



# Native People Law Caucus Newsletter

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Newsletter Date  
Summer 2008



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## NPLC Launches New Blog

<http://nplcaall.blogspot.com/>

On Thursday, August 30, 2007 the Native Peoples Law Caucus launched a new blog. Since its inception, there have been over 20 posts to this blog. Posts range from news from the Navajo Nations to pending legislation to other news items that impact Natives. If you haven't checked out this excellent resource—what are you waiting for?

The Native Peoples Law Caucus is an organization of information professionals who belong to the American Association of Law Libraries. The Caucus provides a forum in which Native law and other issues that impact Indigenous Peoples worldwide can be discussed, ideas shared, information exchanged, and education offered. The Caucus encourages and facilitates the analysis, cataloging, collection, dissemination, management, organization, and preservation of Native law in accordance with cultural tradition.

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## Sovereignty Symposium 2008

By Joan S. Howland, Roger F. Noreen Professor of Law and Associate Dean for Information & Technology, University of Minnesota Law School

The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Sovereignty Symposium was held on June 4 and 5, 2008 at the historic Skirvin Hilton Hotel in Oklahoma City. This truly exceptional event was sponsored by the Oklahoma Supreme Court, the Oklahoma Indian Affairs Commission, the Indian Law Section of the Oklahoma Bar Association, and the Oklahoma Arts Council. Oklahoma's three law schools - the University of Tulsa, the University of Oklahoma, and Oklahoma City University - also served as sponsors. The symposium was attended by over six hundred tribal members, federal and state government officials, judges, attorneys, librarians, academics, and other interested parties. With the timely theme "Peace Keepers," the symposium was informative, thought-provoking, and diverse in approach and perspective. As always, the symposium served as a vehicle to move forward critical tribal issues and as a venue to reinforce the critical importance of sovereignty to tribal communities throughout the United States. (cont'd on next page)

## Sovereignty Symposium 2008 (cont'd from page 1)

The opening ceremonies, both spiritually moving and visually beautiful, included the following: a Presentation of Flags by tribal leaders; Honor Guards including the Vietnam Era Veterans Intertribal Association and the Kiowa Black Leggings; and Brent Greenwood and the Whitehorse Drum Group. The Invocation was given by the Honorable Lawrence Hart, Cheyenne Peace Chief, and the Closing Prayer was offered by the Right Reverend William C. Wantland of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma. The keynote address was presented by Chief Judge Robert H. Henry of the U. S. Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals. A distinguished jurist and scholar, Judge Henry focused his remarks on the federal judiciary's role in protecting American Indian sovereignty and tribal self-determination. He incorporated thoughtful comments about justice, equity, mercy, and peace keeping.

"The symposium served as a vehicle to move forward critical tribal issues and as a venue to reinforce the critical importance of sovereignty to tribal communities throughout the United States."

The two-day symposium included a rich and deep array of programs and panel discussions. A sampling of the many topics covered includes: "Business Opportunities for Tribal Governments - Renewable Energy;" "Crime in Indian Country;" "Best Labor and Employment Practices: 'How Tos' for Casinos, Businesses and Tribal Governments;" "State and Tribal Relations: Compacting from the Tribal/State Perspective, Future Opportunities and Challenges;" "Indian Children and Families;" "The Land, the Water, and the Future;" "The Healing of Nations Through Peacemaking;" "Native Americans and Poverty Issues;" "Indian Health Care in an Electronic World;" and "Development of a Sports League for Native American Sports." The presentations were enhanced by the in-depth knowledge, diversity in background and expertise, commitment to American Indian concerns, and creativity of the speakers. Almost all the programs were structured to encourage dialogue between the presenters and the attendees.

One program, "The Growth of Tribal Libraries and Their Impact on Tribal Sovereignty," merits special attention. Faye Hadley, the Native American Resources/Reference Law Librarian at the Mabee Legal Information Center at the University of Tulsa College, was the coordinator and driving force behind this program. Faye opened the session by sharing her astute insights on the crucial role that tribal libraries play in providing accurate and current information regarding treaties, water and land rights, government programs, medical issues, and a plethora of other matters. (cont'd on next page)



## Sovereignty Symposium 2008 (cont'd from the previous page)

Building upon Faye's thought-provoking introductory remarks, Professor Lotsee Patterson of the University of Oklahoma School of Library and Information Studies discussed the historical development and evolving role of tribal libraries. Lotsee commented that, beginning in the 1970s, the combination of the increasing awareness of the need for information to support sovereignty initiatives and the expanding availability of federal grants led to an optimal atmosphere for the establishment of libraries within tribal communities. Lotsee discussed the LSCA Title IV legislation of the 1980s which provided her with the necessary funding to make her vision for a Training and Assistance for Indian Library Services (TRAILS) project a reality. Lotsee based her implementation of the TRAILS project on her long-held belief that the best strategy for ensuring the sustainability of tribal libraries is to train American Indians within their communities to staff and manage their own facilities. Through the TRAILS project, Lotsee established and trained the staffs of libraries throughout the Pueblos of New Mexico. In her remarks, Lotsee also discussed the library procedures manual, disseminated to all American Indian and Alaskan Native libraries, that she wrote as part of the TRAILS project. Throughout her presentation, Lotsee incorporated her insights regarding the federal and state perspective on American Indian information needs.

Joan Howland, the Roger F. Noreen Professor of Law and Associate Dean for Information & Technology at the University of Minnesota, focused her presentation on the manner in which the Technological Revolution of the past thirty years has proved to be a decidedly mixed blessing for American Indians. Joan discussed the technological developments, especially the Internet, that have allowed American Indians in both rural and urban environments to access governmental, medical, financial, and legal resources that were previously difficult or impossible to obtain. She also noted that, perhaps more importantly, tribal communities can now globally disseminate, via the Internet, accurate and appropriate information about their unique histories, languages, and cultures to students, scholars, government entities, and other concerned individuals. Joan cautioned, however, that the vast expanse of misinformation on the Internet about legal matters, health issues, social services, personal and national security, and environmental concerns has become increasingly problematic. Another point that Joan emphasized was the escalation, via the Internet, of the inappropriate distribution of information and misinformation about American Indians. Technology also has resulted in the increased cultural commercial exploitation of American Indian culture and knowledge. In addition, Joan discussed her work with non-urban indigenous communities in South America. In doing so, she drew comparisons between these communities and the American Indian experience.

Teresa Runnels, Coordinator of the American Indian Resource Center at the Tulsa City-County Library, was the third speaker on the program. Teresa discussed the critical and proactive role an American Indian resource and research center can play within a larger organization. Teresa offered an introduction to her own facility which "provides cultural, educational and information resources, activities and services honoring American Indian heritage." Teresa's center is a vibrant research facility which provides access to an extensive collection of books, periodicals, and media by and about American Indians. The center's website includes pathfinders and other research tools to assist students, teachers, tribal members, and other interested parties who are researching treaties, legislative sources, health issues, statistics, and other topics. Teresa discussed the center's many educational programs and events including the American Indian Festival of Words and the Festival of Words Author Award. As Teresa described the many services provided by the center, she particularly focused on the effectiveness of the monthly E-Newsletter. This publication has proved to be vital to promoting the services, programs, and resources of the Center. (cont'd on next page)

## Sovereignty Symposium Panel Addresses Tribal Libraries



Dr. Lotsee Parterson, Dr. Joan Howland, Karen Alexander, Teresa Washington Runnels

### Sovereignty Symposium 2008 (cont'd from the previous page)

The final speaker on the program was Karen Alexander, the Tribal Librarian for the Miami Nation. Karen discussed the expansion and evolution of their library since she assumed her position in 1989. As she reflected on the many new initiatives she has brought to fruition, she shared her insights about effective methods of developing successful grant proposals for federal grants and other funding sources. She provided a particularly astute analysis of how to obtain sustained funding for library initiatives. Karen also discussed the CHARLIE Library Network, established in 1995 by a grant to the Miami Nation. The network is designed to facilitate better library services to tribal communities, and currently includes the Eastern Shawnee, Modoc, Ottawa, Peoria, Quapaw, and the Seneca-Cayuga communities. Through the network, a regional discussion group has been formed to share information and encourage dialogue about common interests regarding libraries services to American Indians.





## Walking the Red Road

By M. Faye Hadley

On Saturday evening, November 10, 2007, a friend and I went to see Arigon Starr in her fabulous one-woman show called *The Red Road*. It was produced for and staged at the Gilcrease Museum, an institution with a long history of supporting Native efforts in the arts. We walked through a gallery filled with buckskin dresses, beaded moccasins and feathered headdresses on our way to the theater, where we were greeted by Starr's mother who ended up sitting next to my friend. There were few empty seats as the star of the show charged onto the bare bones set (two tables, one covered with a radio microphone and a variety of noise-makers, the other simply covered with a gingham tablecloth, a microphone on a stand, a hat rack with Starr's signature red cowgirl hat - complete with a rhinestone tiara as the hat band - and finally an acoustic guitar). These were all the props that Starr needed to portray eleven characters who all play a role at Verna Yahola's All Nations Cafe, located in Sapulpa, Oklahoma, where the action of one eventful day unfolds. The day is June 4, 1977 when Verna's long-time friend and country music singer Patty Jones (Choctaw) arrives to tape an episode of her country music show and where Verna is dealing with issues familial, financial, romantic, and finally personal. How Verna resolves the issues facing her on this one day reveals her generosity, her humor and her resilience as a Native woman.

Arigon Starr is definitely a rising star in the musical theater arena, and also a great singer/songwriter in her own right.

In spite of the fact that I am of dubious Native ancestry, I got most of the inside Indian jokes from Verna's Navajo fry cook who pointed to the Red Rocks east of Gallup, New Mexico with his lips to Verna's friend, Etta's (Ojibway) reference to 49ers (a post-powwow party that usually lasts until the wee hours). I've got to hand it to Arigon Starr, her ability to portray a wide variety of characters with humor and accuracy, along with her wonderful musical talent, were the facets that made the show so special and such a treat to watch. Ms. Starr is definitely a rising star in the musical theater arena, and also a great singer/songwriter in her own right. All in all, it was a magnificently entertaining evening that I was happy to enjoy with a good friend, Yakoke.

Visit [Arigon Starr's web site](#) to find out more about this talented Kickapoo/Creek artist.





# National Indian Law Library

JUSTICE THROUGH KNOWLEDGE

By Monica Martens

## New/improved online tools for library patrons:

**Reftracker:** In June 2008, NILL launched the RefTracker reference interface for the public and NARF staff. This service allows the NILL reference staff to more easily manage and share reference and document delivery requests from the public. RefTracker allows the library to create a knowledge bank of saved reference/research questions that can be searched, and to collect statistics on the more than 140 reference/research requests received by the library each month. The branding for this service is *askNILL*.

**New online catalog:** NILL migrated its catalog from Inmagic's DB Textworks to Softlink's Liberty system earlier this year. New features include the ability to save and print results and improved searching/browsing capabilities. Please feel welcome to make suggestions for improvements to David Selden at [dselden@narf.org](mailto:dselden@narf.org). Access the online catalog at <http://www.narf.org/nill/catalog/catalog.htm>

**Improved search interface:** During 2007, the Library was involved in launching a new search engine for the Native American Rights Fund's web site, donated to NARF by *ISYS Search Software* (<http://www.isys-search.com/>). The search interface is under development, but still offers great improvements over our previous search engine. Now you can search parts of the NARF web site in addition to the entire site, with a powerful search engine that lets you select search screens, search terms within proximity of each other, and preview highlighted results. Especially helpful to web site users is the ability to isolate large segments of our site, such as the tribal law collection or the ICWA web guide to conduct research. From any NARF page, click on "Search" or go to <http://document.narf.org/>. As we continue to customize ISYS to fit our web site, we welcome suggestions for improvement or general comments. Send Emails to [dselden@narf.org](mailto:dselden@narf.org).  
(Cont'd on next page)

The National Indian Law Library (a part of the Native American Rights Fund) continues to lead the nation in innovative Native legal resources.





# National Indian Law Library

JUSTICE THROUGH KNOWLEDGE

(Cont'd from previous page)

## Online publications:

**ICWA:** In October 2007, NARF announced the publication of its new *Practical Guide to the Indian Child Welfare Act*. The *Guide*, available both on the Internet and in print, is a powerful resource tool for tribal, state and federal entities involved in Indian child custody proceedings. The Library was an integral partner in creating the web site version at <http://www.narf.org/icwa>. In addition to the contents of the book, the web site contains more than 1,000 full-text resources.

The ICWA Practical Guide Project was generously funded by the Administration for Native Americans, with supplemental funding by the Morongo Band of Mission Indians, and supported by NICWA (National Indian Child Welfare Association) as a key partner. NARF and an Advisory Board -- made up of a multi-disciplinary team consisting of members of tribal courts, tribal ICWA departments, state governments, Indian law practitioners, Native non-profit organizations, law firms and urban Indian centers -- provided guidance on the comprehensive content of the Guide. To order a copy of the Guide, print a free copy, or access the expanded Internet edition, please visit: <http://www.narf.org/icwa>.

**Updated research guides:** The Library has updated two important Guides to doing Indian law research, which are also on the NPLC web site:

[Basic Indian Law Research Tips -- Part I: Federal Indian Law](#)

[Basic Indian Law Research Tips: Part II: Tribal Law](#)

## News services:

**Indian Law Bulletins:** Remember that you and your staff/attorneys can sign up for free email alerts for the NILL Indian Law Bulletins, a current awareness service highlighting new cases, regulatory action, news, and law reviews relating to Indian law. Visit <http://www.narf.org/nill/bulletins/ilb.htm> to learn more.

**Receive news through our blogs:** You can continue to keep up-to-date with NARF/NILL news by accessing our blogs and/or subscribing to them through your preferred RSS feeder. Go to <http://www.narf.org/events/news.htm> to access the NARF blog and <http://www.narf.org/nill> to access the NILL blog.

The National Indian Law Library has updated two important guides to doing Indian law research, which are also on the NPLC web site:



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Please join us for our Native Peoples Law Caucus Annual Meeting which will be held on Sunday, July 13, at 12noon—1:15pm.  
Location TBA.



**NPLC Officers:**

Chairperson – Sherri Nicole Thomas  
Webmaster – Monica Martens  
Newsletter – Faye Hadley & Gretchen VanDam  
Treasurer – Monica Martens  
TLC - David Selden

**Mission Statement of the Native Peoples Law Caucus:**

The aim of the Native Peoples Law Caucus is to provide a forum in which Native law and other issues that impact Indigenous Peoples worldwide can be discussed, ideas shared, information exchanged, and education offered. The Caucus encourages and facilitates the analysis, cataloging, collection, dissemination, management, organization, and preservation of Native law in accordance with cultural tradition. WEB SITE: <http://www.aallnet.org/caucus/nplc/>