



# Notes from the Chief

*What I'm working on for You*



Osiyo -

The judicial branch of the Cherokee Nation recently moved from its old location in downtown Tahlequah to the courtrooms and offices built on the second story of the tribe's W.W. Keeler Complex.

The relocation of the Cherokee Nation court system provides spacious and state-of-the-art courtrooms, as well as a modern office setting for our entire judicial branch as well as the Cherokee Nation attorney general's staff. The Cherokee Nation District and Supreme Courts have been using the Capitol since the early 1990's to hear civil, juvenile and adoption cases.

The new courthouse space, which encompasses more than 15,385 square feet, was completed in 2017. It features a 35-foot-high wooden strip ceiling with earth tone fixtures, natural lighting, elevators and open area waiting rooms. It contains both large and small courtrooms, offices for attorneys to meet with clients, a private space for victims, new offices for all judicial staff, and District and Supreme Court filing counters.

With so many people visiting the tribal complex each year, the new court space should alleviate congestion for both employees and tribal citizens. More space for the general public will allow our Cherokee Nation marshals to better coordinate arrestees as their cases are heard in a more efficient and safe manner. Judges and justices will also have their own chambers, which they did not have at the Capitol.

The relocation provides the tribe a unique opportunity to finally renovate the interior of the historical Cherokee Nation Capitol Building. We have done so much restoration work on the exterior of our most iconic structure, and now we can begin the preservation of the interior. The historic Capitol is steeped in Cherokee history and will remain the heart of our story in the Tahlequah community.

The Cherokee Nation Capitol Building, which was built after the Civil War, opened in 1869 and will now

be returned to its much-needed pristine condition. I am proud we are taking the necessary steps to preserve it for the education and enjoyment of all Cherokee Nation tribal citizens and visitors. So much of the critical history of our tribal government has happened on those premises.

Cherokee Nation Businesses Cultural Tourism is developing the plans to renovate and refurbish the Cherokee Nation Capitol Building for its use as a museum for the public. The interior renovation is tentatively scheduled to begin this spring and is scheduled to reopen as a museum in the spring of 2019.

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