By Joanne Webster
Contributing Writer

On Wednesday April 15, at the Choctaw Nation District 8 Community center, surveys were answered by approximatey 100 attendees regarding the plans fror the new Tribal complex in Durant. The questions were:

- What are your top three priorities for services that you would like to see in the new Tribal complex?
- Would you like to have a resource/cultural center?
- Do you see a need for a Tribal library and genealogy research center? Would it be beneficial to have a person/department whose main objective is accessing the needs of a member before ever being sent to a program for help?
- Would this help to limit unnecessary meetings with departments that cannot contribute help?
- Please give examples of your vision of communication on how to best connect Choctaw people with services needed that would be most most efficient in the new Tribal complex.
- What native cultural aspects do you feel should be represented?
- What type of atmosphere should be displayed for visitors passing through that would give a sense of who the Choctaw people are and what we stand for as well as the Nation as a whole?

Answers are sought after and can be submitted to the community center on Wednesdays. Survey sheets can be requested by calling 580.326.3528. Another survey was conducted in Choctaw County during the Communities Empowering Youth training recently, about the types of volunteers we see in our area. An examination was given to our 10 to 14 year-old age group. This group serves in livestock care, fundraising, cheer clubs, tutoring, ministry activities, community service at all levels, sports and caregiving for younger age groups. Four Goodland students worked hard during the "Trash Offs" on the southern end of Choctaw County. This is the gateway into our county coming from Texas. Many come this way from the airport at DFW and this glimpse, as you pass the Oklahoma marker, truly matters "impression wise."

Morgan Moffitt, a Goodland student and member of the Choctaw Nation, has assisted with many efforts on the southern end. CEY training attendees were encouraged to consider this age group for many projects and mentoring opportunities such as during the upcoming "Bring your Child to Work Day." In our area, there are many areas of serving that we can include this segment of the population in although employment is spread out, the skill gains will stay with the owner for life.

Area families are challenging others to join them in participation in "National Walk at Lunch Day." This is a national event held on April 29. It  s the first time that Hugo will have the Elephant Walk Trail to use for this event.

Congratulations to the upcoming May 2009 graduates who earned the Americorps service benefit and immediately began their training year. The first success stories are coming in. To share your success story, contact an Americorps alumni, by e-mail through jolizweb1@wmconnect.com.

Kirby Coffey of CNYAB was honored on Friday at an OKDHS awards event. CNYAB participated in area "Trash Offs" on Saturday at Ansley Park.

The Senior Adults for District 8 will attend the May 21 Bingo event at the Durant Events center. Transportation will be provided from the center.  Past attendees of the Grant Homecoming were updated by mail as to this year  s events. June 6 is the date and the contact to learn more is Sharon Wilkins Grosley who can be reached each Thursday at the Grant Nutrition Center where lunch is served at 11:30 a.m. This will be a special reunion year for the Class of '59.