of this season will turn to calm and it is then that you can give your best self to your family. The gift of self, your best self, is the most precious you’ll ever have to give. Be the radiant beam for your family this Christmas and the coming year by living the words of Jesus.

Resolve to be the best you can be. Give love with all of your heart and spread the joy of Christmas to all you see!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

–By Jenny Miller

RAYMOND RED CORN
Candidate for Osage Nation Congress

If you pay much attention to politics, you’ve heard the term “vision” used frequently. Here? Not lately. Strategic thinking has taken a back seat.

That’s unfortunate, for few tribal nations advance themselves without a vision. No tribal nation becomes successful by accident, although some may experience short-term success by windfall or luck. When tribal legislatures concern themselves with the smallest aspects of tribal governance, strategic thinking goes to the back burner.

This nation’s legislature should be focused on the future. Instead, our focus is often directed to the smallest of budgetary details, or to finding fault with other branches. This approach to governing may make us appear busy, or score a political point now and then, but will it make us great? Will it diversify our business interests beyond gaming? Will it ensure the sustainability of the benefits we already distribute? These questions are seldom asked, much less answered.

In the coming election some candidates will focus on personalities, while others focus on possibilities. I’m looking for candidates who believe, as I do, that there are no limits to what the Osage Nation can achieve with proper leadership and a common purpose.

Let’s identify those candidates, and give them our support.

–By Raymond Red Corn

Letters to the Editor Submissions

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