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**NOMINEES TO THE TENNESSEE  
COMMISSION OF INDIAN AFFAIRS**

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**GRAND DIVISIONS 2007-2011**

Submitted to the State Leadership  
by the Tennessee Native American Convention,  
in compliance with Tennessee Public Chapter 344 (2003)

28 September 2007

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Résumés of 2007-2011 Nominees to the  
Tennessee Commission of Indian Affairs

Nominees for West Tennessee . . . . . 8  
*Evangeline Lynch,*  
*Jimmy Thigpen, Sandra Ellis*

Nominees for Middle Tennessee . . . . . 12  
*James Meeks,*  
*Melba Checote Eads, Dale Mitchell*

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*Kippy Vaughn, Robbie Cody, Billy Joe Nuckles*

Other Nominations . . . . . 21  
*Brent Cox, Historical Commission*  
*Brent Cox, Human Rights Commission*

The four-year terms (2003-2007) of the three commissioners of Indian Affairs from the state's three Grand Divisions expire on 31 October 2007 (TCA 4-34-104. e & g). The following nominations have been approved by majority vote of the Tennessee Native American Convention (TNNAC) (TCA 4-34-104.b) on 15 September 2007, and are submitted to the State's elected leadership for appointment to the state Commission of Indian Affairs for the succeeding 2007-2011 terms beginning 1 November 2007 and ending 31 October 2011.

**PUBLIC CHAPTER 344 (2003) PERTAINING TO  
THE NOMINATION OF INDIAN AFFAIRS' COMMISSIONERS**  

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**BY THE TENNESSEE NATIVE AMERICAN CONVENTION:**

SECTION 5.

- (a) The Tennessee commission of Indian affairs shall consist of at least seven (7) members as follows:
- (1) One (1) member from each of the four (4) metropolitan areas:  
Shelby, Davidson, Knox and Hamilton, and counties contiguous thereto;
  - (2) One (1) member from each of the three (3) grand divisions of the state; and
  - (3) One (1) member from each Native American Indian nation or tribe located within Tennessee, and recognized by the state per recognition guidelines established by the commission.
- (b)
- (1) **The Tennessee Native American convention shall submit a list of not less than two (2) names for each position on the commission to be appointed.**
  - (2) **Accompanying each nominee's name submitted shall be a resume, including the nominee's educational background, work history, heritage, description of why the nominee would be a suitable commissioner and the democratic process and results that led to the nomination.**
  - (3) **Preference in selection of at least five (5) Indian commissioners shall be given to Native American Indians, i.e., persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North America, and who maintain cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.**
  - (4) **Each member of the commission of Indian affairs shall be a resident of Tennessee.**
- (c) From the names submitted by the Tennessee Native American Convention, the Speaker of the Senate shall appoint two (2) commissioners from two (2) areas, the Speaker of the House shall appoint two (2) commissioners from two (2) areas and the Governor shall appoint three (3) commissioners from three (3) areas. The Governor shall appoint no more than two (2) commissioners from metropolitan areas, and each Speaker shall appoint no more than one (1) member from metropolitan areas.

## **DEMOCRATIC PROCESS THAT LED TO THESE NOMINATIONS**

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1. The Tennessee Native American Convention (TNNAC) was created in 2001 to study, develop and implement a democratic election process within the state-wide Indian community. TNNAC developed a caucus nominating process using a two-tiered system of seven primary local caucuses to elect local commissioner-nominees and delegates to a secondary state convention at which up to fifteen delegates from each of the seven caucuses ( $\leq 105$ ) together determine the community nominees to the state.

2. The 2007 TNNAC Caucuses to select candidates for 2007-2011 Grand Divisions' nomination were held on Saturday, 23 June, at 7:00PM Eastern, 6:00PM Central, simultaneously in nine (9) locations around the state: Memphis, West Tennessee (Martin), Nashville, Middle Tennessee (Lyles and McMinnville subcaucuses), Chattanooga, Knoxville, and East Tennessee (Kingsport and Huntsville subcaucuses). Caucuses were open to all Tennessee residents age 18 and older. Over 140 people attended the caucuses.

3. The 2007 TNNAC Convention to select nominees for 2007-2011 Grand Divisions' appointments was held Saturday, 15 September, at Henry Horton State Park on the Duck River near Chapel Hill in Middle Tennessee. 81 caucus delegates from the seven caucus areas chose from among the 11 commissioner-nominees for the Grand Division areas and elected three (3) top Indian Commissioner nominees. The Convention also approved the nomination of one person to two other state commissions (Historical and Human Rights).

4. Caucus voting was by written ballot. Convention voting was by written ballot, hand, voice and acclamation. All nominees received the majority approval of the Convention for the order of precedence in which they are listed.

5. There were two irregularities: (1) A caucus-qualified candidate from West Tennessee, Donna Bivens, withdrew from the election process in September prior to the Convention citing health reasons; (2) The paper ballots from the East Tennessee caucus were not turned in to the TNNAC officers as requested and have not been located. However, all caucuses' votes at the Convention were reported aloud to the Convention at the time of each vote and several real-time paper tallies made by different individuals such that there is more than ample supporting documentation of all caucuses' Convention voting. No other caucus or convention irregularities were reported and no complaints were received by TNNAC about the nomination process, election process or the results.

## **CRIMINAL BACKGROUND**

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*All candidates have stated that they have no criminal record and no other record that would reflect poorly on his/her ability to represent the State of Tennessee and the Native American Indian community.*

**ACTIVE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE**  
**TENNESSEE NATIVE AMERICAN CONVENTION**

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John Smith, At Large (Memphis), chairperson  
Vicky Garland, At Large (Manchester), first vice-chairperson  
Cleata Townsend, Chattanooga, second vice-chairperson  
Sandi Perry, Nashville, secretary-treasurer  
Ed Vinson, Memphis  
Helen Wagner Vinson, Memphis  
Brent Cox, Jackson  
Dale Mitchell, Nashville  
Charles Lawson, Nashville  
Doug Kirby, Clarksville  
Wally Leary, Chattanooga  
Don Merzlak, Greeneville  
Kim Martin, Knoxville

**TNNAC officers contact information:**

John Smith, 1461 Robin Hood Lane, Memphis TN 38111, 901 / 743-0095, muskogee@bellsouth.net  
Vicky Garland, 55 C.C. Road, Lawrenceburg TN 38464, 931 / 766-0827, vlg42@hotmail.com  
Cleata Townsend, 4409 Lonsdale Drive, Chattanooga TN 37411, 423 / 698-2804,  
humanbeing\_2@hotmail.com  
Sandi Perry, 924 Cheyenne Blvd., Madison TN 37115, 615 / 868-1998, lujah7@hotmail.com

TNNAC website: *www.tnnac.org*

**COMMISSIONER NOMINEES' BY RANK AND INFORMATION STATUS AS VOTED BY THE**  
**September 2007 Tennessee Native American Convention election, Henry Horton State Park**

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**COMMISSION OF INDIAN AFFAIRS**

**WEST TENNESSEE**

1. **Evangeline Lynch\***
2. Jimmy Thigpen
3. Sandra Ellis\*

**MIDDLE TENNESSEE**

1. **James Meeks\***
2. Melba Checote Eads\*
3. Dale Mitchell\*

**EAST TENNESSEE**

1. **Valerie Ohle**
2. Kippy Vaughn
3. Robbie Cody
4. Billy Joe Nuckles\*

*\* Qualifies for Indian Preference*

*Nominees' claims in the following résumés  
have not been checked for accuracy.*

**COMMISSIONER-NOMINEES' ATTENDANCE 2004-07** at the  
meetings of the Tennessee Commission of Indian Affairs

- meeting 1: 31 january 2004 Nashville
- meeting 2: 10 july 2004 Chattanooga
- meeting 3: 18 september 2004 Knoxville
- meeting 3a: 23 october 2004 Nashville, Committee of the Whole: *Recognition Criteria*
- meeting 4: 4 december 2004 Memphis
- meeting 5: 12 march 2005 Nashville
- meeting 5a: 30 april 2005 Nashville: Committee of the Whole: *Recognition Procedures*
- meeting 6: 4 june 2005 Chattanooga
- meeting 7: 8 october 2005 Knoxville - *only 3 commissioners, no quorum*
- meeting 8: 3 december 2005 Memphis
- meeting 9: 4 march 2006 Nashville
- meeting 9a: 20 may 2006 Nashville: Rulemaking Public Hearing  
*on Rules for Recognition Criteria for Native American Indians*
- meeting 10: 10 june 2006 Chattanooga
- meeting 11: 5 august 2006 Knoxville
- meeting 11a: 21 october 2006 Nashville: Rulemaking Public Hearing  
*on Rules for Recognition Criteria for Native American Indians*
- meeting 12: 2 december 2006 Memphis
- meeting 13: 17 march 2007 Nashville
- meeting 14: 9 june 2007 Chattanooga
- meeting 15: 21 july 2007 Nashville
- meeting 16: 25 august 2007 Knoxville

*COMMISSION MEETINGS*

	1	2	3	3a	4	5	5a	6	7	8	9	9a	10	11	11a	12	13	14	15	16	
<b>WEST TENNESSEE</b>																					
<b>1. Evangeline Lynch</b> ( <i>incumbent</i> )	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x								x	x	x	x	13
2. Jimmy Thigpen																	x	x		x	3
3. Sandra Ellis																			x		1
<b>MIDDLE TENNESSEE</b>																					
<b>1. James Meeks</b>						x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			12
2. Melba Checote Eads	x		x	x	x	x				x	x	x	x	x			x		x		12
3. Dale Mitchell						x					x	x	x				x				5
<b>EAST TENNESSEE</b>																					
<b>1. Valerie Ohle</b>		x							x								x	x		x	5
2. Kippy Vaughn ( <i>incumbent</i> )						x		x	x	x	x		x			x	x	x	x	x	11
3. Robbie Cody																				x	1
4. Billy Joe Nuckles											x		x			x	x			x	5
1 1 2 1 3 3 1 3 4 2 4 3 2 4 1 3 7 6 3 6																					
10 nominees																					

**TENNESSEE COMMISSION OF INDIAN AFFAIRS**

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**NOMINEES FOR  
WEST TENNESSEE**

## EVANGELINE 'VAN' LYNCH

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*nominee from West Tennessee*

73 Baseline Road

Dyer TN 38330

731/ 643-6655

vanlynch38330@hotmail.com

born: 1935 Haskell County, Oklahoma

*Qualifies for Native American Indian Preference*

Senate district: 27

House district: 79

### EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

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1954 Cass Elementary School Haskell County OK (*dissolved*)  
Stigler High School Stigler OK

1958 B.S., English Bible and Religion, Bethel College, McKenzie, Tennessee

Certification in Special Education, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale

Certification in Elementary Education, University of Tennessee at Martin

### WORK HISTORY

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1979-2000 Teacher, Resource English classes - Grades 9-12, American History - Grade 11  
Obion County Central High School, Board of Education, Union City TN

1978-1979 Teacher Resources classes, Grades 7-8, Junior High School, Burnet, TX

1970-1978 Teacher Resource classes, Grades 7-8, White County IL

1967-1969 Teacher, English classes, Grades 7, 8&9, Junior High School, Arkoma OK

### HERITAGE / NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN PREFERENCE

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Enrolled member, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

*Qualifies for Native American Indian Preference*

### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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2003-*current* Member, Tennessee Commission of Indian Affairs, West Tennessee, current chairperson

1975-1996 Church Women United, Inc., New York NY

served on National Board 3 different times; 2000-2004 state Vice President

Supporting member, Native American Indian Association, Nashville TN

Lifetime member, Indigenous Women's Network

Lifetime member, Alliance for Native American Rights

### STATEMENT

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- Completed a four-year term on the state Commission of Indian Affairs, presently serving as Chairperson.
- Have knowledge of American history and studied governing principles of various tribes.
- I am a full-blood Choctaw Indian and a member of a federally-recognized tribe, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, a tribe also indigenous to West Tennessee.
- Except during a recent illness, I've attended several ACTIA and TNNAC meetings, and served as Commission Liaison to ACTIA's committee on Recognition Criteria.
- Am collecting data on educational resources and have held various workshops for teachers on Native American history.
- Willingness and commitment to continue working on issues, *e.g.*, health care access for Indians in Tennessee, education resources, and recognition criteria.

## JIMMIE E. THIGPEN

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*nominee from West Tennessee*

3416 Scenic Terrace  
Memphis TN 38128  
901 / 251-1519

jetthigpen@comcast.net

born: 1953 St Louis, Missouri

Senate district: 28

House district: 98

### EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

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1971 Nicholas Blackwell High School, Bartlett, Tennessee

Computer-aided drafting in structural detailing, Memphis Area Vo-Tech.

Classes with current employer (MLGW): computer programs (Quarto Pro, Excel), utility CAD drafting and fundamentals of gas.

Private Investigation course, International Correspondence School

### WORK HISTORY

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1988-*current* Drafter II over gas records and gas mapping  
Gas Engineering Department, Memphis Light Gas and Water (MLGW)

2001-07 Private Investigator, licensed by the State of Tennessee

1971-1987 Sheet metal/iron worker and welder  
Memphis Blow Pipe (now Air Con), Southern Blow Pipe (foreman),  
Allstate Fabrication, Industrial Air Corp. and Tennessee Blow Pipe.

### HERITAGE / NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN PREFERENCE

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Cherokee descendant

*[Not a member of a federally- or state-recognized tribe.*

*No Native American heritage information submitted. Does not qualify for Native American Indian Preference.]*

### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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This last Thanksgiving powwow south of Gainesville, Florida, we were honored as being three generations of male traditional dancers in the arena, my grandson Jacob, my son Jason, and myself. I am a member of the Big River Tia Piah Gourd Clan where I was inducted in 1984 at a Memphis Powwow.

### STATEMENT

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As one of the founding members of the original Far Away Cherokee Association, I served as a board member and co-founded the Human Services department. We helped Indians and Indian descent people and families with appliances, housing, bus tickets to get back home across country, money for automobile repairs, etc. We created a repository for clothing and a food pantry in a garage apartment of my home. I helped to form the first dance team and drum at that time where we went to schools and even performed for Saint Jude Hospital over closed-circuit TV. My family had been invited to dance and share Indian customs at many different places. Being raised by my Grandmother until I was fourteen I was told by her we were Cherokee and I have always believed and stood by that. I have taught my family the same, and my children are teaching their children.

## SANDRA K. ELLIS

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*nominee from West Tennessee*

2750 Ashport Road  
Jackson TN 38305  
731 / 423-0790  
sandraellis@earthlink.net

born: 1966 Albuquerque, New Mexico

*Qualifies for Native American Indian Preference*

Senate district: 27      House district: 73

## EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

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1984    Lexington High School, Lexington, Tennessee

Jackson State Community College  
Union University  
University of Tennessee, Martin

## WORK HISTORY

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1995-*current*    owner, Separate Winds Inc., Jackson TN  
1997-1999      Lowe's, Jackson TN  
1994-1995      Fireline, Jackson TN  
1991-1994      Madison County General Sessions Court, Jackson TN  
1990-1991      US Post Office, Jackson TN  
1990-1990      Proctor Gamble/Quaker Oats/Bruce Hardwood, Jackson TN  
1989-1990      Auto Zone, Decatur AL  
1985-1989      Outboard Marine Corporation, Lexington TN

## HERITAGE / NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN PREFERENCE

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Enrolled member, Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma  
*Qualifies for Native American Indian Preference*

## STATEMENT

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I am a federally recognized member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and I am a direct link from the original peoples of Tennessee and the Creek Nation of Oklahoma. I have been active in Indian Affairs for over two years in Tennessee. I have lived the Culture and can help Tennesseans connect to their original peoples in Oklahoma. I am familiar with the election process and council meetings associated with Tribal Business. My Dad is Principle Chief of the (Creek) Nation enabling a first hand look at the process of Governing a Nation. I am connected to (Indian Country) through business associations. I attend Native American Trade shows and conventions on a regular basis. As a child I attended a Native American Recreation Center after school and participated in the Albuquerque "Gathering of Nations" powwow. I embrace my Elders and join them in Their Friday Luncheons and Sunday breakfasts at the VFW.

I have attended various council meetings for Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma. I have attended meetings of the Five Civilized Tribes in Durant, Oklahoma. I have attended meetings in Macon Georgia concerning Indian Lands. I was invited to participate in the Native American Business Leader Awards Luncheon in Atlanta Georgia. I attended the 1007 Civil Rights Conference in Martin TN. concerning Native Americans.

**TENNESSEE COMMISSION OF INDIAN AFFAIRS**

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**NOMINEES FOR  
MIDDLE TENNESSEE**

## **JAMES E. MEEKS**

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*nominee from Middle Tennessee*

520 Nathurst Street  
Tracy City TN 37387  
615/ 885-2973  
tcia@jemeeks.com

born: 1963 Sewanee, Tennessee

*Qualifies for Native American Indian Preference*  
Senate district: 14      House district: 37

### **EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND**

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1981 Grundy County High School  
1985 B.S., double major in Business Administration and Computer Information Systems  
with an additional emphasis in Economics, Trevecca Nazarene University

### **WORK HISTORY**

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2002-*current* Managing Consultant  
2001-02 Technical Analyst, Peregrine Systems  
1990-2001 Consultant/Business Analyst  
1989 System Manager/Technical Support Analyst, The Institute of Clinical Pharmacology  
1987-88 Systems Manager, Williams, Crosslin, Sparks & Vaden  
1986-87 Programmer, Trevecca Nazarene University  
1986-86 Assistant Manager, ITT Financial Services

### **HERITAGE / NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN PREFERENCE**

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Member, Chikamaka Cherokee Band of the South Cumberland Plateau Region  
*Qualifies for Native American Indian Preference*

### **STATEMENT**

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I have been in some facet of business consulting for the past 18 years. Much of this has been Management and IT (Information Technology) operations. Companies hire me because I have been good at working the puzzle ... I seek solutions and don't just look at the problem. The situations in business, in government and in our communities arise because of the need of the persons involved. It may be that a company's process flow is suffering, and this is where I have been inserted into the program to determine means whereby the companies may work more efficiently. This is and has been the talent I use and would endeavor to use within the office of Commissioner. Have I made mistakes? Yes, because I am actually attempting to do something. If a person never makes mistakes, he/she is obviously doing nothing.

I have attended almost every Commission meeting for the past 4 years

I am in Tribal leadership of the Chikamaka Band

I am a member of the Tennessee Chapter Trail of Tears Association

I have been a delegate, in Middle Tennessee, to the TN Native American Convention

I have been a part of genealogy research to assist others who are digging for their roots

I have attended and participated in festivals and powwows

## MELBA CHECOTE EADS

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*nominee from Middle Tennessee*

605 Meadowview Drive

Mt. Juliet TN 37122

615/ 754-5303

melbaceads@comcast.net

born: 1947 Okmulgee, Oklahoma

*Qualifies for Native American Indian Preference*

Senate district: 17      House district: 57

### EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

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1967 Alvin High School, Alvin, Texas

Licensed Practical Nurse, School of Vocational Nursing

Galveston County Community Hospital, Texas City, Texas

44 hours, Alvin Community College, Alvin, Texas

Prepared Childbirth Instructor, New Born Nursery Nurse, High Risk Nursery, Breast Feeding Consultant, Surgical Nursing, Internal Medicine Nursing, Diabetic Teaching and Nursing, Occupational Medicine, Home Health and Visiting Nurse.

Licensed in Texas, Virginia and Tennessee.

### WORK HISTORY

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2000-current Staff Nurse, Alternate Staffing Concepts, Inc., Nashville, Tennessee  
Vanderbilt Home Health Care, Nursing Resource Solutions Inc., Summit Hospital,  
Alternative Staffing Concepts, Phoenix Health Insurance, Virginia: Lewis Gale Hospital,  
Medical Personnel Nursing Pool, Lewis Gale Clinic

1993-1999 Fourth Floor Staff Nurse PRN Pool, Summit Hospital, Hermitage, Tennessee

1993-1994 Weekend Triage Nurse, Medical Necessity, ER visits, Phoenix Health Care

1993-1994 Special Procedures Nurse (part-time), Gastro Clinic,  
Centennial Medical Center, Nashville, Tennessee

Gulf Coast Hospital, Webster Hospital, and Galveston County Memorial Hospital  
Texas

### HERITAGE / NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN PREFERENCE

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Enrolled member, Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma

*Qualifies for Native American Indian Preference*

### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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Coordinator of the Native American Gatherers' Fellowship.

Served on the Native American International caucus for 8 years is now serving as an alternate.

National United Methodist Native American Center as board Member and Secretary.

Serves on the Southeastern Native American Caucus, Member at large on the Advisory Council to the Tennessee Commission on Indian Affairs as Chair of Recognition Committee and Historical Committee.

Coordinator of the Lord Alderdice Event at the Capitol.

Coordinator of the start of the Sacred Site Run at Pinson Mound.

Coordinator of the Commemorative 'Trail of Tears' walk and Memorial service.

Certified lay Preacher of the United Methodist Church serving the Native American Community at Powwows and Churches.

Keynote speaker at the ending services of the Sacred Site Run last September in Milwaukee, Wisconsin as bundles of earth were commemorated before a Gathering of 2,500 people.

I was one of the speakers at the unveiling of the plaque placed on my great, great grandfather's grave by the 'Trail of Tears' Organization to commemorate Chief Samuel Checote as a survivor of Indian Removal from Fort Mitchell, Alabama, to Oklahoma Indian Territory there in Okmulgee, Oklahoma.

## B. DALE MITCHELL

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### *nominee from Middle Tennessee*

5807-A Mackie Place  
Nashville TN 37209  
615/ 356-8552  
maildale@webtv.net

born: 1955 Andalusia, Alabama

*Qualifies for Native American Indian Preference*  
Senate district: 21      House district: 55

### EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

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1973      Andalusia High School, Andalusia, Alabama  
1974-75      Lurleen B. Wallace State Junior College, Andalusia, Alabama  
1977      Alabama Christian College (*now Faulkner University*), Montgomery

### WORK HISTORY

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2006-*current*      Night Shift Manager, Lewis Country Store and More, Scottsboro TN  
2004-06      Shift Leader, Bread and Company, Franklin and Belle Meade TN  
2001-04      Office Manager, ESS Inc., Nashville TN  
2001      Manager, Great Earth Vitamins, Franklin TN  
2000-01      Shift Leader, Maggie Moo's Ice Cream Treatery, Franklin TN  
1999-2000      Electronic Sales, Sears, Roebuck and Co., Franklin TN  
1998      Store Manager, All Wound Up, Franklin TN  
1998      Salesman, Nordic Trac, Franklin TN  
1998-2001      Sales, Nu-Tree Health Food Store, Franklin TN  
1997-98      Assistant Manager, Natural Wonders, Franklin TN  
1983-96      Lab Tech, Russell Corporation, Alexander City AL

### HERITAGE / NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN PREFERENCE

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Enrolled member, Cher-o-Creek Intra Tribal Indians  
(Alabama state-recognized tribe, formerly known as the Cherokees of SouthEast Alabama)  
*Qualifies for Native American Indian Preference*

### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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1997-98      Chairman, Red Stick Confederacy  
1999      Defendant in TDOT vs Black Bear, White Eagle, et al,  
2000-02      Helped with brainstorming sessions that led to draft of bill to re-establish the Commission of Indian Affairs, along with lobbying efforts.  
2002-03      served on TNNAC board as Secretary/Treasurer  
2003      elected to ACTIA, became Secretary/Treasurer in Feb. 2007  
2006      reappointed to TNNAC  
2006      Served on the board of the Alliance for Native American Indian Rights in 2006.  
Helped draft recognition criteria that was submitted to the TCIA by ACTIA.

### STATEMENT

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I have worked for the Indian Community in Tennessee since 1997, the year I first moved here. I chaired the Red Stick Confederacy - a preservation organization - during 1997-98, and later became involved with the Alliance for Native American Indian Rights of Tennessee.

I was one of the defendants in the Kelly Site court case, and have been involved in other efforts to keep Native cemeteries safe from destruction. I helped with the re-creation of the TCIA, and I was one of the many people who lobbied the Legislature for its re-establishment. I was there also for the creation of TNNAC and the establishment of ACTIA, and I have served on the boards of both organizations. I was also the primary author of the revised 'Historic Tribes of Tennessee' resolution, and did the majority of the research for the listing of the Tribes in that document.

**TENNESSEE COMMISSION OF INDIAN AFFAIRS**

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**NOMINEES FOR  
EAST TENNESSEE**

## VALERIE OHLE

---

*nominee from East Tennessee*

PO Box 20592  
Knoxville TN 37940  
865/ 609-0574  
vohle@comcast.net

born: 1957 Chappell, Nebraska

Senate district: 6

House district: 17

### EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

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1975 Upton High School graduate  
Black Hills State University  
University of Wyoming  
Laramie County Community College

### WORK HISTORY

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1999-*current* Freelance web designer  
2006-2007 Food Services, CG Logistics  
2005-2006 Chophouse South  
1991-1999 University of Tennessee Medical Center  
1989-99 Administrative assistant, health and safety education curriculum developer/trainer  
1981-89 Retail management, consumer goods, automotive sales, food, beverage & catering  
1975-81 Full-time college student

### HERITAGE / NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN PREFERENCE

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Delaware, unenrolled

*[Not a member of a federally- or state-recognized tribe.*

*No Native American heritage information submitted. Does not qualify for Native American Indian Preference.]*

### STATEMENT

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I have been actively involved, both organizationally and individually, for many years. I currently serve on the Holston Conference Native American Ministries Committee, and the board of Wisdom Keepers, Inc. ([www.wisdomkeepers.org](http://www.wisdomkeepers.org)). I have recently renewed my membership in the Native American Journalists Association ([www.naja.com](http://www.naja.com)). I am not affiliated with any other member groups beyond NAJA at this time. As an individual, I started "First Nations First Saturdays," a monthly social gathering and carry-in dinner for native people here in the Knoxville area, am serving on the TNCIA committee to implement the first annual state-wide community Day of Healing that will take place on Columbus Day of this year, am an active working member of TNCIA's American Indian Research Initiative that is working on the research proposal for the state-wide health and education needs assessment, and am active in the grassroots working group that is developing the Tennessee American Indian Migrations project ([tnaim.org](http://tnaim.org)). As chairman of Wisdom Keepers, Inc., I am an active working member of the revived *Tanasi Journal* project ([www.tanasijournal.com](http://www.tanasijournal.com)).

## KIPPY VAUGHN

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### *nominee from East Tennessee*

522 West Wheeler Street  
Rockwood TN 37854  
865/ 354-0398  
kvaughn65@aol.com

born: 1965 Ocala, Florida

Senate district: 12      House district: 32

## EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

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1983    Minot High School, Minot, North Dakota  
1996    Tennessee Correctional Academy

## WORK HISTORY

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2006-07      Home School Teacher, mathematics, science, language arts  
2003-04      Counselor/Security, Camelot Schools, Kingston TN  
1999-2003    Food Steward 2, Department of Children Services, Westview Center, Knoxville TN  
1996-98      Food Steward 1, Brushy Mountain State Prison, Petros TN  
1996-96      Food Steward 1, Morgan County Correctional Complex, Wartburg TN

## HERITAGE / NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN PREFERENCE

---

Cherokee, Creek

*[Not a member of a federally- or state-recognized tribe.*

*No Native American heritage information submitted. Does not qualify for Native American Indian Preference.]*

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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2005-07      Member, Tennessee Commission of Indian Affairs, East Tennessee, vice chairperson

## STATEMENT

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As Commissioner I have worked with the people in the East District of Tennessee, for recognition, Health care. I helped Jonesborough in their July 4th celebration by having a Org. set up hunting camps & c/o traditional dancers.

I feel that in being a Commissioner of Indian Affairs in the State of Tennessee, I could assist others whom like myself are trying to keep alive the heritage that my Grandfather imparted to me. In this way I also would be able to keep alive my Grandfather's memory. I also could help others to learn the ways of The Indian, and assist the ones that have fallen by the wayside, with programs that the Federal Government has available to Native Americans. And hopefully during my time in office the Department of Indian Affairs could develop programs within the State to also assist Native American Indians.

## **GENA ROBIN 'ROBBIE' RECTOR CODY**

---

*nominee from East Tennessee*

402 Cave Creek Road

Loudon TN 37774

865 / 717-3796

robbiecody@peoplepc.com

born: 1961 Loudon, Tennessee

*Qualifies for Native American Indian Preference*

Senate district: 12

House district: 32

### **EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND**

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1979 Lenoir City High School

1978-80 Drafting, Loudon County Vo-Tech Center,

### **WORK HISTORY**

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Painter, One Feather, Inc.

Owner, Little Bear Native American Trade Center

Teaching Assistant, Lenoir City Board of Education

Security Officer, Employer's Security Company

Partner's Home Health- CAN

Assistant Manager, Weigel's

District Store Manager, Stop-n-Go

### **HERITAGE / NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN PREFERENCE**

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Member, Georgia Tribe of Eastern Cherokee Indians

*[ No Native American heritage information submitted. Does not qualify for Native American Indian Preference.]*

### **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

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2004-current Tennessee Council of Native Americans

Unity gatherings of Native Americans across Tennessee

Food drives, Snowbird Community, North Carolina

Clothes drives, Snowbird Community, North Carolina

### **STATEMENT**

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I am active in Native American issues and I am aware of problems in the Native American Community. I am interested in a rebirth in Tennessee of Native American communities that hasn't existed in the last 200 years. I would like to be a "voice" for the Native Americans in Tennessee and see a future that they want to look forward to, (and be part of), like the proud heritage that has been given to us by our ancestors.

## BILLY JOE NUCKLES

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*nominee from East Tennessee*

1308 Kingsview Road  
Kingsport TN 37660  
423/ 245-7403  
bjnucks@yahoo.com

born: 1943 Nickelsville, Virginia

*Qualifies for Native American Indian Preference*  
Senate district: 2          House district: 1

### EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

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1961    Dungannan High School Dungannan, Virginia  
         Northeast Tennessee State  
         TVA  
         Air Conditioning/Refrigeration, National Technical School, California  
         Class A Electrician, US Army ICS Industrial Electrician  
         Electrician Eastman Kodak + US Dept. of Labor  
         Industrial Electrician ICS various other Technical courses  
         Team Management classes

### WORK HISTORY

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1971-2001    Owner/operator of Nuckles Enterprises (*electrical, heating & air conditioning, commercial refrigeration, major appliance repair, microwave oven repair, plumbing and home improvements.*)  
1987-99      Electrical and Mechanical Maintenance Supervisor  
               Eastman Kodak and Eastman Chemical Co.  
1966-87      Electrician, Eastman Kodak  
1961-66      U.S. Navy  
1961          U.S. Department of Agriculture

### HERITAGE / NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN PREFERENCE

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Member, Monacan Tribe of Virginia  
*Qualifies for Native American Indian Preference*

### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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I have been involved with the Monacan Nation and other tribes for over 15 years. I was councilman At-Large Representing the Tennessee Monacan for several years. I was in charge of fund raising at difficult times for the Monacans and some more money raising for tribes in Virginia and other organizations.

### STATEMENT

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I think I would make a real fair and honest Commissioner. Of all the years I have worked with the Indian people, I have never received a dime for my services. I helped the Monacan people with some legal advice and recommendations and helped them with different money raising to help pay for almost 200 acres of land. I was councilman at-large for the Monacan Nation for several years driving 8 hours round trip for each monthly meeting. I also work with the Monacans of Tennessee. I have been attending TCIA and ACTIA meetings for some time.

## **NOMINEES FOR OTHER COMMISSIONS**

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September 2007 Tennessee Native American Convention election, Henry Horton State Park

### **HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

**1. Brent Cox\***

### **HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**1. Brent Cox\***

*\* Qualifies for Indian Preference*

## BRENT COX

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*nominee for Tennessee Historical Commission & Human Rights Commission*

444 Cades Atwood Road

born: 1962 Milan, Tennessee

Milan TN 38358

731/723-9994

*Qualifies for Native American Indian Preference*

bcox@utm.edu

Senate district: 27

House district: 79

## EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

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- 1980 Milan High School, Milan, Tennessee  
1994 B.S. History, University of Tennessee at Martin  
1996 M.A. History, University of Memphis

## WORK HISTORY

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- 2003-current Instructor of History for Dual Credit Courses and Extended Campus  
Areas of expertise: *U.S., Tennessee and Native American History*  
University of Tennessee at Martin  
2000-2002 Adjunct faculty, University of Tennessee at Martin  
2001 Historical Surveyor, Thomason & Associates through TDOT  
1999 Adjunct faculty, University of Tennessee at Martin-Selmer  
1996-2002 Jackson State Community College, Adjunct Instructor, U.S. History  
1987-1996 Confederate Leather Works, produced historical military leather gear  
1996 Carpenter, Lashlee Rich

## HERITAGE / NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN PREFERENCE

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Member, Cherokee Tribe of Northeast Alabama

*[Member of a state-recognized tribe.*

*Qualifies for Native American Indian Preference.]*

## STATEMENT

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I have been a trained Historian since I began writing in 1980 and had historical articles on Tennessee history and the Civil War published in *"Sons of the South"*:

"Only Confederate Reinforcements at Shiloh" 1983

"Mexican American War- Tennesseans are Foot Soldiers" 1983

"Born to Fight: Colonel Jacob Barnett Bittle" 1992

"Heart of the Eagle: Dragging Canoe" 1999 Alexander Street Press

"Chapter Seven of Cherokee Proud" 1998, 1999, 2001

"Zeitgeist" 1992

"Wayne County 1830 Census" 1992

"History of Wayne County" 1992

"Oconstota: The Great Warrior of the Cherokee" 1995

## COMMUNITY

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Past Board member of the Tennessee Native American Convention

To: Governor Phil Bredesen, Senate Speaker & Lt. Governor Ron Ramsey, House Speaker James Naifeh

CC: Candace Cunningham, Governor's Boards and Commissions  
Senator Thelma Harper, chair, Senate Government Operations Committee  
Representative Mike Kernell, chair, House Government Operations Committee  
Joseph Sanders, TDEC General Counsel  
Mark James, TDEC General Counsel  
Sohnia Hong, Assistant Attorney General  
Van Lynch, Chair, Tennessee Commission of Indian Affairs  
Tennessee Native American Convention (TNNAC) officers  
John Smith, Chair  
Vicky Garland, 1st Vice-Chair  
Cleata Townsend, 2nd Vice-Chair  
Sandi Perry, Secretary

Re: **Nomination packet for 2007-2011 Commissioners of Indian Affairs,**

From: TNNAC c/o Vicky Garland, 55 C.C. Road, Lawrenceburg TN 38464, 931/ 766-0827

Governor Phil Bredesen  
<phil.bredesen@state.tn.us>  
Tennessee State Capitol, Nashville 37243-0001  
615/ 741-2001  
Staff contact: Candace Cunningham

Senate Speaker & Lt. Governor Ron Ramsey  
<lt.gov.ron.ramsey@legislature.state.tn.us>  
1 Legislative Plaza, Nashville 37243  
Phone 615/ 741.4524  
Staff Contact: Matt King

House Speaker Jimmy Naifeh  
<speaker.jimmy.naifeh@legislature.state.tn.us>  
19 Legislative Plaza, Nashville 37243-0181  
615/ 741-3774  
Staff Contact: Reta Adams

Sen. Thelma Harper, Senate Gov't Ops Cte.  
<sen.thelma.harper@legislative.state.tn.us>  
8 Legislative Plaza, Nashville 37243-0219  
Staff Contact: Khabra Bryant

Rep. Mike Kernell, House Gov't Ops Cte.  
<rep.mike.kernell@legislature.state.tn.us>  
38 Legislative Plaza, Nashville 37243-0193  
Staff Contact: Sarah Adair

Candace Cunningham  
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Governor's Office - Boards and Commissions  
Tennessee State Capitol, Nashville 37243-0001

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Nashville 37243-0435

Sohnia Hong <sohnia.hong@state.tn.us>  
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