



Kiowa Tribe District 7 Newsletter

January of 2024



Happy New Year District 7 Citizens!

Hello, citizens of Kiowa District Seven! I hope this message finds you in good health and high spirits as we enter the new year. I am thrilled to share the news that our office staff is expanding to better serve our Kiowa community. We now have office hours available at our Tulsa office, and I am delighted to introduce Lisa Aunko as our new Office Outreach Coordinator.

As we embark on this new year, we are committed to improving our communication and outreach efforts through new platforms. Our legislative agenda is now focused on passing a budget modification and developing an annual budget for the Kiowa tribe. I want to take a moment to acknowledge the loss that many of our Kiowa families have experienced recently. Please know that you are in our thoughts and prayers. Lastly, we are planning a Spring

Thoughts from an Elder

Just Who Are We?

Here are some contextual concepts followed by related content presented as suggestions on how to address the future of being Kiowa. I think these comments will stimulate your interest in more participation in the governance of the tribe and create similar thoughts you might want to communicate with fellow Kiowa citizens.

Contextual Thoughts (Background)

Today, a vast majority of Kiowa people do not know how to speak the Kiowa language, what I call the soul of the Kiowa culture. This is not a criticism, just an opinion. Very few contemporary Kiowa citizens are full-blood (4/4 of one tribal blood). Today, most Kiowa tribal members live outside their designated Oklahoma tribal service area and have moderate attachment to the tribe. Many of the 1950 Kiowa people, now your grandpas and grandmas, relocated to other cities throughout the U.S. and became a part of this transitional body known as mixed bloods. A guess on my part is that over 75 percent of official tribal members are less than ½ Kiowa blood. You notice I have been guessing, stating opinions, suggesting that our tribal membership is more transitional than traditional, hah? My point with all my rambling about being Kiowa is that we moved from a *traditional* body where our culture was apparent, to one body of *transitional* Kiowa, and it will continue as long as we do not exert our educational sovereignty from a Kiowa perspective. I have no problem with those Kiowa people who choose to be of a transitional nature or those who work to maintain the traditional mode. However, I believe the traditional Kiowa is getting absorbed into the "one Indian, all Indian" mode more than ever before and must bring it to the front, discuss it, and decide if they want to continue to push for traditionalism or make a movement more into the transitional mode, especially as a government.

Content and Suggestions

Our younger generation of Kiowa citizens need to understand who they are as Kiowa people if our spirit is to survive in these modern times. The parents and grandparents, must teach their children more about being Kiowa, provided they know about being Kiowa. I suggest that today's Kiowa home environment gives minimum attention to what is Kiowa compared to what current baby boomers experienced and understand. Again, not a criticism, just my opinion. We need to zero in on this identity concept and address it more within the home and community environment as a tribe and not assume it is being taught at home or within the community for various reasons other than the few I mentioned.

What about the Kiowa Tribe taking a step forward in tribal educational sovereignty and establishing their own version of Kiowa Studies within the structure of governance? Our Kiowa people do this type of activity (Kiowa Studies) every day, or do they? Are there any formal structures, organizations, or activities that focus on perpetuating the Kiowa culture through the Kiowa Tribe? Yes, to some extent we have a tribal language program which is doing a good job with such a difficult condition-loss of language. Why doesn't the tribal formulate the context of Kiowa life and offer it through the formal teaching of specific cultural content to our Kiowa communities? My opinion on the definition of Kiowa culture is inclusive, meaning it addresses all aspects of Kiowa culture from language to ceremony. At one time in our history, we had specific values, customs, attitudes, spirits, behaviors, perspectives, characters, etc., labeled as the "Kiowa Way" as I recall. Today's public schools will continue to face the confusion of wokism and shy away from offering content in/of tribal culture. What little they do offer is piecemeal and only frustrates our children and communities with a

conflict condition prevalent at home, in local communities, and in school.

Believe it or not, the tribe does not need the approval of state or federal agencies to teach their citizens about Kiowa's existence, historically or contemporarily. We as a sovereign tribe can offer our version of Kiowa being to our communities formally if we choose. We do need the energy of our expert Kiowa people, especially the elders and our education professionals to build what I call a “cultural institution” within the tribal structure, research and formalize some goals, and objectives, and create a curriculum plan accordingly. The prevailing plan can be offered at tribal headquarters after hours, and on weekends at no cost to our tribal members. It can even be taken out to the communities throughout the years as a Kiowa community mentorship program as a major part of the perpetuation of our tribal identity, existence, and sustainment, along with the continued emphasis on language retainment, maintenance, attainment, and obtainment. Personally, I envision a new generation of Kiowa-educated citizens as well as public school-educated, state, and national citizens. We need a well-researched, data-supported, tribally endorsed Kiowa Perpetuation Education Program (institute), federally funded for the sake of maintaining our identity. A good plan begins with discussion, debate, proposals, consensus, execution, and implementation and ends with assessment (impact/effect on subjects). In my opinion, we are in the proposal setting but have little inclination to seek and promote proposals other than what the tribal staff offers. Our Kiowa citizens have some great ideas that do not get to the tribal staff or leadership for that matter for various reasons. A simple town meeting approach to solicit ideas from tribal 'citizens would be a plausible means of taking advantage of our tribal citizens' thoughts/ideas/proposals but it means getting out into communities other than just the tribal service area communities. For example, what we all know as "Indian City" could be a viable setting for this cultural institute where schooling to perpetuate being Kiowa could be located. I noticed several of our tribal citizens have suggested using it as a Kiowa Art Program setting for aspiring Kiowa artists. Some have suggested building a tourist setting, again, which might include a casino operation, along with other related amenities, primarily as an economic development focus for the tribe and local communities. Both are great ideas and have some viability but little feasibility studies/data. A Kiowa Cultural Institute, not a museum per se, could encompass a productive curriculum of Kiowa life to be taught by tribal people on-site and virtually in communities throughout the service area.

Closing Comments

The Kiowa Tribe needs its own educational program to teach its citizens about being Kiowa in today's world if they choose, rather than depending on the state's public school system. Using your tribal citizens' expertise and energy are major sources and resources rather than a few tribal staff members. Maybe our legislative branch needs to develop legislation supporting this concept with the appointment of a relevant citizens' commission to head it up and produce a report for the Kiowa people and government. We elected the legislators to represent us and to create meaningful, relevant, legislation as legislators. Also, what better place to find some “expert Kiowa” instead of using the “Kiowa experts” utilized all too often as we all have been subjected to in past years. In fact, most Kiowa expert legislation over the past years has proven ineffective, thus the policy on self-determination and enhanced tribal sovereignty over the years. I believe our Kiowa Indian Council would welcome and pass this type of legislation, meaning we then would have a plan when asked how we proposed to sustain our educational sovereignty we teach our citizens about being Kiowa from our perspectives as a sovereign tribe.

In closing, one of my favorite comments that I live by and practice as much as society will allow is:

“Great minds discuss ideas; average minds discuss events; small minds discuss people.”

Our Kiowa people are great people with great minds. Let us use these minds to practice what we preach and perpetuate who we are.

Happy New Year to all generations of Kiowa Citizens!

Legislative Update



Latest Legislature News

During January, I co-sponsored two bills collaboratively with legislator Anita Johnson from District 5 that were voted on during the January 13th regular session. The first bill, the 1st Amendment to the Kiowa Tribe Territory Expansion Act of 2024, focuses on the expansion of our tribal land base. Our Kiowa Tribe once had extensive territories that sustained our people. However, over time, inhibiting federal laws, land-grabbing policies, fraudulent land transfers, and even theft, greatly diminished our land base. It is crucial for us to re-establish a strong, large land base for our tribe if we expect to keep and preserve our sovereignty as an Indian nation, especially during these turbulent political times.

As a result, the legislature has passed legislation addressing the Office Establishment and Land Acquisition Act of 2017 and the Territory Expansion Act of 2018. These acts enable us to acquire additional allotments and specific lands around Hobart and the Indian city property near Anadarko. As legislators, we have determined that it is in the tribe's best interest to enact the 1st Amendment to the Territory Expansion Act. This amendment will enable the tribe to acquire additional lands, including fee lands which could expand our land base for additional housing and economic development activities.

In collaboration with our legislative attorney, we have addressed several issues with the bill. One of them is ensuring structural inspections of buildings on the lands that are being purchased to verify the status of the working order. We have also included a requirement for an environmental review for all lands to be purchased.

The second resolution we are co-sponsoring is the Leasing Code of the Kiowa Tribe Health Act of 2024. The legislature has determined that it is in the best interest of tribal citizens to provide a long-term leasing system option on the trust land held by the tribe. The system will no longer require the approval of the Secretary of the Interior and will reaffirm our inherent sovereignty. A code has been published and will be enacted to pursue our sovereignty and authority in leasing trust property held by the tribe. We recognize the vital role that land ownership, improvements, and expansion play in our tribe and communities and intend to promote this type of development as part of our duty to our tribal people.

We have been diligently collaborating on the third resolution, which centers around the modification of the tribal budget passed in the summer of 2023. The chairman's office has presented a modification to the legislature, aiming to reallocate revenue to specific areas that have been added to the budget. Notably, additional funding has been allocated to the tribal budget, which requires the people's vote for approval. Ensuring fiscal responsibility and transparency, my primary concern lies in the tribe operating within its means. After all, why do we vote on a budget if not to establish the tribe's operational framework? Furthermore, our concerted efforts are focused on publishing the entire budget with itemized details, ensuring utmost transparency and accountability. If approved by the Kiowa Legislature, the budget will undergo voting by the Kiowa People.

Please visit our legislative website for the resolutions and documents disseminated to the Kiowa Public. <https://www.kiowatribe.org/legislative>

District 7's Newest Addition



Meet Lisa Aunko

Hi! My name is Lisa Aunko. My parents are Timothy and Norma Aunko. My dad is my Kiowa blood- Saddle Mountain Kiowa and my mom is Choctaw. I have 4 brothers and 1 sister and have lived in Tulsa for many years.

I love to cook but my "therapy" is baking- love to watch the Food Network! I do some crafting, try on jewel making, like day trips to find and see different local wonders, and of course, find a good cheeseburger!

Before I retired I worked as a pharmacy technician for 43 years and I am excited to start my new venture as your Outreach Coordinator for the Kiowa tribe. My Dad would be beyond thrilled for my new job as he was so proud of his Kiowa heritage.

I am looking forward to helping our citizens through the local office now open in Tulsa. Good to meet you all and will see some of you soon.

Lisa will be working part-time in our Tulsa location. As an Outreach Coordinator, she will be there to answer the phone, help assist with paperwork, and overall be a helpful point of contact for District 7 Citizens in the Tulsa area.


Tulsa Office Business Hours

District 7 in Tulsa now has business hours. We have recently onboarded Lisa Aunko to work part-time at the Tulsa location. She will be in the office part-time and will help answer the phones at the Tulsa Location and help assist with paperwork for citizens.

Our Tulsa office number is 539-525-0437.

You can also email us at district7legislature@kiowatribe.org

We still have the Norman location but this office space is shared with the Executive Branch. The Norman phone number remains the same, 405-857-8408. However, this line goes to the Executive Branch in District 7. Please use the Tulsa phone number for legislative business.



District 7 Tulsa Office

Business Hours

15 E 16th St
Tulsa, OK 74119

Phone: 539-525-0437
Email: district7legislature@kiowatribe.org

Monday	Please contact by email
Tuesday	Please contact by email
Wednesday	10am-4pm
Thursday	10am-4pm
Friday	10am-4pm
Saturday	Closed
Sunday	Closed

Upcoming Events

Kiowa District 7 Language Class

FEBRUARY 12TH

IN PERSON ACTIVITY BEGINS

@ 7:00PM

VIRTUAL CLASS BEGINS

@ 8:00 PM

POTLUCK! PLEASE BRING AN ITEM TO SHARE!

SPEAKERS

DELORES HARRAGARRA
VELMA EISENBERGER
MARTHA POOLAW

Location : Kiowa District 7 Office
123 24th Ave NW
Norman, Oklahoma 73069

ZOOM OPTION

Meeting ID: 876 3205 2759
Password: kiowa

FOR ANY ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CLASS CONTENT PLEASE
CONTACT KRICKET CONNYWERDY AT RHOADSCONNYWERDY@GMAIL.COM



New Tulsa Language Class



ZOOM AND REGISTRATION INFO CAN BE FOUND:

[HTTPS://LINKTR.EE/KIOWAD7](https://linktr.ee/kiowad7)

IN PERSON: 15 E 16TH ST TULSA, OK 74119

EMAIL: [DISTRICT7LEGISLATURE@KIOWATRIBE.ORG](mailto:district7legislature@kiowatribe.org)

PHONE: 405-857-8408

Our Upcoming Tulsa language class is still on its way.
To Sign up please visit: [here](#)

D7 Links



@kiowaD7

Kiowa Tribe District 7

district7legislature@kiowatribe.org

Website



Sign Up for Our Newsletter



Schedule a Meeting with Legislator Warren Queton

YouTube Videos

September Zoom Meeting (PIN 381420)

Please bookmark and save <https://linktr.ee/kiowaD7> this page will be updated with easy-to-navigate links.

Kiowa District 7 Legislative Office | 123 24th AVE NW, Norman, OK 73069 405-857-8408

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