

October 31, 2014

By Denver American Horse
Oglala Lakota Nation
Veteran's Service Officer

Veteran
Warrior Wakte' glipi.

In our personal journey through time, since the day of our birth, we live amongst our favorite relatives. Namely, our Mother and Father, and our extended family (Tioshpaye). They are our foundation. They are our refuge we could return to, to feel safe and comfortable. Their homes that rested upon the land of Grandmother Earth (Unchi Makh'a) is imprinted with memories in our hearts and minds. Good memories. And since the long silence of their journey to the spirit world, it is us who have now become the Ancestor (Hunka ke). As Veterans, we have to give Hope to our Lakota/Dakota/Nakota Nation (Ocheti Shakowin) and our younger generation. A good leader never takes Hope away from the People (Oyate).

And so (Chan ke) begins this short historic account of a Ponca leader named Standing Bear, who along with his people living on their Niobrara River homeland were forcibly removed and expected to live in Indian Territory Oklahoma. This brutal treatment by the Whiteman (Washichu) is known as the Ponca Trail of Tears and it happened from May 16, 1877 through July 9, 1877 over six hundred (600) miles. Many (Ota) Poncas died over a two (2) year period while living in Indian Territory Oklahoma. Among them was Standing Bear's only son, Bear Shield. He died just before Christmas 1878. Before he died, he told his father to bury him in their homeland.

In the first days of the New Year 1879, Standing Bear left Indian Territory Oklahoma without consent of the agent. During spring (Wetu) of the same year, he was arrested and eventually to be returned to Indian Territory Oklahoma. While waiting to be returned, an unlikely helper (General George Crook) anonymously made contacts with a newspaper man and set a series of events in motion that helped set Standing Bear free. Credit has been given to General Crook for suggesting the use of a Writ of Habeas Corpus for the first time regarding an Indian at that time (1879).

At the end of the Hearing on May 12, 1879, Judge Elmer Dundy delivered his decision, in short, that "an Indian is a PERSON within the meaning of the laws of the United States, and has therefore the right to sue out a writ of habeas corpus in a federal court" (pg. 157, Chief Standing Bear's Journey for Justice). All of the other charges were over-ruled. The Judge then ordered the release of Standing Bear and his followers, thus setting a tremendous precedent.

Standing Bear's determination to return home with his son's wish is a remarkable feat. Along the way, he established a federal court ruling in his favor. Standing Bear gave Hope to all of the Redman and Redwoman for generations to come. This true historical account is found in the book "I am a Man" Chief Standing Bear's Journey for Justice by Joe Starita printed in 2008. The book is 257 pages and easy to read with several photographs.

On a closer to home note. The VA Outpatient Handbook reminds Veterans of the nine (9) healthy living messages as follows:

Wanji. Be physically active.
Nupa. Eat wisely.
Yamni. Strive for a healthy weight.
Topa. Get recommended screening tests and immunizations.
Zaptan. Be involved in your health care.
Shakpe. Be tobacco free.
Shakowin. Limit alcohol.
Shaglog'an. Manage stress.
Napchiyunka. Be safe.

A respectful salute to all of you Veterans.

Until next week, Happy Trails!

October 24, 2014

By Denver American Horse
Oglala Lakota Nation
Veteran's Service Officer

Veteran Warrior Wakte' glipi

The Red Feather Society (Wiyaka Luta Okolakichiye) and the Vietnam Veterans Annual Wachipi is an yearly gathering of Veterans that originally started mainly because of national VA Budget cutbacks and other Veterans issues in the early 1980s. Gatherings and Wachipi were held in a respectful and humble fashion with the help of the Gray Eagle Society.

Food (Woyute) items and money (Maza ska) were donated to the Wachipi by the Veterans themselves and everyone else who was generous. The announcer (Eyapaha) helped the Veterans by not accepting payment and often would drive around town with his PA system to let the public know of the coming celebration. During the Wachipi, a Blanket Dance would be held to help pay for the drum groups or other need. Some women and their families would save (Wakpatan) throughout the previous year to feed and honor the Veterans.

In the process, the dancing Arbor was named after our great Lakota Warrior, Daniel Stands. Over the years, many (Ota) remarkable parades were held. Prisoner of War (POW) and Missing in Action (MIA) soldiers are at the forefront of remembrances during these special days. Families of honored Veterans would bring their flags to the Wachipi for respectful posting and flying over the dancing and prayers throughout the Wachipi.

During the Wachipi, a Red Feather Society Princess is selected by the Veterans themselves for the coming year. It has been told that, for three (3) years the Gray Eagle Society helped the Vietnam Veterans in showing them how to organize and run the Wachipi, and later said if they, the Vietnam Veterans, did not learn by then, well, there was something wrong with them. It is good (Washte) that the Gray Eagle Society had the patience and generosity of time to lead by example.

Presently (Lehanl), the Red Feather Society and the Vietnam Veterans

Annual Wachipi are still in existence today. It is the only Wachipi in the area, or anywhere else in the world, that has a functioning traditional Lakota Warrior Society membership at its core and foundation. The name (Chaje) of this elite group is the Red Feather Society (Wiyaka Luta Okolakichiye). Members of this society are fearless and have been wounded in combat. They are the recipients of a red feather, typically, an eagle feather that has been dyed red. They have also taken an Oath to walk the good Red Road, continue to be Brave, to help and have Compassion for the People. The Warrior culture of Lakota men/women and the supportive roles of their extended families (Tioshpaye) is still prominently shown at this Vietnam Veterans Annual Wachipi every summer on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

Nahan (and), on a more humble note, I would like to ask the schools and their Teachers to write short "Get Well" (Blihichiya) messages to our Veterans who are in hospitals or in rehabilitative nursing care. You are welcome to contact me for more information on this project if you can. Thank you (Wopila).

Veterans Day is coming up and I believe there will be a special presentation for several Veterans at the Pine Ridge High School on November 10th. Keep your ears (Nung' es) open for the latest on this as an agenda is in progress.

I may be out there for Tricks or Treating so help me get many (Ota) sweets. Be safe on Halloween.

Until next week, Happy Trails!

October 17, 2014

By Denver American Horse
Oglala Lakota Nation
Veteran's Service Officer

Warrior Wakte' glipi.

TH'ASHUNKE WITKO (Crazy Horse) - In the fall (ptanyetu), when we hear the winged-ones during their migration as they fly high above us and the evenings (h' tayetu) get colder, a sadness visits me. Sadness, because a great warrior was killed out of jealousy by the older chiefs and some of his own people on September 5, 1877.

This past month of September has been a reminder of his journey to the Spirit world. For some of us lakh' ota warrior men and women, we still honor and remember him. His ways is said to be a serious and quiet personality. He kept to himself but loved his family, friends, relatives and people. He was never boastful of his deeds and did not seek praise for himself. He was a member of the Hokshi Hakakta Okh' Olakichiye (Last Child Society), which consisted of the last born males of selected families. This Okh' olakichiye (Society) gained a reputation of fearlessness (wakh' okpe shni). It is good (washte) to picture these warriors visiting each other around a campfire and talking of their wakte' glipi (to return home in triumph/victory).

In the present here and now (Wana), it is rare to see older men veterans encouraging the younger veteran warriors to practice and carry on these Okh' olakichiye (Society) ways. In its place, I still see jealousy, self-honoring and a willingness to tear other veterans down. It is obvious to me that the further you stray away from our Lakh' ota values of generosity and compassion, the healing of a veteran will not be complete. Some of us are not ashamed of who we are as Lakh' ota speakers and highly value this ability. As a Lakh' ota speaker, we have gained an extra understanding of things and situations because of the meanings of lakh' ota words, phrases, and living in our language as first language at home. Having respect for others is one of those understandings (Woableza) we were taught at home.

As Veteran Warriors and Defenders of the many Indian Nations, as well as the United States, we have to continue to do good deeds for our Lakh' ota people and help them gain the true meaning of Human Rights, rights that we already have. Nobody gave them to us. As Lakh' otas, we were born with these inherent rights. Th' ashunke Witko (Crazy Horse) and our ancestor warriors understood these Human Rights as freedom to live unrestrained from manmade laws and domination from others. As Veteran Warriors, we need to continue to be fearless as well.

To all my reading friends, I want to say Wopila (thanks) for spending some time getting to know the previous Veterans as I presented them in their short biographies. We also want to keep steady in remembering the POW/MIA in our hearts (Chante), never to be forgotten.

Nahan (and), a quick up-date on a date change regarding the VA's Office of Tribal Government Relations Consultation meeting with the area veterans. The date has changed to November 19, 2014. The location will be the Billy Mills Hall from 8:00am to 12:00pm.

Nakun (also), the OST Veterans Service Officer position appears to be Vacant. Contact the OST Personnel Office for more information.

Today, I had a young (Th' echa) Veteran who endured severe combat wounds and many (Ota) hospital stays, stop by the office and upon leaving, he inquired if he can spend some time (volunteer) here at the Homeless Veterans Shelter. A respectful salute to you Brother. Great (Kili).

Until next week (Oko), Happy Trails!

October 10, 2014

By Denver American Horse
Oglala Lakota Nation
Veteran's Service Officer

Warrior Wakte' Glipi

SHIRLEY MARSHALL - Shirley entered the WAC (Women's Army Corp) in 1970. She entered Basic Training at Fort McClellan, Alabama, then went on to Fort Sam Houston for Medical Technician training. She also went on to Fort

Lewis, Washington. Eventually, Shirley went back to Fort Sam Houston as a Dental Assistant and on to Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indiana. Thereafter, she was honorably discharged.

EUGENE AMERICAN HORSE, JR. U.S. Army, Vietnam 1969-1970. Rank: Sp-4. Left High School in November 1968 during the Draft.

DON W. AMERICAN HORSE. U.S. Army, MAY 1969-JANUARY 1972. Rank: E - 5.

GEORGE AMERICAN HORSE. U.S. Navy, 1970-1974. Sitting in for George during the honor song and dance is oldest Grandson, Dusty Richards.

Shirley, Eugene, Don, and George were Honored by their relatives this summer during the Vietnam Veterans Annual Wachipi on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

Shirley is the Daughter of Mary (American Horse) and Hobart Marshall, Sr. of Denby, SD.

Eugene, Don, and George are the Sons of Dorothy (Blue Bird) and Eugene American Horse, Sr. of Denby, SD.

These short biographies are brought to you by Denver American Horse, County Veterans Service Officer, Pine Ridge, SD, Wopila. Mitakuye Oyasin (all my relatives).

Nahan (and), an update on the September 22nd Veterans Stand Down at the Pine Ridge High School campus participation numbers are 64 Wicha (male) Veterans and 3 Winyan (female) veteran participants for a total of 67. A respectful salute to all of you Akicita (warriors/soldiers) who took part.

For all Veterans who may be looking for a place to stay and are attempting to walk the good Red Road, give JoeMo or Sandee a telephone call, or make a visit to the OST Homeless Veterans Shelter (605) 867-2466 or the V.A. Wellness Center (605) 867-2393.

A lila (very) important consultation meeting is coming to Pine Ridge on November 6. All Veterans are encouraged to attend this meeting. More information on this as it develops in next week's smoke signals.

Good news for all Veterans whose wasna (warrior food) is depleted or almost gone, deer hunting season opens on October 4th and ends on December 31st. Call the OST Parks & Recreation department at (605) 455-2584. Remember to be generous.

Until next week, Happy Trails!

October 3, 2014

Veteran Warrior Wakte' glipi

By Denver American Horse
Oglala Lakota Nation

Veteran's Service Officer

LAUREN AMERICAN HORSE - continuing this legacy of service, Lauren American Horse, Daughter of Dawson and Gilla American Horse, departs for Basic Training (June 2014). Like her Mother, she has chosen to serve in the U.S. Navy and upon completion of Basic Training, she will be in advanced training for Aviation Electronics.

CRYSTAL M. AMERICAN HORSE - U.S. Army, 2001 - 2003.

JAMES RYAN HERNANDEZ - Sergeant E-5, Army Reserve 2001 - 2011. Three (3) tours in Iraq. Honorably discharged in 2011.

JEREMIAH RICHARDS - enlisted in the United States Marine Corps on October 14, 2003. He graduated Boot Camp on January 9, 2004 in San Diego. After completing Marine Combat Training at Camp Pendleton, he went to Fort Leonardwood, Missouri to train further to be a Heavy Equipment Operator. After that, he was stationed at Okinawa, Japan for two (2) years with Marine Wing Support Squadron 172. In 2006, he was Ordered to Twenty nine Palms, California. He served with the Combat Logistics Battalion 7 for two (2) years. He completed his Duty with the Marine Corps on October 13, 2007.

* Lauren, Crystal, James, and Jeremiah were honored by their relatives this past summer during the Vietnam Veterans Annual Wachipi on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

Lauren is the Daughter of Dawson and Gilla American Horse.

Crystal is the Daughter of Don American Horse.

James is the grandson of Alice (American Horse) and Tuffy Sierra.

Jeremiah is the Son of Shirley Marshall and Boyd Richards.

These short Biographies were brought to you by Denver American Horse.

County Veterans Service Officer, Pine Ridge, S.D., Wopila. Mitakuye

Oyasin (all my relatives). This is the last group of the related

Veterans who were honored by the Long Valley American Horse Tioshpaye.

We want to say a Wopila (Thank you) to Traditional Dancer Waylon Gaddie for leading the Veterans during the Honor Song and Dance.

Nahan (and), last week I mentioned a very (Lila) important "consultation meeting" coming up on November 6, 2014. This meeting is being initiated by the VA's Office of Tribal Government Relations out of Minneapolis and will be moderated by Peter Vicaire, Liaison for that office. The purpose of the meeting is to get input from the Veterans about the "possible realignment of services from the Hot Springs Facility". We are still waiting for "Han" (yes) or "Hiya" (no) for the use of the Middle School gym at the Pine Ridge High School campus. I hope to have an answer Lila (very) soon.

This past Sunday, October 5th, District Commander Edwin Thompson and the Mila hanska Okolakichiye (American Legion) had a meeting at which Topa (4) of our Lakota American Legion post commanders were recognized for their hard work in getting their Posts updated with new members and meeting other goals. I understand the meeting took place in Hermosa and that Edwin had to kiss a goat named "Pinocchio" to get top fund raising in the amount of \$205.00 han (yes), and these guys were sober LOL. Anyway, good job Edwin! Waste yelo.

The O.S.T. Veterans Homeless Shelter that I mentioned last week could

use some donations of food items, so if you have a little extra to help out with, perhaps some coffee would be a good thing.

My woodpile for the stove is very unshika (pitiful) right now, but I hope to get my chainsaw out of the shop soon and get to cutting some firewood. I am sure most of you are way ahead of me in that regard. Waniyetu wan u yelo (a winter is coming). If you are a veteran, try to be generous with your time and help others, especially the elders.

In closing, I would like to say Wopila (thank you) to Laura Foud at the B.I.A. Realty Office for helping me this past week with my questions.

Until next week, Happy Trails!