Culture Revival  By Kim García

Ever since I was a child, I was told that I was a Wyandotte Indian. Once a year, I attended the Christmas party for the children, sat on Chief's lap, and got my gifts. My parents would take us to local PowWows and we would visit local Indian attractions while on vacation. I hate to admit it, but I learned more about other Indian Tribes than my own throughout the years. It always seemed easy to gain knowledge of other tribes, but always a mystery surrounded the Wyandottes. My mother was not raised being told of traditional Wyandotte stories, language, food, or culture. So in turn, neither were we. What a shame to realize that a culture can go dormant within just a few generations.

As an adult, I have grown more curious about my ancestors, my people, and my Tribe. Two years ago, when I was hired as Comptroller for Wyandotte Nation, I thought this will be a great opportunity to learn more about my people. I have gained an entirely new respect for our Chief during this time. He and the Board of Director have done great work in restoring stability to a nation that was dying. Under Chief’s leadership, our Tribe has grown tremendously. However, the culture of our Tribe still seems a mystery to many members. In our history, the culture of the tribe was not only the Chief's responsibility, it wasn't only the leadership's responsibility, it was the people as a whole. Who sat down with the children to tell them stories? Who taught the children the language? Who cooked the food? Who played the games? Who made the clothes? Was this the Chief's responsibility? Was this the tribal council's responsibility? No. The tribal government's position within the tribe was to ensure the future and stability of the tribal members. Our tribal council and Chief have done just that. Now, it is time for the people to take responsibility for the culture.

A small group of Wyandottes has formed to commit themselves to restoring culture within the Tribe. These few have dedicated many hours to educating our people of our past and reviving a passion for our traditions. This group has now sponsored two annual Culture Weeks. Each time, those who attended gained a tremendous amount of knowledge. Sallie Andrews has graciously led this group for 2 years. She has done a tremendous job in establishing this Committee. Because of her distance, she has decided to step down as Chairperson for the Culture Committee. In the meeting held on July 8, 2005, I was voted Chairperson and Lloyd Divine voted Co-Chairperson.

This year’s Culture Week, held over Memorial Day Weekend, was a great time. Sunrise ceremonies began each day. Beading classes were taught (continued on page 3)
I am Kwa-hoo-sha-ha-ki (Flying Eagle). I am an Indian. I am proud. I am an American Indian and I am both thankful and proud.

Many, many moons ago my people hunted and fished and lived in the forests and by the streams around two great bodies of water, since named Lake Erie and Lake Huron by the white man. My people were peaceful and happy and made war on only those who trespassed or threatened. Our warriors were fierce and courageous. When the white man came, they fought hard and well, but the white man was too powerful and too many. My people moved west toward the setting sun. Again, the white man came. Again, we moved – south this time. When there was no place else to move to, the white man’s Big Chief said, “Go here to this place” – so they did. He said to farm and plant gardens and build houses. These things were new and strange to my people. They were hunters and fishermen and warriors. The Great White Father spoke to my people and said, “Farm, plant, go to school, learn the white man’s ways” – so they did. Always they were poor, many times they were cold and hungry, often sickness came and the medicine men could not cure because the sickness was from the white man and Indian medicine was not good. They always were proud. Our warriors became farmers and our women learned to sew and cook and keep house. Our children went to the white man’s school and church and learned about his ways and his God.

One time an enemy from across the Big Water made war on our friends and our Great White Father spoke again and said, “We must help our friends. Stop farming for a while and be warriors again.” This they did. When this Big War was over, my people again farmed, kept house, and learned the ways of the white man. They did this for twenty summers and winters, which was a long time. Some of our men and women learned to love the white people and married them. The white man’s medicine seemed to be good. Some of our people grew big; some did not. But, all of them tried hard – and they were proud.

Again an enemy from across the Big Water trespassed against our good friends and our great country. And, once again, my people quit being farmers, quit being schoolteachers, quit being storekeepers, quit being ministers, and quit being statesmen. They took up the white man’s war paint and tomahawk. I, myself, fought our enemy over the great waters of the Pacific. I fought with the white man’s tools – airplanes, bombs, and machine guns. Our white man’s medicine was strong and the enemy was defeated. Many of our warriors went to this fight. Some became heroes, even in the eyes of the white man. They fought hard and they fought well. There were some who did not return. They went to the Happy Hunting Ground from Pearl Harbor, Bataan, Guadalcanal, Iwo Jima, Anzio, Normandy, and many other faraway places. Their friends and relatives were very sad – but they were also very proud.

Today there is no war – but neither is there peace – for our people or the white man.

All Indians are still proud. Some still need care, some still need food, some still need clothing, and many still need education. We do not ask for charity – only assistance, justice, and understanding.

We have pride and we have dignity. I am Kwa-hoo-sha-ha-ki. I am an Indian. I am proud. I am a citizen of the best country in the world. I am proud of that, too.

Contrary to rumor, I am not retiring. I will run for Chief again in September 2005.

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**Wyandotte Nation Tag Office**

The Tag Office is now housed in the East Building of the Tribal Complex. Beginning January 1, 2005, the Tag Office will be open on a “BY APPOINTMENT” Basis. Please call Dana or Kate at (800) 256-2539 ext. 219 and ext. 224 respectively for appointments.
where people learned how to edge a tobacco pouch. A pottery class was taught where pinch pots were made. Many learned the art of flint knapping. A class on medicinal plants was held and how we can use them in everyday life. Dr. Bruce Pearson taught language classes. Randy White, from the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe and his family taught us several social dances. There were meals where all could socialize. In the evenings, a seed game was played with the Kansas Wyandottes against the Oklahoma Wyandottes. The children had their own time where they learned several words in our language, heard some traditional stories, made bracelets, chokers, and key rings.

This Culture Committee would like to host a day of culture, inviting all tribal members and their spouses. On September 8th, the Thursday before PowWow and Annual meeting, we are planning several fun and educational experiences. In the afternoon, we will have a class on several traditional social dances including the stomp dance; their significance, and how to actually dance them. In the evening, we will hold a smoke ceremony and a dinner for all. Later, we will put to practice what we learned in the afternoon and have a time of dance for all.

We anticipate this to be a great time. We would like to see the number of participants grow. If interested in attending the Culture Day or being involved in Culture Committee activities, please contact me, Kim García, at kgarcia@wyandotte-nation.org or 918-678-2297 extension 217.

From Earlene Roskob - Second Chief

Kweh Everyone,

I hope this summer has been a good one for you; time to slow down a little, re-charge your batteries, visit old friends and family and meet new ones. At least that is what I have done.

The Second Annual Culture Week kicked off on Friday, May 27, with the “Gathering” at the Pow Wow grounds. A wonderful meal was served and it was an enjoyable evening. So great to again see those friends we made last year, and meet new ones. I have been told conversations in the circle went on late into the night, several nights. Culture Week was packed full of information and opportunity for sharing. We want to thank all those who worked so hard to make this time meaningful: the Committee, Dr. & Mrs. Pearson, Mike Espinolla, and the Seneca Tribal members. I apologize if I have left anyone out. Do try to put this in your schedule for next year. It is worth the time and trip.

I also had the opportunity this summer to be re-introduced to some distant relatives who live in Illinois, Don and Janet Carol Smith and her mother, Esther Mary Lawson. I hadn’t seen them in around 40 years!! They told me their two children were recipients of our early scholarships and the family is truly grateful. The children are grown, have become successful members of society and appreciate the help their Wyandotte Nation has given to them. I have asked Don and Janet Carol to write an article or letter about their family to include in the Turtle Talk, as I continue to ask every one of you to send us information about you and your family. We need to know each other as much as we can, remain connected in every way possible, and strengthen our ties. Together we can accomplish! Divided we are conquered.

The Senecas and Wyandottes have been intermingled for many, many years. Although my family was usually gone during the summer due to my dad’s work, I do remember we always attended Green Corn Festival when we were here. Camp Day is the first Sunday in August, which would be Aug. 7th. I hope to see many of you there throughout the week.

As I write this on July 14th, one of our Wyandotte tribal members, my cousin Gladys Kay (Angel) Murdock, has passed away at Miami Integris Hospital. Our thoughts and prayers go to her family.

For various reasons, I have not checked my emails for several weeks. However, if you have emailed me, I will answer. Please do so. Keep well. ‘TIL NEXT TIME.
PowWow News - by Sherri Clemons

The Wyandotte Nation Pow-Wow Committee would like to thank everyone who donated toward the new benches for the pow-wow grounds. They are a great improvement to the grounds and to the arena. The benches are in place, so come and have a look. The 16th Annual Wyandotte Nation Pow-Wow will be September 9-11, 2005. Session times are:

Friday 8:00 pm  Saturday 1:30 pm  Sunday 2:00 pm
7:00 pm

There are plans for a stomp dance after the session on Friday evening. Come and learn your traditional dance.

We would like to see as many tribal members as possible during this annual event. Bring your lawn chairs & enjoy the pow-wow.

Summer Youth Children

Making a watershed model using recyclable materials. They learned about recycling, about how a watershed works, and how pollution affects us all.

Gift Shop News

***FOR WINTER ***
Izod Jackets with tribal logo! Black or Gray - $60
Fleece Jackets with tribal logo! Cream or Gray - $34
Fleece Blankets with tribal logo and carrying strap! Red, Black or Gray - $30

***Handcrafted Pottery ***
by tribal member Matthew Zane starting at $15
Prints by Jim Stuckenberg $55

***Leanin' Tree Cards***
Decorative Stationary - 18 sheets with envelopes $8.50
Laser and Inkjet compatible

**Still Available**
Decorative Gourds

Wyandotte Nation T-shirts, $6 to $18 dollars.
Sizes: Sm - M - Lg - 2X - 3X

*Check out our other Gift Items*
Wyandotte Nation Coffee Cups
1 - for $5.00  2 - $9.00

Metal Turtle Shapes - $8.00
Turtle Necklaces - $6.00
made by tribal member Monica Raines

Indian art on leather - $18.00
Indian Art on Pillows - $45
Mandellas (4 sizes) $25 - $145
Sand Paintings  $25 - $40
Various Ceramics  $1.50 and up
Authentic Silver and Turquoise Jewelry
Wyandotte Cookbooks
Volumes 1 and 2 - $6 each

For information on how to place an order and receive it in time for the holidays, call Brenda House at (918) 678-2297 or 1-800-256-2539 ext. 227
Tribal Department Reports

Family Services
Kate Randall, Director of Family Services
Dana Butterfield, Family Services Assistant
1-800-256-2539 Extensions #224 and #219

Summer is in full swing in Oklahoma and summer time in Oklahoma includes humidity, lawn mowing and the occasional buzz of night time insects. Several pow-wows ago, the head dancer from Colorado and his traveling companions decided Oklahoma in September was a “natural sweat lodge”. Whew, it was humid that September but we have asked Mother Nature for a temperature friendly 2005 Pow-Wow. We shall see and hope you can join us for the festivities.

Summer Youth Program:
Speaking of summer, the Wyandotte Nation Bearskin Healthcare Facility and Family Services hosted a summer youth program in June. Our last day was spent at Big Splash, a water park in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The month long camp included an environmental program, health, fitness, hygiene, nutrition, and arts and crafts. I hope you enjoy the photos as much as we enjoyed the program.

Tribal Tag/Office Hours:
Tribal Tags may be obtained through the postal service for your convenience or at the Tribal Headquarters. To better serve our Tribal Members we do ask that you call to make an appointment if you are coming in the Tag Office. Criteria to obtain a Wyandotte Nation Tag mandate the Tribal Member reside in “Oklahoma Indian Country” and the vehicle is principally garaged in Oklahoma. Presently, you will see license plate numbers as high as “W1100” on our Oklahoma highways and the Nation is pleased with the success of this program.

Indian Child Welfare:
“There is no resource that is more vital to the continued existence and integrity of Indian Tribes than their children.” The preservation of Indian Families was recognized by the 1978 Indian Child Welfare Act: Section 1901. The Indian Nations and Courts strive to keep Indian Children with their families, relatives or other Indian People. Please keep in mind that tribal adoptive homes and foster homes are needed for Indian Children nationwide. Contact Family Services for information on how you can make a difference.

Tribal Operations:
Please Note: Tribal Enrollment deadline is August 15th, 2005. Tribal enrollment applications should be postmarked no later than August 15th 2005 for an individual to be considered for membership by vote at the September 10, 2005 Annual Meeting. All eligible enrollees will receive membership cards during the month of October. Keep us posted of address changes or those of family members.

Planning/Development Department July 2005
by Ron Kaiser

The last several months the Planning/Development Department has submitted several grant applications. Staff submitted the Tribal Resources Grant application for tribal law enforcement. This grant, if funded, will enable the Police Department to hire another officer. Submitted an Indian Community Block grant application for the Education Department. This grant, if funded, will construct an addition to the Tribal Preschool. Planning staff also submitted an Indian Health Service grant application for the Bearskin Wellness Center. This grant, if funded, will help to establish a program at the Bearskin Wellness Center based on the Seven Dimensions of Wellness. Planning and Housing Staff received notification that the Indian Community Block Grant application submitted in December 2004 was funded from Housing and Urban Development. This grant will fund additions to the sewer lines, which will be used for the future construction of an apartment complex. (continued on page 6)
Planning Staff has attended several training on different grant opportunities for the Tribe, which will enhance the department’s ability to write more grant applications for services.

The Maintenance Department has had several changes in staff the last few months. Maintenance Associate, Michael Younger, submitted his resignation and was replaced by Troy Friend, who transferred from the Turtle Stop. David Welch and Jerrod Oakley filled two seasonal Maintenance positions. Jerrod is a member of the Wyandotte Nation. All are a welcome and needed addition to the staff.

Environmental Department
Christen L. Ceson - Environmental Director 918-678-2297 ext. 241
Kathleen Welch - Environmental Assistant 918-678-2297 ext. 235
Janice Wilson - Environmental Technician 918-678-2297 ext. 245

Our department has had a very busy quarter and is happy to report on several projects that are going on. The department participated in the Tri-State Mining District Forum and received great compliments on it’s help with the set up and speech concerning the Tar Creek Trustee Council. We also participated with the Tar Creek Conference and provided an information stop during the downstream tour. We are very active with the projects that may concern us downstream. Two of our staff attended a GREENSPACE conference and learned about cleaning up Brownfield’s sites. Several meetings were attended that involved other tribal, state and federal agencies. The department has also been helping the town of Wyandotte with it’s Sewage Treatment Plant permit. The department continues to monitor area waterways per our grant agreements. We also helped USGS and ODEQ fund a gauging station at Twin Bridges. Other training included GIS/GPS training at the Geo-Data Service Center in Denver and a couple of BIA training that involved environmental assessments and resource management planning.

The staff planted flowers with the Tribe’s preschool in celebration of Earth Day. We also conducted a watershed activity with the summer youth program. The staff, with the help of our consultant, conducted the Spring Bio-assessment of Warren’s Branch and Lost Creek. We also collected fresh water mussels and fish for heavy metals sampling. We plan to compare these samples with the winter collection during the next month.

Due to changes in our water grant, we are no longer able to perform private well tests at this time, but we are looking for other sources of funding. We do, however, continue to provide education programs, so please call us if you would like RENIE to visit your children’s group or school.

We would also like to report that our environmental department is now its own department and we are very excited! Please give us a call if you have environmental concerns.
Housing Maintenance Specialist

Josh McLaughlin,
Paul Paquin, Project Manager
Kathy DeWeese, Housing Specialist

The Wyandotte Nation Housing Department has been very busy this past year. We have a staff of five individuals. They are:

Reba Guilford, Housing Director
Kathy DeWeese, Housing Specialist
Paul Paquin, Project Manager
Josh McLaughlin,
Housing Maintenance Specialist

The latest new winner of a grand prize was Cynthia Baldwin of Fairland, OK, who won a beautiful, huge, stainless steel outdoor grill. Cynthia was the lucky patron whose name was drawn on June 30, 2005.

On Thursday evening, July 28, 2005, a drawing will be held for a big bass boat sitting out front near the big Lucky Turtle sign. This great prize will be given to the lucky winner whose name will be drawn from the large contest drum in the casino. Free entries are given from any VGT machine when you win a jackpot of $75 or more.

The summer crowds are continuing to enjoy the swirling Sundays where hot seat drawings for the money booth happen every 30 minutes from 1 PM to 5 PM and lucky individuals climb into the blasting wind of the money machine.

The Lucky Turtle also has weekly promotions where $5 of free play is given. On Monday night between 7-10 PM, it is Ladies’ Night and every lady is given $5 free play. On Tuesday night between 7-10 PM, it is Mens’ Night and they each receive $5. On Wednesday, between 10 AM and 2 PM, it is Seniors’ Day and everyone over 55 is given $5 free play.

Every day that goes by, the popularity and reputation of the Lucky Turtle Casino seem to grow. Certainly, the fun is continuing during these long, hot summer days in northeastern Oklahoma. Don’t miss it!

Wyandotte Nation Housing

The Wyandotte Nation Housing Department has been very busy this past year. We have a staff of five individuals. They are:

Jeff Hitchcock,
Housing Maintenance Specialist

The programs included in this department are:
NAHASDA (The current housing program)
IHS-121 (Water wells, rural water hook-ups, septic and drainfield installation and city sewer line hook-ups)
BIA-CHIP Program (Home repair)

Below is a brief description of the programs.

NAHASDA:
This is the current program in operation by all Tribes. It is basically the same other than Congress decided that all tribes should have equal funding, based upon an allocated formula of the amount of enrolled members of the Tribe. The Tribe has nine units in place which were funded with NAHASDA funds.

IHS-121 WATER:
This program is provided by Indian Health Service for safe and sanitary water conditions. It is designed to service all Wyandottes within the Claremore Hospital service area. There are no income guidelines on this program, only restricted boundary areas. This program is used to drill wells, install pumps, put in septic tanks and drainfields, connect to city sewer lines, only drainfields, or connect to rural water hook-ups. If you have need of any of these services, please contact either Reba or Kathy for an application.

BIA-CHIP PROGRAM:
This program is provided by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. It is for the renovation of sub-standard homes of low and very-low income families.

If, after you read the above program schedule, you have need of any of the above program services, please do not hesitate to contact this office. We would be very happy to talk with you, explain any of the programs further and send out an application to make sure you qualify.

We appreciate the opportunity to serve our Tribal Members and hope in the future to be able to extend our services to many, many more of you. Please, at any time we can be of service, do not hesitate to call Reba or Kathy at (918) 678-2297, ext. 236 or 239.

Bearskin Healthcare & Wellness Center by Kristin Thomas

Lots of updates here at the Bearskin Healthcare & Wellness Center within the last few weeks. Bearskin has installed a new walking track that is 8mm thick, plus an additional padding below the 8mm surface. This new surface provides our walkers with cushioning that is much easier on their body joints.

In addition to the new walking track, the Bearskin Clinic has installed a new Prescription Pick-Up Window along the north side of the walking track. This new window will allow patients to work one-on-one with our Pharmacy Technician when picking up medications. The Dispensary will also be requiring all patients to sign for medications they are picking up. This is according to the 1996 HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) guidelines. As a reminder, a 24-hour notice is required on all refills.

The BHWC has also added a couple of speed bumps to the parking lot to slow down traffic. Curb stops have also been installed to keep patrons from parking on some of the newly created landscaping. Handicap signs have also been placed at each handicap parking spot. For patrons continuing to park in these spots without proper handicap parking permits, warnings will be given followed by citations from the Wyandotte Nation Law Enforcement.

The Employee Wellness Program is up and going strong. This program is up and functioning as a result of donations from both Bordertown Bingo and the Wyandotte Nation Board of Directors. Screenings were completed on 73 employees of the Wyandotte Nation and Eastern Shawnee Tribe of
Oklahoma and those 73 employees have also signed up for the program. Lunch and Learns will begin in early August with an introduction to the Seven Dimensions of Wellness by Kristin Thomas. For more information, feel free to call Kimberly Wade at (918) 678-2282 ext. 222.

**Education Department**  
by Tammy Charles

Preschool

Applications for the 2005-2006 school year are being accepted. Classes will begin on August 15, 2005.

Summer program is very busy with many activities under way. Participants are involved in swim lessons as well as other field trips. Summer program will conclude on August 12, 2005. Enrollment is open at any time.

If you are interested in an application, please call Ms. Culver at (918) 678-2297 ext. 230.

**Library**

The Wyandotte Tribal Library is open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. New materials are added monthly to enhance the available materials in the area. Karen McNelis and Jessie Winscott are familiar with our facility and look forward to meeting you and providing assistance.

**Childcare & Development Fund Program**

The Childcare Program is very busy serving 110 families, which includes 87 Wyandottes. We utilize 38 licensed childcare centers and 25 licensed day care homes to provide care for Native American children. We offer assistance based on income to all federally recognized tribes. Participants must reside within a 100-mile radius of the tribal headquarters.

**Tribal Scholarship**

Scholarship applications are being processed with checks being mailed out during the first week of August. Scholarships are available for eight semesters in the amount of $500.00 each. You must meet all criteria to remain on the program and submit your grades in a timely fashion to insure funding.

**Workforce Investment Act (WIA)**

Currently, 32 individuals are participating in this program in either technical school or college. Limited opportunities exist in this program but all are welcome to apply.

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**Bearskin Aviation Grand Opening**

The grand opening of Bearskin Aviation Services took place on Friday, June 24th at the Joplin Regional Airport. The air cargo service is located at the airport and is owned by the Wyandotte Nation.