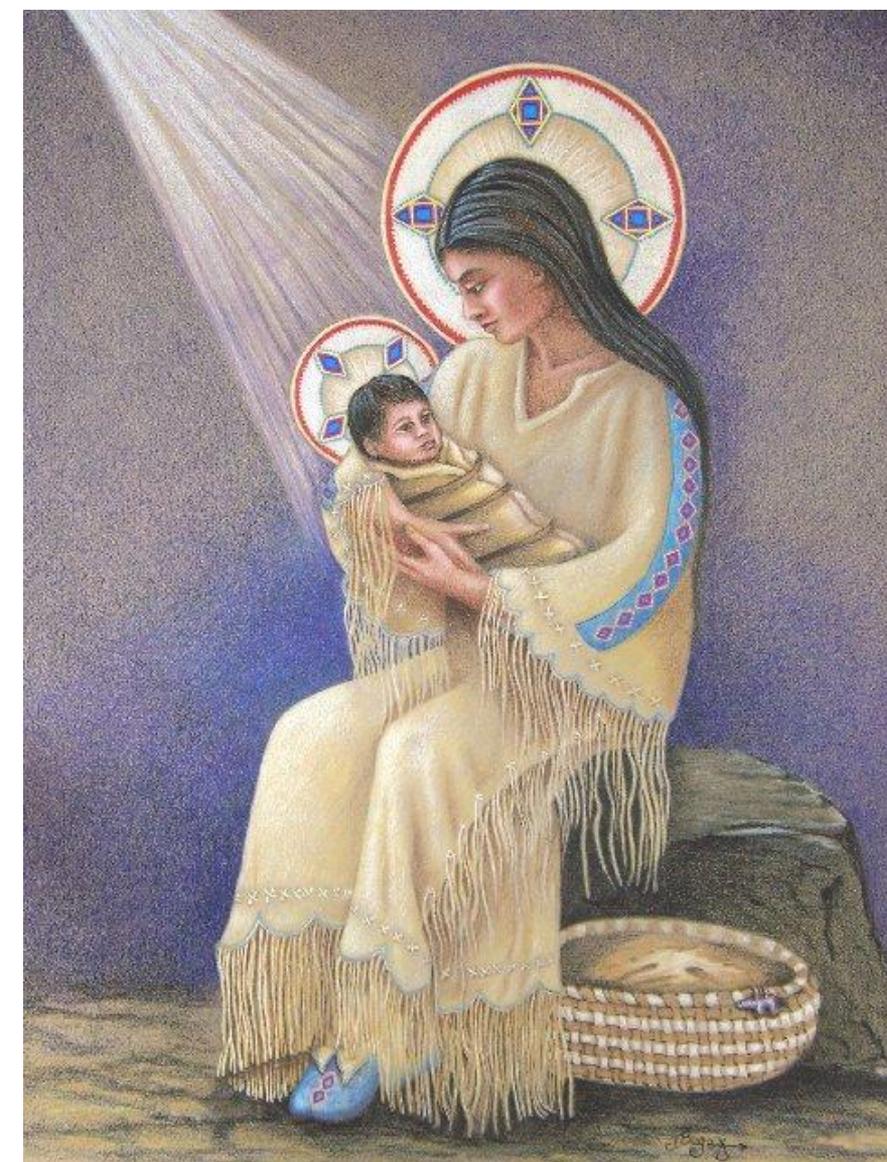


Tribal Member's Art Accepted Into Cherokee Heritage Calendar

Joyce Spirit Wind Bugaiski has once again been awarded a space in the next annual Cherokee Heritage Calendar. This prestigious cultural and pictorial calendar features the art work of the most prominent Cherokee artists. Each painting or drawing depicted represents some facet of Cherokee culture.

Bugaiski's works of art have been displayed on former Heritage Calendars as well. For example, in the current 2012 version, her work entitled "TREE OF LIFE" is featured for the month of August. Below you see a copy of what will appear in next year's Cherokee Heritage Callendar:



Amazing Grace

By Joyce SpiritWind Bugaiski

STORM RAVAGES CHOTA BAND GROUNDS

COUNCIL HOUSE SURVIVES AGAIN!

Jim Howling Wolf Allison was working in his garden one afternoon in July. He was working in the Okra patch which was part of his other plantings. The air had a different feel to it than usual. Yes, of course, he was in Tennessee where the air can be hot and humid...and that was the way it was today. But something in the air was disquieting. Then he heard it off in the distance. To the North he heard a mild rumbling of Thunder. "Hmm, he thought, some people are about to get a storm". But he was not concerned because almost always the storms that hit his property (part of which are the beautiful Chota Band Ceremonial Grounds) come out of the south west. This thunder he heard was in the North-east. "This storm must be going away from me", Howling Wolf mused. Then he heard thunder again, this time much closer! "oh oh", he thought.

Then it hit...the wind that preceded the rain. It sounded like several jet aircraft approaching. And all kinds of leaves, twigs, and small limbs were swirling in the air. The giant Willow trees along side of "Snake Creek" that winds through these bottom land Grounds, began to lean and moan. These are the trees that cast a pleasant shade all around the Council House where all the sacred traditional Native ceremonies are conducted. Howling Wolf had been through this kind of experience before. More than once, these grounds have been tortured by wind and flood damage and the falling of trees, even touching on the Council House.

One by one Jim Howling Wolf now witnessed the snapping off of large limbs and the falling of entire trees on his beloved Chota Grounds..all from this unusual storm coming out of the North. It was a furious and frightening storm, but it was fairly brief. Soon it had traveled on towards the south west...leaving the Chota Band Grounds in a state of twisted confusion. It was impossible to return to his house and cross the little Snake Creek without having to cross over or under limbs or trunks of downed trees.

Miraculously, the Council House was undamaged by this storm. It is almost as if some unseen force or forces were protecting it. This also has happened before. Other storms have felled trees on the very edge of the Council house without causing any major damage to the place where ceremonies are conducted.

Next day Howing Wolf began cleaning up the damage. Several people came to help. But it would take weeks to clean it up and band meetings had to be cancelled. The council house survives...AGAIN. Perhaps, just perhaps, the ancestors have a hand in protecting this sacred place from the destructive forces of Nature that seem to prefer striking this area not far from the Old Chota..former capital of the Cherokee People on the Little Tennessee River.

By Rick Runningbear