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Miigwechiwendam: To Be Thankful

What a thousand-year-old Indigenous prayer teaches us about reciprocity and healing from the destructive consumption of our society

By Winona LaDuke Barn Raiser • Essays • November 28, 2024n

This story was originally published by [Barn Raiser](#), your independent source for rural and small town news.

“Each of us is put here in this time and this place to personally decide the future of humankind. Did you think the Creator would create unnecessary people in a time of such terrible danger? Know that you yourself are essential to this World.

~Chief Arvol Looking Horse, the 19th Keeper of the White Buffalo Calf Pipe

These are complex times. Some of us would think of them as terrifying. That is in many ways true, but Indigenous peoples who have lived here for a very long time, have a different perspective. One of renewal, purification and hope in the birth of a new world. We are the people who are here now and, as our great spiritual leader Arvol Looking Horse reminds us, we are the ones who must be the voice for all.

For Indigenous peoples, this is known as the time of prophecies—the Seventh Fire, the time of a new world being born. It is a time of transition. Indeed, Indigenous peoples have seen many changes. Sometimes we are referred to as post-apocalyptic. We remember what was before and we see what is now. It is in this spirit that we recognize it is always good to be thankful.

Thanksgiving in the American way summons up too many colonists and pilgrims for most of us to stomach, but thanksgiving as an action in time and an ongoing way of life is profoundly healing.

The Iroquois, or [Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Prayer](#) is beautiful, and often quite long, in that the prayer thanks all the beings for their part in the circle of life. That seems appropriate since we rely upon the Natural world for our life. That may well surprise the world of artificial intelligence, but it is fundamentally true. We live on Mother Earth. For that we are Thankful.

One translation of the thousand-year-old prayer begins:

Today we have gathered, and we see that the cycles of life continue. We have been given the duty to live in balance and harmony with each other and all living things. So now, we bring our minds together as one as we give greetings and thanks to each other as people. Now our minds are one.

The prayer then addresses the great beings of this world, giving thanks for each one.

The Earth Mother

We are all thankful to our Mother, the Earth, for she gives us all that we need for life. She supports our feet as we walk about upon her. It gives us joy that she continues to care for us as she has from the beginning of time. To our mother, we send greetings and thanks. Now our minds are one.

The Waters

We give thanks to all the waters of the world for quenching our thirst and providing us with strength. Water is life. We know its power in many forms- waterfalls and rain, mists and streams, rivers and oceans. With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to the spirit of Water. Now our minds are one.

The Fish

We turn our minds to the all the Fish life in the water. They were instructed to cleanse and purify

the water. They also give themselves to us as food. We are grateful that we can still find pure water. So, we turn now to the Fish and send our greetings and thanks.

Now our minds are one.

This prayer continues for many stanzas, and is delivered not only on Thanksgiving Day, but at many feasts and gatherings, because gratitude is a basic principle of life, and of sustainability. So is relationship. Thanksgiving is an action of gratitude, and that reciprocity reaffirms relationship as the core principle of life.

An Indigenous ethic often marveled at by anthropologists is *Indinawaymuganidoog* or “we are all related.” That’s Anishinaabemowin, my Mother language. The Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee and other Indigenous peoples understand that humans are a part of the natural world, not separate from or in charge of it. This is the “web of life.” In an Indigenous worldview, instead of the dominion of humans we see a dominion of Mother Earth. And to her we offer gratitude.

Indigenous teachings also reaffirm reciprocity. That is, you offer thanks for what you take, you take only what you need, and you leave the rest to others. That way other relatives can also eat, and something always remains for the future.

Those teachings are pretty counter to the rights-based entitlement of this society. In practice that seems to be, “If I can get away with it, I will do it. I will take for me, and now.” That translates to: I will throw stuff in the woods. I will dump waste in the river. I will leave a big mess, just so I can get away with it. That is a really immature way, certainly the Donald Trump way.

The depth of this entitlement is continental. We are an entitled bunch. We consume a third of the world’s resources, and we throw most of it away within a year. That’s to say, a lot of us feel entitled to a cell phone, and plenty of access to getting our nails done. And a lot of folks don’t care to work more than they need to, often trying just to get by, walking away before the job is even done.

Entitlement is the opposite of gratitude. And it’s not a long game plan. Indeed, I have a right to do many things, but I have the restraint and respect to not do those things.

In these times of crashing biodiversity, I am thankful for the dams that have gone down on the Klamath River and the return of the salmon. I am thankful for people who show kindness, compassion and love. Indeed, I am thankful every day.

November is Native American Heritage Month, sort of like the one month America is supposed to think about Native people, crammed between Halloween (which until recently would often be full of youngsters dressed as Pocahontas) and Thanksgiving. This is it, this is our month to be remembered. When writing, in this time, I always try and get in as much as I can.

I’m thankful for the lands which have been returned to our people this year: the [Shell Mounds](#) in Berkeley, California, along with [Indian Island](#) in Eureka, California.

I'm thankful that the Dakota had some of their sacred land returned to them, and I'm thankful that I heard our ceremonial drums sound for the first time in 50 years in my village. I'm thankful that our language is heard and understood. And I am thankful for the corn harvests we have from our lands, ancient corn which survived so long.

And I am thankful for my mother who is still here with us, at almost 92 years of age.

I think often of what Onondaga leader Oren Lyons tells us: "The Creator's law is the highest law, higher than the laws of nations, states, or municipalities."

What does that mean? He is saying that just because we have a right under man's laws, does not mean that we have that right under the Creator's law. What better way to express the reality of climate change.

As we look at a political and industrial world that seems to have moved onto a worse track and is accelerating toward destruction, I am grateful for the Thanksgiving prayer. I am of the thought that we should be thankful daily and bring our minds together to be one as our Mother Earth is one.

This story was originally published by [Barn Raiser](#), your independent source for rural and small town news.

Share Your Ideas

Share your input on the innovative practice of preservation! The [PastForward 2025 Call for Ideas](#) is now open and we want to hear from you!

Submit your suggestions on content, speakers, and Milwaukee area tours by **January 10**.

PastForward will take place September 16-18 in Milwaukee, and will explore cutting-edge innovation, ground-breaking creativity, and experimentation in the dynamic field of preservation. Together we will also explore the city's unique history and culture, where local citizens proudly continue their long history of creativity in manufacturing, culinary arts (*Top Chef*, anyone?), music, and more!

The conference will specifically address innovations in the following important areas: a climate-friendly, community-driven repurposing of older buildings; a reimagined commemorative landscape that honors the contributions of all Americans; and an invigorated public sphere that serves as catalysts for civic engagement.

Celebrate Those in Your Community

Honor an incredible person, project, organization, or historic site open to the public that has transformed your community through historic preservation by nominating them for a National Preservation Awards. [Submissions](#) are due January 10.

START YOUR SUBMISSION

November 2024: Native American Legislative Update

Welcome to **FCNL's Native American Legislative Update!** NALU is a monthly newsletter about FCNL's Native American policy advocacy and ways for you to engage members of Congress. By [Rachel Overstreet](#) | Friends Committee on National Legislation November 26, 2024

Happy Native American Heritage Month (NAHM)! While FCNL works year-round in solidarity with Native people across the country, this is a time of year when the necessity of our work is especially clear. We are reflecting on FCNL's [longstanding commitment](#) to right relationship with Native people and look forward to continuing that commitment.

Congress is back in D.C. next week, beginning the busiest time of the legislative session. Last month, we highlighted legislation and executive actions that we are watching closely during the lame duck period. This month, we are focusing on what the upcoming administration and new Congress will bring.

This week, the U.S. will observe Thanksgiving. The holiday and its origins remain a complicated topic for many in Indian Country. While many Native people celebrate Thanksgiving with their families and communities, many use the time to remember the horrific consequences of colonization.

There will be mourning gatherings held across the U.S. In Plymouth, Massachusetts, Native people will gather to observe a [National Day of Mourning](#). On Alcatraz Island in San Francisco, a site once occupied by the American Indian Movement, people will gather to observe a [Sunrise Ceremony](#). This Thanksgiving, we encourage our readers to hold those impacted by colonization in the light, and to learn more about [Native perspectives on the holiday](#).

Doug Burgum Nominated as Secretary of Interior

President-elect Donald Trump has nominated Doug Burgum, governor of North Dakota, for Secretary of the Interior.

If confirmed, Burgum would oversee the Department of the Interior, which manages federal and trust lands, hosts the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and handles most of the government-to-government communication with tribal nations.

He is expected to focus on expanding energy projects, including oil and gas leasing on public lands. This may include expanding drilling and mining leases on tribal and trust lands.

Burgum has worked closely with the five federally recognized tribal nations in North Dakota. He began his tenure as governor in 2016, entering at a low point in state-tribal relations. His administration has pursued better tribal relationships by increasing collaboration on [state-tribal ventures](#). Burgum aggressively sought to create tax partnerships with Native tribes in the state, which allows tribal nations to share portions of taxes collected on tribal land.

The Nov. 15 nomination reflects Trump's focus on bolstering domestic energy production, a key part of his policy agenda. In [his announcement](#), Trump emphasized Burgum's role in reducing regulatory barriers and promoting energy independence.

Congressional Leaders Tackle the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women's Crisis

Members of the House Appropriations Committee's Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee heard testimony on Nov. 20 from tribal leaders and federal officials on the current efforts to address the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women crisis.

Tribal leaders emphasized the need for increased funding for tribal police, as well as better communication between federal entities, states, and tribal communities.

During the hearing, the committee left one witness seat vacant to represent the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women whose stories remain unheard. A recent study by the National Institute of Justice found that [84% of Indigenous women](#) will experience violence during their lifetime.

Senate Considers Major Tribal Water and Land Management Changes

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee met on November 19 to consider and approve a record-breaking 74 pieces of legislation. The bills will make up a "public lands package," a collection of legislation that the committee hopes to pass by the end of the year.

This package deals with the oversight of federal and tribal lands and natural resources. Most bills were passed unanimously by the committee, signaling strong bipartisan support.

One notable bill in that package is the [WaterSMART Access for Tribes Act](#) (S. 2927) which would increase tribal access to grants for water conservation. The bill would allow the federal government to make it cheaper for tribes to pay for some water management projects if they are too expensive. It hopes to encourage small or poor tribal communities to improve their water treatment, storage, and use.

What We're Reading

[Tribes Reach for Sun, Start from Ground Up \(Indian Country Today\)](#)

[Voting on Tribal Lands \(Brennan Center for Justice\)](#)

[National Parks Honor Murdered Indigenous Women with Red Shawls \(The Hill\)](#)

[Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians Observe 100 Years of U.S. Citizenship by](#)

[Walking Together to Vote on Election Day \(The Union-Democrat\)](#)

PBS <https://www.pbs.org> > video > oklahoma-red-people-Z0fAoP

[Growing Native | Oklahoma \(Red People\) | Episode 104 - PBS](#)

[Oklahoma \(Red People\) Episode 104 ... This is Growing Native. MOSES BRINGS PLENTY: Oklahoma is unique among other states. It is home to 39 Federally recognized tribes.](#)

HUD News

FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR TRIBAL COMMUNITIES

For a comprehensive list of Funding Opportunities, visit www.Grants.gov

ONAP JOB ANNOUNCEMENT(s)

Administrator, GS-1101, GS-15, Denver, CO FTE-1306

Application Deadline: 11/27/24 - 12/9/24

Application Links:

25-HUD-270-(MP – Internal to Gov) <https://www.usajobs.gov/job/821121400>

25-HUD-271-P(DEU - Public) <https://www.usajobs.gov/job/821122800>

New Guidance on Applicability of Build America Buy America Act (BABA) Requirements to Housing Projects

The OMB Made in America Office has provided additional guidance to Federal Agencies regarding the applicability of BABA requirements to housing projects. Consistent with Implementation Guidance on Application of Buy America Preference in Federal Financial Assistance Programs for Infrastructure (M-24-02), single family housing projects (buildings consisting of 1-4 dwelling units) are considered “private.” Accordingly, BABA requirements will not apply to HUD Federal Financial Assistance used to fund the construction, maintenance, alteration, or repair of such housing, as such projects are not properly classified as public infrastructure projects for purposes of BABA. However, BABA requirements will apply to projects involving the construction, maintenance, alteration, or repair of housing with 5 or more units (multifamily housing projects).

ONAP will issue additional guidance and update existing guidance for Tribal Recipients relating to BABA and housing projects soon. For now, ONAP encourages all Tribal Recipients to review [PIH Notice 2024-35](#) closely and hold clarifying questions to ONAP staff. We are working on FAQs and will be updating BABA guidance soon to incorporate this new guidance from OMB.

Webinar- Radon in Tribal Housing, December 12, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) will be hosting a webinar on December 12, 2024, to provide an overview of radon, including what it is, what it does, how it is measured, and how to reduce exposure. Speakers will share resources, including funding opportunities, for Tribes to test and mitigate for radon. The webinar will feature speakers from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Kansas State University Radon Program, Institute of Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP), and HUD. The webinar will be recorded and posted on [Codetalk](#).

Background

Exposure to radon is the number one cause of lung cancer among non-smokers and overall, radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer, responsible for approximately 21,000 lung cancer deaths every year. On January 11, 2024, HUD issued its [Departmental Policy for addressing Radon in the Environmental Review Process](#). This policy requires consideration of radon for all HUD environmental reviews. The policy will go into effect for Tribes, Tribally Designated Housing Entities, and Department of Hawaiian Homelands in January 2026.

December 12, 2024

2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time

[Registration Link](#)

Secretary’s Award for Excellence in Tribal Communities

We are thrilled to announce the launch of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary's Award for Excellence in Tribal Communities. This prestigious award acknowledges innovative approaches, best practices, policies, and community engagement that make significant contributions to serving HUD-assisted Tribal residents.

Awards will be considered under the following priority areas: Community Development, New Housing Construction, Supporting Native Youth, and Honoring and Serving Native Veterans. HUD encourages Tribal Leaders and TDHE staff to submit nominations by February 28, 2025. Learn more and apply here: [HUD Secretary's Award for Excellence in Tribal Communities](#).

HUD/IHS Joint Tribal Consultation Comment Period Extension and Webinar

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Indian Health Service (IHS) have published a [Dear Tribal Leader letter](#), extending the Tribal Consultation period seeking Tribes' feedback and recommendations on how HUD and IHS programs can better address housing-related water and sewer infrastructure needs within Tribal communities.

Comments

The deadline for submitting comments on the HUD/IHS Housing-related Infrastructure for Tribal Communities Tribal Consultation has been extended from Saturday, November 9, 2024, until **Wednesday, January 8, 2025**. Please email your comments and recommendations to consultation@hud.gov and consultation@ihs.gov. Use the SUBJECT LINE: HUD/IHS Housing-related Infrastructure for Tribal Communities. Additionally, a virtual Tribal Consultation session will be held on Monday, **December 16, 2024** at 1 pm Eastern. Please register to attend [here](#), so that we can ensure you receive any advance consultation materials.

Join the Virtual Consultation Listening Session Using Webex Link:

<https://intellor.webex.com/intellor/j.php?MTID=m656156ed93e02e1d7543d1777fe916b9>

Join the Virtual Consultation Listening Session by Telephone: The dial-in telephone number is (202) 735-3323. Use meeting access code number [6478445#]

Register Now: ConnectHomeUSA Summit December 10-12, 2024 (Virtual/In-person, WA DC)

The HUD HQ team has worked hard to secure experts and practitioners from the public and private sectors to help **you** make progress towards learning about **digital equity** and fulfilling your **digital inclusion plans!**

The **CHUSA Summit** is a **once-a-year event** designed to help ConnectHomeUSA and other HUD-assisted communities build strong and sustainable digital inclusion programs by providing unique access to digital inclusion experts, federal staff, and one-on-one time with representatives from internet service providers, device refurbishers and content providers!

Day 1: specifically for CHUSA communities, attendees will participate in workshops designed to help them utilize key CHUSA resources. **Days 2 and 3:** are open to other HUD-assisted organizations interested in digital inclusion.

Space is limited, and registration fills up quickly—**register today** to secure your spot! Register [here](#).

Scholarships with January 1-9 Deadlines

2K Annual Drug Rehab USA – Mental Health Scholarship	\$2,000	January 01, 2025
A1 Solar Scholarship	\$1,000	January 01, 2025
Clemson University National Scholars Award	\$223,560	January 01, 2025
Clemson University Out-of-State Tuition Scholarship	\$223,560	January 01, 2025
Clemson University Resident Merit Scholarships	\$121,176	January 01, 2025
Community Foundation of Northern Illinois Scholarships	\$2,500	January 01, 2025
Eleanor Wegg Poetry Scholarship	\$1,000	January 01, 2025
Juniata Eagles Abroad Scholarship	Varies	January 01, 2025
MIT THINK Out of the Box Scholars Program	\$1,000	January 01, 2025
Princeton University Grant	Varies	January 01, 2025
Ruth Suckow Iowa Student College Scholarship	\$1,000	January 01, 2025
Smith Scholarship Foundation	\$20,000	January 01, 2025
The Rev. Archibald Mosley Ph.D. and Jerolene Thomas Mosley Book Scholarship	\$500	January 01, 2025
University of Georgia Baldwin Scholarship	\$8,000	January 01, 2025
University of Georgia Classic Scholarship	\$38,080	January 01, 2025
University of Georgia Presidential Leadership Scholarship	\$12,000	January 01, 2025
University of Minnesota Iron Range Scholarship	\$16,000	January 01, 2025
University of Minnesota National Scholarship	\$60,000	January 01, 2025
Washington HECB Washington Scholars Program	\$294,304	January 01, 2025
Zack Zolin Scholarship Foundation	\$2,000	January 01, 2025
Chicago Police and Fire Scholarship - UChicago	\$269,784	January 02, 2025
Chicago Public Schools (CPS) Scholarships	\$269,784	January 02, 2025
Michelle Obama Award for Memoir	\$10,000	January 02, 2025
BIA Cares Scholarships	Varies	January 03, 2025
Eastern New Mexico University Freshman Academic Scholarship	\$21,600	January 03, 2025
Farm Credit Foundation for Agricultural Advancement Scholarship	\$10,000	January 03, 2025
GE-Reagan Foundation Scholarship Program	\$40,000	January 03, 2025
GSBA Scholarship Fund	\$7,500	January 03, 2025
Kinsey Determination Scholarship for the College of Business	Varies	January 03, 2025
SABR Scholarships	\$1,250	January 03, 2025
WTS-NH Undergraduate Scholarship	\$2,500	January 03, 2025

James Hunter Anthony & Gerald E. Blackshear Endowment	Varies	January 05, 2025
Northern Star Scouting Eagle Scholarship	Varies	January 05, 2025
Stanford University Scholarship	\$92,303	January 05, 2025
THEA Foundation Scholarships	\$10,000	January 05, 2025
2025 Acacia Leadership Scholarship	\$3,000	January 06, 2025
GHR Fellows Scholarship	\$211,280	January 06, 2025
Gustave Blache III Art Scholarships for Aspiring Artists	\$25,000	January 06, 2025
Guy M. Wilson Scholarship	\$1,000	January 06, 2025
Harlem YMCA bai Corporate Scholarship Award	\$2,500	January 06, 2025
Nevada Womens Fund Scholarships	\$5,000	January 06, 2025
North Carolina State University Caldwell Fellows	Varies	January 06, 2025
William D. and Jewell Brewer Scholarship	\$500	January 06, 2025
NJCPA College Scholarships	\$6,500	January 07, 2025
ACEC Colorado Scholarship & Education Foundation Scholarships	Varies	January 08, 2025
Taco Bell Live Más Scholarship	\$25,000	January 08, 2025
VSA International Young Soloists Competition	\$2,000	January 08, 2025
VSA Playwright Discovery Competition	\$1,000	January 08, 2025
Air Force ROTC Scholarships	Varies	January 09, 2025
Built Ford Tough Scholarship	\$1,000	January 09, 2025
Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship	\$55,000	January 09, 2025
FFA Future Leaders Scholarship	\$10,000	January 09, 2025
Grow Ag Leaders Scholarship	\$1,500	January 09, 2025
Jackie Robinson Foundation Scholarship	\$35,000	January 09, 2025
National FFA Scholarship Program	\$10,000	January 09, 2025

State veterans services department relocates Reno office (thisisreno.com) — The Nevada Department of Veterans Services is relocating its Reno office to a larger facility on Gateway Drive. This move aims to provide better accessibility and accommodate more veterans, enhancing local services for the Reno community.

Lithium batteries fuel fires at waste facilities (businessinsurance.com) — Lithium-ion batteries pose significant fire risks at waste facilities, affecting insurance rates and safety measures. Josh Wilson, a Reno-based consultant, highlights the challenges in managing these risks, emphasizing the importance of advanced fire detection technologies.

The Global Legacy of Quebec's Subsidized Child Daycare
With more than two decades behind it, the Quebec program that spawned an affordable child care model has some lessons for the rest of the world.

https://getpocket.com/explore/item/the-global-legacy-of-quebec-s-subsidized-child-daycare?utm_source=firefox-newtab-en-us

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JANUARY 2025 POWWOWS

**Jan 3-4**      **Aissksiniistotowa Pow Wow 2025**      **Gleichen AB**

Dance Specials: Mardi Broad Scalplock Memorial (18 +) Jingle Dress Spotlight Special (18+)  
Men's Spotlight Chicken Dance Special (18+) Women's Traditional Special...

**Jan 4**      **Otoe-Missouria Winter Encampment 2025**      **Newkirk OK**

Schedule: Gourd Dancing 12:00 pm Supper Break 5:00 pm Grand Entry 6:00 pm Contests: Adult  
Categories 18-54 (All Separate Categories) - Womens...

**Jan 4**      **The 72nd Annual New Year's Dance OKC Pow Wow Club 2025**      **Oklahoma City**

**OK** Western Heights High School, Saturday January 4th, 2025 1:00pm - 11:00pm MCs - Leroy  
Enloe (Kiowa-Otoe) & Lester Eagle...

**Jan 11**      **American Indian Pow Wow Morning Star Celebration 2025**      **Bel Air MD**

10:00am-7:00pm MSPW is benefit dance raising funds for the St Labre Indian School in Ashland  
MT. See the pow wow flyer...

**Jan 17 - 18**      **13 Moons Gichi-Manidoo Giizis Pow Wow 2025**      **Carlton MN**

The 2025 13Moons Pow Wow will take place Saturday January 18th at Fond Du Lac  
Reservations Black Bear Casino in Carlton MN, with warm-ups on...

**Jan 18 - 19**      **First Peoples Festival Friendship Pow Wow 2025**      **Estes Park CO**

The First Peoples Festival celebrates Indigenous culture, art, music, language, oral traditions, and  
much more. Shop from cultural vendors from various...

**Jan 25**      **MMIP Central Oklahoma 3rd Annual Benefit Gourd Dance 2025**

**Tryon OK** 2:00pm-9:00pm All Gourd Dance. Supper Break 5:00pm; Gourd Dance resumes at  
6:00pm. We'd like to encourage MMIP families and Sister Chapters to...

**Jan 26 - Feb 9**      **American Indian Arts Exposition (AZ) 2025**

**Tucson AZ** 10:00am-6:00pm Daily Dances @ 1:00pm-3:00pm Open to all the public Please visit  
the website for information: <https://www.usaindianinfo.com/events/expo/arts-expo> An official...

**Jan 31 - Feb 1**      **Seminole Tribal Fair and Pow Wow 2025**

**Hollywood FL** The Seminole Tribe of Florida will host its annual celebration of Native culture  
and arts on January 31-February 1, 2025 in Hollywood, Florida. Pow wow...