

March 2004

Tribal land base growing, citizen meetings helpful

Greetings Chickasaw citizens. We are indeed living in an exciting time for the Chickasaw Nation. I recently had the opportunity to visit with Chickasaw citizens in Oklahoma City. They invited me to share with them information about how the Land Development Committee works. Though I have written about this in *the Chickasaw Times* on numerous occasions, a face-to-face visit provides opportunity to do so much more. I took sample copies of the types of resolutions that our committee reviews.

As you know, those usually come in the form of land acquisitions, acceptance of land, and the variety of different lease types that are usually jointly held by the Chickasaw and Choctaw Nation. We have voted on several resolutions lately that are for donations of land to the Chickasaw Nation. Providing these copies allowed me to do more of a show-and-tell type of presentation. We also looked at maps of Ada and Tishomingo where several land purchases have occurred. The campus ground around the Chickasaw Nation Headquarters has been added to over the years as we have continued to build our land base here in the Pontotoc District. Once again, the actual map helped us to see what our land holdings around the Headquarters look like. The purpose for this is to allow us to expand our offices and other facilities in the direct vicinity of the Headquarters. I am hoping that the area will one day be encircled by a walking trail.

Though I have not written about diabetes lately, it is still on my mind. I am always encouraging you to keep on walking and help to prevent diabetes or prevent the complications caused by hyperglycemia. The new Diabetes Center will be opening soon, and that is an update you can look forward to in a future publication.

I must let you know that Chickasaw citizens are working hard to bring about positive changes. One such citizen is Betty Smith, from the Oklahoma City area. Betty has worked tirelessly to have a bridge crossing on Highway 4 between Tuttle and Mustang named for her ancestor, Ben Pikey. The story is wonderful, and we will have Betty write an article for *the Chickasaw Times* when her project is complete. With the help of Betty Smith and the State Legislature, we are hoping to have the bridge named Pikey's Crossing.

I continue to receive calls and e-mails from many of you. Thank you for taking the time to either call or write. Get your walking shoes out. Spring is coming, and it is time to get out and walk. You are always on my mind. E-mail me at jparker@mailclerk.ecok.edu, or call 580-332-3840.

Sincerely,

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