

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

On May 1st and 2nd the Eastern Shawnees hosted a meeting of representatives from the three factions of the Shawnee Tribe; Absentee Shawnee, Loyal Shawnee and Eastern Shawnee. This is the first time in approximately 200 years that the three bands of Shawnee's have met officially.

Chief Captain had been toying with the idea of getting the three bands together for quite some time. So toward this end, during the last couple of years, when he would meet up with officials from the other two bands, he would discuss the possibility of a meeting and consequently got them interested in the idea also.

Since some of the Eastern Shawnee Tribal members are also descendants of Absentee or Loyal Shawnees, this meeting of the tribes should prove to be helpful in researching family ancestry as well as helping each other in preserving the Shawnee traditions and culture.

There were more than 20 representatives from the three bands including George J. "Buck" Captain, Miami, OK, chief of the Eastern Shawnees; Don Greenfeather, chairman of the Loyal Shawnee band at White Oak, OK; and Leroy Ellis, lieutenant governor of the Absentee Shawnee at Shawnee, OK. (At a recent tribal election, Leroy Ellis was elected Governor of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe).

More meetings between the three Shawnee factions are planned for the future. Tribal members are encouraged to attend these meetings.

WINNERS & LOSERS

A winner says, "there ought to be a better way to do it", while a loser says, "that's the way it has always been done."

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OF OKLAHOMA
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EASTERN SHAWNEE TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA
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Second Annual Native American Youth Camp

The second annual Native American Health and Traditions Youth Camp was held at the Eastern Shawnee Tecumseh Park June 14-19. Karen Sweeten, Miami Tribal CHR, coordinates this youth camp each year and does a fantastic job. There was a total of 50 children attending the camp this year, up seven from last years attendance. The campers were forced to seek shelter a couple of nights because of some bad thunderstorms but, except for a couple of exceptions, it didn't dampen their spirits any.

Activities provided for the campers included pottery making, basket weaving, painting, arts & crafts, traditional story telling and games.

Karen reported that some of this years funding came from the Inter-Tribal "Community Partnership Grants" program and covered a large portion of the food and wages. Another change that seemed to work real well for all involved was setting the age eligibility at 7 to 13 years.

Karen stated that the volunteers were a major contributor to the success of this years camp and she appreciated the efforts of all volunteers, with a special thanks to the Eastern Shawnee Tribe and its Senior Citizens Arts & Crafts group. A special thanks also to the kitchen staff and the teen counselors who did an excellent job.



Tribal members are invited and encouraged to submit articles and information that they would like to share with other tribal members.

Articles should be sent to:
Eastern Shawnee Tribe of OK
Shooting Star
P.O. Box 350
Seneca, MO 64865

GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING

The Eastern Shawnee Tribe held its annual General Council meeting on July 13, 1992.

Chief Captain gave a brief overview of the tribes current programs as well as its financial status. He reported that the tribes Bingo Business is doing very well and future economic development looks very promising.

Tribal elections were held with the following results:

CHIEF

George J. "Buck" Captain

1ST COUNCIL PERSON

Glenna J. Wallace

2ND COUNCIL PERSON

Roy A. Ross

3RD COUNCIL PERSON

Diana Blizzard

SECRETARY/TREASURER

Virginia Fanning

GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Danny Captain

Billie Millhollin

Sheila Wyatt

Terms of office for these positions is two years.

Traditional Indian Burial Observed

Recently, I attended a burial ceremony for one of our tribal members. Not only was I there to pay my last respects but I was able to observe some of the burial customs practiced by our tribal members. As I was unable to attend on the first day, my observations began on the second day. All of the things I observed may not be done exactly the same way by other families as the customs of all the tribes in this area have become co-mingled.

On my arrival, I noticed cigarettes in small bowls in several locations in the longhouse. As I went to view the body, I noticed the open coffin was draped with a very sheer nylon cloth. A relative of the deceased sat at the head of the coffin. I later learned the person sitting is supposed to be an uncle if possible and this person is to sit there day and night until the funeral service.

When a meal was served, the cloth covering the coffin was removed from over the face. This was so the deceased could eat with those present. Immediately after the meal was over, the drape was placed back over the coffin. All persons present took a cigarette from the cigarettes provided, even the persons who did not smoke or chew, theirs could be disposed of later. All those who smoke are supposed to smoke only those cigarettes provided. After the evening meal, a man of prestige, who knew the customs, had the family gather around the coffin, he proceeded to remove the red roses the family had placed in the deceased hand. After speaking over the body he placed an eagle feather in the hand while saying a prayer. The eagle feather is a symbol of strength and beauty to the Indian people.

As soon as possible after a person dies a sacred fire is supposed to be started by a firekeeper. The firekeeper has to start the fire with a flint rock and keep it burning with a bright flame. The fire is to be kept "clean". No one is to put anything in the fire, no cigarette ashes or ends, no paper, no spitting. A firekeeper has to stay with the fire at all times. The purpose of the fire is to keep a light for deceased, so they won't be in the darkness as they begin their journey to the Spirit Land. It was explained that the Indian people don't like to be alone in the darkness. The firekeeper at this particular burial had another man to assist him when it was necessary for him to leave for some reason. The day of the funeral the firekeeper moved the fire to the cooking place, which was to a wood stove outside. This moving of the fire was done just as the sun began to show itself. After the fire was moved the firekeeper could leave, and the cooks took over.

The cooks stayed day and night until the funeral was over. They made as many preparations for the meal as they could during the night. The day of the funeral, breakfast was served as usual. The noon meal

was served at 1:00 p.m. instead of 12:00 p.m. when it is usually served. The cooks had cooked wild onions and eggs, chicken and dumplings, fried chicken, indian fry bread, sweet corn and pork, hominy and beef, brown gravy with chunks of beef, grape dumplings, and chicken and dressing. No potatoes were served. All foods the deceased person liked is supposed to be served at this meal.

At 10:00 a.m., the funeral service started. After a song the same person who placed the eagle feather in the deceased hand, spoke to the family and friends about the deceased. Before the casket was closed, a medicine bag was placed next to the body (this is done if the deceased had a medicine bag). The casket was then closed and moved to the cemetery. Upon arrival of the cemetery and after the coffin was placed, then the man of prestige took the eagle feather and dusted the casket with it. This was done to cleanse the person and wipe away any evil spirits so they will be as clean and pure as they were at birth. After he finished the cleansing, he sprinkled cedar leaves over the casket, then followed with tobacco. During the time he was doing this he explained that, although he was from another tribe, the eagle feather was symbolic to all Indians. He told us the eagle descended from the Great Spirit, that the eagle soared around the earth and then landed and perched in the top of a cedar tree to watch and protect the people. He then explained that cedar was also sacred to the Indian people because it was an evergreen and never lost its leaves thereby symbolizing eternity. The tobacco is sacred because the Indian people think of it as a symbol of peace and contentment.

The casket was then lowered into the grave and everyone present passed from east to west to sprinkle a handful of dirt onto the casket. Then the man of high honor spoke to his sister (most of the time they are called brother or sister, even though they are not actually relatives, this is just the Indian way). He talked to her and told her how much he cared about his sister and apologized for this oversight, then told her she was free to go and not to come back and bother her sisters, to just go on her journey and leave them alone. He said if they needed her for anything, she would know by their thoughts, and then she was to come and help them anyway they needed. He then spoke in Indian language and made the sign of farewell by waving his hands and arms to the west. This was the last farewell/good-bye and the conclusion of the burial service. Some of the family members stayed to cover the grave.

After this, the family and friends of the deceased returned to the longhouse where preparations for the noon meal were being completed. There was one long line of tables, probably 6, and a second line of 3 tables

set behind the first row. The tables were set with plates and flatware (plastic), and a small cup of water at each plate. Then a banana, a piece of hard candy and a cigarette was placed in each plate. When the food was served, there were six bowls of hominy and beef on the first table and five on the second. This continued until all the dishes were served. Each dish was served with one less on each table until only two were placed on the tables. The family and guests were then seated and

In Memory Of Myrtle Lola (Prophet) Dushane

Myrtle Dushane died in her home in Albuquerque, NM on February 12, 1992 after a two day illness. She was born at the home of John and Ellen Prophet just west of Seneca, MO along the Little Lost Creek. The Dushane property line was the Oklahoma border and Prophet allotment was the next one west. She finished school, started working for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and married Victor Perkins in Window Rock, AZ in 1936. They each had their careers with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and raised three children. Mr. Perkins died in 1962. In 1974 Myrtle was living in Albuquerque, where she reunited with Howard Dushane, her childhood friend and neighbor. Howard had finished school at Haskell, married and worked for the BIA. He became a widower in 1973. Myrtle and Howard were married in 1975. She became the third woman to be named Myrtle Dushane. They enjoyed 17 years of a closed and loving marriage. They had many stories of their childhood together along the Little Lost Creek. One of their favorites was about the time Howard used Myrtle's toy buggy to haul rocks. She didn't like that and fussed and pouted but then, she was just a little girl. In her later years, she learned a fuss and a pout would bring speedy help from Howard. Her family considered her a brave pioneer woman. She handled all of life's challenges with a determined and happy spirit. She will be missed but also she will remain alive in her many fond memories of her husband, her children, and her friends.

Written by Lola P. Martinez,
daughter of Myrtle Lola (Prophet) Dushane

TRIBAL TRIVIA

Chiefs of the Eastern Shawnee Tribe since 1939

Walter L. Bluejacket 1939-1941
Thomas A. Captain 1941-1966
Julian Bluejacket 1966-1970
Clyde Bluejacket 1970-1974
Jim Greenfeather 1974-1978
George J. "Buck" Captain 1978-1992
(was re-elected July 13, 1992)
Charles Captain served as interim chief for a while during 1974.

began eating. After everyone finished eating, the cake, which the family had brought, was cut and served, the ceremony was finished at this point. The family and friends took as much of the leftover food as they wanted and the cooks were told to take what was left and divide it between them.

By Florence Routh

News Of Tribal Members

SARAH CAPTAIN will be returning to play another year of basketball for the Tulane Lady Wave basketball team.

Sarah played every game during the 1990-91 season, finishing second on the team in field goal percentage with .529, averaging 6.4 points and 3.1 rebounds with a season-high of 17 points against Virginia Tech on Jan. 14 and 10 rebounds on Jan. 30 against Southwestern Louisiana. Her average playing time per game was 15.2 minutes.

A four-time letterwinner and all-Beach team member while playing at Frank W. Cox High School, Sarah led the team to three district championships, and one regional championship, and advanced to state tournament three consecutive seasons. Sarah was a member of the Virginia AAU state championship team, competed in two AAU Junior Olympics, and was a member of a select AAU team that toured Ireland. Sarah was an honors graduate and was named YWCA Outstanding Teen Woman in 1987.

Sarah is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles D. Captain. She was born Sept. 2, 1970 and her full name is Sarah Marie Captain. Her major is history and her hobby is reading.

In a recent letter from Sherry Trease, she reported that her daughter Belinda Bingham Trease had just won 1st place at OU Dinosaur Museum, for her sculpture of a baby dinosaur coming out of an egg. Belinda is nine years old. She was to receive her plaque during a reception at OU on April 17th.

David and Roberta (White) Schott welcomed the birth of Susan Elizabeth Schott on January 14, 1992. She is the granddaughter of Georgia (Millhollin) White, and is named after her full blood Indian great-grandmother, Susan Daughterty. She weighed 4 lbs., 10 1/2 oz. She now weighs over 11 1/2 pounds and in good health. Susan was also welcomed by her big brothers, Ronnie and Robbie.

Karen (Peacock) Collins wrote in to announce the birth of a grandson. Samuel Michael Tilley weighed in at 8 lbs., 12 oz. on June 3, 1992. His parents are Annjanette Collins and Mark Tilley. He is the great-great grandson of Amy L. (Bluejacket) Peacock and great-grandson of Helen Peacock.