



Indian Country

THIS WEEK FROM

TODAY

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

A Letter from the Publisher

Shekóli. Last week, while the Northeast and much of the country lay low under yet another onslaught of a long, cold winter, Washington, D.C. took a step in the direction of a new spring with a generation of activity around the winter meetings of the National Congress of American Indians.

Significant news emerged when Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs Kevin Washburn told the NCAI that the Bureau of Indian Affairs had published extensive new guidelines to better protect the rights of Native children and families under the Indian Child Welfare Act. In his remarks, Washburn said the strong move was due to misreading or disregard for the Indian Child Welfare Act in state and federal courts.

As Suzette Brewer reports in this issue, such recent cases as *Adoptive Couple v. Baby Girl*, (the “Baby Veronica” case), and ongoing class action litigation in South Dakota, compelled the federal government to explore actions to ensure ICWA compliance at the local and state levels. With a disproportionate number of Indian children removed from their homes thanks to decades of destructive policies, ICWA was enacted in 1978 to preserve Native families and cultures. The new guidelines will be a boon in the eyes of tribal leaders, who know all too well challenges posed by state and local officials to the nation-to-nation relationship our Indian nations share with the federal government. Violations of ICWA can be particularly bedeviling because



they affect individuals who, naturally, have less leverage in exercising their rights than tribal governments.

Washburn told ICTMN that at President Obama’s initiative, the administration is taking an “all-of-government approach to ICWA.” In addition to the Department of Justice looking to file *amicus* briefs in future cases, Washburn said, “both the Department of the Interior and Department of Justice have been meeting with the Administration for Children and Families at Health and Human Services to consider ways in which their programs . . . can be used to help ensure ICWA compliance.”

These developments are a promising step to resolve a troubling issue. Tribal leaders and nations must also continue to look for ways to ensure that the “all-of-government” policy becomes a reality in all areas of governance. Whether it is the Department of Transportation or Housing and Urban Development, we must insist that all branches of government meet oft-forsaken legal treaty obligations.

Na ki’ wa,

Ray Halbritter

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The Natives and the Movies

*In the wake of this year's Academy Awards ceremony, ICTMN contributor **Sonny Skyhawk** bewails the ongoing lack of Native presence and recognition in mainstream films and offers some solutions:*

Our Native people were first photographed by Thomas Edison, in 1898, as he was perfecting his invention of the Kinetoscope. Fast forward to the 21st century. Edison's invention has evolved and has become the film and digital television camera of today.

So, why, 117 years later, is it that every-

one but the Native people of America is being represented or included in that medium?

If we really want to participate, we have to write, produce, finance and distribute our own films. Although all of that is within our ability, we have yet—with some exceptions—to reach the point of taking the investment risk associated with the business end. Until we do, we will continue to wonder why we are not at the award consideration table.

It really comes down to good scripts and investors who have faith in them and our Native talent. That's what it will take

to break that glass ceiling. The Hollywood film and television machine relies on relationships and contacts—not to mention the ability to circumvent the gatekeepers. But it can be done, and we can do it. As a producer in Hollywood, I have managed to open countless closed doors. But I have yet to find that stand-alone script that has breakthrough written all over it—or the Native Tribe that has the means and the will to take the risk.

There has never been a Native film that has lost money. You can take that to the bank, as they say. <http://bit.ly/1DNPEaK> ☞

The Power of Hemp

*As the legal growing of medical marijuana by tribes increases, ICTMN opinions editor **Ray Cook** urges that Natives cultivate its close cousin, hemp:*

I would not get too excited about pot growing. In most cases, as with gaming, successful recreational and medicinal marijuana production would eventually and quickly serve a saturated market, one with experienced growers ready and able to turn legal at the drop of a hat. It is a limited market and very competitive. The chance of making lots of money is slim.

However, industrial marijuana

(hemp) is another story. In a world where environmental and exploration costs of fossil fuels has become increasingly burdensome, hemp has the potential to find a market niche here and abroad.

Industrial hemp has less than one percent THC content (the stuff that gets one high) and its tough, fibrous stalk had many uses. Historically—and before the turn-of-the-century demonization of hemp and marijuana by the lumber and petroleum industries—it was used for ropes, building material, even dry wall. It is a sustainable source for cloth and paper.

America was built with hemp. This hardy weed grows everywhere, thanks

to the initial efforts of Jesuit missionaries. It was promoted by none other than Ben Franklin. The first American flag is made of hemp. The Declaration of Independence was written on—you guessed it—hemp. The Constitution is written on hemp paper. Given the legal, moral, and market hurdles presented by medical and recreational marijuana, it would be better for Indian nations to explore advanced technologies that will take advantage of the potential offered by hemp.

Currently, North American hemp needs are being satisfied by imported hemp. But with restrictions loosening on marijuana, it's time to explore our options. <http://bit.ly/1AYPePW> ☞

The Problem With Rio Tinto

*ICTMN contributor **Peter d'Errico** criticizes the Rio Tinto act, which lies at the heart of a dispute involving the San Carlos Apache and the Rio Tinto mining corporation:*

The Rio Tinto act fails completely to meet or acknowledge the rights of the San Carlos Apache under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The fact that the act uses the phrase “government-to-government consultation” does not mean that it actually recognizes and protects the indigenous government of the San Carlos Apache. That phrase is just another layer

of deception, a mask and window dressing for a unilateral move by the United States.

To make matters worse, the act says that any responses to Indian “concerns” and any steps taken to “minimize the adverse effects” on them shall be “mutually acceptable” to Rio Tinto.

The U.S. has refused to accede to the international legal norms announced in the U.N. declaration. Although President Obama reversed the original “no” vote by the U.S. when the U.N. adopted the declaration, he did so with a statement that “the Declaration's concept of self-determination is consistent with the United States' existing recognition of, and relationship

with, federally recognized tribes.”

In other words, the United States takes the position that federal Indian law already embodies the principles and mandates of the U.N. declaration. As we see in the Rio Tinto act, however, federal Indian law bears little resemblance to the norms of self-determination under international law. In short, the Obama statement, while attached to a yes vote, really amounts to a continuing no vote.

The bottom line is that the San Carlos Apache have a battle on their hands—a serious and profound battle against entrenched forces of colonial domination that have a 500-year head start. <http://bit.ly/1vXzqWa> ☞

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Obama Vetoes Keystone XL Bill

As he promised, President Obama vetoed legislation that would have forced construction of the Keystone XL (KXL) pipeline by eliminating the need for State Department approval for the project, which crosses the international border with Canada.

"I am returning herewith without my approval S.1, the Keystone XL Pipeline Approval Act," Obama said in his veto statement of February 24. "Through this bill, the United States Congress attempts to circumvent longstanding and proven processes for determining whether or not building and operating a cross-border pipeline serves the national interest."

"Vetoing KXL, Obama is showing that he's listened to the Oceti Sakowin-Seven Council Fires of the Dakota, Nakota, Lakota Nations and all people resisting the pipeline," said Tom Goldtooth, executive director of the Indigenous Environmental Network. "But the fight is not over. We need an outright rejection of the KXL permit. That would be the final nail in the coffin for Keystone XL. We stand united with Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island who are fighting against tar sands development and infrastructure, from northern Alberta to the Great Plains to the Gulf. We will see this fight through to the end."

The 36-inch-diameter, 1,179-mile-long pipeline would run up to 830,000 barrels daily of bituminous crude from the oil sands of Alberta, Canada to an existing pipeline in Steele City, Nebraska, according to the energy giant TransCanada, which would build the pipeline. The oil would travel to refineries in the Midwest and on the Gulf of Mexico coast in Texas, where portions of Keystone XL are already completed and operational.

State Department approval is needed for that part of the project that crosses the U.S.-Canada border. <http://bit.ly/1wm31y5> 📱

Navajo Election To Be Held 'Without Further Delay' BY ALYSA LANDRY

Navajo voters may soon go to the polls to select a new president. On February 20, the Navajo Nation Supreme Court ordered an election to take place "as soon as possible and without further delay" and for only two candidates—Joe Shirley Jr. and Russell Begaye.

The court order struck down legislation that would have allowed a repeat of last year's primary election with all 17 original candidates competing again for the Nation's highest elected position.

Shirley—who previously served two terms as president—and political newcomer Chris Deschene emerged as top candidates after the August primary. In October, the Supreme Court disqualified Deschene when he failed to prove he was fluent in the Navajo language, and ordered Begaye, who was the third-place finisher, to face off against Shirley. The court also ordered an election to take place by January 31.

But heated protests, lawsuits and emergency legislation kept the election in gridlock for several months. The February 20 opinion calls for harmony and an end to the delays.

"Because of the self-interested actions of the [election] board and the Council to disregard Navajo laws, the presidential election is now more than three months late," the court judgment states. "The initial effort of this court to have the election by January 31, 2015, has been further delayed by the Council's most recent grab for power."

The court has instructed the Navajo Election Administration to "immediately set the date for the general election," order ballots, commence absentee voting and tentatively schedule an inauguration ceremony. It has also directed the Council to convene a special session to secure funding for the election. <http://bit.ly/17KafQF> 📱

Tribal Deal Would Set Number of Gambling Machines in Washington State BY BRYAN COHEN

The number of gambling machines in Washington state tribal casinos is set to increase by several thousand and rise automatically in the future under a compact recently approved by state legislators and the state Gambling Commission.

The compact, among 27 of the state's 29 tribes, would allow a 10 percent bump to the state's 28,000 slot-style machines and make future adjustments based on gambling demands. Gov. Jay

Inslee is expected to sign the compact and send it to the Interior Department for final approval.

In years past, determining the maximum number of gambling machines in the state required gathering representatives from casino and non-casino tribes for rounds of controversial negotiations. Many of the state's rural tribes don't have casinos but can profit from leasing their allotment of machines to casinos on other reservations. When casinos are allowed to add machines, non-casino tribes stand to lose leases and a critical source of income.

Under the new agreement, if the to-

tal number of leasable machines dips below 500, tribes can automatically increase the statewide cap by 50 machines per tribe. "These amendments allow for market-based growth and only if there is a real need," said Chris Stearns, chairman of the state gambling commission. "It saves the state and the tribes a lot of effort and it removes a lot of tension. That made a lot of sense to us."

Gambling law in Washington State prohibits traditional slots that set odds within individual machines. Instead, machine players win based on a back-end lottery system. <http://bit.ly/17AE4mL> 📱

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- ◆KK Sage Women's Golden Age
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- ◆"Wicaglata"
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"Aakiiwiiluxbaake dii sholadah, duak bii ahxbuck baaliigaamaadala Denver March Powwow kootahnank. Aho! I would like to personally invite everyone from all tribes and cultures to come and celebrate the 2015 Denver March Powwow. I hope to see you there and safe travels to all. Thank you!"

*"likualasaash" ~ One Who Puts
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New Teeth For ICWA

Improvements in federal Indian child welfare guidelines **BY SUZETTE BREWER**

Bottom Line: *The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) is well intentioned but often not wholly effective. Now Washington is trying to correct that.*

The Interior Department has announced sweeping new guidelines to ensure the rights and protections of Native families and children under the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs Kevin K. Washburn made the announcement last week at the winter session of the National Congress of American Indians.

In effect, the federal government will now more rigorously regulate and enforce the ICWA. The new measures are necessary, said federal authorities, because of the continued misapplication and noncompliance of the ICWA in state and federal courts since it was first enacted in 1978.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs, Washburn said, will now collaborate with other government agencies to press for the full implementation of federal law and redouble its efforts to prevent the break-up of Indian families and the further destruction of tribal communities.

"We are taking an 'all-of-government' approach to ICWA," Washburn told Indian Country Today Media Network. "Both the Department of the Interior and Department of Justice have been meeting with the Administration for Children and Families at Health and Human Services to consider ways in which their programs, such as the IV-E funding program, can be used to help insure ICWA compliance in states as well as strengthen tribal capacity in child welfare. We are developing strategies to work together to protect Indian children."

Washburn, a member of the Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma, invoked *Adoptive*

Couple v. Baby Girl, a.k.a. the "Baby Veronica" case, and ongoing ICWA violations in South Dakota, as crucial turning points that prompted tribes and government agencies to find a better way to reinforce the federal statutes.

The Indian Child Welfare Act was developed in the 1970s because a high percentage of Native children were being removed from their families during custody proceedings. Many of these children wound up in non-Indian homes hundreds of miles from their communities. Although the act governs jurisdiction over such instances, its limitations were evident during the Baby Veronica affair, in which a Native father lost custody of his daughter to a non-Indian adoptive family.

In June 2013, when the Supreme Court rendered its decision in the Baby Veronica case, tribal leaders nationwide began looking for better ways to implement and enforce federal laws designed to protect one of the country's small-est minorities.

"We decided that we needed to do something," said Washburn. "We cannot reverse the Supreme Court, but realized that we had some options available."

So in 2014 the BIA held five listening sessions across the country—three with tribes and two with judicial

organizations—to assess the situation and gather comments on how to address ongoing ICWA violations in foster care and adoptions across the country.

South Dakota has been a particular concern to the BIA and other federal agencies in relation to the ICWA for years. In spite of ICWA provisions, nearly 750 Indian children annually have continued to be swept into South Dakota state custody and placed in non-Indian foster homes at a ratio of 11:1 compared to their peers.

Additionally, Indian children constitute approximately 53 percent of the total number of children in state foster care, even though they only make up nine percent of the total child population of South Dakota.

"The result was a lot of broken hearts," said Washburn. "And it was not just the parents, grandparents and communities—it was the kids too."

Tribes and Indian child welfare advocates across the country applauded Washburn's announcement.

"The Lakota People's Law Project



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"We are taking an 'all-of-government' approach to ICWA," declared Kevin Washburn, the Interior Department's Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs, to Indian Country Today Media Network.

(LPLP) is heartened by the release of updated ICWA guidelines," attorney Chase Iron Eyes of the Lakota People's Law Project (LPLP) told ICTMN. "During a decade of working on ICWA-related issues, the Lakota People's Law Project revealed the deep-seated problems of continual and widespread ICWA violations and we think this will provide clarity on many important areas of ICWA's application."

Iron Eyes said the proliferation of violations in South Dakota is primarily because of enormous financial benefits. These are created, he said, by cycling Indian children through public and private foster care services and by classifying every Indian child as "special needs"—thereby reaping more federal funds for their cases. This, he said, created a "perverse incentive" for a system that preys on vulnerable victims.

Last year, the LPLP assisted South Dakota tribes in establishing their own child and family services under the Title IV-E Federal Foster Care Program through the Office of the Administra-

tion for Children and Families. In December, the Oglala and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribes received funding for planning grants, with the ultimate goal of providing these services "by Natives for Natives."

"The tribes must be directly funded to run their own Child and Family Service Programs," said Iron Eyes. "Further, states that refuse or fail to comply with ICWA must be punished with fines, withholding of funds or possible civil rights violations and the federal government must remain ever vigilant against the abuse of power that continues to run rampant in South Dakota."

According to the BIA, hundreds of individual Indian people and organizations representing Indian child welfare advocacy responded to the agency's request for comments last year. The overwhelming majority of respondents asked the agency to update its ICWA guidelines, which had not been revised since 1979.


Included in their comments were suggested changes and revisions to the guidelines, which have been all but ig-

nored by state social service agencies and courts across the country for years.

The updated ICWA guidelines, said Washburn, will provide much-needed clarity and comprehensive direction in determining whether a child is an Indian child, identifying the child's tribe, and notifying its parent and tribe as early as possible before determining placement.

He also said the new guidelines would provide clear instruction on the application of "active efforts" to prevent the breakup of the Indian family and provisions which carry the presumption that ICWA's placement preferences are in the best interests of Indian children.

"For too many years, some of Indian country's youngest and most vulnerable members have been removed from their families, their cultures, and their identities," said Washburn. "Congress worked hard to address this problem by enacting the Indian Child Welfare Act. Yet, today too many people are unaware of this important law and, unfortunately, there are some that work actively to undermine it."

<http://bit.ly/1C1kPAn> 

A Challenge For Native Youth

A federal-level initiative kicks off

Bottom Line: *With the Generation Indigenous Native Youth Challenge, the Obama administration is keeping an important promise made to tribes.*

"The specific struggles that Native youth face often go unmentioned in our nation's discussions about America's children, and that has to change." Those were the words that accompanied the White House's 2014 Native Youth Report when it was released in December.

Part of that change began on February 12 as the Obama administration was joined by 250 American Indian and Alaska Native youth who attended the UNITY Midyear Conference, to launch the Generation Indigenous (Gen-I) Native Youth Challenge.

President Obama announced the Gen-I Native Youth Challenge at the 2014 White House Tribal Nations Conference to tribal leaders and youth in attendance. At the launch of the program, Native youth learned how to become actively involved.

The Gen-I Challenge is one of the key parts to establishing the National Native Youth Network while providing Native youth "with an opportunity to use various digital platforms to tell their stories and share the positive contributions they are making in their communities," said the National Congress of American Indians.

Cabinet secretaries will be participating in a listening tour throughout 2015. Interior Secretary Sally Jewell kicked off the tour on February 10 in Phoenix, Arizona. Jewell visited with Native students on the Salt River Pima-Maricopa and Gila River Indian communities in and asked them such questions as what they liked best about school.

"My colleagues that serve in the Obama administration will host similar listening sessions with Native Youth across the

country," Jewell said in an Interior Department video released on February 20. "I look forward to joining them, and continuing my own travels too, as we work to lift up the voices of an often forgotten community and we work to create a path for real opportunity."

The Gen-I initiative is meant to break down barriers standing between Native youth and their opportunity to succeed, Jewell said: "One of the best ways to do that is to have a conversation with these kids—the next generation of Indian country."

President Obama's recently released 2016 budget calls for a \$1.5 billion increase in federal funds to support tribal

communities throughout the country, with an emphasis on support for Native youth. Along with first lady Michelle Obama, the president has pushed strongly for this initiative since visiting the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation last June. Following his visit, Obama called the stories of the Native youth "heart-breaking" and has been diligent in trying to close the gaps that they face.

"We want to give those young people and other young Native Americans like them the support they deserve,"

Obama said in a White House release on the launch of Gen-I.

"For the more than one in three Native children who live in poverty and the nearly half who don't graduate from high school, we have a responsibility to do better by them—and we will," Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D-North Dakota) said in highlighting the president's budget focusing on Native youth. "It's deeply encouraging that the President has made such a significant commitment to Indian country and our Native youth, listening to the challenges they face and stepping up to the plate with action."

"For the past two years, I have been pressing on the president, cabinet secretaries, and anyone who will listen about the dire need to support Native kids—and we're seeing results," Heitkamp continued. "This budget proposal is another step forward toward better fulfilling our promises for Native youth, and I will continue to work with this Administration and folks on both sides of the aisle to provide Native children with opportunities to succeed."

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



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A Model Forest?

A South American park balances local needs and environmental care BY BARBARA FRASER



The Ampiyacu-Apayacu Regional Conservation Area constitutes an innovative way to serve both indigenous needs and essential environmentalism.

Bottom Line: *After decades of oppression along the Ampiyacu River, its people are warming to a new conservation system—and a new way of life.*

For Alfredo Rojas, the history of the remote villages along the Ampiyacu River in South America is one of enslavement.

Growing up here, Rojas listened to his parents tell stories of the rubber barons who beat and killed the Indians who failed to meet their latex quota. Rojas worked as a child, doing household chores for a family in a nearby town. As a teen, he collected rubber latex or hauled timber for a local landholder.

Later, outsiders came up the Ampiyacu, providing villagers with tools and food in exchange for timber, or advancing them shotgun ammunition, nets and salt in exchange for fish and game. By the time the outfitters had deducted

those advances from the locals' pay, there wasn't much left. Within a few decades, there wasn't much left in the forest either.

The valuable mahogany and cedar were gone, the lakes no longer harbored 10-foot-long paiche fish, and the wildlife disappeared, frightened further into the forest by the sound of chainsaws.

"People came here to destroy," Rojas says.

But no longer. The green wooden building where he stands, watching the rain, commands a sweeping view of the river. Anyone traveling further upstream must now stop and register.

This is one of three control posts guarding key entrances to the Ampiyacu-Apayacu Regional Conservation Area. It is one of the newest protected areas in the sprawling, still heavily forested region of Loreto in northeastern Peru.

"We're happy," says Rojas. "We don't have outsiders coming in anymore."

The conservation area is an ambitious experiment in which the regional government has partnered with four indigenous groups—the Huitoto, Bora, Yagua and Ocaina—to share the task of managing forests, game, and fishing.

The arrangement is still in its early stages. But if it works, it could signal a new way of managing natural resources in an area where park rangers are scarce and travel expensive.

"The regional conservation areas are important to safeguard the places on which people depended for their subsistence," says Cristián González, director of the Ampiyacu-Apayacu Regional Conservation Area and the neighboring Majuna-Kichwa Regional Conservation Area. "One of our accomplishments has been to begin better control and monitoring. From the time the area was

created, the communities have been concerned about outsiders coming in, because they were the ones who were benefitting most from the resources here.”

For indigenous communities along the Ampiyacu and Apayacu Rivers, the establishment of a conservation area has brought trade-offs. Although outsiders no longer have unchecked access to their forests, the communities must comply with limits on hunting and fishing. And if they want to sell timber, they need to draw up management plans.

But fish and game animal populations are recovering, and Rojas and members of other communities along the Ampiyacu River say the new constraints are a reasonable price to pay for keeping their forests intact.

The people of the Ampiyacu are heirs to several generations of upheaval and violence. Most are children or grandchildren of men and women who were uprooted from the Colombian border by rubber producers during a border skirmish in the 1930s. These enslaved people were forcibly moved to the Ampiyacu, displacing the Yagua people who were living there.

The resettled villagers told their children and grandchildren of the rubber barons’ cruelty—of men who were killed when they failed to meet their rubber quota or women whose breasts were sliced off for anything the overseer might deem an infraction.

Nevertheless, when they arrived in the Ampiyacu, most continued working for their overlords or *patrones*. Over time, the *patrones* branched out from rubber into other activities, including logging, fishing, and hunting.

When hard times hit the economy, many *patrones* moved away. But the vac-

uum was quickly filled by outsiders who motored up the river with huge freezers to net hundreds of kilos of fish—or who paid local men to hunt wild game that they would sell upriver in Iquitos, the regional capital.

Using a system known as *habilitación*, these outsiders hired community members to hunt or fish, advancing them food, fuel, ammunition and salt for week-long hunting or fishing trips, then deducting those advances from their pay. The system left hunters or fishermen with virtually no money.



Fisheries monitors in the Huitoto community of Pucaurquillo, Peru, receiving instruction in area regulations.

The commercial-scale hunting took a heavy toll on the area’s wildlife, says René Vásquez, 36, an Ocaina from the community of Nueva Esperanza on the Ampiyacu. Merchants hired local men to hunt, hauling away more than 400 pounds of peccary, deer and paca meat at a time. That, combined with the noise of loggers’ chainsaws, frightened away the game on which families depended for sustenance.

“You could still find animals, but you had to go farther and farther away to hunt,” Vásquez recalls.

Vásquez was a leader of the Federation of Native Communities of the Ampiyacu (Federación de Comunidades Nativas del Ampiyacu, FECONA) in the early 2000s. At that time, the organization began talking with staff from the

non-profit Institute of the Common (Instituto del Bien Común, or IBC) about ways to stem the plundering of the communities’ forests.

The organization ultimately began working with the local communities to map their forests, fields, rivers, and lakes. This in-depth mapping included assessing the way the indigenous people used their land—where different families hunted, where they grew their crops and where they found the palm used to thatch roofs. They even drew on their map an area where they found a patch of coca, the raw material used to make cocaine.

Based on that information, FECONA and the IBC proposed a protected area that would be established and managed by Loreto’s regional government. The process took about a decade and endured a turnover of officials in the regional government.

But in 2010, authorities officially created the 1,072,756-acre Ampiyacu Apayacu Regional Conservation Area.

The conservation area now forms an arc over the headwaters of the Apayacu, Ampiyacu, Yaguasyacu and Zamún Rivers, which drain southward into the Amazon watershed. The area protects water supplies, as well as the habitat of fish that migrate along the rivers, and other forest resources on which the Bora, Huitoto, Yagua, and Ocaina communities south of the area depend.

It is also part of a broader plan to create a “mosaic” of regional and national protected areas that would extend to the Brazilian border in Loreto, connecting with existing parks and reserves that sweep south between the two countries. It would also connect with Bolivia’s Madidi National Park, creating a massive protected area system.

The heart of the area in Loreto would be a national park, identified by indig-

enous villagers as the place where the *sachamama*—the spirit that protects the forest's animals—resides.

* * *

On a muggy morning in early October, Joel Rojas (not related to Alfredo) stood in the middle of the spacious, palm-thatched maloca, or community building, in the Huitoto village of Pucaurquillo. As a drummer pounded two hollow logs to summon his neighbors to a meeting, Rojas—a fisheries inspector for the regional government of Loreto—organized a stack of ID badges for the community's newly minted fishing monitors. Arriving in ones and twos, several dozen men and women, some with children in tow, settled on low board benches.

Electricity has not reached this part of the Amazon. So someone cranked up a generator nearby, allowing Rojas to flip through PowerPoint slides reviewing the rules for fishing in the lakes that provide sustenance for the communities.

"Hold up your hands," he tells the monitors, and there is a ripple of laughter when they realize he is half-jokingly looking for missing fingers.

"Fishing with explosives or *barbasco* is prohibited," he reminds the group. *Barbasco* is a poison from a plant root; traditionally used for fishing, it can harm the entire ecosystem, killing or endangering other wildlife. Similarly, dynamite is environmentally destructive, but fishers use it to stun fish so they can be scooped up easily. The communities around the new protected areas have agreed to limit their fishing equipment to hooks and nets with openings large enough to let juvenile fish escape.

Rojas reminds his listeners that the moratorium on paiche, or arapaima—a freshwater giant that was nearly fished into oblivion here—began in October. He quizzes them on the minimum sizes for paiche and half a dozen other commonly fished species.

Then comes the ceremony. One by one, the men and women file up to receive the badges certifying that the government considers them official monitors, with the power to confiscate

fish from any outsiders caught trolling in their lakes. The lakes are currently set aside for fishing by community members only.

The concept of community monitors is both old and new. The Huitoto traditionally engaged in rituals to determine the amount of fish they could catch, according to Mauricio Rubio, 59, a former president of FECONA. But economic pressures later led to overfishing for outsiders, as a way of earning cash.

"It's better organized than it was be-

government could change the way it manages the areas.

Still, Rojas and his neighbors in Nuevo Porvenir are forging ahead with the new system, drafting plans for a community-managed timber operation. Several other communities are following suit.

Communities can also design management plans for using resources inside the conservation area, González said, though for now most are taking advantage of the resources in their own territories, where game and fish appear



This village is one of many within the Ampiyacu-Apayacu Regional Conservation Area.

fore," Rubio says. "Now we realize that we have to care for our resources first, and then think about selling them for income."

"Little by little," said González, "we have gained their trust."

* * *

Some villagers, including Rubio, wish they could have established a communal reserve instead of a regional conservation area. A communal reserve would give the indigenous communities stronger territorial rights, with management by a joint committee of community members and park officials, he says. Although the government's representative, González, works closely with the communities, Rubio fears the regional

to be recovering. He plans to involve the communities in a more systematic monitoring program to gather data about the impact of the management plans on the forest and wildlife.

On a rainy afternoon, Mirna Churay, 35, sits in the open kitchen area of her parents' house with several other women, weaving baskets and bags of palm fiber to sell to the tourists who stop at the village occasionally. Churay worries that the new regional officials may want to change the rules. But she says the communities will continue on the course they have set.

"No government is going to tell us what to do with our land. We're always going to fight for our lands. More than anything, we are doing it for our children." <http://bit.ly/1DrYPfP>



The Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee (NPTEC) is recruiting for:
ENTERPRISE EXECUTIVE OFFICER HR-15-120 for the overall vision, long range goals, direction, operation and function of the Nez Perce Tribal Enterprises.

Position reports directly to the NPTEC Chairman and is responsible for communication to the NPTEC and Enterprise Board. Oversees and administers the overall operation of the Enterprises. Responsible for staff supervision, strategic planning, budget, training, policy development, contracts, grants, acquisitions, reporting and providing critical fiscal management information to management and elected officials.

Requires a Master's degree in business, accounting, marketing, finance, management or related field with five (5) years business management experience in a tribal setting, five (5) years in a supervisory capacity of large number of staff. Requires eight (8) years experience derived from working with tribal business enterprises. Requires three (3) years of Tribal Gaming management experience, and eligibility to obtain a tribal gaming license. **"Please provide college transcripts"**. Pre-employment drug testing required. Applicant must possess a valid driver's license with the ability to be insured under the Tribe's policy.

A complete application includes: NPT application/resume: **ENTERPRISE EXECUTIVE OFFICER HR-15-120**, P.O. Box 365, Lapwai, ID 83540, by 4:30 pm 3/20/15 (208) 843-7332 Tribal preference applies. INCOMPLETE APPLICATION PACKETS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED. www.nezperce.org.

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EOE/AA

Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT) are hiring for:

**Department: Children's
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**Position:
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**Salary:
\$55,000 - \$70,000 – D.O.E.**

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If you visit
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Please print, fill, out and you may
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Debate is again raging over whether the man in this famous photograph, which recently ran in True West magazine, is Crazy Horse.



Late last month, thousands of Bolivians attended the festival of Entrada de Anata to celebrate the Pachamama, the mother of time and space.



Vandals splattered the famous murals of Native legends at Seattle's Wilson-Pacific School with white latex paint.



The eminent legal scholar Walter Echo-Hawk (Pawnee) is a visiting professor at Lewis & Clark Law School for the spring semester.

Headlines from the Web

AMONG THE NAVAJOS, A RENEWED DEBATE ABOUT GAY MARRIAGE

<http://nyti.ms/1DFyi18>

STUDY SAYS IDAHO TRIBES HAVE \$1 BILLION IMPACT ON STATE

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

DEADLINE APPROACHING FOR LAND PURCHASE OFFERS ON PINE RIDGE

<http://bit.ly/1Bp9c6s>

NATIVE FISHING RIGHTS HEADED TO TRIAL

<http://bit.ly/18ljckw>

DENTISTS OVERWHELMED BY TOOTH DECAY IN NAVAJO CHILDREN

<http://bit.ly/1Bc3xPu>

LAWMAKERS WANT TO WORK WITH TRIBES ON REGULATIONS FOR LEGAL POT

<http://bit.ly/1BxrLp4>

UPCOMING EVENTS

NATIONAL INDIAN JUSTICE CENTER TRAINING MARCH 4-6

This session aims to provide tribal leaders, judges, attorneys and staff responsible for drafting tribal laws with the tools to increase their equality of self-governance, enhance the efficient operation of tribal government, and assure tribal members that their tribal government is responsive and fair. Training will cover due process and separation of powers; intergovernmental agreements; sovereign immunity, protections and waivers; indexing tribal laws; and tribal ethics and conflicts of interests, among other subjects. The event is conducted by the National Indian Justice Center, which assists Indian country in drafting and revising tribal constitutions, and codes.

Location: Atlantis Casino Resort Spa, Reno, Nevada

FIVE COLLEGE NATIVE AMERICAN AND INDIGENOUS STUDIES SYMPOSIUM MARCH 4-6

"Contested Legal Realities: Different Approaches to the Law in Indian Country" is a three-day symposium that focuses on non-lawyer perspectives of Native legal issues. It gathers Indigenous Studies scholars to consider interdisciplinary approaches to legal issues as well as to invite community-based scholars to consider—and critique—those approaches in light of recent cases and longer histories.

Location: University of Massachusetts-Amherst and Amherst College

NATIONAL RES LAS VEGAS 2015 MARCH 9-12

This year's Reservation Economic Summit (RES), sponsored by the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development, offers extensive access to respected tribal leaders, members of Congress, representatives of federal agencies, and state and local elected officials and top executives on a national platform. The emphasis of the forum is on business and training development; related events will include an artisan

fair, scholarship golf tournament, and an exhibitor trade show.

Location: Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada

NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE SYMPOSIUM MARCH 12-14

The symposium is organized by an independent group of Indigenous scholars committed to making a place where Native voices can be heard. Presentations and discussions will include "Artifacts and Objects," "Approaches to Storytelling," "Future Directives for Native Literary Studies," "Self-Imaginations: The Affirmation of Indigenous Identities Through Story," "Our Animal Relatives in Texts," and "Indigenize Wikipedia!" Keynote speakers will be Bram Stoker and Shirley Jackson Award-nominated author Stephen Graham Jones (Blackfeet), and author Frances Washburn (Lakota/Anishinabe), associate professor and director of graduate studies in the American Indian Studies department at the University of Arizona.

Location: Isleta Resort, Albuquerque, New Mexico

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Re: your op-ed about how the Pamunkey Tribe had until recently prohibited intermarriage with blacks (February 17):

When I was a child, my father took me to the Pamunkey Reservation. His grandfather had taken him there when he was younger. I was black, a dusky gift from my mother from North Carolina. We were not tourists;

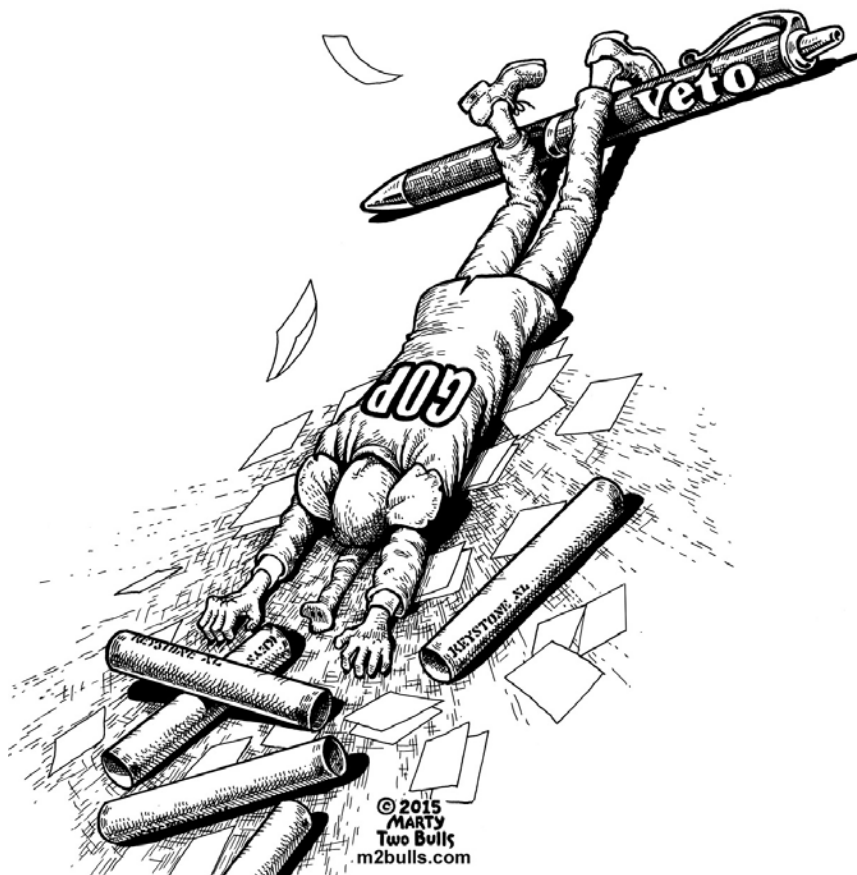
we came to see family.

Of course, I am happy for the Pamunkey to receive federal recognition as a nation under the Obama administration. But I regret the tribal policy prohibiting intermarriage with blacks, while allowing it with whites. I wish that both the Pamunkey and the National Black Caucus, which recently criticized the Pamunkey for its stance,

had taken the time to speak to families like mine.

Our story is not about politics. It is about family reunions and laughter and shared memories of loved ones of long ago. We are a united family and we will not let politics and race divide us ever again.

—Oliver L. Trimiew
Lookout Mountain, Georgia



TOP NEWS ALERTS

From IndianCountryTodayMediaNetwork.com

HOOPA VALLEY WILL VOTE ON POT

The Hoopa Valley Tribe of California will vote on April 28 on whether to permit the growing of medical marijuana on tribal lands. Following an October Justice Department memo, which said that sovereign Indian Nations may choose to grow or sell the crop on tribal lands without fear of federal harassment, some tribes have begun to take advantage of the opportunity. In January, the Fort Peck Tribal Executive Board approved a resolution to grow medical marijuana.

MISTY UPHAM REMEMBERED AT OSCARS

Misty Upham, the late Blackfeet actress known for her performances in *Frozen River*, *Jimmy P.*

and *August: Osage County*, was included in the "In Memoriam" montage at the 2015 Academy Awards ceremony on February 22. She joined a roster of deceased stars that included Robin Williams, Lauren Bacall, Mickey Rooney and James Garner. Meryl Streep, Upham's co-star in *August: Osage County*, introduced the segment. Upham was found dead last October near the White River on the Muckleshoot Reservation in Washington State.

SHINGLE SPRINGS CHAIRMAN RE-ELECTED

Nicholas H. Fonseca has been re-elected to a three-year term as chairman of the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians. Fonseca has been chairman of the Shingle Springs Band for 15

years and a member of the tribal council for 16. One new member, Bernie Gonzales, was elected to the council; the other members of the seven-person council are Fonseca, Hermo Olanio, Regina Cuellar, Allan Campbell, Veronica Holmes and Malissa Tayaba. The federally recognized tribe is located in Placerville, California.

MUSCOGEE CREEK SEEKING CASINO EMPLOYEES

The Muscogee Creek Nation is in search of more than 5,000 workers to staff its upcoming \$365 million casino expansion project in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Plans call for a 483-room, 27-story hotel that will include such amenities as a new gaming area, convention center, spa, restaurants and entertainment

venue. The tribe has slated a job fair for March 5 at the facility.

DELAY ON NOOKSACK DISENROLLMENT

A Nooksack tribal judge has ordered that disenrollment proceedings against 306 tribal members must wait until the process receives approval from the federal government. At issue is the disputed lineage of those who face disenrollment. The council of the Washington state-based tribe began attempting to expel members in 2013. But Nooksack Tribal Court Judge pro tem Randy Doucet ruled on February 23 that disenrollment hearings must wait until the Board of Indian Appeals of the Interior Department says the process can go forward.

How Did I Miss That?

Brian Williams' dubious personal history, Benjamin Netanyahu's equally dubious ad, and 50 shades of irony

BY STEVE RUSSELL

Montana Republican State Rep. David Moore's bill to ban yoga pants has been tabled. According to the *Great Falls Tribune*, Rev. (I mean Rep.) Moore also opined that Speedos should be made illegal.

"Our mullahs," my Republican cousin Ray Sixkiller mumbled, "keep trying to protect us."

TMZ reported that rapper Vanilla Ice was arrested by Lantana, Florida police and charged with burglary and grand theft for allegedly stealing furniture, a pool heater and bicycles from a vacant home. The police claimed that he swiped the stuff for use in a home he was renovating on his reality TV show, *The Vanilla Ice Project*.

Cousin Ray was amazed that Ice finally got busted for stealing "after all those years of stealing from black artists."

Inside Higher Ed reported that the trustees of Clemson University have turned back a recommendation by the faculty senate and the graduate student government to rename the building named for racist and white supremacist Ben Tillman.

"Some of our historical stones are rough and even unpleasant to look at," said chairman David Wilkins, "but they are ours and denying them as part of our history does not make them any less so. For that reason, we will not change the name of our historical buildings."

It seems to me that if universities in the Confederate States would strip the names of white supremacists off campus buildings, they could double their endowments overnight by selling all the naming rights that would be freed up.

NBC News anchor Brian Williams has already been suspended for six

months without pay for falsely claiming his helicopter was hit by hostile fire in Iraq, and that his hotel in New Orleans was surrounded by floodwaters during Hurricane Katrina.

Now, CNN has unearthed video of Williams, right after the bin Laden raid, claiming to have ridden into Baghdad with SEAL Team Six and later, in January of 2013, claiming that one of his SEAL buddies sent him a piece of the chopper that crashed in bin Laden's compound. A spokesman for Special Operations Command had a whole raft of reasons why neither of those claims could be true.

Of course, Indians know that Williams originally made his bones by reporting the Greasy Grass Fight up close and at great risk. Did you know that Williams has a key chain made from a spent rifle cartridge gifted to him by Crazy Horse?

Cousin Ray said he heard that Williams came to Indian Territory on the Trail of Tears. "But there's no truth to the rumor that he carried Chief Ross's bag the whole way."

I recall Mitt Romney claiming on the stump in Michigan that he witnessed the Golden Jubilee of the Automobile in Detroit on June 1, 1946. Romney was born March 12, 1947.

"You wouldn't understand," Cousin Ray claimed. "It's a Mormon thing."

The *Lexington Dispatch* ran a correction of a headline printed over a letter to the editor from one Boyd Thomas. It turns out that Mr. Thomas "does not believe President Obama is the Antichrist, who will come after seven kings, according to Revelation. He thinks Obama could be

the seventh king."

While Cousin Ray was glad to hear that cleared up, he noticed that ISIS also believes the End Times are upon us and that they need to bait "Rome" into a military confrontation.


Since the Pope no longer has an army, there is disagreement about who is going to be Rome. But the U.S. is a hot possibility.

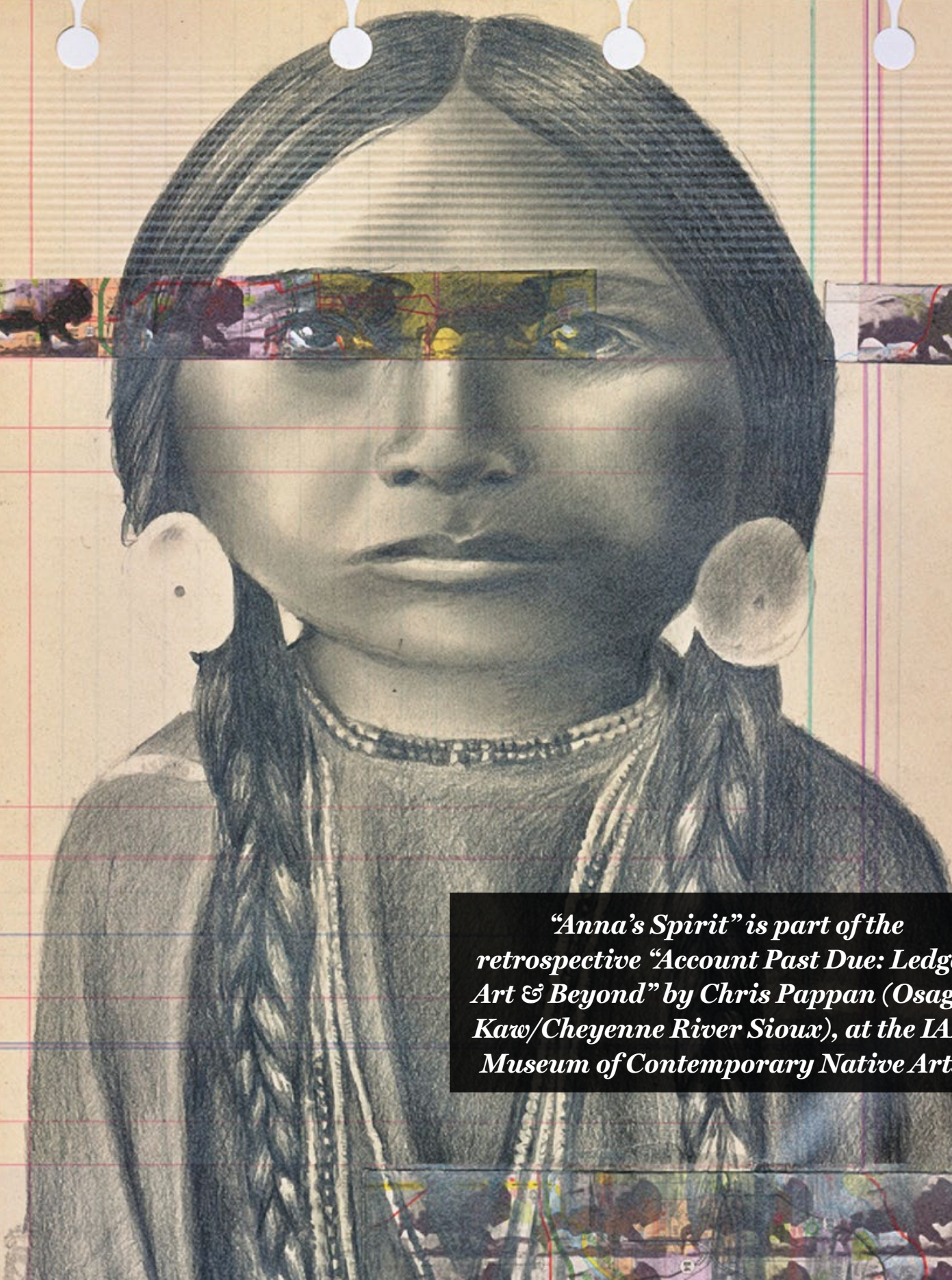
The American Family Association (AFA)—headquartered in Tupelo, Mississippi—has been leading the moral jihad against the movie version of *50 Shades of Grey*. It is a piece of abominable writing that sold obscene numbers of books by wedding a Harlequin romance novel plot to explicit rough sex. The AFA has called it "50 shades of evil."

In an outcome that the *Jackson Clarion-Ledger* called "50 shades of irony," Fandango reported record advance ticket sales for an R-rated movie and that the leading state in scooping up tickets was . . . get ready for it . . . Mississippi. The first city to sell out? Tupelo.

Cousin Ray decided he's too old for soft-core porn. But he still found the AFA's comeuppance "50 shades of hilarious."

A campaign spot for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had to be pulled off the air after his country's election committee ruled the use of children illegal. Netanyahu had played a kindergarten teacher and used the kids to resemble his unruly coalition partners.

Cousin Ray wondered if the Israelis had been watching American Indian tribal elections for pointers. <http://bit.ly/1ztTAs2> 



"Anna's Spirit" is part of the retrospective "Account Past Due: Ledger Art & Beyond" by Chris Pappan (Osage/Kaw/Cheyenne River Sioux), at the IALA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts.