

DECEMBER
2023

THE SHAWNEE JOURNAL



PEPOONIKISFWA
December "winter month"

YA'SASILAWIYAKWE

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

"WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO"

**DEC
4**

**MONTHLY BUSINESS
COUNCIL MEETING**
MIAMI, OK

**DEC
15**

**FINAL DAY TO SIGN UP FOR
2024 SLIP CLASSES**
MORE INFO ON PG. 11

**DEC
25-26**

TRIBAL OFFICES CLOSED
IN OBSERVANCE OF CHRISTMAS DAY

**JAN
1**

TRIBAL OFFICES CLOSED
IN OBSERVANCE OF NEW YEAR'S DAY

**JAN
8**

**MONTHLY BUSINESS
COUNCIL MEETING**
MIAMI, OK

**JAN
15**

TRIBAL OFFICES CLOSED
IN OBSERVANCE OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY

**FEB
1**

**HIGHER
EDUCATION AWARDS
WINTER/SPRING DEADLINE**
MORE INFO ON PG. 12

**FEB
5**

**MONTHLY BUSINESS
COUNCIL MEETING**
MIAMI, OK

**FEB
19**

TRIBAL OFFICES CLOSED
IN OBSERVANCE OF PRESIDENTS' DAY

Visit shawnee-nsn.gov/calendar
for upcoming events, or use your
phone to scan here:



Note regarding the monthly meetings of the Shawnee Tribe Business Council (STBC): At their regular monthly meeting on September 6, 2022, STBC unanimously voted to adopt a new rule of parliamentary procedure for all meetings of the Shawnee Tribe Business and General Council informally known as a "second read rule." The second read rule stipulates that the Council may not act on new business during the same meeting in which said business is first introduced. In essence, tribal business must be introduced for a first read and discussion in one meeting, then the Council may take action in a subsequent meeting. **Dates & times for special meetings to accommodate the second read rule will be posted on the Tribe's website at shawnee-nsn.gov/calendar**

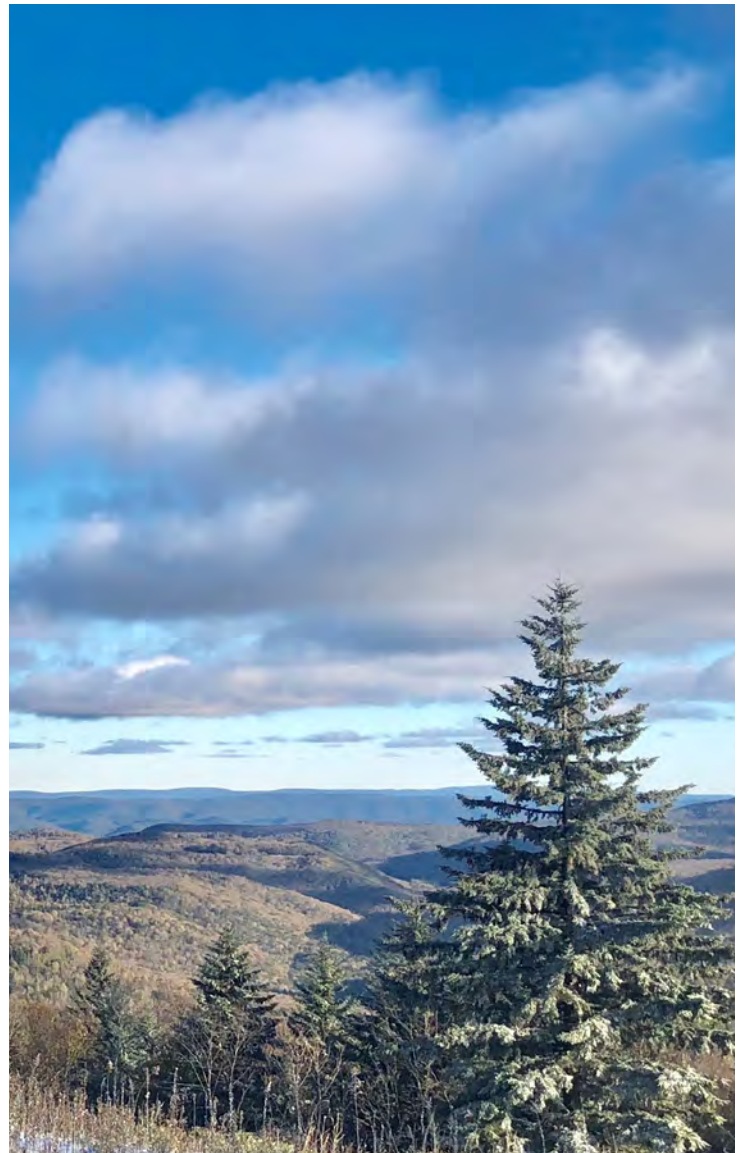
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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

We recognize that digital communications via social media and the internet are not necessarily preferred by or accessible to every citizen of the Shawnee Tribe. As such, we will always strive to introduce new services & programs for citizens through the Shawnee Journal or other direct mailings to all Shawnee households before we broadcast them on our website or social media.

FOLLOW US!

Follow the official Shawnee Tribe Facebook, YouTube and Instagram accounts @saawanooki.

KNOW ANY SHAWNEES WHO'VE MOVED RECENTLY?

Let them know to update their address with our enrollment department so they continue receiving tribal news!

PIYEETAACIMOOWENEEFA "LITTLE NEWS MESSAGES"

Get Shawnee Tribe news and updates once a month by subscribing to our e-newsletter. Sign up at shawnee-nsn.gov/newsletter or scan here with your smartphone.



KIWIITAMAAKONAAKI HOKIMAAKI

MESSAGES FROM THE CHIEFS



**CHIEF
BEN BARNES**

howesi kiiseki caakiwiyeefa, (Good day, everyone),

As we come away from a record-breaking turnout this past September at General Council weekend, I would like to extend many thanks.

To every voter who cast a ballot in this year's election—thank you. I'm honored to serve another term as Chief of the Shawnee Tribe, but I'm even more pleased to know that our tribal citizens are becoming more and more engaged with their tribal government and the election process.

The 2023 election was the first where voters could opt for early voting—either in person or through an absentee mail-in ballot. Voter turnout more than doubled from the previous year's Business Council election, indicating that these early voting options were instrumental in helping more Shawnee citizens make their voices heard at the ballot box. To our Shawnee Tribe Election Committee—thank you for all the time, diligence, and integrity you all have put in to facilitating this year's election.

Finally, I'd like to thank my fellow tribal officials. After well over 20 years in dedicated service to the Shawnee Tribe, Carolyn Smith retired from Seat 1 of the Business Council this fall. Carolyn, it has been a privilege working alongside you, and I hope you enjoy your retirement to the fullest.

To Councilwoman Diana McLean, congratulations on your re-election to Seat 2, and to Councilman Johnny Sparkman, welcome to the Business Council. I am looking forward to continuing the work this Council has begun, fostering continued sustainability in the rapid growth the Tribe has undergone in recent years.

Turning to the months ahead, you can see snow-covered trees in the Monongahela National Forest of our West Virginia homelands on the cover of this newsletter. Later in these pages, you can read about a new program aimed at taking care of our elder citizens (page 11). And on page 7, you can learn about “Kipiyecipakiciipe – Coming Home”—a groundbreaking research project that the Laureate Institute for Brain Research is taking on in a five-year collaboration with the Tribe, merging clinical neuroscience with community & culture based approaches.

I'm reviewing this newsletter as we're entering the colder, darker time of the year. Looking at the cover, I'm thinking about how trees don't go completely dormant beneath the snow in the winter. Rather, they spend their energy in their roots, pushing deeper and broader into the earth so that their branches can take their turn come warmer days.

As we slow down in the coming season, I'd like to gently remind us all to take the time to check in on the individuals and families in our community, especially the *kkilenaweeki* (old folks) and especially those who may be struggling with substance misuse. These winter months get quiet, but they aren't for going silent or sitting completely still.

Reminder: all elected officials can be contacted through the Tribe's website. Visit shawnee-nsn.gov/business-council.

niyaawe, hijini leki.

Chief Ben Barnes



SECOND CHIEF ROY BALDRIDGE

hato caakiwiyeefa (Hello, Everyone)–

Each year at General Council, we are often asked several questions regarding the Shawnee Tribe's unique status. In this article, I will attempt to give a partial answer.

Most know that our ancestors were forced south to the Cherokee Nation after the American Civil War, where we remained until 2000. In 2000, our Tribe was allowed to separate due to the efforts of the Cherokee leaders at the time and Shawnee leaders such as Don Greenfeather, James Squirrel, Ron Sparkman and others. Their efforts resulted in a congressional bill entitled the Shawnee Tribe Status Act of 2000, Public Law 106-568.

The Shawnee Status Act allowed our Tribe to separate from the Cherokee Nation with several conditions:

SEC. 704. FEDERAL RECOGNITION, TRUST RELATIONSHIP, AND PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY.

(b) PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY.–

(3) ADMINISTRATION BY TRIBE.–The Tribe shall be eligible to apply for and administer the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians, including such programs and services within land recognized by the Secretary to be within the Cherokee Nation, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations to the same extent that the Cherokee Nation is eligible to apply for and administer programs and services, but only:

(A) if the Cherokee Nation consents to the operation by the Tribe of federally funded programs and services; **(B)** if the benefits of such programs or services are to be provided to members of the Tribe in areas recognized by the Secretary to be under the jurisdiction of the Tribe and outside of land recognized by the Secretary to be within the Cherokee Nation, so long as those members are not receiving such programs or services from another Indian tribe; or **(C)** if under applicable provisions of Federal law, the Cherokee Nation is not eligible to apply for and administer such programs or services.

(4) DUPLICATION OF SERVICES NOT ALLOWED.–The Tribe shall not be eligible to apply for or administer any Federal programs or services on behalf of Indians recipients if such recipients are receiving or are eligible to receive the same federally funded programs or services from the Cherokee Nation.

(5) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.–Nothing in this section shall restrict the Tribe and the Cherokee Nation from entering into cooperative agreements to provide such programs or services, and such funding agreements shall be honored by Federal agencies unless otherwise prohibited by law.

SEC. 707. TRIBAL LAND.

(a) LAND ACQUISITION.–

(1) IN GENERAL.–The Tribe shall be eligible to have land acquired in trust for its benefit pursuant to section 5 of the Act of June 18, 1934 [48 Stat. 6 985; 25 U.S.C. 465] and section 1 of the Act of 7 June 26, 1936 [49 Stat. 1967; 25 U.S.C. 501]. 8

(2) CERTAIN LAND IN OKLAHOMA.–Notwithstanding any other provision of law but subject to subsection **(b)**, if the Tribe transfers any land within the boundaries of the State of Oklahoma to the Secretary, the Secretary shall take such land into trust for the benefit of the Tribe.

(b) RESTRICTION.–No land recognized by the Secretary to be within the Cherokee Nation or any other Indian tribe may be taken into trust for the benefit of the Tribe under this section without the consent of the Cherokee Nation or such other Tribe.

SEC. 708. JURISDICTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.–The Tribe shall have jurisdiction over trust land and restricted land of the Tribe and its members to the same extent that the Cherokee Nation has jurisdiction over land recognized by the Secretary to be within the Cherokee Nation and its members, but only if such land:

(1) is not recognized by the Secretary to be within the jurisdiction of another federally recognized tribe; or
(2) has been placed in trust or restricted status with the consent of the federally recognized Tribe within whose jurisdiction the Secretary recognizes land to be, and only to the extent that the Tribe's jurisdiction has been agreed to by that host tribe.

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.–Nothing in this Act shall be construed to diminish or otherwise limit the jurisdiction of any Indian tribe that is federally recognized on the day before the date of enactment of this Act over trust land, restricted land, or other forms of Indian country of that Indian Tribe on such date.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 6

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEFS

SEC. 709. INDIVIDUAL INDIAN LAND.—Nothing in this Act shall be construed to affect the restrictions against alienation of any individual Indian's land and those restrictions shall continue in force and effect.

SEC. 710. TREATIES NOT AFFECTED.—No provision of this Act shall be construed to constitute an amendment, modification, or interpretation of any treaty to which a tribe referred to in this Act is a party nor to any right secured to such a tribe or to any other tribe by any treaty.

Those mentioned above are only a few examples contained in the act. Reading the entire act will explain why, in the recent past, our Tribe had to make efforts to return to Kansas, attempt twice to do business in Oklahoma City and finally settle in the Oklahoma Panhandle, even though we did not have a historical connection in the area. It is all about the survival of the Shawnee Tribe for future generations. As I mentioned before, our situation is unique, so please know that if you have any questions, we are only a telephone call, email, or office visit away.

niyaawe (thank you),

Roy D. Baldrige
Second Chief

THE SHAWNEE TRIBE BUSINESS COUNCIL



SECRETARY
**CAROLYN
FOSTER**



TREASURER
**MARK
McDOWELL**



SEAT 1
**JOHN
SPARKMAN**



SEAT 2
**DIANA
McLEAN**



SEAT 3
**SCOTT
SECONDINE**



SEAT 4
**COREY
WINESBURG**



SEAT 5
**MONTY
COOMBES**



SEAT 6
**LEE
BLUEJACKET**



SEAT 7
KENI HOOD

MAALAAKWAHI KE'NEEMEPE: “LET’S LOOK CLOSER”

The Laureate Institute for Brain Research Receives NIH Director’s Pioneer Award for Innovative Research Collaboration with the Shawnee Tribe led by Dr. Evan J. White

The Laureate Institute for Brain Research (LIBR) in Tulsa, OK has received funding through the prestigious National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director’s Pioneer Award (DP1 Mechanism) for an innovative collaborative research project “Kipiyecipakiciipe - Coming Home” between the LIBR and the Shawnee Tribe. The research will be led by Dr. Evan J. White, Principal Investigator and Director of Native American Research at LIBR. This partnership, which is supported by a \$5.9 million, five-year NIH DP1 grant (DP1DA058986), aims to establish clinical cultural neuroscience as an indispensable tool in community-driven research to reduce substance misuse and disorder.

The goal of the project is to address substance use problems that impact Native American people at higher rates than the general population. “Being involved in traditional ways of life has many benefits, and research shows that reducing and preventing substance use is one benefit,” said White. “Our goal is to use modern clinical neuroscience to help understand the way this impacts the brain to promote substance use recovery and prevention.” The project will combine two important approaches: involving the community to consider cultural perspectives and knowledge; and using neuroscience to understand brain processes relevant for substance use disorders. “By combining these approaches, the project aims to make progress in reducing the disparities in substance use problems and understanding how the brain is involved in addiction and recovery,” added White.

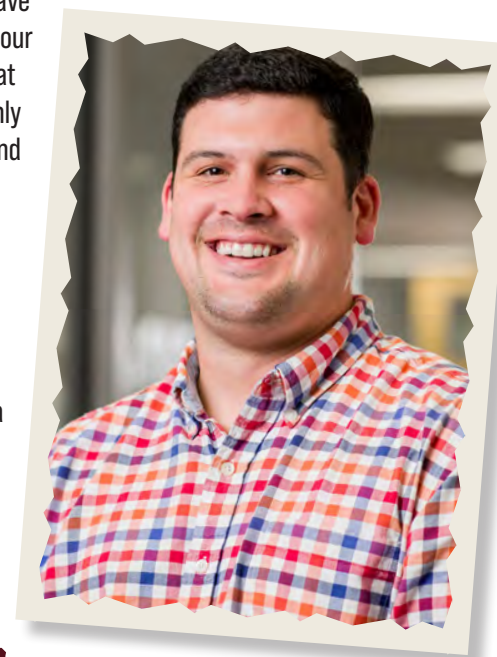
To do this, the project will work closely with the Tribe, using brain imaging techniques to study how cultural engagement affects the brain and its relationship to substance use. “The Shawnee Tribe will help to define what cultural engagement means for the community,” continued White. “This is important because culture is a complex concept that includes many aspects of people’s lives. There is deep cultural knowledge in communities about well-being and living a healthy life. In my view, our job as researchers is to use our scientific toolkit to translate this knowledge

into data and information that can be used by medical policymakers and providers to promote wellbeing in Native communities.”

As the Shawnee Tribe builds its Behavioral & Mental Health Department, tribal leadership hopes to ensure Shawnee cultural knowledge and practices play a central role. A key component of this collaborative research project is a Community Advisory Board comprising Shawnee citizens and ceremonial leaders; the board will inform and oversee Dr. White & LIBR’s research process.

“Shawnee folks deserve Shawnee ways of healthcare,” said Chief Ben Barnes. “I think it’s imperative that our cultural knowledge be the bedrock of any health and human services we provide to our people. We’re extremely fortunate to have experts like Dr. White as one of our own, and I can’t wait to see what his research unravels for not only our nation but Indian Country and healthcare in general.”

Dr. Evan White is an enrolled Absentee Shawnee citizen with Eastern Shawnee and Shawnee Tribe ancestry on his paternal grandmother’s side. He is also a devoted husband and father to two young children, a Shawnee Language Immersion Program student, and actively involved at the White Oak ceremonial grounds and in the Native American Church of Oklahoma.



**DR.
EVAN J. WHITE**

CONTINUES ON PAGE 8

The funding program to which Dr. White's team at LIBR applied—the NIH Director's Pioneer Award mechanism—seeks to identify scientists with high-impact ideas that may be risky or at a stage too early to fare well in the traditional peer review process. The mechanism is designed to support a small number of investigators of exceptional creativity who propose bold and highly innovative research approaches with the potential for high impact on significant problems in any area relevant to NIH. Depending on funding, approximately 7 applications are expected to be funded each year. During the years 2018-2022, the success rate for applicants was 4.5%.

“The project's results will provide valuable information on how cultural factors can protect against substance use problems. It will also serve

as a model for studying cultural factors in other minority groups, and social determinants of health broadly with the goal of improving health for everyone,” commented White.

Dr. White's research for this project will continue through mid-2028. News and outcomes from the study will be published online through the National Institutes of Health's RePORTER tool.

“Kipiyecipakiciipe - Coming Home” is supported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse of the National Institutes of Health under Project Number DP1DA058986. The content reported in this publication is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.

“ OUR GOAL IS TO USE MODERN CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE TO HELP UNDERSTAND THE WAY THIS IMPACTS THE BRAIN TO PROMOTE SUBSTANCE USE RECOVERY AND PREVENTION. – DR. EVAN J. WHITE ”

Scan here to see “Kipiyecipakiciipe - Coming Home” on RePORTER:



WEEMEYAKWE:

“WHERE WE COME FROM”

MONONGAHELA NATIONAL FOREST & SHAWNEE TRIBE COLLABORATE ON U.S. CAPITOL CHRISTMAS TREE

Over the past few months, the Tribe has partnered with the Monongahela National Forest on the 2023 U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree. The Monongahela National Forest is part of the Shawnee ancestral homeland in what's now the state of West Virginia. Shawnee language staff have bestowed the 65-foot Norway spruce with the name “wa’feem’tekwi” which means “bright tree” in saawanwaatoweewe (Shawnee language). Tribal citizens have also contributed handmade ornaments of various sizes. In late November, tribal representatives attended a tree lighting ceremony at the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. After the holidays, the tree will be milled, and the lumber gifted to the ceremonial grounds in White Oak.

Be sure you're following @saawanooki and @USCapitolChristmasTree on social media for updates throughout the holiday season!





Scan here to find
wa'feem'tekwi
on Facebook



CITIZEN SERVICES NEWS

NEW OPPORTUNITIES & UPCOMING DEADLINES

COMING
JANUARY
2024

NEW NEW NEW NEW NEW NEW

ELDER ASSISTANCE REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

Through this new program, the Shawnee Tribe will begin providing funds to assist with expenses incurred in the general welfare of elder citizens and purchases of eligible elder care items. Tribal citizens 65 years of age or older qualify for this benefit. The citizen's income, location or dual citizenship status are not used to determine eligibility.

Expenses such as the following are considered eligible for reimbursement:

Medical & hygienic items, supplies, and equipment:

- » Prescription and over the counter (OTC) medications
- » Ambulatory products (wheelchair, cane, walker)
- » Eyeglasses
- » Dentures

*Utilities, taxes, and insurance:

- » Mortgage or rent
- » Electric, natural gas, propane, water, or trash service
- » Phone or internet bill
- » Property tax
- » Health care or life insurance
- » Homeowner, renter, or auto insurance

*Must be in citizen's name or be able to establish residency

Groceries:

- » Excludes alcohol, tobacco, clothing, and cosmetics

Home Maintenance:

- » Lawn care
- » Handyman services

Application information will be available online January 1, 2024, and a reminder postcard will be sent to all Shawnee households!

SHAWNEE LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM SIGN-UP



saawanwaatoweewe
kitakwiteheepe

The Shawnee Language Immersion Program will be kicking off another year of live virtual classes in January.

ENROLLMENT IS OPEN THROUGH DECEMBER 15.

Self-paced language lessons are also accessible year-round through the online portal SLIPstream.

Email
shawneelanguage@shawnee-tribe.com
for more information about either learning option!



APPLY
BY FEB 1,
2024

APPLY
BY
JULY 1,
2024

HIGHER EDUCATION AWARDS

Thursday, February 1, 2024 is the deadline for the Higher Education Award Winter/Spring Term!

Eligibility:

- » Any Shawnee citizen currently enrolled in a post-secondary education program at the undergraduate, graduate or doctorate level.
- » Any Shawnee citizen currently enrolled in a vocational/trade school program.
- » Applicant must be attending an accredited school, meeting the standards of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or one of its participating or recognized accrediting organizations.
- » Applicant must maintain a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 or higher in order to remain eligible.

Student income, age, location, or dual citizenship status will not be used to determine applicant eligibility.

All program assistance will be awarded as funding is available. Incomplete applications are not guaranteed consideration.

Visit shawnee-nsn.gov/education or email education@shawnee-tribe.com for more information!

COVID-19 IMPACT ASSISTANCE

Financial relief aid is available to the enrolled citizens of the Shawnee Tribe under the United States Department of Treasury's American Rescue Plan Act funding. A direct one-time payment of \$1,500 to offset the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is available to citizens who meet the eligibility requirements. The application period ends on Monday, July 1, 2024. Applications postmarked or submitted online after this date will not be processed.

Eligibility:

- » Enrolled citizen of the Shawnee Tribe as of July 17, 2023
- » 18 years or older as of July 1, 2024 (Citizens turning 18 are eligible to apply once their eighteenth birthday has passed.)
- » Has experienced a negative financial impact or an increase in living expenses due to the covid-19 pandemic

Applicant income, location, or dual citizenship status will not be used to determine applicant eligibility. All program assistance will be awarded as funding is available.

Find full information at shawnee-nsn.gov/covid-relief

Contact program staff at covidrelief@shawnee-tribe.com or (918) 542-2441, ext. 2007.

ICYMI:

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

2023 ELECTION RESULTS



CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE OF THE CHIEF

67% **BEN BARNES (I)** 33% **CYNTHIA GREENFEATHER**

CANDIDATES FOR BUSINESS COUNCIL SEAT 1

12% **HEIDI BIGKNIFE RANKIN** 20% **JANA EDWARDS-JOHNSON**

14% **RUSTY SATTERWHITE** 41% **JOHN SPARKMAN**

13% **RANDY WHITE**

CANDIDATES FOR BUSINESS COUNCIL SEAT 2

39% **MORRIS BLUEJACKET** 61% **DIANA McLEAN (I)**

SPECIAL QUESTION

Shall the monthly stipends for the Business Council Treasurer and Secretary be increased to \$2,100 per month and shall the At-Large Council members stipends be increased to \$1,400 per month, effective October 1, 2023?

74% **YES** 26% **NO**



SHAWNEE TRIBE BREAKS GROUND ON EXPANSION AT GOLDEN MESA CASINO

\$70 MILLION PROJECT INCLUDES HOTEL, RV PARK, RESTAURANT, LARGER GAMING FLOOR

GUYMON, Okla. – Shawnee Tribe Chief Ben Barnes, along with tribal and local leaders and officials with Global Gaming Solutions, LLC (GGS), participated in the official groundbreaking ceremony for a \$70 million expansion of Golden Mesa Casino on September 22.

The expansion project will include a recreational vehicle park, a new 100-room hotel and full-service restaurant, and will double the size of the casino gaming floor to include more than 1,000 electronic games. GGS, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Chickasaw Nation, will continue to manage operations of the casino while the Shawnee Tribe maintains ownership.

Golden Mesa Casino, located about two miles southwest of Guymon on U.S. Highway 54, opened in September 2019, creating a new

tourism and entertainment destination in the region. When it opened, the casino brought with it 175 jobs and about \$4 million in annual payroll. The expansion will increase the size of the casino to 80,000 square feet and increase the daily workforce to roughly 250 employees.

“We are excited to expand our entertainment offerings in the Panhandle and beyond,” Barnes said, “and we’re grateful to be doing so through a meaningful partnership with Global Gaming and the Chickasaw Nation. The rapid growth our tribal nation has undergone just since 2019, and the resources and services we’re now able to provide to our citizens, none of it would have been possible if not for this partnership and the warmth with which the Guymon community has welcomed us out here. I’m thrilled to see the continued fruits of these labors.”

Golden Mesa Casino is the only casino in the Oklahoma Panhandle and attracts visitors from Oklahoma and surrounding states. The casino currently features about 600 electronic games, six table games, a restaurant, bar and retail shop.

“We are pleased to be part of this collaborative effort with the Shawnee Tribe, the city of Guymon, and Texas County to bring the Golden Mesa project to fruition,” Chickasaw Nation Governor Bill Anoatubby said. “We believe this project will increase tourism, enhance local business growth and improve employment opportunities. Today, we salute the leadership of the city of Guymon, Texas County, the Shawnee Tribe and the citizens of the Oklahoma Panhandle for working together to bring economic benefits, new jobs, and entertainment diversity to this region.”

During the construction phase, about 500 unique workers will contribute to the project, with a maximum daily workforce of between 200 and 250 employees on site. Flintco, LLC in Oklahoma City will lead construction efforts on the RV park, hotel and casino floor expansion. The project is expected to be completed by spring 2025.

“Our local partners in Guymon have been crucial to laying the groundwork for this expansion,” said Chris Floyd, President of Shawnee Development. “It’s been a pleasure watching Golden Mesa grow in this community, and we’re excited to see the impact of this phase of growth will be able to make on Texas County and the surrounding areas.”

The casino will remain open during the expansion project, officials said.

“We have enjoyed working with the Shawnee Tribe, local leaders and the hard-working citizens of the Oklahoma Panhandle, who have welcomed us to the community and partnered with us in this project,” Chickasaw Nation Secretary of Commerce Dan Boren said. “We believe Golden Mesa has delivered economic diversification and enhanced tourism opportunities to this region and we expect the expansion of the casino, as well as the addition of the RV park and hotel, will increase the opportunities and the positive impact in the area.”



THE PROJECT IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED BY SPRING 2025.



DEC

THE SHAWNEE JOURNAL

2023



SHAWNEE TRIBE
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