

PIQUA SHAWNEE: CULTURAL SURVIVAL IN THEIR HOMELAND



Ruth Morgan, Photographs
Janet Clinger, Oral Histories
Kenneth Barnett Tankersley, Ph.D., Cultural Consultant

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INTRODUCTION

The federal government initiated the removal of Native people from the Ohio Valley and other parts of the eastern United States in the 1830's to open indigenous land for settlement by whites. But some Native people refused to go, and melted back into the wilderness, in some cases inter-married with traders and other white settlers, or walked back from the west where they were driven, to live in the land where the bones of their ancestors were buried. In order to survive, they were forced to suppress their cultural heritage in both external and internal ways for many generations. Kevin Everhart, one of the project contributors, talked about his grandparents saying, "On the outside you have to live white; on the inside you live Native. You live your traditions." They transcended the trauma of invasion and removal by adopting survival techniques, by keeping components of the culture and heritage buried within the family.

This project celebrates those who stayed by giving voice to their descendants who began to come together as a tribe in the 1990's out of a deep need to connect with other Native people within the homeland. Although cultural suppression was and is a damaging force, like an underground river the culture re-surfaced on the Red Road and is still being recovered. Tribal members are learning their history by comparing stories with others, participating in ceremonies and other cultural activities, while bonding with one another, and celebrating together the incredible fact that **they are still here in their homeland!**

Over a ten year period we interviewed and photographed Tribal members, both to highlight their personal experiences in overcoming cultural suppression, and their contributions toward efforts to revitalize the culture. A pervasive theme that runs through these stories, in addition to the need to come together as a family, is a deep spiritual connection to the Creator, to the ancestors, and to the land. A striking, unique aspect of

the Piqua Shawnee Tribe is their acceptance of members from allied tribes, i.e., those which fought with the Shawnee in the 18th century wars against the white invasion, thus giving more unaffiliated Native people a place to be involved with others. These stories not only serve as a record of the historical struggle experienced by the Tribal members and their ancestors to break through generations of cultural denial, but hopefully will encourage future generations to help the Tribe thrive as a living Native force, and perhaps give them a glimpse of the courage and tenacity of their ancestors and elders.

The Piqua Shawnee stand proudly as a testament to the remarkable resilience of a deeply-rooted culture that survived in spite of the extreme attempts in the past to eradicate it.

We are very grateful for the expertise of Tribal Elders Kenneth Barnett Tankersley, Ph.D., and Barbara S. Lehmann, who helped to shape this project and welcomed us into the heart of the Tribe, the result being, in our estimation, both powerful photographs and genuine, heart-felt stories which reflect the members on-going struggle to be a vital Native presence in their traditional homeland.

Janet Clinger and Ruth Morgan



Gary Hunt
PRINCIPAL CHIEF

CULTURAL IDENTITY

Even up until the middle fifties, Indian people were pretty much persecuted for being Indian if they claimed it or even had it documented. It was all hidden through the family history. I was born in 1954. When I was six I was told I was of Native descent, but nobody knew where it came from or what tribe. From that point on I always had this special interest. I knew I had this camaraderie with nature, and animals. I had a respect for the spirit world.

My biological father was the Shawnee. My mother divorced him when I was three years old. I was raised by a European-based family, but since I was informed of the Native culture, the Native blood, I studied the culture on my own, and practiced the ways of what I understood by reading books. I found out now that some of it was European influenced, but even at that it taught me the ways of nature. We lived in the country. I spent many thousands of hours back in the woods. I believe that the ancestors were watching over me and guiding me in the direction of Native culture and how to communicate with nature and with the animals. I got to the point of

where two or three nights a week I would take a bag of apples and go back in the woods and sit on a stump. I could hand-feed the raccoons and the deer. There is a lot to learn from nature. The thickness of the squirrels' tails will tell you what kind of winter we are going to have. What the different insects do also show signs.

In grade school the kids made fun of me. When we'd play the cowboy/Indian game they would say, "You have to be the Indian and we're going to kill you!" When I got to high school I didn't talk about it too much. When my kids were going through school I didn't really push the issue. I didn't let that many people know anything because I didn't want people to make fun of them nor did I want them to have special favors because they were Indian. It was after they graduated from high school when I got deeply involved in the Tribe.

ANCESTOR MOST ADMIRER ~

Peter Chartier is one of them.¹ I was very

¹ Peter Chartier was half-Shawnee, half French. He could speak seven languages. He was the translator during the fur trade period of the 1700's in Pennsylvania. Peter saw where all of these white groups were getting the Indians drunk and taking advantage of them and taking the furs -- basically screwing them out of their stuff. He warned them three times to stop. In the Pennsylvania

honored by the painting that Steve White did. He did research in the British war files and the description of what Tecumseh looked like. He wanted to do a painting that was 100% accurate. One year at Old Washington, Steve looked at me and through all of his research on what Tecumseh looked like, he said, "You are the guy." That was an honor for me. Eighty percent of my physical structure is Tecumseh. Tecumseh has always been pretty close. I hold a lot of personal ceremonies in my backyard where I have a fire pit. I take my blanket and tobacco out and do my personal ceremonies and prayers. One night I was sitting out there and did the Pipe Ceremony. I always felt like there was some attachment to Tecumseh. I said, "Great Tecumseh, guide me, tell me what should I do? What direction do you want me to

Historical Society they have a book written about him and it states that he gathered five hundred gunmen. At night time they would raid all the fur trading camps – the British, the colonists, the French – all of them, and take back what he thought belonged to the Indian people. He did that so much that they put out a very large bounty on his head. My other grandfather, Thomas McKean, signed the Declaration of Independence. McKean, who was governor of the Pennsylvania territory, wanted Chartier dead and was willing to pay big dollars to any man who brought him in dead. They never caught him. They chased him all over the eastern United States. He took some of the people and settled them in Alabama and North Carolina and our people are all over because of that. Finally when he got older and his gunmen got older, they did catch up with him, but they handed him over to the French. The French had a fort where the Wabash and the Ohio meet. If you look on an Illinois map there is a little place down in that toe of Illinois called Shawnee Town. That was where that French fort was and that was named after my grandfather's village that was outside the French fort. The French found they couldn't control him and his people because they were wild Indians so the French took him north in Indiana and made him settle on the Wabash River straight south of what is now known as Ft. Wayne, Indiana. I found his village. It's three miles from where I live and that's where he died. There are documents at the courthouse that says there is a chief buried on this land. I was raised in that area. It's very strange that eight generations ago my grandfather was doing that and I grew up three miles from where his last village was.

go?" About ten minutes later on the neighbors' privacy fence I saw the shadow of Tecumseh. He spoke to me and said, "You will be the next chief." Two months later I was chief. I have a very strong connection to those two figures. One of our Tribal Elders, went out west to Albuquerque to an NCAI meeting and met with some of the western tribal people. One of the elders told her, "Do not allow your chief to resign because he is a direct descendant of a historic chief and he listens to the ancestors." There is more to the Native culture than a lot of people understand. Most people in today's world see things on a superficial plane. There is far more to it. There have been many times when we've done ceremony, when I've stood in the dance arbor and have seen the ancestors watching.

Considering that you are bi-racial: Shawnee, French, and Scottish, did this fact ever cause any internal problems in your family or for you personally?

It is all positive. I draw on all of it. I'm proud of my Scottish heritage. I've participated in Highland games. I have the full Scottish outfit -- the kilts, the whole attire, and wear it proudly. I'm proud of the French side too. Priority number one is teaching the Shawnee traditions and customs, but I'm also proud of my Scottish and French heritages.

CONNECTION WITH THE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

At a point in time when it was favorable to me and my family, I wanted to become a part of a Native organization that was Shawnee so I

could just be around them and that atmosphere. I had made requests and applications to the federals and got rejected by all of them, even though I now had the genealogy. I'm a direct descendant of Peter Chartier so I couldn't understand why they would not want to accept me into a tribe. I finally ended up finding this website for the Piqua Sept of the Ohio Shawnee Tribe. I shot an email out and told them what my genealogy was. They jumped on it right away. First time I met them they said "We've never met anyone who was a descendant of an important person in the Shawnee organization. We are thrilled to have you."

I just wanted to be a part of the family like it was two/three hundred years ago. I wanted to live in the 1700's. I never wanted to have a position, but after about 2 or 3 gatherings I was asked to be a dancer, and then to be head male dancer. I knew the dances and the songs so I did that. It was my job, which is traditional, at each ceremony to gather male dancers. Then I was asked to be a clan chief. Next thing you know, I'm chief. When I first joined the Tribe that was not my intention. I just wanted to be part of the tribal family.

ROLE IN THE TRIBE ~

My responsibility is two-fold. One is to try to keep the people in the Tribe focused on why they are there and lead them in a direction. My direction is actually given to me by the Elders Council. They are the wise ones. I do answer to them. It is their wisdom that guides me and then in turn, I guide the Tribe in my

personal effects, my character, leading them by holding the council meetings. Also, I am a representative of our Tribe out in public. I do public appearances and presentations. By how I conduct myself and look in public, they are getting a visual of our Tribe. If I don't conduct myself well, they are going to get an impression that these are a bunch of bogus people. If I conduct myself properly, do some traditional things, even speak the language, they are going to get the visual that these people are for real. It's high responsibility, because they are going to associate me with our whole Tribe.

I compared ceremonies, how western tribes did ceremonies versus eastern tribes. I just watched everything. I think that helped me to develop as a chief because I just observed for a long, long time. Once I was in a leadership position, I knew what things needed to be changed, what needed to be developed traditionally.

In our culture the higher you go, the more responsibility you have, like going from clan chief to second chief, from clan mother to tribal mother – the higher you go, the more of a servant you become. The ultimate servants are the chief and the tribal mother.

Being chief has made me richer spiritually because there are times I do conduct ceremonies, but I also do a lot of prayer ceremonies at my house to internalize things and try to get answers from forces higher than myself. It's enriched my spiritual being. It adds a lot of stress because of the responsibilities

and dealing with a lot of the issues. But it's also taught me how to deal with people, because in all reality, I have never dealt with people very well. My wife says I get along with animals better than I do with people because I spent my growing up years back in the woods with the animals. I'd feed the deer and the raccoons and never really associated with people that much other than school. I think that's why sometimes if there is a big crowd, I have to get away. I can sense things within people. There is so much negativity that people carry with them. But it has taught me how to deal with the different levels of society, different levels of people.

LEGACY AS CHIEF ~

I would like to help gain the respect back for the Indian people that used to be years ago. Long before the Europeans decided to try to take the land, when the first settlements came over they had a lot of respect for the Native people because of their ability to survive in the wilderness, the democratic way that the tribes functioned -- the tribal councils. I would like to be able to try to regain that respect from the European-based society. There is more to the Native culture than just a group of people receiving benefits from the federal government.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ~

The preachers will tell you that you need to set aside time, like ten minutes a day to have prayer. My belief is you walk with the Creator twenty-four/seven. You don't have to set aside time, get down on your knees, close your eyes; it is a matter of being aware of the Creator's

presence all the time and being aware of what he wants you to see, hear, and say. As humans you can't do it, but the more you try to practice, the better you become at it. If your attitude is to try to be aware of the Creator's presence at all times, you are going to be gifted with many thoughts, visions, and directions more often than someone who sets aside five minutes a day for prayer.

I have made it a practice to study the religions in the world as much as possible and try to make comparisons. They branched off into different areas. The reason for that is we feel we have to be able to understand and explain things. That's not the case. We don't have to. If you take all the religions and you boil them down, they all have this one Creator who created everything. This Creator is far more advanced than your mind can ever be able to comprehend. Our solar system is one of the smallest solar systems in the Milky Way Galaxy. This is only one galaxy out of 100 billion known in the universe that have been discovered. It's about 30% the size of most of the galaxies out there. To go from one end of the Milky Way Galaxy to the other it would take a hundred thousand light years. Why as humans do we try to understand all the Creator has created when it is absolutely impossible? So now you take your mind away from trying to understand that and just be aware of His presence. He's going to drive you in the right direction. You're going to say the right things, think the right things. You get up in

the morning and have another sunrise. This is awesome. Then watch what happens tomorrow.

CULTURAL REVITALIZATION

None of us grew up on a reservation. None of us really knows what all the traditions are because a lot of it was lost when it went out west. We can communicate with our western people who were moved out there and carried a lot of customs and traditions with them, but even at that, it has changed out there. A lot of our ancient culture has been lost forever in time and it will never be what it used to be. People have to understand that the Shawnee people were very good at adapting and adopting other people's traditions if it was going to benefit their tribe. We could adopt something from the Seneca or Creeks or Iroquois. Whenever they visited they might see something that would benefit and would adopt it as part of their culture. We're doing the same thing in the 21st Century. We are creating our own based on that which was practiced in the past, that we know of.

We push tradition more than anything else. If I had my way we would get rid of all the politics and stick with all tradition. As far as some of the smaller tribes are concerned, we are probably one of the more traditional. That is why I can honestly say that whether we are state-recognized, federally-recognized, or not recognized at all, to me that is irrelevant. We practice the traditions of our ancestors and try to keep those traditions alive.

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION ~

In 1991 our Tribe decided to bring the people back together because it was the right time, and started calling for the Shawnee people who had stayed back in the Ohio River Valley. If you are Shawnee, we are getting back together basically was the simplistic call.

The leadership of the tribe is patriarchal. You go with your wife, wherever she goes; that is the matriarchal part of it. The homes belonged to the wife. If for some reason, and it was very rare, there was a divorce, the male would just grab his personal effects and was gone. The house, the kids, everything belonged to her. That is the matriarchal part of our culture. The men were the leaders, the warriors, the chiefs. The Piqua chiefs all come from clan chiefs. It was run by the males, but at the same time the ownership was female. The women would sit in council as clan mothers. You had two representatives: clan chief and clan mother. They would sit in council so they could learn the direction the tribe was going. They could learn how to handle council because at times all the men had to be out on war parties or had to defend their land. They might be gone for months at a time. The women would actually hold council and continue the business of the tribe while the men were gone. When the men were there, their role was a supportive role. There was a clan chief, but his wife was never the clan mother. It would have been some other woman in the tribe so you get different view points of what needs to take place or

things to vote on or things to bring up. The clans are no longer true families, because we don't live together on the same land, but are considered as families. If we bring a new member into the Tribe, then maybe her background is feathers, so she might go in the hawk clan or the turkey clan. The woman always goes to another clan so we still practice that tradition that the female and male spouses are not in the same clan. We try to continue that tradition the best way we can, with what we are given to work with, because we don't live together. We're no longer blood-family clans, but we still practice the culture the best we can.

Each clan had a bundle and each person in that clan would put something that meant something to them in that bundle, part of their spirit or part of their being or who they were. The bundle of each clan would be put into the ceremonial circle and then there would be a piece of everybody in it. Then if a family member or clan member had passed on or couldn't be there because of sickness, their spirit was still in there. The tribal bundle is bits of pieces of things that have been put in there by each clan. So it brings the whole family together in a spiritual bond. Our tribal bundle only has things in there from 27 years ago because that is how long we have been in existence as an organized tribe.

We come from various states and from different political influences, many churches we attend, and the communities we live in. It's much more difficult than what it used to be

because the opinions are far more varied. They had differences of opinion back when they lived on the same land, but it's not as widespread as it is now.

We've talked about this issue many times. We don't have a lot of young people coming because their interests are more into playstation, movies, dating, things like that. We don't really have young people to teach the language, the culture, the traditions. We're becoming a group of old people who are dying out. Keeping the tribe alive is going to depend on how well we are able to bring the young people in and teach them the respect of the traditions, the culture, the language and keep it alive. That is the biggest challenge.

TRADITIONS ~

As far as the males are concerned, we've started reintroducing the traditions of becoming a warrior which is fun for the young boys. It is hard for them because they have to go through a process for a year. When we think they're ready, they have to pass tests. They have to work hard at becoming a warrior. You learn how to overcome your fears. You learn how to say no to your superficial desires and how to draw strength from something greater than yourself and that is what it is all about. But it starts out that maybe the first part of this process is tending to the elders. If the women need ice, you go get ice for them. If they need a fire started, you start their fire. What this is teaching is how to be a servant because a warrior is a servant. You are teaching them how

to be a servant of the people and gladly do it, not grumbling, because if they are grumbling, they have to start all over again.

LANGUAGE ~

It is hard to get the interest because it is a very time-consuming thing. We've given out recordings and papers to explain the language. It's very difficult. Our language is probably more difficult to learn than the English language is for a foreigner to learn. It is so much different – the way that it is spoken, the proper enunciation, where the emphasis goes. There are things that are really close. In our language the word *methoothwa* is buffalo, but *metheethwa* is red-tailed hawk -- two completely different animals and almost the same word. I think people get frustrated trying to learn it. We don't really have the time, getting together four times a year, for us to have an actual linguistics teacher who would teach like you would in a college class.

It's not that I'm 100% fluent in the language, but I probably speak it about as well as anybody in the Tribe.

The people are very interested in learning the language. It is not going to be 100% correct, because the ancestors spoke with glottal stops, and we're not real sure where those go in the words and sentences. At least the words are still going to be there. I'm hoping that someday we can talk to each other in our language, to be able to carry on a conversation. It will take a lot of work to get to that point.

I work on the language, because there are

Tribal people out there who need to learn and understand it. If the chief is willing to do this, and be an example, then probably we should too. If I can speak the language and show them over time that you can learn it too, you become more Shawnee the more Shawnee things you do. We've become accustomed to the secular world so it is very difficult for these people to come down four times a year and be Shawnee. What I'm trying to teach them to do is when you are at home, practice these things.

CEREMONY ~

There are three major ceremonies: Spring Bread, Green Corn, and Fall Bread. Spring Bread is traditionally when the warriors have come out of the winter during which they supplied the food for the tribe through hunting, etc. The Spring Bread ceremony is the change of responsibility of taking care of the tribe. It goes from the men in the wintertime to the spring when it goes into the hands of the women who are going to plant crops and get things ready for summertime. The responsibility for the tribe now rests on the women's shoulders. Instead of hunting the men are now preparing to protect the tribe. Green Corn is a time when the crops are starting to develop. The prayers to the Creator are for rain and sunshine and the development of the crops. The Fall Bread ceremony is the reverse -- changing the responsibility of taking care of the tribe from the women to the men who are now going out hunting for meat and whatever it takes for the tribe to survive.

SUNSET CEREMONY ~

The traditional Sunset Ceremony is thanking the Creator for being able to see another day and hoping that we can wake up tomorrow and see another sunrise. I used to do the Sunset Ceremony on our land, but since we are not on the land anymore I don't really get to because we are never together at sunset. It is probably one of the only ceremonies I do out in public whenever I do living history. In the ceremonies all the songs and dances are prayers -- prayers to the Creator for his blessings on the change of responsibility, on the food, and protection. Green Corn is probably one of the more important ones because we're asking the Creator to bless the land, and give us rain and sunshine for the crops to develop. The other two are still prayers, but they are more for protection and guidance for whoever has that responsibility at that time.

I try to stress that when you enter that dance arbor that first you do the cleansing ceremony to cleanse any evil that might be surrounding you because you've got to be pure when you walk in there. Your other responsibility is to have a pure heart, a pure soul, a pure spirit, because you are representing the whole Tribe to the Creator. He is looking down on those dancers and deciding the purity and sincerity of these dances and these prayers. We try to do the traditional songs and dances. What goes into the circle is what is in the people's hearts. It doesn't matter what songs they sing really. I told them it doesn't matter

what you wear. You can wear tennis shoes and blue jeans. It is the attitude that you carry into that arbor because that is what the Creator is going to see.

HONORING OF TECUMSEH AT FALL BREAD, 2013

This was something I had been planning for three or four years, knowing that Fall Bread was going to fall on a day two hundred years later after Tecumseh was killed. He was not a chief and was never going to be a chief. He's called Chief Tecumseh -- how that came about I don't know. But he was a great orator, a great leader, a renegade. As Shawnee people we can respect him for his leadership skills, and what he was trying to accomplish. Had he been able to create this great Eastern alliance against the Europeans, it only would have delayed the movement of the Europeans, not stopped them. To honor Tecumseh, the great warrior, the great leader, people need to do more research and study the personality of Tecumseh. I think it could have a lot of positive impact on Native people to learn what he was trying to accomplish and how he conducted himself when he was trying to create the alliance. In the ceremony I was honoring his personality and his great leadership, not his brutality. In his travel down to Alabama he created a lot of destruction. We can't really honor that because you can't honor murder and killing, but at the same time he was a great leader. Honoring him on the 200th anniversary of his death is no different than honoring any other great leader.

He was a very diplomatic person in all respects. He was still Indian. It was still the 1800's when there was a lot of fighting and brutality, but that was the times, that was survival. He had the ability to put people in an awestruck state, because of how he spoke to them. I think that is very important, specifically to the Piqua, because we have great respect and are recognized throughout the country as a lowly state-recognized tribe that is conducting itself in a very positive way.

NAMING CEREMONY ~

We have naming ceremonies. I spend a lot of time at my fire pit in the backyard doing prayers, ceremonies, vision quests, asking the spirits to visit me – tell me what this person's name needs to be. It can be frustrating. I'll offer up the tobacco and sage and the cedar water and sit there for hours in the middle of the night asking the spirits to give me a sign. I do it again and again. Maybe something will come in a dream. I was at my sister-in-law's house and the back of their house is to a field and woods. I went out there just to smoke and be by myself. Here comes this bird out of the trees. It's a full moon, an orange harvest moon. Everybody knows the owl flies at night. So I'm thinking that's him! I don't know the Cherokee culture that well, and Ken Tankersley is of Cherokee descent and so is Barbara Lehmann, both of whom are elders. The next night I called her and said, "I think I got Ken's name! It's got something to do with an owl." She just stopped breathing. She said, "No! An owl

is a warning of death. You can't do that." I know bits and pieces of other cultures. I know in the Lakotas the owl is the messenger of death. Owls are messengers in the east, but not necessarily messengers of death. Ken is a messenger, because he does all this teaching and anthropology. He reports to us and is our representative in Kentucky. Come to find out later I had absorbed the physical pain Ken was going through and the things he was seeing and feeling when he was close to death. I was the one who was visited. The messenger was telling me something. Ken told Barbara that on the way home an owl flew down and tapped on the windshield. A week after that he had his heart attack and almost died. Later I had a few more of these visions after the owl got out of my head. Eventually his name became *Painted Hawk* because in Cherokee the word paint actually means red. Ken is a word warrior, not a physical fighter, and the hawk is a representative of the warrior. Then I saw this Ken warrior, the red hawk or the *Painted Hawk* and that's how he got his name. The process is just frustrating at times. Your physical being, your superficial being gets in the way. I see this owl and evidently I'm not receptive to what it is trying to tell me, because my physical mind says that's Ken's name. Well that's not what it was telling me at all, but I needed Barbara to tell me that.

Barbara, being of Cherokee ancestry, it took me about a year for all the visions to come together to know her name. She ended up

being Red Bird, but when we did the naming ceremony as soon as I evoked her name a cardinal sat on one of the posts and stayed there the whole time until the naming ceremony was over before it flew away. There is far more to the spirit world of the Native American people long before the Europeans got here than what the European culture of today understands.

Shannon Thomas, a direct descendant of Simon Kenton, asked for her Indian name. It came to me in a vision. I gave her Little White Wolf. Simon Kenton was given the name by the Shawnee: the Great White Wolf. I thought it would be appropriate that the descendant of Kenton would be Little White Wolf. That is the first time in history since Simon Kenton was given an Indian name that a descendant of his was given an Indian name so it is historical. I was honored that she asked me to do so. (*See page 27 regarding the Shawnee/Kenton connection.*)

FUTURE VISION

I would like to see the people be more educated in the white man's culture as well as our culture so they can get a good paying job. Educate the people in our traditions and customs. Educate the people in how to be thankful for everything that they have so they can go out and work their job and not cause conflicts with everybody else and be able to show the modern world that we are not savage, intimidating people and always have hot tempers with a 'you owe me everything' attitude. Show the world that we are

human beings just like everybody else and have families to feed. We just happen to descend from a different culture of people.

As far as the Shawnee people as a whole, the first thing I would like to see is all of them get along and respect each other.

The western tribes have federal recognition because they did what the government told them to do back during the Treaty of Greenville of 1785 and during the Removal Act of 1834. They signed all those papers and went out west. They said we will do what you tell us to and you are going to give us some land out there. Our ancestors stayed back in the Motherland and cut their hair and put on white man's clothes and blended into society. They didn't want to leave the Motherland. Now they've got animosity toward us because our ancestors didn't go on the Trail of Tears. Our animosity toward them is you sold Motherland; it's blood money. We've got to get over that. We're working on it.

ROLE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHING NATIVE HISTORY -- PAST & PRESENT ~

I was taught history, but nothing to do with Native Americans. In school the history was all about the West. The schools now have a little bit of insight with the Eastern culture. They do study the French and Indian Wars in the 1750's a little bit, but for the most part it is still the Western culture simply because when Europeans crossed the Mississippi they took the media with them and those were the things that were reported. The only things they had at that time were French journals and British war files;

those didn't get published in high school history books.

Teachers only have a certain amount of time to study different parts of history, and therefore a small amount of time to study Native culture. In order to be able to grasp it all, they would have to have a special class based on Native American cultures. That's why when they are studying the Native Americans they ask me to come into their classrooms for a day and give them as much as I can specifically about the Eastern Native cultures. In 90 minutes I can give them more than they are ever going to get out of the history book. I do about 4 or 5 different high schools every year. It gives the kids more insight about what actually happened east of the Mississippi in the seventeen and eighteen hundreds before they even went out west. I find that there is an interest that the kids want to know what happened in their own backyard because they don't get it in their history books.

I think the books are limited; they've been written by the federal government or maybe by state governments. The teachers are smart inviting me to come in and tell the right stuff to these kids. I don't know that there are many other people who do this.

NEXT GENERATION ~

We are working on ways to interest the younger people. Again, we live in a European-based society and with technology advancing the way it is, there is more interest in playing video games than there is in going out dancing in the

woods. The only thing we can really do is let them know how important it is to get back to nature and to the ancestral ways of thinking, because the truth is that is going to get you further in life and give you more peace than a video game. It's tough because a lot of us don't show interest in the Native culture until we get to be in our forties and fifties. We won't be around then when a lot of the young ones who are in the Tribe now reach that age. Hopefully we will be able to make the transition to the next two or three generations.

Are your children or grandchildren active in the Tribe in any way?

Not at this point. They have an interest. They have lives of their own; the best way to put it is that life gets in the way. They are proud of who they are and I'm sure that someday they will grab a hold of it and want to run with it. My grandson is very interested in it.

WHAT THE PUBLIC SHOULD KNOW ABOUT SHAWNEE HISTORY ~

There is information I would like to give to the public about the Shawnee people. I can talk to them about where we came from, how we became the 'Shawanos' which means people of the south. We could talk about the Shawnee siding with the French in the French and Indian Wars and fighting with the British in the War of 1812. I could go into all of that, but the people today are more interested in uprisings in the west -- the Custer battles, Wounded Knee.

Is there an historical event where you were raised that still resonates involving Native and white people that you

would like the local people to know the truth about what really happened?

Ft. Recovery is one of them. There are multiple events that took place there that led up to Kekionga becoming Ft. Wayne. A lot of people don't know those events. That is also something that I teach. In our area there was a tremendous amount of history that took place. I walk kids through 1790 to 1794 when Anthony Wayne basically overthrew Kekionga. Ft. Recovery played a very important role in that happening. In 1791 650 soldiers within an hour and a half got killed in St. Clair's Defeat by an allied Indian force led by the Shawnee war chief, Blue Jacket, but you don't find that in the history books. It was one of the largest events in the history of the Europeans against the Native Americans east of the Mississippi. The Treaty of Greenville in 1795 is very important history in our own backyard. That's what I try to teach.

LEARNING FROM THE SHAWNEE EXPERIENCE ~

We're doing that slowly by people like myself making public appearances. It gives me an opportunity to teach our culture in an enlightened way. The only ceremony I will allow people to see is the Shawnee traditional Sunset Ceremony. During that time I tell people that we have to respect the fact that the Creator allows us to be here for one reason only and that's to take care of Creation. All of Creation could exist without human beings, but humans could not exist without the rest of

Creation. Everything that the Creator created is still doing exactly what it was created to do except humans. Everything is still in its perfect state except for humans. We should be very thankful that the Creator allows us to walk on this perfect Creation. When people tell you, "We don't live in a perfect world", tell them, "Yes, we do, and we should be thankful for it." We're here and we are honored that we are the caretakers of the Creator's perfect Creation. It's an honor to be here to do that, but people don't do it. They throw cigarette butts on the ground and trash on the highways, etc., etc. You got to second-think that. We're here to take care of this, not destroy it.

Our belief is this: every step that you take, every word that you speak, every movement, every eye wink, every motion that you make, is going to effect the next seven generations of people, and it also effects the past seven generations of people. So in our present state we have to be very, very careful of everything that we do, say, act, because one word that you speak to somebody, inadvertently, might effect a half a million people a hundred years from now. You don't know who you are going to effect. You might be speaking one-on-one with somebody who will pass that on to their children or maybe some relatives. They'll go to school or to work and pass that on. After seven generations you have about a half a million people who are going to be affected by that one word. You got to be very careful.

When I tell people about our culture --

taking care of the land, respecting the animals and the trees, it does not coincide with our modern culture. I do want them to know that, but many people are not going to accept it. It's all about going to work and making money and watching TV and playing on their I pads. They don't care about nature. If they see a coyote, they are just going to shoot it. You just don't destroy a group of animals because you are afraid of them. That upsets the balance of nature and that's not what the Indian people did. They understood that there is a balance. That's what I would like for them to know. There is more to this life than just I pads and TV. There is a balance of nature and you have to respect that. You off-set that balance, you are effecting a lot.

LAND ACQUISITION ~

My plan is to get us back on our feet and see if we can get our own land and develop it without all of the problems and issues we've had in the past. We are state-recognized in Alabama.

To own land you establish a rapport with that state's government. It lets them know that you are a permanent part of their state and you have a very viable voice if you own land in that particular state. I would like to see a parcel of land purchased in Kentucky somewhere, maybe further west, but I also would like to have a parcel of land in Alabama.

What does it mean for Tribal members to have a parcel of land?

They can say this is our land. It is a consistent place to always go to, rather than renting the

4H Park or going to all of these other places where we have to work around their schedule. We can create our own schedule. It's our land and we can do on it what we want to do. We are limited to what we can do by renting these other places. My original wish and desire when we had the other land was to build a council house that had running water, a kitchen, showers, a few small cabins on it that people could stay in over the weekend, and maybe eventually build a museum/visitors center where they could bring school buses in and kids could go through the center and see who we are, who our ancestors were. I may not see that happen in my lifetime, but it is still a goal. We want to have a piece of property and start building that kind of environment. It doesn't matter how many generations down the road, those generations still need to know and understand the history of the clan and the history of our people, and who we are and who we once were.

Is it likely that the Piqua will be able to buy land in the near future?

I think it is very possible. We have people who are donating money and an individual who is willing to match everything that is donated. We are working with some companies which possibly could get a tax write-off as we do have a 501(c)3, non-profit status.

PROTECTION OF SACRED SITES ~

How do you designate specific land? They could create a constitutional law that says this land will not be developed for the next three hundred years. I don't know if anybody has

approached it that way or not. Either it would become a state park or a federal park which means either the state would be responsible for that property or the federal government would be and they don't want to do that. They are not going to hand it over to the Indian people and say you take care of it.

There are burial grounds – mounds. A farmer will get into it with a plough and all of a sudden some bones are uncovered. So he'll call the proper authorities and they come in and designate that it is a burial ground. The federal and state governments have told these farmers that they cannot even drive a tractor on that anymore even though they own it. If they can do that, why can't they specify specific lands as untouchable? That's going to take litigation on at least the state level and you have to have lobbyists do that. Do you get a contingency of lobbyists to go to a state capitol every time the state legislature is in session and try to lobby for that? How many years is that going to take? I'm not too sure how many people would really do that. It's a constant battle. The best way to do it is to get volunteer lobbyists, because people can't afford to pay those lobbyists. They make big dollars. You'd have to get volunteers to go to the State House to represent the Indian people on a regular basis, every time they are in session. It can be done. You have to at least have one lawyer as a lobbyist because he knows the laws of that state.

REFLECTION

WHO IS NATIVE AMERICAN/INDIAN? ~

Anyone who chooses to practice the culture of the ancestors, who honors and takes care of Mother Earth, and believes in the spiritual ways of our ancestors is Native. Because of our present-day government we have rules, regulations and protocol which state that you have to be able to prove that you are of Native ancestry through genealogy to be a member of a tribe.

UNIQUE QUALITY OF THE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

A lot of the other tribes throughout the nation are very particular. There are some tribes that say you can't be a member of their tribe unless you can prove at least 25% blood quantum. My statement to them is eventually that blood quantum is no longer going to be 25%. Are you going to disband as a tribe because you have this rule? My belief is I don't care if a person is 1/100th, if they wish to walk the Native path and be one with nature and learn the traditions and customs, then we have to give them the opportunity. Yet we have the rule that they had to be an ally in the past, but that encompasses a lot of different tribes: the Seneca, Wyandot, Miami, Delaware, Cherokee, etc. There are a lot of people out there who would like to be a part of a tribe.

Because of my experiences in the past of not being acceptable to tribes for whatever their reasons were, I want to give people, who want to practice the culture, the opportunity

to experience the same thing I've experienced. If your genealogy proves out, you can be part of our culture. There are people who want to experience our culture, but may never be given the opportunity to do so. What difference if they are Cherokee, Delaware, Wyandot, Creek, Chickasaw -- it doesn't matter. They are still Native people.

We are traditional or try to be. We try to be very diplomatic with all of our relations, whether it is with the European culture or with other tribes. We don't stir the pot. We defend ourselves, but we don't do publicity stunts. It is not our purpose to draw attention to ourselves. It is our purpose to make sure that all Native people are treated fairly. I think that is what makes us unique. We do things more on a sophisticated, diplomatic level.

PROUD TO BE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

One, I'm proud because my ancestors were Shawnee. I came to a couple of gatherings before I even joined the Tribe. For the first 4 or 5 years I just sat back and observed. Then they put me in as clan chief and then I had the ability to speak on council. I basically told them, "This is what I was taught. This is what I think is real. Traditionally this is the way things were done." Eventually I became tribal chief which gave me the opportunity to try to teach the traditions and customs the way that I was raised. I'm proud to be a Piqua because I have the opportunity to teach the ancestors' ways of doing things. I'm trying to do the best I can to keep the real traditions and customs alive.

FEDERAL RECOGNITION

In order to become federally recognized, the state must have a federal recognition committee that sets certain criteria which means a tribe just can't just get together and say I promise I have Indian blood and now we're a tribe and the federal government should recognize us. You can't do that because everybody would come out of the woodwork. There has to be a fair act of some kind where certain criteria are met by Indian people where they can become federally recognized. The only way the federal government now really gives anything to the Indian people is if you are recognized by the federal government.

Now there is state recognition. Each individual state can help with certain things with the people living in those states such as health benefits. Since we're state recognized in Alabama, and I live in Indiana, my family doesn't get those benefits.

I struggle a lot with European-based society having the ability to tell us who we are. There are benefits to federal recognition financially, maybe, but there are no benefits to it as far as them dictating who we are and who we are not. The federal government is working right now on cutting their budget. As far as I'm concerned, they could do it because that doesn't take away the fact that we are Native people. Just because the government recognizes you as a Native tribe, as a Native person, or not, does not take away the fact that you are Native American. The blood still flows.

Do you think the federal recognition process is fair at this point or that the regulations and rules ought to be altered in any way?

I think they should be altered. I'm not too sure that the government isn't looking at, if we recognize another tribe then that means we're going to have to fork out more money to a minority group. What people don't understand is that there are billions of dollars sitting in our government treasury designated specifically for grants and for minorities. But people don't know that so they don't apply for it. They should use that money, help out these people. The federal criteria is a lot stiffer than the state criteria is. The federal government actually requires the states to have an Indian Affairs Commission and they get money from the federal government to keep it alive. So for the states that don't have an Indian Affairs Commission, where is that money going? It's politics at its best.

More than anything I want to impress as much as possible to stay traditional, to stay together and to carry the traditions on long after I am gone. I don't care whether we ever become federally recognized. What is more important to me is to practice the traditions of our ancestors as much as possible. Living in the 21st Century obviously we drive cars and use cell phones. We've lost some of the language and some of the traditions and culture. We need to keep the base together and continue to be a diplomatic tribe and fight for existence. Right now we are fighting against the federals

who want to destroy the state recognized tribes. It is a very large threat right now. They did the federal census in 2010 and found out how many Native blood people and how many state recognized tribes there really are. Their biggest fear is that the state recognized tribes will now be able to accept gifts from the federal government which is going to take away some of their funding. So 460 million dollars a year to give to federal tribes could be dropped down if some went to state-recognized tribes to keep the Indian Affairs Commissions in each state functional. It's all about the money.

My attitude is if they eliminate state recognition, they can't eliminate the fact that we are still Native blood. We can still get together and practice our traditions whether we are state-recognized or not. The recognition part is important because some of my people get benefits from it. Losing state-recognition is not going to take away the fact that we are Native people.

State-recognized tribes appear to be under attack by some of the federal tribes. Is there any update on that situation?

Oklahoma no longer recognizes state tribes. And now it becomes a spider web. They've started attacking other state Indian Affairs Commissions that recognize state tribes. That is a fairly large blow to state recognized tribes. It's a matter of time unless we can figure out a way to stop it. Oklahoma is actually the hub of Native Americans in the modern day arena.

The federal government is responsible for

that, because they got pressure from the federal tribes. It all started with the 2010 census. I went to most of the meetings. The federal government was actually trying to help out the state-recognized tribes. We want the state recognized people to take the census so they can be eligible to receive health and education funding. What that will do is take some of the funding away from the federal tribes. When the federal tribes realized this, they decided to eliminate state recognized tribes. Now we are coming up to the 2020 census. I'm going to a couple of meetings in Alabama and it will be interesting to find out what they are intending on doing. It's all about the funding. The federal government actually can take away all recognition from all tribes, federal and state. If they continue to pursue this and start passing legislation and laws eliminating state recognized tribes, they can also eliminate recognition from federal tribes. What these tribes don't understand and what the Indian Affairs Commissions don't understand is they get funding from the federal government. If the state recognized tribes and the Indian Affairs Commissions are eliminated, that is millions of dollars that are no longer coming into that state from the federal government. Slitting your own throat is stupid, but it is a pride factor for these federal tribes.

I told some of the federals: "You state that you are Indian and I am not. The reason you make that statement is because the federal government tells you that you are an Indian

because you are federally recognized. So the very people who took you out of your homeland, put you on reservations are the people you believe who are telling you that you are the Indian and we're not."

RECONCILIATION

PIQUA SHAWNEE & WESTERN SHAWNEE ~

The back-story: At the Treaty of Greenville, 1795² some of the chiefs signed the Treaty and some didn't. The ones who did said, "We are willing to give up our land, be paid the money, and move out to the reservation." The people in the east basically look at that as blood money. They said, "No, we are staying where we are at." There were Shawnee who stayed east of the Mississippi and some who went to Kansas and eventually Oklahoma.

There have been animosities with the western people for the simple fact that they don't really want to recognize us as being Shawnee people because their ancestors went through The Removal³. Those who are out there are still the survivors of that Removal. Many of the people here chose not to leave the Motherland. Some of them even stayed and cut their hair and put on white man's clothes;

2 After the defeat of the Indian confederacy, led by Blue Jacket at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in northwestern Ohio, representatives from the various tribes, including the Shawnee, met with General Anthony Wayne at Green Ville and signed what is known as the Treaty of Greenville in which they relinquished a major portion of their lands in Ohio. It is interesting to note that a number of the Native attendees refused to sign the treaty.

3 In the early 1830's Native people, including the Shawnee, were forcibly removed from their Ohio Valley homelands. As noted elsewhere, many either did not go, or ultimately returned home.

because of our skin and hair and eye coloring, you could put on the white man's clothes and blend right into the white man's world. That is what they did for a long time and that is how they stayed hidden. It was much like the Jewish Holocaust where the Jewish people were not allowed to read their Torahs. They had to memorize it if they were going to continue knowing their spiritual culture. It was the same thing with the Shawnee people who stayed back. They couldn't have their hair long. They couldn't speak their language or practice their traditions. They had to adapt to the white man's culture in order to stay on their own land. Again, traditions were lost. Language was lost.

That created the animosity and it still exists. I don't understand it and I tried to resolve it. I've made contact with them to verify if there are people applying to our Tribe who are supposedly federally recognized with them. As far as regular contact -- not a lot. There is some animosity so I have to be careful. Barbara Lehmann and I are hoping to use history connections to try to resolve some of it by working with Native people on projects and events.

It's the same problem we had two hundred, three hundred years ago. I tell people it is one of the reasons why the Indians lost the land to the Europeans because they couldn't get along. They couldn't agree on anything and they still can't today. We are no different than any other race of people in the world that think they want to do things that are right and everybody else

is wrong. It's never going to happen, especially between federal and state recognized tribes. I want to make reconciliation with those people. I want them to help us. I want to help them. They are federally recognized and living on reservations. They don't need our help, but yet they do. What they really need is how to bring their people back to an existence that used to be. Because the Removal took place so long ago, they don't know where the old towns were. They've lost a lot of their history because they've never come back to learn it. That is changing.

I would love to be invited to go out and sit at their Green Corn and talk with their chiefs in a very diplomatic and humble way. You don't go unless you are invited. It would be a great honor for me to be invited out there, to spend time with them. But it would also be an historical event. It would break the barrier.

THE SHAWNEE/KENTON CONNECTION ~

Simon Kenton went out and entered Indian lands and was captured, but he survived many gauntlet runs. They finally recognized him as a warrior so they adopted him into the tribe. They would have had every right, instead of adopting him into the tribe, to burn him at the stake which they did with other captives. He was adopted into the Shawnee because of the respect the Shawnee had for him as far as being a warrior, and even though he was of European descent, his abilities to do what he did in the wilderness, his abilities to fight, gained a lot of

respect from the Native peoples, specifically the Shawnee.

It all comes around full-circle. The Simon Kenton kin adopted me into their family. They have respect for me as our Shawnee ancestors had respect for Simon Kenton. I felt very honored to be adopted into an elite group of people. Simon Kenton was a very important historical person who helped to shape this part of the country. As far as I'm concerned he stands many frames above Daniel Boone because of his accomplishments. For this family to adopt me into their family was just a great, humbling, honoring thing to do.

SHOULD THE PIQUA SHAWNEE BE INVOLVED IN NATIONAL NATIVE ISSUES SUCH AS THE DAKOTA PIPELINE?

All Indians should support other Nations in their endeavors to protect their way of life. There were people in the Tribe who wanted to be a part of the Dakota Pipeline demonstration, but they were teachers and could not leave their work. Prayers were on-going.



Duane Everhart
SECOND CHIEF

CULTURAL IDENTITY

My family did not talk much about our Native heritage when we were growing up. In fact probably about the only time it was really discussed at all was when we were out hunting. And it was just things like, “Well, we’ve got to walk like the Indians.” If anything, it was probably discouraged. Our grandfather was probably embarrassed by it. There was still a hesitancy of revealing a true identity.

I didn’t know for sure until much later in my life. My younger brother pursued it a lot more than I did. After my grandmother died on my father’s side, my grandfather found some newspaper articles that told about my grandmother, my great-grandmother, all the way back to my great-great grandmother, being of Shawnee descent. Thinking about the time period, early 1900’s through the 1940’s, I think a lot of people were still worried that they might get put on a reservation. It was either very crazy or very brave of my great-great grandmother to actually openly admit to her heritage. My younger brother said, “See, I was right.” Now all the lessons made sense that we were taught in childhood.

I had struggled with religion. My mother was Catholic and kind of forced us into the Catholic Church. My father didn’t care – whatever we wanted to do. He didn’t practice any denomination. As I was growing up I talked to my dad a lot about it. I said, “I don’t feel comfortable going to the Catholic Church. I don’t know where I belong, where I fit.” He talked about some of his experiences when he was overseas in the War. As long as you believed in something, that was all he cared about. He never pushed one way or the other. I struggled going to different churches trying to figure out what religion did I belong to. When I was in Boy Scouts, we would go to services with the Boy Scouts, but it was an outside setting and it was non-denominational. It was really getting in tune with nature and that is always what I felt most comfortable with. It explains what my affinity is with nature, why I’m much more comfortable being outside. Thank goodness, now I finally feel this is where I fit best as far as religion goes; things make sense now.

I started out getting involved with one of the Native groups in Ohio. My brother

got involved with some individuals of Native descent. At the time I was living in South Carolina. I would make trips up to Ohio all the time and attended different functions. I talked with my brother and said, “We really ought to think about being part of the Piqua. I think it would be good for us.” We petitioned them. We had done our genealogy and presented that to the Tribe. I’m probably one of the oldest members here.

Unfortunately my grandfather passed away just before we got involved really heavily in the Tribe. I wish he would have survived so he could have started talking. There are other questions I’d like to ask now. All these little things, the food we ate, our time spent outdoors with my father and grandfather, the stories that were brought up at family gatherings about grandparents and great-grandparents, some things were like red flags and nobody knew it. I wish we could have said, “Tell us more about it.” They were embarrassed. I really do believe if my grandfather knew it was safe, he probably would have been more open. I think my dad would have told me a lot more. My aunt, who is still alive, was several years younger than my dad. She doesn’t know anything about it. My mother is first generation American. My grandparents on her side both came across from Austria and started a family in Chicago, Illinois. That family has been traced way, way back. There is no Native blood; it is all from Austria and Germany.

Is there any conflict for you in relation to personal identity coming from two disparate cultures?

No, because I identify with both. I’m half German and maybe a quarter Native American. The other quarter is probably a mix of several different groups, including English and Welsh. I recognize the German background. We grew up going to different functions with my mother’s side of the family – Christmas and stuff like that, so there are a lot of German traditions. I love German food. I don’t have a conflict with it.

My Ph.D. dissertation was on developing a racial identity. I have done a lot of studies on it. I am very much aware of how I identify myself. I’m very clear about it where other people might say, “I don’t know who I am.” I can see why that would be a struggle for some. I’ve read and studied enough about Native people to begin with that, and I know I will get into a lot of trouble for saying this: there haven’t been full-blooded Native people probably since the 1500’s. I know people would argue that, but when you read the history and the archaeological finds, there has been so much inbreeding with Europeans in the Western Hemisphere for so long. It goes way prior to Columbus. I don’t say too much about it because I understand how important it is to feel that you are one hundred percent Native American. The bottom line when you really start studying DNA, we are all mixed anyway.

INSPIRATIONAL ANCESTOR ~

After my dad and grandmother died, my

grandfather and I had a lot of nice talks, but growing up, my dad was a protector. Our mother was the disciplinarian. My dad and I had a real closeness. When I would get scared I'd start to laugh. My dad would laugh so he would never spank me. Growing up we all went hunting. We had some real quality time together. When you get to your teenage years, those kind of things went by the wayside, even though that is when I was really struggling with religion and he would talk to me about that. He is my role model – how he handled life in general. I'll paraphrase the words from country music star, Brad Paisley: I wish I was half the man he ever was. I just admired him in a lot of ways. I've been complimented a lot of times that I look an awful lot like him.

TRIBAL ROLE ~

A troublemaker. (*Laughs*) I'm really good at organizing things. I think that has been my contribution. Sometimes I see beyond some of the things people get bogged down in and probably have a little more futuristic view of where we need to be.

Becoming the Second Chief was very humbling. I have been in the service of people my entire life. I feel that as a leader of the Tribe, I should give more of myself than what a regular member should. There is a lot of time that I work on things away from our gatherings. One of my favorite jobs I inherited, not as Second Chief, but through default, is being the editor of the newsletter. I have taken great pride in putting together a quality

newsletter for our Tribal members to enjoy. It's a fairly informative newsletter with some history lessons and fun little stories. We've also been able to feature Tribal members who have accomplished something like a new job, promotion, etc. It's given me a voice to stress some basic issues of politeness and respect. I think in today's age, we have forgotten some of what we were taught as children, so I try to bring those back for adults in a more mature manner.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ~

I'm probably not as traditional as some. I guess mine is more personal and quiet time. Self-reflection. We pray at every meal when my wife and I are together. I usually say a silent prayer if I'm away from her, when I grab a bite to eat.

CULTURAL REVITALIZATION

LANGUAGE ~

Language is culture. Without the language, you have no culture. The language defines the people. All you have to do is study any history. Any time you have a conquering group, one of the first things they always do is take away the language because once the language is gone, then the people are gone.

Once people fully understand the language, they will have a better understanding of their culture and history. When I teach sociology and we talk about language and culture, I ask my students, "What can you tell me about snow? Define snow. You and I know what snow is here. What if you lived up in the Arctic? You

have to understand that the Inuit people have thirteen different words to identify the different types of snow.” I don’t know this for a fact, but I would imagine the people who live in the deserts have multiple definitions for the different types of sand. That is how you know the world you live in.

We are going to have corn tomorrow after the Green Corn Ceremony. We know that one of the old traditions is that you don’t eat the fresh corn till after the Green Corn Ceremony. The idea was you always clean up what was left over. Something tells me that there is probably a word that tied into that and there is probably something different about this corn and that corn. We struggle with trying to identify that. I live down South. I always get in trouble because our growing season starts before it does up north. I don’t plant my garden until after Spring Bread Dance, but my corn is going to ripen before the corn does up there. We now have our Green Corn festival based on a calendar year, not on the cycles of the moon. My loving niece will always give me a hard time. “You can’t eat corn because we haven’t had Green Corn festival yet.” I jokingly say, “I base mine on the full moon and the ripening of the corn in the South. I had my own little private ceremony so I could enjoy the corn.” We can’t abide by that anymore based on our calendar year. Yes, Green Corn is going to be important, but in the world we live in today can we all get together when the chief checks the moon out and figures out when the corn should be ripe?

We need to start teaching people to do their own prayers. We learn from talking to our elders. Sometimes you do it by prayer too. You just pray hard enough and sometimes those things will come to you – this is what you should do. I really believe that can happen.

I don’t want to use the term ‘religion’, but maybe that would be a term more people would be able to understand how we relate to our surroundings. I’ve been questioned when I’ve gone into schools: “Do you worship trees?” “No. Do I recognize that a tree has a spirit? Yes.” I think some of our people in the Tribe struggle with that, but I was taught that at a young age. That was part of “We’re going hunting son”. I would sit out there when I was squirrel hunting and pay attention and listen to the trees and to the grass, because they talk to you. I probably didn’t pay as close attention as what I would like to see our younger people eventually learn to do. That needs to come back to us. We get so tied up in so many other things.

It is important to understand the power of our prayers. For me it is spirituality; for other people it may be religion. I think that is something that should come out – not just the language; it is part of our culture.

With those two – language and spirituality, everything else falls into place. Then you can get into worrying about clothing, food, and habitat. Most of us have worked very hard to study and understand how we would have been dressed in certain time periods. There has been

a lot of thought and work already put in some of our clothing. We can't make maize the way it used to be made. You are going to have to go down to Wall Mart and get a bag of cornmeal. Even the large tribes, with maybe some exceptions of those in really remote areas, don't practice those old ways anymore. It would be hard to if they did. From some of the reading I've done and some of the things I've studied through archaeology, there was wide-spread cultivation of the land. The idea of having small little plots is really fairly recent, probably going back to the late 1600's. People on this continent have gone through so much change over the millenniums. The garden, the clothing is just a part of it; what hasn't left the people is the language and spirituality – the core.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CEREMONY ~

It's using the tradition and ceremonies and even though it's only three times a year, it still helps that spirituality for the people. Not everybody believes the same thing. Even for people who may not get into it as much as others, there is still that spiritual connection that I think they feel when we're together. I heard so many compliments today about the drum and the songs. It is just such a good feeling. That helps bring people back. "Oh, when are we going to do those songs again? That was really kind of fun, and it was different. That was really something we need to do more often." What the spiritual expression does is keep that little uplift in each individual after they leave. I always feel good when I leave.

Do you feel it brings the ancestors back when you do ceremony?

Yes, I really do. Not everybody may believe that. I'll call it ancestors, because that's the term we use. You can really feel something in the air, a presence almost, not like a ghost or anything, but an inner spirit that boosts you. I believe it and I know others do. Does everybody have to believe it? No, but that's okay. That's everybody's internal belief system that makes us part of that being unique again. You feel it in your heart. A year ago this past Green Corn, I was dancing and something moved me, and moved the drum. All I could hear was the drum beat. They said I was picking up my feet and dancing crazy. That's what I call the ancestors or the spirit that you feel around.

FUTURE VISION

I would like to see us have a large enough piece of property where we could have a cultural center of some type where we could showcase our culture, where some day we could have people there all the time. "Here is who we are. Here is where we've come from. Here is what our culture is like." If we had a cultural center maybe we could do a week-long camp. People send their children to 4H camps to band camps, etc. It would be nice if our families would send their kids to some type of summer camp that we would develop.

I'd like to see the language come back. I don't know that we'll ever grow that big where we could even someday have a school. Not

in my lifetime. Visiting with them and having close friends amongst the Cherokees of North Carolina, I saw how they grew, and went from very little to having their own school system that they manage. They've come so far. I would like to see us do the same. I think we can get very close as far as having a cultural center where we can have tribal functions.

I would like to see us care for our people a little bit better than we do. Many people can't make it to ceremony because of finances. We are not a rich people. There are a lot of very poor people here which is true for most Indian people I've worked with. It would be nice if we could help people come to ceremony. "You need a hundred dollars for gas? Here is a gas card." "You need your lights paid for because you are between pay checks? Here is a check made out to your electric company." Those are the kind of things I'd like to see us eventually do.

ROLE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHING NATIVE HISTORY ~

When I went to school, we studied history which portrayed Native Americans in a negative light. The Pilgrims were kind to the Native People. During the Revolution, most Natives were portrayed as savages, and after that they were pretty much dropped. They didn't cover the contributions of Native people. They were always portrayed as being primitive, almost barbaric people. All the stereotypes were in full force. All Native people ran around with war bonnets and rode painted horses and lived

in tipis. The Eastern Woodlands cultures were never clearly discussed. Until I was an adult and started to read other types of history books did I feel that a more complete understanding of the Native people and their cultures were being reported.

In North Carolina they don't much have a choice. (*Laughs*) North Carolina has the largest Native American population east of the Mississippi. The areas especially that are closer to Native communities do incorporate Native history in their schools. I think schools are doing a much better job. They are much more aware of Native American people. They are getting more and more away from the Pilgrims and the Indians. We are going out to the schools more. People are making a more concerted effort to go out and say, "Hi, I'd like to come talk in your schools." I do it when I have time. I know they do a lot up in Ohio. If you are not close to one of the major tribes in North Carolina, they are constantly looking for somebody. All I have to do is put my name out and it comes up, okay, please come talk. It is our responsibility as Native people to go out and say, "This is who we are." But you get opposition to that too. You've got a lot of people who believe that Indian people are what they've seen on TV and in movies. It is a hard stereotype to overcome. I think every time we go out and talk, we can make an impression. It is slowly being changed, but it is just like any other group of people, stereotypes are going to persist. One of our Elders always says it's a

great story until someone proves it wrong.

THE NEXT GENERATION ~

That is what I struggle with the most. As much as I'm into organizing and can set up all kinds of projects, I don't see how we can draw young people in. It has got to come from the home. We've been dragging my brother's 'younguns' around with us ever since they could walk. My daughter's mother moved to Delaware and I didn't have as much access to her so she didn't have that same upbringing or it would probably be different. To get the young ones we've got to get the parents and grandparents also actively involved. If they don't feel it is worthwhile, the kids won't either. It really does go back to the home and I don't know what else we can do. At one time we had family camps during the summer where we did crafts. We did the fun things -- shoot bows and arrows, shoot guns, and throw tomahawks. We just can't seem to keep the momentum going with the adults to keep bringing their children. I think more of them would come to ceremony if we could just keep the interest up. When we a ceremonial weekend and have to do the tribal business at the same time, nobody wants to sit in on that. It may be tedious, but it is an important part of it. That is one of the things the children have to learn to accept and it is a part of any organization. It's not all fun; it's hard work. Maybe we will get to a day when it is all fun and there are no struggles. I don't think I'm going to live to see it. I wish I had an answer for that one. We've got to do something, but I don't

know what.

We keep saying more and younger people need to come in and watch the dances. Just like my own daughter -- she is so busy, so tied up with other things. She just can't make it. She came last year and enjoyed herself, but it is a ten hour drive for her. I have a grandson who is fourteen. He doesn't know enough. He's only been to one event. When I'm with him we talk about it and he is interested. He wants to talk with me about it, but he hasn't been able to come to the ceremonies enough to show an interest or learn.

LEARNING FROM THE SHAWNEE EXPERIENCE ~

Something you hear a lot about in Native culture is the concept of respect. We talk about the respect for our environment. Sometimes I don't even know whether we practice what we preach, because Native people are also a part of that dominant culture in many ways. If the overall culture understood what we talk about in regard to respect, even though we may not practice it, it would probably help us as well.

WHAT THE PUBLIC SHOULD KNOW ABOUT SHAWNEE HISTORY ~

The public should know more of the truth than the myth. There is a lot of myth about the Shawnee people which I'm sure there is about all other tribes as well. I think the true history has not made it out as much as it should. Tecumseh has been a spotlight and done a lot for the Shawnee people, but that is just the tip of the iceberg. A lot of things that have been

attributed to Tecumseh may be not necessarily true. I would like people to know how large and widespread the Shawnee were. Today most people think of the Shawnee as just being in Ohio and Kentucky. I was shocked when I was in South Carolina to find out how strong a presence the Shawnee were in the Carolinas. North Carolina doesn't even acknowledge the fact that there were Shawnee there, but I know they were. Not so much a problem in South Carolina. The Shawnee were very much a part of the French and Indian War in the Carolinas. They had villages established in present day Saluda, South Carolina. There is still a Shawnee burial mound in the state; the Indian people will tell you that it is Shawnee. Every Indian group in South Carolina would tell me that the first people De Soto came across, when he traveled into through that part of Georgia and South Carolina, were probably the Shawnee. People like Dr. Tankersley, a Tribal Elder, and maybe some of our younger people who go into anthropology, archaeology, and history, may open that up a little bit more.

Probably the thing that drives me the craziest is the whole concept that people inhabited this hemisphere strictly by a land bridge with Asia. It's an absurd thought. It's not being taught correctly, even though it's been proven time and time again that that wasn't the only form of migration. But people just continue to repeat the same old stuff, despite all the things that have been brought out that show something different. In Argentina

they discovered some prehistoric tools used by people who would have lived in that area 15,000 years ago, which surpasses what former archaeologists and anthropologists have said. There was a site also just recently being worked on for some time in Florida in one of the sink holes where they found, once again, people in this country who precede what we have always been originally told about when humans inhabited this continent and the whole hemisphere.

I feel like I have a good understanding, not only about the Shawnee history, but the Native people from the Ohio valley. I'm quite the reader and love historic books. I've read as much as I could locate that focused on the Shawnee. One has to be careful as some books have been written from a skewed perspective. The information had been gathered from less than trustworthy sources. That's where reading multiple historical books come in. It's then in my best judgment what is most correct. There is more I would like to learn historically about the Shawnee, but that may have to wait till I'm retired and can get back into some heavy reading again.

ACQUISITION OF LAND ~

I think we need to own some land somewhere, I'm just not sure where. And then of course, if we own it, we've got to figure out some way to pay for it. That's always going to be a big issue. We can start looking at trying to find something that is suitable, and then looking at getting grants. I know that's something we probably

can do.

We need something that we can call home. Tribal people really have a need for some type of base to operate out of, and that's what we need to really strive for.

PROTECTION OF SACRED SITES ~

I read that in Sweden they were building a road and covered up what they call a fairy rock. Fairies are real important in the Swedish culture; they believe in fairies. They said after the rock was buried equipment would break down. There were accidents on the job site, and so they had to bring out somebody who was a fairy specialist or something. [*laughing*] It was funny, but yet I understood it, because it's not unlike our culture. They had to clean off the rock and wash it. Apparently there are these fairy sites that they hold to be very sacred. It's probably a strong belief system that if they're not protected, bad things do occur. Sometimes it's like if you believe something's going to happen, it does happen, and that may be just all it is. But I think it is most important. And truly the whole bottom line is, if the sacred sites all disappear tomorrow, the whole concept about spirituality and sacredness is in the heart. There are symbols that are used, but they are just that -- symbols. The sacredness has to come from the people that believe. I don't believe burial sites should be disturbed, for any culture, period. There are burial sites that have been bulldozed over and roads put on top of them. Burial sites for all cultures should be sacred, whether they are ours, or Catholic or Protestant,

it doesn't matter. They are all important and should be respected.

REFLECTION

WHO IS NATIVE AMERICAN/INDIAN?

I'll get myself in trouble for saying this. I don't believe that there are multiple races. I was doing my Ph.D. dissertation on racial identities and one of the things I found is we're all mixed. There is no such thing as a pure race. There never has been. Anthropologically speaking, we're even seeing that Neanderthals and *Homo sapiens* inter-bred. There is no such thing as a specific race of Native American.

I believe we are an ethnicity, and our ethnicity comes from our heritage and what we believe about our heritage. Tracking that cultural heritage back to some of our customs that we carried along, that's what being Native is. Today we are actually forming new cultures.

I'm a little concerned about the pow-wow. I think they call it Pan-American Indian-ism. Basically it is where a lot of tribes have lost their original cultures, so they're picking up the pow-wow culture.

We've lost some of our language. We just don't have a lot of the customs that come from passing them down from generation to generation. We've adapted, like our Bread dances, so we're holding on to some of that, and the best we can muster up from writings and from what people have learned. We're not as traditional as what it was 100 years ago, and definitely not what it was back in the 1700 to

1800's, and we never will be.

*UNIQUE ABOUT THE PIQUA SHAWNEE
TRIBE ~*

I think what's unique about us, probably more than any other state or federally recognized tribe, is that we truly come from all over the country to get together. It's only a few days, three times a year, and not everybody can make it every time. But when they do come, they're still family, and it's just like "Oh, it's so good to see you!" That's really special. It's a real family kind of atmosphere, with all the family issues, with the crazy aunts and uncles -- all of that. It's not perfect, but it's always a good thing. It always brings a smile when you see certain people. Maybe sometimes the long distance makes it a little easier if there are issues between people. It's not like being in the same household or neighborhood with them every day.

PROUD TO BE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

It's part of learning the heritage of the people. I've been with them for a long time, probably 20-odd years now, and with the exception of a few setbacks, it's been such a wonderful thing watching a group of people grow to what we've become today. It makes me really proud to be a part of that. Somewhere along the line I actually may have helped with that a little bit.

We've grown more spiritual by bringing back tradition. We are not anything like what we might could be, but when I first came in, there was a lot of in-fighting, and we have gotten away from 98 percent of that primarily because

of the leadership of our Chief who has been really good for us.

FEDERAL RECOGNITION

I don't think federal recognition is important. Our state recognition is important. I've worked with different Indian Commissions. I was actually instrumental in getting the South Carolina Indian Commission up and running. I helped to bring those people together who had been fighting for years amongst themselves. There is only one federally recognized tribe in South Carolina and only one in North Carolina. It is the state recognized tribes that still hold things together. In South Carolina, the Catawba, a federally recognized tribe, is very small. They gave up a large land mass so they could be considered federally recognized. There just seems to be more complications being recognized by the BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs). There is not much we could get out of being federally recognized that we don't have now. A tribe has to have land to be considered for federal recognition.

I think eventually the federal government is going to get out of the business of dealing with Indian people. It should be the states that recognize and deal with the tribes. If the states help tribes, it will be beneficial to the state governments and finances. There is so much that can be done because the federal government will say, "If you have Indian people in your state, we'll give you money to help with your infrastructure and your schools." That is

why the push was so big and important for the census to show where we are at so we can start getting that recognition. Whereas the whole concept of the Bureau of Indian Affairs has been so muddy for so many years that I don't know if it could be straightened out.

We are autonomous as a state group. If we are able to form some type of conglomeration of state tribes, that would have the potential of being a very powerful entity. I just don't see the real need to be federally recognized. I think we can get other laws passed at the state level. Eventually the federal government is going to have to back out of trying to have so much control. It's not that way in the Constitution. The states have got to stand up and take more responsibility for their actions and their people.

RECONCILIATION

I think reconciliation is a form of healing. Some people have a real hard time accepting what has happened in the past. We see this all the time in other cultures. If we learned to respect each other to begin with, we wouldn't have so many problems, but that will never happen. It hasn't happened since the dawn of time. But I think reconciliations are helpful. Look how close it has brought the Piqua with the Simon Kenton Kin. If nothing else, it builds friendships, and completes the circle. In the past the Shawnee people adopted Simon Kenton and numerous other whites. We adopted Simon Kenton's fifth great-granddaughter, and now we are all a family

with historically connected affiliations. We have now brought history and reconciliation together.

IS THERE ANY POSSIBILITY OF RECONCILIATION WITH THE WESTERN SHAWNEE TRIBES?

Short answer is no, but it would be ideal for this to someday happen. Like with all groups, there are deep beliefs that are hard to change. Native people are no different from other groups of people. There are stereotypes about other tribes which is a shame. These all could be rectified by simply coming together and talking with an open mind. Most issues between groups are simply from a misunderstanding. From strictly my experiences and personal opinion, I feel that money and casinos have played an important role in creating these differences. Some tribes are afraid others will get more money or take away money from them. Maybe that's a legitimate fear, but I don't think it as big of a problem as some make it out to be. I see this so much in all of society. There is only so much of that piece of the proverbial pie and everyone wants more. Wasn't it in kindergarten or maybe Bible studies for some that we all learned that we should all play fair and learn to get along? After we grew up, as we watch events unfold around the world, that all changed.

SHOULD THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE BE INVOLVED IN NATIONAL NATIVE ISSUES SUCH AS THE DAKOTA PIPELINE?

I think all Native tribes should be supportive of

each other and any of the struggles they may be going through. Will that happen? Probably not as there is too much animosity among groups. As far as the Tribe being active in such endeavors, we have been in small ways. We did have some members who were going out to support the Dakota demonstration, but due to their jobs were not able to continue. We've written letters in support of other tribes that may be dealing with issues.



Anita Pennington
TRIBAL MOTHER
BEAR CLAN MOTHER

CULTURAL IDENTITY

When I was growing up it wasn't such a good thing to be an Indian. A lot of people we lived around had already made up their minds about Indians. We talked about being Indian among ourselves with family, but we never really talked about it away from home or family.

We didn't necessarily do ceremony, but we did get together and celebrate the spring and the fall. We didn't have the Spring Bread ceremony like we do here now. We'd have a feast and prayers and just celebrate being together. We were proud of being Native, but it was just really hard with going to school with the other kids, because we looked different than most of them already. It made it a little bit harder just to get through school.

We moved around a little bit. I grew up in West Virginia and lived a lot in Akron, Ohio when I was a child. West Virginia wasn't such a problem because there were a lot of Natives there; Akron, Ohio was. When I was going to school I was much darker and stood out from a lot of the other kids in those Appalachian schools. I got a lot of ridicule. They called me everything under the sun because they didn't

know what I was. It was hard because you start to think what is wrong with me; why am I so different? There weren't many Native children there at all. I had my brothers and sisters and cousins. We all got the same mistreatment. Kids learn from their parents when it comes to bigotry.

Our parents and grandparents were raising us in the Native way, but they didn't call it Native. They didn't talk about well this is how the Indians did. We were being raised Native and didn't even know it to some extent, just like maple syrup making and the collecting of the herbs and roots, and things like that. Those were things they learned from their parents and passed it on to us. They definitely tried to install in us an attitude and respect for other people, respect for ourselves, respect for animals and trees and all life. All of our animals were treated kindly and with respect even though we knew we were going to eat them, and they were thanked for their sacrifice. At that time you didn't get that kind of teaching in a white European family raising their own meat.

I just feel so blessed to have had the raising

I had. Don't get me wrong, I've had some very hard times, but who hasn't. I'm so glad I came up in a time when I was still able to learn those things because kids now days don't know where their meat comes from other than the grocery store. They don't know how to go out and play, be adventurous and use their imagination, and just be kids. It breaks my heart the way kids have to come up now. I just don't know what is going to become of the world, because the kids have no foundation.

We made our own maple syrup and maple candy every winter. There is nothing like it. It was always so delicious, and a labor of love. We would have a fire outside in our garage and a stove out there that we would cook it down on. We spent quite a bit of time with it because you didn't want it to burn or cook dry. It took awhile to make it, but it was worth it. We tapped a hole in the tree and put in a little plug, and then hung a bucket on that. My dad made the plugs out of wood. We would collect all that sap and when we got enough we would start cooking it down. We would cook a batch down to just about where we wanted it, then we'd start another batch. It probably takes around eight gallons of sap to make a gallon of syrup.

They made apple butter in summer. The last time I helped make apple butter I was twelve or thirteen years old. In the mountains of West Virginia we would go around to all of these old abandoned farms. We would take a picnic lunch, load up a truck with kids and go

apple picking all day. We'd get a truckload of apples and bring them back and get them ready to start cooking. I have the apple butter kettle that my grandmother made the apple butter in. We'd start cooking it and stirring it with a big wooden paddle. Grandma would throw in the spices and we cooked it down to the thickness that we wanted. One year it started raining and we all stood under this big pasteboard box stirring apple butter. We cut the box open and made a shelter over the apple butter kettle.

There is nothing like the stuff that you make, because you put so much work into it. There are no chemicals -- nothing is fake in it. After you work and make something like this, it always tastes so much better. You've got your energy in it, part of your soul -- it's made with love! It's real ingredients that Creator gave us. That's why it just can't get any better than that. Once you have that homemade maple syrup, there is nothing like it.

A couple hundred years ago when the Native people were setting up a maple sugar camp and it snowed and was cold, they'd put that hot syrup on the snow and eat it like that. I would like to try that. They had to make their own birch bark containers that didn't leak to put it in. That is amazing because that sap is just like a bucket of water when you collect it. It's not thick at all. They were absolutely ingenious. They made everyday things exquisite. They had to work so hard to gather and hunt just to feed themselves every day.

Every spring and fall we'd gather certain

plants that we used for teas and poultices. We went along the creek and gathered the first greens -- dandelions, watercress, purse foot, and so many others. They would cook them as greens for a spring tonic. My grandfather always made a spring tonic. I'm not sure what all was in that, but it was barks and roots and things that he collected. It wasn't real tasty, but everybody had to get a dose of that in the spring. He said it was something to get us cleaned out and ready for summer. He said it had nutrients in it and stuff to build iron. I know he used cherry bark, but I don't remember what else was in it. He had some Native in his family. I just got a little more information from my aunt when I was in West Virginia over the summer. The family all thinks there is Blackfoot on my grandfather's side.

INSPIRATIONAL ANCESTOR ~

I had so many teachers who were inspirational regarding my Native life. My grandmother taught me all about things to eat in the wild -- plants to gather for medicine or teas, how to preserve food, and put stuff by for winter. I still gather greens in the spring and herbs and barks for medicinal purposes. She taught me a lot about animal care and being close to the animals and then treating everything kindly. I was fortunate. My mother's sisters were always in close proximity. I spent a lot of summers in West Virginia with my grandmother. There was always something going on and always lessons. What I really enjoyed was when we would go gathering.

I'm thinking about writing up a little memoir for the kids now who don't have that chance to have that experience of learning all those things and how to survive if you have to without all these modern conveniences.

My grandmother, heart-wise, was truly a Native person. You could just see it and feel it when you were near her. She was really close to the earth. She was always working in the garden. My mother also taught me a lot about Native heritage, taking care of the earth, taking care of other creatures, being respectful of the earth.

As you are bi-racial, does it ever cause conflict within your family?

I'm Cherokee. I get that from my father's side, my mother is white and maybe has some Blackfoot. It really doesn't cause conflict. I've always identified as Native ever since I can remember. I was just so close to nature and always in the woods. I felt that things around me were alive, like the plants could hear me thinking, and the animals understood me. I always felt a big connection with the earth and the animals and the plants.

I've been teaching my son since day one. He's lived a Native life all his life, and I'm very proud of that. Living a Native life is a lot less stressful than living a white man's life, I would say. We live a simple life. We live in an old farmhouse. We don't worry about material things; that is not important. We respect everything around us -- the trees, the animals. Even when we have to eat it, we give our prayer

to it. It is just different. We are just happy with being us.

CONNECTION WITH THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE ~

I had been going to every Native event, anything related to Native history that I could find online and making sure I got my son into it when he was really young. I wanted him to be proud of his heritage and be able to talk about it. I went to Gene Parks' pow-wow. He had an ancestral group in Ohio so I started going to their meetings. I did my genealogy and he got me into the Ohio Native Ancestral Association. We did a pow-wow every year and went around to the schools to do education with the kids about Native American life. We bought computers for the Chippewa reservation one year with donations we collected. We always had a big book drive every year.

Gene already was a member of the Piqua, one of the elders on the Elders' Council. He kept pushing me. He convinced me to try for it so I took a vacation and went to North Carolina and South Carolina. I spent that week going to courthouses and health departments looking at books and files. I found so many certificates for my grandmother, my aunts and uncles. They all had Indian on their certificates. My Native American heritage comes from my father's side. I really didn't get to know his family that well because they were in North Carolina and South Carolina. We just didn't get back there very much. I am of Cherokee heritage. Once I got all of my certificates together showing

my heritage and my connection I submitted an application. It took about a year. They have to verify that the certificates are legitimate. Once they did that I was in. I traveled to a lot of the ceremonies with Gene and his family before I even thought about becoming a member. That's when we were still traveling with the ceremonies. We had them in Tennessee and Kentucky. I didn't become an actual member until 2006. But I knew so many people and had been traveling around to the ceremonies for years.

ROLE IN THE TRIBE ~

You were elected Tribal Mother, a very responsible role, in 2012. What are the main responsibilities and how do you feel about being in that position?

It wasn't something that I went out and campaigned for, but I was elected. The people seemed to really want me in that position. I felt extremely honored. The main thing I need to do in that position is take care of the people and try to keep them together. I'm pretty new at it, but it has been a good experience. For the most part I seem to be able to work well with the people. I enjoy the fact that all these young people are coming now because when I first started there weren't that many. I try to do everything I can to keep the young people involved. I try to get around to talk with all the younger couples with small children to see what they are interested in, and what would keep them coming back, to be part of the heritage and to carry it forth. If we don't get the kids involved, we're through. I always aim to make

sure I have things here for the young kids. If they have fun, then they are more likely to come back and keep coming. My main thing right now is just make all the people feel like they can talk to me anytime.

I knew it was going to be a big job. I really feel so inadequate at times trying to do it. I don't know a lot of things that I feel I should know, but eventually I'll learn them. I give it my best shot and I have a lot of back-up. I do feel the women are with me. Everybody is so helpful. It's more like a community. We work better together. I have this Tribe's best interests at heart. I just want them to get stronger and stronger. When a person has an issue and I need to talk with them, I get so much more out of it than they do. It touches my heart to be able to work with the people, because for me it is all about taking care of the people.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ~

In the morning one of my routine practices is when I get up and my feet hit the ground outside I say my morning prayers. I say prayers throughout the day for whatever reason -- give thanks or ask for help with something.

LIVING IN A TRADITIONAL NATIVE WAY ~

We do eat some traditional foods such as deer and rabbit as often as we can. We gather a lot of different greens out of the woods. I have a special place on my property where I go to give offerings and pray. I don't smoke but I always have my tobacco with me because I never know when I'll need to give thanks for something or

give a blessing.

CULTURAL REVITALIZATION

SIGNIFICANCE OF LANGUAGE ~

Definitely language and the dances and songs are important because we are losing them. So many don't know the language. I don't know the language. I would hate to see that go away. So many tribes have lost their language. Once it is gone, it is gone and there is nobody left to teach it. Your language is who you are. Everybody's language is different; that single identifier will set you apart from anyone else. It is a different world view. I'm in the process of learning and my old brain doesn't learn as fast as it used to.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CEREMONY ~

Ceremony keeps us grounded. It keeps us in a place that we know who we are and where we belong and what we are doing here. We're just a very small, minute piece on this earth. It keeps us together and gives us that common thread that will carry us through together as a tribe. It is not all about us; there are things very much bigger and greater than we are. I always greet the day; welcome the spirits into my life and thank them for all that they do for me. I am so blessed.

It's like there is some sort of an awakening happening and people are starting to come together. People are getting more attuned to their ancestry. I think this is going on in other tribes too. They are growing. I'm not sure what it is. Everybody is looking for something. And

sometimes it is leading them back to their tribes.

FUTURE VISION

We really live in both worlds, and until the time when this new modern world goes down, we really need both sets of skills. As far as Native skills, I think we need to learn to live on the land, and how to treat all the other inhabitants -- the plant people, all the other animals, the water. We need to learn how to live in harmony with those things, and learn from them. We need to learn how to survive and know what to eat, what to use for medicine. I think that is crucial because so many kids now days don't have any idea where even corn or eggs come from. It's sad that people don't even know where their food comes from. You never know what is going to happen with all of the controversy in the world today. People wouldn't be able to survive; they wouldn't make it without all the conveniences that are out here now. We've got to be able to build a fire, get shelter, things like that. I think it is crucial right now for everyone.

We are just in a honeymoon phase with the young people and new people coming in with young families. I would just like to see the people come together, keep the young people coming and see that continue before all the older ones are gone who know all the traditions so we can keep passing those down.

We all need to work on the environment. The stuff that is going into landfills just makes me so sad. The waste that comes out of the

office I work in just breaks my heart. I keep campaigning for recycling. Many people in the tribe are working on their own environmental projects. I would love to see the Piqua get involved in some sort of environmental project as a tribe. I think about it all the time and try to do little things. I know in the big scheme of things what I do probably is not making a big difference, but maybe I'm cutting back on my own personal damage to the earth. But I would like to see us take more interest as a tribe. We all got the earth in this mess. Everybody needs to work on this. A lot of people think, "I'll be dead in fifty years." You have generations coming behind you who are never going to see certain animals or trees. Things are just going extinct and being killed off and used up. It's sad to think that the only time you'll ever see a lot of stuff now is in a video or something. It's not going to get any better until everybody starts working on it together. I lean toward trying to prevent water pollution. Water is our vital commodity. I never thought we'd be buying water in bottles just to have something decent to drink. Countries all over the world are struggling with drinking water.

ROLE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHING NATIVE HISTORY, PAST & PRESENT ~

There was very little about Native people in school when I was growing up. It is starting to change. They are doing a little bit more with Native history now. The schools are such a big melting pot now. They are doing education about all these different nationalities, getting

everybody politically correct. They need to spend more time talking about the history that was here, educating the children about really what happened, about *really* how things went down. The Natives were here and they should be given their due.

I would like to see more Native people going into the schools and giving lectures on real Native life, tradition, and history. We've gone into some of the schools. We have a couple of things we do throughout the year. In the younger grades I would like to see someone teaching things from the get-go. Now you would have to be careful with young ones because you don't want to scare them to death with some of our history. But you don't want them thinking like all the stereotypes they've seen or heard about. I would like to see some of that corrected.

NEXT GENERATION ~

It is up to us to show the young folks something that is going to peak their interest so that they will want to come back. You've got to strike that spark for them. I definitely think we need to start doing education and more demonstrations. They just don't want to sit around and talk about stuff; they want to do things. They want to learn how to make their own clothes or do the tomahawks. The young folks today are living in a hard, hard world. They need to be someplace where they feel like they are welcome, loved, and needed. They need to be a part of something, then they will likely want to come back.

LEARNING FROM THE NATIVE WAY ~

I think the larger culture should make family first, be a little closer with family, and not worry so much about the material things in life, because we come with nothing and we'll leave with nothing. There is too much ME in the world.

WHAT THE PUBLIC SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE SHAWNEE/EASTERN WOODLAND PEOPLES ~

If the white society and the Native society learn about each other, breaking down those barriers would be the best way to reconcile. Education on both sides. Knowing about something and understanding it makes you less afraid of it. The white society does need to know the history of what has happened to the Natives as many of them have no idea. When a battle was fought and the white man wins, it is called a victory. When Natives win, it is a slaughter. I would just like the public to know the truth about how the Native people were actually treated. What the kids get in school is just nothing at all, or very little with lots of room for actual facts. I would like them to know about the genocide of the Natives. Things like that need to be learned and not forgotten to help prevent it from happening again.

ACQUISITION OF LAND ~

I think it would be important for us to have a parcel of land so we could have a constant place to call home. The younger people coming in would have an established place where

they could learn, and have a constant in their teaching. I'd like to see a big council house, big enough for the whole Tribe. I would like to have room to grow certain herbs and plants that our ancestors used so we could teach the next generation about these things. It would be good to have an education center where they could come and have people teach them language, ceremony, and our traditional arts and crafts that the Woodland Indians were known for, a base for the next generation to work and live from.

We are getting closer to the goal of acquiring land. We have our land fund and are looking at some things. Hopefully soon we will have a piece of land. We were put here to take care of the land. We could have ceremony in the same place all the time, because that energy builds up. It gets stronger and stronger when you are located in the same place.

PROTECTION OF SACRED SITES ~

If we don't protect them now they will be gone forever and the next generations will have nothing to work with. They won't have any foundation or history. These sacred sites -- our ancestors walked there and worked there. Without these places we may lose part of that connection to the past. There are so many different places. The mounds definitely. There are so many mounds in Ohio. People don't understand the mounds, that many times those mounds had burials in them and are sacred and shouldn't be played on and dug in. Someone's family is there and it should be respected. It's a

constant battle protecting the mounds in Ohio.

REFLECTION

LIVING IN TWO WORLDS ~

Sometimes it is hard dealing with some of the attitudes of the other folks. Again, it is back to the 'ME'; it is all about me so much. People are so worried about the house they live in, the car they drive, things like that.

With the holidays it is kind of hard. We do our own things for holidays, and they have what they do for holidays. Being raised in both worlds I have learned to join those worlds for the most part, but sometimes they must be lived apart. Sometimes there is a problem trying to walk in both worlds. Sometimes the white world intrudes on the world I identify with, the Native world. I will leave that where it lies. People don't understand the things I do either; it is as hard for them to understand why I may bring branches into my office and rocks on my desk as it is for me to understand why they don't. I'm in a building all day long so I need to have things with me there to help keep me balanced and going through the day.

WHO IS NATIVE AMERICAN/INDIAN?

Native is in the heart, not only in the blood. I've known a lot of people who have a lot of blood quantum, but I wouldn't consider them Native. I think there is a philosophy to living a Native life. I don't care if you dress in regalia every day, if you don't have that philosophy of life of being the caretaker -- taking care of other people, helping your neighbors, being

kind and good, honoring the elders and each other, and being respectful. – to me that is Native. Natives are a proud but humble people. They are not boastful and always trying to make themselves seem better than others when living the Native philosophy of life. Natives are here as caretakers; they don't worry so much about themselves. They were put here to take care of the earth, the plants and the other creatures that share the earth with us.

UNIQUE ASPECT OF THE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

I think that the Piqua Shawnee are unique in the fact that they have a number of elders who have been out west and lived with the big Shawnee tribes and learned the traditions and language, and brought some of those traditions back. They've even been able to obtain some information on some of the traditions that even the western tribes are not living by -- that they do not know or follow. A lot of our knowledge has come from Sara Wagar, Don Rankin, and a couple of others about the old ways and traditions. When we have ceremony and gatherings we try to do it as traditionally as we can in this modern time.

There is a lot of respect between the men and the women for each other. It's just the way it is supposed to be. It takes men and women working together to get everything done in a group like this. That is the way it has always been and that is the way that Grandfather wanted it. There are things that women do that men don't really do, but they still have to

come together and put all these parts together to make a whole and keep on going. A lot of people are under the impression that the women were downtrodden and doormats for the men. The Shawnee and other Woodland groups hold the women in high esteem and their opinions matter. The women can come together and make some decisions, and it is the same for the men. There is a lot of respect for what each other does. It takes all of us to get it done and keep the balance. It is a balance issue. A lot of people are so shocked when they see how the men and women interact and work together and respect each other.

The Piqua Shawnee Tribe accepts people from tribes who were allies of the Shawnee during the wars in the Ohio Valley -- the Cherokee, Delaware, etc. They were Eastern Woodlands peoples, and we all lived very similar lives then. It seems only natural to carry that on today.

PROUD TO BE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

I'm very proud of the Piqua. The Piqua have come a long way from when I first met them. We are a tight, loving group now, and are really coming into our own. We're a small group and I think we represent ourselves well. We always try to be respectful and to do things the correct way, and just be good to one another. I'm proud to be Native because we are the caretakers. We're here to take care of the earth and the other creatures that we share the earth with. That makes me proud to be in that group of the caretakers. I'm proud to be a Piqua, a

good people working hard to carry on tradition.

FEDERAL RECOGNITION

Being federally recognized would open a few more doors for our members such as obtaining education fees, but I also think that we are better off not being federally recognized. When you become federally recognized they put you under the microscope. They would be more involved in our rituals and our lives. I don't think we need it. It is bad enough now that you have to have a card in order to say that you are Native American. No other nationality has to have that. The Irish, the Germans, the Italians – none of them have to carry a card to claim their nationality. I think the less involved with the government is better. History is a good teacher.

RECONCILIATION

IS THERE A POSSIBILITY OF RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE PIQUA AND THE WESTERN SHAWNEE TRIBES?

It is important to a point because I'm sure there are things we can learn from them, but I also think we have things they could learn from us as well. I don't see that happening in the real near future. There are issues. I don't see a real reconciliation there, but I think we could learn from each other. If all tribes work together and learn from one another, they could do great things. I feel we are all the same people at the end of the day, but don't look for us to come

together.

We're just a little tribe trying to live our traditions the best that we can. We're not here to threaten anyone. We have no interest in a casino. We need to be putting our energy into this next generation.

DO YOU THINK THE PIQUA SHOULD CONTINUE TO DO RECONCILIATIONS SUCH AS THE ONE THEY DID WITH THE KENTONS?

Sometimes there were good relationships which were over-shadowed by the bad ones between the Natives and non-Natives. I think if we do more things like that it helps people understand us better and we understand them better. With understanding many times comes unity. The connection the Piqua Shawnee have made with the descendents of Simon Kenton is a good example of the unity. I just wish more of this unity could have been reached in the past so many lives could have been saved.



Barbara S. Lehmann

HEAD ELDER
HAWK CLAN MOTHER
TRIBAL HISTORIAN
ADVISOR TO THE CHIEF

CULTURAL IDENTITY

We always knew we were of Indian descent from the time we were born so that was never a question in our family. That's because of my dad. I can go right to the same place and some of the people are still there. It's a little pocket wilderness area. My family did not go on any kind of a Trail of Tears at all. They just went right up to the mountains and lived in caves on the Big South Fork. My great-great uncles were born in caves there. The lady who gave birth to them moved the family right down the river. The Cherokees called the Big South Fork the old Flute River and the area, the Beuelli. She named her daughter's first child, Minnie Beuelli. I have pictures of my family with my grandmother, my great aunt, and my great-grandmother in Indian dress who made herbal medicines. She was like a 'granny woman'. Did they do ceremonies? Well they lived a ceremony. In their head they never let it go. They just lived that life. I don't know if they organized everybody getting out in the woods at a special time, but my guess is that when great-grandmother went to the garden, she planted by the moon. She did things the traditional way.

I've got Indian non-hybridized beans in my kitchen that are two hundred and thirty years old. They would dry them out at the end of the year and reuse these beans over and over. They still use them today. That is tradition. She didn't stop doing that and go up to the feed store and get herself a little sack of beans. She used those traditional old beans till the day she died. I suppose tradition is a religion because it constructs the way you live your life. She never deviated. I don't know whether that is a religion, but maybe it is in this day and age. The family descendents still plant and dry the beans today.

INSPIRATIONAL ANCESTOR ~

My great-grandmother is the one I most admire. I do not remember my great-great-grandmother, but I have pictures of her. I have one picture with a log cabin where they have a hatchet with feathers on it struck into the log. All in one picture is my grandmother, my great-grandmother, and my great-great-grandmother, whole generations of people sitting there. Ironically, this is hysterical, and nobody in the family knows where he came

from, but on my great-great-grandmother's lap is a blonde-headed kid. The rest of them were all dark black hair, black eyes, and there is this youngster who looks like a captive child sitting there. *[Laughs]*

I remember my great-grandmother saving the funny papers and keeping them in a special box. When we came down to visit, she would point out to the smokehouse where she kept them. Because we could read, we had to bring them inside, and she would watch us read, and grin. She was so proud that we could read. I didn't realize how charming and beautiful that was until I was much older. Of course there was a snake in there one time, and I had to get my great uncle to kill it. He picked that snake up, gave it a twist, and threw it out, and he said, "Don't tell Ma."

She could hardly speak really good English. She spoke very few words, some I could not understand. I would go to my mother or father and say, "What did she say?" They would tell me then I would go do it. She would say instead of cover, she would say 'kiver'. Her sons built her a home – beautiful dining room. My brother and I weren't allowed to go in it until we were like twelve years old. I talked to my dad, "We want to eat at the big table. We want to go in there." We were on the back porch waiting for them to eat and we were hungry. Dad said, "If you open your mouth you will never eat in there again as long as you live. Never make a remark on Maw. Don't you ever say anything." Everybody else had plates, knives, forks and

spoons. She comes in with her pie pan and sits down and eats with her fingers with a little piece of bread. She was very elegant with it. I never saw her eat with a knife, fork and spoon. We just sat there and nobody said a word. When she was done, she would get up very quietly and leave. The men in her house ate first. Women and children ate second, always. In her home, my mom and dad did not sleep together. When we'd go down there, she'd say, "J.C., you go upstairs with the boys." She'd say to my mother, "Your room is in there with the kids." We were put right next to her – me and my brother and mom in one bed. Maw would be in the other room. The men all stayed upstairs. It was like a dorm. She had all these beds. If one would die, his bed was left the way it was. If there was money on the nightstand, it stayed.

She always kept a log home up on the hill. We weren't really allowed to go there. I was going to sneak away up there one time because I wanted to see what was there. She had three snake skins nailed to the door and they rattled when the wind blew. My hair went up and I went screaming down the hill. Dad said, "You've been up to the house, haven't you? Were you scared?" I said, "Yeah, there are snakes on the door. Why would she do something like that?" He said, "To keep bad spirits out." I said, "Well, it works because I will never, ever go there again." And I didn't. That's where she made her medicines and dried her herbs and cooked up whatever she was cooking.

She was the midwife for the area. My grandmother helped a little bit but mostly she was there for birthing of babies or healings. Maw made creams. We had no idea what she brewed up.

My dad left Tennessee to work in Ohio like a lot of people did from that Appalachian area. Just for jobs, for survival. Every Friday night when my dad got off work, he said, "Get in the car. We're going home." I used to say to my dad, "We live in Ohio. We *are* home." There were no freeways then. It took us twelve hours to go from Dayton, Ohio to Tennessee. We'd sleep in the car. We'd visit with our family. Then we'd get in that car and drive back twelve hours. From Friday night at eleven o'clock to Sunday night at eleven o'clock, we were on the road most of the time. But it was so important to my dad to go back to see his mother and his grandmother who were Cherokee and all of the extended family. He continued that closeness till one by one they passed on. My dad's soul never left those mountains.

My brother and I were getting older so around sixteen we thought we didn't want to go there anymore. We had a life. We lived in Ohio. We're doing wonderful things, going to school. We really didn't want to be pulled away and go back, but that was not an argument with my dad. As I got older and became more aware, I have this vivid memory of these grandparents eating and sharing this food. Why didn't I ask questions? That is the sadness of someone getting older. You can look back and think I

really did know her, but I didn't really *know* the person. If I had been older or she had been younger, we would have shared more special time together. As it was, she did watch us grow up to a certain age. I used to think it was a punishment, but as I aged and they passed on, I realized what a gift they had given me.

Are you affiliated with the Cherokee as well as the Shawnee?

Before my dad passed over, my daughter had more to do with that than I did, because in the summers I would be working and my parents would take my daughter over to Cherokee, North Carolina and they would stay with Rachel and Lloyd Johnson in their home on the reservation. My dad and Lloyd would go fishing. My mother and Rachel would cook. My daughter would eat bear meat at Sequoyah's. It was the best traditional life that you could ever hope for. In the Smoky Mountains – back in there it's an Eden. It's still beautiful. She probably had more of a traditional exposure and upbringing than I did to Indians in a community living situation. She still remembers this vividly. Their tribal land was leased to Harrah's Casino which is there now in Cherokee, North Carolina. Rachel said, "I wish I had never done it." My daughter saw a change in her lifetime just by an established casino. It changed her childhood memories. She had a really personal exposure to it in this day and age. When she was young she'd come home and for two weeks you'd have to say, "No, I don't want to play the drum. No, I don't want to see you

dance.” Because the kid would dance from the time she got home, with those little bells on her ankles and beat that drum. She was completely insane for two weeks. Then she’d calm down. I’d hide the drum and the ties on her ankles. Finally she’d go on with her everyday life. You can see how it wouldn’t take a young person long to get back into that way of life.

My dad was offered a business there, a gas station, and to live on the reservation. We were established in Ohio and involved in the schools. My dad lived in Tennessee, even when he didn’t live there. He lived in his head, but we did not. We never really wanted to do that. I think my mother realized we would never be happy being taken back down there. So to take us out of our environment that we grew up in and had our friends, we stayed up North.

Back then my family didn’t have toilets or running water. They had oil lamps and lived in log homes. We could lie on the floor on a pallet, with a featherbed top that they took off their bed to give us a little comfort, and see chickens walking through the holes in the log cabin. Their wallpaper was newspapers, and to make it better for another room they would put up ‘funny papers’, which is the comics. In the winter they had to layer these extra because those holes let cold air in.

I remember my brother going down to our great-grandmother’s. Her sons built her a home. She wouldn’t let the bathroom be put in her house. “I don’t want that nasty in my house.” So they had to build her a new

outhouse. My brother had to go the restroom. He was probably around five. The next thing you see is his little black head coming back and he was just screaming. He was yelling to my mother, “I can’t go! I can’t go!” My mother said, “Why not?” He said, “It won’t flush!” We’re all sitting there laughing, but to him he couldn’t go because he didn’t know how to do it. That’s kind of a word picture of how we felt about going back.

About twelve years ago I took my mother to Tennessee. One of my aunts said to me, “I’m glad you came back.” I said, “I am too. I used to think a lot of things about this area. I used to think, oh, that’s not what I want. I’m glad I got away. Now you have everything that I was searching for. I had to go out and run around and get tired and go crazy to appreciate what you have.” She said, “Well, we’re just glad you came back.” My dad had to go home every weekend to see his family. He had to eat that cornbread and pinto beans. He had to connect. That was his lifeline. Even though I distanced myself when I went back I had to grow into that, shed all that attitude and understand. I think my work made me understand so when I went back I appreciated what I had missed, or didn’t value.

LOCAL OHIO HISTORY CONNECTION ~
When I re-married, I moved to Ohio. I lived on the old buffalo road, but I didn’t know that then. I got interested in local history and that’s basically what I’ve been doing ever since. I started reading all the resource books. By then

I knew I had to go deeper. I saw a thing in the newspaper by Ray Crain with the Simon Kenton Historic Corridor who was giving a bus tour of local sites. I took that tour and kept asking him questions. Finally he said, "You ask too many questions for a bus tour. I can't do this today, but we'll talk tomorrow on the telephone." We talked every day for five years. I called him my short cut through history. He had written three books for the Simon Kenton Historic Corridor.

When Ray passed over, I gave the eulogy for his funeral and took over for Ray. Then I started doing Indian history because that is my background and I always had an interest there. Kenton's history cross-acculturated with the Indians. The primary things in his life were always connected to the Indians so as I'm going with Simon I'm also starting to branch out and follow the Shawnee and the Wyandot.

I've really gotten to a stage where I do research of that period for authors. I have a tremendous library downstairs. Those books are my friends. It took a lot of time just to accumulate that library for resource material. I really like researching. I do tours for Kenton sites and Indian sites. I have found that through that research it answers so many questions about my history and the history of Kenton. I found out that he was an adopted Shawnee, an adopted Seneca, and that he had Wyandot grandchildren by blood. I think my calling was toward the Indians anyway because of my heritage. I'd always focused on the Cherokee

before, because that *is* my heritage. I grew up in those areas so those are familiar to me.

There is something about the land that speaks to me, something that I was compelled to learn. I'll never get it all together. There are people who have done regional histories or Middle Ground history. There is really some good research out there. My particular gift is I know local history. I know what happened right here, which they don't know. For example, the third great-grandson of Simon Girty, who is 93, has given me oral history of the family that is not in books. I've got all my research and my photographs. Some of those things aren't here anymore so that's how fast history passes. When I slow down or can't travel around, I can write. So that's my Plan B. I don't really have time now because I'm still viable and active in the Tribe. I can't say I'm going to give this up and take two years off to write. I do lots of work on the telephone and by mail. I do magazines and speak. I reach the public in that way.

I became the first president of the Simon Kenton Corridor. Ray and I worked together the last year and a half of his life every day, because he was very ill.⁴ Ray's life-long project

4 "He was such a good and wonderful friend and a mentor. He always wanted to get the earliest person you could get for a reference. Ray is up there tonight with Black Hoof and Tecumseh and Girty and Kenton. I'll tell you he'll talk to them long into the night because he will get those answers. I can see that. One thing about someone like that, you don't think about it until they are not there anymore. I told everybody what I would miss, other than the gift of his knowledge; I'll miss my history-talking friend. Nobody else talks history but history people. All of a sudden there is nobody to talk to when someone like that passes. It is like a library burning.

was to get Route 68, the old buffalo trace, turned into a memorial, the Simon Kenton Highway. We always said the buffalo roamed, the Indians followed the buffalo, Kenton followed the Indians, and civilization followed Kenton, so then it became a thoroughfare. The buffalo road actually went from what we now call Toledo, Ohio all the way down to Blue Licks in Kentucky, then right through the middle of Lexington, Kentucky. We wanted to marry those two together and share the history and honor Kenton.

There were some Indians who didn't think that was appropriate; they didn't want a road in Ohio named after an Indian killer. We tried to explain that Simon Kenton was an adopted Shawnee. That really wasn't good enough and they were very angry about that. They threatened to protest at the hearings in Columbus. We had to go to Columbus to testify. If it did not pass state senate this time, we had to start all over again and we'd been doing this for five years. Ray said, "You need some help. You need a Shawnee. I have to make some calls." About an hour later the phone rings; a person said, "Mr. Ray Crain suggested that I call you. What do you need?" I said, "I need a Shawnee of this area to go with me to Columbus, because we may have to argue the fact of our history." Off we go to Columbus to testify. It's very intimidating because you are in the middle of the State House and you are answering to all the senators. You have to be able to answer on the spot any

question they ask you. There's no prep work. We were called forward and I got up and answered the questions. One senator said, "I would like to ask Mrs. Lehmann one question. Why do the Shawnee deserve this when there is another Indian group protesting?" I looked at the Shawnee and he said, "I will answer." I said, "Sir, I would be more the happy to answer that question, but since we have a Shawnee with us today, would it be acceptable for him to respond to that question?" He said, "That would be fine." In my head I'm going to talk them down. I'm going to do a filibuster. I will talk those people to death. The Shawnee walks up to the middle of that state house, takes the microphone, greets them and said, "Sir, I can answer that very simply. They were not indigenous to the State of Ohio. I thank you very much." He turned around and walked away and the day was won with one simple sentence. It was beautiful. The protestors did not show up that day. Later I said, "Wow, I was going to talk them to death!" The Shawnee said, "Well, it's just simply they weren't indigenous to Ohio so what did they have to say?"

I've been up and down Route 68 more than the buffalo. If it's a low fog over the Mad River or in the valley, I can still hear Ray say, "Oh, look Shawnee, they're cooking up breakfast. You want to go eat with them?" It's mental food; it's restorative. It just makes everything look different. When I go to Old Washington, Kentucky for an event I'll

think, “I’ve got to drive two and a half hours! Kenton walked it and was beat the whole time and staked out at night. I’m not complaining anymore.” I think about him all the way down the road.

In 1998 for the first time, the Shawnee, the Simon Kenton kin and the Simon Kenton Historic Corridor with the ROTC from Mason County High School and the Simon Kenton branch of the VFW, led the parade down the street of Old Washington, Kentucky, that buffalo road. Barbara White looks back, tears are rolling down her cheeks and said, “I couldn’t believe the thrill of seeing those Indians walking with us Kentons.” It was so beautiful because here we all were, the Chief of the Shawnee, and Simon Kenton’s fourth great-granddaughter – Simon would have loved it! We all ended up crying. Chief Hunt opened the festival with the mayor and the state representative. There is something wonderful about the Shawnee and the Kentons welcoming these people to the Simon Kenton Frontier Festival and Kenton Re-union.

[See the Addendum, Historical Reconciliation section, for more about the Shawnee/Kenton connection.]

INVOLVEMENT WITH THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE ~

I had been doing local history for a long time, early pioneer settlement that also included Indians. As I became part of the Piqua Shawnee Tribe, instead of just doing history, I helped them with their questions, gave them avenues to research, and booklists to read. It

evolved from that. I went into the Hawk clan. Don Rankin was the Ceremonial Chief. His mother, who was elderly and could not come any more, asked if someone would take her seat until she could come back. I took that seat and stayed in it till she passed over. Then Don wouldn’t let me leave. I’m still in that seat as the Hawk Clan Mother. I guess I grew into the position or aged into it. Then I became an elder on the board of elders. I became the Ohio state liaison for the Piqua Shawnee, which means I can speak for the Shawnee tribe to the media – radio, TV, or newspapers.

I carry a letter with permission from the Chief in my wallet. If I do any media I make sure he gets every article that I use the Piqua Shawnee name on, or if I’m using it in my speech, he gets a copy of my speech. We work together and have become great friends. I have a lot of respect for Chief Hunt and enjoy working with him. I am now senior advisor to the Chief.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ~

I grew up with my dad’s philosophy that you can worship the Creator, or God, or whatever you want to call that higher power, in a pickup truck, out in the backyard, or deck. You can worship anywhere you choose. You do not have to be in a confined space. It’s a personal thing, one with your Creator. Sometimes I just say, “I love the days that you’ve given me”, or walk out on my deck and say, “Oh, thank you so much for this warm sun.” To me, that’s stopping and appreciating a Creation that I

had nothing to do with. It's bigger than me, and I have no control over it either. I'm not saying that's Indian. I'm sure if you ask every member of the Tribe, they'd all have a different thing. Most of the members do go to church and a lot of them are married to people who are Christians. The only difference that I can see after all these years, and listening to all these people, is Indians respect rocks, trees, water, and people. They think everything has a spirit. A rock is a rock. But to Indians, that has a life, a spirit that has been there forever. The Creator put that there. So our approach is different. If I see something overwhelmingly beautiful, like a sunset that is absolutely stunning, that's my prayer. That's my faith.

CULTURAL REVITALIZATION

LANGUAGE ~

Learning the languages again is important. They've made CD's you can put in your car so you can listen to the words and prayers and songs and everyday usage. We make tapes for the Tribe, stories that tell the legends. You get two CD's and a book. We have one person who speaks pretty good Shawnee. She even wrote a dictionary.

We are re-introducing the language and the history. In Women's Council they will ask me history questions so I will give a history lesson. A lot of these people who are from the South don't know some of the stories that happened in the North. They read about them in books, but you make the history come alive by telling.

It's another way of doing oral history. We can't sit by the fire all winter long, but when we get together we take time, whether it's a half an hour or forty-five minutes, and share a little history or I answer questions. Everybody is starting to bring our Tribe together. A lot of them thought, "I didn't think anybody would ever want to know that." I'm sitting there thinking, "What a beautiful story." You never know the knowledge you have. You don't know what you can share until you voice it. That's the gift that everybody gets.

TRADITIONAL ARTS & CRAFTS ~

The Women's Council does a lot with arts and crafts, and then the former Tribal Mother ran a camp in the summer for children on the land. Some parents or grandparents stayed with them. They cooked together and made traditional food. They did tomahawk throws. They had a firearms expert who gave them a certificate if they passed all the tests. They did beading, quilling, moccasin making. One year they brought sewing machines and made traditional shirts, skirts, and leggings. They camped and ate around the fire. They just had a ball. That's never happened before to have an Indian camp of Tribal members. I've never heard of it in this whole area. There is a special bonding around the fire. We brought in a storyteller, flute player, and drummer. That is close to traditional. You are sitting by a running creek in the mountains in a little valley. It looks the same. It feels the same; it *is* the same.

Clothing is also an issue. We are going

back to traditional clothing. Most people think of pow-wow clothing -- big bustles, all these shiny things. It's not like that at all. We have an expert who knows what to wear from the different eras, the French and Indian War to the War of 1812. It's all correct, but you have to know what era you want to honor. You see the early Shawnee, then the Shawnee of 1810 or 1812, and you can see all the influences from the confederation of all the different tribes. It's an educational process just by looking at what they wear. Finance is one consideration because there is nothing cheap about some of these outfits. I always think visual has such an impact. If they are dressed traditionally, as long as it is correct, that has an impact. All of a sudden you look at them and you're taken back. It's like a painting coming to life and walking out at you. I've read far too much history that any one person should ever read, but every now and then I stop dead and just stare. I think that is impressive to the kids. You want them to see the right things, the right material. Visually is what you have to arrest them with first. When they are dressed out in the sun and dancing, it is overwhelming -- the beauty of the colors against the grass and the trees. It's like birds. It's very beautiful. You leave feeling good, because every one of those people out there are dancing in honor of someone.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CEREMONY ~

The ceremonies -- Spring Bread in May, Green Corn in July, and Fall Bread in October are the most sacred times because we are celebrating

the planting, the harvesting, and then getting ready for the winter. The roles change. In spring the women are planting and in the fall the men are going on the hunt. Our dances are solemn; they are like prayers -- nothing like a pow-wow environment. It's a very straight, proud, religious type of experience.

People will save their money and come here for those ceremonies, because they need that spiritual infusion at those times. It keeps them steady throughout the year. It just seems to bring the people together because they are glad to see each other; they want the prayers; they want to do the dances.

The members come together to share that meal, to share pictures, or what they've been doing. When ceremony time comes, they're right there in the moment. They're ready for the drums, for the songs, for the ceremony. It really bonds these people together. Ceremony days are really the ones they come for. Green Corn is really important for everybody. We have our business meeting now the day before, so all of that is done after the business and the council, and the clan meetings. From that point on, it's socializing. We have a meal and ceremony, and then socializing. We spend time re-bonding and catching up. Some bring their instruments -- guitar, flute, whatever they want. They dance around the fire; they can sing and dance, hear music and play their music, and leave with a good feeling. Through the year people tell me, "Oh, I miss everybody so much, I just need to be together with them again." I call it a spiritual

infusion, because it restores your soul. Then you can go back into daily life, or your other life, and then come back again. Because we are not living on a reservation, we make an effort to be together. Some of us come long distances. We don't mind it at all, because we want to be together and celebrate with ceremony.

FUTURE VISION

I would like ultimately to have a genealogy center with a data base. We all have so much information and have no place to put it. It would be nice to have it all in one place, have a library, have a place for kids and adults to get information, and a small museum because there are Indians in our Tribe who have relics. They are all proud of these things and want to put them somewhere. It would be nice for us to have a building that could be utilized for that. That's what I've been working for. What do I do with things that I have collected all these years? What do you do to make them safe? I know historians who have donated their libraries to an historical society or library. I don't see any way to save them long-term.

Eventually it would be nice if we had a council house. We could do speeches, have book signings, have authors and historians come in -- a place to learn. The library should have a media area so that lots of things can go on. We could have movies. It's just unlimited what can be done. It's just money and patience and time. That's my goal: to have one place where a lot of things can be secured. We use an

open shelter now for a council house. We have to have an enclosed council house and a kitchen so we can cook inside. That's where you go home. We're not there yet. Not one of us here will ever enjoy what we are garnering for these kids, but hopefully the grandkids of our kids -- that's what the work is for. We are doing the hard work, but we will never be able to enjoy what we have done, other than the knowledge that they will. It's like a gift, an inheritance.

ROLE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHING NATIVE HISTORY, PAST & PRESENT ~

They don't do local history. There is so much history. When I teach homeschoolers at home I'll say, "There's no way in the world that you came to see me, that you didn't travel on an animal path, an Indian path, or a buffalo road. Get a throwaway camera. Keep it in your family's car. If you see a marker, get your picture taken by that marker. You may go back, and it's gone." That tells them where they live. If you can spark a young kid, just by saying "This is what happened, right over there," then they want to know more. I've had mothers call me and say, "I wish you had never told my kids about the Indians, and Simon Kenton. They drive me crazy. They've gone through all the books in the library. Now they want to go to bookstores." I said, "You know what? You just made my day. Feed that because if you get one or two kids who are doing this, it was all worth my time."

In high school we knew Tecumseh was Shawnee, but they didn't tell us anything about

him. The schools have to meet the criteria by the state so they don't have any time for local history. That's where we lose young historians. I can remember being in high school and being really bored with world history. I'm not going to Turkey or to a lot of those places, but show me something that happened within a 15-20 minute drive, and I'm there. Then you start expanding your circle. Then you want the books, because there's going to be something 25 miles away.

Simon Kenton made a statement once, to a little kid he had sent to school. He said, "How are you doing in school?" The kid said, "I just know everything." Simon said, "Reading about something is one thing, but being there is knowing." If you read a history book about the Indians of your area, if you've walked on that ground, you've got a picture of exactly what went on there and what it looks like today. I apply that to myself. You can read all the books in the world you want to read, but once you've been there and get the lay of the land and the look of it, you know it. Then when you tell people about it, it's a whole different approach. It's heartfelt, and you can tell it. You can get in your car and take your kids over there and have a picnic, read all the signs, and just enjoy yourself. If the kids aren't learning it in school -- and there's no time for it -- it's the parents' job, in my opinion, to up the awareness. Mom and Dad should take them around to the local sites.

NEXT GENERATION ~

The only way of survival for the Tribe is

involving the next generation. It also is the hardest thing to do because the ones who are active in the tribe are 'the movers and the shakers' now. All of the Tribe's young adults are trying to make a living. So it is a waiting game. I couldn't do the things I'm doing now if I had small children or grandkids who had moved back in with me, or if I had to work, or my health was bad. There are so many variables. The ones who can, do a tremendous amount of work. They are focused and can travel, so by the time that we can't, hopefully the young adults will be at an age and a stage in their life when they are ready to be active. It worked before us; why would it not work after us? We are the first sandwich generation where a lot of us have grandparents or grandkids. Some of us have elderly parents whom we are taking care of. It's just life circumstance right now.

There are periods of time when we don't have a drummer, and all of a sudden one of the guys says, "We'll send our son down." Well that son has two kids so eventually they want to come with dad, then eventually you get the kids back. It's like waves of people at different times. Ever since I've been in the Piqua there has been progression. Now we know the kids of the people we worked with and now they are having kids. It's just layers and layers. Like a family reunion, tribal reunion -- sometimes you can go, sometimes you can't. Then all of a sudden everybody comes. There is always a connection.

*LEARNING FROM THE SHAWNEE/
EASTERN WOODLAND NATIVE
PEOPLES EXPERIENCE ~*

The Piqua Shawnee Tribe does the old traditional ceremonies. We cling to the old traditions more than the modern tribes do now. We stick to the old, old traditions. We do solemn ceremonies and traditional songs and dances. I think that is the beauty of it -- very simple, very plain, very reverent.

*WHAT THE PUBLIC SHOULD KNOW
ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE
SHAWNEE*

They had the best real estate, good water, and protected areas from storms. They really knew the land. They were the friendliest people. They had no problems with the early settlers. Then we see encroachment, over and over which forced the Indians further and further west. That sets up a competition. They were defensive and war was inevitable. They lost their good land along the rivers to plant their crops. The whites were really just starving them out, moving them out into unknown territory, and some of that was occupied by other Indians. I can understand the Indians' viewpoint. I know why the whites wanted the land, but that was the Indians' farms and villages. They had buried their dead there.

I deal with a lot of people who go out and dig, looking for Indian artifacts. Some of them dig up bones. We call them "backhoe archaeologists", because they're digging with a

backhoe. I asked one, "What do you do with those bones?" He said, "That doesn't bother me at all. We throw them right back in, cover them up, and go on and dig someplace else the next day." I said, "I would hate to run the gauntlet you're going to run when you try to get through the gate. That's just horrifying to me. It makes me want to go over to our local cemetery, where all the pioneers are, and just get a big backhoe, and start digging it up, because I want to see what kind of glasses grandma wore or maybe her skull has a different shape, or her jewelry or buttons." He said, "That's disgusting." I said, "You just said the same thing in reverse. Indians aren't specimens; they're humans just like your grandmother, your great-grandmother. What's the difference? You wouldn't want us doing it in your graveyard, but yet you're out here in this field where an Indian village and a burial ground are located, and you don't have any problem digging up some beads, or relics, or Indian artifacts, do you?" He said, "It's not the same." I said, "Really? That's a justification I've never heard of. You're really good at this." It's called blocking, but it's aggression; it's acquiring it for the wrong reasons. No respect for the dead and no respect for the Indians.

When they killed the buffalo, one of the Indians said, "We don't kill your cattle. Why are you killing our cattle?" So what did they start doing? They'd go in first and kill all the cattle, because that will starve them out. Because that's exactly what *they* did. The whites always

did the burnt ground policy; they burned the cornfields and everything. That affected the whole tribe, including the children. That was their food, their survival. That eventually brings anger, retaliation, and you're setting up for war. Eventually there's going to be a place where they say, "We're not leaving any more. We are staying. We're done. We're going to fight." That's exactly what happened. They just couldn't overcome the numbers of the whites.

Also, I would like everyone to realize the difference between tribe and pow-wow. Pow-wows are just kind of a fair for a weekend which is colorful and exciting. A tribe is also that, but also a family reunion. When we celebrate Green Corn, Fall Bread, and Spring Bread it is very spiritual and a time for re-bonding with people. Tribes are different because we *are* a family. We bring food. We look forward to coming together. It's not a show; it's family.

For a little over 25 years now, the Piqua Shawnee seem to be coming back together. People are finding they are related to this person or that person in the Tribe. It's like the ancestors are bringing all these people back together. People have found extended family members, some of them very important close family members. That's the beauty of it.

I do the history for the Tribe and try to share as much as I can. The general public should know that the people are still here. They could be your neighbors living next door to you or working in the shop next to you. The

Shawnee are still here in the sacred traditional grounds of their ancestors. The Shawnee were wanderers. No matter where they went, at different times in history, they all seemed to come back together. That has kind of been a rhythm all the way through. It happens today too. Even though the ones who are out west due to the Removal, there is still some intermingling. The ones who stayed or came back are here and still come together again.

SIGNIFICANCE OF A LAND BASE ~

At this point we need a space of healing. We were not removed from that land in Kentucky; we sold it. It was something that was not good for us. We got rid of the situation. We needed a period of time to heal. We went to areas that have historic value in Kentucky for the Shawnee. We shared the history of the areas so it was an educational process rather than an emotional thing. I don't know what the future holds as far as land, but at this time our people are so happy to come together. The main thing is the money situation. How can a tribe like ours support that land, renovate it, and get it so it works for us? Those are major issues and when you get a lot of people involved, it can become a problem. It can divide rather than bring people together. At this point in time we come together for ceremony and education.

If we did have the money for land and upkeep it would be great, because that is permanence. It solidifies a tribe. Not that we are nomads, but the Shawnee traditionally were wanderers; they would re-group and come back

together. Unless you have the money to build shelter houses, it is better to go to different places and educate the Tribal members about the local histories. I try to get the Tribe in a place of significance where we have history.

When we had our adoption ceremony of Shannon Thomas⁵ that was held right on the war road and the wilderness road in Levi-Jackson State Park. The Shawnee ‘owned’ that road. We were there in our own home sacred place. There is something very beautiful about that. The Chief blew the conch shell and called in the ancestors. I never saw him do that except once before and that was on the day we bought our land. When he did that I thought anything can happen. All of a sudden you could just feel everything come in. Simon Kenton came in. He didn’t want to miss the show. It was the perfect spot to do it. Simon had walked that land. Peter Chartier had walked that land. Everyone there who was in that adoption had history right there on that road. It was sacred.

PROTECTION OF SACRED SITES ~

I think this started many years ago with the Ohio Historical connection. People thought it was a safe way to donate land by endowing it to the Society. In some strange way it did protect them because they became private property. You couldn’t literally go on them or they were manned by staff. So they were groomed and kept over the years, like Serpent Mound, Ft. Ancient, Newark Mounds and the Circles.

⁵ See the Addendum, Historical Reconciliation section, for more details regarding the significance of Shannon Thomas’ adoption.

There are unknown dance rings, marker trees -- beautiful areas in Central Ohio. These are owned by private individuals so there is no access to them. That’s the beauty of it. They are protecting them because they are sacred and we know they are there. We have limited access to them. I can’t take a lot of people there, but I’ve photographed and documented all of them so I do have that. At the same time if those people die, will their grandkids sell it? Probably.

One sacred land for me is Chillicothe Old Town near Xenia, Ohio. That land looks exactly today the way it did when Kenton ran the gauntlet when the Shawnee lived there. This is exactly what the pioneers saw when they came into the Ohio Valley. It will always remain that way because that land was put into the Tecumseh Land Trust. It can never be built on. The only thing that can be done is grow food, but it cannot be sold off or platted out. When I’m giving a tour there are certain places that we still go today that are eerily like they were originally. Every one of those places is sacred. People pass this area every day, but once you tell them what happened there, it’s magic. This elevates the awareness of people.

Should any of these sites that are sacred to the Shawnee be returned?

It’s really an ironic question because most of the places, we are not welcome and are barred from because they are privately owned or owned by an historical society. They tell people when they can come on those lands or stop them from even coming. There are

certain places here in this Ohio Valley that are so important to the Native Americans, the Shawnee especially.

There is one Indian site in Logan County that was endowed where I go. I've been threatened with arrest. "This is private property. You cannot walk on this land." I said, "Arrest me, if you will, because I would love to call a press conference and tell them why I cannot be on this land. Nobody uses this land even though you own it. I'm not going to sue you if I fall in a ground hog hole." This is a religious place. Many things happened there that are important to the Shawnee, but we are not allowed to go on the land. The only thing these Indians leave is a footprint. They take nothing. If they are just going to pray or whatever they need to do, what is so wrong with that? They are not destroying anything, but yet they can't go there. I'm not sure it stops people. I don't think you can stop someone if they really want to. I know people who say, "I go when I feel the need to go." I've done it myself. This is a town that their ancestors lived in so they walk that land. They lived on that land so they want to connect with it. It is no more than us going to a family reunion or with grandma and grandpa someplace. There is a connection. You want to go back. So the next guy comes in and buys the farm. "I'm sorry this is private property. You can't come back anymore." There might have been a special waterfall picnic area or a creek that was important to that family, but it's gone. You can see it, but you can't go

sit there. You disconnect from it, but it doesn't mean that you don't think about it. Sometime you might think well maybe they're not home. I'll run back there real quickly. They are lucky that we are people who appreciate and respect what was there, rather than somebody going up there drinking, smoking dope or digging for relics.

Who owns the land? Do you arbitrarily ask someone who paid big bucks or who has lived on it, now we want our land back? That is the issue with the casino Indians from out west who want to come in here and reclaim the land between the Miami Rivers. That is the prime real estate in Ohio. What do you say to those people who have lived there forever and paid dearly for it? Is it their land? Land is sacred now. Land is sacred when you buy it. Land is sacred when you sell it. Land is sacred period. I don't see anybody in this world giving up the farm, because of an emotional decision. I have seen people who are elderly with no children, no immediate family, do something out of the kindness of their heart because they want that land secured or they want it protected. It's something *they* choose. Everyone thought it was secure giving it to a historical society. Now comes the land trust. That seems to be the next thing. They can live on it until they die. They can never build on it, only what's there, maintain it, and keep it like it is. That seems to be an answer in some of these farming communities. Kids can't make a living anymore farming. Their dads could, but the kids can't.

So what does a farmer do as the kids have to work in town? They need insurance, jobs, etc. What do they do with that big cornfield? Do they just keep it because they know what was on there, like Old Town, or do they sell it and retire or do they die there in that farmhouse with no help? It's a question of money, really. Thank God some of those people are financially secure and decided that this is to be in perpetuity. Some of it has been secured. Indians have even purchased some lands.

What the answer is in the future, I really have no idea. The areas that I know are gone. They are in private hands, privately owned or they belong to a society. Unless the society goes bankrupt and can't really afford some of these properties and will let them go to certain groups or organizations, then I would think the Shawnee would be first in line to take care of this property. It is their historical heritage.

REFLECTION

LIVING IN TWO WORLDS ~

I really had fun with it at one time. We have a boat that we stay on at Lake Erie in the summertime. All the boat people know that I am Native. We sit out there on the deck over the water. They know that I do Indian things and like me to tell them some of the stories. These people own these big yachts, and live a higher standard of life than I do, but I network with them. They brought out this big carved watermelon, with handles and all the stars around it. It was beautiful. They know I like

fruit. So they said, "Barbara, do you want some watermelon?" I said, "Oh, no, we ate earlier, and I threw away my plate." They said, "But you're an Indian. You can eat with your hands." Now I thought that is the craziest thing I ever heard, but I just loved it, so I said, "Oh, you're right. Thank you for reminding me." I just went over and with my bare hands, went right into the center of that watermelon, and dredged myself up a big old handful. They dished it out and put it in their little bowls. I'm sitting there eating that melon that I have dredged out of the middle of that bowl with my hands! I thought this is just wonderful. But it was a dated statement: "You're an Indian; you can eat with your hands." In this day and age, in that group of people, at that specific time, that was the funniest thing. They saw me as almost savage. I'm anything but a savage. I can even use a knife to cut meat, not to stab them.

I could have been really offended, but I wasn't. I thought that was hysterical. It was like something that would happen on Seinfeld. Then everybody would be laughing. But no, they ate right after my hand went in there and I did not wash my hands. I spit one of the seeds out into the lake. Because I'm an Indian I can do that.

A lot of people were raised in their families where being Native was a secret. "We don't talk about that." I didn't grow up that way. We knew we were Indians from the time we were born, and there was no doubt about it. It's not like 'becoming' an Indian. You just

always were. I have a different story than a lot of them. It was never an issue in my family. I never had that angst, never had that pull. It was never a secret. It was your life. I just really don't have that in my story like a lot of people do.

WHO IS NATIVE AMERICAN/INDIAN?

That particular question is being asked all over right now. What designates a Native American? I don't really have an intelligent answer to that. Who is Italian? Who is Russian? Who is Chinese? I'm watching TV a couple of years ago in Ohio when a girl won the spelling bee whose parents were from India. She was born in the United States. So she's an Indian American. It's like that with the Indians. People that have lived on reservations are designated Indian because they're on federal reservations. I can tell you right now that in the state of Ohio there are no Indians. Some people say they are, but they're not, because there's no reservation land. Removal, Removal, Removal! We have a document from the state legislature of Ohio that states we are recognized as being *indigenous* to the state. That's the best we're going to get in Ohio unless they create an Indian Commission Board and recognize state Indians. That's going to be a fight to the end on that. I've been through three governors now, and they all look at me and laugh and say, "We don't have an Indian tribe in Ohio." They all went Removal. Ratified treaties /Removal. There are a *lot* of Indians in Ohio, because a lot of them are in our Tribe, and there are Delaware,

Wyandot, Miami, and Mingo in Ohio. I can't really tell you what credentials and criteria you would have to be an Indian, but the ones who are Indian know who they are.

UNIQUE QUALITY OF THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE ~

I've been in the tribe for many, many years and what I enjoy is the kindness, the openness of people who have been in the Tribe for a long time, and new people coming in. One thing I find fascinating: the elders, the old ones – their spirits are bringing everybody back together again, because after you are here a little while and start sharing the stories and histories, we find that many have a common ancestor. It's almost like a spirit talk thing or reunion. Have you ever seen someone in a crowd and said that person looks familiar? Then you talk to that person and you feel like you've known that person for a long time. The Indians believe that is spirit talk. Your spirits know each other. They bring everybody back together again, which is unusual because the Piqua live in different places and come together as a family four times a year to celebrate the ceremonies. That seems to make it more than a tribe; it's just more like family.

When I opened this Tennessee historical society newsletter, because that is where I am from, I saw a photograph I had never seen in my life and it was my grandfather's sister. It is Gayla Brookman's (another Tribal member) third great-grandfather who married her so here we are today. It is her grandfather and

my great-aunt. It just blew me away. That has happened over and over in the Tribe. Not only are we a tribe by being Native blood, but all a sudden you are relatives and that brings the whole Tribe closer together because it really is like a family reunion as much as a tribal ceremonial.

If nothing else the Shawnee are non-discriminatory because we share many, many affiliations with other tribes. We can say our chief is the grandson of a hereditary line of chiefs. I am Cherokee by descent and Shawnee by tribal affiliation because I want to work for them.

How unusual is it for a tribe to accept members who genetically are not Shawnee, but from other tribes who were allies of the Shawnee?

It is unusual. There is a difference between federal and state recognized tribes. In state recognized tribes there is a little more leniency. We don't have casinos. If you have casinos it is narrowed down to some degree – only this membership, only these family members. You'll find that in a lot of the federal tribes you can only be a member if you are out of this 28 or 35 families. There is a Removal record. If you went out west that qualifies you as a 'real' Indian. There are Indians today who are descended from historic chiefs who came back or didn't go out west. But the public thinks they all went west so *there are no more Indians in Ohio*. You don't know how many times I've heard that. Well, by treaty that's true. When they signed the treaty and went to Removal

they didn't keep the land here, but believe me, they didn't all go. They are still here. A lot of them here are still the old traditional Shawnee. The Piqua Shawnee keep the old traditional ceremonies and that is our job here.

You had to be Shawnee by blood with genealogy to be in our Tribe, but later on they accepted those who were allied with them in the Indian wars. If you go back into history even before the War of 1812, other tribes put people into Ohio and Kentucky and the Shawnee put people south. They inter-married early on, especially the Five Civilized Tribes of the South, like the Cherokees, Chickasaws, and Choctaws. They really intermingled, the more they opened up with wars and trade. It would be hard today in a car to make the time they used to with the Indian runners. With the communication and inter-tribal connections they developed, their world became enlarged.

The Piqua Shawnee of today carry on that tradition. We recognized people who helped us. They became family and friends. They stopped fighting each other to fight the British or the foe. They really couldn't fight each other anymore. For survival they had to be a little less selective. A lot of the males were dying at that time. The pool of males got smaller. They inter-married and made families. Some of the Wyandot inter-married with whites and didn't go on Removal, and were accepted into the white community. Every tribe did the same thing – the Cherokees, the Shawnees. In our day and age you are doing it for the next seven

generations, and then the next ones can take it on. We see things from a different view today. I think that's why tribal members are respected and valued. It is all Indian blood.

PROUD TO BE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

I love finding our history, and things that connect us genealogically-wise. When we are at the lake, people will say, "We know about Tecumseh or Blue Jacket. I'll say, "I know his grandchildren. They didn't die with him." They think the historic Indians, when they're gone, it's ended, but no, no, no! If you eat with the grandsons and granddaughters of these historic Indians, you *know* those Indians.

After meeting Dwight Girty, Simon Girty's third great-grandson, I found out that he knew his father, his grandfather, and his great-grandfather! The only one he didn't know was Simon Girty. I got first hand oral history that is not in books from a direct descendant. Dwight would call me once or twice a month till he died. I kept a note pad, and wrote down things he would talk about. That was a bonding for me. When I can talk to the direct third or fourth generation it's like I know these people; they're telling me about family things.

FEDERAL RECOGNITION

We're proud to be state recognized in Alabama and we do not have an agenda for anything more.

RECONCILIATION

IS THERE A POSSIBILITY OF

RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE PIQUA AND THE SHAWNEE WESTERN TRIBES?

There will always be the Mississippi River: the federal tribes are west of the Mississippi and we're a state tribe east of the Mississippi. They probably will never do things together because there are two different agendas. The children of the ancestors who went west in Removal don't know the history here at all. Their history starts with Removal. It is kind of a disfranchisement of their traditional history and lore. Sometimes they resent it. Sometimes we say we know what we're doing because we never left. There is a difference. It's just another extension of your family that moved out of state.

You experience and see things differently. We're the Woodland people. We smell grass and trees and streams and this talks to us. Out there it is mesas and mountains. It's a different attitude. Some of the ones who went out west came back. Some of them still had extended family here who did not go.

I have to credit the internet because people are using it to connect and find lots of family members. The world is getting smaller and smaller. There are bridges across the Mississippi so I'm sure they are going to come over here and see us. (Laughs) The western Shawnee have come out here for tours in the Ohio country.

IS IT IMPORTANT FOR THE TRIBE TO DO RECONCILIATIONS SUCH AS THE ONE WITH THE KENTON FAMILY?

It makes people think and start learning more. They get the children involved and then it becomes a family thing. When we go to Old Washington, Kentucky it now becomes *their* family reunion as well as the Kentons'. These are people whose ancestors were stolen by the Shawnee -- their grandfathers, their brothers, their uncles, and they're sitting there eating with the Shawnee. It's very humbling to be watching someone who owes their life to the person they're sitting next to while they're eating. They end up loving these people and become part of their family. They blend and it blurs to some degree. It's not really a reconciliation any more. I'll get telephone calls saying, "I can't wait for our reunion." *Our* reunion. It brings them all together in a very familiar way. They have shared history, cross acculturation, and then they just become one family.

Over the years the Shawnees and Kentons have become personal friends. Now, as I'm getting older, that is so much more important, because if I have worked so hard all those years; if there is no contact but me, it was for nothing. Now they all have their own alliances and relationships. They are by-passing me and going to Chief Hunt directly, which is exactly the way it should be. Hopefully those contacts are not lost down the road; it is always important for all of these people to be interconnected, because they were previously and will be in the future. I feel my job is to make sure that they know each other, and that this goes on in the future. I want those Kenton

young people to know the Shawnees of today and then they'll know the next ones coming up. This will not end with me. It will go on and on. That is so important to me.

SHOULD THE PIQUA SHAWNEE BE INVOLVED IN NATIONAL NATIVE ISSUES SUCH AS THE DAKOTA PIPELINE?

Some of our people were going to go, but jobs interfered. Prayers were on-going for this issue.



Kevin Everhart

WAR CHIEF

CULTURAL IDENTITY

I grew up in Bryan, Ohio in the northwest part of Ohio. I was pretty much raised by my grandparents and we were raised in a somewhat traditional manner. Although it wasn't really discussed, just a part of daily life. It wasn't until later when we realized our teachings from back then. That was just the way it was. Things were done traditionally, but subtle, just more of the way of life with my grandparents. We spent a lot of time out in the woods growing up. There were certain times of the year that we went to the graves with our grandparents and that is when they offered prayers and tobacco. I never knew why. They didn't sit down and say this is why you did it; you just did it.

My dad was Shawnee and my mom was Austrian. My brother wasn't raised as much by our grandparents as myself and my two cousins were. Our family owned a restaurant during that time, and he was pretty involved with working there. Before then, my parents were around a lot more. Once they took over the restaurant, that is when the grandparents took over with my cousins and me. I can remember numerous times sitting with my brother

and discussing certain way my grandparents did certain things that we now do during ceremonies now.

If there were other Native people in the area, we didn't know it. It was pretty much self-contained in the family. My grandparents were from the old school where on the outside you are white, on the inside you are Native. That wasn't something that was really broadcast. Actually, it wasn't talked about with my aunts and uncles hardly at all. Nobody really talked about our culture as far as being Native. Back when my grandparents were growing up you had to deny who you were. That was a way of life, contrary to popular belief, not all of our people went west on the Trail of Tears or the Trail of Death during the Indian Removal Act. Those who stayed behind, whether they were hiding or whatever the case may be, in order to survive over time, had to become white on the outside. And over time, many did inter-marry and assumed the role of a white person. They were raised not to speak about it.

What's sad is in Williams County, before I left, there were still old laws on the books that

Native people or slaves could be hung in the town square if they owned livestock or land. I don't know whether they are still on the books or not. Twenty-five years ago, they were still there.

My grandfather died in the 1980's at 99 and it was always believed that he was of Delaware decent. I knew my great-grandmother, my grandmother's mother, who was Shawnee. It was funny to listen to my grandfather and my great-grandmother argue back and forth over the years. Every Sunday my grandfather, who was a cantankerous old guy, used to take care of his mother-in-law, my great grandmother, by taking her a Sunday meal. I can remember he would say, "I got to go down and take care of that damned old Indian woman. "It was always said in fun. But in all actuality, he had the utmost respect for her. It was just comical. We had a lot of humor in our family, a lot of laughter. Just naturally we were taught about ways of life and the respect of nature and Mother Earth. It was just common practice, like going to school. I can remember some of the stuff we were taught back then in the history books was totally different from what my grandparents taught me. They just said, "Just don't even pay any attention to it. You know the right way."

In grade school in the typical playing cowboys and Indians, I never got a chance to be the cowboy; they knew I was Native. Most of my friends were real cool about it. It wasn't a big issue with them. Once I got into high

school nobody really cared. It wasn't really talked about much. I personally never really had any problems. Jacob, who was one of the young warriors of the Tribe who I mentored, had problems for a while. In high school Jacob was really chastised a lot for being Native to the point where a few of us were going to go to the school up in Michigan and meet with the school board. He went through a rough time.

I never heard the language, that I can remember. I would guess if anyone spoke the language it was probably my great-grandmother. We had our different traditional ways. I can remember my grandmother taking me out and gathering different plants that were either used for food or medicines. During springtime my cousins and I would go out with my grandmother and gather dandelions. You had to pick the right ones and in the proper way. And certain times of the year we would collect different nuts and berries.

During dinners the elders would always eat first and the children last. The elders would sit at one table and the children at another table. There was a lot of laughter and humor, especially during dinner time. It was a good life and I really enjoyed it.

INSPIRATIONAL ANCESTOR ~

The two would be my father and my grandmother. My grandmother basically raised me, and was the one I got a lot of my teachings from. Growing up specific ceremonies were never branded by name, such as Spring Bread, Green Corn, or Fall Bread. It was just a certain

time of the year that we did this.

As I said, the visiting of graves was very, very important to my grandmother. I learned early on that our ancestor burial areas were sacred to us. I think that built my foundation for the fight I've had in Ohio working certain repatriation groups I've been involved with concerning the saving of the mounds. Growing up, it wasn't a case of "I don't want to go to the grave sites"; that was never an option. We went because that was what we had to do. That was a part of our life. That probably stands out more than anything with my grandmother.

My dad spent eight years in the Marine Corp overseas during World War II. I can remember asking him, "Why don't you ever talk about the War?" He said, "That was my warrior job to do. Unfortunately, life had to be taken and it is not something we talk about or brag about." That was something that sunk home to me. It wasn't a celebration to take life; it was a duty he had to uphold. I also remember discussing spirituality with him. He told me that when you're at war, and you have your friends dying beside you, it makes no difference what religion you are; at that point everyone prays to Creator.

Once I got into the Piqua and eventually became War Chief, that is something that has really followed me deep down. These are jobs that must be done. As a warrior, to have to take the life of a living thing wasn't something to be proud of. My dad taught us the skills of hunting and survival. To this day, if I hunt and

take an animal's life, I honor that animal with tobacco and thank that it for giving its life so we can survive. Those are the things that stuck with me and I try to pass on to my kids and the young warriors.

Is the fact that you are bi-racial ever a source of conflict?

Not even a bit, because as far as I'm concerned, I'm Native. I'm Native through and through. My mom was Austrian. I respect that, and I understand it is a part of who I am, but in my heart I'm Native.

CONNECTION WITH THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE ~

For twenty-five years I was in law enforcement, narcotics/organized crime investigations, so I was transferred a lot until I took my permanent assignment in the Columbus, Ohio area. I became involved in a small group of mixed Native people due to an undercover assignment where I was purchasing Native artifacts and remains from an individual who was digging up burial mounds, taking the artifacts and remains and selling them. After the investigation was finished and the individual was arrested and convicted, arraignments were made to have the remains returned to Mother Earth. With the help of the Native American Alliance of Ohio, which I was a part of, and along with Barbara Crandall, a Cherokee elder, and several others, the remains and artifacts were returned to a private mound where we knew they would be safe. That is how I met the Native people in this area. It was through Barbara Crandall that I first was introduced to the Piqua Shawnee,

and where I met Bryan Dade, who at the time was the acting chief. I had also met Rick Wagar around the same time. Both had invited my brother and I over to Urbana, Ohio where we attended several ceremonies. During that time, they discussed with us the possibilities for putting our application in for members of the Tribe. At that time in my life I really didn't care to belong to a specific Shawnee tribe. My brother, on the other hand, went through the application process and was enrolled in the tribe. Eventually he talked me into coming on board. That's how I ended up with the Piqua.

ROLE IN THE TRIBE ~

In the beginning I was just a member. I didn't know much about the Tribe's War Chief position. I knew the position had been vacant for some time, but the Tribe was in no hurry to fill the vacancy.

The War Chief is basically responsible for the protection of the members of the tribe, the Chief and the elders. He also oversees the warriors. I was taught that in olden days, there was the Principal Chief or the Peace Chief, and the War Chief. They really didn't have what we refer to as a Second Chief. In the past, during peace time the Peace Chief ran the tribe. During war times, the Peace Chief would step aside, and the War Chief would take over, and of course both positions were governed by the Nation's Mother.

Back then during the Grand Councils the War Chief kept peace amongst those meeting in the longhouses. If there were any issues, the

War Chief was advised of the situation and it was his responsibility to address it. It was told to me that during council, if a decision could not be reached, it would be tabled up to three times; on the fourth time the War Chief would present it to the women who could make the decision. The War Chief would then announce that the women had decided, or the issue would be tabled until the following year.

Now my main responsibility is working with the young people, preparing them for their rite of passage. We try to catch them while they are young and teach them about different herbs and medicines, how to hunt and fish, how to survive in the wild, learning the traditions, and hopefully bringing the language back someday. I teach the younger people, if you see an elder walking, make sure you are right there. Help them down the hill or help them carry chairs, or if you see the kids running around and someone gets too close to the creek, you need to be there. They need to have their eyes open at all times, know their surroundings, and what is going on. We're not in the position like we were in the day when we had to worry about wars, but we want to keep that position alive, so the young people realize that it is all about respect for the Tribe and their responsibilities to the Tribe.

Probably as far as my talents go, it is due to my profession; working in law enforcement, especially as an undercover cop, I learned real quick how to survive and adapt in different surroundings, which really isn't much different

than what our ancestors did. I'm always watching out for the Chief and the Elders. We really must be on our toes as far as who is showing up, always watching and making sure that everything is taken care of and everybody is safe. I was a supervisor for years so I'm able to bring a lot of that to the table as well.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ~

I live my life traditionally as close as I can beginning with daily prayers and smudging. I thank Creator every morning. I believe there is spirit in everything that we deal with on a daily basis, whether it is a blade of grass or a deer that is walking through the yard. Everything has a spirit and was put here by Creator. I thank Creator for that. As simple as cutting down a tree -- people think it is just a tree; to me it is not. Who is to say that the sap that runs through a tree, although it is not red, is not the blood of that tree? We have no right to say that. We are not Creator. I believe that tree has a life and a spirit. I believe that the rocks are our grandfathers. If you take the time out of your busy life to stop and listen, you can learn from the trees, from the animals, from the rocks. That's why we use rocks in sweat ceremonies. Those are the grandfathers. Those are the ones who have been here the longest.

At Green Corn one year, I asked for a show of hands of how many people lived their life in a true Native way or did they just do it only at ceremonies? How many people get up and smudge and do their prayers every day? That is what bothers me probably more than

anything. If you are Native, then live Native and live it every day of your life in a good way. Don't just put on regalia and go through the motions during ceremonial times. You are either Native or you are not Native.

LIVING IN A TRADITIONAL NATIVE WAY ~

In keeping with tradition, I make and use natural medicines that were taught to me. I also make drums and other items in a traditional manner.

CULTURAL REVITALIZATION

We are responsible for the next seven generations. That is something that everyone should live by, not just Native people, but all people. We should wake up and go to bed with the fact that everything that we do affects the seven generation to come. One of the things my grandparent really instilled in me was my actions would have a reaction for people down the road. That really made a lot of sense to me. It is something I've always tried to raise my kids with. I try to live this way and try to bring those teachings to the Tribe. We need to keep the youths involved. The youths are the future of the Tribe. If we don't work with them and prepare them for the future by teaching them the traditions and ceremonies, then there will be so much lost. If we can't get the youth involved and not only teach them, but also learn from them, then we're wasting our time. We're getting together and having fun and that's it. To me, that is the biggest part. Chief Hunt and

several other principal people have brought this Tribe so far, but we still have a long way to go. We need to get back to our standardized traditions. There is always going to be politics. It is just human nature, but we've got to tone that down a little bit. When we have ceremony, it is ceremony. Unfortunately, we can't meet every week like they did back in the day. We can only meet so many times a year. Chief Hunt has done a good job trying to keep our council and business meetings short which has helped a lot. The biggest issue is we are losing the youth. When they are gone, they are gone. We have nobody to blame but ourselves.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CEREMONY ~

I believe personally that we're coming to a time of something much bigger than we're all used to. I think we're going to start seeing some of the prophecies coming together and learning spirituality from our ancestors, which is what's kept us alive for 500 plus years. I fear that a lot of tribes have lost that foundation. Our belief in Creator, Mother Earth, and our spirituality, that is what is important.

I look at these young people, my kids included, and we've screwed up. We're not teaching them what needs to be taught. Where is the spirituality? The spirituality should be number one across the board, as far as I'm concerned. Our traditions should be passed on. Our job is to take care of the next seven generations, and we haven't done a really good job doing it. If we don't teach the younger generation, when we walk on, we're taking

all the traditions and the ceremonies with us. They'll die with us. As Elders we have let them down so bad over the years. I know it's a problem that is happening in numerous tribes, not just ours.

If you really listen to the ceremonies, and the teachings, and strictly this is my opinion, it's similar to the Bible. It gives us Creator's word. This is His work, and what He wants us to do. This is the path that we need to go on. It's not just a fluke that the kids have to go through certain ceremonies to become an adult. To learn the culture, to learn the language, to learn the ceremonies, it's Creator's way of working with us and giving us what it is He wants us to do in our life on Earth.

I think that Creator wants us to love each other, love Mother Earth, love all our four-legged and wing-ed ones. We as a human race have turned to total greed. As human beings we go through levels or plateaus. We learn our basic spirituality when we are young. Then as we grow, we get into the true universe of spirituality, so to speak. At each level we're given teachings, and we're supposed to also share those teachings. He's given us a path. Now the neat thing is even if we stray from that path, He will always give us another path or another fork in the road to get back onto the right path later down the line. Creator never turns His back on us!

COMING OF AGE CEREMONY ~

The Coming-of-Age Ceremony is a ceremony that introduces the young men and women

into adulthood. For the young warrior men, it is my responsibility. The young women have a Coming of Age Ceremony as well, but I am not involved in that. It is a very important ceremony for the young people.

The young men go through a process of teachings. Usually over a course of several years, we try to spend time with them. Caleb, my step son, came up with a learning game several years ago where we take the young boys, and put them in teams. Each team would get so many points for being able to identify an animal track or a plant, or for being able to make a temporary lodge. I believe if you make learning fun, they tend to retain the teachings.

The Coming of Age Ceremony is done during our Green Corn Ceremony gathering. The young man who is going through the ceremony is given his instructions on Friday. His face is then painted black which symbolizes that he is between childhood and adulthood. He is basically invisible to the people around him. He is required to fast for 24 hours, then he is taken to a secluded location where he will do his vision quest. He is allowed a fire and a blanket. They are not allowed to sleep and must spend their time in prayer. Although they believe they are completely alone in the wood the entire day and night, I actually have warriors hidden and watching making sure the young men make it through safe. The following morning, the young man is brought back and spends time with the myself and the spiritual leader discussing the young man's experience

during the past 24 hours.

The young man is then prepared for his Rite of Passage Ceremony. We try to do something that is very, very special. After the Ceremony is complete, the young man's blackened face is cleaned, symbolizing that he has now passed into adulthood. He is then presented to the Tribal warriors as their youngest member. The new warrior receives his warrior feather, and we also gift them with something a little personal that is going to mean something to him for the rest of his life. I try to do as much as I can for them to really make this a special day as I really think it is important. It's like graduation. As far as I'm concerned, that weekend is for the young women and young warriors who are coming of age. I get as much out of it as the young ones do. It is just amazing what you see.

What are their obligations as warriors?

Basically, the young warriors have the same duties and responsibilities as all the other wassilons: to be there for and protect the people; to watch the elders, the principal people, and to become servants of the Tribe. There again, in today's society we don't have what we had in the old society. But it is being there -- having one of the warriors in the distance for women's meeting, having them placed in different locations for ceremonies, doing guard duty, being there to make sure that the elders are taken care of, watching the little ones. When it comes to tearing down after ceremony, we are there to help -- just anything and everything that pertains to the Tribe that needs

to be done. That is their responsibility.

Teaching respect from a young age is the key. We try to catch them when they are young and continue it in their trainings. We teach them that respect is carried throughout their lives and nothing is going to change once you become warriors. We are not talking about respect just for the Tribe, but for all things. Respect for all people, for our Earth Mother, for the animals and plants, for the air we breathe, and most important, respect for themselves. There is enough respect in our young people that we don't have any problems. You got to remember, kids are kids. They are going to be out playing and getting into mischief, because that is part of growing up. You just have to be able to catch them at the right time. We try to start young and get that instilled in them.

Someday I will be stepping down as War Chief and someone will need to take my place. Traditionally for the War Chief it is handed down within the family. It is something that the women vote on. It can't be done without the women. The women put the War Chief in; the women can take him out. I'm looking at working with a replacement one day. I'm not sure who that individual will be just yet to take over my job. Chief Hunt and I want to start teaching certain youth to take over the different positions that we are going to need filled someday. We are going to need ceremonial leaders, war chiefs, principal chiefs, tribal mothers. We need to start teaching and

grooming them now before we are not there to teach. That is why I think the rite of passage is so important, to keep that alive and going. That is the key thing in my life.

SIGNIFICANCE OF LANGUAGE ~

I think language is important. Do I ever see it coming back? Doubtful. I can see bits and pieces of it. The language wasn't something that was important when I was younger and was not something that my generation did. The language started dying out a couple of generations before us. It is important that we keep as much of the language as possible. I don't think we will ever get to the point where the language will be the primary language, or even the secondary language as far as that goes. I wish I could say different. I would love to know more the language and speak it. Just like anything else, if you don't use it on a regular basis you forget it. I took Spanish for years and now hardly remember anything. We should try to get it back. I believe that it's an important part of our culture. I believe that we need to make sure that it doesn't die out completely.

FUTURE VISION

I would like to see us get back to traditions as a family. Unfortunately, just like any other culture, there are always politics. But the key is, we control the politics and don't allow the politics to control us. It is ten times better than it was five or ten years ago. Chief Hunt has limited the business and council meetings to certain times of the year, so we can concentrate

more on ceremonies during the other times. I think that is exactly what we need, to concentrate more on ceremony, more on youth involvement, more on traditional teachings, more family outings, and bringing more of the people back. Quite a few members stopped coming to ceremony over the years. Mainly because back then, the tribe was structured with a more political agenda; the spiritual agenda took second place. I think people got tired of it. Now that we have re-structured the Tribe, the people are slowly coming back. I would like to see the Tribe the way it used to be when we would have a hundred plus Tribal members at any given ceremony. But to be realistic, the economy makes it tough for everybody as well. People just can't afford to do things like they used to. I really think the Tribe is on the right path, though. You will always have potholes in the road, we just need to avoid as many as possible. I think we've learned a lot over the years.

We need to build the tribe like a great oak tree. That tree couldn't continue standing over hundreds of years without a strong root system, a strong foundation. If our Tribe has a strong foundation, like the mighty oak, then it can withstand anything that is thrown at us.

ROLE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHING NATIVE HISTORY, PAST & PRESENT ~

When my step-sons went to grade school, the school knew they were Native, so the school would have me come in and do presentations on a yearly basis, which was always neat. One

of the boy's teacher, was the adviser to the Student Council. She actually set up the student council similar to a Native tribal council. She had representatives that were like clan chiefs, among other things. What her goal was to teach the kids some history at the same time they were learning about the structure of being involved in Student Council. I was brought in as an advisor, which I was honored to be. It was so cool. I had them pick tribes to represent. The grades had different tribes to choose from; then they had to do research on the tribes that they selected. Each group would then pick representatives who would sit there as first and second chiefs and hold a council meeting. I explained what a council meeting was and how our culture conducted one. "As Indian people you have to go back to your class, which is actually your tribe, and discuss the issues just like they did in the old days." What a neat concept!

Things like that are good, but as far as the history books, not so much. When I go to the schools to do presentations, that was one of the topics I try to get across to the kids. The history books are not accurate. I just don't think true Native history is important enough where we will see them changing the history books anytime soon. Until that time comes, if it comes, all we can do is continue going into the schools when the kids are small and try to educate them with the accurate facts.

THE NEXT GENERATION ~

As leaders and elders, we don't always take the

time to listen to the younger people. That is a mistake. I truly believe that we can learn from them just as much as we can teach them. There was a time in the Tribe, when the younger people were fed up with all the politics that were going on. Back then, I heard the same complaints from most of them. We were so busy back in the day trying to get the Tribe back on track, that we lost sight of our young people. Because of that, a lot of them stopped coming. My kids were one of the first ones on board; they were walking away from the Tribe. I basically said, "It has to be your choice". I understood why they wanted to walk away. Luckily, we are now seeing more young people coming back.

I tried to raise my kids in the traditional ways, as much as I could. When they were young, that was all they knew. I was able to form the foundation of their Shawnee culture, at least I hope I did.

We had what my grandmother referred to as their spirit table, where she would keep her spiritual medicines, such as tobacco, sage, etc. I remember that she always kept dried corn there as well. I can remember it though it was yesterday, because I would always get in trouble for playing in it. But, because that was part of my teachings as a kid, I have always had my spirit table where my tobacco, sage, cedar, sweet grass and other sacred medicines are kept. Each one of my kids had their own spirit table, and I believe they still do.

WHAT IS IMPORTANT FOR PEOPLE TO KNOW ABOUT THE SHAWNEE?

The truth. Unfortunately, most of what is in the history books isn't true. I'm not saying they should learn our ceremonies or anything like that. This is for all Native Nations, not just the Shawnee. Everyone thinks that Thanksgiving was this big feast with the Indians and the white men. They turned around after the Indians helped the Pilgrims to survive through the first winter and literally annihilated the village. That's something people don't learn. There is documentation in Washington D.C., where the officials ordered small pox-infested blankets be given to Natives for the purpose of total genocide. Some people think that Native people were savages, and that is so far from the truth.

I don't like to separate Native Americans as far as tribes go because every tribe is similar, but different. When it comes to education it should be about Native people as a whole. It is a way of life, and it isn't told the correct way.

Native people survived what some people claim to be the largest true holocaust in the world. During that time, it's estimated that 75 million to 112 million Native people were killed. People don't realize what Native American people have gone through throughout history. In a way it is sad, but in another way, I think it is because we are such a proud race that you rarely hear us complain.

ACQUISITION OF NEW LAND ~

It's very important to acquire land. Since we

no longer have our land, we don't have a home base, of what I consider feeling home. I know our people have always been nomadic, but at the same time I think it's important spiritually for us to be able to go to our own place and do our own ceremonies the way we had it before.

It should be the number one issue. It doesn't have to be a lot of land. We don't have to have 100 acres. We could do fantastic on five acres.

PROTECTION OF SACRED SITES ~

Our belief is that we are to go back to Mother Earth where we started. That's very sacred ground. Our burial sites should be protected. It's no different than a cemetery. It would be like someone going to a national cemetery and digging up somebody's parents, because they want to see what clothes they wore, or how much jewelry they had on when they were buried. Or, let's carbon-date their bones. For what purpose? It doesn't matter how long they lived there. You're desecrating a resting place. Some people who have more time on their hands than they have sense, and want to know what history is all about, are just going to plow in and dig up the remains, because after all, we're just Indians. That's not okay. That's sacrilegious to me. Any more than they'd want their ancestors dug up and remains put on a shelf. It's absolutely not right.

Do I believe the spirit stayed there? No, absolutely not. The spirit walked on as soon as the shell died. Our belief is the Shawnee way: bury an acorn in the left hand. One, it's closest to the heart. Two, as the body deteriorates, it

gives fertilizer to that acorn, and helps that acorn grow into a new tree. So our death gives life. These are the types of things that are important.

I've dealt with grave robbers when I was a cop. I actually busted people who were making thousands of dollars going into mounds, digging up artifacts, and selling them to overseas countries. One of the cases I had, the guy literally had six or seven Native skulls that he had snuck into state mounds, like Fort Ancient, and dug up, because he said he could get \$6,000 to \$10,000 for an Indian skull in Japan. We were one of the first departments to actually prosecute under the Native American Graves Protection Act. I kind of took that personal.

REFLECTION

LIVING IN TWO WORLDS ~

You have to make a living. I'm not so sure it would be great living the way our ancestors lived, because they didn't have it easy either. We've all gotten fat and lazy and spoiled. We are so tied up in how we have to live to survive now days that we're not doing what we should be doing. I'd like to spend more time on the saving of the mounds or the fracking or the pipeline protesting, but because of what society handed us, I'm not able to just take up and go. I've got a mortgage to pay. It was just killing me to not be involved in the Dakota Pipeline protest because it is something I really believe in. I've got good friends in New Mexico.

They are talking about one of the kivas that I've actually been in for ceremony. Now the government is talking about doing fracking in that area. Elders asked me to come out for support. I'd be there in a second if I could. But unfortunately, because of the white society we live in, we are not able to respond to the aid of other tribes like we used to do. I notice with non-Native people it is more ME and not US. I believe we as Native people are more US than ME. I try to live that way. I try to put myself last.

WHO IS NATIVE AMERICAN/INDIAN?

I think Black Elk, a Lakota holy man, said it best: "If you have one drop of Indian blood in your veins then you are Indian." This controversy about blood quantum really annoys me. Blood quantum wasn't even an issue until the Europeans arrived. But now it dictates who we are as a people, a race.

Some of my closest friends, who don't have a drop of Native blood, are probably more Native by heart than many full-bloods I've ever met. They have more spirituality and a bigger Native heart. You can have a Native spirit and not have Native blood. The flip side of the coin is it also bothers me when you have people like the self-proclaimed shamans. I've met more shamans over the years at these festivals and pow-wows than I care to remember. I've got two very good friends who are medicine people; one is Pueblo and the other is Ojibwa. What I've found is a true medicine person is not somebody who goes around bragging about

being a shaman or a medicine person. The self-proclaimed are the type of people who drive me absolutely crazy. I don't know whether these people even have Native blood in them.

UNIQUE ASPECT OF THE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

We're able to adapt to difficult situations. I've been involved in the Tribe for a good 20 years now, and I've seen a lot of issues come and go. We've always been able to survive. We are able to make things happen. We make the best out of the worst situations. It's probably that, more than anything.

I get questioned a lot on why we may have Cherokee or maybe Delaware in our Tribe. Way back Tecumseh tried to unite all tribes. I've got absolutely no problem if someone comes in from another Nation, but it's important that they understand that they're coming into a Shawnee tribe. Things need to be done in the Shawnee way. If you're Cherokee, or Potawatomi, or Delaware, we're still all Native people. I have no problems with that. We can learn from each other. We can't start one day where we're going to do the Cherokee way, and the next day the Delaware way. We have to have a core, and that core is the Shawnee people, the Shawnee tradition, and the Shawnee culture.

PROUD TO BE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

To me it is a way of life. Native people can literally say that there has never, ever been a drop of blood spilled in the name of religion and spirituality. There is not another culture that can say that. We have fought for land or

territories and even horses, but Native people, as a whole, have a spirituality that is centered on the belief in the Creator and Mother Earth and our responsibilities as caretakers. Our responsibilities are not to ourselves or our people, but more to Creator and Mother Earth. Granted we failed a lot, but that is what makes me proud of who I am and what I am. Spirituality is a big key for me. It is the one concept I see dealing with all types of Native people, that there are really no issues about what you believe in. You might run into issues about not doing this ceremony or that ceremony right, but for the most part, our basic spirituality is pretty much shared across the board. I think that is really cool. I can't believe that there is a Native out there who is not proud to call himself Native, whether it is Shawnee or Cherokee or whatever Nation they belong to. It is just being Native American.

Shawnee people have always been known to adapt and that is what we have done. We've adapted from the old ways to the new ways; it is our culture. I can remember my grandparents saying, "On the outside you have to live white; on the inside you live Native. You live your traditions." You had to be white back in the day. Our people have always been able to take a situation and adapt to the odds, whether it is weather conditions, land, hunting, fishing, moving or even living in the white man's world. We've progressed. We have always been able, by the grace of Creator, to adapt to our surroundings, and now to today's society.

We're still here.

FEDERAL RECOGNITION

From the way I was raised, I believe we are all related. I don't need a status, to tell me who I am. Do I think we need federal recognition? No. I've never been big into the federal recognition. I believe that federal recognition is just another way to try and separate Native people. Divide and conquer. Unfortunately, it's working. We have allowed the government to dictate who is Indian and who is not. We have even been challenged by some Natives that we couldn't possibly be Shawnee, because we remained in our homelands when the others went west. Is it because of the federal funding, or land rights? I can't answer that. It doesn't really matter. I don't believe for a second that this is the way our ancestors wanted it. All I do is try to live up to my teaching, try to live life in a good way, and treat all people with respect.

HISTORICAL RECONCILIATION

IS IT IMPORTANT FOR THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TO DO HISTORICAL RECONCILIATIONS SUCH AS THE ONE WITH THE KENTON FAMILY?

I do think that it is important that the Piqua do these types of reconciliations, but we have to be careful with our involvement in certain public activities. Barbara Lehmann, our Tribal Historian, has such a vast knowledge of our history, that the activities that we have been involved in have been historically correct events.

I've got many, many good friends out west, from the Navajo to the Hopi, to the Mescalero Apaches. We've had conversations back and forth. I've been out west numerous times, and had the opportunity of meeting with some elders out there.

It's important that we do these types of things in order to teach, and to do certain ceremonies to honor the fallen warriors. It shouldn't be just Native warriors; it's warriors on both sides. Whether they were white, red, or black, it doesn't matter. If they died for a cause or a purpose, in my eyes, they're warriors, and should be honored for that. The Piqua actually are going to battlefields where we're doing ceremonies to honor those who have fallen, and I'm okay with that. It's important that we go back and show our ancestors, because I'm a firm believer that those spirits are there. Those warriors are there. As War Chief, I think that's so important. It's not our job to judge who was right and who was wrong.

Where I run into an issue is when we start getting too involved in re-enactments. I think you've got to be real cautious about that, because you're getting into a fine line of some real touchy areas for Native people. There are a lot of Native people who don't care for re-enactments. Some of that history they feel is private, or it is areas they don't want to be reminded about. But at the same time, I think it's important where we're able to go out and share the truth about it, because we all know the history books aren't telling it.

IS THERE A POSSIBILITY OF RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE PIQUA SHAWNEE AND THE WESTERN SHAWNEE TRIBES?

Unfortunately I don't think it will ever happen. There are several reasons. One of the big issues is the difference between the two homelands, and where the western Shawnee tribes are now located out west. Two, is power and money, the root of all evil. The western Shawnee tribes say we don't exist. Why don't we exist? Because our people stayed here and theirs didn't? I don't know what they went through out west. I have no clue what happened on the Trail of Death. I don't know what they've been through out west any more than they know what we've been through back here. To judge other people is ludicrous and wrong. I don't see it changing. I think there is more hatred from the western Shawnee toward the Shawnee back east than vice versa. The federal government was not stupid with what they did: separate and conquer. As long as there is a separation of federal and state tribes, we will never see a merge. Tecumseh had his vision of a confederacy of all Native tribes to fight one common enemy and to protect our homelands. If that would have worked out back then, history would have been different. He was trying to merge the tribes together as one. I believe if that would have happened, we would not be having this debate.

DO YOU THINK THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN NATIONAL NATIVE ISSUES SUCH AS THE DAKOTA PIPELINE?

I absolutely do. We could have had representatives out there. There again, if you are going to be Native, be Native. We should have been there for support. There have been several things that we as a Tribe should have

been involved in, but for whatever reason, we weren't. I realize that it's hard for Tribal members to leave their homes or their jobs, but I think as a Tribe we should at least make an effort. Maybe I'm a little more radical than some when it comes to issues like these, but I think it is important that the Piqua Shawnee show their support.



Principal Chief Gary Hunt, War Chief Kevin Everhart, and tribal members accompanying Caleb Willis (center) from his Vision Quest to the Rite of Passage Ceremony.



Kenneth Barnett Tankersley, Ph.D.

ELDERS COUNCIL MEMBER
NAGPRA REPRESENTATIVE

CULTURAL IDENTITY

I remember 1960 very vividly. When I was five years old my grandparents wanted me to meet a fluent speaker of Cherokee so he took me to Cherokee, North Carolina, and introduced me to an elder. I still remember that it started out really nice. He taught me to say “Osiiyo”. (Hello) Then he said, “Tsa”, then “Aniyvwiya”, which means I am Cherokee, and I couldn’t do it. “Aniyvwiya” is a phrase that means the principal people. I got frustrated. When we left he tried to teach me “Donadagohvi oginalii”. It means “until we meet again my friend”. I couldn’t say it, and I saw the frustration in the elder’s face. I’ve never lost that memory.

I loved traditional Cherokee cooking. Everything was home grown, lots of corn and beans and wild foods like blackberries, rabbit, and squirrel. When I was young I lived with my great-grandmother, Elizabeth Saylor. She lived in a cabin that was built in the 1800’s. They put weatherboard over it and a tin roof, but we still had an outhouse and a hand-dug well. We did have electricity: one light bulb that came down the center of the house. We had a black and white television. In the autumn there was a new

television show, Daniel Boone with Fess Parker. Every little boy wanted to be Daniel Boone. I asked her, “Are we related to Daniel Boone?” She said, “No, but you’re probably related to Mingo.” We didn’t know that Mingo was actually a Russian-American and just an actor. “Your seventh great-grandfather was Dotsuwa, Red Bird. He was murdered in Clay County.” In fact Sequoyah visited his gravesite and inscribed what are considered his oldest known writings in the Cherokee syllabary. Sequoyah was related to the Benge family through his mother. David Benge lived near Dotsuwa’s gravesite. My great-grandfather and my dad took me to where Redbird lived and where he was murdered.

My grandfather’s sister, Minty, who married a Hornsby, is buried over this hill in a place called Wildcat. The Hornsbys still own the farm. Most of my father’s side of the family is buried over there. She was a healer. When I had cancer she wanted to heal me, but I knew I had to have chemotherapy and surgery to survive. I didn’t get to see her before she passed away. I always felt bad that I didn’t get

to see her one last time.

I grew up with a very traditional grandmother. She made a living all her life harvesting what are now endangered plants, such as Ginseng and May Apple, which are medicinal, and you could sell them by the pound. Hunting or fishing put meat on the table, what we call country foods. Anyone who has grown up in traditional culture knows that. I tell my students about a traditional livelihood and they have nothing to compare it to. In this area, growing up, everyone was either unemployed or underemployed, but you still could put food on the table because the woods were full of good foods and there was a bounty of game, fish, nuts, berries, and greens.

I should clarify that we celebrated the culture in the family, not in public. When I was growing up the people around me the majority of the time were not Indian. Even going to college, it was not something I ever talked about. When I was going to college for my baccalaureate, my masters and my doctorate, there was so much anti-Indian sentiment that I kept my family heritage hidden. At the time of my first Thanksgiving at Indiana University in 1982, the American Indian Movement had discovered that there were over a thousand bodies that were given to Indiana University by the University of Chicago for study. The Wednesday before Thanksgiving they set up a sweat lodge outside of the Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology where my office was located. I walked outside and there were

the late Dennis Banks, Chico Dulak, and Michael Haney. I said, "Wow! I'm a big fan of yours." They just keep on walking past me. I went inside to tell the director, "You can't believe who is outside!" He said, "Yes, I can. Go into the classroom and I will be in with you shortly." I went into the classroom and there is the dean, the head of the department, all of the faculty and all of the graduate students. Of course, there were no skeletons; archaeologists don't deal with human bones; they dig up garbage. Human remains are the focus of biological anthropologists. They have nothing to do with archaeology. We were told, under penalty of expulsion, "If you talk with anyone out there you are going to be expelled. Just let them do their ceremony. Don't interfere with them and don't talk to them." No one in my family had ever gotten a Ph.D. before. Meanwhile there were people inside joking around. "We've got a box in here just waiting for you." In that kind of environment I couldn't say a word about my Native American heritage.

Now it's okay to be Native. You don't have to hide your ancestry. Anthropology has changed a lot. There is still a lot of anti-Native American sentiment among archaeologists. That is what David Hurst Thomas is trying to explain in his book, *Skull Wars*. He is trying to educate American archaeologists. Wait, we're all in this together! We're working toward the same goals: documenting what went on in the past. We have common goals here so let's work

together. Native people are all for it; it's these older archaeologists who are still in the colonial mode. "I'm a scientist. Only I can handle this; besides, you lost your culture." A lot of archaeologists don't realize that oral histories, the ideological component, went underground and into the home. Even at the time of John Wesley Power, who made the first linguistic map of the United States, Cherokee was still being spoken in the home here in eastern Kentucky. In parts of Harlan County Cherokee continued to be spoken and it still is being spoken in homes today.

My grandmother spoke Cherokee. It was always our secret little language. I thought she made it up. I was told never speak it outside the house. Then my dad's brother died and we were at his funeral. For 24 hours she sat in front of the casket and sang a mourning song in Cherokee. No one knew what she was doing. My mother said, "What is wrong with her?" My dad said, "She's mourning." By that time, I knew the language. When I came into this Tribe, she had been buried just over the hill from where our former tribal grounds were located. They were lowering her into the grave and someone said, "She's facing the wrong way." They literally lifted the casket out of the grave, flipped it around, and dropped it back in. That's when I knew to re-connect. I was offered an endowed position in Colorado that came with a house and a big salary at the time she died. It was pouring down rain at the funeral. I was trying to decide what to do. All

of a sudden the rain stopped and a red-tailed hawk came flying out of this valley screaming at the top of its lungs. At that moment it was clear to me to move back home to Kentucky. This was the location of the old Warriors Trail, which really wasn't so much a warrior's trail, but that is what it was called by Europeans. It was actually a trade route that went from Florida to Michigan. You had shells coming up from Florida, and copper, gold and silver coming down from Michigan and the Ohio River Valley. It's a very traditional place. This is Jackson County. My great-grandmother is buried just on the other side of Jackson County, and all of my first cousins still live in Jackson County. We are one mile from Clay County where I have a lot of kin and in the next county south of there, Harlan County. That is my father's side of the family. My mother's side of the family lived in Monroe County in Tennessee just a mile or two from where Sequoyah grew up as a child. My father's side of the family is the Benge side of the family. Sequoyah's mother's second husband was John Benge. His uncle, David Benge, buried just over this hill, is my fifth great-grandfather. I'm part of Sequoyah's family as well. That's where my Cherokee ancestry comes from. My mother's side of the family is right there in the Sequoyah homeland, but I'm not related through my mother, but through my father. Enrollment between Cherokee and Shawnee has been fluid.

Were there a lot of intermarriages at some point?

No question about it. There are Blue Jacket's

family members in the Piqua as well as among the Eastern Shawnee. If you go into the Dawes final roll, which is *the* enrollment record for the Eastern Shawnee and for the Cherokee Nation, Blue Jacket is listed on both the Eastern Shawnee and Cherokee. Of course the reason for that is political relationship because at the time those alliances were established, the Shawnee was in a heavy battle fighting against colonialism and that's where that comes from. My Native blood is Cherokee; the rest is Scottish and Irish. According to my enrollment card I'm one fourth, but I have blue eyes. That is genetically impossible because that is a double recessive gene. The important thing to remember is blood quantum was created by the United States government. Typical colonialism. When people say what percentage blood they are, that is based on subtracting half each generation according to the rolls. I have so many enrolled ancestors, but on paper I'm supposed to be a quarter blood. But when you run my DNA it is 10%, i.e., 1/10th. So my light hair, pink skin, and blue eyes would tell you that. A good example is my cousin, Gayla. She has light hair, sky blue eyes, and absolutely snow-white skin, yet she has one of the highest blood quantum in the tribe. Genetically she is clearly 1/8. These days, that is a very high blood quantum.

Native peoples have exchanged their DNA with every population on the planet, so in terms of people with the hair, the skin, and the eyes – those phenotypic traits may actually be from

a completely different ethnic group that is not Native American. The only way for anyone to know for sure about his or her ancestry is through DNA. That is why DNA is so important. At the same time Native American is cultural rather than biological. It is religion; it is the songs we sing, the language we speak, the clothes we wear, the food we eat – that's culture.

INSPIRATIONAL ANCESTOR ~

When my grandmother told me about Redbird, Dotsuwa, I've never, ever lost that memory. The descendants of Redbird still get together and visit his grave.

One time there was a pow-wow in this state and they said, "Anyone who is family member of Redbird, come up for a dance." We filled the arena dancing. It was incredible. It's hard to go to a pow-wow in the East and not find a descendent of Redbird. It has been many generations, but he is extra special to me. We still go back there in ceremony. That story is well documented. As an adult I got into the governor's archives in Tennessee, which talks about his murder, who did it, the whole thing. Those are the kinds of things I grew up with. *Does being bi-racial ever cause any problems for you?* Not so much psychological problems. When I was young I acquired a handful of eagle feathers. By the time I was 20 I looked in the mirror and didn't see any Indian and threw them away. I forever regret that. I was always proud of my heritage. My grandmother knew all of the extended family. When she died I thought we lost all of our extended family. I've

continued to reconnect as far as I can to the family my grandmother knew.

When I go to the Navajo Nation I'll go into stores and restaurants and have this Native Pride hat on. No one bothers me. They say, "What's your tribe?" But, be around non-Indians and wear this hat, they'll say, "Oh, you got some Indian blood in you?" It's the absolute opposite.

This year I brought an elder to the University of Cincinnati. There were faculty that he passed and he said, "They don't like Indians, do they?" Not the University of Cincinnati, but specific faculty who had deep-rooted prejudices. Some of them believe *all Indians are drunks*. It's the drunken Indian stereotype. In terms of the prejudice, it's being 10% Native American and 90% white. What if I were 10% African American? I would feel the same way. I would identify with the minority.

For me you have to be pro-active, not re-active. In doing so, you are going to get beat up a lot. The thing about the Piqua is they are a people who rise from the ashes. It is not how you get knocked down; it's how you get back up. I've been knocked down a lot and hard. The biggest thing I suffer is health issues. It would be so much easier to deny my heritage and my ancestry. My life would be so much easier.

INVOLVEMENT IN THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE ~

This is my 18th year with the Piqua. I first attended a Green Corn ceremony with my adopted Mohawk sister, Susan Mullens.

ROLE IN THE TRIBE ~

I bring my academic credentials to the Tribe. They are there whenever they need it, but only when they ask for it. When you look at our elders, we have a brain trust. I use the Beatles as an example. None of them were as good on their own as they were together and the same way with the Tribe. We are strong together, but not as a solo act. I try to unify whenever I can and remind people of the old ways, to be traditional.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ~

Being Indian is 24/7. There are daily ceremonies. I smudge. It is just a part of who I am. Ceremony is not just four times a year. It is every day. I feel if I can't do ceremony every day, and it is not always practical during the academic year, but at least every other day. That is very important for who I am. I haven't practiced a pipe ceremony in a while. I'd love at the elders meeting for us to have a pipe ceremony before we have ceremony. At one council meeting the issues were so serious that we had to deal with I pulled out my largest eagle feather and some sage, and said let's smudge the hall before we begin.

Yesterday I was pedaling my bike and I saw a little eagle feather so I turned around and picked it up. Creator gave me a gift. I stopped and said a prayer. Here is a scientist praying. I pray in my Native tongue. Ceremony and being that part of me is who I am. Even my non-Native family, my in-laws, at Thanksgiving, request that I say a prayer in my Native tongue

and they appreciate that. It is not just Green Corn, Fall Bread, Spring Bread; being Indian you have ceremonies that are every bit as important. As Curly Bear Wagner once told me, it is important to stay on the Good Red Road -- not to drink and do drugs, and only smoke tobacco in ceremony. I try to stay on the Good Red Road every day.

CULTURAL REVITALIZATION

If I had to pick three issues that are vital to our tribe, it is our spirituality, our language and our land. For Europeans it is all about time. For Indigenous people around the world it is space. A lot of people don't value land. There is a beautiful Catholic cathedral on the hill behind us on the Ohio River built by Germans. There is a radio station in there now. The altar from that church is in my mother-in-law's home. She displays pottery in it. I have my telephone on the sacristy. The sacristy is the most sacred part of the Catholic altar. They sold it! To me that says everything about sacred and profane.

Space means nothing in European culture, absolutely nothing. Time means everything. Native people: something is sacred forever. It doesn't matter if there is concrete on top of it! It doesn't matter if there is a building on top of it! It is sacred forever. A lot of people have a hard time understanding it. You can't sell it. This is something that has been plaguing the whole treaty thing for a long time. The issue: how can you sell what is not yours? How can you sell what is sacred? This issue gets at the

very heart of a sickness in Indigenous societies losing what is sacred. I think it is true not just for the Piqua Shawnee, but also for all Indian people.

I applaud the Hodenosanee for buying back New York acre by acre, and the southern Creek or Seminole slowly buying back Florida one acre at a time. That is why at Elders Council, whenever I can, I bring this issue up. We have to be vigilant about acquiring land. It doesn't have to be in one state; it can be in many states, but we have to slowly acquire land. We don't necessarily have to purchase it. We can get Tribal members who can afford it to buy it for the Tribe. I think that is crucial.

Our spiritual life is the most vital aspect of culture. Most traditionalists believe that it is one thing to be physically healthy, but you also have to be spiritually healthy as well. You have to be at center. We talk about the seven sacred directions. There are the spirits of the four winds, North, South, East, West, Earth Mother, Sky Father, and the most important direction of all is center, our center. Center comes first. If you are not at peace with yourself, then you are not centered. Being centered comes through the traditional spiritual beliefs.

SIGNIFICANCE OF LANGUAGE ~

Part of tradition and practicing traditional ceremonies and living a traditional spiritual life requires knowledge of the language. It is crucial to bring back the language. The question: if the last fluent speaker disappears, does the culture actually exist? Language is

the purest form of culture. If you think about what defines culture: the ability to symbol. What is more symbolic than language? The words we speak are arbitrary symbols, whether it is written or verbal or even non-verbal language, and it varies from culture to culture. An important part of cultural identity is language. It is cultural survival. Cultural diversity is every bit as important as biological diversity. It's key to our survival. The more culturally diverse, the more linguistically diverse we are, the healthier we are and the more likely we are to adapt to periods of rapid change – social, political, environmental. Language is power.

FUTURE VISION

My vision for the Piqua Shawnee is the same for all indigenous people, that we survive in peace and harmony and that we prosper.

ROLE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHING NATIVE HISTORY, PAST & PRESENT ~

In the area where I live they want to do Native history. For example, once a year I get a phone call from a local grade school in the community where I do excavations. They ask me if I would give a tour of Shawnee sites in the area, and I do. There is nothing like over a 100 fourth graders screaming at the top of their lungs! In Ohio as part of the examination process for them to advance, there is a unit on Native American history so there is very much a need. The problem is that teachers, especially K to 12, and even in the pre-schools, are hungry for

the information, but there is not enough of the information available. The number of people who have the knowledge to present is very, very limited. It's not surprising that teachers turn to the Internet out of necessity.

The good thing Kentucky has is a Native American Heritage Commission, which Ohio does not. They advise the governor on Native American issues, in particular education. Kentucky has done it right. Although there are no state or federally recognized tribes in Kentucky, yet they do have a Commission.

Ohio has a long, rich Native American history, but at the same time it is deeply embedded in racism. When you think of Ohio Native Americans, you think of Mound Builders. This leads me right into the Mound Builder myth. Our Founding Fathers, like Benjamin Franklin, supported that these burial mounds and earthworks were created by an ancient European race that pre-dated Native Americans. Unfortunately, that mythology survived to this day. The History Channel no longer supports it, but there is a television show called Ancient Giants that attributes all the earthworks to ancient white colored skin giants, and another one which argues that they were all built by previous European populations. One show is called *Unearthing America*⁶ and it is 100% about the archeological sites not being indigenous. I've written and protested and got nowhere. In the second decade of the 21st century this is blatant racism. It is an example

⁶ See "Unearthing the Piqua Shawnee" by Kenneth B. Tankersley, Ph.D. in the Addendum.

of modern day ethnocide.

NEXT GENERATION ~

When I was in Sacramento, CA recently meeting with a group of archaeologists, we also were meeting with Native Americans from all over the country, federal and state recognized tribes. The number one complaint, besides losing the language, was losing young people. For many parents who are both Native American, their children don't want to be Indian. I think this situation exists primarily because of the Indian stereotype -- being poor, and suffering health problems, and of course these are all realities. Today's generations want immediate gratification, and that is about as far away from being Indian as possible. Young people today want to develop an app that makes them super-rich, regardless of what someone's heritage or ethnicity is. In Indian Country it's all about delayed gratification. It's about knowing who you are. It takes a long time to learn traditional ways, to learn the traditional stories, to live a traditional life.

The only thing we really have in life that is guaranteed is our family. Family is the greatest wealth, not money. At some point our young people have to realize what truly matters is family. The Jim Croche song: 'I've Got A Name' – whether or not your name actually reflects your biology, it's family. It is taking pride in who you are. Young people are moving away from tribal societies in general because they don't like who they are. Traditional Indian societies would say they have lost their center.

They are not at peace with themselves. That is a serious problem.

LEARNING FROM THE SHAWNEE/ EASTERN WOODLAND EXPERIENCE ~

I fervently believe that the traditional Native perspective is key to the survival of all human kind. As our Chief has reminded us many times, all we really need to survive is clean air to breathe, clean water to drink, uncontaminated food, and shelter.

ACQUISITION OF LAND ~

I think it is very feasible to acquire land in the near future. There is a place in Jackson County right on the Warriors' Trail. It doesn't take a lot of money to acquire and have an even nicer place that we've had before. We have a donor now who will match dollar for dollar. If we can connect with a state park or national forest we don't need an enormous amount of land.

PROTECTION OF SACRED SITES ~

The village of Mariemont, Ohio contains the last area the Shawnee ever occupied in 1810. That is pretty recent. There were already European settlements at that time. The Shawnee had occupied that area since time immemorial. A group of mountain bikers decided to put a trail through an old growth forest, and that wasn't bad enough, they put the trail right through a historic Shawnee cemetery and through two burial mounds, also ancient Shawnee burial sites. I brought this to the attention of the state historic preservation officer. I talked to and brought the regional director of the National Park Service who

came to our archeological excavation of the village site this summer. He came all the way from Iowa to talk with the Mayor. The Mayor agreed that this had to be stopped and the burial grounds repaired, restored, protected, and preserved over a long period of time. Unfortunately, the mountain bike community is very large and very strong. The Mayor supports Native sacred sites, and preserving Native American heritage. This is on the National Register of Historic Places and it is part of the National Register District and of the National Landmark, yet August 14 there will be an up or down vote on this by the village council. Right now there is an executive order to stop this.

During the summer I was with my archeological field school. We were surveying, mapping the sites, collecting artifacts, including identifying human remains. The bikers are riding their bikes over human remains, running over the bones of Shawnee people. We documented it and while we were doing it, we were shot at. Every student, including myself, wrote down the date and time. If it wasn't bad enough that we were shot at, of course the person shot over our heads, but the bullet was heading toward a swimming pool where young children, as young as pre-schoolers, were swimming. But they didn't care. They were trying to scare us off. No pun intended, where the rubber meets the road, how far do you go to protect these areas? I'm committed.

It is these same sacred sites that stopped the highway, a billion-dollar project,

from coming through. I stopped the Ohio Department of Transportation who brought in all kinds of archeologists to try to discredit me. If the mountain bikers can successfully degrade this area and have it removed from the National Register of Historic Places, it opens the way for the highway to go right through a historic Shawnee village site.

Anyone who wanted to see these sites and the damage I would take them on a tour. One of these tours was this past Sunday. I had no idea that it made it in the Cincinnati Enquirer, which is the newspaper for the city of Cincinnati. When I showed up there were almost 50 people there. Of course there was a set-up. During the tour along comes a mountain biker and a confrontation ensued. He came at me and said, "This land belongs to mountain bikers. This trail was made by bikers, for bikers and no one can stop me." He tried to push his way through. Every time he tried to move his bike I stood in front of it. He was shouting and screaming at the top of his lungs. Fortunately, a councilman interceded and explained to him that there was a 1971 law, which said no bikes in this area, and there had been as recently as last Friday an executive order by the Mayor that said no bicycles. He still denied it. The guy bashed me on the Internet, on television, and in the newspaper. There are two kinds of cyclists: those who ride on paved ground which we call road bikers, which I am, and those who ride off-road through the woods, through the natural environment. The headlines

became “UC Archeology Professor Has Confrontation with Bicyclists”. And I’m an avid bicyclist. I’m always on my bicycle any day the weather will permit me. I don’t like doing the politics. I don’t like giving professional testimony. The other side will rip you to shreds. It is high stress and takes up my time. I don’t live in the community or receive any money from the community. It’s out of pocket money and time, but for me it is being a good citizen and as far as being a Piqua, it is the right thing to do. I am the only one in the area standing between the destruction of these sites. I will give it my all.

There is a law still before Congress to add sacred sites a level of protection. They have been sitting on it. The Army Corps of Engineers just violated all the other laws. Until 1990 a Native American grave was not recognized as a grave of a person, because there were no stone monuments, no tombstones. So people could dig them up and put a skull on their mantel. That’s remarkable! Prior to 1978 and the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, it was illegal for me to speak the language of my grandparents and my forefathers. It was illegal to practice the Green Corn Ceremony. It has to be a federal issue. The law has been sitting in Congress for years now. No movement. Instead what we see is just the opposite: a deconstruction of existing and protecting laws of indigenous people and indigenous places. That is why as an individual, if I have a chance of protecting sites, I do.

The only thing that stopped me from going to Standing Rock was my job. Even though I am a tenured professor, I could not just leave my responsibilities at the University and for the students.

REFLECTION

LIVING IN TWO WORLDS ~

I’m a scientist. I do geo-chemistry. I’m very strict and conservative in my interpretations in science. That is one leg. The other leg is that I hear crows talking to me. If I would tell my students or my colleagues, “Did you hear that crow talk?” – they would think I was psychotic. If you tell another Indian, they will say, “What did the crow tell you?” I firmly believe the other life forces do communicate with us. I think about our ancestors: the sycamore trees around us, part of their life force is drawing on the nutrients of our ancestors. I believe our Mother Earth is alive. The supernatural is natural. I live in that world as well.

I was at my seventh great-grandfather, Redbird’s, grave. (Another Tribal member, Frank Otero, was there.) We were taking a group of rangers to his grave because it was being vandalized. It was a meth lab. The people who were making meth were also trying to rob Redbird’s grave because they thought the tomahawk he was killed with was still with the body and that was something they could sell. Before we took the rangers to the gravesite I had an abalone shell and a sage bundle and we smudged the grave. I did that in the very

small shallow cave that has the oldest writing of Sequoyah who paid his homage to Redbird right after he passed. He knew that Redbird had carved on the wall in the traditional Cherokee writing. He wanted to learn the traditional Cherokee symbols which he incorporated into what became the written language of the Cherokee syllabary. It is actually a very ancient language. I'm in there smudging with an eagle feather and the sage. A friend of mine had come with me. I looked over and said, "Chuck, I didn't know you came in here with me." He was smudging as well. After I get it all smudged and ready to talk to the rangers, and as I back out and stand up, Chuck is looking at me. Frank said I turned pale. There was no one else in the cave, but there was someone right next to me smudging with an eagle feather. I was frightened to the point where I was in tears. I'm a scientist and I have no natural explanation for that whatsoever.

Being an Indian in academia is very difficult. I had a meeting with the provost, our vice-president. I had a short-sleeved shirt on and he was looking at the ceremonial scars my arms. He didn't ask, but I know he was wondering. I always try to wear silver and turquoise. We wear it for protection. Turquoise is a symbol of healing. Cherokee were silversmiths going back to the time of Sequoyah who was a famous silversmith. Silver goes back into prehistory. Certain metals such as silver and copper have always been sacred. It is difficult even to understand that, "Oh I have to

take off work because I'm going to a religious ceremony."

David Hurst Thomas, curator of anthropology at the American Museum of Natural History, has written about the fact that no one is ever going to accept a Native American oral history explanation for the past, and that is unfortunate. The truth is that all cultures change. It is the very nature of culture. The traditional spiritual beliefs are at the foundation of the culture, much of which remains unchanged. A good example is a symbol that archaeologists dig up here in the Ohio Valley. How do you think archaeologists of European descent interpret that symbol? This is Grandmother Spider who brought us fire. *[See page 108 to read the story.]* Early on the first president of the Society of American Archaeology was an Indian, and now they have gotten so far away from that. Our academic journals will never publish traditional explanations, which will get us closer to the truth. The very essence of culture is the ability to symbol. Symbols define culture and that is an example of the symbol. We are all animals, the same as a fish, a cat, and a squirrel. We are not plants. We all communicate and many animals use tools, but what separates us from the other animals is the ability to symbol. Symbolism is assigning arbitrary meaning. How do you glean that arbitrary meaning from the past if you are not talking to the culture that produced it? A Tewa or Hopi anthropologist, who has passed away, Alphonso Ortiz, at the

University of New Mexico, said, “You can learn my language. You can come live with me. You can go to ceremony with me, but you will never, ever know what it is like to be Tewa because you weren’t born Tewa.” For people of science to think that they are going to be able to interpret Native Americans without talking to them is ludicrous. I have both worlds. As I get older, slowly but surely, people who are older than I give up more information and are far more traditional so it is still a learning process. It is always a learning process. We say even in death we make the journey. There is the greatest learning of all. We think about to not be able to incorporate that in our lives. I cannot incorporate that into my academic life. I do have to partition it so it is very, very difficult. It is not easy living in two worlds.

WHO IS NATIVE AMERICAN/INDIAN?

The government has answered it for us. There is a law, and as with all laws there are definitions to the law, and they clearly define who is an Indian and who is not. What is interesting, it has absolutely nothing to do with biology. It’s culture. There are two federal laws, and I keep reminding federal tribal members, that includes state recognized tribes. One is the Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act and the other is the Native American Arts and Crafts Act. There are some tribes who are trying to change that. Now there is fear of losing all tribal recognition altogether, those laws fall on the back burner. The issue of who defines an Indian, it is right now

federal or state recognized. To be a federal or state recognized Indian you have to have your pedigree. You have to go back to be an enrolled Piqua or whatever the tribe. There is at some point a treaty – for the Shawnee it is the Dawes Roll. You have to first have an ancestor on the Dawes Roll. Then from that ancestor you have to show direct lineal descent. You have to have a birth, death, or marriage certificate for every generation from that ancestor to you. We all know that you may or may not be biologically related to that person because of the uncertainty of the fathers of each generation. People, who are on the Roll, may or may not be part of your father’s family, but that is the way the U.S. government defines who is an Indian. It goes one step further. You have to be able to show that you were actively involved in your tribal government. You have to be a voting member. With tribes, you can be put on a roll and you can be removed. It is just like in any temple, synagogue, mosque, and church. You can be enrolled as a member and you can be taken off. All Indians have their own governments. They are their own nations – nations within nations. They have to abide by federal law. This was all because of a Shawnee treaty.

This whole process of blood quantum was Thomas Jefferson’s idea. The idea was essentially to dissolve the Native DNA because he truly believed that Native Americans were not intelligent enough until they had enough white blood in them. That’s where quarter

blood system came from. A quarter blood became the minimum of who is an Indian and who is not. Since then many tribes have gotten rid of the blood quantum. The Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma was one of the first. Many Shawnee have gotten rid of the blood quantum, but other tribes still have that quarter blood quantum. Ironically, most people don't realize the purpose for that blood quantum: if you are a quarter blood, you still are not smart enough to be educated. Once you became one eighth, now you have enough white blood you could be educated. It wasn't a DNA lab. Craft paper was laid against your skin and if your skin was the same color as the craft paper, then you were a full blood. If it was half the shade, then you were a half-blood. You had to be beyond a quarter shade so it was actually the color and the hue of your skin which defined you. For Indian people to buy into that is beyond me. The issue of who is an Indian and is not is a legal issue that the United States government has defined.

In Indian Country there is the term "apple: red on the outside and white on the inside" which comes up a lot. There is an issue about whether or not you practice traditional ways. Even if you are an enrolled voting tribal member and you are on the reservation, do you participate in some of the ceremonies? Are you making efforts to speak the language? If you don't speak the language, at least you are learning the language. Are you passing it on to the children? And if you are not, you are often

called an "apple". So the issue of what do you really believe in is what defines whether you are Indian or not.

UNIQUE ABOUT THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE ~

I've heard various translations of the name, Piqua. But in Shawnee, some of the interpretations are people who have ash on their feet, or people who walk with ashes on their feet. A much older translation is "People who rise from the ashes." The idea of a phoenix is not originally European, not Greek. That concept is very old, very ancient. Engravings of phoenixes can be found between Algonquin/Iroquoian and Muskogean speaking people long before Europeans ever showed up. Within the Shawnee, it is my understanding, are people who rise up from the fire. This idea of persistence and rising up again for me is what makes the Piqua very unique. It is a continuation of what has gone on in the past: this idea of rise up and survive. People don't care about how you are knocked down and almost pushed into extinction. People are more interested in the recovery, the comeback. That is the Piqua to me.

It is also unique that the Piqua Shawnee Tribe takes in members from tribes who were allies of the Shawnee during the invasion of the Ohio Valley in the 1700's. The Piqua are following a long tradition. As long as the Piqua have been Piqua, they have taken in members from other tribes. A good example is of one of my ancestors, Robert Benge. His people were a branch of the

Cherokee called Chickamauga. He saw that they were going along with acculturating into European society. He said, "I'll have none of this. I will proffer my services to the Shawnee." And he did.

There is tradition for taking people into the Tribe, especially the Cherokee. Anyone who was affiliated or worked together with the Piqua Shawnee in the past were welcomed into the Tribe. Recently, spouses of Tribal members have been welcomed into the Tribe. That is a modern phenomenon among modern tribes. For the Piqua we are unique in the fact that we know it was going on prior to the days of the American Revolution and still continuing until this day. That is a unique feature.

PROUD TO BE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

Is a cloud proud to be a cloud? Is a tree proud to be a tree? Piqua Shawnee is who I am. I am proud to be me, to be Piqua Shawnee, and to be alive.

FEDERAL RECOGNITION

It is a decision that the Tribe has to make. There are a lot of benefits that come with that. Imagine a pie, and our country's budget is that pie; a tiny little slice of that pie is entitlements to Native Americans. With every new federally recognized tribe, that tiny slice gets sliced even thinner so that is why there is so much resistance to bringing on any newer tribes. But on the other hand, for tribes to reject another tribe means you want less Indian people on the planet? That makes no sense whatsoever.

That is genocide and ethnocide; it is part of the process that has been around for over five hundred years.

A tribe has to have a federal sponsor. The Poarch Creek are willing to sponsor us. The Piqua Shawnee want to remain Piqua rather than being absorbed into another tribe. You also need to have an anthropologist; we have two – Paul Tamburro, a linguistic anthropologist, and myself. He is Abenaki and his wife is Piqua Shawnee. He is enrolled as a spouse. We have everything it takes. You have to have tribal records of course. You do need to hire a lawyer who does federal recognition cases. We can do all that. We are a tribe listed in the National Congress of the American Indians. A lot of people who are parents see the advantage.

Anyone in our Tribe in Kentucky can get a free education being Native American. There is a foundation which gives state recognized tribal members' free tuition. We also have free college tuition to any state university in Florida because of the Creek. All of a sudden the doors open up even more for federal recognition. There are monthly allotment checks. What most people don't realize, what is thirteen dollars a month going to do for you? People think we get rich being Indian. It is ludicrous. No one can live off of allotment checks. Some of the larger tribes get thirty-three dollars a month. Maybe some of the land-based tribes get a few hundred dollars. But it is pennies in today's economy. For some families that is

what gets them over the edge. I think it is more of a stereotype. Federal recognition I see as protection. But right now the whole issue of entitlement is endangered. Federal recognition is a lot of hard work, but I see it as a positive, but not all the Tribal members do. We have Tribal members who are concerned about having any kind of government involvement. What do they think state recognition is? It is all government determined. We live in the United States of America so we have to abide by its laws. We are citizens of this country. We are a conquered nation. We are a nation within a nation. We are living in an occupied territory. There is no other way to say it. Japan has been trying to get rid of all the reservation land of the Inui of northern Japan. It is not just here; it is all indigenous people. This is a global issue, an indigenous peoples issue. It doesn't matter if you are talking about New Zealand, or Sumatra, or Australia. It is everywhere.

RECONCILIATION

IS THERE A POSSIBILITY OF RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE PIQUA AND THE WESTERN SHAWNEE TRIBES?

It's the curse of Tecumseh. It was Tecumseh's dream to bring all the tribes together. We are not far from Yahoo Falls where Tecumseh spoke and brought many tribes together to try to unite. He said, "There is more of us than there are of the Euro-Americans. We can easily defeat them." And still to this day, tribes are

arguing among themselves. There are currently three federally recognized Shawnee tribes, one state recognized tribe, and a suite of tribes that are neither state nor federally recognized, what we call independent tribes. They all hate one another, even among the federal tribes. Each one thinks they are the 'real' Shawnee tribe. All of them at one time were not recognized at all. When they were state recognized and then federally recognized, with each new designation the conflict with other tribes seems to grow. Unfortunately, I don't see it resolving any quicker than I see the Dine and the Tewa resolving their issues. It's 100% about money. People think that by this tribe's existence it is taking away resources in all aspects of the Native community from themselves. It is absolutely ridiculous and nonsensical but it is a very, very old issue.

SHOULD THE PIQUA SHAWNEE BE INVOLVED IN NATIONAL NATIVE ISSUES SUCH AS THE DAKOTA PIPELINE?

The Army Corp of Engineers deliberately violated five federal laws. They were anticipating that Donald Trump would become President, and if he did, he would get rid of those laws. The ACE as never, ever violated those federal laws, but in this case they did. In the dead of winter in sub-zero temperatures, the protestors were hosed down with fire hoses. The Governor of North Dakota allowed someone to run down and kill a protestor who was blocking a road and they would not be

prosecuted. They put the pipeline through. This was ethnocide. They avoided the original route, which went through a Euro-American neighborhood, and put it through reservation land. And of course the pipeline is leaking now and the water is contaminated. No pipeline that carries oil or gas anywhere in the world doesn't leak. They all leak.

From my standpoint the issue of water is sacred. Essentially all of my research focuses on indigenous people and water issues, not only locally, but also around the world. That is why we were excavating at Serpent Mound this summer to look at our ancestors' use of water and water symbols. In many cases it is a major issue around the world. It is an indigenous issue because water right now is the most precious human resource on the planet. All indigenous people consider it sacred.



2,000 year old stone tablet, which was removed from the Gaitskill Burial Mound in Mt. Sterling, Kentucky. Grandmother Spider has been passed down generation after generation for thousands of years.

Grandmother Spider Who Brought Fire

Once upon a time there was no fire on the earth. Our people came from beneath the water where they lived in a cave. When the people followed the turtle up to live on this land we call Turtle Island, they experienced winter. They had never experienced cold before. How in the world are we going to survive? A piece of land that had fallen off in the distance had what we call the great white sycamore trees. These are sacred trees. When they become very large, they become hollow. At one time our people lived in these trees. The people prayed to the Creator to give us something to get through the winter. The Creator sent a lightning bolt and hit the Great White Sycamore and set it on fire. "There, fire will keep you warm." They said, "How are we going to get this fire?" We will have our most fierce warrior shape-shift and turn into an owl. The warrior shape-shifts into an owl and flies to the sycamore and lands to get the fire. The flames surge up and still to this day the owl has red eyes. The owl returns and shape-shifts back to the warrior and says, "I'm sorry. I couldn't do it." We need a younger warrior. They shape-shift their younger warrior into a black rat snake, but in those days the snakes were yellow. The shape-shifted snake swims out to the sycamore to recover the fire. The snake says, "I know, I'll crawl up the tree and capture the fire." But the fire roared up and turned the snake black and that is why black rat snakes are black today. They said, "What are we going to do? We are failing!" A little girl said, "I will bring you fire." Everyone said, "But you are a little girl. The most we could shape-shift you into is a bug." They turned her into a spider that swam across the water, as water spiders do. Instead of climbing in the tree, she went to the base of the tree. Instead of trying to steal the fire, she just took a piece of the charcoal. To keep it glowing she wove a bowl, as water spiders do, on her back and brought the charcoal back to the people.

This is Cherokee, but the Shawnee have a version as well. This is a motif found commonly on potsherds. This is a solar motif. The archaeological literature is full of interpretations. They never asked a Native person.



Helen Danser
ELDERS COUNCIL MEMBER
EAGLE CLAN MOTHER

CULTURAL IDENTITY

I was born in western Kentucky in Hopkins County and lived a couple of years across the River from Paducah in Massac County, Illinois, and then came back to Hopkins County and was raised there. My mother always told us that we had Indian blood, but during the 1940's and 50's one did not mention any connection with American Indians, much less having any Indian ancestry; to do so could have been politically and financially dangerous. Although we never acknowledged it growing up, I knew it all my life. It was something we did not talk about. We didn't know anything about how Natives lived.

We discovered my dad's family carried American Indian ancestry. None of us knew that while he was alive because it was not discussed. It has been and is a very interesting journey.

At various times during my life I have attempted to make connection with American Indian people singly or in community. The first time I tried was in 1964, my junior year at the University of Kentucky College of Pharmacy when the Surgeon General came

to recruit graduates for the U.S. Public Health Service. I wanted to go into the Public Health Service because they posted most of their new pharmacy recruits to Indian health service. I felt like I belonged there with American Indian people because I had always felt a part of me was missing. The U.S. Public Health Service would not accept my application as a resident because I was a woman. The second time I tried was when my late husband and I were planning to retire in Cimarron, New Mexico where we would volunteer at the Philmont Scout Ranch.

We were going to work part-time there, and pursue my career as a pharmacist and his as an accountant while also absorbing American Indian history. We were within about six months of doing that when he died.

We had always been taught that there were no Indians east of the Mississippi River. I had no clue that there were Indian people here. After a period of time I was able to begin making connections here in Kentucky.

INSPIRATIONAL ANCESTOR ~

I do not have an ancestor that I can trace back

in my own lineage. Having been raised the way I was raised, hiding who I am, was one of the ways that we out here suffered, because we didn't know who we were, and didn't know who our ancestors were. I have heard other Indians at conferences in the west, who were raised away from their people for various reasons, say the same thing that I felt. You don't fit in. You don't know why your speech is different or why you look different. You don't know why your eyes are slanted. You don't know why you respond to things differently. Once you find that Indian connection, it all falls into place.

Do you ever feel conflicted regarding your mixed heritage?

After my husband, Bill, died, I went to outpatient hospice counseling for bereaved persons. The hospice counselor assigned to me was of African American/Cherokee descent.

The first thing he asked me, "Are you Indian?"

For almost a year I had such a battle raging in me. We talked about that a lot. He gave me a book by Vine Deloria, *God Is Red*, and another book about diversity in America.

Now I identify myself as an American Indian when I have to give my ethnicity on legal or medical papers.

INVOLVEMENT WITH THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE ~

My first serious venture into the Indian community in Kentucky was with a small Cherokee band in Jefferson County and as a result of that got into the Unity Conference, a group of about twenty different American Indian groups in Kentucky and southern

Indiana working for the common good.

Involvement in Unity Conference led to attending pow wows across the Commonwealth.

It was at one of the pow wows that I became acquainted with my current husband, who is Shawnee and a member of the Piqua Shawnee Tribe. He invited me to attend a gathering which culminated in future meetings. I think I actually submitted my application the same day we were married on the Piqua grounds out in the arbor after Spring Bread Ceremony in 2003.

ROLE IN THE TRIBE ~

My role is shifting as would be expected in an American Indian tribe. I have learned the Piqua traditions. I was asked to be a Clan Mother for the Eagle Clan early in my membership. Tribal Mother has trusted me with the responsibility for the women's role in the sacred circle for ceremony. After several years I was invited to sit on the Elders Council.

I can't really say what my role will be. I guess the best way to sum it up would be to do whatever the people need for me to do.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ~

My spiritual practice is going to vary from day to day, depending upon what's happening. I have a little booklet of meditations written by a Cherokee woman who is a psychologist, and apparently also a Christian. I use that to start the morning at breakfast, and then have a prayer afterward. Generally that is my big prayer for starting the day, because it expands into more than blessing the food. I am praying for the church I belong to and for the Tribe. Frank

and I are affiliated loosely with a couple of other spiritual groups, one on the east coast and one on the west coast. Depending upon what's happening there, we include them in our prayers, then sometimes for individual tribal members, individual members of the other two groups, and work. At dinner that's another time for prayer. We're always thanking the Creator for each other. I find myself doing that when I'm in Lexington working, and staying where my son lives, and have the same prayer routine there with him. I've noticed that this routine seems to really make a big difference in our relationship, in how we relate to each other, how we relate to the land and how we relate to the Tribe.

LIVING IN A TRADITIONAL NATIVE WAY ~

It is difficult to live in a truly traditional manner in the dominant society with multiple responsibilities in that society. The current dominant society puts the emphasis on the individual person. The American Indian culture was communal with multiple generations living together and caring for each other. To some extent I have been able to continue the American Indian tradition in that area. I cared for my mother who lived near me until her passing; currently I care for my disabled son. I am in frequent contact with many of my clan members. The Clan is itself a family unit. We continue to grow and process at least some of our own food and use traditional foods as much as possible.

CULTURAL REVITALIZATION

SIGNIFICANCE OF CEREMONY ~

Our ceremonies are the same as going to church and having Holy Communion. It is for the Indian people, and probably nobody else will speak to this the same way. I firmly believe that God gave each people where they were planted their way of life. When I look at the Indian prophecies and stories, I see their counterpart in Christianity. If you don't have the ceremonies, you're not speaking to God. Yes, I can talk to God at home. Frank and I can have our ceremony at home. When I come here and meet with the Tribe, I am with Indian people and we are sharing our lives together. When we have ceremony we are joining our voices with each other to praise God, to thank God, to remember that we were created by God, and our duty is to worship God. It's the same thing as going to church.

Our ceremony is very different from Christian church ceremony, but it's the same. When I see the women giving the corn bread to the men, and see the men feeding the women the meat, to me that's the same thing as Holy Communion. The transaction is very similar. Now, the theology behind it is different. But our ceremony and the Christian church ceremony, I see as integral to the worship of the Creator. If we stopped doing the ceremonies, we would cease to be a people. That's what the federal government tried to do. We could not have ceremony until 1947. The United States' forbearers, the men who created it, even though

they said “All men are created equal,” forgot everything about the women, and the Indians were worse than dogs. The culture, for the American Indian people, was a spiritual culture that was in ceremony at least twice a year. They all had a Green Corn ceremony. Our Shawnee people had the Bread ceremonies, and the Green Corn ceremonies. If you take that away, it was like the time when the Babylonians sacked Jerusalem and took the Hebrew people into exile. They didn’t have their temple, and were estranged from God, because they couldn’t have their ceremonies.

All Indian culture was spiritual. The spiritual aspect was the ground work, the basis. The entire social construct was built around the spiritual component that is celebrated and re-created and kept alive through ceremonies. If we actually were able to retrieve all of that, the ceremonies would not just be here three times a year. There would be ceremonies at home. For example, an ancestor’s plate is a ceremony where a small amount of each food present is put on a plate and left outdoors as a symbolic manner of caring for the spiritual aspect of the people (feeding the ancestors). I forgot to do it at lunch today because there were too many things going on. People don’t know anything about that. I’ve learned about it through going to the traditional tribal ceremonies in another state. That is now one of my tasks to teach the people about the ancestral plate. If we were in a true cultural state, I would not have forgotten it. We would not have been able to eat until

that spirit plate had been taken care of because you feed the spirits first.

SIGNIFICANCE OF LANGUAGE ~

If you take away the language, you take away the culture. The victors in war forbid the use of the native language. To translate Native language into English loses something because English is such a harsh language. Most of the Indian languages are melodic and lilting. They don’t have linear sentence structures; the language evokes images and concepts.

I don’t have time now to try to learn either the Shawnee or my native Cherokee language simply because I have so many things to do. I don’t retain as much as I used to. I know just a smattering of the language. I can say, *keimocumelay*, which means “hello friends”. They tell us when we pray that the Creator wants to hear the words that He gave us. To learn a language one needs to be immersed in it as we all were from birth as we learned American English.

If I really were looking at the culture, I would have to look at what most of the tribes on the ‘rezes’ are doing now in terms of immersing their kids in the language.

Our teachings indicate that all the nations were given certain jobs. Our job is to take care of the earth. Our ceremonies were designed to keep this earth in balance. Because of the ceremonies we are participating in, even though we have lost so much of them, it is keeping things at least at a livable level right now. How do you instill this in young people? We are

trying to awaken that something inside them.

FUTURE VISION

I would like to see this Tribe be a living force for Indian heritage and culture by being a living, breathing tribe of people who are following, as close as we know how, our ancient teachings and ways, and that we project that out into the larger community, the larger social construct, so that everyone who sees a Piqua Shawnee will understand that this is a Tribe that is interested in and dedicated to the survival, the heritage, the protection and the teaching of the culture. *ROLE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHING NATIVE HISTORY, PAST & PRESENT* ~ What I remember all the way through school when we had history classes we were told that the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were patterned after the Iroquois League. I'm not sure whether that really was discussed when I was in school or if that is something that I learned later and it has just become such a part of my life. For the most part Indians were here when Columbus came and when the rest of the Europeans came the Indians were in the way. They did talk about the first winter, and had it not been for the Indian people the settlers would have been lost, because they could not have survived. After that first Thanksgiving – and they didn't get that Thanksgiving exactly correct – they started pushing the Indians back. That is what I remember from the formal education. There was very little actually discussed; it was just

basically that the Indians didn't like the white settlers and massacred them and they had to be destroyed and pushed out for settlement. Eventually they were all pushed west of the Mississippi River and those who weren't, were extinct.

The education system is changing to some degree in some places. Where that is changing is in those instances where we have teachers who are interested and they have Indian presenters come in.

We presented at one of the Fayette County schools several years ago and included the mobile museum for the kids to have a hands-on experience. There were two or three of us outside talking with the kids as they toured the museum. One little girl told us she was Native. She identified the South American country from which she came and the tribal group she represented. She could speak a little of the language and was so proud to share this with us. One of the teachers with the group said, "We have no Indians at this school." I just looked at her and said, "We have identified at least thirty-five kids who have Indian heritage. Some of them have smatterings of their language and yet they are denied." It is not as bad now as it was then, but it is denial. The first thing I would like to see in the classroom is acknowledgement that American Indian children are in that classroom. We have over two hundred American Indian tribes living in the Commonwealth and these children must not continue denying who they are in their school life.

NEXT GENERATION ~

A lot of the young people here belong to a couple of families. If we can keep those family members then they bring their kids up, and maybe they bring friends in. In Kentucky we have difficulty getting our people to recognize or acknowledge their ancestry. These hills are full of Native people because some of the people hid. They never got rounded up or they walked out and walked back in because while the government was very vigorous in getting them out of here, they didn't pay any attention once they got them out west so some of them came back.

To entice kids to come here we would need Nintendos, video games, computers, that sort of stuff. Hopefully these young people who are here now will grow into this culture. I know part of the family of that little boy. I've known his grandfather for a number of years through Unity Conference. He is thoroughly Indian and is teaching his kids. It is folks like that who will actually help to bring back a cultural renaissance.

The only way I can see including or engaging more kids would be to acquire our own land again where we can establish a physical place to serve the people and have dedicated space for ceremony. We need to set up a space for the kids to play traditional games and to have coming of age ceremonies. The kids, as well as the adults, need a place to live the culture rather than trying to describe it. However, this is difficult even with dedicated

land because we all have jobs, homes, and family that almost precludes what I just described.

Short of that, perhaps we can encourage more adults with kids to become involved and then provide cultural games and activities for them.

LEARNING FROM THE PIQUA SHAWNEE/EASTERN WOODLAND NATIVE EXPERIENCE & WHAT THE PUBLIC SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE HISTORY ~

Frank and I moved to Jackson County in December of 2003. Any place you move in Kentucky, unless you're in the place where you were born, you're an outsider. We are just now beginning to be seen as people of Jackson County. Frank was at the post office, or the little country store, and was being interviewed by somebody. They said, "Oh, he's that crazy Indian that lives here." Jackson County has years to observe us, to see how we live and what we do. Frankie does blacksmithing, jewelry, carpentry. He is skilled in so many hands-on type things. He knows so much about the Indian traditional survival. But he is seen as that crazy Indian. I am not sure if the larger community is willing to listen to what the Indian can actually teach about the different way of living.

Our legends say that in the end of time the Indian people will teach the larger community how to survive. I believe that that will come to pass, but I think it's going to be only then that they will learn anything from the Native community. Now that's not to say that that's

100%, but it's a small number of that larger community who are going to look at the Native construct and learn from the Native perspective. It is equally hard for the Natives to get in touch with their own culture, because of the acculturation into fear. Remnants of the people who survived in the hills of Tennessee, Kentucky, North Carolina are still living there. They've been insulated, isolated, and are still in fear. When you look at it, it wasn't until the late '40s to early '50s that an Indian in this country could own property, marry, and hold a job. It was only in Jimmy Carter's tenure that the American Indians could practice their religion. Our people may practice part of the culture, but don't know where it came from because their parents and their grandparents didn't tell them. It was unsafe to tell them.

We need to learn from the Native way, as well as the general public, because we were raised in this mainstream culture. In the Native way, in our ancient traditions, all people are equal and are connected to everything that is living. In that inter-connectedness, what I do impacts everybody I come in contact with and those who I do not come in contact with. As Don Rankin, our Ceremonial Chief, was saying in the circle, as we think and talk about things we influence everything. We are not taught that in the European construct. All of us have been raised in that construct now. You can see that reflected in the Tribe in the issues that we face. I can see it in the Kentucky Heritage Commission. We can't totally separate that

out away from us. We have to re-learn what it means to be an Indian in the cultural context. That is the really big lesson that could be learned by the entire country. When you distill it all down, if you look at the teachings of Jesus, of Gandhi, of all the great prophets who walked a non-violent path, it is the same lesson, the same message from what I can put together of my ancestors. We had our squabbles. They would play a stickball game to keep from going to war with each other.

Before 'contact' we had many years of peace after all of those journeys and lessons. We recognized the interconnectedness, and now that is lost. That is a whole spiritual concept. The Indian culture is a spiritual culture and has to be understood in that context. The Piqua are learning that. We are all struggling to recapture that. That is what we would like to gift to the country. In some of the prophecies and teachings the Red man was to take care of the earth.

We were all to come together at this particular time in history in which we are living right now. We were to share these things and respect them; neither is subservient to the other. We are all connected. Our path is to bring all of this together in harmony. If we don't, we will destroy the human race. That is why I come to ceremony. That is why I do the best I can to learn, to help, and try to live what I understand to be those teachings, and be an example. To me the ceremonies are keeping this planet from disintegration right now.

ACQUISITION OF LAND ~

In my opinion, Piqua Shawnee cannot be without a land base in the state of Kentucky. Right now, the Piqua Shawnee is the only group in the state that has identified itself, that is anywhere close to capable of being recognized by the state. It must have a land base. So we cannot afford to go one day without land. Our hope is that land will be available in Kentucky. The idea is to continue to keep Kentucky as a central location, because of the way our Tribe is situated geographically. We would like to see it on the I-75 corridor because of the various states in which our people live. Land is of most vital importance to a tribe. We were always land based. We didn't own the land, but we are the land, and the land is us. The land defines who we are. If we get the money, I think it is extremely feasible. A big issue is to get land that has some kind of a structure on it, and perhaps at least electricity.

When we acquire land again, I would like to see somebody living on it, initially a caretaker, but later on I could see some limited housing and a community garden. I would like to see a stickball court. What would entice young people now is stickball games, dice games, football –those types of things, because the games and the things that the Indians played were part of keeping balance. For example, the Cherokee community in Pennsylvania use a tug-of-war, and the women always have to win that. There is a spiritual reason. Everything we do at Green Corn is to put everything

back in balance. Men are physically stronger and this culture that we live in is a patriarchal culture. East of the Mississippi was almost all matriarchal. We have to keep that balance between the male/female. Everything has to be in balance. The games that we played taught that.

PROTECTION OF SACRED SITES ~

Oh, good grief! The sacred sites! How important is it to protect the Wailing Wall, the Temple, the Cathedral, the cemetery? The sacred sites are part of the culture. They are part of the spiritual journey. If you destroy the sacred sites, you are again destroying the people.

They are under duress every place. There are people where I live in Jackson County who tell me, "There is a burial here. There is a mound there. We don't show anybody." They tell me, but they don't offer to take me. We do not share that information with anybody. They are protected. It's the only way.

When I went to Eagle Falls for the first time, I almost cried up there. It is one of the most sacred sites for the Cherokee and the Shawnee people. It's overlooking Cumberland Falls, which in itself is a sacred site. Our ancestors held council underneath those falls. But up above is the smaller Eagle Falls. You've got to really hike to get up there to it. When you get there, it feels totally different, because that's where the people went to pray and fast, and be connected. When I saw all the trash that was there, and the larger community just tramping up there, drinking beer, it was just like if they

had gone into my church and dumped all that in the middle of the sanctuary.

The sacred sites are extremely important. That really got hammered home to me when I went out west. If you go into New Mexico and the southwestern part of Arizona, everything feels different. When you go up to Taos, the air and the land feels different. They have protected their sacred sites, except Chaco Canyon which has been pretty well desecrated.

Back here in the East, our sacred sites have been destroyed for the most part. We have to protect what's left. We have to work together to do it. That's one of the things that really disturbs me about the federally recognized tribes. Our state people and some of our unrecognized people back here have worked exceedingly hard to protect the sacred sites. They're part of our ancestry too. They have no right to come back and say they're the only ones who can protect it. They haven't done it for all these years. I understand the reasons why. Why don't they help us? We've done it. Why don't we work together to do it? We're here on site. They don't have to be here. We'll carry the burden. Just quit fighting us.

REFLECTION

LIVING IN TWO WORLDS ~

I have been blessed in many ways, because I don't think I experience the conflict as much as some other people do. The conflict for me is more internal. It's not as much of a conflict now as it was when I first knew that I had to

walk the Indian path more. I spent at least a year hating the part of me that was white, because I read Deloria's *God Is Red* and *Custer Died For Your Sins*. Those impacted me in a very dramatic way. My husband had just died. I was alone and I was Indian.

If I could split myself in half -- this part of me is white and it fought and tried to kill this other part of me. Actually that literally did happen during the Removal and immediately after, and to a greater or lesser degree, it's happening today. I try to incorporate both things together and weave them together. The conflict for me is not nearly as much now as it was ten or twelve years ago. It has gotten easier to deal with that internal conflict, because I relate to myself more as an Indian woman than I do as a mixed blood. What would I do if they drew the line, and said, "Which line are you going to step over? Are you going to step over white or red?" Would I have the courage to actually make that stand? I probably would, simply because of where I go now.

WHO IS NATIVE AMERICAN/INDIAN?
Anybody who is born in this country is a native American. That is something we always talk about when we do presentations, particularly if we're doing presentations with kids, because they will raise the question. "We've been taught to call you all Native Americans." And we say, "But you're a native American." "No, we're not." "Well, where were you born?" "Oh, I was born in Mount Sterling." "I was born in Cynthiana." "I was born in Lexington." "Okay,

where are they? Where are those towns?”
“Well, they’re in Kentucky.” “Well, where is Kentucky?” “It’s in America.” “Okay, so you are a native American.” “Oh. So, do we call you Indians?”

That worked reasonably okay until we were in a school study, and this one little kid piped up and he said, “I’m the only Indian in the room.” I looked at him and said, “You’re right. You are. We got mis-named, but that’s the name that they gave us. A lot of us will answer to American Indian.” “So, what do you want to be called?” I will usually say, “You can call me a Native American, an aboriginal, an American Indian, First People. But what we as people want to be called is who we are: the Shawnee are the Shawannanoah. That’s who we are and prefer to be called. There are probably some people in here who are Dineh, and some people in here who may be Lakota. And that’s who they are. The name generally means ‘People.’”

In all of the Indian Nations, a lot of the people stayed behind and hid, and while the government forced the people to move, once they got them across the Mississippi, they sort of forgot about them, so a lot of them walked back. Those are our ancestors. They did not want to participate in what the government was forcing, so they hid and stayed in their ancestral homelands. It has been said that those of us who stayed and those who walked back did not suffer. I very much disagree with that because we suffered greatly, just in a different way. Because we hid, we had nothing. We could

not say who we were. It wasn’t that we wanted to deny our people, but we just would not leave our ancestral homelands. As a result, we don’t fit anywhere. If I go to an Indian reservation, I say nothing about my heritage until somebody says to me, “You look,” and when they say that, then I will acknowledge who I am. For me to go into a reservation, particularly one of the Cherokee reservations, and say, “I am Cherokee,” they will say, “No, you’re not. You were not born here. You’re not on the Miller rolls, or the Dawes roll, or on the Guion rolls. No, you are not Cherokee.” I am. But again, those of us out here, off reservation, are still not capable, because of our brothers and sisters on reservations and the government, to really say who we are, why we stayed, and what we want.

It is an issue that has to be talked about. Our people here in Kentucky, not the Piqua, but in other work that I’m doing in Indian country in Kentucky, are grappling with that issue now. It has so much promise, and so much danger to really say that, and explore that, and stand up to say, “This is it.” We have everything to gain, and everything to lose. The issue is defined as racial discrimination by reservation Indians, by the U.S. government, and by the Kentucky state government.

I have to think that it must have been something like that for my ancestors when they were trying to make a stand. Are we going to do what the government says, or are we going to dig in our heels? Are we going to

make that walk, or are we going to hide in these mountains? Are we going to go out there and then walk back?

UNIQUE ABOUT THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE ~

The Piqua Shawnee probably operate the way any other tribal entity operates, in terms of its government, and how you get admitted into the tribe. A lot of people here carry old Piqua Shawnee heritage. The better question might be what is unique about the state recognized tribes? I think the answer is that we're willing to work together. We're willing to work with the federal tribes. I don't see that coming from the other side.

The Piqua may be even more unique than that, in terms of wanting to be really sure which way the wind blows before taking action, and also trying to persuade, rather than being combative. Under this leadership, we take a low key approach to get the same job done as opposed to a more direct let's-hammer-it-over-your-head approach. That fits with my personality which is not particularly combative. When I feel strongly about something, I try to persuade. That's basically the way I see this leadership working.

I think the fact that the Piqua Shawnee accept people who have blood of other tribes who are/were allies of the Piqua is a real strong point. That portrays what Tecumseh was trying to do. Being a Shawnee tribe, the Piqua would be remiss in following their own ancestral heritage by trying to be 100% exclusive,

because we did have allies, and it's important to recognize your allies. The Piqua is stronger by working with its allies.

PROUD TO BE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

There have been times when I was ready to walk away from Piqua. I am proud because of the perseverance of the people, and that would have to include my own. I know that it is very difficult for me to walk away and leave something that I believe in or struggled with. I think the perseverance of the people who are involved in making this Tribe work and function as an inspiration, as a living, breathing organism, causes me to say these are my people. Another thing that has been difficult for me, Barbara Lehmann articulated. She went back to her Cherokee heritage and said, "We have to acknowledge our blood". That has been hard for me because I'm Cherokee. I'm not proud of everything the Cherokee Nation is doing right now, but that blood is so strong. It was hard for me to say I'm Shawnee. My husband is Shawnee and I know by marriage, I'm Shawnee, so it is becoming easier for me to identify with the Piqua because I feel their support and love for what I'm doing. They are on the right path and we are all in this struggle together. More and more the message is coming, we are one; we are connected, so it doesn't make any difference what name we are. That is helping me to see with a different eye what this Tribe is literally trying to do. I think we are going to get there. I can't help feel some pride in that accomplishment. I can see where we are today

versus where we were a year ago, or the year before that. I can say I'm proud of what has happened in that time period.

RECONCILIATION

HISTORICAL RECONCILIATION WITH THE LARGER SOCIETY ~

Here I am speaking more as Chair of the Kentucky Heritage Commission. There is always a possibility that anything can and will happen. I have seen things happen that I would never have dreamed would happen. So yes, reconciliation between the original peoples of this land and the larger society can take place. In some respects it is taking place little by little now. The Piqua Tribe's reconciliation with the descendants of the Simon Kenton family is a perfect example of how reconciliation might occur. It takes dedication, work, forgiveness, and patience, as well as faith and perseverance to make it happen. In Kentucky we are working to bring reconciliation among the various tribal descendants in the Commonwealth and the Commonwealth. It is a slow, arduous, frustrating, and sometimes painful process. There are steps forward and backward. It is my thought that all the American Indian tribes will have to be reconciled with each other and all working together, including federally recognized, state recognized and non-government recognized, before reconciliation can occur within the larger society. The challenge comes back: "You Indians can't get along with each other. Why do you want to

reconcile with us?"

RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE PIQUA SHAWNEE AND THE WESTERN SHAWNEE TRIBES ~

There is always our hope of reconciliation, of mutual acceptance and understanding. Unless we all work together, all of us will go down. From the conferences and seminars I have attended, where there has been a lot of federally recognized tribal input, I'm not sure that they understand the fact that if they succeed in destroying the state tribes, and the unrecognized Indian people, there is nothing then standing between them and the federal government. When you read what's happening in Washington, regardless of the administration that's in charge, there is always that effort to get rid of the Indian people. President Obama probably was the only president in my history that looked favorably upon the tribes. There are a couple of reasons for that, and that's cultural. When you look at that particular president, his background is tribal. His disenfranchisement is the same thing that the American Indian people have experienced since Europeans landed here en masse. I think he probably had a better grasp of what it means to the tribes than any other president that we have had, from the very first to the very latest.

My personal feeling is that all of the Indian people in this nation, and that includes Alaska as well as all of South America, should put away the bickering, the jealousy, and the desire to be the only one in existence. We need to come

together or we're all going to sink together. We need to learn to be and behave as American Indian people ought to behave, and not this fighting that has always gone on among the tribes. Had our ancestors listened to Tecumseh, and to some of the other great Indian leaders and chiefs who were seeing the writing on the wall, and banded together, we would not be experiencing what we are experiencing now. This has been our big downfall as an aboriginal people.

Tecumseh's central message was that we need to come together. Tecumseh, who was a Shawnee leader, not a chief, went all over this country begging the chiefs of the tribes to come together, work together, and speak as one voice to the Europeans. For short periods of time a few tribes would come together, but the entire aboriginal population of Turtle Island did not. They continued to fight singly, and tried to preserve their own heritage. Because while all the tribes are similar, they are all different. But we could respect each other's culture, and work together. The Pueblos in New Mexico and Southern Arizona have demonstrated that beautifully. When the Pueblo community speaks, they speak as one voice.

There are three federal Shawnee tribes. Now, why cannot all of the Shawnee tribes, including the state recognized Shawnee tribe, come together and speak as one voice? Or all the Cherokee tribes? The same for everybody that is recognized within those various tribal entities, and then all of them come together in

a congress. That's what the National Congress of the American Indian (NCAI) is supposed to be. But we all continue to behave with the same fears and concerns that were instilled in us when the Europeans came and forced the Removal. We continue to suffer the generational PTSD. I believe it will take more generations than these seven to heal that. The efforts at reconciliation may help to overcome that trauma if we can transcend the on-going trauma perpetuated by the various governments on this continent.

I'm really scared of what's going to happen. I was in a NCAI breakout session in Phoenix last year where we were actually voting against a piece of legislation that the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma had persuaded the Oklahoma legislature to pass, which prevents a state recognized Indian from selling anything in Oklahoma. I take my card most places, and am recognized as an Indian. What they did was pass legislation in Oklahoma that said that wouldn't be possible. There was a contingent of us who were saying this should not be. The Indian Arts and Crafts law says that state recognized tribes have the same rights as federal tribes to sell their hand-crafted crafts. The definition of an Indian is in question, particularly the one used by the Federal Census Bureau. I heard they were saying, "Maybe it's time we re-visit and change that definition." I don't know how much influence our tribe and other state recognized tribes have at the legislative level.

I know that one of our Commissioners became the very first teacher in residence at the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian, and he's an unrecognized Indian. This is really ironic, because the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma put up \$500,000 to fund that position. At our Commission meeting he gave a report of his work at the Smithsonian. Kentucky and one of the Virginias, were excluded from any of the teacher's materials that were done. I asked if he could change that. He said, "No, it was set in concrete before I got there." They're going on the basis that by the time the Europeans really got into Kentucky and West Virginia, they had already forced the Natives out of those two states. They said that they never lived here, although we've got all types of indications that oh yes, we did.

I've been to Lower Shawnee Town, just this side of the Ohio River. One of our Commissioners actually lives on that property now, and care-takes it. The ceremonial grounds are there; you don't put ceremonial grounds in a place where you don't live. The Shawnee peoples lived in Southern Ohio and almost all of Kentucky. The Cherokee had a little section of it down in South Central Kentucky.

We are all one people, and the tribes that are federally recognized should embrace that. They should assist us, and we should assist them. We have people out here who are trying to reclaim the language. It is shameful that all our brothers and sisters on the reservation disavow us, especially when it is all over money.

It's the same issue that divided the nations back in the late 1700's up until the Removal of all Indians west of the Mississippi, supposedly. It's been perpetuated for all these years. Many of our people didn't go. Some of our people walked back, and we are the descendants of those Indians who refused to go. It's very painful for our relatives to disavow. But if the Earth holds together, then I have to believe that at some point the Shawnee people will come together as a whole. We're doing work out here, and following tradition. If the Piqua Shawnee remain committed to the goal that we have set, to being as cultural as we know how to be, to being humble and not going in there telling everybody how to do things, but standing upright with humility, then we will be recognized for who we are and what we're doing. We are not sticking our hand out to the federal government and saying 'gimme'. We're not asking for their money or for a casino. We are asking to be treated as Shawnee people with respect.

We are recognized in the State of Alabama. People know us, and know who we are. We're Piqua Shawnee, every single day that we go out and do anything. We have to live that every day.
*THE PIQUA SHAWNEE/SIMON KENTON
KIN CONNECTION ~*

I think that what the Chief and Barbara Lehmann do in Old Washington with the Simon Kenton descendants, which I do not see replicated across the nation, strengthens our position. Having done that, I can see

then what is happening in Old Washington and the reconciliation between the Kentons and the Shawnee. What guilt did the Kentons feel? What guilt did the Shawnee feel? As we come together, we can assuage any guilt that was there. We can now work for each other to make a better world. That's why I can go and help in Old Washington. Perhaps that's one of the unique things about the Piqua; if Kenton historically had that relationship before with the Shawnee, then why would they not continue a relationship with them?

SHOULD THE PIQUA SHAWNEE BE INVOLVED IN NATIONAL NATIVE ISSUES SUCH AS THE DAKOTA PIPELINE?

To my knowledge, there is no particular Tribal policy about it. But I am aware that Piqua members were at the site of the Dakota Pipeline for a brief period of time. If a Tribal member is going to be speaking about it, they need to let the Chief know.

As Chair of the Kentucky Native American Heritage Commission. I wrote a letter supporting the position of the Dakota tribal elders and the people who were demonstrating, and offering any assistance the Commission might be able to provide.



Catherine Rose-Walker

ELDERS COUNCIL MEMBER

RETIRED TRIBAL MOTHER

CULTURAL IDENTITY

My family is a combination of Irish/Scottish/German mixed with Native culture. My family never discussed our Native heritage. My family always gave women a voice, helped the less fortunate, and ate food liked parched corn, which was very different from our friends and neighbors.

My first inkling that I am part Native was when I was in high school. My paternal grandmother was very upset about growing zucchini. "I can't grow that. That is Indian food! There is no way I can have that in the garden. My neighbors will think I am Indian." She was very agitated. It was the first time I had heard references to being Indian. We had parched corn as often as popcorn. My dad knew how to cook the corn and what kind of corn to use. My 'Native-ness' was passed down with food and cultural interaction.

INSPIRATIONAL ANCESTOR ~

I would consider my grandmother, who was born in 1895, to be my most inspirational ancestor. Education has always been valued in my family. In fact she finished high school which was unusual for women at her age.

She got a certificate to teach in a one-room schoolhouse. I had interesting conversations with her around food. One of the things Grandma taught me was to make white hominy. In the fall she knew exactly which hickory trees had the large nuts, and we would gather them. She always had a garden and made cobbles and jams.

INVOLVEMENT IN THE TRIBE ~

Rick Wagar, who was already a member of the Piqua Sept of Ohio Shawnee, encouraged myself and my children to join the Piqua in 1995. Membership is strictly based on genealogy. To be a member of the Piqua Shawnee Tribe we ask that you have ancestral descent, and be able to prove it, from either Shawnee or a tribe who was allied with the Shawnee, which could be Cherokee or Delaware or Iroquois, as well as Potawatomis, and Odawa. As Barbara Lehmann says, coming to ceremony lets the public know there are Indians in Ohio, Kentucky, and here on the East Coast.

ROLE IN THE TRIBE ~

When I got elected to the position of Tribal Mother I felt I had spent my life learning

how to help my tribe. As the Tribal Mother, I was responsible to make sure the women's responsibilities were finished. There's the ceremonial responsibility and just plain old put-the-food-on-the-table responsibilities. When you have that many people to feed, it can't be just potluck. That requires some organizational methods to make sure you have enough meat, salad, drinks and ways to keep those food items safe to eat. I was in charge of the education of our youth and women plus provided a sounding board for the women about Native women's issues.

I always felt that the women were the glue. They are the foundation of the family and of the Tribe. We have so many people in the Tribe who in spite of having Native blood and Native memories, have had no chance to learn ceremonies, understand protocol, understand the duties of a clan mother or a clan chief, and how to participate. As Tribal Mother I decided what we needed was a women's handbook. When a woman comes to ceremony for the first time, and has applied for membership, she gets a copy of the handbook and then has something to take home and read. Then they understand the protocol. It makes it a lot easier to feel at home and not lost. For example, they know what the women do traditionally the day of ceremony. We prepare and spiritually sweep the ceremonial grounds. At the two bread dances we use a hoop which represents the two halves that women and men contribute to the well-being of the Tribe. Half of the hoop is

hung with agricultural seeds -- corn, beans and squash -- the Three Sisters, and they are tied in an individual red cloth bundle. The other half is hung with symbols or representations of squirrels, deer, rabbit, and turkey feathers to represent the male hunting side. The contribution of women and men is what makes the Tribe work. It's not men against women; it is the two working together, which is a real cultural difference. We don't have to hunt for food now, but the Tribe needs to understand the balance of our world.

In the Tribal Women's Handbook, the duties of the Clan Mother and the Tribal Mother are spelled out. The Tribal Mother is the leader of the women of the Tribe and the women's spokesperson in Tribal council. She is in charge of all the duties of women. She has demonstrated her ability to lead, organize, delegate, provide equal attention to those who need it, knowledge of or access to cultural and spiritual traditions of the Tribe, and maintains a patient and calm demeanor. She is responsible for organizing activities that help secure the future of the Tribe by educating the younger members through various means: for example, family camp, storytelling, singing, dancing, small group crafts, and talks at ceremonial weekends. The Tribal Mother and Head Dancer see that all ceremonial items that are the women's responsibility are ready and at the circle before ceremony. The Tribal Mother is responsible for monitoring the well-being of the Tribe both spiritual and physical. The Chief, the Second

Chief, the Ceremonial Chief, and the Tribal Mother are available to any Tribal member for help or advice that they may need, and may send them to other members who are more knowledgeable in those areas. For instance, I had a grandmother whose fourteen year old grandson asked her out of the blue, “If I want to have a coming-of-age ceremony, what do I have to do? What happens?” She calls me and then I speak to the men I know who can help take care of that. He’ll need to be talked to, because he knows he can’t just walk in two days before and have a coming-of-age ceremony. There is preparation work.

The Tribal Mother encourages leadership among the women so they will be able to carry forward the duties in her absence, or when a Tribal Mother dies.

Traditionally the Chief and the Tribal Mother cannot be a couple, cannot be married. It was normal that maybe they would be brother and sister or cousins. It might be close family relations because of the way the clan structure and hierarchy worked. They can be of the same clan. When I was first elected Tribal Mother, Rick Wagar, my adopted brother, was Chief at the time. He stepped down at Fall Bread 2004 and that was when Gary Hunt was elected. Gary was already Second Chief. The Second Chief steps in when the Chief is removed or can no longer fulfill the duties. We have not yet crossed gender roles. Clan Chiefs are male and Clan Mothers are female. Our by-laws state that the Chief, to be elected, has to have been

a Clan Chief ahead of time. There are women Chiefs that have been elected by other tribes, like Wilma Man-Killer.⁷

What was the best part of being Tribal Mother?

I wanted to educate my tribe. Our government removed children at age six to go to Indian schools or to foster homes. That happened to Natives my age.

I ran the summer camps the week before Green Corn Ceremony, on our former Tribal land. I know the things people learned, and that time to be together, changed them. It was really important, to have a chance to let people really understand and feel what it was like to be with their ancestors and work in a group together.

In 2005, the very first year, Kevin Everhart brought all his kids who were still in high school. We had teenagers sitting under the tent working on their punch quill work items for hours, even late at night. Kevin said, “I can’t believe you’ve got these kids working like that.” In 2006 Dewey Chaffin taught stomp dancing and Sandra Hankla moccasin making. Mary Dockerty taught us how to make beaded flowers, and Louie Bolinger how to bead animal and symbol patches. Every year there was hiking, fishing, gun shooting and safety, fire building, tomahawk and knife throwing, dutch oven cooking, and blacksmithing. Several of the boys made their own knives and tomahawks, which they learned to throw. The older men brought the guns, so the young got a chance to use a variety of guns. We had language lessons,

⁷ Wilma Mankiller was the first female principal chief of the Cherokee Nation.

and talks on DNA. In 2007 we had three sewing machines and made dance ceremonial outfits, men's shirts, women's skirts. We made ten skirts in three days, and six or seven shirts. Just the time we had there, the camaraderie, cooking together, everybody pitching in was special. All the Tribal members have fond memories of the time we had with our land and sorrow at its loss.

NATIVE MINDSET ~

We believe that all things in the world are alive and each has their Original Instructions from the Creator. What attracts members is the chance to have Ceremony in the way our ancestors did. There is a spiritual energy present at our Ceremonies. Our supporting Spirits see how hard we work and work with us. Our job as human beings is to be in relationship with the Spirits, to open the door or veil to the other side so our ancestors help us. I believe that a human whose heart is focused on doing the Creator's work with the help of the Spirits has no boundaries. We all remember our Original Instructions.⁸

How do we communicate to our world, whether it is a tree, rock, fire, mountain, plant, or animal? All of earth are living Spirits. In order to communicate, you must have the

⁸ The Original Instructions were passed down from the Creator on how to live a life in balance and harmony. "Part of the Original Instructions resides in Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). For millennia, Indigenous Peoples have acted as guardians of the biological diversity of the planet. They've successfully managed complex reciprocal relationships between diverse biological and human cultures, with their eyes on the time horizon of seven generations to come." *Original Instructions: Indigenous Teachings for a Sustainable Future*, Melissa K. Nelson, Editor, pp. xxi-xxii.

intention to communicate, focused but diffused, patience and persistent from a state of relaxed awareness. The Creator (God) communicates to each of us through our World around us. Our job, as humans, is to learn the Creator's language or signs and specifically focus on the meaning. Each person's signals are different but similar items come up when I hear other people's stories.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ~

My personal spiritual practices are that I acknowledge my part of the world every morning. Regardless of what time it is or what the temperature is outside when I get up I open the door, say good morning, and a prayer. I talk to the birds outside, and see how the day is arriving. I spend a lot of time checking in with what would be considered the natural world, or the outer world in the morning, every day, and acknowledging my part of being there.

In the spring, here in the East the salamanders and the frogs all wake up at the same time. I know this, because there are mass migrations down out of the woods, across the road to the creek. When I am driving home on a rainy spring night, I'm going 25 miles an hour down the road letting the headlights illuminate the little frogs so I won't kill them. I can see a rhythm to my inner life that is tied very directly to the spiritual world. For probably the last 30 years I've found the constant change of the natural world is reassuring for me.

In terms of Native practices, I grow sweet grass, tobacco, sage and we get our cedar

in Kentucky at the family farm. These Sacred Herbs are used for cleansing with smoke and water. The Cleansing can be for humans, other living animals, inanimate objects, living and work spaces and spiritual bundles and objects.

LIVING IN A TRADITIONAL NATIVE WAY ~

We pay attention to the messages that God gives us and to what we are doing in our lives. Phil works out in the woods almost every day praying and talking. Animals get a thank you in prayer when they are killed for food. I pray for any animal hit on the road. I continue to work as a healer, no matter where I am. We eat in season. We share whatever we have. We support people on their spiritual path. We live deep in the woods to have close contact with Nature. I can't live where I can't see the trees and hear the crickets at night. I can't even imagine being anywhere else my connection to the land is so strong. We know many of the spirits who live on our land. This is a healing place.

CULTURAL REVITALIZATION

LANGUAGE ~

Are we ever going to restore Shawnee in this Tribe as a functioning language? I doubt it. Will people be able to pray in Shawnee? I certainly hope so, every single person. I think it may survive as a ritual language, somewhat like Hebrew is here in the United States. Praying in Shawnee is a very emotional experience in the Tribe.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CEREMONY ~

Phil and I practice ceremony with friends at home. We have a place for a gathering so the land itself holds energy from ceremony. When you step into a sacred place anywhere in the world, most humans can feel a difference. For me, ceremony is a chance to step into sacred space with other like-minded folks and to remember and do what has been done for thousands of years. The benefits from that are tangible. Helen Danser, one of our Elders, once said to me, "I have to dance at Fall Bread because I can see the benefits in my life afterward." That is how I always felt about dancing -- not dancing just for myself or the Tribe, but dancing for every ancestors who has passed, and who becomes present there with me. Ceremony provides a heightened experience, due to the amount of people, together with intention. A good metaphor would be if you have one sparkler in your hand it's enjoyable, but if you have fifty people with sparklers, then you have a ceremony and a bigger, more visual, more physically encompassing experience.

COMING OF AGE CEREMONY FOR YOUNG WOMEN ~

We have coming of age ceremonies for young women. It is our way to acknowledge the transition from girl to woman. This is done in the year following her first menses. Once they've talked to me about it, I ask the girls to spend the time, often months, thinking about what it means to be a woman. The Ceremony

is at Green Corn or Spring Bread. During the Ceremonial morning all women present participate. We smudge our new woman and her new clothes. I ask each woman to have a few sentences about what they think is important for this young girl. Then they speak quietly to the new woman. None of us can define what kind of a woman she is going to become. We put a blanket down and then she steps in as a girl and puts on a new set of clothes and steps out as a woman. There is some washing of the hands and feet. Usually that day, she is the head woman dancer.



*After Coming of Age Ceremony for Amelia Willis.
Photo: M. Catherine Rose Walker (former Tribal Mother), Amelia Willis, and Anita Pennington, Tribal Mother.*

FUTURE VISION

I believe our ancestors want us to succeed. I'd love to see us have a piece of land with a museum and a library, a place for people who want to know and understand who the Shawnee

were, and who they are now.

I am very happy that people seem to step into the place and the responsibility when someone has to step down from a Tribal position. I've always felt like God has us in his Hand and is taking care of us. We have gathered culture, songs, and ceremonies and teach them to our new members. We have been having ceremonies regularly for more than twenty years. It's wonderful.

ROLE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHING NATIVE HISTORY, PAST & PRESENT ~

History is written by the winners. My own exposure was to fictional writings mixed with real facts by authors including Conrad Richter, Alan Eckert, and James Thom. In 7th grade I had Ohio history, but very little mention of Shawnee, Mingo, Delaware, and Miami Indians. My own home town was the site of numerous Indian villages and Mt. Pleasant. *Forest Rose*, a fictional account of a white captive rescued by frontiersmen, is considered valid extra reading in the school curriculum. Our education system seems to be interested in making sure our kids know everything about Europe and what happened there and almost nothing about North, Central or South America. It wasn't until I was a re-enactor that I read non-fiction, foot-noted, scholarly books about the Northwest Territory and the people who lived there. It is up to the individual person to become well-informed, by reading books like *Lies My Teacher Never Told Me* by James W. Loewen, and *1491* by Charles C. Mann.

NEXT GENERATION

What I love, and what we have in the tribe, is grandparents bringing grandchildren. We do have teenagers who come with parents. My concern is trying to keep the Tribe viable.

LEARNING FROM THE SHAWNEE & EASTERN WOODLAND NATIVE EXPERIENCE ~

Natives always allowed individuality. It is well documented in early U.S. history of people crossing sexual-defined roles. Individuals, who are different from the norm, can have special powers. Chief Cornstalk's sister, called the "Grenadier Squaw"⁹ by the whites, fought in battles. Medicine people may be heterosexual, gay, or transsexual. Men with spiritual responsibilities in the tribe had choices about going to battle. Villages grew and diminished depending on the hunting, field fertility, location and atmosphere in the village. Shawnee families and or clans migrated together all over the east. There is the balanced partnership between men and woman. Traditionally, the women owned the children, house, fields and agricultural products raised in the fields. There were many rich Native women who sold food to traveling white men and soldiers. In white society, only recently have women acquired any rights to property. Men owned their guns and clothes. They balanced out the field work of women by hunting for meat and helping clear the fields. Men were normally the Chief or head of a village, but there were exceptions where

⁹ Nonhelema, Chief Cornstalk's sister, was a warrior woman reported to be over 6 feet tall.

women were in charge. Benjamin Franklin used the Native balance of power as an idea for our government based on his observations of the Iroquois and their confederacy.

WHAT THE PUBLIC SHOULD KNOW REGARDING THE HISTORIC ROOTS OF NATIVE SURVIVAL ~

. There was enough damage done with wars and the taking of the land, but the most devastating was the germ warfare. It probably took less than 10 years before Natives realized that the diseases came from contact with sailors on the boats. I am talking about before Jamestown, before 1603. Hernando de Soto, who landed in Florida in 1539, spent the winter in what is now Tallahassee, Florida. He went across the southern United States towards Mexico with men, pigs, and horses. Their poop/scat left parasites, animal disease and human disease on the land. In 1678, one hundred twenty years later, Robert de LaSalle went down the Mississippi. The large Indian towns documented in De Soto's journals were no longer there. I'm a microbiologist by education so I find this information really interesting. Germ warfare happened first, which left many abandoned areas of land. In 1620, the Pilgrims were able to move into a village with houses and storage pits full of food and fields cleared. Natives were dead or had left. The early massacre in 1630 in Massachusetts, shown in a 2009 television episode of *We Shall Remain*, happened because the whites knew there was stored food. Due to

hunger and superior weapons, Pilgrims attacked the village and stole the stored food.

The Shawnee tribe was on the east coast in the 1500's near the Susquehanna River. There is a town named Pequea, Pennsylvania on the river, just south of Lancaster. By the 1620's, the Shawnee had moved into the Ohio Valley. It takes many weeks to walk or ride a horse from the east coast over the Appalachians. My ancestors were smart! The incubation time for measles was(7-21 days), chicken-pox(10-21 days)and small pox(7-19 days); the move across the Appalachians was to get away from the germ-filled white invasion. By the early 1700's in Ohio, remnants of allied tribes were banded together trying to survive. Pontiac's rebellion only left three forts on the Ohio side of the Appalachians. Indians were fighting for their homes which were being invaded. Villages were constantly moved to avoid battles. Moving a village is a lot of work for men and women; new fields, new houses, and ceremonial areas had to be made. The need to hunt for food occupied men's time in the winter; fighting was usually in the spring through the fall.

After the French and Indian War,1756 the British Government knew germ warfare worked. Angry at Indians for taking sides with the French, they passed out small pox blankets at Fort Pitt. By the 1780's Natives were angry. "Not only have you taken our land, but you bring death and disease among our people." The Prophet, Tecumseh's brother, in 1805 preached that the Indians should avoid all white

trade items and go back to traditional ways. Staying away from "whites" completely was good for Indian health.

There had always been Indian warfare, warring tribes took prisoners of women and children and adopted them. When Indians engaged in raiding and warfare against the whites, they took captives. Most captives were given over to the women in the tribe, to replace dead relatives or for slaves. However, white Europeans attacked villages killing everyone, even babies.

Most tribes, in the eastern United States were matrilineal. The women owned the fields, their houses the village site and controlled how they were used. Women's Council and Men's Council jointly decided when the entire tribe went to war and happened to captives. There is an interesting written report, of the early dealings of the Indians with William Penn. His translator was talking with one of the Indian men and said, "I notice every time you come to negotiate, you bring this woman with you. Why?" The Indian man said, "Women see and understand things differently than men and we want to have a balanced picture." When white women captives were adopted, they soon realized they had more control of their lives and their possessions than white women did at that time. Many white women captives chose to stay. Mary Jemison's story is documented in a book that she dictated at the end of her life: *The Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison* by James E. Seaver, originally published in 1824.

It is important to remember the Vikings were here for 400 years from 900 A.D. to 1300 A.D. There are documents telling of green-eyed Natives in the early 1500's. There were mixed children from women captives and from white trader and Native women marriages. Traders found a marriage with Native women brought many clan and family connections that were beneficial for business profit. These mixed blooded children would have had more immunity to "white" diseases .

The designation of "full or mixed blood" was designed by the U.S. government based on the exterior color of a person compared to a brown paper bag. There was no DNA in the 1800's. Paternity in a matrilineal culture was not important. The government's interest was to eliminate Indian people, as tried with warfare, genocide, germ warfare and finally declaring that "blood quantum" was important. The loss of culture was so devastating. Elders were the

depository of culture. Elders and the young were the most susceptible to germ warfare. There are stories of sacred objects being buried soon after Removal/trails of tears (all eastern tribes were removed), because no one living in the tribe remembered the ceremony and how sacred items were used. The Native community has suffered a lot of cultural destruction.

PROTECTION OF SACRED SITES ~

White people don't view Indian sites as sacred sites. Many of the mounds were destroyed. Serpent Mound has meteorological and religious significance. I am so glad it is saved and protected. I have spent many hours at Serpent Mound praying. Native people honor the sacred sites, even if they've been allowed to completely go back to nature. Natives know their sacred sites.



*Serpent Mound:
Effigy mound representing a snake with a curled tail created by the Fort Ancient people of southern Ohio.*



Ancestral Algonquian burial mounds at Fort Ancient, Ohio, a site which is sacred to the Piqua Shawnee.

REFLECTION

LIVING IN TWO WORLDS ~

A childhood friend of my younger sister asked me to do something for her mother's funeral. Her mother had this big collection of arrowheads and was so taken with the outdoor drama, *Tecumseh*, and fairly certain of some Native blood in her family. In the Native community they would expect me to show up in my ceremonial clothes, but in a white funeral home, I asked what exactly she wanted. No ceremonial clothes, so I wore my silver and sang Pieyo at the beginning of the funeral ceremony to the four directions. This song calls in God and the Helping Spirits to bless everyone and be present during the funeral. I didn't want her to be embarrassed. I wanted to do something that was suitable for what she was asking in the white world, and yet be true to my own feelings too. Later she said to me, "I can't tell you how many people said having that one piece made a huge difference." This is how we get re-unification between the races, being kind to each other.

My grandkids' friends say you cannot be in our house and not understand that we are Native. In Southeastern Ohio, there are all kinds of mixed bloods. Most do not want to talk about their Native blood.

WHO IS NATIVE AMERICAN/INDIAN?

That's really tough. If you've lived on this continent with your family, and you call this home, aren't you native to America? How many years does it take -- 200, 500 or longer? I do

believe that there is a definite need for cultural teachings or understandings. Our government used brown bags to say what percentage of Native American you were. Now with DNA, we know who has genes and who doesn't. Does Native DNA make you Native? There were a lot of people who were declared not Native because they weren't pheno-typically the right color. Our government would like to have Natives fade into the past. The whole question of who is Native and who is not Native is cultural and not all DNA. I think it depends on where your heart is. As a Tribe we require genealogical proof of Native ancestry to be a Tribal member. I have run into people who are more Native culturally than federally recognized Natives I know.

UNIQUENESS OF THE PIQUA

SHAWNEE ~

I think what is unique about us is that we are very accepting of new members. We are surviving and continuing. I feel like that is because we made huge efforts to make sure our ancestors are here and connected with us. We respect each other and the land. We pray for the Piqua to continue having a tribe and for protection. You can't just do ceremony. You have to have a true heart and love for humanity and each other to be able to go on. I think the Piqua have done that.

PROUD TO BE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

Many Natives were taken at age six to boarding schools or to foster homes. I know women my age who suffered those things. It will take

a couple of generations to help deal with the trauma. Many Native people tried to pass or dropped all 'Native' encumbrances in order to survive. Our job is to restore what we can. Native culture, specifically Shawnee, will survive a little longer. The earth can survive without people; we cannot survive without Her. Native people lived North America for thousands of years. We did cause extinctions and changes, but the earth was cared for. Many of those things have changed since 1492, especially the number of Natives.

FEDERAL RECOGNITION

I am not in favor of federal recognition. Alabama state recognition is wonderful. I am happy for the scholarships. It would be nice to get some grants. There is not a good record of the federal government taking care of Native people and their land.

HISTORICAL RECONCILIATION

WHAT WOULD RECONCILIATION BETWEEN NATIVE PEOPLE AND EURO-AMERICANS LOOK LIKE?

In Australia the government made a public apology to the Aborigines for removing kids from their families and taking them to boarding school. I would like the United States to do that. The United States engaged in germ warfare against the Indians; I would like an apology for that. It is time for the Department of the Interior to allow the tribes to manage their own affairs. The federally recognized tribes

should have self-determination and control of their money and land. The tribes will do better than the Federal Government that has leased oil, mineral and grazing rights of tribal land cheaply and then misspent or lost much of the money held in trust.

The Indian Religious Repatriation Act of 1990 has allowed many tribes to re-acquire ceremonial and religious objects that were taken from them. Many articles from here in the East were acquired before the American Revolution and are in European museums and they are not returning these items. Museums have moved to using models instead of real bones on display. The bones are still in storage and should be re-buried. I would like to see state and federal governments treat mounds and Native artifacts as treasures and protect them from looting and really punish looters. These mounds and other sacred sites are religious places just like a cathedral. There is a golf course in Newark, Ohio over an extensive mound complex. The "owners" think one day a month is an adequate amount of time for Natives to use the site. Mt. Rushmore was carved on a sacred mountain. Natives who want to visit the back side for ceremony are unable to get permits. Serpent Mound in Ohio has very strict rules about what can be done there in terms of ceremony. Who should have rights to these sites? Why shouldn't Natives control these sites? They were built by our ancestors. Because they are on lands taken in treaties they should stay in 'white control'? Our

modern government could change the right of access to these sites for ceremony.

When the history books contain the true facts about the Indian /white interaction in this country our society will know what happened in the past and there will be a correction. The only people who understand are the historians who have researched the time of white settlement in this country. There is a lack of education around Native culture in our society. Today you would never hear someone say the “n” word or other racial slurs or expect the finger or other hand gestures to be tolerated in society. Yet the “tomahawk chop” for the Atlanta Braves or calling my husband “chief” and “Cochise” at work, or calling me a “squaw” at a living history event is considered okay or a joke. The worst prejudice is the one you don’t even know you have.

*IS THERE A POSSIBILITY OF
RECONCILIATION WITH THE WESTERN
SHAWNEE TRIBES?*

I do not think reconciliation among various Shawnee tribes will happen. The split was more than 250 years ago. I would agree that we are each individual and not the same. Those who are in the West do not know the land here. We all have bloomed where we were planted.



Phillip Lee Rose

CULTURAL IDENTITY

I grew up in Carlisle, Kentucky, about thirty miles east of Lexington. Everybody knew everybody. There's a sign outside of town, "The little town with the big heart". We always said, "The little town with the big mouth", because everybody knew everybody else's business.

I didn't grow up in a Native traditional community. Both sides of my family denied it as long as they could, and both finally have admitted it. Even my dad, in this last couple of years admitted that there was Cherokee on his side. My mom's side is Chickamauga Cherokee and Shawnee.

INSPIRATIONAL ANCESTOR ~

The closest one I had was my mother's mother, who was raised hand to mouth, so to speak. She had a knowledge more of nature, and taught me some things, and that it was okay to be proud of being a Cherokee. She taught us to respect nature and take care of it.

INVOLVEMENT WITH THE PIQUA

SHAWNEE ~

Katie Walker belonged to a re-enactment group, which is how we met. Her kids seemed to be

interested in it so she started taking them. We still do it but not as much as we used to. I still belong to a couple different groups. I've got a lot of friends all over the country because of that. In years past I used to do a lot of battle re-enactments. Now that I'm older it's a lot harder on me than it used to be -- running around in 90 degree heat, shooting a muzzle loader all day and doing hand-to-hand combat re-enactments.

When Katie and I decided to get married, she was already a member of the Piqua. That's how I ended up joining the Piqua. The Piqua name comes from the Piqua village around Springfield, Ohio. I always felt I had a Shawnee connection anyway. My family's oral history was basically that we belonged with the Chickamauga Cherokees and a past grandfather married a Piqua woman.

I'm a mix, most of us are. Here in the east, even in the 1700's, there was a lot of Indian blood mixed in with the Scotch-Irish, English, French, Spanish and Dutch traders and the captives who were absorbed. I'm Irish, English, Dutch, Shawnee and Chickamauga.

ROLE IN THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE~

I was head male dancer for three or four years. I've since passed that honor on. I'm a member of the Copperhead Society, a warrior society for honorary protection for chiefs and elders. I've danced and sometimes sang in ceremony. I've taught eighteenth century culture and traditions. When Katie was Tribal Mother, I felt responsible to help her. We used to spend three or four days at Green Corn, cleaning, mowing, building, shopping, wood cutting for ceremony. Katie is the medicine person and the healer and I'm her supporter.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ~

Katie and I are both pretty strong spiritually as far as really being connected to the past. I've had past life experiences as a Shawnee. I have strong connections to things that happened years ago. A lot of that I've incorporated, as much as I can, in my belief system today. I'm at ease with other people's belief systems; I don't disregard anybody's. You've got to believe in something. If you don't have anything, you're really lost.

When I pray I use a pipe, not any sort of ceremonial pipe. It's not that the pipe itself is a sacred thing; it's your thoughts and prayers going up in smoke to the Creator. I try to live ceremony. I'm open to the spirits and the Creator. You don't have to do a ceremony to feel the presence. It's there all the time, so you have to be spiritual in a way all the time too.

We have our own little stomp ground there at the house, and a set way of doing things.

Some of it is Creek, Shawnee, Cherokee, probably Iroquoian. Most stomp grounds have their own set of traditions. We talk to the ones who participate regular and say, "Okay, this is how we do it. They may not do it the same way in Oklahoma, or down with the Poarch Creeks, but this is right now." It's more of a social stomp, but people do get something out of it.

Thousands of years ago, however far back you want to go, the reason our spirituality or religion evolved with getting by in the forest and the woods and digging with nature, because that's where our subsistence comes from. My personal spirituality – I'm in tune with the woods. You don't have to have an altar or a ceremonial ground to talk to the Creator and the Spirits.

LIVING IN A TRADITIONAL NATIVE WAY ~

I'm not just Native four times a year down here in Kentucky when we gather for ceremony. In the Eastern woodland societies everybody always comes together at a ceremonial ground and stomp ground. If for some reason we couldn't come down here, we can do Spring Bread and Green Corn at home.

When our grandchildren moved in with us we promised the spirits that we would teach them Native ways, earth ways, and living with the woods to the best of our abilities. Mother Earth will straighten you right out if you think you're in control. It's more acknowledgement of the land around us. We take care of the wildlife. We're trying to re-establish older

plants that used to be here in our part of the country and get rid of invasive species. Living traditional mainly involves living in harmony with your environment and your land, and not trying to harm it. You're part of it, not in control of it.

Katie and I are both practicing shamanists. Shamanism is basically you believe that everything is alive – the rocks, the grass – everything has a spirit. You can talk to it. Everything is a living being around you. That goes back to what I said about the acknowledgment of our land. We're trying to be part of it. We're co-existing with everything around us. In modern times that is a lot harder. When I hit the driveway I try to leave all my work and my modern stuff in the car somewhere. When I'm home, I'm home. I don't like to leave and go back into town. I'm just content.

There are a couple of Tribal members who live close to us who can't make it down to Kentucky much anymore. Since they are Tribal members we consider them family so we do spend time with them. They are one of the people I shot deer for last year. This member couldn't hunt. I said, "Well, I'll go out and get you something. I'll gut it and skin it and quarter it out and bring it to you." If you got tribal members close to you, the least you can do is keep in contact with them. If you are in an area where you have some tribal members, then everybody there needs to take care of one another. That's one way of community. That's

the only way I think it is going to work.

CULTURAL REVITALIZATION

To me, ceremony, tradition, family, whether clan or blood, are important. Social times, fellowship and joking with each other are important. Language is important, but I think we will have a hard time reclaiming it.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CEREMONY ~

To be Shawnee, that means Fall Bread and Spring Bread. That's what makes us Shawnee. We're different than anybody else. Yeah, we do Green Corn. A lot of people do Green Corn.

For me, as a hunter, I feel like I need to come to Fall Bread. In years past, I've had good success when I've come to Fall Bread, because it's the start of the male hunting year and I'm getting a little help from my ancestors in the spirit.

FUTURE VISION

We've never had a lot of young people with family coming. We're not all living together in a tribal community where everybody is an auntie and a grandma. We can't have that because we're scattered. Younger people with small kids are too busy working.

We're a pretty traditional tribe because we're always bickering and fighting about something or other. You go back through the history and that's why the Shawnee moved around so much, because they couldn't get along with one another. There are splits all through history. I personally go to our

gatherings for ceremony. I practice our religion at home, not just four times a year. I would like to see more of our Tribal members think about and practice the old ways.

I consider myself a traditionalist, but in the old times our traditions were always changing. The Shawnees took a little of this and a little of that. If they liked it they incorporated this dance or this ceremony in their ceremonies so things just constantly evolved. We're a young tribe. A lot of people don't realize we do it this year one way and we might change it next year. We're still evolving. Traditions never stay the same. They grow, drop, pick up something and constantly change. They did in the 1700's and before. When Tecumseh was around, he started dances that he picked up from other tribes. Other tribes used some Shawnee dances. We're scattered here in the east. There is nothing we can do about it. We're not going to all relocate here and leave our families and places where we grew up.

I tell Tribal members that if you can't make it down to Kentucky, have your own Green Corn ceremony. It's not where or even how you do it, it's the doing it. I mark that with any ceremony. If you were waving your arms a certain way or dancing a certain way or you can't sing a lick or shake a rattle or whatever, it's the act of and your intentions. To me, intentions goes a long way.

*ROLE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHING
NATIVE HISTORY, PAST & PRESENT ~*
Maybe it gets better every year. Maybe! People

need to know our true history. They need to know we are still here! We are their neighbors. Where I grew up, there was a 1782 battle, The Battle of Blue Licks. Daniel Boone and Simon Girty were both involved. The settler militia from Boonesboro, Harrodsburg and other Kentucky settlements were ambushed and defeated. Written history and schools lean toward the savage, bloodthirsty Indians butchering the militia. You never hear the Indian side, fighting for their lands against a government who lies and breaks treaties. You just hear the Indians were the bad guys.

NEXT GENERATION ~

Young couples with kids are usually too cash poor and busy and not as committed as somebody older. I really don't know the answer. Even Katie and I haven't been able to bring our grandkids, due to our duties, as of yet to the ceremonies in Kentucky, and our own kids aren't really interested anymore. It's hard for all our young people. When they get old enough to go to college and start a new job, that's what they have to do to just survive and get by.

*LEARNING FROM THE SHAWNEE/
EASTERN WOODLAND NATIVE
EXPERIENCE ~*

You are more humble because if you get too big for your britches, you have tribal elders who will dress you down and set you straight. You are part of your clan, your tribe, the region where you live. That is hard for some people who have never experienced it. It lets you know that there is more out there than the me- me-

me generation. You can be content with a lot less. The electric goes out – what are we going to do? When the sun goes down, go to bed, it's all you can do. You can sit there and pray for the electric to come back on so you can watch some show on TV, but you don't need it. We lose our electric because we are in the woods. The wind blows and trees are down. It's no big deal.

Some of the history on TV is not quite right, a lot of stereotype stuff. We like to show people what it was like. Katie and I, plus other Tribal members do show and tell and talks at our local schools. We talk about cultural life ways from the 1700's and our modern belief systems. We want to let people know we are still here and not just in the past. We talk about why events happened and ask, "What would you do? Hollywood did Native people an injustice for so long. A lot of people take movies at face value. It's getting a little better because they are using Native advisors on culture and dress.

ACQUISITION OF LAND ~

I wish the Piqua had a permanent place where everybody's energy, intention, and goodwill is put in there, and it holds it. Goodwill and intention in an area where you do ceremony does make a difference. I don't like to say magical, but if you're open to everything around you, you will feel it. It takes a while to build up.

I would love to see a community center with a nice kitchen, running water, toilets, heating and air-conditioning for elders and rooms for those who can't camp. We have a

large population of Shawnee and Cherokee people in these mountains and I'd love to see them come into the Piqua and reclaim their heritage!

PROTECTION OF SACRED SITES ~

Sometimes it's futile, in some cases and some places but when you can, you need to protect sacred sites, because if you don't, they're not going to be there. It is going to get bulldozed, or something is going to get built there, and then it's not a sacred site anymore; it's a McDonald's. The Shawnee, a lot of times voted with our feet, and moved all over. We would separate about different issues and some would go this way, and some that way. We just took the ceremonies with us. They were what was sacred to us. We could have ceremonies here, and there, not just that one spot. Yes, that certain spot builds up prayer the more times a ceremony is held there, but wherever we went, we kept our ceremonies, especially the Bread Dances.

REFLECTION

LIVING IN TWO WORLDS ~

My family didn't practice Native beliefs at all when I was growing up. My daughter does, but my folks don't. When I was first started on this road, they didn't understand. They've kind of finally come around, but they might look at me funny because I've got earrings and necklaces on. I don't worry about it. I don't care if somebody gives me a funny look, but it hurts me some if the family doesn't accept it as much.

At work, I was the token Indian for a long time until I got asking around. I said to some of the black guys, "I know y'all got some Indian blood somewhere." One's grandma was Cherokee. Another's granddad came from Virginia, and was Pamunkey. Another, whose last name was a Lumbee or Melungon type surname, said "I've got some family members that look blacker than me, some that are white with blue eyes, and some that look like Natives." After that, at least with those guys, I didn't feel so much alone.

WHO IS NATIVE AMERICAN/INDIAN ?

How I've always looked at it, a Native American has the blood line, whether distant or not. You have to have some blood connection. But being an Indian is a frame of mind, and it's how you look at the Earth, and deal with everything around you -- not change it, but be in it.

UNIQUE QUALITY OF THE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

We're pretty resilient. We keep getting knocked down, get back up and keep on coming out of the smoke and the fire again, and start all over. We don't have no give up in us. We may not be doing everything just exactly perfect and right to please everybody, but we're still trying. It's hard trying to keep a band together like ours when we're all spread out. It's easy to stay together when everybody lives in one of those small communities. We're in better shape than we've got a right to be. People sticking it out, so to speak.

PROUD TO BE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

Being Piqua and being Native I get that connection and being in tune with the woods.

FEDERAL RECOGNITION

Personally, I don't want federal recognition. I think the government has done enough to us.

HISTORICAL RECONCILIATION

Katie and I both have done historical re-enactments. We've talked to the public about how things really were, and that the Hollywood and TV version is not accurate, and being Native how we really feel about things that have rubbed us the wrong way. People do listen, and it's like they've never heard the Native side before. I think in a small way that is reconciliation. We're not the only ones that do it.

We didn't have a problem talking with the public. I've had public and newspaper people sit down in my camp and just talk. It all comes back to being honest, and telling how things were and why. I'm not a 'BS-er' like some people are. I tell what I know and if I don't know, I don't make it up just so I could be talking. We always did reconciliation to some degree. We were just educating, but it falls in that same category.

Since doing some of these interviews, I got hurt at a re-enactment. I had two back surgeries and am now disabled. I can't do all the things I use to. But, I'm still bull headed enough to try.



J.S. Collins

CULTURAL IDENTITY

My parents wanted to make sure that my siblings and I were connected with who we were as a people, and where we came from. From the time I was old enough to travel, and all through my teens, I spent every summer immersed in my family's traditional culture. Since then, through my life, I've participated in traditional ceremonies within that cultural spectrum. That's been my realm of experience.

I was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, and was raised in southern West Virginia in a small town called War, in McDowell County, a very small coal mining town, less than 800 people. I actually still live there. Both sides of my family are Native. My mother's side is Cherokee, Patawomeck, Pamunkey, and Cheraw; my father's side is Saponi and Cherokee. We were told by some of the older generations that you don't talk about this, because something bad is going to happen. They're going to load you up and send you to Oklahoma. There was still that stigma of The Removal. If I remember correctly, the actual ability to remove was still in effect well into the latter half of the last century. I know within West Virginia, it was

illegal until 1964 for Native Americans to own land. My family always knew who we were, and never lost our identity. Our clan affiliation has always been part of that. We have an unbroken chain of clanship in my family, and that's an incredibly rare thing with a lot of Native families.

My family is on the wrong rolls for enrollment with any of the federal tribes, and any of the other groups. We're like the large majority that fly under what the Bureau of Indian Affairs calls Category Number 4 Cherokees. The first three categories are the three federal tribes. The Bureau of Indian Affairs decided that there are Cherokees that meet different criteria for enrollment, they are either enrolled within the federal tribes or they are Cherokees that do not meet that criteria. To some degree it is blood quantum, because even under Category 4, with high enough blood quantum and proper documentation, you can get a CDIB card through the Bureau of Indian Affairs. A lot of people just don't know that or, choose not to.

Culture is very important to my family.

For example, I don't do my hair this way just for coming to ceremony. That's how I keep my hair 24/7. It's a Southeastern traditional style that was worn by two of my tribal heritages; the Saponi and the Cherokee both wear their hair like this at different points in life with different meanings. One aspect of it is that I'm not 100% a young man, but I'm still young enough to go to war if need be. But the other connotation is that I'm a man of age, and that this is how I'm showing that. I want my daughter to see that. I'm descended out of five different tribes, but my Cherokee influence is more present in my life because that's what I was raised with.

INVOLVEMENT WITH THE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

I have some cousins who are members of the Tribe. I was invited to Spring Bread in 2013 to meet with everybody and basically see what I thought. After a while I decided that this is the right place for me. After my initial time coming, I thought about it a lot, and talked with my mother and other members of my family. I decided that the Piqua is probably the best fit for us, because unlike a lot of other groups, they strive to keep their traditions. They know who they are and have less internal issues and problems than a lot of other tribes.

The Cherokee and the Shawnees traditionally have had a long, long history together, not just in traditional story, but also in documented fact. Throughout history they have always acted like brothers, fought like siblings

do, and then made up and fought against other people. It's like, "We can fight amongst ourselves, but you better not pick on my sibling, because then you've got us both to deal with." I think that's really the best way to categorize and explain that relationship.

My family spread throughout East Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio and West Virginia by way of North Carolina and Virginia. My family was Lower Cherokee. That term Lower Cherokee applied to certain members of the over the hill faction of the Cherokees who were in East Tennessee, and were driven south into Alabama and Georgia. This faction disagreed with the most Cherokees on how to deal with certain things after the American Revolution. They disagreed with land concessions. Lower Cherokees were very strongly allied with the Shawnee at that point. I have to make the distinction. It wasn't the historical Cherokee Nation proper; it was the Lower Cherokee faction, what became known as the Chickamauga Cherokees, named after Chickamauga Town.¹⁰

¹⁰ The first joint military action between the Cherokees and the colonists against the Shawnees living on the Ohio River was undertaken and went right in front of the house I grew up in. That area was pivotal in American history at one time. That was during the early years of the French and Indian War. Twenty years later, Shawnees and Cherokees in mixed bands were running raids in that region together. The creek that runs right in front of my house in West Virginia is called War Creek. It was named after an incident that happened at the mouth of the creek where this family of men by the last name of Harmon, got into a skirmish with a mixed band of Cherokees and Shawnees at the mouth of that creek. Also within that county, just a couple of miles over the mountainside from where my house is, there is a place called Maxwell Gap, that was named after a man named Maxwell who was killed there when Mary Ingles Draper's grandchildren were taken by the Shawnee.

A large contingent of those Cherokees allied themselves with what became known in history books as the Northwestern Indian Confederacy, which the Shawnees belonged to, as well as a lot of other tribes.¹¹ There was a lot of conflict going on in Southwestern Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee, with raids being run against the early settlers in those areas who were encroaching on tribal lands. These raids were composed of mixed bands of Cherokees, Shawnees, Delawares, Mingos, and some Senecas -- basically, whoever was in a particular town when they were getting ready to run a raid. Whatever warriors were there decided, "Okay, we're going."

INSPIRATIONAL ANCESTOR ~

I don't admire one ancestor more than the others; that is like asking a parent to pick their favorite child or to ask a child to pick their favorite parent. I respect and look up to all of them; without them I wouldn't be here. All of them had to make hard choices to ensure the survival of our family and heritage.

ROLE IN THE TRIBE ~

Something I was taught from a very early age, coming from my background of being culturally connected, thanks to my parents, when you are a member of a tribe, or are accepted into a community, you don't go to that community with your hand out and say, "What can you give

¹¹ The Northwest Indian Confederacy, composed of many Eastern Woodland tribes, including the Shawnee, Cherokee, Delaware, Miami, Odawa, and others, was involved in a long frontier struggle in the Ohio Valley with the white invaders for the control of their Native homelands, from the French and Indian War (1763-64) to the Battle of Fallen Timbers, the final major battle, resulting in the defeat of the Confederacy in 1794.

me?" You put your hand out and say, "What can I do to help lift this community up?" You have to have that mindset within tribal communities, because as Native people, our whole existence is defined by being humble, by looking out and doing what is best for our community, and not worrying about ourselves. My role as far as the future of the Tribe is whatever the Tribe asks of me within reason of course. I'm not there to push myself into any position, or take on something more than what is asked of me or needed of me. It's solely, "What do my people need?"

I started out as a professional artist, and worked my way into the publishing business. Now the company I own does publishing, video editing, basically anything to do with the entertainment spectrum. I have the utmost intention of using my abilities to the benefit of the Tribe. If it's something they ask of me, I'm going to step up and do my best.

Recently I took the initiative to create an illustrated coloring book with all the clan animals, and their names in Shawnee and English, solely based on the fact that there was a need for it.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ~

I'm guilty of being lax some days, and that's a consequence of unfortunately not getting the proper amount of sleep. If I'm awake before sunrise, I tend to go out and face the East. If I'm close to water, I will go to water and say a prayer, facing the East and welcome the sun-up. If not, then I will use my pipe and send

up smoke. Now, the pipe I don't do on a daily basis. That's an every once in a while deal, because I'm not much of a smoker.

LIVING IN A TRADITIONAL NATIVE WAY ~

Asking this question is like asking a fish "How do you go about being a fish?" It's funny because I don't really think about it. I just do, I strive to retain and pass on my traditions to my children, that's all really needs to be said.

CULTURAL REVITALIZATION

Language, culture, history, and tradition: it all goes together. You cannot have one without the other, and every bit of it is important to pass on. We cannot lose any of it. We cannot lose our traditions, our language, our culture. We have to hold onto it as if it's our child, our baby. It's something that defines us as a unique and distinct people. It separates us from other Native peoples. The way we do things, the way we say things in our language is our world view.

SIGNIFICANCE OF LANGUAGE ~

I'm more familiar with the Cherokee language than I am with the Shawnee language at this point; that's something I'm working on. In the Cherokee language, the word, *kamama* (*Kawawa in the southern "Lower" dialect*), can translate to either elephant or butterfly. The reason for this is there were never any elephants in North America, except for the mammoths. How did this language innovation come about within the tribe? Mammoths were a thing of the past; there was nothing to base this on. So the

terminology originally applied to a butterfly. If you actually look at the butterfly with its wings spread out, and superimpose that over a face view of an elephant, the outer rim is a similar image. So the context of the sentence dictates what the word and the usage is.

A more defined example of that kind of descriptiveness and that kind of cultural mindset: the Cherokee word for apple is *svgata*, and it means literally something along the lines of "something red hanging there". It's a way of looking at the world, that comes through language. It's through the course of learning the language, bringing the language back, that we learn to view things in the way our ancestors did. We can see things how our ancestors once saw them. That's a very powerful, poignant thing to think about, because we can never go back to who we once were or how it was. But through our language and our culture, we can continue to walk in the same path as our ancestors, and have a better understanding of who they were and how they viewed the world.

I get by in the Cherokee language. I'm in no way a fluent speaker. My speaking experience is from growing up around it, and having lots of conversations with friends and family who speak it, and things I've picked up throughout my life. I most definitely am going to learn the Shawnee language. They are very different languages from two different language stocks. Shawnee is Central Algonquin and Cherokee is Southern Iroquoian. The closest cousin languages to the Cherokee language is

the language of the Six Nations up north, the Seneca, Cayuga, and Mohawk. Language is very important for us as tribal people. There are certain aspects of ceremony we will never understand without our language intact, because the language is a complete world view.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CEREMONY ~

Ceremony goes back to culture, language, tradition. It's critical because ceremony is the ground, root, soul, and heart of who we are as a people. It is what connects us. If we have no other common denominator as a tribe, we do in ceremony. We all have our own unique rhythm to our heart and the way our heart beats. Your heartbeat and spirit within you can't be removed.

There are a lot of tribes that have lost their ceremonies and traditional ways, and they've had a lot of family and tribal issues as a result; ceremony otherwise would have been able to help keep them grounded. They not only help remind us who we are, but it's also to remind us to be humble as a people and give thanks for every single thing that we have. We are not given anything without the good graces of the Creator. We have to thank the Creator every single day, from the time we wake up, till the time we go to bed, to be thankful we are given another day. We have to be humble and thankful in everything that we do. Ceremony helps us reinforce and understand that, and our place in the world. To lose our ceremonies would be to lose our understanding of where we belong in the world.

TRADITION ~

Tradition is passing on certain aspects of culture, language, and being, and certain aspects of who we are as a people, and keeping them intact in the way that they were passed to us.

A prime example is when we go hunting. Tradition dictates when we take an animal, for instance a deer, we always thank that deer for its sacrifice, and for giving us the means to sustain ourselves. We are always humble in front of that deer and humble ourselves to the Creator for it. We thank both the Creator and that deer. In the process and showing respect for that deer, we attempt to do the best we can not to let a single part of it go to waste. That's probably one of the best example of traditional knowledge passed down.

FUTURE VISION

I would like to see more of the language make a come-back within the Tribe, and more family coming back home. I would like to see more of our ability to get together and continue to strengthen our ties. I want the Tribe to be a grounded contingent of people over the long haul, not only for my sake, but also for our children. I want to see us, as a people, continue forward.

ROLE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS REGARDING NATIVE HISTORY PAST & PRESENT ~

Mostly in school the issue I dealt with was misinformation. Tragic, but it's kind of a funny story. I actually got booted out of class one day. The teacher was talking about how

Native Americans were the vanishing people, and how there were no more Indians in West Virginia or the East, and that we were poised to be completely wiped off the face of the planet within just a few generations, because we're the vanishing Americans, the great American Myth. I raised my hand and asked, "How do you explain me and my family?" She replied, "You're not an Indian." to which I replied, "According to who? You?" She kicked me out of class. The principal just told me, "Don't do it anymore." Basically, don't correct the teachers any more.

We were taught next to nothing about Native people. Mostly we got the Pocahontas, John Smith, and John Rolfe story. And then Jamestown, and the first Thanksgiving story. There is a passing reference to Cherokees and Shawnees and a few other tribes, but it was next to nothing. The only other thing that we were really told was that we're The Vanishing Americans. It's really antiquated academic material.

I would like to see more accurate descriptions and histories being told and more pertinent things about Native people being discussed. And don't just discuss this in a historical context as if we're antiquated, or something that is on the verge of becoming extinct. I think it really depends on the school district, and how much emphasis they want to put on the Native heritage of the region.

*LEARNING FROM THE SHAWNEE/
EASTERN WOODLAND NATIVE
EXPERIENCE ~*

Unfortunately, most people's knowledge of Shawnee history, or at least knowledge in general of the Shawnee as a people, comes from old Daniel Boone movies. Or they read maybe two paragraphs about Tecumseh and The Prophet, and their involvement in the War of 1812. That's really the only knowledge that anybody has about the Shawnees except for this preconceived misconception about them being a bunch of cutthroats, unfortunately.

I think that one of the greatest things that they need to learn, as far as the history, is to look at the pivotal role they played in the history of this country, and the geopolitics of the Shawnee. They were all over the place, up and down the East, and I guess some of them even beyond the Mississippi. I think probably one of the greatest things that people can take away from learning about the Shawnee as a people in general, is to do away with the stereotypes like the media has been portraying them for the several hundred years. It goes all the way back to the captive narratives of the 1700's and into the 1800's: these stories about the savage Indians coming in and taking white people into captivity who spent months of hardship with them, and were subjected to this level of brutality. Very few captive narratives actually told a complete picture. They painted the Shawnee as broad spectrum demons, so they can justify what later became known as Manifest Destiny.

People really need to learn more about the Shawnee people's actual place in history. Look

at the pivotal events, and the fact that we had great leaders like Tecumseh, Blue Jacket, even The Prophet Tenskwatawa who was a great motivating force.

There was one thing we did that would benefit society as a whole, right off the bat, and that's traditionally we lived in harmony, in sync with nature. We didn't buck against it. We went with the flow of it. We worked in unison and were the equivalent of today's conservationists. We knew what we could take and what we couldn't take, and when we could take it, and what times of the year we could take it, in order to continue to not only be able to have full use of it, but also for us to have it for future generations.

There are a multitude of ways of feeding yourself that aren't going to endanger or destroy the ecology. That was clearly present by the fact that some of the earliest documentations of Europeans talked about how this place was a veritable paradise when they came here. There was a story somewhere in New England where they talked about the fish were so plentiful in this one stream that you could literally walk across the stream on the backs of the fish. We had sustainable garden practices. A lot of our communities still practice them. My family does, and have for as long as anyone can remember. We've always had gardens. There are sustainable ways to hunt. The wrong way to hunt is to go out and just kill for the sport of killing, or to mount a big trophy on your wall. The right way to hunt is to go out to feed

yourself and your family. Then you don't just take the meat; you take everything. You use everything you possibly can out of that animal, and don't let anything go to waste. There are so many uses for so many various animal parts, it's not even funny. These are simple things that could be applied on a daily basis, that would make a world of difference in a lot ways.

There is also the aspect of what our spiritual teachings tell us, throughout our life, each and every single day. This is part of the morning rituals. Every day you be thankful for the day that you have, because you are not promised another one. Every day you be humble for the things that you have, because it's by the grace of the Creator that you have what you have. And if you go through life being respectful to all things, humble, and thankful, you're going to have a very full, fulfilled life. It doesn't matter if you have a million dollars, a Corvette in the driveway, or a huge mansion. Personally, I'd be just as happy living in a one room shack on top of a mountainside.

When Europeans first came here, they didn't know how to garden or really survive in this country. That's why you get the famous story of Massasoit's people in New England teaching the pilgrims how to garden after they decided that they weren't a threat. They looked at them as not being a threat because they had women and children in tow. And in a Native sense, if you've got women and children in tow, you're not there to cause trouble.

Well, little did they know! *[laughs]*

NEXT GENERATION ~

Trent Everhart and myself have been working on some things to bring more young people into the Tribe. We did a presentation at Council this last meeting, about some of the things that we were spit-balling back and forth with each other, to try and get the children more involved in the Tribe. We talked about possibly overhauling the website and making more material available online, that would help drive the kids in a little bit better. We also talked about part of the things that we are working toward. Unfortunately, we didn't get to play any games this last time, because we got rained out, and got bogged down with other things, but we're bringing the traditional games back, like the football game and the peach stone dice game to help get the kids more involved. Eventually we look forward to bringing stickball back into the fold too. These games have been connected with not just the Shawnees, but various tribes in the East since day one of documentation being kept. They are extremely old games. Stickball, for example, was the original version of lacrosse. Now days we can't play it like we would have in the past, not only for days, but also for a multitude of reasons, like the roughness being part of it. I didn't learn the type of rules that the Shawnee would have traditionally played. The Shawnee would have played Creek rules. The form that I learned was Cherokee rules. A very rough game, and it wasn't uncommon for people to get smacked with sticks and everything else. There were only

like two rules: and that was the rule of how you scored, and the other rule was there were no rules. *[laughs]* There was no such thing as out of bounds. If the ball spilled over into the crowd, they just spilled right into the crowd. That's why a lot of tribes actually refer to that game as the little brother to war, because of it being such a rough game, and unfortunately, in some cases it wasn't unheard of for people to get killed during the game. To be a ball player, in the old days was held in the same high regard as if you were a warrior. But nowadays we can't play it like that, as much as it would be a lot more fun that way. These days, we would have to tone it down a lot. I mentioned possibly playing it like flag football. But it's something that's definitely going to happen in the future.

I'm working on more stuff like the coloring book, and more language items geared toward the kids, but in such a way that it would work for both the children and adults. A lot of people equate the coloring books with children, but the animal illustrations I did are such that adults wouldn't feel so bad about working in a coloring book too.

A lot of the federal tribes do immersion classes for language. They will point at an item, and then say the word, and never say the English version of that word, during the entire immersion class, which is a tried and true way of teaching another language to somebody.

The only way that we survive as a people and as a culture is to have our children involved, and learn it, and carry it on. The

most important thing that we can do as a people is pass our knowledge on to the younger generations. If we don't, it's gone. Something that was told to me growing up is that we are always one heartbeat away from losing our culture.

We have a disconnect with our younger generations. In the past, they were encouraged to spend time with the older generations. Unfortunately, in the American mindset now, if Grandpa and Grandma are getting old and senile, and don't take care of them themselves, then nine times out of ten, our elders end up in retirement homes, which is a lovely term for a nursing home. In some cases the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren never meet them. A complete disconnect.

ACQUISITION OF LAND ~

The ability to have land would go a long way in helping the Tribe have a place that we can call home. It would open us up to be able to do more things traditionally that we are not always capable of doing. It's an important piece of the puzzle, but all things in its own time. If that's something that comes to pass, then so be it. It's in the Creator's hands.

PROTECTION OF SACRED SITES ~

Protecting our sacred sites is of great importance; these sites are places where our history, culture and heritage collide and help give us a greater understanding of our traditions. Our sites should be protected but sadly few are. Prime example of destruction of sites, a few years ago a mound was leveled to

make room for a Wal-Mart. That was an utter disgrace. But that is sadly becoming the way of the world with no respect for the past or the thoughts and feelings of others.

REFLECTION

LIVING IN TWO WORLDS ~

It's difficult living in two worlds, and not easy finding that balance between the two. Any Native person walking the face of this planet who says that it is not problematic, one, they're not culturally connected, and two, they're not being very forthright. We have to strive every day to keep intact what vestiges of who we are, and the things that make us unique as a people, but we have to do it in such a way that people can understand us a little better.

In this country, people have a very huge misunderstanding of what it means to be Indian/ Native American/ an indigenous person. For example, people think that if you are enrolled, you get some kind of handout. There are those people who are solely looking for that, and that's their only reason for trying to be connected with the tribe or community, while most people just want to know who they are and feel like they belong. Yes, it's very challenging walking in two worlds, because there are some things we do these days that traditionally speaking we shouldn't do, or there are things that traditionally we should do, that we can't do today.

We're not living in the context of the time that caused certain taboos to come about.

For example, the Cherokees are not supposed to kill rattlesnakes. But in this day and age, unfortunately sometimes it does happen, because you have to protect your family. I come from an area where there is a high concentration of snakes and copperheads, and venomous snakes in general. If I'm out and about walking the mountainside, and come up on one, I go out of my way to go around it, leave it alone. It's not harming me; he's where he's supposed to be and doing his thing. But when one comes into your yard, and is close by where somebody could get bit and hurt, then you have to define what's more important: protecting your family and neighbors, or trying to observe the tradition.

If you're not a cookie cutter American, and it's known that you're different, regardless of whether you're a Native person, an African American, an Asian American, or somebody from any other marginalized community, you're always going to have problems. It's just how our society is. We've come a long way from the stuff they used to do in Virginia, with 'one drop' rules. One drop rules were established to define a person's race, originally based on the race of their mother; it's connected to the slave trade and later used in census taking. Under the one drop rule if you have one drop of (insert race) blood from your mother, then that is your race even though 99% of your ancestry is white or some other race. It was a way to justify marginalizing people. We still have a very long way to go. Thankfully, by the grace of things

like that being overturned, and things not being as bad as they were when it comes to the race issue, it's more acceptable for us to be Native. We haven't always had that. In the past we were always looked upon very, very badly.

Example: I love movies to the point that I jokingly refer to myself as a cinephile. But as a Native youth, seeing our representation, there have been very few accurate portrayals of who we are as a people in film, and in the mass media. I've had this conversation with a few other Native individuals. When I was growing up I remember watching the old John Wayne movies, for instance *The Searchers*; the watcher is rooting for him to kill the Indian, because it was defined that he is the hero, and the Indians are the bad people. Native people, Indians, or *Injuns*, as they were referred to in the movies, are portrayed as vicious, savage, thuggish, sub-par, evil people who need to be eradicated from the face of the planet. Growing up we knew we were Native people, but as a child you don't give much thought to it or make that connection. It wasn't until I was much older and realized that I was rooting against my own people. That hit me like a ton of bricks. It's one of those things that when you grow up you feel a little ashamed of yourself.

WHO IS NATIVE AMERICAN/INDIAN?

That is a question that could be answered in any number of ways, and how you answer it, will depend on how people perceive you. If you listen to certain people, they will tell you that what constitutes an Indian is somebody who

has a federal card. Now we all know that that's a very black and white, cut and dried issue here, or it's more of a red and white issue, just to kind of poke fun. Who defines Indian? What is an Indian? It means a lot of things to different people. You're not going to get the same answer out of anyone. They're always going to give you a different perspective.

Personally, I look at who is an Indian based on how my ancestors and the traditionalists look at it. The blood in your veins does not make you an Indian; it makes you a descendant. It's your culture, your language, and your spiritual practices, and whether or not you live it, that makes you an Indian. It has absolutely nothing to do with the blood in your veins. That's a problem that the greater Indian community has come to accept. That's a foreign construct, pressed upon us by the enrollment officers. Blood has a little bit to do with it, but we as a people have a long history of adopting people who were not our blood, and accepting them as 100% members of our communities, because they lived with us, ate with us, and slept with us. They lived and breathed in the same manner and fashion that we did, so therefore they *were* us. It didn't matter where they came from. That of course isn't the case today and tribes by nature of modern politics cannot be all inclusive and shouldn't be, but I won't pass judgment on someone's indian-ness based on whether or not they have a card. It's all in how you live.

UNIQUE QUALITY OF THE PIQUA

SHAWNEE TRIBE ~

Piqua is an amalgam of Shawnees and their allies, traditionally and historically, The fact of the Shawnee being spread out over the eastern U.S., they came in contact with a lot of tribes. They had a lot of long-standing dealings with the Creeks, the Senecas, the Six Nations, the Mingos, who are now known as the Seneca Cayuga Tribe, and the Hurons, now known as Wyandots, the Cherokees, the Delwares, etc. We all come from different language stocks and cultural backgrounds, but because of the fact that we co-mingled and co-existed with one another, we have strong family ties to one another.

There are tribes that have done that in the past. The Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma in the past, took in a large contingent of Shawnees and Delawares, who were enrolled members of their tribe for awhile, until a few years ago when they split off and reorganized as their own tribe, but they were with them for the better part of 20-30 years. The Six Nations up north took in Tutelo, Nanticokes, and others.

Any time you get Indians together, and we can actually act as a cohesive, singular unit, it's a good thing in my book. With our mixed ancestry being what it is within the Tribe, we all come from different backgrounds, but we're all enrolled Piqua Shawnee, and that's all that matters.

PROUD TO BE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

“Why does the sun come up? Why is the sky blue?” In one respect it's things that just are. I

have a respect for the leadership in this Tribe. Our leadership is probably stronger than a lot of other tribes', and they actually care about their members. As a Tribe, we care about each other. That's partly because of the solidarity of being members of the Tribe, but it runs deeper than that, because most of us are family. There is a running joke in the Tribe that when you come to these functions, you're not actually going to a Tribal function, you're just going to an over-blown family reunion. That comes from the history of what happened with a lot of the remnant populations, and how we all got shoved together in various pocket communities up and down the East.

Without getting too far out in left field, the main thing is that it is not a matter of being proud to be Piqua Shawnee, but more a matter of being privileged and honored to be a member of Piqua Shawnee. It's a matter of being privileged to be part of a community that looks out for itself and takes care of one another. It does the things that we're supposed to do as a people, which is raise each other up, love one another, and look out for each other. It's not a matter of pride in any sense, because it runs deeper than that. It's not such a vain construct as pride.

RECONCILIATION

*IS THERE A POSSIBILITY OF
RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE
PIQUA SHAWNEE AND THE WESTERN
SHAWNEE TRIBES?*

Anything is possible. I hope that one day we can, but I'm not sure that's going to happen in my lifetime. I just hope our collective children are wiser than us.

We need to open a dialogue and work from both sides. The main thing is for all of us to realize we are stronger together than apart, and have more in common than we think.

*DO YOU THINK THE PIQUA SHAWNEE
SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN NATIONAL
NATIVE ISSUES SUCH AS THE DAKOTA
PIPELINE?*

I think the best way to answer that is that we should be involved in the issues that have long lasting effects on this land, not for the sake of our homelands, but for the future of our children.



Jerry McClure
BEAR CLAN CHIEF

CULTURAL IDENTITY

Hundreds of years ago one of my ancestors came from Scotland and one from Ireland and they married into the Cherokee, Choctaw, Delaware, and Shawnee people. McClure is a big name in the Choctaw Nation. They've been with the tribe since about 1870 in Oklahoma. I've got eight family members who are Native: some full, some half. I call myself a very inter-tribal, mixed Native person. Then throw in the Hatfield-McCoys from the feud too! My grandmother was Cherokee and her family was raised with the McCoy family. On the Cherokee rolls, there are probably six pages of McCoys so they were of Native heritage too.

My dad had two sisters who have always denied that we are Native. When I found we were Choctaw first, I was actually exited out the back door. They would not even talk to us. When I married a Choctaw/Shawnee lady. They finally said, "Yes, you are one-quarter Choctaw. Don't ask again." I found an 1859 Bible of my grandmother's on my mom's side. It's got Mom as half Cherokee and Daddy half Choctaw. I had no idea about the Shawnee until my wife's cousin finished the ancestral tree. My

grandmother, my mother's mother, who was found in eastern Kentucky, had Shawnee blood. The name was Damron; it's very old Scotch Irish and they married into multiple tribes.

My grandparents are kin to the Dragging Canoe¹² who is of the Chickamauga Cherokee. McClure is Irish. William McClure married into the Delaware and had 18 kids. All of the boys, married into Shawnee, Cherokee, Chickasaw, and Choctaw. My great-grandmother, was full Cherokee. The name, according to Barbara, is on the Old Reservation Roll. My paperwork said I was 'of color' when I was born. Of color -- whatever that means. The government did this.

I'm a mixed blood mutt. Somewhere about five generations down, I'm kin to my wife through the Cherokees. I'm very happy being with the Shawnee.

I started going to pow-wows and talking with elders. When elders speak, you listen. I started to learn that way. My grandfather took me into the woods in eastern Kentucky, set

12 Dragging Canoe was a famous Cherokee. He signed a treaty selling a lot of land in Kentucky and Tennessee and got killed for it.

me down beside a creek, and said, “There’s something I need to talk to you about. You’ve got to remember God didn’t wake up one day and made Cherokee or Chickasaw or Black. He made us all in his image. Remember if someone looks darker than you, or dresses different or speaks different, you are to look at the heart, not the body.” That is the way we have been raised, both my wife and myself. We always have lived that way.

My grandfather taught me that animals are put here for a reason. I grew up hunting and fishing. When you go fishing, don’t take a hundred fish. Take enough for you and your family and leave the rest for someone else. When we went hunting rabbits and squirrels, we blessed them and said thank you. We left the others for next time or for someone else who might need them. That is the thing about our Native people. If we go out hunting or fishing and we know your family member is hurt, we bring food to you.

My grandfather taught me so many things, including tracking, what to look for, and where not to go, because of course there were snakes. I was taught how to walk in the woods without getting bit, especially when you came to a dead tree. Rattlesnakes and copperheads live in the cold area. He taught me how to step up and over without being bitten, and how to learn to live off the land, which we did several times. He said “You have the spirit.” He gave me a Cherokee name when I was very young. It is *Yonvkagaywvl* which means “Bear Who Speaks

for the People and Storyteller”. When I was fifteen years old I became a storyteller.

My family would never admit to being Cherokee and Melungeon¹³ but they would say, “Now, you see that tree or that rock? They are important.” My dad and I are just exactly alike, 100%, but I knew nothing of his family except that the McClure name is also a Choctaw name. He was put in a white man’s orphanage at six and a half, and out at fourteen. Because they beat him, he ran away. On my mom’s side there is Melungeon blood. They’re called the Blue People. I have three ancestors that wouldn’t talk to us that much, but they were so dark they were blue. They caught fish by hand. I was taught that, but I haven’t done any of that in a long time.

The Shawnee comes in on both sides. Gene Park called me and said, “Your dad’s markers match somebody all the way back to the 1600’s.”

My blue eyes come from the Cherokee side. The Choctaws, Cherokees, the Creeks and Chickasaws all have blue eyes. The federal government, many years ago, called the Cherokee the Blue-eyed Tribe.

Why do you think some of your relatives were in denial about your Native heritage?

Until the First World War was over we were not American citizens. American Indians had no voting rights, and couldn’t eat in certain restaurants. It changed after World War I. We had more people serving in World War I.

¹³ People who identify as Melungeon have a mixed ancestry including European, Native American, and African American.

The first day I tried to ride a bus to school. The driver closed the door in our face and said, "You Injuns aren't allowed to ride." My dad was a police officer. He went to the Superintendent and said, "If my kids and these other ones are not on the bus tomorrow, I will come back and shoot you." The next morning the Superintendent showed up with doughnuts and escorted us up the steps of the bus and put us up front. That was in 1947 in Lexington, Kentucky when I was six.

Indians were so down-trodden and made fun-of that a lot of our people took Irish or English names. Of course when Irish and Scottish folks first came over they couldn't get a job because they were down-trodden. Some of them married Native women.

INSPIRATIONAL ANCESTOR ~

Uncle Ralph Culbertson could do anything. He was honored with many medals from World War I, and World War II. He would take me out in the country where the fish were best. We would catch them right and left.

My grandfather wasn't as patient as my uncle and my dad was an alcoholic. He'd been a Second War veteran, then he got dried out.¹⁴ Because of this I grew up in a very bad

¹⁴ My dad was born on a farm in 1917. In 1823 it opened up as a Choctaw academy, a boarding school for five nations: Choctaw, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Creek, Seminole, and later Potawatomie, and Shawnee. That school was run by a guy named Richard M. Johnson, an Indian fighter, who claimed he killed Tecumseh at the Battle of Thames in Canada. He saw a way of making money, so he brought all these kids in, cut their hair and scrubbed them with lye soap. They were not allowed to talk their language. He wanted to teach them the white man's way. This school lasted to about 1850. When they let us go on that farm, we found a fellow whose dad knew my dad. My dad was called The Indian Boy of Scott County, Kentucky, because he played semi-pro

temper at home. I'd be fired up ready to fight, and my uncle would take me in his little room where we'd sit and talk. I'd come out cool as a cucumber. He never got upset. He didn't have the Culbertson temper that a lot of us had. He just was so gentle. Somebody would say, "Ralph, I need a cherry chest made." He would go out in the woods, cut the cherry just right, and make that chest, and sell it for almost nothing. It would be worth \$5,000. He said, "Cherokees make them to honor other people with gifts." That was the kind of man he was. I learned from him. He took the time. He finally retired from the military, and had so medals when he died, we couldn't put them all on him. Uncle Ralph was just so patient.

My gift from him, which took me a long time to learn, instead of fussing and jumping up and down, is to be patient, and understand that people make mistakes. You learn by your own mistakes. It has taken a long time, but now I can share it with other people.

I used to travel a lot, and listen to elders, and a couple of medicine men. The knowledge I have, a lot of it came from my uncle. I share it with people. That's the way it should be. So many are trying to learn the heritage, to learn how we think, and how we do.

ball, and I played minor ball for the Yankees for three years. They talked about my dad, and how much he knew, and how bad he was beaten when he was put in a white man's orphanage. My dad, before he got sick, showed me where he was living. It's a log cabin. A lady brought a paper that was written about the McClure family living on this farm. Many of the boys who went to school there had their names taken away, and given Scotch and Irish names.

*INVOLVEMENT IN THE PIQUA
SHAWNEE TRIBE ~*

I became an enrolled member of the Piqua Shawnee in 2000. I am a member of the Bear Clan because I've always been with the bear spirits. I love bear for many reasons. The bear is so big. You cannot outrun a bear. My grandfather was Cherokee and Chickasaw; the Cherokee comes from the Long Hair of the Eastern Cherokee which was at one time Bear Clan.

At the time I became Piqua Shawnee I knew nothing of the Shawnee people. I finally learned we Shawnee owned all of Kentucky. But they moved around a lot. The Shawnee married into every Five Nations people, and our traditions are very similar.

ROLE IN THE TRIBE ~

I got elected as Chief of the Bear Clan in 2008. I feel like it is an honor. My Shawnee name means "Bear Chief with Eagle Spirit". I try to make our clan a family. If we have something to discuss or a problem in the Tribe, everybody sits, but only the leaders or representatives will talk and express their opinion. When we have a Clan meeting, I sit and listen. If you are a leader, you are a servant which means you serve your people. As a leader you need to let them express what is in their hearts. If it is a vote, we let them do what they want to do. There have been a few times I haven't agreed, but if Clan of the Bear people say, "This is what we want." I will go with them. We have up to ten members. I'm always trying to recruit if we

find someone who is interested. If they say, "I want to go to Panther Clan" or whatever, we support them. If they say, "I want to be in the Bear Clan, we take it back to our people. "This individual wants to be in our Clan. Do you all have a problem or do you know him?" So far, no one has ever been turned down.

If there is a person that really has a problem, I talk with them one on one. Rumors can hurt people. It may have to be by phone as members are so far away. I let them know we are family and should love one another. Recently I've had a near tragedy in my family and they have been praying for me. We should pray for each other, not argue with each other. I've got a great Clan of people who live all over Ohio and Indiana. I'm the lone Kentuckian. What I try to do is call my people every so often. "Hey, this is Chief McClure. How is everything going? Do you need prayer or whatever?" As a leader I try to keep peace and family and togetherness in our clan. If somebody needs help then we need to know it. It's all long distance trying to communicate with everybody. Thank goodness for cell phones.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ~

I read the Bible and pray, but I think spiritually, the old way of many things, of respecting Mother Earth, and everything that grows is the way. I'm on a spiritual trail for life. I have been very honored in my life. I've picked up fifteen or twenty hawk feathers. I found four eagle feathers out in the country where my dad was born. The feathers are coming to me, and that's

spiritual. That means something. They're talking to us.

In Lexington there is a federal correctional facility where I was their spiritual advisor for seven years. It was a different way of life. I've never been in jail in my life or been in trouble. They asked me if I would visit these guys. For the first couple of months they feel you out. People would say, "I'm full-blood this or full-blood that." There is just no true Kentuckians who are really full-blooded. But after while we became friends. I always would open and close with a prayer. We would use a pipe for praying and ceremony. Now a lot of them were Plains Indians – Lakota. Their ways and our ways are a little different, but I learned from the Lakota way. It was spiritual for me too because I was learning the ways of other tribes.

CULTURAL REVITALIZATION

We need to keep our culture alive to let everyone know we're here. We need to teach the young people to respect their teachers and parents and teach them how to raise crops to survive. The adults should give more attention to the children, because they are our future leaders. We're going to need them, one million percent. We need to pass our heritage down, which to me is based on respect and sharing. Teaching the children to respect the elders. Don't kick them out because they are old. My grandfather once said, "I want to tell you something. I'm one that ran around instead of sitting. Now I wish I did sit. I wish the young

ones would sit with the old people, the elders and listen. I'm learning from the elders. That's the most important. Your eyes will never teach you anything; it's your heart that will teach you." One of the things that I teach, when I go to a school is white, black, yellow, and red in the center: the four directions, and the four sacred races of people. My grandfather and my Uncle Ralph said, "Teach them one thing. We have four races of people. Don't look at the skin; look at the heart."

SIGNIFICANCE OF LANGUAGE ~

I know four or five words of Choctaw. It would be great if Tribal members would learn the language. I would like to learn, but the only way you can learn the language right is to move in with a Shawnee family and live with them for a year or so. It would be nice to have more than one or two people who can speak the language. I know just a few words. The Shawnee stories are so long it would be hard to do.

The language was beat out of our boys in boarding school. Very few of our Shawnee people know the language. The Choctaw start teaching the language in elementary school. When they graduate from high school, their test is totally in the Choctaw language.

Our language, belongs on the Internet. Since I'm still working, I don't have time to hear it. But the language is important. You learn the language, and you learn the heritage a lot too. While they're learning the language, they're learning the traditions of the old ways. I think the old ways are good.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CEREMONY ~

Going back to the old ways of the ceremony and the way they did things is hard for us because the old ceremonies lasted a week to ten days. Today we can only do a small amount of the ceremony, but we are honoring our ancestors. We pray to the Creator to lead us on to what we need.

FUTURE VISION

There are good things already happening. I've been storytelling for over many years. I'd like to find someone to be a true storyteller, and pass it on to them. I'd like the Piqua to get more recognition for who we are. I would like to let people know that we are good, hard working people who are willing to teach other people about the Piqua Shawnee. I would like to see if we could get someone coming in from another Shawnee tribe who would share their cultural traditions and ours with them -- coming together as brothers and sisters. The stronger we are, the more we could do.

ROLE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHING NATIVE HISTORY, PAST & PRESENT ~

We were not taught anything about Native history. Now in the school where I work (as a bus monitor) they bring in Native people who explain how they were raised on the Indian reservation.

NEXT GENERATION ~

The parents have to take the first step. The only way young people can come is for the parents to bring them.

I'm very busy trying to teach about our heritage in church, Scouts, and in the schools. I've got two kids that are wanting to learn. One of them has a little Shawnee. The other is Cherokee. If I can teach them some things, okay.

LEARNING FROM THE SHAWNEE/ EASTERN WOODLAND EXPERIENCE ~

The first thing about the Piqua Shawnee is that we're a family tribe. We care about each other. If you go back to the old Shawnee way, you know they traveled. They still cared about the elders, the women and the children, and made sure that they had clothing and food. I think the country is forgetting what love is about, and what to do to help others. In the old Shawnee way, if a woman lost her husband, then people would get together and give her clothing and food. If a man's sister-in-law lost her husband, he had to take her in and keep her well fed.

We've all learned everything comes through Mother Earth, and we should respect Her, and the men should respect the women.

I told my minister, the Native people knew there was just one Grandfather or Superior Being who walked this Mother Earth, and we prayed to Him, morning, afternoon, and evening. The missionaries came with Bibles and started teaching us about God. We told them, "We know about God. He gave us everything."

WHAT THE PUBLIC SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE SHAWNEE ~

They have said there were no Shawnee or

Cherokee ever in Kentucky. We owned a lot of land here. The people now have forgotten about the Shawnee.

ACQUISITION OF LAND ~

If we could have another piece of land, that would help. All that area of Jackson County, KY is Shawnee country, and very sacred land. You can't really do a ceremony where we were today in a state park, because when you do a ceremony, even way back, the only people who see it should be the Shawnee. We can't really do that now. If we are in a hidden area we can do the teaching and ceremonies without cars driving by.

PROTECTION OF SACRED SITES ~

It is very important because we don't know who may be in that site. It might be a burial with nothing but children who died of cholera or whatever the white man brought. A year or two ago we walked up on a burial on the farm where my dad was born. We blessed that burial in a Native way. We offered prayer and tobacco and sage, hoping that would help things in some way. When we protect them, maybe someone will come along and protect us when we're gone.

REFLECTION

LIVING IN TWO WORLDS ~

It depends on how you carry yourself. For example, I wear a Native hat and I'm a veteran, and people accept that. It has caused problems in the past. I've learned to accept the fact that what happened twenty years ago, I'm more

calm now. We fit in better today. More and more people are trying to find their heritage. Way back when I was younger, you couldn't tell people you were Indian. Today, if you have one drop, as long as you believe it in your heart, that is all matters.

Two Navajo women asked me what reservation I came from. I said, "I'm as city as they come. I've got Choctaw, Cherokee, Shawnee, and Irish." I see now I've got a little French blood and Inuit. So I can walk in the white world, or in the Native world. It just depends on what happens.

I met a guy, Fred Bradley, who was a Cherokee tribal chief, and a veteran too. He said, "Be who you are. Don't be something you aren't. You are Indian as Indians come, but you're part Irish. So don't look down on the Irish because they are Irish. Don't look down on certain Indians because you are darker than they are."

I know I'm Indian, and there are times that I get to participate and do things. But I have other lives too, like work. So you can fit them both in at the right time. If you learn to do that, your life is a lot better. You got guys running around in Kentucky, trying to live in a tipi, and trying to dress in regalia all the time. You can't do that. We're in the 21st Century.

I'll wear my regalia to school when I can. People ask me, "Do you all go out to eat in that?" I tell them, "Only when I'm trying to teach you all about who we are." I went to one school in regalia, and three months

later, I went in jeans, boots, and a shirt. I said, “This is the way I do. It’s the way some of my family dressed. But this is who I am. I walk two roads.” You can’t live this way every day, because the old way is gone in many ways.

WHO IS NATIVE AMERICAN/INDIAN ~

I’m not a Native American; I’m an American Indian. You know where the word Native American came from? During the First World War, we were not citizens, but we still went to war and defended the United States. After the Second World War, the word Native American came about. I was a baby then. I’ve got a lot of blood line in me. As long as you do it with respect, if you call me Native American or American Indian, I don’t care. But do it respectfully. Some people want to become a Native American, and some people get very upset being called a Native American.

Who is Indian? Anybody who finds that they have a blood line whether there is a little bit or a lot, and their heart knows they are Native. Some people in Cherokee, North Carolina don’t look any more American Indian than anybody; they have red hair, green eyes, but they were born there, or their mother was from there, and they go back to live with their family.

It used to bother me way back over 20 years ago, because we had people who said, “You’re not Indian unless you have a card.” I’m not real big on blood quantum. I don’t think that means a thing. It’s right in the heart. It’s what you know, and how you carry yourself.

Several members have done their DNA. I don’t need the DNA; I already know who I am. I may be a mixed-blood, but I feel like I’m a 100 percent. When I do programs in schools as a storyteller, I tell the kids that we are all of mixed race, and just because somebody dresses or looks different than you, learn the heart, and who they really are. I tell them if you’ve got one drop of blood, no matter what tribe, be proud. No matter who you are, be proud. You can’t hardly be from Kentucky and not have some kind of drop of blood in you.

UNIQUE QUALITY OF THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE ~

We are trying to keep our traditions and teach them to everyone. Not everybody is Shawnee, but they are from other tribes which have not really taken them in. But the Piqua have welcomed them to be our members. A lot of the traditions of the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Creek are similar to the Shawnee. We are a family tribe. When we come together we hug and kiss on each other or shake hands and “Glad to see you”, and “How is your family?” or “Do we need to pray for your family?” We show that we do love each other, and we are truly Native people.

PROUD TO BE SHAWNEE ~

I’m proud for the simple reason that when I first joined the Tribe there were a lot of problems. When Gary became Chief, he made this a family tribe.

FEDERAL RECOGNITION

I don't think the Tribe is interested in doing it. To be honest, the federal government can tell you what you can do and cannot do. They can put their hands on some federal charts, and control you. They don't let you go. They don't like some of the ceremonies. It would be helpful in a way if we did go federal, because there would be some benefits for the kids. But I don't think they'll ever go federal, because of the government control.

If they voted for it, I wouldn't say no.

RECONCILIATION

*IS THERE A POSSIBILITY OF
RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE
PIQUA SHAWNEE & THE WESTERN
SHAWNEE TRIBES?*

No. Because we are not a federal tribe, they will never accept us.

*SHOULD THE PIQUA BE INVOLVED IN
NATIONAL NATIVE ISSUES SUCH AS
THE DAKOTA PIPELINE?*

All Native people should be involved in some way. I signed fifteen or twenty petitions and gave them some money to help feed some of those people who were demonstrating against the pipeline.



Frank Otero

CULTURAL IDENTITY

It was forbidden to talk about our heritage. At the time I was growing up in Florida, my grandfather used to come down from Ohio and call me his little Indian boy. My mother said, “No, don’t tell him he is Indian because it is against the law here to be Indian and not be on a reservation.” She basically said she could lose her home, her car, and her job if people knew that we were Indian and not on a reservation somewhere. It wasn’t much talked about in the family. Grandfather was the only one who talked about it, because everybody else was afraid that they would lose their house or their job. He drank too much. I quit drinking and joined AA and got into a cultural drum group in Naples, Florida.

I was always connected to knowing inside myself that we were Indian. Reconnecting with the culture made me realize that I needed something else in my life. I wanted to make a difference. We did cultural drum settings at local colleges and schools and Earth Day and some of the celebrations throughout the region. After my mother passed I talked to my father about knowing that my mother and grandfather

were Shawnee. Alfred Otero adopted me; he is originally from Peru. When we did the DNA testing mine is primarily Shawnee. Grandpa Bobb was born in West Virginia. He started mining coal when he was eight. He started working the rails for Peabody Coal and became a switchman and then later an engineer. The Bobb family is out of West Virginia; the family is Kispoko and Piqua. My parents moved to Florida for a new start. I was raised in Florida and came to Kentucky in 1991.

I grew up with Seminoles in Florida. My dad worked for a surveying company for about eight years and it was owned by a Seminole family. They would take me into the Big Cypress where not a lot of people have ever been, other than Seminoles doing ceremonies there. An elder man took by the hand and said, “I want to show you some things.” My father said, “Go with him.” He knew what he was doing. He showed me how to make fire the right way, how to pray and use tobacco in prayers. Of course as a child you are not supposed to be touching tobacco; it is bad for you. You are not supposed to smoke and this is

what your mother taught you. But he is saying, “It is okay when you are with us to use tobacco, but you are not going to smoke it; you are going to give it to the fire.” I was fairly small and over the years all these memories are coming back later on as I’m going through life. Just in the last year some of the things we did made sense for what I’m doing today.

Seminoles are part of the Muskogee or the Creek Nation. The Shawnee are very similar in their ceremonies, medicine, spiritual and other ways of living. They dance primarily with the stomp dance and they all do Green Corn. Shawnees do a little different because we do a spring and a fall dance. In the Muskogee the first dance is basically you are opening up the ground. It would be like the first sacred night dance. From there that means your season is starting through the ceremony. You would go through blessing of seeds ceremonies to planting ceremonies that the women do. There are ceremonies that the men did before they start to till the ground and work the ground for the women. Right now we are into the Green Corn ceremony; the green corn is up, and it is fresh and ripe. These things are still going on.

It was forbidden for us to do our ceremonies. It was against the law in the past. We were supposed to be speaking English and not speak our own language and going to Christian churches and not talking to God our way. Everybody says we have many gods. No, we did not. We believed in one god and always have.

INSPIRATIONAL ANCESTOR ~

My grandfather taught me how we used to hunt and snare things, how to gather food, primarily how to live off the land. His whole saying was, “I’m going to show you the only way to live.” He just called it the way of life. Life is simple; you don’t have to complicate it.

He taught me some medicine plants in the woods to use. I learned that saw palmetto berry was good for the prostrate and for cleansing the bowel from any parasites. It promotes better flow of the blood. Growing up in Florida the plants are different than the ones in Ohio. When we’d go out to visit him in Ohio he would show me some stuff up there, sassafras and things like that for pain. I stock the pharmacy on the shelf with these plants and renew them every other year or every year depending. He also taught me that the seeds of the plant carries the memory of the first plant. Through that memory it keeps growing and keeps its own DNA, its own structure. When the Creator created it, it knew its purpose in life and in our life. It kept its memory. We lost ours. We lost our way. It has always been a struggle for us. My cat knows who she is and what she is supposed to do in our relationship, and why she is here in this lifetime. We had a purpose and we forgot. If you talk to quite a few Native people, not just Shawnee, you’ll find out that our purpose here was to care-take Mother Earth. We were invaded and from that invasion we were subject to not being able to do that.

Does being bi-racial ever cause you any conflict?

Most of my mixture comes from South America. There is some European, Welsh and French. There's more Indian in the family. In a way it does bother me, but I can't help what my ancestors did to survive. Some of them married into the European community to survive. There's nothing I can do about it.

INVOLVEMENT WITH THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE ~

I've been involved with the Piqua since 1997. I was doing a combination learning and teaching pow-wow in Flintridge, Ohio. People asked me what Nation I was with and I said, "I'm not with anybody, but my blood is Shawnee." Bryan Dabe was our second chief at the time and asked me to come to one of the ceremonies. That is how I started coming back with Native people. I wasn't that interested at the time about being in a group, but after I went to ceremony and saw what they were doing, I saw that it was genuine. It was what Grandfather had talked about over the years when I was growing up.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ~

I don't stop praying. It's in every thought. Everything I do there is a prayer. Some people don't look at it as a spiritual practice, but I like sitting on the porch and watching the birds and bees fly around. It has a feeling of togetherness with the Earth and its creatures. We say it daily: Mother Earth. Where else are you going to go? You can't go to the Moon. You can't breathe. You'll implode or explode. We talk about going

to the stars. Well, in our legends, we came from the stars. To watch the night sky and look at the stars is a spiritual connection. It is good to be an individual, and that's why the Creator gave us individuality and free will, but it's also good to become a part of the whole, working in unison with everything.

Helen and I talk to our plants. Did I like cutting down the trees? No. Did I need to? Yeah, because they were starting to invade. They had to be thinned out. They were killing off other species. Everything has the right and will to live. Who decides, and who chooses that? It was hard to cut those trees down. I prayed about it. I talked to them and told them I was sorry that I was doing it. I used all of them. There will be wood for the fire for the wintertime; there will be a budding for other plants stirring the ground this summer. All the twigs and stuff I can make into different things. I told them that, so they didn't fall on me and kill me.

I'll sing a song in the mornings, and pray. I go through the day with prayers. I go to bed with prayers. And sometimes those things are answered. It's just daily life.

LIVING IN A TRADITIONAL NATIVE WAY ~

We have electricity, heat, and running water. But we grow our own food, and do our daily prayers, morning, noon, and night. I always have a constant prayer. When I go into my workshop I'll start thinking about stuff and praying about it and bringing in the spirits to

help guide my hands and my work.

CULTURAL REVITALIZATION

SIGNIFICANCE OF LANGUAGE ~

Without the language there is a tendency to lose all of the rest of the culture. I use what I do have of the language for my prayers and songs.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CEREMONY ~

Ceremony is very important. Without it, what do you have in life? You might like each other, but do you really love each other if you don't have ceremony in your daily life, if your prayers are not there? Most of our prayers go out for other people, then we ask for ourselves, and not much. Chaos can enter your life and then where are you? You get in financial difficulties to social difficulties and then there is jail or this or that or the other. That is how life can deal you that other hand. Talk to Creator. Give your offerings every day. Talk to everybody who surrounds you, meaning the plants and the bugs and everybody else because they are people too as far as they are concerned. We live amongst them. They are in control and we are just a nuisance sometimes. Without that spiritual connection, you don't have life.

Ceremony is a way of life. My grandfather always told me, "You learn the Way of Life". It's how you conduct yourself in ceremony, and how you conduct yourself in life. You're in constant prayer all the time for good things. You're always prepared for the worst things. There is the unexpected, and then there is the expected. It's in ceremony, walking it. Talk the

talk; walk the walk. If you don't live it, then it means nothing. You're just an actor ad-libbing something. You're going through life as a pale horse, blinded by stupidity, ignorance, hatred and bigotry.

You look at the squirrel over there. He's got a purpose. He's trying to survive. He knows winter is coming, so he's going to stock up his stockpile. He's putting on fat. As the tribe is, so is the squirrel. Our ceremonies are our life.

There is a ceremony for seed blessing, and also one for planting that the women would do. The men's ceremonies included the coming of age, and for different hunts. There were ceremonies before they went to war, and those that were done before the warriors came back home. They were not allowed into the villages until they had cleansed themselves totally from what they had done. They didn't bring that back into their home place, because they were on edge and it disrupts. They had a cleansing place; basically you could say it was a detoxification program. (In today's world, we don't have that. Our warriors come back from war and are sent right back out in society.)

FUTURE VISION

I would like to see us have two land bases, in Kentucky and also in Alabama where we are recognized. We could do all the ceremonies that we do up here, down there too.

We need more of our younger people who are members to come and learn the ceremonies and the ways. We don't have enough of the

younger people coming, because their parents aren't coming with their children. We have some younger fellows here right now, but they weren't interested in the ceremony. They had no course of learning available to take that tradition and learn it, and keep it alive. We need that response. It has to be kept alive, and be ongoing.

Our whole premise before was that the dominant culture took our lands and our ceremonies away. I was asked in an interview about eight years ago, what was it like for the Shawnee to have to move out of their homelands? It was devastating, because all of our ceremonial grounds, our villages, our food source were there. We had ceremonies for seed planting, seed blessings, deer and buffalo hunting songs, and many others. It's really, really essential that we get our younger people involved in these things again. It's essential to learn the language at a younger age. They should be starting at 7, learning the language.

ROLE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHING NATIVE HISTORY, PAST & PRESENT ~

When I was attending public school there was no curriculum that included Native history. Everything I learned was from my grandfather and the Seminole Indians I went to school with.

At our last gathering we were in a discussion about that with an archaeologist, and a few other teachers. There are guidelines on how to teach American Indian traditions in the schools which is state law now. Very well educated people put together guidelines for

all the school districts in every county in the state. They were taken to the school districts and never distributed. We talked to many teachers in the public school system who didn't even know about it. We had to literally take the guidelines to the schools we went to. They are revising it and trying to get the Board of Education to distribute them so they can teach the right way. It is still on the books in the state house that there were no Indians in the State of Kentucky living here at any time. It was a 'Happy Hunting Ground', period. That is a false statement. We can prove that there were Native people living here for over 10,000 years.

NEXT GENERATION ~

We really hope that the younger generation comes back in. We've been together as a tribe for over 20 years and watched a whole generation grow up. Now they're married and have children. There were a lot of children here when I first was introduced to the Piqua and found that these people are my family and that this is my home. Where are they? Did they forget? It makes you wonder.

When we had our land, we had a lot of people showing up for Green Corn and for family camp. We had more turnout, because we weren't meeting in somebody else's dominant culture park. How do you bring the parents in with their kids? It's to have land again.

I'm teaching one young man how to make his own tools, how to survive in the woods, and if he's lost, how he can survive until he finds his way out. As far as the language, it's a slow go,

because we don't have the original language.

LEARNING FROM THE SHAWNEE EXPERIENCE & WHAT THE PUBLIC SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE HISTORY ~

I did a speaking engagement a couple of years ago at the Falls of the Ohio. I was asked to speak about what it was like in Kentucky for Shawnees when we were invaded by Europeans. It was devastating in so many ways. The Europeans considered all Native people were nomadic. We weren't. We had towns we had lived in for over three hundred up to two thousand years. We had a ceremonial complex and council houses. As families we lived in a group of long houses. Everybody worked together for the whole benefit of the town. Warring, hunting and gathering – we did all that. It is fascinating finding out how we did all those things. We made oils for cooking. We even had lamps that used hickory nut oil. There was a medicine person who did basic healing for all the people. Not only did he do that, he assisted with the men for war and men's ceremonies for ball games and everything else. He also ministered to people in their spiritual context in life. We made everything from scratch. The first cultivation of seeds that spread out for farming was found in the Red River Gorge, which is 20 miles from where we're sitting. There was an extensive trade route. Shawnees lived all over the place. We settled in many places and what is now known as Alabama, Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Ohio.

There is still a lot of prejudice, and a lot

of uneducated people. Can we educate these people? Yes, if they'll listen.

ACQUISITION OF LAND ~

The only way to solve our problem of being geographically so scattered is to have a big enough piece of land for all the people to move on. You can't call it a reservation. You'd have to start up a whole town. I don't know where you could get the funds for all that. There are people in the Tribe that I've known personally ever since I started with the Tribe. That has been a long time and yet I don't know much about them. I know their names and we joke. We talk about our gardens or our job or the kids or who died in the family, but that's about all you know. You don't know them as an individual personally or their aches and pains or their fears or excitements. To better know them is to better help them in some cases. We are scattered all over. They don't always get to come to ceremonies. They are either financially strapped or they are physically unable to.

I'd like to see a council house, a place for showers and a kitchen and ceremonial grounds that are not going to get desecrated by somebody. I could see a school for both older and younger people where they could learn cultural ways and the language.

PROTECTION OF SACRED SITES ~

The protection of sacred sites is very important, because if it's a burial ground, our ancestors are buried there. If it is our ceremonial grounds, it has all the prayers of thousands and thousands of people for thousands and thousands of

years, and all their woes and wants, all their happy times, and their goodness coming into one. The good with the bad. Sacred sites need to be protected as much as we can get them protected. There was a big push for protection on sacred sites not too long ago, and it's still going on. You can get involved in it, and it will wear you out, because you've got to fight the dominant culture. They're not going to give up, because underneath that sacred site there might be a cache of coal, or uranium, or gold, etc. Just down the road over here was a sacred site in Levi-Jackson State Park. It shouldn't have been turned into a park, or an amusement area. It was a ceremonial site that all of us would have gone to. Sacred sites are very essential. They are a reminder of who we are.

A lot of those places that used to be village and ceremonial sites are no longer here. People have desecrated them. If there is a sacred site, and they want a road built, they plow right through it. You call in the big dogs and fight battles in court, and that could take years. But then they go ahead and build the road anyway. How do you stop it? You protest and fight it as best you can.

REFLECTION

LIVING IN TWO WORLDS ~

I always had a conflict living in the white world because I didn't fit in. In March we went to Florida on a vacation. I grew up in Orlando, Florida. When I knew Orlando, it was a place you could have a good time, go fishing and all

that. It was a really pretty place at one time. But it's like McDonald's invaded that beautiful spot. I have to smack myself because I helped build it. After I got out of the service they needed workers. They housed us, and I helped build part of it. Then I got to thinking about what it was really going to be, and I quit.

It's what a man said at the American Indian Congress, "We're in this together, not just to live, but to survive. If we don't do these things together, our species will not survive."

I'm comfortable as an Indian in the world that God created around me, and the people that I know. Helen and I were talking about the fact that we don't have the same values as the outside world does. The world that Helen and I live in, the people that we know in the Native community, are our family for all time. We're praying when we're having our meals asking for everybody to live a good life. But I can't say that they say the same for us. So it's hard for me to go into the dominant culture world and not feel unsafe. You have to be on your guard all the time. When I was in my 20s, I had no problem with that, because really I was in another world. I knew there was a movement going on that wanted to stop wars. I felt safe in that movement. There are prejudices in the Native community as well as anywhere else, but it's still more homey than the other outside world.

WHO IS NATIVE AMERICAN/INDIAN?

Anybody born on this continent is a native American. Who is an American Indian?

Indigenous people who have been here for thousands of years.

UNIQUE QUALITY OF THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE ~

We stayed together throughout our tough times. There are some who got disappointed and haven't shown back up, and there are some who financially can't be here. Piqua is my family. I'm just starting to get to know some of the people, and that's after 20 something years. We only get to see each other on the weekends three or four times a year.

PROUD TO BE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

I am proud because it is my family.

FEDERAL RECOGNITION

Being federally recognized in some cases would be a good thing, but then I don't think a lot of people care. Years ago, I was saying let's do it; today I still have questions. How would it benefit us? Would we be better off?

I went to school on Indian Manpower, a federally-funded program, because we were state recognized. We didn't have to be federally recognized to do that. Would recognition benefit us in goods and services? Not necessarily. Would it benefit our children down the road? There are yays and nays to it. Would they get a better education or health care? Not necessarily. There is not that much money allocated to federally recognized tribes, and they're fighting over a pittance right now.



Jason

CULTURAL IDENTITY

I grew up as an Army brat. My parents had me at a fairly young age. I spent the first years of my life in Germany and traveled around from there. When my dad got out of the service we moved back to Ohio. His grandparents were from southwestern Virginia and southeastern Kentucky. His mother and father moved to Ohio shortly after the war and we've been there ever since.

My dad was a member of a heritage group for a long time. There was not a whole lot of Native presence there in southeastern Ohio, but we had friends and family in the heritage group. I left Ohio when I graduated from high school and joined the Army and was gone for quite awhile. Once I came back I joined the heritage group as well. I learned quite a bit just sitting down with elders and discussing things, and then people who knew my grandparents and their family telling the stories about our history and genealogy. Once I started digging on the internet, that is when I really got interested. I've always been interested in my family and its culture. It was when I moved back to Ohio that it really started to sink in. When I got

back involved with that heritage organization, it really opened my eyes and made me look a little bit farther. There were several different tribes represented there: mostly eastern and a couple of the western tribes as well. It was like a big family reunion once a month with a little bit of ceremony and cultural teachings. There were people teaching language and lots of storytelling.

I was taught textbook Native history and then I was taught more by family and others. I was often times taken into the woods as a youngster and shown different plants and animals. I wish I remembered half the things I was shown. A lot of that was passed down through the family. Looking back, that really was traditional ways, but I didn't realize it at the time.

INSPIRATIONAL ANCESTOR ~

To see where my ancestors came from, and to know the conditions they went through is kind of cool. I go to places where my ancestors have lived. Most of them lived on the fringes of society, for lack of a better term, from the mountains of Virginia and Kentucky, to

desolate places and swamps, and everywhere else. This was where they had their families, got through adversity, made it, and created me.

When my father's brothers and sisters were younger, they didn't embrace their own culture. They tried to hide it. Dad, the youngest of his siblings, did learn however to embrace it. He dragged me along to ceremonies and other gatherings and I'm so glad he did.

My cousins call me asking questions about their own genealogy. It baffles me that they don't know who their great-great grandparents were. My dad really is my role model. He's been through some adversity on his own, and overcame it.

Does the fact that you are multi-racial ever cause problems for you?

We can say mixed. I'm good with it. I honor all my ancestors. Some of my Native American ancestors are Shawnee, and some are from other tribes, and other cultures. I'm proud to be a mixed. *[Laughs]* I've never done my DNA. My genealogy is pretty interesting: Caucasian (mostly Northern European -- there is family lore of Scotland and the Scandinavian countries, and our last name), Native American, and a little bit of African in there as well. My mother's family is still a bit of a mystery.

INVOLVEMENT WITH THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE ~

My cousin, Sean, had a lot to do to my wanting to come here. I found the Piqua online. I talked to a couple members of the Tribe and got an invite to come down and hang out.

When I got here it felt like family. I hope they feel that way about me as well because I really, truly do. It's awesome. Then I realized that Sean was a member of the Tribe and I said, "Really, why didn't you say that?"

ROLE IN THE TRIBE ~

My job is helping with the men's meetings and men's issues, working for the Tribe and helping the leaders and elders, and doing whatever they need me to do. When the women have their meeting, the men have theirs as well. I'm glad they trust me to do it, as I know that there are folks way more qualified than I am. I don't necessarily consider myself a leader; mine is more of a position of service.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ~

I thank the Creator for everything. Sometimes when people see that, they don't understand what I'm doing. At every meal, when I cut down a tree, when I take a piece of fruit, I honor the Creator in prayer, and that's a true thank you. That's the way I feel it should be done in my heart. Everybody does things differently. In cleansing and purification, I use sage and tobacco. I lay tobacco down all the time. I'm never without a gift of tobacco. I don't know what other people do, but that's my extension of this outside in the world.

LIVING IN A TRADITIONAL NATIVE WAY ~

We live in the modern era, but where I live in the middle of Ohio surrounded by nature, I'm reminded about it every day and connected to it physically. I step out on my back porch and I'm

surrounded by nature. I watch the sunrise and thank the ancestors. Even though we live in the modern world, we try to hold on to a little bit of spirituality for the lack of a better term.

I have a bond with critters. Most people look at my feeding animals as being a provider; to me I feel I co-exist with them. They are my friends. They watch out for me and I watch out for them. I respect animals. I respect nature the best I can. At the same time it is kind of strange because I hunt and fish. I do kill animals, but I thank them for their lives. I try to help nature and the animals when I can. Once my wife and I were going on a kayaking trip. We were loading up the kayak on the bus to drop us off when a woman came up carrying a critter. I said, "What do you have?" She said, "It's a baby owl." It was hit by a car. She opened up her hand and it wasn't a baby owl; it was a full-grown screech owl. They are just very small. I told her, "It is in shock right now." I didn't know anything about owls. I didn't know they don't drink water. They get all their moisture from their prey. But I put water in my hand and the owl drank it. I nestled him in the tree and told him, "It will get better. Leave. Fly away." So we went kayaking and came back four hours later and the owl was in the same spot. I had a parrot so I knew how to handle birds. I put my finger in front of him and he stepped right up on me. I put him up on my shoulder and got in the car. He road home on my shoulder. When we got home I did some research on what screech owls ate. I built him

a spot in the shed and gave him a place that was warm and dry. I fed him earthworms and minnows for about a week. I actually bought feeder mice. I nursed him back to health. When he was hit it dislocated his wing and it just took time to heal. I left the door open so he could fly out whenever he wanted to and one day I came home and he was on the pear tree in the back yard. He hung around the house for about a month. I still heard him. Before then we never had screech owls. Ever since him, we've had screech owls. Last summer there was a screech owl in the pear tree. He let me get really close. I'm pretty sure it was him again.

I raise critters. I have always done that. I don't know if that is a Native thing or not, or is it just the way we do things in Appalachia? Not many people know as many wild critters as I do.

A friend of mine was an exterminator. The law where he lives says that when an exterminator finds an animal they have to euthanize them. He had a hard time killing the babies and I don't blame him. My friend had three baby raccoons and asked if I would take them. We got them before their eyes were open and bottle fed them. I did everything a mother raccoon does for them. It was a full-time job. I had to feed those little guys three times a day for eight months. Just as bad as a kid, but more needy. Then they start transitioning to being awake at night which is another complication. I've done several litters of raccoons and never lost one. I turn them loose at the house and watch them grow. Eventually they migrate

away. Every once in awhile Penelope, who I raised three or four years ago, comes back. She's different. She still comes in the house. Especially in the winter time, the hibernation season, she will be gone for two or three months and I'll not see her at all. And then one day I'll be watching TV, and hear knocking on the back glass, and there is Penelope wanting to come inside. She'll come in and eat, drink some water out of the dog's bowl, and curl up on me and go to sleep, or she'll eat popcorn and watch TV with me. She is a trip. She can't be right. [Laughs] She brought her babies this year. They all came to the back porch eventually. They are a little stand-offish. If I get too close they start acting like wild raccoons. Penelope's sister still comes by, and also the raccoons from last year. Very few of the boys come by. There is a little possum that comes by and eats and the raccoons are scared to death of this possum. It's funny. They run up the gutters and get on the roof and watch the possum eat.

They have complex social groups. It is neat to watch them and how they interact. The younger raccoons, the babies seem to have dominance over the older. I think the older raccoons will let them do that. None of them ever try to hurt the babies. The older raccoons move out of the way for the babies. They are gentle, and it seems like it would be the opposite way around.

In my family there are several people who are similar to me, but maybe not as nutty as I am when it comes to critters. I truly believe

that we are all connected with everything, with the plants, with the creatures, with each other. I like to think that I have a special bond with animals. I really should have worked with them. Looking back, I wish I had become a veterinarian, because I love critters.



Jason with baby raccoons (photo courtesy of Jason)

CULTURAL REVITALIZATION

SIGNIFICANCE OF LANGUAGE ~

Language, first and foremost is critical.

Ceremony, dances and prayers, of course. Who are we if we don't know our own language?

You look at all federal and state tribes, and First Nations in Canada, and we are all losing our languages. That was key for our ancestors in defining their identity, who they were. You knew who was part of your group by your ability to communicate with them. If we lose our language, we're losing a big chunk of our culture. I speak more Spanish than I do

Shawnee. I know different words and phrases. I would love to learn the language. I keep hearing that we need to learn the language. But I think we need to take a step back, and start at the base level, start teaching our children the language. I think we can learn as well by teaching.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CEREMONY ~

Ceremony is definitely important as well, the revitalization of old ceremony, and going back and finding things that we've lost, or thought we knew. For me, it recharges my spiritual batteries. I get to see my Tribal family that I don't get to see all the time, not just elders, but other members of the Tribe. It gives me a cleansing, and then it's honoring the ancestors, and that's key. It's as important to me as church is for some people.

ROLE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHING NATIVE HISTORY, PAST & PRESENT ~

Ohio just hits the benchmarks only. We learned about Tecumseh and Chief Logan -- just the big ones. We never learned about Cornstalk or Nonhelema. We learned about Logan and Logan's Lament, but never about Blue Jacket, or Black Hoof, or any of these people who are important to me.¹⁵ There was so much history in Ohio; the fact that they didn't teach it was really kind of overwhelming. We learned about the Battle of Fallen Timbers, and there was like two pages on the Hopewell, and maybe a page on the Adena. I don't even know whether we

15 All of those mentioned were important Shawnee leaders involved in the prolonged fight for control of the Ohio Valley in the 1700's and early 1800's.

learned about Ft. Ancient culture. We could open up a history book and see the Great Serpent Mound¹⁶; other than that, there was nothing. It just glazed the surface. Then it just skipped right over and went on to the Civil War. We had like five chapters on the Civil War.

I did have a teacher in high school who was a local historian. He would go off-topic, and not just talk about Blue Jacket or Tecumseh or Chief Logan, but would tell us this town was named after this guy. That was pretty interesting. I've always been a fan of history. As far as actual education, not a whole lot. I learned, but it was because I wanted to. Outside of school I heard stories, listened and picked up things on my own.

I don't know what they're teaching nowadays. Everyone knows that Ohio has a Native past, but there is no mention of modern Indians in Ohio. There are no state recognized tribes in Ohio, and Ohio doesn't have a process for even recognizing tribes in Ohio. There is no Indian Commission in Ohio. Everything that's done in the State of Ohio is done through private nonprofit organizations. We don't have a voice. I would love for there to be just a class on Ohio's past before 1803. Simon Kenton was a footnote. Simon Girty wasn't even mentioned. These are important people, not just for Native Americans, but in Ohio history.

16 General Anthony Wayne defeated the Northwestern Indian Confederation, which included the Shawnee, at the Battle of Fallen Timbers near Toledo, Ohio in 1794. The Hopewell, Adena, and Ft. Ancient were pre-historic cultures which thrived in the Ohio Valley and other areas of eastern North America. The Great Serpent Mound is an effigy mound created by the Ft. Ancient people.

My understanding is that they are teaching it even less now.

I have a decent understanding of the history, mostly with the main players. I know quite a bit about Tecumseh and his family, Black Fish, and Black Hoof. That is something we could teach the younger generation. Barbara Lehmann, the Piqua Shawnee Tribal Historian, is the great resource for that. I take for granted that everybody knows that stuff -- and that everybody has animals at their house.

FUTURE VISION

I would love to see if we could have a land base. I was not here when they had the land in the past. What we are doing now seems to work. It is whatever the Tribe really wants to do.

I'd like to see us be to the point where we could actually make an impact in the community at large, especially in Alabama because we are state recognized there. I'd like to see us keep developing leaders, and grow and flourish, and develop relationships with other tribes and other organizations, and continue to grow socially as well.

NEXT GENERATION ~

It starts at home, integrating it at home. It's hard to make young people do anything let alone explore their heritage.

LEARNING FROM THE SHAWNEE EXPERIENCE ~

Even though we don't always get along, we seem to always be willing to work with one another. It's kind of 'agree to disagree' type

thing sometimes. I see a lot of different personalities, and we're able to all work together towards a common goal, when we actually set a goal for ourselves. That's great. I wish society could do that as well.

WHAT THE PUBLIC SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE SHAWNEE/EASTERN WOODLAND PEOPLES ~

A lot of people are just familiar with Tecumseh, but the overall story of the Shawnee, including where we were before Contact is not known. At one time the Shawnee language was the lingua franca, the trade language of the entire east coast. That is how important the Shawnee were to the development of this country, and to the earlier years of the colonial period. People should know about the Treaty of Greenville, the forced marches, and all the broken treaties. I don't think people realize how many treaties have been broken, and how many times the Shawnee were pushed and pushed and pushed again to the west. They were pushed out of Ohio, and then pushed again!

ACQUISITION OF LAND ~

It would be absolutely wonderful if we did have land, especially in Alabama. Kentucky is a good central location to meet for those who are spread out. I would love to see us have a place where we could go there for a whole week, and do ceremony and dances. Talking about two worlds again, in this world it's not possible to do that, but in my heart, oh yeah, it would be tremendous.

If we had our own land we could stay as long as we wanted to and wouldn't have to pay rent to someone else. We would be free to do whatever we wanted to do on our own land. It's not a luxury at this point; it is something we actually need. We could gather for three or four days. We could show our children things -- hands-on, and make it interesting. Last time at one of our gatherings, one of the members was showing the kids how to make crafts. We've had guys do napping demonstrations. We could actually take it to the next level -- show them not just how, but why. Everything from foraging, building, crafts, hunting and fishing, archery, camping, building fires -- all these things that people don't know how to do anymore.

PROTECTION OF SACRED SITES ~

Ohio kills me. I've seen some of the old mound builder sites that are just gone. I've got a copy of Squier and Davis's manuscripts showing all the mounds of the Scioto River valley, and they're gone.

I go to the Leo Petroglyphs located near Ray, Ohio, which is owned by the Ohio State Historical Society. It is an outcrop of sandstone at the top of a really beautiful gorge full of hemlock trees and a lot of plants you only find further north. It is cold there, a little micro-climate. The carvings in the outcrop are prehistoric, thousands of years old. There is one of a man who looks like he is wearing a buffalo headdress. There are handprints and footprints and bear tracks and birds. A

humming bird! And other animals. It is a neat place to go. I can sit there and connect with someone who could have been an ancestor from thousands of years ago. Now they are all fenced up and you can't actually touch them, but people do jump the fence and carve their names on the rocks which is just horrible.

Developers built a mall on ancient mounds in Chillicothe, Ohio. If you fly over, you can still see remnants of sacred sites that are now flattened fields. You can still see the outlines from the sky. It's horrible. Especially burial sites. I work construction. They used to put emphasis on finding human remains, even in the bid documents. They don't even put them in the bid documents now. I know they're in the contract documents once you sign a contract, but they used to be in the bid documents, that you had to protect Native and non-Native burial and archeological sites. I haven't thought of it in a long time. It used to be a big deal, and now it's kind of okay, whatever, to the powers that be.

REFLECTION

LIVING IN TWO WORLDS ~

Sometimes I feel like I am walking in two worlds. So like the raccoons, I'm able to adapt to that. For instance, in my circle of friends there are a lot of times when I have to explain things that I don't have to explain here at a gathering. It's just because of ignorance on their part, and me trying to educate them. I deal with that a lot in society. There are so

many stereotypes and stigmas associated with being Native that you kind of do live in two worlds. For instance, I'm part of a Masonic Motorcycle Organization, and there is a chapter here locally. Two of the members were going to visit today, but they had some bike problems, so they weren't able. One of them actually said, "Hey, is this like church? What do you mean by ceremony?" I had to explain, "Yes, this is a ceremony. It's not a somber event by any means, but it's to be taken with respect. You guys are more than welcome to visit as observers, but keep in mind that this is like our church, even though it's not in a building, and not necessarily organized like most people are used with religion. It's a spiritual thing for us." You have to educate people all the time about things that we take for granted. They have a different world view than I do. Down here at the gathering with the Piqua Shawnee I actually get to be me.

Again, stereotypes. The Cleveland Indians have "Chief Wahoo", a cartoon stereotype version of a Native American, as a mascot. I watch a Cleveland Indians game, just to watch a ballgame, and it's like I feel ashamed to support something with such an offensive logo. It's this feeling of just wrong, but yet I still watch..

My wife is not Native. I have to explain things to her all the time. She's pretty open-minded, but she doesn't see my emotional attachment to a lot of things. "I know you don't understand this, but this means something to me." That actually causes a bit of conflict.

For instance, she hates the fact that my ears are pierced. I told her this is an expression of who I am. This is who you married. She says, "I wish you wouldn't wear earrings." Because her family is straight-laced, and only hippies wear earrings. There are little things like that, little nuances, but we work really well together. We're a great team, but it does cause conflict on occasion, and then I have to educate her. She's getting it now. It only took 18 years.

She doesn't understand my connection with the animals. She tolerates the animals. She's taking care of the babies while I'm attending the Piqua ceremony. To her, they're pets. When I go to turn them loose, it kills her every time. Although she's not an emotional person, she has made that emotional bond. To me, they've graduated. It's time for them to leave the nest and go.

WHO IS NATIVE AMERICAN/INDIAN?
I used to fluctuate on this. I don't believe in blood quantum. I've dealt with people in the past who I personally didn't feel were Indian, but they were, and that is on me. My belief is that if a person feels they are Native American, and has an ancestor who is Native American, I don't care how far back that ancestor is, that person should be entitled to be and call themselves Native American.

UNIQUE QUALITY OF THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE ~

It is unique that we are so dispersed, but yet people go out of their way to come down here and meet with each other. It truly is a family

atmosphere. I've never seen or been a part of a group that is this tight and this open at the same time. We've got people from five or six states, and 20 or 30 families represented here, and they all come together as one. It's really a beautiful thing. I find this most unique that out of many, one.

PROUD TO BE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

I'm proud because I've got another family here. I'm proud of my past, of my ancestors, and it's a way for me to honor my ancestors. I learn so much here. Every time I come here, I learn something new or see a different viewpoint on it. Or I learn a little piece of ceremony that either I had forgotten, or never knew. It's awesome to be part of a group that's willing to share. I think everyone here is proud to be who they are. Otherwise they wouldn't be here. It's a blessing, really.

FEDERAL RECOGNITION

It is a double-edged sword. It would be great for federal funding, but I don't think the hoops to be jumped through would be fun. I don't know that the ends would justify the means. Just based on my own experience, when you are dealing with any kind of federal contracts you will need another person doing nothing but dealing with the paperwork. I can imagine the paperwork involved would just be a nightmare.

HISTORICAL RECONCILIATION

I think it is a great thing, and very important to do historical reconciliation. We did some drumming with Mark Sage and his people who were re-tracing the Wilderness Road¹⁷; they did an historical reenactment of it on horseback and we met them along the way and hung out with them for the day. But it was good because these people were representing the Daniel Boone Society and here we are in the same spot they would have encountered our Shawnee ancestors. It was a neat thing and the public got to see it. Plus we do other community events every year. We actually get to be in the public eye and that is a good thing. We're not just connected to one spot at ceremony. You're a member of the Tribe outside and people see that. A lot of Tribal members will come here and wear their regalia, but that is the only time they ever do. I think it is a good that we get out in public when we do things, especially things that have a historical path.

SHOULD THE PIQUA SHAWNEE BE INVOLVED IN NATIONAL NATIVE ISSUES SUCH AS THE DAKOTA PIPELINE?

Yes and no. I don't think we have a big enough voice by ourselves. If we were to utilize our seat with the National Congress of Native Americans, that would be wonderful. We're so small that I don't think we would be heard

¹⁷ The Wilderness Road was originally the Native Warrior's Path through the Cumberland Gap to Kentucky and the Ohio River. Daniel Boone gets credit for opening this trail for white settlers to pour into the interior and begin settling west of the Appalachian Mountains.

over the crowd. I would love to be on the front lines, but I couldn't see myself doing it, but I truly love and appreciate those that can.



Jim Green

CULTURAL IDENTITY

In 1815 Major John Robert Drew came up from Quade County and bought land, signed a deed, and brought his family out. He had to buy it through another name as he was Cherokee. He was a representative of the North Carolina legislature. He was getting the advance word. It was many years prior to the actual Removal. He was smart enough to get our family out. Some did go to Oklahoma, but for the most part they hid out.

Certain relatives would tell me about the different aspects of our Native heritage, but then my grandmother was worried about it and would try to hide it. She didn't want it known. Now everybody wants to be an Indian; everybody's grandmother is a Cherokee Indian princess. Back at that time it was disgraceful I guess was the way she thought. Granny Drew Lake became a famous craftsperson at Berea College. She is in a lot of Southern Appalachian books on Appalachian craftspeople. She started the original cane-bottom chairs. That is where some of my interest and craft abilities came from. She didn't like to be photographed. When they

would come to take her picture, she would powder herself all over with flour to try to hide the dark skin. My great-grandmother on my grandfather's side was involved in herbal healing and cooking. They would go out in the forest and gather the herbs and spices and medicine. I used to know a lot of the plants like lady's slipper and some of the others, but I didn't stay abreast of it. She was the direct descendent of Rev. John Drew. He was full-blood; his mother and father were both Cherokee. His father was Major John Robert Drew. When they were forming Berea College, her father, Rev. John Drew, was one of the three, who worked with John G. Fee and Cassius Clay. He wound up at Pine Grove in the mountains up in Jackson County. Clay gave Fee 2.8 acres to start Berea College, which started as a cabin more or less. Then to appease John Drew, my great grandfather helped him build Pine Grove Settlement School. My English part is an old family into America and in Madison County. On the Krimbrell side, six generations married Native women, starting with the Saponi.

My father said he really didn't know much

so I had to go beyond him to find it. Yes, we knew from childhood because the children that we played with would look at our skin and call us a bunch of old Indians. They said their mother had said we were Indians. It was hidden on the one hand, and yet on the other hand, we knew it. I can vaguely remember going to some real big pow-wows up around Greenup County, Kentucky when I was about twelve as a family activity. We didn't necessarily do it per say for the Native aspect, but we conducted ourselves with the different aspects of the culture. My family camped a lot and a lot of outdoor activities. Around the campfire at night we were constantly making crafts, whether it was a bow and arrow or baskets or whatever.

Indian Fort Mountain is part of my heritage. You can go to the Smoky Mountains or the Rockies and not get the total view that you can see after you get up there. You can see 360. It's beautiful. It has deep heritage roots with different aspects from Indian Kitchen to Devil's Slide to Eagle's Nest, Buzzards Roost, East Pinnacle, West Pinnacle. It's Berea College land. I used to camp there when I was a child with the Boy Scouts. I slept in this shallow rock shelter, Indian Kitchen, and unbeknown to me my three-time great-grandfather, Joseph Kimbrell, hid out in there. I spent most of my childhood and young adult life out there. I usually go two or three times in the spring and fall just because of its beauty, to see the leaves, and enjoy the early spring. My ancestors are buried in that general vicinity.

Two of the big, flat stones are 1700's and are still real legible. They all lie in the oldest part of the cemetery. They are in chronological order: grandfather to son and so forth. I was sitting up there one day on the stone and had my lunch. I thought this is sacrilegious. Then I thought, no, my great-grandparent would be tickled to death knowing that I was there having my lunch. When I go to this mountain, even though I go just to see the sights, but still at the same time when I get up there, there is this calling. I get this special feeling that seeps in.

When I go, a lot of times I take friends or neighbors who don't have any Native ancestry that they know of and they enjoy and appreciate it as much or more than I do. There is a general overall love of the Native among the community of Berea. In their homes they have a lot of Indian figurines, and rightfully so because a lot of them do have Indian blood and don't even know it just by virtue of the Wilderness Road cutting through. Most everybody in Kentucky and Tennessee have some.

I'm part Shawnee, Cherokee, and Saponi. The Saponi were primarily in Virginia. The records I have were around 1640 when Joseph Kimbrell first came over from England. He didn't like or trust the white people. He went to live among the Saponia Indians and he took a Saponi wife. They had two children, David and William, who became famous interpreters on behalf of the Saponi and other related Indian tribes in the area for the colonial militia/

government.

I try to go to the annual pow-wow down in Cherokee, North Carolina. I've spent time at the Council House doing my genealogy research. The Saponia spread apart and some became members of other tribes way back in the early 1800's. They are still some and they hold pow-wows in Virginia, but I haven't yet done anything with that. I do more with the Shawnee simply because they are the only tribe that has come back in Kentucky. I worked for many years on genealogy, and I'm still working on it.

INSPIRATIONAL ANCESTOR ~

Right here in this community and a friend of the past president of Berea College was John Drew, a Cherokee and lay minister. He owned a lot of land around Berea. More recent would be my uncle who spent a great deal of time with me when I was young. He taught me and worked with me on a lot of my hobbies. He involved me in building his own house. He told me Native stories and the ways of nature.

Being bi-racial, did this ever cause any problems for you?

In school my brothers, sister and I were called names by the other children. "You are just a bunch of old Indians." We were dark-skinned so they talked about our skin color in a negative way. I never was ashamed of 'my Native' even as a child. I'm just real pleased to be Native American and English descent. I'm proud of my ancestral past.

INVOLVEMENT WITH THE PIQUA ~

I've been with the Piqua Shawnee ever since

they first came back into Kentucky. They billed it as the Shawnee coming back into Kentucky after two hundred and fifty years. They were formally organized about six or eight years prior to that in Ohio. A friend of mine told me about them and invited me to participate so I've been with them ever since. It gave me an opportunity to be involved with other Native people

There was nothing formal before that -- just pretty much our family and friends. Living in Berea, a lot of Cherokee hid out in the mountains during the Removal period. They call them the ridge runners. My people pretty much came through the wilderness, drove through the mountains, hid out and made their homes and did farming -- little small plots here and there. They pretty much had to hide out from the settlers. Because of that, there's been a wide array of Native people around Berea and the surrounding area. For that reason we kept in tune from childhood, the elders telling us and our skin color. There really hasn't been anything formal until the Piqua come along in this area.

TRIBAL ROLE ~

I try to support them and represent them as well and positive as I can. I am retired and have the time. Whenever Barbara Lehmann calls, I try to get there the best way I can. She does a lot for everybody. So whatever I can do to support her generally supports the Piqua. Our Chief is A-1.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ~

In a lot of ways I do my own spiritual practice. I'm a hunter and fisherman. If I take game I bless it before I field dress it. If I do take something, I clean it and use it for food. I try not to abuse it, not just shooting something to be shooting something. I was taught not to do that.

I find my most spiritual time when I am out in nature. Looking back I've probably been in tune with the Native activities throughout my life like our ancestors of years ago. My whole family -- it is who we are. Every activity we do and every time we get together, without meaning to, it is just being Native. It is just what it is.

LIVING IN A TRADITIONAL NATIVE WAY ~

I spent my whole life following my natural instinctive likes and habits involving the outdoors -- hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, arrowheads. It is just who I am.

CULTURAL REVITALIZATION

SIGNIFICANCE OF CEREMONY ~

To me ceremony is the most valuable aspect. That is primarily why I started coming. Since we do meet so little to spend the time in meetings or dealing with politics, doesn't seem sensible. There are some things that have to be dealt with. Since we can't get together all the time, emailing is one way to do it. It is so hard anymore to find tradition and the Native ways. Even the big pow-wow in Albuquerque,

which is billed as the best and the world's biggest, is more like a national convention type thing. Outside of the Shawnee it is pretty hard to find true traditional regalia. We are a tribe that stays as close as we can to the actual way the rites were performed. It is just very hard to find that and when we do it, it is so rewarding. It sticks with us. It is almost like a medicine. I hunger for that more and more. That is why I initially came to the Piqua when I heard about it. I wanted to get involved in the Native ways, learn more about the ceremonies. At night we would have the drumming and the dance, real traditional, even more than it is today. We moved a little away from it. They do outstanding ceremonies. In fact Gary Hunt, our Principal Chief, and Don Rankin, our Ceremonial Chief, have been doing some beautiful ones. They had one down at the Feltner camp. I was sitting there watching and the smoke was rising in a mist-like way. It was a beautiful morning. As I looked back those white oaks had that blue hue. He did the Shawnee prayer in Shawnee and then transcribed it in English, then knelt down and did it to the east, the south, the west. That was the most beautiful I've ever seen, especially hearing him speak so long in Shawnee. To hear that much Native Shawnee was really good. It still lingers with me. Whether it is totally correct or not, they really try from the heart, even to put on the regalia, not necessarily the carnival plumes and all, but try to create the Shawnee look. That is about as good as it gets

as far as I witnessed. You go somewhere else, like the annual Fourth of July Cherokee pow-wow where they pay big money for the dancer contest winners, and it is really fantastic for what it is. But at the same time, the Shawnee ceremonies are more traditional and rewarding.

I'd just like to see more of that, not necessarily in ceremony, but if we just get a little more into the Native deal. Not necessarily do you have to have on full regalia, but when you go to ceremony that is an opportunity to even be dressed as I am today, just something indicating your heritage, such as Native jewelry and not have on a suit and tie or your regular street clothes.

SIGNIFICANCE OF LANGUAGE ~

There is no Shawnee reservation in the Ohio Valley and very few full-bloods, if any. Whereas if you are talking about the Cherokee or Lakota or Mohawk, they still have their reservations. It is very important for them to keep up their traditions and their language. With the Piqua maybe not so much, but it would be nice. I speak a little bit of Shawnee and Cherokee. I enjoy it. I can put a few things together. If I'm making a presentation, I'll use Shawnee or Cherokee. The Shawnee Tribal Mother made up tapes if you wanted to start speaking some of the more common-used Shawnee words so you could at least do a presentation and say a few things. There is nowhere to use it other than specific events, and that is very limited.

FUTURE VISION

The Piqua are disbursed from Georgia, Alabama, up to Indiana, Ohio and all in between. It's a great effort to get together. People take their annual leave and vacation time just to come here. They call it the family. We meet four times a year and that is really not enough for us to get together for the benefit of the Tribe. I'd like more continuity, meeting more often in the local area.

I would like to see the Piqua go even more traditional in all its activities and bring in the different age groups, not just children, but younger adults. In the few days that we do spend, nighttime is a very special time for the Natives with drumming and dancing and chanting. I think we need to spend more time out of the motel, and doing activities. Again, I understand the age problem. We need to bring more tradition back into it and even though a lot of us are at the point now where we not necessarily into the dancing, we need this other bunch there who would rightfully be appropriate and want to and then we could enjoy them as someday they will enjoy others who are younger. Maybe a group of representatives on behalf of the people that we voted to do it could take care of the business aspect and turn it over to them because a large group can't do it anyhow. They could hash it out and bring the results and then we could deal with it. With the limited time we've got, we need to spend it more in a true, traditional Native way and doing activities using the

appropriate people.

When we are spread so far apart, it is hard to carry out activities, and the other problem is the limited funds. At some point in time I hope we can start getting donations from business and industry. There are several million dollars each year that is put there for minority people. A lot of this money is turned back every year. It comes through regionally every year. The mountain areas where we are is one of the regions. We would be prime people for it. The money is there and we could get it, I'm sure. It just takes somebody to get all the information. I had a lot of experience working with business and industry on behalf of the state. We have all kinds of endowments in this state. Native American land, as I see it, would be an easy way to go. You have a lot of individuals who have compassion and love for the Native Americans.

Even in my own personal Native blood lines, I have to work at it, keep abreast of it, which I want to. I have the desire, but if I'm not careful, if on a given day, if I don't just even put on a bracelet or different necklace after so long a period, six months or a year or two, it drops out of sight, out of mind. Fortunately, not intentionally, but my basement keeps me going where I do my crafts. I can't help it. I don't necessarily do it for the project, it just comes out.

ROLE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHING NATIVE HISTORY, PAST & PRESENT ~

The schools try to bring in speakers. and so forth. It's not accomplishing what I see would

really help to pay a tribute to the original inhabitants, the North American tribes. During November, Native American month, they feel they have to do something, so they bring in some Native people, then it's forgotten. It needs to be more than just a token thing. National Geographic estimated that there were thirty million Indians before white men set foot on the continent, and they were spread strategically across this continent such as we are today until Removal, as they called it.

I can't think of anything we learned in school about Native history other than maybe a specific assignment, but it wasn't emphasized. I would like them to teach the early local history from the point when the white man was first involved in this part of the country with the early Eastern Woodland Indians with an emphasis on the true history of Natives and whites.

NEXT GENERATION ~

We need the children too, but what we need are the twenty-eight year old, thirty, forty somethings so you got people back here that will do the drumming and the rest of us can sit and enjoy and still see the activity that we were more into a few years back. If it is not of interest, especially young people are not going to linger. It's a problem and unless we do something eventually there won't even be a Shawnee a few years down the road. We could build the most fantastic reservation, libraries and whatever they keep talking about, but if there is nobody there...

What is happening to us is like in a lot of the churches, the sportsmen clubs -- everything in America, the younger people haven't been involved and feel left out and haven't moved with it. The group who used to be in their forties are now in their sixties or seventies, and there is nothing back here behind it. These aren't the people who want to go out in turkey or deer season and shoot and get ready and prep. They are more interested in having a buffet and sitting at the motel.

We've got to promote it and change our programming. At least we know what the problem is. We need to return back to when the Tribe first started out when we were involved in more outdoor activities of Native America. Bonfires at night, storytelling and dance, drumming, bow and arrow, throwing of the tomahawk and knives -- that kind of thing. More like the Native Americans of yesteryear lived their lives. I share all of those kind of activities with my family. We are almost never together that we don't do a Native activity. My daughters and grandchildren have a love and appreciation of the Native way.

*LEARNING FROM THE SHAWNEE/
EASTERN WOODLAND NATIVE
EXPERIENCE ~*

It makes a kinder person if people get a feeling for the Native way, and a greater appreciation for life and nature. This local community, Berea, Kentucky, and surrounding areas really favor the Native.

*WHAT THE PUBLIC SHOULD KNOW
ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE
SHAWNEE ~*

First, start out with the understanding of the early history of the Shawnee in Kentucky and the southeastern and central United States and their significant role in that history. The Shawnee are credited with stopping the movement west more than all of the other tribes put together; for forty some years they held them at bay. They killed the pioneers by the thousands. History doesn't record it that way. Daniel Boone killed all the Indians, but in reality they made life miserable for those on the early frontier. They were even afraid to tend their crops, or go for water, etc.

I have a four volume Kentucky history set; when it gets to the Native American aspect of that time period of problems, it is one sentence. That says it all. During Native American month you might see a teepee on somebody's farm and the school kids may have a Native American day, and that's it. I know the problems, but the answer I don't necessarily have. We live on the North American continent that was the home of Native Americans, a very colorful race that is well-received by all countries throughout the world, except America, unfortunately. Part of that I'm sure is because the invasion was a very negative thing done in a very negative fashion and they are trying to forget it. We are at a point in history where it needs to be brought forth and probably at this time it can be done, but not in an angry way. Start with the

true story between the whites and the Native Americans -- what actually transpired.

ACQUISITION OF LAND ~

We need money to even operate. Let's just say we did start creating money some way or another. In Kentucky you are looking realistically at least probably \$2500 an acre for lesser land. Then you've got to consider property taxes and upkeep and maintenance. Having land was more important than what I think we perceived when we bought land in the past. It was a bonding agent, a feeling of belonging. It is important, and if it were possible, we very quickly probably need that again just to bond and hold us together. If it were even twenty acres -- in fact we don't really need a large property, because we only meet four times a year, weather permitting. But it is still a bonding time -- even just the statement "our land". "We are going to our land." It probably should be somewhere easily accessible off of the Interstate, I75 -- somewhere in this general area -- London, Berea.

PROTECTION OF SACRED SITES ~

Kentucky is a very important player in early American history. It was the crossroads. There are a hundred and twenty something mounds right around Berea, with a great mound. But the locals don't know about the mounds right there, much less around the country.

The Kentucky government put an interchange over the famous Indian fields around Mt. Sterling that were there for hundreds of years, where all the tribes would

meet and trade their wares. They would stay there sometimes two to four years. Every person in Kentucky knows about Indian fields from childhood. There are graves there they've dug in for a hundred years. Some of the biggest collections in Kentucky come out of there. It's that significant a place. The Shawnee had one of two permanent settlements in Kentucky. It ought to have historical markers. The Shawnee ought to be able to go there every so often and have their ceremonies. It broke my heart when I saw that in the Lexington paper. Just because the old interchange happens to be there and they wanted to put a big cloverleaf, why didn't they work around it? They just haven't appreciated heritage in Kentucky enough even though it is a very historical state.

REFLECTION

LIVING IN TWO WORLDS ~

I have found it easier to hide and to withdraw into the Native, especially in the current situation. I go into the woods for solitude. Even in religion I found way more comfort going more the Native way. I feel very fortunate too that I do have a Native blood line to be able to escape from the modern hectic life and pace, whether it is in the gatherings or at home making crafts or alone on my farm or on Indian Fort Mountain, and even in my personal thought pattern. I find myself doing more so as the existing situation evolves and becomes worse and worse, unfortunately. I withdraw and retreat into my Native to escape

the turmoil of the world, the news media and politicians. I've thought often that I was born at least a hundred years too late. I don't really like a lot of aspects of modern life, except for air conditioning and health. It is almost sad that it effects me so harshly. My time would have been the Indian encampment or crossing the Allegheny, even wearing the clothes. I was born early enough to appreciate my spare time in the woods – hunting, fishing, making things, experiencing the wild life, whereas the kids today, it is computer games and staying inside. You can't chase them out of the house. They don't know any different and I feel sorry for them. Even their free time is more a formal thing like T ball at the park with all the parents. They are playing the game for the parents and the parents are living through them. We played ball in a cow pasture by getting whoever you could. It was informal and we had more of what I call 'down time', more bonding. The children today only know what they know, so they can't feel the resentment that I do about their loss. I escape into my Native. My heart is there still today. I've done it all pretty much -- trips around the world, experience. But still my heart and appreciation for life is escaping the present back into my farmland, sitting on the side of a hill on a little logging road or the dock of my pond or at Indian Fort for hours on that stone looking out. I still draw my strength and my encouragement from the simple, small things of life.

WHO IS NATIVE AMERICAN/INDIAN?

Start with your mom and dad, their mom and dad, etc., if you find Native genealogy that can be verified, then you have Indian blood. There is a difference between being a descendent of Indian blood, and being on the reservation where all your family still are living there today. We are descendents; they are the Indian reservation Indian people. Their ancestor may have married a Frenchman. You don't have to go to the library or the archives to find your blood line. You are there on the reservation. You have a family get together and know you are with Indians. That is not taking away because I'm very proud of my bloodline, and thankful for it, but at the same time I know enough not to get in a group of tribal Indians and holler about me Indian, my Indian, this and that, because they don't like that and I appreciate that. At the same time you can be very proud and thankful that you have an Indian bloodline, that you have an organization like the Piqua that has brought us back together.

UNIQUE QUALITY OF THE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

The desire to relate and to gather with each other throughout the year, and hopefully learn about their own people. It is a strong point that the Tribe does accept members whose bloodlines are from tribes who were allies of the Shawnee during the invasion period. Because of the small number of people that we do have to choose from, if we didn't do that, we wouldn't have enough for a card game. Today it is definitely beneficial for us for the numbers

purpose.

PROUD TO BE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

I am very proud to be a Piqua Shawnee and carry the Piqua card. I feel our Tribe has a good reputation and is growing in respect.

FEDERAL RECOGNITION

At this point I don't think it is a necessity to be federally recognized. It would just be nice to be recognized among the different Native tribes.

HISTORICAL RECONCILIATION

I have friends in Austria, Hawaii, Japan, a lot of different places, and I've found that all countries support Native Americans except America. They will pay great money for a Lakota Sioux to go to Denmark. A friend of mine goes twice a year and they call him a legend. I think that would be a good way for the healing process – not the apology, but building up the pride that we have the Native Americans here, the color and everything that goes with the lifestyle.

We're in a point in time in our country where a lot of healing needs to be done, and not only on behalf of Native Americans. Our country has been split like an atom. Healing needs to be done, people pulling together, recognizing the past.

*IS THERE A POSSIBILITY OF
RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE
PIQUA SHAWNEE AND THE WESTERN
SHAWNEE TRIBES?*

Not without each one of them letting the past

go, and having a desire to re-connect, and recognizing the benefits that can happen by re-uniting. Right now there is too much animosity among them. It's possible but not likely under the present circumstances. It should happen. Actually I think it would be beneficial for the Shawnee if done with proper guidance and purpose. All sides should make that a priority.

*SHOULD THE PIQUA SHAWNEE
TRIBE BE INVOLVED IN NATIONAL
NATIVE ISSUES SUCH AS THE DAKOTA
PIPELINE?*

It would be beneficial if we were involved in national Native issues. I think it would help the Tribe by giving us more identity. Right now it is just more or less that we know who we are.



Deborah Zimmerman

SNAKE CLAN MOTHER

CULTURAL IDENTITY

I was 5 or 6 years old when the teacher had asked us what nationality we were. I stood up in front of my kindergarten class and announced that I was an Indian. All the kids were saying, “I’m German”, or whatever and telling us about the cultural things they did that their family passed from one generation to another. My mother was just mortified and said, “Why did you say that?” I said, “I just think that’s what I am.” My family never talked about what we were, nor did we seem to practice anything related to any particular culture, but I had dreams from as far back as I can remember.

My grandmother did genealogy for about 20 years or more. I heard her talk about it when I was in junior high maybe, but there was never any mention of Indians. My dad looks so Native that everybody kind of made jokes about it with him. When I’d ask questions Grandpa would say, “You don’t want to know anything about your relatives. They’re all thieves and murderers.” Well, I never found any thieves or murderers! I really think that was his effort to just put a stop to it. He didn’t want anyone

to know. I forgot about it but the dreams never stopped. Years later my own children came home from school with the dreaded “family tree” project. I had nothing to tell them. Grandma had passed away and her genealogy work had “disappeared”. We all assumed that Grandpa had burned it because he was so upset that Grandma was doing it at all. I never knew we had any family beyond my grandparents until I started doing the genealogy. I thought, “If Grandma did it, I can do it. I can just follow in her footsteps and she’ll lead me and we’ll just figure this out.” I would stay up until 2 or 3 o’clock in the morning reading, researching little leads on the internet or driving to the genealogy centers. I thought there was a chance there was Native American there, because all the genealogy kept leading that way but I couldn’t prove it. I was so discouraged. I thought even if I did find that we were Indian, how in the world would I ever find *the* tribe that my dad’s people came from?

When I went to the genealogy center everybody there knew the Sinkeys were Indians. There was a book there that said “Indian blood

runs close in the Sinkey family.” I discovered we had a large family just two counties away. I think my great-grandparents moved to get away from the stigma of being Indian. I met other people on the internet researching the Sinkey family also. One distant cousin said that he remembered as a child going to dances at the Sinkey’s. He told me my uncle said he was Irish and Indian and still knew all the dances. Another cousin I met online doing genealogy said, “Your dad is the last male in an unbroken line of male descent. Is there any way you can talk him into a DNA test?” I finally got Dad to do the test. When it came back, there was no mention of Native American. I thought, “Wow! Maybe I’m just wrong.” Turns out Native American was classified as “Other” at the time.

My family left Ohio in 1832 with 20 or 30 families and came to Iowa. They all lived together in Ohio and in Pennsylvania before Ohio. I couldn’t understand at the time why they would leave perfectly good land in Ohio and move to Iowa. I have a theory about how that may have come about. After the Indian Removal Act the military started moving part of the tribe to Kansas. They got as far as the Mississippi River and it was winter and frozen. The money that the military had been given to do the removal had run out and the people were starving. They were selling off their clothes and horses. The Indian Agent there contacted Washington and found out that the removal had not actually been authorized or funded yet. So the personnel that had been hired to move

them just left. Some of the Indians took the opportunity to run. They got across the river because it was frozen and hid out in the woods and bluffs of Iowa, never admitting to this day that they were Indian. A cousin of mine said that his grandmother told him he was Indian and told him about Maneto. She told him to never tell anyone because the Christians just wouldn’t understand.

Does being bi-racial ever present any problems for you?

When I was young, people used to tell me I looked like Cher or Rita Coolidge. Yesterday, driving down here, her song, “Half Breed”, came on and I started crying. That’s what my family was trying to shelter me from, trying to keep me from that stigma. They hid it from us, because it opened opportunities for me. When I first found out about the DNA I was really angry. How could you keep my heritage from me? What right did they have to cheat me out of this and not tell me about this? Then, as I researched and studied more, I thought, “Wow. I would not be the person I am today if we had been put on a reservation, or not had the opportunity to pursue our life and education the way that we did.” I saw the movies about the boarding schools and the conditions on the reservations. I didn’t grow up like that. So I stopped being angry. Everybody makes the best choices they can at the time. I have the life I have because of the choices my ancestors made. I’m grateful for that and so grateful I got to know this part. I feel like I have a heritage I can claim now. When somebody goes to so much

work to keep some things from you, you've just got to keep banging that door until you get to the truth. When I look back at that, I think, if it weren't for the gift of DNA, I would have never found them.

When I started doing genealogy my husband said, "Why do you work so hard on what's probably the smallest percentage of blood in your body? Why don't you pursue the Irish and the Scottish?" I said, "That small percent is why they lied and chose to live where they lived, and why they were pushed around. That small percentage was the reason for all the choices they made. That's why it is so important to me. It determined the course of their lives and mine." Had they been found out, they probably would have been killed or forced off somewhere in Kansas or Oklahoma.

INSPIRATIONAL ANCESTOR ~

The one that comes to mind for me is my great-grandmother Lily. She died the year I was born. This is probably going to sound off the wall but she talks to me. It was kind of haunting -- dreams, visions maybe. That's why I kept pursuing this and pushing it so hard, because she was like thumping me all the time. I've had stuff happen to me my whole life that I haven't been able to explain and couldn't understand. I thank her for pushing me because I probably would have given up without her.

I think my ancestors decided it was time we knew. I was at a family reunion. Some of my cousins from the generation below me started asking me questions. We all sat

around and thought about Grandpa wearing the copper bracelets. He made us all cedar boxes and turquoise and Apache tear necklaces. He and my dad always carried a buckeye in their pockets. He and Grandma taught us to recognize plants and animals and the purposes for them. It was all there all the time. As I began learning the Native culture I realized we were practicing parts of it. We were doing it; we just didn't know it was Native American.

INVOLVEMENT IN THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE ~

A cousin of mine told me about the Piqua. I had hit so many dead ends in my genealogy that I just thought, there's just no way I can ever find *the* tribe. There are just too many out there to be able to find the right one. I didn't want to just join an Indian tribe. I was only interested in finding my dad's people and the truth about who we were. A cousin of mine visited the Piqua and said, "I want you to just come sometime." I don't travel much so the idea of driving all the way to Kentucky was just way out there for me. I just walked into the Piqua gathering and knew they were family. Those were my dad's people. My dad looked so much like Chief Gary Hunt that it's just eerie. The first few times I saw Gary I would just sit and stare at him. I cried a lot on the trip home.

I waited for a long time before I even made application. It was huge for me. Do I really want to do this? What do I bring to the tribe? What do I contribute? Then I came to "I don't really have a choice. This is my blood,

my family. You don't choose your family." It just felt right. My dad and my grandmother thought maybe we were Indian, but they died without ever knowing. I really thought I wasn't going to find out either. I so wish I could have told Dad before he died, "Dad, we're Shawnee. I finally know." I told my aunts, and my cousins, and they're so excited. I'm hoping they'll come sometime, and just experience this. I really never thought I would get to do that. It's been the journey of a lifetime. How could you just know when you're little? What is that? Is that genetic imprinting or something? Is it just ancestors tapping some of us? Am I just wired so they can chat it up with me? I'd have this recurring dream from the time I was little of this warrior who had black face paint on -- same guy, same paint, same dream for 50 years. It just scared me to death. I think I was led all the way. I was very frustrated by it all. Then one of the Elders told me, "You know Chief Hunt used to paint his face black." I feel like I'm finally with people like me that understand who I am. I'm learning the things I think my ancestors might have taught me if they could have acknowledged who we were. I am so grateful to the Piqua.

ROLE IN THE TRIBE ~

I try to do whatever I can to contribute. I have mailed out the paper copies of the newsletter for 5 years. I learned how to help get the ceremonial area ready. So I will do that now when we have ceremony. I want to learn everything I can that I might have learned if I

had grown up in the culture, and help in any way I'm able.

I've spent my life sewing: theatrical costumes, dance costumes, cheerleading uniforms, choir stoles and dresses. My intention, is as long as I am able, I will make regalia. I can do ribbon work. I want to help get everybody their own regalia. A lot of folks just don't know how to do it.

I'm the Snake Clan Mother now and serve on the Tribal Council. It's a commitment to serve. If you're a mom, you just do whatever is needed. I'll do whatever the Clan Chief and my clan need me to do. I think communication within the clan is the most important. As a Clan Mother I serve on the Tribal Council and that's an opportunity to support the Tribe in a meaningful way.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ~

I do daily prayers. My husband and I pray and smudge together. I try to share my beliefs with my children and grandchildren. I continue to learn everything I can about my Shawnee culture. That's my Bible, so to speak.

LIVING IN A TRADITIONAL NATIVE WAY ~

We do what we can to contribute to the Tribe as much as we are able. We go to the ceremonies. We are trying to learn the Shawnee language. We protect our Earth and resources as much as we can. We communicate with Creator in prayer and practice. We teach our children and grandchildren traditional ways. My husband, Tom, loves drumming for the Tribe.

CULTURAL REVITALIZATION

The young people are the future of the Tribe. We've got to teach the next generation. The traditions and the old ways have to be passed on to them. You learn about the Holocaust, and read Anne Frank, and then you realize your own history is affected by that same horror; you're one of those people whose history was wiped out. That was one of the most empty feelings I've ever had in my life. That's why the kids have to know, and have to be taught whatever we can pass to them so the culture is not forgotten.

What are the most significant parts of the culture that need to be kept alive?

The spirituality of it, and the respect for Mother Earth and our resources. I know that gets hammered in the ground, but it's just so important. We are all connected, and that connection carries with it a responsibility. Take only what you need and leave it better than you found it. My dad drummed that in my head all the time. Spirituality is being in touch with the dirt under your feet, the spirits in the sky, the air and water around us. Spirit is everywhere and in everything. The traditional ways our ancestors did ceremony, the language, the art and the expression of the Shawnee.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CEREMONY ~

Participating in ceremony is an opportunity to connect with another time. You feel the presence of the ancestors. Dancing is a very spiritual experience. It's representing the ancestors when we dance and carrying the

prayers of the people. It's not just ceremony; the whole day for me is a ceremony. It's the connection with the people, with nature, with the Drum. It's being a very small part of something a whole lot bigger than who you are. It's almost like you get an opportunity to reach back in history and touch it.

I always invite my ancestors to use my feet. When I'm in the ceremonial circle, and the drums start, then the ancestors just kind of 'Whosh!' over me and carry me through the dance. I don't even think about if I'm on the right foot; it just happens. That's why every time I came for the first 4 or 5 years, I would start crying. When the drum starts you can feel it in your whole being. I didn't think I'd ever get to experience this!

NAMING CEREMONY ~

Barbara Lehmann, who was naming me, started talking about how she came to my name. It is MuchcuttewaSampa: Black Crow. My dad used to go to Canada fishing every summer. Indians owned the camp he went to and they called him Old Crow and the name stuck. The first time I came to a Tribal gathering, we pulled into the driveway and a black crow lit next to our car. I looked at my sister that day and said, "Dad's here." We could feel Dad's presence with us that day.

We walked in the ceremonial circle. Barbara is explaining my name to the Tribal members. It was hot and humid, and the air was so heavy. All of a sudden, the trees just started blowing. I thought it felt good at first. Then the trees were

just whipping back and forth and I looked up and there wasn't a cloud in the sky. The wind just kept blowing the whole time we were in the circle and all the people there were looking up at the trees and the sky too. We all wondered what was going on or if a storm was blowing in. At the end Barbara presented me as Black Crow, I walked out of the circle, and the wind just stopped and a crow flew in and perched. My husband said, "Your dad was here, and all the rest of your family too I think!" It was a very powerful moment. It was such a wonderful day.

SIGNIFICANCE OF LANGUAGE ~

The language needs to be passed on. If the language dies, a part of the tribe dies. It's one of the ways you communicate so the ancestors will understand you. So much of it is gone. I got the language CD and the book. One of the things I think would be neat as a Clan Mother to do, is put a word out to the clan members every month or every week, and just repeat it --have a word for the day. At one time my ancestors all spoke to each other that way. That's a part of our blood and vitality.

FUTURE VISION

I'd like to see more come home, for people to find out, like I did, about their heritage and just come back together. Just come home. Wouldn't that be something?

It would be wonderful if we had our own land. Because like when you create a garment, you put the energy in it. If we had a place, and a Council House we could do ceremonies

privately. That energy would be held in that place... the energy of ceremony and of the people. We can't personalize anything, or put our energy in it when we meet and do ceremony on land that does not belong to us. It's like a cemetery; those left behind need a place to go, to connect. The Piqua need that place to go, where the energy is, and where the history is, where we can go back and just be there. Oh yeah, this is home; this is where the ancestors are. I know there is a whole set of problems with that. I'm an accountant, so things come up in my mind -- maintenance, bills, all of that. *ROLE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHING NATIVE HISTORY, PAST & PRESENT~* They did not teach Native history when I was going to school, and not when my daughters went either. They need to put the actual history in the history books. It's in the libraries. I just never knew to look.

Jodi Picoult wrote *Second Glance* about an east coast tribe. She writes about finding out that her dad was one of the doctors who was sterilizing the Indian tribe there, and putting them in mental institutions. She wrote about how Hitler so admired the way the United States had handled the 'Indian problem'. That's where he got his idea for the ghettos, and sterilization, and eliminating a culture.

The schools need to get the correct history and take the time to get it into the curriculum. They need to know the "white man" just wanted the resources and wanted whatever got in the way to be removed. History classes

need to teach what was done to the people that were here and how it continues. Accuracy is always the best policy. It needs to go back to the European countries wanting to expand and find new resources and that's why they came here. But they didn't do it just here: it was in Africa, India, the Middle East. What they did here, as horrifying as it was, was no different than what they did in the other places to get resources. The people who were here were just in their way. They just wanted to eliminate them, because they wanted the resources, not just the land, but the furs, timber, and minerals. They thought there was gold here. The fact that the first biological warfare happened here needs to be in the history book. They were going to handle the Indian problem by giving them smallpox-infected blankets and clothing to wipe them out. In a couple of weeks, gone, no problem. It's in the Virginia congressional minutes. That needs to be in the history books. Native people need to explain their culture first hand. Not the TV version.

NEXT GENERATION ~

We need to teach the kids the traditional crafts and foods, and explain the ceremonies. They should know how our ancestors lived and died. Prepare them to carry on the old ways.

*LEARNING FROM THE SHAWNEE/
EASTERN WOODLAND EXPERIENCE
& WHAT THE PUBLIC SHOULD
KNOW ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE
SHAWNEE/EASTERN WOODLAND
PEOPLES~*

We need to take care of Mother Earth, and we're not doing a very good job. We haven't been very good stewards. That concerns me for my grandchildren. It feels to me like people have gotten so caught up in status and money and selfies. It all seems so superficial. My husband and I moved out in the country just to get the kids into the country. I think you have to step back, and have some quiet time to just commune with nature, just get your feet in the grass and breathe without electronics going. Native people have a sense of taking care of each other. I think we've lost touch with that a bit.

They call the Shawnee a migratory tribe. They need to know that the Shawnee were just pushed from place to place to place! The Europeans came in and took their land. They need to know that Tecumseh and Blue Jacket were some of the greatest military minds they had ever seen. The Shawnee are proud, spiritual, and protecting. Everything I've learned about them is that they were always protecting their family and home. They farmed, hunted and fished. They laughed and told jokes. They thought their children were their most precious asset. They tapped maple trees and made syrup. They had 'three sister' gardens: corn, beans, and squash. They were silver workers. When you try to research the Shawnee it's really hard, there isn't much information about them out there. There are eastern tribes that were able to stay in their traditional lands, but not the Shawnee, except

those who refused to go or walked back.

ACQUISITION OF LAND ~

It's very important for us to acquire land. It seems like there's so many political issues involved in that. I don't have a feel for what it needs to look like. Campouts on our own land would really nice. I don't like doing ceremony in the state park, because for me it's spiritual. I don't want to hear somebody's car booming with the music blaring. I don't want gawkers. Ceremony is sacred and private.

PROTECTION OF SACRED SITES ~

Sacred sites carry the history and energy of the ancestors. It needs to be preserved for the future. Iowa had a problem with bones being removed from some of the effigy mounds. Those are sacred and should only be handled by specific people in a specific way.

REFLECTION

LIVING IN TWO WORLDS ~

In the Tribe we have spiritual things going on all the time, and it's no big deal. But out *there*, they look at you like, "What's wrong with you?" It's like a different world. Then you come to a place where you just fit.

It bothers me when I see people being wasteful. There's this upwardly mobile, busy bunch of people out there who are just burning up resources, and tearing up Mother Earth by fracking and running pipelines on sacred land. I step out on my back deck in the morning to do a prayer, and thank Creator for the day and my life. I also pray the neighbors don't see me.

I don't think they would understand.

WHO IS NATIVE AMERICAN/INDIAN?

Many Indians say that there are no Indians east of the Mississippi, and no matter what the DNA says you are not an Indian unless your name is on a roll, grew up on a reservation, and only if you are from a federal tribe. The Irish or Latinos don't have to carry a card and be put on a roll. No one else has to be "inventoried". I think each tribe has to define who should be included and who should not. Now tribes are dis-enrolling people. So I guess the government wins after all.

UNIQUE QUALITY OF THE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

The Piqua go to great lengths to adhere to the old traditional ways. I think that's their strongest quality. I know it takes a great deal of time and effort to keep it traditional. I'm so glad they keep it that way.

PROUD TO BE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

The Piqua are strong, and spiritual, and loving. I'm proud that's my heritage. It's just my blood.

FEDERAL RECOGNITION

I'm not very educated about what all that would involve. But right now, we function without a lot of regulation and stigma. Many people have worked so hard and have done such a beautiful job of presenting our Tribe with dignity. I know some other Indian tribes won't recognize us without federal recognition. I know there are many tribes that have just gotten recognition in recent years. I read that the tribe Pocahontas

came from just got federal recognition a couple years ago. I'm not sure what that would do for us. As long as we can still get together for ceremony, I guess it doesn't really matter.

RECONCILIATION

RECONCILIATION BETWEEN NATIVE PEOPLE AND THE DOMINANT SOCIETY ~

They would have to admit what they did, but if they do that, they would probably have to try to make restitution. That's what they're trying to avoid, because it's huge. They took a whole country. They can't give the land back. There is nothing they can do about the land; it's gone. But the genocide, destroying all those people. How could they ever make that right? But maybe if they could just make an admission. I see the Black culture has advanced so far from the time when I was a child. Why can't they do that for Native people? Why can't they just admit they screwed up, and try to heal this? Every generation it is getting worse. The hatred just breaks your heart. It just needs a healing. How do you fix a genocide? How do you fix tearing up their sacred grounds to put in a parking lot? I'm so jealous of these countries, like Ireland, where they celebrate their Celtic background. I would like to see the United States celebrate their Native people.

If you're Native American, you kind of want to keep your head down, and keep your mouth shut, and not be noticed. Don't wear that shirt out in public, because you don't know

who's going to trash talk you just because you're Native. I've had people say to me, "Those Indians have those casinos, and don't pay any taxes," and I'm thinking, "Yay!" The one tribe we have in Iowa is the Meskwaki. The Sauk and Fox started a casino 20 years ago maybe. They have a new school, a new fire department. They've done so much to improve their community. I'm thrilled for them. They were removed and came back and bought their land back. That was really smart! They're so good about sharing their culture. They want everyone to know about their history.

IS THERE A POSSIBILITY OF RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE PIQUA SHAWNEE AND THE WESTERN SHAWNEE TRIBES?

I sure wish there could be. It would seem to me that they could all be stronger if they were bonded together. The government has made such a mess of all the tribes; to be divided seems like the government won.

SHOULD THE PIQUA SHAWNEE BE INVOLVED IN NATIONAL NATIVE ISSUES SUCH AS THE DAKOTA PIPELINE?

Wouldn't be an amazing thing if all Native people stood together? Yes, I think we should always help a brother if we can.



Joshua Bennett

CULTURAL IDENTITY

My mother talked about our Native heritage, but my grandfather obviously knew more about it. We are a family that's blessed with having a very rich history that is documented and known, both our ties to the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and to indigenous people who were here before the Europeans came. I asked my grandfather, "How do you know that?" He said, "I've always known that. It's what I've been told." A lot of people, either their family history is lost and they have to search it out, or they just don't know. I was very blessed as a young man and as a boy growing up that my family already knew the roots of our family and could just tell it. It was stories that we heard at family gatherings. I have a family history that's still alive and something that I get to cherish.

There was that time, after all the Indian wars, when a lot of people didn't want anyone to know that they were Native, because people would look down on them. There was still a lot of racism. A lot of people discriminated against Natives, because of everything that had happened in the past.

I actually have Native ancestry on both sides of my family; my maternal grandfather's side, my maternal grandmother's side, and my paternal grandfather's side. It was one of

those things that some of my family several generations ago just wouldn't talk about it. I don't want to say they were ashamed, but they hid it, because they knew there was a lot of trouble that came along with it.

Grandpa was the one who really loved our family history. But he was almost in the same boat I was, where his grandmother didn't talk very much about our Native family. I knew more about a lot of the European family history my family shared.

We went to a couple of small pow-wows and other gatherings. I remember going to see that outdoor living theatre Tecumseh show that they did in Ohio. My mom said, "Hey, they're talking about our people. That's part of our history as well." Your views of an Indian, especially when you're a young, predominantly white kid, are skewed because of how schools and pop-culture portray these things, especially when it comes to our own history and the actual conditions of people who were here before the Europeans came. I've really done more and more participating, especially since 2006 when I finished the re-enactment of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with my grandfather. I did that entire three year trip with him. (George Shannon, on our Irish side of our family, was

the youngest member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. He is my fifth great uncle.)

My grandfather took me to my first Lewis and Clark event when I was 12. After that I just knew I had to do it, so I talked with my principal and my teachers at school, and they assured me that as long as I kept up the pace, they could make it happen. I was able to graduate high school a year and a half early at the age of 16 in order to do it. I worked really hard to do that, but that three year experience makes me who I am today. During that experience, we interacted with over two dozen different tribes, between Pennsylvania and the West Coast, following the Lewis and Clark Trail. We went to reservations and saw a lot of other cultures, along with the first tribe that we ever interacted with: the Piqua Shawnee. I knew early on that embracing more of my Native roots was going to be part of the next chapter in my life.

INSPIRATIONAL ANCESTOR ~

I've been doing a lot of genealogy research for my dad's family, and found out some stuff about that side. I have a picture of my great-great-grandmother, who is clearly Native. But what's really interesting is I just found her mother on the Dawes Rolls for the Five Civilized Tribes, and she is listed as a half breed. She was half black and half Cherokee. Her daughter, who is half black, half Cherokee, married into the Key family, as in Francis Scott Key. Now I found out that my family is related to Francis Scott Key, through the same line.

It's hard to say one ancestor has been inspirational. I have been fortunate to know the stories of so many ancestors. However, their accomplishments are their own, I can't take credit or draw total inspiration from them. I take something positive from all of their spirits and use that to inspire me in who I want to be. I was able to go out west to a lot of reservations, and spent time with people who aren't necessarily blood related to me, but they have become family.

INVOLVEMENT IN THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE ~

When I decided to join the Tribe my grandpa asked me, "Why are you doing this?" My heart needed to be in the right place. I definitely believed I was on the path that I should be. If I strayed from it, he would be one of the first people to let me know. Admitting when you're wrong about things is something that I've been working toward. I am completely overjoyed to be here right now, and to meet with the Tribal members. They looked at my tattoos and regalia and said, "We don't have a lot of people who are doing it that traditional."

FUTURE ROLE ~

I hope that this becomes part of my life. My children will be raised with the knowledge that I am learning, and bring them to these gatherings and tell them these stories, and just enlighten them on the things that I've gone through, and on who they are as people. That way as children, and then as young adults they will grow to love this, and appreciate who they are and where

they come from. That will help answer part of our issue of getting more young people involved in the Tribe.

Especially in America, we are very conscious of who we are as individuals. Native Americans realized all along that it's not you as an individual; it's about we as a people. I hope to instill that in my children, and contribute longevity to the Piqua, and to learn what I can, especially from these Elders who will be with us as long as the Creator sees fit that they're here, and then continue to pass those things down.

At that micro level, I need to keep conveying who I am through my actions, not my words, and represent my people that way. I don't want people to view the Tribe as what I say, but view it as what I do. My job is to keep the stories and traditions alive. I'm really not concerned with having any sort of status within the Tribe. My concern is just making sure that it doesn't die. Status means nothing in a dying world. It is just to stay humble and help keep it all alive.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ~

It's a personal evolution. As I learn more, I realize I know less than I thought. Native American spirituality is a sort of Spiritual Pantheism. An ultimate respect and reverence for your world and what it represents. There are things I do that are a part of my personal walk that pay respect and homage to my Native roots. I feel it is more of a way of life and thinking than any physical actions or ceremony.

CULTURAL REVITALIZATION

SIGNIFICANCE OF LANGUAGE ~

Language is one of the key chain links that helps hold the culture together. It separates you from everyone else, but at the same time, it also brings you closer to everyone else. There are tribes today that completely lost their language the way it was. They've had to adopt and use a mix of other languages, or taken on another language of a neighboring tribe.

I'm deeply interested in learning more of the Shawnee language. I want to get to the point as I'm raising my kids, to speak to them in English and in Shawnee; then they will be like my grandpa when he heard those stories about what his family has done. When my kids are asked, "How did you learn Shawnee?," they will just say, "I've always known." I really hope I can give that, because language is so vitally important. I really believe that language is one of those key ingredients to keeping culture alive, and just an open mind and heart. Language is a cornerstone of a people's history and culture.

We have a ton of jokes in American society which are basically just a play on our language, because the words rhyme, for instance. When a person from Korea, for example, moves to America, English is their second language. The first couple of times they hear someone say that joke, it makes absolutely zero sense to them. Having grown up with this language we understand every innuendo of it, because language is living. Words have the power

to completely lift someone up or tear them down. How many American songs that rhyme translated into another language, don't rhyme anymore? So something as simple as that can make a big difference from a completely artistic level, and then from an intellectual or comedic level as well. So it really can make a big difference in changing someone's perception. Perception is reality. How we perceive the world is what the world is. So why would I not want my kids to perceive the world as their ancestors perceived it? The closer they can be to that, through language, will really make them understand.

Both my kids have Shawnee middle names in the Shawnee language. The Shawnee didn't have a written language, so it's in English letters. So good luck to their teachers in school trying to pronounce it or read them! Fynn's middle name is Skotemaaciloothi, which means "Fire is Born". He's named after the Mayan general, Siyaj K'ak'. When Anna got pregnant with Fynn, I had dreams about the general. I just knew there was some connection there between my son and this guy. Everett's middle name is Liwatem'kwa, which means "Smoke Bear". He is actually named in honor of Ray Gardner, who is tribal chairman of the Chinook tribe. My kids are forced to confront the language, because it's in their names. I speak to my kids in what little I know of Shawnee. Now I'm to the point where I'm starting to run out of stuff in Shawnee so I said, "Okay, time for Daddy to learn more." What's really nice, though, is

we can learn it at the same time, which is really cool.

FUTURE VISION

At the age of three, many Lakota children speak Lakota. When they go to school they're being spoken to in Lakota and English. Everyone knows it and speaks it. It would be amazing, one day, if we came to a gathering, and everyone was speaking Shawnee. We have some of the best speakers here with us. That's where I would like to be. It would be absolutely wonderful if we get to that point where we can speak to a five-year-old boy and tell him to go grab me some water, and he just goes and gets it.

ROLE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHING NATIVE HISTORY, PAST & PRESENT

History is always written by the victors. That's just how it's always been. Who is going to write about the time they got their butts handed to them? In my schooling it was so hit-or-miss, and mostly miss. There would be a paragraph here or there about Tecumseh, Pontiac, Geronimo, Sitting Bull, and Crazy Horse -- the big guys, what we call the Native Mount Rushmore. But they failed to really get down to a cultural level, at the everyday level. History is dominated by major historic events, which 99% of the time were completely centered around warfare. Everyone's view of Native people, once again, is based around mascot imagery and warfare. That's why you have people at games holding up, albeit fake ones thankfully, a

costume style head on a knife with a headdress on it, like they beheaded an Indian. We were a warrior people who went to war, but hasn't everyone else throughout the dawn of time? What other people can say that they never once fought a war or killed another person? I don't know anyone who would just be willing to be pushed over and not stand their ground and fight for their own people, their own land, or their beliefs. We were proud warriors, and still call ourselves warriors today, but we are also peaceful, diplomatic people. Traditionally our women had equal rights, and at some points, 51% of the vote. Where was that in the advanced blessed-by-God western civilization?

There is a reason that a lot of that gets left out of the history books, because it makes people feel a little bit better about the fact that there was western expansion, referred to as Manifest Destiny. There were people in pulpits saying, "God wants us to kill these barbaric savages." A proclamation written by the Pope stated, "It is your duty as a Christian to convert all of the savages of the New World to Christ, even if it results in their death." There's a reason they're going to leave that out. After continuing my education and learning about all of this and actually looking at facts, I thought, "Wow, they really did try to shape my view of how I saw things."

How would you like to see the curriculum in the public schools change?

Let *us* teach it. We are already seeing some of that. Every once in a while I will be invited to

a school to speak. Once we can start teaching Native history in public schools to non-Native people, then we will be able to really make some headway. Bringing in Native historians and scholars to help write the textbooks would be a great start.

On some reservations there is the emergence of immersion schools, where they're teaching kids at 3, or 4, or 5 years old their own language. If your language dies, so does your culture. They're not only teaching their language, but every class is being taught in that language. As far as getting it in non-Native schools -- in the suburbs of Columbus, Ohio, or Kentucky, or Arkansas, or any place that's not within hundreds of miles of a reservation, how do we teach them? Again, bring us on board. Give us a chance to have a say what is told about our people, as opposed to non-Natives picking it out. There are a lot of well-educated Native American people who have as much right as any white person to say, "This should be taught." For the most part, until very recently in our history, those people, even if they were educated, were still shunned.

The 1491s are a Native American comedy group, who are also activists, that has a YouTube channel. It's amazing to see a group of Native American young men and women from different tribes make absolutely hilarious funny videos. They were on the Jon Stewart Show where they confronted Washington NFL team fans about the mascot issue. They are bringing the issues to a younger generation of

Native people, and getting them involved. We just need to continue to level the playing field. Native people, just as we have since the dawn of time, are going to keep fighting. We're still making headway even when we don't have a level playing field.

Another great one is 'The Last Real Indians. It's giving educated Native people a forum and platform to be able to say, "Hey, we're here too; we're not all mindless savages." For the longest time we didn't have a chance in education to have an equal playing field. Our grandparents, and great-grandparents were sent to boarding schools. They had their hair cut, and were forced to only speak English, or they were beaten.

As a young person history was my least favorite subject, because it was based on big names, dates, and events. As a person who also fancies himself a professional re-enactor on the side, I'm a huge proponent for living history. Getting involved in that at a young age, brought history to life, and made me ask more questions and made me want to understand more.

NEXT GENERATION ~

I am concerned that we need more young people. But by the same token, young people have always shied away from what Grandma did, and gravitated toward the new hip thing. The same thing goes for Native people throughout time. For example: "I'm going to start wearing this cotton stuff, because it's so much easier than tanning hides." Grandma's going, "No, you need to tan hides. This is how

we've done it forever." "Why would I do that when I can just get something from this white guy over here?"

If young people become involved in the Tribe, first thing is "What are my friends going to think?" We have to let them know that this is just a part of who they are. It doesn't have to encompass all of their living and breathing.

We live in this new technological age with Internet forums and chat groups, and all these different things. Just as much as they make things easier, sometimes they make life harder. Young people are still very much caught up in this MTV generation. They sit in front of the television with their new video game system for eight hours straight. It's almost got to be like a tough love situation. Some of my friends who were involved in tribal activities with their families, felt it almost got forced on them. When they came of age and could do it willingly on their own, they were sick of it and didn't want to do it. It needs to be presented as something like, "Here's what I do. You don't have to do it this way, but you're welcome to come in." But you don't force them to do it. It would be nice to see many more young people. I was given that opportunity as a young man to do some amazing things, to travel across the country, to ride horseback across the Rockies, and interact with these different indigenous peoples of America whose cultures are still thriving. There is no real right way, but there is definitely a wrong way. The best we can do is just extend out an open hand and let people

know.

*LEARNING FROM THE SHAWNEE/
EASTERN WOODLAND PEOPLES
EXPERIENCE ~*

Where is the Native American carbon footprint? They took from the Earth respectfully, and that's the key to it. This country, almost since the day of inception, has been about, "What can I get my hands on? How much land can I get?" It's very much that old world mentality that they want to own land, put a fence around it, and post a sign. Native people fought for land, but they didn't fight for ownership. They fought for stewardship. This isn't our land. This is the people's land that the Creator is letting us live on right now. We're stewards of this land, not the owners of it. We're doing so many extractions and taking from the Earth, and all we're giving back is more trash. If we want to do something right, we need to take from the Earth respectfully and give back to the Earth, four times, if not more.

For example, when Native Americans took a deer that they were going to eat, they made clothes from the hide, tools from the jawbone, a hoe from the clavicle. They used every part of that deer. They did it with the utmost respect and love, knowing that that animal was put there for them, but that if they abused that animal, if they took advantage of that animal, it would be gone. Now we have animals, along with people and cultures, right on the verge of extinction, because we're not respecting them.

I'm a strong believer in a very big Native

principle, the Rule of Seven -- that whatever you do affects the next seven generations. It's not about *your* well-being, it's about *our* well-being. It's not about the tribe surviving; it's about the world surviving, the people, the animals, the Earth, the trees -- everything. We're killing the Earth, whether it's the animals or the natural resources, all for the sake of more money. Look at what's going on in current events today, with the wars overseas, our carbon footprint, what we're doing to the Earth, and how things are changing as a result. You want a perfect example of how we should be doing things, just look at the indigenous peoples of North America. Besides a few circle rings, and mounds, what footprint did they really leave? They took everything from the Earth, and gave back everything to the Earth, respectfully. If we acted more like that in today's world, everyone would be a lot better off for it.

*WHAT THE PUBLIC SHOULD KNOW
ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE
SHAWNEE/EASTERN WOODLAND
PEOPLES ~*

I'm a history major. So much of what I do is living history, re-enactments and portrayals. You could read a million Lewis and Clark books and think you know exactly how they must have done this certain portage around the Great Falls, but until you actually try to do it, then you really don't understand what they meant, because you have to experience it.

ACQUISITION OF LAND ~

When we acquire land, it would be absolutely

amazing to have a whole area set up with frames for wikiups, wigwams, and dome lodges. People could just throw their canvas or mats or tarps over them, along with a modern tent. I would love to see a traditional village set up permanently.

PROTECTION OF SACRED SITES ~

Protecting sacred and historic sites of first nations people must be a top priority for us. These places help connect us to our past and prepare us for our future. Could you imagine if someone wanted to tear down Jerusalem to build an amusement park?

REFLECTION

LIVING IN TWO WORLDS ~

How do you keep the traditional values in a 21st Century world? We've had more technological advances in the last 50 years than we had in the previous 2,000. It's pretty mind-blowing stuff, good and bad. I will say that trying to balance that is hard enough on its own, but then trying to represent the fact that I am of mixed heritage, European and Native ancestry, so sometimes I get mixed responses from people. 'Full bloods' off the res when I say, "I'm part of a tribe," some of them will say, "Really? Tell me all about it." And others are like, "Yeah, whatever, white boy." Some people are already going to have their minds made up. It's not my position to try to make up other people's minds for them, and win everyone over. No one is going to be loved unanimously. My obligation is to myself, and now to my two sons and

family, to make sure that I do what I've been taught, and to keep that going so it doesn't die. That's the biggest challenge of living in two worlds. That goes along with being of mixed descent, and living in the 21st Century. There's a global culture now. The fact that I can, at the drop of a hat, look up anyone in another continent, and for absolutely no reason at all, strike up a conversation with that person, puts it on a whole different level.

WHO IS NATIVE AMERICAN/INDIAN?

There will always be a part of the Native American Indian community that will come down to blood quantum. You do have to consider it, because it is a part of whether or not a line of people exists. If Manifest Destiny would have been taken to its fullest extent, 100% annihilation and genocide of every Native American tribe in the Western Hemisphere would have occurred. There are people who are 100% full-blooded Indian. But when you start getting it to a certain point, it comes down to are we talking pedigree? Are we breeding horses or are we people? The one thing that separates us from all the rest of the Creator's creation is our intellect. At some points, a lot of us have a lack thereof. It really comes down to what we feel, what we know, how we act, and what we present to the world. I met a Mohawk elder in 2004 who had dark skin, jet black hair, and dark eyes. There was no mistaking that he was Indian. He asked me, "How do you feel knowing that not everyone who looks at you sees an Indian?" I

said, “You know, it upsets me a little bit.” He didn’t ask why. He said, “Just walk the path. Let your actions speak for you. If you have to go around telling everyone who you are, instead of showing them, and letting them see and make that decision on their own, then you’re not.” As a very impressionable 17-year-old, that meant a lot to me. So it was really a great thing for me to hear, and I’ll always remember it for the sheer fact that up until that point it was all talk for me, not so much action. It made a big difference.

UNIQUE QUALITY OF THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE ~

One thing that I love about these people: it’s family. Whether directly or indirectly, we’re all related somehow. What the Piqua is trying to do is take our culture and infuse love, care, respect, and open mindedness into it. It’s definitely alive and well here.

FEDERAL RECOGNITION

That is a very multi-faceted question, for a multitude of reasons. The first being that on the surface level, there are benefits to being a federally recognized tribe, right out of the gate. For one, I might be able to have things that I wouldn’t be able to otherwise have, (or if I did it would be illegal) like eagle feathers which I feel is a sacred right. I don’t need politicians in Washington saying whether I can or cannot have something that my ancestors have had for thousands of years.

I have good friends in the Chinook tribe

in Washington State. A few decades ago they had their federal recognition taken from them. They’ve been fighting to get it back ever since. It is a strange thing to need the validation of non-Native politicians to ensure one’s “Indian-ness”. On the other hand there are more and more groups popping up trying to take advantage of the situation.

RECONCILIATION

There are Native peoples who completely support Native mascots and there are many who are against them. We are not cookie cutters. We don’t all have the same political views. We are individual people with individual feelings and beliefs. A Native person said, “When people say they are Indians who support the team having that mascot, I always just remember that Custer had Indian scouts too.”

Reconciliation starts at a micro level, and it’s going to slowly work its way to becoming more macro. I’m not saying that every politician and president needs to apologize to the Native American community. There have been a ton of reconciliation efforts on the local community, county, and state levels all across the board. It’s the same with slavery and emancipation. Where do we draw the line, and when do we stop saying, “Are you going to judge me for the acts of my forefathers?” and move forward. I think it will happen as soon as people start actually showing legitimate and mutual respect.



Sara Wagar
ELDERS COUNCIL MEMBER

CULTURAL IDENTITY

SPIRITUAL BELIEFS ~

The cornerstone of the cultural identity of Native peoples in general, and the Piqua Shawnee in particular, is the spirituality inherent in the traditional ways. This aspect of our traditional culture is a marked difference from spirituality of the modern culture. It should be pointed out that all enrolled members of the Piqua Shawnee, or probably any other tribe for that matter, may not follow all the aspects of the traditional culture in their daily lives, but it is at least important to understand what these traditions are, with the hope that many or most of the tribal members will be following these traditions to the best of their ability.

The Native cultures recognize the presence of spirits as part of the everyday reality of this world. This seems to be something that the modern culture does not recognize. The Creator has made the world and put the Creator's spirit in everything. It doesn't have to have a beating heart to have the spirit of the Creator within it; it can be a plant or a rock or water. That spirit is there and it is part of the overall creation. It is a nice gift from the Creator: Maybe I need

some jewelweed because I've gotten into some poison ivy, as jewelweed will help reduce the effect of poison ivy and is there to be used if we need it, but is not to be messed with if you don't need it. Leave it for others that might need it. You can take something if you need it. That is a gift from the Creator and you can use it, but you should give thanks. A Jesuit back in the 1600's might have seen an Indian giving a gift of tobacco to a rock, and the Jesuit thought they were praying to a rock. That is not what it is. Something happened there at that spot and the human wanted to thank the Creator because the spirit of the Creator did something to help the person. So they are giving a gift back by putting some tobacco down. The Creator's spirit can be in a lot of different things so when we make use of a plant, or something that helps us, we acknowledge that rock or plant or whatever it was. It is not because the rock is magic; it is because the spirit of the Creator is there.

An important aspect of our spirituality is the availability to us of spirit guides, who are there to try to help us. Some people could even

call them angels, but I'm not too sure if using that terminology is exactly the same concept. Basically I have a specific group of spirit guides who are available to me and sort of watch out over me and try to give me guidance. These are not all human; they also can be animals. I journey into the spirit levels where I can find them, and of course they can come into this everyday level and find me. If I want to talk with them I go into the spirit levels and get a chance to both talk and listen. It ties us into the overall picture of spirituality. In general if we need some guidance, even if we don't ask, our spirit guides will try to make things happen to protect us.

However, this contact with our spirit guides integrates into our daily lives. They also can be here on our level. It seems like a dichotomy because if they are here you don't really need to journey into their level, but yet it is sort of fun to do that. Just when you are walking around you can talk to your spirit guides or talk to the Creator and absorb the spirit of the Creator that is around you. If you are out looking for a special plant, you are in communication with it, because you realize what that plant is for and if you need it, it is willing to help you.

One of the things that I have noticed is that we tend to sometimes use in English the words 'I feel something' or 'I think something' interchangeably. However, thinking is a logical mental process; feeling is totally independent of thinking. Oftentimes the spirits communicate

to us as much or more with feeling than with thinking. I believe they use both techniques, but the feeling is often the important communication mode and is easy for us to miss. The modern culture doesn't seem to put a lot of emphasis on feeling. In fact it even tends to urge people to suppress and reject feelings. Consequently, when you have feelings, if you are a child of the modern culture, you tend to ignore them and not act upon them or not recognize what they are. Modern people therefore usually miss any messages to them from their spirit guides. As traditional people we need to be receptive to communications from our spirit guides no matter how it comes.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CEREMONY ~

Our old stories tell us that each tribe was brought down to the surface of the earth from the sky. The Creator told us, when we were brought down out of the sky, that the songs and dances are a way that we acknowledge the Creator. It's a way of worship. The songs and the ceremonies are there for us. It's another way we can honor, not only the Creator, but the creation itself. The earth is alive. The drumbeat represents the heartbeat of the earth. When we dance, we are honoring the earth by having our footsteps match the heartbeat of the earth. We're in contact with the earth through that. That is part of the spirituality. The ceremonies are a time that we specifically set aside for that purpose. There are songs that we do at that time that we don't do any other time. We have been told those are the songs that were

given to us when we came down out of the sky. Many ancestor spirits come to watch us do the old dances, because they miss seeing and hearing them.

ACQUISITION OF LAND ~

Our old stories tell us that shortly after the Shawnee people were brought down out of the sky by the Creator, the heart of one of the elders was buried on the land that the Creator gave to us to watch over. It is perhaps because of this that we have always felt a close tie to our homeland and have fought to protect the land and the ancestors that are buried there. This tie to the land is felt on a tribal level as well as an individual level.

On an individual level, I grew up on an old fourteen acre farm in rural Ohio; adjacent to our property were other woods and fields, so I had a good opportunity to interact with the natural world that existed there. I spent a lot of time while I was growing up enjoying the land there. I'd go out in the woods and sit in a good spot and watch the animals go by. One time I was out there and came to this one spot I liked to go to, a clearing in the woods. The ground cover was mostly suppressed except there was one little place where there was like a peninsula of ground cover and then there was a lot of dead leaves covering the rest of it. There was a lot of good vegetation around the edge of the clearing and there were trails that came into the clearing from three directions. I decided that would be a good place to sit and see what happens. I had just laid down in that

little peninsula of grass that was probably a foot high at most. I heard something and saw a doe with a couple of fawns coming down the trail into the clearing. They were just eating on the browse that's right around the edge of the clearing. The doe was coming around on one side and the fawns were browsing around the edge of the clearing in the other direction. I realized that the doe was on one side of me and the fawns on the other. You hear about how you get in between a mother and her kids, and if she thinks there is danger she obviously won't take kindly to that, so I was wondering if she was going to try to do a flamenco dance on top of me when she figured it out. As I always did when I was out there, I tried to be very still. I was just lying there watching her. I could hear the fawns not too far behind me. She was probably about six or eight feet from me when she looks down at this little patch of grass I'm lying in and suddenly realizes there is something there and she doesn't know what it is. She is just staring and staring. I'm not moving a muscle, not even blinking. She still can't figure it out, so she snorts to see if that would induce a reaction. I still don't move. She snorts again and stomps a couple of times. At that point she bounds, three or four bounds into the brush. I knew with her fawns behind me that she wasn't really gone. I knew she was still watching so I didn't move at all. Probably another five minutes go by. Finally she just very casually walks back into the clearing and comes over behind me where the fawns are;

then I could hear them after another few minutes heading down the trail. Once they finally started heading out, I took the liberty of turning a little bit so I could see them. That was cool. They just kept on going. There was a third trail that came in behind me and I heard a pheasant coming up that trail. I hoped that pheasant didn't come all the way up to where I'm at and start fluttering around and spooking everybody, but it didn't come up very far. I had quite a few circumstances out there, watching and seeing what would happen. It was part of my introduction to understanding the natural world.

I have two older brothers, and they learned about bow-making and arrow making when young, although no points were applied to the arrows. They learned to hold the arrow between their thumb and index finger and pull back and release without touching the string. This was a traditional Native way to shoot a bow. I learned about gardening and won some blue ribbons at the county fair for my green beans. One time my brothers and I were out in the woods, and they took off and left me where we had been sitting. I waited a bit and decided to see if I could track them, and I was able to track them for quite a ways. I was pleased with myself because I was pretty young at the time. I thought it was a good skill to have, and it was fun.

On a tribal level, having our own land was considered important. We wanted a place where we could immerse our members in the

traditional culture during tribal gatherings. For example, if someone does not know the Spanish language, putting them into a small, rural Mexican town for a short while would likely enable them to learn Spanish fairly quickly, by immersing them in it. However, being able to create that immersive, traditional environment was a bigger task than we had realized. In the first place, obtaining the land required money, and creating the immersion environment required additional money. The Tribe decided to start a bingo operation to raise the money. This plan worked for a while, and we were able to buy some land, but it became apparent that raising the money through the bingo operation forced us to jump through hoops that were against our better judgment. Like many other tribes, we found that having a gambling operation to raise money for worthwhile purposes was a divisive and negative force within the Tribe, and we ultimately decided to terminate that operation and sell the land. I feel the ancestors are pleased that we decided that.

PROTECTION OF SACRED SITES ~

I've always been concerned about archaeologists going into archaeological digs to disrupt the people who have been placed there, because those people are not supposed to be disturbed.

Some years ago there were Native remains found on private corporate property down in southern Indiana. They hired some archaeologists to come in and do a quick examination of them and get all the information

they could and then did a re-burial within a few months. I thought that was a reasonable accommodation for the archaeologists' interests. However, other archaeologists thought those remains should be open for other archaeologists to examine over a five or ten year period. There was a big fuss about that. They said, "We're here to help you Native people and tell you about your ancestors." I thought about that and said, "No, we don't need help learning about our ancestry. We know a lot about our ancestry, and if there is something we need to know, the Creator can provide that without having to desecrate burial sites."

TRADITIONAL PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS ~

There was a missionary who came into the Shawnee villages in southern Ohio in 1772. We didn't want a missionary so he was pretty much thrown out of there. But one of the things he made a comment about was that the Shawnee people were some of the happiest people he had seen. You think what life was like then relative to our point of view. They're living in huts, making them out of saplings and bark and cat tails, cooking over a fire and making clothing out of deer hides -- living in a culture that modern people would describe as a very primitive culture, and yet the people are happy. People think that our modern society is so great and life is so much easier and yet I don't think there are all that many people who are happy. In our Shawnee culture from 300 - 500 - 1000 years ago, people were pretty much

happy. Now, people think you have to have all those modern things to be happy, but happiness comes from within.

I read a study that anthropologists did on a hunter/gatherer culture. Their conclusion was that the average person in that hunter/gatherer society works to provide for their food and shelter about three hours a day, and the rest of the time they can goof off if they want to. The idea of us working 40 or 50 or 60 hours a week so we can have enough money to buy labor-saving devices for one thing is rather ridiculous. Our simple, traditional lifestyle gave the people time to relax, time to be happy, time to enjoy their family members. The women raised the young ones until the boys were about seven or eight years old, at which time the fathers and grandfathers took over teaching the boys. Both sexes learned the skills they would need as adults, with boys learning about weapons and skills for fighting and hunting. Girls learned the skills for cooking and taking care of the fields and village. The parents were usually very kind to the young ones, although occasionally some discipline was necessary. The interactions between adults and the interactions between adults and children were such that the people worked to promote harmony, because they realized that harmony made everyone's life easier. This is what made the people a happy people.

There were occasional conflicts between adults, however. If somebody did something wrong to somebody, they might wind up with

what would now be considered an economic penalty. If they caused an accident where somebody got hurt and couldn't hunt, then the person who caused the accident would be obligated to hunt for the family who no longer had a hunter. If you caused a problem, then basically you had to solve the problem. If somebody wouldn't agree to do that, they would be exiled. That would be a very bad penalty, because the people were inter-dependent. They needed each other to provide for their food and other necessary items. You need all of the women working the fields and the men hunting. Everybody recognized that it was a system that had worked for tens of thousands of years. Everybody was pretty much of the same mindset. Therefore, people were able to work out their differences and come to a consensus.

This kind of consensus seeking applied to the council meetings too. People might discuss difficult issues for weeks, trying to figure out a way to solve a problem that everyone could agree on, or at least find a way that everyone could live with. In the council meetings, everyone was showed great respect. People listened carefully to whoever was talking. There was even a silent period after the person was done talking for people to show that they were considering what the person had said. This respect for each other is contrary to how the government seems to work today, with bitter differences between opposing points-of-view creating many difficulties in accomplishing the decision making.

WHO IS NATIVE AMERICAN/INDIAN?

I'm not sure there truly is an answer to that question, but the government has established several different answers. You probably have to define a context. What are you going to do with the definition once you have it? Are you going to use it to say who is entitled to Indian community health service? Or for the census records, such as "we have *this* many Native Americans in the country". There are a lot of different potential uses of the answer, so there are a lot of different answers.

When people feel the pull to become affiliated with the Tribe, and have at least some ancestry (it is hard to find full-bloods), they take the initiative to find us. We are not going to try to find them. I'm okay with them being Native American, if they respond to the teachings we are trying to give. However, if we had a person who joined the Tribe because he wanted to get a tribal card that allows him to sell something that says it is Indian made and allows him to jack up the price quite a bit, that is not acceptable, and I might not consider that person to really be a Native American Indian. If you don't have a tribal card, and you say something is Indian made, there is a heap of hurt because the law that protects the Indian artisans has a huge fine.

I remember a story about a gal who was half Irish and half Indian from a tribe in the Arkansas region. She was talking about the fact that she was Indian, but not Irish. She said, "That is because that is not who I am. I am Indian, and was raised in the Indian culture. It

is what I believe, and that is the way I live.”

Then you come back to who is Indian. Governments and tribes try to define that for their own purposes. But if you are trying to get a federal CDIB card, then you have to meet certain criteria. If you want to dance at a powwow, then you might have another set of criteria to meet. Like I said, it depends on the context.

I’m not sure how productive it is to worry about who is and who is not an Indian. I believe that you have to have something in your being that is part of the traditional culture that is differentiated from the modern culture. It is almost irrelevant, except that the government, whether it is federal or state, or tribal, has to have a definition.

UNIQUE QUALITY OF THE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

If you were having an extended-family gathering centered around a big meal, and you wanted to have a pecan pie to serve, suppose you asked everyone coming to bring one or two pieces of pecan pie. When everyone came, you put all of those pieces of pecan pie in a pie plate and found that you had a complete, or nearly complete, pie. I sort of look at the Piqua Shawnee Tribe as that pie.

If we want to define the traditional culture of the Shawnee people, we would have to define it as a function of the time period. For the most part, we use the 18th century as that time period, but there were changes over that 100-year period, with the beginning of the

period almost like there had been no contact with whites, and at the end with the tribe being heavily dependent upon trade goods from the white traders and under pressure to assimilate. Also, the Absentee Shawnee had left Ohio for Missouri in around 1779, so their history diverges from the Ohio Shawnee history then. The 19th century saw even more cultural changes, with the removal from Ohio, and with various Shawnee groups being moved from Texas, Missouri, and Kansas to ultimately wind up in Oklahoma after the Civil War. Each of these Shawnee groups went through trauma that had an effect on their culture. Also, some Shawnee people went to Canada around the time of the War of 1812 and stayed there for a while. Some mixed-blood Shawnee were able to stay in Ohio after the time of the Removal in the 1830’s. Each Shawnee group went through a different set of trauma and had a different altering of their culture. The Shawnee people that stayed in Ohio or Canada after the Removal found their daily life altered perhaps more than the Oklahoma Shawnee, but the major pieces of the traditional culture were still there, but scattered. The Piqua Shawnee Tribe around 1990 started gathering up all of these pieces of culture that had been retained by the various members within their families. Soon, these pieces came together to provide the basis for the traditional culture of the Piqua Shawnee, like those pieces of pecan pie. Because each Shawnee group had different experiences, each has some minor differences in their respective

cultures, but the Piqua Shawnee Tribe was unique in the way we were able to reconnect the various aspects of the traditional culture.

THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE AND LIVING IN A TRADITIONAL NATIVE WAY INVOLVEMENT IN THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE ~

I got into the living history because I needed to learn more hands-on about how our tribal ancestors lived in the 1700's. It's one part of the picture that I needed to understand. I ran into a couple of other people who were in the Tribe who also were doing living history. They said, "Hey, you've got to come over." I started coming to the Tribal gatherings and found I enjoyed them. As with living history, during the tribal gatherings we compared notes. Everybody had some stuff that had been passed down to them. You listened to what people are saying. You listen to the elders and learn from them. Somebody once said, "You seldom learn anything when you are talking." At the Tribal gatherings we'd talk about things, share things, and learn things from the elders. As I said earlier, putting together all the individual pieces that have been passed down to the members, we have a good view of the traditional culture.

ROLE IN THE TRIBE ~

Let me delve back into another old saying, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink." My role is to be here for people who are interested in learning the culture and the traditions. I'm willing to share what I know.

There's a lot that I don't know, but I'm still hopefully learning more every day. I'm just here as a resource and try to make the people aware that if they have questions, maybe there is an answer, maybe there isn't. If there is a specific question that I don't have an immediate answer for, maybe I can find an answer. I'm probably not going to find it in a book. I might find it through other means. Again, that ties back to the point I was saying earlier – you learn by doing. Doing a lot of living in a wigwam in the 1750's, even if it is for only a few days at a time, still gives you a good insight into some of the things that happened then and how the people lived and gives me more insight into the part of reality that is not readily understood by many people. Sometimes when a question will come up, and it's a question I had not particularly thought of, my instant reaction is "darned if I know", but then after it sits on me for maybe five seconds or five days, something will come to me. I'll say, that makes sense. Again, I have to have some basic knowledge to begin with so if something comes to me, it will be that piece of the jig saw puzzle that was missing. A lot of my efforts are to try to pick up a piece here, a piece there, and try to make sense. Sometimes when somebody asks me something and I don't know the answer, I'll go over to that part of the puzzle. Maybe I'll see three or four pieces right around it, but that particular piece isn't there. I think about it and pray about it and ask for some insight from the Creator and from my spirit guides and then sometimes that piece

will materialize. I have reason to believe that it is correct because it exactly fits. Sometimes I can help people even though I may say at the beginning, I don't know. The spirits or the Creator may decide that they'll throw part of that answer at me and see if I can pick it up. Hopefully I'm receptive to it if they do.

LEARNING FROM THE SHAWNEE/ EASTERN WOODLAND PEOPLES EXPERIENCE

There is much to learn from the traditional Shawnee ways. Many of these things I have already talked about, such as the spirituality and living skills needed. There is one aspect that I haven't mentioned so far, and that is the aspect of the tribal control over the people. This "control" was all by peer pressure. There were no jails or sheriffs to enforce a "law".

I've seen what the traditional culture allowed us to do. The chiefs had no authority of force. But the chiefs *did* have influence, because they'd been around the barn a few times and earned some respect. The younger folks were taught to respect their elders. The chiefs still accomplished something, but it wasn't because they were holding a gun to the head of their young people saying, "You can't do that." They said, "This is not a good idea, and this is why." The people listened.

Our tribal governments were comprised of a council that would meet at length if need be to resolve issues, because the people always tried to work to a consensus. That means in the old days they might talk for a week or a

month about some topic. You didn't have to get everybody in complete agreement, but you did need to get to the point where people were willing to accept the decision. So you could say, "Well, I don't like this, but you go ahead if that is what you want to do. I'm not going to get in the way." That was considered achieving a consensus. The point is people worked together until they could come to at least to some agreement as to how things should be done.

When considering the modern culture, I think that we could have freedom like we had in our traditional tribal culture without having all of the issues of crime and punishment that exist in our modern culture. If somebody hurt somebody else so the victim couldn't carry out a responsibility, then that perpetrator would take over that job and provide the victim's family with what was needed. If their own family suffered, then that was their fault. Everybody wanted it to work, and therefore it did work.

In modern society there is freedom that is gradually being lost. I would like to see the government provide good services to people at the lowest unit of government. Let the state government do it or even the county or municipal government. At the federal level, my voice doesn't get heard. As the unit of government gets smaller, proceeding from federal to state to county to municipal, my voice keeps getting heard better and better. The voices of the individual people were certainly heard in the old traditional tribal council.

LIVING IN TWO WORLDS ~

The key issue here is how do we extract the most important aspects of our traditional ways and apply them to the modern way of life. This usually leads to consideration of our economic system and our relationship to the environment.

We have needs to survive -- to eat and to stay warm in the winter. As part of the traditional culture, men hunted to provide meat and the women provided corn, bean, squash, and other vegetables. So the question then comes down to if the Creator made the deer or rabbit I'm looking for to feed my family, is it wrong if I kill that animal, since the Creator made it? You have to look at the whole chain of life. Is it wrong for the wolf to kill a deer? Is it wrong for coyote to kill a rabbit? No, that is how they are supposed to live. That's what they need to survive. The same thing applies to us. If we need to kill a deer to survive, that is OK because, like the wolf, we can do what we need to survive. So whether we kill a deer or pull up carrots, that is all part of the Creator's plan. The Creator says that is something that we can do because it fits in with the overall scheme of things. Now what you should not do is kill or destroy things that you do not need. If you need one deer to survive for awhile, don't kill five deer. You can take what you need, but you shouldn't be taking more, because then that works against what the Creator has laid down in how we should be living.

The modern economic system is based upon trying to expand our consumption of

our natural resources. A professional hunter doesn't need five deer or ten deer or a million buffalo, but if he can find someone who will give him money for that, then he will do it. That's a problem for me. Then you get down to the question of those million buffalo that he kills. Do they ultimately provide the needs for somebody? I'm going to say that it is highly unlikely.

Some years ago I built a house. I bought some land that had fields out toward the road -- about 30 acres, and the back two thirds of the property is all woods. Before I did that, I went out onto the land and talked with the spirits there. I said, "I want to build a house here. I'm going to have to disrupt this part of the land right here. I'm not going to build a house in the woods because I don't want to cut down all those trees. I want to put it out here. Is that OK?" I lit some smudge and did some things like that. The answer came to me that yes, it was OK to do that. That is sort of a mild case of how one might try to live in both the traditional world and the modern world.

When I see photos of a big city, I see an environment that is very foreign to me. Those people apparently reject the environment that the Creator made for us by isolating themselves behind four walls, isolating themselves from cold, rain, snow, sunshine, and everything that is part of the creation provided to us. They apparently think their creation is better than the Creator's. I understand the desire for creature comforts, but we have to stay in touch with the

Creator's creation.

I once saw a movie trailer about Daniel Boone -- "he moved west and carved a civilization out of the wilderness!" No! You don't carve a civilization out of the wilderness; you should become part of the wilderness. Then, it's not really wilderness. It becomes home. But for the outsiders, they think it is a wilderness.

It is pretty enticing to enjoy the comforts of a house with a furnace and running water. And yet, I should be able to live without that. Having that stuff is not part of who I am. To help me understand that, I have spent a week or two at a time as I would have in the 1750's -- You have a wigwam and a place to get water. You are cooking over a fire. You've got a metal pot you got from a trader, which was actually a big improvement over the way cooking was done before that. I lived that way. It's a case where you have a much simpler lifestyle, but it was comfortable. I didn't have a problem living like that. However, you can't really live like that and still maintain a regular job and all that is required for that -- a car to get to work and modern aids so that you have time to go to work, since you don't have enough time to hunt, cook, gather firewood, and do other such tasks.

The way I finally resolve it, not a complete resolution, is the fact that all the things I do in terms of living in 1750, not necessarily how I would cook corn, or how I would keep a fire going in the rain -- those kinds of things are just part of everyday life, but what am I

contributing to the group and to myself? On a personal level you do what you can for other people. You can transfer that concept into the modern world. I still should be doing things that help people, but instead of it being where I'm maintaining a fire for the widow who has trouble getting fire wood, here it may be something different. You still are going to try to help people. I can't say I have a good resolution because I still feel torn when I'm in a place like this [*a hotel*], but on a personal level you still try to do what you can for other people. I have to admit that even though I'm feeling torn, I still enjoy the modern comforts.

[Laughs]

PROUD TO BE PIQUA SHAWNEE ~

Again it raises the question of who is an Indian. We'll have to use my definition: someone with Indian ancestry who has an understanding of the traditions and the culture and tries to live that way. I'm proud to be a person who comes under that category. I think I have a reasonable understanding of many of the traditions. I can never know everything. That was a good way of life our tribe had back several hundred years ago. There was a fair way that people cared about each other. They basically worked to make the system work. Consequently, people were happy. I'm proud to be a part of that kind of a culture that can do that, because there are so many other problems in the world today that are being dealt with in a different manner and not very successfully.

Also, I have already mentioned how the

tribe was able to provide the people with the traditional culture through the use of the pecan pie technique. I am also proud that we are our own masters. We are not dependent upon other entities such as the federal government. Our ancestors realized the dangers of that dependency, but they were left with no choice, and the government prevailed. Now, the Piqua Tribe has again been able to avoid that dependency.

SIGNIFICANCE OF LANGUAGE ~

The language and the culture reflect and reveal each other. If one were to look at something that Chaucer wrote in his old English, it is difficult sometimes to understand what he is saying, because English has evolved to mimic the culture. The more you can understand the language, the easier it is to understand the culture. But I'm not sure that a person can't do a reasonable job of understanding the culture without a thorough understanding of the language. Without having a completely thorough understanding of it, you don't realize that there are some subtleties that have been lost. There are some more gross things that you can talk about. In Shawnee the division between the sexes was not very significant in the language. But one thing that was significant was animate vs. inanimate. In the Shawnee language there are two noun cases: animate and inanimate. It is not just people or dogs or animals that are animate, but trees and other entities. The inanimate usually are things that are subsets, like a stick might be inanimate

where the tree would be animate. That is just an example of how the language reflects the culture. A lot of things that modern people might consider to be inanimate, are classed as animate, and shows there is a cultural dichotomy

If you talked to a Shawnee person from three hundred years ago, you couldn't ask them the question, "Are you religious?" because there is no word for religion in Shawnee. You think that means the people weren't religious. No, it was the fact that religion wasn't a separable concept. You could not differentiate what we might now consider religious experience from everyday experience. There was no difference. Every day you might be in contact with the spirits who would tell you stuff. That was part of reality. It wasn't something that you did one day a week. Sometimes a person can get clues by how the language is structured by what words are there or are not there. The more you can learn and understand the language, the more clues you get about that. We can still talk about the fact that the traditional spirituality was integrated into a non-differentiable concept without actually having to speak it in Shawnee.

I think you can still accomplish a lot of stuff without having the actual language. I don't consider myself fluent. I can say a lot of things, but I don't speak it enough because I don't really know anybody else to speak it to. I can do some things in the language. I have a number of resources that I have developed too. If there is something I don't know how to say,

given some time, I can usually work out how to say it.

There has been actually a lot of documentation, although it is pretty well hidden, on the Shawnee language. You really have to search to find it. I've talked with some of the Native speakers in Oklahoma. I've got a lot of guidance out of them too. Language, of course, is part of culture. I'm trying to absorb it when I can. That is actually a common problem, especially in the eastern tribes, because it's been a longer time since the attempts at assimilation began, which means that it's been a longer time since you had a lot of people speaking it. There are still a few Shawnee people in Oklahoma who had it as their original language, but there are darned few.

I was talking with Darryl Baldwin who does the Miami Language Project at Miami University, and works with the Miami Oklahoma tribe. He has spearheaded the revitalizing of the Miami language. He said they basically just about had to start from scratch because they didn't really have any numbers of speakers to work with. When you are doing that, sometimes you've got to make assumptions. When I was gathering up language sources, I found it especially useful in the Shawnee because I could find some word lists that were written down by a French guy, some by a British guy, some by a German guy, and some by a Dutch guy. You start from the assumption that each of these four guys are hearing the same word, but they're trying to

write it down how it sounds in their alphabet and you can see how they spelled it. Whereas if you just look at it in the English, there might be half a dozen different ways you could think of to pronounce it. By looking at, not only the English, but the French and the German, it gives you a lot of clues about how that was really pronounced. I've gone through some of that process. Talking with the Oklahoma people also gives you help in that area because you can start to pick up some things. You can't learn everything out of a book.

RECONCILIATION

Is that another reason to establish strong connections with the Oklahoma Shawnee?

It is certainly one reason -- sharing of language, but there are also a lot of other parts of the culture that are good to share. There are three Shawnee tribes in Oklahoma. During the 1990's, I knew the chiefs of each of those and talked with them. I don't know the current ones. You can see differences even amongst them about their traditions, although these differences are minor. As I mentioned earlier, these differences are due to the different experiences the various Shawnee tribes had after we separated, but we all share the basics of being Shawnee.

I don't think the Creator or the spirits care whether or not we do something with two fingers or three fingers. The Creator's interest is in who we are as people, and the fact that we are still trying to continue the traditions

that were given to us – because our ancestors believed it was important. The stories say it is important. If we honor those stories and honor those traditions, then we better believe it is important too.

We are basically brothers and sisters. Our old stories talk about the fact that the Creator brought the tribes down out of the sky one at a time. When the Creator brought the Shawnee down we were given our ceremonies, our songs, and our language. Those were given to us by the Creator uniquely for the Shawnee peoples. I heard one of the Oklahoma elders say that, “When the Shawnee people cease to exist, those things should cease to exist – the stories, the language, the ceremonies.” All the other tribes got their language and their ceremonies, and we have ours. The idea is very counter to modern culture. The Christian church is extremely evangelistic, trying to recruit everybody and their brother into it. I guess many other religions may be the same way. But the Shawnee isn’t that way. As far as I know the other tribes aren’t either. The Creator said, “These are your songs, your dances, your ceremonies. Protect them and keep them going.” At what point are we at risk that the Shawnee people disappear? At some other juncture, how do we find Shawnee people anymore? There is so much intermixing of blood lines. I think it is important that we keep in contact as best we can with all the Shawnee people for the sake of continuing to define who the Shawnee people are. It’s culture;

it’s language; it’s also helping to define our existence.

FUTURE VISION

CULTURAL REVITALIZATION

For cultural revitalization, understanding the important aspects of our traditional culture is key. Learning how we should treat others, how we honor the Creator, how we deal with difficult issues, how we accomplish our daily tasks are some of these. If we can understand these, then we are better able to incorporate them into our daily lives and thereby revitalize the important parts of our traditional culture.

As our old traditions say, you can’t make a decision based on today or tomorrow or next year. You have to consider down to the seventh generation. We mustn’t lose sight of the big picture of how we fit in, what we’re supposed to be doing, why we are here, how to get along with others. I don’t think somebody was born to discover cold fusion, for example, or warp drive. Even though that might be a help, I think that is something that just happens along the way. We’re here to learn about ourselves and about other people and how we interact. The scientific things and the day to day life are just part of our educational process. Encouraging people to go the universities to learn things, or if you go to a trade school or apprentice to some skilled person, it’s the same thing. Yes, you should be learning what they are trying to teach and hopefully they are trying to teach you things beyond just how you do Task A,

followed by Task B, followed by Task C. The tribal environment is significant because this puts people into situations where hopefully they are more receptive to understanding the bigger picture.

What are some of the real traditions? Why did those traditions exist? Those traditions developed over countless generations for a reason. Some of the reasons behind them relate to not just the best way to chip a flint arrowhead, but also what is the best way to live in the reality that the Creator made for us. How do you talk to a tree? What does the waterfall tell you when you see the waterfall? What are the needs of your neighbor? Those are the things that become vital if we, as individuals and as a group of people, are going to follow the path that the Creator had in mind for us. We have stories from tens of thousands of years ago about white people coming to Turtle Island and developing a big civilization, and at some point that civilization goes “down the tube”. It is up to us to insure that the skills people need to survive when that happens are still here. We can’t just teach how to start a fire or skin a deer. We also have to teach how you understand the Creator’s world and what is important to survive in it. That’s what I see as the purpose of the Tribe: to help the people understand the traditions that a tribal elder would have had three hundred or five hundred or a thousand years ago.

It would be great to see the Tribe continue to grow and keep our members grounded in

the traditions. The concept of reality that our ancestors understood is not only useful in understanding the traditions and how they came about, it is also useful for us as we live in the modern culture, because there is so much that goes on that is totally unexplainable in terms of why things happen. There is so much chaos in the modern culture. There was a good line in The Last of the Mohicans movie, and I’m not sure if it was in the book or not. Hawkeye is talking to one of the two daughters who is trying to understand the fact that the Indian people have been persecuted and harassed and killed, and even the white folks living on the frontier areas have likewise been getting a lot of the same treatment from the British in that time frame. Speaking of the British, he said, “Do not try to understand them because they are a breed apart and make no sense.” When I sometimes think about what is happening in the modern culture and why things happen, I just think back on that line. You couple that with the story that says this civilization is going down the tube at some point, maybe it is five years from now or maybe it is five hundred years from now, that I don’t really need to know. All I need to do is the best I can to keep what the people need to know alive, to keep it going, so the next generations understand it. As far as everything that happens these days that makes no sense, if I worried about that, then I wouldn’t have time to do anything else.

FEDERAL RECOGNITION

I don't think it is important for the Piqua to try to become federally recognized. In some ways it would be good and some ways bad.

First of all it puts you under the thumb of the federal government, and for the most part, that is a negative. The only potential positive is financial. That was the same with our bingo operation, but that turned out to be a big negative. To have a good environment for your tribe you need to be able to live and teach the culture, and not be interfered with by everybody who is on the outside. If recognition would help us pay more attention to the important things, it would be good; otherwise it is not.

For the most part, the federal government creates more interference than it adds help.

When we are getting together we need to spend the time as a tribe doing stuff and teaching our folks about the Tribe and our traditions. I'm going to give the federal recognition the thumbs down.



Gayla J. Brookman

TRIBAL REGISTRAR

My uncles said, “Don’t tell people you are Native because they will take away your land and house.” They still believed that when they passed away. I couldn’t really get a lot out of them about the Native side because they were told not to talk about it. One uncle took the DNA test so couldn’t deny it anymore. He said, “Yes, we’re Native, but don’t tell anybody.”

I didn’t grow up knowing about our eritage, although my brothers did say we were Native, but we never got to *live* Native. I had to do my genealogy all by myself and I am proud of my heritage.

ADDENDUM



Principal Chief Gary Hunt with Shannon Thomas, sixth great-granddaughter of Simon Kenton, after her adoption into the Piqua Shawnee Tribe.

HISTORICAL RECONCILIATION: THE UNIQUE EXPERIENCE OF THE PIQUA SHAWNEE TRIBE

We define historical reconciliation as an attempt to restore balance. When there have been great injustices it is paramount in a healthy society to name those injustices and allow those who have suffered as a result to give voice to them. In his lecture, “The Meaning of Working Through the Past”, the German philosopher, Theodor Adorno, talks about the loss of history, “the destruction of memory”, when we deny or minimize past events, and calls for an honest reappraisal of the past. At a local community level to recognize the presence of native people and their rich heritage and history, and also come to terms with the past violence and displacement that occurred is a positive step toward historical reconciliation.

How can dialogue, and ultimately reconciliation, begin on a local level regarding *charged* past events or issues that concern Native Americans and whites?

THE SHAWNEE/KENTON CONNECTION ~

It is important to remember that some Native people literally were forced to leave the Ohio Valley in the early 1800’s while others were able to melt back into the woods and hills. But as a result the experiences of the two groups were now quite different.

Due to the fact that the ancestors of the present-day Piqua Shawnee stayed, or in some cases, returned to the Ohio Valley after

Removal, they’ve had a continuous, although sometimes fractious relationship, with the white invaders, and with the land itself. Some of their ancestors inter-married and buried their Native roots to protect themselves and their descendants. Current members of the Piqua Shawnee Tribe attest to this cultural suppression within their own family histories. Since the civil rights movements of the 1960’s, and the consequent re-awakening of cultural pride among Native peoples, the silence was shattered in many of these families who had remained in the Middle Ground, whereas those Shawnee and other Eastern Woodland peoples who were forced to move west to live on reservations did not go through that particular psychological trauma. The western tribes were for the most part confined to reservations with limited contact with whites while living in a new landscape in which they had no historical connection and isolated from mainstream society and culture. What they lost, however, was the connection to the specific place where their ancestors lived for thousands of years, and also a loss of connection to that unique and fascinating history to a certain extent.

The division between the Piqua Shawnee and the western Shawnee tribes was in many ways exacerbated by the federal recognition process which only granted a form of sovereignty with those tribes who signed essentially removal treaties with the federal government. Those tribes became ‘the real Indians’ as far as the federal government was

concerned. The western Shawnee tribes: “You (referring to the those who stayed) did not suffer the ‘trail of tears’, the horrors of removal. We’re the only ‘real’ and recognized Indians.” The Piqua Shawnee (and others who stayed): “No, we did not leave the ground where our ancestors are buried. We stayed by any means necessary, including inter-marrying with the invaders and suppressing our heritage to survive on this land.” All of this is unspoken for the most part.

As stated above the Piqua Shawnee, and other Eastern Woodland peoples, who stayed suppressed their cultural heritage for generations, but were able to live in their ancestral homeland, and in the case of the Piqua Shawnee, begin a process of historical reconciliation with descendants of the white invaders with whom they share the local history. It could be argued that this reconciliation is possible in part because their ancestors lived through those times on the Middle Ground, and through inter-marriage became deeply entwined with the white settlers and the Euro-culture.

The Piqua Shawnee Tribe organized in the Ohio/Kentucky area in 1992. The Tribe is unique in a number of ways, including the fact that they accept people into the Tribe who are not Shawnee, but are descendants of members of allied tribes from the turbulent 1700’s, including the Cherokee, Delaware, Wyandot, Seneca, Miami, and others. (It is important to note that all prospective tribal candidates must verify their Native genealogy.) Unlike those

who were forced to move west, they not only remained in their traditional homeland, but for the most part, eventually integrated into the dominant society. Members of the Tribe often take part in gatherings throughout the region, and in so doing, educate the public about their existence and the very critical notion that they are still present in the Ohio Valley, in the Southern states, particularly in Alabama, and not all dead or in Oklahoma. Note that the Piqua Shawnee are state-recognized in Alabama. (Note that Chief Peter Chartier took many of the Shawnee to Alabama to live. The current chief of the Piqua Shawnee, Gary Hunt, is a direct descendant of Chartier.)

The early invasion of the Ohio Valley included such celebrated frontiersmen as Daniel Boone, Simon Girty, and Simon Kenton, all of whom had close contact with the Shawnee.

Barbara Lehmann, Tribal Historian and Elder, provides some background on Simon Kenton regarding his early days on the Ohio Valley frontier.

“Simon Kenton left Virginia in 1771 at a very young age, when he was sixteen. He got into a fight with a man over a girl and thought he had killed him. He decided he was going to break out for the frontier. He traveled down the Ohio River with two frontiersmen and landed at Limestone Creek which is now Maysville, Kentucky where he started a corn patch. At that time if you started an acre of corn, then you could claim that land.

He participated in Indian skirmishes

defending the forts. He had a group that he trained known as the Kenton boys. They would go fifty miles up and down the Ohio River -- Cincinnati to Marietta. He became very well respected. He went on a mission in Ohio and got captured by the Shawnee. They took him to all the Indian towns. They tied him backwards on a horse. He slept out two nights staked out on the ground spread-eagle with no clothing. Then they took him on his first verified gauntlet run.¹

He did his first one at Chillicothe Old Town, near present-day Xenia, Ohio, the second at Piqua which is now near Springfield, Ohio. He also ran Mac-o-chee and Wapatomika. At Mac-o-chee he was declared to be burned at the stake. They were going to do it at Wapatomika which was called the burning town. Simon Girty interceded for him after a very fierce council. Then they decided to take him to Upper Sandusky to burn him. Kenton said he also ran the gauntlet at Upper Sandusky. On the way they passed by Chief Logan's camp. Logan, the Seneca Mingo Chief said, "I will do all I can for you." Pierre Drouillard came to barter for Kenton and got him to British-controlled Detroit. Then he escaped back to Kentucky and from that time on had so much

1 The actual term is 'gantlet. Gantlet is two rows like a railroad track and you would run down between them. On the two rows there would be elderly men, children, and women. Very seldom would there be warriors. They did a lot of damage. They used briar switches, clubs, sticks -- anything they had to inflict pain. It was a test of the bravery of the person running the gauntlet. If the runner got to the council house where the chief was, then he probably would be taken into the tribe or sold at Detroit to the British.

information on the Indians' interior towns, more than any other person. In the end that was probably one of the prime reasons that the Indian towns ultimately could be taken out. No one knew the interior like Simon did, having been taken to all of them as a prisoner.

He was adopted at Wapatomika by an old woman who had lost her warrior son. She treated and took care of him. He was given the name, Great White Wolf. It probably would have gone well for Simon except a group of warriors, including Red Pole, who was Blue Jacket's half-brother, came in from an unsuccessful raid in Kentucky, and they were angry and hostile. They wanted someone punished and decided that Simon Kenton would be re-condemned at the stake.

I was reading a documentation when they asked the Indians, "What was the difference between Kenton and Boone?" They laughed. They called him "Cutta-ho-tha, the blackened or condemned man. He was as good as we are in the woods." There was a respect for the man because he was actually on a par with them.

Later in his life he welcomed Indians on his land and to his table. Was this unusual at the time for pioneer people to do this?

Absolutely. He was positively one of a kind. It is amazing. Simon's father was a Quaker. There was this Quaker attitude. Even though they weren't practicing Quakers, because he married out of the church, there still had to be an understanding in the home that everybody is equal. Everybody has a voice and you treat

everybody the same.

Simon Kenton knew that this was their land. He wanted that land, but it was also Indian land. He fought for it in Kentucky, but when he came into Ohio after the peace was signed and some of those Indian wars, many Shawnee who had been in the tribe when he was captured, ended up living next to him on his land by his creek and eating at his own table in the house. I always give him a lot of credit. I think he felt guilty for the incursion, but yet that was the only way he could ever get ahead. He wasn't the oldest son. His parents were just tenant farmers. The only way he could ever succeed in life would be to have land. But he always loved the Indians and they loved him.

Just before Removal Chief Black Hoof sent a deputation of the Shawnee to Kenton. They said the chief told Kenton, "You are welcome to come with us in removal. You are our brother. You are one of us. You can have the same allotment." They stayed the night with Kenton. Kenton said, "Tell Black Hoof I am too old. I will die here." So that bond was never broken. Once he was truly adopted and once he was one of them, that mutual respect lasted until they died. Actually Black Hoof never went west. He died in Ohio and so did Kenton. They both stayed where they wanted to be.

Bonah, who captured Kenton, lived next door to him for the rest of his life. At the supper table Bonah would sometimes get really angry. One of the guys said, "Simon, why do

you let him talk to you like that in your own home?" Bonah looked over at Kenton and grinned and said, "Cause I let you live, Kenton. Cause I let you live." They said Simon would go outrageous and chase him out the door and then he'd come back in and they'd have supper."²

Restoring the connection ~

Local historians including Randall Buchman, Ray Crain, and the Piqua's Barbara Lehmann have celebrated and illuminated that joint history. Barbara Lehmann took the next step by connecting members of the Piqua Shawnee Tribe with the Simon Kenton descendants, completing a circle and restoring an historical pathway that would have disappeared without her efforts. Now the two 'families' know one another again.

Barbara talks about her work to establish that connection:

"For 23 years I've been a part of the Kenton Kin Association. They are direct descendants of Simon Kenton and his family. They made me an honorary Simon Kenton Kin. When Gary Hunt became Chief of the Piqua Shawnee Tribe I decided to expose him to the public and some of the people on the other side. I thought it was important that the Kentons meet the Shawnee. Gary fell in love with them and they fell in love with him. Eventually Barbara White said, "We want to adopt Gary and make him an honorary Simon Kenton Kin." Now they have a Shawnee chief in there. It started

² For a fascinating account of the life of Simon Kenton, read Edna Kenton's *Simon Kenton: His Life and Period, 1755-1836*.

to get bigger and bigger. Simon's sixth great-granddaughter, Shannon, and Gary became really close. Shannon had lost her father. Gary said, "I think I will adopt Simon Kenton's granddaughter." At Green Corn ceremony with the Piqua Shawnee present he adopted Shannon. It comes full-circle. They adopted Kenton and as a result he got to survive; so now Gary has changed his genealogy -- at the end of all the Chartiers and all of the rest of his family including his own children, is Shannon Thomas, adopted daughter. She understood Kenton's story before, but now it has an impact on her. Now she is the one who has the Kentons on one side and her Indian family on the other. She now has not only gained a father, but a family of Indians because she is one of them now. This will never end. I can't believe that Simon didn't have a little bit to do with this. Everybody felt him there that day. We cried. We still do when we think about it. It was very real, very emotional for anyone who was there to witness it. That is something probably they will never see again. Shannon is going to be the teacher and message carrier for the next generation and help keep the history alive.

What do you hope people will understand about the Kenton/Shawnee re-connection?

If they are interested in the local pioneer/Kenton history or the Shawnee history, I think they will read that book or any of these references in a new light because "that was terrible what the Shawnee did to Kenton", and now here they are all family again. They literally

go to each other's weddings and graduations. They are now a blended family by choice. There is no anger or hatred. Barbara White told the DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution), "My granddaughter now has a Shawnee father." Now *that* is bridging a big gap! She got into the DAR on Simon Kenton who fought against the Indians and now she has a granddaughter who is a Shawnee Indian! It is subtle but there are changes that will affect their lives down the road that we will not know of. They have to come to terms with that. "How will I tell Aunt Minnie that Shannon is now an Indian? Will she understand that?" That is the education process that will go on and on and on. The Kentons are so grateful to be accepted by the Shawnee. Simon wasn't quite that grateful at first, but he grew to respect them as people. The Shawnee were so absolutely overwhelmed to see three generations of granddaughters of someone their ancestors had captured."

The Shawnee do not forget that Kenton protected the Indians even when the atmosphere in the surrounding countryside was hostile toward them. According to the participants, Kenton's spirit permeates the present-day gathering every fall when the Kentons and Piqua Shawnee gather together like the old friends they have become. Just as Simon Kenton, an invader and Indian fighter, later had Shawnee living on 'his' land and eating out of his corncrib and at his table -- simply amazing for that time period, currently the

Shawnee and Kenton kin come together to honor and celebrate that unique relationship.³

WARRIOR BLESSING AT FT. LAURENS, OHIO, 2007

Another opportunity arose for the Piqua Shawnee Tribe to create historical reconciliation. As fate would have it, two disparate groups met at Fort Laurens, Ohio: the American Revolutionary War re-enactors and the Frontier Families, including the descendants of Simon Kenton, Daniel Boone, Colonel William Crawford, Lou Wetzel, and Simon Girty -- to mention just a few, and the Native people present in the Ohio Valley in the 1700's -- the Shawnee and the Delaware. At noon, the American Revolutionary War re-enactors and the Shawnee and Delaware came together for the Warrior Blessing. At the suggestion of Piqua Shawnee elder and historian, Barbara Lehmann, the Principal Chief of the Piqua Shawnee Tribe, Gary Hunt, invited Steve Wilkins, direct descendant of Colonel William Crawford, to join him in making the tobacco offering and prayer for *all* of the warriors.

The back-story: In 1782 the Delaware, Wyandot, Shawnee, and other allies defeated Colonel Crawford's company of invaders near present-day Upper Sandusky, Ohio. After the battle they captured and burned Colonel Crawford at the stake in retribution for the

³ It is interesting to note that Kenton's son and daughter later married into the Isaac Zane family; as a result, Simon Kenton had Wyandot blood in his line as Myera Zane, was Chief Tarhe's daughter. Kenton also was adopted into Simon Girty's clan of the Seneca Nation.

massacre of 96 Christianized Native Delaware at Gnadenhutzen three months prior by those same soldiers.

Those present at the warrior blessing, being aware of the tragic historical circumstances, were stunned and deeply moved by this most extraordinary moment. Two hundred and twenty-five years later, the Piqua Shawnee opened the possibility for historical reconciliation during this ceremony.

Forgiving is not forgetting, but rather an acknowledgement of dark deeds while recognizing our joint humanity and shared, albeit, troubled past in the Middle Ground.



Principal Chief, Gary Hunt of the Piqua Shawnee Tribe with Steve Wilkins, descendant of Colonel William Crawford, during the tobacco offering and prayer for all warriors at the gathering at Fort Laurens, Ohio of American Revolutionary re-enactors and Frontier Families, 2007.

SHAWNEE/WHITE SETTLER DESCENDANT DIALOGUE GROUP

Prior to the Warrior Blessing, the Piqua Shawnee took part in a dialogue group with several descendants of white settlers to talk about historical reconciliation and what needed to be done to facilitate it. Community Works West convened the dialogue group in the hope that it would produce some movement in the direction of reconciliation. They were quite surprised and delighted that this occurred several hours later as it was not a planned event.

Three major related themes emerged from the discussion at Fort Laurens.

First is the issue of **cultural identity**: The lack of *recognition* of cultural differences and how that lack has prevented positive communication between Native people and Euro-Americans permeated the discussion. In comparison to other native groups, such as the Lakota and Iroquois, the Woodland people, including the Shawnee, have been relatively ignored in the media and public discussion.

For some the issue of how to walk in both worlds is very prevalent as many Native people are racially mixed, and forced by necessity to live and survive in a world dominated by the Euro-American perspective. The issue of acceptance, from outside and from within, the reconciling of two cultural imperatives, the irony and beauty of it, is an ongoing struggle for many Native people and needs to be recognized and understood.

The past and current suppression of

the history of Native people, particularly the Woodland peoples, both within the public education system and in the media, again contributes to the lack of understanding of the cultural and historical richness of the Native experience.

The general belief among Euro-Americans that Indian people are gone or confined to reservations somewhere in the West is another factor contributing to the invisibility of Native people and the issues they currently face.

Racial profiling and stereotyping is extreme for Native people. Sports team names and mascots appear to be a two-edged sword, but often seem to play into stereotypes and misconceptions. Asking permission of Indian people to use names and images is the key.

Who or what defines what a Native person should look like? How do we define ourselves? What does a name bring with it? What is politically correct? Native American/Indian/savage/aborigine/First Peoples. How is cultural revitalization tied to language and the disappearance of traditional speakers?

Second, **The Past**: acceptance of the past as it happened and not like we would have liked it to have been. How do we honor the past? How do we learn from history and let the rancor from the past go? How do we find a reasonable historical perspective?

Third, **Reconciliation**: Is it a possibility? It is critical for Euro-Americans to recognize the current issues/problems that modern Native people face as part of a first step.

One member expressed the idea of historical reconciliation may not reflect an indigenous concept of reconciliation. If reconciliation is the goal, then the Native participants in this project should define reconciliation on their terms. What would reconciliation between Native people and Euro-Americans look like? Chief Gary Hunt expressed that reconciliation must take place among different factions within tribes and also among various tribal groups which, in some cases, have long-standing historical feuds. How can Euro-Americans who want to learn more about contemporary Native issues do so and in what ways could they help in the reconciliation process? There are no easy answers or solutions to any of these questions and concerns.

Piqua Shawnee presence in past and current projects:

In the state of Ohio, Champaign County, when the dialogue group became aware of a proposal to create a wind turbine farm, they were successful in getting the planners to agree to go around the mound area rather than placing one of the wind turbines directly on it.

The dialogue group held a roundtable discussion at Urbana University where they discussed ways for private property owners to respect the local sacred sites. They started a grass roots approach to up the awareness about those sites in order to protect them for future generations. Most of the owners have been very careful to honor these requests according to Barbara Lehmann.



Fort Laurens Dialogue Group: Piqua Shawnee/white settler descendants dialogue

REGARDING THE TIME PERSPECTIVE

A proud descendant of the early white invaders might consider the longevity of indigenous people in the Ohio Valley: **20,000 years**

The following commentaries, written specifically for this project by Kenneth Barnett Tankersley, Ph.D., provide evidence of the Shawnee's ancient presence in their homeland.

UNEARTHING THE PIQUA SHAWNEE

Kenneth Barnett Tankersley, Ph.D.

To the Shawnee people we've always been here since time immemorial. The Western Hemisphere is called Turtle Island. If you look at the oldest unambiguous archaeological record it is about 14,000 years old. There is evidence of archaeological sites that are older. In the summer of 2013, I excavated a site at Big Bone Lick, Kentucky that suggests people were present in the Ohio Valley 18,000 to 20,000 years ago. At the time of European contact the Shawnee were making salt there. In fact Algonquian oral histories told to Thomas Jefferson say our ancestors have been here since the Ice Age. He asked, "Who left the remains of these elephant bones that are lying about the Lick?" Algonquian speakers said to Jefferson, "Our ancestors hunted them."

Today archaeology is not about digging up stones, bones and pots; that's old school. Archaeology has blossomed into a full-blown inter-disciplinary science. We use methods

from other disciplines such as geochemistry, and geophysics. A new focus in archaeology is genomics. We use genomic archaeology to answer the question, "Who are these people?" One of the things we do is look at mutation rates in living Native people as well as those in the remains of our ancestors. We can extract DNA from collagen, the organic fraction of bone. Once you remove the inorganic fraction, hydroxyapatite (calcium carbonate and calcium phosphate), the remaining tissue feels just like skin. Within osseous tissue is, albeit degraded, mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) and Y-chromosome (ftDNA). When we look at mutation rates present in living Shawnee people and that obtained from ancient human remains, it suggests that people have been in the Western Hemisphere between 25 and 35,000 years! While we have not found an archaeological site that old, the genomic archaeology suggests that they must exist.

From a scientific standpoint, we are Homo sapiens sapiens. If we had a time machine and went back 35,000 years ago and brought back an individual, dressed them in sandals, a T-shirt, and shorts and put them in a calculus class, you wouldn't know the difference.

The Shawnee oral history fits perfectly with what we see in genomic archaeology. What is interesting is that a lot of oral histories talk about in the beginning there was water and people were living in water. One of my favorite stories, and perhaps the most sacred creation story, is about Turtle Island, what we call the

Western Hemisphere today.

At one time the people were living in the water. They were afraid they were going to die because they couldn't stand anywhere. The snake said, "I know, I'll go down to where there is earth and I'll bring it to the top." The snake swam down and down, but it just didn't have enough air. It rose to the top and said, "I am sorry, but I couldn't bring it up." Then the beaver says, "I'll go. I've got a tail. I can swim and carry up earth on my tail. So the beaver gets ready, cleans its whiskers and dives down and paddles its tail as far as it can. It can touch the earth underwater, but it runs out of air and rises to the top and says, "I'm sorry. I couldn't bring up any earth. Grandmother Turtle says, "I will get earth for you." Grandmother Turtle took a deep breath and dove down and down and down until she came to the earth, and then allowed the air in her lungs to lift her and the earth to the top of the water and created what we call today, Turtle Island. The great weight of the earth cracked her back and today turtles still have the cracks from bearing the weight of the earth.

That is but one of the oral histories about the origin of Shawnee people. Other creation stories tell of the origin of our clans -- the four-legged, the winged, the legless, the snakes, and the many-legged as well. In the early days of Creation, our apical ancestors were winged, four-legged and legless, today as represented as clans -- bear, snake, and many others. Anthropologically, this situation is not

unusual. Indeed, all peoples whose ancestors once lived in bands and then tribal societies had clans. For tribal people clans are represented by apical non-human ancestor from the time of the creation before there were two-leggeds.

Prior to the Little Ice Age Shawnee people were economically under great stress. We know that people exceeded the availability of meat protein based on our stable carbon isotope studies. They were suffering malnutrition based on the kinds of pathologies found in bones and teeth when a climatic downturn, known as the Little Ice Age, occurred. While it resulted in a very short growing season, the colder and dryer climate resulted in an increase in bio-geographic distribution of bison. They expanded their range from coast-to-coast. With this new source of meat protein, the Shawnee were able to flourish. Unfortunately, it was also a time when Europeans arrived, bringing with them unspeakable diseases. The bison kill sites at Big Bone Lick, Kentucky, and the Madisonville cemetery, and Wynema village sites in Ohio date to this time period.

HISTORY OF SHAWNEE CLANS

Kenneth Barnett Tankersley, Ph.D.

Shawnee are Algonquian speaking people who represent the largest Native American language groups and most geographically widely spoken. Shawnee kinship is patrilineal, a unilineal descent rule in which you join your father's clan at birth, a membership for life. After marriage, it is customary to reside with your father's clan so your children will grow up with their clan, that is, their father's family. The clan represents a lineage based on a common non-human, apical totem ancestor. Marriage, mating, or sexual relations with a member of the same clan is taboo and considered incest. The names and the original number of clans are unknown. However, based on the number of clan symbols found on archaeological sites in the Ohio River valley that date thousands of years ago, they far exceeded those documented historically. Between 1824 and 1825, Charles Christopher Trowbridge, a member of the Lewis-Cass Expedition of the Northwest Territory, documented more than 30 Shawnee Clans including the Bald Eagle, Bear, Beaver, Big Fire, Black Bird, Buffalo, Cloud, Corn, Deer, Dirt, Eagle (a distinctive clan from the Bald Eagle), Elk, Fish, Fox, Hawk, House, Moon, Night, Otter, Panther, Pigeon Hawk, Rabbit, Raccoon, Skunk, Snake, Squirrel, Stone, Swan, Tree, Turkey, Turtle, Water, Wind, and Wolf. By 1859, pioneering American cultural anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan was only

able to find 14 clans active among the Shawnee including the Bear, Deer, Elk, Panther, Rabbit, Raccoon, Snake, Turkey, Turtle, and Wolf. Of particular note, Morgan found that the Shawnee had three active clans that were not described by Trowbridge including the Buzzard, Owl, and Loon. Additionally, by 1859, the Elk clan had become synonymous with the Horse clan.

When compared to patrilineal clan names from other Central Algonquian Native American tribes, the Shawnee is the only tribe, which has a Snake clan. This is an important point when you consider the large number of stone and earthworks in the Ohio River valley, which appear in the shape of a snake. The Miami differ from the Shawnee with Snow Thaws and Sun clans. The Fox differ from the Shawnee with Black Bass, Fox, Partridge, and Thunder clans. The Sauk have Bear, Potato, Black Bass, Great Lake, Ringed Perch, and Sturgeon clans, which are not found among the Shawnee. The Kickapoo have Berry, Thunder, Tree, and War (Man) clans. At sometime in the past, all Algonquian speaking people were of a single tribe and likely contained all of these differing clans. It is presently unknown when the tribes we know today broke away from the Shawnee. However, we still refer to them when we enter the lodge and say "all our relations".

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END NOTES

From Janet Clinger, Oral Historian:

In 2000 Barbara Lehmann, Shawnee Elder and historian, and I began brainstorming about the creation of a project highlighting the Piqua Shawnee Tribe's efforts to preserve and revitalize critical aspects of their culture. When my friend, the photographer Ruth Morgan, and I attended the Frontier Family Gathering at Fort Laurens, Ohio, we all agreed to proceed with the project despite the lack of funding.

When we first met Chief Gary Hunt he asked, "Why are you doing this?" Without thinking I said, "Because we are supposed to." He replied, "I know." From that moment we were on.

Several years after we started working on the project a tribal member, archeologist Ken Tankersley, told me that the Pequot Indians are related to the Shawnee. This was stunning news for me as my English ancestor participated in the Pequot War, 1636-38, in which the English invaders burned a Pequot village killing hundreds of Pequots inside, an horrific event that only can be classified as a massacre.

By helping create this project I feel I am closing that circle to complete an historical reconciliation that hopefully will reverberate beyond the personal.

Eleven years after Barbara, Ruth, and I launched the project, the exhibit, PIQUA SHAWNEE: CULTURAL SURVIVAL IN THEIR HOMELAND, featuring the photographs and excerpts of the interviews, opens in Berea, Kentucky and will travel to various locations throughout the state.

Two somewhat unexpected benefits emerged for us during this process. Ruth and I learned so much about the depth and beauty of the Native way of being in the world, and also we were surprised that working on this project would be so much fun! We are thankful to now be honorary members of the Piqua Shawnee Tribe, and therefore part of the family.

From Ruth Morgan, Photographer:

I came to this project at the invitation of Janet, with whom I have collaborated on multiple projects. As a portrait photographer I see my work as agreement between the subject of my photograph and myself: a moment in time that is preserved in an image. As author and photographer Teju Cole writes, the photographic portrait... “contains the tacit hope that a third party, the viewer, will be able to register the traces of that encounter.”

Often my work has been about defending the humanity of a group of people dehumanized, considered throwaways, as in “San Quentin, Maximum Security,” a body of work that travelled to museums across the country, but was also used in a successful case against the conditions in the prison. By contrast this body of work, and the wonderful interviews by my colleague, began as a means to preserve the story and the wisdom of a people to keep culture alive for future generations.

It has been the resilience of Native Americans that prevented their total annihilation centuries ago. It is this spirit and capacity that has enabled them to maintain their culture as they live in two worlds. Their culture is in their blood. It is my hope that we have done justice to this and that those who come to the work as outsiders leave with a respect for a people and a culture that remains. Janet and I deeply are grateful to have been allowed to enter into this world.



War Chief Kevin Everhart



Second Chief Duane Everhart



J.S. Collings



*Catherine Rose-Walker,
Amelia Willis*



Tribal Mother Anita Pennington



*Tribal Historian Barbara Lehmann,
Gayla J. Brookman*



Jim Green



Kennett Barnett Tankersley



Second Chief Duane Everhart



Ceremonial Chief Don Rankin



Jason



Kennett Barnett Tankersley



*War Chief Kevin Everhart,
Caleb Willis*



Helen Lisanby Danser



*Catherine Rose-Walker,
Phil Lee Rose*



Phil Lee Rose



Principal Chief Gary Hunt



Kennett Barnett Tankersley

