



Indian Country

TODAY THIS WEEK FROM
THE PREMIER E-NEWSLETTER SERVING THE NATIONS, CELEBRATING THE PEOPLE

A Letter from the Publisher



Shekóli. As we close in on the fourth anniversary of the launch of Indian Country Today Media Network.com, the most recent incarnation of what was once a weekly national newspaper, we celebrate an annual tradition: This Week From Indian Country Today's Year in Review. In this, the last edition of the year, we pause to reflect on the events that have come to define the past 12 months.

The year in politics was particularly momentous. President Barack Obama paid a historic visit to Indian Country when he spent the day at the Standing Rock Sioux nation and pledged a renewed commitment on the part of the federal government to honor its treaty obligations. Natives made news in U.S. politics as well: Keith Harper was confirmed as Human Rights Ambassador to the United Nations and Diane Humetewa was the first Native female judge appointed to the federal bench. ICTMN contributor, poet and activist Suzan Shown Harjo was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest honor for a civilian in the United States. Kevin Washburn, head of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, moved ahead with an overhaul of the cumbersome federal recognition process and sat for an hours-long interview with the editorial board of ICTMN to explain his approach.

Momentum for the Change the Mascot campaign for the Washington football team to renounce its racist name continued. The year began with the premiere of "Proud To Be," a widely-hailed commercial produced by the National Congress of American Indians that the NFL refused to air, but which millions of people nevertheless watched on global networks and online. Each week more celebrities, news outlets and national leaders called on the team to stand on the right side of history and lose the offensive moniker.

Indian nations continued to rally around environmental issues as well, whether taking a stance on the XL Keystone Pipeline, development in Bristol Bay or mining in the Penokee Mountains. The Navajo Nation won a \$554 million settlement for mismanaged land and trust funds, while earlier in the year a landslide in Washington saw nations in the Northwest rise to the aid of the disaster victims.

In this issue we also take time to remember those who have walked on, such as Code Talker Chester Nez, brilliant comedian Charlie Hill, mercurial actress Misty Upham, and the indefatigable activist Billy Frank, Jr. They and many others will be missed but not be forgotten.

ICTMN.com reached an important midyear milestone when the website surpassed 1 million monthly unique visitors, then maintained and grew beyond that number in the following months. The growth in audience size is less a testament to anything particularly clever happening online than it is a sign of the importance of all things Native to our nations and the world at large. We cover these stories in the spirit of those who have come before us, and for those in the generations to come who will follow us. We do it because it is our story—the story of the Indians of Turtle Island—and it needs to be told.

Náki'wa,

Ray Halbritter

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U.S. Department of the Interior
Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations

LAND CONSOLIDATION EFFORTS UNDERWAY

The Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations, created to implement part of the **Cobell Settlement**, is offering fair market value to landowners for voluntarily restoring fractional land interests to tribes, which helps ensure that Indian lands **stay in trust**.

- Many landowners have already been paid.
- The Program has successfully concluded transactions worth more than \$100 million, restoring the equivalent of nearly 265,000 acres of land to tribal governments.
- All sales are voluntary, but landowners will only have **45 days** to accept

Land owners are encouraged to contact the U.S. Department of the Interior to learn about eligibility and to ensure that their contact information is up to date.

Please call the Trust Beneficiary Call Center Today:

1-888-678-6836

More information is available from your local Fiduciary Trust Officer, or on the web: www.doi.gov/buybackprogram

Yale Brings Native New England Research Into the 21st Century

The Yale Indian Papers Project is making it easier to learn about the history and culture of New England Natives by gathering historical materials into one virtual collection. By making previously unpublished documents like letters, treaties and maps available online, researchers, scholars and tribal members will all be able to easily access the information without having to drive or fly to a number of repositories to view documents.

"We are gathering source materials about native New England peoples, and putting it all online," Paul Grant-Costa, executive editor of the Project, told the *New Haven Register* during a program at Southern Connecticut State University that was devoted to the project. "The concept is to gather primary source materials and manuscripts and maps, and make them accessible."

Grant-Costa explained that there are differences between the written record and what is written and what actually occurred, because the written record was typically recorded by white settlers. "We hear a lot about Thanksgiving, and then there is the idea that Native people have disappeared, but Native people have been here continuously," Grant-Costa said.

Researchers involved with the Yale Indian Papers Project have traveled widely, including to London, to gather original documents. "We found that documents about New England Native people have been scattered around the world, including a lot of material in England," Grant-Costa said. "Previously, to get them, you would have had to get on a plane, which is expensive." <http://bit.ly/1uA0XLh> 📱

Debra Haaland Announces Bid for New Mexico Democratic Party Chair

Debra Haaland, Laguna Pueblo, made history this year by being the first Native American on a major party ticket to run for lieutenant governor of New Mexico. Now Haaland is looking to make history again—by announcing a run to become chairwoman of the state's Democratic Party. If she succeeds, she will be the first Native American woman to lead a major political party in the state.

"There is a lot of healing that needs to be done," she said. "As I traveled the state in 2014, I saw what was beautiful and amazing about New Mexico and our Party, but I also saw things we could do better. That's why I'm running for Chair; we can rebuild our party and create new bridges that will enable us to come back in 2015 and 2016 stronger than ever."

Haaland is currently a Tribal Administrator at San Felipe Pueblo and Chairwoman of the Laguna Development Corporation Board of Directors, a former small business owner. She is also a graduate of the University of New Mexico School of Law. In addition to working Indian Country for President Obama in both 2008 and 2012, Haaland has worked on several local and statewide campaigns in a variety of capacities.

"It's absolutely a privilege and an honor, and one I take very seriously," said Haaland. "The bottom line is this: as Democrats, we must solidify our Party in 2015 so that in 2016 we can advocate effectively for Early Childhood Education, fight for our teachers and workers, and support our candidates in all 33 counties." <http://bit.ly/1xgYxbg> 📱

Indigenous Leaders Applaud Peel Watershed Court Ruling

Indigenous leaders are celebrating the Yukon Supreme Court's ruling in favor of First Nations rights and the protection of the pristine, fragile Peel Watershed from mining interests.

"The First Nations in Yukon and the Northwest Territories see it as a great achievement," said Dene National Chief Bill Erasmus. "This is precedent-setting because it supports, at law, that the final land claim agreements supersede territorial legislation. These agreements were negotiated over many years between the parties and agreed upon. They are part of the Canadian Constitution and therefore protection is provided."

"Seven major rivers flow through the Scotland-sized area, which is home to healthy populations of caribou, grizzly bears, wolverines, and peregrine falcons," *National Geographic* reported. "The nearly roadless landscape is also the winter range of the Porcupine caribou herd, which summers in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge."

The ruling could have repercussions throughout Canada when it comes to planning land use and managing resources, Peel Watershed Planning Commission Chairman Dave Loeks told *National Geographic*. "Conservation values have more likelihood of being taken into account in formulating public policy," he said. "Mining and industry may have a less prominent position in policymaking, which means that the remaining open spaces in the north have a fighting chance."

"The Yukon government's unilateral decision on the plan for the Peel violated our agreements," said Na-Cho Nyak Dun First Nation Chief Ed Champion. "This land is our breadbasket, it's our university, our church. We've been there since time immemorial, and we'll be here forever. To protect our land and water is the soul of the First Nations." <http://bit.ly/16gi7cx>

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NIGA to Celebrate 30 Years With Improved Annual Trade Show and Convention

The National Indian Gaming Association's (NIGA) 30th Annual Trade Show and Convention, to be held March 30-April 2 at the San Diego Convention Center, is expected to be the largest gathering of tribal leaders and casino industry executives in the country. The program will feature an unprecedented line-up, including special keynote speeches, a panel with Indian Country's top CEOs, a new plenary session and a full roster of in-depth sessions devoted to Indian gaming's most important issues.

"We have been working very hard for the past eight months to strengthen and enhance our show to ensure that it effectively meets and exceeds the needs of every member of the tribal gaming community; as well as the many other businesses that serve and support Indian gaming," said NIGA Chairman Ernest L. Stevens, Jr. "The goal of our trade show is centered on NIGA's mission to promote tribal sovereignty and Indian self-reliance to advance the lives of Indian people economically, socially and politically."

The conference will feature sessions and workshops devoted to, among other topics, operations, security, leadership development, business and finance, compliance and iGaming.

"We recognize that the issues in Indian Country are unique and distinguishable from commercial gaming," Stevens said. "We have also started working closely with the gaming manufacturers and tribal gaming operators to further enhance our program. You can expect to see the very best of Indian gaming represented at the conference this year." <http://bit.ly/1qIUWAB> 

New AFN Chief Says No to New Pipelines Without First Nation Consultation


Newly elected Assembly of First Nations Chief Perry Bellegarde emphasized sovereignty and First Nations consent after being voted in with 63 percent of the ballots on December 10.

"To Canada we say, for too long have we been dispossessed of our homelands and the wealth of our rightful inheritance," Bellegarde said in his first speech as national chief. "Canada will no longer develop pipelines, transmission lines or any infrastructure on our lands as business as usual. First Nations peoples will oppose any development which deprives our children of the legacy of our ancestors."

Bellegarde, Cree-Assiniboine of Little Black Bear First Nation, received 291 votes, versus acting chief Ghislain Picard's 136 and Leon Jourdain's 35. The elections

were held during the AFN's special assembly in Winnipeg. Bellegarde is a regional chief of the AFN as well as head of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN).

Seen by many as the most mainstream of the three candidates—Ghislain had called the Canadian government and Prime Minister Stephen Harper "the enemy," while Jourdain had said he would push for nation-to-nation negotiations—Bellegarde nonetheless drew the proverbial line in the sand.

"We will no longer accept poverty and hopelessness while resource companies and governments grow fat off our lands and territories and resources," he said. "If our lands and resources are to be developed, it will be done only with our fair share of the royalties, with our ownership of the resources and jobs for our people. It will be done on our terms and our timeline. Canada is Indian land." <http://bit.ly/1soLjWV> 

BY RICK KEARNS

Hundreds of activists from the Shipibo, Asháninka, Achuar, Awajún, Mundurucu, Guajajara, Kichwa and Kampupiyawi communities gathered to create the banner on Agua Dulce Beach near the summit to emphasize how territorial rights of Indigenous Peoples must be guaranteed to address the effects of climate change.

"If we want to defend our global climate, we must defend the Amazon. If we want to defend the Amazon, we must support indigenous rights and territories," said Leila Salazar-López, Program Director of Amazon Watch.

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

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Thorpe Family Appeals Ruling

Powerful supporters have now been enlisted **BY TISH LEIZENS**

Bottom Line: *The remains of the legendary Native American Olympic athlete Jim Thorpe still do not rest in peace with his family. But influential advocates may change that situation.*

Former Colorado senator Benighthorse Campbell and the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) have joined the sons of Jim Thorpe and his Sac and Fox Nation in petitioning a Philadelphia court to return the remains of the Olympic athlete to Oklahoma. They expressed their support in *amicus curiae* briefs filed with the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit on December 8—the day that Thorpe’s sons asked the same court to rehear the case.

On October 23, the Third Circuit threw out an earlier ruling and said Thorpe should remain in the mausoleum in a Pennsylvania borough that has been named after him. Thorpe’s sons and the Sac and Fox Nation of Oklahoma—the main parties to the legal suit—are appealing.

“Thorpe’s remains are located at their final resting place and have not been disturbed,” the Third Circuit said. “We find that applying NAGPRA [the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act] to Thorpe’s burial in the borough is such a clearly absurd result and so contrary to Congress’ intent to protect Native American burial sites.”

The interpretation of NAGPRA, which Congress passed in 1990 to protect sacred Indian sites and artifacts, is at the heart of this protracted legal battle. Thorpe’s sons from his second marriage, William, Richard and John (now

deceased), along with the Nation, said in their petition that the panel of judges misunderstood the act.

Much of the present argument rests on whether Thorpe’s current resting place constitutes a “museum,” with its various legal implications.

“Instead of focusing on the truly shocking facts surrounding the removal of Jim Thorpe’s body from a tradition-


of the repatriation laws when he served in the House of Representatives, said in his *amicus curiae* brief that the court undermined the work in Congress with its decision.

“The definition of ‘museum’ in NAGPRA reflects Congress’s deliberate choice that the law cover all Native remains in the possessions of any entity that receives federal funds, including historical societies, local governments, cultural and visitor centers, archives and other holding repositories, collections and displays,” he said.

Pennsylvania’s possession of Thorpe’s remains, Campbell said, is a “disruption of a traditional, Native funerary process and returning-the-name ceremony, which is the last step before burial in the territory of the Sac and Fox Nation.” He added, “The use of Jim Thorpe’s remains to attract tourism to the borough perpetuates the concept that what is sac-

cred to the American Indian is appropriate for cultural exploitation by the American public.”

Suzan Shown Harjo, president of the Morning Star Institute and a key player in the creation of NAGPRA and the repatriations laws, agrees with Campbell. “If they receive federal money and hold the remains of our people, then they are subject to NAGPRA,” she told ICTMN.

Thorpe’s remains have become a roadside attraction, Harjo said, and in consequence much spiritual damage had been done to his elders and tribe. “It is just real common decency. They can still have the name and the mausoleum. The family wants the remains.” <http://bit.ly/1xbIs7Z> 



Jim Thorpe’s remains may yet rest in peace.

al Sac and Fox burial rite, subsequent multiple interments, and the commercial use of his remains—the panel improperly speculated about theoretical consequences, none of which, in fact, are possible if NAGPRA is properly interpreted,” Thorpe’s sons and the NCAI stated. “Under NAGPRA the determination that an entity is a ‘museum’ is a threshold matter and repatriation requires additional processes, including notice to lineal descendants, and an opportunity for fact development to determine if repatriation is proper under the circumstances.”

Campbell, who was instrumental in the passage and the oversight of NAGPRA and was central to the enactment

Curbing The Railroads

The iron horse meets environmental protection on Native land **BY HARLAN MCKOSATO**

Bottom Line: *Collisions involving locomotives can wreak havoc on Indian Country. Is a new federal approach to the problem a solution—or mere window dressing?*

Railroad lines run all over Indian Country—from New York to Washington, from the Dakotas through Oklahoma, clear down to the Gulf of Louisiana. They plow through Native lands in Oregon, Idaho, Minnesota, Wisconsin, even Alaska. Just about everywhere, tribal people are familiar with the sound of trains rolling down the tracks as they cut across their reservations, pueblos and villages.

The environmental effects can be devastating. But the nation's major railroads are now implementing a new program, Positive Train Control (PTC), to curb this potential damage.

PTC is designed to prevent train-to-train collisions, derailments caused by excessive speeds and human error, unauthorized train movements in work zones, and the movement of trains through switches that are left in the wrong positions. It is expected that PTC will eventually be deployed over approximately 70,000 miles of track and involve approximately 20,000 locomotives.

The system will use GPS technology to track a train's location and speed by enabling real-time information sharing among trains, rail wayside devices and regional headquarters. Ultimately, the system will be able to stop a train before it passes a signal displaying a stop indication, or before moving to an improper line switch—thereby averting a collision.

PTC is a result of the Railroad Safety Improvement Act of 2008. It is now required that all Class I freight and passenger railroads install the new safety system by the end of next year. In particular, rail-

road lines that carry poison or toxic-by-inhalation hazardous materials are being targeted.

The affected areas are extensive. "Our ancestral territory runs throughout 13 states," said Dr. Andrea Hunter, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer of the Osage Nation of Oklahoma. "We extend back up into the Ohio River Valley and portions of the states that border the Ohio River and then down through Illinois, Arkansas and

railroads are building their own wireless network to accommodate the system, according to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

The poles, the FCC said, are effectively 60-foot miniature cell phone towers. The FCC oversees the spectrum that is needed for the network and the railroads must follow FCC rules in dealing with the states and tribes in reviewing the construction.

Nonetheless, questions have been raised about the protection of tribal sacred sites, burial grounds, historic properties, cultural resources and the environmental footprints that will be left by the massive construction of some 20,000 of these poles. Some tribal members and Tribal Historic Preservation Officers feel the new program is a genuinely enlightened gesture. Others suspect it constitutes window dressing, designed merely to give the impression of more sensitivity to Native cultural

resources and historic properties.

According to the FCC, the railroads involved in the program have already erected about 10,000 wayside poles. However, according to an FCC official, they have been put up without the federal government having followed a statute that requires that tribes have the opportunity to review their construction.

"The FCC entered into Memorandums of Understanding with the seven major freight railroads to create a \$10 million Cultural Resource Fund to address the situation of several thousand wayside pole PTC antenna structures that were constructed without any preservation review," said Geoffrey Blackwell of the Chickasaw Nation, Chief of the FCC's Office of Native Affairs and Policy. <http://bit.ly/1w6AsCH>



The new safety system may raise as many problems as it solves.

across out into the plains. There are 13 states that we work with as far as cultural resource management."

PTC was discussed in October at the National Congress of American Indians convention in Atlanta. Railroad officials from the Norfolk Southern line and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway were in attendance. At a meeting of the NCAI Subcommittee on Human, Religious and Cultural Concerns, a Norfolk Southern representative gave a short presentation and pledged to involve tribes at every level of PTC and poll them about relevant installation processes.

Ironically, PTC itself requires some technological incursions on traditional tribal lands. Therein lies a conflict. To install the GPS system, new "wayside poles" must be erected along the railways. The

Major Radiation Leaks Plague New Mexico

\$54 million fine for federal government

Bottom Line: *The state of New Mexico has socked the federal government with a record penalty for radiation contamination at two major facilities.*

Citing numerous violations of state hazardous waste permits, the New Mexico Environment Department has levied \$54 million in fines against the Los Alamos National Laboratory and the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). The fines were spurred by a February explosion and radiation leak that exposed more than a dozen workers to contamination and shut down the country's only underground nuclear storage facility indefinitely.

It is the biggest civil penalty ever levied by state authorities against the federal government, according to the Albuquerque Journal.

"New Mexico is proud of our national labs and cutting-edge scientific facilities, and we have important rules in place to protect those facilities, the people who work there, and all New Mexicans," said Governor Susana Martinez in a December 6 statement announcing the fines. "The health and safety of New Mexicans will always be our priority, and we have to hold federal agencies accountable for safe operations in the state of New Mexico. The federal Department of Energy is a strong partner with us, and we will continue to work with them closely to ensure their success in our state."

The fines resulted from more than

nine months of investigation into the February 2014 pair of incidents, the New Mexico Environment Department said. The state's findings generated a total of 13 violations at WIPP, with penalties of \$17.7 million and 24 violations at Los Alamos, with penalties of \$36.6 million.

In levying the fines, the state con-

violations of safety procedures, as well as attempts to hide those lapses.


"These civil penalties follow a thorough investigation and are important to ensuring the continued safety and success of these important facilities," said New Mexico's Secretary of the Environment, Ryan Flynn. "We look forward to

continuing to work with the federal government to ensure the safety and success of both LANL and WIPP."

The environment department also said the facilities could not use federal money that is earmarked for the environmental cleanup and operations at Los Alamos and WIPP for paying the penalties. New Mexico also demanded that the federal government submit regular compliance updates over the next two months.

"DOE [the Department of Energy] has an opportunity to demonstrate future compliance, which could trigger penalty reductions if DOE can assure New Mexicans of safe future operations," the environment department said.

The fines could also be increased, since the current round deals only with what is currently known, Flynn said.

"We were intentionally very conservative," he told the Albuquerque Journal. "The actions you see today are related to very clear-cut violations of the permit that have already been self-disclosed by LANL and WIPP or are self-evident. There is not a lot of room for interpretation." <http://bit.ly/1wjv12Q> 



A damaged nuclear waste container at the Los Alamos National Laboratory

firmed "the existence of major procedural problems that contributed to these events, and also found a less than adequate response," the agency said.

The trouble started on February 5, when an underground truck fire forced evacuations at WIPP. On February 14 a waste drum ruptured and radiation leaked out, exposing more than 20 workers to the contamination, according to a timeline in the Santa Fe New Mexican.

WIPP was shut down indefinitely, with a potential cleanup cost of more than \$500 million, according to the Department of Energy, which oversees the two facilities. Reports surfacing over the course of this year indicate numerous

For Native Vets, Curing Through Tradition

Easing pain with time-honored methods **BY RICHARD WALKER**



Urquhart: 'Being in the dark helped me to look deep in myself and finally let go of troubles from my past.'

Bottom Line: *Post-traumatic stress disorder is an emerging concern among Native American veterans. A new survey suggests that ritual could help their troubles.*

Such time-honored institutions as sweat lodge ceremonies, purification rituals, equine therapy and spiritual enlightenment involving totems like sacred songs may be key to combating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among Native American veterans, a new survey has found.

The leader of the survey—Washington State University (WSU) Ph.D. candidate Greg Urquhart, Cherokee and a veteran of the Iraq conflict himself—hopes the online research he and his research partners are gathering will bolster steps taken by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the Indian Health Service (IHS) and tribes to make traditional Native American therapies more available.

The team also hopes that their findings will apply particularly in rural Native American communities that are far removed from VA health care offices.

The survey is part of a research study titled “Native American Veterans’ Perceptions, Knowledge, and Attitudes toward Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Available Treatment.” The survey went live in November 2013 and will remain online until early next year. As of December 8, the survey had garnered 590 responses from Native American, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian veterans.

The survey uses 30 questions to examine the attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs of Native American veterans concerning PTSD and its various treatment options.

GREG URQUHART

The Old Versus The New

The survey comes as the VA's 820 outpatient clinics, 300 veterans' centers and 150 hospitals are struggling to meet the needs of 8.92 million veterans enrolled in the VA health care system. That number is expected to grow as enlistments end for military personnel who saw action in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The VA has begun putting more stock in Native American traditional therapies, offering sweat lodge ceremonies at several hospitals and sending representatives to Native veterans' camps to learn more about talking circles and other methods of healing. At a meeting of veteran service officers at the Suquamish Tribe in September, a VA representative who attended Camp Chaparral at the Yakama Nation said that she learned of the importance of talking circles and of the "cleansing and healthy" effects of sweat lodges.

The VA's "Guidelines Concerning Native American/Alaska Native Traditional Practitioners" states that each VA medical center should have an area that may be designated exclusively for Native American traditional healing therapies. HR 3230 (the federal Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014) empowers tribal veterans offices to process Native veterans for VA health care and to speed the process by which veterans get care.

The VA is also authorizing and reimbursing care provided to Native veterans in tribal health clinics.

According to a VA report, there are more than 154,000 Native American/Alaska Native veterans, a higher rate per capita than any other ethnic group. Of that number, 7.1 percent are unemployed, compared to 4.9 percent of non-Native veterans.

Moreover, 15.3 percent do not have health insurance, compared to 6.3 percent of non-Native veterans; 36.4 percent suffer from one or more disability, compared to 26.2 percent of non-Native veterans; and 18.9 percent have a service-connected disability rating, compared to 15.6 percent of non-Native veterans.

An Alternative Approach

Traditional therapies could help close those gaps.

Urquhart knows this firsthand. Hailing from Tacoma, Washington, he served in the Army from 2001-07 as an M1 Armor crewman and cavalry scout in Iraq in 2004-05. He spent 12 months and one day in the war zone. "I saw a limited amount of combat," he said. "Not a lot, but enough."

Urquhart developed mild symptoms of PTSD. But he has found sweats to be

*Considerably more
Native veterans
are finding
recovery through
their own methods
than through
modern means.*

healing. "For me, being in the dark and focusing on the grandfathers helped me to look deep in myself and [to] finally let go of troubles from my past," he said.

He has much supporting evidence. For instance Gil Calac, Paiute, a veteran of the Vietnam conflict, co-facilitated a therapy session at Yakama's Camp Chaparral in August. A female veteran opened up during the talking circle. "We told her, don't wait 45 years to get it out," Calac said. "She is still having a lot of issues but we told her [healing] will come."

At the camp, Calac and another veteran talked about their songs, their traditional foods and the land. "People I talked to stated that really changed them," Calac said. "You could see it, hear it."

Urquhart explained why many Native veterans are reluctant to seek treatment: "The traditional Native view of health and spirituality is intertwined," he said. "Spirit, mind, and body are all one—you

can't parcel one out from the other—so spirituality is a huge component of healing and one not often included in western medicine, although there have been a few studies on the positive effects of prayer."

Assessing the Findings

Among the noteworthy results of the survey to date are the following:

- Sixty percent of survey respondents who had attempted conventional PTSD therapy reported "no improvement" or were "very unsatisfied."
- Forty-nine percent of respondents reported that conventional counseling had no impact on their PTSD or made the symptoms worse. On the other hand, 72 percent of Native respondents saw spiritual or religious guidance as successful or highly successful.
- PTSD is not limited to battlefield experiences. PTSD can be caused by sexual assault and hazing.
- Not all of the respondents reporting sexual assault were enlisted personnel; some respondents had been officers.

The survey has garnered both hard data and extensive personal feedback. "Traditional/spiritual healing can be very effective together with in-depth education and background in modern treatment methods," wrote an Iroquois Navy veteran.

"Healing ceremonies are absolutely essential, as is story telling in front of supportive audiences," a Nahua Army veteran wrote. "We need rituals to welcome back the warriors."

Urquhart and his fellow researchers at the WSU College of Education—Associate Dean of Academic Affairs Phyllis Erdman and graduate students Matthew Hale (Cherokee and an Air Force veteran) and Sarah Sevedge—hope the study gives Native veterans a voice in shaping therapies available in future programs.

"It is my belief," Urquhart said, "that if we as Native people speak as a group through this survey, places that provide veteran services for PTSD like the VA and IHS will listen and will add our suggestions and preferences for treatment [and] healing to programs intended to help Native veterans." <http://bit.ly/1AwLHX> ☞

Celebrating Native Athletes

Author Don Marks discusses his new book

Bottom Line: *The award-winning Winnipeg-based journalist Don Marks won widespread acclaim for his bestselling Native-themed hockey book They Call Me Chief: Warriors on Ice (J. Gordon Shillingford, 2008). Now he sits down with ICTMN to talk about his follow-up volume for Shillingford, Playing the White Man's Games.*

How did *Playing the White Man's Games* come about?

This book follows up on the success of *They Call Me Chief*, which told the stories of Native athletes who overcame significant obstacles to achieve success in the National Hockey League. That book resulted from work on a documentary film through which I had accumulated over 100 hours of videotaped interviews that were condensed into an hour-long production for [Canadian] network television. There was so much fascinating material that had to be left out of the documentary, so I decided to compile the information into *They Call Me Chief*.

Playing the White Man's Games expands the experience by telling the life stories of Native athletes who excelled in other contemporary sports such as track and field, major college and professional football, major league baseball, pro golf and so on. Again, the players support their blessings of natural athleticism with a strong sense of Native American culture, history, spirituality and identity to overcome significant obstacles and achieve success.

How did you choose the athletes featured in your book? Billy Mills, Jim Thorpe and Notah Begay III are well known, but Ed "Wahoo" McDaniel may be a name many are not familiar with.

Frankly, I chose the athletes who were most widely known so that the book would have as broad an appeal as pos-

sible. Fortunately, the notoriety of the athletes stemmed from the enormous success they achieved, so the book contains the most famous and successful indigenous athletes from First Nations throughout Turtle Island.

As for "Wahoo" McDaniel not being as well known as say, Jim Thorpe or Notah Begay III, I believe this depends on one's

'I chose the athletes most widely known to have broad appeal.'

personal experience. Wahoo is certainly well known to any wrestling fan and achieved quite a great deal of fame for his play in the National Football League. No matter what, his enormous success in both sports, his antics on and off the field or outside the ring, the strong sense of identity and pride in his native heritage that he carried with him at all times and passed on to his son as a single parent, is a compelling and meaningful, fascinating and entertaining, read.

Then again, I certainly recall hastily rewriting the chapter on NHL Head Coach Ted Nolan, which had been heavily focused on Ted being "blacklisted" by the NHL. But then, after more than a decade in limbo, Ted was hired by the New York Islanders on the night before *They Call Me Chief* was going to print.

And stories like the proper burial site for Jim Thorpe remain in limbo, as does the debate over the use of First Nations people as mascots by sports teams, especially the Washington Redskins fiasco.

You've written about some of the

greatest Native athletes of all time. If you could create a second book like this 50 years from now, who would be featured in it?

If I were to write a second book 50 years from now, there is no doubt that I would like to profile the enormous success of Carey Peters, goaltender for the venerable Montreal Canadiens franchise (and the number one goalie for the hockey-crazed country of Canada in international competition, including the Olympics), and the colorful career of Jordin Tootoo, the first Inuit ("Eskimo") to play in the NHL who was quite a playboy in Nashville with country and western starlets but who also had to deal with the pressures of his brother's suicide and substance abuse. Current major league baseball stars such as Joba Chamberlain and Jacoby Ellsbury demand more detail, and I would love to provide more detail about Alwyn Morris holding up an eagle feather at the Olympics and relate this gesture to the moving salutes by black athletes John Carlos and Tommie Smith.

The back cover of your book says that some of these athletes are forgotten Americans. Do you feel like this book will help cure that?

I can only go by the experience of my previous book. I was able to maintain contact with many of the athletes featured therein and they told me that the book revived interest in their careers and sparked enormous recognition. The bonus was the fact many of them were invited to provide speeches and inspirational presentations throughout the country (both to CEOs as a "formula for success" and for youth as role models). Hockey schools which were offered by some of the players acquired much more participation and one player had to develop a traveling hockey school to keep up with demand. <http://bit.ly/1kNK28M> 📱

Mascots, Bullying and Discipline

What Indian Country told the Education Department BY TANYA H. LEE

Bottom Line: *The Department of Education recently conducted its first cross-country listening tour. The responses of Native Americans were eye opening.*

Much of what William Mendoza found during the Department of Education's first-ever cross-country listening tour was encouraging. He learned of schools that were trying to be more sensitive to the needs of American Indian and Alaska Native families.

What he found was also heartbreaking—especially instances of students who have been the victims of horrific incidents of racial discrimination.

Mendoza, Oglala-Sicangu Lakota, is executive director of the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Education. His tour was undertaken in conjunction with the department's Office of Civil Rights.

The tour comprised listening sessions in Franklin and La Crosse, Wisconsin; Anchorage, Alaska; Troy, New York; Los Angeles, California; Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma; East Lansing, Michigan; and Seattle, Washington. The project was designed to hear from people nationwide in rural, reservation, and urban schools, and from students in schools outside Indian country where there may be only a handful of AI/AN children. "Those are the most invisible and most vulnerable," said Mendoza.

"[We are developing] a body of knowledge, not just hearing from tribal leaders or educators on this issue," he said. "We're doing that, we have done that, but this is the first step in the Education Department hearing directly from the students. That has been largely absent from the work of the department."

When Mendoza talked to tribal leaders about challenges and issues, he heard about bullying, student discipline and

curriculum. But the most pressing matter, leaders said, is indigenous imagery and symbolism in schools.

"Research points to this having an adverse effect on students and that states and schools need to address this issue and work with tribal leaders to make sure we have safe and welcoming environments for our students," said Mendoza.

The department found 2,432 public

Some news was encouraging, but some of it was heartbreaking.

schools with indigenous-based mascots or nicknames. Rating the schools on a scale from 1 to 5 in terms of how harmful the depiction of the AI/AN community, 1,612—or 66 percent—raised concerns.

"What we've heard from families and students is that they feel isolated and unable to address this in their communities, especially the further they get from tribal centers, whether they're on reservations or urban Native centers," Mendoza said. "This is where they feel most unsupported."


One way the White House initiative can help, Mendoza said, is to make people aware that they have a resource in the Office of Civil Rights: "We want more folks utilizing the civil rights process. We need to know more about the harm these mascots, imagery and symbolism are doing

and figure out how we can do better to help inform schools and inform our grant structures to work in more proactive ways to address those concerns."

Bullying is another area where more work needs to be done, Mendoza said: "There's an account that came to us from LaCrosse, Wisconsin, about a young lady who when she was having a conversation with a young man. He was saying, 'I'm going to give you guys smallpox blankets,' and he was taunting her with this and it kept on and kept on. She felt like she had to respond. And her reaction was, 'Yeah, you're white. Your men raped our women.'"

"They began to go back and forth on this in the classroom. A male teacher came into the conversation, and recounting this, the young lady said that she thought he was going to stop the conversation. Instead of stopping it, he said, 'Well, in actuality your women raped our men,' and he began to argue this point. The end result was that the whole class was involved in this, laughter was involved, she was uncomfortable and it ended with the teacher putting a stop to it by saying, 'OK, OK, you win the debate. Your reward is blankets.' She only mentioned this incident in passing to her mom. It's just heartbreaking."

Two other sensitive areas, Mendoza found, were curriculum and discipline. Parents, he found, want a say in curriculum decisions to ensure that the history of Indigenous Peoples is taught thoroughly and correctly. And they want to work with schools to develop discipline procedures that are culturally appropriate.

"Parents feel alone in being able to make changes in the schools and so they're looking for help from tribal leaders. They're looking for collaboration at the leadership level. They want to expand pathways to make sure our students have the same opportunities that are offered in neighboring communities." <http://bit.ly/1IKDmIs> 

Learning To Talk Lakota

On Facebook, a site sparks an explosion of interest **BY RICK KEARNS**

Bottom Line: *An online Lakota language group is growing by leaps and bounds.*

The Lakota Language for Beginners Facebook (LLBF) page has gone from 60 to more than 11,000 members in a year and a half. And it continues to grow.

The founder of the group, Charles B. Smith, known also by his Lakota name Unpa Nunpa (Smokes Twice), said that the difficulty faced by some Lakota programs is the loss of Lakota speakers. That and the role of language in culture, he said, were factors that pushed him toward creating the group.

The process started for Smith because of his increased involvement with Lakota ceremonies and the realization that he needed to learn the language.

"I have been attending Lakota ceremonies for over 30 years and had gained an extensive vocabulary," Smith said. "However, I did not get serious about learning the language until two years ago." There were two other Lakota language groups on Facebook at that time. But they were, and mostly continue to be, for those who already know the language. "I wanted to create a learning site that would be more open and inviting."

Smith joined with his Uncle Les Ducheneaux, an award-winning Lakota language instructor at Tiospaye Topa School in LaPlante, South Dakota. Ducheneaux is now retired and goes by the name of Wakinyan Cangleska Tio-

spaye in the group. "I told him about my idea to create a new Lakota language group," said Smith, "where beginners could go to get started in as nurturing and supportive an environment as possible. Lakota is extremely difficult for many adult learners."

Ducheneaux agreed to join his nephew

verb-based curriculum and getting the students to speak the language," he said. "A lot of fluent speakers haven't learned the art of critiquing; we critique our participants but we do it privately. The group is really cooking."

Group member Gena Wasley agreed. "The forum is really wonderful," she

said. "They make you feel comfortable without feeling stupid for struggling." She also praised the support that the forum receives from its various teachers and managers. "There's always someone there to help out." The Facebook group also includes links to a YouTube channel and is in the process of developing more videos.

"I am basically a Lakota nationalist," Smith said. "I believe firmly that we are a separate, sovereign

and distinct people currently colonized by the United States. I dream and long for a cultural rebirth among our people that will see us once again embrace traditional values and ways of living; a return to living more simply, with respect towards the earth and fellow human beings, free from alcohol and drug abuse and the rampant materialism and greed of these times.

"The language needs to be the centerpiece of our cultural rebirth. This is also the reason we offer cultural as well as language lessons in the group. We proudly offer history lessons from our point of view. All of this is in the hope to begin the building of a new, modern national identity for the Lakota Nation." <http://bit.ly/12Wu0C2> 📌



This image adorns the Lakota Language for Beginners page on Facebook.

ew in developing the group and in March of 2013 they began with 60 family members and friends. The veteran educator said the way to make Lakota language instruction more successful for adults, as it has been for children, is to offer verb-based lessons.

"One of the problems in the reservation schools ... was that the teachers would start with colors, numbers and give the students a list of nouns," Ducheneaux said, "and you can't speak with only nouns. I developed a verb-based strategy that gave out vocabulary with verbs to use in sentences, and to keep a log of verbs... that's how you can begin to really speak the language and enjoy it."

"Our success is largely due to our



Director of Finance
Colville Tribal Federal Corporation
Coulee Dam, WA
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Umonhon Nation School

Umonhon Nation Public School is nestled inside the small isolated community of Macy, NE, home of the Umonhon tribe since the 1800's. Umonhon Nation Public School, is located on tribal lands about 70 miles northwest of Omaha and 27 miles southeast of Sioux City, IA. 510 students in grades Pre K-12 attend the school. The school has a high mobility rate. Currently 100% of the students are Native American. The majority of staff lives outside the community and make the daily commute from several outer lying communities.

Applicants must qualify for a Nebraska Administrative and Supervisory Certificate with an endorsement in Superintendency. Minimum of three years school administrative experience required. **The start date for the position is July 1, 2015. Open from 12/1/2014 to 1/5/2015.**

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

1. Letter of application, including reasons for interest in the position. 2. A signed copy of the application form. 3. A signed copy of the background check form. (Important: Submittal of this form is not required until such times as it is determined that the applicant is qualified for the position of Superintendent of Schools) 4. Resume 5.

Letters of recommendation 6. Transcripts

Send Resumes to:

Stacie Hardy, Ed.S.
Interim Superintendent
Umonhon Nation Public School
Macy, NE
office: 402-837-5622

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applications received by the deadline
are processed.



Native Ears At Risk

In Indian Country, hearing is frequently endangered **BY TANYA H. LEE**

Bottom Line: *American Indians and Alaska Natives are at significantly greater risk for ear infections than the rest of the U.S. population. But research and treatment are progressing.*

Sharon Navarrette (Cherokee/Creek/European) remembers having plenty of ear infections when she was a little girl. There were so many—and they were so severe—that her mother had to keep cotton balls in her ears to absorb the drainage. She had trouble hearing and difficulty with speech—problems that persist.

The infections stopped when Navarrette was in fourth grade. But in her late 20s, her face started to go numb. She would have dizzy spells. And the infections returned. An ear, nose and throat specialist discovered she had a cholesteatoma, a cyst made up of dead skin cells, which was growing around her eardrum. The cyst had to be removed surgically, lest she lose her hearing in that ear.

While cholesteatomas are rare, ear infections and deafness among American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) are not.

A study published by the journal *Pediatrics* in 2002 found that the incidence of outpatient visits related to ear infections (*otitis media*) for AI/AN children under 1 year of age was almost three times greater than for other U.S. infants. For AI/AN children from 1 to 4 years old, the rate was 1.5 times greater than for other children. These results are consistent with those found in earlier studies.

Chronic ear infections can cause hearing loss, speech delay and, later,

reading problems and lower educational achievement. The Centers for Disease Control reported in 2005 that “American Indian or Alaska Native adults (6.4%) were nearly twice as likely as white adults (3.5%) and about four times as likely as Asian adults (1.8%)

that connect the middle ear to the back of the nose and throat, can play a part in ear infections. When the tubes—whose purpose is to equalize air pressure within and outside the middle ear—become blocked because of an upper respiratory infection or other cause, the small hairs within the ear cannot remove fluid and infection.

“Eustachian tube dysfunction usually follows the onset of an upper respiratory tract infection [a cold] or secondary to allergic rhinitis [runny nose],” said Thundercloud. “There is evidence that the Eustachian tube of American Indians and Alaskan Natives is functionally different and may impair protective function, which leads to obstruction.”

Fortunately, parents have several options to prevent ear infections in children, Thundercloud said: “Since formula-fed babies are more prone to ear infections, breastfeeding should be promoted in the first six to twelve months of life to possibly prevent ear infections. The Indian Health Service has embraced the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, which promotes maternity care practices, education, and counseling on breastfeeding.

Other preventive measures “include reducing the infant’s exposure to environmental pollutants, such as tobacco smoke, and to other children with upper respiratory infections,” said Thundercloud. “Parents should make sure their children receive the recommended immunizations before they are exposed to diseases.” <http://bit.ly/136RLY8> 📱



Examinations and other early preventive actions can be crucial.

and black adults (1.6%) to have a lot of trouble hearing or to be deaf.”

Researchers including Walter P. Kelley and Tony L. McGregor have documented Native American sign languages developed not for inter-tribal communication but rather for communication among deaf or hard-of-hearing members of the same tribe (“Keresan Pueblo Indian Sign Language”).

Dr. Alec Thundercloud (Ho-Chunk Nation), a pediatrician and director of the Indian Health Service’s Office of Clinical and Preventive Services, said that risk factors for ear infections in children include “upper respiratory infections, day care or sibling day care attendance, short breastfeeding duration, prone sleeping while being formula fed, and exposure to tobacco smoke.”

The Eustachian tubes, small canals



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				2 people	\$19,989 - \$26,880
2 bedroom	\$648	12	→	2 person	\$24,000 - \$26,880
				3 people	\$24,000 - \$30,240
				4 people	\$24,000 - \$33,560
3 bedroom	\$743	4	→	3 people	\$27,600 - \$30,240
				4 people	\$27,600 - \$33,560
				5 people	\$27,600 - \$36,280
				6 people	\$27,600 - \$38,960
4 bedroom	\$835	1	→	4 people	\$30,858 - \$33,560
				5 people	\$30,858 - \$36,280
				6 people	\$30,858 - \$38,960
				7 people	\$30,858 - \$41,460
				8 people	\$30,858 - \$44,320
Studio	\$640	5	→	1 person	\$23,623 - \$29,400
1 bedroom	\$689	13	→	1 person	\$25,338 - \$29,400
				2 people	\$25,338 - \$33,600
2 bedroom	\$835	12	→	2 person	\$30,412 - \$33,600
				3 people	\$30,412 - \$37,800
				4 people	\$30,412 - \$41,950
3 bedroom	\$959	4	→	3 people	\$36,006 - \$37,800
				4 people	\$36,006 - \$41,950
				5 people	\$36,006 - \$45,350
				6 people	\$36,006 - \$48,700
4 bedroom	\$1,076	1	→	4 people	\$39,120 - \$41,950
				5 people	\$39,120 - \$45,350
				6 people	\$39,120 - \$48,700
				7 people	\$39,120 - \$52,050
				8 people	\$39,120 - \$55,400
1 bedroom	\$844	22	→	1 person	\$30,652 - \$35,280
				2 people	\$30,652 - \$40,320
2 bedroom	\$1,022	36	→	2 people	\$36,823 - \$40,320
				3 people	\$36,823 - \$45,360
				4 people	\$36,823 - \$50,340
3 bedroom	\$1,175	14	→	3 people	\$42,412 - \$45,360
				4 people	\$42,412 - \$50,340
				5 people	\$42,412 - \$54,420
				6 people	\$42,412 - \$58,440
4 bedroom	\$1,317	2	→	4 people	\$47,383 - \$50,340
				5 people	\$47,383 - \$54,420
				6 people	\$47,383 - \$58,440
				7 people	\$47,383 - \$62,460
				8 people	\$47,383 - \$66,480

* Rent includes gas for heat and cooking. Tenant responsible for Electricity.

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When is the Deadline?

Applications must be postmarked or submitted online no later than **February 19, 2015**. Late applications will not be considered.

What Happens After You Submit an Application?

After the deadline, applications are selected for review through a lottery process. If yours is selected and you appear to qualify, you will be invited to an interview to continue the process of determining your eligibility. Interviews are usually scheduled from 2 to 10 months after the application deadline. You will be asked to bring documents that verify your household size, identity of members of your household, and your household income.



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Tribes Scorn Land Giveaway

Acreage is sacrosanct, say critics **BY GALE COUREY TOENSING**

Bottom Line: A coalition of tribal nations is protesting a federal defense act that would yield sacred Apache land to a mining corporation.

More than 70 tribal nations have urged the Senate to defeat or remove a section of the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that would transfer a part of the publicly owned Tonto National Forest that is sacred to the San Carlos Apache Tribe to a giant international corporation for a massive, potentially environmentally devastating copper mine.

The Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI), a nonprofit Oregon-based organization with 57 member tribes, and the 16-member Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Association, have each asked senators not to enact Section 3003, the Southeast Arizona Land Exchange, of the annual must pass defense bill. The tribes' actions are in solidarity with San Carlos Apache Chairman Terry Rambler, who has launched a grassroots campaign to defeat the land swap measure.

"If such a land transfer provision seems out of place in a defense bill, that's because it is," said Fawn Sharp, President of the Quinault Indian Nation and ATNI and Area Vice President of the National Congress of American Indians. "If the idea of transferring the ownership of federal forest lands to foreign mining companies seems absurd, it's because that's true, too."

At the heart of the matter is the Southeast Arizona Land Exchange and Conservation Act, a House bill sponsored by Rep. Paul Gosar (R-Arizona). It was tacked onto the annual must-pass NDAA along with several other land-related bills by Sen. John McCain (R-Arizona), according to the HuffingtonPost. The House approved the land swap bill December 4 and sent it to the Senate for a vote.

If approved by the Senate and signed by President Obama, the land swap provision will allow Resolution Copper Co.—a subsidiary of the international mining

conglomerate Rio Tinto—to acquire 2,400 acres of the federally protected public land in the Tonto National Forest in southeast Arizona, in exchange for 5,000 acres in parcels scattered around the state.

Resolution Copper plans a massive deep underground copper mine on the San Carlos Apache's sacred landscape and has already begun drilling the shaft in anticipation of the land swap bill's approval.

Letters sent to Senate Majority Leader

If such a land transfer provision seems out of place in a defense bill, that's because it is, said an opponent.

Harry Reid (D-Nevada), Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Kentucky) and the chairs and vice chairs of the Senate Armed Forces and Indian Affairs committees on December 9 requested that the Southeast Arizona Land Exchange and Conservation Act be stricken from the NDAA, said Affiliated Tribes contact Steve Robinson.

Sharp noted that the land swap is strongly opposed by tribes and tribal organizations. "This action, of transferring land out of federal ownership removes it from the Federal Trust Responsibility, which, along with treaty rights, is a primary way the tribes have left to protect our traditional lands from being destroyed," she said.

Referring to Indian Country's decade-long effort to keep the Apaches' sacred landscape out of the hands of the mining


company, Sharp said, "We have had to fight this effort before, and we will keep on fighting it."

The ATNI passed a resolution opposing the land transfer bill in 2011. There were several efforts to move it last year, but a large bipartisan group of members of the House twice pulled the land swap legislation consideration. "The Land Exchange cannot pass Congress on its own merits," Sharp said. "Attaching this provision as a rider to NDAA represents the antithesis of democracy."

Sharp said that the proposed giveaway of tribal sacred areas to foreign corporations "constitutes a violation of trust and a slap in the face of our veterans, past and present. These are sacred lands. All land is sacred to us, but this exchange includes a place of worship known as Oak Flat, which has particularly significant religious, cultural, historical, and archeological value to tribes in the region. The land is eligible for protection under the National Historic Preservation Act."

But once the land is privatized it is no longer protected by such federal laws as the National Historic Preservation Act, the Archaeological Resources Protection Act, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, the National Environmental Policy Act and Executive Order 13007 (Protection of Indian Sacred Sites).

The land swap act also sets a bad precedent, Sharp said, because it does not allow for any meaningful consultation with tribes and mandates the land transfer within one year of its passage without any studies or environmental impact assessments.

"As if that's not enough, Resolution Copper would develop a copper mine that will forever destroy the tribes' religious practices by irrevocably harming the region's water supply and quality," Sharp said. "At what point do human rights and justice stop taking a backseat to profiteering in this country?" <http://bit.ly/1yHs3lT> 



General Counsel

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is accepting applications for the Chief of Police. Applicants must be MN POST licensed or eligible to be licensed.

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Photos of the Year

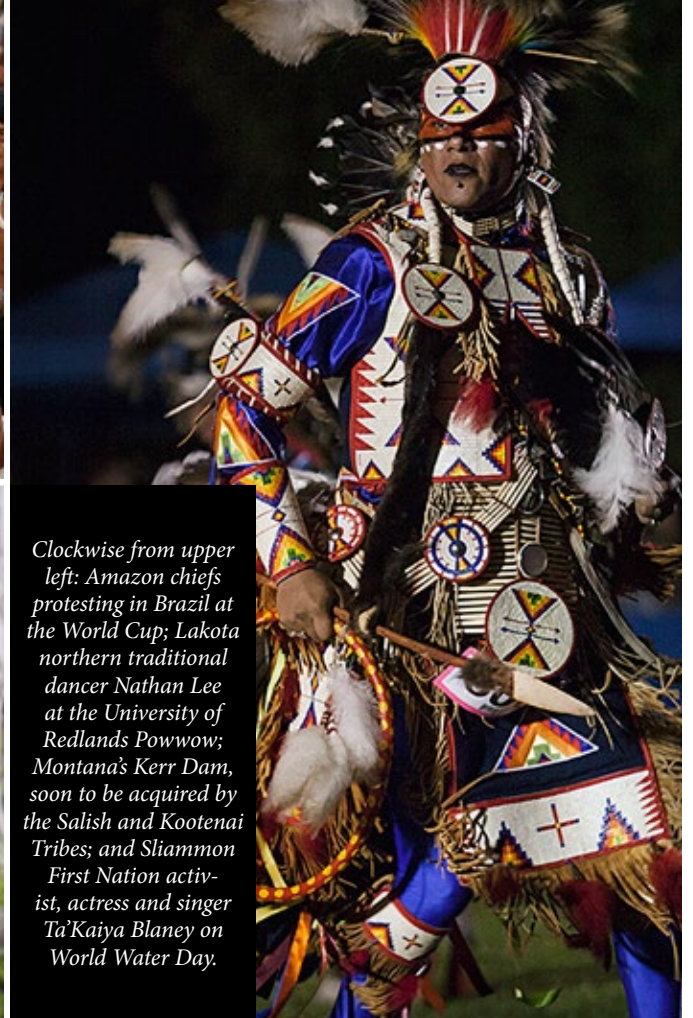
If a picture is worth a thousand words, then these vivid, memorable images of the last twelve months will speak volumes in 2015 and beyond.



Clockwise from top: T.J. Oshie, Ojibwe, scoring at the Winter Olympics; a collection of sacred eagle feathers; master Haida carver Saaduuts Peele; "Blessing from the Medicine Man" by Howard Terpning; and the dry, cracked bed of Lake Mendocino in California.



AP IMAGES (2); COURTESY FLICKR/USEWS MOUNTAIN PRAIRIE; RICHARD WALKER; HOWARD TERPNING ©, 2011© HOWARD TERPNING /COURTESY OF THE GREENWICH WORKSHOP, INC



Clockwise from upper left: Amazon chiefs protesting in Brazil at the World Cup; Lakota northern traditional dancer Nathan Lee at the University of Redlands Powwow; Montana's Kerr Dam, soon to be acquired by the Salish and Kootenai Tribes; and Sliammon First Nation activist, actress and singer Ta'Kaiya Blaney on World Water Day.





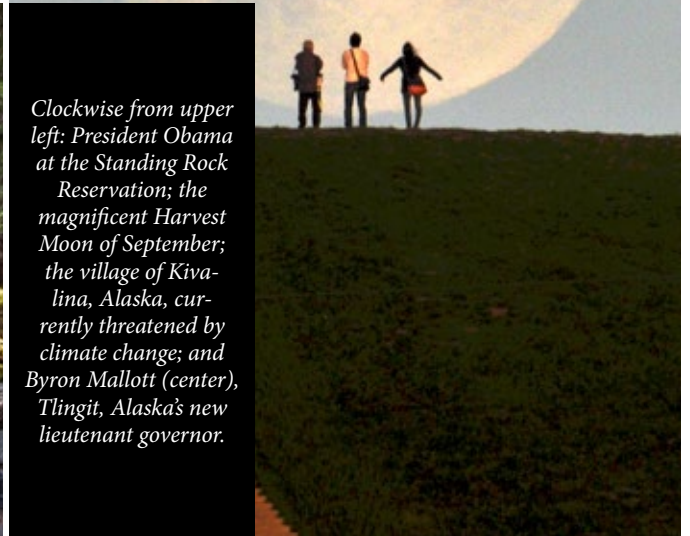
Activist Suzan Shown Harjo, Cheyenne and Hodulgee Muscogge, received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor, from President Obama on November 24.

AP IMAGES

Clockwise from top: An oil train explosion near Fargo, North Dakota; Miss North Carolina Johna Edmonds, Lumbee, who drew criticism for posing as Pocahontas; Mark Ruffalo, Leo DiCaprio and Edward Norton at the People's Climate March; and the Winnemem Wintu protesting rising water levels at California's Shasta Dam.







Clockwise from upper left: President Obama at the Standing Rock Reservation; the magnificent Harvest Moon of September; the village of Kivalina, Alaska, currently threatened by climate change; and Byron Mallott (center), Tlingit, Alaska's new lieutenant governor.



The Year Of Living Politically

Throughout the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the federal government and the fifty states, Indian Country maintained a powerful presence

One of the most important political storylines in Indian Country in 2014 was the push for stronger government-to-government relations, as well as improved living conditions throughout Turtle Island. Among this year's biggest headlines were President Barack Obama's visit to a reservation, a Native woman who made judicial history by ascending to the federal bench, a messy Navajo presidential election, and the naming of Keith Harper as the White House's human rights ambassador. Here are those stories—and others:

Welcome To Standing Rock

During the 2008 presidential election, then-Senator Barack Obama made a campaign stop to visit with the Crow Nation in Montana. His second visit to Indian Country may have been delayed, but two years into his second term, Obama—now President of the United States—returned to connect anew with Native people. Prior to his trip to Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in North Dakota, he shared his

thoughts on the visit in a column for Indian Country Today Media Network.

"We're writing a new chapter in our history—one in which agreements are upheld, tribal sovereignty is respected, and every American Indian and Alaskan Native who works hard has the chance to get ahead," he wrote.

not end with that visit, however. More initiatives were rolled out on December 3 at the 2014 White House Tribal Nations Conference.

The World Conference Controversy

The World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) began spurring debate months before it was convened in New York in September.

Controversy swirled during the 13th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in May, when indigenous organizations voiced concern that state actions would sideline the issues of Indigenous Peoples at the WCIP. These concerns stemmed from news last winter that the President of the

General Assembly had decided that Indigenous Peoples would not have full and equal participation at WCIP on par with states.

When the WCIP was over, the biggest news that emerged was its Outcome Document. The Document, prepared in advance of the WCIP and approved in New York, had input from Indigenous



Controversy at the 13th Session of the U.N. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in May (above) set the tone for the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples four months later.

While in North Dakota, the president met with tribal youth, who shared their stories of struggle with poverty, addiction, suicide, violence and more. President Obama acknowledged there was a "crisis" in Indian education and introduced his plan to improve tribal education. The President's focus on Native youth and Indian education did

Peoples during the preparation stages. However, it was finalized without any indigenous consultation.

The Document reaffirms the commitment of states to the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and promises consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples. This affirmation was ironic because the final document was put together without such consultation. This point was made forcefully by many in Indian Country.

Many felt the Document did more harm than good. One critic was Glenn Morris, a professor of political science at the University of Colorado at Denver. The “so-called” Document, he said, now completely excludes four essential principles for indigenous rights. They are: 1) self-determination; 2) the international personality of indigenous nations and international character of treaties between indigenous nations and invader states; 3) the right of Indigenous Peoples to control their territories, natural resources and traditional knowledge; and 4) the dismantling of the Doctrine of Christian Discovery.

“How can states make the pretense of honestly implementing the spirit of the UNDRIP while ignoring these four essential areas?” Morris asked.



Keith Harper, Cherokee, is the new U.S. Human Rights Ambassador to the United Nations.

Harper Gets an International Voice

Keith Harper, Cherokee, became the first citizen of a federally recognized tribe to become a U.S. ambassador; the Senate confirmed his appointment on as U.S. Representative to the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva on June 3. Harper had been widely known in Indian Country for being part of the team of lawyers who represented the lead plaintiff in the *Cobell* trust litigation and settlement.

“The President’s nomination and Senate confirmation of Keith Harper as Ambassador means that we will have someone representing the United States who can fight for our tribal treaty rights and our human rights at the international level,” said former Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nation tribal chairman Tex Hall. In a letter of support prior to Harper’s confirmation, the National Congress of American Indians praised him as a role model and an ideal candidate for the job.

An Historic Seat on the Federal Bench

Diane Humetewa’s name will now be engraved in the annals of American Indian and U.S. history alike. On May 14 the Senate unanimously voted to confirm the Hopi jurist as a judge for the U.S. District Court for Arizona. She thus became the first Native American woman federal judge in U.S. history and only the third Native American to ever hold such a position.

Following the confirmation, the NCAI said it “greatly appreciates the efforts of the President and Senate in achieving this historic confirmation.” Praise poured in for Humetewa from all corners of Turtle Island. Sen. Jon Tester (D-Montana) called her “an inspiration to Native people, especially Native women across Indian country.” Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D-North Dakota) said she has “no doubt that [Humetewa] will hold the court to the highest standards, as she has done throughout her career.”

Fluency Matters

Sixteen candidates threw their hats into the ring in hope of becoming the



Diane Humetawa, Hopi, is the first Native woman to sit on the federal bench.

next Navajo Nation president earlier this year. From the August primaries there emerged two candidates: former Navajo President Joe Shirley Jr. and Chris Deschene. But controversy broke out when Deschene was accused of not being fluent in the Navajo language—a requirement for all presidential candidates.

Following the primary election, several Navajo citizens and former presidential candidates filed grievances against Deschene, claiming he had lied about his fluency qualifications. Deschene argued that “fluency” is a matter of opinion, a matter that the Navajo Supreme Court and the Navajo Elections Authority discussed at length. The issue ultimately postponed the November election for president until December. Ultimately, Deschene was removed from the ballots by the elections authority in November and replaced with Russell Begaye, who had finished third in the primaries.

That change to the ballot, however, brought a second issue into play. Absentee and early voting ballots had already been returned with votes for either Shirley or Deschene. This meant scrapping the whole electoral procedure. The election was postponed because those ballots must now be reprinted and the votes recast, and it is

currently scheduled for 2015, with no set date.

Washburn and Federal Recognition

Kevin K. Washburn, Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs for the Interior Department, was busy in 2014. One of his biggest initiatives was pushing to reform the federal recognition process. In May, he announced new regulations that addressed two of the seven mandatory criteria a tribe currently must meet to be acknowledged. Most importantly, it was affirmed that a tribe must have maintained continuous political authority over a distinct community of members from historical times to the present.

Not everyone was happy with the changes. The new federal recognition regulations were accompanied by frustrations concerning a controversial provision that would allow certain third parties to veto a tribe's ability to re-petition for federal status. The veto was included in the proposed new rules under pressure from Connecticut politicians.

Following public meetings and a public comment period that ended September 30, Washburn said the regulations would be reviewed and that adjustments, if any, would be made. The final rule would then be published in the *Federal Register*. That process may take up to two years.

The Midterm Elections

Turnout in midterm elections tends to be lower than average. But this year several groups worked to change that trend, at least from the Native perspective. In several states, the Native presence was vi-

brant and led to some important results.

In Alaska, history was made when the First Unity fusion ticket of Independent Bill Walker and Democratic candidate Byron Mallott captured the governor's and lieutenant governor's seats, respectively. Walker is the first independent candidate to be elected governor in state history and Mallott is only the second Alaska Native to be elected lieutenant governor.

In South Dakota, voters decided that

ent, and developed plans and strategies to meet the ongoing struggles of Indigenous Peoples worldwide going into the future.

In 1974, some 5,000 representatives from 97 indigenous nations from across North and South America traveled to the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe for nine days as part of the First International Treaty Council of the Western Hemisphere. It was there that the IITC was established. Today, the non-profit organization works on such issues as the human rights of Indigenous Peoples,

sovereignty, self-determination, and the recognition and protection of treaties, traditional cultures and sacred lands.

The 2014 meeting, in September, took place in Okmulgee, Oklahoma, on the family land of Philip Deere, a Muscogee (Creek) Na-

tion citizen and one of the co-funders of the IITC.

Gaining Tribal Self-Determination

American Indian sovereignty scored a big win in 1996 when Congress approved the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act. Then in November, prior to the beginning of the "lame duck" session of Congress, Rep. Steve Pearce (R-New Mexico) introduced HR 4329, which constituted a reauthorization with some key reforms to further assist in tribal self-determination. The bill passed the House on December 2 and was sent on for Senate consideration. These reforms "will provide lease-to-own programs aimed at providing rural tribes with the means for self-determination, and allow tribes to focus more on money and development, instead of administrative requirements," said the House.



Georgene Louis (Acoma Pueblo), Sharon Clahchischillie (Navajo) and Doreen Wonda Johnson (Navajo) all were elected to the New Mexico House of Representatives.

the county that contains the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation would be renamed Oglala Lakota County, abandoning the former name of Shannon County. The county's original 19th century namesake, Peter C. Shannon, was a Pennsylvania-born judge, legislator and Union Army officer who served on the Edmunds Commission, which was tasked with compelling the Sioux bands to relinquish millions of acres of land.

In New Mexico, six Native women jumped into races statewide and three of them won: Doreen Wonda Johnson (Navajo), Sharon Clahchischillie (Navajo) and Georgene Louis (Acoma Pueblo).

40 Years of Fighting For Indigenous Rights

The International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) turned 40 this year. At its annual conference, participants celebrated the past, shared experiences and cultures of the pres-

Indian Country Afield

In 2014, Native athletics had victories, defeats and dramas

“Incredible” hardly describes the sports world for Indian Country in 2014. It was a year of firsts. Shoni Schimmel became the first Native American to be drafted into the WNBA in the first round. The award for the top college lacrosse player was shared by the brothers Miles and Lyle Thompson—the first time Native Americans had been so honored. Chris Wondolowski, of Kiowa descent, made his first appearance in the World Cup, playing for the U.S. national team.

But the year was also fraught with strife, most of it aimed at the Washington Redskins and owner Dan Snyder. The National Football League team’s mascot spurred thousands of Native Americans to protest and call for change. Snyder adamantly refused to acquiesce, insisting that the term “Redskins” honors Native Americans. Despite Snyder’s attempts to hold back history, there was significant progress against the team name. “Redskins” lost its trademark protection and 50 senators, as well as many media companies and retired players, publicly opposed the continued use of the term. The fight will surely carry over into 2015.

Something else that will almost certainly continue in 2015 is the good works being conducted by athletes to improve the lives of Native youth. Notah Begay III held his seventh annual Foundation Challenge to benefit young people. Billy Mills, celebrating the 50th anniversary of his historic Olympic win, pushed for more support of youth as well.

Here were some of the biggest moments in Indian Country sports in 2014:

The Atlanta Dreamer

“DREAM BIG,” followed by several emoticons and then “#N8tive,” was what Shoni Schimmel tweeted the night before she held up an Atlanta Dream uniform at the Mohegan Sun Arena in Uncasville,

Connecticut, the site of last year’s WNBA draft. She was drafted eighth overall, the highest position for a Native American in the history of the WNBA, and went on to a rousing rookie campaign.

Racism in the NHL

Thirty-one-year-old Jordin Tootoo, the only Inuk forward in the National Hockey League, opened up about how he overcame racism as a child and still deals with racist comments today. “I’m not going to



Chris Wondolowski in action at the 2014 World Cup

hold things in anymore,” he told CBC News. “I can’t. I need to speak out, and for [people] to understand how hurtful it is, especially at the professional level.” He hopes the NHL will adopt a no-tolerance policy for racist remarks.

A Hall of Fame Hole-in-One

On October 11, Notah Begay III was officially inducted into the Stanford University Athletics Hall of Fame. Joining in the celebration was his college teammate Tiger Woods.

Historic Lacrosse Win

It is often said that brothers share everything. That may explain why, on May 29, University of Albany attack men Lyle and Miles Thompson were honored with the

Tewaaraton Award, given annually to the top male and female collegiate lacrosse players. “Tewaaraton” is the Mohawk name for lacrosse.

Billy Mills Still Running Hard

On October 14, 1964, Billy Mills was in Tokyo running the most memorable race of his life. Fifty years later, Mills, now 76, is still the only American in track and field history to win an Olympic gold medal in the 10,000-meter run.

And he is working hard on behalf of youths through his Running Strong charity.

The Nationals Get Bronzed

On July 3, the Iroquois Nationals lacrosse team began arriving in Denver to get acclimated and prepare for the 2014 Federal of International Lacrosse World Championship. Though they lost to Canada and the USA—which won the gold and silver, respectively—the Nationals won their first medal in tournament history by finishing third.

Mr. Wondo-ful

As excited fans boomed for Team USA in the Arena da Amazonia in Manaus, Brazil during the 2014 World Cup, a similar roar erupted thousands of miles away in Carnegie, Oklahoma. There, the Kiowa tribe was hosting its own viewing party for USA striker Chris Wondolowski.

To Russia, With Sticks

Native hockey players T.J. Oshie (Team USA) and Carey Price (Team Canada) both made big plays in the 2014 Olympic Games in Sochi, Russia, to help their teams advance. Price had a .971 save percentage and two shutouts, helping Canada take the gold. Oshie had sports fans calling him “T.J. Sochi” after his shoot-out goal helped the United States beat Russia.

The Shock of Cultural Recognition

It was a memorable year for Native arts

From the continuing trade in katsinam to musical triumphs to war bonnet controversies, Indian Country had a big impact in many corners of the arts world in 2014:



"Glittering World" was showcased at the National Museum of the American Indian.

Happy Anniversaries, NMAI

The Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian celebrated four anniversaries in 2014. It was 25 years since its creation, 20 years since the opening of the museum in New York, 15 years of the Cultural Resources Center in Maryland and 10 years since the opening of the DC museum on the National Mall. To mark the occasions, the Washington museum organized "Nation to Nation," a massive exhibition on treaties that will run through 2018, and the New York museum mounted an unprecedented show of jewelry by the Yazzie family.

Influence and How to Use It

The Canadian DJ trio A Tribe Called Red won the Juno Award (Canada's Grammy equivalent) for Breakthrough Group of the Year—and kept breaking through. ATCR made the "Caucasians" t-shirt (a parody of Cleveland Indians apparel) a must-have for hip Natives, saw one of its tracks selected for the soundtrack to *The Gambler*, and pressed the Canadian Museum for Human Rights to tell the truth about Canada's treatment of Aboriginals.

Seal of Approval

Inuk throat singer Tanya Tagaq won the Polaris Prize, awarded to the best album by a Canadian artist. Animism, a disc that Tagaq says expresses "how I feel about colonialism, government and society," bested releases by such well-known artists as Drake, Arcade Fire, Mac DeMarco, and Owen Pallett. In her acceptance speech, Tagaq defended seal hunting and lashed out at animal rights do-gooders. "[Seal meat is] delicious and there's lots of them and fuck PETA," she said.

Can You Not? (Part I)

Parisian auction houses haven't lost their taste for trafficking in sacred cultural items, as shown by two controversial auctions that saw dozens of Hopi *katsinam* sold to the highest bidder. The second sale, held in December, included sacred Navajo items as well, which representatives of the Navajo Nation bought with tribal money—setting a potentially dangerous precedent.

Big Name Acts

"Harvest the Hope," an Anti-KXL Pipeline concert held on a farm near Neligh, Nebraska, featured an arresting lineup: Willie Nelson, Neil Young and Lakota rapper Frank Waln. Waln, who met Young at a protest in Washington, D.C. and later participated in a round dance with the legend, called the Nebraska event "a dream come true."

High Visibility

Rebel Music, an MTV series that focuses on music created by people facing political or social adversity, looked at young stars from Indian country in a second-season premiere streamed on Facebook. Frank Waln, Inez Jasper, Nataanii Means and Mike "Witko" Cliff were featured in the 19-minute clip, which to date has racked up 4.4 million views.

Fan Favorite

Native Hawaiian Kini Zamora made an impressive run on *Project Runway*, reaching the final four. His dynamic designs wowed the panel show after show, and he was the favorite going into double-episode series finale, filmed at New York Fashion Week. But judges panned an uncharacteristically lackluster collection when they saw a sneak peek and Zamora had to revamp his whole line in 24 hours. The garments he showed were much improved and, as usual, technically flawless. But the stumble proved insurmountable, and he was out of the running.



Tanya Tagaq, Inyut, won the Polaris Prize for best album by a Canadian artist.

Secession

Three staffers from the venerable Santa Fe Indian Market broke off to form a rival show, the Indigenous Fine Art Market, and held their inaugural event the same weekend as the 93rd edition of the massive market. In the end, both events were successful and fears that artists would pay the price for a political struggle were dissipated.



Native Hawaiian Kini Zamora made a memorable stand on Project Runway.

Can You Not? (Part II)

Cultural appropriation was again a big issue; non-Native rock and pop musicians still seem unable to kick the habit of donning sacred feather headdresses as a fashion accessory. Pharrell Williams, quadruple-Grammy winner and judge on *The Voice*, caught heat for wearing a warbonnet on the cover of *Elle UK*. Rapper Emerson Windy's pseudo-Native single "Peace Pipe" and a headdress-happy music video and album cover. A publicity photo of Christina Fallin, daughter of Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin, drew criticism. Fallin the younger egged on the controversy with public statements and unhelpful assistance from Wayne Coyne of the Flaming Lips.

Bad News for Hipster Headdresses

Native music fans who are sick of seeing stars and festival-goers accessorizing their culture were heartened when British Columbia's Bass Coast Festival banned Native headdresses altogether. The considerably larger UK Glastonbury didn't ban war bonnets, but put them on a list of items that cannot be sold without prior authorization.

Take That, Edward S. Curtis!

Bolstered by a popular video on the hugely influential website Upworthy.com, photographer Matika Wilbur's Project 562 blew past its crowd-funding goal. Wilbur was shooting for \$54,000 to finance her quest to photograph members from every federally recognized Tribe and Nation; over the

course of a month, she raised \$213,461.

Movies for the Masses

The rush of acclaimed films by and about American Indians and First Nations peoples released in 2013-14 found an audience in everyday Natives no matter where they live, thanks to technology. Movies like *Rhymes for Young Ghouls*, *The Cherokee Word for Water* and *Shouting Secrets*, which pleased festival audiences but would never make it to a middle-America megaplex, are now available through Netflix, iTunes, and other streaming services.

NDNs on TV

SundanceTV's *Red Road* series, starring Jason Momoa and Kiowa Gordon, and featuring Zahn McClarnon in a supporting role, finally gave Natives an edgy drama in prime time. But it was just one of numerous TV shows making heavy use of Indigenous actors in major storylines; others include *Longmire*, *Banshee*, *Hell on Wheels* and *House of Cards*.

Smells Like Ted Nugent

Ted Nugent, who has always claimed a kinship with Native Americans—whether they want him or not—got his comeuppance for years of inflammatory remarks when Native-owned casinos and resorts decided to cancel his shows. He reacted in his typical defiant style, further alienating many Natives who said they were revoking their fandom. Native activists protested a Nugent show at the Sturgis Bike Rally in South Dakota (the rocker called his critics "stinkyass unclean dipshit[s]") and the event's organizer remarked that he would have canceled it had he known of the controversy beforehand.



Charlie Soap and Kimberly Guerrero in *The Cherokee Word for Water*



Christina Fallin, daughter of Oklahoma's governor, won few fans with her headdress.

Telling Their Own Story

The Chickasaw Nation embarked on a film project to give one of its cultural heroes her due. The subject is Te Ata, a dancer and storyteller who served as a sort of ambassador for Indian country in the early and mid-20th century (notably performing for President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the British Royal Family). She will be portrayed by Qorianka Kilcher, with Gil Birmingham and Graham Greene in supporting roles.



Even *The Daily Show* took on 'Redskins.'

White People Behaving Sadly

A segment on *The Daily Show* that put Washington Redskins fans in the same room with some of the leading anti-mascot activists sparked controversy when the football fans told *The Washington Post* they felt duped by the producers and threatened by the activists. One of them burst into tears on the set, and later called the police. When those same Native activists showed up for pre-game tailgating with *Daily Show* reporter Jason Jones, Redskins fans actually did threaten them.

The Year In Pow Wows

Regalia, ritual and renewal

The pow wow circuit expanded in 2014, going beyond traditional borders both geographic and cultural. Hundreds of Natives gathered in Washington, D.C. at the First Gathering of the National Congress of Black American Indians; Vanderbilt University hosted its first-ever pow wow. A few pow wows delivered some surprises—both good and bad—while others celebrated big anniversaries or kicked off new traditions. Among the headliners:

Nansemond Tribe Celebrates Land Grant

A 77-acre tract of land was granted to the Nansemond Tribe in February by Suffolk, Virginia; in August, the tribe held its 26th Annual Nansemond Indian Tribal Powwow, marking the first time they had celebrated the event on their own land. The tribe plans to construct a full-fledged Indian village called Mattanock Town, complete with a tribal center and Nansemond cultural museum. However, a stipulation requires that the tribe raise an estimated \$5-6 million to complete the village, tribal center and museum within five years. If they fail to do so, the land could go back to the city.

Farewell, Pennsylvania

For 11 years, John Sanchez coordinated The New Faces of an Ancient People Traditional American Indian Powwow, but he decided 2014 would be its final year. “I just don’t have the time to devote to it and keep my day job,” Sanchez told ICTMN. Sanchez, Apache, is a professor in the College of Communications at Pennsylvania State University, where he is the only American Indian faculty member. And although his pow wow is fading out, he is confident he can continue to be a positive force for Na-

tive causes. “Penn State was very receptive to the kinds of things I wanted to bring to this university,” he told StateCollege.com. “I just bought burial plots here. I see myself here for the rest of my life.”

visibly stunned Juarez, tears in her eyes and hands covering her mouth, nodded yes.

Vanderbilt Steps Up

A newly formed student organization called Native Americans in Tennessee Interacting at Vanderbilt (NATIVE), hosted its inaugural event, called “Nations Within States: Citizenship, Pottery & The Catawba Indian Nation,” on September 17. NATIVE’s goal is to increase the public profile of American Indians in Tennessee by bringing them together.

Gathering of Nations Honored

The American Bus Association (ABA) named Gathering of Nations one of the Top 100 Events in America for the fifth consecutive year. Gathering is the world’s largest assemblage of Native American and indigenous people and was chosen from hundreds of events nominated by ABA members.

A German Pow Wow?

A wacky Native American pow wow was held in Berlin in February. But this wasn’t exactly a pow wow, according to Red Haircrow, Chiricahua Apache/Cherokee. The event, he wrote for ICTMN, reminded him more of a *Star Trek* convention than an authentic pow wow, filled with activities, “based on fantasy worlds and people. Native Americans are real, and have a present and future, not just a past.”

First Gathering of National Congress of Black American Indians

In July, hundreds of black Indians gathered in Washington, D.C. for the First Gathering of the National Congress of Black American Indians (NCBAI). Black Indians have been the subject of books, documentaries and an exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution, but this gathering was the first massive effort to bring the people together.



Clockwise from upper left: Scenes from the Tule River Band of Yokuts Powwow, the first gathering of the National Congress of Black Indians, the Gathering of Nations and Berlin’s “Winter Pow-wow 2014”

Mile-High Powwow Still Flying High

This year, the Denver March Powwow, which has grown from its modest beginnings to become a major draw throughout Indian country, celebrated its 40th anniversary.

A Shocking Proposal

Headman dancer Johnny Nieto surprised the crowd (and his girlfriend) at the 11th annual Tule River Band of Yokuts Powwow with a startling announcement. “I want to do something crazy,” he said. “Right in front of my home crowd, my home people. It’s about time—Yendi Juarez, will you marry me?” The crowd erupted with joyous drumming and Native wails of approval. A

Environmental Vigilance

In 2014, Mother Earth was a major player



The Carlton Complex fire wrought devastation in Washington State in July.

The 10 most prominent environmental stories of 2014 constituted a wide range of events—extreme weather, natural disasters, major administrative decisions and potent activism. Some of the issues were ongoing. Others surfaced for the first time. And still others rose from a slow burn to a sudden burst of headlines. Among them were these:

CALIFORNIA DROUGHT

The drought that has been plaguing California for the past few years began affecting the daily lives of tribes, many of whom were forced to declare water emergencies. As Gov. Jerry Brown declared a statewide emergency, and signed drought legislation into law, conflicts arose over water allocation. A spate of deluge rains at the tail end of the year caused floods and mudslides but did not fill the water gap.

NEW MEXICO'S RADIATION LEAKS

A pair of industrial accidents at the

Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) nuclear storage facility in Carlsbad, New Mexico, and Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) in February leaked radiation and contaminated more than a dozen workers. The WIPP was closed down indefinitely, with a potential cleanup cost topping \$500 million. As the story unfolded, it emerged that officials at the facilities had covered up safety violations and lapses, compounding the problems. In December the state of New Mexico levied \$54 million in fines against the facilities.

WASHINGTON LANDSLIDE

In March, a slice of rain-saturated hillside obliterated a neighborhood outside Oso, Washington, about 55 miles north of Seattle. The wall of mud and debris killed 43 and devastated the region. But as the disaster unfolded, area tribes stepped up with aid and comfort.

RAMPANT WILDFIRES

Wildfires were especially fierce this

past summer, and many of those that raged this year took place in, or affected, Indian Country. Washington State got the brunt of the assault, with the biggest wildfire in its history burning a hole of 250,806 acres—392 square miles—in its center, leaving a veritable moonscape in its aftermath. Oregon found itself in similar straits, contending with the 395,747-acre Buzzard Complex fire, as well as another blaze on the Warm Springs Reservation itself. The Navajo Nation declared a state of emergency as the Assayii Lake Fire destroyed precious artifacts and ceremonial items, causing evacuations and burning more than 13,000 acres. A 20,000-acre fire on the Colville Indian Reservation prompted evacuations, and a fire in Yosemite National Park leapt from 19 to 2,600 acres in just one day, growing even worse before it was contained.

NAVAJO AWARDED \$1 BILLION FOR SUPERFUND CLEANUP

In a landmark award, the Navajo Nation received \$1 billion of a \$5.15 billion settlement that the federal government reached with Kerr-McGee Corp. and its parent Anadarko Petroleum Corp. for Superfund Cleanup around the country. The Navajo settlement is to clean up extensive uranium contamination from abandoned mines and processing plants in Cove, Arizona and Shiprock, New Mexico. The award came in the wake of a bankruptcy court ruling in 2013 that found Anadarko and Kerr-McGee liable for damages.

RECORD SALMON RUNS AND A HISTORIC RETURN

Northwest tribes exulted as some salmon species returned to spawn in record numbers. The fall Chinook comeback, dubbed “The Return of the King,” was the highest to the Columbia River basin in 75 years. In addition, salmon began

making their way back to the Upper Elwha River after the last part of the dam had been dismantled. The fish remembered the way even though they had not made the journey for 100 years.

THE FATE OF BISON

Bison were on the radar in a big way throughout the year. A young activist was arrested trying to defend Yellowstone bison, which were being slaughtered—because of supposed overpopulation, for wandering outside the park's bounds seeking food, and amid ranchers' fears that they would spread brucellosis to livestock. However, the Interior Department set out a bison reintroduction and preservation plan in July, paving the way for innovative solutions. These included sending the Yellowstone bison, which are genetically pure, to tribal lands with the goal of restoring the animals as much as possible. The move paved the way for sending bison that had been quarantined and found to be brucellosis-free to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation, as well as to the Cherokee Nation. In addition, tribes on both sides of the U.S.–Canada border signed a historic treaty to work together on bringing back the iconic animal to both sides of the 49th Parallel.

BRISTOL BAY PEBBLE MINE

The struggle of Alaska Natives to protect the largest wild salmon run in the world from mining went on a roller coaster ride this year. The Environmental Protection Agency set limits on the plan for the world's largest pit mine—slated for the pristine Bristol Bay watershed region—that were so strict that they practically scrapped the proposal

under the Clean Water Act. Then, in November, a judge ruled that the EPA had overstepped its bounds on one small point. However, on December 16 the region itself received recognition from President Barack Obama when he halted all future oil and gas drilling leases there. It remains to be seen whether mining will follow.



Top: Bristol Bay, in southwest Alaska, is threatened by a mining proposal.

Bottom: Bison on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation.

KEYSTONE XL

The Keystone XL pipeline, as always, ranked high on the list of environmental concerns. This year saw an unusual collaboration between American Indians, ranchers and others who oppose the project. The Cowboys and Indians Alliance, as it called itself, rode on horseback across the country to Washington, D.C. to camp out and protest the pipeline on Earth Day. This

took place against the backdrop of a long-awaited environmental report from the State Department, which all but skirted the issue and said that any impact on carbon footprint and thus climate change from this particular project would be minimal. Meanwhile a judge in Nebraska struck down a law that had allowed the governor to approve the route through the state,

putting that portion of the pipeline back to square one. Frustrated, the House passed legislation that would have forced the approval of the pipeline; Rosebud Sioux Tribe leader Cyril Scott called this an act of war. When the Senate voted down its version of that bill, Lakota activist Greg Grey Cloud broke into song from the observation gallery and was arrested. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell said she welcomed indigenous voices: "They know their lands better than we do," she told MSNBC's José Díaz-Balart.

PEOPLE'S CLIMATE MARCH AND INDIGENOUS ASCENSION

This year marked Indigenous Peoples' "arrival" in mainstream consciousness, as important advocates, environmental stakeholders and climate change experts gained public awareness.

Indigenous Peoples at the grassroots were finally recognized as the original stewards of the land, being at the forefront at the People's Climate March on September 21; a wide range of notables tapped and acknowledged their expertise. The boldface names who backed the advocacy ranged from President Obama to actor Leonardo DiCaprio. The latter marched with the Tar Sands contingent along with other celebrities, including actor Mark Ruffalo and Sting.

What Happened Up North

On the whole, triumphs for First Nations



Shawn Atleo stepped down as Assembly of First Nations Chief.

Among other landmarks in a significant year for Indigenous Peoples in Canada, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of a First Nation's title to its land and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) National Chief resigned. Overall, 2014 was marked by victories, as major suits were decided in Indigenous Peoples' favor and various governments turned thumbs down on destructive mining proposals.

Taseko Mine Rejection

In February, Ottawa finally rejected yet another proposal from Taseko Mines Ltd that would have decimated sacred lands and pristine habitat to extract gold and copper from a British Columbia wilderness. It was the third rejection of what the AFN had dubbed the worst mine proposal ever, after an environmental assessment that even industry-friendly Prime Minister Stephen Harper had called "very damning." Undeterred—or unable to take a hint—Taseko sued.

Atleo Resignation

In May, Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo stepped down in the middle of a second term that he had squeaked by to win, citing conflict over the First Nations Education Act. The resignation led to a debate over whether the AFN was even relevant any more, so estranged had it become from the grass roots. On December 10, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) Chief Perry Bellegarde was handily elected as the new National Chief.

Tsilhqot'in Ruling

What was probably the biggest Native news of the year took place halfway through the calendar, when the Supreme Court of Canada radically altered the way land claims and treaties would be viewed. In an unprecedented move, the court granted aboriginal title to the Tsilhqot'in over 675 square miles of territory. The wide-ranging ruling has implications for

everything from pipelines to sovereignty, according to experts. That is because the ruling formally acknowledged that Indigenous Peoples can claim occupancy and control of vast tracts of land beyond the settlement sites to which they have been relegated.

Mount Polley Mine Spill

In August, a tailings pond dam burst at a mine outside the town of Likely, British Columbia, sending four billion gallons of mining waste into pristine B.C. waterways. The footage was horrific and the incident drew comparisons with the notorious *Exxon Valdez* oil spill. The mining company's chief executive's assertion that he would have no problem drinking the water from the rivers into which the waste had flowed was met with derision. Beyond damage to the watershed, the disaster led neighboring First Nations to eject the owner, Imperial Metals, from another mining site. And in neighboring Alaska, Native Alaskans and others—afraid of what they saw as lax regulation—requested that the British Columbia government tighten its rules.

Peel Watershed Victory

The fate of one of the world's largest tracts of undisturbed wilderness hung in the balance for much of the year as a lawsuit against the government of Yukon for exposing its Peel Watershed up to potential mining operations wound its way through the courts. First Nations, environmentalists and others who wished to preserve the fishing industry in the remote region had sued the territorial government for scrapping a carefully developed plan for the watershed; a new administration had substituted another plan that opened up much more of the sensitive area to development. In what observers called a precedent-setting ruling, the court told the Yukon government to return to the consultation stage, using the agreed-upon plan as a starting point.

Taking The Long View

Recalling the past and embracing the present

2014 was a big year for Native history. Significant anniversaries were celebrated, important findings were made and provocative questions were raised. ICTMN spotlighted a number of them:

February marked the 127th anniversary of the Dawes Severalty Act.

Also known as the General Allotment Act, this legislation introduced private land ownership to American Indians; President Grover Cleveland signed it into law in 1887. It was arguably one of the most devastating U.S. laws for Natives because it slashed millions of acres from the existing land base, broke up many tribes and threatened their sovereignty.

In 2012, Andrew Jackson was ICTMN's top pick for the worst U.S. president. This year, by way of an alternative, we nominated 10 Native icons who could replace him on the \$20 bill. They included Sequoyah, who devised a written syllabary for the Cherokee language, and the heroic Seminole leader Osceola.

New scientific discoveries rekindled the debate over the Bering Strait Theory.

The theory holds that Asians crossed the Bering Sea to settle the Americas. In a multi-part series for ICTMN, Alex Ewen examined the sociological, anthropological and cultural assumptions that undergird the ongoing discussion. The theory itself suffered serious damage in 2014 as dendrochronology—a dating system that employs analysis of tree rings—poked holes in existing radiocarbon data.

The FBI seized a vast collection of Native artifacts on April 2. A 91-year-old Indiana man had amassed them over eight decades. The federal bureau's action suggested that U.S. law enforcement might finally be taking the issue of cultural repatriation seriously.



Horse regalia makes a comeback

Estimates of the age of Serpent Mound were radically revised. Following new radiocarbon analysis of the site in rural Adams County, Ohio, it now appears that one of the premier Native American earthworks in the hemisphere is about 1,400 years older than previously thought.

Inuit oral history was borne out. A ship, missing since 1846, was discovered in shallow waters in an area called Utjulik—just as oral accounts had maintained. The Inuit testimony of what had happened to two vessels under the

command of Sir John Franklin had previously been discounted for decades.

Horse regalia continued to make a comeback.

James Star Comes Out hit upon the idea of reviving the tradition of ornamenting horses with such accoutrements as beaded headstalls and fringed and feathered blankets after he had examined many vintage images of horses of the Oceti Sakowin (Lakota, Nakota, and Dakota). "When tribes were placed on the reservations, the use of horse regalia dwindled," he said. But now, audiences are applauding this form of cultural revitalization. "A lot of people hadn't seen that in years," Star Comes Out said.

The book *Bloodshed At Little Bighorn: Sitting Bull, Custer, and the Destinies of Nations* made a splash.

In his volume, Rocky Mountain College history professor Tim Lehman wrote that George Armstrong Custer fathered a child

with a Cheyenne woman. Recorded Native oral history offers several sources that say that Custer indeed had a son named Yellow Swallow with Meotzi, the daughter of Black Kettle.

November 29 marked the 150th anniversary of the Sand Creek Massacre.

In the massacre, federal troops killed as many as 160 peaceful Cheyenne and Arapaho, the majority of them women and children. The slaughter permanently changed Indian relations with the U.S. government. Many commemorative events were held to honor those lost and to remember the tragedy.

Remembering Those Lost in 2014

As 2014 comes to a close, we remember those who walked on during the past year and pay tribute to their service and their lives. Whether prominent on the international stage or the home front, these enlightened spirits touched our lives. Here is a sampling of the people who passed through Indian country for what seemed, in the end, all too brief a time:

Charlie Hill, standup Oneida-Mohawk-Cree comedian and legendary Native comic influence, on December 30, 2013 at age 62.

Bonnie Green, Yurok elder and tribal council member, who served six terms as South District Representative and one term as vice chair, on January 18.

Bill “War Soldier” Soza, painter, provocateur and American Indian Movement activist, on January 18 at age 65.

Robert Charles Onco, member of the Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma and American Indian Movement activist, on January 31 at age 63.

Arthur J. Hubbard Sr., Navajo Code Talker and the first American Indian elected to the Arizona State Senate, on February 7 at age 102.

Robert J. Conley, Cherokee author and recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award of the Native Writers’ Circle of the Americas, on February 16 at age 74.

Martin E. Sullivan, who oversaw the return of 12 sacred wampum belts to the Onondaga Indian Nation before being required to do so by law, on February 25 at age 70.

Loretta Saunders, pregnant Inuit student who went missing on February 13 and was discovered on February 26, the victim of a homicide, at age 26.

Beaulah Shavney, Chickasaw elder and charter member of the Women’s Army Corps, on February 26 at age 91.

Southern Ute Tribal Chairman **Jimmy Newton Jr.**, involved with tribal politics since 2003, on March 31 at age 37.

Edmond Andrew Harjo, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma tribal member and Congressional Gold Medal recipient, on March 31 at age 96.

Peter Matthiessen, author of the prophetic *Indian Country* (Viking, 1984) and

sculptor husband Korczak Ziolkowski before his death that she would continue work on the controversial Crazy Horse Memorial being carved into the Black Hills, on May 21 at age 87.

Puyallup Tribal Chairman **Herman Dillon Sr.**, first elected to the Pullyap tribal council in 1971, on May 23 at age 82.

Chester Nez, the last survivor of the original 29 Navajo Code Talkers, on June 4 at age 93.

Sidney Bedoni, Navajo Code Talker, on June 8 at age 91.

Darrell “Chip” Wadena, tribal chairman of the White Earth Chippewa for 20 years, on June 24 at age 75.

James Garner, of Cherokee descent, most famous for his starring roles in the TV series *Maverick* and *The Rockford Files*, as well as the movies *The Great Escape* and *Victor Victoria*, on July 19 at age 86.

Rosalie Little Thunder, who helped preserve the Lakota language, protect sacred sites and species and founded The Buffalo Field Campaign, on August 9 at age 64.

Gerald One Feather, founder of Oglala Lakota College, advocate for higher education and president of the Oglala Sioux, on August 21 at age 76.

Misty Upham, Blackfeet actress famous for her performances in *Frozen River* and *August: Osage County*, found on October 16 at age 32.

Bob Hicks, Muscogee, longtime advocate for Indians in Hollywood and co-founder and first president of First Americans in the Arts, on November 14 at age 80.

Jayla Marie Rodriguez, killed by feral dogs behind her home on the Pine Ridge Reservation, on November 18 at age 8.



Clockwise from top left: Billy Frank, Jr., Bonnie Green, Edmond Harjo and Chester Nez

In the Spirit of Crazy Horse: The Story of Leonard Peltier and the FBI’s War on the American Indian Movement (Viking, 1991) on April 5 at age 86.

Doris Pilkington Garimara, aboriginal author of *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence*, on April 10 at the age of 76.

Billy Frank Jr., Nisqually tribal elder arrested dozens of times while trying to assert his Native fishing rights during the 1960s and 1970s, on May 5 at age 83.

Cpl. Tom Jones Jr., Navajo Code Talker, on May 12 at age 89.

Ruth Ziolkowski, who promised her



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AMAZON WATCH/SPECTRAL Q

At this month's climate change summit in Lima, activists formed a tree, circumscribed by the Spanish words for 'Peoples + Rights = Living Forests.'

THE BIG PICTURE