



Indian Country THIS WEEK FROM

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

A Letter from the Publisher

Shekóli. This week's newsletter contains an opinion piece from Sen. John Barrasso (R-Wyoming), the new chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. His essay lays out the broad strokes of his plan for the federal government's approach to our Nations. Barrasso stresses the need for economic development, with a focus on "housing, education, irrigation, Indian child protection and substance abuse prevention." He's right in pointing out the historic mismanagement engendered by the federal government's flawed policies of the past, and promises to continue with what we know works: self-determination and self-governance, two things that were given an enormous boost by Republican President Richard Nixon.

When it comes to U.S. politics, individual Natives or particular Nations might lean toward one political party or the other. In reality, we are always on one side of the negotiating table and, regardless of election results or changes in power, U.S. representatives sit on the other. These facts should never alter our goals. We simply want results.

Just as Barrasso's piece is directed from his government to ours, Duane Champagne's essay on Native leadership this week bridges the



gap in the other direction. It should be required reading for all senators, as it explains the holistic approach our nations have taken historically towards governance. Champagne points out the importance of ceremonial and spiritual knowledge on the part of respected leaders. Indigenous Peoples confer kinship bonds and nation status on different planes and among many species, with each group having a place and role in a cosmic plan.

This interconnectedness informs our decisions and how we go about doing what is right for our people. When we are able to articulate and build agreements by following the wisdom of our ancestors, those plans succeed. When outside policies are foisted upon us, the results are nothing but the opposite.

Na ki wa,

Ray Halbritter

Table of *Contents*



2	COMMENTARY	12	CLASSIFIEDS
3	NEWS	13	WEEK IN PHOTOS
8	DO NATIVES MATTER IN 2016?	14	WEB, EVENTS, LETTERS
9	CALIFORNIA TRIBE TO GROW MEDICAL POT	15	CARTOON, ALERTS
10	KTUNAXA OPPOSE WOLF KILLINGS	16	HOW DID I MISS THAT
11	MURKOWSKI BLASTS WILDLIFE PLAN	17	BIG PICTURE

Natives and Republicans: Working in Tandem

John Barrasso (R-Wyoming), the new chair of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, assures Native Americans that the GOP is on their side:

Perhaps to the surprise of some, Republicans have been active in establishing or enacting landmark tribal policy. President Nixon authored the Special Message to the Congress on Indian Affairs. President Reagan signed into law the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act. My predecessors, as chairmen of the United States Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, Sens. Ben Nighthorse Campbell and John McCain, championed trust reform,

Indian health care and the protection of women from domestic violence.

Admittedly, the federal government has not done well in meeting that first duty or its specific responsibilities to Indian country. Tribal members face far too many challenges in so many areas including health care, education, and economic development. Solutions, not the status quo, are needed to address these challenges.

My committee will hold a series of oversight hearings aimed at identifying the many issues impacting tribal development. These include housing, education, irrigation, Indian child protection, and substance abuse prevention. As a doctor, I understand these issues all too

well from the two tribes I represent in my home state of Wyoming, the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone Tribe.

The first bill I introduced as chairman is the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act. It has six co-sponsors and I expect many more members will support us. This bipartisan bill will promote more tribal autonomy and decision making in the energy sector. We are committed to giving the power back to the tribes and not the federal government.

I look forward to working together in the years ahead as we continue to strengthen our relationship based on both respect and trust. <http://bit.ly/1zcDsNP> ☞

A Matter of Respect

The concept of respect in indigenous cultures, though elusive, says ICTMN contributor Duane Champagne, is also often essential:

A key concept in the cultural philosophies of most Indigenous nations is respect. A person gains it by acquiring practical and spiritual knowledge and then living in a prudent manner while teaching others to do the same. By learning knowledge and sharing knowledge, a person is fulfilling a central life task.

Much of this respect is gained through an appreciation of elders. The elders are

not just those people who have grown old and are elderly in years. They are the persons who have acquired the cultural knowledge of the nation and have learned through many years of experience.

Respect is also gained through an appreciation of leadership. Leadership in an indigenous nation can depend on broad kinship support. But it also depends on knowledge and respect toward all members of the community. Traditionally, successful leaders served at the discretion of the community, often wielding power only as long as the leader maintained positive influence over and support from community members. A leader needed to be a good parent,

and have a well-ordered family life, before he or she could manage a group or participate in national government.

For thousands of years, indigenous governments were informed by tribal cultural philosophies focused on maintaining respectful, useful, practical, and well-balanced relations with the entire cosmic order. At the same time Indigenous nations sought to avoid harm stemming from actions that disrupted cosmic, national and individual relations. Respect for the ways of the cosmic order were central to maintaining long-term well being—and the fulfillment of individual and national goals. <http://bit.ly/1z2qyD6> ☞

'Drunktown's Finest' Does No Favors

The film Drunktown's Finest, written and produced by Diné filmmaker Sydney Freeland, which takes place in a locale reminiscent of her hometown, has garnered critical acclaim. Jennifer Denetdale, an associate professor of American Studies at the University of New Mexico, argues why it should not:

Drunktown's Finest follows three Navajo characters looking for meaningful lives in a place that resembles Gallup, New Mexico, a border town to the Navajo Nation that has been denounced for its treatment of Natives for decades. Many reviews have called *Drunktown* a

film that affirms Navajo traditional culture, and a possible source for individual redemption against the poverty, racism, and discrimination that characterize Native American life.

But given that a border town like Gallup continues to perpetuate an atmosphere where violence against Natives is the ordinary, a narrative that ignores the realities of Navajo people's experiences in border towns serves to help sustain the injustices. Every day Natives, mostly Navajos, die on Gallup's streets and in its ditches, mainly because of alcoholism. Alcohol-related deaths include exposure and incidents like domestic violence, assaults, and murders that have been normalized.

Drunktown's Finest glosses over the

sustained violence that shapes the border town's relationship with Native and Navajo peoples. In the hope of redeeming her hometown, Freeland ends her film with the trope of finding healing and redemption in tradition and culture. When Native peoples are traumatized, they need only channel tradition, and healing will begin. The separation of "tradition" from the "politics" of challenging structures of domination and exploitation individualizes our responses to self-healing and keeps the undercurrents of a town like Gallup intact.

Sometimes art is about making us feel good so that we don't have to do anything about a problem that seems insurmountable. <http://bit.ly/1uzhRuJ> ☞

Obama Puts Alaska Refuge Off Limits With Wide-Sweeping Protection

Citing Native subsistence fishing traditions, among other considerations, President Obama has designated 12.3 million acres as wilderness in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, putting the area off limits to oil and gas drilling in perpetuity.

“The Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge, one of the few remaining places in the country as pristine today as it was when the oldest Alaska Native communities first set eyes on it, is too precious to put at risk,” the White House said in a statement on January 25.

“This far northern region is known as ‘The Sacred Place Where Life Begins’ to Alaska Native communities,” the statement continued. “The Refuge sustains the most diverse array of wildlife in the entire Arctic—home not only to the Porcupine caribou, but to polar bears, gray wolves, and muskoxen. Bird species from the Coastal Plain migrate to all 50 states of the country—meaning that no matter where you live, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is part of your landscape.”

It is the most sweeping protection proposal made by a president in 35 years, according to *National Geographic*, and creates the largest wilderness area in U.S. history.

“Designating vast areas in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as Wilderness reflects the significance this landscape holds for America and its wildlife,” said Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell. “Just like Yosemite or the Grand Canyon, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is one of our nation’s crown jewels, and we have an obligation to preserve this spectacular place for generations to come.”

The wilderness designation is “the highest level of protection available to public lands,” the Interior Department said (see related story, p. 11). <http://bit.ly/1DeV1xy> ☞

Senate Passes Keystone Bill Despite Threat of Obama Veto BY GALE COUREY TOENSING

The Senate voted 62-36 last week to approve construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline, forcing a showdown with President Obama, who has promised to veto the bill.

The controversial \$8 billion pipeline is a Canadian-owned project that would carry more than 800,000 barrels a day of bituminous crude from the Alberta oil sands through Indian country and American states to refineries in Texas, then on to Gulf Coast ports for shipping to world markets.

The vote on January 28 was the first Senate bill of the 114th Congress and followed three weeks of what is called “regular order,” the process of proposing, debating and voting on amendments. Nine Democrats joined 53 Republicans to pass the bill, but the vote fell short of the 67 required to overcome a presidential veto. The White House has executive authority to approve or reject projects that cross the international border, and Obama has promised to veto the project while the review process is still underway.

Keystone is almost universally loathed by Indian country, environmentalists and ranchers. Anticipating the Senate’s vote of approval, a number of environmental organizations almost immediately signaled their opposition; among them are the Sierra Club, 350.org, the Center for Biological Diversity and the International Forum on Globalization. Danielle Droitsch, director of Natural Resources Defense Council’s Canada project, said that “the new, Republican-controlled Congress just delivered a New Year’s present to big polluters,” while League of Conservation Voters Senior Vice President of Government Affairs Tiernan Sittenfeld predicted, “This dirty and dangerous bill is soon to meet its well-deserved fate—a presidential veto.” <http://bit.ly/1ze8Sop> ☞

Wisconsin Governor Rejects Menominee Tribe’s Casino Bid

Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker has denied the request of the Menominee Tribe to open an off-reservation, \$800 million casino in Kenosha. His decision followed extensive opposition from the Potawatomi and Ho-Chunk Tribes, who said the casino would compete with their existing casino operations.

Wrangling over the project began in 2005, when former Wisconsin Gov. Jim Doyle signed a compact with the Potawatomi Tribe that would allow the Potawatomi and Ho-Chunk Tribes to be reimbursed for any loss of business

resulting from approval of the Kenosha casino proposal. The Menominee said they were prepared to establish a \$200-\$250 million bond to cover any losses incurred by the competing tribes.

Then, late in January, the Forest County Potawatomi filed a federal lawsuit arguing that their gambling compact with Wisconsin requires the state to reimburse the tribe for any losses linked to a Kenosha casino. State officials, including Gov. Walker, also expressed concern that taxpayers might be responsible for that reimbursement. “After a comprehensive review of the potential economic impact of the proposed Kenosha casino project,” Walker

said, “the risk to the state’s taxpayers is too great.”

“Gov. Walker and his administration gave the Kenosha Casino project a thorough review,” the Potawatomi Tribe said in a statement, “and we agree with his determination that this project is not in the best interest of Wisconsin.”

“It is our belief that this project would have improved the lives of the nearly 9,000 members of the Tribe,” responded Laurie Boivin, the Menominee Tribe’s chairwoman. “Instead, one tribe—the Forest County Potawatomi—and one goal of Governor Walker—the presidency—has led to a no for our people.”

<http://bit.ly/1Bt1ZPA> ☞



Seeking a Job in an Expanding Field?

Explore AHIMA's Coding Basics Online Program.

Demand for Medical Coding Professionals is Growing.

Because of growing demand for [healthcare] services...the demand for healthcare workers over the next decade will grow nearly twice as fast as the national economy. To meet the swelling demand for care, the number of healthcare workers will have to expand by almost 30% overall by 2020—the most dramatic growth of any sector in the United States over the next ten years*. **Capture the opportunity!**

Who Should Choose AHIMA's Coding Basics?


Anyone interested in the flexibility and benefits of our online program!

- Create a training schedule to fit your needs.
- Individuals with healthcare backgrounds may take a reduced number of courses to fill in knowledge gaps.
- Students moving into two- and four-year health information management (HIM) programs won't need to repeat courses.

Why is Medical Record Coding Needed?

Increasing patient safety by reducing medical errors is a critical business issue affecting healthcare. Delivering quality healthcare depends on capturing accurate medical data. In response to this issue, the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) developed Coding Basics, an entry-level online medical record coding program. The program's flexibility offers both new and experienced healthcare professionals the opportunity to obtain the education needed to meet the challenges of healthcare's future.

Seeking a Credential?

 Coding Basics is a recommended resource for the Certified Coding Associate (CCA) exam. Visit ahima.org/certification for more information.

Why Choose AHIMA?

We're the experts, setting standards for medical information across all healthcare settings.

 ahima.org/codingbasics |  (800) 335-5535

© 2015 AHIMA | MX10022 | 233 N. Michigan Ave. 21st Fl. | Chicago, IL 60601

AHIMA is the premier association of health information management (HIM) professionals. AHIMA's more than 71,000 members are dedicated to the effective management of personal health information needed to deliver quality healthcare to the public. Founded in 1928 to improve the quality of medical records, AHIMA is committed to advancing the HIM profession in an increasingly electronic and global environment through leadership in advocacy, education, certification, and lifelong learning.

*Source: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce forecasts of educational demand through 2020


American Health Information
Management Association®

AFN Chief Sits Down With Prime Minister

Newly elected National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Perry Bellegarde discussed issues ranging from missing women to land claims with Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper on January 28, initiating the dialogue he had alluded to during his campaign. Bellegarde outlined First Nation priorities and invited Harper to the AFN's July National Assembly in Montreal.

"It was basically a meeting to open lines of communication and, at the end of the meeting, there was agreement that our officials will continue to meet, to discuss priorities and what can be achieved moving forward," Bellegarde said.

On the list of topics were land claims resolution and treaty implementation, the Toronto *Globe and Mail* reported, especially in relation to the implications of the Supreme Court of Canada's favorable ruling on Tsilhqot'in land rights last year.

Bellegarde also pressed to convene a national inquiry into the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and to alter or eliminate the First Nations Education Act to give Indigenous Peoples the control they need over the process. Revitalizing languages and closing the gap between aboriginals and mainstream Canada rounded out the list of talking points.

The discussion, which lasted less than an hour, was "a very positive first meeting," said Jason MacDonald, Harper's chief spokesperson, to CBC News. However, Bellegarde said in a letter to national chiefs, "We agreed that there is much work to do to achieve the changes needed to substantively improve First Nations well-being."

Bellegarde has previously met with the leaders of Canada's other major political parties, including New Democratic Party (NDP) Leader Tom Mulcair, head of the official Opposition, and Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau. <http://bit.ly/1uH2wbz> 📍

Humboldt State University Students Seize Building Over Native Issues

BY ALYSA LANDRY

A coalition of Native students and allies at Humboldt State University (HSU) in Arcata, California has occupied a campus building to protest treatment of the indigenous population, spotlighted by the firing in October of the popular Lakota administrator Jacquelyn Bolman.

The group, Unified Students of Humboldt, seized the Native American Forum building on January 19, renaming it the Jacquelyn Bolman Forum and issuing a series of demands. The students are calling for Bolman's reinstatement as director of the Indian Natural Resources Science and Engineering Program; transparent hiring, promotion and tenure processes to ensure greater diversity; funds for diversity programs; and an end to what they call retaliation against staff and faculty who support students of color.

On January 23, HSU President Lisa Rossbacher visited the sit-in to deliver a letter that read, in part, "We are all part of a larger community. Our focus needs to be how we work together, rather than against each other." An occupier, Andrew Perera, dismissed the letter as "a lot of pleasantries" and said the group has no intention of leaving the building.

Many students regard Bolman as an inspiration. "She was the first person to tell me to stand up taller and hold my head higher because I am a Lakota man," said Perera. "She was the first person to expect me to go to graduate school, and she gave me a sense of identity."

Another student, Conor Handley (Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Arizona), praised Bolman for having given him, "a Native student here at a predominantly non-Native town, a place to feel at home, a place to be Indian." <http://bit.ly/1ySezIp> 📍

Isolated Awa in Brazil Forced Out of Their Lands Again by Illegal Loggers

BY RICK KEARNS

Not for the first time, illegal logging is forcing isolated indigenous people out of their territory in Maranhao province in northern Brazil. Survival International (SI) and other advocate groups, including FUNAI, Brazil's national indigenous foundation, recently reported that three isolated Awa-guaja people appeared in an indigenous Maranhao village in late December following encounters with illegal loggers operating in their territory.

The two women and one adolescent boy were first seen by local Awa people outside the village, according to reports from the religious indigenous advocacy agency CIMI, and were taken in by the villagers.

The specific reasons for their arrival are not known. But one Awa resident of the Maranhao village told CIMI, "They were surrounded by loggers. We heard lots of noise from the chainsaws nearby and the tractors carving roads to transport the wood, and there were many trees marked for felling. So we said, 'Come with us, otherwise the loggers will kill you.' And they came with us."

While the Brazilian government has

taken steps to remove illegal loggers and other invaders from Awa territory, the recent arrival of the Awa-guaja indicates that the problem has not been resolved. "All uncontacted tribes face catastrophe unless their land is protected, and Amakaria's story is proof that the uncontacted Awá are living on a knife edge," said SI Director Stephen Corry.

"In 2014," he added, "Survival's campaign pushed Brazil into evicting loggers from Awá land, but it's vital that work doesn't stop. If the uncontacted Awá are to stand any chance of survival, their land must be properly secured."

<http://bit.ly/1601CRV> 📍

An Accolade For Ellsbury

Native center fielder is honored along with college team

New York Yankees center fielder Jacoby Ellsbury, Navajo/ Colorado River Indian tribes, is part of the Oregon State University 2005 baseball team that will be inducted into the university's Athletics Hall of Fame this fall. While on the Beavers, Ellsbury helped them win 46 games and set the stage for their 2006 and 2007 national titles. The first Native American of Navajo descent to reach the Major League, Ellsbury had a stellar career with the Boston Red Sox before joining the Yankees in 2013. Last year, he donated \$1 million to his alma mater to help expand the team's

locker room facilities. <http://bit.ly/15Yr5ud> 📍

Former Official Stole From Cayugas

Pleads guilty In court

Kim Thomas-Muffoletto, a former state official, pleaded guilty in court to charges that she stole thousands of dollars from the Cayuga Indian Nation. The former director of Native American Services at the New York State Office of Children and Family Services acknowledged on January 26 that she embezzled \$24,687 from the tribe's trust fund between April 2007 and January 2014, among more than a dozen accounts, Syracuse.com reported. Thomas-Muffoletto, who was originally charged with grand larceny on October 14, said she used some of the funds

to pay personal expenses and the expenses of certain family members. <http://bit.ly/1EOe2If> 📍

New Head Of NB3 Foundation

Justin Huenemann assumes post

Justin Huenemann, Navajo, is the new executive director of the NB3 Foundation, established by professional golfer Notah Begay III (Navajo, San Felipe and Isleta) to provide health and wellness education to Native American youth through sporting activities. A graduate of the University of Minnesota, Huenemann has been a senior program officer for the Northwest Area Foundation in St. Paul, Minnesota and was founding president and CEO of the Native American

Community Development Institute. Huenemann has also been involved with government, non-profit and higher education sectors, while also serving on numerous boards. At NB3 he replaces Crystal Echo Hawk, the foundation's only other executive director. <http://bit.ly/16117XR> 📍

Harassment During Hockey Game

Both youngsters and chaperones assailed

Assailants hurled epithets and dumped beer on Native youth and their chaperones during a Rapid City Rush hockey game in South Dakota on January 24, according to news reports. The assault took place on students from the American Horse K-8 school in Allen who were sitting below a VIP suite; the students

Services & Support

- Conference Facilitation
- Networking Opportunities
- Annual Native American Economic Summit
- Business & Procurement Fairs

Culture & Tourism

- Nation's Largest Pow-Wow
- Petroglyph National Monument
- International Balloon Fiesta
- Nation's Longest Aerial Tramway

Albuquerque

CENTURIES OF TRADITION, HERITAGE AND GROWTH

American Indian Chamber OF COMMERCE OF NEW MEXICO

2401 12th St NW, Suite 5-S
 Albuquerque, NM 87104
 PH: 505-766-9545
 FAX: 505-766-9499
 www.aiccnm.com

facebook

were told to “go back to the reservation,” according to a chaperone, Justin Poor Bear. Tom Helland, president of Rapid City beer distributor Eagle Sales, said that guests of the company suite were responsible for the harassment and apologized for the incident, the Associated Press reported. Several suspects have been identified. <http://bit.ly/1DhhrhB> and <http://bit.ly/1KcVJgP> 📍

PBPN Nation Loses Leader

Gary Mitchell walks on

The Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation (PBPN) is mourning the loss of its tribal leader Gary M. Mitchell, who walked on at age 63 on January 23 in Topeka, Kansas. The 18-year tribal government employee had served on the

Tribal Council as chairman, vice chairman, and treasurer. As tribal chairman Mitchell was a driving force for the tribal-state gaming compact of the 1990s and the building of a casino on the Prairie Band Reservation. The tribal historian, Mitchell also founded the *Potawatomi News*, the Nation’s newspaper, in 2000. Most recently he served as chairman of the PBPN Gaming Commission. <http://bit.ly/1Kcn42H> 📍

Soboba Band Gets Disaster Relief

Will receive federal aid

President Obama has ordered federal aid to supplement the efforts of the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians to recover from severe storms, flooding and mudslides that it suffered early in December. Obama’s

order, issued on January 27, extended to certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis. This provision will apply to emergency work and the repair or replacement of any damaged facilities on the 7,000-acre reservation. The 1,200-member tribe is also eligible for federal funding to assist with hazard mitigation measures. Rosalyn L. Cole has been named as the Federal Coordinating Officer for the recovery operations. More funds could be made available, said the Federal Emergency Management Agency. <http://bit.ly/1zegrKi> 📍

A Tribute To Misty Upham

Late Blackfeet star is honored at SAG Awards

The late actress Misty Upham, Blackfeet, was included in the “In Memoriam” tribute at the 2015 Screen Actors Guild Awards ceremony on January 25. Upham’s face appeared along with images of other recently deceased notables including Joan Rivers, Shirley Temple, James Garner, Philip Seymour Hoffman and Robin Williams. Upham’s promising career was cut short in October when she fell to her death at a ravine near the White River on the Muckleshoot Reservation in Washington State. Known for her work in the critically acclaimed *Frozen River*, which garnered her an Independent Spirit Award nomination, she was also in *August: Osage County* and the current release *Cake*. <http://bit.ly/1BCNXec> 📍

Not a Subscriber?

Get your own This Week From Indian Country Today eNewsletter!

SUBSCRIBE NOW



Do Natives Matter In 2016?

A new report skips over Indian electoral influence but the author affirms its clout **BY TANYA H. LEE**

Bottom Line: *The Center for American Progress has released the report “The Changing Face of America’s Electorate: Political Implications of Shifting Demographics,” focusing on the 2016 elections. The author, Patrick Oakford, discusses the report’s Native American angle—or, rather, the lack of it—and related minority matters:*

The report discusses voters of color but leaves out Native Americans, despite the fact that the American Indian/Alaska Native [AI/VN] population in several states is significant. Was there a reason Native Americans were not included in the analysis?

The exclusion of Native Americans in the analysis was simply due to data limitations. The data sets I used didn’t have a large enough sample size of Native Americans for me to include them in the analysis. However, the exclusion of Native Americans in the report in no way means that these voters aren’t influential in elections. And I don’t think their political influence should be lost on any 2016 presidential candidate.

The percentage of Native Americans in some states is quite significant. For example, in Oklahoma the AI/AN population is 9 percent; in Alaska, 14.7 percent; in New Mexico, 10.4 percent; in Arizona, 5.3 percent; and in South Dakota, 8.9 percent. Why wasn’t that population included in the data sets?

You’re right that in some states the population is quite high. And if we look at [U.S.] Census data, the Native American population would absolutely show up in those states. But the analysis relied upon not only Census data, but also state-specific exit polls. Unfortunately we don’t have detailed exit polling for every state. So there wasn’t a match between the states for which there is adequate Census data [on Native Americans] and the state-specific exit polling.

The Native American voter turnout

in 2012 helped swing elections in key states like North Dakota and Alaska. This was mostly due to a wide push for voter turnout through the Get Out the Native Vote initiative. Are other minority groups using similar tactics to improve their voter turnouts?

Absolutely. There are efforts all across the United States to try to increase voter registration and turnout among minorities. And I think we are moving in the

‘The 2013 Shelby County v. Holder decision was a devastating blow to the Voting Rights Act.’

right direction by expanding and improving those efforts. In Texas, for example, there were nearly 3 million Latinos who were eligible to vote but didn’t turn out in 2012. Since then, we’ve seen more targeted efforts to reach and register Latinos in Texas.

The Supreme Court in June 2013 rejected the Voting Rights Act’s central provision that all or part of 15 states had to get advance federal approval for any change in their voting laws. How will that ruling affect your projections and how do you think it’s going to have an impact on voting in 2016?


The 2013 *Shelby County v. Holder* decision was a devastating blow to the Voting Rights Act, and since that decision, numerous states have launched attacks against the voting rights of Americans. A

couple of examples: Texas passed a very strict photo identification law in 2011, but it didn’t go into effect until after the Supreme Court decision. Similarly, North Carolina significantly reduced the number of days for early voting. Both of these laws have the potential to dampen voter turnout. It’s going to be extremely important for organizations and communities to do everything they can to overcome the negative effects of these laws in 2016.

The 2014 midterm election saw a very small overall turnout, as is common in midterm elections—even though Native Americans turned out in large numbers to help secure wins. Do you know why minority groups tend to have low voter turnout rates?

There are multiple reasons. Perhaps most notably, these communities have had to overcome historical voter disenfranchisement. But I think broader inequality also plays a role. Pew Research has an interesting study in which they compare voter turnout rates between racial and ethnic groups by various demographic variables. For example, when one compares Latino and White non-Hispanic voter turnout rates by income or education level, the gap between these two groups narrows significantly.

Native Americans have been making progress in exercising their voting rights. In South Dakota, satellite voting offices were set up on reservations. In Alaska polling places had Alaska Native speakers to translate the ballots into Native languages. Do other minority groups face as much of an uphill battle?

This very much goes back to the *Shelby County* decision, which really set our country back and created new challenges for all Americans, particularly voters of color. I don’t think Native Americans are alone in having an uphill fight to secure equal voting rights. And while these fights may vary from state to state, it’s one that all Americans should be committed to winning. <http://bit.ly/1AeLjrR> 

California Tribe To Grow Medical Pot

Landmark deal represents new Native resource

Bottom Line: *With decriminalization of marijuana rising, and legal use of its medicinal strain rising, the Pinoleville Pomo Nation is set to take financial advantage of the situation.*

The Pinoleville Pomo Nation in northern California's Mendocino County is set to become the first tribe to grow and manufacture medical marijuana on tribal land. The tribe signed a deal early last month to develop an indoor grow facility for the crop on its rancheria north of Ukiah.

Much of the operation will be conducted by FoxBarry Farms, a subsidiary of Kansas-based FoxBarry Companies, which partners with tribes on a variety of economic development projects ranging from farms to casinos.

"We anticipate construction to begin in early February, and operations to commence by the end of the month," Barry Brautman, president of FoxBarry Companies, told Indian Country Today Media Network.

FoxBarry Farms will help develop "state-of-the-art greenhouses, as well as processing and office space" for the venture, Brautman said. "Our first phase will include 90,000 feet of greenhouse space, and another 20,000 feet of indoor space," he added. In addition, FoxBarry will manage distribution of the crop.

Tribal chairwoman Leona Williams emphasized the legality of the operation. "The tribe will actively monitor and oversee the operation to ensure compliance with the law and any employee or other person found in violation of state law will be turned over to the local law enforcement to be prosecuted to the fullest extent possible," she said in a statement.

According to Williams, the resulting revenue "will help pay for the tribe's social programs, including elder care, child care, health care and education," reported the *Press Democrat* of Santa Rosa, California.

Under the agreement, the marijuana will be sold only for authorized medical users and dispensaries, according to California state law. It is anticipated that California will join at least four other states in legalizing recreational use of marijuana next year.

FoxBarry has pledged \$30 million to develop at least three medical marijuana facilities on tribal lands in northern, cen-



Relief from pain, just a few puffs away

tral and southern California. According to Brautman, the company has reached terms with one other Indian Nation, though he declined to identify the tribe at this time. "Documentation is nearly complete," he said. "I anticipate that the operations for that tribe [are] 30 to 45 days behind Pinoleville."

FoxBarry is joined in the Pinoleville Pomo venture by United Cannabis. The Colorado-based outfit will offer consulting services to the FoxBarry-managed medical marijuana farms, particularly in regard to cultivation, harvesting, processing and sales. Under the licensing agreement, United Cannabis will receive \$200,000 in pre-paid royalties and 15 percent of net sales. In return, FoxBarry will have exclusive distribution rights to United Cannabis products in California.

"The project will be producing the full range of medical marijuana and medical marijuana-infused products under the licensing agreement with United Cannabis," Brautman said. This will include leaves,

flowers, hash, hash oil, medicinal pills and medicinal liquids and/or oils. The products will contain various levels of the psychoactive ingredient tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and the non-psychoactive cannabidiol (CBD).

CBD has been widely touted for its medicinal benefits, particularly in reducing symptoms of intractable epilepsy. Marijuana strains with high levels of THC have proved effective in controlling the symptoms of autism in some children by stimulating brain cell signaling and reducing certain dysfunctions, reported SFGate.com.

News of the agreement comes shortly after the U.S. Justice Department agreed to allow federally recognized Indian Nations to grow, manufacture and sell marijuana and marijuana-related products on tribal lands without fear of federal harassment. The agreement was stated in a memorandum dated October 28 and released in December.

Under the terms of the Justice Department memo, tribes selling marijuana on sovereign lands will only be prosecuted if they violate any of the eight guidelines that are also in place in states where it is legal to grow and sell the substance. These guidelines cover such areas as selling marijuana to minors or diverting it to states where marijuana is illegal.

Many industry experts and tribal observers believe that the medical marijuana industry may constitute a significant source of income for Indian Country in years to come.

"I don't think anything will ever provide the far-reaching economic benefits of gaming to tribes," said Brautman. "That being said, the marketplace is lucrative on the proper scale. Tribes that participate in the right type of projects will certainly be in a position to provide their membership with benefits including housing, health care and education." <http://bit.ly/1C89Uoh>

Ktunaxa Oppose Wolf Killings

An attempt to save caribou encounters tribal resistance BY JACK MCNEEL

Bottom Line: *In British Columbia, caribou are endangered and predator wolves are on the rise. Should the latter be hunted to rescue the former?*

A new plan by British Columbia wildlife authorities to cull wolf packs that are preying on a thin caribou herd in the Selkirk Mountain Range has drawn fire from the Ktunaxa Nation. But faced with a growing wolf population and caribou numbers, wildlife authorities along the border of Washington, Idaho and British Columbia feel they have no choice.

The decision to hunt the wolf packs was not taken lightly, said Wayne Wakkinen, a regional wildlife manager in northern Idaho, who previously studied grizzlies and woodland caribou in the region as a research biologist.

“It wasn’t just, ‘Let’s go out and kill some wolves and hope it works,’” Wakkinen told Indian Country Today Media Network. “If you look at what would probably be the result of no action, it’s that we’re going to lose caribou. That’s the bottom line. Some people don’t like the idea of wolf control, but given the option of wolf control or do nothing and watch caribou go extinct in the Selkirks, you’ve got to do something or face the consequences.”

The Ktunaxa Nation disagrees, even though the plan also includes measures they favor. This includes protecting 2.5 million hectares from logging and road building in the area, to promote healthy habitat and enable mountain caribou recovery.

“The Ktunaxa Nation is deeply concerned,” the tribe said in a statement. “We

are concerned this approach to conservation is extremely hasty. Management efforts should focus on increasing the population of caribou. Killing one species of animal to benefit another species is contrary to Ktunaxa stewardship values.”



Still standing . . . for now.


Caribou have historically occupied this area. Their numbers declined greatly in the late 1900s, and for three years in the early 1990s Idaho even imported caribou from British Columbia to try and reestablish the population. Washington State took the same approach in the late 1990s. However, according to Wakkinen, there are at this time no caribou to speak of in Idaho.

“Six or seven years ago it seemed the population had stabilized around 45 or 50 in the whole Selkirk range,” Wakkinen said. Even then, no more than four were seen in the U.S., he added. Records from four or five years ago in British Columbia show a rapid drop in population. Last year just 18 caribou were counted, and wolves were

nearby. Authorities believe it is likely not a coincidence that wolves became established in the area at about the time caribou numbers went into decline. Now there are three known packs in the Selkirk Mountains, and wolf numbers could be as high as 24.

British Columbia currently has radio collars on wolves in two of the three packs. Last year wildlife authorities collared six caribou, and in the past year they have documented two losses to wolf predation in the herd. Management agencies in the states and province have concluded that total elimination of wolves within this population is the answer. British Columbia has also been given permission to fly up to 12 miles into Idaho for wolf control if needed.

A more multifaceted approach is needed to boost caribou numbers, the Ktunaxa said, including restriction of access to key habitat, decreasing vehicle mortality and establishing breeding programs. While the tribe supports monitoring predation impacts, it called the wolf-killing plan a narrow, short-term approach.

British Columbia’s Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations finalized its Grey Wolf Management Plan last April, with the fundamental goal being to maintain self-sustaining wolf populations. The plan allows for wolf removal in targeted locations such as the Selkirk Range to protect the very small population of caribou. With a provincial population of about 8,500, wolves are not a species of concern in British Columbia as they are in much of the U.S. <http://bit.ly/1KdCIBN> 

Murkowski Blasts Wildlife Plan

Obama is declaring 'war against Alaska,' says senator **BY GALE COUREY TOENSING**

Bottom Line: *President Obama wants to preserve Alaskan wildlife. Alaska's senior senator wants to promote development. A clash was inevitable.*

Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) last week vehemently attacked a White House plan to legally set aside millions of acres of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) as wilderness, protecting it permanently against oil and gas drilling (see related story, p. 3).

"This outrageous action confirms what most Alaskans have feared—that the Obama administration's war against Alaska families and the middle class would only intensify under the final two years of President Obama's tenure," Murkowski said.

Obama's environmental protection plan, Murkowski said, would "lock up" millions of acres of the nation's richest oil and natural gas prospects on the Arctic coastal plain and block development of Alaska's offshore resources. She charged that the White House made its decision without proper consultation.

"I cannot understand why this administration is willing to negotiate with Iran, but not Alaska," Murkowski said. "But we will not be run over like this. We will fight back with every resource at our disposal."

At issue is President Obama's January 25 announcement that he would formally recommend that Congress designate an additional 12.28 million acres of ANWR as wilderness, the highest level of protection available to public lands. The proposal would include ANWR's Coastal Plain, which contains considerable oil and gas reserves.

Currently, more than seven million acres of the refuge are managed as wil-

derness under the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980. But more than 60 percent of the refuge, including the Coastal Plain, is not protected under that designation.

The White House said Murkowski "overreacted" to the presidential announcement, according to Politico.com. The *Christian Science Monitor* called the senator's response a "primal scream." And the Obama administration is committed

to protecting the pristine 12.28 million acres of ANWR that are currently under debate.

to protecting the pristine 12.28 million acres of ANWR that are currently under debate. In this capacity, she carries considerable clout in the current environmental battle. Expanding on a press release headlined "Obama, Jewell Declaring War on Alaska's Future," a visibly angry Murkowski held forth at a press conference on January 26. Joining her at the podium were her fellow Alaska congressmen Sen. Dan Sullivan and Rep. Don Young, both Republicans.

"It is a one, two, three kick to the gut of Alaska's economy," she said. "We have said as a delegation that we will not stand it, we will not tolerate it, we will do everything we can to push back against an administration that has taken a look at Alaska and decided it's 'a nice little snow globe up there and we're going to keep it that way.' That's not how you treat a state. Show us some respect."

Sullivan vowed to fight "this outrageous action from President Obama." Young said the administration's "latest attacks on Alaska" are "a violation of existing law" and that he is "already beginning work in the House to ensure this assault is stopped dead in its tracks."

If Congress approves Obama's plan, it would be the largest wilderness designation since the passage of the visionary Wilderness Act more than 50 years ago. But Murkowski said this is not likely to happen.

"I can almost guarantee that this Congress will not approve placing ANWR into wilderness status," she told National Public Radio. She added that much White House attention is focused on polar bears, birds and other "critters" that populate the area but that the interests of her constituents are "more important."

<http://bit.ly/1EQzXyi> 📱



Murkowski: 'We will not be run over like this.'

to protecting the pristine 12.28 million acres of ANWR that are currently under debate.

"Designating vast areas in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as Wilderness reflects the significance this landscape holds for America and its wildlife," Interior Department Secretary Sally Jewell said. "Just like Yosemite or the Grand Canyon, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is one of our nation's crown jewels and we have an obligation to preserve this spectacular place for generations to come."

Murkowski chairs the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee and the Interior and Environment Appropriations Subcommittee, which together oversee the Interior Department's underlying legisla-

**ND EPSCoR Tribal Colleges
Liaison Manager
ND EPSCoR**

Maintain/enhance strong alliances between the ND EPSCoR program and the Tribal Colleges; support research/training capacity-building initiatives at each tribal college that will engage faculty/baccalaureate anticipatory STEM majors; maintain a data collection and manage system. Will travel extensively throughout North Dakota. Req. Master's degree in a science, engineering or mathematics discipline; 2 yrs. supervisory exp.

For complete details on this position and to apply, go to www.ndsu.edu/jobs (only online applications are accepted). \$75,000+/year plus comprehensive fringe benefit package including retirement plan and full coverage for family health insurance. Screening begins Feb. 6. #1500012.



Human Resources
SGC, 1919 N. University Dr.
 Fargo, ND 58102
(701) 231-6293

NDSU is an EEO/AA-M/F/Vet/Disability employer.

Women and traditionally underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply.

**Seeking Established
Brokerage Operations**

Seeking established Brokerage operations who have experience in Marketing and Sales within Indian Country for a newly formed Property/Casualty Tribal Insurance facility.

Please submit a resume of your agency/brokerage operation and include your tribal experience within Indian Country.

Reply to:
insurancebroker25@propertycasualtyfacility.com

David Minkin Senior Apartments

Beginning on January 26, 2015 our 99-unit building at 5313 9th Avenue; Brooklyn, NY 11220 will be re-opening its waiting list to the elderly, where the head or spouse is 62 or older, including units that are handicapped accessible, with limited income based on Section 8 guidelines.

Qualifications for the 99 units, which include 10 units for the mobility impaired, will be based on Section 8 guidelines. Interested persons may obtain an application by writing to:

David Minkin Senior Apartments
c/o P.O.P. MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
191 Joralemon Street, 8th Floor
Brooklyn, New York 11201

Or in person at 5313 9th Avenue; Brooklyn, NY 11220; leave contact information during the hours of 2-4 pm.

All applications will be mailed.

COMPLETED APPLICATIONS MUST BE SENT BY REGULAR MAIL TO THE POST OFFICE BOX INDICATED ON THE APPLICATION FORM. APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED AT THE POST OFFICE NO LATER THAN FEBRUARY 21, 2015.



Positions Available



U.S. Department of the Interior
Office of Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs



Bureau of Indian Education

Associate Deputy Director - BIE Operated Schools

**Location: Albuquerque, NM
Control Number: 391413100**

Associate Deputy Director - Tribally Controlled Schools

**Location: Bloomington, MN
Control number: 391425200**

Closing Dates for both Positions:
February 11, 2015

For More Information and Application Procedures:

www.usajobs.gov

Use the control numbers to search the database.

Or Contact:

Ms. April Gromadzki, HR Specialist at,
april.gromadzki@bia.gov

The Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Preference will be given to American Indian and Alaska Natives

**Omaha Tribe of
Nebraska is hiring for
the following positions:**

Assistant Attorney General
Behavioral Health Therapists

EMT

Dietary Supervisor

APRN

Omaha Tribe of Nebraska
PO Box 368
Macy, NE 68039

P:402-837-5391
F:402-837-4394

rhastings@omahatribe.com

Not a
Subscriber?

Get your own
This Week From Indian Country Today
eNewsletter!





Tanya Tagaq honors her Inuit heritage on her new album, Animism, which was recently nominated for three Juno Awards in Canada.



Brian Cladoosby, president of the National Congress of American Indians, unfurled an Iroquois wampum belt as a gesture of respect among all peoples during his recent State of Indian Nations address.



Environmentalists are increasingly concerned by a rash of deaths that is occurring among bighorn sheep in Montana and neighboring areas.



Justin Huenemann, Navajo, is the new executive director of the NB3 Foundation, founded by Native golf star Notah Begay.

IVAN OTIS/COURTESY BERNSTEIN ARTISTS, INC.; VINCENT SCHILLING; JACK MCNEEL; FLICKR

Headlines from the Web

TRIBE'S \$6 MILLION GIFT TO HELP NATIVE AMERICAN NETWORK GO GLOBAL

<http://bit.ly/1yZd9vW>

FIRST TRIBAL-OWNED TACO BELL SET TO OPEN ON MORONGO INDIAN RESERVATION

<http://bit.ly/1v7l6PZ>

CAYUGA NATION, UNION SPRINGS AWAIT FEDERAL COURT DECISION ON GAMING, LEADERSHIP

<http://bit.ly/1CEKr4x>

TRIBES AT ODDS ABOUT 2 ½ ACRES IN YUBA COUNTY

<http://bit.ly/1zFG9e6>

NATION TO RECEIVE \$7.4 MILLION IN COBELL LAND BUY-BACK PROGRAM

<http://bit.ly/1zeCu3u>

UNFINISHED NATIVE CULTURAL CENTER POSES PROBLEM FOR LEGISLATURE

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

Upcoming Events

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT INFORMATION SESSION

FEBRUARY 5

This outreach and education event will discuss health and dental coverage options for Native Americans under the Affordable Care Act. Sponsored by the National Indian Health Board, the National Council on Urban Indian Health, the Native American Health Coalition of Houston and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Location: The United Way, Houston, Texas

AMERICAN INDIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

FEBRUARY 5-6

"Sustainability of Traditional Language, Culture and Knowledge" is the subject of the 16th annual conference of AISA. With traditional knowledge as a broadly constructed concept, conference topics will include, but not be limited to, language, art, history, the environment,

governance, health, storytelling and education.

Location: University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico

BAY AREA AMERICAN INDIAN TWO SPIRIT POWWOW FEBRUARY 7

This is the fourth annual powwow organized by Bay Area American Indian Two-Spirits, an organization that offers culturally relevant activities for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex Native Americans, their family and friends in an alcohol and drug-free environment.

Location: Cow Palace, San Francisco, California

ALASKA FORUM ON THE ENVIRONMENT FEBRUARY 9-13

The 17th annual gathering of environmental professionals from government agencies, nonprofit and for-profit businesses, community leaders, Alaskan youth, conservationists, biologists and community elders will offer over 80 technical breakout sessions and keynote events. Discussions will be devoted to climate change, energy, environmental regulations, cleanup and remediation,

fish and wildlife, and other subjects.

Location: Dena'ina Convention Center, Anchorage, Alaska

INDIAN RESERVATION ROADS PROGRAM CONSULTATION SESSIONS FEBRUARY 10 AND 12

These public forums are designed to solicit input on proposed revisions to the Indian Reservation Roads Program—formally identified as 25 CFR 170—and its successor, the Tribal Transportation Program. The proposed revisions update 25 CFR 170 to comply with the Moving Ahead for Programs in the 21st Century Act, which was passed by Congress in 2012. The Moving Ahead legislation reflects additional delivery options for the TTOP that are available to tribal governments, and clarifies requirements for proposed roads and other access to tribal communities. The initiative is a joint effort between the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration.

Locations: Frontier Building, Anchorage, Alaska (February 10) and Crowne Plaza Seattle Airport, Seattle, Washington (February 12)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Gabriel Galanda's column "Disenrollment Is a Tool of the Colonizers" (January 16) offers excellent food for thought.

Self-imposed tribal disenrollment exacts a high psychological toll. Nowhere is this more evident than in the case of my own people, the Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians. They are now the poster children for

the destruction and dysfunction that is spreading throughout Indian Country at an alarming rate.

Today, the Picayune is not a tribe but a people reduced from over 1,850 tribal members to fewer than 700. They have no tribal government. Instead, they have self-appointed warring factions, all of whom claim "leadership." Programs at Picayune are at a total

standstill.

What is the solution? Bring the people—all the people—home to Picayune, as well as to all the other tribes where corrupt tribal governments have stolen their people's very identity through disenrollment. This is where we belong.

—Cathy L. Cory
Porterville, California



TOP NEWS ALERTS

From IndianCountryTodayMediaNetwork.com

KEY POST FOR NOTTAWASEPPI HURON MEMBER

Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder has appointed Christine Lanning, Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Pottawatomi Tribal Council Member, to the Michigan Community Service Commission. Lanning is the tribal council treasurer and serves as chairperson for both the Culture Committee and Elders Committee. She brings more than 30 years of experience in sales and marketing; she has been senior purchasing agent for the tribe's award-winning FireKeepers Casino Hotel in Battle Creek, vice president for Lanco Marketing, and the bid and program sales manager for Sysco Food Services.

RARE GENE IN CANADIAN INUITS

Approximately 3 percent of Canada's Inuit population has a genetic intolerance to sugar, a new study says. Writing in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, a research team noted that the condition, congenital sucrose-isomaltase deficiency (CSID) barely exists among North Americans of European ancestry but has a much higher prevalence among indigenous peoples in the north. Perhaps 28.5 percent of the Canadian Inuit population carry the CSID gene, the study says. Researchers from the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario led the study.

AK-CHIN TRIBAL COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

Louis J. Manuel Jr. and Delia M. Carlyle were recently named chairman and vice-chair, respectively, by the Ak-Chin Indian Community Tribal

Council. Manuel and Carlyle will serve one-year terms for the Arizona tribe that sits nestled in the Santa Cruz Valley. Both have set goals that are focused on further expansion of the tribe's economic projects and job creation for the community. The Tribal Council serves the 1,004-member community with a land base of just over 22,000 acres.

MOHAWK FAMILY DEVASTATED BY FIRE

A family lost its home and all its possessions in a fire on the St. Regis Mohawk territory in New York on January 16. The uninsured homeowners, the Jacobs family, were not hurt. In the wake of the fire, the Akwesasne community has pitched in to help. "We were getting donations that night," said Al-lena Jacobs. In addition, the St.

Regis Mohawk Tribal Council has stepped forward by approving the offer of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to donate a temporary trailer.

DIVERSITY PLEDGES AT U. OF OKLAHOMA

Rumors of a planned "Cowboys and Indians" fraternity party at the University of Oklahoma (OU) have prompted new diversity initiatives. Although university and fraternity officials found no such party was impending, the incident inspired students to petition for an official university policy that would ban such events or acts that exploit another culture's history, customs and beliefs. The OU Student Life office responded by saying it would reaffirm anti-discrimination policies and work to increase diversity education and training.

How Did I Miss That?

Cousin Ray offers unconventional wisdom on musical diplomacy, Tea Party wisdom and the curious phenomenon of Robert E. Lee Day BY STEVE RUSSELL

Secretary of State John Kerry visited Paris to mend the fences that needed mending after no high-ranking American attended the Paris solidarity march. In addition to his flawless French, Kerry brought on James Taylor to sing “You’ve Got A Friend.” That led the titular head of the GOP, Rush Limbaugh, to respond, “Oh, my God, what a bunch of wusses, what a bunch of mush. It’s squishy. And the militant Islamists all over the world cannot believe the good luck that they’ve been handed.”

My Republican cousin Ray Sixkiller was less rabid. “You gotta admit,” Ray laughed, “it wasn’t exactly ‘Lafayette, we are here!’”

* * *

And then Ray wished me a happy Robert E. Lee Day. I had to ask when that was and why I should be happy about treason. Turns out, it’s the way Alabama, Arkansas, and Mississippi cover up Martin Luther King Day. They have no problem honoring a man who led a failed revolution to maintain slavery on the same day as a man who fought slavery’s bastard offspring, Jim Crow.

* * *

Famous pig castrator Sen. Joni Ernst (R-Iowa) gave the official GOP response to the State of the Union Address. Rachel Maddow of MSNBC wondered if that would end the separate Tea Party response, since Ernst is to the right of Attila the Hun.

No, the Tea Party response was given by Rep. Curt Clawson (R-Florida), famous for telling Nisha Biswal of the U.S. State Department and Arun Kumar of the U.S. Commerce Department, “I’m familiar with your country;

I love your country. Anything I can do to make the relationship with India better, I’m willing and enthusiastic about doing so. Just as your capital is welcome here to produce good-paying jobs in the U.S. I’d like our capital to be welcome there. I ask cooperation and commitment and priority from your government in so doing. Can I have that?”

“It could have been worse,” Cousin Ray grimaced. “He could have taken Pakistan’s side in the Kashmir dispute.”

* * *

Al Jazeera reported that Pope Francis, responding to a question about Catholic family size, declaimed that Catholics do not have to breed “like rabbits.” Citing a woman pregnant after seven C-sections, the Pontiff called the eighth pregnancy “an irresponsibility” when “God gives you methods to be responsible.”

Cousin Ray smirked at another lecture on sex from a celibate.

* * *

A body with very little celibacy, the U.S. Senate, has voted 98-1 that climate change is happening, but a filibuster stopped any recognition that humans are causing it.

As long as the Senate thinks that the environment answers to its beliefs, Cousin Ray wondered, why doesn’t it repeal wildfires, floods, and superstorms?

* * *

A poll by NBC News and *The Wall Street Journal* showed that approval ratings for governors Mitt Romney and Jeb Bush have fallen like stones

since they began offering themselves as presidential candidates. Bush is down to 19 percent and Romney has fallen to 27 percent. As for ex-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, she is at 43 percent.

Cousin Ray commented, “There’s great entertainment value in any of those three trying to position themselves as economic populists.”

* * *

CNBC reported that Owen Li of a New York hedge fund, Canarsie Capital, was running about \$100 million in March of last year. He’s now down to about \$200,000. Li has apologized for losing his clients’ money: “I take responsibility for this terrible outcome ... My only hope is that you understand that I acted in an attempt—however misguided—to generate higher returns for the fund and its investors. But even so, I acted overzealously, causing you devastating losses for which there is no excuse.”

“Lemme get this straight,” Cousin Ray said, rolling his eyes. “This dude loses almost \$100 million of other people’s money and it’s big news that he apologized?”

* * *

NBC reported that Arizona has become the first state to require passing a civics test for graduating high school. Students must answer 60 of 100 questions correctly on the same civics test given to new citizens as a condition of naturalization. If tribal governments started doing the same, it would seriously limit tribal enrollments.

“Maybe so,” Cousin Ray pointed out, “but nothing will stop the hordes with Cherokee grandmothers...and all princesses to boot.” <http://bit.ly/1H3dnHJ> ☞



The German candymaker Haribo will alter its 'Skipper Mix' following complaints of ethnic stereotyping.

HARIBO

THE BIG PICTURE