
NUMU TEKWAPUHA NOMENEEKATU NEWSLETTER

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The Comanche Language & Cultural Preservation Committee

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No-Hand's Song

(*This song shows the exact translation under the Comanche words, and the literal translation under that.)

Jesas tsa tai i yai miarɯ u
(Jesus is us watching he's doing this he)
(He's watching over us)

Jesas tsa tai i yai miarɯ u
(Jesus is us watching he's doing this he)
(He's watching over us)

Oyorɯ tai tabeni tai i yai miarɯ u
(All us day us watching he's doing this He)
(Every day, all the day, he's watching over us)

Pɯ tekwapɯ?ha tai hani miaku tai i yai miarɯ u
(His word us we are doing us watching He's coming us He)
(When we do his word he will watch over us)

Pɯ tekwapɯ?ha tai hani miaku tai i yai miarɯ u
(His word us we are doing us watching He's coming us He)
(When we do his word he will watch over us)

Pɯ tekwapɯ?ha tai hani miaku tai i yai miarɯ u
(His word us we are doing us watching He's coming us He)
(When we do his word he will watch over us)

OUR CADDO NEIGHBORS

Recently I have been corresponding with Phil Cross from the Caddo Tribe, our neighbors to the north. He is also a researcher and we exchanged information and ideas. He gave me the address of a web site that I thought would be of interest to many of you: www.caddolegacy.com. It is a good place to learn about our neighbors, and in some cases, our relatives.

ANOTHER MILESTONE

In our quest to provide more and more material for those who want to learn our language and learn more about our culture, at first we converted the many VHS tapes we've collected over the years into DVDs and made them available to tribal members (see a complete list in the April 2008 issue of the Comanche Language Newsletter).

We are now in the process of converting audio cassettes into CDs. When we have completed this task we will compile a list and publish it in a future issue of this newsletter. We will offer the same service as we did with the DVDs – enrolled tribal members can request copies of the CDs for their own use at no cost to them.

Currently we have CDs with some of our fluent elder speakers telling stories and singing Comanche songs. When this project is completed it will be a treasure of information that will be available for generations to come.

If any of you have audio cassettes that you would like to have converted to CDs, please contact us (580-492-5126 or clcpc@comanchelanguage.org) and we will be happy to do that for you once we have completed our own tapes.

Hopefully by the time the next issue of this newsletter comes out (January 2010), we will have a list of all the CDs available.

UPCOMING EVENTS

I hope this language newsletter reaches everyone in time for the next two events:

DICTIONARY MEETING: We will meet Saturday, October 3rd, in the old conference room at the Comanche Complex to get the revised Comanche Dictionary ready for reprinting. We will meet from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. and participants are asked to bring a covered dish to share for the noon meal. Depending on how much work is accomplished will depend on whether more meetings will be scheduled. Fluent Comanche speakers are encouraged to attend and will be given a stipend for their participation.

COMANCHE LANGUAGE COMMUNITY CLASSES: We will meet Saturday, October 10th from 1 to 4 p.m. in the old conference room at the Comanche Complex. We will offer a refresher for those who have taken earlier classes and work towards building more words and finally sentence structure. Participants are asked to bring all material they were issued earlier this year during the area community language classes. New material will be provided as needed. Students will have input into how often the language classes will be offered.

STORY TIME

(*It is the time of year for traditional Comanche stories to be told, and we have some taken from the Doris Duke Collection at O.U.) I want to personally thank Pat Sahlin who has graciously volunteered to put the stories from the collection onto the computer, to make them easier to access for our newsletter. She has done an outstanding job, and you will see some of those stories in upcoming issues. Thank you (Ura) again, Pat.)

From the Doris Duke Collection:
(BACKGROUND OF INFORMANT)
Mary Poafpybitty Niedo (She is married to Joey Niedo), is Arapaho and half Comanche. She was born May 20, 1895, in Fort Sill, Oklahoma. She now lives south of Apache, Oklahoma, north of Porter Hill, along Chandler Creek. One of her brothers is James Isaac Poafpybitty. Mary is one of the last Comanche Eagle doctors.

(What's your name?)
My name is Mary Poafpybitty.
(And where were you born?)
I was born in Ft. Sill,
(What year was that?)
It was the year of 1895.
(You said you were part Arapaho?)
Yes.
(What was your fathers name?)
My father's name was Poafpybitty,
(And what tribe was he?)
He was a Comanche,
(What was your mother's name?)
My mother was half Arapaho.
(What was her name?)
Chappy
(Did you have brothers and sisters?)
Uh, huh,
(How many brothers did you have?)
I had eight brothers and four of us girls.
There was a dozen of us, twelve of us.

(Would you tell that story again about the old ladies and the tent?)

Oh, that.

(Yes, would you? That's a good one.)

STORY OF HOW OLD WOMEN GOT THEIR CLOTHES

There was two old women, their husbands had passed away...way back in years, and they didn't have no children or no family any(where). The people moved from place to place to place, and they keep dragging around with them. They had a little tipi they lived in, just the two of them.

One day, the chief's son, early in the morning, he announced and said, "My sister is very sick and I want all you people to come and see her." And they were all around their tipi, trying to get this girl well. But she just got sick all at once, and then that night, after everyone had went to bed, she died. When she died, these two old ladies heard a lot of crying out there, so one said, "Hey my friend," she said, "(let's) get up and go see those people. They are very rich people and I know they got lot of things. We might just as well go over there. Hurry, put your moccasins on."

And they put their moccasins on, picked up their blankets and went over there. The tipi was all open and spread out like an arbor and people were just crowded in there. This girl inside was laying on the ground. They didn't have no beds at that time, you know. She was laying on the ground and the father and mother were (at) the side of this girl. It was their only daughter. So everybody was crying for that girl. And finally these two, they couldn't get in the midst because there was a lot of people there and they were all hollering and crying and they didn't know how to get close to the body of this girl. They wanted to get real close so the father and mother would see what they were doing. They

didn't have no room to go in, so they climbed on top of the tipi and they jumped up there and hollered and cried and cried and cried. Both of them.

One of them said, "Uh-na-na-na-na-na-na-noi-oi-oi-oi," like that. And the other woman said , "Ho-ho-ho-ho", and she said "Cry, like me, don't cry like that. If I cry, just holler like me."

So she said, "Ah-a-oie-oie-oie" and they sounded just alike. They cried like that. They wasn't even crying, just making all that racket. So they jump and holler up there and finally the side poles they had opened the tipi with gave away and they dropped from the top of that tipi right in the center of all the people. They dropped right there around the body and they start hollering and crying.

Pretty soon the father and mother of this girl that died said, "Oh, my, poor old people. (They) feel real bad for our daughter. My wife, tell your brothers and your sisters to open their sacks." You know they used to have sacks made of raw-hide. They turned it over and they scraped it clean inside and they got all their moccasins and blankets and whatever they wanted to keep, they kept inside. And its got a lace on it, with cuts, and they lace it up with a long buckskin. That's how they keep their things at that time.

So he said, "Open up your sacks and bags and give these poor old ladies some moccasins, blankets, dresses." And they opened up for her and her sister, the girl that died (her) mother and sister and her grandmother, they opened up and they gave them moccasins, and dresses, and blankets. And as soon as they gave those things to them, they stopped crying and they took out. And as they went along they punched one another and said, "Let's go." So they took out. And when they took out, just as soon as they got away

from the crowd, they beat it, they run. They beat it to their tipi and when they got there they just went down to the floor.

One sat down and took her moccasins off, and the other one took her moccasins off, and they tied those other moccasins on, and this one pair was too big for her friend.

"Hey, my friend. My moccasins are too big. Can we trade?" And she said "No, mine's the prettiest. I don't want to trade you. Keep it on like that."

So they put those moccasins on and those pretty blankets and their pretty dresses and they were sitting in there, inside of their tipi and laughing and said, "When we went up there, this is what we went after, and we got it. Now, when they have a dance or anything we (can) be going over there all dressed up real nice like the other people, because we are so poor, we ain't got no men folk to get us a deer to make moccasins out of and now we got pretty moccasins."

And they just laughed and they wasn't even sorry for the girl that died. They just went after those things, you know, so the father and mother would feel sorry for them and give them all that stuff. They even gave them beads and they were all dressed up.

After they had buried the daughter, they all moved away from that place, because that's the way the Indians used to do. If they had a burial out there in the field somewhere, they all moved away from there, as far as they could go. Over the hill so they wouldn't know where the body was, just lost track of where they buried them, just moved from place to place. If one of them died, they all moved away. They ain't going to stay around that cemetery, what you call it today.

So that's how these two old women got their clothes. And when they camp they don't camp close to them. They

always be away from the other bunch because the other people, oh, I don't know, they don't care for those old people, they don't try to help them.

When they butcher -- butchered them buffalos, after they get through and (take the) meat to their tipis, the two old women would walk out there, and whatever was left, they get all that. They cut and hang it up, and then they dried it and pound it and sack it up in those rawhide sacks where they keep their meat. They keep it in there, when they travel anywhere. They got their horse and just throw it behind the saddle and tied it on and they go. That's how they traveled, those two old women. They just follow the people around. They got no relatives, no nothing.

Just like today, anybody got no relatives, nobody cares for them, I guess that's the way it happened. Those two old ladies were like that. The funniest part of it is how they just cried alike, and when they went back to their tents they said, "We never did cry, we just holler like we was crying, but we didn't even have no tears in our eyes. That's the way it happened you know. That's all of that story. Short story, (That's your short story, huh?) It's a short story.

HOW COYOTE HELPED THE COMANCHES

(You said you know coyote stories, too. Could you tell me one of those?)

Yeah. A long time ago, they had a camp. Whole bunch of them, had a camp. In the night they heard a coyote holler, hollering out there four times, as loud as he could. So when one of the men heard, he run to the chief and said, "The coyote holler out there four times. That means bad news. Either we all going to get killed or there's going to be death among us. You better go out there with a piece of meat and feed it to that

coyote, and talk to him and tell him to stop hollering like that.

So one man took a chunk of meat and took it out there to feed that coyote, and that coyote run from him. Instead of eating it, he run away from it.

So they all went back to bed again and when they went back to bed, here it hollered again. And hollered and hollered. He tells them bad news, the coyote. And the old people understand what the meaning of that coyote hollering out there in the field after they all go to bed. They say, "We got bad news coming, or death coming to our tribe." They say that.

After they had moved from there, they went on and camped in another place. When they camp they found a man and a woman over there, when they had went a long way.

This man and woman had been away from the tribe for a long, I don't know how many years they were gone. They were walking back trying to find the Comanches, where they were at. They would go and walk and walk and walk, and finally they wear their moccasins out. They had no way of killing a deer to make moccasins out of, or even a buffalo. So they just kept going.

One night they laid down under a big bunch of cedar trees, and it was kind of cold and those cedar trees kept the wind away from them and they made a little place where they could sleep.

After they went to bed they heard a coyote hollering out there. Her husband said, "I hear that coyote out there." And that woman said "I guess he's telling us bad news or either he's going to help us. In some way that Coyote is telling us something."

After awhile, when they went to sleep, that coyote just keep coming closer and closer to them. Finally it

come to the place where they were sleeping.

This woman woke up and this coyote was right over her feet. She had cuts on her feet, and sores, and this coyote just went and licked the bottom of that woman's feet. They were sore, you know. He licked and licked and cleaned it out and then lay right there by this woman. She woke up and said, "This coyote's right here with us. He has been licking all the sore spots and my feet stopped aching."

So he said, "I'm going to put my feet close to that coyote's mouth and see if he could lick my sore feet." So the coyote licked that man's feet. They were just all cracked up and sore 'cause they had walked, I don't know how far they walked. That coyote start licking the bottom of the feet of this man. After awhile it felt good, you know, and after they went to sleep they heard it talking out there.

The coyote said, "Now tomorrow when you get up, go straight this way, toward the sun coming up. You go that way and just walk, walk, walk and when night comes you go to sleep. I'll be over there and I'll I fix you up again." He said, "I'm going to fix you all's feet again. Then after four days and four nights you all's feet is going to get well. Going to be just as hard as a rock, just like my feet." And that coyote said, "Feel my feet," and they felt the bottom of that coyote's feet, and it was real hard. You know (he) goes over rocks and everything and it don't hurt him.

Coyote don't hurt his feet, he keeps it from cracking up and when ever he runs through the rocks. "You all's feet going to be like my feet. And when you run, you all gonna run like me. Fast, nobody can catch you."

And so that night, they had walked all day again. They went to bed. And here comes this coyote again. It follows

them a long ways, for four nights, just doing that to them. After the fourth day on that morning, they started, and the man said "Let's try what the coyote told us. Let's try it and let's hold on to each other's hands and let's run and see how fast we can run."

They hold one another's hands and they beat it. They run fast and they was just going like coyotes through grasses and everything, rocks never did hurt their feet.

And finally, I don't know how many days, they went on and on 'till they found the Indian camps. They got back to the Indians and when they got home, they went and told the Indians what that coyote had done for them. He made the bottom of their feet real hard, just like a rock. Didn't feel no stickers or nothing. They just went over everything and got home and that's what the coyote done.

**STORY ABOUT LOST BROTHER
as told by JOE ATTOCKNIE**

(Background of Informant: Joe Attocknie was born September 11, 1911, near Apache, Oklahoma. He has lived in this area all his life. Interview date was June 9, 1969.)

My relative a generation back got into a battle. Him and some other Comanches got into a battle with some whites in Texas.

During the fight this relative got shot off his horse, he got shot in the knee. But he was able to conceal himself, and when the fight was over, the two whites and the Comanches separated and withdrew, and the younger brother of the man that got wounded was able to help his brother. But (he) was unable to move him because they didn't have a horse. So he had to drag him the best

he could and they began to have hardships.

They began to run out of food and water. One day the wounded man's younger brother saw a group of people at a distance, maybe several miles out of their way. Somehow he chased after them. They must have been moving faster than he thought but it took him quite a while longer than he thought to find those people.

When he finally caught (up) with them, and took them back to rescue his brother, all they could find was the spot where the two brothers had been hiding, and no trace of the wounded brother.

They searched and made what they thought was a complete search of the wild area around the spot, and they couldn't find nothing. The man just disappeared.

Eventually, they came on home, and later a bigger bunch went to look for him and they couldn't find him. They couldn't find no trace. So, they just thought he --. They abandoned him eventually.

After a year's wait, in about a week they were getting ready to mourn him as being dead and somebody thought about this medicine man that could read the future. So somebody went to Bird's Head and told him, and went through the ceremony and presented him a gift. It takes a medicine man to find out something of the future or find, like in this case, somebody that was lost.

He told them what to do, how to build a lodge, and of course, people went to witness something like this. They had a crowd in no time after they built the Lodge. And then the singers began to sing for the priest, the Sun priest, Bird's Head.

It took them some time to work, to get him worked up. And people took part, they helped sing and then on certain occasions other people would dance and only at this time Bird's Head

would dance. They were singing one certain song when they seen that he was singing with them. He joined the song with them and then they seen that he added some songs, some words to the song that they were singing. When he raised his hands up, the singers would lower their voices so they could hear him singing and these were the words that he had sang and as near as I can recall. *(Mr. Attocknie sings a Comanche song here.)

When Bird's Head got through singing, he interpreted what he was singing as "Four days from now, from the west, we will see a pack of traders coming in, and with them they will have mule colts. The pack animals will have mule colts, trotting along the side. The pack animals will be wearing bells," and he said, "Four days from now this lost man, this lost one that you have asked about, will be riding on one of those pack animals."

So, of course, up to that time, the predictions and the foretelling of this man Bird's Head had been very accurate. There was no need to doubt him.

The people usually moved every day, the Comanches usually did not stay (but) one day at one campsite. But for this reason (of waiting for the lost relative), Bird's Head got everybody (to stay).

So they stayed, one day, two days, three days. On the morning of the fourth day, while they were still at this place, some of the more anxious ones went toward the direction that Bird's Head had indicated, the direction the traders would come from.

Close to noon, those who had been watching the horizon saw dust and they wanted to know, what was causing this dust. It was supposed to be the traders. And sure enough, (when) they headed for the direction of the dust they met this

pack train. And just as Bird's Head had said, on one of the pack animals was riding this lost relative. He had been wounded in the knee and had another name at the time. But later it became (the) name for that wound. He became known as the Knee (Comanche word). I am saying (this) to illustrate the way in which the Comanches used this Sun Dance as a ritual to foretell the future.

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. 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 lapel pin with C.L.C.P.C. logo and "NemꞮ TekwapꞮ" in center. \$5 includes s&h.

New Lapel Pin. 1 1/8" lapel pin with our 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).