



# Indian Country

THIS WEEK FROM

## TODAY

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

### *A Letter from the Publisher*

*Shekóli.* One of the greatest challenges to the sovereignty of tribal nations can be the disregard of explicit treaty rights granted to tribal citizens to hunt and harvest off the land of their traditional territories. Time and again, Natives who exercised their right to hunt, fish and gather have been forced into the courts to stand up for the hard-won and unequivocal terms in treaties wisely negotiated by their ancestors. In northern Minnesota and Wisconsin, the litigation and conflict over these rights spanned several decades and culminated in victory for the area's tribal nations. At the time, the cost was not just legal fees but open hostility from outside communities.



Nevertheless, the Fond du Lac, Bois Forte, Mille Lacs and Grand Portage Nations forged ahead with plans to manage the resources of huge swaths of land. Not surprisingly, they managed well.

Now, as reported in this edition of our newsletter, Native-run land and wildlife management teams, such as the 1854 Treaty Authority, have been placed in a leadership role on land use by their one-time opponents (the various hunting associations in the state of Minnesota) and state and federal agencies. These Native authorities are highly regarded for their expertise and accomplishments

in understanding the many diverse and complex forces at work on public lands. In particular, their knowledge of the iconic animal of these forests—the moose—has helped bring about a collaborative effort among many different interest groups with the aim of supporting a dwindling moose population.

It is a time of crisis for these impressive creatures, and in the face of climate change and other pressures a population rebound may be out of reach. Yet the people of Minnesota have taken the right steps to ensure a brighter outcome by turning to the original nations of the land, people for whom responsible use is not just a concept, but a way of life. The impressive achievements of these Indian nations have been recognized by their neighbors. And thanks to the spirit of collaboration, there is hope.

*Na kîr wa,*

Ray Halbritter

### Table of *Contents*



**2** COMMENTARY

**4** NEWS

**8** A NATIVE FILM REDISCOVERY

**10** SAVING THE MOOSE

**11** SAVING PINE RIDGE

**12** CLASSIFIEDS

**13** WEEK IN PHOTOS

**14** WEB, EVENTS, LETTERS

**15** CARTOON ALERTS

**16** HOW DID I MISS THAT

**17** BIG PICTURE

### The Global War on Tribes

**Zoltan Grossman**, a faculty member in Geography and Native American & World Indigenous Peoples Studies at Evergreen State College, postulates a “Global War on Tribes”—with shared traits and a path to shared resistance:

Wherever it is waged in the world, the Global War on Tribes has some common characteristics. First, the war is most blatantly being waged to steal natural resources under tribal lands. The rugged or inaccessible terrain that prevented colonial powers from eliminating tribal cultures also made accessing min-

erals, oil, and timber more difficult, so that a greater share is now left on tribal lands than on more accessible lands.

Second, the Global War on Tribes is a campaign against the very existence of tribal regions that are not under centralized state control, and which still retain non-capitalist social organization, even if they are not all egalitarian in their values.

Third, the collective form of organization enables tribal peoples to fight back, because they still have social networks of trust to defend their lands and ways of life. The Indian writer Arundhati Roy told me that tribal peoples have “a whole

bandwidth of resistance that has actually managed for quite a few years now to stall the corporate onslaught.”

Western society tends to dismiss “tribalism” as ignorant villagers brutally acting in their narrow self-interest. Yet in some regions, a local tribal identity may be more inclusive than larger-scale ethnic or religious identities. In the 21st century, many remaining pockets of exploitable resources are located in tribal regions. They are the only successful pockets of resistance may be found in the mountains, deserts and forests where tribal peoples refuse to die. <http://bit.ly/1vwyc3L> ☞

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### How Names Can Literally Wound

**Jacqueline Keeler**, a founder of *Eradicating Offensive Native Mascotry*, links such team names as ‘Washington Redskins’ to violence against Native women:

Some of the assaults on Native women are due to jurisdictional gaps on reservations. Our tribes cannot prosecute non-federally enrolled people. Some of these gaps were addressed by the passage of the Violence Against Women Act in 2013. But the desire to exploit these gaps and to go “hunting” for Native women to abuse and murder is clearly tied to lingering stereotypes held about Native American

women that permeate American culture.

Most Americans have little contact with Native people outside of stereotypes. The flip side of the “warrior” stereotype includes “Indian princess” and the “squaw” stereotypes displayed by female fans who dress up in “Pocahottie” outfits. They don our regalia—even faux eagle feather headdresses reserved for our leaders—to make themselves more sexually alluring to drunk male fans.

According to the Justice Department, one in three Native women will experience rape. Native women have 2.5 times the sexual assault rate and three times the murder rate of all other American women. In some counties, the murder rate for

Native women is 10 times the national average. These assaults are committed 78 percent of the time by white men. Native women are the only group more likely to be victimized by someone not of their race.

The National Football League’s continued merchandising of “Redskins,” which explicitly describes attacks on Native people, cannot be divorced from historical stereotypes that are central to America’s conception of Native people. These racist images, encoded for 250 years, are still promoted today—not only by the NFL but by nearly 2,000 high schools across the United States. <http://bit.ly/17Q5XrR> ☞

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### The Value of Tribal Colleges

**Mark Trahant** (Shoshone-Bannock) considers a recent essay in *The Atlantic Monthly* that criticized the “poor return of more than \$100 million a year in federal money” given to the nation’s 32 fully accredited tribal colleges and universities:

Tribal colleges remain an unfair bargain. They deliver higher education at a much lower cost per student. But they are an unfair bargain because they should not have to do that. There should be resources available that can get the job done.

If you look at the economy of a local community, you’ll find that there are of-

ten four pillars of activity that create jobs. These are the government, health care, higher education and the private sector. Government (tribal and federal) plays a huge role in any reservation economy.

It’s the same with Indian health, which is now Indian country’s single largest employer. In communities with strong tribal colleges, these colleges are a third leg for economic development because there is an infrastructure surrounding a campus that creates good gigs ranging from professors to maintenance workers. The fourth leg, the private sector, is usually the weakest link.

Tribal colleges already contribute to a reservation economy. Economists call

them “anchor institutions” because of their payroll and other infrastructure building characteristics. In fact, if you look at just about any community, the largest employers are hospitals and universities.

The role of tribal colleges is growing more important because higher education has the power to generate ideas that turn into something else—especially private sector jobs. Yes, graduation rates are important and should be improved. But that is just the beginning of what tribal colleges do. They are institutions where ideas grow. It takes good ideas to create permanent, sustainable tribal communities. <http://bit.ly/19gkKMM> ☞

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## Obama Slates \$748 Million For Native Housing and Veterans

President Obama is allocating \$748 million of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)'s 2016 budget to aid housing and development needs in Native communities.

"When Native American communities succeed, our nation succeeds," said HUD Secretary Julián Castro. "The President's FY 2016 Budget proposal is a blueprint for greater opportunity for all Americans."

Among other Native American housing and community development provisions, the proposed FY 2016 budget includes:

- \$660 million through HUD's Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG) Program, an increase of \$10 million over the FY2015 enacted budget, to help tribal grantees invest in new homes, infrastructure and economic development. Grantees will be able to construct, acquire, or rehabilitate home ownership units and rental units.
- \$80 million under the Indian Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG) Program, a \$14 million increase from FY 2015, including the \$10 million set-aside for teacher housing. Indian CDBG funds are awarded competitively and used by federally recognized Indian tribes, Alaska Native villages, and tribal organizations for a wide variety of needs, including producing affordable housing, public facilities and job creation.
- \$8 million for the Indian Housing Loan Guarantee program (Section 184) Program, a \$1 million increase over 2015, to tribal communities to access private capital as a means of stimulating their affordable housing and homeownership programs.

The president's plan would also allow for \$177.5 million in "special purpose vouchers" that include rental vouchers for families, veterans, and for Native Americans who are homelessness, as well as victims of domestic violence. Those vouchers can also be used for newly constructed and acquired housing, according to HUD. <http://bit.ly/1uS61Br>

🔗

## Caution Advised for Tribal Growing of Medical Marijuana BY ALYSA LANDRY

California's Pinoleville Pomo Nation is poised to become the first American Indian tribe to grow medical marijuana. But its proposed operations, and those of other tribes that would follow suit, are raising concerns among attorneys and Native groups. Medical marijuana is illegal in 27 states, and some experts fear that tribes are taking risks that could be costly or even land members in jail.

"There are lots of outside forces looking to take advantage of potential economic development in the tribal context," said Anthony Broadman, a partner at Galanda Broadman, a Seattle-based, Native-owned law firm.

With federal, state and tribal governments involved in its regulation, marijuana is a sticky topic. At the heart of the argument is a recent Department of Justice (DOJ) memorandum that states that sovereign Indian nations can grow or sell marijuana on tribal lands without fear of federal harassment.

"The DOJ memo was not a blank check to just get out and start growing weed," said Broadman. "If anything, regulation is going to be more robust on tribal lands." He urged caution: "There's going to be a lot of money poured into this. That will drive a lot of poor decision making. Tribes that are being cautious are taking the right approach."

Walter Lamar, president of Lamar Associates, a Native-owned consulting and professional services company, also advised caution, noting that marijuana is still an illegal drug. "We're going to have to watch out for opportunists and hucksters," said Lamar (Blackfeet/Wichita). "The promise of substantial revenues that are coming from this will lure some tribes into it blindly." <http://bit.ly/1vQekP5>

🔗

## Oil-Train Explosion Sparks New Concerns Over Bakken

Another train carrying extra-flammable crude oil from the Bakken oil fields has derailed, detonating some of its cars. The 109-car train was headed to an oil depot in Yorktown, Virginia, from North Dakota on February 16; a dozen of the cars exploded into flames, engulfing a home. At least one car fell into the Kanawha River near Mount Carbon, West Virginia, authorities said.

Though no fatalities were reported, at least one person was treated for smoke inhalation. Two nearby towns were evacuated and water supplies were cut

off while the amount of contamination in the river was evaluated.

In an interview with National Public Radio aired on February 10, six days before the accident, President Fawn Sharp of the Quinault Indian Nation warned against the transportation of oil by rail. She opposed both oil-train depots and the overall environmental damage caused by the continuing use of fossil fuels.

"Each area and each region has, I believe, a sacred trust and a sacred duty," she said. "When you are an elected official you need to make decisions that are based not only on the economics of

a decision but the science, the culture, the history."

In the same segment, tribal fishery policy spokesman Ed Johnstone cautioned against the potential environmental impact of oil spills on the Quinault fishing industry. "What's a culture worth?" he asked. "What's a history and tradition worth? You can't put a number on it."

The U.S. Department of Transportation Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration cautioned a year ago that oil from the Bakken oil fields was more prone to ignition than other types of crude. <http://bit.ly/1zNJUHN>

## Tonya Gonnella Frichner, Native Rights Activist, Walks On

BY GALE COUREY TOENSING

Tonya Gonnella Frichner, an Onondaga lawyer and activist who dedicated herself tirelessly to the pursuit of human rights for Indigenous Peoples, walked on after a decade-long bout with cancer on February 14, 2015. She was 67.

"Tonya was a dedicated, focused and accomplished Native woman," said her fellow Native activist Suzan Shown Harjo. "She is one of those irreplaceable people, who will be missed and long remembered."

Gonnella Frichner's posts and activities were many. She was the president and founder of the American Indian Law Alliance, a nonprofit organization that works with indigenous nations, communities and organizations in their struggle for sovereignty, human rights and social justice. She served as an active participant and legal and diplomatic counsel to Indigenous delegations in virtually all United Nations international forums affecting Indigenous Peoples, especially during the drafting, negotiations and passage of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). From 2008 to 2011, she was North American Regional Representative to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

Gonnella Frichner also taught American Indian history and law, federal Indian law, and anthropology and human rights for over 20 years at City College of New York, Hunter College and Manhattanville College. Her many honors included the Harriet Tubman Humanitarian Award, the Thunderbird Indian of the Year Award, the Ellis Island Congressional Medal of Honor, the American Indian Community House International Service Award, the Silver Cloud Singer Outstanding Service Award for advancing Indigenous Youth, and the Ms. Foundation Female Role Model of the Year. <http://bit.ly/1yLZVOu> 📱

## \$8 Million For Native Climate Change Aid

\$8 million will be made available to fund projects that promote tribal climate change adaptation and ocean and coastal management planning, the Interior Department announced last week. The federal government will make \$4 million available for climate adaptation planning; another \$4 million will go toward planning for ocean and coastal management. The initiative is part of the Obama administration's Tribal Climate Resilience Program.

The funding will aid tribal climate adaptation preparation training and participation in technical workshops and forums. It will also support coastal tribes in addressing the challenges of coastal erosion and development, rising sea levels, ocean acidification, and emergency management.

Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell promoted the initiative last week as she toured the Alaskan coastal villages of Kotzebue and Kivalina, which have been particularly hard hit by climate change. "Alaska Native communities are on the front line of a changing climate and live with very real impacts on infrastructure, economic development, personal safety and food security," Jewell said. "The administration remains fully committed to working with local leaders to build more resilient communities and protect the traditions that are central to Alaska Natives' cultures and identities."

"No one is impacted by climate change more than Native communities in Alaska, but we have also seen serious problems developing for tribal communities across the West and on both coasts," said Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs Kevin Washburn. "We must act to help protect these communities."

Also on hand during Jewell's visit were state and oil industry officials, who discussed recent federal moves to limit the development of federal lands and waters for oil and gas, Alaska Dispatch News reported. <http://bit.ly/1AWl4LB> 📱

## Two Infants Die in First Nation Blaze Amid Firefighting Contract Dispute

Two toddlers died in a First Nation reserve fire in the early hours of February 17 as neighboring firefighters went unsummoned because they did not have a contract with the reserve, local officials said last week.

Firefighters were not called as a home burned on Makwa Sahgaiehan First Nation at 1:30 a.m., said Loon Lake mayor and volunteer fire chief Larry Heon, because the contract with

the village had been canceled. The dead were Harley and Haley Cheenanow, ages two and 18 months, respectively. Although the Royal Canadian Mounted Police responded to the emergency, by that time the infants' father was carrying the boys' bodies out of the house. The infants' grandmother also escaped.

It is not yet clear who, if anyone, had canceled the Makwa Sahgaiehan firefighting contract. Loon Lake officials said that the First Nation was responsible. Heon said that "the Band has outstanding bills and last year sent the village a letter discontinuing the ser-

vice," according to the Canadian Press.

But Band leadership told the news-wire that they knew nothing about the matter and that they had assumed the department would respond to any fire. "We've always had it [the firefighting contract]," said Makwa Sahgaiehan Chief Richard Ben. "We've paid thousands upon thousands to that fire department."

Makwa Sahgaiehan First Nation received more than \$11,000 to fund fire protection during the fiscal years of 2012-13 and 2013-14, reported the Canadian Press. <http://bit.ly/1pSY0J> 📱

## Ten Western Counties Are Disaster Areas

*Drought ravages New Mexico and Arizona*

The Department of Agriculture has declared 10 counties in Arizona and New Mexico primary natural disaster areas because of drought-related damages and losses, making them eligible for federal assistance. The announcement, made on February 4, designated Apache, Cochise, Gila, Graham and Pinal counties in Arizona, as well as Colfax, McKinley, Quay, San Juan and Union counties in New Mexico. Farmers and ranchers in contiguous counties—Coconino, Greenlee, Maricopa, Navajo, Pima, Santa Cruz and Yavapai in Arizona, and 11 more in New Mexico—now also qualify for natural disaster

assistance, the Agriculture Department said. <http://bit.ly/1L1rpbF> ☞

## Keystone XL Eminent Domain Attempt Blocked

*Judge in Nebraska halts proceedings*

TransCanada has been barred for the moment from invoking eminent domain to force property owners to sell their land for construction of its Keystone XL pipeline. The energy giant hopes to run part of its 1,700-mile-long conduit—which will stretch from Alberta's oil sands to the Gulf Coast of Texas—through the state of Nebraska. In January, TransCanada took legal steps to begin forcing landowners to sell their rights of way. But following a lawsuit by several landowners, a Nebraska district court judge

issued a temporary injunction against TransCanada on February 12, Huffington-Post reported. Director Jane Kleeb, of the anti-pipeline group Bold Nebraska, called the decision a “major win.” <http://bit.ly/1FWwEpO> ☞

## Native Business Support in Montana

*\$84,000 will go to nine operations*

Montana Governor Steve Bullock and Department of Commerce Director Meg O'Leary have announced \$84,000 in grant funding to nine Native American business owners to help expand their business operations. The funds are being made available through the Montana Indian Equity Fund Program (IEF). Equity Funds are grants designed to assist current or new Native American business

owner's start or expand their businesses. The funds are available only to enrolled members of Montana's federally recognized tribes and to enrolled members of the Little Shell Chippewa Tribe. “The Indian Equity Fund has proven to be an excellent resource for tribal members with entrepreneurial goals,” said O'Leary. <http://bit.ly/1zjjUFa> ☞

## Body of Dead Toddler Identified

*Corpses discovered on Barona Reservation*

Forensic authorities have identified the body of a 3-year-old boy, found last month in a freezer at a home on the Barona Indian Reservation in San Diego, California, as that of Roland Eagles Meza Sandoval. Police detained his mother, Elaina Rose Welch,

## PAVE THE PATH to a Successful Future



Pictured above: USD President James W. Abbott, Alyssia Thompson and Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation President and COO Laurie Becvar

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—Alysha O'Connell, summer 2014 participant from Cheyenne River, S.D.

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32, after she told police that her son was dead and exited her home with a shotgun in hand. When the police entered, they found the body of Welch's boyfriend, 32-year-old Julio Ricardo Mongiotti, who had been shot to death. The next day, Sandoval's body was found. Welch was charged with two counts of murder; the charges were dropped on January 22. <http://bit.ly/1zIgBq1> 📧

## Essay Collection Wins Competition

*Emphasis on colonialism in South America*

The essay collection *Indigenous Intellectuals in Ecuador, Bolivia and Chile: Difference, Colonialism and Anti-Colonialism* has won the 2015 Casa Las Americas Honorary Award for essays. The author

is Claudia Zapata, director of the Latin American Cultural Studies Center at the University of Chile. "What I do is to spend time on the indigenous authors that enter into the public sphere through their writings," she said, "and I emphasize their importance and currents of thought with their own sensibility and paths in the areas of culture and intellectual activity in our countries." The indigenous writers Zapata examined are historians, sociologists, journalists and "humanists in general." <http://bit.ly/1vjfaTC> 📧

## Charge Made In Assault On Natives

*Disorderly conduct is alleged*

A man who hurled beer and racial slurs at a group of Native American youths last

month at a hockey game in Rapid City, South Dakota, has been charged with disorderly conduct. Trace O'Connell, 41, faces up to 30 days in jail and a \$500 fine if convicted, police said. He is accused of pouring beer on a group of Native American students during a Rapid City Rush hockey game at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center and allegedly telling them to "go back to the reservation." The families of the students argued that O'Connell committed child abuse and assault as well, but he will not be so charged. <http://bit.ly/1FxQF93> 📧

## Native Nation Certificate At Northern Arizona

*New program is in the works*

Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff is developing a graduate certificate for indigenous leadership and Native Nation-building. The program is part of a larger effort to support tribal leaders' efforts at building sustainable, self-governing communities. Among other steps, the university recently hired Manley Begay as a professor of Applied Indigenous Studies to help tribal leaders focus on governance and political sovereignty. Administrators and educators have long been associated with the region's tribal leaders. "We're right next to the largest reservation in the United States [the Navajo Nation], so from an institutional standpoint, this initiative really makes sense," said Chad Hamill, director of Applied Indigenous Studies. <http://bit.ly/1zROHYT> 📧



# A Native Film Rediscovery

*A forgotten depiction of Kwakwaka'wakw life is found and released anew*

BY CHRISTINA ROSE



*In the movie's most powerful scene, the Kwakwaka'wakw dance in animal masks and apparel on war canoes.*

**Bottom Line:** *Missing for decades, a masterwork of the American Indian chronicler Edward S. Curtis has re-emerged to enlighten modern audiences.*

Photographer Edward S. Curtis is primarily known for *The North American Indian*, a 20-volume document published between 1907 and 1930, which captured images of what he sometimes inaccurately called the “Disappearing Race.”

But he had another major achievement—a feature-length silent film about the Kwakwaka'wakw people that had, until recently, been merely the stuff of legend.

The film is *In The Land of The Head Hunters*. Curtis had hoped it would save him from financial ruin. But the movie, which reportedly cost \$20,000 to make, only grossed \$3,269 when it premiered in 1914. Until recently, *In the Land of the Head Hunters* was all but lost. Experts would say that the film had not been viewed in its entirety since the 1940s.

But dogged preservationists have now pieced together a coherent—if not totally complete—version of the film that went on sale through Milestone Films on February 14.

*In the Land of the Head Hunters* is not a documentary. Rather, it was conceived as a fictional melodrama of

the Kwakwaka'wakw people, set in the mid-1700s. Filmmaker Barbara Cranmer, a descendant of the film's assistant director, George Hunt—himself a Kwakwaka'wakw Indian—said the more macabre headhunting aspects of the film were fictional and played upon the propaganda of the time.

Nonetheless the movie—filmed in the beautiful Northeast corner of Vancouver Island, Canada—contains accurate depictions of Kwakwaka'wakw ceremonies and dances that were performed decades, and even a century, earlier. As such, it is an important document of culture that might have otherwise been lost.

At the time of the release, critics



loved it. "As a gem of the motion picture art it has never been surpassed," wrote Stephen Bush in *Motion Picture World*. "You get the impression of having feasted one of the world's great picture galleries and there follows that most delightful of sensations, a new perception of pleasure in which the eye and the brain take special shares."

"Many of our old relatives were part of the film and when we saw them as teenagers, that was great for us," said William Cranmer, hereditary chief and chairman of the U'mista Cultural Society in Alert Bay, Canada. "We appreciated that the story was told in the way things happened in those early days. We saw the canoes as they were expertly paddled by the people of the day. We saw the way they used the designs on the house fronts and the history of those designs. There is a lot of information that is useful for us today. If Mr. Curtis hadn't made that film, we wouldn't see it."

*In the Land of the Head Hunters* was the first feature film to hire Natives as actors and crew. "There was a degree of respect that Edward Curtis had for Kwakwaka'wakw culture," said Sarah Holland, executive director of the U'mista Cultural Centre. "The 'princess' in the story was too high-ranking to do some of the things the role required, so she had two body doubles. That shows there was dialogue around what was appropriate. People from this area can identify people in the film by their particular regalia or by the song they were singing or dancing to."

Head Hunters was notable for its use of tinted and toned color. Moreover, Curtis's directorial skill made for many stunning shots. "It had huge artistic ambitions for a film in 1914," said Brad

Evans, an associate professor at Rutgers University, who was involved in the film's reconstruction.

Aaron Glass, an assistant professor at the Bard Graduate Center in New York City who has spent 20 years working with the Kwakwaka'wakw, sees the film as a testament to the incredible shift

American Museum of Natural History for \$1,500 in 1922.

In 1947 a 35mm print popped up, owned by a Chicago film collector who said the film had been found by a friend, in a dumpster behind a theater. The Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago created a 16mm black and white copy and destroyed the original deteriorating 35mm print.

By 1972, only remnants of the film appeared to exist; they were put together to create a new film called *In The Land of the War Canoes*, which was promoted as a documentary. By 1991, War Canoes distributor, Milestone Films, began searching for a complete 35mm copy of the original film.

"No one had seen Curtis' original version since the 1940s," Glass and Evans wrote. They finally discovered some of the original 16mm elements at the Field Museum. They also found two more reels at UCLA. At the Library of Congress they found a large number of film frames, in story order, which they used as substitutes for lost footage in the restored version.

The UCLA Film and Television Archive restored the film in cooperation with The Field Museum. The current restored version is 65 minutes long, but Evans and Glass believe that the original

version probably ran about 20 minutes longer.

Barbara Cranmer recalls hearing stories of the film's production. "Just imagine it, over on an island by Fort Rupert, building a big set with a big house front, and all those wigs!" she said. "I am proud we were a part of the film and I would say thanks to the ancestors that we have a living culture today as a result. The thing is, it's about being humble with it and how we share our own story."

<http://bit.ly/1MAb8fp> 



*Though not a documentary, the film was a potent document.*

within the tribe at the time. "Participating with Curtis to stage outlawed ceremonies was really a sign of their status as a modern people in 1914," Glass said. "They maintained a lot of ceremonial practices and found a way to maintain them under very modern conditions."

Following the film's 1914 premiere its distributor, the World Film Corporation, screened it in a number of locations throughout 1915 and 1916. Then it all but disappeared; Curtis himself sold the only known copy to New York's

# Saving The Moose

*Minnesota tribes collaborate on preservation initiative* BY DOUGLAS THOMPSON

**Bottom Line:** *Moose are on a steep, alarming decline in Minnesota. But area Nations are trying to reverse the trend.*

The moose is a revered creature in Minnesota. Many communities and entrepreneurs use moose images as trademark and advertising tools to promote or sell their area or business. And for tribal communities, moose hunting is a significant part of their hunting heritage.

But beginning in the 1980s, the moose population in northwestern Minnesota began to dwindle and then crash. Herd numbers dropped from more than 4,000 to fewer than 100.

This decline is more than a matter of state pride or mere numbers.

"The annual subsistence moose hunt has been one of the prime ways for band members to secure food for the family," said Sonny Myers, executive director of the 1854 Treaty Authority, an inter-tribal natural resource management agency that manages the off-reservation hunting, fishing and gathering rights of the Grand Portage and Bois Forte Bands of the Lake Superior Chippewa in the territory.

Today in Minnesota, the northeastern portion of the state is the last stronghold for moose. And even there, it is estimated that the moose population has declined by almost 50 percent over the past decade from more than 8,000 to approximately 4,500.

So in 2008, the Minnesota legislature directed the state's Department of Natural Resources to develop a Management and Research Plan for moose. Significantly, the Bois Forte, Grand Portage and Fond du Lac Bands—along with the 1854

Treaty Authority and the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission—have now become actively involved in natural resource moose management in Minnesota.

The arrangement entails considerable

conservation projects to the Minnesota legislature to be funded by the Minnesota Outdoor Heritage Fund. It further pools and distributes revenues generated from a constitutionally imposed sales tax increase.

The outcome has been remarkable: The council has awarded \$3 million to enhance moose habitats, while also improving the adaptability of Minnesota's north woods to climate change. Fond du Lac, Grand Portage and the 1854 Treaty Authority have shared tribal wisdom in driving the process of project selection.


Other stakeholders—including The Nature Conservancy, the U.S. Forest Service, the Counties and the DNR—are supporting ground projects that will enhance approximately

9,000 acres of moose habitat on county, state and federal lands. The Minnesota Deer Hunters Association has also played a key role as the grant applicant and fiscal agent for the project.

"What I am most proud of was the united focus on collaboration and shared learning," said Mark Johnson, the association's former executive director. The current executive director, Craig Engwall agreed.

"The Deer Hunters Association is excited by the prospect of partnering with Minnesota's tribes on similar habitat management efforts in the future," he said.

In addition to its practical outcome, the current undertaking represents an opportunity for tribal resource managers to earn the respect of other land managers based on their expertise and experience.

"You can't put a value on relationships like this," said Schrage. <http://bit.ly/1v6WIDi> 



*Still at risk, but perhaps on the comeback*

tribal consultation with relevant federal, state and county agencies. Associated parties include the Nature Conservancy, the University of Minnesota Natural Resources Research Institute, the United States Forest Service and the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association.

The current collaborative is designed to identify moose habitat improvement projects and where they should be implemented.

"Due to the importance of moose, both culturally and for subsistence, tribal natural resource staff had a unique knowledge of where good moose numbers and good moose habitat coincided," said Mike Schrage, the wildlife biologist for the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa and a leader of the initiative.

The planning and vetting of priorities led to a funding request to Minnesota's Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. The council reviews and recommends

# Saving Pine Ridge

A spark of hope for a desperate reservation **BY LYNN ARMITAGE**

**Bottom Line:** *Twila True is on a mission of uplift in South Dakota.*

There are no jobs for 90 percent of the population. The average household income is \$3,500 a year. About 60 percent of the homes have no water or electricity. An average of 17 people live together under one roof. Babies are dying at a rate higher than anywhere else in the world.

You might expect these statistics in a Third World country. But according to TrueSiouxHope.org, this scenario plays out year after year on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota—the second largest Native American reservation in this country (roughly the size of Connecticut), and also the poorest.

“Whenever I share these statistics with people, they are shocked to learn this is happening right here in our own country,” said Twila True, founder of True Sioux Hope Foundation, a nonprofit organization that aims to help lift the Pine Ridge natives out of a cycle of poverty.

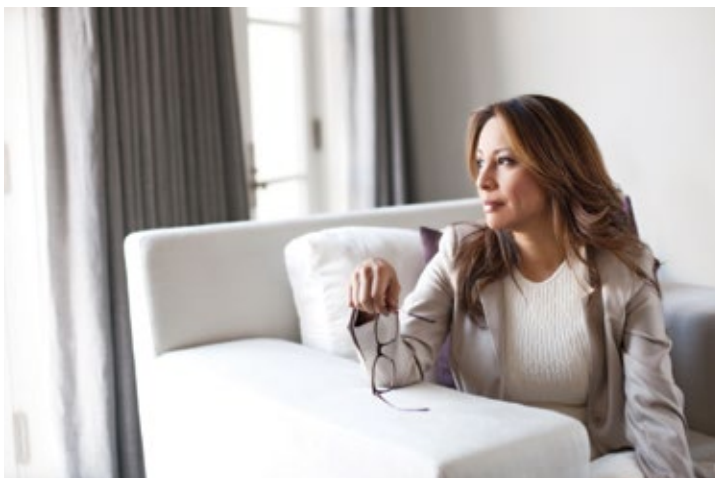
True, 43, is an Oglala Sioux. She lives in Irvine, California but grew up near Pine Ridge. She visited frequently with her Native grandmother who helped raise her, and she has returned many times since. True adopted her youngest daughter from the reservation when she was three months old.

“They are such a warm, welcoming people who have really lost hope and you just want to bring that hope back,” she said.

As the CEO of an international investment corporation, True is in a financial position to help restore hope to the residents of Pine Ridge. She and her husband are the founders of True Family Enter-

prises, a private investment firm that is focused on real estate, consumer goods, retail, private equity and venture capital.

True said she was overwhelmed at first about where to concentrate her efforts. During her visits to Pine Ridge, she recalled Sioux children laughing and



*Twila True has made the Pine Ridge Reservation a personal crusade.*

playing happily among the broken-down trailers, and she had an epiphany. “Children have hopes and dreams, and aren’t plagued by the past,” she said. “I realized that Band-Aids aren’t going to do it. The long-term goal is education.”

For now, True Sioux Hope Foundation is focused on answering some immediate needs on the reservation. These include supporting a workforce training program that teaches the Pine Ridge natives trade skills (welding, home construction, farming, etc.); building an orphanage; and securing formula for infants.

“Many families are so poor that babies have only soda or coke to drink,” said True. “We want to provide proper nutrition, instead of the free stuff they get from the government.”

But True’s foundation is also exploring plans to eventually open an all-girls school on the reservation. True is part-

nering with Victoria Shorr, founder of The Archer School for Girls in Beverly Hills, Calif., on this project. “It will be the first all-girls college preparatory school on a reservation in the U.S.,” said Shorr.

In the course of raising awareness and funds, True has been compelled to dispel several myths about Native Americans—especially the one about how wealthy they are as the result of casino profits. While Pine Ridge does sport the small Prairie Winds Casino, True said it is not as profitable as it could be—because Pine Ridge got the short end of the stick when tribal lands were established.

“Pine Ridge is about 100 miles away from the nearest airport or major highway,” she said. “Even if they built a bigger casino, not too many people would come because it is out in the middle of nowhere.”

A video that True produced spells out the problems that have caused despair on the reservation. Among them are extreme poverty, lack of housing, teen suicide and pregnancy, alcohol and drug addictions, lack of medical care, child sexual abuse, an approximate 70 percent high school dropout rate, obesity, and diabetes rates that are 800 percent higher than the U.S. average.

“It’s going to take awareness and education that we’re not all drunks and dirty Indians,” said Ethleen Iron Cloud-Two Dogs, a tribal youth program specialist, in the video.

True is doing her best to spread the word. “It’s now to the point where it’s past judgment and criticism and no matter what, I think these people are worth saving,” she said. “We need not die quietly in a corner.” <http://bit.ly/17hY9hI>



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The Optimator is by Star Walking Bull, Ojibwe/Arapahoe, the subject of a retrospective at the IAlA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts.



Terry Goedel (Yakima/Tulalip) won the Senior Division title at the 25th annual Hoop Dance Championship at the Heard Museum in Phoenix.



Tonya Gonnella Frichner, Onondaga, a major figure in indigenous rights struggles, walked on February 14.



Canyon Trilogy by R. Carlos Nakai is the first platinum-certified album by a Native American artist playing Native American music.

# Headlines from the Web

**MYTON ORDERS UTE TRIBE TO STOP WORK ON TRIBAL COMMUNITY CENTER**  
<http://bit.ly/1AEw4Pd>

**GAMBLING BOARD APPROVES DEAL FOR MORE MACHINES AT TRIBAL CASINOS**  
<http://bit.ly/17hdIpQ>

**NORTHERN CHEYENNE TRIBE HEARS THE GREEN SIDE OF MARIJUANA DEBATE**  
<http://bit.ly/1AkKKiY>

**OMAHA TRIBE MEMBERS TRYING TO REVITALIZE AN 'ENDANGERED' LANGUAGE**  
<http://bit.ly/1zniB8d>

**LAWMAKERS: KEEPING TRIBE'S GAMBLING PACT NOT SURE BET**  
<http://bit.ly/1vrBTI6>

**FEDERAL JUDGE SIDES WITH COLORADO RIVER INDIAN TRIBES OVER CALIFORNIA BOUNDARY DISPUTE**  
<http://bit.ly/17eHQSP>

## Upcoming Events

### **BUREAU OF INDIAN EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION UPDATE** FEBRUARY 26

Representatives from the Interior Department will meet with tribal leadership to provide an update on the Bureau of Indian Education's transformation implementation plan, and to answer any questions from tribal leadership pertaining to the issue of Indian education.

**Location:** Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.

### **UNITED NATIONAL INDIAN TRIBAL YOUTH WEBINAR** FEBRUARY 26

The subject of this webinar, hosted by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, is "Youth Action Planning: Develop a Fundraising Plan." It will focus on creative fundraising and will challenge participants to think outside the box when fundraising for youth council projects. This is the third webinar in the "How to

Build an Effective Youth Council" series.  
**Information:** <http://bit.ly/1vslseE>

### **STATE DEPARTMENT CONSULTATION WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES** FEBRUARY 26

The State Department invites U.S. federally recognized tribes and other U.S. Indigenous Peoples to a follow-up consultation with federal representatives regarding the September 2014 United Nations World Conference on Indigenous Peoples.

**Location:** Capital Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C.

### **NATIVE SCIENCE FELLOWS GATHERING AND RESEARCH SEMINAR** FEBRUARY 26-28

The keynote speakers of this year's forum, organized by the nonprofit organization Hopa Mountain, which invests in rural and tribal citizen leaders who are working to improve education, ecological health, and economic development, will explore the environment from indigenous perspectives. The keynote topics include "Land, Culture, and the Environment: Lessons From Indian Country" and "Geology From a Blackfoot Perspective." The

Native Science Fellows program is offered in collaboration with the Blackfeet Native Science Field Center at Blackfeet Community College, Salish Kootenai College, Montana State University and the University of Montana.

**Location:** Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana

### **NATIONAL ROUNDTABLE ON MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS** FEBRUARY 27

Organized by the Assembly of First Nations, this roundtable discussion will address the subject of the approximately 1,200 indigenous women of Canada who have, according to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, been murdered or who have been reported missing since 1980. The talks are expected to focus on awareness, prevention, policing, community safety and related subjects. In addition to First Nations representatives, scheduled government participants include Status of Women Minister Kellie Leitch and Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt.

**Location:** Ottawa, Ontario

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Re: "Should Tribes Grow Pot on the Rez?" by Harlan McKosato, about federal approval of tribes growing medicinal marijuana (February 10):

Pot is a different "drug" from the rest of the drugs that are banned by law. It is the only drug that you can pick from the ground and use. Other drugs require extensive refinement. If the Creator had

meant for us to use this "drug" he would have left it growing everywhere . . . like a weed.

—Michael Madrid  
 Las Cruces, New Mexico

Re: the recent incident in Rapid City, South Dakota, where rowdy drunks harassed and dumped beer on Native youths during a hockey game at the Civic Center:

Rapid City has, since its inception, been a cesspool of anti-Native sentiment, race-based exclusion and a tradition of cowardly acts of public harassment and humiliation by the majority of the non-Native community. I call upon the Native people of Rapid City and of all the tribes who use the venue for any purpose to simply no longer do business there.

—Melvin Martin





## TOP NEWS ALERTS

From [IndianCountryTodayMediaNetwork.com](http://IndianCountryTodayMediaNetwork.com)

### BILL TO BAN 'HALF-BREED' INTRODUCED

Montana State Rep. Nicholas Schwaderer has introduced a bill that would require state and other agencies to remove the terms "half-breed" and "breed" from public sites in his state. The bill constitutes an extension of one dating from 1999 that mandated the removal of the term "squaw" from Montana place names. According to the historian Nicholas Vrooman, who works with the Little Shell Tribe, there are 17 places in Montana that are identified with the word "half-breed" or "breed."

### A CHAMPION MUSHER IS MOURNED

George Attla Jr., an Athabascan sprint dog mushing legend, died in Anchorage, Alaska on

February 15 at the age of 81. A competitor for more than half a century, Attla won the Open North American Sled Dog Championships eight times and the Fur Rendezvous World Championship Sled Dog Race 10 times. Hundreds bid farewell to him at his service; he was "dressed in mukluks, fur-trimmed gloves, a fur-lined hat and a parka," the Alaskan news site [newsminer.com](http://newsminer.com) reported.

### HUD ANNOUNCES INDIAN BLOCK GRANTS

The Department of Housing and Urban Development announced last week that more than \$651 million for housing block grants would be allocated to the 636 Native American tribes in 34 states. Indian Housing Block Grant allocations are distributed annually to eligible tribes

or their designated housing entities for a range of affordable housing activities. They primarily benefit low-income families living on reservations or in other American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

### BARRASSO BACKS INDIAN IRRIGATION

A bill introduced by Senate Indian Affairs Committee Chairman John Barrasso (R-Wyoming) would hold the federal government accountable for addressing the maintenance backlog of aging Indian projects in his state and across the West. Barrasso's bill would ensure that the federal government follows through on its promise to build and maintain these projects by providing \$35 million each year from 2015 to 2036 to help cover operations

and maintenance costs. This includes any structures, facilities, equipment, or vehicles used in connection with the projects.

### LOWER BRULE SIOUX COUNCIL MUST MEET

Following disagreements within the Lower Brule Sioux Tribal Council, a judge has ordered the members to hold a formal meeting in March. The current council has been split over issues of transparency regarding financial records since its election in September; they have not met since then, even though meetings are required once a month. But Judge B.J. Jones of Fargo, North Dakota, has now ordered the members to assemble, under threat of contempt of court. "I'm confident this council can meet," he said.

# How Did I Miss That?

*Obama's thoughts on Christianity, an expensive book about John and Yoko, the mendacity of Brian Williams and the sex life of Dominique Strauss-Kahn*

BY STEVE RUSSELL

President Obama was roasted for saying, "People committed terrible deeds in the name of Christ." My Republican cousin Ray suggested that people were just mad because Obama was soft on ISIS: "Couldn't he say more than 'brutal, vicious death cult?'"

\*\*\*

NBC News anchor Brian Williams became news after he lied that the helicopter he was riding in over Iraq was hit. That lie morphed into questions about the things he claimed to have seen in New Orleans when covering Hurricane Katrina. Apparently, he claimed that floodwaters surrounded his hotel, located in the French Quarter, which did not flood. NBC has suspended Williams for six months without pay.

This reminded Cousin Ray of the time Hillary Clinton was caught in a similar lie about being under sniper fire in Bosnia when video showed otherwise. Ray, knowing I served in the Air Force, asked me if I was ever riding in an aircraft that was hit by fire.

I'm getting old, but I'm very confident that would stick in my memory. I might have a memory hole for some close calls, but in this case I don't.

\*\*\*

The Republicans' latest accusation against Obama is that he has no plan for what to do if the Supreme Court ignores normal construction of statutes and makes a political—rather than a legal—decision that a literal reading of a drafting error means people can't get subsidies for health insurance bought off the federal exchange.

Fair disclosure: I was once reversed for a literal reading of a drafting error in a criminal case—which is a different thing. In defining one of the ways to drive while intoxicated, the legislature had described the formula for alcohol concentration in blood, breath, and urine in a parallel form.

But because they got one of the formulas wrong, the parallel did not work and a literal reading could not define the crime. The appellate court admonished me to attend to the many places other than the definition where they got the blood formula right, and just pretend they had made the conversion correctly.

They were not right, but they were the last word. Similarly, the Supreme Court will have the last word on whether a civil law—the Affordable Care Act—will perish over a drafting error that the Republican Congress refuses to fix.

Cousin Ray was confused. "So," he asked, "you are saying that the Supreme Court should do exactly what you got your hand slapped for not doing?"

Another way to say it is, "If I were required to read a criminal law that way—and I was because I don't disobey court orders—then if the Supreme Court won't do the same in a civil case—Jesus H. Christ on a pogo stick!"

"I'll never understand lawyers," Ray muttered. "Who cares?"

\*\*\*

The German art publisher Taschen has put out a book from the 800 or so photos of John Lennon and Yoko Ono taken by Kishin Shinoyama just before Lennon's murder. A photo from that shoot was on the cover of the last Len-

non album during his lifetime, *Double Fantasy*. It is available this month at your local bookstore for a mere \$700. Cousin Ray cleared his throat pointedly and said he'd wait for the paperback.

\*\*\*

J. Crew, which calls itself a "specialty retailer," has released its spring collection, which includes a pair of sequined "wedding shorts." Not to get married in, but for the after-party or the honeymoon. The price tag is \$450.

"Hey, I've known guys who got married in shorts," Cousin Ray announced helpfully. "Of course, they were Wranglers that got cut off after the knees went out..."

\*\*\*

Remember Dominique Strauss-Kahn? He's the former International Monetary Fund honcho who was busted for the rape of a New York hotel maid in 2011, touching off a media fest that scuttled his run for president of France. The rape case went away when he "reached a settlement" with the maid. He is now on trial in France for "aggravated pimping." He testified in his own behalf that the prosecutor was exaggerating his orgy attendance.

"The prosecution gives the impression of unbridled activity," he said, but the "licentious evenings" were "only 12 parties in total—that is four per year over three years." Prostitution is legal in France from either end of the transaction but pimping is not, and he denied hiring the entertainment.

"Well," Cousin Ray commented, "why didn't he just say it was only a dozen orgies?" <http://bit.ly/1766hBy> 



COURTESY MATTHEW MC LAUGHLIN PHOTOGRAPHY

*Welterweight Tat Romero, of Metis Michif/Apache ancestry, is set for the Resurrection Fighting Alliance card on March 6.*

**THE BIG PICTURE**