

March, 2010

# GAH-YAH-TONT

*It is Written*

Newsletter of the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma

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## **General Council Actions of February 27, 2010**

A Special General Council Meeting of the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe was held February 27, 2010 at the Ottawa-Peoria Cultural Building in Miami, Oklahoma.

After the Call to Order and establishment of a Quorum to conduct business, the following Agenda Items were listed to be discussed.

- 1) Request for land purchase funds from General Council Welfare Account.
- 2) Request for funds for Convenience Store Acquisition from General Welfare Account.
- 3) Discussion and Action on Claims Committee Issues. (Refer to Claims Committee Ordinance)



On item number 1, General Council voted not to purchase a 64 acre parcel of land with a three bedroom home located east of the Ceremonial Grounds at the Bureau of Indian Affairs appraised value. The motion by resolution was to take funds out of the General Welfare Account to purchase this land and to allocate 25% of the income to the Welfare Account for future land acquisition. The motion failed by a vote of 83 yes, 118 no.

Number 2 on the agenda was cancelled as there has been a negotiated agreement that would not cost the Tribe any outlay of expense.

On number 3 on the agenda, there was considerable discussion about issues with the Claims Committee. A motion was made by General Council resolution to move the Claims Committee under Business Committee supervision and rescind all previous resolutions in conflict with this resolution. The Resolution was amended to allow the Claims Committee members to remain as elected members. The vote on the amendment was passed by a vote of 89 for, 77 against. The Resolution proper to place the Claims Committee under the supervision of the Business Committee and rescind all previous resolutions in conflict with this resolution was passed by a vote of 94 for, 54 against.

There being no further agenda items to discuss, a motion to adjourn was entertained and the meeting adjourned at approximately 3:15 p.m.



## **From Chief Howard**

**Dear Tribal Citizens:**

For several months now many of you have called written or emailed me and other Business Committee members about problems you were having with our Claims Committee. This committee provides several direct services to our tribal members and is funded mainly by our Casino. The profits have been down these past few months at our casino and we can probably attribute that to the general downturn of the economy. This committee has also had complete independence from the Business Committee for nearly two years and answered only to the General Council.

Some administrative problems surfaced during the required audits and the only way we had to address them was to call for a Special General Council meeting. At this Special meeting there were a lot of comments and opinions expressed and in the end the only action taken was to put the Claims Committee under the authority of the Business Committee. The Business Committee has been trying to identify problems and to work on solutions with the Claims Committee. This guidance may be enough to work through the claims problems but if it isn't then further action will have to be taken by the General Council.

Other action taken by the General Council during the Special Meeting was the decision not to purchase land. I proposed the Tribe use funds from savings to buy land within our reservation, especially land that was already in Trust. Twenty percent of the net income from our enterprises goes into savings. We now have about three million dollars (\$3,000,000) in that account. I proposed that we establish a fund of a certain amount and to fund it from the 20% going into savings. Policies and procedures would of course need to be developed but eventually we could have a respectable land base. I think we need to re-visit this. Some people may have mistakenly thought that it would interfere with their services. I will keep you posted.

I would like to Thank You for the privilege of serving as Chief of the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe. It is an honor.

## **From Ceremonial Chief Charles Diebold**

Greetings tribal members,

I hope this newsletter finds everyone in good health and good spirits. Winter will soon be behind us and it will be spring again. It will also be time for our ceremonies to begin. The first ceremony will be the Sundance which generally is held during April. As a reminder I have listed the ceremonies below. As always everyone is welcome and I hope you get the opportunity to attend. It is times of good medicine and when all families and friends can come together to give thanks.



- Spring Sundance - April generally
- Strawberry dance - May
- Blackberry dance - July (first full moon)
- Green Corn – Thanksgiving – first full week of August
- Fall Sundance – Same week as Green Corn

I have included below a small account of the Sundance which had been put into words.

Early in the Spring a dance is held called the Sundance. At this time a prayer is sent to the father on the smoke of the sacred tobacco. A prayer that the sun will warm the earth and sprout the seeds. The prayers of many are heard this day as the people bring gifts of food and a token of their gratefulness for another season of planting. The dancers are composed of men and boys of the tribe. They are painted and wear feathers, beads and bells. They start the dance in the eastern part of the grounds, where they all go to dress. As they come into view whooping and turning to the north, south, east, and west the sight is very mysterious to onlookers who have no idea of the meaning. But to those who know, it holds a hope for abundance and gratefulness for another spring. The songs are directed to the sun and the rain to aid in the growth of the seeds to be planted. After the dance the gifts of food are divided among the dancers and another cycle has begun.

In keeping with previous newsletters I would also like to include another story. This story is about the flint fire and the meaning and importance it holds for us.

## The Rock Fire

Ha wa nee you's power is seen in the smoke of the sacred tobacco and the flames of a rock fire. Our thoughts and prayers are carried to heaven on the smoke of the sacred tobacco and his power is reflected in the flames of the rock fire. Both are considered direct lines of communication with our heavenly father. Therefore the rock fire is never abused. Never stir up sparks just to be doing something and never burn paper or trash in a rock fire.

The rock fire is started by striking a flint rock against a piece of steel into a small heap of punk from a dead ash or redbud tree and a small quantity of oak leaves crumpled very fine. Small twigs are added to aid the small blaze. Then larger twigs are added as the flame grows. A log is laid beside the blaze to aid as a wind break and to use to bank the fire to conserve the coals.

A rock fire is kindled for the Sun Dance and Blackberry Dance, as well as during the Greencorn feast. During Greencorn 2 fires are built one to represent the clans of the north and one for the clans of the south. A rock fire is also kindled for personal use when someone is feeling the need for a close personal talk with their maker. Your prayer is heard as the smoke of the sacred tobacco is sprinkled over the glowing embers. Your thoughts whether good or bad are heard. Your wishes, dreams and innermost fears are revealed as you sit in the smoke of the sacred tobacco. Mitch (Ace) Nuckolls currently carries the responsibility of the firebuilder. He learned this from Uncle Dutch and his father Jeff and has been building the fire for years.

Seneca-Cayuga words for this month:

Sundance : hon – non – gout – ta – we – say

West: hay – caw – quens

Children: kiak - saw – so – oh – oh

Water: nic – a - noose

I give this offering: ah – gah – tan – dee

Seeds: ka – nay – houn - qwa

Nya Weh,

Toot no son dee

Charles Diebold

Ceremonial Chief

Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma



## **Inquiring About Our Members in the Armed Forces**

The Tribal Office is requesting information on our members who are currently in the Armed Forces, especially those members who are deployed overseas. If you have a family member or acquaintance who is currently serving in the military and/or is deployed overseas, the Newsletter editor would like for you to submit their name, rank, branch of service and address. The tribe would like to insure that they get newsletters and are contemplating collecting necessary items and sending to our deployed troops. Your cooperation in this effort would be most appreciated. We want to honor our troops and let the tribe know of their service. The information can be sent to:

Seneca-Cayuga Tribal Newsletter  
23701 South 655 Road  
Grove, OK 74344

## **Seneca-Cayuga Tobacco Company has new Management**

The Seneca-Cayuga Tribe has hired a new management team for the Seneca-Cayuga Tobacco Plant. Mr. Robert Garwood and Mr. Chuck Craig have been hired to head up the Tobacco Administration. Mr. Garwood is from the Miami, Oklahoma area and is a successful business man having owned and operated his own company for several years. Mr. Craig comes to the company with a wide background in all phases of production.



Logo of the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma

## **GAH-YAH-TONT**

Newsletter of the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma

### **TRIBAL OFFICERS**

LeRoy Howard, Chief  
Katie Birdsong, 2<sup>nd</sup> Chief  
Raymond Rodgers, Secretary/Treasurer  
April Curnutte, 1<sup>st</sup> Councilperson  
Jim Spicer, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilperson  
Leonard Smith, 3<sup>rd</sup> Councilperson  
Geneva Fletcher, 4<sup>th</sup> Councilperson

**Seneca-Cayuga Tribe  
Grove Office  
23701 South 655 Road  
Grove, Oklahoma 74344  
918-787-5452  
Fax: 918-787-5521**

**Seneca-Cayuga Tribe  
Miami Office  
R2301 East Steven Owens  
Boulevard  
P.O. Box 1283  
Miami, Oklahoma 74355  
918-542-6609  
Fax: 918-542-3684**

**May, 2010**

The Seneca-Cayuga Newsletter is a newsletter of the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma, located at the addresses listed above.

The Seneca-Cayuga Newsletter is the official publication of the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe with a goal of meeting Seneca-Cayuga tribal citizens informational needs.

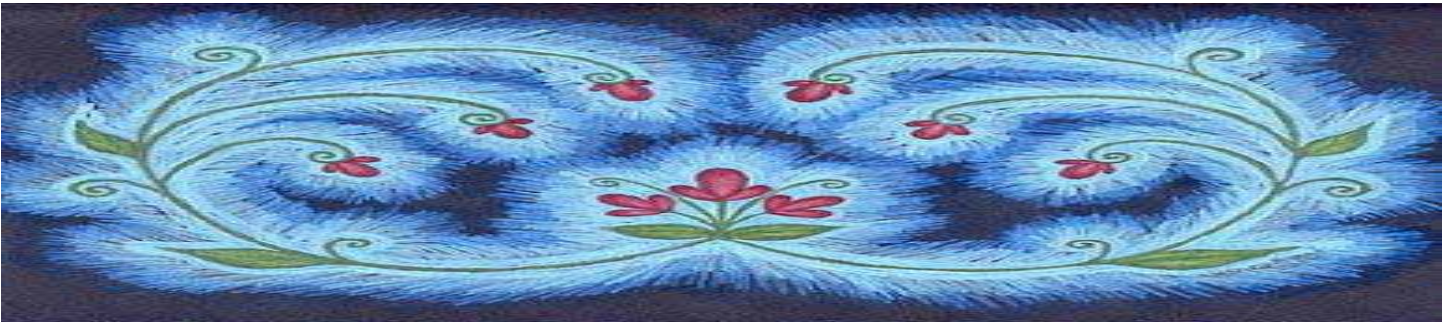
The Seneca-Cayuga Tribal Newsletter is mailed free, one per household, to enrolled members of the Seneca-Cayuga General Council.

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## From our Domestic Violence Program

The Domestic Violence Program offers free counseling, financial assistance, and referral services for domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence. Please call the Domestic Violence Office at 918-787-5452 or 866-787-5452 for assistance.



The Domestic Violence Program has two meetings scheduled for April. The first one is titled “Our Community-Building on Our Strength.” The meeting will be held at the conference room in the Human Resource Building, Grove office. The date and time will be April 12, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. and should not last more than an hour. The second meeting is titled “Women Are Sacred.” It is scheduled for the following Monday, April 19, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. Part 1 will challenge the community to reflect on victims and their families, the professionals who serve them, and on the struggle for fairness, dignity, and respect for victims of crime. Part 2 will involve the community to make a commitment to ensure that all victims have the rights and services they need to recover from crime. The public is invited to come. Hope to see you there.

## Bison Program Nutrition Support a Success

The Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma has developed a Bison herd as part of a partnership and grant through the Inter-Tribal Bison Cooperative. The Bison herd is a natural herd which means they have not been bred with beef to make them look larger. The Tribe’s herd is fed on hay grown on Tribal lands with occasional mineral supplements. Bison meat lacks the fat that is found in beef and is higher in protein making it a great source of nutrition for diabetics and folks with heart conditions.



A primary objective of this program is to provide an alternative nutrition source for Native Americans. In late February the program got to give out the first meat of the program. Attempts were made in the past but weather conditions made it impossible to get the meat into the community. One hundred twenty three tribal members took part in the meat give away. Others came later in the day to purchase more. The program hopes to provide nutrition support more than one time a year. This will depend on the growth of the herd and the continued support of the community.



There have been questions from Tribal members about our herd and we thought the best way of answering those questions would be by asking the Tribal herd master and ask for his reply. The following is an interview with John Birkes who heads up our Bison Program.

John, thank you for taking the time to sit down and be interviewed for the newsletter. I know many of the Tribal members have questions about the Bison herd and how it is doing. So let's get started.

*A few years ago there were reports that the Buffalo were dying and they looked sick. Could you tell us what really happened?*

**We had 20 head die from a copper deficiency and parasites. The copper deficiency was because the pasturelands were being overgrazed. Once we figured out what was happening we treated them and started adding copper supplements to their diet along with feeding cubes. It did not take the herd long to recover.**

*What did you do with all the dead Bison? We kept the head and left the rest in the pasture away from the fence. They were left to feed the raptor birds and coyotes. We are committed to keeping the herd natural so that requires that we recognize the whole cycle of life that supports the herd. Once the animals cleaned buffalo carcasses we buried them in the pasture to fertilize the land.*

*What would prevent overgrazing from happening again? Well the added supplements have helped but honestly the herd needs more land. Right now the herd is on about 80 acres of land and for the size herd we have now we need 212 acres. If we plan to increase the size of the herd then of course we are going to need more land to meet their needs.*

*With the use of supplements is the herd considered a 'natural' herd? Yes, we do not inject them with steroids or feed them a grain diet to fatten them up. They are fed strictly grass based supplements and hay. That is why they may look different than what you see on TV. Buffalo on television are bred with cattle to increase their size lots of times. The Tribe's herd is 100% Bison.*

*The recent Bison meat health initiative provided 121 Tribal members with Bison meat improve their diet. When do you plan to distribute more meat? We would like to do it twice a year. Right now I have a goal of doing it again in the fall but that will all depend on how many calves we have in the Spring and if we are going to get any surplus Bison in the next year. We took the addresses of those who participated in the health initiative program so that we can notify them of any future meat distribution.*

*Many Tribal members have called wanting to know what happens to the bones and heads of the buffalo when you process them. We keep the head and clean them. Then we donate them for ceremonial purposes to our Tribe or other Tribes within the Intertribal Bison Cooperative. The hides are set aside to be tanned and then we will probably sell any that are not taken for ceremonial uses. The meat processing company keeps all the bones to be made into bone meal and fertilizers.*

John thank you for your time and we look forward to hearing more about the herd in the future.



## We Need Current Addresses!!!

The Tribal Newsletter Staff is requesting anyone who has knowledge of relatives or acquaintances who have moved to have them please notify us of their new addresses. Each time we mail a newsletter we receive several back with undeliverable addresses. Those who have moved and left a forwarding order can be corrected; in the case of those who leave no forwarding order, we have no way of knowing what their current address might be. Please let relatives who have changed residency know that we need current addresses to get the newsletter to them. Your cooperation in this matter is appreciated as we want all our tribal members to get the newsletter and know what's happening with the tribe. Please mail updated addresses to:

Seneca-Cayuga Tribal Newsletter  
23701 South 655 Road  
Grove, OK 74344

or email them to: [loganl@sctribe.com](mailto:loganl@sctribe.com)

## Tribal Environmental Department Now Recycling E-Waste

“As we become more dependent on electronic products to make life more convenient, the stockpile of used, obsolete products grows.” ~ EPA

Electronic waste, e-waste, e-scrap, or Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) describes loosely discarded, surplus, obsolete, broken, electrical or electronic devices. The processing of electronic waste in developing countries causes serious health and pollution problems because electronic equipment contains some very serious contaminants such as [lead](#), [cadmium](#), [beryllium](#) and [brominated flame retardants](#). Even in developed countries recycling and disposal of e-waste involves significant risk to workers and communities and great care must be taken to avoid unsafe exposure in recycling operations and leaching of material such as heavy metals from [landfills](#) and [incinerator](#) ashes.



In the never ending battle for a greener work place and safer environment, the Seneca Cayuga Tribe Environmental Department and the IT (Information Technologies) Department have joined forces to provide, free of charge, e-waste collection and disposal. Items can include; computers, computer monitors, keyboards, speakers, cell phones, printers, etc. The e-waste can be dropped off at the Environmental Department or IT Department during normal business hours Monday-Friday at the Grove office. E-waste should not be considered “waste.” It is a resource. Useful materials such as glass, copper, aluminum, plastic and other components can often be extracted and reused at a proper recycling center.

If you have any questions please contact Mike Rutledge or Mark Boyd at 918-787-5452.



## ICDBG Grant Reports on Project Progress

In the recent funding cycle for Indian Community Development Block Grants, five area Tribes applied and were funded for a new clinic to be located on Peoria Tribal land just north of their Casino. Our Tribe applied for the renovation of our clinic facility to put a new roof and rehabilitate bathrooms, windows & doors and replace the heating & air units & duct work. The Medical part of the existing clinic was not a part of the new clinic funding and we needed to upgrade our building. We ranked high enough under the application for funding but tied with another Tribe. The Tiebreaker was the Tribe with the least amount of HUD funding and the other tribe won because they had none. We have four active ICDBG HUD grants totaling approximately \$3,000,000.00. The Career Center Facility is in the stage of Close-out and we will be occupying it next month. Another grant funding the Substance Abuse Center Facility is progressing ahead of schedule and we will occupy it within approximately three months. The Grant funding the Auxiliary Power System to provide power back up with propane generators to the Fire Station & Public Works Buildings to provide emergency assistance, and the Tribal Water and Wastewater Systems to provide power when the local electric goes out is also in process. This will also enable the Tribe to supply needed services to residences on our system (this was Stimulus money we were awarded). The Department of Housing and Urban Development has also informed us that they will allow us to continue with the Wellness Center Facility. These facilities are all located at our Grove location, near our ceremonial grounds.

## New Tribal Community House Nears Completion

The new Seneca-Cayuga Tribal Community House located just north of the Ceremonial Grounds is nearing completion. After a period of winter weather, the contractor is now making good progress in construction of the building. Insulation and exterior walls have been installed and after the outside shell is completed, interior work will be done to ready the building for Tribal use. An anticipated date sometime in April will mark the completion of the building and the delivery of the keys to the Tribe. The picture was taken March 3, 2009 and shows the degree of completion on that day.





## BC Makes Changes to Elections Ordinance and Names New Committee

The new Election Committee for 2010 has been sworn into office.

**Front row: Cynthia Donahue-Vice Chairman, Sharon Winnie-Van-Member, Second Row: Micco Emarthla-Member, Linda Whitecrow-Secretary, Marilyn McClelland-Chairman, Marge Dunning-Alternate.**



The Business Committee has adopted a new Election Ordinance and in conjunction with the new Election Committee has selected Election Administrator Terry Rainey to administer upcoming elections.

Major changes in the new ordinance include

1) the provision to engage an Election Administrator; 2) a change in the dates for Declaration for Candidacy; the Declaration of Candidacy must be filed in person with the Election Administrator or Tribe's Enrollment Officer on the fourth Thursday, Friday, or Saturday of March each year. Deadline for filing for candidacy will be 1:00 p.m. on the fourth Saturday of March.

Also changed is the filing fee schedule. There shall be a non-refundable filing fee of Two Hundred Fifty (\$250.00) by money order or certified check made payable to the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe to file for candidacy for any elective position. Challenge of Eligibility of Candidates can be made by filing a Two Hundred Fifty (\$250.00) non-refundable fee which shall be by money order or certified check made to the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe and must be filed no later than close of business on the Tuesday following the closing of the filing period.

Also of note is that the signature on all absentee ballot return envelopes must be notarized prior to mailing back to the Tribal Election Post Office Box.

A copy of the new Election Ordinance will be placed on the website in the very near future. Anyone requesting further information on the new Election Ordinance can contact any member of the Business Committee.

Offices up for election and to appear on the June, 2010 ballot are:

Second Chief

Secretary-Treasurer

Second and Fourth Business Committee Members

Second and Fourth Grievance Committee Members



# Footprints in the Milky Way

*Mary Ellen Wabaunsee Dainty*  
6/22/1925 - 1/29/2010

*Somers James Young*  
6/3/1926 - 2/5/2010

## Information from the Substance Abuse Program

Substance Abuse Program Administrator Josie Jones reports that program employee Kristy Chance has passed the LACD (Licensed Alcohol/Drug Counselor) exam and is now a licensed Counselor. Congratulations to Kristy on this achievement.

The program welcomed Vincent Ball on January 12, 2010, as a student Intern from Pittsburg State University. Vincent has an office in the Miami Complex and is under the supervision of Administrator Josie Jones.

The Substance Abuse Program has been approved as a provider by the Cherokee Nation's Access to Recovery (ATR) Program. We are the only provider in Northeast Oklahoma. ATR has a list of resources they have contracted with for inpatient treatment, detoxification, and other treatment centers that our program can refer our clients to once they have completed initial screening and assessment at our facility. ATR will pay for these referrals. Call 918-542-6609 for more information about this service.

Also of note is that that Cherokee Nation is applying for a grant renewal of this program for another three years. This is a much needed service and could be ongoing for our program. A number of clients have already utilized this service.

In August, 2009, our program was awarded the Methamphetamine and Suicide Prevention Initiative (MSPI) Grant. Kristy Chance has been facilitating Meth Education in the schools and has had the National Guard's Drug Demand Reduction Program out of Oklahoma City come and do presentations in these schools.

## Tribal Environmental Department to Conduct Free Tap/Well Water Testing

The Seneca Cayuga Environmental Department will be conducting free tap & well water testing for bacteria and E. coli in drinking water during the entire month of March. The department offers these services to Seneca Cayuga tribal members year round but would like to emphasize the importance of safe drinking water during March for lab updates and training. If you would like your water tested and live within the 50 mile service area of the Grove or Miami tribal offices, please contact the Environmental Department at 918-787-5452 to schedule a testing date.



## A Message from the 2010 U. S. Census Director

Are you up for the “Take 10” challenge?

On behalf of the U.S. Census Bureau, we are asking our partners to join us in making history by helping to boost the mail back participation rates across the Nation and in your community during the 2010 Census.

During each Decennial Census, the Census Bureau undertakes the count of every person residing in the United States, as mandated by Article 1, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution. To encourage everyone to take 10 minutes to answer the 10 simple questions on the 2010 Census form, we are launching the “Take 10” campaign. Through “Take 10,” you can visit <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/take10map/> to get updates on the proportion of households that have mailed back the 2010 Census forms. You also will be able to view differences between your community’s participation rates and those of neighboring communities or other areas across the country.

The “Take 10” Challenge - Tools to Inspire the Mail Back Participation Rates for the 2010 Census

During the 2000 Census, 72 percent of occupied households mailed back their forms. In 2010, we are challenging communities to do even better. The Census Bureau’s “Take 10” campaign gives you a wide range of tools to inspire your community to meet our challenge. These include:

- An interactive, map-based, “Take 10” Web site that allows local areas to track and compare their 2010 Census mail back participation rates, which will be updated on a daily basis at <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/take10map/>, and to look up their 2000 Census participation rates.
- An [electronic toolkit](#) is available which includes talking points, sample speeches, new releases, newsletter copy, event suggestions, flyers, stickers, and doorknob hanger templates, and more.
- Suggestions on how to use friendly competition with other communities to inspire participation in the census.

You can play an important leadership role in encouraging your community to mail back their forms. Most 2010 Census questionnaires are delivered from March 15-17, 2010. From the time the forms are delivered until the closing of the mail campaign at the end of April, you have the opportunity to remind your area residents of the importance of mailing back their census forms. We believe that you can encourage participation through speeches, special events, and challenges.

The stakes are high; an accurate count of the local population helps to ensure that your community receives its fair share of federal funding. This funding includes resources for services, such as health care, education, and roads.

Your constituents must complete and mail back their census forms between March 15, 2010 and April 15, 2010. The good news is that the 2010 Census questionnaire is one of the shortest in history—just 10 questions that only take about 10 minutes to complete. We hope we can count on you to encourage participation in the 2010 Census. Visit <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/take10map/> now to see your area’s 2000 Census mail participation rate and check the site daily for updates beginning March 22.

The 2010 Census: It’s in our Hands.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Groves

Director, U.S. Census Bureau



Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma  
P.O. Box 1283  
Miami, OK 74355

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