



Indian Country TODAY

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

A Letter from the Publisher

Shkōli. In 1985, just 87 Native American actors were awarded lead or supporting roles in productions monitored by the Screen Actors Guild. By 1993, that number had soared to 436 castings for Native men and women. What made the difference? The premier of the soon-to-be blockbuster, *Dances with Wolves*, in 1990.

Now, 25 years later, *This Week From Indian Country Today* looks back at the impact and success of the movie as a lens through which we can assess the state of today's motion picture and television industries.

The film, directed by Kevin Costner and written by Michael Black, helped propel the career of such notable actors as Wes Studi, Tantoo Cardinal and Graham Greene, who was nominated for a Best Supporting Actor at the Academy Awards. In this week's feature article, Studi remarks that the film is to be lauded for putting an end to a certain Hollywood stereotype—"no more wooden Indians."

Though the film's central character played by Costner was non-Native, its reception pointed to the enduring fascination of mainstream Americans in Indian culture and is most likely responsible for the jump in the number of roles won by Native performers just a few years later. Unfor-



tunately, 1993 was a high-water mark for castings of Indian talent and there has been a slow decline in the years since. According to Indian country's working actors, the nature of those roles has stagnated as well, due to business-as-usual casting. "Why can't I be called up for a doctor or a nurse in a regular story?" Cardinal asks ICTMN.

Challenges abound in Hollywood when it comes to presenting Indians, whether historical or contemporary: The door is too often closed to Native writers, directors, casting agents, talent agencies and talent, despite intense global interest in our stories, our culture and our ways. However, it is not 1987 anymore and Natives are poised for opportunity. Indian country has several generations of media-savvy performers and producers working their craft inside and out of the mainstream.

We have kept up with the times. It's Hollywood's turn to catch up.

Na Ki wa,

Ray Halbritter

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Omens Of The Next Generation

Mike Myers, founder and CEO of Network for Native Futures, finds chilling parallels between the perpetrators of the recent Paris massacre and the make-up of many Native youth—parallels with political repercussions:

According to the BBC, the attackers in the recent jihadist rampage in Paris who have been identified so far are all in their late 20s or early 30s. This should be a time in young people's lives when they are settling into careers, starting families, or engaging in activities other than mass murder.

When you consider the state of affairs for young Indigenous people, it's surprising that we haven't experienced similar radicalization. The violence is there but is largely internalized. Studies consistently show that the highest numbers of negative indicators are in the 20-35 age group. They have the highest numbers of suicides, violent victimhood, unemployment and dropout rates.

Over the next 10 to 15 years, this generation will be coming to power. They will become elected officials, administrators and managers. They will constitute the majority of most of our populations. In most of our territories they already represent an average of 32

percent of our population.

I'm not saying that there aren't any positive, empowered, innovative and dynamic young people. Rather, they are outnumbered by the negative and disempowered.

The fate and future of our young people has to stop being an election campaign promise that gets dragged out every cycle and then not acted upon. If you don't think the young people notice this, then you are blind. They notice it, hear it and reject it as empty.

Ask them, and you will find it is an essential element of their disenchantment with the current state of Indigenous politics. <http://bit.ly/1O2ug3h> ☞

Bigs And Littles On The Rez

Bobbi Rose Nez, a volunteer with Big Brothers Big Sisters—which promotes mentoring relationships between adults (“Bigs”) and children (“Littles”)—cherishes her interaction with a Native girl:

I began volunteering 13 years ago. Born and raised on the Navajo Nation, I have always felt it important to give back to the Native American community.

I've been matched with my current Little for the past seven years. She is of Navajo and Cheyenne descent and is a registered member of the Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT). Based on our Na-

vajo clan system, we're cousins. As such, we're able to connect more easily and discuss our families, cultural practices and desires to give back to our Native communities.

Our proven effective mentoring practices are combined with a tribal community focus. The program runs under the guidance of Big Brothers Big Sisters staff, community organizations and community members to best serve a tribe's existing needs, structure and cultural values.

As a Big, I'm able to introduce my Little to fun activities and lend support during her challenging times. In return,

I'm given a firsthand look at the activities from her perspective and the chance to watch her grow into a happy and productive young woman.

I've witnessed my current Little transition from a shy 9-year-old to a confident teenager in leadership roles, even participating in the first-ever Tribal Youth Summit hosted by the White House. One of my favorite memories with my Little is traveling to Fairbanks, Alaska in 2013 for a conference and to learn about the Alaskan Native culture.

I encourage all in the Native American community to rise to the challenge and volunteer. <http://bit.ly/1LSIUbn> ☞

Different Kinds Of Welcoming

Amid the Syrian refugee crisis, some have argued that this continent's first inhabitants welcomed their first European visitors. Gyasi Ross (Blackfeet Nation/Suquamish) counters that the case is not quite so simple:

There are those who point out that it was refugees who founded this nation as we currently know it. Indeed, as they say, were it not for those European refugees—who looked to escape religious persecution, who knew that they would never own land, and who were running from the freakin' bubonic plague—there would

be no “America” today.

Parts of that argument are true. But to reduce all of Native peoples' immigration policies to that of “acceptance” and “openness” is both dishonest and even insulting toward our ancestors.

As a matter of historical record, different Native groups adapted their positions and policies based upon changing circumstances and relationships with the European immigrants. Those groups who got wind of bad interactions with the Europeans weren't nearly as inviting as some other groups who were not aware of the Europeans' destructive habits—or who knew but took a risk to trust anyway.

It's also worth noting that within each tribal nation, the matter of how to appropriately deal with invaders was always up for debate and hotly contested. Tribes were then, as they are now, composed of myriad individual opinions and political factions. Therefore, although there is some poignancy to the rhetoric, the argument is really only a funny punch line with no substantive relevance.

It's a reductive take on a nuanced and complex history of interaction that spanned the course of several hundred years as Europeans slowly made their way across this continent and each Native group handled them differently. <http://bit.ly/1O3hwt6> ☞

Shell Is Fined \$77,000 for Releasing Toxins Near Swinomish Reservation

BY RICHARD WALKER

Shell Oil has been fined \$77,000 following an uncontrolled release of toxins from one of its refineries near the Swinomish Reservation in Washington State that sickened residents and sent at least two people to the hospital. The fine was announced on November 20 by the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries.

A state investigation found that the Puget Sound Refinery did not adequately decontaminate its main industrial flare when it was shut down for routine maintenance on February 20. This failure released hydrogen sulfide, hydrocarbons, mercaptans and pyrophoric iron into the air.

An industrial flare is a disposal system that burns off waste gases and vapors that cannot be used during production. "It's also a safety device that can help prevent fires or explosions during power outages or other emergencies," the Department of Labor & Industries reported. The improper operation of an industrial flare can release hundreds of tons of hazardous pollutants.

Shell Puget Sound and the Northwest Clean Air Agency received numerous complaints from nearby residents and businesses on the day of the release. "To me, it smelled like really bad sulfur, rotten eggs," Michelle Cladoosby told KING 5-TV. Her father, Mike Cladoosby, told KING 5, "It burned. I had a hard time breathing." Mike Cladoosby's son, Brian, is chairman of the Swinomish Tribe and president of the National Congress of American Indians.

Labor & Industries had previously cited Shell in 2013 for skipping critical steps when shutting down the flare. In that case, an explosion nearly injured several contractors and Shell employees. Over the last three years, the department responded to several complaints that yielded 11 inspections at the refinery. <http://bit.ly/21ssDWp> 📍

Little Mortgage Lending In Any South Dakota Indian Counties

BY MARK FOGARTY

As recently reported by ICTMN, Oglala Lakota County in South Dakota suffered from a lack of home loans during 2014. Further analysis of federal data now reveals that the other four counties in the state that, like Oglala Lakota, are entirely within the boundaries of Native reservations, were also mortgage deserts last year.

Corson County, on the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe (CRST) reservation, saw just four mortgages made on it in 2014. Dewey County, located mostly in the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe reservation, with a small portion in Standing Rock, had 11. Ziebach County, also within the CRST with a small portion in Standing Rock, had five. Todd County, on the Rosebud Sioux reservation, saw nine mortgages. Approximately 20,000 people live in these four reservation counties.

The 29 mortgages made in the counties represented just \$2.5 million in finance. Another \$327,000 came from sales of these loans into the mortgage secondary market.

Less than a half million dollars of mortgage finance was extended or invested on Oglala Lakota County through 29 loans last year. That makes the total for the five reservation-only counties about \$3.3 million in loans and investments, or about an average of \$600,000 for each county. None of the five counties had as much as \$1 million in home loan finance last year.

The data was collected under the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act and analyzed by LendingPatterns.com, a software program that was developed ComplianceTech, a firm based in McLean, Virginia. <http://bit.ly/1Q0oULO> 📍

Jewell Talks Indian Country Climate Resilience at Paris Forum

Kicking off a panel discussion last week at the 21st Conference of Parties (COP21), Interior Secretary Sally Jewell touched on work within Indian country that demonstrated what the U.S. is doing to help prepare communities and the ecosystems on which they depend for the effects of climate change.

Noting that Washington is determined to "honor and capture" the "knowledge to strengthen our understanding of ecosystems and climate change," Jewell cited the example of the Alaskan Native Tribal Health Consortium's Local Environmen-

tal Observer (LEO) Network.

"It's a way for individuals, communities in Alaska to record abnormal events and trends," she said. "Like, where are the caribou migrating? What's going on with the weather? How is the permafrost melting? What's happening with the berries? What's going on with insects? We're seeing insect patterns change that are bringing disease, and really changing very much the health impacts in many areas." Jewell said, too, that the network is both engaging citizen science and educating the federal government through its efforts.

Jewell then discussed the working relationship with American Indian tribes

and Alaska Natives across Turtle Island regarding seed funding. This funding will allow tribes to begin their own climate resilience programs on tribal lands and reservations. The most recent grants went to Alaska Native villages.

Jewell took the opportunity at COP21 to announce a public-private partnership that focuses on forests and brings the strength of global supply chains together with strong government commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. She also participated in a roundtable hosted by French President François Hollande with African heads of state to discuss renewable energy and climate adaptation in Africa. <http://bit.ly/1RpYjHm> 📍

The Legacy of ‘Dances With Wolves’

Has Hollywood improved on its portrayal of Indians? BY ANGELA ALEISS

Bottom Line: *A quarter-century after the acclaimed release of Dances With Wolves, the Oscar-winning film continues to be a touchstone of uplifting Native imagery—and a reminder that much cinematic truth-telling remains to be done.*

Twenty-five years ago this fall, *Dances with Wolves* constituted a watershed. After decades of cowboys-and-Indians Westerns, many believed that Hollywood finally showed a human dimension to its Native characters.

At the movie’s preview screening in 1990 at San Francisco’s American Indian Film Festival, Michael Smith (Sioux) recalled that the reception was euphoric.

“We had so many people,” said Smith, the founder and president of the American Indian Film Institute, the festival’s sponsoring organization. “The theater had 670 seats. It was pretty moving. I think [the film] struck people in an emotional way. I don’t think *Dances with Wolves* is ever going to be topped.”

Many would agree that 25 years later, no Western has had such a powerful impact. But others question whether the movie has had a long-term positive effect on Hollywood’s portrayals of Native Americans.

One thing is for certain: The film was a smash. It raked in a stunning \$424 million at the worldwide box office and earned seven Academy Awards, including Best Picture, Best Director (Kevin Costner), and Best Adapted Screenplay (Michael Blake). It also garnered a nomination for Best Supporting Actor, for Graham Greene (Oneida).

Michael Blake, who wrote the script from his 1988 novel, recalled how director/co-producer Kevin Costner was “stunned speechless” over its overwhelming reception. “He had no idea how deep this ran and what a deep af-



Dances With Wolves, said the Cherokee actor Wes Studi, helped his career—and set big-screen standards that still need to be followed and patterned.

COURTESY MAURA DHU STUDIO

fect it had on people,” Blake said in a 2003 interview.

The legacy of *Dances With Wolves* endures; indeed, there has lately been occasional talk about related projects. *The Holy Road*, Blake’s 2001 sequel to the film, might become a TV mini-series. And *Dances with Wolves: The Musical* is currently being developed by Matt Murphy Productions, which won four Tony Awards for Memphis.

Bonnie Arnold, an associate producer for *Dances with Wolves*, said the movie was “the first time that anyone had done anything that ambitious.” Arnold, now co-president of feature animation at DreamWorks Animation, added that *Dances* “showed that it was a story to be told and a value to be had from that [Native] culture.”

But not everyone associated with the film is satisfied that it has done everything that it can and should have done insofar as cinematic depictions of Natives are concerned.

Cherokee actor Wes Studi, who portrayed a Pawnee warrior, cautioned that in this case, Hollywood cannot rest on its laurels. Show business, he said, “needs constant reminders not to fall back into the same old habits of lazy writing and storytelling” that appeared in earlier Westerns.

Still, Studi remembers that the movie was good for both him and his career. “Many people recognize me from *Dances with Wolves*,” said the 67-year-old veteran actor, who has 91 film and television credits.

Indeed, many Native actors enjoyed a boost in their careers following the release. According to the Screen Actors Guild, only 87 Native American performers were featured in lead and supporting roles in 1985. Following the release of *Dances With Wolves*, that number peaked at 436 in 1993.

Later statistics, however, have shown a gradual decline in the demand for Indian actors.

Nonetheless, Studi believes that

Dances with Wolves “set a standard followed by many films afterward that dared look into ‘what made the Indians’ tick. No more wooden Indians.”

Percy White Plume (Lakota), who had a minor role in the film, recalled that when it came out, “everyone was on board.” He added, “The non-Native people got an inside look at us and how it must have been 200 years ago. And that part was good.”

Just the same, White Plume said that many Lakota did not like how the white hero, Lt. John Dunbar (Costner) dominated the movie: “It was a white man coming into the Lakota country and learning the

and fan-based organization Mary Cares to Sinte Gleska University on the Rosebud Reservation.

For Tantoo Cardinal, who played Kicking Bird’s wife Black Shawl, *Dances with Wolves* “kind of whisked me in the door and put me at the top of the list.”

“It didn’t hurt to be involved with a big-name production liked that,” Cardinal said.

But after 40 years of a successful acting career in both Hollywood and Canada, Cardinal sees little change in the movies’ Native portrayals. The casting process in general, she said, still smacks of tokenism.

“It’s ‘We want to introduce this funky little mystical element, so we have to have an Indian in here,’” she said. “Why can’t I be called up for a doctor or a nurse in a regular story?”

Rene Haynes agrees. She worked on location and extras casting for *Dances with Wolves* with the late casting director Elisabeth Leustig and is now a casting director with 46 film and television credits. Haynes believes that “we are still a long way from seeing a solid contemporary representation of Native faces on the screen.”

Still, she credits the movie with jump-starting many Native careers. “Many of the young local Native people

who had their first acting experience on *Dances with Wolves* now have very respectable careers,” Haynes said.

Michael Smith of the American Indian Film Institute does not disagree. But he points out that for all its acting accolades, *Dances with Wolves* did not employ Native writers, directors, or producers.

“It seems like the stories are there but we’re not really growing,” Smith said. “People don’t know our actors and our filmmakers.”

So what’s the solution?

“Get Indian movies in mainstream theaters,” he said. <http://bit.ly/1O17pfZ> 

*At stage center of an
Oscar-winning movie
that redefined the
cinematic portrayal of
Native Americans was
the leading role of a
white man.*

language and leading the way.”

Several years later, Costner raised hackles among more than a few Natives when he tried to build a casino and a railroad that traveled from Rapid City to Deadwood, South Dakota. “The [Lakota] people didn’t want it,” White Plume said.

The casino was never built. Instead, in 2003 Costner founded the museum Tatanka: Story of the Bison, which still operates in Deadwood. In a similarly enlightened vein, Mary McDonnell, who played the character Stands With A Fist in *Dances*, now donates the proceeds from her personal appearances

Embracing Pot In Washington

Two tribes accept the reality of cannabis BY RICHARD WALKER



"Everyone who has wanted marijuana has had marijuana," said a tribal police chief. "I was ecstatic when the ban was removed."

Bottom Line: *For the Suquamish and Squaxin Island Tribes of Washington, licensing the retail sale of marijuana and legalizing its use on their lands now seems inevitable.*

Thousands of motorists a day take State Highway 305 through the Suquamish Tribe's Port Madison Indian Reservation on their way to and from the neighboring cities of Poulsbo and Bainbridge Island.

Meanwhile the reservation of the Squaxin Island Tribe is near U.S. 101, 16 miles northwest of the state capital of Olympia.

Both the Suquamish and the Squaxin have legalized medical marijuana. In September, they signed 10-year com-

pacts with the Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board to sell the substance.

The Squaxins' retail marijuana store, "Elevation," which opened for business November 12 on its reservation, is believed to be the first marijuana retailer owned by a Native nation in the U.S. "Agate Dreams," to be operated by a Suquamish Tribe business entity, is expected to open early this month on Highway 305, near Suquamish Clearwater Casino Resort.

No matter how Suquamish and Squaxin people feel about marijuana, it has become clear that their governments could not ignore it.

"The state legalized this. It was brought to our doorstep by a neighboring government," said Suquamish Chairman Leonard

Forsman. While some tribal citizens have mixed feelings about marijuana, said Forsman, "the fact is it's here."

For Native nations near urban areas, legalizing marijuana use has some advantages. Had marijuana possession and use remained illegal under Suquamish law, enforcement on the 7,657-acre reservation (where 3,581 acres are owned by non-Indians) "would have been quite complex," Suquamish Police Chief Mike Lasnier told the *North Kitsap Herald*.

"We actually supported the council in making the change so there wouldn't be that disparity," Lasnier said. "We—all of law enforcement—have bigger issues to deal with, like meth and heroin."

Lasnier noted that tribes that legaliz-

ing marijuana can set the ground rules on how it is processed and sold on their lands, thereby heading off environmental problems associated with clandestine cultivation.

“Everyone who has wanted marijuana has had marijuana,” he told ICTMN. “It’s more accessible now, except the Mexican mafia is no longer making the money and there is no more horrific dumping of trash and pollution. I was ecstatic when [the ban] was removed, because now there’s one set of rules for everyone.”

In the current fiscal year, which began on July 1, retail marijuana has generated an average total daily sale of \$2.3 million in Washington State. Those sales yield tax revenues that can be used to bolster law enforcement and other public services.

The state charges an excise tax of 37 percent on all taxable sales of marijuana, marijuana concentrates, useable marijuana and marijuana-infused products, according to the Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board.

From July 1 to November 23, Washington’s 655 active producers and processors and 192 active retailers reported \$259.7 million in sales and paid \$64.9 million in excise taxes, according to the state Liquor and Cannabis Board. By the end of the fiscal year, Kitsap County (the Suquamish Tribe’s neighboring jurisdiction) is expected to receive \$98,924.69 for marijuana-law enforcement.

King County, another neighbor, is expected to receive \$965,307.15. All told, \$2.7 million will be distributed to counties and \$3.2 million to cities, the Liquor and Cannabis Board reported.

The Suquamish and the Squaxin will not receive a share of the state’s excise tax, because the state will not impose an excise tax on their lands.

But by the terms of the compact, the Suquamish and the Squaxin will charge a tax equivalent to the state excise tax on sales to non-Native customers on their lands. All tax revenue collected by the tribes will be used for tribal government services.

Like any government, the Suquamish and the Squaxin are free to impose their own local sales tax rates. But that rate can be lower than that imposed by neighboring local governments.

Even though recreational marijuana use is legal in certain states, their laws do not trump federal law.

In 2013, for example, Washington and Colorado voters approved the legalization of recreational marijuana. But the Justice Department issued a memorandum setting forth eight enforcement priorities of the federal government.

These priorities emphasized preventing access to marijuana by minors, preventing the criminal element from involvement in the industry, and preventing the diversion of the product out of state.

(In a subsequent memo, the Justice Department clarified that the same priorities should guide federal enforcement priorities in Indian country.)

According to the Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board, the state’s regulatory system for marijuana and the rules written by the board “appears to meet” the eight priorities. The board also said that Washington Gov. Jay Inslee’s office “is maintaining an open dialogue with the federal government and the [board] is moving forward to carry out the expectations of the [Justice Department] under the new law.”

Because the Suquamish Tribe is sovereign and self-governing, it did not have to enter into a compact with the state. But it chose to do so, because the state had already developed the rules, with U.S. Justice Department guidance, for keeping the industry clean.

“We wanted to make sure we were close to DOJ guidelines,” Forsman said.

So how does legalized cannabis jibe with a culture that teaches its young people the importance of alcohol-free, drug-free, tobacco-free living—a culture for which substances were long the salve for generational traumas?

The answer is complex.

“Because it’s legal, adults 21 and older get to make that choice [of using cannabis],” Suquamish Tribal Council member Robin Sigo told the North Kitsap Herald “But that doesn’t mean we endorse it.”

Sigo, who leads the Healing of the Canoe Project, which teaches young people about making healthy lifestyle choices, added, “We’ve really moved away from the ‘Just say no’ model and are now focused on giving youth and families information

about how it might affect them, so they can get to make the decision themselves.”

Peg Deam, a culture bearer who works for the Suquamish Tribe Department of Community Development, agreed.

“For our children, it’s another lesson in ‘You make your choices. How do you want to live?’, then show them the consequences,” she told the *North Kitsap Herald*. “They have free will, they’re going to make their own choices. Right now, [marijuana] is hush-hush and under cover. When we bring it out ... it becomes another stark reality for our kids to see and we can educate them on what they do not want in their lives.”


Squaxin Island Tribe Councilman Jim Peters told the *Tacoma News Tribune* that Squaxin is diversifying its economy but is treating marijuana like alcohol or tobacco.

“We’re not going to advertise for people to get into it, but if you are into it, we have a product for you,” he said. The Squaxin, he said, educates its young people about the dangers of drug and alcohol use and operates a drug and alcohol treatment center.

Some Native nations in Washington are still saying “no” to marijuana legalization. The Yakama Nation, with a population of 10,000, has banned the use of marijuana on its 1.2 million acre reservation in the central portion of the state.

As far as the Nation is concerned, marijuana is illegal in its historical territory—10.8 million acres of ancestral land it ceded to the United States in an 1855 treaty, but where the Yakama people maintain hunting, food gathering and fishing rights.

The Port Gamble S’Klallam Reservation, tucked away in a rural area of Kitsap County, is a closed reservation. Only S’Klallam citizens live there, and many think the sale and use of marijuana conflict with cultural teachings.

“So much of our energy is put toward healthy lifestyles,” said Kelly Sullivan, executive director of the Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe. “Some tribal members have a problem with us being in the alcohol and tobacco business at the casino. They think there should be more options for income than this type of thing. So, we’re not going to do something just because we can.” <http://bit.ly/1OzsT0u> 

Who Speaks For The Wolves?

Tribal tradition and expert opinion clash over lupine recovery BY KONNIE LEMAY



A resurgence of gray wolves has posed an environmental and cultural conundrum.

Bottom Line: *Gray wolves are mounting a comeback in several northern states—and are thus causing tension about their future.*

Gray wolves are making a big enough population comeback that some research-

ers are calling for them to be taken off the federal Endangered Species List. But some tribes oppose the measure.

More than two dozen wolf researchers—including the founder of the International Wolf Center—sent a letter on November

18 to the Interior Department calling for the gray wolf to again be delisted in Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin.

“We support the Endangered Species Act and feel it has resulted in the successful recovery of gray wolves in this

region,” wrote Adrian Wydeven, coordinator of the Timber Wolf Alliance at Northland College in Ashland. “It is time for wolves in this region to return to state management and for the Endangered Species Act to focus funds and resources on truly endangered wildlife.”

No tribal wildlife managers, however, signed onto the letter.

“We want the wolves protected,” said Lacey Hill, wildlife specialist for the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe in Wisconsin. “We don’t want the wolves harvested.”

Some scientists fear that leaving a recovered species on the endangered list weakens protections for other animals that might need it more.

“We do firmly believe that if species get listed, but never get delisted when they recover, it taints that act,” said L. David Mech, founder of the International Wolf Center in Ely, Minnesota and one of the letter’s signatories. “The tendency, then, to list new species would be reduced because they never could get off the list.”

The near-demise and rebirth of the gray wolf has been a source of contention and tortuous procedure for more than four decades.

In 1974 the gray wolf—sometimes called a timber wolf—was listed as endangered in the lower 48 states and Mexico. At that time, the only gray wolves south of Canada numbered 750, in northeastern Minnesota.

But by 2014, the combined wolf population in Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin was more than 3,700.

Population goals set under the Endangered Species Act had been achieved by 1999, and the process for delisting began the following year. A final rule to delist was posted in April 2009. It was withdrawn in July to allow for more public comment.

By September 2009, a federal court had reversed the delisting, relisting the gray wolf as “endangered” in most affected states and designating it as “threatened” in Minnesota.

The wolves were again delisted in the region in December 2011, and the jurisdiction for managing them was turned over to individual states. Nearly half a dozen states promptly initiated wolf hunting and trapping seasons, raising controversy among environmentalists and opposition by most tribes.

On December 19, 2014, another federal court case resulted in the relisting of the wolf as endangered in all of the Western Great Lakes Region, including Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin.

Many wolf researchers fear that these constant court battles pose a threat to the Endangered Species Act. They argue that it will be more difficult to get any

area, the health of the wolf population has a unique cultural significance, tying the thriving of wolves to the thriving of the Ojibwe people.

The Bad River Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe has adopted a Ma’iingan (Wolf) Management Plan that opposes any harvest of wolves. It also includes a six-mile hunting buffer zone around the reservation to protect the four wolf packs that the tribe monitors. These are wolves that travel throughout the reservation as part of their territory.


“There shouldn’t be any harvest [there] at all,” said Lacey Hill. “Those are Bad River wolves.” But she added, “The state doesn’t recognize our wolf management plan.” The three wolf hunting and trapping seasons that the state designated before the 2014 federal court ruling did not honor the tribe’s buffer zone.

Wydeven, a retired Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) specialist who was once the state’s wolf manager, said he was disturbed that Wisconsin state legislators chose to circumvent the DNR when creating the regulations and methods for hunting and trapping wolves.

“Traditionally those things have been left up to the DNR,” Wydeven said. While working with the department, he said, the state’s wolf

population rose from a few dozen to more than 770. “We’re seeing a lot more wolves than many of us ever envisioned we could see.”

While he would like to see a harvest regulated by the state’s Department of Natural Resources, Wydeven—like Mech—feels that some killing of wolves is necessary. Because there are now more wolves, there are areas where they are causing more depredation of livestock and pets—and that could result in a backlash.

“We’re starting to see more conflicts,” he said. “We’re starting to see more resentment toward the Endangered Species Act.” <http://bit.ly/1SiA8sJ> 

There are many researchers who feel that the court battles over the environmental status of the gray wolf could pose a threat to the Endangered Species Act.

species onto the list if it seems that the animal would be stuck with that label—along with attendant habitat use and other restrictions—whether its numbers have recovered or not. Moreover, some areas may require culling of the wolves.

“Wolves do need to be managed, and management of wolves generally means killing them,” said David Mech. “I do think for the good of the wolves they do have to be managed.”

The November 18 letter to the Interior Department cites tribal governments among other agencies in the recovery of the gray wolf. But most tribes do not endorse the philosophy of public hunting or trapping. For the Ojibwe in the

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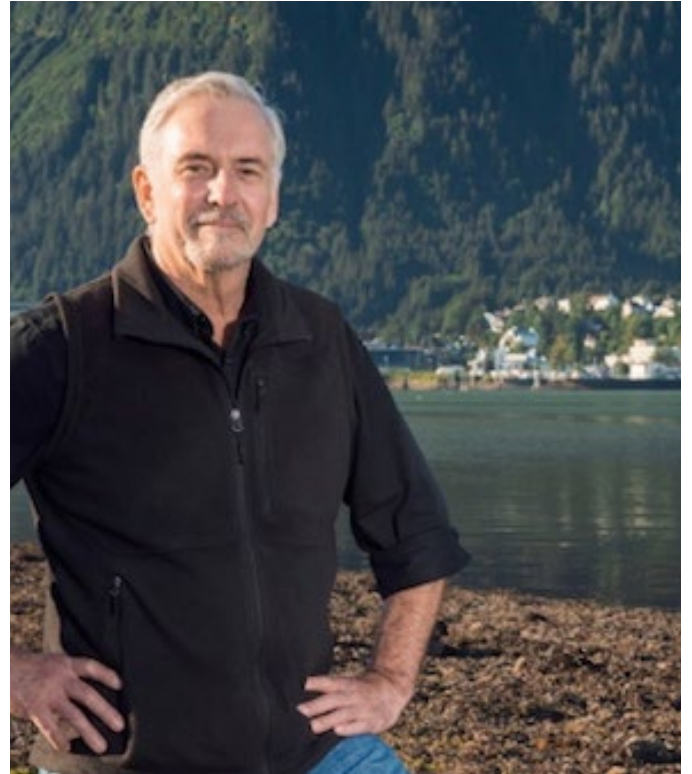
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Goggle's first Native-themed Google Doodle, unveiled for Thanksgiving, incorporated the Three Sisters of corn, beans and squash.



Inuit are mourning the unexpected death on December 1 of Greg Fisk, 70, the recently elected mayor of Juneau, Alaska.



University of Wisconsin point guard Bronson Koenig (Ho-Chunk, at right) is a rising figure in college basketball.



The 1 World Indigenous Games, mounted after 30 years of planning, gathered 24 Brazilian tribes and 23 nations in total.

GOOGLE; FACEBOOK; UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN; SHELLEY MCKOSATO-HAUPT

Headlines from the Web

TRIBES SHOP FOR NEW CASINO ARCHITECT

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

FRANK CLOUTIER ELECTED CHIEF OF SAGINAW CHIPPEWA TRIBE

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

U.S. OFFICERS TAKE KIDS OFF RESERVATION AMID CUSTODY FIGHT

<http://wapo.st/1SzYE91>

COEUR D'ALENE TRIBE NAMES NEW POLICE CHIEF

<http://bit.ly/1Ox4ysi>

MAINE NATIVE AMERICANS SAY TRUST IS DETERIORATING

<http://nyti.ms/1Q3O504>

CHEROKEE NATION DONATES \$4 MILLION TO RENOVATE SEMINARY HALL

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

INDIAN COUNTRY'S SUPERVISION AND MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

DECEMBER 9-11

The general sessions will include "Top Challenges for Supervisors and Managers in Indian Country," "How To Improve Team Performance With Norms," "Hiring The Right People," "Effective Delegation" and "Mentoring Employees." Many workshops will be offered, among them "Identifying Your Personal Leadership Brand," "Indian Preference," "Sovereignty In Action," "Emotional Intelligence" and "Dealing With Difficult Personalities." Sponsored by the Human Resources division of the Falmouth Institute.

Location: Platinum Hotel and Spa, Las Vegas, Nevada

NATIVE AMERICAN GRANT SCHOOL ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

DECEMBER 10-12

Among the topics of discussion will be school financial responsibility and accountability; academic assessments for student achievement; liability and insurance; language and culture and their effects on education; environmental awareness in the green age; ethical leadership in community schools; maintaining facilities and school construction; serving children with special needs; and healthy community lifestyles.

Location: Orleans Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR TRIBAL CONSULTATION

MEETINGS DECEMBER 15-17

These three consultation sessions, held

via webinar and teleconference, will solicit and obtain oral and written comments on issues concerning the Johnson O'Malley program, which addresses the unique cultural needs of American Indian students attending the Minneapolis Public Schools through a supplemental program of services planned, developed and approved by the Local Indian Education Committee. These meetings continue previous dialogues that were conducted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Education in 2012 and 2015. A consultation booklet for the sessions will be distributed to all federally recognized Indian tribes, bureau regional and agency offices, and bureau-funded schools.

Contact Information: <http://bit.ly/21LW5H0>

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Re "Thanks For Nothing" by Terese Mailhot (Nov. 26):

Thank you for a very important message. I like the idea of abandoning the view of black and white when it concerns very nearly everything we encounter in life. And I would certainly like to see more authen-

tic information about Natives in our schools. It would be nice if children, no matter where they live, were taught about their local Native people, their customs, their philosophies and their ways of life.

I also loved Ms. Mailhot's attitude toward decolonization. We can't turn back the clock, but we can turn our country

into a place where, as she says, people can have access to land, food, and shelter, no matter their class or color. In the end it's not race that matters but our common humanity.

Brava.

—Natalie Sera
Reno, Nevada

WELCOME TO NORTH DAKOTA



TOP NEWS ALERTS

From IndianCountryTodayMediaNetwork.com

WISCONSIN ONEIDAS OPEN BANK BRANCH

The Oneida Nation of Wisconsin has opened a new branch of the tribally owned Bay Bank at a busy commercial corridor in Green Bay, adjacent from the Oneida Casino. Tribal officials and such well-known members as Junior Miss Oneida Marissa Danforth conducted the ribbon cutting on November 25. "The neighborhood is the second busiest traffic corridor in Green Bay and does \$100 million in banking business by itself," Bay Bank President Jeff Bowman said. "This branch represents a huge opportunity."

NATIVE WOMAN BEATEN IN SEPTEMBER DIES

Rebecca Rose Anderson, a 30-year-old Native female who was assaulted in Minne-

apolis on September 3, died on Thanksgiving Day. KSTP.com reported that Anderson was found severely beaten and unconscious; the Ramsey County Medical Examiner's Office has ruled her death a homicide. The police have teamed up with CrimeStoppers of Minnesota to offer a cash reward for information leading to an arrest and conviction in the case. Anderson was the mother of five daughters.

HOUSE APPROVES SUSANVILLE LAND INTO TRUST

The House of Representatives last week by voice vote approved a bill to place land into trust for the Susanville Indian Rancheria of California. The bill, H.R.2212, would affect some 300 acres that the tribe plans

to use for its powwow grounds, a recreational area, a museum and a cultural center. Currently, the Bureau of Land Management manages the property. The Senate Indian Affairs Committee approved its version of the bill, S.1761, on October 21.

YUROKS INSTILL NEW LEADERSHIP

The Yurok Tribe of California on November 30 installed their new chairman and vice chairman, James Dunlap and David Gensaw Sr., respectively, at tribal headquarters in Klamath. Both had been elected in a run-off on November 10. "Together, we can accomplish more than we can individually," Dunlap said. "I'm going to really enforce and really advocate developing a better working relationship with our

neighbors." The ceremony was live streamed online, marking the first time the Yurok had done so for an installation.

NO MORE 'THANKSGIVING BREAK' AT HUMBOLDT

Student activists at Humboldt State University, in Arcata, California won a small victory for Native Americans last month when the university announced it would no longer call its November intercession "Thanksgiving Break." Henceforth, it will be "Fall Break." Students had asked administrators for the change last year. "[We] felt that naming and exemplifying that moment of history was a bit insulting," said Michael Ramirez (Konknow Maidu/Wintu/Hupa/Yurok). "It was insulting to take this tragedy and use it to exemplify unity."

How Did I Miss That?

“Rickrolling,” hummus v. Hamas and golden eagle encounters BY STEVE RUSSELL

Yahoo! Finance reported that Ghost Security Group (“Ghost Sec”), a hacktivist group supporting the cyberwar that Anonymous has declared on ISIS, took over an ISIS website. “Please gaze upon this lovely ad,” they posted, “so we can upgrade our infrastructure to give you ISIS content you all so desperately crave.”

The “lovely ad” was for Viagra. Ghost Sec suggested that ISIS needed chemical assistance to “enhance your calm.” Meanwhile, Anonymous has been “Rickrolling” and launching DDoS (Distributed Denial of Service) attacks on sites they identify with ISIS or ISIS funders.

“Rick Astley must be living right,” my cousin Ray Sixkiller commented. He was referring to uses of the Internet meme represented by the verb “Rickroll”—whereby the Rickroller replaces expected content with Rick Astley’s song “Never Gonna Give You Up.”

A police officer in Norman, Oklahoma responded to a call of a loose donkey. The woman who turned in the animal said she had a pen for the beast (named “Squishy”) but no way to get it there. The officer proceeded to contact the four-legged subject and persuade him to have a seat in the back of the police cruiser. The complainant said that if nobody appeared to claim Squishy, she would keep him.

“Just one question,” Cousin Ray said, raising an eyebrow. “How did they know the donkey’s name?” He kept chuckling until I bit and asked him what was funny.

“I can’t get a scene from *Jaws* out of my head. If Oklahoma cops are going to pick up jackasses—particularly in the Oklahoma City area—they are going to need bigger cars.”

The Washington Post reported that The Donald Trump—after ruminating publicly that he would not appear at the December 15 Republican debate unless CNN paid him \$5 million—changed his mind when CNN announced it would not cough up an appearance fee for a politician.

“Never mind that last question,” Cousin Ray snickered. “I know the donkey’s name and it’s not ‘Squishy.’”

Dr. Ben Carson, carefully reading somebody else’s words in front of the Republican Jewish Coalition, verbally confabulated “Hamas” with “hummus.”

The candidates tried to enter full pander mode but were hampered by their inability to say much to the audience without relying on Jewish stereotypes. Jim Gilmore just happened to have caught *Schindler’s List* on his way over. John Kasich learned Jewish stereotypes at the knee of his sainted mother.

But The Donald really got out there, claiming there were perhaps more “deal makers” in the room “than [in] any room I’ve spoken to.”

Cousin Ray and I were unable to agree on how an Indian organization would react to a parade of pols wearing turquoise and ribbon shirts. But we were both pretty sure about beginning a speech with “Hau, Kola!”

“On the other hand,” Ray suggested, “it might work fine with a German audience.”

As you leave Albuquerque, west on I-40, if the light is just right and you

glance in your rearview mirror, you will understand why the Sandia Mountains are sacred to the people of the Sandia Pueblo. Hiking on Sandia Peak, I turned a bend in the trail and came nose to beak with a golden eagle. We were both surprised.

The eagle did not fly away as I slowly raised my camera. All I could see in the viewfinder was the bird. It turned away and then looked back, as if over his shoulder, right at me. It took flight, circled once and was gone. This is indeed, I thought, a sacred place.

I remembered that golden eagle when I read about Michael and Neil Fletcher of Sudbury, Ontario, out hunting grouse, when they happened upon a bald eagle with its leg caught in a trap. Putting a sweatshirt over the eagle to calm it, they took almost four minutes to pry the trap open.

Watching the video they posted on Facebook, it appeared the hardest part was getting their dog to agree. While they were working, the eagle settled down before the dog did. When they freed the bird, nothing appeared to be broken.

Since the animal was no longer panicked, both Fletchers paused briefly for the selfie of a lifetime—the two smiling hunters with the eagle offering neither beak nor talon, although at that point it could have sliced and diced them. After posing for the photo, the eagle took flight and was gone, leaving a snowy wood in Ontario, like Sandia Peak, a sacred place.

Cousin Ray smiled.

“Great story. But the eagle was lucky to get found by subsistence hunters rather than trophy hunters.” <http://bit.ly/1YOhX1X> 🍷



Ramahkweineh Royce Thomas (Mohawk, Wolf Clan) danced at the opening of the Great Law of Peace Center in Liverpool, New York

ALEX HAMER

THE BIG PICTURE