



# San Diego Cherokee Community Newsletter

Issue 17

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

December 2009

## *Next Meeting*

Our next SDCC meeting is December 12, 2009 at 1 p.m. at the Hometown Buffet. It is located at 10660 Camino Ruiz, San Diego, CA 92126.

We will be having a holiday gathering at Hometown Buffet. The Council will purchase lunch for members only. If you want to bring a guest, the member will have to pay for them.



One of the cast iron kettles from the Cherokee Nation

## **Cherokee Hog Fry**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Cherokee Nation Cultural Picnic was held on October 11, at DeAnza Cove on Mission Bay. The Cherokee Nation provided a traditional hog fry for the San Diego community.

Members from the Cherokee Nation presented the SDCC with 3 large cast iron kettles to use for future cultural picnics. The Cherokee Nation also presented kettles to the other satellite communities in California. The kettles were purchased from Louisiana.

Lunch included the fried hog, brown beans, and Indian fry bread provided by cooks from the CN. Kanuchi was also made by the cooks to put over hominy or rice. The general membership brought various other food items to share.



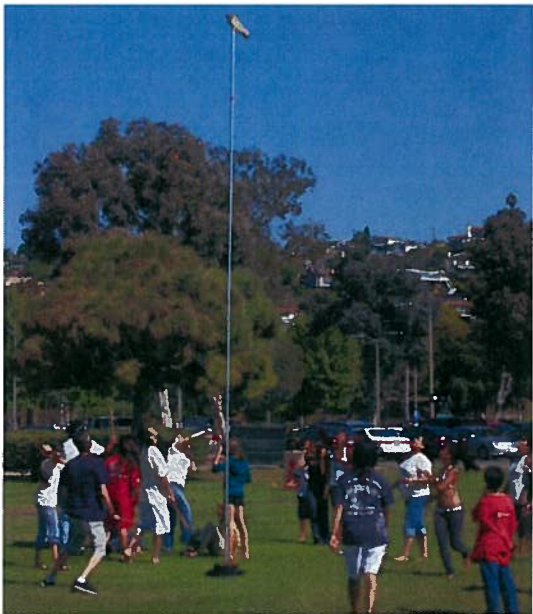
Principal Chief Chad Smith gave the State of the Nation speech. The

Cherokee Nation Youth Choir sang several songs. Several members from the Cherokee Nation Tribal Council also spoke.



The Cherokee Nation had several arts & crafts stations that individuals could learn how to make. They included basket weaving, pinch pots and beading. They also provided booths for registration and voting information.

Games of stickball and marbles went on throughout the afternoon.



San Diego is so culturally diverse that during our CN picnic, individuals from Hawaii were also having a celebration.

They invite Principal Chief Chad Smith and members from the Youth Choir to learn how to row in their traditional outrigger canoe.



The Council also collected donations for The Angel Tree. We sent home with the individuals from Oklahoma, 2 large bags of winter clothing for distribution among the citizens. The SDCC also has sent a check to The Angel Tree for \$200 to purchase Christmas presents for children who might not otherwise receive gifts.

The SDCC would like to thank all who gave to this worthy cause.

## Looking for...

The SDCC is looking for a volunteer for the newsletter editor or volunteers who are willing to write articles for the newsletter. The newsletter is a useful tool in dispensing information to the satellite community of the Cherokee Nation here in San Diego.

## State's Oldest Town

Like many other towns on the western frontier, Fort Gibson began as a camp surrounding the actual fort that was built on the Grand River in 1824. All military posts had camp followers who wanted to

do business with the government, its soldiers and their families. These included legitimate businesses such as mercantiles, blacksmiths, laundries, and hostleries.

By 1827, Fort Gibson had the first post office in what would become Indian Territory and then Oklahoma. It was called Cantonment Gibson, Cherokee Nation at first. John Nicks served as the first postmaster.

In 1857, the US abandoned Fort Gibson as a military post and its ownership reverted to the Cherokee Nation. At that time, the Cherokee council created the town of Kee-too-wah, platted town lots on the military grounds and offered the barracks and other buildings for sale to the Cherokees.

The town of Kee-too-wah never actually developed. In 1862, federal troops under Col. W.A. Phillips once again occupied Fort Gibson to control Indian Territory during the Civil War. The Fort was closed again in 1871, but troops were occasionally stationed there for the next 20 years whenever the need for military presence might arise. The famed Buffalo Soldiers of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry were among those occupying Fort Gibson at various times.

Two schools occupied the stockade buildings after they were no longer used by the military. In 1885, Dr. Henry Stanley, famous explorer to Africa, operated a school at the Fort. In 1897, Lura Rowland, a young blind woman from Arkansas, began a school for blind students in the old barracks. This school later moved to Muskogee and became the Oklahoma School for the Blind.

Fort Gibson had its struggles with disastrous fires, floods and the Great Depression. During WW II, the town's population swelled with the coming of Camp Gruber to nearby Braggs. Today Fort Gibson is a town steeped in history and distinguished as Oklahoma's oldest town.

Source: Muskogee Times

## Facebook

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## Freedmen Matter Not To Be Investigate by Justice Dept.

November 9, the Justice Department sent letters to Oklahoma Congressmen Tom Cole and Dan Boren stating it would not investigate the five Oklahoma tribes for alleged illegal treatment of their respective Freedmen citizens.

The letter was in response to congressional members asking the DOJ to investigate the Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek, Chickasaw and Seminole nations for allegedly barring descendants of former slaves from full citizenship.

The DOJ replied it could not investigate because there is a case pending in federal court regarding Freedmen citizenship.

Boren called the request “an affront to tribal sovereignty,” while Cole, who is Chickasaw, said it was “abhorrent and unfair.” The men sent separate letters to U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder asking him to let the courts settle the issue.

Only the Cherokee Nation is currently in litigation with Freeman descendents over citizenship. A ruling is pending in the tribe’s District Court, while litigation is pending in the U.S. District Court of the Northern District of Oklahoma.

Source: By Will Chavez, Cherokee Phoenix

## 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



Phil Konstantin, George Lynch, Principal Chief Chad Smith, Wynona Bigknife, Patrick Bea, Shannon Ventuleth, Cindy Swayze. Not pictured: Mike Ledger



Grounding up hickory nuts for Kanuchi



Sharing of corn seeds for a plentiful harvest





Junior Miss Cherokee



Time to eat



CN Youth Choir



Council Member At-Large Jack Baker



Photos by Phil Konstantin, George Lynch and Wynona Bigknife



Council Member At-Large Julia Coats

You can see more photos on our website:  
[www.sandiegocherokeecommunity.com](http://www.sandiegocherokeecommunity.com)