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Indian Citizenship Act of 1924

Penny Flannigan comments on the Centennial of the Indian Citizenship Act

A Timeline of Indian Citizenship

More Interpretations of ICA

Proud note from Teri Larson

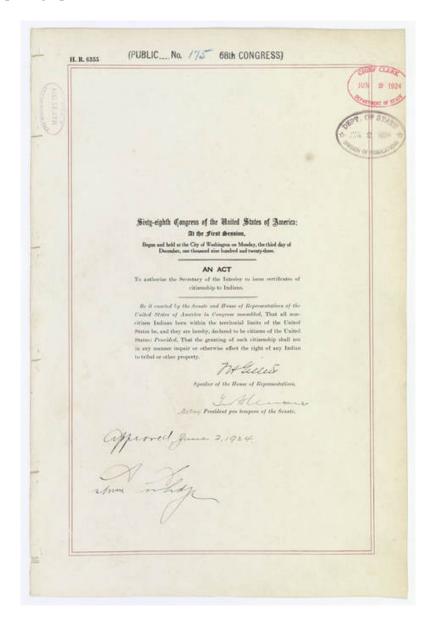
A Spelunker Thought She Found Trash in a Cave. It Was Actually Evidence of a Lost Civilization Trump wants Congress to approve \$9 billion in DOGE cuts, including \$1B+ to public broadcasting Native American Legislative Update: May 2025

Senate Probes Impact of HHS Cuts on Non-Indian Health Service Programs

Trump Proposes Gutting Bureau of Indian Education Funding

NCAI Mid-Year Final Call for Vendors-Exhibitors is TODAY

Reminder about photographic/video archives



Indian Citizenship Act of 1924

This law stipulated that all Native Americans born in the United States were automatically citizens by birth. Native Americans were the last main group to gain this right set forth in the Fourteenth Amendment.

Summary

In 1924, Congress regularized the U.S. <u>citizenship</u> status of all Native Americans by <u>birthright</u>. All other persons born within the United States had gained citizenship with the Fourteenth Amendment but not Native Americans, whose citizenship status had been allocated irregularly depending on descent, gender and marital status, and status to their tribal nations.

Source

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and house of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That all non citizen Indians born within the territorial limits of the United States be, and they are hereby, declared to be citizens of the United States: Provided That the granting of such <u>citizenship</u> shall not in any manner impair or otherwise affect the right of any Indian to tribal or other property.

Approved June 2, 1924

Act of June 2, 1924, Public Law 68-175, 43 STAT 253, which authorized the Secretary of the Interior to issue certificates of citizenship to Indians., 06/02/1924; Enrolled Acts and Resolutions of Congress, 1789 – 1996; General Records of the U.S. Government; Record Group 11; National Archives.

Analysis

The SAI (Society of American Indians) has been criticized for desiring a US citizenship that would render Native sovereignties obsolete, based on the dichotomies conceived at the time: that "achieving" U.S. citizenship meant refusing tribal authority. The settler-colonial concept of citizenship . . . made the mutual exclusivity of Indian "ward" and US "citizen" appear inescapable and natural. At the time ward versus citizen looked like the only choice possible Faced with the choice between Indian wardship's bitter subjugations and US <u>citizenship</u>'s illusory freedoms, the SAI chose citizenship. Perhaps they chose the possibilities they could imagine within citizenship and a plural democratic nation. In their work for Native people, SAI intellectuals developed layered possibilities that stretched far beyond the false dichotomy of savagery versus civilization posed by settler colonial society. Local work imagined and opened up possibilities of living as fully modern citizens, dynamic contributors to the democratic life of the US, and as nations with inherent sovereignty. In the past century Native individuals, nations, and intellectuals have further developed ideas of multiple, layered citizenships and multiple, layered sovereignties that open up possibilities rather than block them off. Native peoples must have the power to make choices within the realm of possibilities, not the realm of foreclosed opportunities.

Excerpt from:

Lomawaima, K. T. (2013). The mutuality of <u>citizenship</u> and sovereignty: The Society of American Indians and the attle to inherit America. *American Indian Quarterly*, *37*(3), 333-351.

Penny Flannigan comments of the Centennial of the Indian Citizenship Act

In my family, voting is a tradition. My mother took me to the voting booth every year as she filled out her ballot and emphasized the importance of having a say in who represents us.

Now, I take my daughter with me when I vote in federal, state, local, and tribal elections, so she knows that this is one way that we, as Native people, can say we are still here, and our voices matter.

The centennial anniversary of the Indian Citizenship Act is a reminder for all of us that the systems in which we operate today were not built by or for Native people – but rather, to erase and eliminate us. For far too long, Native people had no say in the government that dictated nearly every aspect of our lives, and gaining citizenship required giving up tribal citizenship and assimilating into American culture. This is only one piece of the long, traumatic history of erasing Indigenous identity.

We have come a long way in building strong relationships with the sovereign Tribes that share geography with Minnesota and the United States, but we still have further to go. It has only been one hundred years since Congress extended US citizenship to Native people, recognizing the original people of these lands as citizens of the United States. And now I am proud to be an Ojibwe woman wherever I go – in the community, in the halls of the Minnesota State Capitol, and in the voting booth, and proud Native people now have a say in decisions made about us, without giving up our identity or tribal citizenship.

Peggy Flanagan is Minnesota's 50th Lieutenant Governor, an enrolled member of the White Earth Band of Ojibwe, and currently the highest-ranking Native woman elected to executive office in the country.

On June 2, 1924 President Calvin Coolidge signed the Indian Citizenship Act which declared all non-citizen Indians born within the territorial limits of the United States to be citizens. The Act authorized the Secretary of Interior to issue certificates of citizenship to Native Americans.

The Indian Citizenship Act was, in part, a response to recognize the thousands of Native Americans who served in the armed forces during the First World War.

However, despite the enactment of the law, citizenship was not a guarantee for Native Americans.

The law included a provision that citizenship could be denied if it might, "impair or otherwise affect the right of any Indian to tribal or other property."

Nearly two decades after the Indian Citizenship Act was passed, Congress saw a need to reaffirm and extend citizenship rights to Indigenous peoples through the Nationality Act of 1940.

Timeline of Native American Citizenship

1776 Declaration of Independence signed

- 1788 U.S. Constitution enacted
- 1831 Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek was ratified, allowing Mississippi Choctaw to become citizens
- 1857 Supreme Court ruling in Dred Scott v. Sandford said Native people could become citizens through naturalization
- 1868 The Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution declared all persons "born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof" were citizens; the "jurisdiction" requirement was interpreted to exclude most Native Americans
- 1870 Civil Rights Act of 1866 was ratified by Congress repeating the exclusion of Native Americans from citizenship based on birth location.
- Supreme Court ruling in Elk v. Wilkins reaffirmed the exclusion of Native people from U.S. citizenship.
- 1887 Dawes Act passed by Congress granting American citizenship to all Native Americans who accepted individual land grants under the provisions of statutes and treaties
- 1924 Indian Citizenship Act was passed by Congress granting birthright citizenship with exceptions.
- 1940 Nationality Act was passed by Congress reaffirming Native people's birthright citizenship
- "...The bill as passed automatically make every Indian born within the territorial limits of the United States a full citizen.

"The bill is just what the Indians of the Red Lake reservation have been fighting for," said Edward L. Rogers, County Attorney of Cass county and member of the tribe, and president of the General Council of Minnesota Chippewas, It only gives them the right to vote, however, and does not affect government allotments or rights to tribal funds..."

The Tomahawk - June 5, 1924

"Approximately 125,000 Indians have thus been given citizenship. It is estimated that 200,000 Indians were previously made citizens by various acts of Congress.

While the Indians have all finally achieved citizenship in the land owned by their forefathers before the white man's foot had found their soil, the restrictions on the lands of the Indians has not been changed".

"...Up to the time of the adoption of the citizenship measure by congress probably not over forty-five per cent of the Indians of the United States had gone through the regular naturalization process and been granted citizenship papers. Many, no doubt, in places where they were known, were granted the right of franchise without question as to their citizenship, because election

boards have been a little slow in refusing to give ballots to the 'first Americans'...." Windom Reporter reprinting from the Pipestone Star

"...The proposed act will throw down the present bars that have prevented many Indians from becoming citizens and open the way to them by making application to the Secretary of the Interior and procuring a certificate.

In explaining why there are 125,000 Indians that are not citizens Commissioner [of Indian Affairs] Burke stated that under the present law they could not achieve citizenship unless they left their reservations, separated themselves from their tribes and took on themselves the habits and mode of living of white people..."

"...The effect of the bill and the real status of the Indian can, however, be tested at once. He is now supposed to have every right of an American citizen.

Let him claim the right which all citizens are presumed to exercise - the right to go to the polls and cast his ballot. Let him, therefore, fulfill at once the voting requirements of the state in which he is a resident. Let him register, get his name on the polling list, and then use the power of the ballot to effect his salvation and the best welfare of the community..."

The Tomahawk - July 10, 1924

https://sos.mn.gov/media/5428/indian-citizenship-act.pdf

Text from the <u>Handbook of Federal Indian Law</u>.

The majority of Native Americans were already citizens in 1924, having gained citizenship through the Dawes Act, through various treaties, through military service or marriage, or by other means. Still, one third of the Native population did not fall under any of the categories that conferred citizenship, and this act made them citizens as well. https://history.hanover.edu/courses/excerpts/260indian-act.html

http://www.thomaslegion.net/indiancitizenshipactof1924.html Date of Indian Citizenship

[The Indian Citizenship Act of 1924, also known as the Snyder Act, was proposed by Representative Homer P. Snyder of New York and granted full U.S. citizenship to America's indigenous peoples, who were referred to as "Indians" in this Act. (The Fourteenth Amendment guarantees citizenship to persons born in the U.S., but only if "subject to the jurisdiction thereof"; this latter clause excludes certain indigence.) The act was signed into law by President Calvin Coolidge on June 2.]

Indians who are otherwise eligible to vote may not be denied that right because of their race. Their right in this respect is protected by the fifteenth amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which says:

Section 1.

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Section 2.

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

In order to exercise the right of suffrage, Indians must of course comply with the conditions equally required of other voters, and may be denied the privilege of voting if they fail to comply with the requirements of the law as to registration, payment of poll tax, or do not meet the educational or other qualifications for electors, etc., as provided by the State laws.

It will be observed that the act provides that the granting of such citizenship shall not in any manner impair or otherwise affect the right of any Indian to tribal or other property. Therefore, the restrictions upon the trust property—real or personal—of Indians are not removed by the passage of this act. Questions relative to the control or management of trust property are, therefore, not changed by the act but are to be handled on their own merits as heretofore.

Prior to the passage of the act of June 2, 1924, about two-thirds of the Indians of the United States were already citizens. There were a number of different provisions of law by which or under which Indians became citizens previous to June 2, 1924. Some of the most important ways of their attaining citizenship were as follows:

- 1. *Treaty Provision.*—In some of the treaties or agreements with certain tribes of Indians provision was made whereby Indians desiring to become citizens might become such by complying with certain prescribed formalities somewhat similar to those required of aliens. For example, see Articles 13, 17, and 28 of the Treaty of February 23, 1867, with various bands or tribes of Indians. (15 Stat. 513, vol. 2, 960.)
- 2. Allotment under the Act of February 8, 1887.—In the act of February 8, 1887 (24 Stat. 388, vol. 1, 33-38), Congress provided for the allotment of land to the Indians in severalty and in section 6 thereof declared that Indians so allotted should become citizens of the United States and of the State in which they reside. (See the language of the Act.)
- 3. Issuance of Patent in Fee Simple.—In the Act of May 8, 1906 (34 Stat. 182, vol. 3, 181), Congress amended the Act of February 8, 1887, so as to postpone citizenship of Indians thereafter allotted until after a patent in fee simple had been issued to said Indians. Provision was also made whereby patent in fee might be issued by the Secretary of the Interior to competent Indians before the expiration of the twenty-five-year trust period. Therefore Indians whose trust patents are dated subsequent to May 8, 1906, and who have also received their patents in fee simple have become citizens under said act of May 8, 1906.
- 4. Adopting Habits of Civilized Life.—Section 6 of the Act of February 8, 1887, both before and after its amendment of May 8, 1906, provided:

That every Indian born within the territorial limits of the United States who has voluntarily taken up within said limits his residence, separate and apart from any tribe of Indians therein, and has adopted the habits of civilized life is hereby declared to be a citizen of the United States, and is entitled to all the rights, privileges, and immunities of such citizens, whether said Indian has been or not, by birth or otherwise, a member of any tribe of Indians within the territorial limits of the United States, without in any manner impairing or otherwise affecting the rights of any such Indian to tribal or other property.

5. *Minor Children.*—The Solicitor of the Interior Department has held that where Indian parents became citizens upon allotment, their minor children became citizens with them, and that children born subsequent thereto were born to citizenship.

- 6. Citizenship by Birth.—(a) An Indian child born in the United States of citizen Indian parents is born to citizenship. (b) Legitimate children born of an Indian woman and a white citizen father are born to citizenship.
- 7. Soldiers and Sailors.—Congress in the act of November 6, 1919, ante 232, provided that Indian soldiers and sailors who served in the recent World War and who have been honorably discharged might be granted citizenship by courts of competent jurisdiction. (Indian Office Circulars, Nos. 1587 and 1618.)
- 8. Marriage.—The act of August 9, 1888 (25 Stat. 392, vol. 1, 38), provided that Indian women who married citizens of the United States thereby became citizens of the United States. This provision is apparently inconsistent with the act of September 22, 1922 (42 Stat. 1020), and would probably be held to have been repealed by the latter act, though not specifically mentioned therein. Marriages corning within the act of August 9, 1888, and consummated before the passage of the act of September 22, 1922, would not of course be affected by the later act.
- 9. Special Act of Congress.—Sometimes Congress makes provision for a particular tribe of Indians or a particular group of Indians to become citizens. For instance:
- (a) In the act of March 3, 1901 (31 Stat. 1447, vol. 1, 114), provision was made for the extension of citizenship to the Indians in the "Indian Territory" by amending section 6 of the act of February 8, 1887 (24 Stat. 388, vol. 1, 33). It should be observed, however, that in the act of May 8, 1906 (34 Stat. 182, vol. 3, 181), amending said section 6, the language, "and every Indian in the Indian Territory," was not included.
- (b) In the act of March 3, 1921 (41 Stat. 1249-50, ante, 317), citizenship was extended to all members of the Osage tribe of Indians.

The above is not intended to be a complete list of the acts of Congress involving the citizenship of Indians, as there are a number of other laws including those affecting particular tribes, but it is believed the foregoing list or statement is sufficient to give a general idea of the main principles or rules that were involved in the determination of whether or not a particular Indian was a citizen prior to the act of June 2, 1924, *supra*.

Source: Washington: Government Printing Office, 1929.

Recommended Viewing: 500 Nations (372 minutes). **Description:** 500 Nations is an eight-part documentary (more than 6 hours and that's not including its interactive CD-ROM filled with extra features) that explores the history of the indigenous peoples of North and Central America, from pre-Colombian times through the period of European contact and colonization, to the end of the 19th century and the subjugation of the Plains Indians of North America. 500 Nations utilizes historical texts, eyewitness accounts, pictorial sources and computer graphic reconstructions to explore the magnificent civilizations which flourished prior to contact with Western civilization, and to tell the dramatic and tragic story of the Native American nations' desperate attempts to retain their way of life against overwhelming odds.

Mention the word "Indian," and most will conjure up images inspired by myths and movies: teepees, headdresses, and war paint; Sitting Bull, Geronimo, Crazy Horse, and their battles (like Little Big Horn) with the U.S. Cavalry. Those stories of the so-called "horse nations" of the Great Plains are all here, but so is a great deal more. Using impressive computer imaging, photos, location film footage and breathtaking cinematography, interviews with present-day Indians,

books and manuscripts, museum artifacts, and more, Leustig and his crew go back more than a millennium to present an fascinating account of Indians, including those (like the Maya and Aztecs in Mexico and the Anasazi in the Southwest) who were here long before white men ever reached these shores. It was the arrival of Europeans like Columbus, Cortez, and DeSoto that marked the beginning of the end for the Indians. Considering the participation of host Kevin Costner, whose film Dances with Wolves was highly sympathetic to the Indians, it's no bulletin that 500 Nations also takes a compassionate view of the multitude of calamities--from alcohol and disease to the corruption of their culture and the depletion of their vast natural resources-visited on them by the white man in his quest for land and money, eventually leading to such horrific events as the Trail of Tears "forced march," the massacre at Wounded Knee, and other consequences of the effort to "relocate" Indians to the reservations where many of them still live. Along the way, we learn about the Indians' participation in such events as the American Revolution and the War of 1812, as well as popular legends like the first Thanksgiving (it really happened) and the rescue of Captain John Smith by Pocahontas (it probably didn't).

1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus. Description:

1491 is not so much the story of a year, as of what that year stands for: the long-debated (and often-dismissed) question of what human civilization in the Americas was like before the Europeans crashed the party. The history books most Americans were (and still are) raised on describe the continents before Columbus as a vast, underused territory, sparsely populated by primitives whose cultures would inevitably bow before the advanced technologies of the Europeans. For decades, though, among the archaeologists, anthropologists, paleolinguists, and others whose discoveries Charles C. Mann brings together in 1491, different stories have been emerging. Among the revelations: the first Americans may not have come over the Bering land bridge around 12,000 B.C. but by boat along the Pacific coast 10 or even 20 thousand years earlier; the Americas were a far more urban, more populated, and more technologically advanced region than generally assumed; and the Indians, rather than living in static harmony with nature, radically engineered the landscape across the continents, to the point that even "timeless" natural features like the Amazon rainforest can be seen as products of human intervention. Continued below...

Mann is well aware that much of the history he relates is necessarily speculative, the product of pot-shard interpretation and precise scientific measurements that often end up being radically revised in later decades. But the most compelling of his eye-opening revisionist stories are among the best-founded: the stories of early American-European contact. To many of those who were there, the earliest encounters felt more like a meeting of equals than one of natural domination. And those who came later and found an emptied landscape that seemed ripe for the taking, Mann argues convincingly, encountered not the natural and unchanging state of the native American, but the evidence of a sudden calamity: the ravages of what was likely the greatest epidemic in human history, the smallpox and other diseases introduced inadvertently by Europeans to a population without immunity, which swept through the Americas faster than the explorers who brought it, and left behind for their discovery a land that held only a shadow of the thriving cultures that it had sustained for centuries before. Includes outstanding photos and maps.

Atlas of the North American Indian. Description: This unique resource covers the entire history, culture, tribal locations, languages, and lifeways of Native American groups across the United States, Canada, Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean. Thoroughly updated, Atlas of the North American Indian combines clear and informative text with newly drawn maps to provide the most up-to-date political and cultural developments in Indian affairs, as well as the latest archaeological research findings on prehistoric peoples. The new edition features several revised and updated sections, such as "Self-Determination," "The Federal and Indian Trust

Relationship and the Reservation System," "Urban Indians," "Indian Social Conditions," and "Indian Cultural Renewal." Continued below...

Other updated information includes: a revised section on Canada, including Nunavut, the first new Canadian territory created since 1949, with a population that is 85% Inuit; the latest statistics and new federal laws on tribal enterprises, including a new section on "Indian Gaming"; and current information on preferred names now in use by certain tribes and groups, such as the use of "Inuit" rather than "Eskimo."

Trail of Tears: The Rise and Fall of the Cherokee Nation. Description: One of the many ironies of U.S. government policy toward Indians in the early 1800s is that it persisted in removing to the West those who had most successfully adapted to European values. As whites encroached on Cherokee land, many Native leaders responded by educating their children, learning English, and developing plantations. Such a leader was Ridge, who had fought with Andrew Jackson against the British.

As he and other Cherokee leaders grappled with the issue of moving, the land-hungry Georgia legislators, with the aid of Jackson, succeeded in ousting the Cherokee from their land, forcing them to make the arduous journey West on the infamous "Trail of Tears." ... A treasured addition for the individual remotely interested in American Indian history as well as general American history

Teri Larson

Cece passed the exam and earned the Seal of Biliteracy in Paiute. We are so proud of her! She is the first in our family to earn anything like this.

My grandpa and grandma, like so many of yours, were forced into boarding schools and punished for speaking their language. We've come so far and hard work is paying off- our languages matter and they will live on

Thank you so much to WCSD Indian Education Program for always supporting our students, Fawn Hunter works so hard to ensure our kids are a priority. This is such an amazing accomplishment for students, language teachers, and volunteers.



POPULAR MECHANICS

A Spelunker Thought She Found Trash in a Cave. It Was Actually Evidence of a Lost Civilization

https://currently.att.yahoo.com/news/explorers-found-hidden-chamber-

cave-123000802.html?.tsrc=daily_mail&uh_test=1_11&.tsrc=daily_mail&segment_id&ncid=cr m -1295960-20250530-408--

<u>A&bt_user_id=RwWyuh0wyJ0o9pjhznlJ8IqJ2lSjWsE2ujH%2Fqsqme0eof9JtFz5%2FMZZuNg</u> SnPmYK&bt_ts=1748593833589

Trump wants Congress to approve \$9 billion in DOGE cuts — including more than \$1 billion in cuts to public broadcasting

https://currently.att.yahoo.com/news/trump-wants-congress-

approve-9-205222476.html?.tsrc=daily_mail&uh_test=1_11&.tsrc=daily_mail&segment_id&ncid=crm_-1295960-2 0250530-408--

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Native American Legislative Update: May 2025

Senate Probes Impact of HHS Cuts on Non-Indian Health Service ProgramsOn May 14, the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs <u>heard testimony</u> from tribal leaders and advocates on potential harm from the reorganization of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The proposed reorganization would slash funding at HHS and lay off 20% of its workforce.

While Secretary of Health Robert F. Kennedy Jr exempted the Indian Health Service from the broader reorganization, other HHS programs that tribal nations rely on have faced budget cuts and staff reductions. Impacted programs include Tribal Head Start, Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Tribal TANF), and Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA).

Tribal leaders pointed out that the cuts have been made without any consultation with Native communities. Chairman Lisa Murkowski (AK) and Vice Chairman Brian Schatz (HI) both emphasized the importance of informed tribal consultation before changing programs.

Trump Proposes Gutting Bureau of Indian Education Funding

The <u>President's "Skinny Budget" Request</u>, which outlined some of proposed cuts to federal programs, was released the first week of May. The budget proposes a drastic \$187 million (79.7%) cut to the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Education Construction Fund. This reduces funding from \$234.7 million (in 2024) to just \$47.7 million for the coming fiscal year. The cut would undermine the BIE's ability to address urgent safety hazards like gas leaks, mold, and asbestos. It would not even cover basic emergency and environmental repairs for BIE schools.

Though the administration cites program underperformance as the reason for these cuts, the underperformance has been driven by chronic underfunding. Decades of underinvestment have caused deferred maintenance costs to skyrocket to almost \$1 billion. A 2024 Department of Interior Inspector General report identified underfunding, poor communication, and staffing shortages as core issues. The 2024 report recommends addressing deficiencies through improved oversight and compliance, not by cutting funds.

- Indigenous Leaders at UNPFII Underscore the Need for Genuine Consent | Indian Country Today
- Honoring Native Mothers: Our First Teachers | Native News Online
- Montana to Recognize Indigenous Peoples Day | Montana Free Press
- Army Control of U.S.-Mexico Border Buffer Zone... | Cronkite News
- Hochul to Apologize for 'Atrocities' at Former New York State-run Native American Boarding School | Spectrum News
 - Trump Pledged to "Make America Healthy Again," Then Cut a Program Many Tribes Rely on for Healthy Food | ProPublica

Final Call for Vendors – Exhibitor Application Deadline is Monday, June 2

Join us (NCAI) **June 8–11, 2025**, at **Foxwoods Resort Casino in Mashantucket, Connecticut**, as tribal leaders, Native youth, advocates, and partners from across Indian
Country come together for a pivotal gathering of strategy, advocacy, and unity. This year's **Mid Year Convention & Marketplace** will serve as a powerful convening to defend tribal sovereignty, shape advocacy strategies, and foster collaboration for the future. If you're interested in showcasing your work or services, don't miss this opportunity to exhibit!

Exhibitor applications are due Monday, June 2. Booth pricing begins at \$600, with categories including Indian arts and crafts, tribal enterprises, nonprofits, and federal agencies. The Marketplace is open to all convention attendees and the general public.

Once accepted, applicants will be charged for their booth space. Placement is determined on a first-come, first-served basis.

On June 1, 2008, a fire at Universal Studios Hollywood destroyed 3 acres (1.2 hectares) of the studio's property, including a vault which held as many as 175,000 irreplaceable master audio recordings from hundreds of musicians including Billie Holliday, Louis Armstrong, Aretha Franklin, Elton John and Nirvana.

Just a reminder to make sure your photograhic/video resources are properly duplicted or digitized and "safe" copy is stored in another location.