



Indian Country THIS WEEK FROM

TODAY THE PREMIER E-NEWSLETTER SERVING THE NATIONS, CELEBRATING THE PEOPLE

A Letter from the Publisher

Shekóli. As one year closes and another begins, it is customary to reflect on what we have experienced during the past twelve months, and how we might use the past to guide us in the days ahead. For this year-end issue of This Week From Indian Country Today, we reviewed hundreds of news posts and headlines published in 2013 and watched again how stories unfolded in time—some for the better, and some for the worse. Think of this newsletter, then, as a contemporary version of the great Lakota winter counts, when the season of deep cold was a time to record the significant events of the past year. And so we remember and memorialize members of our global community who have walked on; we revisit the best of Indian entertainment and culture; and we try to recapture and present what we feel is a mounting awareness among our friends and allies—and the mainstream media—for the newsworthy topics that are so important to Indian country.



leaders to fully inform the American public of the detrimental effects of the name of the Washington football team. We sought to amplify the longstanding message from civil rights leaders such as Suzan Shown Harjo, who have been rightly saying that it is unacceptable for a professional sports league to continue promoting such a derogatory epithet. With radio ads airing every Sunday, a huge outcry in the public arena compelled the NFL and the team's owner, Daniel Snyder, to take notice. Despite their predictable and increasingly flimsy defenses, a diverse coalition of civil rights groups, public-health organizations, religious leaders and sports icons was joined by governors, the D.C. Council, Republican and Democratic members of Congress and even the President of the United States in saying that now is the time for a change.

The increased focus on Native issues is cause for optimism, even when such events beyond our control—such as the U.S. government's sequester—created unexpected challenges. Indian country awareness is frequently cause-driven, and our correspondents frequently reported on the actions of the best and brightest. On the political front, strong Indian women led the fight to reinstate the Violence Against Women Act, just as tireless activists campaigned on behalf of Baby Veronica and the full enforcement of the Indian Child Welfare Act. To the north, the grass-roots movement Idle No More caught fire on both sides of the border, with real-life flash mobs coming together for a round dance at the Mall of America and digital outreach informing the rest of the world about American and Canadian environmental practices.

In an op-ed recently published in *The Washington Post* I concluded, "Taken together, this coalition's collective message has been clear: 2013 is the year the campaign against the NFL's use of this racial slur coalesced into a permanent movement. It is not going away until the team either stops using the epithet or, if it won't do the right thing, the league steps in to take corrective measures."

As households in Native Nations across Turtle Island look to 2014, it is fitting to draw strength from our achievements. Our voice will be heard.

Na ki' wa,

Ray Halbritter

Also, this fall the Oneida Indian Nation launched its Change the Mascot campaign in support of decades of efforts by national Native

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Hall of Fame / Mantle of Shame Awards for 2013

BY SUZAN SHOWN HARJO



The lobby for the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a trade treaty to fast-track energy projects that the U.S. and a dozen other countries negotiated in secret. The TPP, like NAFTA, the nearly 20-year-old North American Free Trade Agreement, overrides U.S. laws, provides federal rights for foreign extractive companies in the U.S. and does not recognize any Native nations' rights, not even the ability to intervene or to be heard in public processes. The Quechan Tribe found that out when it could not formally be heard against the Canadian Glamis Gold, Ltd., which would have destroyed its sacred place. Unions and other groups have called on Congress to slow down TPP approval.



The non-profit legal organization the Native American Rights Fund, for developing the *Cobell* case, only to be shut out of reimbursement for attorney fees by the very private practice attorneys who owe the biggest debt to NARF for becoming multimillionaires from the settlement that has paid just a few hundred dollars to the plaintiffs. NARF's appeal for attorney fees is still under court consideration.



Prattlers against "Obamacare," the Affordable Care Act, who claim it does nothing to help Native people. Yet it contains a permanent reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act. And that's just for starters.



Oce'Vpoka Cvko Rakko (Hickory Ground Tribal Town/Ceremonial Ground) and Mvskokvlke (Muscogee Nation) for diligently attempting to protect ancestors and the sacred Hickory Ground, near Wetumpka, Alabama, for carrying out their duties of care and respect and for educating others about the ongoing desecration by the Poarch Band and its persecution of Muscogee citizens for trespassing and other charges that have been dismissed.



The Poarch Band for its casino on top of Hickory Ground, a ceremonial ground, burial area and historical site near Wetumpka, Alabama, and for barring Muscogee (Creek) Nation citizens' access to the hallowed ground for ceremony and prayer, in violation of the American Indian /religious Freedom Act and other federal laws.



All Native students who wear and carry feathers they earned or have an honor song done at their high school graduation, and all their relatives and friends and school employees who support them. They are exercising Native national cultural sovereignty and teaching others how to respect our customs and traditions. They are to be applauded, supported and, if need be, defended.



James Czywczynski for issuing an ultimatum to the Oglala Sioux Tribe to buy two 40-acre parcels on its Pine Ridge Reservation for \$4.9 million. One parcel is the site of the Wounded Knee Massacre of 1890 and contains hundreds of graves. Each parcel is appraised at less than \$7,000, according to the Associated Press, and cannot be accessed with any known easement agreement. Czywczynski should have given the land or sold it at fair market value to the Wounded Knee Survivors Association and the Cheyenne River, Oglala and Standing Rock Sioux Tribes long ago. It's still not too late to do so.



The National Museum of the American Indian and Director Kevin Gover and Board Members Manley A. Begay, Jr., Ben Nighthorse Campbell and Phil Deloria for hosting and supporting the NMAI Symposium on Racist Stereotypes and Cultural Appropriation in American Sports, which attracted the greatest audience in NMAI history. It yielded more than one million hits on the Museum's website and started the heightened media focus this year on the movement to end "Native" sports stereotypes.



Washington NFL franchise Owner Daniel Snyder for engaging in the time-dishonored practice of "chief-making" for exploiting the "Aleut chief"—who had never been to Alaska and who did not know the difference between being a chief and having "chief" as his childhood nickname. Snyder also gets shamed for the four frail, aged Navajo Code Talkers who stood in the end zone in team jackets and were "honored" during halftime. Shame, too, on Snyder and his advisors for his "Bartering for Racism Tour," where money rains on the minority of Native Americans who are fine with his racist team name, or who will say they are for a grant or contract. When he bargains for pieces of racism, guess what? It's still racism.



Rep. Eni F. H. Faleomavaega (D-AS) and other co-sponsors who introduced the Non-Disparagement of Native American Persons or Peoples in Trademark Registration Act, H.R. 1278, on March 20, 2013: Reps. Tom Cole (Chickasaw, R-Oklahoma), Betty McCollum (D-Minnesota), Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-Washington, D.C.), Raul M. Grijalva (D-Arizona), Karen Bass (D-California), Gwen Moore (D-Wisconsin), John Lewis (D-Georgia), Michael M. Honda (D-California), Donna M. Christensen (D-Virgin Islands), Zoe Lofgren (D-California), Tulsi Gabbard (D-Hawaii), Barbara Lee (D-California), Mark Pocan (D-Wisconsin), Corrine Brown (D-Florida), G. K. Butterfield (D-North Carolina), Andre Carson (D-Indiana), Yvette D. Clarke (D-New York), Donna F. Edwards (D-Maryland) and Bobby L. Rush (D-Illinois). Appreciation, too, for President Barack Obama, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nevada) and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi

(D-California), who lent their voices to the effort to remove the name of the Washington, D.C. NFL franchise.



Sonic sign in Belton, MO, before the Kansas City – Washington game: “KC CHIEFS WILL SCALP THE REDSINS FEED THEM WHISKEY SEND 2 RESERVATIONS.” After the game, another sign declared: KC CHIEFS – WILL SCALP THE RED*KINS DRAIN THE FIREWATER -- OUT OF THEM.” Several years ago, the Sonic corporation was rebuked by national Native action for leading the charge in Oklahoma against the tribal-state tobacco pacts and for being a part of the nationwide lobby group to abrogate federal-tribal treaties.



The broad coalition that won reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act of 2013, with the historic provision recognizing the inherent sovereignty of Native nations regarding pursuit of pertinent crimes. Kudos to Wilson Pipestem (Osage & Otoe-Missouria), Rep. Tom Cole (Chickasaw, R-Oklahoma), Rep. Gwen Moore (D-Wisconsin), Sen. Patty Murray (D-Washington), Terri Henry (Cherokee) and Deb Parker (Tulalip).



The French judge who ruled for the auction house and against the Hopi Tribe and created a judicially sanctioned black market pipeline for stolen sacred objects and cultural patrimony of the Hopi and other Native nations from the US to Paris. Shame to the auction house owner who mischaracterized both the French judge’s ruling and US law as holding cultural items as desecrated once they pass into private hands.



Darrell Robes Kipp, Apiniokio Peta (Morning Eagle), Blackfeet language warrior of extraordinary wisdom and dedication, who walked on this year at 69. Educator, author and historian, he co-founded in 1987 Pikuni Nizipuhwahsin, The Piegan Insitute, with community-based projects, such as Cuts Wood School immersion program for grades K through 8. He inspired many others in the Native heritage languages revitalization movement with such succinct lessons as, “No one needs permission to save your language.” And, “Start saving your language today.”



The Supreme Court ruling against Onondaga land rights for the same non-legal reasons that it has applied to the Cayuga, Oneida and other cases—that too much time has passed and that providing any justice would simply prove too disruptive to those who have benefitted from the land thefts. And shame to those justices who displayed such stunning ignorance of federal Indian law and Court precedence in the Baby Veronica and Bay Mills arguments.



Native people who became leaders of prominent museums this year: Jim Pepper Henry (Kaw) of the Heard Museum; Della C. Warrior (Otoe-Missouria) of the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture; and W.

Richard West, Jr. (Cheyenne) of the Autry National Center of the American West and the Southwest Museum. They joined Kevin Gover (Pawnee) of the National Museum of the American Indian and Patsy Phillips (Cherokee) of the IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts. Added to the many Native heads of tribal museums and cultural centers, they prompted Henry to quip, “Indians are colonizing the museums.”



The British Museum for talking with Grand Ronde officials for two years and then refusing to return any of their cultural items that were “collected” in 1850 and which are hidden away in the Museum basement. Greece has been trying to recover on artistic and moral grounds its Parthenon Marbles, statues stolen by Lord Elgin in the early 1800s and bought by the Museum, where they are on display today. Museum insiders say that repatriations to Native Americans and others will not be done until and unless Greece acknowledges the Museum’s “ownership” of the Elgin Marbles.



DeLanna Studi (Cherokee) for representing Native People so well in her one-woman stage show, in her film work and as chair of the SAG-AFTRA National Native Americans Committee.



Former Vice President Dick Cheney’s “joke” about an antelope hunt in his home state, Wyoming, in which the loser had to dance with an “Indian squaw.”



The 1491s for continuing to deliver the goods, show after show, and for winning all the smart, funny, inventive and all-too-true awards that we should have in Indian world (and for their individual community work that does not go unnoticed).



Native nations that are in full meltdown. How can you tell? When at least one person in each faction is an embezzler, a predator or looks and acts more like Toronto Mayor Rob Ford or former Rep. Anthony Weiner than like your national and culture heroes—and if more of your young people want to be vampires than Indians.



Oneida Indian Nation for its energetic, effective campaign to educate the public through ads in target cities where the Washington franchise played this season and its outreach to non-Native communities and the NFL; the Oneida Tribe in Wisconsin for its persistent, ongoing efforts to address issues of racism in sports through shareholder activities and Fed/Ex; HONOR and the American Indian Movement for their excellent educational advocacy in conjunction with the Washington games in Wisconsin and Minnesota; and the Houston Independent School District as the latest to take district-wide action to end “Native” stereotypes in its schools’ athletic programs. <http://bit.ly/1cgOdmH> 🍀

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Galbraith Leaves Obama Administration

BY ROB CAPRICCIOSO

In a move that Native affairs insiders had expected for some time, Charles Galbraith is leaving the Obama administration.

Galbraith, a citizen of the Navajo Nation, joined the White House Office of Public Engagement as a Deputy Associate Director of Intergovernmental Affairs in February 2011. He previously served as a Deputy Associate Counsel for Presidential Personnel. He also worked for President Obama during his first presidential campaign, serving as an organizer of the Native American Domestic Policy Committee, a nationwide group of tribal leaders and activists.

It has been a tough three years on the job, with tribal leaders pressing and holding Galbraith accountable on many issues during his time at the White House. These include the administration's lack of protection for tribal budgets from sequestration; its failure to reimburse tribal contract support costs; concerns involving the operation of the new White House Council on Native American Affairs; and perennial issues involving the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indian Health Service. Galbraith was also compelled to publicly defend the administration's decision not to insist on protection for tribal budgets under the Budget Control Act. That stance deeply affected tribal citizens, and many tribal leaders were disappointed that the administration did not fulfill its trust and treaty responsibilities on this matter.

The White House confirmed that Raina Thiele (Dena'ina Athabascan, Yup'ik), most recently program examiner at the Office of Management and Budget, will replace Galbraith in January. <http://bit.ly/1jiDWg6> ☞

Temporary Ban on Horse Slaughter Lifted

A federal appeals court has lifted a temporary ban on horse slaughter in the U.S., removing barriers for plants to open as a lawsuit by the Humane Society of the United States, Front Range Equine Rescue and other parties goes forward.

Domestic horse slaughterhouses effectively closed in 2007, after Congress eliminated funding for inspections at plants the year before. While the funding was restored in 2011, the Department of Agriculture did not approve the permits for the first slaughterhouses until this past summer.

Then, on December 13, the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver lifted an emergency injunction it had issued in November after animal-rights groups appealed a previous ruling of a federal judge in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The 10th Circuit ruled that the Agriculture Department adhered

to proper procedure in issuing permits to Valley Meat Co. in Roswell, New Mexico; Rains Natural Meats of Gallatin, Missouri; and Responsible Transportation in Sigourney, Iowa. The ruling paves the way for these three companies to commence operation.

The order also lifts the emergency status of the case, meaning it could be months before a final decision is reached, Blair Dun, the attorney for both Valley Meat and Rains Natural Meats, told the Associated Press. Therefore the plants, while nearly ready to open, could remain closed if the plaintiffs agree to post a sufficient bond to cover the companies' losses should they ultimately prevail.

Valley Meat Co. in Roswell, New Mexico, has stock waiting in Texas feedlots. Owner Rick De Los Santos previously told Indian Country Today Media Network that the plant would be ready to open the second week of November. <http://bit.ly/1c9NUMR> ☞

Tester Adds Native American Liaisons to Staff

Sen. Jon Tester (D-Montana) has announced the addition of two Native Americans, Carla Lott and Sierra Howlett, to lead his outreach to and work with Montana's Native Americans.

Lott, the first member of the Black-foot Nation to receive a commission in the Army, will be based in Helena, Montana. She brings considerable experience to Tester's staff from Indian country, including community development, having served on multiple Indian education, economic and veterans' committees.

Howlett, a member of the Confed-

erated Salish & Kootenai Tribes, will serve as Legislative Assistant for Indian Affairs for Tester's Washington, D.C. office. She attended the University of Montana and Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. Before joining the senator's staff, she worked on tribal issues both in Montana for CSKT and nationally for the Early Head Start National Resource Center.

"Carla and Sierra are two talented Montanans and leaders in Indian country who know how to bring folks together to get things done," said Tester, Montana's only member of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee.

"They're a tremendous team, and I look forward to working with Carla and Sierra to respond to the needs of Montana's Native Americans."

Tester has been a member of the Senate Committee of Indian Affairs since he joined the chamber in 2007. As part of his ongoing outreach efforts, he recently brought committee chairwoman Maria Cantwell (D-Washington) to his home state. He is also currently backing bipartisan legislation to recommend new ways to reduce childhood poverty and abuse in Indian country. <http://bit.ly/1heyCG4> ☞



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Harper's Nomination Derails in Senate and its Future is Unclear

BY ROB CAPRICCIOSO

Senate sources have confirmed that lawyer Keith Harper's nomination to become a human rights ambassador with the State Department is off—for now, at least—as the Senate did not move on his nomination before its holiday recess. President Barack Obama must now decide whether he wants to submit the nomination again in 2014.

There was an effort by Senate Democrats to move on a number of presidential nominees before the holiday recess. But Republicans threatened delay tactics that would have forced Democrats to stay in session longer, cutting into their break. Given that scenario, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-

Nevada) reached an agreement with Republicans late on December 19 to proceed with a few non-controversial nomination votes on December 20. Harper was not included.

Reid was under pressure to not move on Harper's nomination, Senate sources said, since the vote out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on December 18 was so close, with Harper passing narrowly, 9 to 8. No Republicans, including U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs Vice Chairman Sen. John Barrasso (R-Wyoming), voted for him. The Republicans also would not agree to hold over pending nominees, including Harper's, into next year, effectively ending

this round of Harper's nomination process. Beyond controversies involving Harper, Senate Democratic staffers noted that Republicans have been generally slowing down the president's nominations for various positions.

If the president wants to proceed with Harper, he will have to resubmit his nomination in 2014. It is unlikely the president would decide to make a rare recess appointment in this case, which would require Harper to be approved by the Senate before the end of its next session or vacate the post. Shin Inouye, a spokesman for the White House, says the president remains committed to Harper's nomination.

<http://bit.ly/19i2f9S> 

Budget Deal Leaves Questions for Indian Country

BY ROB CAPRICCIOSO

The macro-level budget deal passed by the House on December 12 and the Senate on December 18 after months of partisan wrangling makes recommendations on topline discretionary spending levels for fiscal years 2014 and 2015. But details of how Indian program funding will be affected have yet to be ironed out and released by congressional appropriators.


Currently, Indian country officials are reminding legislators of the budget cuts that tribes have faced as a result of sequestration, and tribes are encouraging a restoration of and increase in federal support.

According to an analysis by the Indian-

focused law firm Hobbs Straus, funding for the Departments of the Interior and Health and Human Services is unlikely to figure in a final omnibus bill because of vast differences between the House and Senate. As a result, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Indian Health Service (IHS) may receive funding under a continuing resolution, "thus making it very difficult to get any increases," the analysis states.

The macro-agreement also does not include a change to the formula under the Budget Control Act for automatic cuts to mandatory spending under that 2011 law. Therefore, the analysis says, the se-

questration of mandatory spending will continue. This is problematic for such programs as the Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI), which is considered mandatory funding and is still subject to sequestration under a different section of the law. The program already received a two percent cut in 2013, to the chagrin of Indian-focused health officials nationwide.

Tribes also hope that the final budget will include funding for contract support costs and that it will not enact a plan to limit such costs, a move that the White House made to widespread unpopularity this year. <http://bit.ly/1dpoNCs> 

Navajo Nation Could Get \$1 Billion in Uranium Damages

The Navajo Nation could receive up to \$1 billion for the cleanup of abandoned uranium mines and processing plants in Cove, Arizona and Shiprock, New Mexico, after a bankruptcy judge ruled that two companies are liable for damages.

U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Allan L. Gropper found on December 12 that "Anadarko and Kerr-McGee are liable to the plaintiffs for damages, setting a range for such damages between \$5.1 and \$14.1 billion," the Nation said in a statement on December 13. "The exact amount of damages will be determined after briefing by the parties."

The ruling was a long time coming,


Navajo leaders said. "Our work in this bankruptcy case began when I was vice president and Louis Denetsosie was attorney general," Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly said in the statement. "Any funds resulting from this lawsuit are welcomed and long overdue."

Any damages will be shared among the large group of plaintiffs, which include the U.S., 22 states, four environmental response trusts and a trust for the benefit of certain tort plaintiffs.

The conflict originated in 2005, when Kerr-McGee, a unit of Anadarko, spun off its chemicals business along with some old environmental liabilities into

a company it named Tronox. Anadarko then bought Kerr-McGee's oil and natural gas assets for \$18 billion.

Meanwhile the new company, which made paint materials, was crushed under the weight of its environmental debts and declared bankruptcy in 2009, suing Anadarko and Kerr-McGee. The December 12 decision came out of the 2012 trial that resulted from the lawsuit.

The judge ruled that Anadarko and Kerr-McGee had acted with "intent to hinder" in the spinoff as a way to avoid their environmental liabilities, according to Reuters. <http://bit.ly/19yNfT7> 

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Jewell Visits Laguna Pueblo

Emphasis is on education

Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell had her first opportunity to directly view an Indian school when she visited the Laguna Pueblo Elementary School in New Mexico on December 11. She and Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Kevin Washburn, who were meeting with others to help inform the work of the American Indian Education Study Group, toured the facilities and had a roundtable with principals from other local tribal schools. Alluding to the school, which is more than 50 years old, Jewell said, “You may have challenges with the heating and cooling system and cracks in the wall, but you wouldn’t tell that from the kids in the classroom, who are doing so well.” <http://bit.ly/ITkne3> 🌐

Pego Elected Saginaw Chippewa Chief

Other key positions filled

The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe elected several of its members to key positions at its General Council meeting on December 3. Steven Pego is now chief, Lorna Kahgegab Call is sub-chief, Shelly Bailey is treasurer and Sandra Sprague is secretary; together the four constitute the tribe’s Executive Tribal Council. Also elected were Ron Nelson, District II Representative as the Tribal Council sergeant-at-arms and Jennifer Wassegijig was elected chaplain. The other tribal

council members currently serving until fall elections in 2015 are Tim Davis, Chip Neyome, Michele Stanley, Lindy Hunt, Delmar Jackson, and Julius Peters. <http://bit.ly/1jfP39H> 🌐

Foreign Policy Hails Activists

Idle No More leaders are recognized

Foreign Policy magazine has named the four founders of Idle No More—Jessica Gordon, Sylvia McAdam, Sheelah McLean and Nina Wilson—to its list of the 100 Leading Global Thinkers of 2013. From its teachings beginning in October 2012, designed to draw attention to Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s omnibus budget bill—which many saw as gutting long-standing environmental protections and abrogating First Nation treaty rights—Idle No More has burgeoned into a worldwide whirl of flash mob round dances, protests and other civil actions that *Foreign Policy* said “continues to give voice to an often overlooked population.” The four founders join a roster that includes whistleblower Edward Snowden, Secretary of State John Kerry and Pope Francis. <http://bit.ly/1fsmAYF> 🌐

Begay Opens Course He Designed

Third such venture for golfing legend

Four-time PGA tournament winner and Indian country philanthropist Notah Begay III officially opened the Sewailo (Yaqui for “flower world”) Golf Course out-

side Tucson, the third such course that he has designed. The 18-hole, par 72 course cost \$28 million and will employ up to 90 workers, many of them Yaqui tribal members. “These projects start from the standpoint of culture and it’s important we maintain a respect for culture and tradition in the communities in which we work,” said Begay. “I asked for guidance from our Creator as we shaped this course.” <http://bit.ly/1dpy39C> 🌐

Reid Says ‘No’ To Redskins

Joins several powerful colleagues

Sen. Harry Reid (D-Nevada) has called upon Washington Redskins owner Dan Snyder to change the name of his team. “I think Snyder is so short-sighted on this,” Reid said in an interview published in *The Hill* on December 19. “We live in a society where you can’t denigrate a race of people. And that’s what it is. I mean, you can’t have the Washington Redskins. I think it’s so short-sighted.” Other political leaders who have called for a name change include President Obama, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-California), Rep. Tom Cole (R-Oklahoma), Rep. Betty McCollum (D-Minnesota) and Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-Washington, D.C.). <http://bit.ly/ITkne3> 🌐

Child Advocate Of The Year

Pediatrician serving Cherokee is honored

Wilma P. Mankiller Health

Center pediatrician Migdalia Muriel was recently named Child Advocate of the Year at the Cherokee Nation Early Childhood Unit annual gala. The award is given to an individual who works in the health, education or social services field and directly affects the lives of children. The Puerto Rican-born Muriel has been working as a pediatrician for the Cherokee since 1996 and has dedicated most of her career to providing quality health care for Native American children. “I was surprised by this award, mainly because I never expected to be recognized for doing what I love and consider my duty, but I humbly accept it,” she said. <http://bit.ly/1bWfIOU> 🌐

Code Talker Billey Walks On

Veteran of bloody battles

Navajo Code Talker Wilfred E. Billey, a Marine veteran of Tarawa and Saipan, walked on December 12 at the age of 90. A supporter of the worldwide Elderhostel, Inc. Road Scholar program, he was a tireless advocate for education, especially for scholarships for the children of Navajo Code Talkers like himself. He also worked for the Navajo Methodist Mission School, Central Consolidated School District and municipal schools in Farmington, New Mexico. In his honor, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly ordered all flags on the Nation to be flown at half-mast from December 13 to 20. <http://bit.ly/1bWfIOU> 🌐

Second Woman on Cherokee Supreme Court

Angela Jones, 43, was sworn in as only the second woman ever to serve on the Cherokee Nation Supreme Court and the first to do so under the administration of Principal Chief Bill John Baker. Jones is serving a 10-year term on the five-member high court; the only other woman to serve, Stacy Leeds, was on the bench from 2002 to 2006. 🌀

Natives Celebrate Obama Inaugural

President Obama's second inaugural was an occasion for much Indian-themed celebration in the nation's capital: The American Indian Society's Inaugural Ball was held at the Crystal Gateway Marriott. For the first time, the Native Nations Inaugural Ball was held to raise funds for the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian. And among the groups participating in the inaugural parade was the Native American Woman Warriors of Billings, Montana. 🌀

Idle No More Joins in Snowbowl Protest

The burgeoning Idle No More movement hit Arizona in a freshly charged protest at Flagstaff City Hall over snowmaking with treated effluent at the Arizona Snowbowl, a ski resort on the sacred San Francisco Peaks. "Each of the four worlds has been taken away, because of the inhabitants' disrespect," said the well-known Navajo painter, writer and cultural activist Shonto Begay. 🌀

Spence Ends 44-Day Fast

Attawapiskat First Nation Chief Theresa Spence ended a liquid fast that she began on December 11 to protest Ottawa's policies toward aboriginals. Spence agreed to begin eating again after First Nations leaders and the heads of the Liberal Party and New Democratic Party signed a 13-point Declaration of Commitment that laid out the priorities, needs and demands of aboriginals in Canada. 🌀

Nebraska Governor Signs off on Keystone

Nebraska Governor Dave Heineman approved a new route for the contested 1,711-mile Keystone XL pipeline, slated to wend its way through the U.S. from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico. Under



Attawapiskat First Nation Chief ended a 44-day liquid fast to protest Ottawa's policies toward Natives.

The year began on an optimistic note with a substantial Native presence at President Obama's inaugural.

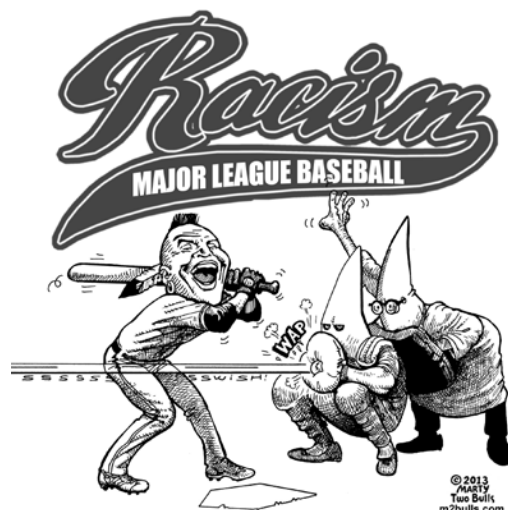
the plan, the \$7 billion project would skirt the ecologically sensitive area of Sand Hills but still run through the Ogallala aquifer, which supplies water for irrigation and other uses. 🌀

2013 Declared Year of the Dakota

The city of St. Paul, Minnesota passed a strongly worded resolution officially recognizing the 150th anniversary of the Dakota-U.S. War of 1862 and declaring 2013 to be "The Year of the Dakota: Remembering, Honoring and Truth-Telling." The action came some three weeks after St. Paul's twin city, Minneapolis, passed a nearly identical resolution that described the suffering that the Dakotas subsequently endured as "genocide." 🌀

Vilsack Signs 'Government-to-Government' Pact

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack strengthened the consultation and coordination process with Indian tribes by signing a regulation that the department said "establishes overarching department-wide guidance." The new process fulfilled the requirements outlined by President Obama's 2009 Memorandum of Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies on Tribal Consultation. 🌀





Sally Jewell, a political unknown, would be overwhelmingly approved by the Senate as Secretary of the Interior.



The 40th anniversary of the Occupation of Wounded Knee was marked by a huge march on Whiteclay.

Jewell Given Nod as Interior Secretary

In a surprise move, President Obama nominated a political unknown, the chief executive officer of an outdoor gear and clothing company, as Secretary of the Interior. Sally Jewell, a former commercial banker, oil company engineer and environmental advocate, was the first woman nominated to Obama's second-term cabinet. The Senate later confirmed her by a vote of 87-11. 🌀

Senate Passes Violence Against Women Act

By a wide margin of 78-22, the Senate voted to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act, complete with provisions that would allow tribal courts to judge non-Indians who commit crimes against Indians on reservations. Republican opponents tried and failed to offer amendments that would counter such measures, and even some GOP senators who had voted against the bill in 2012 ended up supporting it. 🌀

Interior Approves Mashpee Wampanoag Land

The Interior Department issued preliminary approval for an initial reservation for the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe in Massachusetts, a move that would provide the tribe's citizens with an acknowledged homeland and clear the way for a \$500 million destination resort casino. 🌀

Western Diné Justice Center Debuts

The Western Diné Justice Center, the first institute of its kind on the Navajo Nation, opened its doors amid expectations that it would streamline the tribal judicial process. The 134,429-square-foot center, which cost \$62 million to build, was slated to house Navajo district courts, peacemakers courts,

law enforcement officials, prosecutors and a corrections facility under one roof. 🌀

40th Anniversary of Wounded Knee Occupation is Observed

Hundreds of tribal citizens of the Pine Ridge reservation and members of the American Indian Movement gathered to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Occupation of Wounded Knee. Chief among the variety of activities was a memorial service held for Russell Means, who had died the previous October. The observations culminated in a march on the nearby town of Whiteclay, Nebraska to protest alcohol sales there. 🌀

Highway Serving Navajo Nation Collapses

A landslide buckled a 150-foot section of U.S. 89 in Arizona, closing a 20-mile stretch of a major route that had long served the Navajo Nation. The collapse, which occurred about 25 miles south of Page, wrecked more than 150 feet of the roadway. Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed an emergency declaration to

help maintain emergency medical services, transportation for students and commuters, and compensation for the likely economic fallout. 🌀

Comanche Boy Suffers First Pro Defeat

George "Comanche Boy" Tahdooahnippah, the 34-year-old middleweight boxer who entered the professional ranks in 2004, suffered his first defeat, losing in a decision against Delvin Rodriguez in a fight held at the Mohegan Sun casino in Uncasville, Connecticut. The previously unbeaten 34-year-old fighter's record thus became 31-1-1. He declared, "The best things are still to come." 🌀

Even some Republican senators who voted against the Violence Against Women Act in 2012 supported it in 2013.

New chairman for Indian Economic Development

Derrick Watchman, a member of the Navajo Nation, formally became chairman of the board of directors of the National Center for American Indian Economic Development. Among many other positions, Watchman was chief of staff for the Navajo Nation, where he managed the executive branch program and services. 🌀



The Rio Grande del Norte gorge became a national monument by executive proclamation of President Obama.

Métis Win Historic Land Case

Métis were jubilant after the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in their favor on a 143-year-old land claim, determining that the federal government failed to keep its promise to grant them 1.4 million acres in Manitoba back in 1870. “What is at issue is a constitutional grievance going back almost a century and a half,” the 6-2 court wrote. “The unfinished business of reconciliation of the Métis people with Canadian sovereignty is a matter of national and constitutional import.” 🌀

Fighting an Offensive Trademark

Six Native American plaintiffs faced off against Pro-Football Inc., the parent company of the Washington Redskins, before a three-judge panel of the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in an attempt to change the name of the NFL franchise. They argued that the team should lose its trademark protection because the name violates a federal law that prohibits registering names that are disparaging, contemptuous or otherwise disreputable. 🌀

Four Pueblos Reach Water Settlement

Four Pueblo tribes in New Mexico—the Tesuque, Nambe, Pojoaque and San Ildefonso—settled a historically lengthy case that involved water rights disputes with the tribes. *New Mexico v. Aamodt*, which lasted 46 years and was often described as the longest-running case in the federal court system, dealt with state and federal water issues related to the Rio Pojoaque Basin, north of Santa Fe, the homeland of the pueblos. 🌀

Another Indian Ally Leaves the Capital

Sen. Tim Johnson (D-South Dakota), a member of the Committee on Indian Affairs, announced he would not seek re-election

in 2014. In his five terms in the House and three terms in the Senate, Johnson proved to be a tireless advocate of tribes, frequently touring the Native communities in South Dakota and addressing how to improve living conditions there. 🌀

Precious Site Becomes National Monument by Order of Obama

By an executive proclamation, President Obama established the Río Grande del Norte gorge, which lies within the traditional area of the Taos and Picuris Pueblos, as well as the Jicarilla Apache and Ute Tribes, in northern New Mexico as a national monument. The area combines natural beauty with what the proclamation called a “dazzling array of rock art.” 🌀

Métis celebrated their legal victory in a 143-year-old land claim suit over 1.4 million acres in Manitoba.

Quapaw Lawsuit Claims Mismanagement

Charging a breach of trust encompassing widespread mismanagement of both land and money, the Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma filed a class-action lawsuit against the federal government on behalf of its 4,500 members and at least 400 individual Quapaw homeowners. The suit seeks \$175 million in damages dating back to at least the 1890s. 🌀





The Navajo Nation has formed a limited liability company in preparation for the purchase of its first coal mine.



The Quinaltup Indian Nation declared its namesake lake in Washington off limits to non-tribal visitors.

High Court Hears Baby Veronica Case

The Supreme Court heard the case of *Adoptive Couple v. Baby Girl*, a crucial test case of the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978. The bitter custody dispute posed two basic questions: Can a non-custodial parent invoke the Act to block an adoption? And can the Act define “parent” to include an unwed biological father who has not complied with state law to attain legal status as a parent? 🌀

Obama Budget Worries Leaders

Tribal leaders found themselves concerned over cuts in President Obama’s proposed 2014 budget of \$3.78 trillion, notably the reduction of the Indian School Equalization Program by \$16.5 million and the allocation of those funds for the Department of Education’s Turn-around Model. “Now is not the time to slow the progress we have seen in Indian Country,” said Jefferson Keel, president of the National Congress of American Indians. 🌀

Katsinam Auctioned in Paris

Over the protests of the Hopi and their supporters, 70 sacred katsinam—often called “masks” by non-Natives—were auctioned for \$1.2 million at the Drouot facility in Paris. As the gavel came down on one of them, the Crow Mother, which sold for \$209,000, a woman in the audience cried out, “This is not merchandise, these are sacred beings!” 🌀

Lake Quinaltup Declared Off Limits

The Quinaltup Indian Nation unanimously closed its namesake lake in western Washington State to all non-tribal fishing and boating. The Nation cited rising pollution and diminishing

salmon returns as the result of leachate from septic systems serving waterfront homes, as well as the unregulated building of docks and bulkheads that altered the shoreline habitat for salmon and other fish. 🌀

Navajos Grope Toward Coal Mine

Having approved a renewal to their lease with the Navajo Generating Station, the Navajo Nation Council voted 17-4 to form a limited liability company to buy the tribe’s first coal mine. The approval authorized the company to act as an arm of the Navajo Nation and to carry out business actions on its behalf during the possible acquisition of the BHP Navajo Mine, southwest of Farmington, New Mexico.

Ejection Over Voting Rights

Montana State Democratic Senator Sharon Stewart-Peregoy, Crow, protested her removal from her chamber’s ethics committee, saying that it was due to her having shouted and pounded on her desk for 15 minutes after a failed attempt to block the Republican majority from passing bills that sought to restrict voting rights.

“Some people are doing everything they can—gerrymandering and more—to stack things against Indian voting,” she said. 🌀

Churchill’s Final Appeal Denied

The Supreme Court declined to hear the appeal of Ward Churchill, the activist academic who falsely claimed Indian ancestry, against the University of Colorado for firing him in 2007. Churchill aroused a firestorm by referring to the victims of September 11 as “little Eichmanns”; the university subsequently found plagiarism and fabrications in his work. 🌀

*Now is not the time to slow
the progress we have seen
in Indian Country,’ said
Jefferson Keel, President of
the National Congress of
American Indians.*

Self-Help Housing for Zuni Pueblo

Twelve Zuni Pueblo families broke ground on the pueblo's first Self-Help Housing program homes, the first program of its kind on Native lands in New Mexico. With support from the Agriculture Department, the pueblo members began building about two-thirds of the structure in a process known as "sweat equity," a preferred mode for individuals who may be short on cash. 🌀

ACLU Supports Prisoners' Rights

The American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of California joined an intertribal coalition that opposes a state regulation that forbids indigenous prisoners from using certain items in religious ceremonies. The ban covers, among other items, kinnikinnick, sacred pipes, buffo or deer skulls, antlers, drums, leather, and dipper and bucket. Members of the coalition include the Round Valley Indian Tribes and the Pit River Tribe. 🌀

Oneidas Donate \$10,000 for Mascot Change

The Oneida Nation donated \$10,000 to Cooperstown (New York) Central School to help offset the cost of purchasing new uniforms after it was voted to change the name of its sports mascot from "Redskins" to "Hawkeyes." The initiative was driven mainly by students, prompting Oneida Nation Representative Ray Halbritter to remark that they displayed "a great deal more wisdom than some of the major league team owners." 🌀

Taking Leave of the State Department

Elders and chiefs of 10 sovereign nations walked out of a meeting with State Department officials in Rapid City, South Dakota at which the government attempted to consult the tribes about the Keystone XL pipeline. Leaders of the Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association called the meeting "invalid" because they said they would meet only with President Obama to discuss the issue. 🌀

Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania to Appeal Ruling

The town of Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania said it would appeal a U.S. District Court ruling that would compel them to begin the process of returning the remains of their namesake, the Sac & Fox Indian known as the "World's Greatest Athlete." In April,



The Pow-Wow Oak in Massachusetts, around which the Wamesit Indians once gathered, was torn down after 300 years.

Jim Thorpe's sons have cause to hope that they may be able to begin the process of recovering their father's remains from a Pennsylvania town.

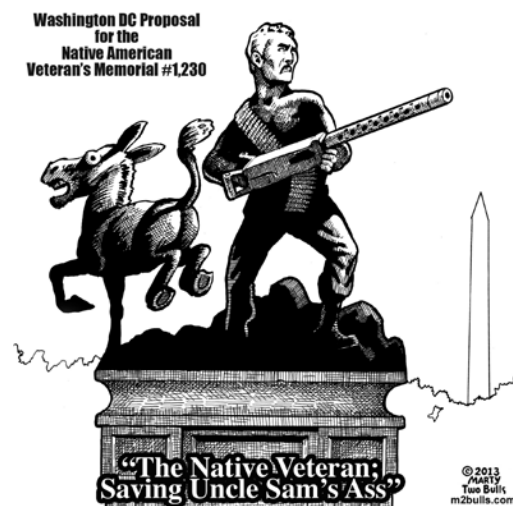
the court ruled in favor of Thorpe's sons, who hope that they can recover their father's remains from the mausoleum where they are currently housed. 🌀

A Katsinam Goes Home

One of the sacred *katsinam* sold at a controversial auction in Paris in April was purchased by Richelle Dassin, sister of the late French pop musician Joe Dassin, for return to its Hopi forebears. Dassin had long had an interest in the Hopi, having studied anthropology at the University of Michigan and written his student thesis about them. 🌀

Mohawks Top Off Freedom Tower

Mohawk ironworkers who were part of the construction team that erected the Freedom Tower in Lower Manhattan celebrated as the 1,776-foot-tall structure was topped off with a 758-ton, 408-foot spire. "I worked on this building for four years," said John McGowan, Kahnawà:ke, whose father and grandfather had worked on the Freedom Tower's predecessor, the World Trade Center, which was destroyed on September 11, 2001. "It was a great honor to bring back the height to New York." 🌀





The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recommended taking the gray wolf off the federal Endangered Species list.



Dustin Martin is one of several Native designers whose work will be featured by Paul Frank Industries.

A Turnaround on Gray Wolves

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed taking the gray wolf off the federal Endangered Species list, saying it is no longer in danger of extinction, and replacing it on the list with the Mexican wolf, which is currently under siege. The federal agency pledged to solicit assistance and input going forward from tribes, principally the Nez Perce in Idaho. 🌀

Work on Navajo Route 20 Begins

Work on Navajo Route 20, a \$35 million, 28-mile paved highway in Arizona, began after 40 years of delays and false starts. The project, designed as an alternative route for U.S. Highway 89, kicked into high gear after a portion of that highway collapsed in February. “This new road is a blessing for the Navajo people,” said President Ben Shelly. 🌀

Supreme Court Remands Baby Veronica

In a 5-4 ruling, the Supreme Court remanded the four-year custody battle over Veronica Brown to the South Carolina courts for further review, holding that sections of the Indian Child Welfare Act “did not bar the termination of parental rights” under state law. The decision did not yet terminate the rights of Dusten Brown, Veronica’s biological father, or transfer her to the custody of Matt and Melanie Capobianco, her adoptive parents. 🌀

Boost for One-Touch Bingo

The National Indian Gaming Commission declared its hope of classifying one-touch electronic bingo machines as Class II gaming under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, which would change a controversial Bush administration-era rule and benefit Indian casinos. Under the new classification the game, which

involves a player pressing only one button to wager and play, could be offered in Indian facilities that lack a tribal-state gaming compact. 🌀

Paul Frank Industries Joins with Native Designers

Following its ethnically insensitive “Dreamcatchin” theme party of the previous September, Paul Frank Industries announced it would feature new fashion contributions from Native designers. Louie Gong (Nooksack) was slated to design a silk-screened handbag; Cande Halcro (Cree/Metis) would apply beading artistry to sunglasses; Dustin Martin (Navajo) would produce t-shirts; and jeweler Autumn Dawn Gomez (Comanche/Taos Pueblo) was enrolled to create accessories. 🌀

New Colville Salmon Hatchery Opens

A \$50 million salmon hatchery that represents a collaborative effort among various federal agencies and the Colville Confederated Tribes opened with a First Salmon ceremony

and ribbon cutting. The project was built on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers property near Chief Joseph Dam at the juncture of the Okanogan and Columbia Rivers. 🌀

Immigration Bill Gets Tribal Amendment

The Senate voted unanimously to approve an amendment to the S.744 immigration reform bill that would add four tribal government officials to the Border Oversight Task Force originally established in the bill. “If we really want to make sure our borders are secure on the North and South,” said Sen. Jon Tester (D-Montana), who offered the amendment, “Indians need to be part of this conversation.” 🌀

*For our borders to be secure,
said Sen. Jon Tester, ‘Indians
need to be part of this
conversation.’*

Capobiancos Get Custody of Veronica

The South Carolina State Supreme Court ordered that Veronica Brown be returned to Matt and Melanie Capobianco, the white couple who had agreed to adopt her from her birth mother before she was born. "I want everyone to think of Veronica and her life as it is now," responded her biological father, Dusten Brown, Cherokee. "My wife and I are her whole life. This is not right." ❀

Sand Creek Spawns Class Action Suit

Four Oklahoma tribal descendants of victims of the infamous Sand Creek Massacre of 1864 filed a class action suit in U.S. District Court in Colorado seeking reparations on behalf of more than 15,000 of their brethren. They did so even though more than 100 attempts over the last century have failed to induce federal financial agencies to provide compensation. ❀

No More Budweiser to Whiteclay

Following a series of protests and demonstrations, High Plains Budweiser announced that it would no longer deliver alcohol to the town of Whiteclay, Nebraska, only a couple of hundred yards from the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. High Plains determined it would only deliver as far as Rushville, about 20 miles south of Whiteclay—a proximity that still disturbs many of Pine Ridge's Oglala Sioux residents. ❀

Indians Lacking at Native Council Meeting

The first meeting of the White House Council on Native American Affairs took place without any tribal leaders present. Instead, Interior Secretary Sally Jewell solicited their input in a conference call held three days before the meeting itself. Tribal leaders criticized the omission. "That's not a real government-to-government relationship," said Tex Hall, chairman of the Three Affiliated Tribes. ❀

Woman for Spokane Tribal Council

Carol Evans was sworn in as a member of the Spokane Tribal Council, the first woman to hold such a position since her mother, Pauline Stearns, 25 years before. "Women are important because they are caregivers, it is called Mother Earth for a reason," she said. ❀



A carrier of the eagle staff for the annual Sand Creek Massacre Memorial Run took a moment to reflect.

No tribal leaders were present at the first meeting of the White House Council on Native American Affairs.

Candidates for Surgeon General are Named

The National Indian Health Board and the National Congress of American Indians selected four nominees to present to President Obama for the post of Surgeon General of the United States. They were Donald Warne (Oglala Lakota), Lori Arviso-Alvord (Navajo), Charles Grim (Cherokee) and Rear Admiral W. Craig Vanderwagen, the U.S. Public Health Service General Medical Officer at the Zuni Indian Hospital. ❀

\$9.8 Million for Native Electrical Infrastructure

The Agriculture Department announced \$9.8 million in electrical improvements to Native communities. The money was to be distributed among three projects—Black Hills Electric Cooperative in South Dakota,

Central Rural Electric Cooperative in Oklahoma, and Lacreek Electric Association, serving South Dakota and Nebraska. ❀

Sweat Lodge Figure Goes Free

Self-help guru James Arthur Ray, jailed for negligent homicide after three people died in his Arizona sweat lodge in 2009, was released on parole from state prison near Phoenix. ❀





For the first time in a century, bison are now roaming the Fort Belknap Reservation in Montana.



The Coast Guard returned the Cape Arago Lighthouse to the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians.

Pine Ridge Approves Alcohol

By a nonbinding vote of 1,843 to 1,678, tribal members of the Oglala Sioux on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation elected to overturn their ban on alcohol sales. Those who voted to lift the ban hoped to recapture millions of dollars spent on alcohol in the Nebraska town of Whiteclay, just on the reservation's border, a rationale that Tribal President Bryan Brewer found "troubling." 🌀

Lighthouse Returned to Confederated Tribes

The U.S. Coast Guard transferred ownership of the Cap Arago Lighthouse and 24 acres of land in Charleston, Oregon to the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians. "We are honored to have been able to work with the Confederated Tribes in returning this land to the tribes," said Coast Guard Capt. Mark Reynolds, "and to be able to pay respect to current local tribal heritage and their ancestors who called this land home." 🌀

Slate Drops 'Redskins' Name

The online news and culture site Slate.com said it would cease referring to Washington, D.C.'s NFL franchise by its official name of Redskins. "The 80 years since [the team was named] have witnessed the triumph of the civil rights movement and a powerful effort by American Indians to reclaim their identity," wrote editor David Plotz. To continue speaking of Redskins, he said, is "extremely tacky and dated." 🌀

Washington Teams With Penobscot Against Maine

In a rare act of solidarity, the U.S. Justice Department joined the

Penobscot Indian Nation in support of its lawsuit against the state of Maine over hunting and fishing rights in the Penobscot River. The Nation initiated its suit in August 2012 over Maine's assertion that the Nation has jurisdiction and regulatory authority only on its reservation islands and not in the "Main Stem" of the River. 🌀

Early Voting Office for Oglala Sioux

South Dakota state and county officials promised to use federal money from the Help America Vote Act to provide a satellite early voting and registration office that would facilitate the electoral process for Oglala Sioux tribal members. Claiming disenfranchisement, the tribe had sued the officials; the funding is slated to cover elections through 2018. 🌀

Online Lending Outfits Being Targeted?

The New York State Department of Financial Services ordered at least 16 tribal online lending entities to stop making loans to Empire State residents, in a letter directed to 35 lenders and 112 banks that help process the loans. Claiming sovereign immunity, the Native American Financial Services Association responded

by suing New York, prompting the Justice Department to assure tribal representatives that they were not being singled out. 🌀

Bison Return to Fort Belknap

Thirty-four disease-free, genetically pure bison were released into the Fort Belknap Reservation in Montana, marking the first time in a century that the animals have been able to roam the area. The bison traveled 190 miles from the Fort Peck Indian Reservation, where in 2012 the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks had transferred 70 of them from Yellowstone National Park. 🌀

Given the 'powerful effort by American Indians to reclaim their identity,' said Slate.com, referring to 'Redskins' has become 'extremely tacky and dated.'

Wounded Knee Remains in Limbo

A deadline for the \$4.9 million sale of the Wounded Knee site came and went without owner Jim Czywczynski being able to find a buyer. He had previously said he would auction the site if the Oglala Sioux did not purchase it by May 1. "He needs to be straight and fair with whoever's going to buy it," Tribal Council member Kevin Yellow Bird Steele said. 🌀



A U.S. district judge banned the shipment of mega-loads through Nez Perce tribal territory without further review.

Judge Halts Mega-Loads

U.S. District Judge B. Lynn Winmill banned the shipment of mega-loads through Nez Perce tribal territory without further review and directed the U.S. Forest Service to conduct a study of the scenic corridor and consult with the tribe. The Nez Perce had been protesting the transport of equipment through their territory en route to the northern oil sands for more than two years. 🌀

'Here they are kicking at this man when he is down,' said Dusten Brown's attorney. 'They're not only kicking him, they're trying to destroy his life.'

Government Challenges Keepseagle Fund Plans

The Agriculture Department filed a legal challenge to a plan by lawyers for the *Keepseagle* plaintiffs that would allow them to create an agricultural "legacy foundation" to assist Native farmers and ranchers, using \$380 million in unclaimed funds meant to be awarded to the farmers. The department said that the proposal constituted "a modification that appears to be in tension with limits on the use" of the funds. 🌀

Plan B Available at HIS Facilities

The Indian Health Service expanded access to emergency contraception by issuing a verbal directive to its facilities to dispense Plan B at its pharmacy windows without a consultation or prescription for women age 17 or older. The IHS said it would lift the age restriction, allowing access to Plan B for women 15 and older, once the Food and Drug Administration approved new labels for the product. 🌀

Capobiancos Sue Brown for Costs

No sooner had Matt and Melanie Capobianco taken court-ordered possession of their adopted daughter, Veronica Brown, than they sued her Cherokee biological father, Dusten Brown, for some \$500,000 in fines, attorneys' fees and expenses in the bitter custody struggle. "Here they are kicking this man while he

is down," said Shannon Jones, Brown's South Carolina attorney. "They're not only kicking him, they're trying to destroy his life." 🌀

First Same-Sex Suquamish Marriage

James Abler and Terry Johnson became the first same-sex married couple to be recognized by the Suquamish Tribe when they married at the Suquamish Clearwater Casino Resort on the fourth anniversary of their first date and Abler's 27th birthday. The happy couple already has two foster children, ages 5 and 7. "You can't legislate love," said Suquamish Tribal Judge Randal Steckel, who officiated. "Love makes a family. It makes me very proud to do this here."

Nooksacks Protest Potential Disenrollment

About a hundred people gathered in downtown Seattle to protest the possible striking from the rolls of over 306 members of the Nooksack people. Tribal officials say there is no proof of their ancestry, but many of those affected say the officials are politically motivated. "I'll be losing my identity," said Rudy Romero. "I've known ever since I was a little boy that I was Nooksack and that I was Native American. And the tribal council is trying to take that away from me." 🌀

AND NOW...

ESPN's
IN-HOUSE INJUN EXPERT!

Rick Reilly

HELLO NATIVE AMERICAN INDIANS! ME HEEPLUM BIG WHITE MAN HERE TO TELL YOU WHAT YOU CAN AND CAN'T BE OFFENDED BY. GOOD INJUN LOVES TO BE CALLED REDSKIN. BAD INJUN... BAD REDSKIN.

EXPERT QUALIFICATIONS:

A. Father-in-law is part Injun.

B. Has talked to Injuns on cell phone.

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Citing his daughter Veronica's needs, Dusten Brown announced he would no longer litigate against her adoptive parents.



For her first piece of legislation, Sen. Heidi Heitkamp proposed a Commission on Native American Children.

Idle No More Targets Oil Spills

Denver held an Idle No More rally to support Canada's Day of Solidarity and in opposition to oil and gas companies that the grassroots movement charged with failing to clean up spills caused by September's massive flooding in northeast Colorado. "The Creator knows we're here," said Tessa McLean, Ojibwe, who organized the event. "We want a cleanup because it's a destruction of nature." 🌀

Dusten Brown Stops Litigation

Having lost an epic custody battle for his biological daughter, Veronica, Dusten Brown, Cherokee, announced that he would no longer litigate against her adoptive parents, Matt and Melanie Capobianco of South Carolina. "The time has come for me to let Veronica live a normal childhood that she so desperately needs and deserves," he said. "Veronica is only 4 years old but her entire life has been lived in front of the media and the entire world, and I cannot bear for that to continue any longer." 🌀

New President for National Congress

Brian Cladoosby, Swinomish Indian Tribal Community chairman, was elected president of the National Congress of American Indians during the group's 70th Annual Convention & Marketplace in Tulsa, Oklahoma. "I look forward to working with all the amazing tribal leaders across the country to improve the lives of Indian people," he said. 🌀

Opponents Lose Key Keystone XL Battle

Opponents of the southern leg of the Keystone XL pipeline lost their last legal battle against the project when a split U.S. Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a lower court's refusal to stop

construction. The northern portion of the controversial project must be approved by the State Department because it crosses the U.S.-Canada border. But the southern leg, a purely domestic operation, is now able to proceed. 🌀

Oneidas and NFL Representatives Meet

An hour-long meeting between National Football League officials and representatives of the Oneida Indian Nation yielded no change in the NFL's decision to keep "Redskins" as the name of their Washington, D.C. franchise. "What we told them is that we would like to work with them in a way that provides a legacy that ends the continued use of marketing a racial slur," said Oneida Indian Nation CEO Ray Halbritter. 🌀

Heitkamp Proposes Children's Commission

In the first bill she presented to the Senate since being elected, Heidi Heitkamp (D-North Dakota) proposed legislation that would create a Commission on Native American Children. The cost of the commission would be \$2 million. "We need

to bring in people from a multi-disciplinary approach who are committed to a process that will set us on a path for change," she told ICTMN. "We can't waste another generation." 🌀

Suquamish Celebrate Return of Objects

The Suquamish Tribe celebrated the return of 19 boxes of objects that had been taken from their Old Man House village site in the 1950s and 1970s. In all 496 objects, some up to 2,000 years old, were brought to the Suquamish Museum; they included a pendant and a comb carved from bone, a basalt adz blade, an awl fashioned from a deer's ulna, and needles and tools for hide-working fashioned from bone and antler. 🌀

'The Creator knows we're here,' said event organizer Tessa McLean, Ojibwe. 'We want a clean-up because it's a destruction of nature.'

Cherokees Slam Capobianco Bill

In a trenchant 50-page response, the Cherokee Nation rejected attempts of Matt and Melanie Capobianco, the adoptive parents of Veronica Brown, to recover \$1.5 million in legal costs they incurred in two states during their epic custody battle. The brief pointed out, among other things, that in over “1,000 Indian Child Welfare [Act] cases...not one single court has ever held that intervention into a state proceeding pursuant to ICWA allows for the award of attorneys fees against the tribe.”

D.C. Council Votes Against ‘Redskins’

The Washington, D.C. City Council voted unanimously to approve a resolution urging the Washington Redskins football team to change its name, the second time in its history the council has taken such action. The vote of 10-0 was confirmed with two members absent, including Council member Marion Barry, who supported the name change, and one member who abstained.

New York Approves Commercial Gaming

By a margin of 57 percent, New York State voters approved a constitutional amendment that would expand commercial gaming, allowing casino developers to compete for the right to build new venues. Ultimately up to seven full-scale casinos would be permitted throughout the state, excluding tribal territories, where the state’s five Indian gaming tribes operate their facilities.

Task Force on Native Child Violence

The Justice Department announced the first of four public hearings of a new task force that will examine the impact of exposure to violence on American Indian and Alaska Native children. “We must now accept the shameful reality that American Indians and Alaska Natives are disproportionately likely to be exposed to crime and violence—and that many who suffer exposure are children,” said Attorney General Eric Holder.

Obama Will Visit Indian Country

President Obama promised tribal leaders from 300 Indian nations gathered at the 2013 White House Tribal Nations Conference that he would pay his first visit to Indian country sometime in 2014; he made the pledge as part of his discussion of “being good stew-



The Washington, D.C. City Council called on the Washington Redskins to abandon their name.

‘American Indians and Alaska Natives are disproportionately exposed to crime and violence,’ said Eric Holder, ‘and many who suffer exposure are children.’

ards of Native homelands.” During his 2008 campaign, the then-candidate was adopted as a member of the Crow Nation, a moment that he has publicly recalled several times since.

First Eastern Cherokee Female Chair

Terri Henry was elected Tribal Council chair of the Eastern Band of Cherokee, the first woman to hold that position. A veteran of the Indian Law Resource Center in Washington, D.C., she is the founder of the Qualla Women’s Justice Alliance and is a member of the National Congress of American Indians Task Force on Violence Against Native Women. She also worked on the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act.

Code Talkers Honored at Capitol

Representatives of 33 tribes were honored at the Capitol on November 20 with the Congressional Gold Medal recognizing the work of non-Navajo Code Talkers in World Wars I and II. Among those present at the ceremony were eight senators and congressmen, along with Bessie Wahnee and Irene Permanu, whose late husbands were Comanche Code Talkers, and 96-year-old Edmond Harjo, Seminole, a Code Talker himself.





An off-reservation casino is at the heart of the Michigan v. Bay Mills Indian Community case.



Concerns persist over asbestiform minerals like grunerite at an open pit iron mine near the Bad River Ojibwe Reservation.

Supreme Court Hears Bay Mills Case

A clearly divided and conflicted Supreme Court heard the crucial case of *Michigan v. Bay Mills Indian Community*, wherein the state of Michigan is attempting to have the tribe's sovereign immunity waived so that the state can prevent it from reopening a casino on off-reservation lands. The tribe said the site is protected under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act because it was purchased with money received under the Michigan Indian Land Claims Act of 1997. 🌀

Aquinnah Wampanoag Sued on Gaming

Massachusetts sued the Aquinnah Wampanoag Tribe to stop it from operating a small Class II gaming facility on its island trust lands on Martha's Vineyard. The suit alleges a breach of contract of the 1983 Settlement Agreement among the tribe, the commonwealth, the Town of Aquinnah and the Taxpayers' Association of Gay Head, Inc., and seeks a declaratory judgment to stop the tribe from moving forward with its gaming plan. 🌀

House Approves Fond Du Lac Land Swap

The House of Representatives passed a bill that would allow the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa to swap thousands of acres of land with Carlton County, Minnesota. The measure permits the tribe to give the county 1,451 acres of off-reservation land in return for 3,200 acres of equal value that the county currently administers on Fond du Lac property. The Senate Indian Affairs Committee approved a companion bill. 🌀

New Head for Indian Education Bureau

After serving almost two years as acting director of the Bureau of Indian Education, Dr. Charles "Monty" Roessel was named full director, reporting directly to Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs Kevin Washburn. Roessel is former director of community

services, executive director and superintendent of Rough Rock Community School in Chinle, Arizona, on the Navajo Reservation, and in 2011 was named the BIE's associate deputy director for Navajo Schools. 🌀

Problems Persist at Mine Near Bad River Ojibwe

Though Wisconsin environmental laws were eased earlier this year, Gogebic Taconite (GTac), which hopes to dig the world's biggest open pit iron mine near the Bad River Ojibwe Reservation, is still "having difficulty meeting even those relaxed requirements," *The Progressive* magazine reported. The Florida-based company had not yet addressed concerns about how they would contain asbestiform minerals or the presence of sulfuric acid from pyrite-infused rock at the site. 🌀

A Happy Ending for Auctioned Sacred Items

Hopi and San Carlos Apache tribal members outraged by the auction of 25 sacred *katsinam* in Paris—the second such sale of the year—were cheered upon learning that the Anenberg Foundation had bought 24 for \$530,000 and planned to return

most of them to the community. The 25th piece was purchased by Pierre Sevan Schreiber, the lawyer who had challenged the sale and who also planned to return his purchase. 🌀

'Not Guilty' Verdict in Three Feathers Case

Four Mohawk men in New York who were charged with operating an illegal casino were found not guilty. Since 2011, they had operated the Three Feathers Casino at the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe's reservation in Akwesasne without state or federal licensing or tribal council approval. But the Men's Council of the People of the Way of the Longhouse says they operated by standards that met or exceeded those of the National Indian Gaming Commission. 🌀

Sacred katsinam that were auctioned in Paris will end up back in the hands of Hopi and San Carlos Apache tribal members.

What Tribes Were Promised . . .

BY ROB CAPRICCIOSO

As in past years, federal officials made several promises to tribal leaders during the White House Tribal Nations Conference, held most recently on November 13. Indian Country Today Media Network was on hand to gather the top 10 pledges:

1) President Barack Obama will visit Indian country in 2014.

The main announcement at this year's conference—or at least the one that garnered the most attention—was that Obama said he will visit somewhere in Indian country in 2014. He didn't say where, but tribal leaders are suggesting a broad tour of diverse reservations to help him understand the full scope of issues facing tribal citizens today.

2) The administration will address tribal contract support cost (CSC) policy and settlements.

"We hear you loud and clear." That became the mantra from administration officials before and after the conference regarding tribal concerns that the Office of Management and Budget has proposed to cap future CSC reimbursements due to tribes, while avoiding paying billions already due to tribes in this area, despite Supreme Court rulings that say the federal government is responsible for paying.

3) Double Indian lands taken into trust.

Interior Secretary Sally Jewell announced the administration's plan to place more than 500,000 acres of land into trust by the end of the president's term. Interior has placed more than 230,000 acres in trust since Obama took office. "Restoring land to tribes is not only important to achieve self-determination, but it can also be a spark for economic development in Indian country—generating investment, new jobs and revenues," Jewell said. "Placing more than 500,000 acres of land in trust over the next three years is

unprecedented in modern times, and I'm committed to making it happen."

4) Transportation projects. Big tribal applause was awarded to Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx when he announced a commitment to helping build Indian country's infrastructure. "The Department of Transportation's position is clear," Foxx said. "Residents of our tribal nations need and deserve safe roads and bridges and access to reliable public transportation. You well know, as well as I do, that transportation is a life-blood to communities, families."

5) Statement of principles by Attorney General Eric Holder.

The Justice Department leader promised to closely work with tribal nations to improve safety and justice in Indian country. He said he will release a "Statement of Principles" that will guide the department's work with Indian country. "This proposed statement will codify our determination to serve not as a patron—but as a partner—in fighting crime and enforcing the law in Indian country," Holder said.

6) Another push for a legislative fix to the Supreme Court *Carcieri/Patchak* issues.

Interior has taken solid administrative steps to solve the land-into-trust complications created by the Supreme Court. But future administrations might not be so proactive. So Indian country has requested clean and lasting legislative fixes to the rulings that would allow all tribes to be equal benefactors of Interior's ability to take lands into trust for them. Several agency officials and Obama himself said they would keep pushing Congress to pass such fixes.

7) Energy involvement. "We want to work closely with tribal leaders to develop renewable resources on tribal lands, in

particular," said Ernest Moniz, Secretary of Energy, in a speech at the summit. "Today, we are very pleased to announce that nine tribes have been selected to receive over \$7 million to further deploy clean energy projects." Some tribal leaders pressed for support for non-renewable projects as well, which agency officials said they heard, but little concrete support was offered.

8) Economic development.

Obama and his staffers said before the event that he wants to focus on improving the economy in Indian country for the rest of his time as president. The administration seems to still be at the information-gathering stage here. Jobs and economic reports are long overdue from Interior that would shed more light on what is needed. Jewell said a final rule involving Patchak recently issued by Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs Kevin Washburn will give tribes greater certainty about their ability to develop recently acquired trust lands for such purposes as housing, schools and economic development.

9) Strengthen the White House Council on Native American Affairs.

This new council of high-level agency secretaries and staff doesn't have any Native Americans on it, so the administration has vowed improved tribal consultation to make sure this body has teeth.

10) Climate change assistance.

This administration wants to focus on climate change for the president's remaining time in office and is making tribes a part of its plan. "The health of tribal nations depends on the health of tribal lands," Obama said in his speech to tribal leaders. "So it falls on all of us to protect the extraordinary beauty of those lands for future generations." <http://bit.ly/1jqGYPr> ☞

... And What They Want

BY ROB CAPRICCOSO

Tribal leaders made abundantly clear at this year's White House Tribal Nations Conference that they appreciate the good things the Obama administration has done for their nations to date. But that doesn't mean they are content—far from it. We were at the summit to record the following tribal desires that were expressed:

1) Stop sequestration of Indian treaty dollars. Money designated for tribes by the Departments of Interior, Health and Human Services and other agencies across the government is supposed to be protected by Washington's trust and treaty responsibilities to tribes. But the Obama administration and Congress did nothing to shield Indian funds during their no-holds-barred austerity approach. Indian programs did not cause the national budget crisis, so why should Indian programs have been sequestered?

2) Scrap the proposal to cap contract support cost reimbursements. It's an affront to Indian health and welfare, multiple tribal leaders said, and it shows that the Office of Management and Budget, the Indian Health Service, and the Department of the Interior are more committed to the bottom line than to Indian citizens.

3) Pay back the billions for contract support costs already paid for. The Supreme Court says these payments must be reimbursed. Plus, the administration has chosen to settle the *Cobell* and *Keepseagle* cases, which both had arguably less concrete numbers for what was owed to tribal citizens than contract support costs that have been dutifully recorded by tribes over the years. The Indian Health Service puts the estimate for what is owed by its agency at \$2 billion; the Interior Department estimates over a billion.

4) Support Indian education. Tribal leaders noted that when initially campaigning for president in 2008, President Obama promised to make Indian education a priority. Instead, attention has been haphazard, Native student progress has declined, and tribal colleges have received less support than they did under past presidential administrations. Indian youth and families are suffering because of it.

5) Use executive powers on Indian issues. Past presidents, including Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon, have pushed more sweeping tribal reforms with executive orders and special messages to Congress on Native issues than Obama. Obama's executive actions can be done without Congress.

6) Federal-tribal energy policy needs work. Tex Hall, chairman of the Three Affiliated Tribes, and Ben Shelly, president of the Navajo Nation, both made the case that Indian energy, both conventional and renewable, needs much more concerted attention. "Our oil and gas initiatives are just as important as other oil," Hall said. Shelly specifically asked the White House Council on Native American Affairs to support Indian energy policies being pushed by Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska) and Sen. John Barrasso (R-Wyoming).

7) Address IRS issues. Ron Allen, chairman of the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, said the National Congress of American Indians asked the administration for a commitment to publish IRS General Welfare Doctrine guidelines to clarify tax exemption for special activities serving cultural and economically disadvantaged tribal citizens. That includes support for legislation to preserve the status beyond this administration.

8) Add Native Americans to the White House Council on Native American

Affairs. The first meeting of the new council took place in late July without any tribal leaders present, irritating many tribal leaders. Michael Finley, chairman of the Colville Tribes, recommended to Interior Secretary Sally Jewell that the council hire an Indian-focused director to oversee its progress and to seat Native Americans on the council immediately.

9) Strengthen consultation—for real this time. The Office of Management and Budget and the Indian Health Service in 2013 produced budget plans that hurt Indian country, despite a 2009 memorandum from President Obama requiring consultation. "I hope the president heard that his Department of Justice team took the contract support cost litigation to the Supreme Court without consultation with tribes, and once the Supreme Court ruled favorably to the tribal position his management team tries to sidestep upholding the intent of the Supreme Court decision," said Edward Thomas, president of the Central Council Tlingit Haida Indian Tribes, who chose not to attend the conference.

10) Obamacare is not a cure for Indian health woes. "Affordable coverage is not the same as pre-paid, treaty-based healthcare," wrote Indian journalist Mark Trahan in his post-conference analysis. "American Indians and Alaska Natives are supposed to have a treaty right—a special right—to healthcare. One that's fully funded. It's not 'affordable healthcare just like everybody else's'"—despite what the president said at the event. The concern here from tribal leaders and Indians is that Obama might not understand the basic special status of Indians in this country today, thereby undermining his entire approach to tribal issues. <http://bit.ly/19utd7x> ☛

Seven 2013 Stories Not to Forget

BY GALE COUREY TOENSING

Terrorist Threat Charge for Attempted Prayer

Wayland Gray, a Muscogee (Creek) Nation citizen, was arrested by the Poarch Band of Creek Indians in February when he tried to pray at Hickory Ground, a Muscogee sacred site in Wetumpka, Alabama currently owned by the Poarch Band, and charged with making a “terrorist threat.” The arrest and charge were part of an ongoing conflict over Poarch’s construction of a \$246 million casino on the Muscogee sacred place. A grand jury later dismissed the terrorist charge against Gray for lack of evidence.

10 Scariest NSA Secrets Exposed by Snowden

Whistleblower Edward Snowden’s revelations about the federal government spying on US citizens through their phones and Internet use raised some scary questions: Are American Indians more vulnerable to being swept up in the frenzy of the hunt for terrorists? Is there reason to fear that the government would use information seized from phone calls and the Internet to launch “counterterrorist” actions against sacred land advocates? Or against indigenous activists involved in the struggle for land rights? Or those protesting devastating proposals like the controversial Keystone XL pipeline and other extraction projects?

Founding Fathers Would Have Deemed Violence Against Women Act Constitutional

Brent Leonhard, a deputy attorney general for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation in Oregon, found nine early treaties, some of them signed by the Founding Fathers, acknowledging the inherent sovereign

right of tribes to exercise jurisdiction over non-Indians in Indian country. Leonhard’s research, which he detailed in “Closing a Gap in Indian Country Justice,” published in the Harvard Law School Journal on Racial and Ethnic Justice in October 2012, set a precedent for extending tribal jurisdiction in the Violence Against Women Act.

Amid many high-profile stories of last year, others should not be overlooked.

Washburn’s Bold Plan to Fix the Interior Department’s Federal Recognition Process

Kevin Washburn, Interior’s Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, unveiled a draft of potential changes to the federal acknowledgement process that Indian leaders hailed as the best thing to happen in decades to a system that has been described as hopelessly broken. Among other things, the new rules would require tribes to prove continuous political authority and community since 1934—not “first contact”—and eliminate the requirement that an external entity identify the group as Indian since 1900.

Inside New York and the Oneidas’ Historic Agreement

Oneida Indian Nation Representative Ray Halbritter and New York Governor Andrew Cuomo announced in May a historic agreement. It will recognize the Oneida Nation’s reservation, settle all outstanding litigation, resolve all disputes over proper-

ty and sales taxes (including cigarette and fuel sales) and provide tens of millions of dollars to the state from the Oneida Nation’s Turning Stone Resort—as well as a gaming exclusivity zone to the Nation.

Beginning of Veazie Dam Removal

With the removal of the Veazie Dam in July, the Penobscot River in Maine became free flowing from Indian Island at Old Town to the Atlantic Ocean for the first time in more than 150 years. The dam removal was part of the \$62 million Penobscot River Restoration Project, an unprecedented private-public partnership among the Penobscot Indian Nation, seven conservation groups, hydropower companies, state and federal agencies and a huge number of individual supporters. The river restoration will ultimately allow endangered Atlantic salmon and other species of sea-run fish to return home to 1,000 miles of habitat not only on the river but also its tributaries.

Mohawks Not Guilty in Three Feathers Casino Case

In early December, the jury in a federal court trial in New York State returned a verdict of not guilty against three Mohawk men and a fourth non-Native man charged with operating an illegal casino and illegally transporting gaming devices “within Indian Country.” The men opened the Three Feathers Casino on the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe (SRMT)’s reservation in 2011—without state or federal licensing or approval from the SRMT council. While the verdict is believed to be precedent setting, it is not known what the broader implications are for other individuals or groups within federally recognized tribes who may want to conduct gaming on tribal land. 

The Environment In 2013

So much happened this past year with respect to the environment that it is hard to know which way to look first. Climate change continued as oceans acidified, glaciers melted and politicians finally sat up and took notice, at least on paper. Still unknown is how each separate factor is connected, and how those connections play off each other to compound the process. These 10 major environmental stories of 2013 are just the tip of the melting iceberg.

1. Climate Change

New computer modeling began revealing just how close Earth is to a tipping point—and how little we know about the interconnectedness of what is happening. The warming trends seemed to have left the atmosphere, at least for now, and moved into the oceans, which the models found are heating up at an unprecedented rate.

2. Extreme weather

From fire to ice, Indian country was hit by the four elements to the four directions. In South Dakota, a rogue blizzard claimed the lives of 100,000 cattle and other livestock, many of them on tribal lands. Flooding wrecked huge swaths of Indian country. One of the hardest hit areas was Santa Clara Pueblo, whose soils are still stripped from the devastating Las Conchas wildfire of 2011 and which is now subject to flash floods.

3. Greenhouse Gases

Methane got a lot of press in 2013. While the influence and volume of methane emitted by melting Siberian permafrost remained unclear, more of the gas was found to be belching from the ocean floor than was previously suspected. In an especially alarming milestone, the concentration of atmospheric carbon dioxide, one of the major greenhouse gases, surpassed 400 parts per million for the first time in human history.

4. Ocean Health

The world's oceans continued to acidify. Their surface temperature reached its

highest mark in 150 years, not boding well for what is going on at their depths. Indeed, scientists suspect that much of the global warming phenomenon could be taking place below the surface and that it will manifest itself suddenly, with dire consequences.

5. Keystone XL Pipeline

Protests continued against the 1,700-mile-long, \$7 billion project designed to carry oil from the Alberta oil sands of Canada to the Gulf of Mexico coast in Texas. The environmental assessment undertaken by the State Department was released in draft form, saying that the pipeline would have

From fire to ice, Indian country was hit by the four elements to the four directions.

little or no decisive effect on oil sands development, job creation and environmental health in general. Tribal leaders and Nobel Prize winners alike came out against the project, as protests continued and many high-profile activists were arrested.

6. Ice Melt

The Arctic and Antarctic continued melting, while more and more information came to light explaining how, and what effect it might have on climate in general. The Himalayas, most notably Mount Everest, were found to be shedding their mountain glaciers, as are the Swiss Alps. For a few days over the summer, almost all Greenland's permanent ice sheet liquefied, at least for a few inches and a few days.

7. Fukushima radiation & cleanup

Radiation from the Fukushima nuclear meltdown stemming from the devastating 2011 earthquake and resulting tsunami began showing up in fish on the west coast of Turtle Island. The Japanese government and utilities finally admitted that tons upon tons of radioactive water was being released into the ocean daily and that many of the melted-down nuclear rods were in a more precarious position than anyone had realized.


8. Animal Species

Bees dropped out of the sky from pesticides; elk dropped dead from toxic algae; starfish began turning to goo. These were just a few of the alarming die-offs that were noted by scientists in different parts of the world. By disturbing contrast, other species were doing a bit too well—feral hogs breeding from Texas through the Plains, and pythons invading the Everglades, for instance.

9. Battles Over Fracking, Mining, Coal Trains and Wind Power

Biggest among the huge roster of environmental battles to choose from was the taconite mine in Wisconsin. The Lummi Nation stood firm against a coal-train terminal in Cherry Point, Washington. On several occasions, fracking was proved to be the cause of earthquakes. Wind power caused controversy as well, especially with a new permit that renders the killing of eagles by wind turbines legal by defining them as unavoidable collateral damage.

10. Navajo Generating Station

The Navajo Nation continued negotiations to buy a coal plant in an effort to take control of coal processing on their reservation. But many called out the deal as flawed, and in December, just as the Nation was winding up its work on the deal, a highly regarded grassroots environmental group came out publicly against it. 

Twelve Exotic Places to Visit in 2014

BY HANS TAMMEMAGI

JANUARY - TROPICAL HEAT IN WINTER **Cook Islands**

Deep in the Pacific, and south of the equator, are the 15 idyllic Cook Islands, with golden beaches and tall coconut trees.

Rarotonga, the main island, has a lush mountainous center and is ringed by a reef, which cradles a turquoise lagoon where you can spend hours snorkeling amidst a feast of multicolored fish.

The Polynesian people are friendly, and the island has a delightful, small-town ambience (with virtually no multinational businesses).

Scooters are the best way to travel and explore.

FEBRUARY - ANTIPODEAN WARMTH **Tasmania, Australia**

Isolated in the wild southern ocean, Tasmania, Australia's island state, is rimmed by sandy beaches and populated by bizarre creatures. Near Hobart, a delightfully picturesque city, lies the Port Arthur Historic Site, the penal colony established in 1833. Here you can learn about the role of convicts in Australia's history, and human capacity for cruelty. The evening ghost tour visits the morgue where the guide, holding a skull, explains how inmates' bodies were dissected to see if criminal brains differed from normal brains.

MARCH - AVOID THE PEAK OF SUMMER **Dubai**

Dubai is a monument to excess—the world's tallest building, an indoor ski hill (in simmering desert heat!), artificial islands and a seven-star hotel. But a

short drive into the Arabian desert will bring you to an oasis, the Al Maha Resort. Elegant villas with large canvas sails for roofs feature king-size beds, Arabian antiques and enormous bathtubs. Sprawl-

symbol of Cambodia, a center for worship since it was founded in the early 1100s. It appears on the national flag and is the country's main attraction. Angkor Wat displays magnificent Khmer archi-



There are 15 Cook Islands, and all are idyllic.

ing wooden decks and personal infinity pools offer long views over the desert of attractive sculpted ridges and rich shadowy ripples. You can ride a camel or drive a Land Rover into the desert, home to exotic animals such as delicate Arabian gazelles and the romantic long-horned oryx.

APRIL - SPRING IS BEST **Angkor Wat, Cambodia**

Angkor Wat is one of the world's architectural masterpieces and a powerful

structure with sandstone pillars, towers and bas-relief friezes depicting scenes from Hindu epics. Part of the sprawling Angkor World Heritage Site, the Wat is but one of about 100 temples. Jungle encroaches on the ancient structures and monkeys swing through the foliage.

MAY - TULIPS IN BLOOM **Amsterdam**

Amsterdam, the gateway to Europe, has an extensive canal system, like Venice. Take a boat tour or enjoy a long walk. The canals and bridges are picturesque.

The streets are narrow and often cobblestoned. Bars and coffee houses abound. And the famous red-light district, located in the middle of the old town, cannot be avoided. Beware of bicycles, which constantly whiz past. Be sure to visit the Van Gogh Museum, Anne Frank house and Rijksmuseum. Pay a visit to the De Drie Fleschjes, a “brown” bar established in 1650.

JUNE - BLOSSOMS AND PUBS **Cardiff, Wales**

Cardiff is a great city. Cardiff Castle with its crenellated walls and colorful clock tower sits right in the heart of town. The city is designed for pedestrians, and, being flat, it's also perfect for cycling. Bicycles are available for free! The downtown encompasses St. David's Shopping Center and broad, open walkways that contrast with the surrounding narrow lanes, arcades and cobbled streets. Bilingual signs abound with long, tongue-twisting words. Cardiff Bay, a beautifully restored former dockland, includes plazas, a merry-go-round, the Wales Millennium Center, a spectacular opera house, and the Senedd, the National Assembly of Wales.

JULY - A NORDIC COUNTRY **Tallinn, Estonia**

Tallinn is one of Europe's most beautiful capitals, with narrow cobblestone streets, church spires, medieval buildings, thick battlements and towers. The medieval Old Town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, was established in 1219. The ramparts of upper Town, which was for nobles, offer wonderful views onto the rooftops and spires of lower town, which was for merchants. Numerous museums, churches and other fascinating places dot the lower town, including the Passage of History with plaques in the sidewalk outlining Estonian history.

AUGUST - MEDITERRANEAN SUMMER **Santorini, Greece**

Santorini is a fiery jewel in the Cyclades Islands of Greece. The main town of



The desert in Dubai echoes with the past.

Fira sits on a 300-meter cliff in a jumble of whitewashed restaurants, bars, and hotels, dotted by the occasional domed church. Each morning, donkeys gently bray as they clip-clop down a zig-zagging path to meet the cruise ships and fetch up tourists. You can visit Akrotiri, buried by a volcano 5,000 years ago and one of the world's finest archaeological sites. Or visit the island of Nea Kameni, which is still an active volcano, where you can bathe in hot springs and peer into the “burning inferno.”

SEPTEMBER - IT'S ALWAYS SUMMER **ON THE EQUATOR** **Galapagos Islands,** **Ecuador**

These isolated, arid volcanic islands sit astride the equator and are home to 150-year-old lumbering tortoises, prehistoric marine iguanas, glistening sea lions and the most unusual birds, including blue-foot boobies, pelicans, frigate birds, elegant flamingos and, of course, the rather ordinary-looking finches, whose beaks allegedly helped Darwin decipher the processes of evolution. As a bonus, the animals, having no predators, are indifferent to humans, allowing you to get close and personal.

OCTOBER - THE DRY SEASON **Sossusvlei, Namibia**

You can hike to the top of the world's tallest, most elegant sand dunes in the Sossusvlei region of Namibia in south-

west Africa. The view is spectacular, with one towering sand dune merging into another, all of them as red as if the earth were bleeding. Sinuous ridges divide the enormous dunes into vast patches of velvet shadow and rippled crimson. Amazingly, this barren landscape is home to life. Ostrich, oryx and kudu wander here and there, ceaselessly searching for food. Beetles, spiders and snakes leave delicate, ephemeral patterns in the sand.

NOVEMBER - GOOD **SEASON FOR THE** **SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE** **Machu Picchu, Peru**

Stone buildings, temples and terraces, overwhelming in their elegance and size, are arrayed high on the side of a precipitous mountain. This is Machu Picchu, which Condé Nast's Traveler magazine considers the world's number one tourist attraction. The structures are built of chiseled boulders that fit perfectly without cement and are extraordinarily stable, an important feature in an earthquake-prone area. These amazing, silent stones are in perfect balance with their surroundings and are also aligned with the sun's orbit. Abandoned by the Incas when the Spanish conquistadors invaded Peru, Machu Picchu remained hidden high in the Andes and was not rediscovered until 1911.

DECEMBER - GOOD SEASON FOR **THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE** **Amazon Jungle, Peru**

When your plane lands on a small grass airstrip in the dense Amazon forest, the smells are ripe and rich. The foliage is lush and alive with strange caws and chirps. Bugs buzz. And, it is hot—very hot. A native canoe carries you up a fast-flowing Amazon tributary, deeper into the humid jungle to the Manu Wildlife Center. The guide will point out white egrets, toucans, blue-headed parrots, green ibis and red-and-green macaws. At night you will boat with a powerful spotlight catching the sinister eyes of caimans. <http://bit.ly/1h6QJAv> 🌐

The 5 Must-See Native Films of 2013

You might have noticed a flurry of film-related pieces here at ICTMN recently. That was because we were spotlighting movies that showed at the Red Nation Film Festival and the L.A. Skins Fest, both in Los Angeles, and the American Indian Film Festival (AIFF), which takes place in San Francisco. The three fests run essentially simultaneously, which makes November a dream month for fans of Native film.

Beyond that, 2013 has been a truly outstanding year for Native cinema. In addition to an always-strong slate of documentary films, among them *Indian Relay*, *Urban Rez*, and *Young Lakota*, Native directors and actors turned in exceptional work in a number of movies, and that's what we'll focus on here. (By our own ad-hoc reasoning, and despite solid work by Natives in supporting roles, we're disqualifying the endlessly analyzed farce that was *The Lone Ranger* and the less-ridiculous *Jimmy P.* for casting non-Natives in leading roles.)

If you'd like to see some good contemporary narrative cinematic fare by Natives or featuring Natives, here's a handful of the best:

Winter in the Blood

Starring a who's-who of Native actors that includes Chaske Spencer, Julia Jones, Gary Farmer, Michael Spears and Saganaw Grant, *Winter in the Blood* came with high expectations, and the film largely delivered. It was the opening-night feature at the L.A. Skins Fest; won the Grand Prize at the Montreal First Peoples Festival; and at AIFF its star, Chaske Spencer, won Best Actor while the brother team



Chaske Spencer took best actor honors at the American Indian Film Festival for *Winter in the Blood*.

of Alex and Andrew Smith won Best Director.

The Lesser Blessed

At Red Nation, *The Lesser Blessed* was named Best Picture and Joel Evans won Best Actor for his portrayal of a troubled teen. Up the coast at AIFF, Kiowa Gordon took the prize for Best Supporting Actor.

Maina

This tale of a rivalry between two arctic peoples set in the pre-contact era took home Best Picture at AIFF, and its stars Roseanne Supernault and Tantoo Cardinal won for Best Actress and Best Supporting Actress.

The Cherokee Word for Water

This true story from the life of the late Wilma Mankiller was an opportunity to

make a great film about recent Native history, and it succeeded in being just that. Star Kimberly Norris Guerrero, who portrays Mankiller in the movie, won Best Actress at Red Nation, where *The Cherokee Word for Water* was the festival's closing-night film.

Tiger Eyes

While not a "Native" film per se, this adaptation of a beloved Judy Blume novel marks a high point in Tatanka Means' acting career, and the warm reception from critics suggests he may get a look for more and bigger mainstream projects going forward. He actually won his awards in 2012 (Best Supporting Actor at AIFF and Best Actor at Red Nation), but *Tiger Eyes* got its biggest boost in terms of accessibility in the summer of 2013 when it premiered in theaters. It's also available on Netflix. <http://bit.ly/1kQ0aBv>

<http://bit.ly/1kQ0aBv>

The Year in Food

BY DALE CARSON

“Trends are cyclical—like 15 years ago, everything was about spa food, and ten years before that, everything centered around butter and cream,” Ron Dimas, chef de cuisine of Orange Sky Restaurant, told Indian Country Today Media Network. The trend of 2013 is a return to a “healthy food phase spurred by medical concerns,” he said. “Whatever the reason, I welcome the direction we’re headed in.” And Native cuisine goes hand-in-hand with healthy eating, as this list shows:

Farm-to-Table or Field-to-Plate

The farm-to-table movement, also called field-to-plate, is about eating seasonal foods, based on what is available locally at peak harvest. Nowhere has this trend been more evident than in Native American communities where “self-sustainability” is the goal. Just take a look at tribes in the Northern Plains, where the interest in gardening has skyrocketed.

Some would argue the farm-to-table buzzphrase has already gone mainstream, making it a new rule rather than a goal. In light of that, the field-to-plate food ethic that is fueling the growth of farmers’ markets across America proved the most dominant trend of 2013. If it was already spreading, now it has a foothold.

Indigenous Foods

“Native foods are not a trend,” Nephi Craig, executive chef of the fine-dining restaurant at the White Mountain Apache Tribe’s Sunrise Park Resort Hotel, told ICTMN. “They are a way to recover our communities and decolonize ourselves.”

The award-winning Apache/Navajo Chef makes a good point. We only included it in our list of 2013 food trends, because it’s a new concept to mainstream society. Like Craig, we expect this “trend” to stay strong and grow.

Anti-Genetically Modified Foods

Although genetically modified (GM) fruits and vegetables have been on supermarket shelves since 1998, more and more GM crops are flooding our diets. Controversy has soared over labeling. People want the choice to consume organic or know when they’re eating scientifically engineered corn, strawberries



Amaranth is one of the nutrition-packed “superfoods” that made a splash in 2013.

or the like. And more anti-GM advocacy groups have formed and become more vocal, because we still don’t know the risks of consuming these foods that have been altered at their very core. Many European countries, and most recently Hawaii’s Big Island, have completely banned the growth and/or sale of GM crops.

Buffalo

Buffalo is an incredible source of lean protein and iron. When cooked properly, it is tender and juicy. More restaurants, and especially burger joints, are embracing bison meat as a healthy substitute or addition to beef. And contrary to previous common conception, eating buffalo actually helps preserve the animals. Traditionally, people who eat a food are more likely to care for and preserve it

than those who don’t, reports thehealthycookingcoach.com.

Gluten-Free and the Paleo Diet

The theory behind the Paleolithic Diet, short-named the Paleo Diet, is that mimicking the diet of our ancestors some 10,000 years ago—prior to the European construction of the agriculture and grain-based diet—is the healthiest way to live.

Also referred to as the caveman diet, Stone Age diet and hunter-gatherer diet, the Paleo Diet avoids refined foods, trans fat, dairy and sugar. Instead it emphasizes consuming lean proteins; fresh vegetables and fruits; and healthy fats like those in nuts, seeds, avocados, fish oil and grass-fed meat. Among the touted health benefits are improved blood lipids, weight loss, and reduced pain from autoimmune. And the diet is scientifically proven to help stave off degenerative diseases such as obesity, cancer, diabetes, heart disease, Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s, depression and infertility.

Superfoods

Nutrient-packed vegetables, fruits and grains are having their heyday. All the praise used to go to antioxidant-laden blueberries for their anti-aging properties. But now society has broadened our horizons while returning to traditional indigenous foods that offer energy and essential vitamins—like freekeh, amaranth, quinoa, salmon, kale, certain seeds and nuts, and more!

Meatballs and Sliders

2013 was the year of sliders and meatballs, with specialty restaurants popping up all over major cities throughout the U.S. The Native version? Game meats rolled into delicious balls or served on buns. Even Chow.com recommends elk meatballs. <http://bit.ly/1bTEG1f>

Remembering Those Lost in 2013

We recall reverently and fondly these notables who walked on this past year:

Charles W. Blackwell, Chickasaw Nation Ambassador to the United States, on January 2 at age 70.

Kenojuak Ashevak, renowned Inuit artist, on January 8 at age 85.

George Flett, nationally recognized artist of the Spokane Tribe, on January 30 at age 66.

Oscala Clayton Sylestine, lifetime chief of the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe, on January 31 at age 80.

Clarence Jackson Sr., Tlingit Elder and board member of the Sealaska Corporation since its inception, on January 31 at age 78.

Richard Twiss, Lakota president of Wiconi International, on February 9 at age 58.

Mary Ellen Brave Bird-Richard, Sican-gu Lakota activist, author and educator, on February 14 at age 58.

Willard Golding Sr., Quechan Tribal Elder and head bird singer, on February 19 at age 70.

Charles Anthony "Charlie" Harjo, Choctaw/Creek chairman of the Wichita Intertribal Warrior Society, on March 9 at age 64.

Thomas Streicher, Pine Ridge humanitarian and founder of the nonprofit firm Divine Spark, Inc., on March 22 at age 58.

Archie Thompson, last of the Yurok Tribe Elders, on March 26 at age 93.

George Paul Horse Capture Sr., pioneering A'aninin curator, on April 16 at age 75.

Augustine Lopez Sr., Tohono O'odham chairman and vice chairman, on April 18 at age 78.

Margaret Pictou LaBillois, first woman elected chief in the New Brunswick region of the Eve River Bar First Nation, on April 10 at age 89.

Richie Havens, inspiring Cherokee folk singer and activist, on April 22 at age 72.

Fran James, Lummi master weaver, on May 2 at age 88.

Elijah Walker, revered aboriginal leader and politician who opposed the Meech Lake constitutional accord, on May 17 at age 64.

Hon. Evelyne E. Bradley, known as the Navajo Nation's "Mother Justice," on May 21 at age 88.

Randy Twist, Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma founding member of the Northern California Chapter of the American Indian Chamber of Commerce, on May 22 at age 50.



Clockwise from top left: Football owner Bud Adams, actor August Schellenberg, civil servant Chastity Bedonie and Inuit artist Kenojuak Ashevak

Katie John, Athabaskan Elder and advocate for culture, language and subsistence rights, on May 31 at age 97.

David Brown, Chickasaw Nation lieutenant governor, on June 6 at age 70.

Charles C. Colombe, president of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, on June 9 at age 75.

Albert White Hat Sr., Lakota language preserver and instructor at Sinte Gleska University, on June 11 at age 74.

Marge Anderson, Ojibwe Elder and the first woman to lead a Minnesota tribe, on June 29 at age 81.

William "Bill" Houle, chairman of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe, on June 30 at age 82.

James Garland Eagle, Cherokee Nation deputy chief and tribal council member, on July 2 at age 63.

Oliver Red Cloud, chief of the Sioux Nation since 1977, on July 4 at age 93.

Clinton M. Pattea, Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation tribal president, on July 5 at age 81.

Gordon Belcourt, Blackfeet executive director of the Montana Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council, on July 15 at age 68.

Earl Barbry Sr., chairman of the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana, on July 31 at age 62.

Willie Dunn, Mi'kmaq singer-songwriter who addressed aboriginal issues in his work, on August 5 at age 71.

Robert "Bob" Jondrewau, Keweenaw Bay Indian Community activist, Air Force veteran and drum keeper, on August 10, at age 66.

Farrell Cunningham, Maidu language instructor, on August 11 at age 37.

Alyce Spotted Bear, Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation chairwoman, on August 13 at age 67.

August "Augie" Schellenberg, Emmy-nominated Mohawk portrayer of Sitting Bull, Geronimo and King Lear, on August 15 at age 77.

Sherman Chaddlesone, world-renowned Kiowa artist, on August 17 at age 66.

Ida Bear, Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) Elder, on August 19 at age 74.

Chastity Bedonie, Navajo veteran of the Interior Department, Senate Indian Affairs Committee and National Indian Gaming Commission, on September 15 at age 39.

Jacob A. Escalante, Tohono O'odham Nation chairman, on September 24 at age 86.

Nelson Draper Sr., Navajo Code Talker, on September 22 at age 96.

Maurice Lyons, Morongo Band of Mission Indians tribal chairman and longtime tribal council member, on October 16 at age 63.

Bud Adams, Cherokee owner of the Houston Oilers and their successors, the Tennessee Titans, on October 21 at age 90.

Ernie Campbell, Chief of the Musqueam Indian Band, on October 26 at age 72.

Jacob Oweetaluktuk, founding member of the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, on October 31 at age 76.

Darrell Robes Kipp, Blackfeet educator, historian, author, filmmaker and co-founder of the Piegan Institute in Browning, Montana, on November 21 at age 69.

Arthur "Art" Taylor, Nez Perce educator, on November 28 at age 48.

<http://bit.ly/1hlYccd> and <http://bit.ly/18RVG8c>



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Photos of the Year

If a picture is worth a thousand words, then these vivid, memorable images of the last twelve months will speak volumes in 2014 and beyond.



Clockwise from top: An Idle No More rally in Ottawa; the legendary Louisville Cardinals sisters Shoni (#23) and Jude (#22) Schimmel; the 50,000-strong Forward on Climate rally in Washington, D.C.; and the signing copy of the Violence Against Women Act.



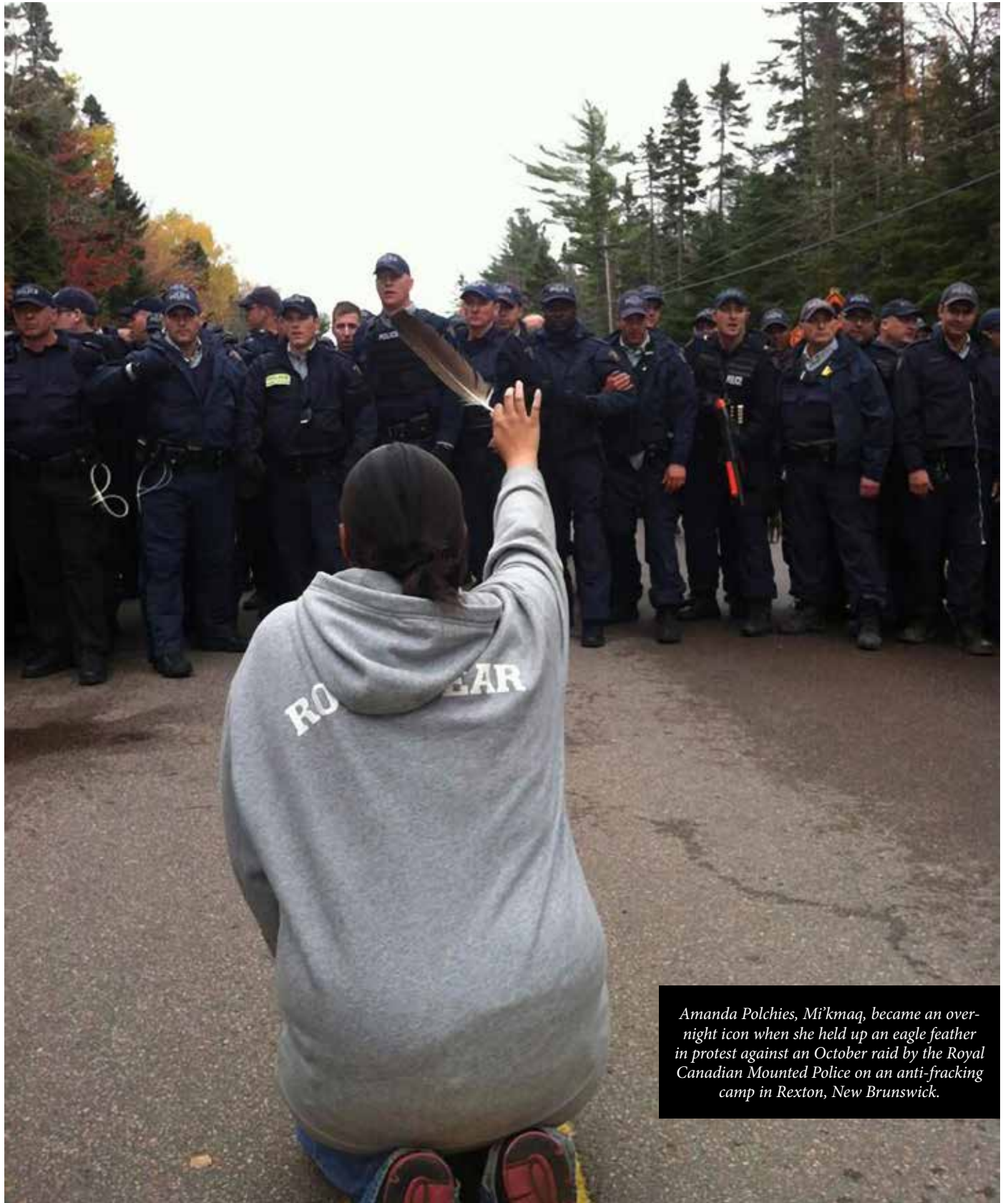
(C) NADYA KWANDIBENS/RED WORKS STUDIO/PRINTS@REDWORKS.CA; AP (2); JENNA POPE; FACEBOOK/SEN PATRICK LEAHY



Clockwise from upper left: Saginaw Chippewa return ancestors to the earth; Kya-Rae Arthur (Navajo/Cree) at the Honoring Our Youth Powwow in Missoula, Montana; New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo and Oneida Indian Nation Representative Ray Halbritter agree on exclusive gaming rights; and former Guatemalan President Rios Montt, charged with the deaths of 1,771 Native Mayans.



COURTESY MARCELLA HADDEN/NIBING GIZIS PHOTO STUDIO; ADAM SINGS IN THE TIMBER; AP (2)



Amanda Polchies, Mi'kmaq, became an overnight icon when she held up an eagle feather in protest against an October raid by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police on an anti-fracking camp in Rexton, New Brunswick.

OSSIE MICHELIN

Clockwise from top: Grand Entry at the Gathering of Nations; a feral horse runs toward a pen used to capture feral livestock in Klagetoh, Arizona; an Indian trail tree in Georgia; and an honor song and traveling song are performed as the Capitol Christmas Tree is uprooted from the Colville National Forest, ancestral homeland of the Kalispel people.



DIEGO JAMES ROBLES (2); JAMES STEWART; JACK MCNEEL



Code Talkers from 33 tribes were presented with the Congressional Gold Medal at a ceremony at the Capitol late last year. Each tribe was represented by a different image; this medal honored the Lakota.

THE BIG PICTURE