



Sharon McClellan is of Cherokee descent and is a director and treasurer with the Four Directions Healing Foundation. She has worked several years with minorities in urban Peoria, is a member of Dayspring Native American Fellowship in East Peoria, serving on the Council there. She has always leaned toward her Native American heritage in being a positive influence among her own people. Sharon and her great granddaughter, Aubrey, are learning the Cherokee language together, strongly supported by her husband, Butch. She lives in Creve Coeur, Illinois.



Danira Parra is of Southwestern Pima and Yaqui descent through her paternal grandparents. She is a director with the Four Directions Healing Foundation presently serving as its secretary. She worked for 14 years as an English/Spanish translator in Illinois County courts of the 13th Judicial Circuit leaving that work in 2004 to become a United Methodist pastor. She lives in Ransom, Illinois.



NATIVE AMERICAN COOKING *from East to Southwest*



presented by

Sharon McClellan & Danira Parra
(Cherokee Heritage) (Pima/Yaqui Heritage)

4 Directions Healing Foundation
www.4directionshealingfoundation.com

Photo courtesy of James Gray &
www.freerangestock.com

The Cherokee: The majority of the Cherokee nation is presently located in Oklahoma with a smaller group forming the Eastern Band in North Carolina. The Cherokee were the last of the five civilized tribes that were included in the brutal mass migration that is known as the “trail of tears”.

In 1838 the Eastern Band’s ancestors, a group of about 400 Cherokee, escaped forced removal because they lived on the privately owned land of William Holland Thomas, a white man who, as a boy, was adopted and raised by Cherokee Principal Chief Yonaguska. Another group of 200 that joined the Eastern Band did so by the personal sacrifice of their leader, Tsali, who was wanted by the government. He sacrificed himself in exchange for permission for his people to remain in North Carolina.

According to the white settlers, a “civilized nation” meant that the Cherokee had a peaceful co-existence with the whites. Although they lived as farmers and were primarily Christian believers, the American government was under pressure to make farmland available for the growing settler population. Additionally, in 1829 gold had been discovered in the hills of the Indian lands and both prospectors and business adventurers were coveting it. As a result, the U.S. Government passed the 1830 Indian Removal Act, which not only removed the Cherokee from their homes, their cultivated fields, and the only type of living they had known for generations, but it also did the same to the Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muskogee-Creek and Seminoles. All told, about 46,000 men, women and children were forced into a grueling journey through summer heat and winter snows, walking most of the 2,000 plus miles from their verdant homes to the poor lands of Indian Territory (today’s Eastern Oklahoma).

Of the 15,000 Cherokee who started out on the journey more than 4,000 died from starvation, exposure, torture, illness and murder.

A LITTLE HISTORY

The Pima: There are several bands of O’Odham (*means “people” in the Uto-Aztec language*) both on and off reservations in central and southern Arizona. Near Scottsdale you find the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community comprised of Onk Akimel O’Odham and Pipaash, while the Keli Akimel O’Odham live in south central Arizona in the Gila River Indian Community; and the Ak-Chin Akimel O’Odham and Tohono O’Odham (Papago) live along the Santa Cruz River. Today the Pima people are the subject of a decades-long study by the University of Arizona, which is documenting the deleterious health effects they have experienced due to changes in their diet, from traditional foods to processed foods. Traditional foods are more prevalent among the Sonoran River and Yaqui River O’Odham of northern Mexico. Historically, Akimel O’Odham were a land-based agricultural people that lived primarily on foods they grew, gathered or hunted.

The Yaqui: The brutal end of devastating wars between the Yaqui and the Mexican government caused a band of Yaqui to flee to Arizona around 1917. Those who did not escape were forcibly removed to southern Mexico, their lands confiscated and distributed. Others who escaped mass slaughter and removal kept fighting using guerilla warfare tactics which, 20 years later, resulted in land being ceded back to the Indians. The highest concentration of the Yaqui nation can be found there today. In 1964, the U.S. government established a small reserved land-base in Southwestern Arizona for the U.S. Yaquis and they received federal recognition in 1978. Today, there are Yaquis scattered all over Arizona, most of whom never registered with the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1978, and, as such, are not recognized as “Yaquis” with the BIA regardless of their ancestry, DNA, or cultural practices.

FOUR DIRECTIONS HEALING FOUNDATION



Established in 2010, the 4 Directions Healing Foundation is a 501c(3), not-for-profit organization created by Native Americans across the United States to address issues we believe to be important and relative to all people, regardless of their heritage.

Our goals are:

- to promote authentic public education about Native Americans,
- to labor for the unification and healing of all people with a special emphasis on Native American people,
- to provide physical and financial assistance for Native Americans who are in dire need, with a special emphasis for elders and youth on reservations or Indian Communities,
- to protect Native American culture(s) against those who misrepresent and exploit them, and
- to work toward the healing of our natural world.

The 4 Directions Healing Foundation strives to be a living, visible example of one of the most core Native American traditions, which is working for the good of the people. By example, we hope to show people the giving spirit of Native Americans, and inspire others to give in their respective communities.

Spirituality is inherent in almost every aspect of Native American living, including in ritual, ceremony, as well as in what might be considered by others as the mundane and routine aspects of life. But because our connection to the Creator is so important to us, we also believe that it is imperative that we, as an organization, conduct ourselves in pure-hearted and prayerful ways. Within the 4 Directions Healing Foundation, we seek to unify Native American people from all tribes, working for the good of Native Americans across the nation.

Our board of directors include 12 persons, most of which are of Native American heritage, some of which are recognized tribal members, and all of whom have made a commitment to these ideals.

We are interested and available to speak at schools, clubs, churches, and civic organizations to share and teach both about history as well as about present-day Native American people and their ways.

Please talk to one of our presenters today, or contact us through our website if you are interested in having someone speak/present at your organization.

Interested in becoming a Member?

You may become a general member of the 4 Directions Healing Foundation by making a financial donation to our organization. Your donation is 100% tax deductible.

In return you will receive a monthly newsletter telling you about our efforts and up-coming events, as well as the satisfaction of knowing that you belong to a group that is actively working for the good of Native Americans through outreach and education both on and off reservations.

Get more information at www.4directionshealingfoundation.com

Notes on Purslane, Potatoes & Corn

Purslane grows wild in many backyards and is considered a weed by many (if not most) Midwestern gardeners. It frequently grows between the tiles of backyard patios or as unwanted groundcover under shrubs and in flower beds. It is self-seeding, grows best in sun, but will also do well in shade as well as in drier, drought conditions. This makes it hard to eradicate from well maintained gardens, but also a wonderful crop to forage. Some Mexican grocery stores sell fresh purslane in their produce section.

Potatoes: One traditional way of baking potatoes is to dig a shallow hole, line it with rocks, put the potatoes in the hole, and build a small fire on top of the potatoes. In about an hour, after the fire dies down and the embers have cooled, remove the coal, embers, and ashes and remove the potatoes. They will be black with inedible skins, but the insides will be tender and retain a smoky flavor.

Corn: A similar method may be used for steaming corn. Take fresh corn, pull down, but do not completely remove, the husks to expose the silk. Detach and discard the silk, then pull the husks over the ears of corn again. Soak the corn in water and place it on top of the rocks lining the hole. Pour water over the corn, lay fresh corn husks on top of the ears of corn to cover them completely, then cover with sand and build a fire on top of it all. After the “bonfire,” around which you play games, sing songs, and tell stories, dig out the corn, break open the husks and feast on it seasoning with salt and chile.

TOMATO, CUCUMBER, PURSLANE SALAD

2 medium cucumbers, chopped & seeded (may also be peeled)
4 medium tomatoes, chopped & seeded
1 cup purslane, stemmed & chopped
1 serrano pepper, seeded & minced
1 large lemon, or 2 small limes
Salt to taste

Place all ingredients in a bowl. Mix and refrigerate for about 1 hour. Serve cold. Serves 6-8



PURSLANE POTATO SALAD

6 medium potatoes, baked or boiled, & diced
2 cups purslane, stemmed and chopped
4 green onions, sliced
1 celery stalk, sliced
1 cup mayonnaise

Mix together all ingredients. Serve chilled.

Serves 6-8

RECIPES

Cherokee Potato Soup

5 cups water
5 medium Russet potatoes
½ cup-1 cup of diced onions (any kind)
Salt to taste

Peel potatoes, cut them up, throw them in water over medium heat. Cut onions up and put them into water with the potatoes. Boil until potatoes and onion are tender. Mash them all up together. Add salt to taste.

Notes from Sharon: Cherokee Potato Soup consists mainly of potatoes, onions and water. The potatoes and onions were peeled, cut up and cooked in water until tender. Then the potatoes and onions were mashed in the water, making a thick soup. Salt can be added for flavor and sometimes I add a little milk and butter. Potatoes used by the Eastern Woodland Cherokee were not the Irish potato we use now, but was something called the Spanish potato and the onions were wild onions.

The main staple of the Cherokee diet is corn (*selu*) and is used in many dishes. They also used many wild plants, berries and nuts to supplement their diet along with beans and squash. For meat, they hunted deer (*amv*), rabbit (*jestu*), bear (*yona*) and sometimes buffalo (*ya na si*).

FRIED RICE

This is nothing like the Asian Fried Rice we enjoy at Chinese restaurants. The rice kernels are fried before, not after, it is steamed, lending the rice a fluffy texture and enabling it to more completely absorb the flavors.

- 2 cups long grained white rice
- 3 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup green chiles, diced (may be canned)
- 4 cups vegetable or chicken stock
- 1/4 cup fresh cilantro
- 1/2 tsp oregano
- 4 tsp salt (if stock is unsalted)

Heat vegetable oil in a 2 quart sauce pan over medium heat and toss rice in. Stir frequently to toast rice evenly. All rice should be lightly browned before going to next step. Stir in chopped green chiles followed immediately by the vegetable/chicken stock. Finely chop the fresh cilantro and add it in along with the oregano and salt (optional). Giving one final stir, bring the rice to boil, cover and reduce heat to low. Cook for 15-20 minutes until all liquid is absorbed. Serves 6-8.

CANYON RANCH BROWN TEPARY BEAN DIP

Courtesy of Canyon Ranch (from www.tocaonline.org)

- 4 cups dried brown tepary beans
- 3 quarts water
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp black peppercorns
- 1 tablespoon whole cumin seeds
- 1 tablespoon whole coriander seeds
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 tsp salt
- 1 fresh lime, juiced

In a stockpot cook beans with 3 quarts of water and 1 teaspoon of salt for 2-3 hours until tender. Preheat oven to 400° F. Roast black peppercorns, cumin and coriander seeds on a small baking sheet for 5 minutes. Grind toasted seeds in a spice grinder or clean coffee grinder. Drain beans and reserve cooking water. Combine cooked beans, 2 cups of reserved water, olive oil, 2 teaspoons of salt and fresh lime juice. Puree until smooth. Makes 10 cups.

NOTES ABOUT FRYBREAD

Notes from Sharon: I have some misgivings about sharing and demonstrating frybread. It is not a traditional Cherokee dish. Instead we made cornbread. It is a cornbread dough that was often rolled, floured and placed in the ashes of the fire to cook, or it could be cooked in a skillet. A little different than the cornbread we are used to today. But then I thought I would go ahead with the frybread, because I love it, and because it is made today by Cherokee.

The frybread mix I use most often comes from the Wooden Knife Frybread Company, 601 SD Highway 44, Interior, SD 57750. Phone: 1-605-433-5463.

They can also be accessed at www.woodenknife.com.



Notes from Danira: There are so many different recipes for frybread and most of them using the same basic ingredients. Among Southwestern Indians frybread as we know it today wasn't a part of our culture until the government subsidies of white flour, shortening and baking powder were made available to the poor in the cities and on the reservations. Sharon's frybread is soft and fluffy. My frybread is hard and puffy. Neither one is particularly healthy, but they both taste, oh, so good. I recommend you use frybread sparingly as it is very high in calories and has almost no nutritionally redeeming qualities.

TEPARY BEANS

2 cups tepary beans, soaked overnight
6 cups water
1 medium onion, chopped
2 medium carrots, diced
1 cup celery, diced
1 cup green pepper, diced
½ cup green chiles, diced (may be canned)
1 clove garlic, diced
2 tbs vegetable oil
3 cups tomatoes w/juice (may be canned)
½ tsp oregano
1 tsp salt

Drain the soaked beans and put them in a large pot with the 6 cups of water. Bring it to a boil and let cook at medium heat for about 1 hour. When the beans are tender, in a separate pan, sauté the onion, carrots, celery, peppers, green chiles, and garlic in the vegetable oil until they are tender. Add the tomatoes, oregano, and salt to the mix. Let simmer for 8-10 minutes. Add to the beans. Cook for 1 more hour. Serves 6-8.

HOMEMADE FRYBREAD

1 cup of bleached flour
1 tsp powdered milk
1 tsp baking powder
1/2 cup of water
Vegetable oil for cooking
extra flour for your hands

Mix flour, milk, baking powder and water all at once in a small bowl. Mix with fork into a sticky ball. Flour hands very well. Mix the dough with your hands to form a ball. Do NOT knead the dough, it will make it tough.

Cut the ball of dough into 4 equal pieces. With your hands and fingers, press each piece into a circle about 6" in diameter. Don't worry about it being perfectly circular, it won't taste any different.

Pour oil at least 1-inch deep into a deep heavy pot or skillet, heat it to about 350 degrees. Take the formed dough and gently place it into the oil, being careful not to splatter the hot oil. Fry until golden brown, about 2-3 minutes on each side. Place the cooked fry bread on a paper towel to absorb excess oil.

Fry bread is delicious whether eaten plain, as the natives did, or topped with a variety of toppings. It is also great to make Indian tacos with a topping of taco meat, tomatoes, lettuce, taco sauce and I have to add sour cream. My husband's favorite meal.

Fry bread can be kept warm in a 200 degree F. oven for up to 1 hour. They also refrigerate well and can be reheated on a 350 degree F. oven for 10-15 minutes before serving.

Makes 4 pieces

SOUTHWEST INDIAN FRYBREAD

4 cups flour
2 tsp. salt
2 tsp baking powder
4 Tbsp shortening
2 cups ice-cold water (approx.)
Vegetable oil for cooking
extra flour for your hands and surface

Sift all dry ingredients together. Cut in shortening. Add water a little at a time while combining ingredients. Depending on heat and humidity you may need a little more water or a little less. Roll dough out onto a floured surface and knead it gently until all dry and wet ingredients are well combined and a fairly soft dough has formed. Cover and let dough rest for 30 minutes to 1 hour.

Lightly flour a clean surface and roll out the dough into a rectangle about 15" x 10" x 1/4" thick. With a sharp knife cut the dough into 4" x 3" rectangles. Stack the rectangles on top of each other between sheets of parchment paper and let rest for 15-30 minutes.

Meantime, heat up oil in a deep skillet or fryer to 375 degrees F. Gently drop the rolled out rectangles into the hot oil one at a time. The dough will puff up and float as it cooks. Roll them over in the hot oil so that they cook on each side. Gently remove when lightly golden (about 1 minute on each side). Place the frybread on a papertowle covered plate to absorbe excess oil.

Cut the frybread open on 3 sides and fill with sweet or savory filling of your choice.

Serves 6-8