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The Countdown Begins

A little girl told Santa Claus she didn't want to sit on his lap

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'Prove it or lose it.' How tribes are forced to fight to secure senior water rights

Tribes in the U.S. have the most senior water rights, which sounds good. However

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Washoe boy stands up to bullies with history lesson

White-hot thermal grid battery aims to decimate lithium on price

Court: Mining violates Indigenous rights

Discovering his Native American heritage changed a Lakota musician's focus — and his life

North America's first people may have arrived by sea ice highway as early as 24,000 years ago

Terrence Scott James



The Countdown begins



A little girl told Santa Claus she didn't want to sit on his lap. His reaction is going viral
Katie Love

Santa Claus is gifting the internet with an important message about consent.

On Dec. 10, Florida mom Katie Love took her 3-year-old daughter, Adley, to take pictures with Santa at the Ritz-Carlton Key Biscayne in Miami. When Santa asked Adley if she wanted to sit on his lap, the little girl responded with a firm “No.”

Santa reacted by praising Adley for being able to communicate her wants and setting boundaries.

“I asked him to repeat what he said so that I could record it,” Adley’s mother, Katie Love, tells [TODAY.com](https://www.today.com).

The video has been seen more than 1.6 million times on TikTok.

“I said, 'This is her body, and she’s in control of her body,’” Santa explained in the clip. “I asked if she wanted to sit on my lap, and she said, ‘No,’ and I said, ‘Way to stand up for yourself.’”

“You can't let even Santa Claus — if Santa Claus says, 'Do you want to sit on my lap?' If you don't want to, you say, 'No!'" he added.

At home, Love and her husband, Aaron Martin, teach Adley that she never has to accept a hug or kiss from anyone, including her parents.

“Adley knows it’s always her choice and she can give a high-five instead,” Love says. “We don’t pressure her to have any kind of unwanted touch. When we were growing up, we were told, ‘Be polite. Sit on your weird uncle’s lap,’ and I don’t want that for my daughter.”

Love notes that several people have commented on how Adley looks uncomfortable in the video.

“I think part of that had to do with the fact that she had just told Santa she wanted a purple bike, and she was worried she wouldn’t get the bike after she didn’t sit on his lap,” Love says. “But you can see her start to smile when he reaffirmed her reaction and told her that it was OK to say no.”

Steve Lantz, aka “[The Rev Santa](#),” gets choked up when he learns why he’s going viral.

“My wife and I have a 6-year-old daughter and a 10-year-old son, and we started teaching them at a very early age that they are in control of their bodies,” the Presbyterian minister and father of two tells TODAY.com. “There are times I will ask my daughter, ‘Do you want a hug?’ And if she says ‘No,’ I honor that. I don’t push. I never ask twice.”

Lantz notes that he was "very impressed" with Adley. TikTok is impressed with both of them.

“I just cried. As a child who was uncomfortable (with) touch and fam who pushed me, this is good to hear,” one person wrote in the comments.

Wrote another, "I have so so much respect for how her boundaries are respected and honored! I love how she knows to speak up for herself!! Way to go to her parents!!"

This article was originally published on [TODAY.com](#)

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**Smash Knit: How Ugly Christmas Sweaters Took the Holiday Season by Storm**

[https://www.mentalfloss.com/posts/ugly-christmas-sweater-history?utm\\_placement=newsletter](https://www.mentalfloss.com/posts/ugly-christmas-sweater-history?utm_placement=newsletter)

**[The Caribou Are What Make Us Neets’ajj Gwich’in](#)**

A plea against oil and gas drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refugen By Raeann Garnett

**[A New Hope for Shutting Down the Dakota Access Pipeline](#)**

An unusual, after-construction public comment period opens the door for correcting a grave mistake By [Juliet Grable](#)

**Study suggests** current AI models excel at imitation, fail at innovation when compared to children; study asked human and AI subjects to select tools for unconventional tasks ([More](#))

**How a south Reno hot spring can offer hints about life on Mars:** South Reno's Steamboat Hot Springs is experiencing new geothermal activity, intriguing scientists about Earth's past and the potential for life on Mars. The resurgence of hot spring water could provide clues similar to those sought on the Red Planet. ([elynews.com](#))

**Noram Drills Deepest Hole to Date: Confirming Fault and Mineralizing Structures**

**Interpretation:** Noram Lithium Corp. has completed the third hole of its drilling program in Clayton Valley, Nevada. Samples from the Zeus property will be sent to ALS Laboratories in Reno for assaying, with the results pending. ([wacotrib.com](#))

## How the Minnesota book 'Braiding Sweetgrass' became a culture-shifting bestseller

<https://www.startribune.com/how-minnesota-made-braiding-sweetgrass-became-culture-shifting-bestseller-milkweed-editions/600326556/>



### **'Prove it or lose it.' How tribes are forced to fight to secure senior water rights**

Tribes in the U.S. have the most senior water rights, which sounds good. However, they are also the only group that has to quantify how much water they need, or else they risk having it allocated elsewhere. Our Scott King looked into this issue and one program in Nevada working on solutions.

### **ONAP Vacancy Announcement - Supervisory Grants Management Specialist (Director Grants Evaluation)**

**Series & Grade: GS-15 FTE-1250**

**Location: HUD HQ's Washington, DC FTE-1250**

**Application Deadline: December 21, 2023**

#### **Application Links:**

24-HUD-436 (MP – Internal to gov) <https://www.usajobs.gov/job/765215700>

24-HUD-437-P (DEU- Open to Public) <https://www.usajobs.gov/job/765232700>

**ONAP Term Vacancy Announcements - Grants Management Specialist; GS-11/12, Anchorage, AK(2) - TRM - 11720 & TRM -11721 and Seattle, WA(2) -TRM- 11712 & TRM - 11717; Term not to exceed one year and one day, may be extended for a total of up to four years** Application Deadline: **December 26, 2023**

Application Link: 24-HUD-351- P(DEU-Open to Public)

<https://www.usajobs.gov/job/765614100>

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### **Congratulations to Antoinette Cavanaugh**

One year under my belt towards my PhD today finishing my stats class with an A. Many hours of study....many questions...I have faced so much self-doubt and the doubt others have tried to plant in my head. So far, with dedicated work in graduate studies i have maintained an 4.0. I represent our tribe, my ancestors and above all, my family—and I represent with pride. Elmer Harney (ne atta) always said, “Hard work comes with the territory!” Aishe ne Newe-Numuneen. Tosa-Neweneen! We are a resilient people.



<https://www.foragesf.com>

**WE BELIEVE THAT THE MORE PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT NATURE, THE MORE THEY WANT TO PROTECT IT. OUR CLASSES ON THE SUSTAINABLE COLLECTION OF EDIBLE PLANTS, MUSHROOMS, AND SEAWEEDS ARE OUR SMALL WAY OF HELPING TO GROW A LIFELONG LOVE OF THE OUTDOORS.**

KEVIN SMITH, PHD Kevin is an archaeologist with an emphasis in the material culture of forager societies, the relationship between Indigenous hunter-gatherers and aquatic environments, and the evolution of the human species. He posts weekly foraging content on his YouTube channel "Catch N Cook California" and is a lifelong forager. His earliest memories are of digging clams and picking berries with his family in northern California where he grew up. In addition to foraging for berries, plants, and mushrooms, he is an avid angler, freedive-spearfisherman, and general outdoors enthusiast. His classes focus on bridging gaps between people, the natural environment, and local seasonal foods. His outings offer productive and hands-on experiences where foragers learn to harvest local wild foods with no carbon footprint. All outings proceed with a special emphasis on safety, respect, and how to forage to ensure a sustainable harvest, so that we may enjoy for generations to come as it has been done for thousands of years. (great pic; would not transfer)

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A Land Liberated

By Michael Jamison Winter 2024

For four decades, people who care about a wild corner of Montana called the Badger-Two Medicine fought to keep the land free of oil and gas leases. This autumn, the final holding fell.

<https://www.npca.org/articles/3654-a-land-liberated>
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**‘In My Country’**

By Jacob Baynham Winter 2024

More than a century after Native Americans were displaced to create Glacier National Park, a Blackfeet-run tour company offers visitors a chance to see the park from the perspective of the people who lived there first.

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Court backs tribes on legislative map in N.D.

https://replica.startribune.com/infinity/article_popover_share.aspx?guid=1f510f97-6f9b-4ddc-933c-f355435c7c8b&share=true

Washoe boy stands up to bullies with history lesson



Nine-year-old Silas Jim's family gave a presentation to his classmates Wednesday to help educate them on Wa-she-shu culture. Pictured are Brittney Jim, Tira Jim, Dennis Sheehan, Art George, Silas and Jordan Jim.

Photo by [Sarah Drinkwine](#).

By [Sarah Drinkwine](#)

Peers of 9-year-old Silas Jim, a Washoe boy who was bullied into cutting his hair, joined him in the Round Dance song Wednesday at Meneley Elementary School and opened their hearts to his culture.

Silas had been bullied about his long hair. Some of the children had teased him so much, he cut his hair in November.

“It made me really mad and sad, and I just had enough,” said Silas.

Silas' family gave his classmates a presentation on the history of the Wa-she-shu and why their people grow their hair out.

“The hair is a part of our culture,” said Silas' uncle Art George. “It contains memories, and it makes a strong.”

Silas' grandma Joreen George read the story “Thunder's Hair” to educate the students why Wa-she-shu consider their hair sacred.

In the book a boy is bullied about his long hair, and he decides to cut it, but his grandmother reminds him about the power of having long hair.

“These teaching have been passed down for thousands of years,” reads the story. “We say that our hair has a special part of us in it. Our spirit. It is our connection to the ancestors before us and to the spirit world. Each of these three parts remind us of the three parts of us; the mind, the body, and the spirit. This is why we take care of our hair and why our people continue to wear our hair long. If we cut it, we lose that special connection.”

The children in Teresa Rose’s third-grade class, listened with interest and excitement to learn something new about their classmate.

“It was very sad what happened to Silas,” said Rose. “Last year there was an opposite thing that happened. There was a student who had to cut her hair very short for some personal reason and she got called a boy. A lot of it is they just don’t understand and it’s important to show them and teach them.”

Meneley Elementary School Principal Blaine Spires said he hopes to bring more Wa-she-shu experiences to the school.

“Silas’ family coming in was very educational,” said Spires. “We want to create a big umbrella of learning and improve the culture of our school so that we have a better understanding of where we come from.”

Spires said he is working with Culture and Language Resources Director Herman Fillmore for the Washoe Tribe of California & Nevada, to have a presentation for the whole school soon.

“One of our goals is to always increase the community in our school,” said Spires. “The Washoe are a big population in our school, so we want them to be included and understood. We want to improve the culture of our school. When we have a better understanding of where we came from it builds a stronger community.”

Spires said Meneley Elementary School prides itself on having trust and transparency with it’s community.

“We share celebrations and concerns and I hope our families know they can reach out at any time,” said Spires.

White-hot thermal grid battery aims to decimate lithium on price

<https://newatlas.com/energy/fourth-power-liquid-tin-battery/>

[**When it comes to mining on sacred lands, some tribal members say their voices have been overlooked**](#)

[Court: Mining violates Indigenous rights](#)

Ruling seen as major win amid long struggle, legal battles in Guatemala.

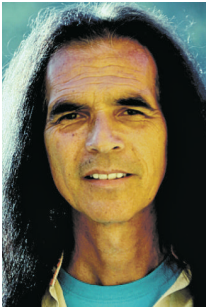


https://replica.startribune.com/infinity/article_popover_share.aspx?guid=9da2b129-7069-4be0-83b0-df03bff059da&share=true

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## MUSIC TO HEAL BY

**Discovering his Native American heritage changed a Lakota musician's focus — and his life.**



**FAMILY MAN:** Paul Summers LaRoche with the band he founded, which includes his son, Shane Summers, on drums, and daughter, Nicole Summers, on flute.

By JANE TURPIN MOORE • Special to the Star Tribune

To label Paul Summers LaRoche a musician is only part of his story.

Granted, last year he received the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Native American Music Awards. But that's just one of the many accomplishments for the founder of Brule, a contemporary Native American rock band with a sound that critics have described as “healing” and a “journey of sight, sound and soul.”

The award was possible only because of a personal journey that prompted LaRoche, at age 38, to begin obeying the Seventh Direction — the spirit within himself. It was an amazing transformation for a man who was raised white and started his career as an architect.

“The floodgate of inspiration opened and I have not been able to control it since,” LaRoche, now 68, said of the music that flowed from him after meeting his Lakota family and discovering his biological roots on the Lower Brule Reservation in central South Dakota.

LaRoche has recorded 20 CDs (selling over 1 million), authored the biographical “Hidden Heritage,” done 12 behind-the-scenes concert documentaries aired by PBS, produced a 90-episode TV show focusing on Native American culture and led his “family band” to be the first



Native American music ensemble performing with major symphony orchestras.

Their 2007 history-making “Brule, Live at Mount Rushmore: Concert for Reconciliation of the Cultures,” has become the longest-running Native American concert special on national TV.

“We’ve also broken the concert attendance barrier of 10,000 many times, and we’ve toured as far away as Saudi Arabia,” LaRoche said.

And he’s not done yet. LaRoche has composed at least 500 songs or melodies that are unreleased but cataloged, and Brule has a robust calendar of upcoming performances at concert venues, arenas, festivals, casinos and schools.

“I needed to return to my roots to find stability and discover what I was called to do,” said LaRoche.

### **Growing up white**

The southwestern Minnesota town of Worthington was LaRoche’s boyhood home.

Adopted at birth by a caring couple, Clarence and Irma Summers, LaRoche and his younger adoptive brother were fed the largely fictional but loving narrative that they were of French Canadian descent.

LaRoche buried any questions about his biological origins, focusing instead on the positives of his wholesome Catholic upbringing. Charismatic and musically gifted, LaRoche simply strove to fit in, although his darker complexion and unsettled spirit suggested a different truth.

“My musical journey began in 1963 when my dad, Clarence, kind of an old-timer, gave me an accordion,” said LaRoche.

But the typical music outlets youngsters explore didn’t work out. LaRoche liked singing but failed to make his high school choir, and after trying for two years to master the trumpet, the school band director “suggested” he move on.

Coming of age in the early 1970s, LaRoche found his niche playing keyboards and singing in garage rock bands.

He established “Paul’s Place,” a popular Worthington nightclub, sang at weddings and funerals and used training gained in a two-year architectural drafting program at the former Northwest Technical Institute to support his young family.

It wasn’t until after his adoptive parents died in 1987 that LaRoche’s teenage sweetheart-turned-wife, Kathy Summers, dug into documents that eventually led LaRoche to his true origins.

“I just felt there was something significant for him to know about his birth story, and I had to help him find it,” she said.

She believed LaRoche needed a nudge to unlock his full potential. Despite his popularity as a singer and performer in southwest Minnesota and as a singer/keyboardist with promising cover bands in the Twin Cities, his first 20 post-high school years could hardly be termed conventionally successful.

“It was a whirlwind, crazy kind of time,” admitted LaRoche. “I thought I wanted to become an architect, but the world of music always tugged at me very strongly.”

Bouncing between stints with a civil engineering firm and band gigs, coupled with raising son Shane (now 46 and Brule’s drummer) and daughter Nicole (now 44, the flutist in Brule), made for an untethered existence for over 15 years.

“Kathy has been the glue that’s kept our family and story going,” said LaRoche, crediting his wife — Brule’s manager — for assuming the bulk of childcare duties, holding down an administrative assistant job and managing 50 — yes, 50 — family moves.

“She was probably thinking, ‘Is my husband going to play in dumpy clubs the rest of his life?’ ” LaRoche laughed.

“I really couldn’t find my place in the regular workforce, as hard as I tried, and I was a struggling musician trying to make my way in a world of cover songs.”

### **Lakota roots**

Summers quietly researched LaRoche’s birth, having found an attorney’s letter among his late parents’ personal papers.

“I sensed an undertone of nervousness, that his adoption was a little under the table, since he was a Native newborn going to [white] parents in their 40s,” she said.

His birth certificate confirmed Pierre, S.D., as his birthplace and named a father, Fred LaRoche, a Frenchman who long ago had entered the Lower Brule tribe.

“His adoptive parents had shared a partial truth,” Summers said. “They just left out the ‘Native American’ part.”

Unbeknownst to LaRoche, Summers started tracking down members of his biological family. One evening, LaRoche picked up the phone and heard a voice say, “Paul, you don’t know me, but I’m your brother.”

LaRoche bonded with Fritz (they had the same mother but different fathers) and came to understand that he’d been given up at birth because of the impoverished and complicated circumstances of his birth mother and the dirt-poor life on the reservation.

The LaRoches spent Thanksgiving 1993 at the reservation meeting his Native American family. After several more visits, including a naming ceremony and a powwow, they moved to the reservation for 10 years.

Discovering his Lakota roots, and becoming, along with his children, an enrolled member of the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, was life-altering for LaRoche, who finally was trusting the spirit within him.

### **A different sound**

“Paul had always played other people’s music or written music for others,” said Summers. “His Native family recognized his gifts and told him, ‘You need to get back into music and write from your heart.’”

LaRoche credits the stories heard, people met, ceremonies attended and the sounds, rhythms and Native lifestyle with unleashing the music that became the soundtrack of Brule.

Daughter Nicole Summers, who played flute in the Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies as a teen, has cultivated a style that mimics natural sounds: wind, birds and animals.

“I like that we can represent our culture in a good and positive way while being completely original,” she said. “And seeing how young audience members are motivated by us and our performances makes me want to live a better life and be a better role model.”

Over a two-day period in May, LaRoche came full circle when Brule, which is based in Sioux Falls, performed a series of six concerts for the 3,300 students in the Worthington school district.

Sharing a sense of cultural pride and wellness through the lens of Native people, Brule delivered a message of hope, faith, pride and confidence to a student body that is 74% nonwhite.

“The relevance of the messaging from Paul and Brule — that we’re all part of one community while remaining individually distinct — couldn’t be more important right now,” said Tammy Makram, managing director of Memorial Auditorium Performing Arts Center, site of the school performances.

*“Paul and Brule are all about peace and reconciliation.”*

*Jane Turpin Moore is a Northfield writer.*

*“I needed to return to my roots to find stability and discover what I was called to do.”*

*Paul Summers LaRoche, musician and founder of Brule.*

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North America's first people may have arrived by sea ice highway as early as 24,000 years ago. One of the hottest debates in archaeology is how and when humans first arrived in North America. Archaeologists have traditionally argued that people walked through an ice-free corridor that briefly opened between ice sheets an estimated 13,000 years ago.

Read in Phys.org: <https://apple.news/A5jgNFUZXQYWzrLne2svgaw>

In loving memory of



Terence "Terry" Scott James

March 26, 1963 - December 7, 2023

Traditional Wake:

Wednesday, December 13, 2023 @ 5pm

1030 W Truckee River Ranch Road, Wadsworth, NV

Graveside Funeral Services:

Thursday, December 14, 2023 @ 10am

Wadsworth Cemetery, Wadsworth, NV

Luncheon to follow at New Wadsworth Community Building

Food donations are appreciated

Flowers can be delivered to: 560 5th St., Wadsworth, NV 89442