



LITTLE TRAVERSE BAY BANDS OF ODAWA INDIANS
7500 ODAWA CIRCLE, HARBOR SPRINGS, MI 49740

TRIBAL COUNCIL TRAVEL REPORT NARRATIVE

From: Marcella R. Reyes, Treasurer

Date: 10-19-2013

Re: 70th Annual NCAI Conference

I am respectfully submitting this report to my fellow tribal councilors and the citizenship of LTBB. It was my honor to attend the NCAI 70th Annual Convention & Marketplace in Tulsa, OK along with my fellow councilors.

On the first day, Monday October 14th I began the day by attending the Native Prayer Sunrise Gathering. There was an interesting and diverse group of people and faiths in attendance at this early morning event.

The first General Assembly was called to Order by Jefferson Keel, President of NCAI and was followed by the Color Guard bringing in the tribal flags of the whole state of Oklahoma. Invocation was given by George Tiger, Chief, Muskogee (Creek) Nation.

The second General Assembly was called to Order after lunch break by Juana Majel Dixon, First Vice-President of NCAI (she was a candidate in the NCAI Presidential election). During the afternoon session John Echohawk, Executive Director, NARF & John Dossett, General Counsel, NCAI spoke in length regarding Michigan vs Bay Mills Indian Community and how this case presents a threat to the doctrine of tribal sovereign immunity. They strongly urged all tribal leaders in attendance to join together by filing a joint Amicus brief against Bay Mills.

Randy Noka of the Narragansett Tribe of Rhode Island delivered a powerful presentation on "Attitudes and Issues in the Tribal-Federal Trust Relationship".

Monday evening I attended “Sliver of a Full Moon” at the Oklahoma Jazz Hall of Fame. This play is a story of a movement that restored the authority of Indian tribes over non-Indian abusers to protect women on tribal lands. Although thousands contributed to this victory, Sliver of a Full Moon follows the story of five Native women who took a stand and two Native men, including Congressman Tom Cole, who stood with them to win this victory. Two of the cast members were playing themselves and shared their stories of abuse & violence and the inability of the tribal authorities to do anything.

On the second day, Tuesday, NCAI Honored Dusten Brown, father of “Baby Veronica” with a Pendleton blanket and eagle feathers. We were also notified during the conference that Dusten Brown had decided to drop his suit suing for custody of “Baby Veronica”.

I attended a luncheon “Honoring the Youth” where Ernie Stevens, Jr. Chairman, National Indian Gaming Association presented NCAI Youth Leadership Awards to several outstanding youth in Indian Country. This was a very nice luncheon and it was an honor to be present while these young people were recognized for their hard work and leadership.

On the third day, Wednesday Sam McCracken, General Manager, Nike N7 & Ben Friedmann, Co-Chair, Google American Indian Network were both speakers on a panel discussion of Partnerships that Strengthen Tribal Economies.

Later that morning Nominations and speeches for NCAI Board Administrative Offices were held.

The Muskogee Creek Nation in collaboration with Nike N7 & Blue Cross/Blue Shield hosted the 10th Annual National Native American Health & Fitness Walk. We left the conference center shortly after noon and walked the 1.6 miles to the historical site of the Oak Council tree. While there we were given a tour of the Muskogee Nation’s mobile health unit.

The afternoon’s breakout session I attended “The Future of Native Foods: Sovereignty, Safety and Sustainability”. The focus of the session was to engage tribal leaders in a discussion of agriculture and food issues affecting all of Indian Country. A-dae Romero, Executive Director, Cochiti Youth Experience, Inc gave an informative presentation about the farming efforts in her community. Their tribe is partnering their youth with experienced farmers/elders within their community to share their knowledge and pass on their farming experiences to these children.

A-dae shared a story with us of a young boy in their community who has been involved in this project since he was four years old and now at the ripe old age of seven he is farming 10 acres by himself and holds his own in conversations related to crop rotation.

Brian Cladoosby, Chairman of the Swinomish tribe in Washington spoke in length regarding food sovereignty, inter-tribal relations related to food sovereignty and encouraged tribes to work together in their food sovereignty efforts. The Swinomish tribe has a successful fish canning operation in the state of Washington. He encouraged anyone in attendance to contact his tribe if

they are interested in a fish processing operation of their own.

I attended the Cultural Night hosted by the local tribes at the Tulsa Hard Rock Casino that evening. This event served local native foods for dinner and held an exhibition pow wow where traditional dances were performed and the storied behind them were shared.

On the fourth day the high point of the General assembly was the NCAI elections. It was my great pleasure to participate in this very important process of electing leaders to speak for us and represent us in DC.
