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250 years, Native American tribe regains ownership of Big Sur ancestral lands

Ranchers Push

After



[First American Art Magazine](#)

The legendary printmaker and mixed-media artist, Jean LaMarr (Northern Paiute/Pit River) is featured in a profile by Jean Merz-Edwards in our Fall 2020 issue.

Growth industry. Privately run but publicly funded Nevada charter schools have been allowed to proliferate in Nevada, with bipartisan support and scant legislative or regulatory scrutiny. There are multiple policy implications, including but not limited to companies profiting from Nevada public education spending. Ask state officials. They can't tell you how much Nevada public money flies out of state to enrich companies headquartered in, oh, Florida. It's just not something they track.

Charter schools, taken collectively, are already the third largest school district in the state, and as growth continues, they'll overtake Washoe and be the second largest, I dunno, within five years easy I think. Your state legislators actually considered capping charter growth in 2019. For a nanosecond. That bill was gutted, replaced with little more than a toothless suggestion that charters should try to include a more diverse student body. Nearly two years later - well, it was a toothless suggestion. April Corbin Girnus reports: [Charter schools grow, but fall short of diversity targets set by Legislature](#). from the Nevada Current

Sarah Sunshine Manning · December 14, 2019

Acknowledging the Winter Solstice is a Decolonial Act for Indigenous People

The winter solstice is an opportunity for Indigenous people to reconnect to the natural world, sharpen our senses, and access our most powerful selves.

The winter solstice is a special time for those who honor and acknowledge the patterns of our natural world.

On this day, the sun is at its lowest point in the sky, traveling across the sky world above us in a short stride, resulting in the shortest day and the longest night of the year in the Northern Hemisphere. For Indigenous people across the globe, the natural world is a source of teachings about natural and universal laws. In understanding the interconnectedness of all things, we recognize that the cosmos— the sun, moon, stars, and other planets— affect us and connect us in undeniable ways.

The winter solstice is an event that has been observed for millenia by many of our Indigenous ancestors. While some Tribal Nations have traditionally held special ceremonies during celestial events like the winter and summer solstices, others may have simpler ways of observing these moments. Some Tribal Nations have maintained teachings around solstice time, while others may be seeking to revive the teachings, practices and ceremonies that were forcibly taken from us.

In its period of darkness, the winter solstice is an opportunity to go inward with deep intention, to care for our spiritual selves, our bodies and minds, our loved ones and families, and to prepare for the longer days ahead.

The winter solstice falls on December 21 This year.

In the spirit of self care, community care, accessing our ancestral memory and our most powerful selves, here are 14 different ways that you and your loved ones can spend the winter solstice in observance of a natural phenomena that comes only once a year. Take what works for you from this list, and if possible, consult with elders and your own traditional teachings for guidance on the best ways to acknowledge this event and deepen your spiritual connection during this time.

ON SOLSTICE DAY...

1. Take the day off of work or just slow down and rest

Whether you have to pull a full or double shift on winter solstice day, or if you have the day off already, set aside time to just, be. No guilt. No intrusive thoughts about what needs to get done. Set down your electronic devices and smart phones, and be present in the moment. And if you have kids, housemates, friends or loved ones, spend that quality time together and totally unplugged from technology.

2. Cook and share a healthy, comforting meal with loved ones

As Indigenous people of the Earth, kinship is what has always held us together. Sharing space and time to cook, eat, and nourish our bodies and our loved ones' bodies through the preparation of healthy meals is both physical, communal and spiritual. Seek out traditional and clean foods to prepare, or cook your favorite recipe from a loved one!

3. Reflect on the past year

Take time to reflect on the highs and even lows of the past year. Acknowledge and celebrate your growth, your resilience, your strength and the blessings you may have overlooked. And last but not least, let go of what doesn't serve you in order to create space for the positive ahead of you in the coming year. Make amends with others if you need to and set yourself up for new possibilities, new friendships and deepened connections.

4. Give thanks for all of your blessings

It's so easy to get wrapped up in what isn't working for us, what didn't happen for us in the past year or loss we may have endured. But the fact that we are all still here, breathing and living right now, is evidence of SO many blessings. Start with the small things, like, clean air, a warm space to be in, your physical abilities, the gift of your intelligence and creativity. Recount these things in your mind, in a prayer or meditation, or even write them down on a piece of paper. There is no limit to how long this gratitude list can be! And in fact, the longer the list the better.

5. Clean and honor your living space by decluttering

Our homes are the sacred spaces where so many important things happen. We rest in our homes, we eat in our homes. We gather, commune, and even raise children in our homes. Creating a sacred space in your home sets you and your family up for success each day. Create an

atmosphere on solstice day that allows you to just be present in your home and to focus on the things that nourish and inspire you. This might mean getting a lot of the heavy lifting-type cleaning done in the days leading up to solstice day.

6. Show the people who you care for that you appreciate them

This could be as simple as a written card, a text message, a phone call or a home visit. You can show up for them with a favor, a simple gift, or just with your presence. Not only express your gratitude for them and the ways they have brought value and nourishment to your life, but ask genuine questions about how they are doing, and be an attentive and compassionate listener.

7. Channel your creative energy through arts, crafts and exercising your imagination

One of the most powerful gifts that we all have, is the gift of our creative thoughts. We are born with creativity, and we exercise this daily with our thoughts and actions, actively co-creating the world around us. We are ALL creatives in some way! Channel your creativity by dreaming up something new, by making something with your hands and your mind, and savor the process. Sew, bead, paint, write, cook, design, change the layout of your bedroom or living room, and even strategize movements. The possibilities are endless!

8. Drink natural and medicinal teas

Our natural world is rich with medicines, for both body, mind and spirit, and our ancestors knew the power of drinking medicinal teas. If possible, prepare and drink teas from your or other Indigenous homelands. Drink tea with loved ones. Pray over your tea, pray to the root and plant nations, to ancestors, and to the water, and know that you are activating medicine on a cellular and even generational level.

9. Practice special self-care rituals for self and others

Care for your physical and spiritual self with a warm shower or bath, with rich lotions, essential oils, etc. Put on a luxurious face mask if that's your thing. Give yourself a manicure or pedicure. Get a massage or give a massage. Braid someone else's hair for them, or ask them to braid your hair. Name your practice, and make time for that.

10. Go to a ceremony or hold a personal moment of prayer in your home

If you have access to a ceremonial space, go to that space. Show up with something to give while you receive. This looks different for everyone, depending on tribe, nation, and regional and clan teachings.

11. Pay attention to the movement of the sun

The sun is revered by Indigenous nations for a reason. It literally gives us life! It's so valuable to observe the natural patterns of the sun and to consider the teachings we have related to the sun. By sitting in deep observation on solstice day, and in fact, on any day, we sharpen our senses and our intuitive relationship to the natural world.

12. Light a fire

Winter solstice and winter in general is a time of fires, and fire is an old soul. Fire is also comforting, beautiful and mesmerizing to look at. You can put medicines on the fire, like sage or

cedar. You can sit around a fire and feel its warmth. You can cook over a fire, put offerings into a fire, even pray, sing and tell stories next to a fire.

13. Make offerings

While we ask for good things for the upcoming year and give thanks for our blessings, it's so important to also give back and make offerings. Reciprocity, even to the spiritual world, matters. Set out food, make prayer ties, or whichever offering is prescribed by your own teachings.

14. Set intentions for the longer days ahead

In the same way we co-create each moment of our day, we have the power to co-create the future that is ahead of us simply with the power of our thoughts. So set and declare your best intentions for the coming days, for the winter season, and upcoming year. Write your intentions down. Journal your intentions. Pray about them and ask for support. Believe that you can achieve those things, whether they are personal, physical, spiritual, relational or professional.

We know and our ancestors knew that in order to show up for our communities as good relatives and as energized agents of change, we have to be grounded and strong. Replenishing your spirit in a time of growing social unrest is also a revolutionary act.

We all have the power to create a world where we are better and more connected, and it all starts within— within self and within community— in carving out time and space to reflect, grow and always give back. Remember we must also show care and compassion to our relatives who are less fortunate, who are living in less than ideal situations, who are grieving or struggling with their most basic needs. Remember our Earth and our non-human relations. Remember those who are suffering injustice in different corners of the world. And remember the generations that have come before and those who will come after us.



With warmth and solidarity, happy winter solstice. Sarah Sunshine Manning

Sarah Sunshine Manning, NDN Collective Director of Communications, is a citizen of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation in Idaho and Nevada, and Chippewa-Cree of Rocky Boy, Montana. Manning directs NDN Collective's communications strategy and impact. She also serves as producer of the NDN Podcast While Indigenous and as editor of the NDN blog. Manning has Bachelor's degrees in American Indian Studies, Social Science-History, and licensure in Secondary Education. She has a Master's degree in journalism and mass communication.

GrantStation

COVID-19 Related Funding

Funds for Collaborative Arts Projects Addressing COVID-19 Issues in California

The California Arts Council's Impact Projects grant program will support collaborative projects that center artists and artistic practice in responding to issues facing California.

Organizations Aiding Vulnerable Populations in Southern Indiana Supported

The Community Foundation of Southern Indiana's COVID-19 Relief Fund provides grants to organizations in Clark and Floyd counties that work in support of seniors, children, immigrants, workers, and other vulnerable populations that have been stressed by the pandemic.

Grants Assist Nonprofits in the Northern Piedmont Region of Virginia

The Northern Piedmont Community Foundation's Emergency Response Fund has been established to support critical needs due to the COVID-19 crisis.

National Opportunities

Support for the Preservation of African American Historic Places

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is committed to saving America's diverse historic environments and to preserving and revitalizing the livability of communities nationwide.

Organizations Addressing Human Needs Funded

The Looking Out Foundation is dedicated to empowering those without a voice. The Foundation provides support to nonprofit organizations nationwide that address the ever-changing needs of the human race.

Grants Foster Youth Efforts to Address Childhood Hunger

Youth Service America (YSA) and Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation's Youth Grants provide up to \$500 to support youth leaders across the U.S. to turn their ideas into action and make an impact on the issue of childhood hunger.

Fellowships for U.S. Classroom Teachers

Fund for Teachers believes that extraordinary leaders are made more extraordinary when they are empowered to push past the boundaries of knowledge.

Regional Opportunities

Organizations in the Mid-Atlantic States and Utah Supported

The Kahlert Foundation primarily supports nonprofit organizations that work to improve the quality of life and well-being of communities in the states of Maryland and Utah.

Funds for Libraries in Rural Texas

The Tocker Foundation is dedicated to the support of rural, public libraries in Texas serving populations of 12,000 or less.

Grants Promote Oral Health in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont

The Northeast Delta Dental Foundation is dedicated to improving the access to, and the quality of, oral healthcare and education for the public and the dental communities in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

Support for Efforts to Strengthen Colorado Communities and Families

The Anschutz Family Foundation supports nonprofit organizations in rural and urban regions of Colorado that assist people to help themselves while nurturing and preserving their self-respect.

Federal Opportunities

Funds Available to Diversify the Nursing Workforce

The Nursing Workforce Diversity Program seeks to increase nursing education opportunities for individuals who are from disadvantaged backgrounds, including racial and ethnic minorities underrepresented among registered nurses.

Program Rejuvenates Main Streets in Small Communities

The HOPE VI Main Street Grant Program offers support to small communities to assist in the renovation of a historic or traditional central business district, or "Main Street" area, by replacing unused, obsolete, commercial space in buildings with affordable housing units.



MAP Fund

The MAP Fund invests in artistic production as the critical foundation of imagining—and ultimately co-creating—a more equitable and vibrant society. MAP's grant program supports original live performance projects that embody a spirit of deep inquiry. [Learn more](#) about the funding guidelines and application process



Keeling Curve Prize

The Keeling Curve Prize, an initiative of the Global Warming Mitigation Project, is a global warming solutions project that awards prize money to projects across the globe that have significant potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or increase carbon uptake. [Learn more](#) about the Prize guidelines and application process

Challenge Seeks Smart Farming Solutions for African and Asian Countries

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation: Grand Challenges—Smart Farming Innovations for Small-Scale Producers

Grand Challenges, an initiative of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, fosters innovation to solve key global health and development problems. The Smart Farming Innovations for Small-Scale Producers request for proposals (RFP) seeks smart farming solutions that leverage digital technology innovations that have the potential to drive positive impact for small-scale producer (SSP) entrepreneurs delivered through bundled farmer services and enabled by scalable digital and data platforms. Solutions should address one or more challenges faced by small-scale crop and livestock producers in one or more areas of agricultural advisory, farm management decision

support, input supply, finance, insurance, market access, and linkages. Solutions should use human-centered design to elucidate the barriers that prevent SSPs from improving productivity, profitability, and income—then propose smart farming solutions that can help elevate SSP entrepreneurs. Consortiums implementing projects in selected African and Asian countries are eligible to apply for seed grants or scale-up grants. The application deadline is February 25, 2021. Visit the Grand Challenges website to review the RFP, which details the eligible countries and guidelines for forming a consortium.

Funds to Protect Threatened Heritage in Several Regions

[Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development: Cultural Emergency Response](#)

The Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development, based in the Netherlands, seeks to create opportunities for connection and exchange and stimulate cultural expression. The Cultural Emergency Response program provides financial support to cultural heritage under threat, primarily in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Eastern Europe. Proposals must refer to a man-made or natural disaster or a conflict situation which caused a cultural emergency situation that requires immediate action. Support is provided for concrete material needs, research missions for identifying cultural emergency relief actions, first aid training for salvaging culture, or raising awareness about the damage to culture and heritage in an ongoing crisis. Applications may be submitted at any time. Visit the Fund's website to download the Statement of Need form.

National Science Foundation Smart and Connected Communities Grants

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has announced their Smart and Connected Communities (S&CC) Grants. The goal of this NSF grants solicitation is to accelerate the creation of the scientific and engineering foundations that will enable smart and connected communities to bring about new levels of economic opportunity and growth, safety and security, health and wellness, accessibility and inclusivity, and overall quality of life.

Deadline for Application: February 24, 2021

For more information on the grants and how to apply, please visit their website [HERE](#).

The S&CC program encourages researchers to work with community stakeholders to identify and define challenges they are facing, enabling those challenges to motivate use-inspired research questions. The S&CC program supports integrative research that addresses fundamental technological and social science dimensions of smart and connected communities and pilots solutions together with communities.



Dragon Lizard playing his Leaf Guitar 🎸

Carol Purroy ·

T'was a month before Christmas,
And all through the town,
People wore masks,
That covered their frown.
The frown had begun
Way back in the Spring,
When a global pandemic
Changed everything.
They called it corona,
But unlike the beer,
It didn't bring good times,
It didn't bring cheer.
Airplanes were grounded,
Travel was banned.
Borders were closed
Across air, sea and land.
As the world entered lockdown
To flatten the curve,
The economy halted,
And folks lost their nerve.
From March to July
We rode the first wave,
People stayed home,
They tried to behave.
When summer emerged
The lockdown was lifted.
But away from caution,
Many folks drifted.

Now it's December
And cases are spiking,
Wave two has arrived,
Much to our disliking.
It's true that this year
Has had sadness a plenty,
We'll never forget
The year 2020.
And just 'round the corner -
The holiday season,
But why be merry?
Is there even one reason?
To decorate the house
And put up the tree,
Who will see it,
No one but me.
But outside my window
The snow gently falls,
And I think to myself,
Let's deck the halls!
So, I gather the ribbon,
The garland and bows,
As I play those old carols,
My happiness grows.
Christmas is not cancelled
And neither is hope.
If we lean on each other,
I know we can cope
(Thanks for posting, Yessy Torres)

Idlewild's buffalo zoo – Jean Myles remembers....

(from a Karl Breckenridge column Jan 9, 2009)

I find that we can answer one question. Phyllis Adler asked ... "What happened to the buffalo in Idlewild Park?" The buffalo were purchased by the Frank Russell Turner, a descendant of one of the original Irish families who settled in Sierra Valley and owner of the Turner Ranch at the west side of the valley on Highway 89/49. In the mid-1950s, a friend learned that the Reno Zoo was going to destroy the animals, and let Frank know. Frank was interested and made arrangements to pick up the seven remaining ill-cared-for animals, who became the biggest family pets anyone had ever had in Sierra Valley. The buffalo lived a life of luxury and ease in the lush meadows of the Turner Ranch.

However, buffalo do not like fences of any sort. For years they roamed the valley, not paying much attention to property lines or fences. By the time our family became regular visitors to the Valley, there were only three left. They delighted our children as we often met them on one of Sierra Valley's roads. If they were coming towards us, always three abreast, we stopped and waited until they passed. If they were headed in our same direction, we followed slowly as they ambled along, hoping that they would eventually turn so we could pass. One day, on our way to our cabin above Sierra City, we watched in amazement as the three leaned against the post and barbed wire fence along the highway. When they and the fence toppled over, the buffalo rose, shook themselves off and wandered down the highway. The children were whooping with laughter as we followed them down the road. Occasionally, the buffalo would migrate to another ranch and a phone call would request that Frank come and get his pets. He would agree to pick them up the following morning, if the neighbor would kindly round them up. Horses are skittish around buffalo, and, herding buffalo is has been likened to herding cats ... they don't go where you want them to. They would ultimately be contained in a corral, and Frank would appear early the next morning to find the corral empty ... to the chagrin of the other rancher and to Frank's great amusement. After one or two experiences like this, the ranchers became very aware and just called to tell him where they were. He would meet them on the road and talk them into the truck.

They loved to ride. When he got to the ranch, he would let the tailgate down and leave them until they decided to get down. If he could not find them, they would eventually find their way home. Their exploits became legendary to Sierra Valley folk, and everyone watched out for them. As age overtook them, they died off one by one. We still find ourselves looking to see them grazing in the meadows as we drive along Highway 49 on our to the cabin. Enjoying your news and views, and reminisces.



wbur.org

[**Ranchers Push Back On American Prairie Reserve In Montana
Local ranchers in the region worry their way of life may disappear as the reserve grows in size.**](#)

(I find that sentence rather amusing.)

[Indigenous Environmental Network](#)

Rather than dramatically change their operations—JPMorgan executives continue to jet around the globe, Disney’s cruise ships still burn oil, and BlackRock’s office buildings gobble up electricity—the corporations are working with the Nature Conservancy, the world’s largest environmental group, to employ far-fetched logic to help absolve them of their climate sins. By taking credit for saving well-protected land, these companies are reducing nowhere near the pollution that the...



[bloomberg.com](#)

[Nature Conservancy Hooked Corporate America on an Empty Climate Solution](#) [Companies say they’re saving forests by buying offsets, but many of these lands don’t need defending](#)

After 250 years, Native American tribe regains ownership of Big Sur ancestral lands



Amanda Jackson, CNN • Updated 30th July 2020

(CNN) — A northern California Indian tribe's sacred land is now back under their ownership, thanks to the help of a conservancy group.

The Esselen Tribe, one of the state's smallest and least well known tribes, inhabited the Santa Lucia Mountains and the Big Sur coast for thousands of years, according to [their website](#). Nearly 250 years ago, their land was taken from them by Spanish explorers, according to the tribe's [history](#). The tribe remained landless until Monday.

The Esselen Tribe of Monterey County (ETMC) closed escrow on a \$4.5 million deal with [Western Rivers Conservancy \(WRC\)](#), an environmental group, to purchase nearly 1,200 acres in Big Sur. The WRC acquires land with the purpose of finding a long-term steward that will conserve the natural habitat. In October [the group announced](#) it helped the tribe to be rewarded a grant through the California Natural Resources Agency that covered the purchase of the land.

"It is with great honor that our tribe has been called by our Ancestors to become stewards of these sacred indigenous lands once again," Tom Little Bear Nason, Tribal Chairman of the ETMC, said in a [statement in October](#).

"These lands are home to many ancient villages of our people, and directly across the Little Sur River sits Pico Blanco or 'Pitchi', which is the most sacred spot on the coast for the Esselen People and the center of our origin story."

Future of the land

The land, which was known as the Adler Ranch, first came to the attention of WRC in 2015 when the long time owners had been trying to sell the property for years, Sue Doroff, president of WRC, told CNN on Wednesday.



A view of the redwoods on the property.

Doug Steakley/Western Rivers Conservancy

The area piqued the conservation group's interest because it is known for its giant redwoods, an ideal nesting place for one of the largest flying birds in the world, the California condor.

"The old-growth redwoods on this property are genetically adaptive to the warmer dry climate of Big Sur," Doroff said. "These trees will be important for the future effort to assist in redwood survival."

The Little Sur River runs along one side of the property with a tributary jutting onto the land, which is a spawning ground for the South-Central California Coast Steelhead, [said the WRC](#). Both these species are in dire need of conservation. The [condor is listed as endangered](#) and the [steelhead as threaten](#) on the Endangered Species Act.

Both parties agreed that the land will not be commercially developed on and that conservation efforts will continue, according to Doroff.

"We are proud of our involvement here and conserving this landscape," Doroff said. "We are honored to be a part of rebuilding the Esselen Tribe."

In addition to conservation efforts, the ETMC plans on building a village that other indigenous tribes in the area can utilize. They are also planning to host public educational events to teach others about their culture, according to Doroff.

"We are going to conserve it and pass it on to our children and grandchildren and beyond," Nason told [The Mercury News](#). "Getting this land back gives privacy to do our ceremonies. It gives us space and the ability to continue our culture without further interruption."