

Letter to the editor: Thank you to Indigenous People's Day supporters

Written by Gallupsun Staff
Friday, 08 November 2019 09:31

Editor,

A note of thanks to everyone who came out to support Indigenous People's Day on October 14, 2019.

Although the Day is not yet a Federal Holiday, there are efforts nation-wide to make this change happen; 11 states, including New Mexico, have replaced the long held holiday honoring a man that was actually lost at sea and his crew was on the verge of mutiny. Land was sighted just prior to his crew plotting to toss him overboard.

When the Indigenous people rescued the lost seafarers and welcomed them, they were found to be peaceful and friendly, according to the journals that were preserved. Another fact that is kept from the educational systems of the world is that the people were highly advanced and "civilized" already.

The Declaration of Independence has a clue about how the "civilized" colonists viewed the Indigenous peoples; they are described as "merciless Indian savages whose known rule of warfare, is undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions."

In fact, the very origins of the "United States of America" are owed to a theft from the League of the Iroquois when the Kaianerekowa or "Great Law of Peace" was appropriated by Benjamin Franklin who saw it as an important model that would allow the colonies to speak with one voice rather than with the thirteen Articles of Confederation each administration was using at the time.

The formation of the new American government featured many of the governing political structures that formed The Iroquois League. What we cherish as Freedom of Speech came from the assemblies of the Long House; Equal Representation was derived from the Grand Council of the League formed by the delegates called "sachems"; the sovereignty of separate nations gave impetus to the writers who produced the United States Constitution that became the solution for the federal system which allowed each "state" to retain power over internal affairs while the national government regulated the affairs of all.

Letter to the editor: Thank you to Indigenous People's Day supporters

Written by Gallupsun Staff
Friday, 08 November 2019 09:31

For this cause Indigenous People's Day has been the Modus Operandi since July 1990, when representatives from 120 Indian nations from every part of the Americas met in Quito, Ecuador in the First Continental Conference (Encuentro) to recognize our resilience against the continued colonization of our original homelands. It is also marked every year here in Gallup, N.M.

Today's sign language was developed as a form to communicate between Indigenous tribes and later between tribes and European colonizers. While over 24,000 "Native Americans" served during World War II, it was the Navajo Code Talkers that brought about victory for the U.S. and ended the war.

A sincere thank you to Gallup Mayor Jackie McKinney and the City Council who passed Resolution/Proclamation R2016-40 on September 27, 2016, declaring the Second Monday of October as "Indigenous Peoples Day" into perpetuity. Mayor McKinney came out to express his support along with Navajo Nation Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie, who also joined us, a historical first for the City and Navajo Nation to come together for this Special Day.

My gratitude to everyone and the long-time supporters of Indigenous People's Day: "Thank you!"

Mervyn Tilden
Gallup, New Mexico