
ROOTS AWAKENING

JUNE 2009 ISSUE

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AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMITTEE

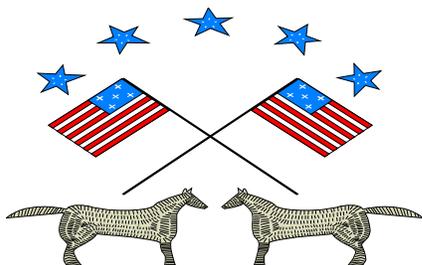
2009 Annual Arts Program

We Shall Remain!

“The Master of Life has appointed this place for us to light our fires and here we shall remain.” - Tecumseh Shawnee

*Native peoples have always adapted and when necessary fought back-- from the Wampanoags of New England, to Geronimo and his band of Chiricahuas, to Tecumseh, to the visionary Principal Chief of the Cherokees; John Ross during the Nu-No-Du-Na Tlo-Hi-Lu, “The Trail Where They Cried”, to the bold new leaders of the 1970s such as Russell Means & Clyde Bellecourt who harnessed the momentum of the civil rights movement to forge a pan-Indian identity and advocate organizations such A.I. M. (American Indian Movement), to current Native American Indian leaders and spokespersons such as Vine Deloria, John Echo-Hawk, Ada Deer, or Wilma Mankiller who today are striving to establish and hold onto rights for all Native American People. This years program will be held at **Carlow University**, Pgh., PA*

For an entry form, more details and/or a copy of the prospectus call: 412-885-5097, or email aliyo@verizon.net



The November 2008 Exhibition “Unheard Voices” was held at Slippery Rock University, Slippery Rock, PA In honor of David Dixon. The winners of the categories are:

2-D 1st Place: Anna Duchene
“The Indian Problem”

Peoples Choice Award -Erin Leigh Clemens
“NDN: The Rise of Lakota Culture”

2nd Place: Jean Louise Adams
“Panther Across the Sky”

3rd Place: Mary A. Koepke
“The Winner”

Wearable Art: Honorable Mention
Dennis RedMoon Darkeem
“Caught in the Middle”

Native American Apology Resolution legislation re-introduced

By Kansas Sen. Sam Brownback & Oklahoma Rep. Dan Boren. “The resolution seeks reconciliation and offers an official apology to Native peoples for the poor choices the federal government made in the past,” Brownback said. “I firmly believe that in order to move forward and have a true reconciliation, the federal government needs to formally apologize.”

“While we cannot erase the past, it is time for us to heal past wounds. We should

acknowledge previous failures, express sincere regrets, and work toward establishing a brighter future for all Americans,”

The resolution would extend a formal apology from the U.S. to tribal governments and Native people nationwide for its “long history of official depredations and ill conceived policies” that resulted in indigenous peoples being dispossessed of millions of acres of land, lingering poverty, and ongoing erosion of tribal sovereignty largely through the judicial branch.

“The U.S. government broke hundreds of treaties it made with Indian nations; these were government-to-government treaties ratified by the U.S. Senate,” Boren said. “The impact of many U.S. policies is the source of many of the social and economic disparities that tribes face today. It is time for our nation to face these injustices and reconcile our relations with the Native Americans.”

It is important for the government to acknowledge injustices such as forced removal and painful events like the Trail of Tears. While this apology doesn’t recognize the complexity of those wrongs, it’s an important step in moving forward. as a resolution of apology and reconciliation.

“It is a first step toward healing the wounds that have divided us for so long – a potential foundation for a new era of positive relations between tribal governments and the federal government. It is time – it is past time – for us to heal our land of division, all divisions, and bring us together as one people.



Dear President Obama

As you weigh the various candidates for the upcoming Supreme Court vacancy, the National Native American Bar Association strongly asks you to consider a Native American candidate. While much of America is underrepresented on the Supreme Court, the U.S. has never appointed an individual indigenous to this country to its Supreme Court.

The Native American community turns to you humbled. We recognize with a warm heart that many of our brothers and sisters also turn to you with sincere and important interests in seeing familiar faces on the Supreme Court. However, we turn to you with pleas and desperation. For more than 200 years the United States Supreme Court has sat in judgment over us, over our lands, over our treaties, and over our families. Not one single day have we ever had a voice in those decisions.

No Native American Supreme Court Justice, Federal Judge, nor Supreme Court Clerk. Not only has a Native American never served on the Supreme Court, there is not a single Native on the federal bench in the entire country and, to the best of our knowledge, there has never been a Native American Supreme Court clerk. There are 866 federal judgeships (nine on the Supreme Court, 179 on the Courts of Appeals and 678 in the District Courts), and not one Native American federal judge.

While the Native bar is small, where we lack in quantity, we excel in quality. Because there are so few Native attorneys, they must each be excellent not only in their own field, but in tribal, state and federal law. There are dozens of Native attorneys qualified for the federal bench and a number of qualified Natives for the Supreme Court, such as John EchoHawk (who many consider the Thurgood Marshall of Indian country), Larry EchoHawk and Kevin Gover.

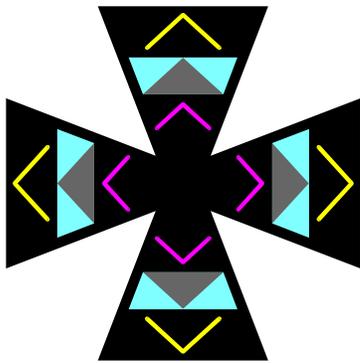
Disproportionate Effect of Federal Courts on Native Americans. In addition, the Supreme Court and federal court decisions often disproportionately affect Natives. As outlined in the U.S. Constitution, tribal governments are nations pre-dating the formation of the United States, and the relationship is regulated by Congress. Most Indian reservations continue to be in “federal trust” and federal

criminal law applies on most Indian communities. Not only do federal courts oversee this Congressional relationship with tribes and the treaty and trust responsibility to tribes and its citizens, tribal citizens are the only group in the country that has an entire code of federal law (25 USC) devoted to them.

In order to serve as a tribal court judge one must not only have an understanding of oral tribal customs, but of all written tribal constitutions and laws, all state laws, and all federal laws.

President Obama, we recognize and respect the difficult decision before you, and the many interests you must weigh. We ask only that our lack of voice for more than 200 years be a consideration in your decision.

National Native American Bar Association



Why Your Great-Grandmother Wasn't A Cherokee (or Indian) Princess

It seems like a lot of young people these days are searching for an elusive ancestor who was a [Cherokee princess](#). Usually they reveal this family history proudly to a bunch of Indians in a chat room or mailing list somewhere and get laughed off the Internet.

Why? Well, there is no such thing as a Cherokee princess. They're not real. We never had princesses, and we still don't, unless you count the winners of

beauty pageants.

Here are some possible explanations for anyone who has been told they have a Cherokee princess in their family tree.

1. "Princess" may be a very poor translation for the daughter of a chief. Cherokee chiefs were not kings. They were chosen by the community, and there were always multiple chiefs, both peace chiefs and war chiefs, at the same time. The daughter of a chief was more like the daughter of a mayor or a governor than a princess. She certainly wasn't going to inherit any throne. But many people were ignorant of this, and Americans have been fascinated by royalty for a long time, so it is likely that "chief's daughter" or even "prominent person's daughter" may have gotten translated as "princess" by mistaken or romantic-minded white people.

If your research finds that your grandmother was actually the daughter of a chief, then why not say "My great-grandfather was Chief So-and-So," which is more accurate and more interesting anyway.

2. "Princess" may be a very poor translation for an important female politician, such as a female peace chief or Beloved Woman. (Nanyehi, Nancy Ward, was the last and most famous Cherokee Beloved Woman.) These were not hereditary positions either--peace chiefs were popularly elected, and the Beloved Woman was honored by the council through courage in war. But again, these positions may have been misunderstood or romanticized.

If your research finds that your great-great-grandmother (or great-great-great-grandmother--this was a long time ago that we had Beloved Women or female peace chiefs) held one of these positions, well, read all about her, she would have been an interesting and powerful woman, and it is really too bad to trivialize her as a "princess." Your friends will be more impressed by the true story anyway.

3. "Princess" was a popular term of endearment early in the 20th century. Your great-grandfather may have called your great-grandmother his

Cherokee princess, not because she was royalty, but because he loved her. Isn't that sweet? I think maybe that makes a better family story than the princess one anyway. But this actually has happened more times than you'd think. (Similarly, a lot more Cherokee women were recorded with the name "Rose" than were actually named "Rose," because her white husband or father called her his Cherokee rose.)

4. Your white ancestor may just have told his family his wife was a Cherokee princess to alleviate racist tensions. There were a lot of people who weren't real happy with their sons taking Indian wives. In fact, another thing that may be frustrating your genealogical search, is that a lot of men claimed their Indian wives were Cherokee when they actually belonged to another tribe because Cherokees were considered more "civilized" than other Indians by white Americans. So the "Cherokee princess" may have been an ordinary Lenape citizen, or something, and her husband was trying to make her new in laws or neighbors more accepting of her.

5. Or, it's possible that your ancestor may not have been American Indian at all, but rather African-American. One of our readers wrote us recently to tell us that her "Indian princess" ancestor had turned out to be African-American, and when she did more research into it, "Indian princess" and "Cherokee princess" were sometimes used in the South as somewhat derogatory terms for light-skinned mulatto women (similar to "high yellow.") This appellation may have been passed down in your family by people who were unaware of its original meaning.

In any event, unless you have a record that your ancestor was the daughter of a chief (or, more rarely, a Beloved Woman or other important female personage), she probably was not. That doesn't mean she wasn't a "real" Indian, though. The "princess" part was probably simply appended to the family story about her at some point. It doesn't have any bearing on whether she herself actually existed or not.

But either way, you would be best served by

dropping the princess story from your genealogical queries. Cherokees, and other Indians, who might be able to help you are not going to take you seriously if you approach them with such an unrealistic story. Imagine if someone from Ireland told you about some relative of his who he insisted was descended from the fairies, or owned the Brooklyn Bridge. You could think of some plausible reasons why he might believe this, but it will still seem silly to you. Being told about Cherokee princesses will always seem silly to us. If your ancestor really was the daughter of a chief, well, then say so. Otherwise, just say she was a Cherokee. Believe me, that will sound all the more impressive for potentially being true.



Earl's Famous Boiled Cherokee Peanuts

1-2 Pounds Raw Peanuts

Salt

Water

In a large stock pot bring several quarts of water to good rolling boil.

Add Salt to taste (about 6 Tablespoons)

Add sorted & cleaned Peanuts (discard open & broken ones)

Boil for 1-3 hours depending on amount o peanuts – tasting a nut every 30-45 minutes to see if done. Some people like them very soft, some like them with a little crisp. Cook to your desired liking. Raw peanuts are the kind like you get in a feed store for our winged & 4 footed brothers & sisters.

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