

Interview With Michael Busby



Editor's note: Michael Busby is grandson of principal chief Vivian Panther Lawson. He was present on the National Grounds during the Spring 2012 gathering and showed great enthusiasm and helpfulness in all the activities.

TL: *How does it feel to be the grandson of a chief?*

Michael: *Well, it's a great honor. I am very thankful. My grandmother is a very good woman. She has always been about the people. Her position does not go to our head, we are all equal. It has been an awesome experience to grow up near her and I have learned a lot from her.*

TL: *I notice that you seem to be really interested in Native culture. Have you been this way all your life or is this a recent thing?*

Michael: *It is not so much an interest as it is a calling. It is something I feel and am very passionate about. I have always felt that I have been called to serve the Cherokee people as well as any other people of the world. My Cherokee heritage comes from my mother's side of the family and from my dad I have an English and Irish heritage.*

TL: *Do you have the same passion about your English/Irish heritage as you do your Native heritage?*

Michael: *Yes, I sure do. I have always had an interest in anyone's culture or ethnic background.*

TL: *Do you feel any conflict between the two cultures?*

Michael: *The two cultures harmonize with each other. One can deny or accept their heritage.*

TL: *Do you think it is possible to live the Native culture which is linked to the past in this modern high tech fast moving world of today?*

Michael: *Yes one can live in both worlds. We can never live exactly as our Native ancestors did, as we were not there to observe it. It is hard to explain but even in this modern world I feel this need to connect to my Native heritage.*

TL: *You have probably read in the history books that the Indians of the past were a savage and bloodthirsty people. Do you think that portrayal or perception is accurate?*

Michael: *Everybody is going to have their opinion the way they see it. If some want to walk through life with misunderstanding and hatred, that is up to them. But that is not the way I am going to be.*

TL: *Do you feel, then, that this is a time of healing of past hatreds on both sides?*

Michael: *Yes, I do, but I also realize in this life there will be constant strife and struggles between different peoples.*

TL: *Can you see yourself in the future fulfilling a position of leadership and responsibility among those of Native American descent, such as in the Southeastern Cherokee Council?*

Michael: *Yes, and I will.*

TL: *Can you tell what kind of leadership you might be drawn to? Is it ceremonial, administrative, organizational?*

Michael: *I believe you cannot always choose just how your life will develop. One must just follow the Creator's*

leading day by day. I can say that I am not very interested in the political side of things!

TL: *Thank you very much, Michael*

Michael: *Thank you, I appreciate it.*



Spirit Wolf Watches Clan:

By Autumn Snow

The main news from the Spirit Wolf Watches Clan is: I took my mother "Bonnie Spirit Eyes Jones" and my son Robert Eagle Heart Terranova's ashes to our ancestral home just outside Madison, West Virginia, for "re-matriation" (burial). They were placed next to my father: Herbert Silent Warrior Jones. Many of my blood family of the clan attended. They traveled from Michigan to be with me. My cousin, Ken Many Bears, told me: "We didn't want you to do this alone". My cousin, Kathy Peaceful Dove, helped me by reading one of my mother's poems: "Safely Home". I started to read it but could not continue. She ran up beside me and put her arm around my waist and then read the poem. Kevin Deer Hunter, Karen White Wolf Dancer and Darrell Runs With Deer are my blood family who were present. It was a beautiful day. With all the storms and unusual hot weather, people out of electric power for many days, so many tornados jumping here and there, so much storm damage going on around the state, I was afraid I would not be able to fulfill my promise to my mother and son to take them home West Virginia in the Appalachian mountains for final ceremony. But Creator answered my prayers and blessed us. It was beautiful, peaceful and serene on the mountain. You could see for miles and miles in this beautiful place. The sunshine and a gentle breeze was present on this special day. L Many flowers were placed, a ceremony was held, prayers were said, music played, and they were laid to rest with Dad. I left the mountain with a feeling of peace. My promise was kept and they were home. My clan told me before I left, they would also say prayers and burn sage to send blessings for peace and safe journeys. It is good to know we are as one in love, harmony, peace and balance. I am grateful for my family and all my clan. We are always there for each other when we need love and support.

Autumn Snow, Chief of Spirit Wolf Watches Clan of S.E.C.C.I.