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# NUMU TEKWAPUHA NOMENEEKATU NEWSLETTER

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The Comanche Language & Cultural Preservation Committee  
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## **2009 SPRING & SUMMER COMMUNITIES CLASSES**

We began classes in March in the Walters High School and had 89 sign ins over the month long weekly course. We had developed a self-teaching process that tribal members can learn using modern technology, and this was our first attempt to teach on a one to one basis in a classroom setting. We were a little skeptical about the reception to this process, but we needn't have worried – it was accepted and embraced by tribal members. During the Walters sessions we had a visitor from Britain who wrote a story that appeared worldwide on our efforts. We want to thank Bud Yackeschi, speaker consultant, and Doris Parli, student advocate, who helped us during the classes.

In April we traveled to the new Comanche Day Care Center in Apache for classes. There we had 105 people sign in during the four weeks of classes, and Rosalie Attocknie, speaker consultant, and Carolyn Codopony, student advocate, helped us there.

The classes for Lawton had to be moved to the Comanche Business Center to accommodate all the students in attendance, with 100 people signing in over the four weeks. At all the classes Billie Kreger has acted as facilitator, except for one class held in Lawton, where Ron Red Elk substituted for her. Carolyn again helped us along with Rita Coosewoon, speaker consultant.

In June we traveled to the Comanche Outreach Office in Norman, where again we had a good reception from our tribal members. Betty Pete, speaker consultant, was scheduled to help, but was unable to at the last minute so Rita Coosewoon stepped up to the plate, along with Mia Monenerkit and George Tahdooahnippah, student advocates. We had a total of 97 sign ins over the four week course.

Beginning July 9<sup>th</sup>, and through each Tuesday during the month starting at 6:30 p.m., we will hold classes in the Cahoma Building west of Cache. We invite all new students, plus previous students from other communities to join us. Returning students are asked to bring their hand-out material from earlier classes, and new students will be provided everything they need including a writing instrument.

To date we have given out over 1,000 pieces of language learning material to the students who attended our classes. Amazing!

One of the things we try to impress on each one is that THEY are the ones who determine their own success, or lack thereof. We can provide all the material we have developed, but it is up to them to put it to use.

We have some very good positive suggestions throughout these classes, and hope to implement some of them in the near future. A frequent request is filming a speaker and focusing on their mouth movements while they are saying words. Another is sentence structure.

Hopefully we will have that soon with the revision of the Comanche Dictionary, which will add many components for sentence structure. We still have exciting things in store for language preservation – so keep watching!

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Note from the Editor:

With great sadness, we mourn the loss of one of our Comanche speaking Treasures, Gloria Cable. She was such a big influence in the efforts of our CLCPC, and she leaves behind a legacy that will carry on long after the rest of us are gone. She was especially prolific at translating many of the children's songs that we hear sung today, along with The Lord's Prayer, which is always a popular and beautiful song in Comanche.

Gloria was the mother of our President, Billie Cable Kreger, and we extend our heartfelt sympathy to the entire Cable family, and especially to her spouse of 59 years, Vernon Cable.

Please keep this family in your prayers. She will be missed by all of us.

I am printing the obituary that was put together by the family and distributed at the services for Gloria.



GLORIA M. (WERMY) CABLE

Gloria M. Wermey Cable, 84, of Cache, OK, has gone to be with her Lord and Savior on May 29, 2009. She was born at Southwestern Hospital, Lawton,

Oklahoma on September 7, 1924, to Agnes Atavich Wermey and John Donald Wermey, Sr. She attended the Cache Schools and graduated in 1942. She worked at the Fort Sill military base from 1942 to 1945. She attended Cameron University. She was Dean of the Girls Dorm at C. Warren Jones Nazarene Bible School, Lendrith, NM. She married Vernon Cable, Sr., on July 14, 1949. They would have had their 60<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary this July 14<sup>th</sup>. Gloria was a mother and housewife, who raised her children, and helped raise her grandchildren, nieces and nephews; and a homemaker (Martha Stewart and Betty Crocker had nothing on her because she cooked and sewed for all of her family, she even made her daughters prom dresses and Indian regalia). She participated in the Comanche Language ANA Program for pre-school age children in Cache. She was involved with the Comanche Language & Cultural Preservation Committee since 1993. She stayed active until her health prevented her from participating. Some of the accomplishments that took place while she was part of the organization were the implementation of summer camps, and workshops. She was a Master/Apprentice and was one of the few fluent Comanche language speakers. She participated in the summer school classes in 1995 and a three year Lannan project. She also contributed to the CLCPC Picture Dictionary, Flash Cards, and Set of 3 CDs of Comanche Indian Songs. She translated many of the children's songs into Comanche and also translated "The Lord's Prayer". She spent years, along with other Comanche speakers, translating words into Comanche to create our own Comanche Dictionary. Gloria was a Christian woman who attended church dedicatedly. She was

instrumental in leading her parents into Christianity at a very young age. She was a member of the Komah Memorial Church of the Nazarene in Cache, where she was the church secretary for many years and retired after her failing health.

She participated in the Native American Alzheimer's Research through the University of Texas, Southwestern, in Dallas, Texas, beginning in 2001 until her death.

She is survived by her husband of the home, five daughters and their spouses: Charlene and Pat Tahdooahnippah; Billie and Ken Kreger; Verna Cable; Norma Cable and Richard Adame all of Cache, and Glenda and Joseph Goseyun of Indianola, OK.; three sons and their spouses: Vernon Cable, Jr. and Carol, Pilot Point, Tx.; John R. and Cecelia Cable; and Terry and Stephanie Cable of Lawton; two sisters and their spouses: Peggy and Nick Tahchawwickah and Leatrice Wermey of Cache; two brothers and their spouses: Glenn and Roberta Wermey, Clinton, OK, and George and Geri Wermey of Cache; 18 grandchildren, 28 great grandchildren, 3 great-great grandchildren and many nieces, nephews, cousins, family members and friends.

She was preceded in death by her mother and father: Agnes Atauvich Wermey and John D. Wermey, Sr., a son: Tony Cable; 2 brothers: Don Wermey, Jr. and Billy Murphy Wermey; an aunt Myrtle Atauvich; an uncle: Robert Atauvich and a special tui Jeanette Jenkins.

Contributions can be made to the SW Hospice of Lawton, Oklahoma, or the Alzheimer's Research, University of Texas, Southwestern, in Dallas, Texas.

The Gloria Cable Family Thanks all those who said a kind word during their time of mourning, a word of prayer, sent flowers, or contributed to the dinner. May God Bless each one of you. Ura!

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## CARLISLE INDIAN SCHOOL more of the story

In our April 2009 Language Newsletter we told you about the records available for students that attended Carlisle Indian School.

I heard back from tribal member Julianna Brannum in California who wrote the following:

"Thanks for the newsletter, as usual! I love reading it top to bottom – always such good stories!

"I, too, spoke with the woman at the National Archives and ordered my great aunt's file – Hattie Topetchy raised me (as well as two other generations of Comanches) and she will always have a special place in my heart. I recently ordered her file and it just brought tears to my eyes – mostly letters from the administrators at Carlisle asking her family to send her train fare, so she could come home."

"I recommend ordering them if you get a chance – my file only cost me \$15!

"Also, thank you for listing the PBS series, "We Shall Remain." I co-produced the final episode, "Wounded Knee," and we actually have a segment within the film that focuses on the boarding school era. I am most proud of this segment and it will surely bring tears to all of our eyes. Please be sure to watch it. It is on PBS's American Experience program – the series is called "We Shall Remain."

*(\*Editor's Note, I hope all of you were able to see this series.)*

"Thanks for everything you do and keep up the good work! Ura, Ura, Ura!

Julianna Brannum"

*(\*P.S. Julianna's business name is "Naru Mui Films" – telling a story. Let's all wish her success in her career.)*

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## **RUTH PALMER INTERVIEW from the Doris Duke Collection**

*(\*The first part of this interview was published in January 2007, and Ruth Palmer (born in Faxon in 1913) was telling about her experiences while attending Fort Sill Indian School in the 1920s. This interview was given on August 2, 1967):*

Ruth: We used to have parties on Friday nights. We have carnivals, bazaars or parties. We have cake and ice cream. For bazaars they'd have little booths with different things, and the fishing pond, and chili and hamburgers and all that.

Q: Every Friday night?

Ruth: No, not every Friday night, but once every two months or so. When my grandmother was in the hospital she gave me \$11 and said, "Divide it with your brother." And I went. We were going to have a bazaar and I gave them some money and we had a bazaar. That's why I looked forward to them.

### **ATTENDING SCHOOL**

Q: How long did you stay at that school?

Ruth: Ten years.

Q: And you said you went when you were six?

Ruth: Seven, I went there when I was seven. I stayed there till I went to the ninth, twice, ninth grade twice. And after I got bigger I had friends. Ruby Cable was my best friend, and Lilian Perty, she was another friend of mine. Just certain ones I chum around with.

One time I got a coat (with) imitation leopard skin lining, and everybody wanted to borrow it so they could wear it.

Richard Martinez used to go to school with us. When one of us (would) buy something, we all would try it on. My girl friend bought spool heels, you know, high tops, they button. They were

black patent leather and grey suede shoes. They were spool heels. We used to all try those shoes on. We thought that was something great. Spool heels.

Q: Did they have dances for boys and girls when you got older?

Ruth: No, we never did have dances. They wouldn't let us dance. It was against the rules. But when we go to Concho on the basketball team, we'd dance the Virginia Reel. And we enjoyed going off like that.

Q: What were some of the names of people, like your matrons?

Ruth: When I first went there our matron's name was Miss Hunter. Boy she don't never walk, she runs. She runs in a trot whenever she goes somewhere. She was peppy. She got up early, about four or five o'clock, and we're drilling. We had dumbbells we used, too. Have drills with them. Early in the morning. She was the boys matron, then she came to the girls matron.

Our assistant matron was named Miss Emick, and another was Miss McCray. She was the one I like best. When she (would) go to town she would say, "Now, Ruth, you've been a good girl and I brought you some candy." And she'd give me several Hersheys. She was good to me. We had a lot of different matrons – Ellen Otipoby was one of our assistant matrons. There was just a lot of matrons.

Q: Were any of them mean to the kids?

Ruth: Oh, yes. We had one woman, I won't say her name, but she was going to school. She was kind of the head of us, a captain in the drills. If we get out of step she'd just slap us. She was mean to us, but I won't say her name, she's still living.

Q: Did you ever play any tricks on them to get back at them?

Ruth: No, I never did. We used to have kick ball, too. We'd play rocks you know. We have a little piece of toy round one and we'd throw it up and catch it, this rock and our toy. And it (would) be big rock, too. We'd play on the side and we'd pick it up, just like that and we'd have stock piles all over the back campus. We'd play rocks like that. We'd throw the rock and then catch the rock while it's falling. When you catch it you put it on the side and just keep doing that till you miss and then the other one plays. Then we'd have friends and we'd play hide the rocks. On the side of the buildings there's little holes. I don't know what made them, in the cement. And we'd get little rocks and hide them. Then we'd tell the other one to hide his face and we'd hide them and we'd say, "Ready" and she'd come along and pick up them rocks that we hid. Oh, we had a lot of games.

Q: What other kind of games?

Ruth: We had basketball, of course, and that was when the softball first started. That year I was quitting school, and I was catcher and Rachael Martinez was the pitcher. We were just starting (to play) when we had to go home for summer vacation. When softball first started we were just learning it and that's when I quit school. My last year in school was when soft ball started.

Q: How come you quit?

Ruth: Well, I had finished and I had to quit 'cause I couldn't go any further.

Q: What did you do after that?

Ruth: I went to Lawton High School for a little while, and that's where I learned to swim. They had a swimming pool and I learned to swim there. I was good at drilling because I already knew how, in gymnasium. Roland Clark was my teacher in mathematics, and in gym I just remember two teachers. Miss Cruthers was one. And then I had to quit (Lawton High). My grandmother

was pretty sick, you know. That was my other grandmother. My mother took me home with her then. My grandmother already passed away. I went home with my mother.

Q: Where was she living then?

Ruth: Cache.

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## INDIAHOMA: A MERGER OF CULTURES

*(The following is excerpts from The History of Comanche Country, Oklahoma, a project of the Southwest Oklahoma Genealogical Society, dated 1985. Re-printed with permission.)*

Residents of Indianhoma have been adjusting, compromising and just plain getting along since their beginning. With a town name that symbolizes a unity of cultures, this community was meant to be different. Its common ground seems to have been a good natured acceptance of each one in its midst, a belief there was room for all.

Indianhoma's heritage began before the community existed as a town. In 1894 Rev. Henry Kohfeld approached Quanah Parker, chief of the Comanches, and succeeded in obtaining a grant of land for a mission to be located on Indian land. In 1901, Kohfeld was joined by another Mennonite Brethren missionary, Rev. A.J. Becker and his wife. The Beckers influence was felt in this area of Comanche County for nearly 40 years. These two arrivals provided a Christian foundation for a community that was yet to come.

Families make up a community and Indianhoma's first families were those of Chebahtah, Kowena, Codopony, Saupitty, Tahmahkera and Asenap, Comanches who, among others, chose their 160 acre allotments in this area

between the Big Sandy and Post Oak Creeks, south of Elk Mountain in the Wichitas. A government issue "I.D." house, built before the turn of the century for a Comanche woman, Tsigobah, mother of Maddische, still stands in Indiahoma, having been moved there during the town's early years.

On August 29, 1903, the Comanche County Commissioners of McKechan (chairman), Martin and Pierce ordained the city of Indiahoma as incorporated, with a name that combined "Indian" and "Oklahoma." By 1911, with a population of about 1,000, there were three grocers, two cotton gins, a cement block manufacturer, the bank and a newspaper, more than a dozen retailers, six builders, two churches, the school – and even three fraternal lodges.

During a community project in the late 1970s, Ida Baker recalled those early years. Her family moved from Lawton to land two miles southeast of Indiahoma in February of 1902. At first, they lived in a big circus tent with storage space for hay in the back of it and spaces to tie their horses during bad winter storms. Her father, called "Big Tent" by his Indian neighbors, later built a dugout, then a one room log cabin. Other improvements were a well and a windmill.

Lottie Quetone, who spoke only Comanche then, particularly enjoyed going to McCarthy's store during Indiahoma's early years. The store sold gingersnaps out of a big barrel, which thrilled this little girl, and "when you bought candy they would put it in a striped sack. It seemed like candy just tasted better out of a striped sack," she recalled. She and other local youngsters attended Mountain View School at that time, before local schools were built.

Mollie Chebahtah remembered the town Fair. "I remember Daddy grew a watermelon that weighed 100 lbs. and won First Prize at the Fair." Events included a three-legged race and a fat man's race. "Herman Asenap and Joe Lambert were the two men who always ran the race and won."

World War II marked the continued migrations from farm to city and Indiahoma was hard hit. Then in 1956, expansion of Ft. Sill eliminated one sixth of the town's economic base, without a matching increase in "impact" funds, because the land became unoccupied artillery target range. Even historic Post Oak Mission had to be moved.

Perhaps the 1978 project that most reflects Indiahoma's unique character was that of renaming the streets. Once designated simply A, B, C, D, and so on, the north-south streets were re-named to honor the town's history: Post Oak for the mission, Brenton and Potter for early merchants; Chebahtah, Asenap and Big Bow for noted Indian settlers, Becker for the missionary and Dillon for the first postmaster. East-west streets were re-named to honor agriculture – Wheatland, Grassland, Hampshire, Hereford, Charlois and Suffolk. The big street where U.S. 62 was once lured straight through town became Showplace.

*(\*Editor's note: for the complete article about Indiahoma and other area towns, go to the Lawton Public Library and ask for the book mentioned at the beginning of this article.)*

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### **A LOVE SONG TURNED TO A '49 SONG**

Each one of the classes held over the last few months has been unique. We not only learn about the language, we learn about the history of our language and our culture. The last

class held in Norman was no exception. Talk turned to songs near the end of the class and several were sung from the Comanche Hymn Book. There was discussion on the origin of the songs, and information about the original composers. Then people started talking about other songs – fun songs. Some of the '49 songs were mentioned, and one in particular came up. It was the favorite of our own Lucille McClung, another of our Comanche Treasures who is no longer with us. She referred to it as the “Pizza Song.” Rita Coosewoon shared the origin of this song from her oral family history with us. When her step-grandfather Sam Pewewardy was going off to World War II with the 45<sup>th</sup> Division, he sang this song to his wife, Mollie, Rita’s grandmother. It was a farewell song that was taken up by other members of his group. However, like many of our customs, over time it was changed and went from a farewell/love song to a '49 song to “The Pizza Song.” The pizza part comes from the “pitsu” word in the song. The song goes:

**THE PIZZA SONG**

Na nu tsuu tuasuu pitsu piturui nu  
 Keta tsuu yakemi?a kwai  
 Na nuu tsu tuasuu pitsu piturui nu  
 Keta tsuu yakemi?a kwai

The translation is “I’m coming back, don’t cry for me.”  
 Just a bit of interesting Comanche history for you.

**PRODUCTS FOR SALE**

**Comanche Dictionary.** Over 6,000 Comanche words with Comanche to English and English to Comanche sections. \$30 plus \$5 s&h.

**Comanche Lessons, set #1.** A set of four Comanche Lessons, complete with

a word list for each lesson and a CD. \$20 plus \$5 s&h.

**Picture Dictionary.** 26 page Primer explains the Comanche alphabet and sound of each letter. Includes a CD. \$12 plus \$3 s&h.

**Comanche Song Book.** Collection of 116 songs written in Comanche with an English translation, plus a set of 3 CDs of the songs. \$20 plus \$5 s&h.

**Comanche Flash Cards Set.** Three sets of 48 Flash Cards using simple Comanche words, accompanied by a CD. \$12 plus \$3 s&h for all three sets.

**Comanche Language Tee-Shirts.** Comanche language logo in full color on left chest. Available in solid red or royal blue. Children’s sizes small (6-8), medium (10-12), and large (12-14), \$10; Adult sizes small through XL \$12; Adult sizes 2X and 3X \$15. Specify color and size when ordering and add \$5 per shirt s&h.

**Authentic Handmade Comanche Dolls.** Beautiful 20” soft bodied dolls, dressed in traditional clothing. Both girl and boy dolls available. \$40 each plus \$5 s&h. (Special Order: Allow 6-8 weeks delivery.)

**Tote Bags.** Navy with red trim. 16”x12”x5” with back pocket. Front has the Comanche Language logo. \$12 plus \$5 s&h.

**Ball Caps.** Royal blue with red bill and Language Logo on front. \$10 plus \$5.

**Lapel Pins.** 1 inch round Cloisonne pin with colorful C.L.C.P.C. logo and “Numu Tekwapu” in center. \$5 includes s&h.

**New Lapel Pin.** 1 1/8” Silk screened lapel pin with clear epoxy finish. Exact replica of our colorful CLCPC logo complete with feathers, on gold plating. \$5 includes s&h.

**\*Please Note:** We give discounts to enrolled Comanche Tribal Members. Contact us before ordering (see top of newsletter).