



# ***San Diego Cherokee Community Newsletter***

Issue 1

[www.sandiegocherokeecommunity.com](http://www.sandiegocherokeecommunity.com)

July 2007

## ***Cherokee National Holiday***

The 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Cherokee National Holiday is Labor Day weekend, September 1-3, in Tahlequah, OK. This year's theme is "Common Values Common Ground" in commemoration of Oklahoma History.

The Cherokee National Holiday has been held since 1953 in tribute of the signing of the 1839 Cherokee constitution. It has grown into one of the largest event in Oklahoma. It attracts over 100,000 visitors from across the world.

The events include a parade, powwow, music, food, cultural arts and crafts, native games, competitive athletic events and even a car and bike show. There should be something for everyone no matter what the age.



2001 Parade - Photo by Phil Konstantin

Tahlequah is nestled in the Cookson Hills between the Illinois River and Lake Tenkiller.

### ***Want Some Fun & Excitement With Other Cherokees?***

Virginia Hall is trying to get a group of people together and attend the Cherokee National Holiday this year. Reservations need to be made very soon, because there will be a lot of visitors in Tahlequah during the Cherokee Holiday. Maybe rides, motel rooms, etc. can be shared. If anyone is interested, please call Virginia at 619-426-8396 or email her at vrh29@aol.com.

## **Election Results**

The June 23 election shows Principal Chief Chad Smith has beaten challenger Stacy Leeds with 59% of the vote. Deputy Chief Joe Grayson Jr. defeated Raymond Vann with 61% of the votes cast.

The At-Large District, seat 1, saw Julia Coates defeat Taylor Keen with 74%. For seat 2, Jack D. Baker retained his seat with 75% of the vote over Sean R. Nordwall.

The resolution affirming the 2003 Constitutional Amendment which removed the federal approval requirement from the Cherokee Nation's Constitution passed with 67% of the vote.

## Looking for Volunteers

Now that you've joined the San Diego Cherokee Community, this is a great time to seek your interest. We are looking for someone to help with the newsletter, someone who can speak the Cherokee language, people interested in genealogy research and cultural resources. So come on out to our next meeting and get involved, meet some new friends, and share your talents.

If you are not an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation and wondered if your ancestors are listed on the Dawes Roll, come join us at our next meeting. We will have the entire list of the Dawes Roll for both the Eastern and Western band of Cherokees with the enrollment numbers for you.

Please remember, you do not have to be a Cherokee to take part in our meetings or activities. Simply bring your interest in all things Cherokee and join us for a great time. You never know, you might even find a long lost member of your family.

## General Membership

SDCC membership as of July 1, consisted of:

29 Family Memberships  
16 Individual Memberships  
85 Total voting members

Annual dues are \$25 for one person and \$35 for a household. Members over the age of 18 are entitled to voting rights in the organization. Also included is a subscription to our newsletter. You may

choose to receive your newsletter electronically or via postal mail.

Membership also entitles you special access to programs such as Cherokee language classes that will be available only to members of San Diego Cherokee Community and other local Cherokee Nation chartered organizations.

Visit our website for more details:

[www.sandiegocherokeecommunity.com](http://www.sandiegocherokeecommunity.com)

## Next Meeting- July 22

Our next meeting is July 22 at 1 p.m. at Lake Murray. Take I-8 to the Lake Murray Blvd exit. Go north for ½ mile & turn left on Kiowa Dr. This is a potluck picnic, so bring a dish and share. Just look for our signs to the picnic location. Please check our website for any updates at

[www.sandiegocherokeecommunity.com](http://www.sandiegocherokeecommunity.com)

## Newsletter Articles

sdccnewsletter@yahoo.com is the place to submit your newsletter articles, pictures, and suggestions. We need your thoughts and ideas so please email them to the above address.

## Cherokee Creation Stories

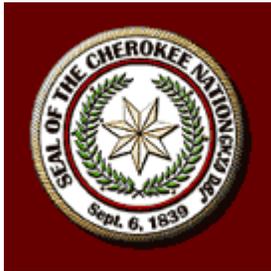
By Phil Konstantin

One of the Cherokee creation stories says that water beetle dove to the bottom of the worldwide sea and found some mud. From this he formed an island. The great bird flew down to see the island. The flapping of his wings helped to dry the mud. As the bird tired, his winds would touch the land. This caused mountains and valleys. The

first man and woman then came and stepped onto the land.

Another creation story says the Cherokee entered the world from a cave in the southeastern United States. This story may be a reflection of Choctaw and Chickasaw stories, though. The Cherokee have several stories which say they migrated to their southeastern homelands. One story says they migrated to the south from the great waters of the north. They battled with other tribes until they came to the end of the mountains. Here they stayed. Another story says they lived in a land until a great shaking made them leave. They crossed a great body of water in a boat. Once on land, they traveled through the land. They crossed three great rivers, and finally stopped in the mountains.

*Did you know.....*



The official seal of the Cherokee Nation can tell you a lot about the Cherokee. The seal has a 7-point star. The points represent each of the 7 clans and 7 of the characters of the Cherokee language as designed by Sequoyah. The wreath is made of oak leaves. This is the wood which was burned in the tribe's sacred fire.

## Clans

By Phil Konstantin

Cherokee society is matrilineal. The family is centered around the woman's bloodline. A person can only marry someone from a different clan. Children

take on the clan of their mother. A boy's mentor is his mother's brother (uncle), rather than his father.

Cherokee society has seven clans:

- Long Hair
- Blue
- Wolf
- Wild Potato
- Deer
- Bird
- Paint

Clan members are considered brother and sisters.

- The **Long Hair Clan** (also called **Twister** or **Wind**) usually produced Peace Chiefs. Orphans and prisoners-of-war were made members of this clan. They were at the eastern side of ceremonies.
- The **Blue Clan** (also called **Bear**, **Panther** or **Wildcat**) often produced healers for children. They were to the left of the Long Hair clan at ceremonies.
- The **Wolf Clan** often produced War Chiefs or protectors. It has often been the largest clan. They are usually to the left of the Blue Clan at ceremonies.
- The **Wild Potato Clan** (also called **Blind Savannah**) were the gathers or farmers. The Wild Potato is usually to the left of the Wolf arbor.
- **Deer Clan** members were usually the best hunters and runners. The Deer Clan is often to the left of the Wild Potato at ceremonies.
- The **Bird Clan** (also called **Raven**, **Turtle Dove**, and **Eagle**) often produced people who could deliver messages between heaven

and earth. They were also responsible for the birds. At ceremonies, they were usually to the left of the Deer Clan.

- Medicine People usually came from the **Paint Clan**. They were usually to the left of the Bird Clan at ceremonies

The Cherokee used bows and arrows, spears, blowguns, stone weapons, tomahawks and battle hammers for hunting and warfare. The Cherokee could be fierce warriors. They often fought with the Creeks. They also engaged in a practice called "*blood feud*." Simply stated, assaults against a member of one clan by another clan could be revenged against any member of the instigating clan.

They enjoyed games like stickball and marbles. In winter a game was played in icy areas. It involved sliding a long stick across the ice for distance and accuracy.

## Interim Board Members

Phil Konstantin, Meeting Facilitator  
George Lynch, Records Keeper  
Virginia Hall, Membership Coordinator  
Mike Ledger, Treasurer  
Phil Powers, Alternate Facilitator & Records Keeper  
Gene Wilburn & Pam Hightower, Program Coordinators

### Financial Report

As of 6/24/07, the balance in the San Diego Cherokee Community bank account was \$2,533.00. Since then \$50.00 in T-shirt sales has been added, making the current balance \$2,583.00. There is a current AP invoice outstanding of \$545.00 for Trail of Tears DVD purchases.

-Mike Ledger, interim Treasurer

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Below is a link for a transcript of the treaty which made the Freedmen part of the Cherokee Nation in 1866. You can read all of the original language for yourself.

<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/Kappler/Vol2/treaties/che0942.htm>

### TREATY WITH THE CHEROKEE, 1866

July 19, 1866. | 14 Stats., 799. | Ratified July 27, 1866. | Proclaimed Aug. 11, 1866

Here is the text of the sections in that treaty which deals most with the Freeman:

**ARTICLE 4.**

All the Cherokees and Freed persons who were formerly slaves to any Cherokee, and all free negroes not having been such slaves, who resided in the Cherokee Nation prior to June first, eighteen hundred and sixty-one, who may within two years elect not to reside northeast of the Arkansas River and southeast of Grand River, shall have the right to settle in and occupy the Canadian district southwest of the Arkansas River, and also all that tract of country lying northwest of Grand River, and bounded on the southeast by Grand River and west by the Creek reservation to the northeast corner thereof; from thence west on the north line of the Creek reservation to the ninety-sixth degree of west longitude; and thence north on said line of longitude so far that a line due east to Grand River will include a quantity of land equal to one hundred and sixty acres for each person who may so elect to reside in the territory above described in this article: *Provided*, That part of said district north of the Arkansas River shall not be set apart until it shall be found that the Canadian district is not sufficiently large to allow one hundred and sixty acres to each person desiring to obtain settlement under the provisions of this article.

**ARTICLE 9.**

The Cherokee Nation having, voluntarily, in February, eighteen hundred and sixty-three, by an act of the national council, forever abolished slavery, hereby covenant and agree that never hereafter shall either slavery or involuntary servitude exist in their nation otherwise than in the punishment of crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, in accordance with laws, applicable to all the members of said tribe alike. They further agree that all freedmen who have been liberated by voluntary act of their former owners or by law, as well as all free colored persons who were in the country at the commencement of the rebellion, and are now residents therein, or who may return within six months, and their descendants, shall have all the rights of native Cherokees: *Provided*, That owners of slaves so emancipated in the Cherokee Nation shall never receive any compensation or pay for the slaves so emancipated.

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*Spotlight on a member of the SDCC...*

The following was provided by Steve Spencer, regarding a Cherokee Freeman Research Report, on the family of Joe Davis, Vinita, Indian Territory from data taken from a his Cherokee Freedman Card. Steve is a descendant of Joe Davis.

The family of Joe Davis resided in Vinita, Indian Territory, in the Cherokee Nation. The family appears in May 1901 to enroll as Cherokee Freeman. On this card appear the following names: Joe Davis, Sadie Davis, Willie Davis, Thomas Davis, Joseph Davis, Dan C. Davis, Carl Davis and Charles Davis.

Joe is the father of all others on the card. He was the slave of Kinnie Davis. The father of Joe Davis was Tom Faught. The mother of Joe Davis was Betsy Davis. Tom Faught had been a slave and was enslaved by Peggie Faught. Joe's mother, Besty, had been enslaved by Wm. A. Davis. The family resided at that time in the Coowescoowee District of the Cherokee Nation.

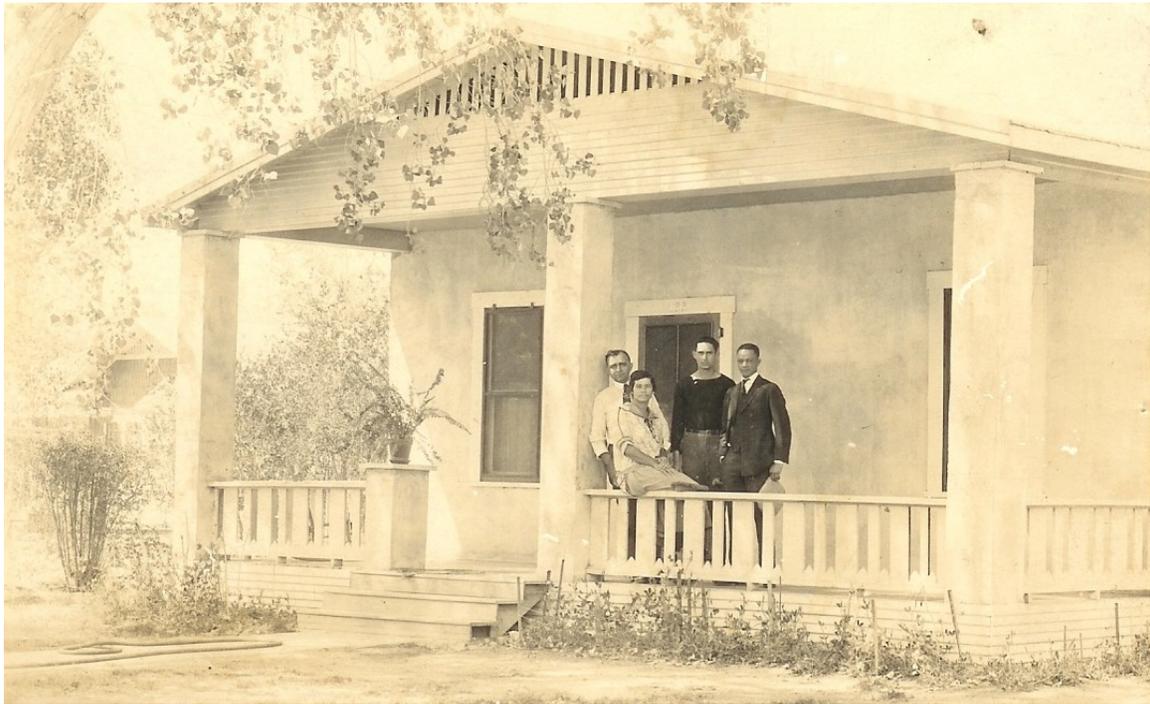
The names of the family members are also listed on an earlier Freedman Roll, the Kern Clifton Roll and their names appear on page 116 of that roll. As on many Freedmen card, the Kern Clifton Roll is referred to as the K.C. roll. It can be assumed that Joe Davis took the name of his mother, and their does not appear to be additional information on Tom Faught. The parents of

Joe Davis had lived in the Flint District while slaves, but Joe and his family now reside in the Cooweescoowee District.

The family was originally on the *“Doubtful”* cards, as it was believed that they may not have been eligible to enroll. They were later moved to the approved card in 1904.

Joe Davis had been born a slave as had his parents. They had different slave owners, so there was a possibility that while enslaved, they may have lived in nearby family estates, for Joe’s parents to have met. Joe and his mother also were both Davis’ slaves; however, their enslavers were listed differently. Wm. A. Davis is listed as his mother’s enslaver and Kinnie Davis is listed as the enslaver of Joe.

Because this is a family of Cherokee Freedmen the following information is being presented. The descendants of person on this card are at present eligible to apply for enrollment as Cherokee citizens. There are currently issues pertaining to the status of Cherokee Freedmen. They were ruled eligible for citizenship in 2006. Then, an election was held to expel the Freedmen in March of 2007 initiated by the Chief of the tribe. At this time, the nation has temporarily reversed its stance and once again allowing the freedmen to apply for citizenship in the nation. At present, due to a petition drive initiated by the Choctaw Freedmen, the Congressional Black Caucus has become involved and Congressional hearings will take place pertaining to the rights of the Freedmen.



Picture of Joe Davis, wife Belle and 2 of their children at 223 South Vann Street, Vinita, IT

# The Cherokee Nation

The Cherokee Nation is the second largest Indian tribe in the US. As of June 2006, there were approximately 262,000 tribal citizens enrolled; 129,000 Cherokee citizens live outside the tribal jurisdiction and 133,000 Cherokee citizens reside within the 7,000 square mile area of the Cherokee Nation.

The Cherokee Nation is not a reservation but a jurisdictional service area that includes all of eight counties (Adair, Cherokee, Craig, Delaware, Mayes, Nowata, Sequoyah and only part of Rogers) and portions of six counties (McIntosh, Muskogee, Ottawa, Tulsa, Wagoner and Washington) in northeastern Oklahoma within the boundaries of the historical Cherokee Nation existing before the Civil War.

As a federal recognized Indian tribe, the Cherokee Nation has both the opportunity and the sovereign right to exercise control and development of tribal assets, which include 48,000 acres of land as well as 96 miles of the Arkansas Riverbed.

The Cherokee Nation has a tripartite, democratic form of government that includes judicial, executive and legislative branches. The original written Cherokee Constitution was approved in 1839. The second written Constitution of the Cherokee Nation was approved by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs on September 5, 1975, and was ratified by the Cherokee people on June 26, 1976. The third Constitution in the history of the Cherokee Nation was ratified by the Cherokee citizens in 1999 and approved on June 7, 2006.

The executive power is vested in the principal chief; legislative power in the 17-member Tribal council; and judicial power in the 5-member Cherokee Nation Supreme Court. The principal chief, deputy chief and the Tribal Council members are elected by the Cherokee citizens and subject to term limits of two terms in office. Then they must sit out one term of office before being able to run again for office.

The judicial branch of tribal government includes a series of district courts and the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court consists of five members who are appointed by the principal chief and confirmed by the Council. It is the highest court of the Cherokee Nation. The Supreme Court oversees internal legal disputes and the district courts.

--From the Cherokee Nation Visitor Guide

## *Did you know . . .*

The name 'Oklahoma' comes from two Choctaw words: 'okla' meaning people and 'humma' meaning red. So the state's name literally means 'red people'. It was so named for the Indians who first settled Indian Territory long before statehood. Thirty-nine tribes are headquartered in Oklahoma, giving it the largest Native American population in the country.

## Important websites

[www.cherokee.org](http://www.cherokee.org)

[www.sandiegocherokeecommunity.com](http://www.sandiegocherokeecommunity.com)