



# Notes from the Chief

*What I'm working on for You*

Osiyo -

The Cherokee Nation, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians are again collaborating for the fifth annual Cherokee Days in Washington, D.C., at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian. The three-day event is April 13-15. It is free to attend in person, and many of the educational and cultural offerings will be streamed live online.

The annual celebration has grown into a special event for the Cherokee Nation, and it is typically one of NMAI's most heavily trafficked weekends. The collaboration between the three federally recognized Cherokee tribes and the Smithsonian is easily one of the best national showcases of tribal culture. We are able to share our heritage and history in one of the finest cultural museums in the world.

Since starting this annual partnership five years ago, we have enlightened and educated thousands of people about who the Cherokee people were in our historical homelands in the Southeast, and just as important, who we are today. Collectively, our historians, educators, entertainers and artists reflect the best of our Cherokee people.

Cherokee Days showcases live cultural art demonstrations and cultural performances including songs and traditional dances, as well as storytelling. There will also be pottery, stickball, basket weaving, carving and textile demonstrations. Among the activities are make-and-take experiences, which allow children to create traditionally inspired Cherokee items including cornhusk dolls, clay beads and medallions. This special festival continues to spark excitement in people of all walks of life and of all ages.

I am proud to say the leaders, along with the staffs, of the three federally recognized tribes continually work together to advance language preservation, historic preservation and cultural policies. There is so much to learn and appreciate in our intertwined narratives.

In addition to NMAI's current "Americas" exhibit, a new installation created by Cherokee Nation will debut during Cherokee Days. "Trail of Tears: A Story of Cherokee Removal" shares the unique Cherokee perspective of removal policies and focuses on the early history of our tribe in Indian Territory. It educates viewers about the circumstances surrounding the Trail of Tears and the devastating cost of greed and oppression our people lived through. It also shows how our tribal government rebuilt itself by re-establishing schools and courts in modern-day Oklahoma. The perseverance to not only survive but to thrive is a story we are eager to share nationally and in our own voice. The exhibit will remain on display through the remainder of 2018.

Additionally, a new panel exhibit focused on Cherokee women will be showcased this year. The "Cherokee Women Who Changed the World" display focuses on our historic matriarchal society and female trailblazers within our culture.

To experience the Cherokee Days event if you cannot travel to Washington, D.C., there are live broadcasting capabilities available through [www.CherokeeDays.com](http://www.CherokeeDays.com). Please visit the site for an agenda of daily activities and performances. Also, follow Cherokee Nation's social media accounts for additional photos and videos throughout the event.

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