



# Indian Country THIS WEEK FROM

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

## *A Letter from the Publisher*

*Shekóli.* Once again, Indian Health Services is in the news, bringing more questions to the fore about one of the most crucial agencies established by the United States to fulfill its legal treaty obligations with the citizens of Indian nations. This week's story focuses on the shuffling of leadership positions at the agency, with concurrent assessments of how well the agency will manage to work with a newly-elected Republican Congress.

There have been commendable efforts to improve the state of health care for Natives via strong provisions in the Affordable Care Act, and ICTMN will continue to do its best to inform its readers on how to make the most of these provisions. However, even if the operation of IHS was free from the current criticisms from both sides of the House, our correspondents would find it difficult to convince the patients and clients in the system that they were receiving care comparable to the average person in the United States. The reality is that IHS may recruit the most worthy candidates and develop the most streamlined management organization in the federal government and still be viewed with trepidation by Natives of all nations. The root problem comes down to money. The agency is underfunded, and vulnerable to budget conflicts in Congress when its financing should not be up for debate. Members of Congress can snipe at Presidential appointees and bicker about performance, but until the United States meets its legal treaty obligations



and establishes a fixed line in the budget, working at the agency or its service institutions will be a thankless task.

Not so coincidentally, this week's edition carries a tribute to Shotpouch, a medicine person whose lifelong knowledge of plants and natural medicines enriched the health of many petitioners. So, while we look to improve the quality of care from western medical practitioners, we must never forget our traditional ways, ways that can keep us healthy and strong and out of the hospital bed. Native use of plants and herbs has now been commercialized and diluted by corporations offering so-called natural powders and plants in a jar. Stacks of self-help books have been written about healthy living and preventive care based on traditional Indian ways. Neither trends come close to representing the truths guarded by our cultures. We must treasure, preserve and support our medicine people. What they know is priceless and crucial to the future; not just to us, but for everyone else on Turtle Island as well.

*Na kir wa,*

Ray Halbritter

## Table of *Contents*



<b>2</b>	COMMENTARY	<b>11</b>	CLASSIFIEDS
<b>3</b>	NEWS	<b>12</b>	WEEK IN PHOTOS
<b>7</b>	SLOW EXTINCTION	<b>13</b>	HEADLINE, EVENTS, LETTERS
<b>8</b>	STRENGTH IN NUMBERS	<b>14</b>	CARTOON, ALERTS
<b>9</b>	INDIAN HEALTH TAKES CENTER STAGE	<b>15</b>	HOW DID I MISS THAT
		<b>16</b>	BIG PICTURE

### Christian Violence: Obama Touches a Sore Spot in American Politics

*Peter d'Errico expands the comparison recently given by President Barack Obama during the National Prayer Breakfast.*

Are you puzzled about the violence of the Islamic State, how killing and torture can be justified by religious doctrines? Have you thought that Muslim violence today echoes Christian violence in the Crusades and the Inquisition? If so, you likely welcomed President Obama's comments at the National Prayer Breakfast in early February.

If you are among those who reflexively

criticize anything Obama says, or are enamored of right-wing media bloviators, you may have gotten indigestion at Obama's statement that in "the Crusades and the Inquisition... people committed terrible deeds in the name of Christ."

Former Republican governor of Virginia, Jim Gilmore, said Obama's comparison of Muslim and Christian violence was "the most offensive [comment] I've ever heard a president make in my lifetime." Gilmore added, "He has offended every believing Christian in the United States." [Question: are there non-believing Christians?] The president of the Catholic League, Bill Donohue, stated that Obama's comparison was

"insulting" and "pernicious."

What are these people upset about? One wonders whether Gilmore and Donohue really don't know the history of Christianity, or if they believe this history should be hidden. Given the sad state of education in the United States, the possibility of their ignorance exists. Equally sadly, the possibility exists that they know this history and want to hide it.

Historical records show that Christianity was very violent during long periods of its development. The horrors of the Crusades and the Inquisition, to which Obama referred, are demonstrated in official church documents. <http://bit.ly/1J5C6Mo> ☞

### Should Tribes Grow Pot on the Rez?

*As the legalization of marijuana has sparked in Indian country, Harlan McKosato looks for answers to big questions.*

The smoke you see coming from tribal lands is no longer the stereotypical smoke signals. The smoke is coming from the mouths of Native people who are pro-legalization of marijuana, and from the ears of those who are against it. I say this tongue-in-cheek, but the debate is sparking up (so to speak).

In December, the U.S. Department of Justice released a memo stating that Indian tribes can grow and sell marijuana on their lands as long as they follow the same fed-

eral guidelines as states that have legalized "the ganja." More than half the states have some form of law that legalizes pot – 23 states have legalized medical marijuana and Colorado, Washington, Oregon and Alaska have legalized recreational use. California, Arizona, Nevada and New Hampshire are apparently the next states on the horizon to legalize recreational use.

Now, back to the idea of tribes starting their own marijuana farms – one argument is that growing and selling pot could offer tribes another boost (i.e. tribal casinos) to their local economies. Another argument is that reservations and villages need another legalized recreational drug like they need another hole in the head.

"For me, it's a drug," said Ellen Fills the

Pipe, Oglala Sioux Tribal Councilwoman and chair of the council's law and order committee. Smell the Truth, an online news source dedicated to the coverage of medical marijuana and cannabis industries, described Fills the Pipe as the "owner of the most ironic tribal name in existence, (who) will likely oppose the newly relaxed law due to her background in law enforcement."

The big questions are: Who is going to enforce the rules and regulations that have been laid down by the DOJ? What about all the anti-drug people on the rez whose work could be thwarted by a new tribal law legalizing marijuana? Don't tribes need all the economic development opportunities they can get? <http://bit.ly/1KRuqZS> ☞

### Poverty, Genetics and the White American Psyche

*Tanya H. Lee looks at the history of whites treating non-whites as inferior beings and why it needs to end.*

The sequencing of the human genome and the science that made that feat possible have led to some fascinating new research into genetics. Among the most intriguing projects are those that link poverty to genetic changes in children and those that strongly imply that genetic changes caused by environmental factors, as well as those that result from random mutations, can be passed from one generation to the next.

This research can be interpreted from a social justice perspective as proof that pov-

erty, particularly child poverty, is a human rights issue. It can be used to develop interventions to help kids compensate for the effects poverty may have on their brains and bodies. It can lead to legislation that lessens the gap between the wealthy and the poor and raises everyone to an acceptable standard of living.

Or not.

As a nation that was founded and built on the premise that some people (those of Northern European extraction) are inherently and irrevocably superior to other people (pretty much everyone else), we need to be very careful about how we understand and, as journalists, report this new research.

Our history of racism and our belief in

"American [read White] exceptionalism" started when the first European settlers began slaughtering first nations peoples to take the land and resources they controlled. It extended right through the 20th century with the forced removal of indigenous people from their land and children from their families. In the 21st century, we still see this happening as fishing and hunting rights are contested, subsistence is threatened by international corporations, the extraction of natural resources on Indian lands is for the most part conducted by non-Indians for the benefit of non-Indians, education for most Indian children is disgraceful, and poverty and lack of opportunity lead to addiction and teen suicide. <http://bit.ly/1AITHNW> ☞



**The National Center**  
for American Indian Enterprise Development

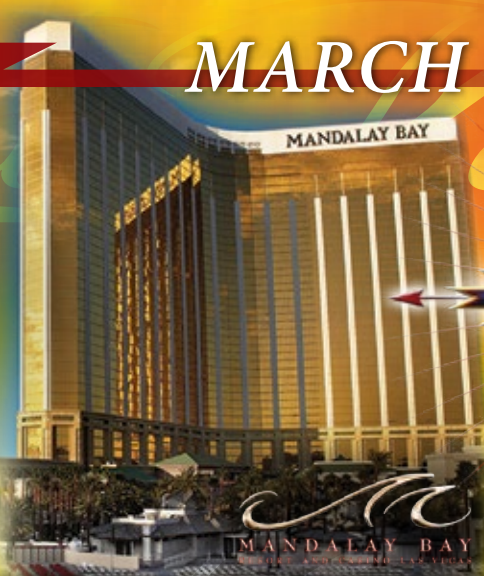
**MARCH 9 - 12, 2015**

IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE...

# NATIONAL RES

RESERVATION ECONOMIC SUMMIT

*Las Vegas*



**ADVANCE REGISTRATION ENDS FEBRUARY 20, 2015**

**WE MEAN BUSINESS FOR INDIAN COUNTRY!**

**NATIONAL RES LAS VEGAS 2015 FEATURES:**

- Nearly 4,000 Attendees From Across The U.S. & Canada
- 2 Days of the Largest Native American Business Tradeshow
- Electrifying General Sessions & Keynote Speakers
- 4 Days of Catered Networking Meals & Receptions
- The Most Effective Networking Opportunities in Indian Country
- Network with Key Business Executives, Tribal Leaders, Federal Officials and Dignitaries
- 4 Days of Training & Business Development
- Buy Native Procurement & Matchmaking Expos
- 27th Annual NCAIED Scholarship Golf Tournament
- RES Business Boot Camp
- National Center Business Innovation Forums



**BUSINESS TRADESHOW & EXPO**

Put your products and services in front of thousands of Native American businesses and entrepreneurs at the largest annual Indian Country economic summit.



**BUY NATIVE PROCUREMENT EXPO**

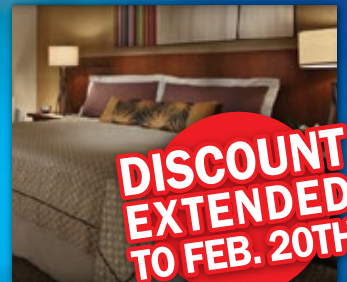
Have the opportunity to present you company's goods and/or services to buyers from federal, state, and local governments, as well as Fortune 500 corporations.

**Interested? To sign up, please email: [PTAC@ncaied.org](mailto:PTAC@ncaied.org) or call: (770) 494-0431**



**RES BUSINESS BOOT CAMP**

Features dynamic presenters, panel discussions, interactive exercises, and structured networking with industry leaders that will tackle the most important topics for business success and will jump start the National RES 2015 Las Vegas Conference!



**HOTEL RESERVATION & DISCOUNT RATE**

MANDALAY BAY SPECIAL CONFERENCE RATE:  
**SUN-TUE: \$194+** TAXES & FEES  
**WED: \$124+** TAXES & FEES  
**THURS: \$94 +** TAXES & FEES  
**CALL: 877-632-7800**  
**USE CODE: RES2015**

**Register Your Booth Today!**

**Attend on Monday, March 9th!**

**Book Your Room Today!**

**REGISTER TODAY & SAVE AT: [WWW.NCAIED.ORG](http://WWW.NCAIED.ORG)**

## Billy Frank Jr. Honored With Salmon Totem Pole

BY RICHARD WALKER

A pole honoring the late Billy Frank Jr. (1931-2014) now stands at Wa He Lut Indian School at Frank's Landing on the Nisqually reservation in Washington State.

The Salmon Totem Pole stands not far from where Frank and others were arrested multiple times for exercising their treaty fishing rights in the Fish Wars of the 1960s and 1970s. Stand here at this historic, ancestral place, and you're standing on ground that was the center of efforts leading to the 1974 federal court decision upholding Indigenous Peoples' inherent right to fish.

It was a battle to defend a people's cultural and spiritual survival.

"We were fighting for our life—our survival," Frank told one of his biographers, Trova Heffernan, in the book *Where the Salmon Run: The Life and Legacy of Billy Frank Jr.*

The pole was dedicated on January 23, Founders Day at Wa He Lut Indian School. The honor pole was carved by Lummi Nation master carver Jewell James and the House of Tears Carvers, and depicts a salmon atop a stanchion of running waters.

Frank, who passed away on May 5, 2014 at age 83, was the longtime chairman of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission. He spent much of his life defending the environment, the salmon, and treaty rights—not just Northwest treaty rights, but treaty rights elsewhere in the United States. After the 1974 court decision, he worked to improve and protect the health of the environment, forging partnerships—sometimes unlikely ones—and holding the U.S. government accountable for its treaty responsibilities.

Now, the Salmon Totem Pole stands as a reminder to students of Frank's courage, tenacity and life work—and of the students' responsibility to be good caretakers of the environment that sustains us. <http://bit.ly/1FEW6QB> ☎

## Workshops Assist Navajo Businesses Survive

BY KRISTI EATON

As president of iiná bá, Inc, a Native American-owned environmental consulting firm, Duane Aspaas says he is always looking for tips, training and education for his staff of nearly 20 to stay competitive.

Marketing and administrative staff from iiná bá, Inc., recently attended a workshop hosted by The National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development to learn about the proposal and request-for-proposal process that goes into obtaining high-level contracts in Indian country.

Afterward, Aspaas and his business were selected by the Navajo Gaming and EPA for contracts. "Often times when preparing a proposal, it is easiest to use some stock company marketing materials and qualifications language," he said. "I like to think we've been selected by the Navajo Gaming and EPA because the presentation of our proposal was very professional and was organized to highlight our qualifications to meet their specific project requirements."

That's exactly what the people behind NCAIED want to hear. The organization was started to develop American Indian economic self-sufficiency through business ownership. Originally started back in 1969 in Los Angeles as a grassroots movement, it was known as the Urban Indian Development Association. The seven American Indian leaders who started it believed economic empowerment could help improve conditions for Native Americans through partnerships between government, the private sector and Indian country.

The biggest obstacles stopping Native-owned businesses from winning high-level government contracts is a lack of knowledge, capital, bonding and qualified personnel, said Cyndi Jarvison, senior procurement specialist for The National Center Procurement Technical Assistance Center, who works solely within the Navajo Bureau of Indian Affairs region. <http://bit.ly/1KStc2m> ☎

## IHS Careers—Opportunity. Adventure. Purpose

BY INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

If you're looking for a career that will allow you to contribute to a rewarding mission, look no further. The Indian Health Service (IHS) is an innovative, dynamic, nationwide organization of public health professionals working to meet the individual health care needs of American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Our health care professionals not only serve appreciative communities with interesting and exciting traditions to share, they also practice patient-centered care working as part of an interdisciplinary team.

We offer three distinct career paths: The federal civil service, direct Tribal/Urban Indian hire or as an officer of the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps. The civil service and Commissioned Corps each offer generous vacation, sick leave, insurance and retirement packages, as well as possibilities for sign-up bonuses. If you choose to work directly for a Tribe, your pay and benefits are comparable to federal employment, but are negotiated directly with the Tribe.

What's more, you could be eligible to apply for the IHS Loan Repayment Program (LRP), which repays qualified health profession education loans—up to \$40,000—in exchange for an initial

two-year service commitment at an eligible site.

And you can experience all of this while living and working in some of the most beautiful areas of the country, making an IHS career all the more rewarding.

Professionally rewarding and personally fulfilling. Explore a world of opportunities at [www.ihs.gov/careeropps](http://www.ihs.gov/careeropps) or contact [IHSRecruiters@ihs.gov](mailto:IHSRecruiters@ihs.gov).

The policy of the IHS is to provide absolute preference to qualified Indian applicants and employees who are suitable for federal employment in filling vacancies within the IHS. IHS is an equal opportunity employer. <http://bit.ly/1uPcXiD> ☎

## Navajo Nation's Electricity Problem

BY ALYSA LANDRY

Carol Bigthumb waited more than half a century for the lights to come on in her house.

Bigthumb, 57, grew up in LeChee, Arizona, a small community in the northwest corner of the Navajo Nation and about five miles from nearby Page. Hers was a simple life, shared with seven siblings and a herd of sheep.

Life without basic infrastructure – running water, phone or electricity – wasn't a hardship, Bigthumb said, because she didn't know any better.

"We knew how to get along without it," she said.

Then two things happened to change her perspective: she spent eight years in Utah on the Indian Student Placement Program, where she first saw modern conveniences like kitchen appliances and TVs; and construction began in 1970 on the Navajo Generating Station, a coal-fired power plant that went up half a mile from Bigthumb's home and delivered electricity and water to customers across Arizona, Nevada and California, but failed to serve her community.

More than 40 years later, in March 2014, Bigthumb finally flipped a switch in her house and got light.

It can cost as much as \$50,000 to connect one customer to electricity, said Walter Haase, general manager for NTUA. And the hardship doesn't end there: an estimated 32 percent of all homes lack electricity, while 31 percent lack plumbing, 38 percent lack water services, 86 percent lack natural gas and 60 percent lack telephone services.

In numbers, about 15,000 homes are not connected to electricity. But while NTUA extends power to about 700 new customers per year, a steady increase in the number of households on the reservation makes it difficult to make a dent in the need, Haase said. <http://bit.ly/1Aj0ZQQ> ☞

## Idle No More Duluth Fights to Save Wolf

BY KONNIE LEMAY

Idle No More Duluth, based in northern Minnesota, is using the recent federal court ruling that put the gray wolf back on the endangered species list to call for respect by non-Natives of hunting bans enacted on most Minnesota Ojibwe tribal lands.

The December ruling halted wolf hunts, which have taken place in at least six lower 48 states since the gray wolf was delisted from endangered species designation. Minnesota's first wolf hunt was in 2012.

All of the Ojibwe tribal nations within Minnesota have outlawed hunting or trapping of wolves within their reservation boundaries. The snag, though, comes on reservations checkerboarded with non-Native ownership within reservation boundaries since the General Allotment Act of 1887. While virtually all lands within the Red Lake and Grand Portage reservations' boundaries are held by the tribe or tribal members, others are like Leech Lake and White Earth, where 10 percent or less of lands within reservation boundaries are tribally held.

So although the tribes have banned wolf hunts within their reservations, the question arises over whether bans can be upheld on non-tribally-held parcels.

Although the hunt has been stopped for now, the issue will arise again. Congressional moves are already afoot to pass legislation overriding the court ruling. U.S. representatives from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan and Wyoming are all involved in the effort. Idle No More Duluth's initiative intends to lay the groundwork for respecting tribal boundaries and laws before such moves again change the laws. <http://bit.ly/1MjajY2> ☞

## Walkers Conclude 'Journey for Existence'

BY LYLA JOHNSTON

On February 1, the walkers of Nihígaal Bee Iina (pronounced ni-hi-gahl beh ee-nah, meaning "Our Journey for Existence") completed their quest to walk over 200 miles in the name of their children, land and ancestors. The walk was in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of The Long Walk, whereby over 9,500 Diné (Navajo) were marched at gunpoint for hundreds of miles into Bosque Redondo—a concentration camp where they would stay for four years. Only 7,304 survived the internment to return back to Diné Tah, the original Navajo homeland. In addition

to honoring the resilience of their ancestors, the walkers also set out to raise awareness about issues surrounding oil and gas extraction in Diné Tah. Ultimately, the group walked the entire span from Dził Naa'oodilii (Huerfano Mountain) to Tsoodzil (Mount Taylor) in 26 days, a total of 225 miles.

"It was awesome to be walking up that mountain, carrying those prayers, to feel the stillness of Tsoodzil and just for that day it was really calm, sunny, bright," commented Kooper Curley, one of about 70 walkers who joined for all or part of the journey.

"This is about addressing the issues with fracking, coal mining and the gas extraction around the four corners

that NASA can see from space," says Leslynn Begay of Flagstaff, Arizona. "When people see the walkers they become interested, they ask questions and they become more aware."

Despite the continuous hardship they encountered through the oil and gas corridor of Dine Tah, the walkers indicated that each day ended with a note of hope.

According to organizers, this walk will be the first of four major journeys to each of the four sacred mountains of the Diné (Tsoodzil, Doo'ko'óslíid, Dibe Nistáá and Tsisnajini). Through this first walk, organizers reported to have gained a great deal of useful experience for the journeys ahead. <http://bit.ly/1vInJrR> ☞

## Chinook Tribal Chairman Ray Gardner Walks On

*Tireless advocate was 59*

After a long struggle with lung disease, Chinook Tribe Chairman Ray Gardner walked on February 3. He was 59.

The Chinook Observer reports how Gardner led his tribe during an important time, and came close to attaining federal recognition. He also oversaw the effort to have the tribe's Middle Village included in Lewis and Clark National Historic Park.

"He was a gentle bear of a man, a determined worker and fighter for the Chinook people, a tireless advocate for long sought justice," former Southwest Washington Congressman Brian Baird, current president of Antioch University Seattle and friend of Gardner, told the Chinook Observer. <http://bit.ly/1KSrr5j>

## Ho-Chunk Inc. Becomes Major Shareholder

*An investment opportunity*

Lance Morgan, president and CEO of Ho-Chunk, Inc., said on February 9 that the economic development corporation for the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska has become a major shareholder in the Native American Bancorporation Co.

"First and foremost, we saw this as an excellent investment opportunity for Ho-Chunk, Inc.," Morgan said in a news release.

The Native American Bank, N.A. (NAB) is headquartered in Denver, Colo., and has a retail branch and loan production office in Montana. The bank specializes in commercial loans to Native

American governments and enterprises, as well as home loans to Natives. <http://bit.ly/1vqywBf>

## Lawsuit Seeks to Wrest Control of Lake Quinault from Tribe

*Nation intends to defend meritless lawsuit*

The Quinault Indian Nation is dismissing a lawsuit's assertion that the tribe does not have legal control over the use of Lake Quinault and hopes that U.S. District Court in Tacoma will do the same.

"Lake Quinault is undisputedly within the Quinault Indian Reservation," the tribe said in a statement quoted by the Aberdeen, Washington Daily World in the wake of a lawsuit filed by two property owners. "The Nation intends to vigorously defend this meritless lawsuit."

The suit, filed on December 30, 2014 by North Quinault Properties LLC and Thomas and Beatrice Landreth, alleges that the Quinault Indian Tribe's suspension of non-tribal use privileges due to habitat degradation was an overstepping of privileges.

The case is pending. <http://bit.ly/1F5Qrpf>

## Four Killed in Saskatchewan Car Crash

*Heading to speak at Payepot School*

Flags were lowered on February 12 in Regina and Ottawa as Canada mourned the deaths of four prominent artists in a horrific car wreck two days earlier.

Michele Sereda, 49, a co-founder and artistic director of the experimental theater

company Curtain Razors; dancer and powwow instructor Lacy Morin-Desjarlais, 29, Saulteaux and Métis, of Regina; Michael Green, 58, of Calgary, a co-founder of the theater company One Yellow Rabbit, and Blackfoot elder Narcisse Blood, 60, Kainai First Nation, were riding together on their way to Piapot First Nation when the Subaru Outback driven by Sereda collided with a truck driven by Morley Hartenberger, 59, who also died.

The four had been heading to speak to students at Payepot School, where Sereda had taught for five years, CBC News reported. <http://bit.ly/1FHeIEY>

## Native School to Be Demolished

BY RICHARD WALKER

*Not forbidden to destroy landmark*

In July, the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board voted 7-1 to designate as a landmark a public school with strong ties to Seattle's Native American community. Supporters thought the school was thus saved from demolition.

Landmarks Preservation Board coordinator Erin Doherty said at the time, "It is rare to demolish a landmark."

Rare, yes, but not forbidden.

Seattle Public Schools is moving ahead with plans to demolish the 60-year-old school to make way for construction of a new elementary school and middle school. That's because three months after the landmark designation, the Landmarks Preservation Board voted 7-3 with one abstention to impose "no controls" on the designation, meaning the school district

could proceed with plans to demolish the school. <http://bit.ly/1D3X4aY>

## Police Tear Down Peruvian Home

BY RICK KEARNS

*Latest in a series of events*

In the first week of February Peruvian national police and Yanacocha mine security guards tore down the foundations of a house Maxima Acuña de Chaupe and her family were building and then two days later the security guards threatened to build a guardhouse right in front of her property but were dissuaded by the presence of activists and reporters.

Local and international groups are filing requests to investigate the incidents and seeking further protections for the family that has faced other conflicts with armed police and security guards within the last month. <http://bit.ly/1J91YXL>

## Adam Beach Is on Board for 'Joe Dirt 2'

*Kicking Wing is back*

Adam Beach, Saulteaux, is today one of the most recognizable Native actors, but in 2001, when the David Spade comedy Joe Dirt was released, he was still on his way up. At that point, he hadn't yet co-starred with Nic Cage in Windtalkers (2002), hadn't played Ira Hayes in the Clint Eastwood-directed Flags of Our Fathers (2006), and hadn't made his runs on the TV series Law & Order: Special Victims Unit (2007-2008) and Big Love (2010).

Beach has now signed on to reprise his role of Kicking Wing in Joe Dirt 2: Beautiful Loser. <http://bit.ly/1zcLrrZ>

# Slow Extinction

Don't Let Another Medicine Person Walk On Without Passing Down  
Herbal Healing Wisdom BY STEVE RUSSELL

**Bottom Line:** *Traditional medicine people are dying off as the new generation has no interest in the extensive learning it takes to be a Native healer.*

Call him Shotpouch. That's not his name, but I don't have his permission to write this and the Shotpouch outfit is big enough that no individual is likely to be mistakenly identified. He'll be as safe as I'd be among the Teehees, another big Cherokee outfit.

I first met Shotpouch at a little mom and pop in Jay, Cherokee Nation, Oklahoma. It was breakfast time, and we got scrunched into the same table because there were more bodies than tables and it was that kind of place.

I had had some bureaucratic problems with the BIA, and I was whining about it. Shotpouch appeared to be full blood, which turned out to be true, and of an age that his face no longer reflected any particular age, but you could tell that guy was old.

He chuckled at my rendition, but then launched into his own BIA story. His complications with the BIA one-upped mine considerably and even though he spoke softly in that cadence of people still thinking Cherokee-to-English, by the time he finished the hilarious saga of bureaucratic ineptitude you could hear a pin drop in that greasy spoon.

There was a moment of silence when he finished followed by a collective roar of belly laughs, and I knew I had just been taken to school in the art of storytelling by a master. He also made me feel better, because my hassle was trivial by comparison.

We wound up leaving at the same time and, as I got into my red Karmann Ghia convertible with the top down (don't ask—it's a long story), he started walking

in a direction where I didn't think there was much destination. But one look at his gimp stride led me to offer the old man a ride, which he accepted.

Turned out, Shotpouch lived up in the hills, without electricity. He had a spring for water and an outhouse prudently downhill from it. The entire cabin was surrounded by what looked like an amazing vegetable garden...except that I did not recognize



*Herbal remedies outlasting traditional medicine people*

some of the plants, and he appeared to be cultivating others I thought were weeds. He had chickens and several piglets to whom he spoke in Cherokee.

He was a fascinating man, and that tale at the eatery was just a tiny example of what he could do in English. I had the thought: he must be incredible in Cherokee; when a middle-aged couple showed up in a Chevrolet that looked older than they were, and started an animated conversation that I had no hope of following.

I excused myself and strolled through his garden for a while. By and by, he came out and went directly to a particular row and oh-so-carefully removed a couple of green plants, roots and all. He sandwiched the plants between two damp paper napkins and handed them to the woman.

The man reached for his wallet and the conversation smoked me again, but some sum did change hands. My experiences that day led me to look the old man up when I visited Jay, usually more than once a year. I learned that he had spent his whole life studying traditional medicine, but he was not teaching a young person to replace him.

There came a time when I drove up that gravel path to his house and found his garden in terrible disarray. I drove over to the Seventh Day Adventist Hospital in Jay where my R.N. aunt worked, and asked after him. The medical community was small enough in Jay everybody would know. Shotpouch had walked on some months before.

Medicine people are an endangered species in Indian country. In some cases, the people who remember the ceremonies have already walked on, but it's more problematic that the young are not willing to devote their lives to learning the practices.

The ceremonial aspects of traditional medicine may be dying out, but the herbal remedies that filled the traditional tool kit live on. This month, I was reminded of old Shotpouch when the news feed suggested that what could go wrong, has.

First in Canada, and then in New York, authorities are being pressured to crack down, no matter if the evidence shows poor quality control or fraud. If herbal medicines are to be seriously considered alongside mainstream medicines they should meet the same standards of purity and correct labeling.

Purity and correct labeling could be a matter of life and death to you and your loved ones, because in the 21st century you are on your own. Shotpouch is dead.

<http://bit.ly/1FF0eQJ> ☞

# Strength in Numbers

Hundreds Gather at Oak Flat to Fight for Sacred Apache Land **BY LEE ALLEN**

**Bottom Line:** *Arizona's San Carlos Apache Tribe hosted a gathering of nations in support of the fight to save Oak Flat from an international mining company where hundreds showed support.*

As the morning sun rose high enough to burn off the chilly overnight temperatures, mesquite fires scattered throughout the Oak Flats Campground offered a warm welcome to a special day for Arizona's San Carlos Apache tribe.

Some 300 tribal members and supporters from across the country gathered to protest the infringement of traditional Apache holy lands. There were Chippewa, Navajo, Lumbee, Paiute, Havasupai, and representatives of the National American Indian Movement and the National American Indian Veterans group, as well as non-indigenous supporters representing myriad concerns including those of environmentalists and other lovers of nature. All furious at Congress's sneaky transfer of sacred Apache land to a mining company and vowing to do what they could to see that it didn't happen.

"What was once a struggle to protect our most sacred site is now a battle," said San Carlos Apache Tribal Chairman Terry Rambler, organizer of the grassroots movement aimed at stopping transfer of hundreds of acres of ceremonial land to those who would dig a mile-wide hole in the ground in a search for copper.

Arizona's Apache Tribe represents a culturally rich society with heritage tied to Mother Earth. As a people, they extend a Hon Dah welcome greeting to all who wish to share their culture and history. But now they are fighting to keep their holy lands culturally sacrosanct.

"Our homelands continue to be taken away," said former San Carlos Chairman Wendsler Nosie Sr., decrying what he

termed the dirty way in which a land-swap rider had been attached to a must-pass bill that sailed through Congress and was signed into law by President Barack Obama. The amended legislation, with the support of Arizona Senator John McCain, was "an action that constitutes a holy war, where tribes must stand in unity and fight to the very end," according to Nosie.

The legislation that the former chairman termed "the greatest sin of the world" is the Southeast Arizona Land Exchange and Conservation Act, which gives a 2,400-acre tribally sacred site to a global mining entity,



*Gathering as one for Oak Flat*

Resolution Copper, that wants to destroy its natural state with a massive mine intended to extract an ore body located 7,000 feet below ground level. That ground is hallowed to the Apache peoples whose reservation border is just east of the proposed mine at Oak Flat, home to Indigenous Peoples since prehistoric times, a place where acorns and medicinal herbs are gathered and coming-of-age ceremonies are held.

Kicked off by earlier protests in both Tucson and outside Senator McCain's Phoenix office, the multi-pronged awareness approach to mitigate the potential fate of Oak Flat picked up momentum via a two-day, 44-mile, march from the San Carlos tribal headquarters and culminated in a weekend-long Gathering of Na-

tions Holy Ground Ceremony, "A Spiritual Journey to a Sacred Unity," at Oak Flat.

Following a holy ground blessing, the morning was filled with traditional, cultural and religious dances, with Rambler dancing and Nosie joining the group of drummers. The weekend of solidarity was epitomized by guest speaker and activist preacher John Mendez.

"What the system doesn't know, what Resolution Copper doesn't know, is there is nothing that can break our spirit and keep us from moving forward to victory," Mendez told the assembled. "This is a protracted struggle, but if we stay true to task, we will win. A single flame can start a large fire, and we've created a fire that cannot be extinguished."

The Apache struggle has become part of the ongoing battle worldwide for Indigenous Peoples protecting sites that are sacred to them because of the places' importance to both spiritual and physical survival.

"This issue is among the many challenges the Apache people face in trying to protect their way of life," Rambler said. "At the heart of it is freedom of religion,

the ability to pray within an environment created for the Apache. Not a manmade church, but like our ancestors have believed since time immemorial, praying in an environment that our creator god gave us. At the heart of this is where Apaches go to pray—and the best way for that to continue to happen is to keep this place from becoming private land."

Despite Obama's signature on the measure, the administration has expressed displeasure as to how the legislation flew under the radar to become law.

"I am profoundly disappointed with the provision of the bill that has no regard for lands considered sacred by nearby Indian tribes," said U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell. <http://bit.ly/1CmDmSm> 🍀



# Indian Health Takes Center Stage

Burwell-Roubideaux Relationship in Focus Following Role Change **BY ROB CAPRICCIOSO**

**Bottom Line:** Secretary of HHS Sylvia Mathews Burwell wants everyone to know that she fully supports the re-nomination of Dr. Yvette Roubideaux as director of IHS.

Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Sylvia Mathews Burwell wants American Indians, Congress, her employees and the press to know that she fully supports the re-nomination of Dr. Yvette Roubideaux to be director of the Indian Health Service (IHS).

Roubideaux, a citizen of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, was recently forced out of her position leading IHS, which she has held for almost six years, due to an appropriations law enacted in 2009 that limits the amount of time a presidential nominee can serve in an acting position for a job for which they have been nominated.

President Barack Obama re-nominated Roubideaux to the position in 2013, but she has been in acting status since then because the Democratic Senate of 2013-14 did not re-confirm her; in fact, Democrats voiced several

concerns based on negative tribal assessments of her performance. Her re-nomination was never able to clear the Democratic Senate Committee on Indian Affairs (SCIA) where she faced intense questioning from leaders of the committee, including Sens. Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.) and Jon Tester (D-Montana). Former Sen. Mark Begich

stance she faces, according to department officials.

Robert McSwain, former head of IHS during the latter part of the George W. Bush administration, has been tapped by Burwell to take over the job until the now Republican Senate decides whether to move forward on Roubideaux' re-nomination.

After an HHS spokesman who requested anonymity to share details of the change spread word to the press on February 10 and the shift became news, feelings in both Roubideaux' office and Burwell's were rankled.

Adding to the consternation, another HHS official who requested anonymity told ICTMN that Burwell is perhaps less a protector of Roubideaux than former HHS

Secretary Kathleen Sebelius.

Roubideaux, according to a person close to her, was worried that these unnamed HHS officials were going out of their way to convey a lack of support for her by Burwell. (Roubideaux has not spoken to ICTMN about this situation, and she has ignored requests for comment about her leadership and on



*Burwell, left, fully supports Roubideaux, right.*

and Sen. Lisa Murkowski, both from Alaska but from opposing sides of the aisle, also played major roles in blocking her re-nomination.

Roubideaux' role has now shifted to senior advisor to Burwell for American Indians and Alaska Natives—a new position not listed in the HHS organizational hierarchy chart that has been created for her based on the circum-

Indian health matters over a number of years.)

At the secretary's headquarters in Washington, Burwell, too, was concerned about the optics. A named spokesman for HHS, Mark Weber, soon contacted ICTMN to share an e-mail of support for Roubideaux that Burwell had recently sent employees of the department.

"Dr. Yvette Roubideaux has ably led the Indian Health Service (IHS) since 2009 and been an important member of the HHS leadership team," Burwell's letter read in part. "In her new role, Yvette will bring her experience, commitment and expertise to a number of important projects."

The full letter, according to some IHS employees, was not widely seen as a ringing endorsement, but more of a perfunctory statement explaining the change in leadership.

Weber, meanwhile, said the letter clearly demonstrated Burwell's "continued support" for Roubideaux. "The perception that there is any daylight between the secretary and Yvette—that's just not true," he said. "She has the full support of the secretary."

Weber also insisted that Roubideaux was not experiencing a demotion.

"[I]t is not a demotion at all," he said. "In fact, it provides Dr. Roubideaux a broader portfolio of initiatives and policies that impact Indian country."

He elaborated: "It's going to be a matter of perception. If you're not enmeshed in how the government bureaucracy works and positions of power—a position close to the secretary, such as an advisor, is an incredible position of power."

The position sounds pretty attractive the way Weber describes it, so why shouldn't Roubideaux want to just keep it rather than dealing with all the complicated bureaucracy of leading IHS? "I have not discussed that issue specifically with Dr. Roubideaux," Weber said. "Right now, this is the best way she can serve."

If Roubideaux has such power, should McSwain, now acting as the head of IHS, feel undermined? "We're all colleagues here that work together,"

Weber said. "By legal authority, Mr. McSwain has the signature authority; however, before we make any big decisions around here, we all consult with each other and make sure our policies are aligned and our work is moving the department forward in the best interest of the American public and in this case the American Indian population."

Weber further shared a Youtube video of Roubideaux testifying before the House Interior Subcommittee on February 11 as the official face of HHS. In the video, Rep. Tom Cole (R-Oklahoma), one of two Native Americans in Congress, speaks highly of Roubideaux—a fact Weber pointed to in a later phone conversation during which he noted bipartisan House support for the former director.

But Weber also said that all the House support in the world does not matter if the Republican Senate does not get on board to re-confirm Roubideaux.

"We can encourage and hope the Senate acts, and we certainly can't control that, but we can keep pushing for Yvette and her confirmation," Weber said. "Look at her budget testimony [of February 11]—when you look at the increases that IHS is seeing, where we are with the contract support costs issues—it's night and day from where she started."

Support from Senate Republicans is an unlikely – but still possible – scenario given past concerns expressed by tribal leaders and health experts about Roubideaux' lacking consultation on contract support costs, tribal health settlements, and her miscalculations regarding the federal sequester's impact on Indian health programs.

"I would absolutely say that Secretary Burwell is aware of tribal concerns," Weber said. "And I will say that if you look at the budget proposal this year, we heard those tribal concerns, and we are acting on them."

Weber added that Roubideaux' situation is not unlike those of many of the president's nominees who were not confirmed last year and who now await re-confirmation. However, many of those nominees were able to pass their respective Democratic committees, which is a

difference in Roubideaux' nomination compared to several other stalled ones.

"The Senate process is the Senate process," Weber said on that matter. "Whether they choose to pick up somebody or not, we can't control [that] here at HHS."


Roubideaux' stumbles combined with Republican distaste for controversial changes made by Senate Democrats to the confirmation process in 2013 that allowed Obama's nominees to more easily pass the chamber may ultimately prevent her confirmation, Senate staffers on both sides of the aisle say. Republicans, these staffers say, could choose to use past tribal and Democratic concerns about Roubideaux against her. And Republicans would have cover from charges of obstructionism because the Democratic Senate itself did not move on her re-nomination when it had the chance to do so.

The record of Democratic opposition is long. Several Democratic senators penned a letter in 2013 to the White House expressing concern over Roubideaux' mishandling of tribal contract support costs and related issues, and former SCIA Chairman Tester wrote a letter to Burwell last July highlighting vacant positions at area IHS agencies that he believed she had been slow in filling. Some also did interviews decrying her leadership.

"I think there are some communication issues that need to be worked out, and I've told [Roubideaux] exactly that," Tester told ICTMN in an interview last year. "There needs to be a lot better communication between tribes and her."

He added that there are "a lot of Native folks out there who don't like [Roubideaux]. saying further, "[T]here needs to be the leadership there that pushes the envelope and listens to the people on the ground...."

Weber believes Roubideaux now meets that standard. "Absolutely, folks like Dr. Roubideaux, other leaders here in the department, have their detractors," he said. "But if you aren't stirring up things, you're just taking up space."

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

## Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort

Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort of Mt. Pleasant, MI is currently accepting applications for two Executive level positions: Comptroller and Director of Cage & Count.

For the full job description please see our website [www.soaringeaglecasino.com](http://www.soaringeaglecasino.com) or please contact Melissa Harnick at [mharnick@sagchip.org](mailto:mharnick@sagchip.org)

Department:  
**TRIBAL GAMING AGENCY**

Position:  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Salary:  
**D.O.E.**

Close date:  
**O.U.F.**

**Job announcement #15-15**

If you visit [critonline@crit-nsn.gov](mailto:critonline@crit-nsn.gov) you will find the application. Please print, fill, out and you may fax to 928-669-5263 or email to [critthr@crit-nsn.gov](mailto:critthr@crit-nsn.gov)



Clearwater Casino & Lodge (Lewiston, ID) is currently accepting applications for:  
**FINANCE DIRECTOR**



This class provides overall leadership, guidance and direction to the finance department management team as it strives to provide the highest quality in exceptional service standards to tribal council, enterprise board, executive office, enterprise department head and outside organizations. The purpose of the class is to oversee and direct accounting functions in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). Requires Bachelor's degree in Accounting, Business, Public Administration, or Finance (Master's and/or CPA preferred). Must be able to obtain a Nez Perce Tribal Gaming License (subject to complete background check). Requires a valid driver's license with the ability to be insured under the Tribe's policy (must provide copy of driver's license and a motor vehicle report of ENTIRE driving record (MVR)). CPA credential preferred. Requires three (3) years of supervisory experience. Requires five (5) years of experience in senior-level finance or accounting position. Knowledge of finance, accounting, budgeting, and cost control principles including Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), knowledge of automated financial and accounting reporting systems, knowledge of federal and state financial regulations. Ability to analyze financial data and prepare financial reports, statements, and projections. Working knowledge of short and long term budgeting and forecasting, rolling budgets, and product-line profitability analysis. Requires professional written and verbal communication and interpersonal skills. Ability to motivate teams to produce quality materials within tight timeframes and simultaneously manage several projects. Ability to participate in and facilitate group meetings.

Tribal Preference will apply. For qualification requirements you may e-mail us at [hr@crcasino.com](mailto:hr@crcasino.com). Applications are available on-line at [www.crcasino.com](http://www.crcasino.com).



**FUELS DIRECTOR**  
Colville Tribal Federal Corporation  
Coulee Dam, WA  
**Closing Date: February 26, 2015**

Colville Tribal Federal Corporation (CTFC) is searching for a dynamic Fuels Director to join our team with competitive pay and excellent benefits.

Responsibilities: Oversees the management, functions of CTFC convenience stores and develops a strong fuel supply systems. The incumbent reports to the CTFC Chief Executive Officer. Requirements:

Must have a Bachelor's Degree in Business Mgt or related field. A minimum of 5 yrs progressively responsible experience in management and leadership roles in private business required. Must have 3 yrs direct experience in the fuels industry and 3 yrs of retail experience.

For a complete job announcement/description contact CTFC, Attn: Human Resources, POB 5, Coulee Dam, WA 99116 or [debi@ctcecorp.org](mailto:debi@ctcecorp.org) or call 509-634-3208.

Not a Subscriber?  
**Get your own**  
This Week From Indian Country Today  
**eNewsletter!**



**SUBSCRIBE NOW**



A pole honoring the late Billy Frank Jr. (1931-2014) now stands at Wa He Lut Indian School at Frank's Landing on the Nisqually reservation.



For decades, Carol Bigthumb drove on this road, with power lines and in view of the Navajo Generating Station, yet she received electricity in 2014.



Joe Dirt (David Spade) is unimpressed by Kicking Wing (Adam Beach)'s taste in fireworks, in a scene from the 2011 comedy 'Joe Dirt.'



An Idle No More rally to save Indian Heritage School was held May 15, 2013 at the Seattle School District Office. And they thought it had paid off.

# Headlines from the Web

## MONUMENT MARRIED BY VANDALISM, TRASH

<http://bit.ly/1F69HTK>

## STATE REJECTS HARD ROCK ARENA OFFER TIED TO CASINO OK

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

## FORTUNE BAY CASINO HEAD UNDER INVESTIGATION

<http://bit.ly/173J6HU>

## FBI DIRECTOR ACKNOWLEDGES 'HARD TRUTHS' ABOUT RACIAL BIAS IN POLICING

<http://wapo.st/1vGP8uf>

## DEPUTIES BEGIN PATROLLING CHUMASH RESERVATION

<http://bit.ly/1AwI7xm>

## KAINE, WITTMAN PRESS TO GET US RECOGNITION OF VA. TRIBES

<http://wapo.st/1vItpBX>

## Upcoming Events

### MAKOCE IKIKCUPU: DAKOTA LAND RECOVERY IN THE ERA OF CLIMATE CHAOS FEBRUARY 19

A free presentation lead by Dakota writer, teacher and activist Waziyatawin, who will discuss her work with Oyate Nipi Kte, a non-profit organization dedicated to the recovery of Dakota traditional knowledge, including language, oral tradition, spirituality and life ways, to empower communities and develop initiatives for sustainable living based on Dakota environmental ethics.

**Location:** The College of St. Scholastica at 7:30 p.m.

### NCAI EXECUTIVE COUNCIL WINTER SESSION FEBRUARY 23 - 26

The National Congress of American Indians will hold its 2015 Executive Council Winter Session in Washington, D.C. for tribal leaders of the 566 federally recognized tribes.

**Location:** Capital Hilton, 1001 16th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036

### FIRST TRIBAL MARIJUANA CONFERENCE FEBRUARY 27

Tribal leaders, executives, entrepreneurs and Native health and social work professionals, and law enforcement personnel are invited to attend this ground-breaking national conference to examine the legal, political and social policy implications of marijuana legalization in Indian country.

**Location:** Tulalip Resort Casino, Quil Ceda Village, Washington

### ADVISORY BOARD FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN MEETING MARCH 26, MARCH 27

The Advisory Board will meet on Thursday, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. MST in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The purpose of the meeting is to meet mandates of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA) for Indian children with disabilities.

**Location:** Manuel Lujan Jr. Indian Affairs Building, 1011 Indian School Road NW., Albuquerque, New Mexico 87104

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Against Railway Oil Spills, Consider Signing This Petition

Crude oil from Canada and North Dakota rolls through cities, wetlands, rookeries, and along lakes and rivers. Both the crude and the way it is transported are more dangerous than they need to be. The oil can be stabilized before being loaded. This process makes it less likely to explode if the train derailed.

But the oil companies do not want to pay for stabilization, and no regulator can compel them. The tank cars can be reinforced. That makes them less likely to break open if they tip over. But the shippers do not want to pay for upgraded cars, and they cannot be made to upgrade. The trains could be shorter and travel more slowly.

The Federal Railroad Administration can make this happen, but sooth-

ing lobbyists assure them that health, safety, and a love for the environment are the railroads' prime concerns, certainly not profit.

Learn more and petition the government to enforce railroad health and safety laws at <http://bit.ly/1yCUGBi>, before the next derailment leads to a loss of life, a destroyed ecosystem, or a poisoned water table.

*Paul Wulterkens, St. Paul, MN*



## TOP NEWS ALERTS

From IndianCountryTodayMediaNetwork.com

### RECOGNIZING AFRICAN AMERICAN CONTRIBUTIONS

In recognition of Black History Month, the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center and the African American Museum & Cultural Center of New Mexico will explore an often overlooked chapter of our state's history, the experience of African American teachers in Indian Schools. Three African American educators who taught in the Indian Service—Dr. Lenton Malry, Mr. Tommie Jewell, Sr. and Mrs. Alice Pegues—will be in conversation with Mable Orndorff-Plunkett on Wednesday, February 25 at 5:30 p.m. at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center. <http://bit.ly/1Cnwabc>

### WASHBURN APPROVES HO-CHUNK'S HEARTH ACT

In keeping with President Obama's commitment to

empower tribal nations and strengthen their economies, Kevin K. Washburn, assistant secretary for Indian Affairs, recently announced his approval of three separate land leasing codes for the Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin. The action brings to 18 the number of federally recognized tribes whose land leasing regulations have been approved by the Department of the Interior in accordance with the Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Homeownership (or HEARTH) Act. <http://bit.ly/1zcNKLx>

### BOARDING SCHOOL PEDOPHILE FREE

Sentenced to three years for the sexual abuse of boys at a Saskatchewan residential school more than 50 years ago, convicted pedophile Paul Leroux has been granted full

parole after serving just one year, CBC News reports. The victims were all students at Beauval Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan during the 1970s, according to CBC News. Among other factors, the judge took into account Leroux's age, which was 73 at the time, and gave him concurrent, rather than consecutive, sentences, radio station CKOM reported after the 2013 sentencing. <http://bit.ly/171ZFVc>

### GETTYSBURG SKULL NOT FROM GETTYSBURG

A human skull thought to belong to a soldier who died at the Battle of Gettysburg turned out to belong to a Native American man who lived some 700 years ago. The skull was set to be auctioned last June with a number of other artifacts thought to also be from Gettysburg,

but the auction was canceled after a public outcry. A study by the Smithsonian Institution National Museum of Natural History determined that the remains are an American Indian male between the ages of 22 and 25 who was likely from the Southwest, and were dated about 1269 to 1299. <http://bit.ly/1KTtGmZ>

### NAKOTAH LARANCE WINS CHAMPIONSHIP

On Sunday, February 8, the Heard Museum in Phoenix held the final round of its 25th annual World Hoop Dance Championship. The contestants, who survived the semifinals on Saturday, competed in four categories: Adult, Senior, Teen and Youth, with the winner of the Adult category also being named World Hoop Dance Champion. That winner was Nakotah LaRance. <http://bit.ly/1zS6ELH>

# How Did I Miss That?

Pretty Puppy; Super Stupidity BY STEVE RUSSELL

GoDaddy.com, the website hosting service, is famous for edgy ads, mostly involving naked ladies of whom you really didn't see as much as you thought you did. This year, they went too far, and made an apparent puppy mill look good in a takeoff on what was the best ad, the lost puppy saved by the Budweiser Clydesdales. They backed off it before game day.

I don't know what GoDaddy was thinking other than all publicity is OK as long as they spell your name right. Where I live, rescue dogs rule and puppy mills are not considered respectable.

The game, you ask? Oh, yeah, it was an excellent ball game until the penultimate play, when Marshawn "Beast Mode" Lynch was supposed to put it away for the Seahawks...but some rocket scientist decided sending Lynch straight in was too obvious. I'm reminded that only three things can happen when you throw the football and two of them are bad. R.I.P. Woody Hayes. R.I.P. 2015 Seahawks.

\*\*\*

I refuse to be shocked that ISIS burned a Jordanian jet jock alive. They've done worse. But I am shocked that they continued to use him as a bargaining chip after they had killed him. I gather ISIS was surprised when they said what they wanted for the pilot and Jordan said, "OK, but we need proof he's alive." There is an arguable advantage to being known as ruthless and violent, but being somebody who can't do a deal is all downside.

\*\*\*

Speaking of downsides, cowing Jordan into joining the United Arab Emirates back in the cheap seats has not gone well.

They really pissed off King Abdullah of Jordan. Several news outlets carried conflicting stories on whether Abdullah had personally led bombing attacks on ISIS after the death video was released and given wider exposure in Jordan than it ever got here. While that may sound absurd, King Abdullah is a fully qualified fighter pilot,

trained in the Royal Academy at Sandhurst in the UK.

"It's up to the king whether he wants to risk his royal ass," my cousin Ray Sixkiller observed, "but if Abdullah got shot down, how would you like to have been his wing-man?"

\*\*\*

NetworldWorld reported on the 25 most common and worst passwords on the Internet and the rank of each one last year. The number one most common and therefore worst both this year and last year was 123456. New entries on the top 25 were baseball, dragon, football, mustang, access, master, Michael, superman, 696969, batman. When I finally got Cousin Ray to comment, he said he thought batman and superman started with capital letters.

\*\*\*

The New York Times reported on the latest generation of on line dating services, which are smart phone apps. The report, by Molly Wood, contained a line that causes the double entendre to hit you right upside the head. "Even digital dating has become a hand-held activity." I'm not such a big fan of double entendre, but I slip one in whenever I can.

\*\*\*

Denial of vaccination science joined denial of climate science in the presidential race, predictably dragged in by Sen. Rand Paul and somewhat less predictably by Gov. Chris Christie. Former GOP Rep. Joe Scarborough was chewing up the set on his morning talk show: "It's not a right-left thing. It's a stupid-smart thing."

Midweek, there were 102 confirmed cases of measles spread across 14 states.

Leadership is a word you seldom hear in the same sentence as Mississippi, but that generally backward state has the highest rate of vaccination among kindergarteners

in the country.

Doctor Rand Paul said he has seen kids "with profound mental disorders after vaccines." In an attempt to walk it back, he posed at a photo op getting a booster shot. "If you believe vaccines cause mental disorder," Cousin Ray smirked, "that photo explains a lot."


Paul said the government doesn't own children. Parents own children. Cousin Ray had no comment, but I heard him humming the tune of "Born Free."

\*\*\*

J.D. Salinger wrote *The Catcher in the Rye* and no other novels, although he did publish some short story collections that showed he was in fact as gifted as *Catcher* made him appear. Harper Lee wrote *To Kill a Mockingbird* and explicitly told legions of persons who allowed Scout Finch to lance the boil of American race relations for them that she would never publish another novel.

The one she did publish will always be important to lawyers, to remind us we are not gods and the truth does not always prevail. As to Lee's decision to end her novelist career...well, it's good to go out on top, and a book that sold 40 million copies is on top.

Harper Lee's sister and lawyer, who had always protected her from the publishing business sharks died...and, three months later, a publisher "found" what is in fact her first novel. It's called *Go Set a Watchman*, and the claim is that *Watchman* was rejected for publication but so many readers were in love with flashbacks to *Scout Finch*, Lee went back and crafted a novel set at the time of the flashbacks. No one has seen Harper Lee for a long time. She's 88 years old and said to be in poor health. Hard to see why she'd change positions all of a sudden.

Cousin Ray caught me muttering to myself and asked what's eating me. Forty million copies of one book? I don't think all five of my books put together have sold a thousand! <http://bit.ly/1zAJt3s> 



*The youngest generation joins walkers of Nihígaal Bee Iina (Our Journey for Existence).*

**THE BIG PICTURE**