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Survival in Motion

Potter Valley Tribe has reclaimed 48 acres of ancestral land in Mendocino County

Jigzibik, Chicago;s first Native American affordable housing project

Before you order

John Templeton Foundation has millions of dollars in research funding

Muscogee Nation court rules descendants of enslaved people are entitled to citizenship

On controlling fire, new lessons from a deep indigenous past

America 250 - Nevada programs (funding available)

Washoe Pageant and Da ?mo?mo

An Awakening



[The Wildlife](#) ·

In an astonishing mid-air encounter, a weasel launched itself onto a woodpecker in flight—clinging to its back like a wild aerial rodeo. The woodpecker, wings beating frantically, struggled to stay airborne as the predator tried to overpower it. This wasn't teamwork—it was survival in motion. Amazingly, the woodpecker managed to escape, shaking off its attacker and flying to safety. The moment, captured in a rare photo, looks almost mythical: a tiny mammal riding a bird through the sky. Nature, once again, proves it's full of unexpected drama.

The Potter Valley Tribe has reclaimed 48 acres of ancestral land in Mendocino County, establishing the Pomo Community Forest through a federal conservation program. The coastal parcel will support cultural programming, habitat restoration and traditional education. Only three tribes nationwide have used this USDA program to acquire forest land for conservation. [Tribal Business News](#) has this story.



tribalbusinessnews.com

[California tribe taps seldom-used USDA program to acquire ancestral forest land](#)

[The Potter Valley Tribe acquired 48 acres through a federal conservation program to establish the Pomo Community Forest for cultural programming, habitat restoration and traditional education.](#)



[Native News Online](#) ·

[Chicago's Native American community blesses land for Jigzibik, the city's first Native American-focused affordable housing project, Tribal Business News reports. The 45...](#)

[Paula J Wright Before you order...](#)

[Elaine Alec · Before You Place That Order for a Dress or Beadwork... Read This](#)

As a sister, a friend, and someone who's spent hours sewing and beading, I want to speak plainly. Not just as someone who's placed orders but as someone who understands what goes into them.

When I place an order for a dress or beadwork, I don't expect it quickly. I mentally prepare to wait up to a year. Not because I'm passive. But because I know.

I know what I'm asking for. I know how hard it is. I've ruined fabric. I've broken needles. I've spent hours troubleshooting tension settings or unpicking a mistake. This work takes discipline, emotional energy, and a lot of time. So when I order from someone else, I try not to ever throw last-minute requests or expectations at them. I always say: "Please don't let this order mess with your flow. I'm just grateful you said yes."

This Work Is Physically and Emotionally Demanding

You're not just paying for fabric. You're paying for:

- Hours of cutting, pressing, adjusting, finishing
- Back, shoulder, and wrist pain that lingers long after the dress is done
- Emotional regulation to stay focused, even when life is overwhelming
- Time away from family, community, rest

Makers don't just "sit and sew." They stretch every part of themselves to get things right and then get up and do it again for the next person.

Have What You Need Before You Order

Don't message until you're ready. That means:

- Your deposit is ready
- Your measurements are accurate
- Your main, secondary, and third colour choices are clear
- You understand the price and timeline

Why? Because your delay causes ripple effects. There's often a lineup of people waiting. Your hesitancy or last-minute changes can throw off someone's prep schedule especially when they need to organize materials, source supplies, and sometimes even drive hours just to pick up what they need. So just because you sent the money, the clock should start when you give them what they need to do the work. Everything that's requested happens in real time and considerations of gas, labour, and mental load need to be remembered.

If Something Comes Up For You or For Them Let's be honest. Life happens. Kids get sick. Cars break down. Grief hits. Pain flares.

Know this and this is important.... If a maker is still checking in with you, even when they're behind, even when they're exhausted or hurting, that's not failure. That's integrity. That's emotional intelligence. That's accountability.

Because it's easy to ghost. Easy to block. Easy to disappear when you're overwhelmed. But people who keep showing up in communication even when they're not okay? Those people are rare. And they deserve grace.

Now sometimes other things happen that aren't cool, people who do rip people off and that's a whole other post... but for the most part people staying open to communication is key. And for makers, be honest about how many orders you have and your lineup. That way buyers can mentally prepare for the wait.

And... if you're the customer and something shifts your money's tight, your timing changes communicate right away. That's what relational accountability looks like. It goes both ways.

Yes, Dresses Are Expensive. And They Should Be.

I went fabric shopping recently, and the costs have skyrocketed. So yes dresses are now starting around \$1,200 and going up to \$2,800 or more. That's the reality. And it's fair.

Because:

- You're not just buying a dress. You're receiving years of skill and intention.
- If you take care of it, it can last for generations.
- And unlike fast fashion, it holds value. You can resell it. Pass it on. Honour it.

So if you know you want one, start saving. Maybe don't buy that next pair of Nikes. Put something aside. Plan for it. Don't rush the process and don't try to guilt someone into giving you a deal on their labour.

It's a Privilege to Have Someone Say Yes Most makers are already doing work for their families. For ceremony. For grief. For love. If someone agrees to make something for you, that's a big deal.

You're being trusted with their time, their medicine, and their energy. Treat that with care.

Edit: I've seen a few people share..

"Charging that much is colonial."

No. Expecting someone to give you their time, labour, materials, teachings, and emotional energy for free or for less than what it's worth... that's colonial.

That comes from a system that trained people to take from Indigenous women. To expect care without compensation. To believe access equals entitlement.

The real question isn't "Why does this cost so much?" It's: "Why do you expect someone else to carry the weight for you, for nothing?"

Pricing isn't the problem. Exploitation disguised as community is. You don't get to weaponize language about decolonization while guilt-tripping Indigenous makers into staying broke.

This work is slow, physical, intentional. It comes at a cost to people's bodies, time, and lives. If someone's been doing it for 20–30 years and charges accordingly, that's not greed. That's dignity.

So if you're worried about cost, that's okay.

- Save up.
- Learn how to do it yourself.
- Ask what's available in your budget without demanding the top-tier custom work.

But don't call someone colonial for charging what they need to live. Colonialism is the expectation of unpaid Indigenous labour. Not the refusal to keep giving it.

If you want something more affordable, that's okay just know what you're asking for. There are people with less experience, who use simpler materials, who don't add detailed design or embroidery. That's a different tier of work and it costs less for a reason.

But don't go saying "that's colonial" just because someone with 20–30 years of experience charges accordingly. What's actually colonial is expecting Indigenous women to give their labour, knowledge, and time for free or guilt-tripping them when they won't.

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**The John Templeton Foundation has millions of dollars in research funding to award every year.**



- ~~~~~
- [Muscogee Nation court rules descendants of enslaved people are entitled to citizenship](#)
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### **On controlling fire, new lessons from a deep indigenous past**

"Climate change is extending the season during which hot and dry weather encourages fire across North America. At the same time, a long post-settlement history of stamping out wildfires has changed much of the continent's landscape: Forests are thicker, which allows fires to spread up into the canopy, and more uniform, with fewer bare patches that might otherwise slow a fire's progress. As a result, wildfires now tend to grow hotter and bigger: Some say we are in the age of megafires. Forest ecologist Lori Daniels, at the University of British Columbia, has found evidence in tree rings for surprisingly high rates of fires before the early 1900s, thanks to the Indigenous use of fire to manage huge swaths of forest. In British Columbia, after European settlers put an end to burning, much of the forest changed dramatically: In one study site, Daniels and her colleagues have documented 200 to 775 trees per hectare — more than four times the historical average of 50 to 190 trees. North America, researchers say, is running a "fire deficit." ... " [Read more from Yale e360.](#)



Hello all,

This email is being sent to my email lists. Please forward to your colleagues and friends that would be interested in learning more about our work. These sessions are a good way to learn quickly from us with sample ideas and resources.

I am also attaching a few Fact Sheets for you to help get the word out on this historic statewide initiative.

**America250 and America250 Nevada is coming. Here is what you need to know.**

### **What is it:**

America250 is a **nonpartisan** initiative working to engage every American in commemorating the 250th anniversary of our country. This effort is an opportunity to pause and reflect on our nation's past, honor the contributions of all Americans, and look ahead toward the future we want to create for the next generation and beyond. To learn more, visit [www.america250.org](http://www.america250.org). America250 Nevada is the state of Nevada's official effort with the America250 initiative. From **January 1 to July 4, 2026**, America250 Nevada will celebrate by recognizing the diverse contributions of Nevadans while promoting civic education and engagement. To learn more, visit [www.america250nv.org](http://www.america250nv.org).

### **Why participate?**

This is a literal once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to use our nation's history to remember our roots, establish ties in our community, and amplify unity through a shared vision of our future. Our planning has focused on programs that would elevate the high ideals we all share, like civic engagement, volunteerism, and the joy of being a Nevadan.

### **Q&A America250 NV Sessions**

Q&A Sessions are planned for the public to learn more about America250 NV online for communities to participate in the statewide initiatives, grants, and how to submit events.

- WED. August 6, 10:00-11:00am
- WED. September 3, 3:30-4:30pm

To sign up for a session: <https://forms.gle/z6Qmoe2AWC6hVNdh8>

Nevada Volunteers is hosting an online Lunch & Learn, Thursday, August 21, 2025 11:00am - 12:30pm, which will focus on the grants with NV Volunteers, Nevada Arts Council and Travel NV. [Sign up here.](#)

*Please note that each state has a comparable organization. Look it up!  
And shouldn't it be USA250?*





JANUARY 1, 2026 - JULY 4, 2026

Marking the 250th anniversary of  
the founding of our country.

## Our Nevada Stories

The Nevada Division of Museums and History and Nevada Arts Council will work to collect our unique oral history for the **first statewide oral history archive**. Capturing the voices of our state to keep for generations. Our aim is to archive this historic moment as an online audio time capsule through the stories of multiple generations and perspectives.

We're **gathering stories two ways**: online and in-person interviews with State of Nevada Folklorist Brad McMullen.

Our Nevada Stories will be **developed into a podcast series** to be broadcast and available for download.



**Nominate a Notable Nevadan** via our website. Deadline is August 15 for the first round. Form is at [America250NV.org](http://America250NV.org).

**Submit your own story** via our online portal, in August 2025. Portions of those stories may be used in the podcast. All will be archived in our online gallery.

**Plan a listening party.** Our Nevada Stories Podcast will begin airing in January 2026. Our team will have questions and prompts for a good discussion on the themes.

**Visit one of our State Museums** in 2026 to experience the stories along side relevant artifacts and displays.

Bradford McMullen, Folklorist  
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### OUR MISSION

To celebrate the anniversary of our nation's founding by recognizing the diverse contributions of Nevadans and promoting civic education and engagement.



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## Nevada Gives

Throughout history, service has been a cornerstone of American society. From Benjamin Franklin's first volunteer fire brigade in the 1700s to the establishment of the American Red Cross in 1881 and the creation of the Peace Corps in the 20th century. **Nevada Gives**, in partnership with Nevada Volunteers, embarks on reinvigorating our love of community into action – action to reshape our part of the world.

**36 various volunteer projects** will be created throughout the state. Gather your friends, co-workers, and neighbors and join us. Now is the time to come together—our actions today will inspire the next chapter in our state's story. Join us in this remarkable journey, and let's shape the future through service.



**Learn more.** Q&A Sessions on 7/30, 8/21 to help you develop your proposal. Sign up at [America250NV.org](https://America250NV.org).

**Deadline.** Submit a proposal for your project by 10/31.

**Funding Available.** Chosen proposals will receive a stipend that corresponds to the scale of the proposal and the number of potential volunteers.

**Volunteer Recruitment.** Your proposed project will be promoted on our website, newsletter and social media to recruit volunteers to your site to sign up.

**Celebrate.** Photos of your event will be promoted with our key sponsors, celebrating the accomplishment.

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## Our Tentpole Initiatives

### Educate

We will help Nevadans understand the relevance of the Constitution and other founding documents to their daily lives.

### Engage

We encourage Nevadans to participate through civic involvement, voter information, and volunteerism.

### Celebrate

We will salute the principles and ideals that unite us as a country and nation.

### Civic Seal Program

is a public/private program working to educate our K through 12 students in civics, social studies, and leadership in a robust, meaningful, and in-depth manner.

**Nevada Gives** embarks to re-invigorate our love of community into action – action to reshape our part of the world with 36 planned community volunteer events.

**Our Nevada Stories** aims to capture our history and vision for our future via stories from our statewide community.

**Grants are available** on our website from Travel Nevada and Nevada Arts Council.

**Extensive community calendar** with programs leading up to the big day. Events will be promoted alongside all AM250NV events and programs.

**Website** contains resources like curriculum, handbooks, and access to grant opportunities on our website, [America250Nevada.org](http://America250Nevada.org).

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In 2016, I was getting ready to interview Adam Fortunate Eagle, a resident of the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Reservation who's best known for having led the Native American occupation of Alcatraz Island from 1969-'71. I picked up his autobiography, titled *Pipestone: My Life in an Indian Boarding School*.

Embarrassingly, this was the first I'd heard of an Indian boarding school. I was 44

Also embarrassing: Growing up in Connecticut in the 1970s and '80s, I had no idea that familiar places like Hammonasset (the beach!) and Lake Quassapaug (the amusement park!) had Indigenous names. The only "fact" about local Indigenous history I recall having learned as a child was that the Pequot were "the Indians who used to live here." But my one "fact" was incorrect: There are *still* two federally recognized Pequot tribes in Connecticut.

In the years after I read Fortunate Eagle's biography, I learned a lot more about Indian boarding schools—in large part thanks to the staff of the Stewart Indian School in Carson City and the Nevada Indian Commission, who were patient with my questions and generous with their time. This was in 2017 -2018, shortly after the state of Nevada had approved funds for a massive renovation of the long-ailing campus. Back then, although the campus was open to visitors, most of its buildings were closed. Today, it's home to an excellent museum that tells the school's many stories.

During that era, boarding schools finally entered the public eye. You probably heard about the mass graves and President Biden's long-overdue apology on behalf of the federal government.

Learning more of this history made me a better, more informed citizen. It gave some helpful dimension to stories that Indigenous acquaintances have told on occasion about their grandmas never hugging children. It's not that Grandma was a jerk; you see, it's that Grandma, carted off against her parents' will to a boarding school in the 1920s, was deprived of the love and security of her family when she was little. That can leave a lasting mark on a person's heart.

So, why am I bringing this up *now*, almost a decade later? Because, after a few generations of efforts to reverse the erasure of many important parts of American history, the Trump administration is pushing to relegate them back into obscurity.

On June 13, *The New York Times* reported:

*Staff at the National Park Service, which is part of the Interior Department, were instructed to post QR codes and signs at all 433 national parks, monuments and historic sites by Friday asking visitors to flag anything they think should be changed, from a plaque to a park ranger's tour to a film at a visitor's center.*

*Leaders at the park service would then review concerns about anything that "inappropriately disparages Americans past or living (including persons living in colonial times)."*

In a July 22 update, the *Times* included takes from both sides of the issue:

*Critics have warned that these moves could lead to the erasure of difficult periods of American history, as well as contributions made by people of color, gay and transgender figures, women and other marginalized groups.*

And

*Several Republican lawmakers have applauded the administration's efforts to purge the federal government of "woke" initiatives that portray historical events or figures as racist, sexist or otherwise flawed.*

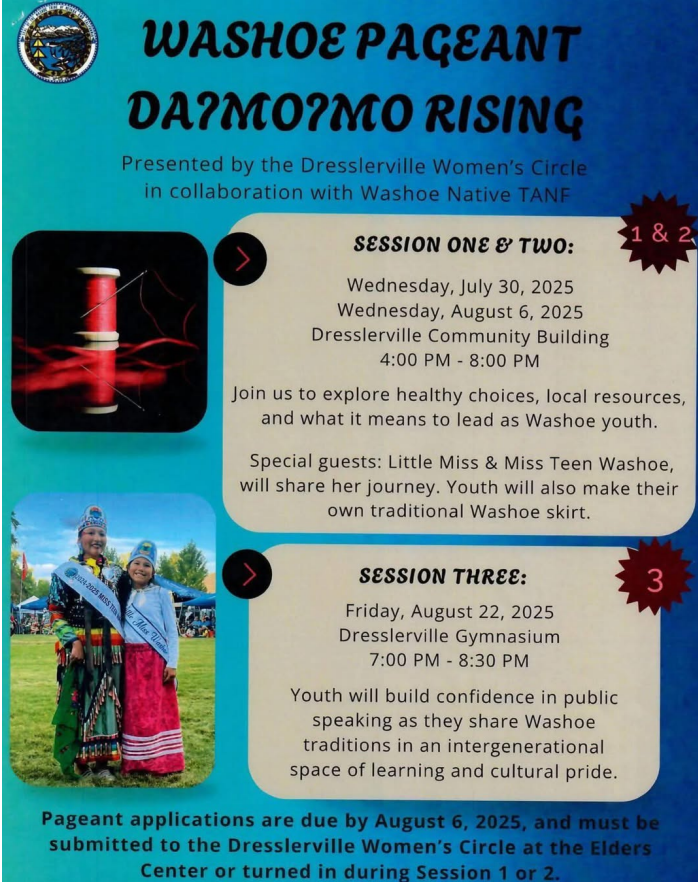
Portraying slavery, Japanese-American internment camps or Indian boarding schools (in their early iterations, anyway; the forced assimilation and violence eventually abated, and a few proudly still operate) as racist and flawed is not a "woke" initiative. These institutions were very much racist. Keeping the truth in the light is not unpatriotic. Keeping it in the dark is brainwashing.

My decades of ignorance regarding Indigenous history got me nowhere. They did not make me a better or more patriotic American, just a more ignorant one.

In news somewhat related to all of the above, Adam Fortunate Eagle turned 96 last week, according to social media posts by a member of his family. Happy birthday, Sir! I hope you keep telling your stories.

I hope everyone keeps telling their stories. I hope we all listen to each other this time. Why not start with these fascinating accounts by former Stewart students, in their own voices, sharing stories both difficult and fond.

Take care,  
*Kris Vagner, managing editor, Reno News and Review*



**WASHOE PAGEANT  
DA?MO?MO RISING**

Presented by the Dresslerville Women's Circle  
in collaboration with Washoe Native TANF

**SESSION ONE & TWO:** 1 & 2

Wednesday, July 30, 2025  
Wednesday, August 6, 2025  
Dresslerville Community Building  
4:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Join us to explore healthy choices, local resources,  
and what it means to lead as Washoe youth.

Special guests: Little Miss & Miss Teen Washoe,  
will share her journey. Youth will also make their  
own traditional Washoe skirt.

**SESSION THREE:** 3

Friday, August 22, 2025  
Dresslerville Gymnasium  
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

Youth will build confidence in public  
speaking as they share Washoe  
traditions in an intergenerational  
space of learning and cultural pride.

Pageant applications are due by August 6, 2025, and must be  
submitted to the Dresslerville Women's Circle at the Elders  
Center or turned in during Session 1 or 2.