



# Newsletter

*The United Cherokee Nation (UCN)*

An International Tsalagi (Cherokee) Tribal Membership Organization

*"Gathering The Lost Tsalagi (Cherokee) Into One Tribal Membership Organization"*

VOLUME 02  
ISSUE 08

August 01  
2010

## Early Tsalagi Culture

By Chief Terry "Cherokee Warrior" Evers

The UCN Arkansas Clan

Early Tsalagi settlements consisted of groups of relatives of at least four clans. There were always fields of crops outside the settlement walls; for security the settlements also cultivated interior fields for emergency rations. Each family had their own section marked off by mounds of earth, lines of stones or ownership stakes. Men and women worked the family sections.

Men worked the fields, hunted, fished, built buildings, made civic decisions, supervised festivals, trained boys for the Tsalagi priesthood and hunting, attended peace councils, conducted inter-tribal trading and defended the settlements.

Women ruled the household, raised the children, planted crops, cultivated the fields and harvested the crops, prepared food for household and religious festivals, carried water, gathered wood, laundered and made clothing, made baskets and pottery and performed select ritual dances in festivals. Some select women even participated in council decisions and *Beloved Women*, made decisions on the fate of prisoners of war.

*Tsalagi warriors* were fierce in battle, frank, honest, cunning and unforgiving. All Tsalagi men loved their wives and children and seldom exhibited harsh behavior in the home. Physically and temperamentally the Tsalagi made favorable impressions on other tribes and whites. Tsalagi loved their athletics and possessed high endurance. Tsalagi were grave in manner, reserved in speech while participating in civic affairs; while in private they were frank, humane and cheerful.

### Tsalagi Homes

Early historic Tsalagi houses were one to three rooms, two story, and gable roofed, square or rectangular, covered with Cypress bark. Housing was begun in early spring but never completed during the hot months of summer due to warfare and the need to grow crops for winter. In the fall the men of the settlement and men from surrounding settlements gathered and built houses and could finish one good sized dwelling in one day. Each dwelling also had a sweat house where the Tsalagi purified themselves for religious purposes and sweated out sickness. In colder areas each town had a large community hothouse. Each settlement had separate social houses where the women would

Continued on page 4

### Inside this issue:

Message from the Principal Chief	2
Recipes of the Month - Old Field Apricot Drink / AniYunwiya Cake	3
Cherokee Moons - "Ga-lo-ni"	3
Member Spotlight	3
Contact Information	8

### Special points of interest:

- "Early Tsalagi Culture", by Chief Terry Cherokee Warrior Evers, page 1 and 4.
- "Willow the Oak Tree", by Bright Sun, page 2
- A story about KaMaMa-for the children from Willy White-feather, page 5-6.
- "The History of the Texas Tsalagi" (Part One), by Texas Assistant Clan Chief Yona Woni, page 7.
- Self Determination, by Oklahoma Clan Chief Jim Lee, Page 8.

## "WILLOW", The Oak Tree—By Bright Sun

He and I planted it well over 10 years ago, that day it was warm and sunny, and I could feel his Spirit touching Mother Earth, to give life to this little branch, that would one day cover the yard. That tree became him through his Spirit, he watered it daily, prayed to it in the evening and waited through the long Winter to finally see the Spring answer his prayers, and today it looks as though Willow reaches up through the sky to the "Happy Hunting Ground" and is still under his watchful eye. My Dad, his Spirit still stands in my yard, through Willow, giving our winged ones a place to chirp and visit. I go out daily and visit with them and speak to my Dad, through Willow. I wanted to name her Pocahontas, he said, "No her name is Willow", I smiled and wondered if she would ever know that she was and Oak tree.

As time draws near to the anniversary of the day of his passing over to our ancestor's, I'm a little more sensitive than usual, but I also give thanks to the Creator of all things for all that he taught me by example and the knowledge he instilled in me, so that I would continue on the path he taught me.

I finally released his ashes the first weekend of July, along the sacred river of our ancestor's, the very river Pocahontas must have played upon as a child some 500 years ago, the river that Willow now stands guard over.

I wanted to share this with you because it is exactly what he would have said; "We as American Indians are strong today because we remembered yesterday". Let's continue this bond with one another and become close in Spirit, with each other and Mother Earth, help each other and most of all, learn all that we can from our Elders.

I will always reach out to make sure we are together and keep the teachings of my Dad, Gray Wolf. Remember to listen to the Wind, the Spirits will guide you, our ancestor's speak to us through time.

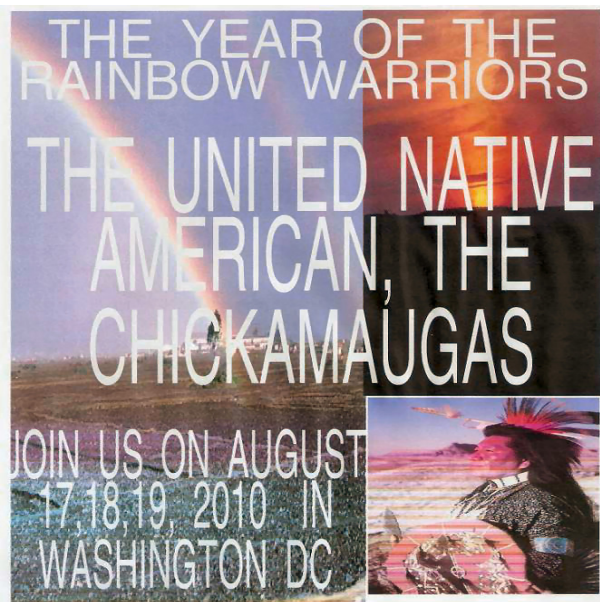
With All My Heart, Bright Sun, "I miss you Dad, this is in honor of you and your teachings".

## Message from the Principal Chief

O'siyo Members, welcome to our tenth 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 all articles to Chief Katey Ross Lee our National Secretary at: [kateyross@yahoo.com](mailto:kateyross@yahoo.com)

### CANCELLED



The Native Mixed-Blood Drive and Gathering at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D. C., was cancelled unexpectedly on July 27, 2010. Terry Nichols is trying to start it back up again, for the same dates. Our Members that planned to attend were very disappointed, to say the least.

We have moved the National Office to Chief Katey Ross Lee our National Secretary, in Quinton Oklahoma, as I continue traveling and seeking employment, as am unable to remain in Arizona.

The business of The United Cherokee Nation (UCN) is being handled out of her office until the time I find a new job and settle in.

Please visit our Forum and Website.

Tohidu.....Nvya Yona

## Recipes of the Month—Old Field Apricot Drink / Aniyunwiya Cake

### Old Field Apricot Drink (Oo-wa-ga)

Gather old field apricots. Hull out the seeds and pulp, put these on to boil after adding a tiny bit of soda to make the seeds separate from the pulp. Strain the juice from the seeds and pulp, add meal to the juice and cook until the meal is done.

### Aniyunwiya Cake

2 cups sugar, 3/4 cups bacon grease, 2 cups water

or milk, 1 cup raisins, 1 tsp cloves, 1 tsp nutmeg, 1 tsp allspice, 1/2 tsp salt, 3 1/2 cups flour, 1 tsp baking soda, 2 tsp baking powder, 1 cup pecans (or other preferred nuts); chopped

Put sugar and bacon grease into a cast iron pot and heat. Stir in water or milk, raisins, cloves, nutmeg, allspice and salt. Bring to a boil and cook at boiling for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove pot from stove and allow to cool. Sift together flour, baking soda and baking powder. Add this to cooled mixture and beat thoroughly. Stir in nuts. Pour batter into buttered baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees F. for 40 minutes.

May be eaten plain or sprinkled with powdered sugar.

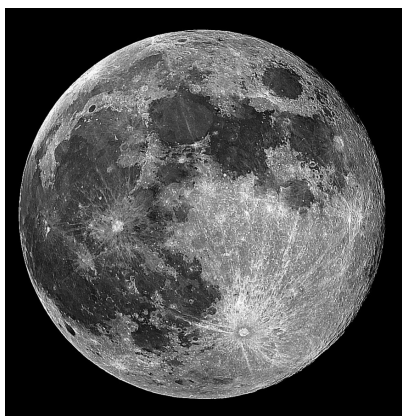
### Reminder

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

## Cherokee Moons - August - The Fruit Moon



### August Fruit Moon "Ga-lo-ni"

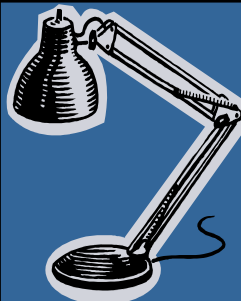
Fruit Moon—Galon. Foods of the trees and bushes are gathered at this time. The various "Paint

Clans" begin to gather many of the herbs and medicines for which they were historically known. Green Corn festivals are commonly held at this time in the present day. The "Wild Potato" Clan, also known as the "Panther", "Raccoon", "Bear" or "Blind Savannah" Clans, the Ani-Gatugewi, begin harvesting various foods growing along the streams, marshes, lakes and ponds.

## Member Spotlight

Retired Chief Joleen "Bright Sun" Treadway of the Virginia Clan, is a frequent writer of articles for our newsletter. She was taught many things by many people and she is kind in sharing what she has learned with all of the members of The United Cherokee Nation (UCN).

She is a Storyteller and has, in the past,



Retired Chief Bright Sun of the Virginia Clan.

taught about our culture in the local Williamsburg / Newport News area schools. I am thankful for the many conversations we have shared and the many articles that she shares with us, most every month. She lives with her son Robert Sparrow Hawk, near where she was raised and in the area where her father Gray Wolf taught her about our people, our culture, the standing ones, the winged ones and the land that we all hold so sacred.

Bright Sun is my friend and council, we learn from each other and teach each other every month. I consider her my friend and sister working together for our common goal of Gathering the Lost Tsalagi.

Aho, "From My Heart" Nyva Yona

# Early Tsalagi Culture

continued

stay when male visitors visited their husbands.

## Town Council House

In the center of every settlement there was a circular fifty foot diameter *town council house* built on a man made earthen mound. This is where the old beloved men and head warriors conducted civic affairs of the settlement. The Town Council House also served as the location of community feasts and dances. The Town Council house was at the center of the settlement and community activities.

## Food and Drink

Food was fried, roasted or boiled and in modern times are still prepared in the "old ways". Considerable use was made of parched cornmeal that was carried on long trips, hunting and war expeditions. Gourds were used to carry water, deerskin bottles held bear oil and honey. The Tsalagi also depended upon wild foods such as Cane Wheat, *tse wi na*, a wild turnip, *U la tli ya* a root much like a beet, *Kv ni ku tsa ta* also similar to a beet. *Kv lo hi* was a water root and was like a foot long beet that was pounded into meal and tasted like flour and fritters and bread were made from it. *Shv ne si* grew in pods and resembled beans but had to be boiled for at least 24 hours to remove its poison. After boiling its taste resembled wheat and was used in baking.

Drinks made of boiled locust pod were sweet. Hickory nuts were used to make another nourishing drink. Wild grapes were gathered dried and made into a soup with the consistency of honey. The Tsalagi learned to make beer from persimmons but it was not an alcoholic fermented drink.

## The Pretty Feathered Eagle

*Golden Eagle feathers* were prized by the Tsalagi as the Golden Eagle is the Great Sacred Bird of the Tsalagi. The Tsalagi called it the *pretty feathered eagle* and it was used in rituals, particularly war rituals. In ancient times the killing of an eagle was a community event and could be done only by a *professional eagle killer* carefully chosen and trained as such. He, and only he, knew the prescribed form of the ritual and the prayers that were said after the killing to be pardoned by above eagles to keep vengeance from happening to the tribe. Currently federal laws prohibit the killing of eagles even for tribal ceremonial purposes so the Tsalagi adapted to the use of painted turkey feathers.

The *Eagle Dance* utilized the eagle feathers to obtain war powers and blessings. The eagle killer provided the feathers for the dance and was paid by offerings taken at the dance. The eagle Dance was held the night of the eagle killing. The eagle feathers were believed to be hungry for their long journey thus a bowl of venison and corn was set below the feathers on the ground and the feathers were invited to eat. The body of a flax bird or scarlet tanager was hung above the feathers for the same purpose.

The actual food was disposed of after the dance as *the spirit of the food* is what was eaten by the feathers. The final act of war preparation was the making of *Eagle Dance wands* with the feathers.

The Eagle is and was regarded by the Tsalagi prior to their conversion to Christianity as a *Great Spirit* thus only the greatest warriors and those versed in the sacred ordinances wore and carried eagle feathers in the dance.

The ancient Tsalagi believed that any person who dreamt of eagles must immediately arrange for an Eagle Dance and perform the required ritual and fasting, otherwise someone in the person's family would die.

## Summary

By 1650 the large and adaptable Tsalagi tribe was established in the naturally rich area in southeastern North America. Tasks were evenly balanced between men and women and functioning cooperatives were established to do the planting, harvesting and building construction. Warfare occupied most of the people's time; houses were well planned and structurally well built. In coping with the elements and emergencies; all were anticipated and well planned for and all lives were dominated by ancient religion.

## Sources

Gilbert, "*the Eastern Cherokees*"

Smith, "*the Story of the Cherokees*"

Maxwell, "*America's Fascinating Indian Heritage*"

Mooney, "*Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*"

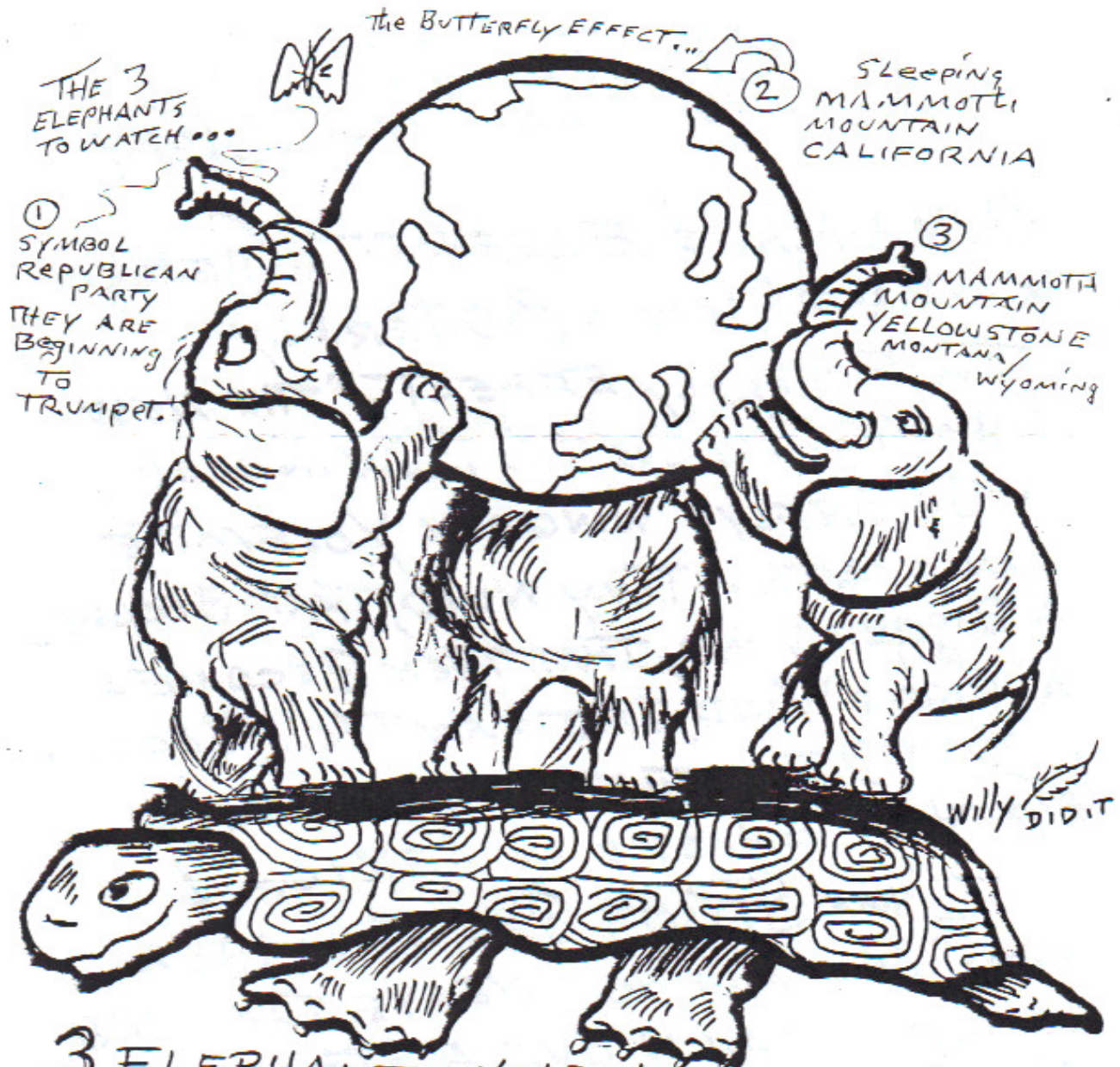
Payne, "*Payne Papers*"

Timberlake, "*Memoirs*"

Adair, "*History of the American Indians*"

Speck and Broom, "*Cherokee Dance and Drama*".

# KaMaMa by Willy Whitefeather



3 ELEPHANTS HOLDING UP THE WORLD WHILE STANDING ON THE BACK OF A GIANT TURTLE. AN ANCIENT CARVED ART FORM FROM INDIA. IF THE ELEPHANTS DROP THE WORLD, WOULD IT PUT A STOP TO WARS? OVER

## KaMaMa by Willy Whitefeather

continued

A <sup>KA</sup> <sup>MA</sup> <sup>MA</sup> STORY

KA·MA·MA IS 'ELEPHANT' IN (HEROKEE  
KA·MA·MA IS ALSO BUTTERFLY

THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT - "THE NEW  
PHYSICS - MEANS THE BEATING OF  
A BUTTERFLY'S WINGS IN YOSEMITE  
CAN CREATE A TINY WIND, THAT BECOMES  
A BIGGER WIND, THAT THEN BECOMES  
A HUGE WIND, THAT CAN THEN BECOME  
A DUST STORM, THAT CAN MAKE AN  
ELEPHANT SNEEZE IN AFRICA!

CHIEF STEALTH SEATTLE IN 1853  
SAID; "MAN DID NOT WEAVE THE WEB  
OF LIFE, MAN IS BUT A STRAND IN  
THE WEB, WHAT HE DOES TO THE  
WEB, HE DOES TO HIMSELF."

Willy 

## The History of the Texas Tsalagi (Cherokee) by Texas Assistant Clan Chief Yona Woni

### The History of the Texas Tsalagi (Cherokee) (Part One)

Excerpted from the Texas Clan Newsletter.

The Tsalagi (Cherokee) are one of the most important tribes in Texas History. They are not originally from Texas. They moved to Texas from the east around 1823. One reason the Tsalagi are important is because Sam Houston was an adopted Tsalagi. Sam Houston was the first President of the Republic of Texas and the General of the Texas Army that defeated the Mexicans in the Texas Revolution in 1835. From Tennessee, he followed his Tsalagi family first to Arkansas in 1828, then to Texas in 1832. Sam Houston's Tsalagi name was "Go-la-nv" (qwm) "the Raven".

The Tsalagi (Cherokee) are also important in Texas history because they took over the leadership role of the Indian tribes of East Texas from the Caddo. They became the dominant Indian tribe in East Texas.

The importance of the Tsalagi (Cherokee) in Texas is more historical than cultural. By the time they arrived in Texas their culture had become very much like the Americans and Europeans in many ways. To find the original Tsalagi Indian culture you have to go back 200 years before they came to Texas.



The Tsalagi (Cherokee) are one of the five civilized tribes. They were called this because by the time large numbers of European settlers arrived around them, the Tsalagi had already learned to make and use metal tools, European style clothes and European style houses.

The Tsalagi (Cherokee) are an Iroquoian speaking people who originally lived in eastern Tennessee and the surrounding areas. They were originally known as the Ani-Yun-wi-ya, (the Principal People). Their territory included almost all of Tennessee and Kentucky, the northern part of Georgia, the northern part of Alabama, the eastern tips of North and South Carolina and Virginia. This is a lot of territory and the Tsalagi was a big nation. They were a part of the larger mound-building cultures of the Southeastern United States.

In the east and in Texas the Tsalagi were primarily farmers who lived in villages. They also hunted and gathered wild plants for food and medicines when they could. Before European contact, they farmed corn, beans, pumpkins, squash, and several other kinds of plants. They did not have domesticated animals like cows or chickens. They did have dogs.

The Tsalagi are famous for their beautiful baskets. They used baskets to hold food like corn as they picked it and to hold wild berries and roots. I will share more next month.

Do-nv-da-go-hvi, (Until we meet again),

Chief Yona Woni, (Speaking Bear)



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

### THE UNITED CHEROKEE NATION (UCN)

**Mailing Address;**

**The United Cherokee Nation (UCN)**

**P.O. Box 161**

**Quinton, OK 74561**

**Phone: 918-302-8308**

**E-mail: Newsletter@theucn.com**

**We're on the Web**

**<http://theucn.com>**

VISIT  
OUR

**FORUM**

## *Self Determination by Oklahoma Clan Chief Jim Lee*

Lets face it, our economy went down the tube last year and regardless of how many times the current administration in Washington and the talking heads on the network news tell us it is making a recovery and things are getting better, few if any of us have, or will, see any improvement. Banks are still failing in record numbers, more homes are going into foreclosure every day, and more workers have exhausted their unemployment benefits. The news is still full of stories about more lay-offs, about States and cities cutting or reducing services, and about cutting funding for repairs to critical infrastructure such as roads, schools, hospitals, & etc. I do not see anything getting any better, in fact I see them getting worse day by day as more and more people have less and less to work with.

While most of us have to learn to get things done with seriously reduced income, taxes are being raised to compensate for lower revenues due to the public spending less money, and the prices of everything we buy are going up at an alarming rate.

This is forcing many of us to reconsider long established patterns of behavior. Many of the habits we established when money was plentiful are no longer sustainable, and maybe that can be a good thing because it forces us to take control of our destinies and learn to do things for ourselves as our parents and grandparents did.

Many of them were self-sufficient, living on farms and producing or trading something they produced for the things they needed to live a fairly comfortable and independent lifestyle. This is a worthy goal for any of us. Complete self sufficiency is difficult to achieve while remaining a part of our modern society, but anything you can produce or do for yourself is something you do not have to pay someone else to do or produce for you, thereby freeing up those funds you used to spend for those products or services to be used for other things, such as the tools to do more things for yourself or to do the things you're already doing more efficiently. Not only will this free up some of your funds, it will give you the satisfaction of knowing you are making a positive difference in your own destiny, and there are few things more comforting than knowing that you, and not anyone or anything else are in control of your own destiny.

Self sufficiency, like anything else worth doing, takes a little bit of effort but the effort is richly rewarded, sometimes immediately as when you decide to buy potatoes instead of pre-cut and packaged French fries at the store or ride a bicycle to work or other places (where practical) instead of paying for the gas to drive (it also has the added benefit of improving your health). When your vehicle needs minor repairs, you can usually buy the tools, parts, and a book to tell you how to do it for less than the cost of taking it to a mechanic, and from then on, you will already have most of the tools and the book. Practice preventative maintenance by keeping your oil changed at proper intervals and keeping it greased. This will drastically reduce the number of repairs necessary. Do not drive it until it quits before repairing it, as this will reduce the damage to be repaired. The benefits to this type of thing are realized almost immediately and will encourage you to further efforts.

Other things, like a garden take a little longer but the rewards are well worth the effort and patience and, in the case of a garden, you will know where your food is coming from and that it is nutritious and safe to eat. I have a friend that grows a vegetable garden in a one bedroom apartment in Seattle in flower pots and planters, so it can be done anywhere if there is the will to do it.

These things mentioned are but a very few of the things that can be done to free up your cash for more important things. You can think about your situation and find many things that you could do for yourself without much effort and things you are paying for that you really do not need.

You might want to make yourself a list. Put necessities on one side and luxuries on the other side. Decide which of the things on the necessities list that you can do or make for yourself (for instance, bread can be made for less than a dollar a loaf and homemade bread is much better tasting than the commercial stuff in the store and you don't need a bread maker to make it), eliminate as many things as you can from this list by doing or providing them for yourself. Next, look at the luxuries list. Anything that you spend money for and is not on the necessities list belongs here (no, cable T.V. does not belong on the necessities list, neither do soft drinks nor beer). Think seriously about it. How many of the things on this list are things that cost more than they are worth? You can probably eliminate a few just because you don't use them as often as you used to (is it really necessary to have three movie channels?).

The more you do for yourself, the more you will experience the satisfaction of knowing that you provided for yourself, and the more you will be motivated to do for yourself. It has the snowball effect.

Our ancestors understood this and had the pride that came from being the masters of their own destinies. We, in our own generations and in our efforts to become a part of modern society, have largely forgotten the ways of our people and the lessons of our ancestors. A large part of us were never taught the reasons for our old ways and it is well past time we started re-learning them and teaching them to our children, so they can build a future for themselves based upon self sufficiency and independence rather than going through life being tossed about by social and economic influences like leaves caught up in the current of a swift mountain stream. Any degree of self sufficiency you can achieve will improve your ability for self determination, and any degree of self determination is certainly better than being at the mercy of forces you cannot control.

Jim