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Winter Wonderland at Multnomah Falls

Former tribal leader, police officer James Phoenix named newest WCSD trustee



Siobhan McAndrew Reno Gazette Journal

A former Reno police officer and chairman of the Pyramid Lake Indian Tribe was unanimously chosen as the newest member of the Washoe County School Board on Tuesday.

James Phoenix was sworn in to fill the seat left open by Joe Rodriguez, who resigned in November after being elected to the Sparks City Council.

Phoenix will serve out the remaining two years of the four-year term representing District C, an area that represents parts of north Washoe County including Gerlach, North Valleys and Wingfield Springs. It also includes the Pyramid Lake area, where Phoenix lives.

Phoenix will have to run in 2026 if he wants to remain on the school board following his appointment.

Phoenix assumed the role immediately for the first official meeting of the year. He joins a board where most trustees started as appointees. Trustees Beth Smith, Adam Mayberry, Diane Nicolet and Alex Woodley were all appointed to positions before running to retain their seats. Colleen Westlake and Christine Hull were elected.

In addition to his roles with the tribe and as a police officer, Phoenix served in the Nevada Army National Guard for 28 years before retiring.

In his application, Phoenix vowed to engage with students and staff.

"I will be present and actively engaged at planned community events as a community leader," he wrote.

He also vowed to be an asset to the board.

"In my opinion, being connected, present, real and maintaining trust is key."

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[Sherry L Rupert](#) [American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association \(AIANTA\)](#) ·

Thank you Wanderlust Travel Magazine for this gorgeous representation of our U.S. Indigenous Experiences for the 2025 Original List We look forward to our continued partnership and showcasing more of our Indigenous partners. #AIANTA #DestinationNativeAmerica #IndigenousTourism #WeAreStillHere



The [American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association \(AIANTA\)](#) is excited to share the highly anticipated “Origin List 2025” feature within the December 2024/January 2025 Issue of [Wanderlust Travel Magazine](#), the U.K.’s oldest travel magazine. The Origin List invites travelers to step into a world of rich traditions and ancient knowledge by **exploring 50 unforgettable experiences crafted by Indigenous communities**. These immersive encounters invite you to encounter diverse cultures and landscapes while supporting a more thoughtful and sustainable approach to travel.



Several months in the making, AIANTA’s CEO [Sherry L Rupert](#) served on the advisory committee of Origin List 2025 where she represented Indigenous tourism in the U.S. among a global committee of Indigenous associations to include [Discover Aboriginal Experiences](#), [ATTA - African Travel & Tourism Association](#), [Embratur Brasil](#), [Indigenous Tourism Canada](#), [NZ Māori Tourism](#), and the Sámi Parliament of Finland.



Featured on the Original List for Indigenous experiences in North America - U.S. Indigenous tourism includes AIANTA members [Akwesasne Travel](#), [Tatanka Rez Tourz](#), [Sun Tours](#), [Choctaw Cultural Center](#), [Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians](#), [Shash Dine' Eco-Retreat: A Glamping Hotel](#), and [Kodiak Brown Bear Center & Lodge](#).



Wanderlust is the UK’s leading travel magazine, taking the road less traveled since 1993. It is available in the USA, Canada and in over 70 countries around the world. With a strong and rapidly growing digital presence, [wanderlustmagazine.com](#) delivers thousands of articles and attracts over 12 million visitors a year, alongside 180,000+ social media followers. Wanderlust is now the most-read UK travel magazine with the highest average circulation across and print and digital, and continues to pioneer coverage of authentic, responsible and sustainable travel.

Full story here: <https://bit.ly/49Eozeg>



## **Request for Information from Tribal Communities**

HUD published a Request for Information (RFI) on 12/30/2024 HUD seeking public input regarding how best to assess measures to increase the resilience of residential properties to natural hazards and extreme weather. This information will allow HUD to develop policies that better support HUD's program participants in increasing resilience to natural hazards, including extreme weather, and accessing affordable insurance for their properties.

Click link to read full publication: [Federal Register :: Request for Information Regarding Resilience Measures and Insurance Coverage](#)

There are four Tribal Community Specific Questions:

*Question for comment #8:* What unique challenges do Tribal communities face when implementing housing resilience measures? How can HUD support Tribal communities in addressing these challenges?

*Question for comment #9:* What partnerships between Tribal governments, local authorities, and other organizations exist to enhance housing resilience on Tribal lands? Are there ways in which these partnerships can be expanded or improved? Please explain and provide specific recommendations, successes, and challenges as well as any supporting data as applicable.

*Question for comment #10:* How can Tribes or organizations in remote locations with limited options for resilience investments better access or incorporate resilience strategies, resources, or methods? What resources can HUD provide in partnership with groups in these areas?

*Question for comment #11:* What Traditional Knowledge and Indigenous Knowledge about building practices can be integrated with modern resilience measures in tribal communities? Please explain and provide specific recommendations, as well as any supporting data.

### How to Submit Comments

- Electronically through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>
- By mail to the Regulations Division, Office of General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 7th Street SW, Room 10276, Washington, DC 20410-0500

See Notice for more information on how to submit feedback. Comment period ends 02/28/2025.

## **JFK Library Foundation**

**NOW is the time to submit your nomination for the 2025 Profile in Courage Award!**

Presented by the JFK Library Foundation, this prestigious honor celebrates leaders who risked everything in pursuit of the greater good—the quality in leadership that President John F. Kennedy admired most.

Have someone in mind for the award? Let us know



FORM ON FACEBOOK

## **Can you read cursive? It's a superpower the National Archives is looking for.**

Elizabeth Weise, USA TODAY Sun, January 12, 2025 at 2:06 AM PST

### **If you can read cursive, the National Archives would like a word.**

Or a few million. More than 200 years worth of U.S. documents are in need of transcribing (or at least classifying) and the vast majority of them are handwritten in cursive – requiring people who know the flowing, looped form of penmanship.

**“Reading cursive is a superpower,”** said Suzanne Issacs, a community manager with the National Archives Catalog in Washington D.C.

She is part of the team that coordinates the more than 5,000 Citizen Archivists [helping the Archive read and transcribe](#) some of the more than 300 million digitized objects in its catalog. And they're looking for volunteers with an increasingly rare skill.

Those records range from Revolutionary War pension records to the [field notes of Charles Mason of the Mason-Dixon Line](#) to [immigration documents from the 1890s](#) to [Japanese evacuation records](#) to the [1950 Census](#). (*Ed note: including your tribal records*)

The National Archives uses Citizen Archivists who volunteer to help transcribe such materials. The ability to read cursive handwriting is helpful but not essential.

“We create missions where we ask volunteers to help us transcribe or tag records in our catalog,” Issacs said.

To volunteer, all that’s required is to [sign up online and then launch in](#). “There's no application,” she said. “You just pick a record that hasn't been done and read the instructions. It's easy to do for a half hour a day or a week.”

Being able to read the longhand script is a huge help because so many of the documents are written using it.

“It’s not just a matter of whether you learned cursive in school, it’s how much you use cursive today,” she said.

### **Cursive has fallen out of use**

American’s skill with this connected form of script has been slowly waning for decades.

School children were [once taught impeccable copperplate handwriting](#) and penmanship was something they were graded on.

That began to change when typewriters [first came into common use in the business world in the 1890s](#) and was further supplanted in the 1980s by computers.

Still, handwriting continued to be considered a necessary skill [until the 1990s when many people shifted to e-mail](#) and then in the 2000s to texting.

[By 2010, the Common Core teaching standards](#) emphasized keyboard skills (once taught as “typewriting”) and no longer required handwriting on the presumption that most of the writing students would do would be on computers.

That led to a pushback and today [at least 14 states require that cursive handwriting be taught, including California in 2023](#). But it doesn’t mean that they actual use it in real life.

In the past, most American students began learning to write in cursive in third grade, making it a rite of passage, said Jaime Cantrell, a professor of English at Texas A&M University Texarkana whose students take part in the Citizen Archivist work, putting their skills reading old documents to work.

For her generation, “cursive was a coming-of-age part of literacy in the 1980s. We learned cursive and then we could write like adults wrote,” she said.

While many of her students today learned cursive in school, they never use it and seldom read it, she said. She can tell because she writes feedback on their papers in cursive.

Some of her students aren’t even typing any more. Instead, they’re just using talk-to-text technology or even AI. “I know that because there’s no punctuation, it reads like a stream of consciousness.”

It’s an uphill – but by no means impossible – battle to become comfortable with reading and writing the cojoined script. And it opens up access to a wealth of older documents.

**Cursive is still a skill for some** [California passed a law in 2023](#) requiring that “cursive or joined italics” be taught for grades one through six. The law’s author said it was so students could read primary source historical documents.

That’s exactly how Cantrell’s students use it. One of the classes she teaches involves deciphering documents written in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries – and one of their projects is to get involved in the National Archive’s transcription work.

“There is certainly a learning curve,” said Cantrell. “But my students stick it out. They feel like they have a duty, they feel like they’re making a difference.”

Being able to read cursive is just the start to deciphering older documents, said the National Archive’s Nancy Sullivan. The handwriting of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries isn’t what today’s third-grader are taught.

Though sometimes the oldest writing is the easiest to read, said Cantrell.

“If you look at Abigail Adams letters to her husband (President John Adams) and his responses, the cursive is an art form, it’s so uniform,” she said.

**Artificial intelligence can only go so far with cursive** Artificial intelligence is starting to be able to read cursive but only with human help, said the National Archive's Sullivan.

The Archives has been working with FamilySearch, a genealogical non-profit operated by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that offers free genealogical software, searching and access to historical documents.

FamilySearch developed an AI program that reads handwritten documents. But a person is still required to do the final edit.

"There's usually some mistakes," she said. "So we call it 'extracted text' and our volunteers have to look it over and compare it to the original." Only once a volunteer has looked the document over is it considered an actual transcription.

And AI can't always decipher the often problematic documents their volunteers deal with, said Issacs. Sometimes they've been torn, smudged, folded or dog-eared. In the case of Revolutionary War pension applications, widows had to prove they were married so they often included handwritten family tree pages torn from the family Bible.

Not to mention simple poor penmanship. "Some of the Justices of the Peace, their handwriting is atrocious," said volunteer Christine Ritter, 70, who lives in Fairless Hills, Pennsylvania.

There are cross outs, things written on the other side that bleed through, strange and inventive spellings, old forms of letters (a double S was sometimes written as a "long s" and looked like an F) and even children's doodles over top. And many obsolete terms and legal words that can flummox even the most erudite readers.

"It feels like solving a puzzle. I really enjoy it," said volunteer Tiffany Meeks, 37. She started volunteering as a transcriber in June and learned a new word – paleography, deciphering historical manuscripts.

"I felt like I was learning a different language. Not only was I brushing up on my cursive, but my old English as well," she said. "I learned a new word; paleography," which is the deciphering of historical documents.

### **No cursive? No problem**

The Archive's Issacs is clear that volunteers don't have to start out knowing cursive, you can learn along the way. "It helps – but it's not necessary."

For example, there's a "no cursive required" option for those reading Revolutionary War pension records. Instead of reading and transcribing the records, volunteers can also help append "tags" to records that have already been transcribed by other Citizen Archivists so that they're easier to search.

You can also pick it up as you go along, said Ritter.

“When they first sent me a document I thought, ‘Oh my gosh, I can’t read this. I got nervous. But the longer you do them the easier it gets,” she said.

Ritter’s working on [Revolutionary War pension files](#) for soldiers who served at the [Battle of Guildford Courthouse on March 15, 1781](#). As she works, she imagines how much it will mean to families to find something so old about one of their relatives.

She says she once prided herself on her perfect penmanship but today says her handwriting is “atrocious.” Still, she can read cursive with the best of them and it’s become a wonderful hobby.

“I wake up in the morning and have my breakfast with my husband, then he goes off to go fishing and I come in my work room, I have my computer and I put on my radio station with oldies and I just start transcribing,” she said. “I just love it so much.”

*This article originally appeared on USA TODAY: [The National Archives needs Citizen Archivists who can read cursive](#)*

***Ed note: Again, cannot re-emphasize enough about the need to read cursive for anyone interested in their tribe’s history, protection of land/water/human rights, or to correct records, PARTICULARLY AS THE WORLD SHIFTS TO RESEARCH BY AI.***

***Communities with active senior centers might want to develop a citizen archivist project as this demographic does read/write cursive!***

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[Your Bold Solution Could Help Restore Trust in U.S. Institutions](#)



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### **(CA) Assembly Bill No. 1821 CHAPTER 658**

Ramos. Pupil instruction: course of study: social sciences: treatment of Native Americans.  
[https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=202320240AB1821](https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240AB1821)



The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association and Bureau of Land Management National Scenic and Historic Trails Program Unveil California National Historic Trail Poster at Nevada Native Art Recognition Event

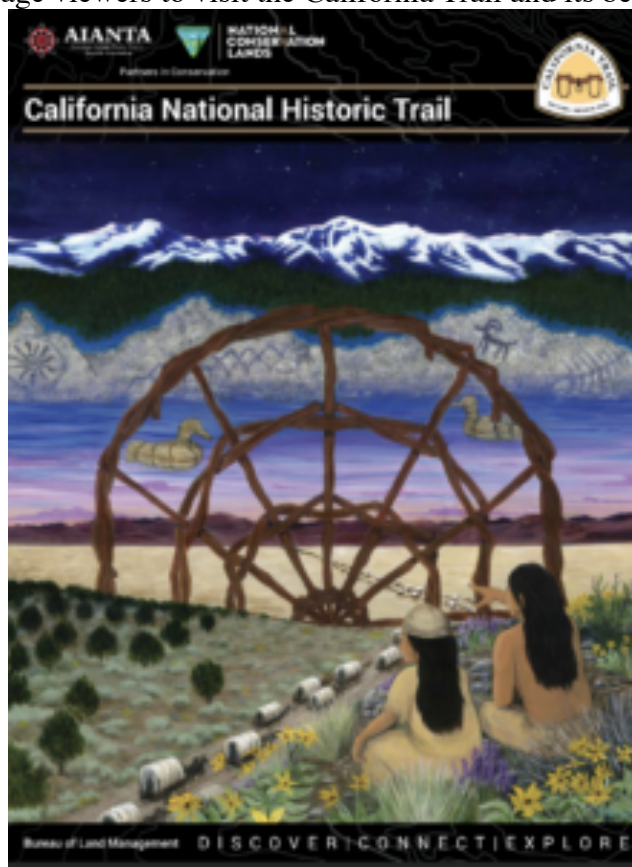


AIANTA/BLM NV Native Art Recognition Event

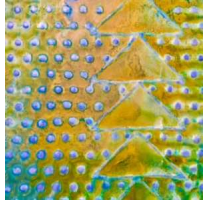
### **Congratulations to Poster Artist Cassandra Garback!**

“The story of the California Trail is usually told from the perspective focusing on the journey it took for westward migrants to travel over 5,000 miles from Missouri to California. However, the land they crossed was far from empty and the greatest migration in U.S. history is a story of over 250,000 diverse travelers crossing the ancestral lands of hundreds of Indigenous groups. In Nevada, Indigenous peoples present during the historic period of the trail, and still connected to the land today, include the Washoe (Waší-šiw), Northern Paiute (Numu), Western Shoshone (Newe), Southern Paiute (Nuwuvi), and Goshute (Kutsipiuti) people.”

“My goal is to transport viewers on a journey through Nevada’s diverse heritage, just as the California Trail has done for generations,” said artist Cassandra Garback. “My hope is that this artwork will encourage viewers to visit the California Trail and its beauty for themselves.”



<https://www.aianta.org/the-american-indian-alaska-native-tourism-association-and-bureau-of-land-management-national-scenic-and-historic-trails-program-unveil-california-national-historic-trail-poster-at-nevada-native-art-re/>



[Melissa Moose](#)

Artist•[melerom@hotmail.com](mailto:melerom@hotmail.com)•MelMoose•<http://www.melissamelero.com>

Melissa Melero was born in San Francisco, CA in 1974 and spent most of her childhood living in Reno, Nevada. She is a Northern Paiute enrolled with the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe located in Fallon, Nevada with ties to Fort Bidwell Paiute and Modoc Tribes. Melissa holds a BFA from the Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe, NM and a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Fine Arts from Portland State University, Portland, OR. She has exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Native Arts in Santa Fe, NM, the Nevada Museum of Art, Reno, NV, C.N. Gorman Museum, U.C. Davis, CA and in other select museums and galleries throughout the U.S. Melissa currently lives with her family in Hungry Valley, Nevada working as a professional artist, contributing writer for First American Art Magazine and founder of the art collective, the Great Basin Native Artists (GBNA).



Joseph and Mason with [Lena Wright](#) and [Jack Malotte](#) as they finish their mural at the Nevada Museum of Art



**Of the Earth:  
Native American Baskets and Pueblo Pottery  
March 22, 2025 - December 31, 2027**

This inaugural exhibition celebrates the opening of a new gallery and showcases remarkable gifts of Native American baskets and Pueblo pottery to the Nevada Museum of Art. The baskets are a gift from Larry Dalrymple and Steve Moreno, who dedicated the past 45 years to acquiring baskets, personal histories, and photographs from modern and contemporary weavers of the Great Basin, Northern California, and the American Southwest. The pottery comes from Brenda and the late John Blom, who began their collection in the early 1990s, sourcing pieces directly from potters, galleries, and Pueblo villages in the Southwest.

To commemorate this special occasion, the exhibition also features 15 newly commissioned Native American baskets from weavers in the Great Basin and Sierra Nevada, including Leah Brady (Western Shoshone), Loretta Burden (Northern Paiute), Sue Coleman (Washoe), Norma Darrough (Western Shoshone), Gracie Dick (Northern Paiute), Julia Parker (Coast Miwok | Kashaya Pomo), Lucy Parker (Kashaya Pomo | Yosemite Miwok | Mono Lake Paiute | Coast Miwok), Melanie Smokey (Western Shoshone | Washoe), Sandra Eagle (Northern Paiute), Rebecca Eagle (Northern Paiute), Nila Northsun (Shoshone | Chippewa), and Jacqueline Rickard (Walker Lake Paiute).

Another highlight of the gallery is a major mural by Jack Malotte (Western Shoshone | Washoe) in collaboration with Lena Tseabbe Wright (Northern Paiute | Yurok). Contemporary artworks inspired by basketry and pottery traditions are interspersed throughout the gallery.

To accompany the exhibition, the Museum, in collaboration with the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California and publishing partner Rizzoli Electa, will publish *The Art of Native American Washoe Basketry*, a reissue of chapters on Washoe basketry and culture, first published in *Tahoe: A Visual History* in 2015.

*This exhibition is co-curated by Melissa Melero-Moose (Fallon Paiute | Modoc) and Ann M. Wolfe, the Museum's Andrea and John C. Deane Family Chief Curator and Associate Director.*

**Lead Sponsor** Henry Luce Foundation

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Tuvalu: The disappearing island nation recreating itself in the metaverse

“Our land, our ocean, our culture are the most precious assets of our people – and to keep them safe from harm, no matter what happens in the physical world, we'll move them to the cloud “– Simon Kofe

"It's our dignity, our culture, our heritage. It is not something we can pack into suitcases and take with us. We have done the least to cause the crisis, but we are paying the highest price." — Grace Malie

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/future/article/20241121-tuvalu-the-pacific-islands-creating-a-digital-nation-in-the-metaverse-due-to-climate-change>