

January, 2010

# GAH-YAH-TONT

*It is Written*

Newsletter of the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma

## Grand Lake Casino Holds 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Chili Cook-Off

Grand Lake Casino hosted the “Second Annual Grand Lake Casino Chili Cook-Off” on November 4, 2009. The cook-off was started in 2008 when several employees of the Casino boasted of how good “their” individual recipes were.

This year the Cook-Off had 13 entries with tasty productions ranging from mild, to medium to “a little” spicy. The entrants were: 1) Managers on Duty; 2) Count Room; 3) Slot Technicians; 4) Pull Team; 5) Administration; 6) Food and Beverage; 7) Cards; 8) Security; 9) Vault; 10) Cashiers; 11) Housekeeping; 12) Slot Attendants; 13) Gaming Commissioner’s Office.



Judges tasting Chili Cook-Off entries are (front to back) Grand Lake Casino General Manager Rick Smith, Internal Auditor Debbie Logan, and Tribal member Donna Montgomery. Manager in Training Tony Gonzales is in the background.

Judges for this year’s event were Debbie Logan, Internal Auditor; Linda Warren, Grievance Committee member; Donna Montgomery, Tribal member; Rick Smith, Grand Lake Casino General Manager; Jim Spicer, Councilman; and LeRoy Howard, Chief.

After some serious tasting of the 13 entries, Tony Gonzales announced the results. As luck would have it, there was a tie for first place! So, the problem was alleviated by giving \$125 to each member of the two teams tying for First Place. The Pull Team and the Cashier’s came out on top with the Security team coming in Third. The Chili Cook-Off is to become an annual event with a hint that next year it might be an invitational to allow other entities to enter.



## **Tribal EPA Department and Supporters Hold Recycle Event at Grand Lake Casino**

On November 13, 2009, the Seneca-Cayuga Environmental Department teamed up with the Grand Lake Casino and Red Cedar Recycling in promoting “America Recycles Day”. We had approximately 100 participants that brought in paper, plastics, aluminum cans and cardboard, at our collection site in the Parking Lot of Grand Lake Casino.

To help motivate recycling, the Casino offered five dollar free play to citizens who brought in at least five pounds of recyclable materials. The Environmental Department received donations from Rural Electric Cooperative, Public Service of Oklahoma electric, and AGS Gaming for prizes given to lucky recyclers visiting the event. The Energy Efficient prizes ranged from a 22” VISIO Television, electric blanket, and energy saving light bulbs, amongst other prizes. In addition to the five dollar free play, each contributor received a coupon worth five dollars off the purchase of a multi-pack of new energy efficient light bulbs.

The Seneca-Cayuga Smoke Shop manager Stoney Sisco donated coupons and koozies for those interested in them. Thanks go to Marilyn McClland for setting up a display on Domestic Violence Awareness to spread education and information to the public.

We are grateful for all the participation we received and also very proud of keeping approximately 800 pounds of materials out of a landfill. We look forward to our next collection event sometime in March or April 2010. The Environmental department will continue collecting your recyclable goods at the Environmental Trailer Collection site located by the AOA building.



Thanks again to all those contributors who helped make this event a success.

**Remember “REDUCE-REUSE-RECYCLE”.**





**From Chief LeRoy Howard**

Dear Tribal Citizens:

I trust everyone had a good Christmas and enjoyed the holidays. For many of us here, the snow and frigid temperatures was a challenge.

I have, in the past, tried to keep you informed on issues the Tribe has had to deal with for the past year and a half. First is the lawsuit brought by 29 former employees against the tribe for \$1.8 million in addition to what some of them took when they left their jobs. The lawsuit was filed in State Court and we are still waiting for the Judge’s decision on whether that is the proper court.



The Federal Authorities are now investigating the suspicious activities and missing money that occurred during the period prior to mid-2008. We have no idea how long it will take. We are also in settlement discussions with the bonding company of the contractor whose performance wasn’t quite up to standards. Hopefully we can get that settled and we can proceed to get the Fitness Center project completed.

We were not successful this year for the program that funds the major portion of the Tribe’s construction projects. Audit issues were a partial reason for the unsuccessful attempt. Another major funding source for tribal administration was also lost for the past few fiscal years.

Effects of detrimental actions, neglect, or the lack of experienced and knowledgeable staff doesn’t necessarily show up immediately, but because of timing within a fiscal year, and the length of time it takes to conduct audits, we face the consequences later. We are confident that we now have very experienced and knowledgeable people on staff and that we are well on the way toward successful programs again.

I have been experiencing some difficulty with the establishment of a business development arm of the Tribe. I will continue to work on this and plan for more progressive efforts to establish profit generating enterprises for the Tribe. I’ll keep you posted.

Until next time, Thank You and it’s an honor to be Chief of the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma.

LeRoy Howard



## **From Ceremonial Chief Charlie Diebold**

Greetings tribal members,

I hope things are going well and everyone is in good health. It is that time of year when families come together to visit and give thanks. As a native people we are all a family within the tribe and as we go through the holidays keep each other in mind and in your hearts. We also have tribal members serving in the armed forces. Being away from families is especially hard for them and they should not be forgotten. Please keep them in mind during this holiday season as well.



As the newsletters continue I would like to include items for you such as stories, words, updates on happenings etc. So for this edition I am including a story which talks about the “Water Drum”. The water drum is used in all our ceremonies and is tied by the singer. So the next time you hear the singers singing think about what is behind the sound. This story I received from the faith keepers.

### **The Waterdrum**

The water drum used in ceremonies, is a symbol of life and all aspects of life. The drum container, whether a hollowed tree trunk, crock jar or iron kettle represents the body of the Indian people and the pot that holds the corn and meat while it cooks, to feed the people, that they might live. The water inside the drum represents the fluid necessary to all life, water itself.

In the water are placed 4 small stones, representing the four seasons, 4 phases of the moon, the 4 directions, the four sisters (corn, beans, squash, and pumpkin), the 4 winds, the 4 corners of the world and the 4 phases of human life (youth, child bearing years, old age, death).

The deerskin stretched so tightly across the top of the drum represents the animals provided for food, clothing and housing. The rope used to tie the head and pull it tight represents the road of life from beginning to end, strings of the bow and the thread that binds our clothing.

The top or head of the drum is painted with red the color of the sun that lights the way, so life can be. Inside the circle is painted an X with the center of the X representing God as the center of our life, and all creation.

So the drum is the symbol of existence; the body, soul, and all the existing components of life and religion of the Indian people. The drum is also the symbol of God's gift of song; the drum beat is the beat of the heart of the Indian people.

Seneca-Cayuga words for this month:

Turkey: sa-hont

Potatoes: han-na-dah

Sweet Potatoes: han-nat-das

Cake: na-wen-dah-weht

Nya-Weh

Toot-no-sone-dee, Ceremonial Chief



## **Tribal Information Technologies Department Expands**

The Seneca-Cayuga Tribal Information Technologies department has hired two new employees to aid in the upgrade and upkeep of the Tribal computerized systems. Both new employees are tribal members and come from prominent families.

Davey Blansett has two years training in Computer Network Technology and Network Systems Administration at the Tulsa Technology Center as well as two years in Information Assurance and Forensics at Oklahoma State University. He is the son of the late Linda Brown Blansett, Grandson of the late Anita Charloe Brown and John Brown, and Great Grandson of the late Ruby Diebold and Jake Charloe, and Hobart Brown and Gladys Brown.



D.J. Birdsong has earned an Associates in Applied Sciences Degree as a Computer Support Specialist from Northeastern A & M Junior College in Miami, Oklahoma. He is continuing his studies to complete a Bachelors Degree in Computer Sciences. Born in Claremore, D.J. is a 1997 graduate of Jay High School. D.J. is the son of Donald Birdsong, Sr. and Betty (Birdsong) Gray, Grandson of the late Jacqueline (Jackie) Logan Birdsong and Floyd Birdsong and Mary

(Snell) Butler and Richard Sherman Snell, Sr., and Great Grandson of the late David (Babe) and Janie Logan. We welcome both of these new employees to our Tribal staff.

## **Accounting Department Welcomes Kyle Ollis to Staff**

The Tribal Accounting Staff has employed Kyle Ollis, son of Sally Whitecrow-Ollis and Grandson of Mayo and Lucille Whitecrow, as Staff Accountant. Kyle graduated from Commerce High School in 1991, and attended Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, where he earned a BS in Business Administration/Management Information Systems in 2003. Kyle later attended Missouri Southern State University, Joplin, Missouri and earned a BS in Business Administration/Accounting. The Accounting Office is housed at the Grove Tribal Complex and welcomes this new addition to the Staff.



## Tribe Holds Children's Christmas Parties

The Seneca-Cayuga Tribe held the Annual Children's Christmas party in Miami, December 12, 2009 and the Annual party for the Pawhuska area on December 13, 2009. Approximately 500 Tribal Children were treated to gifts and treats. Santa Claus was in attendance and volunteers worked at both parties delivering gifts and holding drawings for door prizes. Free hotdogs, chips, soda and cookies were provided to all those attending.



The parties were huge successes and plans will commence in the near future for next year's get-togethers.

The Miami party was advertised in the Joplin, Miami and Grove newspapers, and the Pawhuska Party was advertised in the Bartlesville, Pawhuska and Tulsa newspapers.



## American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Funds for the Tribe

Flora Elmore, our Governmental Specialist states her office frequently gets the question of "Did the Tribe get any recovery money?" The simple answer is yes. To date the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma has received \$918,618.00 from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act or ARRA of 2009. The Tribe has been notified by email that an additional \$86,000 is being sent through the Department of Energy pushing the total recovery money awarded over a million dollars.

The funds awarded went to the federal programs of childcare, elder nutrition, housing and the building of an emergency power plant. Once the Department of Energy sends a letter of award those funds will be used to replace heating and cooling systems in the AOA feeding site, human resources building and possibly purchase air quality testing equipment. Each of the awards came with strict stipulations that the funds needed to be expended quickly and provide transparency in reporting. To meet the transparency requirements, the Tribe files a quarterly report for public review on [www.recovery.gov](http://www.recovery.gov).

If there are any questions about the awards received or other grants awarded to the Tribe, the office of government specialist would be happy to respond. Please email questions to Flora Elmore at [felmore@sctribe.com](mailto:felmore@sctribe.com).

## GAH-YAH-TONT

Newsletter of the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma

### TRIBAL OFFICERS

LeRoy Howard, Chief  
Katie Birdsong, 2<sup>nd</sup> Chief  
Raymond Rodgers, Secretary/Treasurer  
April Curnutte, 1<sup>st</sup> Councilperson  
Jim Spicer, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilperson  
Leonard Smith, 3<sup>rd</sup> Councilperson  
Geneva Fletcher, 4<sup>th</sup> Councilperson

**Seneca-Cayuga Tribe  
Grove Office  
23701 South 655 Road  
Grove, Oklahoma 74344  
918-787-5452  
Fax: 918-787-5521**

**Seneca-Cayuga Tribe  
Miami Office  
R2301 East Steven Owens  
Boulevard  
P.O. Box 1283  
Miami, Oklahoma 74355  
918-542-6609  
Fax: 918-542-3684**

**March, 2010**

The Seneca-Cayuga Newsletter is a newsletter of the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma, located at the addresses listed above.

The Seneca-Cayuga Newsletter is the official publication of the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe with a goal of meeting Seneca-Cayuga tribal citizens informational needs.

The Seneca-Cayuga Tribal Newsletter is mailed free, one per household, to enrolled members of the Seneca-Cayuga General Council.

## GAH-YAH-TONT

*It is Written*

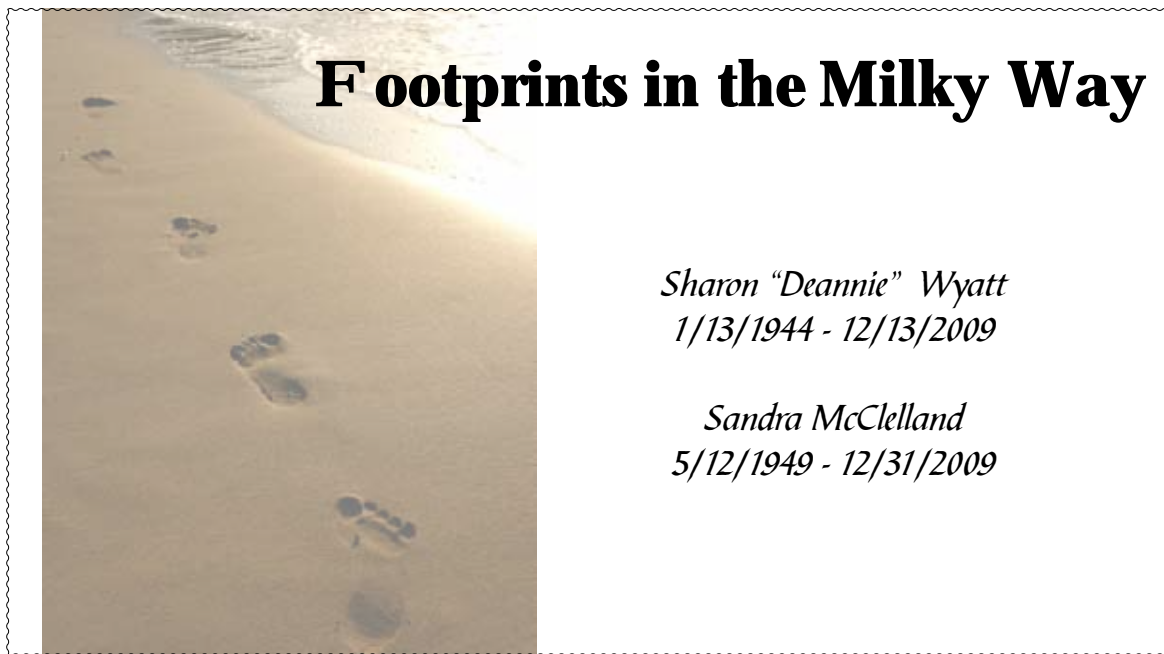


## New Tribal Building Construction Progressing Nicely



Construction on both the Tribal Educational Resource/Career Center and the new Tribal Substance Abuse Program building is progressing nicely. The Newly constructed Tribal Educational Resource/Career Center will house a library, a computer lab and classrooms and is slated for completion and inspection on or about February 1, 2010. The Substance Abuse building which will house the Substance Abuse Program and Counseling services has a scheduled completion date of August 10, 2010.

The new Community House/Ceremonial Building should be completed sometime during March, 2010.



## Stalking Awareness Month

January is Stalking Awareness Month. The [2008 Stalking Victimization Report](#) found that, during a 12 month period, an estimated 3.4 million persons age 18 or older were victims of stalking. Nearly 75 percent of victims knew their offender in some capacity. Stalking victims most often identified the stalker as a former intimate partner (22 percent) or a friend, roommate, or neighbor (16 percent). The report confirmed that domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking crimes are not isolated from each other, but happen as part of a continuum in many victims' lives. We would like to raise awareness in our community about this serious and violent crime. Please call 918-787-5452 if you need help.



## Tax Commission Issues Tag Information

Leslie McCoy, tribal tag agent offers the following information for obtaining your tribal Registration and Tags. The following information and checklists are for use in applying for tribal titles, registration and tags.

Vehicle Year	Description	Tag Fee
2010 - 2006	Less Than 5 Yrs Old	\$150.00
2010 - 2006	Renewal	\$75.00
2005- 2000	5 to 10 Years Old	\$75.00
2005 - 2000	Renewal	\$50.00
1999- Older	11 Years & Older	\$40.00
1999 - Older	Renewal	\$15.00
Elders	55 Years of Age Limit One per Member	No Charge
Motorcycles	Motorcycles	Same as Automobiles
Title Fee	Loss or Change of Information	\$25.00
Lien Fee	Includes Entry & Copy of Title	\$25.00
Mail Processing Fee	Mail Processing Fee	\$1.00
Vanity Tag	Vanity Tag	\$10.00

**COMMERCIAL VEHICLES TWICE THE RATE OF AUTOMOBILES**

**\$.25 CHARGE PER DAY PENALTY APPLIED TO LATE REGISTRATIONS**





Checklist of Information Needed for a NEW TITLE

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Need Original Title
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Need Bill of Sale
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Need Copy of Current Insurance Verification
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Need Copy of Tribal Membership Card (not C.D.I.B.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Payment
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Need Lien Information

Personalized tags are available for a \$45 fee.

Handicapped Tags: Same as Vehicle Registration Fees. Call the Tribal Office at 918-542-6609 for an application for a Handicapped Tag.

Checklist of Information Needed for REGISTRATION RENEWAL

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Need Copy of Current Insurance Verification
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Need Copy of Tribal Membership Card (Not C.D. I. B.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Payment

**Census Results Increase Grant Funds**

With all the publicity the census is sending out about filling out the form and sending it back, I thought I might share how much the answers you send in affect the Tribe's ability to get funds. The United States Government uses the information collected from the census to target areas in the population for funding opportunities. Historically Indians are underreported in the census resulting in limited federal funding opportunities for their tribes. If the US census collects information to prove that the Tribe is growing in size, increased college attendance, homeownership, or the number of members who have lost their jobs, it affects how much money programs receive in the long term.

Also keep in mind that the Tribal planning offices use the data from the census to determine greatest areas of need in the community. The last census reflected a significant number of Tribal members living below the Oklahoma poverty line. With that information the planning office was able to request more federal dollars for feeding programs, low income heating air programs and emergency assistance. The Seneca- Cayuga's were under-reported in the last census so please take the time to fill out your census form and return it. Your answers are important and impact community.



The Domestic Violence Program offers support services, free counseling, financial assistance, and referral services. We can provide workshops or information about Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking. Please call the Domestic Violence Office at 918-787-5452 for assistance.



## **VIOLENCE IS NOT PART OF OUR CULTURE**

### **Nearly One-third of Native female teens involved in violence**

Nearly a third of American Indian and Alaska Native teens were involved in serious fights or attacks in the past year, the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) reported.

Among Native girls and women aged 12 to 17, 29 percent were involved in a violent incident at school or work. That was higher than the national average of 26.7 percent. The report was based on a survey of more than 33,000 girls and women.



## Seneca-Cayuga Department of Public Safety

The Seneca-Cayuga Department of Public Safety put their new Swift Water Rescue Team in service in November of 2009. On January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2010 Grove Police Department Dispatch Center requested assistance with a call 100 yards off Honey Creek Bridge in Grove. The call as sent out as a small child and a dog I the water, possibly under the ice. Grove Police Department expressed great thanks for assisting in their call. The SWRT has attended numerous trainings to include Swift Water Rescue 1, Ropes Rescue 1, and will be attending SWRT 2 in mid-spring, 2010.

The Tribal Fire Department also has 6 people working on Emergency Medical Technician-Basic training and should complete the training in late April, 2010. These individuals are attending classes at Northeastern Area Vo-Tech, Afton, Oklahoma two nights per week since September 1, 2009. Upon completion of classes the department will be one of the only volunteer departments in the area to have this many EMT's on a voluntary basis in the area.

The Seneca-Cayuga Tribal Department of Public Safety has a new STORM SHELTER data base and would like to include your storm shelter and/or safe room on this list. In the event of a disaster, a print out of all locations for storm shelters and safe rooms in the affected area would be distributed to early responders to help them look for survivors. There is no charge for this service, your information will be kept private, and will only be given to the necessary authorities should the need arise. Registration forms are available at the Public Safety Office in the Fire Station.

During the Christmas Eve blizzard, and the following winter weather, The Department of Public Safety had manpower out on the roads within the former reservation boundaries. We were checking roads, continually looking for power outages, and checking on stranded motorists. Roads became very hazardous, and unsafe for our department to be on, so our guys were called back in and put on standby for general emergencies only for several days. We are happy to report that we were not called to fires, or other problems during this time.



Seneca-Cayuga Swift Water Rescue Team pictured from left to right: T.J. Burden, Jamey Lennox, Team Captain Jeremy Foreman, Jerry Clark. Kneeling is Trainee Ryan Brown.



Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma  
P.O. Box 1283  
Miami, OK 74355

1ST CLASS PRSRT  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Joplin, MO 64802  
Permit No. 222



**Owned and Operated by the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma**