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Three Western Shoshone medicine people

Nevada Commission for Women seeks four new members

Stories, Wisdom and Advice

“Grandma, how do you cope with pain?”

A history lesson for people who think that history doesn't matter.

Intact DNA from 7,200 Year Old Woman Reveals Strange Human Lineage

Meet Cheddar Man; first modern Brittons had dark skin and blue eyes

Kevin Locke and an open letter to the Standing Rock Sioux

Harry Fonseca: Stone Poem #4



Three Western Shoshone medicine people. Corbin Harney, and Eunice Silva and Florence Vega, both over 100 years old. RUBY VALLEY TREATY DAYS. 1990 Photo by Linda Putman.

The Nevada Commission for Women currently has four open positions. Please share this with anyone you know who may be interested in becoming a Commissioner for the State of Nevada!

Apply at: https://ha1.nv.gov/form/Governor/Boards_and_Commissions_Application

Thank you!

NV Commission for Women

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My cousin Helen, who is in her 90s now, was in the Warsaw ghetto during World War II. She and a bunch of the girls in the ghetto had to do sewing each day. And if you were found with a book, it was an automatic death penalty. She had gotten hold of a copy of 'Gone with the Wind', and she would take three or four hours out of her sleeping time each night to read. And then, during the hour or so when they were sewing the next day, she would tell them all the story. These girls were risking certain death for a story. And when she told me that story herself, it actually made what I do feel more important. Because giving people stories is not a luxury. It's actually one of the things that you live and die for.

- Neil Gaiman

[Heidi Barlese](#) is  feeling thankful. March 2016

· [Sparks, NV](#) ·

Ever since I remember, I've always been interested in Stories (legends). I remember coming home from School, and asking my Grandma to tell me a Story. Later, I looked in the Libraries for Books on Paiute Legends. Now, I am Researching my Family History, and friends give me pointers on where I should look/go. It is AWESOME! Now, I am able to put a face to a name, or see the place. I remember how my Grandma cried, when some of her pictures of her

grandparents/mom/dad were damaged . But now, because she told me things, and I listened, I am able to look for those people (relatives), and marvel in the thought of knowing.

“Grandma, how do you cope with pain?”

“With your hands, honey. If you do it with your mind instead of relieving the pain, it toughens even harder.”

“With your hands grandma?”

“Yes, our hands are the antennae of our soul. If you move them; knitting, cooking, painting, playing or sinking them into the ground, you send care signs to the deepest part of you and your soul lights up because you’re paying attention to it. Then signs of pain will no longer be necessary.”

“Hands are really that important?”

“Yes my daughter. Think of babies: they start to know the world through the touch of their hands. If you look at the hands of old people, they tell you more about their life than any body part. Everything that is done by hand is said to be done with the heart. Because it’s really like this: hands and heart are connected. Masseurs know well: when they touch someone with their hands, they create a deep connection. It is precisely from this connection that healing comes. Think of lovers: when they touch their hands, they make love in a more sublime way.”

“My hands grandma.... how long I haven’t used them like this!”

“Move them, my love. Begin to create with them and everything within you will begin to move. The pain will not pass away. And instead what you do with them will become the most beautiful masterpiece and it won’t hurt anymore. Because you have been able to transform its essence.”

--Elena Bernabe

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Ever feel in a rut?

~~~~~  
[Robert Upham](#)

My daughter once wrote a poem to me. One of the lines stated “My Dad stayed on the move, because movement was all he knew”.

This movement was taught to me by my Great-Grandmother Julia Running Fisher, whose picture hangs on the wall at my daughter’s house. My grandmother Julia moved for a variety of reasons. I imagine one of the reasons was to follow the buffalo. This nomadic lifestyle is in our blood.

The buffalo are gone, as it once was, the same way all my Grandma’s children died before her. In one of my drawings a buffalo stands in front of a train. His stance says, “Move out of my way. I’m coming through.”

I remember my grandmother dialing on the phone and she would say, “Long Distance, Please.”

Then, soon after, she would say “I’m coming through.” Then she would speak the Gros Ventre language. I had no idea what she was saying. I would hear somebody’s name here and there, I would hear places such as Hays, Chinook, Lodge Pole, Big Warm, Harlem. All the other words were as if she was a code-talker in World War II. My grandmother’s son, Wilbur Ohlerking, died in World War II. His picture was on the wall near the kitchen. As soon as she hung up, the activity would begin. Out would come the flour and the yeast, and soon the kitchen would be filled with the smells of baking bread. The loaves would be carefully wrapped in towels and

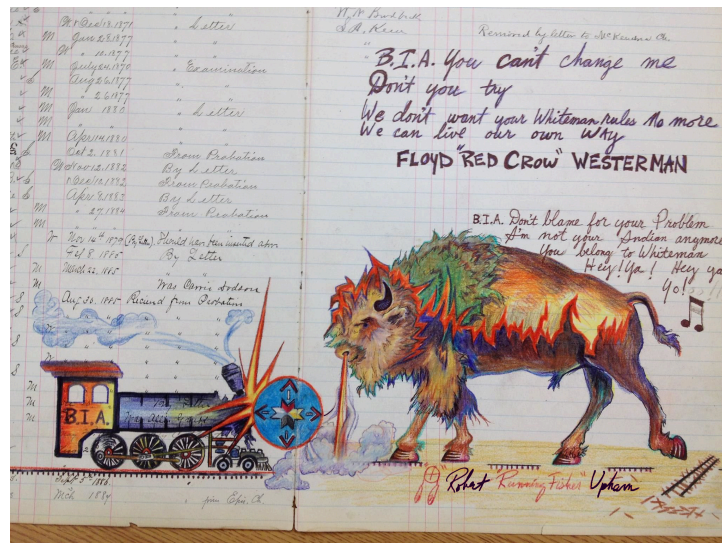
packed in a big shopping bag, along with baloney, peanut butter and jelly, wieners (usually Oscar Mayer—because that’s what I liked), pilot bread, Ritz crackers, raisins, nuts with a nut-cracker and SPAM. It was as if we were packing rations for a long-range patrol in World War II.

She made periodic disciplined and heart-felt journeys from Seattle to Butte or Fort Belknap Montana, to place flowers on Wilbur's grave. Buried in these two places are her children, including my grandmother—my Mom’s mother.

The train we rode was called The Empire Builder. The street that we lived on in Seattle, Washington was called Empire Way. Empire, Empire, Empire... always a reminder somewhere, enit. As we travelled through two mountain ranges, my grandmother and I would lean against each other, admire the scenery and look for animals. These animals were the elk, deer, beaver, mountain goat, mountain sheep, the bear and many others. My grandmother would point out places where there were buffalo jumps. She would point to the many-levelled terraces alongside of hills and tell me they were made by the buffalo. I could imagine many Indians creating the stampeding of buffalo over the cliff, as I fell asleep.

Usually I was asleep by the time we reached Harlem, Montana, and I was awakened by the train whistle and my grandma shaking me by my shoulder. The next thing I knew, we were stepping out into the dark on hard-packed snow. There was no train depot. We stood in the middle of the road and as the train left, we waited as if in a cross-walk, waiting to cross the street. Our green light was the red caboose passing by and the railway crossing gates opening, revealing a big green sign with white lettering that said, “Canada, 45 Miles”. We weren’t going to Canada, we were only walking ½ mile towards Canada to the North end of Harlem, Montana where my Grandmother’s sister Rose lived. We moved together into the cold darkness. I didn’t know anything about where we were going, but I did know that if I was on the move with my grandma, I was safe, and that is all I knew.

Story by [Robert Upham](#) AKA “Harlem Indian”



[Greater Humor Club](#)

[Jeff Grinnell](#) . . .

**A history lesson for people who think that history doesn't matter:**

What's the big deal about railroad tracks?

The US standard railroad gauge (distance between the rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number.

Why was that gauge used?

Well, because that's the way they built them in England, and English engineers designed the first US railroads.

Why did the English build them like that?

Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the wagon tramways, and that's the gauge they used.

So, why did 'they' use that gauge then?

Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they had used for building wagons, which used that same wheel spacing.

Why did the wagons have that particular odd wheel spacing?

Well, if they tried to use any other spacing, the wagon wheels would break more often on some of the old, long distance roads in England . You see, that's the spacing of the wheel ruts.

So who built those old rutted roads?

Imperial Rome built the first long distance roads in Europe (including England ) for their legions. Those roads have been used ever since.

And what about the ruts in the roads?

Roman war chariots formed the initial ruts, which everyone else had to match or run the risk of destroying their wagon wheels. Since the chariots were made for Imperial Rome , they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing. Therefore the United States standard railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches is derived from the original specifications for an Imperial Roman war chariot.

Bureaucracies live forever.

So the next time you are handed a specification/procedure/process and wonder 'What horse's rear came up with this?', you may be exactly right. Imperial Roman army chariots were made just wide enough to accommodate the rear ends of two war horses.

Now, the twist to the story:

When you see a Space Shuttle sitting on its launch pad, there are two big booster rockets attached to the sides of the main fuel tank. These are solid rocket boosters, or SRBs. The SRBs are made by Thiokol at their factory in Utah . The engineers who designed the SRBs would have preferred to make them a bit fatter, but the SRBs had to be shipped by train from the factory to the launch site. The railroad line from the factory happens to run through a tunnel in the mountains, and the SRBs had to fit through that tunnel. The tunnel is slightly wider than the railroad track, and the railroad track, as you now know, is about as wide as two horses' behinds.

So, a major Space Shuttle design feature, of what is arguably the world's most advanced transportation system, was determined over two thousand years ago by the width of a horse's rear. And you thought being a horse's ass wasn't important? Ancient horse's rears control almost everything.

[knowledge-time.com](http://knowledge-time.com)

[Intact DNA From 7,200 Year Old Woman Reveals Strange Human Lineage](#)

[This week's study revealed that archaeologists discovered bones from a 7,200-year old skeleton of a female hunter/gatherer from Indonesia. The bones are unique because they have a "unique human genetic lineage" that is not known anywhere else. The remarkably preserved fossil, which belonged to...](#)

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### [Meet Cheddar Man: First modern Britons had dark skin and blue eyes](#)

A project from London's Natural History Museum and University College London revealed groundbreaking DNA results that give a much clearer image of early British inhabitants.

Cheddar Man's skeleton was discovered in 1903 in Gough's Cave, located in **Cheddar Gorge in Somerset, England**

It is thought that the cool temperature in the cave helped to preserve the skeleton's valuable DNA.

Scientists obtained DNA from Cheddar Man by drilling a 2-millimeter hole in his skull and extracting bone powder.

Initially, it was assumed that the man, who died in his 20s, had pale skin, but new analysis and facial reconstruction have revealed quite the opposite. It is now believed that Cheddar Man's ancestors arrived in Britain via the Middle East after leaving Africa.

Cheddar Man is special because he represents the population occupying Europe at the time. They had dark skin, and most of them had pigmented eyes, either blue or green. Data and software used in forensics gave Booth and the team a clearer understanding of Cheddar Man's skin pigmentation and how dark it was. The investigation into the skeletal remains revealed that Cheddar Man had "genetic markers of skin pigmentation usually associated with sub-Saharan Africa.

Using 3-D printing, Cheddar Man was brought to life.



Experts say the ancestor was a Mesolithic hunter-gatherer who would have spent his days carving tools, fishing and hunting animals. Researchers say he was around 166 centimeters (5'4 inches) in height. It is believed that Cheddar Man is related to 1 in 10 people living across the United Kingdom today.

## Whitney Rencountre



A picture during Kevin Locke's final day of performances, Friday, September 30, 2022. He was asking where all the children were, there was mostly retired folks in the crowd at Crazy Horse Memorial. Just then a bus load of students from Oglala Lakota Oyate pulled into the parking lot. So I invited them in to dance with Deksi Kevin. His eyes lit up and he went on teaching them and got them dancing with him, while showing them how to use a hoop. He was singing old songs, that he said he rarely shares in presentations, almost like he knew it would be his final time sharing them.

Deksi Kevin shared a message that we need to pray more, love more, share more hope and have more faith. Most importantly, we need to respect our fellow human beings.

I didn't know this would be the final words I would hear from Uncle Kevin, who I admired and learned from through the years, like many others around the world.

Long live, Deksi [Kevin Isgor-Locke](#) 🙏❤️

[Kevin Isgor-Locke](#)

This is an open letter to the Standing Rock community.

As a Standing Rock tribal member who has been involved with the Lakota language for my entire life, I am saddened to see the decision by the Standing Rock Tribal Council to ban the Lakota Language Consortium and Jan Ullrich and Wil Meya who have a long history of contributing positively to the Lakota language documentation and revitalization. I have reasons to believe that this decision was ill-informed by a manipulative narrative full of propaganda. If the proponents of this narrative were sincerely concerned with the future of our Lakota language, they would have called for a constructive dialogue. Instead, they resorted to spreading misinformation, gossip, manipulations, slander, unsubstantiated allegations, defamation, and ad-hominem attacks disguised as facts. The worst part is that the proponents of this narrative have actively sought to stigmatize all who voice different views. They have manipulated identity politics and decolonization rhetoric to label and demonize their opponents. I believe that this type of narrative is counter-productive to our shared goals of language revitalization.

I was discouraged to see that politics outweighed constructive conversations. I believe that the committees should have brought people like myself who work in language revitalization as well

as Elders that have worked with LLC to provide perspective. It's disappointing that no one asked for first-hand accounts of how the LLC materials were created. I could go on about how I'm feeling, but I wanted to clear up some misinformation and manipulation that I've seen floating around social media.

One of the biggest manipulations is the one about copyrighting the Lakota language. For more than a century, native and non-native authors who published about our language have copyrighted their books and no one has accused them of copyrighting the language. Because they didn't! A language cannot be copyrighted. Joseph Flying By, Ella Deloria, Beatrice Medicine, David Rood, Albert White Hat, Eugene Buechel, Ivan Starr and many others have published copyrighted books to share the language and culture. And we have benefited from their work. In the same way, we benefit from LLC publishing the collaborative work of many first-language speakers.

The topic of intellectual property of people's stories has also been manipulated greatly. I was present for many of the sessions where Jan interviewed Elders from across Lakota country I can testify that ethics and cultural protocols were followed. And I also know official Standing Rock representatives encouraged his language documentation work. Many Elders around Lakota country entered collaborative efforts with the LLC to create Lakota language content. I have been to dozens of interviews with Jan and I saw first-hand that people shared their stories willingly and happily knowing that LLC is a vehicle for making their stories accessible to learners. I believe we all had a clear understanding that we gave LLC permission to share the information but that it did not prevent us from continuing to tell our stories elsewhere. I often think about our Standing Rock Elders from the turn of the 20th century who decided to share our sacred songs with the music researcher Francis Densmore. They believed the songs should be recorded for future generations. Had Densmore and our Elders not worked together on this project, we wouldn't have had this wonderful record of our songs. Along the same line, the LLC worked with our contemporary elders and this resulted in creating a record of our language and making it accessible to all who wish to learn it. Imagine banning Densmore for her contribution! Jan deserves better than this from us.

I am very concerned that Standing Rock has asserted it should have ownership of the intellectual property of tribal members.

Like I said, I've been there when stories in our language have been shared and sometime later seen them used in lessons within the language materials and the dictionary. I was also present when native-speaking consultants vetted the translations or interpretations of words and sentences. I believe that the LLC has created the only truly reliable Lakota dictionary. All of us language learners have benefited from it, and generations of Lakota language learners will continue to benefit from it, as well as other LLC materials.

Moreover, as a lifelong learner of the Lakota language, I am familiar with all of the publications on our Lakota language, not only those published by LLC but also those by other publishers. For this reason, I find it beyond absurd when someone claims that LLC plagiarized existing language materials. Only someone who has not studied the Lakota Grammar Handbook in detail can state



that it is a plagiarism of the Colorado Lakota Language Project textbooks. Or someone who purposely wants to manipulate the narrative!

Recordings of interviews between Jan Ullrich and Delores Taken Alive have also been at the center of the online debate. Again, I observed a number of occasions when Delores worked with Jan. They had a warm relationship and cherished their shared love for the language. I know that copies of the recordings have been shared with Delores herself as well as with her family. Along the same line, LLC has been working actively with our Culture and Language Institute toward storing the entire collection of recordings in our tribal archive. During a recent tribal council meeting, the representatives of the Culture and Language Institute acknowledged that the delay took place primarily on their end.

The question of orthography is another topic that has been manipulated by the social media campaign. The allegation that LLC bullied people into using an orthography is beyond absurd. Standing Rock tribal representatives, educators, and elders, such as Jesse Taken Alive and Delores Taken Alive, invited the LLC to Standing Rock specifically so that the schools could have a standard orthography and curriculum. The use of the orthography was supported by the tribal department of education and the tribal council who voted to partner with the LLC on it. The fact that the orthography has been chosen by our tribal schools and by the Dakota/Lakota Summer Institute and used by them for the past 16 years is clear evidence. Is Standing Rock going to act on a whim and abandon a 16-year-long trajectory started by our wise Elders? Two generations of Standing Rock children have been learning Lakota with this orthography already. Who will benefit if they have to switch orthographies suddenly? Is the idea that using five or more orthographies benefits our language? Nonsense! While LLC has encouraged a single orthography in Lakota education, it has also encouraged elders to continue to write as they are used to. The idea of a single orthography was firmly endorsed by the Summer Institute and many elders.



It should also be said that we, as Lakota people, have disagreed about how to write our language for decades prior to the existence of LLC. LLC did not create this problem. It simply offered one possible solution, and in my personal opinion, it is a good one. The Elders on the LLC board of directors selected one of the existing writing systems for their publications. I have been involved with the Lakota language learning and teaching for more than half a century, so I can confidently say that the introduction of the orthography and the reliable products written in it was one of the main factors contributing to the unprecedented increase of Lakota language learners, growing proficiency and accuracy in their pronunciation.

There are, of course, first language speakers and learners who promote or use other orthographies. It is their right to do so and we should all simply respect each other's choices. We can have a constructive dialogue about the various advantages and disadvantages of different writing systems, but attacking or stigmatizing each other for our choice of orthography is not helpful.

In my view, LLC has facilitated valuable work on behalf of Lakota language documentation and revitalization. It contributed to increasing local capacity by organizing many educational events and programs, it wrote grants to fund scholarships and many of our tribal members have benefited from them. More than 80% of the LLC materials are digital and free. But there is a cost associated with printing books and that is why hard copies are not free. Costs have to be covered in order for materials to stay in print. Old materials are out of print because there is no one fighting to keep them printed. Our students deserve colored textbooks, not old photocopies of photocopies. Why would we want lower-quality materials in our classrooms? We should spend the money to have good material printed at a cost and I believe our young people deserve that. Our schools and tribes can partner with the LLC to find grants for funding more quality materials delivered to our schools at an affordable price.

LLC also encouraged and supported local initiatives. Anyone can work on creating language materials. We should be telling stories, making new songs, and finding more ways to use the language so we can be immersed in it. LLC doesn't limit any of that. On the contrary, reliable reference tools, like the dictionary, make it possible.

Last thing about money, which comes up all the time. LLC applies for grants WITH Tribes. The funding pays Lakota language linguists, and First language speakers to document the language. Do we want to see our Elders and young people doing this work for free? It's hard work, it takes a lot of time and effort. We should be encouraging these folks, not discouraging them by telling them they shouldn't get paid for the work they do. It devalues the language and the work. Schools purchase books about Lakota culture from various publishers, so why should that be different for language books?

I had been involved with the Lakota language before the existence of the LLC and I have been there with the LLC from its very beginning. What I saw was that the LLC always promoted partnerships, collaboration, and focusing on the things that unite us in our shared goal of language revitalization.

The destructive social media campaign is doing the very opposite. It divides people, it stigmatizes language learners based on their choice of language materials to study from. It disrespects our elders by claiming they lacked agency in making good decisions. It attacks elders who don't support its narrative. It spreads allegations based on nothing but gossip. The claim that Wil Meya stole a Winter Count is a good example. As a student at OLC, Wil was given permission to work under the supervision of Johnson Holy Rock to translate a video of John Marrowbone describing the Calico Wintercount. The translation was finished and provided to OLC, whereas the original videotape never left the OLC archive. Do we really want our tribal resolutions to be based on such gossip and unsubstantiated allegations?

We are all intelligent people and we need to work together to see our language revitalized. I hope as a Tribe we have more discussions before we make big decisions like this that impact so many people. I think that this destructive narrative has done much damage to the Lakota language revitalization movement here on Standing Rock.

If you've made it this far I want to encourage you to join me as I move forward with the LLC materials that have helped me become more fluent and literate in the language. One thing I think we can do is to enter into a positive discourse where more people's voices can be heard. I've been working with others to come up with a code of conduct that I think folks entering these conversations should follow. I plan to publish it in the near future and I hope you'll join me in being open to conversations like the ones outlined here.

I have also encouraged open-minded and constructive communication with community members.

Kevin Locke



**At the Nevada Museum of Art**

**Harry Fonseca: Stone Poem #4 March 27, 2021 - January 1, 2023**

This spotlight exhibition highlights a single painting by Harry Fonseca. *Stone Poem #4* was recently acquired for the Dorothy S. and Robert J. Keyser Greater West Collection at the Nevada Museum of Art. In addition to the painting, the Center for Art + Environment acquired a gift of significant archive materials related to the artist's research, design, and creation of the *Stone Poem* series.

Harry Fonseca (1946-2006) was born in Sacramento, California, and is of Nisenan Maidu, Hawaiian, and Portuguese ancestry. In the late 1980s, he began a major series of paintings called the Stone Poems. The series was inspired by his visits to rock art sites in the Coso Range of the Eastern Sierra and Canyonlands National Park in Utah. *Stone Poem #4* evokes figural images similar to those found in the Great Gallery, a prehistoric rock art site located in Horseshoe Canyon in Utah.

In 1995, Fonseca traveled to New Zealand for a cultural exchange and symposium with Indigenous artists from the Pacific Rim and Pacific Islands. During this trip, he befriended Aboriginal painter Judy Watson and collaborated on new works with her. It is possible to draw comparisons between the paintings of Fonseca and other contemporary Aboriginal Australian painters, many of which are on view in the concurrent exhibition, *My Land, My Dreaming*.