

UNSEEN FORCES PROTECT COUNCIL HOUSE AT CHOTA BAND GROUNDS

The sound of the chain saw pierced through the usually peaceful Chota Band Grounds. Grounds keeper Jim Howling Wolf Allison was cutting into smaller chunks a huge Willow tree that had come down and grazed the end of the roof of the 7 sided council house. Had the tree fallen a few inches more towards the East, there would have been severe damage to the structure. As it is, only the "totem pole" was slightly damaged by the falling of the tree. It appeared that "unseen forces" had protected the council house from severe damage from the falling tree. Other unexplained things have happened on these grounds, including the sudden spontaneous flashing up of a strong fire inside the inner circle of the council house in the pre-dawn hours of the night, and mysterious lights moving about the Grounds and sounds of drumming when no human drummers were present.

August 7, a group of helpers arrived on Chota Band grounds to repair and restore the aging and weathered Inipi (Sweat Lodge). The usual materials used to make such a structure are willow limbs. However, this time, it was decided to use local river cane that grows near a river in the area. River cane is what the ancient Cherokees used to make blow guns and musical flutes. It is very similar to Bamboo.

The previous Inipi had hosted several sweats over the past 3 years, but was un-salvageable and had to be completely dismantled. One of the helpers, Watching Hawk, who cut and supplied the river cane, brought his dog Camo along to hang out with the workers. Camo enjoyed wading in the "Snake Creek" that flows through the grounds and chasing after an occasional squirrel.



**CAMO, THE DOG, TAKES A SNOOZE INSIDE THE COMPLETED FRAME-
WORK OF THE INIPI (SWEAT LODGE).**



Howling Wolf and helpers begin to bend river cane into arches to form the basis of the Inipi



Wood sculpture on Chota Grounds, representing the Cherokee mother of Jim Howling Wolf Allison, Chief of the Chota Band of Maryville, TN