



Nemîshâtênemo êhthâkiwiyâni



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Chief Thurman and Sandra Massey (NAGPRA) Attend Play About Thorpe Case and Take Part in NAGPRA Panel

by Sandra Massey (NAGPRA)

On February 12th, Sac and Fox Nation Principal Chief George Thurman and Historic Preservation Officer Sandra Massey attended the staged reading of *My Father's Bones*, a play about the Jim Thorpe lawsuit, and participated on the panel about the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation (NAGPRA) afterward. The University of Pennsylvania Penn Cultural Heritage Center in Philadelphia sponsored the program, offered free to the public.

The event included a showing of the Jim Thorpe, *World's Greatest Athlete* movie trailer, the presentation of *My Father's Bones*, the panel, and a reception.

My Father's Bones, written by Suzan Shown Harjo and Mary Kathryn Nagle and directed by Matt Pfeiffer, recounts the circumstances of Jim Thorpe's funeral, burial, and the subsequent lawsuit through the eyes of his youngest son, John "Jack" Thorpe, former Principal Chief.

Jim Thorpe requested and was in the middle of a traditional Sac and Fox funeral when his third wife Patsy Thorpe removed his body before the ceremony had concluded. Although he wanted to be buried in Oklahoma, Jim Thorpe's body remained unburied for years while Patsy Thorpe searched for a burial site, finally striking a deal with the two towns of Mauch

Chunk and East Mauch Chunk.

The towns merged to become the Borough of Jim Thorpe. While the Borough claims that it was not motivated by tourism, it removed Jim Thorpe's remains from its cemetery and placed him in a roadside park.

Jack Thorpe made several attempts to repatriate the body of his father, finally filing a lawsuit in 2010. After his death in 2011, the remaining Thorpe sons, William and Richard, and the Sac and Fox Nation went forward with the litigation, still in process.

Suzan Shown Harjo is an Indian activist who worked for years to bring NAGPRA into being. She also sued the Washington professional football team over the team name and won. During the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) conference in 2014 she presented a resolution in support of the Sac and Fox Nation's case to repatriate Jim Thorpe. Most recently, she was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

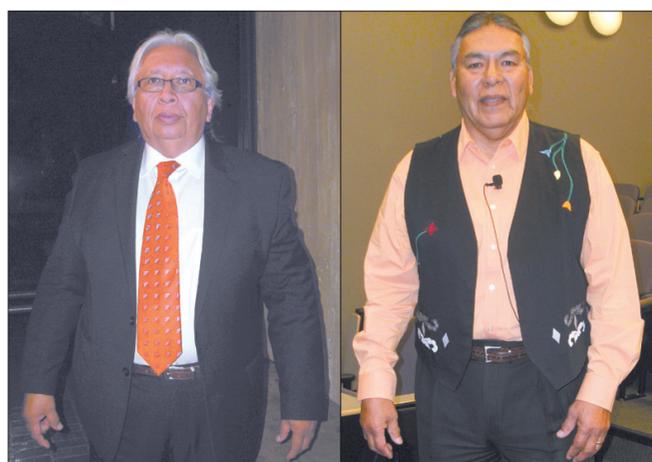
Mary Kathryn Nagle is an attorney and award winning playwright whose plays have been presented across the country. She is a member of the 2013 Emerging Writers Group at the Public Theater.

The first version of *My Father's Bones* was selected as a finalist for the 2013 Von Marie Atchley Excellence in Playwriting Award and performed at the Autry Center of the American West in Los Angeles.

The play will be presented during the Sovereignty Symposium on June 3rd at the Skirvin Hotel in Oklahoma City.

Zack Morris, Sac and Fox/Potawatomi, portrayed Jack Thorpe. New York actor Joe Cross, married to a tribal member, acted the part of Bill Thorpe; he once appeared as Black Hawk in a play presented during the 1992 Sac and Fox Pow Wow.

Other speakers on the NAGPRA panel included Harjo, President of the Morning Star Institute; John E. Echohawk, Director of the Native American Rights Fund; and Lucy Fowler Williams, Associate Curator and Keeper of American Collections at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. Panel moderator Richard Leventhal is the Executive Director of the Penn Cultural Heritage Center, a Department of Anthropology Professor at the University of Pennsylvania, and Curator in the American Section of the Penn Museum.



From Left: Sac and Fox Nation Principal Chief George Thurman was a speaker on the NAGPRA panel and Zack Morris, Sac and Fox/Potawatomi, portrayed Jack Thorpe in the play.



Zack Morris (far left) and Joe Cross (center) with the rest of the cast in a staged reading. (Photos by Sandra Massey NAGPRA)

TIMELINE OF LAWSUIT

- June 2010. Jack Thorpe files a lawsuit against the Borough of Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania.
- April 2013. U.S. District Court Judge Richard Caputo rules in favor of the Thorpe sons.
- October 2014. The U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the ruling. Three of ten judges comprised the Court of Appeals. The Sac and Fox Nation petitioned for rehearing and rehearing en banc (i.e., asking the Third Circuit's other judges to hear the case, with the original three recused.)
- December 2014. The Pennsylvania Third Circuit Court of Appeals denied the Petition for Rehearing, providing no reason.
- February 2015. The Sac and Fox Nation will petition the United States Supreme Court for a writ of certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. A writ of certiorari means the Supreme Court has agreed to hear arguments regarding whether a ruling had been decided correctly.

Upcoming Events

March 7

Sac and Fox Elders
All-Gourd
Dance Benefit
Community Building
1:00 - ?

March 10

Sac and Fox Nation
Veterans Meeting
Cultural Center

March 11

Sac and Fox Elders
Monthly Meeting
Stroud

March 19

Sac and Fox Nation
Womens Auxillary

April 4, 2015

Sac and Fox Nation
Eggpalooza
1:00 - 3:30 pm

April 9

Sac and Fox
Genealogy Workshop
Learning Center
2 pm - 6 pm

Chief's Address To The Nation

I pray that my article finds you and your family in good health and that this winter season with all of the unpredictable weather patterns hasn't affected you in any adverse manner. I believe all of our students are looking forward to Spring Break, spring sports, and upcoming graduations. Students, if you have any accomplishments that you wish to share with our tribal membership, please contact our newspaper Editor Ken Johnson at extension #1060, and he will be more than happy to help you with your story.



Principal Chief
George Thurman

Black Hawk Health Center

I am pleased to announce the hiring of a medical coder and licensed practical nurse, both of

whom are tribal members.

I have some additional good news - before the end of March, we will have two (2) Doctors and two (2) Physician Assistants working as a team to see more patients. Although overcrowded at the current facility, we converted another exam room, which is a good thing because it means more patients can receive much needed health care.

One can see that we are very crowded at the current health facility, but we are progressing towards very soon announcing a Groundbreaking Ceremony for your new health facility!

Rodeo Committee

The Rodeo Committee is excited to announce the addition of another event to the 2015 calendar. The Oklahoma High School Rodeo Association (OHSRA) has agreed to have one of their sanctioned rodeos at our rodeo facilities October 10-11.

This rodeo promises to be one of the largest events ever to be held at our rodeo grounds, which means improved facilities need to be built at the grounds to accommodate all of the contestants who compete, plus their families. An exceptional rodeo this year could mean more rodeos being booked for our fa-

cilities in coming years. These cowboys and cowgirls will be our source to other rodeo contestants telling them about the great facilities and hospitality that they encountered while competing here.

The Rodeo Committee invites anyone who wishes to join the committee to contact a committee member and ask when their next meeting will be.

Economic Development

The PACE Group, selected to help our Nation recruit an Economic Development Director, met with many tribal members, community leaders, Sauk Business Enterprise Board, and Business Committee to complete a Needs Assessment and Job Description. They are now ready to aggressively begin their search for the right person to fill this position.

A firm will be selected soon to conduct a feasibility study for best usage of our available land base within Payne, Lincoln, and Pottawatomie counties. Sauk Business Enterprises Board and Business Committee have interviewed two (2) firms to conduct this study, which will let us know what type of economic development is best suited for our properties. That will save money and time as we decide

how to diversify our economic development endeavors.

Short Takes

• United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) – The Nation recently held a meeting with USDA representatives to discuss how they can help our Nation in many areas from agriculture, housing, loans, grants which can benefit individuals and our government. Plans are to have more meetings within a "town hall" meeting atmosphere on a weekend so that tribal members may attend to ask specific questions.

• Black Hawk Health Center (BHHC) - An announcement will be made very soon of a "town hall" meeting to receive your input as to what tribal membership and other patients wish to have included in a new health center / clinic. Lunch will be provided. A representative from the architectural firm will be present to listen to your suggestions, which may be implemented into the planning stage of the facility. The BHHC staff will also attend to listen and have input as well.

• Bill and Richard Thorpe, Conner's & Winter Law Firm, SFN Historic Preservation Of-

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