



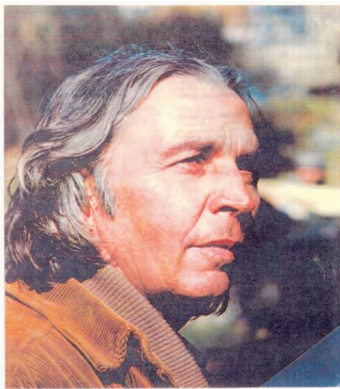
Newsletter

The United Cherokee Nation (UCN)
An International Tsalagi (Cherokee) Tribal Membership Organization
"Gathering The Lost Tsalagi (Cherokee) Into One Tribal Membership Organization"

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What Is An Indian ? - Thoughts and Writings of the Two Trees Foundation



Chief Two Trees 1927-1995

What is an Indian? This question was asked of a group of American Indian children at Anderson Elementary School in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Their answers were quite interesting and very disturbing. In this circle of black, brown and blondish hair...of black, brown, green, blue and hazel eyes...of wiry, curly, kinky and straight hair...they were very percent-of-blood oriented. From 15/32 to 1/4 to 1/2 they were calling out their indi-

vidual percents - that is until they began to laugh. Yes, it is ridiculous, especially when one child was asked to point to the half of him that was Indian and the half that wasn't!

Is this form of identifying our identity shared by other peoples? When did we ever hear a Jew declare he was half Jewish? What makes a Jew a Jew is his religion and culture.

American Indian authors Walter Peck and Thomas Sanders explained it this way: To define the American Indian is as impossible as it is to define the Jew - for many of the same reasons. A Jew knows he is a Jew because he recognized himself within the framework of a historical-cultural setting that allows him identity. The Native American, the Indian, the Navajo - call him what you will - knows he is an Indian because of the mystic tie to the land, the dim memory of his people's literature that has been denied him, the awareness of his relationship to Sakoiatisan, Manicou, Auaca, Wakan Tanka (depending on his being Iroquois, Algonauian, Inca or Souix) somehow all manifest them-

selves within him and consistently call him back to his ancestors.

Bill Charfield, elder teacher and historian, agrees with this philosophy. "My cultural identity makes me what I am. It is my beliefs that make me Indian."

This brings up an interesting point. Can an individual be Jewish and Catholic at the same time? Can an Indian? According to Bell, an individual's sacred regard for language, his concept of the Creation and his desire to live in harmony with the natural world need be applied when seeking to define an Indian.

While addressing a college audience, LaDonna Harris was asked to define an Indian. LaDonna replied, "I cannot define the Indian any more than you can define what you are". Different governmental agencies define him by the amount of blood. I had a Comanche mother and an Irish Father. But I am a Comanche, I'm not Irish. And I'm not Indian first, I'm Comanche first,

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Special points of interest:

- "Cherokee Inter-marriage" Thoughts and Writings from Karen "Windrift" Torrez on page 4
- Tribal Council member, Reverend and Chief Tim "Dancing Red Hawk" McIntosh is in the Member Spotlight this month.
- Any interested member or reader can submit short articles to Chief Katey Ross Lee for inclusion in future months Newsletters.

Recipe of the Month

Cherokee Black Bean Soup

Ingredients:

- 1 cup sliced leeks
- 1/3 cup oil
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 lb canned or dry black beans
- 1/2 cup water
- 1-1/8 tsp fresh ground pepper
- Salt to taste

Soak beans overnight first, if dried. Cook low for 4 hours. Stir as needed.

Sauté the leeks in the oil in a large saucepan until golden.

Add garlic and half the beans with their liquid.

Mash the beans with a fork.

Then add the rest of the beans with their liquid but do not mash.

Stir in the water, salt to taste and pepper, and simmer, covered, for 40 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Serve hot.

Cherokee Moons - December - The Snow Moon



December

Snow Moon

“Us-gi-yi”

SNOW MOON (when the first snows fall in the mountains)

The spirit being, "Snow Man", brings the cold and snow for the earth to cover the high places while the

earth rests until the rebirth of the seasons in the Windy Moon Anuyi.

Families traditionally were busy putting up and storing goods for the next cycle of seasons.

Elders enjoyed teaching and retelling ancient stories of the people to the young.

Reminder

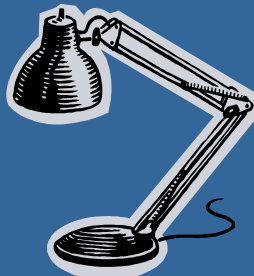
2009 Dues are due each year as of January, please send them in, if you have not done so already. We remain a Membership supported Tribal Organization and do not have any other source of support to continue our cause.

Wado, SB

Member Spotlight



Reverend Chief Tim "Dancing Red Hawk" McIntosh an Ordained Pastor and a nationally recognized Spiritual Leader and Teacher of Cherokee Medicine.



Tribal Council and Wisconsin Clan Chief Dancing Red Hawk

Who's grandfather was raised as part of the Bird Clan on the Eastern Cherokee reservation and was taken from his mother at a young age and given to an adoptive white family.

He is also Director of Elawei Ama Spiritual Resources and a Spiritual Leader of the Earth Lodge Foundation in Wisconsin. As a Chaplain and spiritual caregiver to those who are dying for over 12 years in Hospice ministry, and as pastor of the Lutheran Church of the Great Spirit, an urban Native American congregation in Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Chief Gigage Tawodi Galisgidahu

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Indian second. When a Comanche took in someone, he became Comanche. He wasn't part this, part that. He was all Comanche or he wasn't Comanche at all. Blood runs the heart, the heart knows what it is."

Elizabeth Hallmark, an Ojibwa and director of the Minneapolis American Indian Center: Thinks along these traditional lines; "Just because an individual has a tribal enrollment number entitling him to certain services, does not in my mind, define his person as an Indian. It is the heart of the person that speaks to me. That's where my Indian-ness is - in my heart.

One of the great Mineconju-Lakota holy men of our time was John (Fire) Lame Deer, he associated Indian-ness with the heart also. His beliefs in the concepts symbolized in the Pipe identified him as an Indian. He recollected a time in his life when the meaning of the Pipe filled his senses. He stated that at the moment he realized that to truly understand what it meant to be an Indian was to understand the Pipe. He went on to say that even as an old man he was still learning. We must ask ourselves then:

What bureaucrat has the right to say who is and who isn't an Indian? Or who is more of an Indian?

To be an Indian is a way of life, a looking within and feeling a part of all life, an allegiance to, and love for, this earth. Historically, we did not judge individuals by the color of

their eyes or the color of their hair, but how they conducted themselves and lived their lives. To debase our identity by reducing us to percents of blood is another version of genocide. To deny our tribal nations the right to traditionally adopt and naturalize citizens is relinquishing our tribal sovereignty.

The last time some of us were required to show papers for proof of blood was when we wanted to breed dogs or horses. The confusion of attempting to define what is Indian will persist in the governmental bureaucracies, but will not be shared by many American Indians who know what they are.

For many of us, to be Indian is not a heritage granted by legislation, percents of blood of bureaucratic studies, or even by a community's consideration. It comes from the heart and the heart knows what it is.

One of the ways we learned was listening to nature and the oral/written literature of the past. Contained within this literature are the values, beliefs and concepts of true Indian-ness.

It seems that if the traditional American is to remain at all visible and have a voice in the affairs of the People, then traditional thinking American Indians must challenge the bureaucratic system of identifying Indians - if for anyone, for their children and grand-children.

Thoughts and Writings of the Two Trees Foundation in honor of Chief Two Trees .

May Good Medicine Be Yours This Holiday Season!

It was once told to me that "thoughts are powerful. If you think something long enough, it comes into being." As a child I tried so hard to practice this every Christmas and think of the things I wanted for myself! (In my selfishness, it seldom worked to bring me the material things I was so focused on!) Yet now, as an adult, I have indeed experienced times when what I have been thinking, whether a positive thought or a negative one, has eventually come to pass. It's as though what I focus on and the thoughts that keep running through my mind - the ones I think over and over again, seem to gather the energy and set into motion the very thing I am focused on. I have learned with time, to put aside the negative thoughts and focus all the more intently on the positive thoughts if I want to give them the energy and set them in motion!

This is the Law of the Spirit - if we put out good energy with our thoughts, it comes back to us multiplied by seven, if we make bad medicine with bad thoughts causing someone trouble or pain, it too will come back to us, multiplied by seven. Regardless of what anyone else may think of us, or say, or do to us, it is always best to try first to have good thoughts toward them. If you really want the good medicine to return to your life and fill it, then

make it a point every day, to be full of the awareness of the beauty around you and say "Thanks" Wado -sgi!

Be full of gratitude for friends and family, for the goodness you find in others, for your health and all that you are capable of. Be full of acceptance for yourself and for others - without conditions, without judging. Know that differences and changes make life interesting and welcome them. Appreciate the gifts of laughter and fun in your life, and find your true peace and contentment in knowing that you can always control your ability to think the good thoughts and look on the bright side of life. If you think of something strongly enough and in a positive light, focusing on the good in serving Creator and all of creation, it will come to pass. Remember that the happiest people in the world are those who have a hard time recalling their worries ... and an easy time remembering their blessings.

May the good medicine of life be yours this holiday season! Aho!

Reverend Chief Tim Dancing Red Hawk

A Cherokee Thought - On Cherokee Intermarriage

To measure exactly the amount of Cherokee blood we have in our veins is nearly impossible. Our ancestor's intermarried with other tribes, and races over the past several hundred years. In the past and present, in the Cherokee population, there is also a larger female to male ratio. Some females have had to look outside the tribe for marriage. The marriage between the Cherokee and non-Cherokee people became common and somewhat acceptable.

In the early days, the Cherokee had intermarried with other neighboring tribes such as the Muscogee and Seminole in the South and the Delaware and other tribes to the East and North. The Muscogee were very similar in culture to the Cherokee, some said they were our close cousins. Many years ago the Muscogee had been the Cherokee's enemy. The Cherokee were the most intermarried of all tribes, due to the

size of the tribe, size of the area that they controlled and geographic distance between their towns. Since the removal there were many tribes placed in a smaller area, so the Cherokee married into and with many other tribes in the Oklahoma Indian territory.

The Cherokee also intermarried beginning in the 1600's with European whites. Most of the early Europeans were traders and farmers and came to the colony's as young men without a wife or family, many were adventurers. It was to their advantage to marry into the Cherokee. This would help in their communication with the tribe and in other areas such as trading. In the early days if a Cherokee woman married a European white man, her children were accepted as intermarried white's with the tribe and had restricted rights. If a European woman married a Cherokee man they were not accepted. They would not be consid-

ered Cherokee or part of the clan but that has since been changed by Cherokee laws.

When the Cherokee became plantation owners in the 1700's - early 1800's, they owned black slaves. They did intermarry with their black slaves as the Cherokee land owners worked side by side with their slaves. If a slave married a Cherokee man, she would become a member of the tribe and would have freedom from slavery. Most whites did not marry their slaves. Although when it came to marrying a slave, most full blood Cherokee and whites disapproved of this intermarriage. With the Cherokee intermarrying with the many races and other tribes, we have become mixed blood over the many years. There are very few full-blood Cherokee.

By Karen "Windrift" Torrez

Reclaim Your Heritage - A Short Poem

One can spend years in a dormant state, acknowledging silently, one's heritage. You can brush it aside, as something long ago, as though it doesn't matter. Feeling disconnected. Making excuses, but ... I can't find my ancestors on any rolls..... but I would never be accepted anyway..... Assimilation accomplished.

Our ancestors, completely swept up, overwhelmed, their world ravaged, and way of life, destroyed. We are all that remain from "what was". Nearly all mixed blood now..... Assimilation accomplished.

Being Cherokee is more than just saying you are. It is deeply knowing you are, from the heart. Felt within, it silently stirs conviction, motivating action. It is Honor.

We are The Generation awaking from a deep sleep, a spark within each of us, ready to ignite. Feel the fire of inspiration, from our relatives before us. We are The Generation.

Each one of us, a tiny piece of puzzle, scattered to the wind. Every piece is precious. Complete the picture.

We are The Generation that has been tasked to rebuild, to preserve Sacred Knowledge. We must come together now. This was prophesized long ago. The Spirits of our Ancestors will lead you home. Be still and listen. Time is of the essence. Reclaim your heritage. It is yours.

By Elaine "Owl" Forrest

Message from the Principal Chief

O'siyi Members, welcome to our second edition of The United Cherokee Nation (UCN) Newsletter.

We hope to have this Newsletter on the website for printing each month and ask that any interested member please send articles to Chief Katey Ross Lee our new National Secretary. Please visit our Forum and Website.

Tohidu.....SB

"Gathering the Lost Tsalagi (Cherokee) into One Tribal Membership Organization"

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FORUM

Emergency Preparedness by Jim Lee

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Last month's article was a brief description of four main categories of preparedness and I omitted the most important category of all;

MENTAL PREPAREDNESS or ATTITUDE

The one factor that determines a person's ability to navigate his or her way through a crises or emergency situation successfully is without a doubt, ATTITUDE. I cannot stress this enough. No matter how well supplied a person is with the other necessities; they are useless if one panics or loses his or her head and does not utilize them wisely. Interviews with people that have survived everything from avalanches, plane crashes, to home invasions without exception indicate the one determining factor that makes the difference between those that survived and those that didn't is the ability to think clearly and reason the situation out, form a plan of action, and carry it out. There can be no doubt that a person with a positive mental attitude has a much better chance to survive any situation with which he or she may find themselves confronted.

To this end, there are some things that you can do to prepare yourself;

1; Become familiar with your environment. Many people living in cities have no idea who their neighbors are or what is on the next block. You don't have to know your neighbors personally to know what kind of people they are. Be alert. Take drives or walks around the neighborhood

surrounding your home. Identify such things as potential trouble spots. For instance, if there are liquor or drug stores near by, they are prime targets for looters. Is there a gang in your neighborhood? You may have to deal with them. The more you know about your surroundings, the better you'll be able to assess the risks, form a plan, and carry it out. It is always easier to deal with a known than an unknown.

2; Consider "what if? " Think of different possible scenarios that could happen. You are the one best qualified to assess the possibilities of your situation. You can think through the different things that may occur and decide how to deal with them before they happen. Most emergencies are thrust upon a person with little or no warning and sometimes require immediate response, without allowing time to think the situation through. It's always best to have at least an idea of how you would want to deal with a situation before it happens. One thing to remember, though, is to be adaptable, because there are always unexpected things that may require you to alter your original plan.

3; Hysteria is communicable; Never allow the hysteria or panic of others to affect your decision making. Most of us are fairly compassionate beings and it is hard not to be affected by the fear of those around us. Fear is a natural response to dangerous situations. It is part of our survival instinct. If you feel yourself starting to panic, stop, (elevated

pulse rate and rapid shallow respiration are indications of panic), and take several deep breaths. This will oxygenate your blood and make more oxygen available to your brain enabling you to think more clearly. A survivor is not someone that has no fear, he or she is someone that overcomes that fear and does what is necessary regardless of it.

4; Do not put yourself at risk unnecessarily; People put themselves at risk on almost a daily basis without even thinking about it. Many buy houses downstream from lake dams in earthquake prone areas some have houses on hillsides that are prone to mudslides. Some risks are acceptable, like driving your car, others are foolish. Think about things. Most things can be avoided before they become problems just by using a little common sense.

These are some of the things you can do to help prepare yourself to keep a positive attitude. A positive attitude is the most important asset a person can have in an emergency or crises situation. Remember, when a crises or other emergency occurs, the police and medical personnel are going to have their hands full, so you cannot rely on help from them. The safety and well being of yourself and those that rely on you is in your hands. It's up to you.

I'm writing this article in hopes of starting a continuing dialogue on this subject and comments are encouraged. I will be available to consult with anyone that has concerns on this subject for his or her personal situation on the Forum or by email; ucnoklahomacian@yahoo.com

Jim Lee