



# San Diego Cherokee Community Newsletter

Issue 6

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

January 2008

## Meeting Dates

The next meeting of the San Diego Cherokee Community will be January 27, 2008 at the Clairemont Community Center, located at 4731 Clairemont Drive at 1 p.m.

The program will be on tracing your Cherokee genealogy. Please bring your information on your Cherokee roots to share with the group. We will also begin listening to tapes of the Cherokee language and learning to speak the language. Cherokee Proud, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition by Tony Mack McClure will be given away to a lucky member that attends. This book is a Cherokee ancestry tracing guide.

On March 9<sup>th</sup>, the Trail of Tears DVD will be played for members. Afterwards a discussion of the video will be held. The program will start at 1 p.m. Popcorn and soda will be provided. The meeting will again be held at the Clairemont Community Center.

May 18<sup>th</sup> has been designated for the San Diego Cherokee Annual Picnic, location TBA. This will be a potluck picnic and meeting. The SDCC council is trying to get Principal Chief Chad Smith or Deputy Chief Joe Grayson Jr. to attend

the picnic for a meet and greet. However due to their schedule, nothing has been definitely set – update on this later.

Visit our website for more information and updated details:

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

## This Is What You Missed Last Time by Not Attending Our Meeting

Our last meeting was December 9<sup>th</sup> at the Clairemont Community Center. It was our holiday meeting and potluck luncheon.

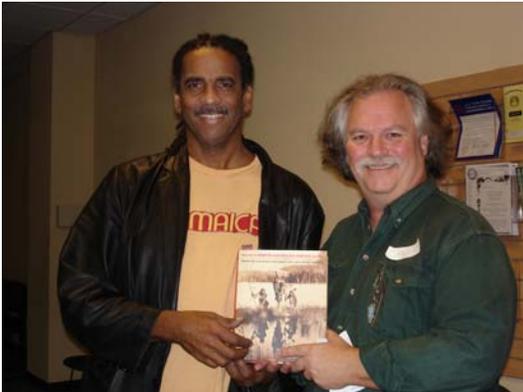


Setting up the potluck luncheon



Everyone enjoying their meal

Steve Spencer was the lucky winner of our drawing held at the meeting. He received an autographed book entitled, This Day in North American Indian History by Phil Konstantin.



Steve Spencer and Phil Konstantin

## By-Laws & Ballots to Be Mailed

The preliminary by-laws of the SDCC have been reviewed by the interim Council members and changes were made to be in accordance with the by-laws of the Cherokee Nation's parent corporation for the satellite communities.

The by-laws and ballots are to be distributed to the members of the SDCC for them to vote on. The by-laws and ballots should be mailed at least two weeks prior to the January 27<sup>th</sup> meeting. It will take the majority of the ballots returned for the by-laws to be adopted.

If the by-laws are adopted, then the interim Council can start the process of the formal selection and election of Council members by the May 18<sup>th</sup> picnic.

Election of a Council must take place in order for the San Diego Cherokee Community to be formally recognized by the Cherokee Nation Community Corporation. The CNCC is a non-profit corporation that will provide oversight to the satellite communities located outside the Cherokee Nation's boundaries.

More than 60% of the citizens of the Cherokee Nation live outside of the Nation's boundaries in northeastern Oklahoma. California has the largest concentration of the Cherokee Nation citizenship outside of Oklahoma.

The satellite communities currently have two members-at-large on the Cherokee Nation Council. They are Julia Coates and Jack D. Baker.

## Kards For Kids

The Cherokee Nation is now offering a very special piece of artwork for sale that's not only affordable, but benefits children in need.

Cherokee artist Verna Bates of Locust Grove assisted Indian Child Welfare staff with the creation of the "Kards for Kids"

Kids” project by allowing one of her works to be copied onto note cards currently available for purchase. The name of the image is “Making Small Talk” and features a father holding his child.



A set of five cards can be purchased for \$10. All proceeds from the sale of the cards will directly benefit Cherokee children who are currently in the care of the Cherokee Nation Foster Care Program, due to circumstances such as abuse, neglect or abandonment.

For more information on Kards for Kids, contact Ellen Guttillo at [ellen-guttillo@cherokee.org](mailto:ellen-guttillo@cherokee.org) or call 918-696-7603, ext. 31.

Source:  
[www.cherokee.org/pressroom/2472/story.aspx](http://www.cherokee.org/pressroom/2472/story.aspx)

## Potato Soup (Nu-Nv-Oo-Ga-Ma)

Peel white potatoes and cut them into small pieces. Boil in water with an onion or two until potatoes and onions mash easily. After mashing, add some fresh milk and reheat the mixture. Add salt and pepper, if desired. This soup is the best when eaten hot.

## Cherokee Nation History Course

The Cherokee Nation history course sponsored by the Cherokee Nation, in conjunction with the Cherokees of Orange County, is being offered to residents of Irvine and the surrounding areas.

The course is four days and thirty-two hours long. It has received widespread acclaim from the thousands of tribal employees and community members who have participated in it.

This is a part of an ongoing initiative to rejuvenate the knowledge of language, culture, and history of the Cherokee Nation. CN history is not just about dates, places, and events, but about processes of adaptation and resistance, proactive and reactive responses, identity and continuity.

The course is to be conducted on January 26-27 and February 9-10 at the University of California, Irvine. Registration is \$10 per person. Registration must be done by 5 p.m. January 23, 2008.

For more information, contact Julia Coates at 530-383-9396 or [Julia-coates@cherokee.org](mailto:Julia-coates@cherokee.org).

## NCAI Opposes Cherokee Termination Legislation

The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) unanimously passed a resolution at their 64<sup>th</sup> annual convention in Denver, opposing a U.S. House bill that could terminate the Cherokee Nation's federal funding and sovereignty. The NCAI is the oldest and largest national American Indian organization.

The NCAI resolution states opposition to House Resolution 2824 because it would break the promise of tribal self-government and threaten the right of all Indian tribes to determine and preserve distinctive Indian identities.

It also states that H.R. 2824 would create unnecessary mandated Department of Justice and Government Accountability Office studies of the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole nations, as well as call for the termination of the government-to-government relations between the Cherokee Nation and the U.S. Governments.

U.S Congresswoman, Diane Watson (D-Calif.), who is a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, introduced H.R. 2824 on June 21, 2007. The bill would sever the government-to-government relationship between the CN and the U.S. government. This would cut nearly \$300 million in federal funding to Cherokee services.

Litigation concerning Freeman citizenship issues continues in federal and tribal courts. Until all litigation is resolved, Freedmen descendants who had citizenship before the March 3 vote, have been reinstated with full social services and voting rights.

Tribal officials said the CN has launched efforts to rally tribal leaders to tell Congress that the Freedmen's citizenship status should be decided by the courts and not Congress.

*Source:*  
--Travis Snell, *Cherokee Phoenix*, December 2007

## Turkey Feathers For Cultural Purpose

An agreement between Cherokee Nation Natural Resources, the National Wild Turkey Federation and the U.S. National Park Service is helping Cherokees to maintain their culture.

CNNR supervisor Pat Gwin said he learned that the NPS was conducting a pilot program that was allowing some turkey hunting in national parks and discovered that NPS officials were looking for partners to dispose of the bird carcasses.

“They were just being thrown away because technically it's illegal to have turkey feathers,” said Gwin. “It is illegal to have any wild bird feathers that you do not legally kill yourself.”

Gwin said the agreement between the entities took almost two years to finalize but it has been a tremendous success in the couple of months since its inception. Anyone requesting to receive turkey feathers through the program must provide proof of Cherokee citizenship, he said.

The feathers are used by Cherokee bow and arrow makers who use the primary feathers for fletching on the nock end of

the arrow, which improves the arrow's flight. They are also used in making ceremonial fans and painted on by numerous artists.

Sam Still, a cultural consultant and United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee citizens, said turkey feathers have always played an important role in Cherokee culture, usually given to children who might not have the ability to care for sacred items.

"Turkey feathers have always been given to young children who had yet to earn their hawk or eagle fathers," Still said. "It is OK for them to touch the ground, where it is not OK for eagle feathers to do so. So, young boys in training were given turkey feathers until they showed that they could treat them the same as an eagle feather."

For more information, call Pat Gwin at 918-453-5704 or email [pat-gwin@cherokee.org](mailto:pat-gwin@cherokee.org).

Source:  
[www.cherokeephoneix.org/Arts](http://www.cherokeephoneix.org/Arts)

## A terrible, tearful trip

*By Phil Konstantin*

The trip from the Cherokee lands to Indian Territory was approximately 1,000 miles. Between 15,000 and 17,000 Cherokees made the trip. Often, they had little more than the clothes on their backs. Much of the trip was made overland. A drought had lowered the levels of many of the rivers in the area. This delayed some of the trip into the winter months.

As many as 4,000 Cherokees died during the trip due to sickness, fatigue or exposure. Many of the dead were the young and the old. Many more would die in the next few years in Indian Territory since they had been ill prepared to move to a new land.

This forced march was called "the place where they cried," or as it is better known, "The Trail of Tears." Both Elias Boudinot and John Ridge would eventually be killed for their part in the New Echota Treaty.

## Surviving against all odds

*By Phil Konstantin*

The Cherokees would survive, and eventually become successful in their new lands. One of the first institutes of higher learning west of the Mississippi Rivers was created by the Cherokee Nation.

The Civil War also wreaked havoc among the Cherokees. The tribe was divided on whom they should back, if either side. Some Cherokees fought for the North, others for the South. As many as 25% of the male Cherokee population were killed in the conflict. The last Confederate general to surrender was a Cherokee named Stand Waite.

Today, the Cherokee Nation is the largest Indian tribe in the United States. There are more than 200,000 tribal members. In the 2000 census, almost 750,000 people claimed to have some Cherokee ancestry. During the Trail of

Tears time, a small group of Cherokees were able to hide out in North Carolina.

## Trail of Tears

(Part 1 of Series)

Between 1790 and 1830, the population of Georgia increased six-fold. The western push of the settlers created a problem. Georgians continued to take Native American lands and force them into the frontier. By 1825, the Lower Creek had been completely removed from the state under provisions of the Treaty of Indian Springs. By 1827, the Creeks were gone.

Cherokee had long called western Georgia home. The Cherokee Nation continued in their enchanted land until 1828. It was then that the rumored gold, for which De Soto had relentlessly searched, was discovered in the North Georgia Mountains.

The Cherokee in 1828 were not nomadic savages. In fact, they had assimilated many European-style customs, including the wearing of gowns by Cherokee women. They built roads, schools, and churches, had a system of representational government, and were farmers and cattle ranchers. A Cherokee alphabet, the “Talking Leaves” was perfected by Sequoyah.

In 1830 Congress passed the “Indian Removal Act.” Although many Americans were against the act, most notably Tennessee Congressmen Davy Crockett, it passed anyway. President Andrew Jackson quickly signed the bill into law. The Cherokees attempted to fight removal legally by challenging the removal laws in the Supreme Court and

by establishing an independent Cherokee Nation.

At first, the court seemed to rule against the Indians. In *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia*, the Court refused to hear a case extending Georgia’s laws on the Cherokee because they did not represent a sovereign nation.

In 1832, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Cherokee on the same issue in *Worcester v. Georgia*. In this case Chief Justice John Marshall ruled that the Cherokee Nation was sovereign, making the removal laws invalid. The Cherokees would have to agree to removal in a treaty. The treaty then would have to be ratified by the Senate.

By 1835, the Cherokees were divided and despondent. Most supported Principal Chief John Ross, who fought the encroachment of whites starting with the 1832 land lottery. However, a minority (less than 500 out of 17,000 Cherokees in N. Georgia) followed Major Ridge, his son John, and Elias Boudinot, who advocated removal.

The Treaty of New Echota, signed by Ridge and member of the Treaty Part in 1835, gave Jackson the legal document he needed to remove the First Americans. Ratification of the treaty by the U.S. Senate sealed the fate of the Cherokees. Among the few who spoke out against the ratification was Daniel Webster and Henry Clay, but it passed by a single vote.

In 1838, the U.S. began the removal to Oklahoma, fulfilling a promise the government made to Georgia in 1802. Ordered to move on the Cherokees,

General John Wool resigned his command in protest, delaying the action.

His replacement, General Winfield Scott, arrived at New Echota on May 17, 1838 with 7,000 men. Early that summer, General Scott and the U.S. Army began the invasion of the Cherokee Nation.

In one of the saddest episodes of our brief history, men, women and children were taken from their land, herded into makeshift forts with minimal facilities and food, and then forced to march a thousand miles. Some made part of the trip by boat in equally horrible conditions. Under the generally indifferent army commanders, human losses for the first group of Cherokees removed were extremely high.

John Ross made an urgent appeal to Scott, requesting that the general let his people lead the tribe west. General Scott agreed. Ross organized the Cherokees into smaller groups and let them move separately through the wilderness so they could forage for food.

Although the parties under Ross left in early fall and arrived in Oklahoma during the brutal winter of 1838-39, he significantly reduced the loss of life among his people. About 4,000 Cherokees died as a result of the removal. The route they traversed and the journey itself became known as “The Trail of Tears” or, as a direct translation from Cherokee, “The Trail Where They Cried” (“Nunna daul Tsuny”).

Ironically, just as the Creeks killed Chief McIntosh for signing the Treaty of Indian Springs, the Cherokees killed Major Ridge, his son and Elias Boudinot

for signing the Treaty of New Echota. Chief John Ross, who valiantly resisted the forced removal of the Cherokees, lost his wife, Quatie, in the march.

And so a country formed fifty years earlier on the premise “...that all men are created equal and that they are endowed by the Creator with certain unalienable rights, among these the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness...” brutally closed the curtain on a culture that had done no wrong.

Source: <http://ngeorgia.com/history/nghisttt.html>

## Legend of the Cherokee Rose



No better symbol exists of the pain and suffering of the Trail Where They Cried than the Cherokee Rose. The mothers of the Cherokee grieved so much that the chiefs prayed for a sign to lift the mother’s spirits and gave them strength to care for their children.

From that day forward, a beautiful new flower, a rose, grew wherever a mother’s tear fell to the ground. The rose is white, for the mother’s tears. It has a gold center, for the gold taken from the Cherokee lands, and seven leaves on each stem that represent the seven Cherokee clans that made the journey.

To this day, the Cherokee Rose prospers along the route of the “Trail of Tears”. The

Cherokee Rose is now the official flower of the State of Georgia.

Source: <http://ngeorgia.com/history/nghisttt.html>