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PEACE ON EARTH

Sornuk Valley, Hovsgol Province, Outer Mongolia. A Duhalar child falls asleep on a white reindeer as her mother milks the herd nearby. The Duhalar reindeer people live in Hovsgol — the land of the blue lake — a territory of about 65,000 sq. km in Northwestern Mongolia bordering the tiny Russian Republic of Tuva. The Duhalar are the guardians of this hidden realm, patrolling a maze of evergreen forests and snow-capped mountains on the backs of their stocky reindeer. They gain a meager existence by hunting for furs and antlers, which they sell in a nearby Mongol town. The Duhalar depend on a healthy domestic reindeer population not just for their milk and as a means of transport but also for their spirituality - to move through a forest haunted by the spirits of their ancestors who counsel the living through the shaman's songs. If the reindeer vanish, the songlines of the ancestors will also cease to exist.

Dec.16, 2013 A New Preamble Before the Big Show NYT By EDWARD ROTHSTEIN

WASHINGTON — Before we explore the problems with the permanent exhibition that opened this month at the National Archives here, it might help to recognize the challenges it faced. The exhibition, “Records of Rights,” is the first attraction you see after passing through the building’s new marble-clad entrance. It is meant to prepare a million visitors a year for what awaits them above, in the dimly lit Rotunda: original copies of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights — founding documents with such a sacral stature, they are viewed in near silence. What kind of exhibition could possibly serve as preamble?

At first, it seems an answer had been found: You see the eerie yellow glow of a display case. And inside, written on thick vellum, with a threaded ribbon holding an ancient royal seal, is one of four surviving copies of the 1297 Magna Carta, a contract between English barons and their tyrannical king.

What a way to begin this exhibition while also foreshadowing prospects ahead! The document was purchased by the investor and philanthropist David M. Rubenstein in 2007 for \$21.3 million; he provided it on permanent loan. He also donated a major portion of the \$30 million required for the new entrance plaza, the new gallery we are entering, and the exhibition that opens with this document.

Why is Magna Carta an ideal preamble? Because it laid a foundation for much English law and inspired the founders of the United States in their own daring experiment. Magna Carta recognizes that even kings must defer to a “law of the land”; that justice emerges from procedure, not fiat; and that “free men” merited guarantees we would now call “rights.”

The document is flanked by two informative touch screens. Its ink, we learn, is derived from growths that form on oak leaf buds when wasps lay their eggs there. And its influence is surveyed from colonial times. On a 1775 Massachusetts 30 shilling note, a soldier holds a sword in one hand, Magna Carta in the other. The document helped shape the Declaration of Independence, the Fifth Amendment, court decisions and contemporary declarations.

A visitor might think that the exhibition is going to proceed similarly. Perhaps we are about to see how ideas of due process grew into ideas of rights and liberty, which then, however haltingly or falteringly, made their way into the present. That might also be suggested by segments of the Rotunda's murals of the founding fathers; as you walk past, the bewigged figures morph into immigrant children, black infantrymen, American Indians, picketing women and contemporary schoolchildren — promising to show, perhaps, how we are all the founders' heirs. We even suspect we will examine the idea of the United States — one of the few nations to evolve out of concepts rather than a people or place.

But then we turn a corner and discover that this promise is not to be fulfilled. Instead it is turned on its head. We are going to learn not how these ideas succeeded despite flaws, but how deeply, throughout our history, they have failed.

The remainder of "Records of Rights" is about the depredations of black slavery and racism, the struggle for women's equality and the difficulties faced by immigrants. A panel explains that the documents' ideals "did not initially apply to all Americans," adding, "They were, in the words of Martin Luther King Jr., 'a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir.' "



And yes, however incomplete, this assessment of the founding documents is important, particularly in the case of American blacks (though liberty and justice are, of course, always and everywhere, delivered imperfectly to all). Slavery presents a compelling challenge to an idealized vision of the founders' achievements.

We see the original 1783 discharge papers of Cato Greene, who was captured in Guinea, Africa, sold into slavery in Rhode Island and fought in the Revolutionary War to obtain his freedom. We see a reproduction of the 1784 voucher for a slave who labored constructing the president's residence in Washington (later to become the White House). Here too are reminders of all the

injustices since.

In the section about women's rights, we learn that the archives holds hundreds of repatriation oaths taken by American-born women: on marriage their citizenship shifted to their husbands' nationality, so they had to petition for return. In the survey of immigration, too, we see discrimination, hatred and exclusion.

In addition, there is a technologically effective 17-foot-long touch-screen table at which 12 people at a time can zoom in on some 350 documents illustrating struggles for, say, workplace rights, "rights to privacy and sexuality" or "rights of Native Americans." Viewers are invited to select a sentiment and "tag" each document with sentiments such as "maddening" or "typical."

A good part of this should be included in any history of the United States, but here, presented in isolation, without context or deeper analysis, the effect is numbing. We aren't being asked to think: We are being drilled, unrelentingly, in injustice. When we are told, for example, about the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and its long-overdue promise, we are also informed that this year, "the Supreme Court declared Section 4 of the act unconstitutional." There is no explanation either of that section or of the decision; the only point is to imply continuing wrongs.

Another example: The section on immigration makes you wonder why anybody bothered to come to the United States at all. The exhibition's explanation is passive, even grudging, suggesting that war or persecution "pushed" some here; some were drawn by material prospects; and "for others the impetus was the promise of political or religious freedom." The impression, over all, is that this remained just a promise, and that America, even now, is resistant to immigration. We don't find contrary indicators like this: From 2001 to 2011 the number of immigrants legally admitted to the United States was greater than in any other comparable period in the nation's history.

The exhibition notes that Americans have "debated issues" like these, but there is no debate — only compassion opposing intolerance. A more compelling approach might have been to explore how the idea of "rights" has changed. Or to compare American struggles with those of other nations. Or to see the nation's profound virtues alongside its failings.

Magna Carta is this exhibition's promissory note, in more ways than one; its gallery's promise is also unfulfilled. What are we left with, as we head up to the Rotunda to see the founding documents? No context or perspective; only grim struggles and partially won liberties. What are we to think of Magna Carta, which no doubt accompanied a fair share of baronial tyranny? And what is a visiting class of students to think, except that the United States has been uniquely hypocritical and surpassingly unjust?

This is a peculiar way for an institution that is a reflection of the government itself, to see the nature of its origins, the character of its achievements, and the promise of its ideas.

Edward Rothstein on Twitter; twitter.com/EdRothstein

"Records of Rights" is at the National Archives, Constitution Avenue at Ninth Street NW, Washington; [archives.gov](https://www.archives.gov).

Micqaela Jones. This artist is an enrolled member of the Temoak Western Shoshone Tribe. She grew up on the Duck Valley Reservation near Elko, NV. For the last 12 years she has been traveling and selling her art work with her husband and children. Today she continues to make art work towards her Shoshone culture using contemporary expressions and vivid colors.

[A report aims to “shame” America into rethinking Native justice](#) hcn.org

In 1881, a Brulé Lakota man in South Dakota who shot and killed another member of his tribe was sentenced to death by federal officials who thought the tribal punishment of eight horses, \$600 and a blanket was too lenient. The case set a precedent that certain crimes committed on tribal lands are to...

On behalf of the RTC Board of Commissioners and staff, thank you for attending the RTC Transit Connections 2013 community summit.

The presentations given at the summit are now available on our website, www.rtcwashoe.com, click on HOT TOPICS and scroll down to the Transit Connections 2013 topic.

Michael Moreno, RTC Public Information Officer mmoreno@rtcwashoe.com

[KUYI 88.1FM Hopi Radio](#)

razoo.com

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[Application for tuition support for on-line coursework at Great Basin College](#)

Per requests brought forward at the Western Shoshone-Barrick Dialogue meetings in 2013, Barrick has been able to partner with Great Basin College to offer tuition support for Western Shoshone students taking on-line coursework as part of a degree/certificate program or coursework that directly benefits their employment. This support will cover tuition for on-line courses up to 12 credits for the semester. Current recipients of the Western Shoshone Educational Legacy Fund Scholarship will not be eligible for the on-line tuition support because they are already receiving the scholarship.

Since this is a new program, we will need your help in letting students in your communities know about the opportunity. I have been contacted by a few students this fall, and I will send applications to them, but I believe that there are still many other students who I have not spoken to.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 775-397-8458 or at gfenmore@barrick.com

Thanks for your help with this program, and hope you have a happy holiday.

George Fennemore

[American Indian College Fund to Celebrate 25 Years](#)

indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com

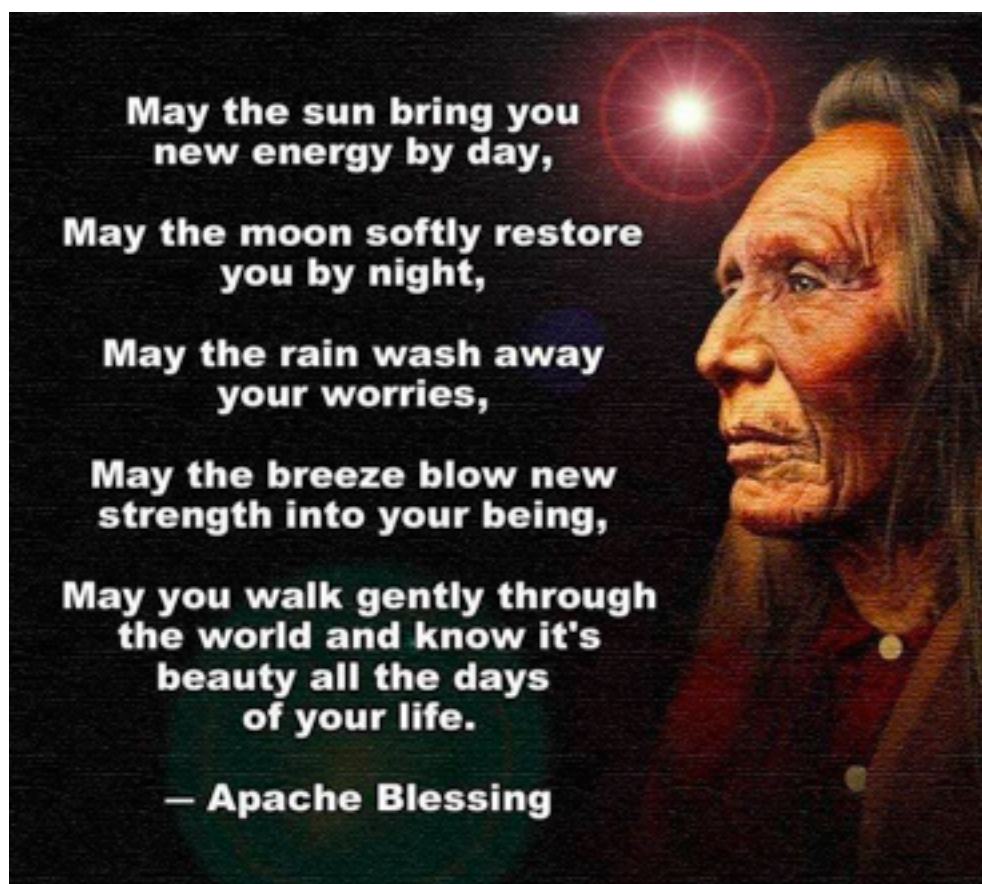
[The American Indian College Fund will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2014. Cheryl Crazy Bull, the president and CEO, discusses the fund's future.](#)

[Pell Grants for Better Jobs for Renters 1](#) fs6.formsite.com

[Just the fact that you are a member of The H.O.P.E. Program means you qualify for the Pell Grant on your own Income Merits! Up to \\$5645 can be yours for 2013!](#)

Here's what happened this week at Interior: Clean and renewable energy, and its economic impact, on display this week in Baltimore; Secretary Jewell announces nearly \$7million in awards to help advance the administration's Climate Action Plan; the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force meets to discuss progress in the greater Everglades region; initial land purchase orders go out to the Oglala Sioux Nation, a major milestone in implementing the Cobell settlement; and best wishes for a safe and happy holiday season from all of us here at the Department of the Interior.

[Click here to watch this week's episode.](#)



[Kill the Art,
Save the
People: Why
the
'Stereotypes'
Had to Die](#)

indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com

[Artist Cannupa Hanska Luger explains why he felt the need to destroy his Stereotypes sculptures](#)

The Ultimate Green Fuel? Utah Engineers Convert Algae Into Bio-Fuel

by [jonathanturley](#)

There is a fascinating new breakthrough out of Utah where engineers at the Department of Energy's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) have invented a machine that can [convert algae and into crude oil in minutes](#) -- skipping the usual millions of years of natural development. The invention could offer a unique and plentiful biofuel. [Read more of this post](#)

Playing with this jump rope generates enough energy to charge your phone

Now kids can generate energy not just when they play soccer, but when they jump rope.

***Grant Funds Available from Justice Department to Indian Country**

[nativenewsonline.net](#) WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Justice today, December 20, 2013, announced the opening of a comprehensive grant solicitation for funding to support public safety, victim services, and crime prevention by American Indian and Alaska Native governments. The department's FY 2014 Coordinated Tribal...

BY SARAH LASKOW

Thunder in the Heart Round Dance Takes over Polo Park Centre Court

[nativenewsonline.net](#)

WINNIPEG –The gathering proved that the Idle No More Movement is very much alive in this region of the country. Many participants took part to demonstrate their commitment towards protecting the environment, waters and lands and promoting the sovereignty and rights of Indigenous Peoples. The gatheri...

Arizona State retires Becenti's number [azfamily.com](#)

SHIPROCK, N.M. (AP) -- In the sacred Navajo hoop dance, performers bounce and hop as they whirl hoops around their arms and bodies, a ritual honoring the circle of life. For Ryneldi Becenti, a smaller hoop within that greater circle helped guide her life.

What It's Like: Grand Entry at a Pow Wow From a Dancer's Point of View

[indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com](#)

A dancer's eye view of the grand entry at a pow wow filmed by accomplished pow wow and hoop dancer Jacob Pratt.

How Y'all, Youse and You Guys Talk [nytimes.com](#)

What does the way you speak say about where you're from? Answer the questions to see your personal dialect map.

Reporter's Notebook: 'What Part Of Sacred Don't You Understand?'

[www.npr.org](#)

The controversy over the auction of Hopi objects boils down to competing definitions of the sacred.

- [Mary Wa](#)

Here's how you explain waste water on a sacred mountain. It's like someone every day

peeing all over your church, synagogue, temple.

On Dec. 22, 1969, **Radio Free Alcatraz** broadcast for the first time. [Occupation of Alcatraz](#) spokesperson [John Trudell](#) (in photo) conducted the regular radio program. You can listen to some of the broadcasts on the [From the Vault Radio - Pacifica Radio Archives](#): <http://bit.ly/>



[1hw0WUL](#) For more on the Occupation, visit: <http://bit.ly/HSJzki> For more about the life of Trudell, see the [Independent Lens | PBS](#) website for the film Trudell: <http://to.pbs.org/1cJY3uK>
Photo by Ilka Hartmann.

[Diné hoping to earn spot on U.S. Olympic speed skating team - Navajo Times](#)
www.navajotimes.com

["I don't care how much it burns," said Gorman, 26. "I don't care how tired I am. I am going to make it the best trials I've ever had, no matter what it takes. I'm going to leave it all on ice, everything I've got."](#)

GRAVESIDE SERVICES FOR "MOONMAN" JOHNNY POWELL, WERE HELD SUNDAY AT THE SCHURZ CEMETARY @ 11 AM. HIS "BIG EATS" TO FOLLOWED AT THE TRIBAL GYMNASIUM, SCHURZ, NEVADA DEC. 22, 2013.

William (Jack) Woods - services today in Elko



**"I find television very educational.
Every time someone switches it on
I go into another room and
read a good book."**

— Groucho Marx

Hallmark's Filmmaker's Companion