
NUMU TEKWAPUHA NOMNEEKATU NEWSLETTER

September 2001

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The Comanche Language & Cultural Preservation Committee

P.O. Box 3610 Lawton OK 73502-3610

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Editor: Barbara Goodin

CLCPC OFFICERS ELECTED

On Tuesday, August 7th, the monthly business meeting for the Comanche Language and Cultural Preservation Committee was held and the following officers were elected:

President: Billie Cable Kreger

Vice-President: Dr. Reaves Nahwooks

Secretary: Deloris Wooth Karty

Treasurer: Barbara Goodin

“Letter From The President”

Maruaweka:

It is nearing the end of summer and our gardens have blossomed with fruit that we have now eaten with enjoyment. Now our garden is overgrown with weeds and there is no more fruit.

And, like the garden with all the changes taking place within our backyards, our language group has seen a big change take place.

I now sit in the President’s seat and I would like to extend a great big welcome to everyone. Among all the chatter that is going on I will strive to continue with our goals to save our language.

Our trip to Idaho (Shoshone Nation Reunion, Fort Hall, Idaho) was very enjoyable and we hope to see some of our relatives again at the Comanche Nation Fair taking place at Camp Eagle (north of Cache) on September 28th, 29th and 30th.

Ura
Billie Kreger

!! COMANCHE LESSONS AVAILABLE !!

Comanche Lessons are now available! This first set contains four lessons, as will subsequent sets, beginning with greetings and leave-taking, followed by two Comanche stories.

The format followed will be words/phrases written in Comanche, followed by an English translation. An audio cassette accompanies each set, so the student can actually hear the words spoken as they follow them on the written sheet.

Other sets will follow, with each set containing four lessons and an audio cassette.

To get your Comanche Lessons, send \$25 check or money order to C.L.C.P.C., P.O. Box 3610, Lawton OK 73502. Shipping and handling is included in the price.

!! 2001 FALL ENCAMPMENT !!

The 2001 Fall Encampment, sponsored by the Comanche Language and Cultural Preservation Committee will be held October 5th, 6th & 7th this year. It will be held at the Comanche Tribal Complex, north of Lawton. Everyone is invited!

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Friday, October 5th:

- 9:00 a.m. - Continental Breakfast
- 10:00 a.m. - Opening Ceremony
Miss Lawton
Honoring for Edgar Monetatchi
- 11 a.m. - Tee-pee set up demo
- Noon - Lunch
- 1:00 p.m. - Bow & Arrow demonstration
- 2:00 p.m. - Beadwork & Shawl demonstration
- 3:00 p.m. - Dried corn demonstration
- 3:30 p.m. - Fry Bread demonstration
- 4:00 p.m. - Meat cutting demonstration
- 5:00 p.m. - Dinner
- 7:00 p.m. - Hand Games
- 8:00 p.m. - Story Telling / Moopits Stories

Saturday, October 6th:

- 8:00 a.m. - Breakfast
- 9:00 a.m. - Herbs & Remedies
- 10 a.m. - Comanche History / Our Story

11 a.m. -Comanche Youth Dancers
Noon- Lunch
1:00 p.m. - Fort Sill Indian School History
2:00 p.m. - Comanche Clothing Fashion Show
3:00 p.m. - Comanche Day Cradles
3:30 p.m. - Comanche Night Cradles
4:00 p.m. - Men's Clothing Demonstration
4:30 p.m. - Chibitty Family Group
5:00 p.m. - Dinner
7:00 p.m. - Mini Pow-wow
8:00 p.m. - Story Telling

Sunday, October 7th:

8:00 a.m. - Breakfast
10:00 a.m. - Comanche Hymns
Noon - Lunch
1:00 p.m. - Closing Remarks and Break Camp

(*The above is a tentative schedule, and as such is subject to change. If you would like a confirmed schedule, please send a long, self addressed, stamped envelope to: CLCPC, P.O. Box 3610, Lawton OK 73502, and it will be mailed to you a few days before the encampment.)

“PROJECT TEACHING”

The Comanche Language Committee is embarking on a new concept that we are calling “Project Teaching.” It will replace community held language classes as we know them.

Beginning this Fall, we will sponsor weekly gatherings for Comanche people to come together and learn more about both our language and our culture.

We hope there is enough interest to have gatherings in the following communities: Apache, Cache, Fletcher, Richards Spur, Lawton and Walters.

The Language Committee will provide three (3) people at each site who will offer several subjects over a period of time.

Some of the subjects to be covered in this eight month project will be: stories, songs, language, history, traditions, culture and prayers.

If you are interested in participating in “Project Teaching” as a teacher or a student, please contact Billie Kreger at 429-3866, Reaves Nahwooks at 246-3529, Deloris Karty at 247-

6707 or Barbara Goodin at 353-3632.

The community gatherings will be free and open to all interested persons.

COMANCHE WOMAN TO BE HONORED

The late Sonja Atetewuthtakewa will be memorialized with a “Sonja Atetewuthtakewa Award for Distinguished Service in the Protection of Native American Children.” The first award will be presented during the Ninth Annual Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, September 19-21, in Norman OK. Persons may be nominated for this award by contacting janiebraden@ouhsc.edu or lisa-rhoades@ouhsc.edu.

Sonja was the daughter of Zona Atetewuthtakewa Suminski, and the niece of Ronald Red Elk. She died in 2000. This award will honor her dedication to protecting Indian children and families.

Submitted by Juanita Pahdopony-Mithlo
The cradleboard exhibit “Gifts of Pride and Love: Kiowa & Comanche Cradles” has traveled for two years, as our historic and rich nomadic tradition continues. This exhibit honors our ancestors whose loving hands constructed the cradleboards and today continues to build cultural bridges of understanding and a connection to all people.

The Pahdopony Cradleboard

The prayer for all creation
began our spiritual journey,
“the gathering of the medicine”
needed to create the “Gifts of Pride and Love.”

The gathering of the important materials:
the stiff rawhide, cedar support points, beads,
harness leather, buckskin, canvas,
colorful lining material, sinew,
metal tacks, and mescal beans;
the selection of the colors of beads,
and the comparison of the colors and the patterns,
and how they looked next to each other;

the rich designs so familiar to the family,
and supported with the knowledge
so easily available to anyone who wished to honor
a soon-to-be-born child and others...

**Always before making a cradle or anything else,
there were prayers of thanks, for the new baby
and for the material and for its gathering and
use.*

Thus began the construction of a Comanche
cradle only a lifetime ago.

The Comanche cradles as “carriers of tradition”
bound our people to a culture in which
“the people” represented the richest
and most precious resource,
because a child in a cradleboard signified honor,
patience, respect, love and the belief that
our culture would continue.

Pahdopony “01

**Weckeah. Gifts of Pride and Love: Kiowa and Comanche
Cradles. (2000)*

LEGEND OF THE DREAM CATCHER

submitted by Deloris Karty

Long ago when the world was young, an old
Lakota spiritual leader was on a high mountain
and had a vision.

In his vision, Iktomi, the great trickster and
teacher of wisdom, appeared in the form of a
spider.

Iktomi spoke to him in a sacred language that
only the spiritual leaders of the Lakota could
understand.

As he spoke, Iktomi the spider, took the
elder’s willow hoop which had feathers, horse
hair, beads and offerings on it, and began to spin
a web.

He spoke to the elder about the cycles of
life...and how we begin our lives as infants and
we move on to childhood, and then to adulthood.
Finally, we go to old age where we must be taken
care of as infants, completing the cycle.

“But,” Iktomi said as he continued to spin his
web, “in each time of life there are many forces—
some good and some bad. If you listen to the

good forces, they will steer you in the right
direction. But if you listen to the bad forces, they
will hurt you and steer you in the wrong
direction.”

He continued, “There are many forces and
different directions that can help or interfere with
the harmony of nature, and also with the great
spirit and all of his wonderful teachings.”

All the while the spider spoke, he continued to
weave his web starting from the outside and
working towards the center.

When Iktomi finished speaking, he gave the
Lakota elder the web and said... “See, the web is
a perfect circle, but there is a hole in the center of
the circle.”

He said, “Use the web to help yourself and
your people to reach your goals and make use of
your people’s ideas, dreams and visions.

“If you believe in the Great Spirit, the web
will catch your good ideas — and the bad ones
will go through the hole.”

The Lakota elder passed on his vision to his
people and now the Sioux Indians use the dream
catcher as the web of their life.

It is hung above their beds or in their home to
sift their dreams and visions.

The good in their dreams are captured in the
web of life and carried with them...but the evil in
their dreams escapes through the hole in the
center of the web and are no longer a part of them.

They believe that the dream catcher holds the
destiny of their future.

10TH ANNUAL COMANCHE NATION FAIR September 28, 29, 30, 2001 Camp Eagle

Tentative Schedule of Events

Friday, September 28th:

4:00 p.m. — Reception for Shoshone Relatives

5:00 p.m. — Cedaring Ceremony

6:00 p.m. — Opening Ceremony

6:30 p.m. — Hand Games

6:30 p.m. — Pow-Wow Begins

Announce Golden Age Princess

Saturday, September 29th:

7:00 a.m. — Fun Run
 11:00 a.m. — Parade through downtown Cache
 Noon — Hot Dogs and Chips served to all
 1:00 p.m. — Band performs until 3 p.m.
 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament
 Horse Shoe Tournament
 Car Show
 Kid's Games
 6:30 p.m. — Pow-Wow
 6:30 p.m. — Hand Games
 8:00 p.m. — Teen Dance
Sunday, September 30th:
 8:00 a.m. — Spirit Walk
 10:00 a.m. — Outdoor Church Services
 Noon — Sunday Dinner served to everyone
 2:00 p.m. — Story Telling Contest
 Vision Quest Performance
 Other activities will be added
 6:30 p.m. — Pow-Wow with finals

There will be an exhibit of “most authentic hand made items” that will range from quilts to food. Everyone is encouraged to enter one item of their choice, with prizes to be awarded by popular people’s choice voting. This exhibit will be available for viewing through the entire three day Fair.

Prizes will be awarded for parade entries, with several categories available.

Cash prizes will be given to winners of the Story Telling contest, with stories being told in Comanche. Registration will begin at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday.

Tee-shirts will be given to participants of the Fun Run and Spirit Walk, and “freebees” will be given out by various departments within the Comanche Tribal Complex.

The C.H.R.’s will man a first aid station for the duration of the Fair. Remember to bring any medications you may need during your stay, and shade for the afternoon activities. There will be plenty of cold water and soft drinks available on site, and a variety of delicious food to sample.

There is a limited number of craft booths and food booths available. Please contact Delphine Nelson at the Comanche Complex, 580-492-4988, for more information.

Visit the Comanche Tribe’s web site at:

www.comanchenation.com

for more updated information.

**The following is from the Texas Folk-Lore Society publication, Legends of the Supernatural section. It was shared with us by Linda Pelon.*

**THE WOMAN OF THE WESTERN STAR:
 A LEGEND OF THE RANGERS**

by Adele B. Looscan

(with apologies to the memory of Judge Duffy)

Judge Hugh Duffy, to whom I am indebted for this legend, was identified with the interests of Bandera County for fifty-four years. As host of the Duffy Hotel, his genial gifts made friends of all who shared his hospitality. His acquaintance with the rangers enabled him to gather from them and others a rare collection of tales, which he related with convincing accuracy and detail. *The Pioneer History of Bandera County*, by J. M. Hunter, contains an appreciative sketch of his life and a tribute to his many fine qualities.

I tell the tale now as it was told to me, when the moon was full and shone on a merry group of friends seated on the ground, in the neighborhood of Polly’s Peak. The narrator began with these words: “It was on just such a night as this.” Then followed the legend in the time-honored style sacred to legendary lore, impossible for me to imitate.

A more charming landscape cannot be found than the hills and dales of Bandera County. The Indians loved this country, and every year resorted thither, to fish in the waters of the Medina and to hunt deer and turkeys on the mountains. But their intentions were not always so peaceful, and Texas Rangers were not infrequently called upon to protect the few white settlers who were bold enough to call this region home.

In the summer of 1844, there had been some fierce conflicts between the white and the red men; the latter had fled precipitately, showering their arrows behind them upon the rocky ground. The battle having ended with slight loss to the victorious rangers, they were taking their rest near the base of a conical eminence, afterwards known as Polly’s Peak.

The moon was at its full. The rangers lay at ease near their camp fire, whose glowing coals of red and yellow seemed to vie with the moon's glorious golden hue. The story-hour had come, and each in his turn told of his own or another's thrilling experience or hairbreadth escape. A mockingbird, perched on the topmost bough of a gnarled oak, poured out the melodious measures of comedy and tragedy that make up his wonderful repertoire. The story tellers were forced to listen to him and interpret, as best they might, the infinitely varied notes of his song.

Now it seemed a human voice, calling, "Come here! Come here! Come here!" Now, a cry of distress, as of a captive frog in the coils of a snake; again, household words pealed forth: "Tut! Tut! Tut! Chick! Chick! Chick! Mew! Mew! Mew!"; then came high pitched trills of bewildering sweetness, rivaling those of the most gifted prima donna, followed by a low, soothing, caressing lullaby. The song ceased suddenly and left as its echo an uncanny stillness. The breeze had entirely died away; the leaves on the near-by trees seemed to stand at attention, as if awaiting orders. From whom? A voiceless presence commanded an attitude of motionless silence.

The rangers felt its strange influence and looked inquiringly at each other; meanwhile not a word was uttered. The tense silence became painful. A cloud, veiling the face of the moon and dimming its light for a few moments, invited them to watch its passing, and, as they gazed upon its flitting shadows, there suddenly stood in their midst a tall, beautiful Indian woman.

Her hair hung in long braids over her shoulders; her brow was crowned by a circlet of sparkling crystal beads; countless strings of colored beads and shells adorned her body; a skirt of a filmy blue fabric reached nearly to her ankles. She carried a bead-embroidered quiver at her side, and swung across her back was a bow of bois d'arc. The rangers arose and gazed in amazement at her majestic attitude, and several minutes lapsed before their captain controlled his voice to ask: "Where do you come from, and why are you here alone?"

Quietly folding her arms, she replied: "My people are tired of fighting. So many of our

braves have fallen, victims of your death-dealing weapons, that we are helpless. I come to ask that the path between my people and yours be again made white! I come alone, because I know not fear. The Great Spirit is my father!"

She laid three polished arrows at her feet and stood for a moment looking up into the sky, while the moonlight glittered on her shining ornaments, and the blooming white yucca that surrounded her gleamed like silver. She turned toward the west and, pointing to a star, wonderfully brilliant in spite of the moonlight, exclaimed, "That star is my home! I go there."

Her listeners, almost breathless from amazement, were men accustomed to danger; it was their daily duty to meet it. They now saw no threatening danger, no indication of a cowardly ambush; but the silence, like that of the desert, created a feeling akin to awe, and acted like an admonition. But for a hasty sign of the cross, a slight movement of the lips on the part of a few, they stood as lifeless as a group of statuary.

A dark cloud had been rapidly gathering about the summit of Polly's Peak, but the rangers, bewildered by the strangeness of the situation, seemed transfixed as by some magic spell, and saw naught but the graceful figure and pointing finger of the woman. Their senses were dulled as in the mazes of a dream. The plaintive note of a whippoorwill began to tell his mournful tale, the piercing shriek of an owl startled the little company, and a blinding flash of lightning and crash of thunder broke the spell of their enchantment.

They sprang to their stack of arms, seized their guns, and made ready to face an enemy. Some cursed, with wild unreason. Others cried: "Where is the woman, damned siren that she is, who made it her business to bewitch us men, while the red devils of her tribe prepare to attack and kill us! Let's find and follow her! Look for the arrows she laid at her feet!"

One swore he had seen her caught up into the black cloud as it opened to emit the thundering electric bolt--plain proof that she was an emissary of the devil.

While confusion thus reigned, some tried in vain to find the arrows, which might give a clue.

With the earliest dawn, a careful and persistent search failed to discover the arrows, or the presence of a single Indian within the radius of a hundred miles.

The presence and disappearance of the “Woman of the Western Star” must be classed as a mystery, and, like many another mystery, its influence was not only felt at the time, but had lasting beneficial effect. Henceforth the Indians came and went peacefully, committing no depredations, and unmolested by the white men. At a certain season of each year, they placed flint arrowheads and beads of many colors in the grave of their most noted chief and planted a peace feather at its head. In the long ago, he and his tribe had resisted the Spanish invasion and he had fallen, mortally wounded, in battle against them. On a high cliff overlooking Bandera Pass, his grave could still be seen thirty years ago.

*(*Reprinted from the Lawton Constitution, Tuesday, June 19, 2001)*

HALF OF WORLD’S 6,800 LANGUAGES FACING EXTINCTION

WASHINGTON (AP) — Ever hear someone speak Udihe, Eyak or Arikapu?

Odds are you never will. Among the world’s 6,800 languages, half to 90 percent could be extinct by the end of the century.

Half of all languages are spoken by fewer than 2,500 people each, according to the Worldwatch Institute, a private organization that monitors global trends.

Languages need at least 100,000 speakers to pass from generation to generation, says UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

War, genocide, fatal natural disasters, government bans and the adoption of more dominant languages also contribute to their demise.

“In some ways it’s similar to what threatens species,” said Payal Sampat, a Worldwatch researcher who wrote about the topic for the institute’s May-June (2001) magazine.

The outlook for Udihe, Eyak and Arikapu — spoken in Siberia, Alaska and the Amazon jungle, respectively — is particularly bleak.

About 100 people speak Udihe, six speak Arikapu, and Eyak is down to one, Worldwatch says. Marie Smith, 83, of Anchorage, Alaska, says she’s the last speaker of Eyak, a claim verified by linguists.

She doesn’t like the distinction.

“It’s horrible to be alone,” Smith, who grew up speaking Eyak, told The Associated Press in an interview. “I am the last person that talks in our language.”

It’s becoming a struggle, too, to find many who can say “Thank you” in the Navajo language of the American Indian tribe (ahehee).

The losses ripple far beyond the affected communities. When a language dies, linguists, anthropologists and others lose rich sources of material for their work documenting a people’s history, finding out what they knew and tracking their movements from region to region.

And the world, linguistically speaking, becomes less diverse.

That languages die isn’t new; thousands are believed to have disappeared already.

“The distinguishing thing is it’s happening at such an alarming rate right now,” said Megan Crowhurst, chairwoman of the Linguistic Society of America’s endangered languages committee.

Linguists believe 3,400 to 6,120 languages could become extinct by 2100, a statistic grimmer than the widely used estimate of about one language death every two weeks.

While a few languages are more than 2,000 years old, others are coming back from the dead, so to speak.

In 1983, Hawaiians created the ‘Aha Punana Leo organization to reintroduce their native language throughout the state, including its public schools. The language nearly became extinct when the United States banned schools from teaching students in Hawaiian after annexing the then-independent country in 1898.

‘Aha Punana Leo, which means “language nest,” opened Hawaiian-language immersion preschools in 1984, followed by secondary schools that produced their first graduates, taught

entirely in Hawaiian, in 1999.

Some 7,000 to 10,000 Hawaiians currently speak their native tongue, up from fewer than 1,000 in 1983, said Luahiwa Namahoe, the organization's representative.

"We just want Hawaiian back where she belongs," Namahoe explained. "If you can't speak it here, where will you speak it?"

Elsewhere efforts are under way to revive...ancient...languages.

Governments can help by removing bans on languages, and children should be encouraged to speak other languages in addition to their native tongues.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 2001

1st - Saturday: Dictionary Development Meeting, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Museum of the Great Plains. Covered dish meal at noon.

4th - Tuesday: CLCPC Monthly Business Meeting, 6:30 p.m., 511 Monroe, Lawton.

8th - Saturday: Dictionary Development Meeting, 1 to 4 p.m., Museum of the Great Plains.

15th - Saturday: Dictionary Development Meeting, 1 to 4 p.m., Museum of the Great Plains.

22nd - Saturday: Dictionary Development Meeting, 1 to 4 p.m., Museum of the Great Plains

28th-30th — Comanche Nation Fair, Camp Eagle

October 2001

2nd - Tuesday: CLCPC Monthly Business Meeting, 6:30 p.m., 511 Monroe, Lawton.

5th-7th - Annual CLCPC Fall Encampment, Tribal Complex Grounds, north of Lawton.

13th - Saturday: Dictionary Development Meeting, 1 to 4 p.m., Museum of the Great Plains.

20th - Saturday: Dictionary Development Meeting, 1 to 4 p.m., Museum of the Great Plains.

27th - Saturday: Dictionary Development Meeting, 1 to 4 p.m., Museum of the Great Plains

PRODUCTS FOR SALE

COMANCHE LESSONS. This first set contains Lessons #1 through #4, beginning with greetings and leave-taking, followed by two Comanche stories. The format followed is words/phrases written in Comanche, followed by an English translation. An audio cassette accompanies each set, so the student can actually hear the words spoken as they follow them on the written sheet. \$20 plus \$5 s&h.

Item #1. Solid Royal Blue or Solid Red Tee-Shirts. Language logo in full color on left chest. Numu Tekwap in white on left sleeve. Children's sizes small through large, \$10 plus \$3.50 s&h; Adult sizes small through XL \$12 plus \$3.50 s&h; sizes 2X and 3X \$15 plus \$3.50 s&h.

Item #2. Comanche Dictionary. A 133 page soft bound dictionary prepared by Dr. Alice Anderton (1993) with Comanche speakers Lucille McClung and Albert Nahquaddy. \$22 plus \$3.50 s&h.

Item #3. Bumper Stickers. NUMU TEKWAPU in large letters, with Comanche Language Preservation on the second line. \$2 each includes s&h.

Item #4. Authentic Handmade Comanche Dolls.* Beautiful 20" soft bodied dolls, dressed in traditional clothing. Both girl and boy dolls available. \$40 each plus \$3.50 s&h. (*Special Orders Only, 6-8 weeks delivery)

Item #5. Comanche Hymn Book. No longer available. Watch for new edition out soon.

Item #6. Picture Dictionary. A 26 page booklet that is ideal for beginning learners. Has simple words and brief sentences. \$10 includes s&h.

Item #7. Comanche Flash Cards. A set of 48 cards showing pictures and words in Comanche. \$5 plus \$1 s&h.

Item #8. Tote Bags. Navy with red trim. 16"x12"x5" with back pocket. Front has the Comanche Language logo. \$12 plus \$3.50 s&h.

Item #9. Ball Caps. Men's are royal blue with red bill and Language logo on front. Ladies are solid royal blue with logo. \$10 plus \$3.50 s&h.

Item #10. Collar/Hat Pins. Language logo with feathers, 3/4" long. \$4 includes s&h.

Item #11. Earrings. Same design as collar/hat pins. \$8 includes s&h.

Item #12. Buttons. Two styles. #1: "Numu

Tekwapu” and #2: “Ihka Niha, Numu Tekwapu.
\$2 each includes s&h. Specify button number.
Item #13. Lapel Pins. 1 inch Cloisonne pin. \$5
includes s&h.

**If you have an e-mail address, please include it
in case we need to contact you about your order.*

COMANCHE LANGUAGE and CULTURAL
PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
P.O. Box 3610
Lawton OK 73502

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