

## We Are The People

We are the people of the Ancestors. We have various blood lines... Cherokee, of course, English, German, French, Irish, Scottish, Scandinavian, German. But we all have the same blood. We are of the "Human Race"

Some of us of the Southeastern Cherokee Council can trace our lineage to the Shawnee, or the Creek (Muscogee). The written records are sadly lacking in details and it is hard to prove our ancestry at times.....but yet "many of us feel it".

It has been said very wisely: "Blood is good, Spirit is better". If you have Cherokee blood "good for you!" If you have the Cherokee spirit in your heart, "Even better!"

It is good that each one of us seek to confirm our Native ancestry. It will go as far as it can go. Beyond that, we enter into the unknown. And Creator simply influences us to know that we pertain to a Native culture that although undocumented, is nevertheless very real.

We are the people. We call ourselves "The Principal People" or the "Real People". Our tribe has a name. We are the "Southeastern Cherokee Council". There are other organizations of people of Cherokee descent out there. Some are Federally recognized others not...but perhaps The Great One recognizes those who are real Natives...people who seek to walk in balance.....to retain the spirituality of the grandfathers.

So we return to ceremony. Ah yes, those "silly rituals" that some of the "old folks" still observe. Going to water, smudging, offering tobacco to the fire, telling old stories about Uktena (the giant serpent) and the like.

We are the People....we live in two worlds. We live in the modern society with all its amenities....yet we retain the spirituality of the past and of our ancestors...so much entwined in Nature, the trees, the fire, the stars, the moon, the wind, the rain and the snow.

We are the PEOPLE, who are you? ###

## Story Telling Feast

By Lee Uwoyeni Billingsley,  
(Member of the Ceremonial Team)

*The New Moon of January 11, 2013 was the time to observe the Story Telling Feast. This was the time of year when the hunting and harvesting was finished; the time when traditionally the people gathered in their lodges until late at night and told stories. The people learned through their stories so this was a time for learning as well as entertainment. This was a time to celebrate by gathering with those we love, and listen to their stories as well as tell our own. It was a time to rest.*

*If it happens that you are alone this time of year, you can read a book or watch a movie, or take some time to listen to a story and learn what you can from it. Light a candle, burn sage and tobacco, smoke a pipe, handle crystals or offer prayer in whatever way suits you best during this time. Remember those you love who are not with you for whatever reason, in the military, in a hospital, traveling or working away from home. Remember their stories.*

*Sun-down on the day of the new moon is the traditional time to begin ceremony but this is not always possible for us. So this ceremony can be done a few days before or after the New Moon date.*



*Lee Uwoyeni (the Hand)*

## FALL AND SPRING

### GATHERINGS SCHEDULED AT NATIONAL TRIBAL GROUNDS:

The National Tribal Grounds, located in Ochlocknee, Georgia, has scheduled its Spring and Fall gatherings for the year 2013. After the "cold moons" are over, the first gathering of our tribal members will occur on March 16<sup>th</sup>. However, it is recommended that visitors arrive a day or two early for this event to participate in Grounds Cleansing activities and other social interactions. The First New Moon of Spring will be celebrated at this gathering and will be conducted by ceremonialist Joyce Spirit Wind Busgaiski. Sunrise ceremony will be conducted by Rick Runningbear Dunifer. The annual Council Meeting takes place on this occasion.

The Fall Gathering will take place on October 5<sup>th</sup>. The Atahuna and Great New Moon ceremonies are addressed at this gathering as well as the important annual Membership meeting. The sunrise ceremony will be conducted by the Fire Keeper inside the Council House (Medicine Lodge). The Fire Keeper will be attending to the sacred Ceremonial Fire before the rising of the sun on that day of ceremony. The Fire burns until the last ceremony of the day is completed.

All who can are encouraged to come to the National Grounds to attend these important annual events. Other ceremonies traditionally done by our ancestors during the year should be done by the various bands and individual members in their various locations throughout the land.



THE BLUE HERON IS OUR SYMBOL FOR CEREMONY AND SPIRITUALITY. IT IS THE EMBLEM OF THE BLUE HERON MEDICINE LODGE.

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