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Quarterly Newsletter of the
OKLAHOMA INDIAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION

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APRIL EDITION

Planning Underway for Sovereignty Symposium XXI



"peace keeper"

... will be this year's theme for the twenty-first Sovereignty Symposium that will take place June 4-5, 2008, at the historic Skirvin Hilton Hotel, located at One Park Avenue, in downtown Oklahoma City.

This year's keynote speaker is Chief Justice Robert H. Henry of the U.S. Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals.



Indian and non-Indian elected officials, judges, attorneys and other individuals are expected to be in record attendance at the 21st Sovereignty Symposium. Symposium staff are in the final stages of planning as June 4 and 5 rapidly approaches.

Opening Day will begin with the processional, which includes Justices of the Oklahoma Supreme Court, other VIPs, and the Principal Leaders of Oklahoma's tribal nations. The processional of tribal leaders is considered a highlight of the Opening Day plenary as the flags and respective leaders of Oklahoma's 37 federally recognized tribal nations are recognized as they file into the room. The tribal processional is coordinated by the Oklahoma Indian Affairs Commission and moderated by Executive Director Barbara Warner.

The Indian Affairs Commission has been actively involved with the Symposium for most of the 15-year tenure of the Commission's executive director. Coordinating the opening day tribal activities was introduced several years ago and included sponsoring a "Private Tribal Leader Luncheon" for the principal leaders of Oklahoma's tribal nations and coordination of the tribal flag processional.

Sovereignty Symposium is sponsored by the Supreme Court of Oklahoma and is the only forum of its kind in the nation that is sponsored by a state court. Other sponsors include the Oklahoma Indian Affairs Commission, the Oklahoma Bar Association – Indian Law Section, the Oklahoma

Arts Council, the Oklahoma City University School of Law, the University of Oklahoma School of Law, and the University of Tulsa College of Law.

Topics for this year's Symposium include but are not limited to the following: *Drugs & Victimless Crimes in Indian Country; Language & Cultural Preservation; The Future of Oklahoma Indian Country: Economic Interdependence; Business Opportunities for Tribal Governments-Renewable Energy; Best Practices: "How To's" for Casinos, Businesses, & Tribal Governments; Water Law & Land Use; Gaming; Self-Governance: Promoting Peaceful Lifestyles through Health & Wellness; Poor Like Me—Native Americans & Poverty Issues; and Evolving Indian Issues*, among others.

Registration for this year's event is \$250 for both days if postmarked before May 20. A one-day (June 5 only) registration of \$150 is also available. Hotel reservations at the Skirvin Hilton Hotel can be made by contacting the hotel at (405) 272-3040 by May 14.

This year's Symposium promises to be an exciting and educational event that will provide attendees with great networking opportunities. Attendees will not be disappointed with the range of topics. Mark your calendars!

**For online registration for Sovereignty Symposium activities, go to www.oscn.net/sovereignty.
CHECK OUT EARLY REGISTRATION!**

Valeria Littlecreek selected as "Honored Educator" at 2008 Indian Education Powwow

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Kaw Nation



Director of Tribal Affairs for the Oklahoma Department of Education, Valeria Littlecreek, was honored March 1 for "her persevering drive to bring Indian education to the forefront of education in our state." After being nominated by the Western Heights Indian Education Parent Committee and the Indian education staff of Western Heights Public Schools, the 2008 Indian Education Powwow was held in her honor.

Littlecreek is a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. She has served children for 33 years as a teacher, curriculum specialist, Administrator of Indian Education programs, and a school counselor for grades K-12. She holds a bachelor's degree in Psychology, a teaching certificate in Secondary Social Studies and a master's degree in School Counseling from Oklahoma State University. She holds a secondary principal's certificate and will earn her doctorate degree in Educational Leadership from OSU upon completion of her dissertation. She is listed in Who's Who among Professional People and serves as a member of the College Board's Southwest Regional Executive Board. Valeria serves on the Oklahoma Indian Affairs Commission Board of Commissioners as the designee for Ex Officio member, Sandy Garrett, Superintendent of Public Instruction.

OIAC's Publications Ready for Distribution in April!

- Oklahoma Tribal Leaders Poster—2008
- Oklahoma Indian Nations Pocket Pictorial—2008
- Oklahoma Indian Nations Information Handbook—COMMEMORATIVE EDITION

"Opening Day Legislative Reception"



Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation's Deputy Director, Tom Jordan, speaks at OIAC's March 20 Board Meeting

Requests the tribes' support in a new effort to fund a "multi-purpose Mobile Analysis Center (MAC)"

The OSBI was established in 1925 and is recognized as the premier investigative agency for the State of Oklahoma. OSBI is predominantly a law enforcement assistance agency responsible for providing investigative, forensic, informational and analytical services to the law enforcement community.

"Many of OSBI's requestor agencies throughout Oklahoma lack the financial and personnel resources, equipment and training, necessary to address major crime and critical incidents occurring within their respective jurisdictions, and rely heavily on the OSBI to assist with these type of events," said Jordan.

Jordan also said, "The OSBI has a critical need at the current time for funding of the multi-purpose Mobile Analysis Center (MAC) in order to provide the capability to process criminal intelligence information, coordinate investigative leads, process critical evidence, and provide secure communication capabilities allowing for coordination and integration of other support services."

The OSBI will be contacting Oklahoma's tribal nations regarding this important initiative to combat crime in Indian Country.

"The MAC unit will be turned into actionable knowledge that supports the ability to detect, investigate, prevent and respond to CRIMINAL and TERRORIST activity. With the tribes' support, we can become even more effective in providing our services. Together we can establish mutual goals that can energize law enforcement through specialized training.

With financial support from the Native American Community, this Mobile Analysis Center would provide an exciting surge into the 21st century.

This is an incredible opportunity to work together on a state-of-the-art project for the State of Oklahoma. In return, OSBI can offer investigative and forensic services."

Thomas D. Jordan, Deputy Director, OSBI



CHIEF FLOYD E. LEONARD REMEMBERED



CHIEF FLOYD E. LEONARD, waapimaankwa (WHITE LOON) MIAMI TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA

Floyd Ernest Leonard, honored Chief of the Sovereign Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, passed peacefully from this life on Saturday, March 8, 2008 at Saint John's Hospital in Joplin, MO.

He was born September 19, 1925 in Picher, OK to Joseph Ernest and Ruth (Lassiter) Leonard. His father was a member of the Miami Tribe; his mother was of the Prairie Band Potawatomi.

A veteran of the U.S. Coast Guard, he served from June 1943 to April 1946. He served aboard a U.S. Navy tanker, the USS Celtic, in the South Pacific from May 1944 to January 1946. He married Patricia Mesplay on July 11, 1946 at the Sacred Heart Church in Webb City, MO. In his long life of service in education and to his Tribe, she was ever at his side. The Tribe recognized her loyalty and for this the Tribal Council named her as an Honorary Member in 1997.

Chief Leonard was a committed family man. Those closest to him knew of his great pride for his family; his loyal wife Patricia, his son Dr. Joseph Leonard, a professor at Miami University and his wife Etsuko of Oxford, OH; his grandson Dr. Wesley Leonard of Berkeley, CA, and his granddaughter, Mika Leonard, of Washington, DC. They all survive him.

In his personal and professional life, Chief Leonard had three driving interests: education, music, and Native American issues, particularly, Miami Tribe concerns. His love of teaching and education led him to a bachelor of science degree, a master of science degree, and an education specialist degree, all from Pittsburg State University, in Pittsburg, KS. He began teaching in 1950 and served as an elementary school principal in Joplin, Missouri Public Schools from 1952 until 1966, as assistant superintendent of schools in Webb City, MO, from 1966 until 1977, and as assistant superintendent of schools in Joplin, from 1977 to 1986. He retired after having served the public school system in Missouri for 36 years. He was honored by the Tribe for his commitment to education in the establishment of "Leonard Learning Center", the Nation's day-care/preschool facility in 2000. And his commitment to education was crowned in 2005 when he received an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Miami University in Oxford, OH.

He was a gifted musician playing string bass and singing in dance bands beginning in 1942. He later changed to bass guitar and continued to regularly perform through 2007. A lifetime member of the American Federation of Musicians, he worked with the nationally known Dick Stabile Band, and numerous regional musicians including bands led by Clete Smith, Dick Allison, Paul Jensen, Jack Henderson, Bill Pearson, and Rick McCloud.

(continued on next page)

Chief Leonard was proud of his Miami ancestry and came to tribal service early in his life. He was first elected to the Nation's Business Committee in 1954 and had the honor to serve with late Chiefs Harley Palmer and Forest Olds in his early years. He was elected to the position of Chief in 1974 and held that seat until 1982 when he had to step down for health reasons. He returned to serve as Chief in 1989 and held that position until his passing.

He was committed to intertribal Indian affairs and was proud to serve for over sixteen years as chairman of the Inter-Tribal Council of Chiefs of the Nine Tribes headquartered in Ottawa County. He was a past president of the Miami Indian Health Clinic Advisory Board, past member of the Claremore Indian Hospital Health Board, past member and president of the Seneca Indian School Advisory Board, and past member of the United States Catholic Bishops Advisory Council.

A staunch advocate for Native American rights, he traveled far and wide on behalf of his Miami people. Trips to the State Capitol in Oklahoma City, to BIA headquarters in Muscogee, and to Washington, DC to secure alliances and fight for Miami rights were commonplace to him. He knew many in government, and his efforts for his people brought him just esteem and honor in their consideration.

Chief Leonard once said that he recalled when "the Tribal Office was in the trunk of Chief Forest Olds' old car". In a half century of service to his people, Chief Leonard witnessed community poverty in the sense of loss of language and culture, no land base, no buildings, and no money. We recognize that his efforts re to be remembered for helping to bring the Miami Nation to this day. He passed in peace knowing that his family was well established and cared for, and his work for his Tribe helped strengthen us to carry on for all time. We are humbled and energized by the memory of this great man.

Chief Leonard will lie in state at the Nation's longhouse until Tuesday morning, March 11, 2008. His family has arranged a special graveside memorial set for 10 a.m. that morning at the Myaamia Heritage Cemetery, located northwest of the City of Miami. Chief Thomas Gamble will officiate. Indian burial rites will be given at the graveside. His granddaughter, Mika Leonard, will perform the Lord's Prayer in Indian sign language. Pallbearers are: Ben Olds, Mitch Cordray, Scott Willard, John LaFalier, Jerry Lankford, and Frank Leonard. The Chief, or Presiding Chairman, of each Ottawa County Tribe will serve together as Honorary Pallbearers. Following the burial ceremony, the Miami Nation will host a memorial gathering at the Nation's longhouse located west of Commerce, OK. Eulogies will be delivered and a dinner will be served.

Directions are posted on the Nation's website at www.miamination.com. Information may be obtained through the Nation's Headquarters at 918-541-1363 or 1364 and through Paul Thomas Funeral Home, Picher, OK, 918-673-1683. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the CHIEF LEONARD MEMORIAL FUND/MYAAMIA PROJECT. Information for donations is available on the Nation's website listed herein.





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B U L L E T I N B O A R D

-NEXT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING-
 Thursday, May 15, 2008
 4545 N. Lincoln Blvd., Suite 284
 (next door to OIAC office)
 Oklahoma City, OK

**Don't forget to register for
 SOVEREIGNTY SYMPOSIUM/Skirvin Hilton/OKC
 JUNE 4-5, 2008**
Early Registration Deadline May 20, 2008
www.oscn.net/sovereignty

| 2ND SESSION 51ST LEGISLATURE LEGISLATIVE SESSION DEADLINES | |
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| December 7 | Bill Request Deadline |
| January 17 | Bill Introduction Deadline |
| February 4 | SESSION CONVENES |
| February 21 | Bill in Committees - House of Origin Deadline |
| March 13 | 3rd Reading in House of Origin Deadline |
| April 3 | Bills in Opposite House in Committees Deadline |
| April 24 | 3rd Reading in Opposite House Deadline |
| May 30 | SINE DIE ADJOURNMENT by 5 p.m. |

*"Our most valuable asset—THE BALLOT."
 Mark Twain*