Osage casinos no longer in jeopardy of closing

By Benny Polacca
Osage News

The federal Department of the Interior has approved the three land-into-trust applications for the Osage Casinos in Skiatook, Ponca City and Tulsa. Osage Nation government officials signed the applications on Tuesday (Aug. 23).

“We are pleased with the work of the Department of Interior and how they expedited the process for us,” Principal Chief John Red Eagle said in a statement issued shortly after signing the applications.

See OSAGE CASINOS
—Continued on Page 6

Osages tentatively settle with U.S. Government for $380 million

Wilson Pipestem: “We believe this is the largest settlement [with a Native American tribe] in the history of the United States.”

By Shannon Shaw
Osage News

It could be a very good Christmas for Osage shareholders.

The Osage Trust Team announced today that they have made an agreement to tentatively settle the Osage Trust Case for $380 million, ending an 11-year court battle with the United States government over the mismanagement of the Osage minerals estate. That is a payout of $155,136 per full share to be made on, or before, Dec. 5 of this year.

“We’ve been in litigation for 11 years now. The prospect of more litigation, more appeals, the Trust Team thought the time has gone on long enough in this case,” said Wilson Pipestem at the Osage Minerals Council meeting today. Pipestem, Osage/Otoe-Missouria, is the attorney for the Osage trust team.

“It’s been an intense few months, to say the least, but we made it this far,” Pipestem said. “Bottomline, before Dec. 5, payments will be made to headright holders.”

In addition to the $380 million, the United States has agreed in principle to processes and actions to improve the management of the Osage Mineral Estate and the Osage tribal trust account, according to a prepared release.

See OSAGE TRUST CASE SETTLEMENT
—Continued on Page 4
Osage News to be reduced to one newspaper per household in October

Osage News

Beginning in October, the Osage News will be reduced to one newspaper per household.

“It is our goal to drive readers to our Osage News Web site, making it their primary source for information,” said Osage News Editor Shannon Shaw. “The news industry is changing to a more online, multimedia based information tool and we are changing with it.”

Currently, there are households that are receiving up to five newspapers, causing an unnecessary expense, Shaw said. Last year the Osage News cut their circulation by 1,500 by mailing it to members only and hoped to cut back even further by giving Osages the opportunity to cancel subscriptions or opt out altogether, but few took advantage.

Instead, the numbers grew with the growing number of members and the Osage News is still mailed to more than 10,000 Osages.

“By reducing the newspaper to one newspaper per household it will cut our distribution costs and save the Nation a little money,” Shaw said.

For those Osages that save extra copies of their newspapers for loved ones living far away, Shaw encourages them to contact the Osage News offices to update their family members addresses so they can continue to receive a newspaper.

An Osage News one-year subscription is $24.

For more information call (918) 287-5668 or email osagenews@osagetribe.org. The Osage News is also on facebook and Twitter, @OsageNews.

Wind farm project approved by Osage County board

Nation remains opposed, prepares for legal action;
BIA: Proposed wind farm project may interfere with minerals estate

By Benny Polacca
Osage News

The Osage County Board of Adjustment has given the green light for a Missouri wind farm company to build 94 wind turbines in western Osage County near Burbank. Construction on the project could start this fall and would be finished in about one year.

An Aug. 11 public meeting on the land variance request sought by Wind Capital Group drew mostly supportive comments from non-Osage residents in favor of the wind farm project. But the Osage Nation remains opposed and is preparing for any forthcoming litigation to halt the project plans.

If built, the 94 wind turbines would stand approximately 400 feet in height on the prairie and each of the turbine’s three blades would be up to 130 feet in length.

See WIND FARM PROJECT—Continued on Page 5
‘Diabetic Days’ helps Osages young and old

By Sunnie Clahchischiligi
Osage News

For most of his life Maynard Revard was a fairly healthy person who made few visits to the hospital.

But sometime in 1989 that changed, when Revard hopped into his truck and drove himself to Pawhuska IHS Clinic.

“I already knew I had it when I came in. My eyes were blurry, I was real thirsty and just didn’t feel well,” Revard said. “My blood sugar was way up there and they stuck me in the hospital.”

After spending about eight hours in the waiting room Revard was diagnosed with Type II diabetes and spent a week in the hospital.

Now the 63-year-old makes regular trips to Pawhuska IHS to take part in Diabetic Days, offered every Tuesday and Thursday by the Diabetic and Community Health Program at the clinic.

The program is open to all Native Americans who are registered at IHS and provides services like free blood pressure monitors, glucose monitoring supplies, assistance with dentures, eyeglasses, shoes and more.

Revard, Osage, said he was diagnosed with the disease when he was in his early 40s, and has made regular visits to the clinic since.

He said, unlike most, he doesn’t come from a long line of family with diabetes. In fact, just about no one in his family has the disease.

“I’m the only one,” he said. “None of my kids are (diabetic), none of my grandkids, my sister, mom and dad weren’t.”

Because it was such an uncommon concept in his family Revard said he thought very little about the disease, and of the possibility of him getting it.

“I never thought much about it until I got it, and I didn’t know how it could impact your whole life,” he said.

Julie Mashunkashey-Miller, Pawhuska IHS diabetes nutritionist, said the program has been in full swing for many years but due to administrative issues it took a break for a couple of years. The program just started back up in July, thanks to a high demand from diabetic patients.

“Anytime, they can come in and ask questions, and we do our best to direct them so they’re on their way to a healthier lifestyle,” Miller said.

Marie Rumsey, registered nurse and Pawhuska IHS health programs director, said because the Diabetic Days program is a IHS grant funded program, all statistics on diabetes include all other Native American tribes.

However, she said the program does keep record of the participants in the program.

She said there are at least 442 active diabetic patients seen every three months at the clinic.

On a national level, out of 3.3 million American Indian and Alaskan Natives in 2007, 16.3 percent of American Indian and Alaskan Native adults were diagnosed with diabetes, according to the Indian Health Service Web site.

Ninety-five percent of those diagnosed had Type 2 diabetes, as opposed to Type 1.

While diabetes is known for its genetic transmittal it has no prejudices.

Revard’s case shows that even those who don’t have a history of diabetes in their family are just as vulnerable as those who do.

Yet some still think they don’t have a choice.

Miller said she meets plenty of parents with diabetes who often feel defeated before they even try.

“I’ve heard them say ‘I’m diabetic so my kids are going to be diabetic,’” Miller said. “But that’s not always the case, we want to start the prevention now, when they’re young.”

According to the Indian Health Service Web site, 1,748 American Indian and Alaska Native youth under the age of 19 were diagnosed with diabetes in 2005, and from 1994-2004 there was a 68 percent increase in Native youth ages 15-19 who were diagnosed with diabetes.

Revard said it took him a while to adapt to the changes he had to make.

See DIABETIC DAYS
—Continued on Page 6
Nation working to provide housing for victims of domestic violence

Transitional Housing Program is in early stages

By Sunnie Clahechisligi, Osage News

It is one thing to escape a domestic violence relationship but it’s another to stay out.

That’s why the Osage Nation Counseling Center is looking to provide homes for victims and survivors of domestic violence in Osage County.

“We’re going to try to enlarge our services to take that extra step and that is provide housing for Native American women who are trying to get out of bad situations,” said Louis Gray, Primary Residential Treatment Coordinator and Counselor for the Osage Nation. “Part of what the state’s doing also is helping those women, once they get out to become financially ready, get on their feet in a way that they don’t go back and get in that cycle of domestic violence.”

On Aug. 23 the Osage Nation Counseling Center held a luncheon and presentation titled “Stepping Out of Domestic Violence” at the Dave Landrum Community Center.

Various tribal entities were invited to the event including the Osage Nation Chief of Police.

Guest speakers from the Oklahoma Coalition Against Violence and Sexual Assault presented at the event including OCAVSA Prevention Coordinator and domestic violence survivor Shelly Collins.

Collins said her former husband shot her five times and left her for dead, after abusing her for several years.

She said one of the hardest things about bouncing back from domestic violence is the mental aspect. She said the new initiatives set to help victims and survivors get back on their feet only helps their ability to heal mentally.

“The biggest thing for victims is getting their self-esteem built back up because they’ve been torn down so far,” she said. “So having this community support and the support from friends, family or whoever is there, who can support them is so important.”

Collins and her colleague Jo Descher, Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Transitional Housing Director, said that most women tend to return back to their abusers for housing and economic reasons.

Descher said once a person with children becomes homeless the person’s children are automatically taken away due to neglect. In fear of losing their children and having no money most women return to their abusers, Descher added.

Because of such incidents programs like the Transitional Housing Program in Oklahoma are important.

The program helps survivors of domestic violence get back on their feet with housing and economic aid. The Program is funded by the Transitional Housing Grant Program and in partnership with The U.S. Department of Justice and Office on Violence Against Women (OVW).

Gray said he and others at the counseling center are working on getting their own housing and economic program for Native American and all women in Osage County.

Gray said the tribe has funds available to help women get on their feet. He said there is a grant where the counseling center can lease homes in the community to women who are trying to get their lives back on track. He said now it’s time for the next step.

“We’re at really early planning stages of all that but we’re going to try and get it going... So we’re trying to build a whole series of homes where women can get out of that cycle of out of domestic violence.”

Osage Trust Case Settlement

The settlement is the result of months of negotiations with the U.S. following U.S. Court of Federal Claims rulings that said the Osage Tribe was owed approximately $330 million for claims arising from 1972 to 2000. This ruling was subject to appeals to the Federal Circuit and possibly the U.S. Supreme Court. The tribe and the U.S. were moving toward a trial in early 2012 for the remaining claims in the case, then further appeals, according to a release.

The settlement is tentative at this point, with the trust team seeking comment from Osage shareholders everywhere. A mail-out was sent from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to notify Osages of the proposed settlement. The mail-out asked for shareholder feedback. A Web site was also set up to notify Osage shareholders of the settlement. It is password protected, for shareholders only.

Once feedback has been heard the trust team will then move forward to accept or deny the settlement. Pipecostem said. If the trust team should deny the settlement the case will move forward in 2012 and beyond.

Upon agreement and authorization of the settlement, the United States will deposit $345 million in the Tribal Trust Account by Oct. 30 and the money will be disbursed to all shareholders of the Osage Minerals Estate, whether they are Osage, non-Osage, or entities. Roughly 30 percent of shareholders are non-Osage.

The law firms representing the tribe will be paid a 9 percent contingency fee, roughly $34.2 million.

The trust team is made up of three members of the Osage Minerals Council, the Speaker of the Osage Congress and the Principal Chief of the Osage Nation. They are Galen Crum, Cynthia Boone, Dudley Whitehorn (Chairman), Jerri Jean Branstetter and John D. Red Eagle.

“While not perfect, the proposed settlement represents an end to over a decade of hard fought litigation and a new beginning for improved management of the Osage Minerals Estate and Osage trust funds,” Whitehorn said. “Upon execution of the settlement, our Osage headright holders, including our elders who have waited too long for this settlement, will receive their settlement payout before Christmas.”

Trust Settlement series

The Osage News will be doing a series for the October issue that goes in-depth about the settlement, financial investment opportunities, how to spot fraud, a profile of the attorneys, the history and timeline of the case.
Wind Farm Project

The Bureau of Indian Affairs is also concerned whether the project will interfere with the Osage Minerals Estate, which is held in federal trust, according to an Aug. 15 letter addressed to Principal Chief John Red Eagle and the Osage Minerals Council. The 8,300 surface acres designated for the project are privately owned, but the Osage Minerals Estate shareholders own the subsurface mineral rights in Osage County.

Amid concerns shared by an ON government official and discussion regarding communication between Wind Capital Group and the Nation, the board voted 4-0 to approve a conditional use permit for the land originally designated for agricultural use.

Therefore, the decision gives the OK for the wind farm construction on those lands.

On Aug. 11, the board heard public comment at the Osage County Fairgrounds. Several local residents, including the Shidler Schools Superintendent, voiced their support for the wind farm, but Chris White, executive director of governmental affairs for the Chief’s Office, spoke in opposition during the meeting attended by approximately 100 people.

“It is the position of the Osage Nation that no wind farms be developed within Osage County, we ask one more time that this be honored,” White said. “There is a continuing federal trust responsibility to all Native tribes by the United States. This responsibility is upheld by the U.S. Constitution, treaties, Supreme Court decisions, executive orders, federal statutes, regulations, existing federal policies, tribal laws and the dynamic political relationship between the Osage Nation and the federal government.”

Chief Red Eagle has voiced opposition to the project, which includes disruption to the environment, habitat for area animal species and concerns for the Osage Minerals Estate. Other recent concerns aired include possible disruption to historical and unmarked gravesites, lower property values and sound/sight nuisances brought by the wind turbines.

“The Osage Nation vows to protect the Osage Minerals Estate and the Tallgrass Prairie under which it lies. If our requests continue to be ignored, then the Osage Nation will be left with no choice but to utilize every option available to us, including a vigorous court defense of our rights and our natural resources,” White said in conclusion.

Tom Green, senior manager of project development for Wind Capital Group, told the Osage News (prior to the meeting) he approached Osage Nation officials months ago. He would not elaborate on what took place in those discussions, but described them as “polite and professional conversation” and similar recollections were reiterated during the public meeting.

“We met with the Minerals Council, discussed the project, we’ve had very, very cordial, courteous, professional conversations with the tribe and very frank discussions from both points of view,” Green said at the meeting. “We have full respect for the tribe, but we disagree on this.”

“That was a very honest statement,” White told the board in response to Green. “Tom seems like a good ol’ boy, we’ve had lunch together one time – I paid for mine, he paid for his – and the ultimate statement was that we disagree . . . I might only add that there is federal regulation, Osage County Commission has been apprised of such that federal regulations, there’s federal law, which supersedes state laws, supersedes your county ordinance, local laws.”

Non-Osage rancher Ford Drummond, who owns 1,200 acres adjacent to the proposed wind farm area, also spoke against the project citing concerns about declining property values.

“The value of my property would be severely diminished if there’s a wind farm there,” Drummond said during the meeting. “It’s not a win-win for everybody.” He also raised concerns on potential future tornadoes coming through the area as well as damage to the habitats of the greater prairie chicken and bald eagles who come to nest in the area.

Joe Conner (Osage) also takes issue with land values potentially impacted by the project because his family’s original allotment lands are in northwestern Osage County close to the proposed wind farm. He is also concerned unmarked Osage graves from the 19th and early 20th centuries could be disturbed by the project.

The day after the meeting, Chief Red Eagle issued a written statement.

“The Board’s decision to approve the permit was not surprising. We have been disappointed in the County officials’ lack of cooperation in this entire process,” Chief Red Eagle said. “We’ve reached out to the Commissioners on more than one occasion concerning this issue and how the two governments might work together on alternatives to these industrial wind farm developments . . . in each instance, the Commissioners have failed to respond. This has left us no choice but to proceed with legal action in this matter.”

At its Aug. 12 scheduled meeting, the OMC also commented on the county’s decision. “It wasn’t a surprise,” said OMC Chairman Galen Crum.

During the meeting, Crum also stated “when we did meet with (the wind farm officials), they were prepared to offer us nothing for the Minerals Estate,” adding that the cost of moving a wind turbine location (should it be located on an oil well) would fall on the Minerals Council.

Joe Conner applauded the OMC’s opposition. Amid the oil pump jacks which dot the landscape, Conner said: “It’s nothing compared to a 400-foot wind turbine.”

On Aug. 15, the Osage Agency’s Bureau of Indian Affairs Superintendent wrote a letter stating the agency did not approve a wind farm ordinance recently established in Osage County and any wind turbine built “may have to be removed or relocated” if it interferes with the minerals estate.

Superintendent Melissa Currey wrote the letter to Chief Red Eagle and the OMC.

The Osage County Commission approved the wind farm ordinance in early April.

“The County Commission has enacted wind ordinances regulating the non-trust portions of the surface estate within Osage County,” Currey wrote in the letter. “This letter is to notify you that said regulations were not approved by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and are not binding on the mineral estate.”

Currey reiterates that the United States holds the Osage Minerals Estate in trust for the Osage Nation and that “state courts have held that the oil and gas estate is the dominant estate and the surface is the subservient estate. Thus, the minerals estate cannot be denied reasonable access to the surface, and may, indeed, use so much of the surface estate as may be necessary to develop and produce the minerals.”

Chief Red Eagle, who opposes the wind farm project, said the BIA’s letter pleased him.

“This is something we’ve fully expected and it’s a position we’ve taken all along,” Chief Red Eagle said in a news release. “We have always been confident that the Bureau of Indian Affairs would uphold its fiduciary responsibility and we’re pleased with their actions.”

Regarding wind turbine construction, Currey said: “If we find that any particular installation may be interfering with the operations of the mineral estate, that installation may have to be removed or relocated.”

Green said construction on the project this size can stretch nine months to one year. He defended the project stating the wind turbine construction would only cover 1 percent of the 8,300 acres.

See WIND FARM PROJECT —Continued on Page 6
Osage Casinos

after the applications were signed. “Getting tribal land placed into trust can often take years, so we feel fortunate to have this matter resolved in such a short amount of time.”

Government officials have said the land-into-trust application process could take between six months and three years before being approved. The three Osage Casino applications approved will place about 50 acres into federal trust.

The Aug. 23 signing took place at the Osage Casino’s central office next to the Tulsa casino. Officials present at the signing were Chief Red Eagle, Osage Casinos CEO Neil Cornelius and Bureau of Indian Affairs Regional Director (Eastern Oklahoma Region) Charles Head, according to a news release.

Chris White, executive director of governmental affairs for Chief Red Eagle’s office, told the Osage News the applications were initially approved by Larry Echowhaw (Interior Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs) on July 8. Those applications were then subject to a 30-day public comment period before they could be signed.

The 30-day public comment period, which is required in accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations, ended Aug. 18 without protests filed. According to the Federal Register, which publishes land-into-trust actions, the Osage Casino applications comprise just over 50 acres. The Ponca City casino application covers 15 acres, Skiatook 7.5 acres and Tulsa’s covers 27.66 acres.

Moving forward

The trust application approvals close a chapter of worry on whether federal and state authorities would partially or entirely shut down the Nation’s gaming operations because the lands holding the three casinos were not placed into trust as required by federal law and the National Indian Gaming Commission.

White, who is the former Ponca City Osage casino general manager, praised the application approvals during the ON Gaming Commission meeting on Aug. 9. “It allows our gaming enterprise to move forward.”

At the time the casinos were built, Osage government officials contended the NIGC approved the Osages’ claim that Osage County was also the reservation, said a former ON government official who requested anonymity in a March 2009 Osage News article. The state signed the compact as well, a de facto recognition that the county is also the reservation, the official said.

The Ponca City casino has 56 employees and 223 slot machines; the Skiatook casino has 54 employees and 200 slots; and the Tulsa casino has 313 employees and nearly 1,100 slots.

In the meantime, efforts to hire a full-time general manager for the Ponca City casino are ongoing.

White, who left the Ponca City casino last year for his appointed position in Chief Red Eagle’s office, said one of the concerns among casino employees was whether their jobs were safe, considering the casinos’ legal status at the time was unknown. The situation also impacted interest in filling the general manager position, he said during the Aug. 18 ON Gaming Enterprise Board meeting.

Joe Olujic, Chief Operating Officer for Osage Casino, said the Ponca City GM position is being advertised in the Tulsa World during the Aug. 18 meeting. The job description also appears online at the www.osagecasinos.com Web site.

The land-into-trust application approvals come nearly two months after the U.S. Supreme Court denied the Nation’s request to hear the reservation status case against the Oklahoma Tax Commission.

The federal case against the state Tax Commission began 11-years-ago when the Nation sued the entity for taxing Osage citizens living on land that the Nation claimed was still, and had always been, reservation land, also known as the boundaries of Osage County. Since that time the case has been to the 10th Circuit Court of Federal Appeals twice, in which the federal court denied to hear a rehearing of the Nation’s case. The Nation appealed to the Supreme Court in October of last year and the High Court ultimately declined to hear the appeal on June 27.

Despite exhausting all appeals in the reservation status case, Chief Red Eagle and White remained optimistic that Interior officials would approve the trust applications. They also praised BIA regional officials, in addition to Interior officials, for working to expedite the trust applications’ processing.

Echowhaw (Pawnee) is a former Idaho Attorney General who was confirmed Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs in May 2009 after being appointed by President Barack Obama, according to the Interior department’s Web site. He is the first Native American elected to a state attorney general position and served two consecutive terms in the Idaho House of Representatives in the 1980s.

Wind Farm Project

Green also said construction of a wind turbine would require 10 feet of digging for a concrete foundation and the underground collector system for the electric energy would stretch four feet below ground. “Each turbine will be connected to a centralized substation then (the electricity generated will be) taken into an overhead transmission line in the project area,” Green said.

In a recent development, Wind Capital Group bought a half-page advertisement in the Aug. 25 Bigheart Times newspaper. Green thanked the supporting residents for favoring the wind farm project. In the ad, Green also wrote: “With the conditional use permit process completed, Osage County Wind (which is the name of the Wind Capital Group project) will move forward with all the extensive pre-construction work necessary for a project of this scope. We will continue working closely with state and federal agencies to make certain we meet and exceed all regulations and guidelines.”

On the Nation’s side of the issue, Congressman Geoffrey Standing Bear filed a bill to create a revolving fund on Aug. 29 “to defend the Minerals Estate against development of wind farms in Osage County.”

The bill (ONCA 11-81) was filed just over a week prior to the 2011 Tzi-Zho Session of the Second Osage Nation Congress.

Diabetic Days

once he was diagnosed. He said remembering to take his medications and eating healthy were the most challenging but he knew what would happen if he didn’t.

“If you don’t treat it you feel so bad, I don’t know how people could not treat it, you just feel horrible,” he said. “I knew people that were diabetic but they wouldn’t treat it, they just wouldn’t, they’d say ‘I’ll be alright,’ well they’re not here anymore or they got a leg taken off and now it’s too late. You’re looking to end your life 20-30 years early, that’s just not very smart.”

Diabetic Days are held at Pawhuska IHS Clinic Tuesday and Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. New patients can call the Osage Nation Diabetes Program at (918) 287-5525 to schedule an appointment.
2011 Tzi-Zho Congressional Session starts Sept. 6

Congress will use the fall session to consider the Nation’s FY 2012 budgets, bills and resolutions

By Benny Polacca
Osage News

The Second Osage Nation Congress will meet for the annual Tzi-Zho Session starting Sept. 6 in the Congressional Chambers on the ON government campus.

This is the second of two regular 24-day sessions held annually by the Congress. This will be the second Tzi-Zho Session for the Second ON Congress since the 2010 general election in which four Congress members won their initial terms and two members were reelected.

The Tzi-Zho Session is typically when the Congressional body reviews, considers and passes the annual government operation budgets for the upcoming fiscal year. The Nation’s 2011 fiscal year ends Sept. 30 and FY 2012 starts Oct. 1.

Each of the Nation’s three government branches will submit their respective budgets to the Congress, which will consider the budgets in subcommittees before being a floor vote by the entire Congress.

The Executive Branch will have the highest number of budgets to submit, which include scores of government departments offering goods and services to Osage citizens as well as a budget for the Office of the Chiefs and boards and committees’ operations.

The FY 2011 budget for government operations covered 98 programs, departments and grants awarded to the Nation and comprised 97 pages.

The Judicial Branch will submit its own budget for the Nation’s trial and Supreme Court functions and the Legislative Branch’s budget covers the Congressional office and session expenses and operations.

Congress will also consider a budget for donations to cultural causes including the villages’ five-man boards, drumkeepers and military organizations.

In addition to the budgets, Congress will consider legislative bills or resolutions introduced by one of its 12 members.

This session, Congress may take up the following legislative items recently filed:

– Congressman Geoffrey Standing Bear has filed a bill (ONCA 11-77) to create a revolving fund for expenses related to the Osage Nation Code.

The Nation is in the process of revising its tribal laws to conform to the 2006 reformed government. According to the bill, “the purpose of this act is to establish a fund on behalf of the Legislative Branch for the Osage Nation Code book revenues and future codification expenses.”

– Standing Bear has also filed ONCA 11-79, which would “remove the authority of the Osage Gaming Board of Directors to retain legal counsel and to reserve that authority to the Osage Nation Executive Branch.”

– The Congress may also review a revised ON Election Code to revise laws pertaining to the Nation’s election. The next general election will be in June 2012 when six Congressional terms will expire and be up for grabs by all interested Osage candidates.

– An earlier revision of the Election Code (ONCA 11-40 sponsored by Congressman Raymond Red Corn) was considered in the Hun-Kah Session earlier this year, but was tabled pending inquiries sought from the Attorney General’s office.

For more information on Congress, including Congressional committee meeting notices and pieces of legislation filed, visit its Web site at www.osagetribe.com/congress. The 24-day session may also be extended three additional days if Congress agrees to extend the session.

Domestic Violence

–Continued from Page 4

...cle of violence,” Gray said. “It’s such a big problem, we got to do something, it affects families and marriages, schools, social problems all the way down the line. We’ve got to do something.

“They’re (women) the most powerless of all the social classes that we have and we have to do our part,” Gray added.

So far the counseling center offers counseling sessions and helps women get protective orders. He said the services are open to all women in the community.

The counseling center will host another presentation on Oct. 7 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Landrum Community Center in Pawhuska.

Former Miss Oklahoma and author Susan Supernaw, who is also a domestic violence survivor, will present and talk about her book, “Muscogee Daughter.”
New Osage Nation tribal tags to include Osage orthography

Tags to be sold by ON Tax Commission starting in October

By Benny Polacca
Osage News

The Osage Nation license plate is getting a brush-up and will bear the Osage language starting in October.

The landscape artwork on the Osage tribal tag's bottom half will disappear to make room for the orthography symbols.

The Osage Tax Commission, which sells the license tags to Osage citizens, voted on the new design Aug. 9. The commission considered four design samples featuring the Osage orthography before deciding on a design which has “Osage People” written across the bottom center. The new tag’s colors will remain blue and white and bear the Nation’s yellow seal.

Osage Nation Language Department workers Rebekah HorseChief and Braxton Red Eagle approached the Tax Commission with the idea to include the orthography on the tag this summer, which spurred the design change. Red Eagle said he is “optimistic” about the new tag because it’s another way to raise awareness of the Osage language.

“People from all over the country are going to see these tags,” said Red Eagle, a University of Oklahoma student who was a summer intern for the department. “This is the biggest way to spread it, I would say. All my friends are going to ask me about it.”

Red Eagle, a psychology major at OU, and HorseChief brainstormed on work ideas for the summer when he started his internship, which led to designing a new tag with the orthography.

On the new tag design, the orthography reads “Osage People” and is pronounced: “Wah-Zha-Zhi Ni-Kah-She.”

“This is huge,” HorseChief said of the orthography to be displayed on the tag. She said the Osage would be the second tribe in Oklahoma to use their language symbols on their tribal tag design. The Cherokee Nation uses its language syllabary on its tribal tag design.

“It’s an assertion of our sovereignty through our language, which identifies us as Osages,” said HorseChief, who is a language instructor and student recruiter for the department. The Language Department has a history of working with other Nation entities in using the orthography to promote awareness of the language.

The Language and Tax Commission officials also consulted with Oklahoma Correctional Industries, which employs prison inmates to create the Osage tribal tags at the Dick Conner Correctional Center near Hominy. In the end, the five-member Tax Commission reviewed four tag designs.

On Aug. 9, the Tax Commission selected a tag design with a unanimous vote after discussion and feedback on the designs. They praised the chosen design’s simplicity.

“I like it,” said Tax Commission member Milton Labadie. “If we give people too much to look at, then we’ll have to be concerned about law enforcement.” Special license plate designs in other states have drawn criticism from authorities that have trouble reading tags with several colors and designs while on highway patrol duty.

Tax Commission member Richard Luttrell Sr. said he also liked the chosen design, adding: “It’s simple.” He then made a motion to approve the Osage language’s addition to the tag and to remove the artwork featuring three teepees, three buffaloes and a horse rider.

This is the third design of the Osage tribal tag since 1997 when the white/blue stripe tribal tag made its debut, said Tax Administrator Mary Mashunkashey. She said the Tax Commission office plans to make its first order of 400 new tribal tags in late September so they will be available for purchase in October.

OCI inmate workers will continue to make the new Osage tags in Hominy, Mashunkashey said.

The current tribal tag with the landscape artwork (featuring teepees, buffaloes and horse rider) is the design selected by the 31st Osage Tribal Council in 2006, Mashunkashey said.

Before the reformed government started, the Tribal Council hosted a poster contest to select a new tag design, which drew several entries. Barbara Alkire, a former government employee who is non-Osage, created the current and winning tag design, according to the Tax Commission.

With the newest tag design coming, Mashunkashey also believes more Osage language awareness will be shared as well as pride in Osage citizenship. “For a tribal member to be able to put a tribal tag on a vehicle shows they’re proud, they’re saying: ‘I’m Osage,’” she said.

The Tax Commission sells Osage tribal tags for motorcycles, commercial, farm; and recreational vehicles in addition to regular vehicles and those vehicles owned by military veterans.

The price of registering a vehicle with an Osage Nation tribal tag depends on the age and size of the vehicle. A brand new 2011 passenger vehicle with a factory price more than $15,000 costs $201 to register, Mashunkashey said. Personalized tribal tags have an additional $25 fee.

Osages interested in registering their vehicles with a tribal tag must provide the Tax Commission with documentation including proof of their Osage citizenship/CDIB, vehicle insurance and proof of Oklahoma residency. The Tax Commission is online at www.osagetribe.com/tax and can be reached at (918) 287-5393.
Dhegiha language speakers gather for first-ever conference

Speakers of Osage and other tribes with Dhegiihan dialect meet, network

By Benny Polacca
Osage News

Ardina Moore says she and her fellow Quapaw people are pleased with the tribe’s Las Vegas Strip-style casino resort but there are more important things the people must consider: their tribe’s first language, for example.

“We are proud of this casino, but to me, our language and culture are more important,” Moore said during the Dhegiha Gathering language conference held at Downstream Casino Resort.

The conference is the first ever gathering of tribes whose languages come from the Dhegiha linguistic family which comprises Osage, Omaha, Ponca, Kaw and Quapaw.

At 80 years of age, Moore (also Osage) is the Quapaw language program director and like other Native language instructors and enthusiasts, she is concerned about her people, especially younger generations, carrying on the language. “I teach as best I can,” she said, adding she tells young people: “One hundred years from now, people are going to ask: ‘what are these people known for?’ Do we want them to say ‘well, they have a casino?’

“Anybody who has the desire to learn should learn their language,” Moore said. “To me, nothing is more important, I don’t know how much longer I have like the rest of us.”

Moore’s thoughts are among the dialogue and lectures shared during the two-day conference of language speakers from the Dhegiha tribes. The conference, hosted by the Osage Nation Language Department, was held Aug. 2-3 at the three-year-old casino resort, which sits just inside northeast Oklahoma’s corner boundary.

Herman “Mogri” Lookout, who is the first ON language department director since the 31st Tribal Council created it, also noted the concern in having few language speakers. “Our elders are gone, they could speak our language. It may not be passed down generation-to-generation, that’s when the white man could say: ‘that’s an endangered language.’”

Lookout praised the efforts of language instructors who, like the Osage, are working to prevent their languages from going extinct. “This is the last group of people who can do that. I want our children to be able to speak their languages – those are my prayers.”

Alice Saunsoici, 73, Omaha, teaches her tribe’s language at Nebraska Indian Community College, and said she is thankful for her language when she spoke during the conference.

“It makes me feel like somebody,” she said adding it wasn’t always easy learning the language. Saunsoici recalled an incident, when she was younger, where she mispronounced a word numerous times during a public speaking engagement. She didn’t expect other Omahas to be present but there were two of them sitting in the corner laughing, she said. “We make mistakes, but we laugh” and move on, she said.

Saunsoici also expressed gratitude for the Dhegiha Gathering because it mirrors a story she was once told by elders who said the Dhegiihan language speakers once met by a river before the tribes went separate ways. “We are going to be together again – downstream,” Saunsoici was told. “Here we are now.”

During the conference, the language speakers and instructors shared their struggles and triumphs in sharing and teaching their respective languages with their people.

Caesar Williams, Ponca, 68, teaches small groups in Tulsa the Ponca language. “I’m still in my infancy at my age in learning the Ponca language. I look at it as ‘this is going to help people learn our language.’”

“Sometimes there’s only one other student in the group at times,” said Williams, “but I’m the only teacher in Tulsa keeping this nucleus together.”

Louis Headman, director of the Ponca Tribe’s Language Department, said his program developed a curriculum for teaching the language and is developing lesson plans.

Headman, whose grandmother lived to be more than 100-years-old and spoke Ponca to him, felt honored he was asked by the tribal government to direct the language program for the people. “It’s great to have someone say ‘we want you to come and teach our language,’” he said.

Lookout said he was pleased with the conference turnout and dialogue. “It’s all about networking. I think it was positive in that we have a common thing that we’re looking for – to be ‘one’ again.”

He said a second Dhegiha Gathering would be considered.
Osage Tax Commission sued over tobacco shop border tax

By Benny Polacca
Osage News

The Osage Tax Commission is questioning the status of a lawsuit filed against the entity in July by an Osage smoke shop operator who is challenging the border tax levied against the tobacco shop.

The July 6 lawsuit filed by “Highway 123 Smokeshop” in the Osage Nation Tribal Court objects to the border tax charged by the Tax Commission. The border tax is levied against smoke shops within 20 miles of the Kansas border. The Highway 123 Smokeshop, just west of Bartlesville, is one of two shops falling into that category.

The Highway 123 shop’s owner and/or operator is not listed as the plaintiff in addition to the shop’s name, according to the lawsuit. The Tax Commission issued the shop’s tobacco retail license to the late Norma Jean Mays who passed away on May 25. Her surviving son Roscoe Mays operates the Highway 123 shop, but the Tax Commission notes he is not listed on the tobacco license.

At its Aug. 9 meeting, the five-member Tax Commission raised questions on whether the lawsuit could continue and asked its attorney to follow-up with legal counsel representing the Highway 123 Smokeshop to check on its status.

“If they’re suing us, who’s in charge?” Tax Commission Chairwoman Beverly Brownfield asked during the meeting. “Is the license even valid?” asked Tax Commission member Teresa Rutherford.

Tax Administrator Mary Mashunkashey agreed, adding: “We need to know who’s running the smoke shop.”

New chapter

The lawsuit filing is the latest chapter in the argument the Highway 123 Smokeshop is having with the Nation over the border tax. According to the Tax Commission, the border smoke shops are charged an additional tribal tax of $1.57 per carton of 10 packs of 20 cigarettes – on top of the minimum $1.50 in tribal tax charged for cigarettes in accordance with the current tobacco tax compact the Nation signed with the state of Oklahoma.

The smoke shop challenged the border tax in a written protest to the Tax Commission on April 27 after the Second Osage Nation Congress failed to pass a bill seeking to repeal the border tax during the 2011 Hun-Kah Session.

The bill, ONCA 11-33 sponsored by Congressman Geoffrey Standing Bear, was initially passed by majority vote of the Congress on April 8, but Principal Chief John Red Eagle vetoed the bill after the Tax Commission protested. The Tax Commission opposed ONCA 11-33, arguing that Roscoe Mays would receive a $100,000-plus tax break if the border tax is repealed – if Mays sells the same number of cigarette cartons this year as he did in 2010. “This is, in essence, taking $100,968 of the Nation’s annual income and giving it to one individual Osage,” the letter states.

Also in the letter, the Tax Commission commented on the border tax issue. The Highway 123 Smokeshop, pays the $1.50 minimum tax rate per carton plus the $1.57 additional border tax “to make the total tax more even” because the border stores pay 50 percent less in sales tax than the other stores. The second border smoke shop near Ponca City pays the minimum $1.50 per carton tax because it competes with the neighboring Kaw Nation, which does not have a signed tobacco tax compact.

By Aug. 30, Mashunkashey said the Tax Commission had yet to hear updates on its requests for information on the Highway 123 Smokeshop.

The Tax Commission meets the second Tuesday of each month.

The Osage News did not receive comment from Mays before this issue went to press.

Lawsuit

According to the July 6 lawsuit, Highway 123 Smokeshop “is one of two retail tobacco shops located within 20 miles of the Kansas border. However, plaintiff is the only licensed tobacco retailer against whom the tobacco border tax is being assessed.”

The lawsuit argues the Tax Commission’s “actions in assessing and collecting a higher tax rate upon plaintiff’s retail tobacco shop is discriminatory and in violation of the equal protection clauses of the Osage Nation and United States Constitutions.”

The Highway 123 Smokeshop lawsuit states: “The additional Osage border tax rate bears no substantial relationship to any legitimate government purpose and it is arbitrary, capricious and unenforceable.”

In seeking relief after exhausting administrative remedies, according to the lawsuit, the Highway 123 Smokeshop is asking the tribal court to rule against the Tax Commission and to “issue an order enjoining the Tax Commission from assessing or collecting the tobacco border tax” from the shop.

Tax break

Before Chief Red Eagle took action on ONCA 11-33 in April, the Tax Commission objected to repealing the border tax. In an April 7 letter, the Tax Commission said Mays could pocket up to $100,968 if the border tax is repealed and if the store sells the same number of cartons this year as he did in 2010. “This is, in essence, taking $100,968 of the Nation’s annual income and giving it to one individual Osage,” the letter states.
Election Code changes to be considered by the Second ON Congress

By Benny Polacca
Osage News

The Osage Nation Election Board is considering amendments to the election code, which could be considered by the Second ON Congress in the Tzi-Zho Session.

The next general election is slated for June 2012. That is when six ON Congress terms will expire and those four-year-term seats will be up for grabs.

In the meantime, Election officials have been considering revisions to the law to reflect issues and events which occurred during the 2010 general and runoff elections, as well as worse case scenarios. A revised code is subject to Congressional approval.

One of those changes includes a requirement for the chief and assistant chief to run on a single ticket as well as revised timelines for elections, primary elections and special elections.

The revised election code was presented to the Congress during the Hun-Kah Session, but was tabled pending feedback from the Attorney General’s Office.

Congressman Raymond Red Corn is sponsoring the revised election code, ONCA 11-40.

According to the bill, “the joint filing of two candidates, one for each Executive position, shall comprise a ticket for the election.”

Red Corn said during the Hun-Kah Session he supports the single ticket idea to run on a single ticket as well as revised timelines for elections.

According to the initial version of ONCA 11-40 filed with Congress, other potential changes and additions to the election code include:

• Staggering the terms of the three election board members with one member serving three years, the second serving four and the third with a five-year term. The two alternate board members would serve four-year terms.

• Holding a primary election for the Principal Chief and Assistant Principal Chief positions if more than two candidates run for those offices. The primary election would be held on the first Monday in April of the year when the Executive Branch positions expire. There would be no primary election for the congressional candidates. If two or less candidates for the Executive Branch run for office, there would be no primary election and those candidates would appear on the June election ballots with the Congressional candidates.

• The revised bill would require an Election Board member to recuse his/ herself from board duties if an immediate family member; person who lives with the board member; or a business partner affiliated with the board member files as a candidate for office.

• The Election Board will not be required to participate in inauguration ceremonies.

• Any member of the Osage Nation whose 18th birthday occurs on or before any election shall be placed on the Osage voter registry six months prior to that election.

• Language forbidding candidates from holding an Executive or Legislative branch term while concurrently serving on the Osage Minerals Council.

The Election Board was slated to revisit ONCA 11-40 on Sept. 1 just before this story was published. The 24-day Tzi-Zho Session of the Congress starts Sept. 6.
Osage Nation stars in the *New York Times* bestseller ‘Robopocalypse’

Steven Spielberg set to direct film adaption, scheduled to be released in 2013

By Shannon Shaw
Osage News

It's the future and humans are dependent on robots and machines. Zero Hour strikes and the robots rise up, killing everyone in sight. New York, Tokyo, London, nowhere is safe. Who will save humankind? The Grayhorse Army.

The Osage Nation is one of the protagonists in the *New York Times* bestselling, “Robopocalypse,” which features Osage characters from the Grayhorse Indian Village. Optioned by DreamWorks before the book was even published, the film version is set to be directed by Steven Spielberg and is scheduled for a release date of 2013.

The Osage News spoke with “Robopocalypse” author, Daniel H. Wilson, on why he chose the Osage Nation, what does he know about the film coming out, and why he described Osages as dancing the In-Lon-Schka with their eyes closed.

*Osage News:* What was your inspiration to use the Osage Nation as the basis for tribal governments/tribal society in your book?

Daniel H. Wilson: I grew up in Oklahoma where sovereign tribal governments are the norm. In the back of my mind, I always thought that if the larger United States government were ever to falter, these smaller governments would be able to keep functioning. Set in a post-apocalyptic world, Robopocalypse was the perfect opportunity to explore this idea. I considered a few different tribes, but the Osage Nation had the best balance between urban and rural areas. Tribal boundaries are often overlayed on top of existing cities, but that’s where the machines are attacking first. On the other hand, I didn’t want to set this novel on an isolated reservation. As it turned out, Grayhorse provided the perfect setting because it serves as a spiritual home to return to in a time of crisis, and it’s also rural enough to be safe from crazy machines.

*ON:* I’ve read you are from Oklahoma around the Tulsa area. Have you ever been to our tribal campus or the village of Grayhorse?

Daniel H. Wilson: I grew up in Tulsa, I had heard of Grayhorse and I’ve had Osage friends, but never made it out to visit. I suppose Ponca City is about as close as I’ve made it!

*ON:* Are you Native American? If so, what tribe?

Daniel H. Wilson: I am a member of the Cherokee Nation, although I am nowhere near full-blood. I’m thankful that in Oklahoma I had the chance to learn about my heritage, even without strong family ties to the tribe. I remember Archie Mason coming out to Owen Elementary and playing the flute for us in third grade! Later, I was part of the Native American People club at Booker T. Washington High School and then the American Indian Cultural Society at the University of Tulsa. I’ve been to the odd powwow, but I admit that I don’t have near the knowledge about my roots that I wish I had.

*ON:* As with most works of fiction, there are some inaccuracies to the use of some of our traditions, words etc. in the book. Where did you get your information or where did you do your research for your book?

Daniel H. Wilson: Any inaccuracies are my own fault, but I did my best to get it right! My only hope is that the good outweighs the bad, and that Osage readers can enjoy the book and its American Indian heroes. A great research resource for me was Dr. Peggy Hill, a biologist at the University of Tulsa and the faculty leader of the American Indian Cultural Society while I was in school there. Peggy is the one who first explained Grayhorse and the Osage to me. However, some of the themes in the book were also based on the trials and tribulations of other tribes. For instance, the existence of gangster culture at Grayhorse was inspired by the plight of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation of South Dakota.

*See* ROBOPOCALYPSE
—Continued on Page 19
ON Foundation board hires executive director

Foundation seeking Osage applicants for intern position, to establish office operations in Tulsa area

By Benny Polacca
Osage News

The Osage Nation’s Foundation Board is establishing its office operations after the Second ON Congress passed an initial budget for the board in June.

In early August, the board hired an executive director who will be charged with establishing office operations for the board, which is the charitable arm for the Nation.

On Aug. 4, the four Foundation Board members met and voted unanimously to hire Bill Webb, founder of Texas-based Legacy Foundation and Event Management, as the ON Foundation’s executive director. Webb is hired on a one-year contract with the foundation and is looking to hire an intern to support the foundation office operations.

“I am very excited about the opportunity to work with the board of the Osage Nation Foundation to bring their vision to reality,” Webb said in a statement. “There is a tremendous amount of potential and while the direction is clear, there is much work to do on a strategy for implementation.”

Webb said he is considering office space options in the Tulsa area where the Foundation’s office will be based. His company, Legacy Foundation and Event Management, manages several charitable foundations for professional athletes, college and professional coaches, and nonprofit organizations. The firm manages all aspects of the foundations, including administration, marketing, fundraising, compliance, and event coordination.

According to its Web site, Legacy has partner involvement with charity and fundraising events including: Ronald McDonald Charities; Children’s Medical Center of Dallas; Wayman Tisdale Freshman of the Year Award; Friends for Kids; and the Jackson Hole Film Festival.

In a news release, Foundation Board Chairman Alexander Skibine (Osage), said: “Bill Webb brings the skills and knowledge we need to advance the organization and he already has a very good understanding of what we want to accomplish and how we can go about it.”

During the Eighth Special Session, the ON Congress passed an initial $200,000 budget (ONCA 11-66) for the ON Foundation which includes funding for the Foundation office to be established and funding to hire an intern. The four members serving on the Foundation Board were confirmed by the First ON Congress in October 2009. A fifth spot on the board is open.

ON Foundation seeking Osage for intern position

Webb said the Foundation will be advertising and interviewing for the contracted Foundation intern position which will be based at the Foundation office in the Tulsa area.

The selected intern, who will report to Webb, will be responsible for various duties related to the Foundation’s daily activities, including marketing, community relations, communications, event coordination and administration. Applicants should be Osage. A college degree is not required but preferred. Any one interested in the position should email a resume to bwebb@osagefoundation.org.

The four Foundation Board members serving were confirmed by the First ON Congress during the 2009 Tzi-Zho Session. They are:

- Katsy Mullendore Whittenburg, Osage, owns one of the largest historic ranches in Osage County. She serves on the boards of the Woolaroc Frank Phillips Foundation Trustee, the River Oaks Bank in Houston, TX, the Houston Museum of Fine Arts, the American Quarter Horse Association of Amarillo and she is the host of the largest fundraiser for Eldercare of Washington and Nowata counties.
- Monte Boulanger, Osage, is the Senior Operations Manager in Bentonville, Ark., for Walmart’s Credit Card and Financial services for the Western United States. He has also served as chairman of Tribal Voices and American Indian and Alaska Native Resource Group, which advises Walmart on how to appeal to consumers on a cultural and community basis.
- Bill Kurtis is the current host of the A&E channel’s “Investigative Reports,” “American Justice” and “Cold Case Files.” Kurtis, who grew up in Independence, Kan., is a former Chicago CBS News anchor with more than 30 years of experience in journalism and two Peabody Awards. He also serves on foundation boards for

Congress to Issue Report

The Tzi-Zho Session starts its 24-day run on Sept. 6.

Bill and resolutions related to the subpoena meetings may also be taken up in the Tzi-Zho Session. On Aug. 23 for example, Congresswoman Alice Goodfox filed a bill (ONCA 11-78) seeking to “rescind the authority of the Osage Nation Treasurer to sign or endorse” written documents on accounts of the Minerals Estate.

Goodfox’s ONCA 11-78 bill is titled “An act to rescind the authority of the Osage Nation Treasurer to sign or endorse written instruments on accounts of the Minerals Estate.”

If passed, ONCA 11-78 would require that “the Minerals Council shall have full and sole control over all Minerals Estate accounts and shall have all authority to open, close, administer, deposit and draft upon those accounts.”

This is the first time in the reformed Osage government’s history that the Congress has sought subpoenas at this size with regards to the number of testifying individuals and various documents and records.

The subpoena interviews were held July 14-15.

Before the Congress voted on the subpoenas on July 5, the Congressional Affairs Committee met and voted that morning to appropriate money to hire an outside (certified accounting) firm to review documents that are collected via subpoena and that firm will assist the Congress in evaluation of the records and testimony.

Branstetter told the Osage News on Aug. 30 the Congress was awaiting additional documents requested by the Treasurer’s office via subpoena immediately following the July meetings. She said the Congress was also working with the court reporters present at the meetings who took down the testimonies for the meeting report.


See FOUNDATION HIRES
—Continued on Page 19
Oklahoma Assault a showcase of talent

Team provides exposure for ‘overlooked’ Native and non-Native high school basketball players

By Sunnie Clahchischiligi
Osage News

Braxton Redeagle and his friend Christien Crynes have seen a lot of basketball talent go to waste.

They have watched some of their teammates make bad decisions and others give up positive opportunities.

“We had a friend in high school who played basketball but now is in jail for certain mistakes that he made,” Redeagle said. “We know people from the Tulsa area who are friends, who didn’t amount to what we know they could have, all they needed was hopefully someone doing what we’re trying to do now.”

Two years ago, Redeagle and Crynes decided to start the traveling basketball team Oklahoma Assault with high school basketball players, hoping to get them exposed to college coaches, while providing them with tools to prepare them for college.

Redeagle, Osage, is a 20-year-old psychology major at the University of Oklahoma and Crynes is a 21-year-old student at Arizona State University in Tempe, Ariz. The two at some point played basketball with and against each other and kept in touch after high school.

Redeagle said after talking basketball one day the two of them decided to take it a step further.

“We’re a lot alike in our thinking,” Redeagle said. “We really enjoy it (basketball), it’s what we’re interested in, it’s pretty easy to do something you like doing, we both play basketball all the time.”

It was March of last year when they decided to start looking for guys to play on the team. They looked in Osage county and eventually in the Tulsa area.

Redeagle said at first he was just looking to start a basketball team because his younger brother was in high school and he wanted to coach him.

The first team was a 17-and-under team with about 10 players. The team played from the moment their school let out for the summer to the beginning of the next school year.

In the first year Redeagle and Crynes used every contact they had in their books. They called old coaches to use high school gyms for practice and called people they knew for information on tournaments.

Crynes got his mother on board to help the players with college preparations as she made a living out of preparing high school students for college.

The team played in NCAA certified tournaments and tournaments in the Mid American Youth Basketball league.

Since both Redeagle and Crynes are college students the money to run their program came from local businesses, their parents, fundraisers, friends, family and a recent sponsorship from Osage Casinos.

The sponsorship bought the team new jerseys with the casino logo embedded on them.

Oklahoma Assault team, including the co-founders and coaches of the team. Braxton Redeagle, Osage, (front row, first from right to left) and Christien Crynes (front row, second from R to L). The team was founded by Redeagle and Crynes to get high school basketball players exposed to college coaches and to prepare them for college.

So far the team has traveled in tournaments in Edmond, the Tulsa area, Bixby and Wichita, Kan.

At the end of the first summer Redeagle said they were happy to see that what started out as a basketball team turned into something that could help high school basketball players.

“The first summer was pretty smooth, we don’t even know how we came together and played so easily,” Redeagle said. “We were just amazed at the time how two 20-year-old guys could take a group of high school guys and take them around like that, and be able to have control and to have everything work out the way it did.”

Jamison Cass, 18, was one of the players on the first team.

Cass said he was just looking to get some experience playing against competitive teams.

“They opened it up to get looks for people who were getting overlooked,” Cass said. “The program itself allows you to get more than just play bas-

See OKLAHOMA ASSAULT
—Continued on Page 15
Welcome Back Cookout!
Saturday, September 10, 2011
Noon to 2pm
Wakon Iron Hall
Pawhuska, OK

Join us for hamburgers & hotdogs, enroll for fall semester, meet other students and play some ‘Osage Jeopardy’ with us.

Everyone is Welcome!

Prescription Pill Dump Days

September 12, 2011
Barnsdall Senior Center, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Skiatook Walmart, 3 p.m.-6 p.m.

September 14, 2011
Pawhuska Title VI, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Pawhuska Hometown Foods, 3 p.m.-6 p.m.

September 19, 2011
Fairfax, Palace Grocery, 12 p.m.-2 p.m.
Homing, Marvin’s Grocery, 3 p.m.-5 p.m.

September 21, 2011
Skiatook Walmart, 2 p.m.-5 p.m.

Get rid of those old, unused, unwanted, expired medications just sitting in your home and receive a FREE t-shirt!

Oklahoma Assault

Continued from Page 14

Cass said the College Game Plan created by Crynes was most beneficial to him. The Game Plan was a guide with workshops to help the players. He said although he decided not to play college basketball he is instead a freshman at Rogers State University in Claremore.

Which is really all Redeagle and Crynes could ask for.

“The whole point of what we’re doing is to work with high school kids and help them find the opportunities that are available where they can succeed and do the best that they can,” Redeagle said. “We have this mind set of where if we can take some youth and help them improve their lives they can in return improve their community. That’s our outlook on it because most of the people that play on our team are from rougher backgrounds.”

This year Redeagle and Crynes added another team to their program. They had both a 17-and-under and a 16-and-under boy’s team.

Although the focus was get exposure for Native American basketball players, Redeagle and Crynes opened it up to any talented players in the area looking to get noticed.

This year there were Cherokee players form Sequoya, Creeks from Muskogee and two Osages including Redeagle’s brother Cade Redeagle.

“It’s hard to find guys who are Native American with that kind of talent who will stay in the program,” Redeagle said. “Some have to work for their family and some have their own reason that they couldn’t play anymore.”

And others come from rough areas, from the rougher spots in Tulsa.

Even though the second season is over, the work continues for both Redeagle and Crynes.

For the past two years the two have spent countless hours on the phone or talking on Skype, planning for the next season.

“We spent a lot of time on it, pretty much every day,” Redeagle said. “I spend more time working on the program than I do my homework.”

But at the end of the day, once all the marketing calls have been made for sponsorships, Redeagle said the two are reminded of the good they’re trying to do.

He said he realizes that the program might not be for everyone but it doesn’t keep he and Crynes from trying.

“It doesn’t work for everybody but overall it makes an improvement on all different levels, they know some-one’s there for them and the grades do get better. I think it’s just a lot of lifestyle changes and things that they do, we’re the only real positive influence they have in their lives,” Redeagle said. “What we get in return is just that satisfaction, seeing things come together and knowing that we did what we could to help somebody else, I think that’s pretty much all we’re looking for.”

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, 109 E. 6th Street, Pawhuska, OK 74056 or email sshaw@osagetribe.org. Letters must be respectful and informative to the reader, and may be edited for grammar, clarity and space.
As Russell Mashunkashey lifted his drumstick, he closed his eyes and envisioned he and a couple of other singers were sitting under the arbor at In-Lon-Schka.

But there was no arbor, and it wasn’t June. But in the blink of an eye it was the dead of summer all over again.

“It was just like being at home,” Mashunkashey said. “The way we set up camp, the way we, like going from the stage... it was like when me and my brothers sing, when we sing at the arbor and when we’re done we walk back to our camp. That’s what it felt like.”

That’s what performing in front of thousands of people at the 7th Annual Festival of Native People felt like.

The Pawhuska native living in North Carolina organized a group of Osage people to showcase the Osage culture at the festival in Cherokee, N.C. on Aug. 26-27.

A group of about 25 Osages young and old traveled 30-plus hours round trip to the home of the Eastern Band of Cherokees. At least 15 traveled by charter bus and the others traveled on their own.

Mashunkashey moved to Cherokee in 2007 with his wife Karie Mashunkashey after he received a degree in business administration from Haskell Indian Nations University.

He searched for a job but could only land some temporary work helping out with the entertainment department for the tribe.

This year, for the annual festival, he proposed bringing out his people to showcase their In-Lon-Schka, and got the OK.

“She (his boss) was going to try something different,” he said. “Some of the groups you’ve seen here have been here every year, some of the Southwest dancers and the pole flyers, they’ve been here since the beginning, but they were looking for something different.”

This year the festival showcased the Cherokee Warriors, Tsimshian people, Osage people, Aztecs, Navajos, Apaches and the Totonac Pole Flyers.

Vann Bighorse, director of the Wah-Zha-Zhi Cultural Center, said he didn’t hesitate when Mashunkashey passed along the invitation.

“I thought it would be a great cultural exchange with the other tribes that were going to be there,” Bighorse said. “One of our tribal people was there and was involved in the Festival of Native People, and I just thought it’d be good for us to go out and support him and his effort.”

Bighorse, along with his staff at the cultural center, did their best to gather Osages from each district.

Some were Bighorse, his wife Mary Bighorse and their daughter Mary Bighorse Wildcat and her family; John Star Bighorse and his family; Osage Nation Princess Dora Jo Williams; John Henry Mashunkashey and his wife; Osage Nation Assistant Chief Scott Bighorse and Teresa Hudgins; Addie Thomas and her son Jet Thomas.

Those who rode in the charter bus left from the cultural center on Wednesday, Aug. 24, and made the 15-plus hour drive to Cherokee, N.C.

Osage Nation Princess Dora Jo Williams said since her crowning in May she’s made a couple of trips to represent the tribe but nothing like the trip to North Carolina.

“I think it was pretty neat, we showed our own style, our own ways, and it was just something different than anyone’s seen up there,” she said. “How much we traveled, how far it was, it was something new for me, I’ve never been that far away from home before.”

On Thursday the group rested and prepared for the two-day festival.

On Friday, Aug. 26, they set up camp at the Cherokee Fairgrounds where an amphitheatre and vendor areas were set up.

Tables and a tent were supplied in a shaded area of the grounds. It was there that the group set up tables for finger weaving demonstrations, fry-bread making, beading and Indian Dice.

The afternoon session was for youth dancers. The local schools brought kids in to watch other children dance.

The second half of the afternoon was open to all dancers. The Osage dancers dressed under the tent, as they would at their camps, and made their way to the amphitheatre.

Osage dancers showcased In-Lon-Schka at 7th Annual Festival of Native People in Cherokee, N.C.

Story and Photos by Sunnie Clahchischiligi
Osage News

Mashunkashey’s father John Henry Mashunkashey, who also went along for the trip, served as the master of ceremony. Before the Osage dancers made their way on stage, John Henry educated the audience a little bit about the Osage people.

He introduced the singers, who were mostly Osage, and the dancers individually to the audience.

He spoke of the cooks, and how they spent hours in the intense heat cook-

See FESTIVAL OF NATIVE PEOPLE
—Continued on Page 18
Photo left: Mary Wildcat leads the group of Osage dancers around the drum during an afternoon session of the 7th Annual Festival of Native People in Cherokee, N.C. held Aug. 26-27. Wildcat was a group of about 25 Osages who made the trip Cherokee to share their culture.

Photo below: Osage dancers Beaushee Wildcat, Osage Nation Princess Dora Jo Williams, Jaycie Bighorse, John Star Bighorse II, Mary Wildcat, Lesharo Wildcat, Jet Thomas, and Vann Bighorse pose for photos for spectators at the 7th Annual Festival of Native People held Aug. 26-27 in Cherokee, N.C. A group of about 25 Osages made the 15-plus hour trip to share their Osage culture on an all-expense paid trip by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.
Festival of Native People

Continued from Page 12

ing meals for the people. He mentioned the significance of the In-Lon-Schka and what the June dances were like.

It was the first time in the seven years of the festival’s existence that a dance like the Osage In-Lon-Schka had been showcased.

“It was new, we were the first southern plains tribe with a war dance to dance out here,” Russell Mashunkashey said. “They haven’t had that out here.”

The entire trip was paid for by the Eastern Band of Cherokees, which showed only a small fraction of their generous nature.

All expenses were paid for all performers and when the festival first started the Nation had a permanent pole placed on the fairgrounds for the Totonac Pole Flyers.

Teresa Hudgins, mother of Addie Thomas, went along for the trip as the frybread cooker and chaperone for Dora Jo Williams.

Hudgins said she hadn’t been to North Carolina and was happy to experience the cultures and festival with some of her family.

“I liked it, I’m proud of my culture and I enjoyed being able to see my grandson perform in front of other people, other cultures and I enjoyed for him to be able to see other cultures and take that in,” she said. “I ran into people who knew other Osages, one of the vendors knew several people that I knew, and I always find that fascinating. Being able to take our culture and being able to show it to somebody so far away, I think is just awesome.”

More stories and photos about the Festival of Native People on Pages 20-25.

Photo by Sunnie Clahchischiligi/Osage News

John Star Bighorse II, Osage, makes his way around the drum at the 7th Annual Festival of Native People at the Cherokee Indian Fair Grounds on Aug. 26-27 in Cherokee, N.C. Bighorse was one of about 25 Osages who were invited by, along with six other tribes, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians to share with culture.
Save the Date!
–Local Events Calendar

SEPTEMBER

September 10
Osage Language
Welcome Back Cookout!
Wakon Iron Hall
Noon to 2 p.m.
Wakon Iron Hall

September 12
Prescription Pill Dump Days
Full schedule on osagenews.org

September 23
Osage Book Club Meeting
Nehemiah’s Wall
Pawhuska
The Osage Book Club will meet at noon at Nehemiah’s Wall to discuss “The Osage Tribe: Two Versions of the Child-Naming Rite” by Francis La Flesche

October 1
4th annual Scott Kelby Photo Walk
Meet at Old Fire Station, west of Constantine Theater 9 a.m.-11:30 p.m.
Sign up for this free event at www.worldwidephotowalk.com/walk/pawhuska-ok-united-states-old-fire-station-park-area/
Email Sherry Stinson, sherry@tylercreative.com for more info.

October 7
Native American Woman Suffer from Domestic Violence in the Greatest Numbers
Landrum Community Center
Contact Osage Nation Counseling Center

October 15
Northern California
Osage Fall meeting
9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Location: Humanist Hall; 390 27th St., Oakland, CA 94609
Speakers and further details to be announced

October 19
2011 Osage Nation Health Summit
Wah Zha Zhi Cultural Center
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
5th Annual Osage Nation Health Summit
Lunch will be provided.

NOVEMBER

November 6
Benefit Handgame to support the Oklahoma Indian All-Star Games
Grayhorse Indian Village Community Building
Starts at 2 p.m.

Save the Date Submissions
Have an upcoming public event? Contact the Osage News and we’ll list it in our Save the Date section and on our Website. Call (918) 287-5668 or email us at osagenews@osagetribe.org with dates, contact info and details of the event.

Robopocalypse

ON: I have read that the rights were bought by Dreamworks for a feature film to begin filming Jan. 2012. Did you have a hand in the screenplay and will you have a hand in the casting?

DW: The rights to Robopocalypse were optioned by DreamWorks and Steven Spielberg announced that he is going to direct the movie. The screenplay was written by Drew Goddard, who cut his teeth on Buffy the Vampire Slayer and Lost. Obviously, I’m beyond thrilled! Although I’m not a part of writing the screenplay or casting, I was consulted early on about what the robots would look like and how they would act. It’s hard to believe, but the filmmakers have been doing intense pre-production for over a year now, and some of the pre-visualization (videos, artwork, and computer generated models) is mind-blowing. These machines are going to be realistic and terrifying and surprising – I can’t wait to see the finished product!

ON: Out of the Osage characters, which one is your favorite and why?

DW: Lonnie Wayne Blanton is my favorite Osage character, although Cherrah is a close second. Lonnie Wayne is an older guy who is very straightforward and doesn’t mess around – basically, a cowboy. He’s old-fashioned, but also willing to adapt in order to survive, and that means keeping society functioning smoothly as well as fighting the machines. I love the contrast that Lonnie brings between high-tech and low-tech; urban and rural; and cowboys and robots. For example, Lonnie ends up tracking quadruped walking robots through the same woods where he might have gone deer hunting the season before.

ON: Is there anything you would like to add for our Osage readers?

DW: I just want to thank everyone for reading the book, and to apologize for anything that I got wrong! Also, I should mention that Robopocalypse is the second book I had published this year. My other book, called A Boy and His Bot, was released in January and has a Native American boy as the protagonist. It’s a terrific middle reader novel for kids 9 to 12 and I’m really proud of it.

ON: If asked, would you accept an invitation to visit our tribal campus or our In-Lon-Schka dances held in June every year?

DW: Absolutely! And if there is a sequel to Robopocalypse, you can bet that I’ll be out there doing my research. You’ll have to chase me away.

Thanks so much for the interview! You can follow me on twitter @danielwilsonpdx. And my latest news is at www.danielwilson.com.

Foundation Hires

the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, the Nature Conservancy of Illinois, the Abraham Lincoln Museum and Library, the National Park Foundation and the Woolaroc Foundation.

• Skibine is a professor at the University of Utah’s S.J. Quinney College of Law. He has served as deputy counsel for Indian Affairs on the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs in the U.S. House of Representatives. He has served as a regional representative for the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in the Bureau of Indian Affairs and as a staff attorney and project director for the Institute for the Development of Indian Law.
Festival of Native People

Along for the Osage-cultural ride

By Sunnie Clahchischiligi
Osage News

Three young Osages tossed their suitcases filled with streamers and broadcloths onto the Red Carpet bus.

They settled into the theater-like seats with some of their family members and hit the open road for the 2011 Festival of Native People in Cherokee, N.C.

I was asked to follow the group of about 15 Osage parents, children and grandparents as they attended a cultural showcase held Aug. 24-27, more than 15 hours away.

Seven Native American tribes in the country were invited to showcase some of their cultural and traditional dances.

Somewhere between the Oklahoma/Arkansas border and Nashville, Tenn., I was reminded of what it was like to pack your best Indian clothes and head to a foreign land to show strangers who you people are.

As children my young sister and I would pack our best velvet blouses and squash blossoms, and hit the interstate with our uncle.

We traveled to museums and art shows to show people the art of Navajo weaving that had been in our family for more than five generations.

It’s been almost 10 years since my uncle; sister and I packed our Navajo looms onto his extended cab pick-up truck.

Both my grandmother and uncle taught me how to weave Navajo rugs when I was about six years old. My parents worked off the reservation about an hour away from our home on the reservation. After school I walked from the boarding school up to my grandmother’s home, which sat at a mountain base behind the school.

As soon as I walked through the door of the house my great-grandfather built, I dropped my backpack and picked up my wooden comb. My grandmother, or as we call her “Shima,” always had my loom waiting for me.

My older sister, of about 10 years, learned way before I did and my younger sister learned shortly after I picked up the talent. Before we knew it we were featured at big art shows like the Santa Fe Indian Market and the Heard Museum in Phoenix, Ariz.

As a child I never stopped to think about the importance of traveling and sharing my culture with others, but as I sat on that charter bus I realized how valuable it is and it overwhelmed me.

On the bus ride I got to know a lot of the Osage families. Some, I had seen around Pawhuska, and others I had met at least once or twice before.

I remember thinking to myself how brave and patient some of the older parents were. I couldn’t pay my

See OSAGE-CULTURAL RIDE
—Continued on Page 22
The Totonac Pole Flyers make their way down a tower during their culture showcase of the 7th Annual Festival of Native People in Cherokee, N.C. held Aug. 26-27. Seven tribes throughout the country made the trip to Cherokee to show their Native cultures.
parents to sit in a moving vehicle for that long.

I wondered why they would agree to hop on a bus and sit for over 15 hours.

We stopped at a barbecue restaurant outside of Memphis, Tenn., and that’s where I got my answer.

I sat at a table with John Henry Mashunkashey and his wife Ahna Wake and Vann Bighorse and his wife Mary Bighorse. They talked about what Pawhuska was like when they were teenagers. They recalled the various luxury car dealerships in town and the many pharmacies that lined the streets of Pawhuska.

They talked about what it was like to be Osage back then.

Excitement filled their voices when they talked about the traditional food, the people and the Osage culture.

I realized that they didn’t hesitate stepping on that oversized bus because it meant keeping their culture and traditions alive.

They included their children and grandchildren because they would eventually carry on those Osage traditions.

And the children showed no hesitation.

They carried their suitcases filled with their best Osage outfits with gusto.

To read more from Sunnie Clahchischiligi’s blog series, visit www.osagenews.org.
Festival of Native People

Cherokee hospitality

By Sunnie Clahchischiligi
Osage News

Every Friday and Saturday night starting at 7 p.m. a group of people sit in benches around a campfire on Oconaluftee Island Park in Cherokee, N.C.

They spend the evening listening to stories told by a Cherokee traditional storyteller, it's one of the many programs the tribe has to keep the people culturally intact.

I've grown up surrounded by many Native American lands; Navajo, Pueblos, Hopi, Apache and others, but never in my many travels have I seen a tribe that is so culturally rich than that of the Eastern Band of Cherokee.

The Cherokee alphabet appears on just about every street corner and the word “Cherokee” paints the small tourist town.

I traveled to Cherokee, N.C. with a group of Osage dancers and demonstrators for the 7th Annual Festival of Native People. I tagged along to document the trip in words and photographs.

We arrived early in the morning on Thursday and spent the rest of the day exploring and preparing for the weekend festival.

We boarded the Cherokee transit that is the public service provider for the entire Cherokee town, Native or not.

Cherokees and everyone else use the transit system to get to their jobs, appointments and to shopping destinations.

Before heading out we were given a run down of the many attractions in Cherokee, but what struck my interest most was the tribally owned coffee shop called “Tribal Grounds.”

Tribal Grounds was located in a tourist strip that had an urban feel to it.

While I made my way to the shop I saw some local Natives sitting at the patio tables enjoying a cup of java.

The local menu was written in both English and the Cherokee alphabet.

The coffee beans are grown locally and sold in bags in the coffee shop.

Back home we've gone as far as marketing Navajo tea but haven't reached what the Cherokee's have done by growing the beans and creating a full menu from their coffee beans.

Other attractions included tubing and rafting along the calf-high river that flowed along the main highway.

But what was most impressive was how well the Cherokee government took care of their people and their guests.

The Indian Village and fairgrounds include booths for vendors, an amphitheater and a pole installed for the Totonac Pole Flyers, who show for the Festival of Native People.

All expenses were paid for the eight tribes that showcased at the annual event, including the Osage group.

The tribe did everything to make sure the guests got everything they needed.

A little out of town sat the Harrah’s Cherokee Casino and Hotel. That itself was a sight.

I'm not much of a casino goer myself but the magnitude and sheer size of the Cherokee casino was incredible.

The outside was just as beautiful as the inside that had a Dunkin Donuts Express, Johnny Rockets and Uno Chicago grill for its guests.

It was clear the Cherokee government invested in the best of the
More from the

7TH ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF NATIVE PEOPLE

Photo above: A group of Osages play Indian Dice during an intermission from the 7th Annual Festival of Native People held Aug. 26-27 in Cherokee, N.C. The group was invited to the festival to showcase their Osage dance and culture.

Photo page 24: A group of Osage dancers make their way on to the stage of the amphitheater at the Cherokee Indian Fair Grounds during the 7th Annual Festival of Native People held Aug. 26-27 in Cherokee, N.C. The group was invited on an all-expense paid trip to Cherokee to share their Osage culture through dancing and arts and craft displays.
News In Brief

Guest wins $1.1 million jackpot at the Osage Casino in Tulsa

Someone is $1.1 million richer after winning the highest jackpot ever paid at the Osage Casino in Tulsa.

On Aug. 19, a guest (who wishes to remain anonymous) was playing a “Wizard of Oz” slot machine and hit the jackpot on a wide area progressive, the casino said in a news release. A wide area progressive electronic gaming machine is linked together with other machines at unrelated casinos.

The total jackpot of $1,165,889.53 is the largest in the history of the Tulsa casino, which opened in 2005.

“We’re excited for our guest and the fact this is our largest jackpot won at Osage Casino,” Osage Casino General Manager Stephan Burris said in the release. “This event came during Osage Casino’s Seventh Anniversary celebration when guests were winning prizes and experiencing many winning moments at the closest gaming attraction to downtown Tulsa.”

The Osage Casino in Tulsa has more than 1,100 electronic gaming machines, table games and a poker room. The casino enterprise’s Web site is at www.osagecasinos.com.

Cobell settlement hotline up and running

Have questions about the Cobell settlement? Call the hotline at 1-800-961-6109. It’s easy and only takes a couple of minutes.

For more information visit the Web site at www.indiantrust.com.

Osage language no longer being offered in Skiatook

The Osage Language Department will no longer be offering language classes in Skiatook due to the loss of certified teachers on staff. Classes affected will be a class in the Skiatook High School, community evening classes and the Osage Nation Head Start. Classes may resume if a certified teacher is hired for that area, said Osage Language Director Herman “Mogri” Lookout.

Osage Language classes are still being offered in Pawhuska, Hominy, Fairfax and Edmond. The Fall language semester begins Sept. 12.

For more information on class schedules and the Fall language semester, please contact Rebekah HorseChief at (918) 287-5279 or visit their Web site at www.osagetribe.com/language/.

Nation announces 2011 Targeted Emergency Services Grant

Grant targets rural emergency entities serving the Nation; Application deadline is Oct. 14

Osage News

The Osage Nation is announcing its 2011 Targeted Emergency Services Grant in which eligible rural emergency response entities in Osage County can apply for up to $20,000.

The total grant is for $275,000 and each eligible applicant can apply for a maximum amount of $20,000, according to a news release. The purpose of this grant is to expand or enhance emergency services that serve communities within the boundaries of the Osage Nation.

“The targeted services grant will focus on emergency services and specifically rural volunteer fire departments that already operate on a shoe string budget, and we hope to provide some much needed supplemental funding,” said Jennifer Tiger, Director of Strategic Planning and Grants Management. “The Osage Nation is committed to helping sustain critical services in our communities.”

The deadline for submission is Oct. 14 at 4 p.m.

To be eligible for the grant, applicants are limited to rural volunteer fire departments; volunteer fire departments in communities with less than 1,500 persons; Emergency Medical Service providers and organizations offering emergency training such as First Aid-CPR-AED.

Applicants can contact Chris Standing Bear at (918) 287-5633 or Otto Hamilton at (918) 287-5584 at the Osage Nation Office of Strategic Planning & Grants Management for more information or to request an application packet.

Austin Kirk pitches no-hitter, eighth in MiLB history

On July 4, Osage baseball pitcher Austin Kirk threw a no-hitter for MiLB team Peoria Chiefs, an affiliate for the Chicago Cubs.

It was the eighth no-hitter in franchise history and the first solo no-hitter since 1988.

Kirk and his no-hitter clinched a 2-0 win for the Chiefs over the Clinton LumberKings. Kirk pitched a complete game no-hitter with two walks and 10 strikeouts.

He has pitched for the Chiefs since August of 2010. As of Aug. 30 Kirk had a record of 5-10 with a 4.10 ERA (Earned Run Average).

Kirk, who was a standout at Owasso High School, was drafted out of high school by the Cubs in the third round, 109 overall pick in 2009.
Jennifer Bighorse named ‘Rising Star’ by 2010 Great Women of Gaming

Jennifer Bighorse was named a “Rising Star” by 2010 Great Women of Gaming for her outstanding work for Osage Casinos as marketing director in August.

“A real leader, Jennifer demonstrates time after time her ability to involve and motivate others,” said Joe Olujic, chief operating officer at Osage Casinos. “She is a great listener and has the unique ability to hyper-focus when necessary. She can be opinionated, standing up for her position, yet she is still able to go in a different direction when asked.”

Alongside the guest service department, she played a part in designing the Osage EDGE (Exceptional Presentation, Discover the Guest, Go Beyond, Earn their Return) program to train employees in an effort to increase revenue and generate guest loyalty. Due to her commitment to the company, Osage has seen a significant increase in results from promotions, according to an article in Casino Enterprise Management magazine. The Bronco Bucks summer 2010 promotion generated an impressive 88 percent increase in guest rewards card memberships, as well as a spike in other numbers across the board.

Bighorse’s other accomplishments include streamlining the casino’s direct mail promotions, simplifying and digitizing on-property promotions and globalizing marketing efforts across all seven casino locations, saving the company more than $1 million in operating costs in the last year, according to the article.

She has received several awards in the past few years and played a large role in Osage receiving the prestigious Barona/VCAT 2011 Award for Excellence in Indian Gaming Marketing, according to the article.

She has said that one of her proudest accomplishments has been hiring and retaining the staff she has today.

“I really truly believe that everything that’s happened since I’ve been here has been a team effort. Being able to move in the direction that we’re moving has been an accomplishment.”

Cherokee Hospitality —Continued from Page 23

best when it came to their people and community, and they had no problem showing it.

It was nice to see a prospering government that spent a lot of its energy trying to maintain culture and tradition with urban ways.

Visiting the Eastern Band of Cherokee showed that it is possible to be a successful tribe, and without losing focus of the tradition and culture.

To read more from Sunnie Clahchischiligi’s blog series, visit www.osagenews.org.
Births and Celebrations

Happy Birthday!

The family of Isabella Frances Curtis-Standingbear would like to wish her a happy fourth birthday. Isabella has enjoyed a great summer with her family and friends. She was able to travel, swim, and participate in what she calls, “Hey-Yahs” dancing in the In-Lon-Schka.

With much love from: Mom, Dad, brother Maddux, Grandmas, Grandpas, Aunts, Uncles and many cousins wishing you a happy birthday and many more to come.

Happy Birthday!

Joseph Roan Gray will be eight-years-old on Sept. 23. Joseph is in the 2nd Grade at Marrs Elementary in Skiatook. Joseph is active in Cub Scouts and enjoys fishing with his dad and football. He is the oldest son of Matthew and Arlandra (Freeman) Gray, and older brother to Makenzie Maria. Maternal grandparents are Joe and Ann (Maker) Freeman; maternal great-grandparents are Virginia and the late Lloyd Maker, Jess, the late Marcell (West) Freeman and the late Raymond Hill. Joseph’s paternal grandparent is Shannon McGuire. Paternal Great-Grandparents are Jim McGuire, the late Andrew (Buddy) and Margaret (Lutrell) Gray.

To Joseph, we love you and wish you a happy birthday! Love, Mom, Dad and Makenzie!

Happy Birthday!

Sunnie Gullett will be turning 13-years-old on Sept. 15 and her family would like to wish her a very happy birthday. She is the daughter of Lisa Mashunkashey, great-granddaughter of Earl Mashunkashey and the late Betty Mashunkashey, great-granddaughter of the late Catherine Wilson and great-great-granddaughter of the late Lillie Bighorse Cunningham. She is a 7th grader at Pawhuska Junior High School.

Sunnie you are growing up to be a beautiful young lady, happy 13th birthday! Love, mom and all of your family.

Happy Birthday!

Joe Don Mashunkashey and his niece, Mya Miller, both celebrated their birthday on July 12! Joe Don turned 35 and Mya turned four. Mya is the daughter to Julie Mashunkashey Miller and Benny Miller of Pawhuska. Each year Mya looks forward to celebrating her special day with her Uncle Joe Don!!

Happy Birthday!

Whoa! We can’t believe you’re six! Happy birthday, Gianna!!! Sending you love and birthday wishes from Osage County, Oklahoma to Ocean County, New Jersey! Love always, Aunt C and Big Brother.

Happy Birthday Blaine and Bianca!

These are the Hipp twins, Blaine and Bianca. The family would like to send a big birthday shout out to them on Sept. 18, they will be four-years-old. They are currently attending the Osage Nation Head Start in Hominy. Birthday wishes from mom, dad, brothers Blake and Carson and Gammy Delo.

Happy Birthday!

Happy 6th Birthday, TO-OP-PE! Gianna Marie. We love and adore you!

Gianna was born on Sept. 8, 2005 and is from the Grayhorse District. She is the daughter of Eric and Janese (Lasley) Sieke. She is the granddaughter of Raymond A. Lasley, II and the late Gloria J.
Tutoring opportunities available for Osage students

The Osage Nation Tutoring Program and the Sylvan Tutoring Assistance Program is being offered to Osage students through the ON Education department. The ON tutoring program is for Osage students living in Osage county and the Sylvan tutoring program is nationwide.

Osage Nation Tutoring Program

The Osage Nation Tutoring Program is an Osage tribally funded program designed to serve Osage students attending school within the boundaries of the Osage Nation. The intent of the program is to serve as many Osage students in K-12th grades as possible that are at risk of failing required subject areas. Eligible students receiving services through the Osage Nation Tutoring Program will be provided a one-on-one tutoring assignment along with a tutoring plan to be carried out through scheduled meeting with a certified teacher.

Sylvan Tutoring Assistance Program

The Osage Nation Sylvan Tutoring 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 first through twelfth grades that are at risk of failing required subject areas, where Sylvan tutoring centers are available. Students receiving services through the Sylvan Tutoring Program will receive funding of $2,500 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.

If you have any questions or would like to be mailed an application on either of these programs, contact Cherise Lookout with the Osage Nation Education Department at (918) 287-5544 or toll free 1-800-390-6724. Applications are also available online at www.osagetribe.com/education/.

Births and Celebrations

–Continued from Page 28

Blanchard Lasley. She is the great-granddaughter of the late Raymond and Peggee Lasley. Love, Daddy, Mommy, Pa-Pa, Uncle Isaiah, Aunt Melinda, Uncle Brandon, Madeline, Loren and Makani.

Gianna Marie Sieke

Osage Nation Burial Assistance Application Process

• Submit an application within 30 days of time of death
• Provide CDIB or Membership Card that verifies Osage Indian Blood for deceased individual
• Provide a copy of a death certificate for the deceased individual
• Provide a copy of an itemized Funeral Home statement of the deceased individual

The application is complete when all pertinent documentation is received by this office; once the application is complete a letter of approved funds and check will be mailed to the funeral home. Notice will also be sent to the applicant informing them of the amount being paid to the funeral home.

• Allow 10-14 working days for completed application to be processed and a check issued.
• Reimbursements checks will only be issued to funeral home and designated grocer only; individual expenses will not be reimbursed.

For more information, questions, or concerns please contact the Osage Nation Constituent Services Office

Osage Nation Constituent Services Office
Attention: W. Jacque Jones, Administrator
621 Grandview • Pawhuska, OK 74056
Phone: (918) 287-5662
Fax: (918) 287-5221 • Fax: (918) 699-5221
Email: jjones@osagetribe.org

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, 109 E. 6th Street, Pawhuska, OK 74056 or email sshaw@osagetribe.org. Letters must be respectful and informative to the reader, and may be edited for grammar, clarity and space.
Obituaries

William Jack Core

William Jack Core, age 83, of Hominy, Oklahoma passed away August 19, 2011 at the Cleveland Manor, Cleveland, Oklahoma. Jack was born to William Bryan and Edna (Townsend) Core at Hominy, Nov. 10, 1927. Jack graduated from Hominy High School in 1945; Jack proudly served in the United States Army during WWII, and in 1951 graduated from Oklahoma A & M. Jack was a long time resident of Del City and Hominy. Jack was retired; he had been a Dairy Inspector and Milk Lab Tech. Jack relished taking an active role in both his church and in his community. As a long time member of the Hominy Friends Meeting, he gladly gave of his time serving as a Sunday School teacher, on ministry and counsel; and as a member of the finance Committee for the Great Plains yearly meeting. He volunteered for Christ’s Cupboard and acted as treasurer for the Hominy Ministerial Alliance. Jack enjoyed working with the Hominy Community Center, the Hominy Alumni Association and the Breakfast Club Association. Jack also wrote articles for the Hominy Newspaper and helped Norris Fields with the weekly Karate class. He had a gift for showing kindness to others. His tender ways and Can-Do-Spirit made William Jackson Core a beloved family member and friend.

He is survived by one sister: Dorothy Manzer of Hominy, two brothers: Melvin Core and Carl Core both of Pawhuska; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Jack was preceded in death by his parents, two sisters: Lorrena Thompson and Ida Mae Penn; three brothers: Floyd Core, Kenneth Core and Marlan Core.

Funeral Services for Jack were Tuesday, August 23, 2011 at 10:00 A.M. at the Hominy Friends Meeting, Hominy with Pastor David Nagle, Pastor Clifton Phelps and Everett Waller officiating. Congregational songs – “Amazing Grace,” “The Old Rugged Cross,” and special music by Clifton Phelps; Pianist was Waynel Green. Casket Bearers were Homer Joe Holding, Scott Lohah, Cody Re- vard, Bryan Core, Alan Brown, Da- vid Meriable and honorary casket bearers Melvin Core and Carl Core. Interment was in the A.J. Powell Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers donations can be made to Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation, 825 N.E. 13th St., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 73104 or Hominy Friends Meeting. Arrangements were made with Powell Funeral Home, Hominy, Oklahoma.

Otis Chapman Morago

Otis Chapman Morago was born Oct. 24, 1945, to Margaret and Otis E. Mozago, in Santa Fe, N.M. He grew up in Seattle, Washington and attended Rainier Beach Junior and Senior High School from 1961 to 1964. Married Susie Blackwood. Together they have a daughter, Kelly Ann Morago. Otis served in the Army in Vietnam, was gravely injured and received the Purple Heart.

Later, married Lorraine Sather. After many years in Seattle, he moved to Westport to work, surf, and continue his artistic interests. He was well known for his beautiful works of coastal Native American designs in leather, woodcarving and ink paintings, was well known for fly tying of original and popular designs.

Otis was preceded in death by his parents, brother Peter, sister Linda Lee, grandparents, aunts, uncles and sister-in-law Lois Morago.

Otis is survived by daughter Kelly Ann Morago, her daughter, his sister Margo and her family Anthony, their son Daniel and Jill, their sons Dominic and Sebastian Ferraro, brother Michael, half brothers Phillip and Johnny Lou Morago. Best friends Rick Dobbs, Barry Esty, Mark Lewis, Diane Lundy, Bill Vitalis, Jim Wallace and many others who loved him.

Otis passed peacefully on July 3, comforted by his loving sister Margo. Military service was at the Tahoka National Memorial Park at a later date. A remembrance gathering to be in Westport at a later date for family and friends, on the beach and Jetty he loved. God bless you Otis, we will miss and love you forever.

Lisa Wray (Tibbetts) Smith

Lisa Wray (Tibbetts) Smith, a member of the Osage Tribe, passed away on July 10, 2011, in Skiatook, Oklahoma, from an eight-month battle with cancer. Lisa was born Lisa Wray Routh, to Edward W. Routh, and Nancy M. Norman, on April 17, 1959, in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. Lisa was adopted by her stepfather Don Tibbetts as a child, and raised in Bartlesville, Oklahoma City, and Elk City, Oklahoma by Don and Nancy Tibbetts.


Lisa is the great, great granddaughter of Mrs. Aggie (Martin) Ware, original Osage allottee, and her husband Milton Clark Ware; great granddaughter of Mrs. Nancy Jane (Ware) Anderson, original Osage allottee; granddaughter of Mary Nancy (German) Holt, Osage tribal member; daughter of Nancy Marie (Norman) Tibbetts, Osage tribal member.

Lisa was preceded in death by her baby son James Smith. She is survived by her two children; daughter Julia A. Smith, Tulsa, OK; and son Randall K. Smith and wife Haley, currently stationed in El Paso, TX; her parents Don and Nancy Tibbetts, Dallas, TX; brother Kenny Tibbetts and wife Valerie, Elk City, OK; sister Christy Treat and husband Steve, Skiatook, OK; sister Donna Cash and husband Todd, Dallas, TX. Lisa has one granddaughter, Adalynn J. Smith, nephews Sam Treat, Chris Treat, Ryan Cash; nieces Jessica Treat, Lindsay Cash, and Taylor Cash.

Lisa loved life, and loved her family. She was a member of Victory Christian Church in Tulsa, OK. During Lisa’s years at the Tulsa Tribune and Tulsa World, she spent many hours annually working on the Needy Family Project in the Tulsa area. She was also the media representative escorting Oklahoma’s winners of the state spelling bee to Washington, D.C. each year.

Lisa loved the outdoors, especially fishing and camping. She loved gardening and was proud of her flowers and gardens. She was a devoted mother, and a devoted friend to so many. Lisa will be remembered for her beautiful smile, and her goodness toward her friends, her great energy, and vibrant personality.

Lisa was very proud of her Osage lineage through her mother’s side of the family. Lisa asked that all of her family and all of her friends to please remember the good times of her life and theirs. Her desire was that there would be no sadness. Lisa was buried in Elk City, Oklahoma, at her request, with a small family ceremony.

Flash Ebert

Flash Ebert, 75 of Odessa, TX, died Friday, July 29 at Medical Center Hospital. He was born April 8, 1936 to Evelyn Cannon and Conley Ebert in Pawnee, the oldest of four kids. Flash grew up following the boomtowns in Oklahoma, Colorado and Wyoming before the family settled in Texas. The Ebert family put down roots in Odessa. Flash attended Crockett Junior High and Odessa High where he was a standout polevaulter on the track team. He graduated from Odessa High School in 1954 and attended Odessa College.

He married Tommy Della Jackson in Odessa on August 28, 1956. He became a machinist and soon established a reputation as one of the best,
Opinion

Letters to the Editor

Wind Farms ineffective

I read the Osage News article “Wind Farms Possibly Coming to the Osage Reservation” (April, 2011) and want to encourage the Osage Nation to oppose such a move. Living in California, we have wind farms near Palm Springs and we have traveled to Norway and Denmark where such farms also exist. These farms are environmental eyesores, affect the local ecosystems by killing birds that come in contact with their blades, and do not produce the expected amount of electricity. To construct such farms in a tornado-prone area is also folly.

—Deborah Knowlton-Czarnecki
Twin Peaks, California

Build a bridge to the future

The road from my home in San Antonio down to the beach at Port Aransas passes right through Taft Texas in San Patricio County and a wind farm that has 196 towers. In addition to being one of the largest producers of oil and gas in Texas, San Patricio County is a center for farming. The towers built by Siemens are 398 feet tall and have a maximum capacity of 2.3 megawatts. They produce a total of 380 megawatts – enough electricity to power 115,000 homes.

North of Taft, banks of oil tanks and oil wells dot the landscape. Natural gas terminals and pipeline junctions may also be seen from the highway. In my last trip down, I decided to photograph some of these to make the point that wind farms, agriculture and oil and gas production, can and do work side by side in San Patricio County. In the photographs you see oil wells and tanks, and a natural gas junction, all in the midst of the towering windmills. Also in the photos is a freshly picked cotton field with a tower right in the center and shots of bailed cotton waiting to be shipped. I have also posted a video taken about 600 yards away from a group of windmills to show the sound level on my Web site: http://www.osageffr.com.

The oil and gas producers of San Patricio County have partnered with the wind farm companies to work together for their mutual benefit. As I was taking some of these pictures, a county sheriff stopped and asked if we needed any assistance. In our conversation he mentioned that there had not been a single complaint to the county against the wind farm companies from the farmers, or the oil and gas producers.

In the end the people of Osage county will make the decision about wind farms there. However, it would be wise for us to contact all the participants in San Patricio County to ask how they accomplished the successful synergy of the concerned parties. In future meetings between the Osage Nation and the wind farm company, we should be offering our assistance in an effort to partner with them to address our common concerns. Instead of building walls through litigation, we should be building a bridge to the future by working with the county, landowners, oil and gas producers and the wind farm company to achieve our common goals. It is sad to think that we would spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on legal fees to stop wind farms in Osage County, when there is a real need for better medical facilities, elder care and jobs there.

Let’s start a positive dialogue with the involved parties and build a bridge to a better future for everyone in Osage County.

—Jim Ryan
San Antonio, Texas

Without Reservations

Obituaries

which allowed him to raise three successful children. During that time he found time to start building and shooting muzzleloaders competitive. Soon his rifles, which were lovingly hand made, became highly prized. Flash became a State and National Champion, with records that stood for over a decade. He was one of the founders of the Permian Basin Muzzle Loaders Association. He opened his own machine shop in Odessa in 1973, Turbo Specialties and Machine, Inc., which he operated until his retirement in 2000. He may have retired from the business world but he continued with his true love of firearms. He perfected a bolt action for 22 rim fire shooters; it also became a world record setting success, considered by many as the best in the world. The Turbo Mark V has set more world records than any other 22 rim fire action ever in history. It was his crowning achievement.

He was an avid hunter, raising and showing quarter horses and even made time to get his pilots license and fly his own plane. He loved classic cars and rebuilt them. He was a member of three car clubs: The Oil Burners, Hot Wheels and The Midland ACAA. Mr. Ebert was a nationally recognized self-taught engineer who designed and patented his own turbo charger for the oil field.

He is preceded in death by his parents and his only daughter, DeShay Ebert. He is survived by his wife Tommie of 55 years, his sons, Prince Ebert of Odessa and Craig Ebert of Pilot Point, Texas. Three brothers, Gurney Ebert of Ovid, Colo.; Starr Ebert and Joe Ebert of Belton, TX.

Funeral services were on August 1 at the Sunset Memorial Funeral Home Chapel and a burial followed at Sunset Memorial Gardens with Jimmy Braswell officiating. Pallbearers were John Elledge, Mike Barth, Jerry Parkis, Ken Locke, B.D. Berryhill, Sheril Berryhill, Buddy Bradshaw and Carl Chambers.

—Continued from Page 30

Cartoon © Santo Domingo Pueblo Cartoon Artist, Ricardo Caté
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