

NATIVE

Oklahoma
MAGAZINE



OCTOBER 2022

CREDITS

NATIVE *oklahoma* MAGAZINE

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NATIVE OKLAHOMA MAGAZINE is a monthly publication provides content from the Native community. For more information, to sell on our shop or to advertise, please call Adam Proctor at 918-409-7252 or email adam@nativeoklahoma.us

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Native Oklahoma Magazine is a publication not only for the visitor to Oklahoma, but also a resource for our Native community and neighbors. Every month, Native Oklahoma’s award-winning writers showcase Native artists, cooks, foods, culture, and crafts, as well as current events and powwows. Our issues include event calendars and lists of Native American attractions across Oklahoma. Native Oklahoma also includes a list of gaming venues, places to stay, and the location of tribal headquarters.

ON THE COVER:

Osage artist Dante Biss-Grayson hosted a fashion show titled “New Native Fashion: Empower by the Sky-Eagle Collection & Sovereign Santa Fe,” held on Aug. 19-20 at the La Fonda Hotel in downtown Santa Fe as part of the Santa Fe Indian Market’s 100th-year celebrations.



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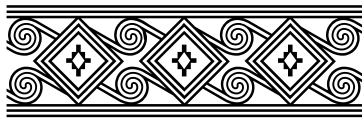
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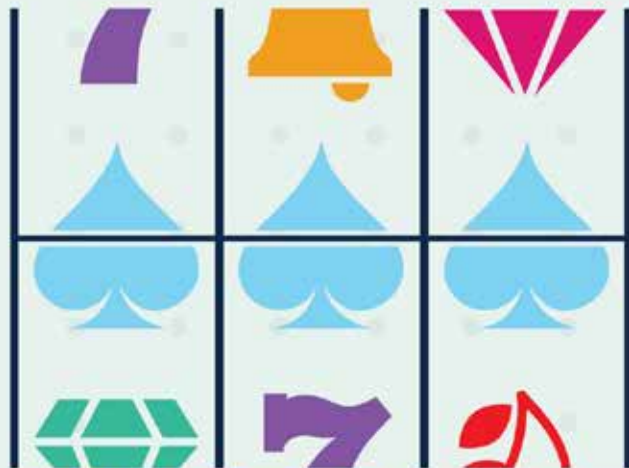
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'RESERVATION DOGS' CO-CREATOR SAYS THE SHOW GIVES AUDIENCES PERMISSION TO LAUGH

from Fresh Air by Terry Gross

RESERVATIONS DOGS CO-CREATOR AND SHOWRUNNER STERLIN HARJO SAYS HE GREW UP SURROUNDED BY THE "BEST STORYTELLERS IN THE WORLD."

Harjo remembers sitting in his grandmother's kitchen as a kid, listening to tales of amazing characters — either real or imagined — often doing mundane or ordinary things. The magic was in the telling; a story about someone making a simple run to the store could be infused with sadness and regret, coincidence and magic.

"That's how I learned to tell stories. ... You can't say that cinema is a Native American art form, but storytelling is," Harjo says. "I try to capture just a small amount of that in [Reservation Dogs]."

Reservation Dogs is the first and only TV series where every writer, director and series regular is Indigenous. Part comedy and part drama, the FX series streaming on Hulu follows four teenagers who long to escape the dead ends they face living on a reservation. They're frustrated and alienated, caught between what's left of traditional Native culture on the reservation and the broader pop culture. The show highlights the importance of Native traditions — while also mocking how tradition can be turned into sanctimonious pop culture clichés.

Harjo belongs to the Seminole and Muscogee Nations, and he says the positive feedback from his community — including his parents — is what keeps him going: "My dad, one day, said to me, 'This show has given people, Native people, a reason to hold their heads up a little higher.'"

Last Halloween, Harjo noticed something he hadn't seen before: "Every year at Halloween, there's people that dress up in these fake, dime-store Indian clothing. And they are 'Indian' for Halloween. And we've all seen that growing up. We've all seen it. And my kids are going to have to see it. But all of a sudden, after Season 1, people, kids started dressing up as the Reservation Dogs. So many pictures flooded in on social media of them dressed as the Reservation Dogs."

INTERVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

On why he prefers the term "Indian" to "Native American"

My grandma said "Indian," so I'm not here to change what my grandma said. And it's what I know. I'm sorry that Christopher Columbus got it wrong, but that's what we call ourselves, you know? That's what we call ourselves. I also say "Native" and I say "Indigenous." Just depending on where I'm at and who I'm talking to, those are all interchangeable to me. "Native American" is just a mouthful.

On the show's name Reservation Dogs title paying homage to Quentin Tarantino's Reservoir Dogs

It came out when I was in college, and it was right as I discovered that I could be a filmmaker. ... My father had a friend who worked for the cable company, and that's the only way that we got cable. So I was able to watch movies for free because his friend did some backdoor stuff and hooked us up with a cable box that allowed us to watch HBO and Showtime. I just became immersed in movies and pop culture. MTV was out at the time. I think that when you're from a rural community, that's kind of how you live your life. You almost live your life through movies and through pop culture. ... First of all, it's a catchy title, not a lie, Taika [Waititi] and I came up with it. And then it was, well, if we're going to have this show where these kids are living through and constantly referencing pop culture, like we have to tip our hat to the master of that.

On playing with the stereotypical "Indian warrior" imagery in the pilot

Most of the time people are very precious with Native people, like, "This is no laughing matter." This is very serious and stoic, and that's kind of how the world is trained to view us. We realize we need to bake into the show permission to laugh with us.

And I think that that spirit character, he comes in at this moment in the pilot. ... If I asked most people in the world to draw a Native American, that's what they would draw. They would draw an Indian that was dressed in buckskins from the 1800s. They wouldn't draw me. They wouldn't draw any of the characters on the show. So it was almost like giving people some familiar territory and then turning it on its head.

On growing up on the Muscogee Reservation in Oklahoma

Right now I live on the Muscogee Reservation, which is part of Tulsa. Through a lot of complicated government policy and interactions with tribal governments that I can't go into because it'd be another show, it was not identified as a reservation before, but it is now. But if you look at Oklahoma, it used to be Indian Territory, which was essentially one big reservation. Then, of course, oil and the land and other things disrupted that.

But this is where Trail of Tears ended. This is where all of the tribes that were forcibly removed by the U.S. government were brought to Indian Territory, which is Oklahoma now. So essentially it was one giant reservation. And you go an hour in any direction in Oklahoma or 30 minutes in any direction, in Oklahoma, you're going to be in a new tribal territory, with different tribal languages on the stop signs and on signage in the town. Different cultures, different customs. And so it's ... a melting pot of Indigenous Native people from America. And I think there's something like 38 tribes here.

So you grow up different when you're in Oklahoma as a Native kid. ... People know Native culture, people know who Native people are. And it's a very diverse state. I think that not a lot of people know about Oklahoma and the diversity here, but in rural Oklahoma, it's very diverse. And I don't know, it was something that I wanted to celebrate in the show, growing up in Indian Territory, Oklahoma.

On why Native teens connected to rap music when he was coming of age

Rap was reaching the height of popularity ... and being a Native kid, we gravitated towards it because it was the sort of punk rock that we were growing up with. It gave Native kids a culture and identity that they could grab a hold of at a time where our own identity was a bit lost and our own identity was less celebrated, we could grab a hold of hip-hop, and that became something that we could identify with that was taking it to the man that was exposing problems within our culture. I think that it became something that, as a term, as a means of endearment to us, that it helped us in our own identity and in our own struggle.

On the importance of ghosts and spirits in his culture – and in his work

I think that part of growing up and with Muscogee and Seminole culture is death is such a part of our experience. It's very community-driven. Your cousins are like your brothers and sisters. Your aunts are your extended parents, and you're close to your elders and everyone's a part of this tight community.

I was constantly at funerals. I've been a pallbearer, like, 12 to 15 times, I think, give or take. And our songs, the songs that we sing, there's these spiritual songs that we sing that mostly get sung and you hear them at funerals, and it's all about facing death and mortality head on. There's something really beautiful about a funeral in our community, where everyone comes together and it's really funny. And you're getting to see people that you haven't seen in a long time and you say, "I love you," to people that you wouldn't normally say, "I love you" to. It's just a part of being in a community.

Someone was always passing away. ... In the culture you're taught that they're not gone and that you can still speak to them and talk to them and there's ghost stories and things like that. But I just grew up with this sense of magic, and there's a sense of like we can communicate, we can reach people in other places, and there's ceremonies for it and there's different things. It's something that I'm fascinated with ... and I explore it as much as I can through my work.

On the casting process for Reservation Dogs

You can't go to Hollywood to cast a show like this. ... [Native actors usually] get to play, like, a dead Indian outside of a teepee every five

to 10 years, you know? So there's not a big pool of Native actors in L.A. So we went to the communities, and shout out to Angelique Midthunder, who was our casting director. She went in and we went to different communities and we also had tapes sent to us from communities, but it was important that they were from an Indigenous community. ... It wasn't unnecessarily unorthodox for me, because I've been making these films for so long, and I know that there's talent out there. There's just not opportunities for Native actors to even know that there's an opportunity to be in a movie.

On seeing Indian stereotypes in pop culture as a kid

My dad watched Westerns. ... There was a way to sort of separate what was happening in the Western for me, because I didn't recognize the Indians in the Western. They weren't my experience. When you grow up and your grandma and your mom and your dad and everyone's Native around you, and then you see this version of Native people in these Westerns that are just the bad guys that are faceless and sort of

like the zombies. ... They're in the way and the white man has to exterminate them for Western expansion purposes and to tame the West or whatever, I don't recognize that as my people. So it wasn't painful to watch for me. I could separate it. I do see the issues in that now I have to explain to my kids why they can't watch Peter Pan, and if there was a Western on, I would have to explain to them, like everything all of a sudden becomes a lecture, where I'm having to talk about film analysis with my children. It has an effect.

On absolving himself of the guilt that he can't speak Muscogee

For a long time, I felt really guilty about that. ... But at a certain point, I just came to the realization that government policy, genocide, colonization, ... the forced removal by Andrew Jackson. So many things caused that. And I let go of that sense of guilt, because it's all been about survival and there's things that were taken away and there's things that perish because of that. And all I can do is try to learn

and realize that it's not my fault, it came before me. The darkness that can take a language away, came before me. And you look at boarding schools ... and how they actively took away our language. My parents and grandparents went to these boarding schools, so the fact that we have any of it left is a miracle. So I try to really focus on that: the miracle of it, the magic of the fact that we still have our culture and it is about survival. I try to focus on that instead of the guilt that I think you grow up with when you can't speak the language.

Lauren Krenz and Susan Nyakundi produced and edited this interview for broadcast. Bridget Bentz, Molly Seavy-Nesper and Beth Novey adapted it for the web.



Series co-creator Sterlin Harjo attends the series premiere of Reservation Dogs in Hollywood, Calif., Aug. 5, 2021.



Mahota

**CHICKASAW MAP
II BLANKET**

\$320

Originally painted on deerskin, The Chickasaw Map of 1723 is an important visual of Chickasaw history as it illustrates how the world was viewed by our ancestors. The map outlines in an artistic way, waterways, trade routes, and the relationships with other tribes at that time. Experiences and memory were depended on by the Chickasaw people who knew what lay beyond the southeast region, which was coveted by colonists who needed maps. The Chickasaw Map is credited to Fani' Minko' (Squirrel Leader or Squirrel King), a Chickasaw warrior and leader.

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OSAGE-OWNED FASHION BRAND SOARS IN POPULARITY

Written by Natasha Lovato

AFTER RECENT SUCCESS IN LONDON, AND A FASHION SHOW AT THE SANTA FE INDIAN MARKET, DANTE BISS-GRAYSON LOOKS FORWARD TO SHOWS AT THE CANNES FILM FESTIVAL, NEW YORK FASHION WEEK AND MORE.

After European fashion shows, red carpet debuts, and a Vogue Magazine mention, the Osage-owned fashion brand Sky-Eagle Collection has soared in popularity.

Owner of Sky-Eagle, Dante Biss-Grayson, modernizes indigenous-inspired fashion techniques to create dresses, skirts, tops, scarves, ties, jewelry, shoes and more. Grayson seeks to bring Native faces to the forefront of the fashion world, and his mission has only just begun.

SKY-EAGLE TAKES EUROPE

Pure London is a runway and tradeshow that brings bright minds from around the world to Olympia, London twice a year to showcase the best of the season's must-have fashion collections.

Pure London was Grayson's first European runway trade show, and he described the opportunity as a strategic plan to grow his brand globally and bring new Native fashion to a broader market.

"London is just one stop in many that are planned over the next few years," Biss-Grayson said. "The goal is to network with large retailers, buyers, and distributors. The first trade show went well, and the brand is in discussion with distribution companies in Germany and Italy."

EMPOWERING NATIVE PEOPLES

Recently, Sky-Eagle presented at Empower, a two-night runway show in Santa Fe as part of the annual Santa Fe Indian Market festivities. The show ran from Aug. 19-20 and debuted everything from Biss-Grayson's iconic ribbonwork to his urban-streetwear brand, WoW-PoW. The show also featured special guest designers, his sister Addie Roanhorse and Sage Mountain flower.

Sky-Eagle also was mentioned in Vogue Magazine after its feature on the red carpet.

Indigenous actress, Amber Midthunder, made history as one of Hollywood's first leading female Indigenous action heroes by starring in "Prey," the latest installment in the action-horror franchise, Predator. Prey is streaming on Hulu now.

Midthunder dazzled the red carpet for the premiere of her show in a blush-colored Sky-Eagle gown covered in custom lace and beading.

THE BIG-4

Sky-Eagle launched during the pandemic and has since then relied primarily on its social media presence and online leverage which Biss-Grayson looks to grow as overseas popularity increases.

"We have a flagship store location in Taos, New Mexico and we most likely will expand, but in today's world, E-Commerce is where it is at," Biss-Grayson said.

To further grow, Biss-Grayson has big plans for being a part of the Big-4 fashion weeks in New York, London, Milan and Paris as well as additional trade shows in New York, Los Angeles, and Las Vegas.

Biss-Grayson launched his shoe collection at Pure London and for the upcoming Big-4, Biss-Grayson has

Osage artist Dante Biss-Grayson hosted a fashion show titled "New Native Fashion: Empower by the Sky-Eagle Collection & Sovereign Santa Fe," held on Aug. 19-20 at the La Fonda Hotel in downtown Santa Fe as part of the Santa Fe Indian Market's 100th-year celebrations. Courtesy Photos from Augustine Fernandez



Osage artist Dante Biss-Grayson on the catwalk with models in his fashion show "New Native Fashion: Empower by the Sky-Eagle Collection & Sovereign Santa Fe". Courtesy Photo/Augustine Fernandez

a number of possibilities he can't wait to debut.

"I have found a place where I can create custom lace with my designs, so I would like to integrate that into the process," he said.

Biss-Grayson explained that he would like to integrate more custom prints, more boots and heels and he wants to explore using more sustainable materials as well.

"There are varieties of leather made from apples, and there are materials that are easier to recycle. I would also like to try out and integrate LEDs for couture pieces. There are so many possibilities," he said.

Biss-Grayson plans to showcase his work at New York Fashion Week, Feb. 9-15, 2023.

"This will be my first time at NYFW and I look forward to this. New York holds a special place in my heart," he said.

Biss-Grayson plans on making many more visits to New York and other shows worldwide so that Sky-Eagle can make an impact in all corners of the globe.

Some of those stops include a fashion runway show during the Cannes Film Festival, May 16-27, 2023, and recently Biss-Grayson was invited to attend Paris Fashion Week in 2023.





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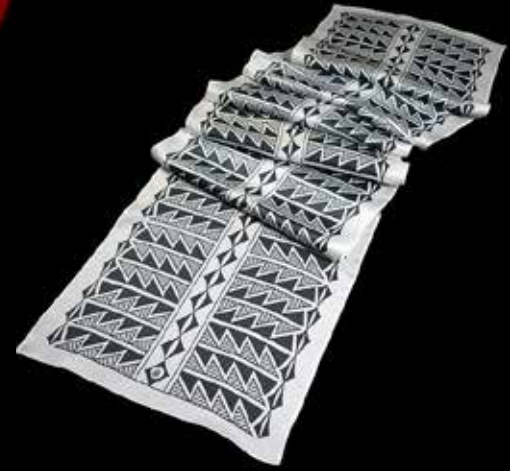


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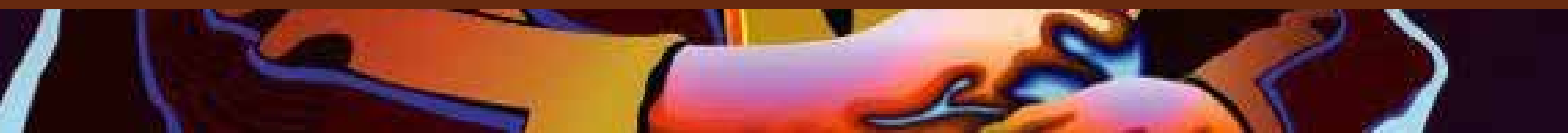



Buffalo Gouge Art



Buffalo Gouge Art

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Mahota

**THE WHITE
DOG'S PATH**

\$350

The Milky Way was known as Ofi' Tohbi' Ihina' (the White Dog's road), and is believed to be the path that deceased Chickasaw tribal members use to travel to the other side. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chickasaw Nation suffered the loss of significant tribal elders who were artists, culture bearers, storytellers, language speakers, and song leaders. Through mourning the loss of loved ones, comfort is found, knowing that Ofi' Tohbi' Ishto' was waiting to lead them on into the next world, and reunite them with loved ones that have passed on. The stars honor those that have passed on and visualize their journey as Ofi' Tohbi' Ishto' awaits to accompany our Chickasaw people once again.



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NEW MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS LINE 988

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has released a new mental health crisis line to help support anyone experiencing an emotional crisis. The hotline is available across the United States, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Any person of any age can call or text 988 to connect to a trained National Suicide Prevention Lifeline crisis counselor.

The emotional support given over the phone is confidential. Callers can talk about any emotional crisis, struggle with addiction or suicidal ideation. The crisis workers use active listening skills to assess the risk of the situation and determine if the person is in danger. If the caller is in danger, the worker will create a safety plan with the caller.

According to SAMHSA, less than 3% of the calls have resulted in dispatching 911. The crisis workers will help provide safety plans and resources that are available to callers, as well as those calling in on the behalf of others.

"Even before the COVID-19 pandemic started, mental health across the states was progressively getting worse," said Deanna Carpitche, senior prevention coordinator for the Chickasaw Nation Family Services Division. "988 is short and easier to remember than the other long suicide hotline numbers. It's not something you have to Google every time you are in an emergency. The process needs to be fast. Our main goal is to keep the callers with us and from being hospitalized."

Wait time is under three minutes at the longest. Callers reach an automated voice first, so callers can state where they want the line to be directed.

"I tried calling it to see if it was launched and to see what the experience is like as a test. You hear a voice say, 'If you are a veteran, press one.' It gives you a Spanish option, too. If you don't press one, you can just wait on the line. Someone answered me in just 15 seconds and was very welcoming," Carpitche said.

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for First American youth ages 10-24, and First American communities experience the highest rates of suicide among all racial and ethnic groups in the United States. The goal of 988 is to bring mental health and substance abuse services into the mainstream and clear the stigma that surrounds asking for help, according to SAMHSA.

"Where the Chickasaw Nation comes into these services is support and partnership. We have been meeting over the summer with Solari (Crisis and Human Services), which oversees multiple 988 call centers. We are discussing ways to partner with them for the First Americans in our service area. We want to offer the callers our services if needed," said Carpitche. "Dr. Shannon Dial (Chickasaw Nation Integrated Services Executive Officer) is working with Solari to find the best way to offer callers our medical family therapists, provide outpatient services, or whatever is needed, in the most direct and quickest way possible."

"I want the Chickasaw Nation to be able to help our own citizens, as well as any other First American citizens in need. This is why we

are working with our 988 partners," said Todd Crawford, under secretary of mental health services for the Chickasaw Nation.

There are medical family therapists located in Chickasaw Nation medical facilities as a part of family services. Several therapists are available in the clinics so patients can be seen immediately. The Strong Foundation also provides counseling to Chickasaw Nation employees. Chickasaw Nation Lighthouse Police have two crisis counselors who are always available.

"We have more meetings coming up with Solari. We hope to discuss ways we can develop culturally aware crisis responses for Chickasaw and other First American communities," Carpitche said.

For First American-based resources, text "NATIVE" to the crisis text line at 741741. For more information, visit [SuicidePreventionLifeline.org](https://www.SuicidePreventionLifeline.org).

Those experiencing an emotional crisis, addiction or suicidal ideation can call 988 or use the chat option on [SuicidePreventionLifeline.org](https://www.SuicidePreventionLifeline.org).

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6 WAYS TO MAINTAIN STEADY CASH FLOW FOR YOUR SMALL BUSINESS

82 percent of small businesses and start-ups fail due to poor cash flow management. Having a solid grasp of cash flow – in terms of your understanding and also in a practical sense – is crucial for business success.

This can be tough: Spending money is easy, but making it is hard. Combine that with the fact that Native American businesses have to strive extra-hard for seed money, mentorship opportunities, and clients or customers, and you have a significant challenge on your hands.

Fortunately, it's not an insurmountable challenge. Here, Native Oklahoma Magazine offers practical suggestions on how small business owners can build up a solid, positive cash flow:

MAKE AND STICK TO A BUDGET

Budgeting is a critical, underestimated business skill. With solid budgeting, you can ensure you have enough money for all your expenses and your business goals. Also, you can put aside enough for a rainy day. You should account for projected sales, fixed costs, direct costs, and overheads when preparing your budget. Also, it's a good idea to prepare lines of credit as a fallback option if things go wrong.

USE SOFTWARE TO GET AN ACCURATE OVERVIEW OF YOUR FINANCES

It's only when you have a clear picture of what's happening with your money that you can make sound business decisions. Traditionally, businesses have relied on books of accounts and bank statements to keep tabs on their cash flow. Using bookkeeping or business finance software represents an upgrade to the traditional way of doing things. You can generate key financial reports, sync money from various sources, simplify payroll, forecast more accurately, and reduce inventory errors.

Lease equipment (and supplies) instead of buying

Equipment-related costs are one of the biggest expenses for businesses. Typically, you pay for the equipment upfront and also for maintenance and repairs. Also, you have to replace equipment from time to time. Leasing equipment (and supplies) is an affordable way of doing things. Going by a National Business Capital piece, operating leases run between 1 to 3 years (no more than 5), and you pay 5 to 9 percent as the lease rate.

FORM AN LLC TO PROTECT YOUR PERSONAL ASSETS

Many small businesses operate as sole proprietorships, which is the default business structure in the US. Switching up to an LLC can be beneficial from a financial standpoint. It makes paperwork simpler and comes with tax advantages. Most importantly, your personal assets become separated from business ones – if you get sued, your personal assets remain safe. Every state has its own regulations around LLC formation. Check the rules in Oklahoma before moving forward.

GET PAID ON TIME WITH A BETTER INVOICING PROCESS

Customers and clients are infamous for not paying on time – and, in some cases, at all. Having a better invoicing process can help you

get paid on time. Be upfront with your expectations, have solid payment terms (and payment methods), and send out invoices on time – preferably with reminders before and after. You can use invoicing software to automate much of this. You can use templates to create professional invoices, adding your name, logo, brand colors, and pertinent information.

GET EXPERTS TO WEIGH IN

An expert's opinion can be worth its weight in gold when it comes to business finances. Some experts you should consult for important decisions – and ways to maintain a steady cash flow – include CPAs, attorneys, wealth advisors, brokers, and bankers. Last, but not least, consider finding a mentor – someone with business experience who can help you to straighten out your finances or offer targeted advice when necessary.

CONCLUSION

Getting good at cash flow management will take time and practice. You can speed up the process by picking up key financing skills, using solid software, working with professionals, and covering your bases by registering as an LLC or other business entity.

Photo by Alexander Grey.

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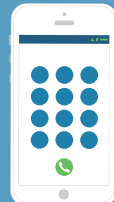
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honest
conversation

The rate of drug overdose deaths among American Indians is higher than the national average.¹

75 percent of opioid misuse starts with people using medication that wasn't prescribed for them – usually taken from a friend or family member.²

You can be the one to help keep your family safe.

STOP OPIOID ABUSE Your influence matters

- ✓ Kids are 50 percent less likely to use drugs when parents tell them about the risks.²
- ✓ Talk to your kids about the risks of opioid abuse.
- ✓ Encourage your kids to talk with their doctor about other ways to treat pain.
- ✓ Lock up your medications.
- ✓ Dispose of unused medications safely at a take-back program near you. Find one at www.obndd.ok.gov

Learn more at okimready.org



¹Source: Center for Disease Control
²Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



Mahota

**CHICKASAW MAP
II BLANKET**

\$320

Sweeping across the center of the blanket is Wind, Mahli, bringing both the fluid curvatures of change and the sharp edges of the unexpected, an integral revival of ancient motifs of Chickasaw mound builders. Wind represents our life's journey; bringing the many changes we go through from the time of birth to the afterlife. It was said in the Chickasaw story of Wind, Aba' Binni'li' knew that eventually, young children would grow up, and the wind would bring this change to them. Mahli blows across the blanket to remind us that change will come, and resilience will always be the way of the Chickasaw people.

BOOK REVIEW: BETWEEN TWO FIRES – THE CREEK MURDERS AND THE BIRTH OF THE OIL CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

“A GRIPPING EXPOSE OF THE MAGIC CITY”

– Fus YvhiKV

In 1920s Tulsa, half-breed Sam Davis searches for a missing Native girl. He finds a conspiracy to murder Creek landowners in the Glenn Pool, the world’s largest oil reservoir. Sam battles powerful oil barons and uncovers corruption, lies, and a tragic truth about himself.

What a delightful read! I love this book! I could not put it down. *Between Two Fires* stands solidly in the genre of historical fiction. Most of the characters and events portrayed in this engaging novel happened. Readers will find the passionate and tempestuous love story between the protagonists, Sam Davis and Zitkala-Sa, engaging as they battle the chief antagonist, powerful Tulsa Mayor John Simmons and his oil baron cronies.

The author, banker/historian/writer, J.D. Colbert (Chickasaw-Muscogee-Creek), is the only person who could bring this story to life. Mr. Colbert has extensively researched this story and has given numerous presentations on the historical events described in his manuscript. His outstanding writing maintains a good flow and the plot is fast paced. Colbert is an accomplished writer and storyteller.

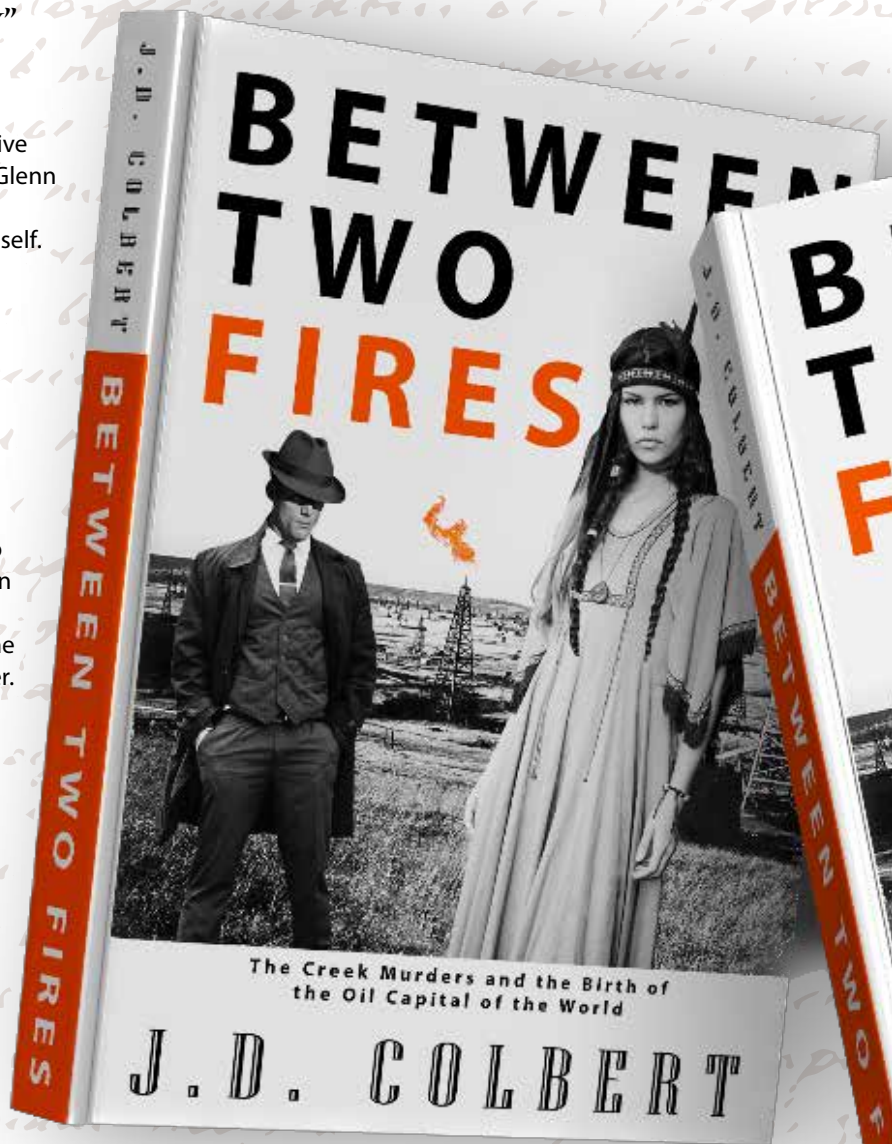
Mayor Simmons spearheads a grand conspiracy to steal valuable Creek lands in the Glenn Pool. It is the world’s largest reservoir of oil. The narrative reflects actual events in the Tulsa area in the early part of the 20th century. The book jacket summary might better capture the flavor of the story. Here it is below.

Kill the Indian, Save the Man. That is the goal of the Dawes Commission, a federal agency. The Commission is charged with destroying the Muskogee-Creek Nation by allotting communally owned tribal lands to individual members. Forced assimilation is the zeitgeist of 1920s Oklahoma.

SAM DAVIS is a handsome, roguish, half-breed. He brokers real estate between illiterate Creeks and land-hungry palefaces. Assimilation makes for good business. Oil strikes bring thousands of fortune-seeking whites to Tulsa. Sam’s commissions soar against cascading reports of missing and murdered Creeks.

When Sam is asked to find MILLIE NEHARKY, a missing Creek girl, he meets ZITKALA-SA, a beautiful Lakota-Creek activist from the Indian Rights Association. Determined to protect the Creeks, Zitkala is investigating stories of graft and murder. Sam and Zitkala discover a grand conspiracy to steal Creek allotments in the Glenn Pool. It is the world’s largest reservoir of oil. The trail leads to Tulsa City Hall and powerful mayor JOHN SIMMONS. The mayor has a grandiose vision of creating The Magic City.

Sam is unwittingly but deeply entangled in the conspiracy. As he descends deeper into the darkness of the web of deceit, the luminosity

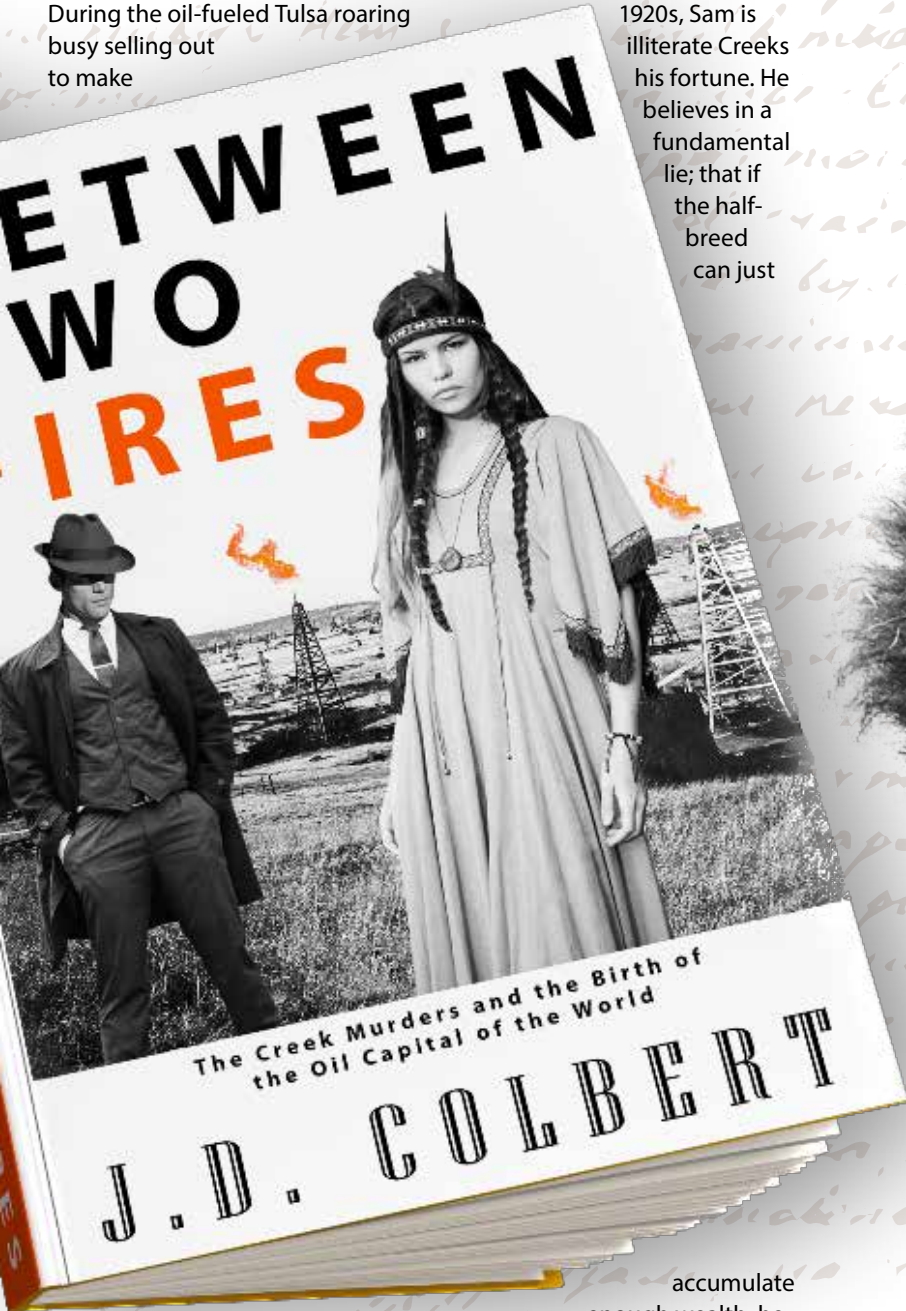


of his Native identity increases. Sam and Zitkala carry on a passionate and tempestuous love affair as they struggle to defeat Mayor Simmons and his oil baron cronies. In Millie, Zitkala must confront a tragic secret from her past while Sam grapples with the clarion call of his Creek culture.

Wow! What a story! *Between Two Fires* is a page turner. It is very beautifully written and there is a continual forward pacing of the plot. *Between Two Fires* is one of the best books that I have read in years!

Many readers will correctly note a strong similarity of *Between Two Fires* and the smash bestseller, *Killers of the Flower Moon*. *Killers* covers a similar story about the murders of Osage people and the theft of their valuable oil rights in the 1920s. *Between Two Fires* does the same only it focuses is on the Muscogee-Creek experience in and around Tulsa in the 1920s. However, *Between Two Fires* tells a deeper, richer, and, ultimately, a far more satisfying story that I think we can all relate to. Horrific as was the theft of valuable Creek allotments and the murders of Creek people, these serve as a backdrop to the stories of Sam and Zitkala. The author places them in situations that force them to confront their identities.

For the half-breed Sam, he is on a voyage to self-discovery. During the oil-fueled Tulsa roaring 1920s, Sam is busy selling out to make his fortune. He believes in a fundamental lie; that if the half-breed can just



pronounced character arc. She too must confront fundamental lies that she believes in. She too finds herself transitioning and transforming.

I highly recommend this book. You will be able to find it soon in eBook form on Amazon's Kindle Direct Publishing, other online platforms and in paperback from Ingram Spark. The book's publishing date has yet to be determined. Keep your eyes peeled; you do not want to miss a chance to read this engaging historical thriller!

Mr. Colbert may be reached at jcolbert@holissohakov.com

self-discovery. During the oil-fueled Tulsa roaring 1920s, Sam is busy selling out to make his fortune. He believes in a fundamental lie; that if the half-breed can just

accumulate enough wealth, he will be admitted into the august air of high white society. He thinks that will bring him happiness. However, several events and circumstances cause him to confront this lie. It is Zitkala who engenders Sam's transition and who causes him to reexamine his very identity. *Between Two Fires* can thus be appropriately viewed as a coming-of-age tale for Sam. Zitkala too has a



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THE FIELDS ARE WHITE FOR HARVEST

John Morris

“Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!” —John 4:35

God wants us to share His love and truth with others, but sometimes we get hung up. What do I say? Where do I begin?

When we have a real life experience with Jesus, that is where we begin! I was standing at a Promise Keepers Conference in 1996, listening to Tony Evans talk about God’s love for us. He asked us to tell the person next to us, “I love you.”, on one side was my brothers from my church. On the other side was a group of bikers with leather outfits on! The biker guy standing next to me was 6’7 and hairy! When he turned to me, with tears streaming down his face, and said “Man, I love you.” I knew that was from God Himself speaking to me, and that is where I surrendered my life to God! I understood that God loved me, after all of the bad things that I had done in my life, He sent Jesus to die for me!

“For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.” —John 3:16

For some of us, talking about Christ comes naturally. But it’s not as easy for all of us. Maybe we’re shy, or maybe we’re worried someone will ask us a question that we can’t answer. I don’t know much, but I know what God had done for me. My story is simple, and Jesus changed my life.

OUR MISSION FIELD

Every one of us is to be involved in gathering this great harvest of God. When we step out our door each morning, we go into the mission field. Our coworkers and neighbors and family members are the people God has placed us among. God has place me right here in the middle of Cherokee, Adair and Delaware county. I reach out to K-8, middle schools, high schools and Northeastern State University. With coaches in volleyball, football, cross country, football,

John Morris is currently serving with Oklahoma Fellowship of Christian Athletes and is supported financially by faith partners. If you are interested in more information on FCA or being a faith partner go to this link <https://my.fca.org/johnmorris>. John can be contacted through email: johnmorris@fca.org or by cell number (785-760-1627).

archery, basketball, wrestling, cheer, dance, baseball, softball, track and field, and golf! That is some mission field!

“Then Jesus came near and said to them, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” —Matthew 28:18-20

GOD WANTS TO USE US

Ultimately, each person is saved by hearing Christ speak to him or her personally, but our testimony may be the tool that the Holy Spirit uses to draw a person to the Savior. Let’s ask God to give us opportunities to speak to the people in our world.

God wants to use you. The laborer in this story is simple, sinful US.

If you are scared to witness for Christ, simply pray, “Lord, I am willing. Open a door for me to share Your love with someone today.” He can do a great deal with a life that is yielded to Him.

“For we walk by faith, not by sight,” —2 Corinthians 5:7

John Morris is currently serving with Oklahoma Fellowship of Christian Athletes and is supported financially by faith partners. If you are interested in more information on FCA or being a faith partner go to this link <https://my.fca.org/johnmorris>. John can be contacted through email: johnmorris@fca.org or by cell number (785-760-1627).

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