



# San Diego Cherokee Community Newsletter

Issue 10

[www.sandiegocherokeecommunity.com](http://www.sandiegocherokeecommunity.com)

November, 2008

## Next Meeting

Our next SDCC meeting will be December 14 at the Clairemont Community Center at 4731 Clairemont Drive, beginning at 1 p.m.

This holiday season, the SDCC Council has decided to provide our membership with a complete turkey dinner with the trimmings for our annual Cherokee Community Holiday Celebration. We will provide turkey, ham, side dishes, deserts and beverages; all that we ask is for our Cherokee brothers and sisters to bring their appetites. We do ask that you RSVP by December 7th to our email address at

[sandiegocherokeecommunity@yahoo.com](mailto:sandiegocherokeecommunity@yahoo.com)

or leave a message at 858-674-1168 (for the individuals that do not have a computer), on the number of individuals that will be attending.

In the spirit of giving, we ask that you make a cash donation of any amount to the Cherokee Nation Angel Tree. We will have a basket for the donations. The Council will send the CN Angel Tree a check so that they may select individuals from their tree to purchase gifts for.

The Angel Tree is hosted by the Cherokee Nation to provide gifts for disadvantaged children of the Nation living in the fourteen counties of the Cherokee Nation.

We will view a movie entitled "Our Spirits Don't Speak English". The movie is told from an American Indian perspective. This documentary uncovers the dark history of the U.S. government's policy. It gives a voice to the countless Indian children forced through the system.

A round table discussion on the issues that were brought up at the last meeting about what it means to be a Cherokee will be also discussed. We will also be giving away a CD from the Cherokee Youth Choir -- "Precious Memories".

We anticipate our next meeting will be in February. Please visit our website at [www.sandiegocherokeecommunity.com](http://www.sandiegocherokeecommunity.com) for details. Due to the new budget restrictions from the City of San Diego, we may have to move our meeting place next year. If anyone knows of a great place for us to meet in a location that is centrally location, please let us know. We hope to have a class on grass mat making.

## What You Missed . . .

At our last meeting in September, we were visited by several members of the Cherokee Nation from Oklahoma. They did a presentation on various subjects that are of interest to the people of the CN.

Julia Coates did a presentation of the history of identity formation among the Cherokees. Melanie Knight, Secretary of State of the Cherokee Nation, talked about the hundreds of other Cherokee groups and why their claims are so problematic for the CN.

Genealogists for the Cherokee Heritage Center, Gene Norris and Roy Hamilton, talked about the Dawes Rolls and the questions and misconceptions they most often encounter around Cherokee identity claims.

Members from the Community Organizational Training and Technical Assistance (COTTA), Kristin Gideon and Paul Buckner, talked about how they can help the various satellite communities inter reaction between the groups and the Cherokee Nation.

We appreciate the Cherokee Nation sending out representatives from the Nation and look forward to the other presentations they hope to bring to the various satellite communities in the year to come. More to come later on this topic.

## American Indian Heritage Month

November is National American Indian Heritage Month. Back in 1990, President George H.W. Bush approved a joint resolution designating November as such. During this month, we honor our native peoples and recognize them for strengthening the diversity of our society.

On November 18, National American Indian Heritage Month was celebrated in Cherokee Council chambers with an opening prayer. Various Cherokee speakers and Cherokee Hymn singers and musicians participated.

### *Indian Capital*

Congress passed the Dawes Act in 1887, with the intent of ending the reservation system among the Native American tribes in Indian Territory. Their goal was to better assimilate Indians into the mainstream of American culture. They hoped that the Indian Territory would then come into the Union as a state.

For this goal to be achieved, the lands held in common by the tribes would be distributed to individual members of the tribe. Eventually, tribal governments were to be dissolved.

Congress formed a three-person commission on March 3, 1893. The group was named the Dawes Commission after its chairman, Henry Dawes. Their main job was to negotiate new treaties with the Five Civilized Tribes. The treaties would allow for the

enrollment of tribal members with the intent of making individual allotments of land to those members.

The Dawes commissioners traveled extensively throughout Indian Territory to meet with tribal leaders. While those treaty negotiations took place, temporary offices were kept in McAlester and Muskogee. Once the negotiations were completed, the Commission chose Muskogee for its headquarters.

Some say that it was this decision that established Muskogee as the "Indian Capital", and the town was often referred to in that way. Literally thousands of individuals claiming Indian blood flooded into the Territory hoping to gain an allotment. The Dawes Commission workers had to interview each one and examine any documentation they provided as proof of their Indian heritage.

A building was constructed for the Commission at the corner of Second Street and Okmulgee Avenue by Dr. F.B. Fite. Thousands of government employees came to Muskogee from nearly every state in the Union to work for the Dawes Commission. It has been said that during this time period, Muskogee had more government workers than any city except Washington D.C.

The Indian Capital, Muskogee, had a permanent population that was largely white and African American. A census report for Indian Territory in 1894 stated that the Territory had a population of 178,097. Of this number, more than 70% of Indian Territory residents were not Indian.

Source: Jonita Mullins, Muskogee Phoenix newspaper.

## Cherokee Huckleberry Bread

2 C flour  
1 C sugar  
1 C milk  
2 C Huckleberry or blueberries  
1 egg  
1 stick butter  
1 t. vanilla.

Cream eggs, butter and sugar together. Add flour, milk and vanilla. Sprinkle flour on berries to prevent them from going to the bottom. Gently fold berries into mixture. Put in floured and lightly greased baking pan and bake at 350 degrees for 40 minutes or until done.

## Totem Poles

The world's largest totem pole was built by Ed Galloway, working from 1937 to 1948. It is 90 feet tall, 18 feet in diameter, and 54 feet in circumference at the base. It is made from 100 tons of sand and rock, 28 tons of cement and 6 tons of steel. There are 200 different carved pictures with four, nine-foot-tall Indian chiefs near the top.

Exiting the room at the base of the totem pole and starting around the side, you will see what looks like a foot of some large prehistoric creature coming out of the base. Take a few more steps, and you spot another large foot. When you get around to the back side, the mystery is solved. There you see a giant turtle head. This large totem pole is constructed upon the back of a giant turtle.

The other totem poles are of the standard variety, averaging 6 to 20 feet tall. One is a little different from the others. It is in the shape of a giant arrowhead about 18 feet tall. All the totem poles have one thing in common, they are all made of concrete.

Nathan Edward Galloway was born in Missouri in 1880. He developed his carving abilities as a child by carving small wooden items. He was a self-taught artist and craftsman.

Galloway's work soon caught the eye of Sand Springs, Oklahoma, founder and philanthropist Charles Page. He was soon employed as a manual arts instructor at the Sand Springs Children's Home orphanage. For the next 20 years, he taught woodworking to the boys at the Home.

Galloway retired from teaching in 1937 and moved to Foyil, Oklahoma, and started working on Totem Pole Park. This was to be a monument to the American Indian.

For the next 25 years, he worked on building this park and showing it to neighbors and tourists traveling U.S. Highway 66.

Galloway died in 1962, and the park was left untended for several years. However, the concrete totem poles survived. Members of Galloway family, his friends, and friends of the totem pole have restored it so it can again be a roadside stop for the traveler.

In 1999, the park was added to the National Register of Historic Places.

## Dewberry Cobbler

1 ½ C flour  
1 ½ C sugar  
1 t. salt  
1 C milk  
2 t. baking powder  
1 stick butter  
3-5 C dewberries or blackberries

Melt butter in a 9 x 13 pan. Mix together the first 5 ingredients in bowl. Put half the batter in the pan and spread to the edges of the pan. Add the dewberries or blackberries. Add the rest of the batter on top. Bake at 325 degrees for about 1 hour.

### Meet your council members:

Meeting Facilitator – Phil Konstantin  
Records Keeper – George Lynch  
Treasurer – Mike Ledger  
Membership Coordinator – Patrick Bea  
Program Coordinators – Cindy Swayze and Shannon Ventuleth  
Alternate Facilitator, Records Keeper & Newsletter editor– Wynona Bigknife

If you have any ideas or suggestions for upcoming meeting, please contact us. You can contact any of the council members at:

[sandiegocherokeecommunity@yahoo.com](mailto:sandiegocherokeecommunity@yahoo.com)

## Stickball and its Role in Cherokee Ceremony

A-ne-jo-di, or Stickball, is a very rough game played by not only the Cherokee, but many other Southeastern Woodland tribes including the Muscogee (Creek), Seminole, and others.

The game resembles the modern European game of lacrosse, using the ball sticks which are handmade from hickory. A small ball, made of deer hair and hide, is tossed into the air by the medicine man. The male players use a pair of the sticks, and female players use the bare hands.

In earlier times, only the men with the greatest athletic ability played the game. The game was oftentimes played to settle disputes, and the conjurer for each team often became as important to the team as the players themselves.

Seven points are scored when the ball strikes a wooden fish or ball on top of the pole approximately 28 feet in height and two points are awarded when the ball strikes the pole.

In earlier days, there would be a dance before the ballgame. The ballplayers were the participants of the dance, along with seven women dancers. Each woman represented one of the clans. Throughout the dance, the women would step on black beads which represented the players of the opposing team. The conjurer had placed these black beads on a large flat rock.

Today, stickball is an important part of the day's activities at ceremonial Stomp Grounds, being necessary to play before

the Stomp Dance can ever begin. It is also a recreational sport at other times between community teams. There are also intertribal teams made up of players from Cherokee, Muscogee (Creek), Yuchi, Natchez, and other area communities.

Source: Cherokee National Cultural Resource Center

## Native American Heritage Day

The Native American Heritage Day Bill, H.J. Res. 62, designates the Friday after Thanksgiving as a day to pay tribute to Native Americans for their many contributions to the U.S.

The Native American Heritage Day Bill encourages Americans of all backgrounds to observe Friday, November 28, as Native American Heritage Day, through appropriate ceremonies and activities. It also encourages public elementary and secondary schools to enhance student understanding of Native Americans by providing classroom instruction focusing on their history, achievements, and contributions.

California has established the fourth Friday of September as Native American Day in California.

## Diabetes Awareness Month

Diabetes has reached epidemic proportions among Native Americans, and complications from diabetes are major causes of death and health

problems in most Native American populations. Because of this, Cherokee National Principal Chief Chad Smith has declared November as Diabetes Awareness Month.

“Cherokees are at high risk for the development of diabetes, and it affects not only the individual but the whole family,” Smith said. “The Cherokee Nation is committed to the well-being and health of Cherokee citizens and helping improve their quality and years of life.”

Diabetes is a disease that affects the body’s ability to convert sugars, starches and other food into energy. It is estimated that more than 23 million Americans are affected by the disease, and that nearly 6 million are not aware they have it. In the Cherokee Nation, there are nearly 5,000 patients in the tribe’s Diabetes Registry.

Native Americans are at particular risk for diabetes, and in 2007 just over 38 percent of the diagnosis of patients treated at the tribe’s health centers were in relation to the disease. The Cherokee Nation spends an average of \$6.5 million annually in the diabetes program which offers a team approach to care, including intensive case management, podiatry services, primary prevention activities and self-management instruction.

If you would like more information on the Cherokee Nation Diabetes Prevention Program, contact Tonya Giger at 918-453-5776.

Source: Muskogee Phoenix

## **First Hard Rock Casino in Midwest**

The Cherokee Nation Enterprises, LLC and Hard Rock Hotel Holding LLC have entered into a license agreement that will enable the Cherokee Nation Enterprises to brand its expanded hotel and casino near Tulsa under the Hard Rock Casino name. The agreement is current pending review and approval of the National Indian Gaming Commission.

The Hard Rock Casino Tulsa will be the first Hard Rock branded property in the Midwest. The new property will bring its own version of the Hard Rock experience to Oklahoma with influences from Cherokee heritage, Oklahoma’s rich history of musical artists and a blend of the property’s current and future amenities and entertainment.

As part of the Hard Rock brand, the new resort will include the décor, memorabilia and merchandise that have made the Hard Rock brand famous around the world.



The Hard Rock Casino Tulsa’s current expansion is estimated at \$155 million, with the new gaming floor opening in

December and the newly branded hotel welcoming its first guests in the spring of 2009.

Cherokee Nation Enterprises is the retail, gaming, entertainment, hospitality and cultural tourism entity of the Cherokee Nation. CNE operates casinos in Tulsa, Claremore, Roland, West Siloam Springs, Fort Gibson, Sallisaw and Tahlequah, as well as the Cherokee Travel Plaza, two Cherokee Outpost convenience stores, six retail tobacco shops, four gift shops, two golf courses and three hotels.

The company is currently undergoing the \$155 million expansion in Tulsa along with the \$125 million expansion at the Cherokee Casino West Siloam Springs.

For the past two years, CNE has been voted the number one company to work for in Oklahoma by Oklahoma magazine, a statewide publication. The company currently employs more than 3,200 people throughout northeastern Oklahoma and northwestern Arkansas.

CNE began operating in 1990 with the opening of the Roland Bingo Hall, later to be expanded into Cherokee Casino Roland. In 2007, CNE's total revenue reached \$418.6 million. CNE continues to grow, with 100 percent of the profit benefiting the Cherokee Nation through job creation and funding for vital government services, such as health, education, housing and community services.

<http://www.cherokee.org/NewsRoom/FullStory/2734/Page/Default.aspx>

## REMINDER

Don't forget to RSVP by December 7 on the number of people planning on attending our Cherokee Community Holiday Celebration on December 14.

[sandiegocherokeecommunity@yahoo.com](mailto:sandiegocherokeecommunity@yahoo.com) or leave a message at 858-674-1168 for those individuals who don't have email.

## CHEROKEE CASEROLE

1 ½ lb ground beef  
1 med. onion, chopped  
1 C Minute Rice, pre-cooked  
1 can whole kernel corn  
1 can tomato soup  
1 can water (soup can)  
4 slices American cheese  
Salt and pepper to taste  
Oregano and basil to taste

Brown meat and onions; drain off excess grease. Add other ingredients, except for cheese. Simmer for 5 minutes, top with cheese and cook until cheese pieces melt.

## *Cherokee Hospitality*

Hospitality is a prominent feature in Cherokee character and that instinctive impulse to 'eat when you are hungry' is scrupulously compiled with by them, when among their own people, and anything can be found acceptable to a hungry stomach. To such height is this custom carried, that in many towns, an invitation is not necessary preliminary to eating; whether the person be a stranger or a relative; and from a native, no compensation is required for eating, lodging, and provender for beasts.

Taken from a manuscript prepared by J.P. Evans in 1835.

Source: [www.cherokee.org/culture](http://www.cherokee.org/culture)