

MVSKOKE FOOD

Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative



Double Rainbow over Wilson Farmland
March 22, 2012

MFSI Pays Tribute to All Fathers - June 17th 2012

Dacey Barnett
Office Assistant

President Obama said that anyone can become a father but being a real father means owning up to his responsibilities and being there for the child.

A father is a role model, too, the way he behaves, acts and reacts, carries himself, interacts with others. He gives a sense of security to the child in more ways than one. The child grows up with the comfort that the

father will protect and support the child at all times. The most important role of the father, besides being there, giving love and showing commitment and responsibility, is to teach the child about the sense of values.

My Dad, Reverend John Berryhill, worked very hard providing for his family, working big corn fields, big cotton fields, sugar cane fields, and big gardens. He was always there for me.(article continued page 7)

Announcements

www.mvskokefood.org

MVTO

MFSI would like to say mvto, mvto '[big] thank you' to Jenny Carter and Shirley Wood. Ms. Carter donated two large hardbound texts on forestry science and Ms. Wood donated several gardening magazines. Thank you to these two nice Okmulgee ladies.

Birthdays

Happy Birthday Larry West on June 6th. Larry is a Beginning Farmer and Rancher, enrolled in the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture Program with MFSI.

Okmulgee Farmers' Market

The Okmulgee Farmers' Market occurs every Tuesday and Friday from 8 am - 1 pm on the West lawn of the Creek Council House Museum. Come down and support your local growers!

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Food and Fitness Policy Council

Rita Williams
Policy Coordinator

One of the main goals for the Policy Council is to help create healthy communities at the tribal level as it relates to the nation's food system and physical activity. Discussions of the Creek peoples food timeline is a very important element to helping us understand what we are seeing today in our health related diseases.

Their diet pre-removal took on various foods as our people were introduced to the invasion of European contact, but one thing is certain, their food pyramid consisted primarily of meat, fish, berries, nuts and corn. We don't know everything about pre-removal foods in the Creek diet, or some of the diseases that they died from, this will be an on-going research for the policy council.

During the removal, our people were at the mercy of the federal government. Once they arrived in Oklahoma, a foreign land outside their natural surroundings, they were desolate, suppressed, sick, hungry, without shelter, and suffered tremendous loss. The federal government did very little to take care of their basic needs and much less with no compassion to feed them. As they were corralled like cattle, the soldiers said, "Let them eat grass."

Our Creek people did prepare some foods that were indigenous to their ways, using in place of ingredients that were found in Alabama and Georgia, they had to supplement and be creative with the different environment they were living in.

After many years of survival and land allotment, our people began to raise their own crops, cattle and other livestock. The women learned to preserve food by drying and canning and made their own breads from corn they grew and pounded into meal.

When the commodity program began, our people were given processed flour and lard as a part of their foods. For some households this became their only means of groceries to cook with.

Starting in the 30's and 40's or maybe earlier health providers began seeing health related diseases among our people. As our society grew and the world had changed our food system, so did our diseases. Disease escalated to an all time high with diabetes more prevalent among Native Americans.

(article continued on page 5)

MFSI Today

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Wetumka Indian Community Center, Salsa Garden Training May 3rd 2012

H. June Marshall,
Community Coordinator



MFSI staff Stephanie Berryhill and June Marshall traveled to Wetumka Indian Community Center to share gardening tips on growing tomatoes and peppers. Some of the gardeners were experienced gardeners and they shared tips. Stephanie and June taught what they have been learning about horticulture from their involvement in the Kerr Center Beginning Farmer and Rancher program. Marshall explained the program will be opening in the fall for anyone interested in becoming a part of the program either in the horticulture or livestock tracks. Horticulture is the cultivation of a garden, orchard, or nursery; the cultivation of flowers, fruits, vegetables, or ornamental plants

and/or the science and art of cultivating such plants.

Marshall explained basic steps in growing tomatoes. Tomatoes (Beef Steak) and bell pepper (Big Bertha) plants were given out. Berryhill demonstrated how to seed plants, explained when to plant the seedlings, soil composition, various containers to use, and the importance of following directions on seed packets. Participants seeded tomato and pepper seeds in small paper pots. To maximize use of seeds, plant only one or two seeds in every seedling pot thereby having additional plants and you will not have to thin seedlings. Plant seedlings when they have about four to six leaves. They can be set into larger containers or directly into the ground. Tomatoes like the warm soil and should be planted after the last frost. Check out Stephen Martinson's web site for additional tips on growing tomatoes. <http://www.easytomatogrowingtips.com>

The Big Bertha (hybrid) is an improved variety to produce fruits more abundantly and more resistant to disease. This is the

largest variety bell pepper available, producing heavy yields of sweet peppers that are 7" long and 4" wide that turn from green to red when mature. Seventy-two days to maturity.

MFSI would like to thank Jennie Lillard for getting the training set up and also to the following who came out and shared their gardening experiences: Anna Lowe, Susan Ellis, Jean Noon, Mary Jones, Amanda Martinez, Wilma Coachman, Shirley Berryhill, Irene McQueen, Darlene Morgan, Dolores Chavez, and Lu Coachman. Most of the attendees asked to be put on the mailing list to receive MFSI monthly newsletter. Contact Sue White, MFSI, at 918-756-5915 to be added to the mailing list.

The gardeners expressed interests in the following: Berries, cut flowers, herbs, fruit orchard, honey, commercial vegetable farming, grapes, eggs, and market garden.

MFSI is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit, organized exclusively for charitable, educational and scientific purposes, located at 100 East 7th Street, Suite 101, Okmulgee, Oklahoma 74447.

Wild Foods

Hurry and Gather Those Wild-growing Spring Greens

Stephanie Berryhill
Cultural Preservation/Cultural
Food Policy Specialist



OKMULGEE--Wild-growing spring greens, such as pokeweed and sour dock,

have been up for the last few weeks, but are already getting too big and tough to eat. You may still enjoy these spring greens if you can find late sprouters.

Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative is interested in knowing about the ways that Mvskoke people prepare wild-growing foods that are currently in season. Some of these foods, that are in season locally, include mulberries *kē*, Lamb's Quarters *tahwv*, pokeweed *osa*, and sour dock.

From conversations that we have had with local people we know that mulberries can be used to make preserves and cobbler. Julie Berryhill's late mother, Opal Selvidge, Dustin, used to cook Lamb's Quarters and sour dock in with poke. She prepares tender poke stalk like fried okra and it tastes very good. A traditional southern preparation for poke is with eggs--prepared similarly to wild onions. Wilson area Mvskoke woman Lucille Bear used to feed *tahwv* to her hogs who reportedly "loved" eating it.

Lamb's quarters may be eaten at anytime of the year,



although the leaves are easiest to gather in the spring when they are at their biggest. Next month's "Wild Foods" will include ways to prepare *tahwv*.

Please contact Stephanie Berryhill at (918) 759-0817 to share ways that you, your parents, or grandparents prepare[d] and cook [ed] these wild-growing foods. MFSI would also appreciate having the Mvskoke term for 'sour dock.'

Fried Poke Stalk

- Poke stalk
- Egg white
- Corn meal
- Cooking oil

Gather tender poke stalk (no more than an inch around--close to the size of okra for frying) and slice into small pieces (3/8 inch width--the same size for fried okra). If tender stalks can't be found, strip the stalk rind -- white pithy center will remain. Set aside in a bowl. Whisk an egg white with one-fourth cup of water and add to the bowl of cut stalks--make sure they are well coated. Roll the cut stalk in corn meal and fry in cooking oil at a temperature of 350 degrees until golden brown.

Images:
Top left: Pokeweeds (*osa*)
Bottom right: Mulberries (*kē*)

St. Crispins Adult Diabetes Camp

Rita Williams
Policy Coordinator

On May 16, 2012, Rita Williams, Policy Coordinator was invited to present at the Seminole Nation Diabetes Adult Camp held at St. Crispins.

Scott Robison, M Ed. Health Educator with the Wewoka IHS Adult Diabetes Camp was the coordinator for this annual

camp. He stated, "The Elder patients have been doing some gardening at the Elder Nutrition sites and also in their homes. They requested more ideas and tips to improve their gardens as well as traditional foods."

Rita shared a power point presentation on the Wilson Indian Communities grant project to grow a community garden. Many of the attendees

already grow gardens and are interested in classes on gardening and insect control. They were a good group of adults and I totally enjoyed the sessions I had with them.

Next year they have requested that MFSI do a traditional meal one day of the camp. I am looking forward to this invitation again.

CCHE Policy Coordinator Presents at National Gathering

Rita Williams, MFSI CCHE Policy Coordinator has been invited to present on behalf of the Praxis Project as part of the Roots and Remedies: Toward a Comprehensive Agenda for Healthy Communities, June 22-24, 2012 in New Orleans, LA.

Ms. Williams will present her case study during the Environmental Justice and Mother Earth Session along with co-facilitators, Simone-Senogies from Indigenous Environmental Network and Carla Perez from Movement Generation.

MCN FFPC Continued from Page 2

Once diagnosed with diabetes or any other disease, the bottom line is you have to be conscious of what you eat and put healthy nutritious foods on your plate along with increased physical activity.

The MCN FFPC addresses the needs to better the tribe's agricultural system for healthier fresh foods grown and provided to the citizens at an affordable price, suggests ways to empower the communities to become healthy by eating freshly grown foods and the tools necessary to work this plan, increases physical fitness with safe environments and works towards strong policies for the tribe's food sovereignty, food sustainability and food security.

Henryetta Public School children plant lettuce and radish container garden

Stephanie Berryhill
Cultural Preservation/ Cultural
Food Policy Specialist

HENRYETTA -- Over 100 Henryetta Public School children are learning about food production by seeding lettuce and radishes through a small container garden project at Henryetta Elementary School.

The project has been initiated and supported by Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative in order to get youth interested in eating

healthy, whole foods.

Stephanie Berryhill, MFSI staff member who organized



the project, thinks that one of the best ways to get children to eat healthier foods is to involve them in the food production process. An underlying goal of this short-term project is that it reinforces efforts to get children to make healthier food choices through learning how to grow food.

“Children enjoy planting seeds and putting their hands in soil--they think it is fun. It can also be interesting, fascinating, and empowering for children to be involved in caring for and growing food. The time and effort

that they put into making sure that their plants thrive makes them feel invested in the end

result and having that sense of accomplishment is more than likely to make them want to eat something healthy for that reason alone.”

Connie Adams, Henryetta’s after school program administrator, has done a nice job of making sure that container garden is cared for and

the lettuce and radishes that the children seeded in April are beautiful. Berryhill will assist the youth with lettuce and salad preparation so that the children can try a really good salad before the end of the summer program.

Henryetta Public Schools is one of 17 “Move It!” schools that have been identified by the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Food and Fitness Policy Council (MCN FFPC) because of its high percentage of Native student attendance. Initiating efforts such



as the container garden project is a small step in the direction of meeting one of the main goals of MFSI’s Communities Creating

Healthy Environments Grant, which is improving access to healthy foods in schools with high Native American populations. The tribal food and fitness policy council is supported by Communities Creating Healthy Environments, a grant funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

The focus of this work is also important in the area of MFSI’s partnership with the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture -- which includes getting youth interested in farming and ranching, particularly growing food. Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative believes that providing educational training through materials and resources, coupled with experiential learning by bringing Non-GMO (genetically modified organisms) seeds, healthy organic soil, and containers into schools and communities is one of the most meaningful ways to enable communities to relearn how to grow their own food.

Below are some people that had good compliments/memories about their Dads:

Brittany Barnett/Dad is Dan Barnett from Broken Arrow: He is always there for me and Shannon. He is not just a good Dad but also a good coach in sports. He is always encouraging us to do better in life.

Marcus Briggs-Cloud: In Maskoke kinship structure, a child's clan uncles are the primary male teachers in one's upbringing, not one's father. Men are suppose to be responsible in being present in the lives of their own clan's children, which of course would not be their own children, because you should not marry to your own clan relative. We call our clan uncles "Pvwv" and we call our uncles on our father's side "Erkuce" which literally means "little father". We may not always have a father in our life as the Western nuclear family suggests is most appropriate, but our Maskoke kindship system, when properly exercised, will always provide a male figure in our lives.

Pearl Thomas: Her Dad, Reuben Chalakee, attended the government boarding school. He would tell about meeting Jim Thorpe at Haskell (her Grandson Drew could hardly believe that his Great-Grandpa met Jim Thorpe). He would tell of working for \$1 a day and that \$1 would go a long ways to put food on the table for the family.

He provided for four children and his wife and was working two jobs. Later he went to work for Ball Brothers for 30 years, and still farmed, raised corn, and cotton. They picked pecans and had a large garden into his early eighties. He had good work ethics, was always on time, and believed in working for what you have. He loved chocolate. He always kept his Creek song book and Bible nearby to not forget them. He spoke fluent Creek.

Cerke vcayecet momen vnokecet ometsken safvcket arvres. Taking care of your Father and showing him your love will make him happy.

SUMMER RECIPE

Summer Salad

Chopped Summer Salad by Donna Hill

My sister Donna (lives in the Washita community between the towns of Anadarko and Fort Cobb) made a summer salad that was light and refreshing. She roasted a bell pepper (any color she said) and a fresh ear of corn (more corn as you like), remove husks, and brown in 425° oven for 20 minutes, turning occasionally. Cut in small pieces 1/2 small red onion, one avocado, one cucumber, one tomato, roasted bell pepper, 1/4 c. chopped cilantro or parsley. Add the cooled corn kernels and a can of drained black beans. Mix dressing in small bowl: 2 tbs. lime or lemon juice, 2 tbs. orange juice, 3 tbs. olive oil, 1 tbs. honey, 1 tsp. cumin, 1 chopped clove garlic, salt/ pepper. Pour over salad mixture, let set, and serve. Serves 4. Submitted by J. Marshall.

“You can bury a lot of troubles digging in the dirt.”

Author Unknown



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100 E. 7th, Suite 101, Okmulgee, OK 74447

<http://www.mvskokefood.org>

Summer Events

Indian Health Care Resource Center of Tulsa (IHCRC)
Summer Camp Meals

Friday, June 22, 2012, 11:30 am, Clinton Middle School,
Tulsa, OK (40-45 students)

Thursday, July 19, 2012, 11:30 am, Clinton Middle School,
Tulsa, OK (40-45 students)

Thursday, July 26, 2012, 11:30 am, Clinton Middle School,
Tulsa, OK (40-45 students)

MFSI OFFICE

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INITIATIVE

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MFSI Staff are here to help you. Please
feel free to stop in and visit.

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