



The Western Star
Quarterly Newsletter of
The Western Cherokee Nation of Arkansas and Missouri

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Fall 2025



Welcome!

In this newsletter, we will cover such topics as who we are, where we will be holding meetings, when we will be there, and what is going on with the Nation.

We will even be throwing in some interesting recipes, trivia, and who knows what else!

If you have any interesting stories, please share them with us, and of course...pictures are encouraged as well!

Please remember to keep all comments positive and uplifting.

Muri Pierson

From the Editor



Osiyo! Greetings from California!

I hope everyone has enjoyed their summer. Fall is always one of my favorite times of the year. Kids are back in school, the weather gradually cools off, and I think baking again!

I do have to apologize for the lateness of this newsletter. I was in a car accident in August, and I have not bounced back as well as I'd like. But I am better and doing my best to catch up!

Please share your thoughts, news, stories, recipes and pictures with us.



Send your submissions to:

westerncherokeeanation@yahoo.com



Letters to the Editor



If you wish to address the editor, or office staff...If you have comments or questions...This is the place!

westerncherokeeanation@yahoo.com





In The News



This year's Pow Wow was just held on Sep. 12th/13th at our new Western Cherokee Event Center in Kimberling City, MO. and after the Pow Wow, was the Council of Chiefs. We will be posting pictures in the next newsletter, and we would love to share your pics and stories! Please send them to: westerncherokeenation@yahoo.com

Trail of Tears Inter-Tribal Pow Wow

Singers & Drum:: Drowning Creek Southern Drum Jay, OK

Sponsored by
The Museum of the American Indian and
The Western Cherokee Nation

Upcoming Tribal Meetings

Mark
Your
Calendar



We will be having our next meeting on Oct. 11th, 2025 - 1:00 pm
at the VFW Community bldng. west of Stigler OK on Hwy 9



We will be having an informational meeting in Poplar Bluff, MO
on Nov. 22nd at the Holiday Inn in Poplar Bluff.

Pictures From Last Year's Pow Wow



Pow Wow Chief
Murl Pierson



Head Man Dancer William Cantrell,
Princess Nizzi Falcon of the
American Indian Center Springfield,
Head lady Dancer Amanda Zeigler,
Dancer Valerie Badhorse



Drowning Creek, Southern Drums from Jay, Oklahoma



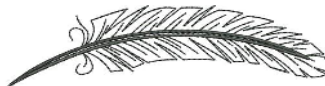


If you want to donate towards the purchase of a sign for our brand new event center, please click on the donation link on the side of the home page:

[Click here to donate for a sign for the new Western Cherokee Event Center.](#)



Don't forget...If you donate in any way, remember to fill out a "proof of interaction" form and send it in asap. This form can be found under "BIA Requested Forms" on our website.



If you want to donate towards helping with the costs of the pow wow, please click on the donation link on the side of the home page:

[Click here to donate to help pay for the October PowWow](#)







Know Your Leadership

Tribal Council/Board of Directors:

- Muri Pierson:** Chief Executive Officer/President
- Dan Cowden:** Deputy Chief/Vice President
- Helen Hoogendoorn:** Secretary/Board of Directors
- Carole Hampton:** Tribal Council/Board of Directors
- Philles Alessi:** Tribal Council/Board of Directors
- John Crume:** Tribal Council/Board of Directors
- Anthony Hefley:** Tribal Council/Board of Directors
- Brian Cole:** Tribal Council/Board of Directors



Office Staff

Murl Pierson: *Processing Cards, Scanning Records, Training Help, Answering Phone and Doing All Things necessary to keep the Nation Running Smoothly*

Marjorie Pierson: *Office Manager, Researching Applications, Processing Records, Approving Applications, Answering Phones, Giving Tours of Museum, and Doing All Things to keep the Nation Running Smoothly.*



Dan Cowden: *IT (Software), Scanning Records, Building Family Trees, Auditing and Reconciling Records.*

Roberta Cowden: *IT (Hardware), Webmaster, and Capital Expenditure Advisor.*

Helen Hoogendoorn: *Assistant Office Manager, Assisting Manager where needed.*

Heather Garrison: *Food Pantry Distribution Manager, Keeping Records of Food Pantry Help and Training Volunteers.*

Patricia Jackson: *Food Pantry Distribution Assistant.*

Gale Findley: *Food Pantry Distribution Assistant.*



If you need to contact us directly.

Office Hours:

Mon-Fri 10:30 am - 5:30 pm

Sat. 10:30 am - 1:00 pm

(mountain time)

<https://westerncherokee.co>





Petition Update

Our Journey towards being reinstated as a federally recognized tribe is proceeding, and we are making strides in the right direction. Our tribal attorney is working hard, as are our leadership, but the members of the nation have to do their part as well. The B.I.A. has many demands, and we must meet them to be recognized.

In our last newsletter, we listed some of the hold ups we have, and we will list them again. Remember, we have to comply to achieve our goals!

1. Addresses

The B.I.A. states that we must have actual, physical addresses for all citizens of the nation, not just PO boxes. Currently, over 4000 citizens still list only PO boxes for their address. If you can't receive mail at your address, call us, we might have an idea or two!

2. Correct Addresses

While making the new enrollment cards we find that 90% of our citizens have a different address listed for the card, than they have on their record on file. Please update us with current addresses if they have changed, and include your email address as well.

3. Interaction

The B.I.A. states that each citizen shows frequent interaction and support of the tribe, but less than 130 citizens actually did so last year. It's easy! Please fill out the interaction forms (available on our website under BIA forms) Remember, everything counts! Attending the Pow Wow and other meetings or events. Volunteering for any activities/events. Donating items to the store or museum. Visiting the office or museum. Receiving or contributing to this newsletter. Commenting on the Facebook Page. EVERYTHING, and we do mean everything connected to the nation shows that we are a genuine community!



Hey! Did you know about this?



Just a quick reminder to put this on your calendars! There are a great many events, and you can post this graphic on your facebook pages or other social media to remind everyone that our collective Native Heritage has had an immense influence on American society as a whole. Look online for events that might be happening near you!

Meanwhile check out this government website with information and resources

<https://nativeamericanheritagemonth.gov/>

Community Outreach

In addition to running our museum, giving presentations at local schools and events, and sharing our culture whenever requested, The Western Cherokee Nation is connected with The American Indian Center in Springfield, where citizens can participate in classes each week for weaving, bow making, drum classes, language classes, pow wow etiquette, and more, not to mention the opportunity of gathering with other tribal people and those who appreciate native ideas and cultures. – Keep your eyes peeled for news on future events and opportunities to help out. Here is the latest list of upcoming activities the AIC are hosting.

AIC Fall Events:

- September 10th -- Bow Class, 5:30 PM in the AICS Office
- September 17th -- Drum Practice, 5:00 PM in the AICS Office.
- September 18th -- Health Scripts, 4:00 PM in the AICS Food Pantry.
- September 23rd -- Ladies' Group Snack and Yak, 6:00 to 8:00 PM in the AICS Office.
- September 24th -- Bow Class, 5:30 PM in the AICS Office.
- September 27th and 28th -- Native American Heritage Celebration at Wonders of Wildlife. See flyer below.
 - October 1st -- Drum Practice, 5:00 PM in the AICS Office.
 - October 2nd -- Health Scripts, 4:00 PM in the AICS Office.
 - October 11th - AICS Youth Pow Wow at Webster County Fairgrounds
 - October 13th -- Campfire Desserts, 6:00 PM. Meet at the AICS Office. Learn to make Desserts over a fire and celebrate Indigenous Peoples' Day with AICS!



<https://www.aicspringfield.org/> (website)

(417) 880-1570 (office phone)

WCNAM Food Pantry – Sometimes we all need a little help!

Food Pantry Services



Open on the 4th Thursday
of each month 11am – 3pm





Member Activities

you
HAVE I GOT NEWS
FOR YOU?
us?



*Have You or your family had any special events going on?
Graduations, competitions, parties?*

Member Activities

Native Directions Inc

Three Rivers Indian Lodge



Diana Todd of Manteca, CA volunteered with the Three Rivers Lodge Annual Pow Wow, held over the 4th of July weekend. Our tribe is represented everywhere our citizens participate in programs and events.

So Share Your News With Us!





Member Stories

Share Your Story



Every member, every family in our tribe has stories to tell. We want you to share them with us! They may be family history stories, or memories. They may be the individual journeys that have led you here. Pictures, letters....family lore...they are all a part of what makes us who we are. We'd love to hear your stories here.



What's Cookin'?

Recipes shared from our membership!



This recipe is sooooo simple, but is amazingly good.

It always gets me raves at potlucks!

Pudding Pudding Cake

Notes:

- * You can use any flavor of cake and pudding that you prefer...my family loves chocolate, lemon, and banana.
- * This is a real cake on top of real pudding, and you spoon it into bowls to serve it, so plan accordingly.

Ingredients:

1 box of cake mix
1 large box of instant pudding
1 large container of Cool Whip topping

Directions:

Mix cake mix according to directions on box, and pour into rectangular pan.

Mix pudding mix according to directions and spoon over the cake batter in the pan. Try to get it as even as you can, but don't panic...it will look a bit goopy and strange!

Bake according to the cake directions. You will not be able to test for doneness, so bake according to the time listed on the box.

When done, remove from oven, cover with foil and place in freezer. Cool for one hour or until pan is cold to the touch.

When you are ready to serve it, cover it with the cool whip, and spoon it into bowls! It will have lovely pudding at the bottom and a moist cake on top, and the final flourish of the creamy cool whip.

TRADITION CULTURE

My story is not so different from many other members of our tribe. My grandfather spoke Cherokee, but none of his children ever learned the language. Sadly, I think that the language is disappearing in the recent generations.

That said, you are never too old to learn something new, so here is lesson #1



Lesson #1

The Cherokee language is called Tsa la gi

1st word - **Osiyo** (oh see yo)
"greetings" basically this is how you say "hi" or "hello"
2nd word - **tohitsu** (toe hee choo)
"how are you/are you well?"

Put these together, and you have your first sentence:

"Osiyo, tohitsu"
"hello, how are you?"

Your Editor

In our last newsletter, we introduced two Cherokee words as a beginners lesson' on the language of our grandfathers.

Here is a repeat of that introduction, as well as two new words/phrases we can learn

Syllabry

dawado- Is my name

phonetics

dah wah don(g) - Is my name
the "g" sound is not really sounded, but swallowed.

Diana dah wah don(g) Diana Is my name.



Syllabry

dejado- Is your name

phonetics

got a ooste - what de jah don(g) - your name

got a ooste de jah don(g) What Is your name?

I hope you enjoy learning just a bit of our culture this way. Mind you.....My typing up the phonetic sound of the words, is not really a satisfactory way to teach the language. The sounds and rhythms unique to Cherokee are much better learned by hearing them spoken. I suggest you go online to take advantage of several different online teaching forums. I am linking a You Tube video from which I culled this latest language lesson here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C8oqnpbpqjY>

Let's talk smudging.....



Smoke



Water

Most of us are familiar with the concept of smudging with sage smoke for cleansing, purification and healing, but did you know that there are two ways of performing this ritual? For those new to the idea, here is information on Smudge Water...how to make it and how to use it.



Smudge Water

(water blessing)

Many people have breathing issues, and cannot easily use traditional smudging methods. For them, smudge water is an alternative. For the Cherokee, this is especially appropriate as we have a tradition of "going to water" when in need of

special blessings, purification, or healing. There are two ways of going to water. One, the water is poured over, or dipped up with the hand and spread on the person's body. The second is a morning ceremony in which a person literally goes to the water, wading into it, and while facing east, gives prayer while immersing themselves seven times.

When using smudge water, the water, which has been prepared with sage or other traditional herbs, can be poured over the hands, and then touched/spread on a person's body as prayers are given. They can be vocal or silent as the need of the individual requires. It can also be used to cleanse the air or environment by using a spray bottle to mist the air.

For a person in a hospital or care environment, or where traditional smudging is not available, this is an especially useful way to honor the tradition and comfort of smudging, but without affecting the modern standards of such facilities.

To give a water blessing with smudge water, pour the water over your hands. Bring the wet fingers and palms to the head, to cleanse your mind, the face to purify the soul, to your arms to give strength, and to your heart for healing, and to calm fears and emotional harm.

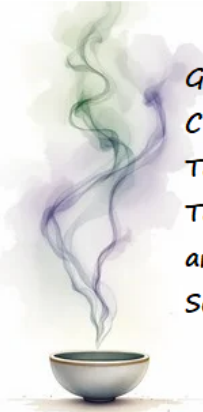
Two ways to create smudge water:

First is the more traditional way, made by steeping the sage in pure water. This does not store for very long, but it is simple and steeped in tradition.

- 1) Start with a clean glass container, such as a canning jar.
- 2) Fill the jar with pure water. Spring water is best.
(but distilled water is okay.)
- 3) Add your sage. You may also add other herbs if desired. Lavender is a popular choice to add.
- 4) Let the herbs steep in the water for at least one day, or overnight.
- 5) You may add a table spoon of alcohol or witch hazel if you wish. This will help mix the oil in the herbs with the water and help it to store longer.
- 6) Store in a cool dark place until needed.

The second way of creating smudge water uses essential oils. This method is especially good to use in a spray bottle or smaller container.

- 1) Start with your clean glass container (30 ml)
- 2) Fill with pure water
- 3) Add 10-20 drops of sage oil. (and any other oil)
(Be sure it is pure essential oil with no additives.
You can also make your own...directions can easily be found online.)
- 4) Add 1 tbs of alcohol or witch Hazel to emulsify the oil and water and to help your water to last longer.
- 5) Seal the container and shake vigorously to thoroughly mix the contents.
- 6) Store in a cool dark place until needed.



Great Creator, our Father.
Creator, bless me this day to have good thoughts,
To see good things in a person,
To hear good things from a person,
and To talk good to a person,
So that I can walk with others in a good way.
Thank you Creator



We hope you have enjoyed this fall edition of our newsletter. Look for the next edition in December! Now...we need YOU to help out and send us your stories, your pictures, your recipes, your ideas!



The deadline for submissions
is Nov. 30th.

Once again...send all materials to:

westerncherokeeanation@yahoo.com

Happy
fall
Y'all!