

NUMU TEKWAPUHA NOMNEEKATU NEWSLETTER

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The Comanche Language & Cultural Preservation Committee

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“From The President”

Following are the minutes of the first meeting held by a group of people who all held the same dream -- to preserve their native language:

“On July 27, 1993, a group of Comanches met at 5:30 p.m. in the conference room of the Comanche Tribal Complex. Edward Tahhahwah Jr. served as moderator.

“There was discussion on ways to restore the Comanche language and retain tribal culture.

“There was a consensus that a name for the group should be adopted and officers should be elected.

“Lucille McClung nominated Ronald Red Elk for president by acclamation, seconded by Martin Weryackwe Jr. Mr. Red Elk was elected by a show of hands.

“Maria Peavey nominated Martin Weryackwe Jr. as vice-president, seconded by Cid Rivas. There were no other nominations and Mr. Weryackwe was elected vice-president.

“Ray Nieto nominated Carla Russell as secretary/treasurer, seconded by Barbara Goodin. There were no other nominations and Ms. Russell was elected secretary/treasurer.

“Eva Riddles nominated Edward Tahhahwah Jr. as preservation officer, seconded by Albert Nahquaddy. There were no other nominations and Mr. Tahhahwah was elected preservation officer.

“Mr. Red Elk formally called the meeting to order, and asked Ray Nieto to give an invocation.

“As this was the first meeting held, there were no previous minutes to be read. Mr. Red Elk directed Ms. Russell to check on charges to open a bank account for the group in anticipation of future funding. A report will be given concerning this at the next meeting.

“There was discussion on developing a constitution for the group. It was decided the officers would draft a constitution and bring it before the whole group for fine tuning before adoption.

“There was discussion on a name for the group. It was voted to adopt the name ‘The Comanche Language and Cultural Preservation Committee.’

“Dr. Alice Anderton, linguist from the University of Oklahoma, spoke on developing a Comanche alphabet and spelling system. Plans were made for president Red Elk to approach the Comanche Business Committee (CBC) to officially adopt an alphabet and spelling system for the Comanche Tribe. A definite date will be set later.

“A short session was held on Comanche words with Ms. Anderton acting as facilitator.

“Mr. Red Elk announced the next meeting will be held August 10, 1993, at 5:30 p.m. in the conference room. The meeting was adjourned.

“Submitted by Carla Russell, secretary.”

Those who signed in at this meeting were:

Ozzie Red Elk	Alice Anderton
Albert Nahquaddy*	Maria Peavey
Lizzie Pomeceah*	Bell Pekah*
Eva Riddles	Ray Nieto
Bud Yackeschi	Leonard Riddles
Cid Rivas	Lucille McClung
Kenneth Goodin	Forrest Kassaravoid*
Carla Russell	Barbara Goodin
Ronald Red Elk	Edward Tahhahwah Jr.
Jo Vickers	Roderick “Dick” Red

Martin Weryackwe Jr.

(*Denotes that person now deceased)

The Comanche Language and Cultural Preservation Committee later adopted the following statement:

“We, the Comanche Language Committee, have established our mission to be that of fostering a cooperative working relationship among federal, state, and tribal agencies; schools, parents and others, for the preservation and promotion of the Comanche language and culture.

To accomplish this mission, the following objectives were established by this committee:

1. To seek funding sources from a variety of agencies.
 2. To develop a complete dictionary.
 3. To develop a curriculum for pre-school and school-age children.
 4. To develop an awareness program for the spelling system in the different Comanche communities.
 5. To record and preserve Comanche stories and songs on tapes and in books to be illustrated by Comanche artists.
 6. To develop a plan for a tribal archive in which to retain and house all material gathered.
- The plan of operation for accomplishing these objectives are as follows:
1. Establish a cultural/language preservation desk within the Comanche Tribe.
 2. Identify all remaining fluent speakers of the Comanche language.
 3. Meet with fluent Comanche speakers for the purpose of recording Comanche in print, audio and video.
 4. Employ a linguist, preferably with a Ph. D., who is knowledgeable in Comanche.
 5. Conduct a needs assessment in several Comanche communities for a pre-school age program.
 6. Apply for a grant from the National Park Service and pursue any other funding sources that might be available.

The Comanche Language Committee respectfully requests the adoption of this mission statement, its objectives and the plan of

operation for accomplishing those stated objectives. The Committee also respectfully requests that a budget be established for the work of the Comanche Language Committee.

Signed by Ronald Red Elk, Comanche Language Committee.”

“Sümü Oyeta Tana Nananumunuu”
Ronald Red Elk

!! ATTENTION !!

We have a new web site address:

www.comanchelanguage.org

and a new e-mail address:

clcpc@comanchelanguage.org

The old web site and e-mail address will still work for awhile, but please make these changes in your address book and “Favorites” site.

EXCITING FUTURE PLANS

Next year we plan to put the Comanche Language Newsletter on the internet! You will be able to look at it and print it out to read later, also. You will need to download Acrobat Reader, which is a free program. Just go to: **www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html** on the internet and download it so when the newsletter is available you will be ready for it!

In order for us to make sure you receive the newsletter, you will need to send us the e-mail address you would like your newsletter sent. Please send your e-mail address to: **jvickers@comanchelanguage.org**

We plan to initiate this new technology in March 2001, but we want to give you plenty of time to prepare for it. Our newsletter mailing list has grown tremendously, and we realize there are some who do not have access to a computer to receive the newsletter in that format. Please be assured that we will still mail out newsletters to those who need them mailed to their homes.

With our mailing list growing, and the cost

of printing and mailing the newsletters increasing, we hope to cut our costs and still provide the newsletters to all who would like to receive them. We would like to hear feedback from you. Either send us your e-mail address, or write or call and tell us you prefer receiving the newsletter in your mailbox. We hope that by initiating these measures, we can continue to provide the newsletters free of charge, as we have done in the past.

I.P.O.L.A. HONORS GENEVA NAVARRO

Geneva Woomahvoyah Navarro of Sante Fe NM was honored by the Institute for the Preservation of the Original Languages of the Americas (I.P.O.L.A.) on Saturday, September 16th, for her efforts in preserving the Comanche language. The honoring event occurred on the same week-end of the Comanche Nation Fair, so our group was not able to attend. Instead, we contacted I.P.O.L.A. and arranged to send a proclamation from Comanche Tribal Chairman Johnny Wauqua, and a recorded video of members of our group congratulating Geneva on the honor being bestowed upon her. She told me later she was fine when she viewed the video at the actual event, but later that evening when she viewed it again at home, she cried with happiness that her friends would send her such a treasure.

Geneva, you — along with our other speakers — are our treasures, and we appreciate each and every one of you!

Pictured: Geneva (right) wearing her Comanche Language and Cultural Preservation shawl, with granddaughter Autumn Gomez, who read the Comanche saying inside the logo, and grandson Matthew Gomez, who translated the saying into English.

SINGING CLASSES TO BEGIN

The Oklahoma Arts Council has granted funding for the Comanche Language Committee to implement singing classes in area communities. It is a master-apprentice project, and Rusty Wahkinney of Cyril has agreed to teach the classes. All Comanches are invited to attend and learn the songs of their ancestors. Newspaper announcements will be made in each community as the singing classes begin in that community. The first classes will begin in Walters.

FALL ENCAMPMENT 2000

The Oklahoma weather did not cooperate for the Fall Encampment 2000 and dampened the parched earth with much needed rain — but it didn't dampen the spirits of those who braved the sometimes torrential rains to attend.

Billie Kreger, event coordinator, had arranged for knowledgeable people to make presentations on topics of interest to Comanche people. She succeeded! The week prior to the event (October 20th and 21st) was spent making last minute arrangements, planning and buying food, and setting up the “camp” on the grounds of the Museum of the Great Plains in Lawton.

When we all arrived on Friday, the 20th, the

skies were gray, which soon turned to a light rain — and it went downhill from there!

The staff at the museum worked with us on developing a “Plan B” and we began moving our mountain of supplies indoors. Even though the morning got off to a slow start, the day went fairly well. The rain persisted through the night and increased by the following morning, with severe weather to enter the picture late in the afternoon. What a week-end!

The first morning of the encampment started off with coffee, bagels, and sometimes soggy donuts. But we enjoyed it until it came time to move indoors. Then we enjoyed it more by finishing off the donuts and bagels, and letting the coffee warm us from the cold rains outside.

The opening ceremony was given by our beautiful Comanche tribal princess, Megan Stone, who performed the Lord’s Prayer in sign language. She was helped by our own little girls, Misses , Mycah Saupitty, Alyssa and Amber Karty, Penny Cable and Samantha Scott. They were all

wonderful! The camera man from KSWO T-V took their pictures while the reporter interviewed Paraiboo, and they later appeared on the evening news.

Morgan Tosee came prepared to set up his teepee,

but with the rain and mud outside we asked him to just talk to us. He explained many things about the teepee and told us about the peyote meetings held in them. He later fielded questions from the audience, and even had some offer further comments. It was all very informative.

By this time it was lunch time, so we all sat down to enjoy a heaping bowl of hot stew and crown pilot crackers!

Next we had the honor of the presence of Leonard “Black Moon” Riddles and his wife, Eva, along with other family members. Paraiboo read a proclamation from the office of the Chairman of the Comanche Tribe, and the Language Committee presented him with a beautiful Pendleton blanket which was called “Buffalo Hunt.” We expressed our appreciation to him for all the help he’s given us from the inception of our group, and we are saddened that his health does not allow him to participate any longer. He is a true treasure of our Comanche Tribe. Ura, Leonard, for all you’ve shared through the years, and for your help and contributions to our group.

Our presentations then continued with five year old wonder, Cheyenne Pocowatchit, son of

Vincent Pocowatchit Jr. He brought his own drummers and gave us an outstanding performance in his fancy dance technique. He is the generation of the future, and we all thoroughly enjoyed him!

Ava Doty kept our attention with her articulate presentation on the history of the Comanches. We all learned something from her. She kept telling us this was just a brief sample of the information she has collected, and

I'm sure we could set aside a whole day and still not hear all she knows.

Due to the weather, we did not present the meat slicing, fry bread and dried corn demonstrations. Because we had already made the decision to cancel the evening presentations, we moved along to the story telling. All stories were told in Comanche, much to the delight of our elders! We then adjourned until the next morning. As we were leaving the museum, the sun began to peek through the clouds and we thought we might have better weather for the next day. It was not to be.

Saturday morning we again congregated in the meeting room of the museum for a wonderful breakfast of "The Works," (Billie's words). Bacon, eggs, biscuits, gravy, hash browns, juice and coffee.

Our first presentation was a favorite of the crowd last year — Wekeah Bradley and her daughter Cynthia with the herbs and remedies demonstration. After she told us about each item she had brought, she fielded questions and allowed everyone to come up and get a close look at the herbs she brought.

Geneva Navarro brought her beautiful buckskin dress for the next presentation. She planned to model it for us also, but confessed she'd stayed at the pow-wow too late the night before and just didn't have time in her rush that morning! She explained the history of the dress and answered any questions the audience had for her.

Soon Theresa Lopez arrived with the Comanche Youth Dancers in tow. The kids were excited to perform and began dressing for their presentation. There were about a dozen, all the way from a little one that could barely walk (but smiled the whole time they were in front of the crowd) to a teenager that you could see the younger girls looked up to. What a wonderful show! They gave us examples of different dances and invited everyone out to dance with them on their final number. If we were outside, I'm sure there would have been a two-step, but there just wasn't room where we

were. We promised the kids all the hamburgers and hot dogs they could eat, and they had worked up quite an appetite by lunchtime.

After we all had our fill, we sat back to a colorful display of the beadwork of Deloris Karty. She started off with old photos and a brief history of her family, which was interesting, then proceeded to tell about all the beautiful beadwork spread out before her. Many of the items were duplicates, since she does a lot of work for her twin granddaughters, Alyssa and Amber. She is a true craftsman of the delicate art of Comanche beadwork.

We next adjourned to the auditorium of the museum, where we proceeded to watch the video produced by Hidden Path Production Company titled "The Last Comanche Code Talker — Recollections of Charles Chibitty." It was a powerful and moving video in which he chronicled the lives of 17 young Comanche men inducted into the armed services solely for the purpose of using the Comanche language to defy the enemy during World War II. The 42 minute video was followed by Mr. Chibitty giving an emotional speech, followed by several others also speaking. Members of the production company were present, along with some staff of the museum. I was very glad we were able to show this during our Fall Encampment, as it was the appropriate place for it to be seen by Comanche people. Please look elsewhere in this newsletter for information on how you can obtain a copy of this video for your own private collection.

Ray Niedo next gave a presentation on bow and arrow making. He brought a bow he was in the process of making and explained how he came to know the art and the steps one takes to come to a finished product.

The last presentation before dinner was a round table discussion of Comanche Traditions and Customs. All kinds of subjects were brought up and discussed, and I think each of us got a lot out of the discussion. It seems like when we're all together, we never cease to learn from each other.

As we were cleaning up after our atakwasu dinner, dark storm clouds began to gather, and many started their journey homeward. Of those that stayed, we heard the storm sirens go off and learned tornadoes had been sited nearby. Needless to say, that was the culmination of an exciting week-end! After the all clear signal was given, we were all able to depart for the safety of our homes.

I want to say ʉra to Billie Kreger for planning the Fall Encampment, to our cooks, Alva Niedo and Lorna Cable for serving us delicious food, to Jo Vickers for arranging the equipment to show the video and to all those that helped with clean up during and after the event took place. It takes us all working together to make our events a success.

Billie's already making plans for next year — she said she's going to plan it earlier in the year after the heat has subsided and before the rains start! Go, girl!

CODE TALKERS VIDEO FOR SALE

“The Last Comanche Code Talker — Recollections of Charles Chibitty” can be purchased for \$39.95 in the gift shop of the Museum of the Great Plains, 601 NW Ferris Avenue, Lawton OK 73507. If you live out of the area, you can order the video by mail by sending a check or money order for \$39.95 plus \$3.95 shipping & handling (\$43.90 total) to the above address: Attention Celeste; or call Celeste at 580-581-3460 to order using a credit card.

The video would make a wonderful Christmas gift to a family member of the Code Talkers, or to anyone who is interested in Comanche history or the military history of World War II.

(*Editor's note: There were errors in the two hymns that were published in the September newsletter. They are corrected below.)

Comanche Hymn #1

(to the tune of “Follow On”)

(by Namiqau [Numukweya]-Tired-Out Man)
 Nah nʉ haka tabeni nʉ uwakatu miarui
 Jesus?i pu?etu nʉ miarui.

Oko nʉ tomoba?atu nʉ miarui.

Uwakatu nʉ miarui nʉ tsuh.

Chorus:

Nʉmi suutai, nʉmi suutai,

Jesus?i nʉmi suutai nʉʉʉʉ

Uwakatu miarui nʉ tsuh,

Nah hakatu, nah hakatu, nʉ miarui nʉ tsuh.

Translation:

Any day I'm going to Heaven.

I'm going to follow Jesus' path.

I'm going to go up there above the clouds.

Yes, I'm ready to go to Him.

Chorus:

Love us; love us (or bless us, bless us)

Jesus, do love us.

Yes, I'm ready to go to Him.

Just anywhere, just anywhere, I'm ready to go.

Comanche Hymn #2

(“Take The Name Of Jesus With You”)

(words by Foster Burgess)

Ma yaa nahnia Jesus ʉma?ai. ʉmʉ suana tsa
 nʉʉsukaa. Ma ʉʉ?a ʉma?aihku hubiya
 upa?atu.

Chorus:

Nahnia tsa pihnakama nasupetipʉ tomopa?a.

Sing twice.

Translation:

Take the name of Jesus. Your soul will feel good. His kindness goes along with you, praise His name.

Chorus:

His name is good, it tastes sweet. Our heavenly Father up above in heaven.

NUMI WUYURUKI?A TUREETUU

(QUAIL'S CHILDREN)

(1) Tuatsa soobesa nʉmi wʉyuruki pʉ tʉreetʉ pʉatsi uhrii tʉkaweekiku mian. (2) U kehewakuse sika marii kwabiikaako Kaawosa marʉ kʉ pitʉn. (3) Marii tʉbiniyu surʉha “Mʉ mʉ hina tʉreetʉ?” (4) Uhrʉ pabise “Nah nʉ nʉ tsa uhka nʉmi wʉyuruki?a tʉreetʉ.” (5) “Aa nintsatsa?a tʉetʉ!” me surʉ yukwitʉ. (6) Tasaatsi, urʉpa?atu siisimi?an. (7) Wihnuse mahrʉ pia pitʉn. (8) Miitsi surʉ “Ai mʉmʉ

kwanaruu!" me urii niikwii. (9) Suse uruu pabi urutsa taa, "Kaawosa nūmi tabinīta 'Mūmū hina t̄areetū?" (10) Nuse u suse t̄awekan. Tasaatsi nūmūpa?atū siisimian." (11) Urūu piase tuhūbū kan. "Haka putu surū mian?" (12) "Ibotu?u pohyawai." (13) Suse wihnu urūu kutū yūatsū wan. Suse yūtsūwaitū u punin. (14) Sūmū surū u ba?aikū yūatsutsi wihnu kwasikū u wakatu yū ūtsū. (15) Pū kasa ma surū u obotū u mahuwin. (16) Suse Kaawosa pū naape wūhkoban.

Translation:

(1) Once upon a time long ago, Quail left her children, to look for some food for them. (2) While she was away, Kaawosa arrived there where they were lying. (3) He asked them, "What kind of children are you?" (4) The oldest of them said, "We're Quail's children." (5) "Ah! [mocking slang term] child!" he said. (6) He lifted his leg, and urinated on them. (7) And then their mother came back. (8) In a little bit she said, "You all smell bad!" she told them. (9) And her oldest child told her, "Kaawosa asked us 'What kind of children are you?' (10) I answered him; and he raised his leg and urinated on us." (11) Their mother got mad. "Which way did he go?" (12) "He walked off this way." (13) And then she hurried away. And flying around, she saw him. (14) And then when she flew over him the next time; she aimed at him, flying. (15) She knocked him over with her wing. (16) And Kaawosa broke his leg.

PRODUCTS FOR SALE

Item #1. Royal Blue Tee-Shirts. Language logo in full color on left chest. Children's sizes small through large, \$10 plus \$3.20 s&h; Adult sizes small through XL \$12 plus \$3.20 s&h; sizes 2X and 3X \$15 plus \$3.20 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 \$3.20 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 \$3.20 s&h. (*Special Orders Only, 6-8 weeks delivery)

Item #5. Comanche Hymn Book. A 5.5 x 7.5 soft cover book that contains the words to 118 Comanche hymns, listed by title with composer's name. Compiled

by Elliot Canonge (1960), 64 pages. \$10 plus \$2 s&h.

Item #6. Picture Dictionary. A 26 page booklet that is ideal for beginning learners. Has simple words and brief sentences. \$8 plus \$2 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 new Comanche Language logo. Strikingly beautiful! \$15 includes 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 s&h.

Item #10. Collar/Hat Pins. Language logo complete with feathers, 3/4" long. \$3 plus \$1 s&h.

Item #11. Earrings. Same design as collar/hat pins. \$7 pair plus \$1 s&h.

Item #12. Buttons. Two styles. #1: "Nūmū Tekwapū" and #2: "Ihka Niha, Nūmū Tekwapū. \$1 each plus 50 cents shipping. Specify button #.

Item #13. Lapel Pins. 1 inch Cloisonne pin. \$5 includes s&h.

LIMITED TIME ONLY !! Comanche Angels for tree ornaments. 4" soft body made with a pecan head. Each one unique. Adorable! \$2 each plus .50 cents s&h.

?? ARE THESE YOUR RELATIVES ??

The Comanche Language Committee was given this old photograph by a non-Indian. We would like to identify all the individuals, and try to make copies for family members. Please contact us if one of these men is your relative, and give us as much information as you can about that person. Ura.