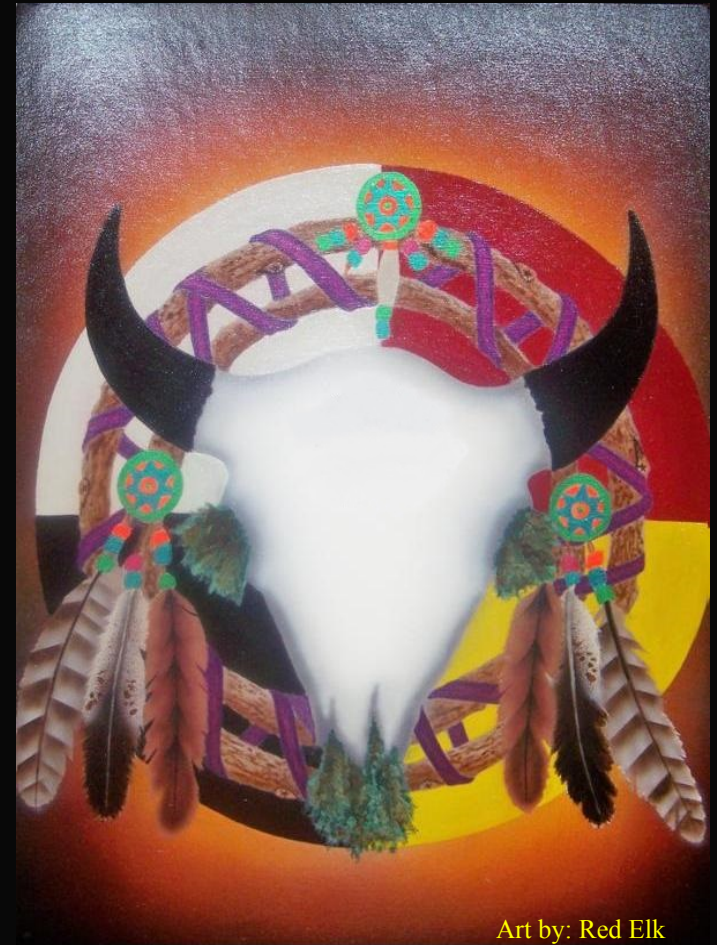




Photo © 2013 by Beckwith Thompson

Chief Luis Tijerina, Watching Wolf, as he is known to many is a native of Odessa, Texas. He started working in the field of computer technology right after graduating from high school. He opened an IT services business a few years later before he decided to work as a communications manager for an oil well services company. He married at the age of twenty-five and raised two children. Chief Luis began his Red Road journey at the age of 29 becoming the Chief of the tribe in Trans-Pecos Region of Texas in 2005 and still acts as one to this day.

American Indian Heritage, Culture and Spirituality
Presented by: Chief Luis Tijerina
AKA: Watching Wolf



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Foreword

A great many thanks to all of those that have believed in me and held me up on those occasions when I needed to be upheld. If I have forgotten to name anyone I hope you will forgive me for having done so as there were many who assisted me in all of my endeavors. Pila maye, yelo. Thank you, very much.

Tunkasila – God, Grandfather, Creator,
V-N-Agahai - Life Guide, Teacher, Mentor, Friend,
Carolina Tijerina, Wife
Veronica Corrales - Daughter,
Luis “Louie” Tijerina, II –Son, Life’s Lessons,
Alberto, Sr. & Lourdes Tijerina - Father & Mother,
Reuben Reyes – Brother,
Belinda Bernal - Sister,
Alberto Matta Tijerina - Brother,
Orlando Tijerina - Brother,
Paul Ortega -Uncle,
Jacob Corrales - Son In Law,
Austin J. Corrales - Grandson,
Chief Keith Horselooking - Mentor, Teacher,
Friend, Spiritual Advisor,
Trans-Pecos American Indian Association - Members,
Friends, Relatives,

Four Laws to Live By

Normally in every presentation I strive to put forth these four laws that everyone can live with. These laws were taught to me by our group’s Apache Grandmother V-N-Agahai just as she attempts to teach all that she comes in contact. As a life guide V-N-Agahai takes her responsibilities very seriously as do I.

The four laws are as follows:

Take Care of Mother Earth - we consider the world on which we live to be our mother because she gives us every thing that we are and everything that we have.

Take Care of your Brothers and Sisters - not just the brothers and sisters that live with you at home. Remember we are related because we all have a belly button. Yes, a belly button. That makes us all humans. Created by the Creator, Wakan Tanka, the Great Mystery. We belong to the human race.

Take Only What You Need - so that others might have. If we take in excess then others will have to do without. This is inclusive of someone else’s time.

Take Care of Yourself - so that you might be able to do the other three. If you don’t take care of yourself there will be no one to come along to take care of you.

If all of us were to live and adhere to the four laws wouldn’t our world be a much better place? Peaceful. Balanced. Tranquil. Achitu, Stay safe!

Sweat Lodge Ceremony

The Sweat Lodge Ceremony or Purification Rite is one that takes the participants as close to their deaths as they would want to ever get. The temperature in the lodge can rise to a deadly 150° or more. Normally there are four endurances or rounds. Each round gets hotter as more heated lava rocks are introduced to the lodge.

There are songs that are sung every round and prayers are said for family, self and those participating.

The heat & steam causes the body to sweat to purge the toxins, and poisons while leaving the participants feeling refreshed and renewed.



Fig 5. Illustration of a sweat lodge with the buffalo skull alter just outside of the entrance where the Sacred Canupa rests on a pipe rack. Provided by Sinte Gleska University, artistic interpretation by

Even the dermis benefits to great lengths by allowing the dead skin cells to be shed like brother snake sheds its skin when it is no longer of use.

The Purification Rite is a precursor ceremony that prepares the participants for another ceremony such as the Sundance, Vision Quest or any of the other ceremonies where being cleansed is desirable.

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Acknowledgments

Over the last 26 years there have been many people that have crossed my path and left their mark on this Red Road journey. They have all been mentors in one way or another. On this path there are no mistakes and no coincidences. Everything is for a reason and is a part of a bigger picture. All one has to do is stop, look and listen, then and only then, will it begin to make sense.

Many thanks to Granny V-N-Agahai, Goes Across Woman, whom had patiently waited for me to come along to learn all that she had to offer. Those things that her Father Sees Far gave to her to give to a man called Watching Wolf. Thanks for the countless times you have taken time to teach and share the knowledge and wisdom.

To my friend Domingo Vargas who also has taken time from his life to teach, share and listen to the endless line of questioning. Also thanks to him for standing along side of me to pierce in the Sundance Ceremony.

Red Dog, the old man in my life that means more to me than my own flesh and blood. He has taught Wolf the meaning of friendship, no, more than that, brotherhood. He stood beside me in the early days of Sun dancing, he encouraged, supported and even cooked meals for me at the end of the days of Sundance. He sponsored me when I had no pipe to dance by loaning me his Ānupa until I could finish making my own. He cut my first set of pegs, which I still own and pierce with, out of choke cherry branches. A debt that I will never be able to repay.

Chief Keith Horse Looking, whom has taken this young warrior on the road to maturity, and made a brave that not only talks the talk, but walks the walk. He has allowed me to spread my wings and take flight by showing me how to pray at the tree with a song in my heart and a dance in my feet.

Thank you to my family whom have supported my every step!

Vision Quest Ceremony

This ceremony is one that doesn't lend itself to individual interpretation. It is more of a ritual that must be done the same way every time. The subject of the ceremony is taken out on the hill, as it is called, and left for a period of time from one day to four days. No food or water can be ingested a day before the ceremony.

There are several objects that are needed from a wooden bowl to cedar branches to a Ānupa. Each participant

must have the same items before they are set out. Four hundred prayer ties are required to encircle the subject in his/her sacred space. Many times one must ask for items that they don't have and barter with tobacco or something of similar value.

When set out on the hill one is to have a conversation with Creator to understand what one's life is to be all about, to find their destiny in a sense. Sometimes the subject will receive a new name after the ceremony.



Fig. 4 Illustration of the Sacred space that the subject is put in for the length of the ceremony. They must not leave this space for any reason and should try to stay awake throughout. Provided by Sinte Gleska University, S.D. Artistic interpretation by Watching Wolf.

Sundance Ceremony

The Sundance ceremony is an annual tribal gathering that gives way to a very personal self sacrificing of the flesh. At the center of the Sundance grounds is a transplanted Cottonwood tree. This 30' - 40' tree is cut down without the use of any power tools. Several men use axes to chop away at the tree until it falls to the awaiting arms of about 40-50 Sundancers with cross members in their arms to cradle the tree never letting it touch the ground. At times the tree is bigger around than one mans arm length. After the tree has been transplanted, the trunk about 10'-12' in the ground and still about 30' still up in the air, the dancers wind prayer bundles around the tree trunk. But before the tree is put into the hole in the ground, prayer flags, piercing ropes, and other significant symbols are placed on the branches of the tree. Once the tree has been planted, the hole filled in and all the prayer flags and ties mounted on the tree the Sundance has officially begun.

In the morning before the sun hits the horizon, about 5 A.M., all dancers, chiefs and sub-chiefs are sweated in for the four days of dancing. Sweating in means many things to the dancers. First they understand that they are no longer flesh and blood but are regarded as spirits. When they enter the dance circle they are supposed to release all worldly things such as eating, drinking water, smoking cigarettes, and touching others that are not dancers.

When the piercing rounds begin the dancers are taken to the altar at the center of the dance circle by the tree. They are laid down on a bear skin rug, a symbol of strength and healing, where they are cut with a scalpel and skewered with wooden or bone piercing pegs, connected to the rope by a harness made of sinew then the pulling away from the tree begins. Four trips to the tree to say prayers for family or friends later the dancer will pull with all of his/her might and rip the flesh around the peg freeing themselves from the pegs. After this the flap of skin is cut away by the medicine man and wrapped in a piece of colored cloth to be placed on the tree as a prayer bundle. The flesh is the symbol of the prayer(s) that were said at the tree. After all dancers have finished ripping loose the piercing round is over until the next one thirty to forty minutes away as the dancing continues until almost sunset.



Fig. 3 Illustration of a Sundance Tree with prayer flags, ropes & Sundancer in ceremonial skirt. Provided by Sinte Gleska University, artistic interpretation by Watching Wolf.

Introduction

In the course of his journey on the Red Road, Indian way of saying Natural Life, Watching Wolf (Wolf), has learned to distinguish between Heritage, Culture and Spirituality. Although, most American Indian events contain all three, some contain only two of the three and some contain only one.

Wolf has journeyed where not many have dared to stand. Not by his own choice but by a calling that came in the form of a waking dream or as the Indian would say—a Vision.

He has come to understand that the only way that he is going to keep the knowledge and wisdom that has been shared with him by the elders is to pass it along. That is what he is here to do today in the presentation and by having put together this booklet for you to take and read at your leisure in the privacy of your own home or school room.

Share what you may with those that would not take it and trash it or consider it less than.

Please be advised by no means does Wolf claim to have the answers to all questions nor makes any claims to know it all. He is only a man that has traveled this path further than some and less than others.

Smudging

In a Smudging Ceremony all of the elements, Heritage, Culture and Spirituality are involved in this ageless practice of purification and protection. It is a sacred event

that is taking place when an individual is being smudged (wafting sage smoke around the subject).

Sometimes it is not a person that is being smudged but an inanimate object, such as a house, a room in a house where a person has died, an object that will be used in ceremony, etc.

Most of the indigenous people

utilize one form of smudging or another. Some use sage wands, sweet grass braids and some use a conch shell with chopped sage or cut pieces of sweet grass. Others, such as the Aztecs, use smudge-pots with burning charcoal and granulated cedar sap or copal.

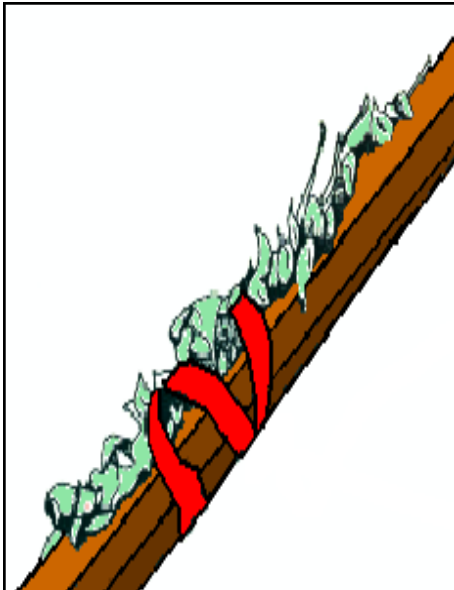


Figure 1 - A Sage wrap on a Pipe Stem that helps protect and bless the pipe.

Yuwipi Ceremony

The Yuwipi or Spirit Calling Ceremony is a powerful event practiced mostly on reservations, although at times holy men will perform the ceremony before urban or off-reservation gatherings. The Medicine Man will be wrapped in a blanket then wrapped and tied with a rope. One rope around the neck ties to the hands bound behind the back then on to the ankles securing that he won't easily escape. Next he is laid on his stomach and covered with another blanket. At this time he goes into his meditation and calls on the spirits to come and release him but more importantly give him the knowledge of that which he seeks. Usually there is someone that is being healed and the Medicine Man needs to know what roots, herbs or other remedies to give the person. Sometimes the ceremony is done to find a lost article of great importance to the requesting party.

When the ceremony is said and done the blanket cover is lifted off of the Medicine Man and there he is with all the rope and blankets stacked neatly with him sitting on them.

Pipe Ceremony

The pipe ceremony is a solemn and sacred event which takes the participants from normal everyday happenings to the realm of the spiritual.

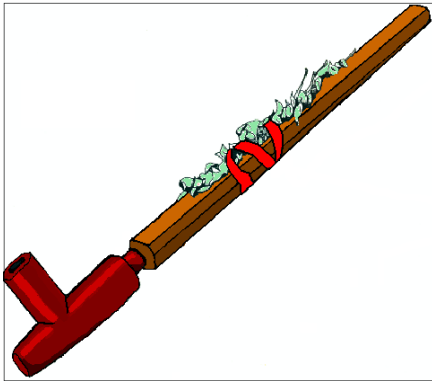


Fig. 2 Illustration of a Čanupa provided by Sinte Gleska University, Rosebud, S.D. Artistic interpretation provided by Watching Wolf.

It is an instrument that contains the secrets of the universe. It has been touted as having a direct connection with the Creator. When loaded the proper way with recognition of the seven directions, North, South, East, West, Above, Below and the Direction Within, with the Ancient Pipe loading song in the old one's language it is said

to have magical properties. The ability to heal and make one whole with a single prayer is not a dream of the dreamer but a promise from the Creator.

When in ceremony Wolf tells the participants to be very careful what they are praying for because they just might get it. It is not an instrument like the Aladdin's Lamp that grants you three wishes. You don't ask for worldly things, like a Mercedes, or a million dollars. You would ask for more important things like world peace, the health of a sick loved one or even a prayer for the general well being of the participant sitting next to you in the ceremony.

Heritage

Heritage exists in a smudging because it has been inherited from a previous generation to the current one to the next generation. Most of the time this passing is in oral form and taught by an elder of the tribe. Many times it is done by what Wolf calls it, Osmosis. You see what happens so much, sometimes for years, then eventually you know how to do the smudging. There are various ways of preparing a smudge and many different ways of smudging. One way is using a Lakota wrap of the sage which is bunched up and wound with either colored yarn, twine or sinew.

Even the color of the wrap has significance for the smudge-er and for the smudge-ee. In the Lakota way of being the colors of the medicine wheel have significant meanings as do other tribes. Other tribes may use the same principle except they might use a different color. IE. The North in the Lakota way of being is symbolized by the color Red in the Lipan Apache it is symbolized by the color White. In the Lakota way of being the West is represented by the color black in the Navajo or Mescalero Apache it may be represented by Navy Blue. Depending on the tribe and the band from which the ceremony came determines the color and at times the words used to describe the power beings in those directions.

Culture

Culture is a part of this ceremony because it was taught and learned in a specific way. Ceremony lends itself to changes according to the celebrants vision of how things need to be done. For example, if Wolf is Smudging someone tomorrow he may have a dream tonight that will show him how things need to proceed. When dreams come they are for a reason and close attention is paid to details. In this way the person or place being smudged will receive the proper energy or protection.

In the culture of a tribe it is the elders responsibility to see that it is learned. No books to look it up in exist on the reservation. The young people have to learn it by repetitive trial and error. Some of the ceremonies such as the Sundance are considered rituals because it is done the same way every time. Some of the rituals steps can be changed to fit the circumstances of the day, but many can not be changed. The prayers and songs must be sung the same way with no room for deviation. IE. It is a belief that the spirits of the directions will not understand the prayers and songs if not sung in the old language.

Other Supplanting Ceremonies

There have been other ceremonies that have supplanted the original ceremonies brought by the White Buffalo Calf Maiden. The pipe ceremony is one that is used to open gatherings, meetings, and sweat lodge ceremonies. It is used in naming ceremonies where one receives an Indian name or at weddings.

As was mentioned earlier, ceremony lends itself to the celebrant which allows for some deviation from the original way of celebrating it. When the celebrant feels, we call it being moved by spirit, the need to do something above and beyond the original way then by all means it is done. There is a saying in the tribal circles it goes something like this. “When it’s time do something it’s time. Not sooner or not later but at the right time.”

Supplemental to the Legend

A legend has its beginnings somewhere in the history time line. It may have been a true event that along the way got exaggerated or embellished by the believers. It may have progressed from reality to surreal to myth to legend. Although, how do we explain the living proof that exists. Do we carbon date it to believe or to discredit? Read the following.

That bundle still exists today in the Greengrass area of South Dakota, with a man by the name of Arvol Looking Horse. He is the 19th generation keeper of the Sacred Bundle, the Sacred Canupa or Medicine



**Chief Arvol Looking Horse,
S'unkawakan Wicas'a,
19th Generation Keeper of the
Original
Sacred White Buffalo Calf Pipe
of the
Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota
Nations of the Sioux.**

Pipe and has been since he was twelve years old. It is taken from the bundle to smoke once a year and people from all over the Nation gather just to get a glimpse of it. What a burden and responsibility for a young man of twelve to accept. When told that he would be the next keeper of the Calf Pipe he knew his life would never be the same. Nonetheless, he accepted the responsibility and is still the keeper unto this day.

Spirituality

There is a thread of Spirituality that runs through everything that the American Indian does. In a smudging the Spiritual energy is being cleansed and protected by the smoke from the smudge, be it sage, cedar, copal, sweet grass or other smoking agent.

There are many ways to smudge none seems to be stronger than when an Eagle feather is used to move the smoke around the subject. Eagle feathers possess a special quality to start with. The Eagle is the bird that flies highest and closest to the creator and is so revered by the American Indians that when a feather falls off of a dancers regalia at a powwow it is treated like a fallen U.S. soldier in the field of war. The dancing is stopped and the feather is picked up by the arena director and carried to safety until it can be smudged and returned to the owner or given to an elder. American Indians believe that the Eagle feather has the ability to gather negative energy from the subject being smudged and then cast it off to the ground where it can harm no one. When the negative energy is cast to the ground, Mother Earth takes it in to transform it to a more useful positive energy.

Many of the physical ailments that a person experiences are attributed to the negative energies and lack of spiritual connection. The Smudging in conjunction with an Eagle feather has been known to cure and heal people from their ailments by merely touching the smoke and feather on the affected area. Once a smudging is completed the subject is ready for the intended ceremony or for going back to their every day business of life.

The Seven Sacred Ceremonies

There are seven ceremonies in the Lakota way of being. These ceremonies were brought to the people by Ptečincala Ska Wakan Winan which means White Buffalo Calf Maiden or Calf Woman.

The seven Sacred Ceremonies are:

Keeping the Soul—the soul of a dead loved one is purified so it can return to the Great Spirit from whom it came.

Sweat Lodge Ceremony or Purification Rite — is used as a cleansing and a preparatory ceremony.

Vision quest — is at the center of an individual's quest for closeness to Wakan Tanka. It is an individual ceremony, performed on an isolated mountain top or a badland butte.

Sun Dance — an annual gathering of the tribe to thank the Great Spirit for all that the Creator has given to the people.

Making Relations — a ritual to create between two people a blood bond that is closer than a kinship tie.

Preparing a Girl for Womanhood — ritual recognition of the importance of women as the source of the flowering tree of the nation.

Throwing the Ball — a ritual that establishes the relationship of the people to the universe, or to Wakan Tanka who is every where ¹.

Legend of the White Buffalo Calf Woman

In the days of old when all things weren't in peace and harmony. Two warriors were sent out to locate game to feed the tribe. As they walked along they talked quietly and kept an eye out for game. Off in the distance they saw a luminous object heading towards them. As the object came closer they could make out the figure of a white buffalo. Even closer the figure looked like a woman dressed in a dazzling white buffalo robe.

Now the two men were face to face and couldn't believe the beauty that stood before them. One of the warriors, the good one, recognized she was Wakan or Holy. The other warrior, the not so good one, having his judgment clouded by his lust attempted to have his way with her and immediately burst into a ball of fire and was left a pile of smoldering ash and bone. The good warrior bowed to her and asked how he could serve her. She replied, "Go back to your people and tell them to prepare a large Tipi in the center of the camp and I will return at sunset."

The good warrior did as instructed running all the way back to the camp. Upon his arrival the people could see that something was happening and began to gather around him as he approached the Chief's Tipi. The Chief asked him to tell him what was the problem. He began by telling him what had happened to the, not so good, warrior. The Chief dispatched a pair of his mightiest warriors to go verify what he had just been told. Meanwhile, the good warrior delivered the message from the lady in the white buffalo robe. Shortly thereafter, the dispatched warriors returned verifying the fact that there was a pile of ash and bone where the other warrior told them they would be.

The Chief having no choice but to believe what he had been told ordered the people of his tribe to construct the Tipi in the center of the camp as the woman in the white buffalo robe had instructed. The lodge was larger than any of the other Tipi's in the camp and stood out from the rest. Surely someone Wakan was about to visit for it was even bigger than the Chief's or Medicine Man's Tipi.

The people prepared the Tipi for a council and waited patiently for the sun to set. Just as the sun met the horizon with the people looking on they saw a figure coming towards them from that direction. She walked towards them and became brighter as she approached them. When she finally arrived they could see the luminous robe she wore just as the warrior had described and they saw she carried a bundle in her arms. They had council with her all night and she instructed the people about how their lives were to be lived from that day on. Leaving them with the bundle and the seven ceremonies she walked away into the morning star with these as her final words, "When the white buffalo returns to the herd then you will know that the end times are near. Prepare yourselves and your brothers for a new world to come." With that said she turned, walked away and appeared to become a white buffalo and then eventually disappeared into the Sun.