

A PROMOTER OF HEALING



Above: Noqah Elisi

Noqah Elisi, returned from Alaska to "Cherokee Country" last Spring after attending to the details for the funeral of her son John, who tragically died in a shooting accident in the Fall of 2012 in Nome Alaska. Coming from a rich back ground and world view of traditional Native values, she immediately began to attend to matters pertaining to the Bear Spirit Band and the Buffalo Creek Band.

Whenever there is a death of a band chief, it is natural that there be grief, confusion, and some need of re-organization. Such was the case with the Buffalo Creek Band after the passing of Starr Thunderfoot Macauley. In the process there were several individuals in need of encouragement and emotional healing. Noqah, a member of the Bear Spirit Band made herself available to several members of the Buffalo Creek band. Some came to Bear Spirit Grounds for a time of "spiritual reinforcement" and guidance as they seek to overcome problems and challenges of the band.

Noqah says, "Our souls have a purpose for jumping down from the Spirit world into these bodies on Earth. Our life's task is to learn what this purpose is and to align our intentions and actions with that purpose. We need to stay open and attentive for the voice of All Father as he moves us into that purpose. Ceremony is one doorway through which we access this journey." To help us in this process, Noqah emphasizes the need for private individual ceremony on a daily basis; for keeping us connected within ourselves to Creator, Mother Earth, and each other; and moving us through the human processes of growth and maturation. She believes that ceremony and prayer helps us in overcoming negativity that is constantly threatening all of us as we struggle with our daily issues of living and walking "The Red Road."

Noqah was born in an isolated mountain region of western North Carolina and remembers the values taught her from her Cherokee grandmothers which included a strong work ethic and a ceremonial life. She spent many years working as a

chemical dependency counselor among the indigenous peoples of Alaska in the remote villages where one finds many serious social problems including alcohol, drug, and sexual abuse. In her work she has endeavored to utilize the traditional Native approach as well as the skills she learned in her formal college training. She holds degrees in Forestry and Psychology.

Noqah has a love for horses and mules. She recently completed a horse journey with a group of indigenous and non-indigenous Americans to commemorate the escape route of Little Wolf and Dull Knife's band of Northern Cheyenne from Fort Reno, Oklahoma to Lame Deer, Montana. Her future plans include carrying her son's ashes by mule along the Trail of Tears from Tahlequah, Oklahoma to Red Clay, Tennessee; and on across the mountains to her family's cemetery on Big Brushy Creek at the foot of Green Mountain, North Carolina. There she and her family will place Son's ashes between his Grandmother and Grandfather.

TRIBAL MARSHALL VISITS BUFFALO CREEK BAND



Above: Tribal Marshall James Black Wolf Barfield

James Black Wolf Barfield traveled from the National Grounds in Ochlocknee, Georgia, to east Tennessee in April to attend to matters pertaining to the Buffalo Creek Band. During his stay he also visited the Bear Spirit Grounds and met Noqah Elisi. He and her were both instrumental in facilitating the election of new officers for the Buffalo Creek band.

The Buffalo Creek Band is located not far from the Bear Spirit Band and the Chota Band and the three bands often refer to themselves as "sister bands". Mike Stone Carvr Utz is the chief of the Bear Spirit Band and Jim Howling Wolf Allison is chief of the Chota band of Blount County Tennessee.

