

BRIDGING THE

GAP

Through Knowledge, Education, Understanding & Insight

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The SEP Group provides opportunities for positive exchange among diverse groups through community outreach, education and cultural diversity awareness.

HAVING DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

By LTC Byron L. Diamond

Diversity is a term used most often to describe different types of race, religion and nationalities, but in today's business world, it can be used to describe the different individual behaviors of employees. Diversity is about characteristics and demographics that differ from person to person and how those characteristics affect human behavior. To understand how diversity affects the workplace I'm going to look at four types of diversity: differences in skill and abilities, values and attitudes, occupations and age.



individual's values and attitude differences vary as well. Values reflect a person's sense of right and wrong or what ought to be. They influence the way we react to others and how others react to us. For example, you may value the belief that everyone has the right to be treated with respect and paid equally no matter what his or her gender or age. Let's say you go to work for a company that pays men who are older a higher salary

than a person who is younger and female, even though they have equal qualifications. If you have the attitude that the company is an unfair place to work, you will most likely quit.

Differences in Skills and Abilities

"Aptitudes are potential abilities, whereas abilities are the knowledge and skills that an individual currently possesses." (Schermerhorn 2003) Professionals such as doctors, lawyers and truck drivers all require a specific level of skill and knowledge to be able to do their jobs. None of these professionals could perform their jobs if they had skill but no knowledge or knowledge but no skill.

There are tests designed to evaluate specific skills and abilities. Professional truck drivers would be given a driving test to demonstrate their knowledge on how to operate specific equipment on a truck and trailer. Some tests are designed to measure general skills and abilities.

Value and Attitude Differences

Just as skills and abilities are varied, each

Occupation

Another type of diversity that impacts behavior is an individual's occupation. For example, an individual in a professional occupation is more likely to make independent decisions and is more likely to reject being managed too strongly. The case of a medical doctor is one example. A medical doctor considers themselves an expert in a specific medical field and is likely to consider that no one else has the same level of expertise. Based on this, the individual is likely to make their own decisions and to act independently. The same also applies to other professional occupations such as lawyers and scientists. On the other hand, a person just entering the workforce in an entry level position would not be an expert and would require the help and

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CHOICES OF THE JOURNEY

By Paul Ha Le

Paul Le spoke at the 2008 Asian-American Heritage Celebration event. This article is the second of three telling his family's story from March 1975 through their orientation into life in Omaha, Nebraska. The first part in the series appeared in Issue 12.

After my father made it safely to Saigon, he and his brothers and sisters spent about a week in Saigon, further planning the escape. Our plan was set. The next step would be to travel to the shores of Vung Tau (about 120 kilometers south of Saigon) and escape by a fishing boat (not much larger than 4' x 20') that my father and uncle had purchased a few days earlier.

For an entire week on the shores of Vung Tau, my family (which included my parents, my father's parents, and about seven of my father's brothers and sisters) would spend the night on that fishing boat, just in case we needed to escape during a night invasion. During the day, we would go to a nearby hotel and shower, rest, and be prepared for anything that might happen. After seven days of doing this, it finally happened.

On the morning of April 30, 1975, our entire family was on its way to shore to go back to the hotel, when the first missiles struck amid chaotic screams, with thousands of people scrambling for safety. Thankfully, we were all still on our boat, so we could start taking off for the open sea. There were thousands of boats trying to escape; a huge swarm of floating wooden targets, all in danger of being annihilated by these missiles. A boat, similar in size to ours, with a family, was docked right next to ours. We were already moving out to sea, and no less than thirty yards away, when a missile struck the boat that was next to us and split it in half. The back half of the boat immediately sank, and at the front of the boat was the mother, screaming for help, with a few of the surviving children, not much older than four years old crying, clinging to her. Those lives were about to sink along with the rest of the massive destruction caused from the Communist



Paul and his Dad in Vung Tau

attack. But there was nothing we or anyone else could or would do. It was everyone for themselves. That was one of the last images my family saw as we left our country forever.

So there we were, drifting out to sea, with no real plans other than a glimmer of hope that some larger ship would take us to a safer place. I was only two months old, and was very sick (which we found out later was Tuberculosis). Through all of this chaos, our only true goal was survival. There are so many stories of refugees that tried to escape on boats, but were either shot by Communists, captured, murdered and raped by pirates, or died from illnesses. So it was common to see dead bodies of adults, children and infants floating by. Just about anyone who didn't live was thrown overboard to make room in the already packed and over-weighted boats.

The odds were against us, but I believe my dad's angel, who saved him on his journey to join us, was now with us; for it was the same evening that we escaped the bombing shores of Vung Tau, that we were spotted by a large Vietnamese commercial boat. We begged to get on board, because we knew as we got deeper into the ocean, there was no way our boat would last. The boat was already full of

refugees. Since the captain of the ship knew my grandfather, we were able to climb on board. My grandfather was a very caring and giving man. He served as a chief importer/exporter and was honored and respected by not only those in the industry, but by many in the entire community. On this day, his gratitude was returned. And our first sign of hope, as a family, was realized.

While climbing on board, the vessel had to lower a rope ladder, and one by one, my grandparents, uncles and aunts (on my father's side), parents and siblings with the help of their crewmen, climbed up the ladder onto the deck. We were instructed to leave most of our belongings and only bring one item. My mom was forced to choose the one thing that at the time could not be replaced easily, my formula. So my family left all of our clothes, jewelry, and other items that fit into the already few bags that we had brought with us, on the boat. As soon as we took our last foot off of our boat, pirates jumped on our abandoned boat, and ransacked through everything. Other than the clothes on our back (and my formula), that was the last we would see of our belongings.

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Bridging the Gap welcomes your submissions of article ideas and written articles.

To have your upcoming event published in Bridging the Gap, please notify us by February 2, 2009 for the April-May 2009 issue.

All submissions, due February 11, 2009 for the above issue, will be considered for publication. We reserve the right to edit submitted material.

Please send your submission to Mary Schmidt-Rodriguez at m.schmidtrodriquez@us.army.mil

ST. PATRICK'S DAY CELEBRATION ORIGINS

By Jack Murphy



When most people talk about St. Patrick's Day, it normally consists of topics such as corned beef and cabbage, the massive consumption of green colored beer and other alcoholic

beverages, a nervous drive home and/or a close encounter with a porcelain toilet seat cover, followed by an agonizing work day that never seems to end.

Over the years, my personal St. Patrick's Day traditions have been spent donning the green with family members, while enjoying some of the typical Irish traditions such as corned beef, cabbage, Irish music, story telling and a pint or two of Guinness Stout... Well... Because I am an honest man, I must admit that on some occasions when the craic (Gaelic for good times/enjoyment) was really good, it may have been three pints of Guinness.

Sadly, over the past couple of years, this wonderful family tradition has somewhat dissolved. My father passed away from a battle with cancer in July of 2006 and since his passing, my Uncle has not been able to carry on with hosting this tradition.

Although I believe the absence of the Murphy family St. Patrick's Day gathering will be short-lived, I must admit that I miss it greatly. My family's Irish heritage has been instilled in each generation. We believe that it is important to know our ancestry, as it helps us to learn about those who came before us and appreciate the struggles that they faced and the successes they achieved. Knowing and learning from our heritage also helps us better identify with our personal role in society, develop a stronger appreciation for the heritage of others, and appreciate the freedom that we have to embrace

diversity in America.

My family is no different than most who are of Irish descent. We love to laugh and tell entertaining stories. Many of us have developed quite a knack for doing so. According to folklore, those who kiss the Blarney Stone in Cork, Ireland's Blarney Castle, are endowed with the "gift of gab," or "the gift of eloquence." Irish legend tells us that the Blarney Castle was actually saved from total destruction due to the gift of gab of its defenders. I do not know for a fact if there were any actual members of the Murphy clan defending the Blarney Castle; however, it is quite possible that the Blarney's received their training in this art from the Murphy's.

When I was a young child, Grandpa Murphy told me stories of leprechauns, fairies, pots of gold and the luck of the four-leaf clover. One time he told me to go out in the backyard and try to find a highly coveted lucky four-leaf clover. I crawled around on my hands and knees for several hours until my palms and knees were grass stained searching for this magical weed, without any success. In hind sight, it was merely a way to keep me from being underfoot while the adults visited. On a positive note, today I use Scott Turf Builder/Weed and Feed to control weeds from developing in my lawn.

In all seriousness, up until recent decades, Ireland has been a war-torn country that fought for its own identity and independence for centuries. Ireland suffered much oppression, despair and economic hardship. Ireland's immense struggles are evident in many of the great poems and literature that makes Ireland famous. Much of Ireland's history was passed along through the art of storytelling and personal accounts that were told from generation to generation. Although many of these stories and

accounts are considered to be folklore and speculation, the history and culture of Ireland remains both enchanting and inspirational to all.

The history of Saint Patrick (the patron saint of Ireland) is no exception. Today St. Patrick is one of Christianity's (primarily within the Catholic Church) most recognized figures. Many aspects of his life remain a mystery; however, there are several historical facts that support traditional beliefs.

Historians agree that St. Patrick was born in either Scotland or Wales around the end of the fourth century. His birth name was Maewyn Succat, the son of Roman

parents who lived in Britain. His name was later changed to Patricius (Patrick).

Some beliefs claim that Patrick's father was a deacon in the Christian Church of Britain, thus giving Patrick a foundation of the Christian faith while growing up. In contrast, other beliefs state that Patrick considered himself to be a pagan until he was approximately sixteen years of age. Regardless of which of these beliefs is true, it is known that when Patrick was a teenager, he was kidnapped by Irish marauders that invaded his homeland. The marauders then transported Patrick to Ireland and sold him into slavery.

Patrick remained a slave in Ireland for approximately six years. During this time period, he served as a shepherd for his master's herd in the desolate and rugged Western region of Ireland that today is called County Mayo (I am quite familiar with this region, as this is also where my family's ancestry is from).

The years that Patrick remained in slavery were bleak and extremely difficult. He turned to a deep faith in God with great fervor and had many spiritual visions and dreams. After an estimated six year period, God gave him an escape



Blarney Castle

WOMEN TAKING THE LEAD TO SAVE OUR PLANET

By Pam Makovicka

In 2009, the National Women's History Project will honor women who have taken the lead in the environmental or green movement. They plan to feature Rachel Carson, the founder of the contemporary environmental movement, as a model.

Rachel Carson, born May 27, 1907, was a writer, scientist and ecologist. She grew up under simple circumstances in the rural town of Springdale, Pennsylvania. Her mother taught her a life-long love of nature and the living world. Rachel expressed this love first as a writer and later as a student of marine biology. She graduated from Pennsylvania College for Women and received her Masters Degree in zoology from Johns Hopkins University in 1932.

She was hired by the United States Bureau of Fisheries to write radio scripts during the depression. She then began



a fifteen-year career in the Federal service as a scientist and editor and progressed to Editor-in-Chief of all publications for the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. In 1952 she resigned from government service and devoted herself to writing.



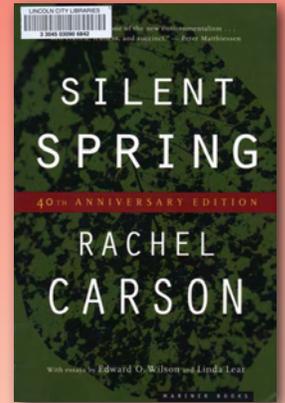
She wrote several articles designed to teach people about the wonder and beauty of the living world, including *Help Your Child to Wonder* and *Our Ever-Changing Shore*. She was disturbed by the use of synthetic

chemical pesticides after World War II, and changed her focus in order to warn the public about the long term effects of misusing pesticides. In her book, *Silent*

Springs, she challenged the practices of agricultural scientists and the government, and called for change in the way humankind viewed the natural world. She testified

before congress in 1963 calling for new policies to protect human health and the environment. Rachel Carson died in 1964 after a long battle against breast cancer. Her witness for the beauty and integrity of life continues to inspire new generations to protect the living world and its creatures.

I encourage you to read some of her books. They are very interesting and help us focus on why the green movement is so important. 



St. Patrick's Continued from Page 3
plan through a dream. Some beliefs indicate that Patrick escaped back to his homeland and was reunited with his family after enduring much suffering and near starvation on his exodus. Other beliefs claim that his escape led him to Gaul (which is now located in the country of France) where he lived in a monastery and became a monk.



St. Patrick's Grave

Both theories believe that soon afterward, Patrick began to have dreams of the Irish people beseeching him to return once more to Ireland and walk among them. It is believed that Patrick returned to Ireland during the year 433 and became a missionary in the Northern and Western regions of the island.

Ireland was primarily populated by pagans during this period. Patrick is credited for converting many of Ireland's pagan tribes to Christianity. Legend has

it that Patrick used the shamrock as a symbol to teach the pagans about the "Holy Trinity," which consists of God the Father, Jesus Christ His Son and the Holy Spirit. It is believed that Patrick performed many miracles

while serving as a missionary in Ireland, and is even believed to have raised the dead. He is also recognized for establishing many churches and schools throughout certain regions of Ireland.

Today Patrick is esteemed with being Ireland's most famous Saint. March 17th is presumed to be the anniversary of St. Patrick's death in the fifth century, as well as his religious feast day. For thousands of years this day has been observed as a religious holy day. It is celebrated

in Ireland and throughout the world in honor of St. Patrick's dedication to Christianity and his boldness in spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I am unclear on exactly how green beer, leprechauns and pinching others not wearing green fits in with the true meaning of this holiday. It quite possibly may be due to the fact that the egg-laying rabbit and fat man with flying reindeer ideas were already taken. Whatever the reason may be, this St. Patrick's Day please remember:

***Saint Patrick was a gentleman,
Who through strategy and stealth,
Drove all the snakes from Ireland,
Here's a toasting to his health.
But not too many toasting
Lest you lose yourself and then
Forget the good Saint Patrick
And see all those snakes again.
St. Patrick's Day Toast - Anonymous***



AN EXTRAORDINARY PERSON: SGT ADRIAN VELEZ

By Lisa Munger of *The Grand Island Independent*

This article is reprinted with permission of The Grand Island Independent. Originally posted November 16, 2008.

Four years ago, Adrian Velez approached a group of about fifteen young men playing soccer. He was wearing his National Guard uniform, as he always does.

The field cleared within minutes.

"They thought I was the police," SGT Velez said.

The men weren't doing anything wrong, he said. It was the uniform.

"They were all Hispanic," he said. "I stopped some of them and asked what was going on, why they were leaving. They said they were afraid."

Velez said that, for some immigrants -- documented or undocumented, first-generation or not -- previous experience with uniformed, corrupt police hastens frightful memories from their countries of origin.

Velez serves as one of two Hispanic liaisons for the Army National Guard in Nebraska. His territory includes everywhere except Omaha and Lincoln. He works with Hispanics at the grassroots level, moving through communities to dispel myths about the Guard. He also translates for Spanish speakers with family members considering service in the Guard.

"It should be a family decision," he said.

Velez's own family propelled him to Nebraska sixteen years ago. Born and raised in New York City, he said his Puerto Rican ancestry was an important part of his upbringing and strongly shapes his identity. He's been with the Guard for four years.

Before that, he worked in manufacturing jobs as a mechanic. It was that work, he said, and the interaction with Hispanic co-workers, that made him realize how inaccurately the Guard is perceived in some circles.

"There is a misconception of the



National Guard," Velez said. "People see the uniform, and (as guardsmen) we're misperceived as part of a legal system putting people in jeopardy. People also think we just do the war thing."

He uses those moments to tell people about the Guard's domestic missions, such as helping with disaster relief, he said.

Velez attends school-related events, swings into Hispanic community cultural centers and attends meetings. He talks to people about the Guard and answers questions wherever he can.

Odalys Perez, director of Grand Island's Multicultural Coalition, said Hispanic leaders in the community count Velez among their ranks.

Perez said Velez's role in presenting a positive image of a person in uniform has an impact.

"I'm originally from Cuba," Perez said. "Anything related to the army is really bad there. We have really, really bad memories. When I came to the U.S., I wasn't sure about the role of the police. Let's face it; all of us immigrants have faced some discrimination from people in

uniform. Adrian helps bridge those gaps."

She said Velez's work fits well with her coalition's mission of serving new immigrants to the community and increasing cross-cultural understanding.

It's not just Nebraskans who have noted Velez's excellence.

Last year, co-worker LaVonne Rosenthal nominated him for a national award given to one guardsman in the United States for promoting diversity within the service. He won.

"I had difficulty in writing the nomination," said Rosenthal, State Equal Employment Manager for the Nebraska Guard. "He'd been involved in so many activities through the communities, there was so much to write about."

Velez cited the award as one of his proudest accomplishments.

"It means I'm hitting the job on the nose," he said.

Velez is hitting it on the nose in life outside the Guard, too, said Wendy Meyer-Jerke, public information officer for the city of Grand Island.

Meyer-Jerke works with Velez on the board of the Community Youth Council, a group made up of high school students who take on community service activities and participate in city politics.

"He's very accepting of students and very encouraging, no matter what their situation is," she said. "The kids are drawn to him."

There is a quality people recognize in Velez that's hard to quantify, Rosenthal said.

He works with Hispanics at the grassroots level, moving through communities to dispel myths about the Guard.



WEBSITE REVIEW: HOLIDAYS AROUND THE WORLD K-12

By Denise Anderson

Have you ever noticed how many holidays there are from October to January? I started to think, what other holidays are there that do not fall into that time frame.

I found a great site that lists many holidays celebrated in the United States and around the world: <http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/holidays.htm>. You can learn all about the history of and how the different holidays are celebrated. You will also find craft projects you can do with



your children, associated with various holidays.

You can read about the history of Chinese New Year and discover which Chinese year you were born in. Are you a rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, rooster, dog or a boar? The year 2008 was the Year of the Rat and 2009 is the Year of the Ox. The Chinese New Year is celebrated in January or February.

In the Cinco de Mayo holiday section, you can read about its history in both

English and Spanish, enhance lesson plans, if you're a teacher, and discover different games and activities you can do to help you and your children learn about this celebration.



You can also learn about Islamic holidays, Jewish holidays, Kwanzaa, St. Patrick's Day and many other holidays celebrated around the world. This site also has songs and poems from all different nations. This site is a great way for your family to learn about other cultures and religions. You might even find a holiday that relates to your family and bring back traditions you can incorporate into your next celebration. 

AFRICAN-AMERICAN TRIVIA

Compiled By Peggy Brown

- The first Black woman elected to congress was...
 - Patricia Harris
 - Barbara Jordan
 - Shirley Chisholm
 - Sadie Alexander
- Legislation to restrict the movement and civil rights of emancipated slaves was enacted in 1865 in Mississippi and was known as...
 - Black Rules
 - Negro Restrictions
 - Black Papers
 - Black Codes
- The Apollo Theater in Harlem, New York, held its first live show on January 26, 1934. What type of act was showcased?
 - Jazz
 - Off-Broadway Musical
 - Afro-Caribbean Dance
 - Opera
- The first Black mayor of a major American city was...
 - Tom Bradley (Los Angeles)
 - Maynard Jackson (Atlanta)
 - Carl Stokes (Cleveland)
 - Harold Washington (Chicago)
- Wilma Rudolph overcame scarlet fever and pneumonia, which left her crippled, yet she emerged to win the 1960 Olympic Gold Medal in which sport?
 - Ice Skating
 - Track
 - Tennis
 - Volleyball
- The first Black-owned television station in the United States began broadcasting in 1975 and was located in which city?
 - Los Angeles
 - Cincinnati
 - New York
 - Detroit
- What year was the first Martin Luther King, Jr. national holiday celebrated?
 - 1981
 - 1978
 - 1993
 - 1986
- What state was the first to abolish slavery?
 - New York
 - Pennsylvania
 - Florida
 - Kansas
- What event sparked the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)?
 - A race riot in Springfield, Massachusetts
 - The War of 1812
 - The Los Angeles riots
 - The Civil War
- Who was the first Black person to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize?
 - Dr. Ralph J. Bunche
 - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
 - Nelson Mandela
 - Dr. Benjamin Mays



PART 2: A SHORT HISTORY OF NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES IN NEBRASKA

By Peggy Brown

This is the second article in a two-part series on the history of Native American tribes in Nebraska.

The first part in the series appeared in Issue 12.

In the previous article, I wrote about the Lower Loup culture, the Pawnee, the Redbird culture, the Oneota, the Omaha and the Ponca tribes. This article will focus on the Oto and the Sioux tribes.

Like many nomadic groups that came before and after them, the Oto immigrated to the Central Plains from the east, just ahead of the Europeans. European historical records first mention the Oto and Missouri tribes in the late 1600's. Both the Missouri and Oto (as well as the Iowa) were part of the Siouan tribes that settled in the area. The Missouri were then in central Missouri and the Oto were in central Iowa. The Oto moved to the lower Platte River valley and established villages such as the Eagle Ridge and the Ashland sites by the early 1700's. The precise reason for this migration is not clear, but the European colonization in the east probably motivated the tribes to move further west. Though not native to this region, the Oto tribe gave our state its name; "Nebraska" is an Oto word that means "flat water."

To refresh your memory on the tribes that settled in Nebraska, the principal Siouan people in the first half of the 1700's were the Ponca and the Omaha in northeast Nebraska and the Oto in the lower Platte River valley of Nebraska. Despite the fact that they spoke a similar language as the Sioux tribes to the west, they were very different. The western Sioux tribes, like the Lakota and Teton Dakota, were very nomadic, moving place to place to hunt bison. The Oto, who were buffalo hunters and farmers, lived in permanent villages and always returned from their hunts to these villages. These villages were comprised of oven-shaped, earth-covered



Portrait of the Oto woman Hayne Hudjibini, or "Eagle of Delight." She was one of a group of Native American leaders who visited the White House in 1822. She contracted measles during her visit and died shortly after returning home. Source - White House Historical Association.

houses that were grouped together to create the village.

Once the Oto migrated to this area, they, like the Ponca and Omaha, were in contact with the Caddoan speaking tribes – like the Pawnee. Details regarding this interaction are unclear, and there are some references that there was conflict between tribes. It is unlikely though that there was ever an all out war. Both the Oto and Pawnee people formed a relatively peaceful alliance and began dealing with the Europeans who ventured onto the plains. This cooperation became beneficial to both tribes.

As the Europeans ventured into the plains, they thought it advantageous to form alliances with the indigenous tribes. The Spanish, French and English all wanted access to furs and hides. The Pawnee and Oto worked together so they could provide beaver and other pelts as well as bison robes in exchange for trade goods.

The Oto had closer access to French and English trade goods in this early contact phase. They may have presented themselves as the primary conduit for trading commodities to the Pawnee. The Oto were also a reliable source of catlinite for the Pawnee. Catlinite (also called pipestone or pipeclay, is a type of argillite - metamorphosed mudstone - and is usually brownish-red in color) was used by the Pawnee to make tobacco pipes. The Oto could trade the catlinite because they used to live in the Pipestone, Minnesota region, where it is plentiful.

If the Pawnee were receiving trade goods and catlinite from the Oto, what were the Pawnee offering in return? Since the Pawnee controlled a vast region abundant in bison they may have been offering the Oto bison products or direct access to the hunting ranges.

By the late 18th century, more than 1,000 Oto lived in villages along the Platte River, and the Missouri tribe was also quite large. However, contacts with White traders brought diseases to the tribes. With no immunity to fight diseases like small pox, whooping-cough, these and other new illnesses greatly reduced the size of the tribes. The Missouri, with maybe no more than 100 people left, joined the Oto for protection.

By the mid-1860's there were approximately 400 Oto-Missouria remaining and they settled on a reservation near the Big Blue River in Gage County, Nebraska. Eventually White settlers were able to acquire this land and in 1881 the Oto, with the Missouri, were removed to Indian Territory in what is today, Oklahoma.

Horses reached Nebraska in the late 1600s (about 1680), and the upper Missouri by the 1750s. Much of the trade was between tribes — Apache groups took horse herds to Kansas and all the way to the Dakotas, trading them for hides and other goods. In Nebraska, two different fundamental economies evolved. Tribes in eastern Nebraska (Pawnee,

Ponca, Omaha and Oto) utilized the horse for hunting buffalo, but did not abandon their pattern of living in earth lodge villages and farming. The western part of the state became dominated by bison-hunting nomads, which are today pictured as the stereotypical



Brule War Party

Native American Tribes Continued from Page 7

Plains Indian. The Sioux, Cheyenne and Arapaho, lived in skin teepees and roamed over most of western Nebraska. These tribes were relative newcomers to the Plains, having moved out of the Great Lakes region onto the Plains in the 1700s. Horses allowed them to expand their traditional nomadic lifestyle over the vast distances of the plains.

The Sioux, nomads of the plains, took great advantage of the horses that were brought to America by the Spanish. Horses allowed them greater mobility as they traveled. They were able to pull teepees as they followed the buffalo on their hunts.

The Sioux were broken down into three major sub-divisions: the Dakota (or Santee), the Nakota (or Yankton) and the Lakota (or Teton). The Dakota

tribes, who lived west of the Missouri River, were known as the Teton Dakotas. Two subgroups of the Teton – the Oglala and the Brule, were the main tribes to roam across what is now western Nebraska.

The Sioux were deeply religious. Teton religion was based on belief in an all-inclusive, supernatural power that dwelt in the sky, earth and the four directions. Young men were often sent on a vision quest across the plains until exposure to the weather, fasting or self-torture produced dream visions. In these dreams they acquired a song, or various taboos, or medicinal objects that would protect or treat them. Each year, supernatural forces were invoked to protect the tribe



Sioux

in a Sun Dance and related ceremonies during the annual encampments. The Sun Dance was probably the most spectacular and important religious ceremony of the Plains Indians. The rituals varied from tribe to tribe, but many of the ceremonies have features in common including fasting, dancing, singing, drumming and the experience of visions.

Roles of men and women were clearly defined. The men were the providers and defenders of the family; they were the hunters and the warriors. While it was a man's world, the women actually built and owned the teepees in which the tribe lived. The teepees were made of tanned buffalo skins supported on a framework of long poles. The women butchered the bison, dried the meat, prepared the meals, made clothes, gathered wood, water, roots and berries and cared for the children. When a man married a Sioux woman he was expected to move into her home.

By the mid-1800s, the Pawnee, Omaha, Oto-Missouria, Ponca, Lakota (Sioux), and Cheyenne were the main plains tribes living in Nebraska

Today the United States government recognizes several tribes in Nebraska. They include the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, the Omaha Tribe of Nebraska, the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska, the Sac and Fox Nation of Missouri in Kansas and Nebraska, the Santee Sioux Tribe of the Santee Reservation of Nebraska and the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska. Reservations in Nebraska currently include land of the Omaha, whose tribal council is located in Macy, Nebraska. The Ponca and Santee Sioux, both have tribal councils in Niobrara, Nebraska. The Winnebago are located in Winnebago, Nebraska.

The information in this and the previous article was taken from the following websites: <http://www.accessgenealogy.com/native/tribes/>, www.nativeamericans.com, <http://www.nebraskastudies.org/0200/frameset.html>, <http://www.native-languages.org/>, <http://www.nanations.com/otoe/>

CHILDREN'S BOOK REVIEW: THE NIGHT OF LAS POSADAS

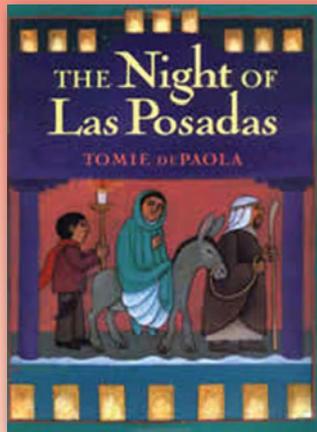
Written By Tomie DePaola; Putnam Juvenile; September 27, 1999

Book Review By Denise Anderson

The introduction of this book reads, "Las Posadas, an old Spanish custom which celebrates Mary and Joseph seeking shelter in Bethlehem on Christmas Eve, stems from the word 'posada' meaning 'inn.' It began in Spain and came to the New World, first to Mexico and then to the American Southwest."

Most people have heard the story of Mary and Joseph. This version takes place in Santa Fe, New Mexico, with the celebration of Las Posadas. Sister Angie is in charge and she is so excited because her niece and husband, Lupe and Roberto, will portray Maria and José (Mary and Joseph). She lines up the singers and two men to portray the Devil. It is the Devil's job to try and keep the young couple from finding a place to rest.

On the evening of the processional, snow begins to fall and Sister Angie



becomes ill. Lupe and Roberto's truck gets stuck in the snow also. A young couple arrives out of the blue, with the woman pregnant, and replaces Sister Angie's niece and husband. Singers follow the couple and boo at the Devil for not helping Mary and Joseph and they also walk with the couple to the courtyard of the Palace of Governors. The event takes place without a hitch until they all arrive at

the Palace. The couple vanishes, and Lupe and Roberto show up and take their place and sit by the empty manger. Later in the story, Sister Angie walks into the church and lights a candle at the statue of Maria and José. She notices that the cloaks of Maria and José are covered in fresh snow.

My family and I really enjoyed reading this book because of the beautiful illustrations and the timeless story. Miracles do happen, especially around the holidays. 🌍

THE KEVIN LOCKE NATIVE DANCE ENSEMBLE - THE SPIRIT OF MUSIC AND DANCE REVIEW

By WO1 Robrenna Redl

Kevin Locke's performance at the Lied Center was in a word extraordinary. This was not the first time I have had the opportunity to see the master storyteller and world-renowned hoop dancer. Locke performed in 1999 during Homestead Days in Beatrice, Nebraska. The performance at Homestead days was a solo performance, and was just as impressive as at the Lied Center. The performance at the Lied Center included an ensemble of musicians, dancers and storytellers who have tribal affiliations with the Lakota, Oneida, Anishinaabe, Ojibwe, Comanche, Choctaw and Chippewa Cree tribes.



Front Row: Amber Windy Boy and Thirza Defoe; Back Row: Edmund Nevaquaya, Doug Foote, Kevin Locke

The show began with Locke introducing himself and five young men and women currently attending schools in Lincoln and Omaha. As the young men played instruments, one of the young women performed a beautiful and athletic dance, known as the Jingle Dress Dance. There are many legends surrounding the origin of the Jingle Dress Dance. In the most popular account, a spiritual person dreamed of four women wearing jingle dresses standing before him. In the dream, they taught how the dress was made, the sorts of songs that were appropriate and the way the dance was performed. The beautiful athletic dance received rousing applause.

Locke then introduced his ensemble who included Doug Foote, a member of the Lakota Tribe; Thirza Defoe, of the Ojibwe and Oneida tribes; Edmond

Tate Nevaquaya, of the Comanche/ Choctaw tribe; and Amber Windy Boy, of the Chippewa-Cree tribe.

Locke spoke on how the instruments represent the different parts of nature: the drum is the thunder, the rattle is the rain, the flute is the wind and the voice is the lightning.

Locke engages audience to participate during the show. As he demonstrated the sign language Native Americans use to describe the rain, the wind and much more, he had the audience imitate his movements.

As he spoke about the language, he provided translations to words and in a playful manner he translated coffee as "Starbucks."

As an audience, we were asked to stand as a poignant tribute was made to veterans, including those who served their tribes and country, losing their lives in the process. One of the female performers held the American Flag as the beautiful flute sounds played TAPS.

In dark shades, Locke played expressive music



from the indigenous flute in a jazzy repertoire, as he paid homage to his ancestors, as pictures with deep-rooted meaning were streaming across a screen.

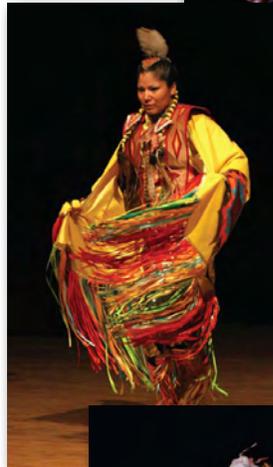
One of the dances performed was the Eagle Dance, which represents the eagle as a sacred and symbolic bird because of its ability to fly high. The

belief is that it has the power to move between heaven and earth. The Eagle Dance portrays the life cycle of the eagle from birth to death. Another dance is the Traditional Dance, which style allows for individual expression. A slow tempo allows the dancer to convey emotions in singular fashion.



Lastly, Locke performed his most

popular dance, the Hoop Dance. This dance is an incredible feat of rhythm, athleticism and coordination. As Locke explained, "The hoops represent Unity, while the four colors of the hoops (black, red, yellow and white) represent the four human races, four directions, four



seasons, four winds and more. As the Dance concluded, all 28 hoops are interlocked in a spherical union illustrating the interdependence we all share and cannot truly live without."

To end the program he had audience members,



Continued on Page 22

RESTAURANT REVIEW: LA MEXICANA

1637 P Street; Lincoln, Nebraska; 402-477-0785

By Ann Thompson Reicks

When you walk through the door of La Mexicana, you will think you have stepped across the border. The restaurant is located at the back of the Mexican grocery store. On the way to your table you will see a wide assortment of piñatas hanging from the ceiling, fresh produce including long canes of sugar transported from California, a meat counter filled with cuts of meat you are not likely to find at other Lincoln area grocery stores and delicious-looking bakery items from rolls to cakes.

When you reach the restaurant, you will be greeted by a friendly waiter or waitress who will escort you to your table. While you peruse the detailed menu, you will be served chips and salsa (two bowls – hot and mild) on the house. I would recommend a regular margarita on the rocks as you ponder your meal choice (half price on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday). The restaurant's extensive dishes include appetizers, salads, combination plates, burritos, enchiladas, ala carte items, as well as seafood, chicken, pork and beef specialties. Also included on the menu is a limited selection of American cuisine including a deluxe hamburger and cheeseburger and a "Little Amigos Menu" for children. For your convenience you can find a "Mexican Food Dictionary" in the menu, with the lunch menu listed on the back page.

Lincoln is lucky Abram Morales arrived here in 1993. Abram is originally from Guadalajara, Mexico and was living in Seattle when he attended a wedding in Omaha. He and a friend decided to explore the local area and headed west to Lincoln. They were craving an authentic Mexican dinner and found an establishment in Lincoln claiming to have just such fare. Abram and his friend thought the food was awful. It was then Abram decided he would open a real



authentic Mexican restaurant in Lincoln. He had been working in the restaurant industry with his cousin in Seattle, so he knew he had the experience and knowledge to venture out on his own.

The Morales Family of Restaurants began when

Abram opened Mazatlan in 1994, followed by El Toro in 1995, La Mexicana in 1997 and Las Margaritas in 2006. Mazatlan II is scheduled to open in May 2009 with smaller portions and lower prices. You can find Abram at any of the restaurants on any given night but if you don't see him, he is most likely in the kitchen. Abram's favorite aspect of the restaurant industry is cooking up new recipes and tweaking current dishes to add an extra flare.

The menus at each of his restaurants are his own creations and are very similar from eatery to eatery but there are also differences. For example, vegetable fajitas are not available at La Mexicana but can be found at Mazatlan and Las Margaritas.

Margaritas are served at all of the establishments, and are the best in town.

Now back to La Mexicana (where my husband and I can be found at least once a week). The service and food is excellent and very authentic. If you don't like "real" Mexican food and Taco Bell is your idea of venturing south of the border, your taste buds may not appreciate La Mexicana. The servings are generous and we usually go home with a box full of yummy leftovers. There are specials each night which I would encourage you to try. Unfortunately we seem to be stuck in a rut and even the wait staff knows what we want before we even sit down – deluxe tostada with chicken and chicken ranchera (#45). I have no idea what goes in to the preparation of chicken ranchera but I do know if we don't eat it once a week we go into withdrawal. Although

we haven't ventured too far from our favorites, we have never been disappointed. The fajitas are outstanding and you certainly cannot go wrong with the arroz con pollo (#46).



Arroz con Pollo

Chips, Salsa and Guacamole



Chicken Fajitas

Enchilada and Taco

We are very thankful Abram Morales found Lincoln and took a chance that the people in this Midwest city would appreciate authentic Mexican food. With his fifth restaurant on the way, odds are there is one of Abram's eateries near you. I would encourage

you to find the restaurant nearest you the next time you have a south of the border craving. Who knows, you may even run into Abram if he isn't at one of his other restaurants, in the kitchen or helping his wife with their seven children.



BECOMING CITIZENS OF THE WORLD – ONE COUNTRY AT A TIME! CUSTOMS IN SOUTH KOREA

By COL (P) Roma Amundson

The fourth country in our series on unique customs and courtesies of different countries is South Korea. Again we begin with Socrates' statement – "I am not an Athenian or a Greek, but a citizen of the world." Just a word of advice to our readers – our National Guard experience in South Korea is not at all "M*A*S*H-like" in nature; the present day experiences of our National Guard members are quite different. They have made an impact in South Korea through their contributions to active duty military in areas of public affairs, medical support and reconnaissance activities. Every year we can expect a group of our Guard members to travel over there – as our Medical Detachment (MEDDET), 111th Public Affairs Detachment, and 41st Rear Area Operations Center (RAOC) have done – and to complete their assignments with professionalism.

Just to review history briefly, the North Korean forces invaded South Korea in 1950. A United Nations-backed coalition of sixteen member nations sent military assistance to South Korea. The resulting war lasted three years and ended in a stalemate. On July 27, 1953, an armistice agreement was signed, and a Military Armistice Commission with five members for each side was set up to supervise the implementation of the armistice. Since neither the United States nor South Korea ever signed the agreement (although they respect the terms as members of the United Nations), a state of war is formally still in effect.

While both economic and military



Korean elementary school children pose with broadcaster Sgt. Joy Kroemer of American Forces Network-Korea during a children's day tour at Yongsan. The garrison frequently welcomes Korean nationals on post as part of the Good Neighbor program.

ties bind the two countries together, the economic connections are becoming stronger and the military ones less important. South Koreans are beginning to believe that the U.S. military presence in their country should end soon. Nevertheless, until that time comes when U.S. forces are withdrawn permanently, it behooves us as Nebraska National Guard members to be aware of the cultural differences.

A very basic cultural characteristic that drives all business and interpersonal relationships, in South Korea, is that of the importance of family. As far back as Confucius, the family has been viewed as the basic unit of society. Because the family has a certain hierarchical basis, husband over wife, parents over children, father over son, elder brother over younger brother, that basis extends over into business relationships. Rank and age are very important in all interactions. Because all actions of the individual are believed to reflect upon the family, respect of parents and superiors is of utmost importance. Virtues of kindness, righteousness, propriety, intelligence and

faithfulness are also held in high esteem.

Business Practices

- Age and rank must be respected in South Korea, and it may be difficult to develop relationships with business counterparts older or younger than you, and who are higher on the corporate ladder than you.
- If you are with a business group, be sure to let the senior member of your group enter the conference room first, with the next-highest-ranking member next, etc.
- Punctuality is Rule #1. Be on time for your meeting.
- One-on-one business meetings with a company contact person are common; this contact person will present your proposal to the company, so make every effort to develop a strong relationship with this person.
- Because English is taught in the schools, you will probably be able to conduct your meetings in English. Written materials may also be in English.
- Business hours are 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, with 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday.
- Appointments are necessary for business meetings. Business dinners are common, and meetings can be held in coffee shops. Business breakfasts rarely occur.

Negotiating

- Keep in mind that respectful rapport between individuals is key to a successful business relationship. Personal relationships take precedence over business ones. Demonstrate a strong work ethic, and be open, direct and sincere in all dealings.
- At each meeting, take time to talk to your counterparts. In fact, the first meeting should be reserved for getting to know them rather than engaging



Veterans of the South Korean Army

Customs in South Korea Continued from Page 11

- immediately in business discussions.
- Be sure to like tea; it's usually served at the beginning of the meeting, and it's good manners to accept it as a sign of hospitality.
- Although younger executives are more westernized than their elders, don't forget that they still possess the traditional values. Don't step on any traditional feelings by thinking that they will appreciate your Western views simply because they speak English and are more open to your negotiating style. If, after some negotiating, your counterparts return to chit-chat, take it as a sign that they are finished with the business meeting for the day.
- Business occurs at a slower pace than in North America or Europe. Don't set deadlines, and you may expect to return to South Korea several times while negotiating the same deal.
- Before the meeting, find out the rank and position of the persons represented on the other team and try to match them. Remember that in South Korea, status and hierarchical rank is extremely important.
- Korean men have higher social status than Korean women, as a result, the women will open doors and allow men to pass through first (Western businesswomen, though, don't have to do this).
- Even now, it's rare that Korean women will be engaged in business negotiations. If a woman is included on your team, then make sure you mention this to your South Korean contact so they can mentally adjust to and accept this idea prior to your first meeting.
- Don't use triangular shapes in any of your promotional materials, as triangles have negative connotations in Korean culture.
- Bow at the beginning and end of a meeting. If the meeting has been

Remove your shoes when entering a South Korean home, restaurant, or temple building. Leave them with the toes pointing away from the building.

successful, a longer bow than the one given at the beginning of a meeting indicates that the meeting went well.

- It goes without saying to treat the elderly with respect. Acknowledge them first in the group.
 - Don't smoke or wear sunglasses when elderly people are close by.
 - Do not enter a home or office until you are invited, and do not seat yourself until you are asked to do so. You might even want to wait for the invitation to be extended a few times before you actually accept.
 - Because saving face is very important, you should never admit that you do not know the answer to a question.
 - Don't overly admire an object belonging to another person. He or she may feel obligated to give it to you.
 - Your business cards should have your information on one side in English and the other side in Korean. Offer your card with your right hand. Never place a Korean's card in your wallet if you intend to put your wallet in your back pocket. Never write on a business card.
- Business Entertaining***
- Evening is the time for the largest and most formal meal. Entertaining is often done in a restaurant, rarely at home. If you are invited to a home, consider it an honor.
 - Don't discuss business unless your host brings it up first.
 - Don't walk around the house looking over the rooms. Take cues from your host.
 - Remove your shoes when entering a South Korean home, restaurant, or temple building. Leave them with the toes pointing away from the building. When putting your shoes back on, face the building.
 - Call ahead when visiting a home, and send a thank-you note to your host



Korean and American Families share bibimbop, a mixture of rice and vegetables during Family-to-Family Friendship Day at Buyong elementary School, Gaeksari, South Korea.

after a meal.

- Plan to reciprocate by asking your host to a meal of equal value at a later date.
- You may be invited out to a bar after business hours where a lot of alcohol will be consumed. Plan to attend these events, as interaction on an informal basis will assist in cementing a business relationship, but as always, don't forget the cultural and traditional biases strong in Korean culture. In other words, remember you are in Korea and not in the United States.
- The inviter pays for the invitee, but it's also polite for the younger to pay for the elder.
- When sitting on the floor for a meal, men should cross their legs while sitting on the cushion. Women may sit with their legs to the side. Don't straighten your legs out under the table.
- Chopstick use will be appreciated by your host. When finished with the chopsticks, set your chopsticks on the table or on the chopstick rest.
- Pass food with your right hand, supported by your left.
- Drinking partners will often trade filled cups to drink. If you don't want a refill, do not finish your glass.
- When eating a meal, don't finish everything on your plate. If you finish everything on your plate, this indicates that you are still hungry and that the host did not provide enough for you. If a host, offer food at least three times.

Continued on Page 13

Customs in South Korea Continued from Page 12

- Be prepared to sing a song at the end of the meal.
- Small talk topics include Korean cultural heritage, kites, sports and the health of the other's family. Topics to avoid are local politics, socialism, Communism and Japan.

Time

- Local time is thirteen hours ahead of Central Standard Time. (CST +13)

Greetings

- Men greet each other with a slight bow and sometimes with an accompanying handshake while maintaining eye contact. If you support your right forearm with your left hand during the handshake, this indicates added respect.
- The junior person will initiate the greeting and be the first to bow. The senior person will be the first to offer his hand.
- Korean women rarely shake hands, and a western woman will have to initiate a handshake with a Korean man.
- A compliment on an elder person's good health is appreciated.
- When writing letters, address the recipient as "To my respected" with the title and full name. The family name is not sufficient by itself.



Gyeongbok Palace is the largest of the Five Grand Palaces built during the Joseon Dynasty.

Titles/Forms of Address

- In order, a Korean has a family name, a generational or clan name, and a given name. For example Kim Hyong

Sim has the family name of Kim, the generational name of Hyong, and a given name of Sim.

- Address people by their title alone or by both their title and family name. Kim Hyong Sim would be referred to as Mr. Kim. Given names are strictly not used unless permission is granted.
- Married women retain their maiden names. If you don't know the maiden name, you can refer to her as Madame with her husband's family name.

Gestures

- Don't put your arm around another person's shoulders.
- People of the same sex will often hold hands.
- Show respect to older people by touching your left hand, palm up, left hand to your right elbow when shaking hands or passing objects such as food or documents.
- Get someone's attention by extending your arm palm downward and moving your fingers up and down.
- Blowing your nose in public is considered bad manners. If you have to blow your nose, move away from people.
- Eye contact is important to convey sincerity and attentiveness to the speaker.
- Excessive laughing means that you are embarrassed about something.
- Because feet are considered dirty, you should avoid touching other people or objects with your feet.
- Men should keep their feet flat on the floor with their soles down when seated. Women are permitted to cross their legs.

Gifts

- If invited to a home, bring a gift such as fruit, imported coffee or quality tea, or crafts from your home. Liquor



may be given to a man, but never to a woman.

- Be certain that no gifts that you give were produced in Korea or Japan.
- Gifts in a business setting may be impersonal ones with your company logo.
- Use both hands when giving and receiving gifts.
- Don't open the gift in the presence of the giver.
- A gift of money should be put in an envelope.
- Expect resistance to receiving a gift, it's considered good manners, so just be persistent.
- It is customary to reciprocate a gift with one of similar value, so choose wisely, keeping in mind your guest's economic level. If you receive a gift that you cannot possibly match, then send it back by indicating that the sender's generosity is great and the gift is too much.

Dress

- Men should wear a conservative suit, tie and white shirt for business. Likewise, women should wear a conservative skirt and blouse or dress. Avoid tight skirts, as many people sit on the floor in homes and restaurants.
- Dress modestly for informal times. Avoid the colors yellow and pink.

Source

Morrison, Conaway, Borden, Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands, (Adams Media Corporation, 57 Littlefield Street, Avon, Massachusetts, 1999).



NEBRASKA MILITARY DEPARTMENT DIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN

On October 1, 2008, BG Kadavy signed Nebraska's strategic plan for diversity. A summary of the plan is provided here, with the full plan available from LaVonne Rosenthal.

Diversity continues to be a key priority for the Nebraska National Guard. Our organization belongs to the citizens of Nebraska, and must reflect our heritage and diversity. The key to success is to maintain individual diversity within the framework of our military and state values and ethos. Due to the effects of globalization, immigration and demographic changes, Nebraska looks different today than it did thirty years ago, and it will look different thirty years from today. Our organizational philosophy must be agile and flexible enough to accept these changes and grow with them.

This strategic plan describes how Nebraska will manage its diversity initiatives. It contains three distinct sections that support our leadership's position on diversity and will assist subordinate leaders in sustaining diversity at the operational and tactical level within their local communities. This plan defines diversity and its relationship to equal opportunity (EO) and equal employment opportunity (EEO). It clearly states The Adjutant General's vision, mission and purpose as it relates to diversity in the Nebraska Military Department.

The focus areas articulated in this plan are:

- 1) Community outreach and partnerships.



The Nebraska Military Department's Diversity Strategic Plan is the tool by which we realize The Adjutant General's diversity vision.

- 2) Recruitment and retention.

- 3) Education and training.

By focusing on these three areas, leaders, managers and members of the Nebraska Military Department can leverage their efforts to support diversity at all levels of the organization. The Special Emphasis Program (SEP)

Group, with guidance from the Diversity Group, is chartered to review the creation of policies pertaining to community outreach and partnerships to ensure their alignment with Nebraska's diversity initiatives. The SEP Group is also to examine career management and mentoring activities to ensure they are grounded in robust and inclusive recruitment, retention and professional education practices.

The Nebraska Military Department represents a variety of personnel systems.

It is comprised of Army National Guard, Air National

Guard, Federal civilian employees and State of Nebraska employees. For the purpose of this strategic plan, contract employees are covered by their contracting agency's policies.

National Guard refers to Air National Guard (ANG) and Army National Guard (ARNG), full time and part time members, as well as Active Guard Reserve (AGR) members. Different methodologies apply to the different personnel systems, yet all share the

common theme of enhancing the awareness of diversity.

Definition of Diversity and Diversity Management

Diversity is defined as the inclusion, integration, awareness and appreciation of various cultures within the operational force. Diversity provides an opportunity for the maximum utilization of individual members' talents, skills and perspectives, with a view towards increasing the organization's productivity, effectiveness and mission readiness.

Diversity management reflects the result of diversity in action as the creation of a work environment and organizational culture in which all members are treated with dignity and have the opportunity to succeed and to contribute fully to mission accomplishment.

In the Nebraska Military Department, there is a Diversity Group that provides oversight of diversity initiatives. This group also provides guidance and review of activities and projects developed by the Special Emphasis Program (SEP) Group. The SEP Group, appointed by The Adjutant General, is the operational and tactical entity for diversity initiatives.

Concepts of EEO/EO and Diversity Relationship

Compliance programs (such as EEO/EO) are enforced by law. Diversity responds to the challenge to leverage demographic changes. The Nebraska Military Department's model of diversity is grounded on the laws and regulations related to EEO/EO and civil rights, and are exemplified through actions of the SEP Group as well as commanders and leaders at all levels of the organization.

The Diversity Strategic Plan Concept

The diversity strategic plan is derived from the realization that the future of our organization rests with our success to recruit and retain individuals who are representative of Nebraska's demographics. We have a tendency to

BOOK REVIEW: MIRACLE AT ST. ANNA

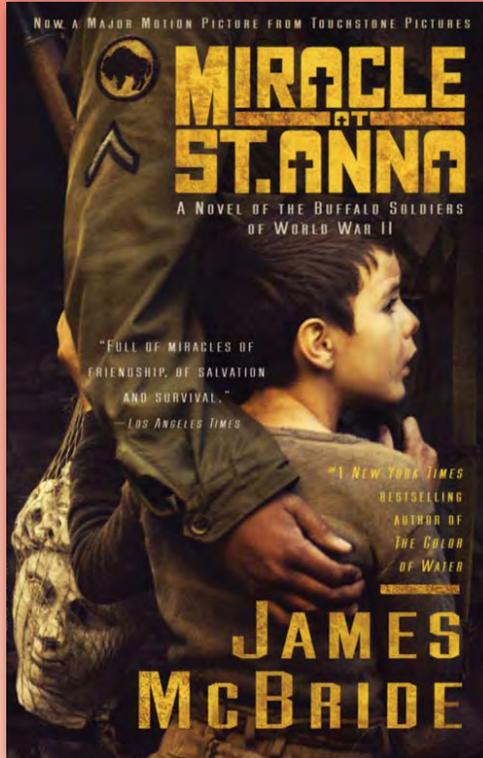
*Written by: James McBride; Riverhead Trade; Reprint edition (September 2, 2008);
Riverhead Hardcover; First Edition edition (January 28, 2002)*

Book Review By Denise Wald

Miracle at St. Anna is a fictional novel of the Buffalo Soldiers of World War II. Mr. McBride's novel is now a major motion picture directed by Spike Lee, released September 2008. Miracle at St. Anna follows four Black Soldiers of the all-Black 92nd Infantry Division. The book was inspired by real events and draws upon the individual and collective experiences of the Black Soldiers who served in the Serchio Valley and Apuane Alps of Italy during World War II.

Set in Italy during the Christmas season of 1944, the storyline follows Sam Train, a giant man-child from North Carolina, 2LT Aubrey Stamps from Washington D.C., Hector Negrón, a Puerto Rican from Spanish Harlem and Bishop Cummings, a corrupt minister from Kansas City. The four find themselves separated from their unit due to a stubborn and inept commanding officer. To complicate the situation even more, the four become stranded in the small village of St. Anna di Stazzema after Sam rescues a six-year-old orphan boy.

Sam Train is a simple-minded and kind soul who reminded me of the giant death row inmate, John Coffey, in the movie *The Green Mile*. Train was superstitious and believed the statue head he carried in a net bag attached to his belt allowed him to become invisible to the enemy. This superstition carried forward when



he befriended the small orphan boy who was also affected by the ravages of war. The boy's first encounter with Train had him believing he was a chocolate giant. Not only because of the color of his skin, but because the Soldier offers the boy chocolate bars.

2LT Stamps felt the Army had been a bitter disappointment for him, and regretted the decision

to join the moment he set foot at the Fort Huachuca, Arizona training camp. He had believed the propaganda in the Negro press that the Black men sent over to fight in Italy were being sent to fight as men. However, he struggled with reality knowing that when the war ended he would have to return to the States and would still not

be considered a White man's equal. He found it ironic how in America, Germans could eat first class, go where he couldn't go, live where he couldn't live and get jobs where he couldn't.

The four Soldiers and boy are taken in by the citizens of St. Anna. The villagers are fighting their own battles between the Fascists' cause and those who have put their faith in the freedom-fighting Partisans. Sheltering the four Soldiers and refugee child complicates their situation as the Germans are advancing on the small village. 2LT Stamps is eventually able to communicate with their higher division, which adds to the dangerous situation they are in. They were given orders to capture a German Soldier.

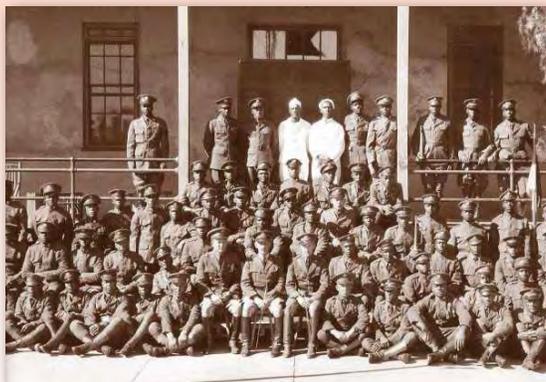
Even though the book is fiction, the author acknowledges many survivors of the war, especially the veterans of the 92nd Infantry Division who fought in Italy and the Italians who fought with them. McBride based the events of the

book on the personal stories of these men and women who survived and were willing to share their stories.

The book touches briefly on the inequality the Buffalo Soldiers faced while assigned to the United States Army during WWII, whether the individual signed up on their own or was drafted. The Black Soldiers were brave in many respects, as they risked their lives for a country in which they were treated with less respect than the enemy they were fighting. 🌍



General George S. Patton pins the Silver Star on Private Ernest A. Jenkins. Patton told reporters after the ceremony, "The Negro soldiers are damn good soldiers, of whom the nation should be mighty proud." Despite a heroic effort by the all African American 761st Tank Battalion, Patton would not recommend a unit citation for their campaigns in France. In the 1970s the army set the record straight and issued a belated citation.



These are men of "A" Company 10th Cavalry at their barracks at Fort Huachuca, Arizona. The year is 1928.

2008 NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH CELEBRATION RECAP

By *Mary Schmidt-Rodriguez*

“Extremely interesting in regard to Omaha culture, kinship and the present Indian center backgrounds;” “Very good presentation, I learned a lot;” “Great buffalo, thanks!” “Super program!” “Very organized and a great speaker;” “Great job, keep the events ongoing;” “Thought that the speaker was very interesting and I enjoyed it very much.” These are just a few of the comments from the 2008 Native American Heritage Month Celebration, and summarize the event well.

The celebration started off with an invocation by Chaplain Smith. We were then served lunch, catered by Hy-Vee (buffalo raised by Wittler Enterprises), which consisted of Buffalo (with a side of barbeque sauce), corn casserole, blueberry cobbler and a beverage. The buffalo was very tasty.

Our speaker for the afternoon was Mark Awakuni-Swetland, a professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in Anthropology and Ethnic Studies. As a young boy, Mark was adopted by a family from the Omaha tribe, living in Lincoln, Nebraska. Charles Stabler became his Grandfather and socialized him into the Omaha way of life. His Grandma, Elizabeth Saunsoci Stabler, taught him about Omaha family history, kinship and the Omaha language. Mark compiled and published an Omaha dictionary for his Grandma Elizabeth in 1977.

Mark was named into the Inkhésabe (Black Shoulder) Buffalo Clan. He is a member of the Omaha Tia-Piah Society, and a member of the Umonhon Hethushka Society, which are both veteran organizations. Mark has a Bachelor of Arts (1994) and Master of Arts (1996) degrees from



the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), with majors in Great Plains Studies, Anthropology and History. He also received a Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Oklahoma-Norman.

One of the first things Mark wanted to make clear to the audience was that the city of Omaha was named after the Omaha tribe, not vice versa!

A migration took place during World War II, as the Omaha moved from north and west of Macy, Nebraska, to look for

work in the war-driven economy of Lincoln.

Mark’s talk focused on clan, kinship and the Lincoln Indian Center.

The Clan System consists of the following:

- A clan claims a common ancestor.
- Membership comes from the father.
- Seven of the ten clans provided a Tribal Council representative.
- Marriage is outside of the clan and ideally outside of the moiety (one of two basic complementary tribal subdivisions).
- Most clans have smaller clan divisions.
- Each clan owns a set of personal names that they alone can give out (not the tribe).
- Each clan performs certain rites/duties.
- Each clan has certain taboos of things not to eat and/or touch.

For the Omaha, kinship is a way of life. To say “all my relations” is not just a cute New Age Indian phrase; to act as if you have no relatives is not acceptable. Each kin term comes with an expected behavior: avoid the mother-in-law, be formal with

Continued on Page 17



Native American Luncheon Recap Continued from Page 16

your father and tease your uncles and sister-in-laws.

The terms used to identify Mark's family goes something like this:

- Anyone his father calls 'brother,' Mark would call 'father.'
- Anyone his mother calls 'sister,' Mark would call 'mother.'
- All of their children are his brothers and sisters – not parallel cousins.
- His mother's brothers are his 'uncles' and his father's sisters are his aunts.
- All of their children are his nieces and nephews – not cross-cousins.

The Omaha have kin by blood, marriage and clan. They also recognize 'potential' kin; i.e., they address their father's brothers as 'father.' They use terms of relationship, real or fictive, rather than calling someone by a personal name.

An example of this is his relationship to Folklorist Roger Welsh. Roger was adopted as 'brother' by Alfred 'Buddy' Gilpin. Mark's adopting grandfather, Charlie Stabler, had a distant relation with Buddy calling him 'brother.' Therefore, Mark calls Roger Welsh 'grandpa.'

The Omaha trace their lineage for clan membership through their father, and also acknowledge their lineage through their mother. They trace connections back multiple generations and across clans. These connections are their security network as the Omaha's familial system is multigenerational. This provides economic, cultural and emotional security.

Following Mark's lesson on family, he spoke about the Omaha's respect for land and how ownership of such is viewed. Land is respected as 'mine' as long as I use it for hunting, farming or residing on it. The visible evidence of this residence is by the use of the fireplace.

The acquiring of the Lincoln Indian Center and the visible evidence of it remaining on the property of the community is not by the building,

but by the fireplace first built at the ground breaking ceremony on August 11, 1978. Mark's grandfather, Charlie Stabler, performed a Native American Church Cedar Blessing Ceremony at which he had Mark build a fire on the property to provide the hot coals needed for the ritual. His grandfather then had him mark the ground where he built the fire so they could return to it at a later date. A few bricks salvaged from the grounds became the visible indication of the intent to use the land for the Lincoln Indian Center.

The fireplace was used a year later to dedicate the new building. It was used after that to dedicate the east wing half-way house. It is referred to as 'Charlie Stabler's fireplace' and the maintenance responsibility is placed on his grandson, Mark Swetland.

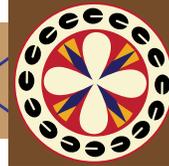


Charlie Stabler meant for the fireplace to be used by the entire community. His words from 1978 reflect this: "This is the Lincoln Indian fireplace. It marks our intent to occupy this land. It serves the community like the unethe (hearth) in our home. It is central to our life by providing heat, cooking and a focus for our prayers."

In the 1990's the physical presence of the fireplace was enlarged and a dedication marker was incorporated into the brickwork. In 2008, the fireplace was refurbished. It was rededicated on the 30th anniversary of the first fire. Red bricks from the 1978 fireplace are preserved in the 1990's enlarged brickwork.

The fireplace continues to mark the Lincoln community's intent to occupy the land, supported by the linkages of families through the Omaha kinship system.

The afternoon concluded with COL Roma Amundson presenting Mark Swetland with a framed certificate in recognition of his presentation to the Nebraska Military Department. Thank you to everyone who attended this event, as your support of these heritage luncheons demonstrates our dedication to learning about and understanding different cultures. 



SPECIAL EMPHASIS PROGRAM (SEP) GROUP'S YEAR-IN-REVIEW AND FUTURE PLANNING MEETING

By Mary Schmidt-Rodriguez



Every year the SEP group has an end of year meeting to discuss what went well and what can be improved from the past year,

and to plan for the upcoming year. Our 2008 meeting took place on Wednesday, December 17, 2008, with thirteen members present. BG Kadavy, MG Bailey and BG Adams joined the group for lunch, and were briefed on the Group's future plans.

We began the meeting by talking about upcoming heritage event luncheons. Luncheons scheduled for 2009 include the first ever Greater Middle East Heritage Luncheon in January featuring Dr. Alsharif, the African-American Heritage luncheon featuring Fire Chief Niles Ford, in February, and an Irish-American heritage event in March, just to preview the first few months of the calendar year.

Next we discussed the *Bridging the Gap* newsletter. Everyone agreed that the newsletter is a great communication tool. Ideas were discussed for new topics to be published in the upcoming year. One possible series will feature diversity in

Velez Continued from Page 5

"There is a natural way about him that is approachable. He doesn't put on airs. Adrian is Adrian," she said.

Meyer-Jerke said that, besides having an ebullient personality, it's old-fashioned hard work and reliability as a volunteer that makes Velez invaluable as a community servant.

"Grand Island is lucky to have someone like him. He touches a lot of audiences that look for leadership and guidance," Meyer-Jerke said. "His enthusiasm is great. He is so giving of his time and talents. It is amazing."

Nebraska, focusing on the cultural groups who have made their home here in recent years.

We then went on to discuss items identified by students who attended the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) Leadership Team Awareness Seminar held in August 2008 in Ashland, Nebraska. Many topics related to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and diversity were discussed during the training, and the SEP members at our meeting brainstormed action plans relevant to what we could directly impact in relation to the Nebraska National Guard.

One of the first topics discussed was an informal mentoring program in the Guard. We all agreed that this is a difficult process to achieve, but that it is possible. One idea is to review the Teammates' model for mentoring and how it can apply to Soldiers and Airmen. At the brief back after the SEP members' meeting, BG Kadavy agreed with the significance of mentoring, and will be writing an article about the subject in an upcoming edition of *Bridging the Gap*. He also agreed that it is important to let people in the Guard know that it is okay to ask to be mentored.

We also discussed how to promote an inclusive culture in the Guard, and to

Whatever the reason, Velez said he has made measurable inroads among Hispanic communities across the state. People aren't afraid of the uniform anymore, he said. They're used to seeing him around. He has explained what the Guard does and what opportunities it offers recruits.

He still visits some of the same soccer fields he unwittingly cleared out during his early days with the Guard.

"Now recruiters go to soccer games. Sometimes they even play," he said. 🌍

look beyond just numbers and quotas. Diversity can't stop with recruiting. Diversity is about inclusiveness; it's not all about quotas, statistics and focusing on our differences. It is also about ways we are alike, realizing that both differences and similarities make us who we are, and how to use our individual strengths to make our organization better and stronger. We agreed that the word diversity has taken on a more negative tone, since many view it as separating people. To help dispel the negativity and truly work toward a more inclusive organization, the group discussed holding informal brown bag events with videos or guest speakers.

MG Bailey gave kudos to group members, letting them know what a great job they are doing. Over the last few years our group has become more than evolutionary, as we've grown to be revolutionary in taking our organization to new levels of diversity. He said we are working to make the organization a good and positive experience. It's great that we've been able to experiment and to explore beyond what has been done in the past.

During a break in the meeting, BG Kadavy awarded the Strength in Diversity Award to SEP member, SGT Adrian Velez.



MSgt Kim Davila summed up the morning by saying that we are all working toward the same goal. We are not trying to push anything on anyone, since we are already a diverse community.

BG Kadavy also praised the SEP Group members for their efforts, and concluded the meeting by saying that it is people throughout the entire National Guard who make a difference. 🌍

Continued from Page 6

AFRICAN-AMERICAN TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. c. Shirley Chisholm, the first African-American woman elected to the United States Congress, was a passionate and effective advocate for the needs of minorities, women and children, and changed the nation's perception about the capabilities of women and African-Americans. A New York City educator and child care manager, Chisholm saw the problems of the poor every day, and in the 1950s this led her to run for and win a seat in the New York State Legislature. In 1968 she was elected to Congress from the 12th District. She served in Congress until 1982. In 1972 she entered several Democratic presidential primaries, receiving 151 delegate votes for the presidential nomination.

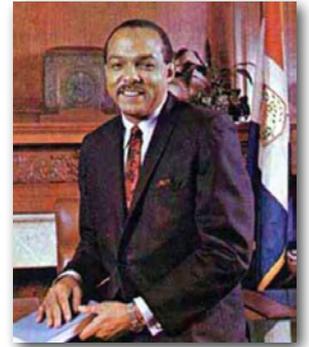


2. d. The Black Codes were laws passed on the state and local level in the United States, mainly in the rural Southern states, to limit the civil rights and civil liberties of African-Americans. While some northern states also passed legislation discriminating against African-Americans before the Civil War, the term Black Codes is most commonly associated with legislation passed by Southern states after the Civil War in an attempt to control the labor, movements and activities of African-Americans. There were signs posted in towns to keep Blacks from integrating with the Whites.

3. a. The Apollo Theater in New York City is one of the most famous clubs for popular music in the United States, and certainly the most famous club associated almost exclusively with African-American performers. Founded in 1913, the Apollo Theater was owned by various Jewish families up until World War II. When the Apollo first opened, it was one of New York City's leading burlesque venues. Open to White-only viewers, the Hurtig and Seamon's (New) Burlesque Theater would remain in operation until 1928 when Bill Minsky took over and transformed it into the 125th Street Apollo Theater. Upon Minsky's untimely death, Sidney S. Cohen, a powerful theatrical landlord, purchased the Apollo in 1932. The Apollo Theater finally opened its doors to African-American patrons in 1934, 20 years after the building's original opening, showcasing "a colored review" entitled "*Jazz a la Carte.*"



4. c. Carl Stokes was best known as Cleveland's 51st Mayor (1967), and the first African-American mayor of a major United States city. He was also a Soldier, a lawyer, a member of the Ohio House of Representatives, a broadcaster, a judge, a father, brother to a Congressman and a United States Ambassador.



5. b. Wilma Rudolph was born with the odds stacked against her. She was born prematurely into a large family during a time when African-American babies were denied access to the best healthcare. As a child, she was sick with a long list of diseases including pneumonia, scarlet fever and polio, which left her left leg partially deformed. On September 7, 1960, in Rome, Wilma became the first American woman of any ethnic background to win three gold medals in track at the Olympics. She won the 100-meter dash, the 200-meter dash and ran the anchor on the 400-meter relay team.



6. d. The first Black-owned and operated television station in the United States was WGPR-TV in Detroit, Michigan.

7. d. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day marks the birth date of the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., and is observed on the third Monday of January each year, around the time of King's birthday, January 15. The campaign for a federal holiday in King's honor began soon after his assassination. Ronald Reagan signed the holiday into law in 1983, and it was first observed in 1986.



8. b. Vermont was the first territory (not a state at the time) in North America to abolish slavery outright in 1777. The first state to abolish slavery outright was Pennsylvania in

Continued on Page 20

SEP MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

Captain Amy Johnson

In 1992, I enlisted as an Active Duty Medic in the United States Air Force. After spending time stationed at Offutt Air Force Base (AFB) and at Yokota AFB, Japan, it seemed as if the time had come to step back, attend college, and leave my years in the Air Force far behind me.

Therefore, in 1995, I returned to Nebraska, went to Bellevue University – Omaha, and received a Bachelor of Science in Health Care Management. After that, I went on to obtain a Master of Public Health (MPH) degree from the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

After a nine-year break in service, I raised my hand (again). This time, I was seeking a Public Health Officer role and so became a member of the Nebraska Air National Guard. I entered the 155th Air Refueling Wing (ARW) Medical Group as a medic, and received my commission as a Second Lieutenant six months later.

Currently, I am serving as the full-time Medical Plans and Operations Officer for the Nebraska Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and High-Yield Explosive (CBRNE) Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP). This is a joint operation consisting of both Air and Army National Guard personnel. The CERFP responds to Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) or other catastrophic events to provide mass decontamination, search and extraction and medical care. This past August, we were tasked to be present on-site for the Democratic National Convention as a precautionary measure, should there have been a real world incident. For the



CERFP personnel, this was a fantastic learning opportunity and provided unmatched on-the-ground experience.

My childhood years were happily spent in Fremont, Nebraska with my parents and sister, Dawn. With the exception of career travels, I have always been a resident of the State of Nebraska. Currently, I reside in Omaha with my son – the most amazing accomplishment in my life – Quinlan Patrick Johnson. Quinlan was born November 8, 2006, and never fails to make me laugh and smile every day.

My son is biracial, though I like to say that he is multicultural, because there's so much more to "race" than black or white. He shares my Irish heritage as well as his father's African-American heritage.

I believe that we are all of one race - the human race - and I will raise my son to know about love, honor, respect and loyalty. He will learn about all the pieces of his varied heritage in addition to all the things a parent teaches their child. My hope is that when he is an adult, people will understand "race" for what it really is: a social construct. 🌍

African-American Trivia Continued from Page 19

1780. All of the other states north of Maryland began to gradually abolish slavery between 1781 and 1804.
9. a. A 1908 race riot in Springfield, Massachusetts, reported by liberal New York journalist W. E. Walling, inspired him to help found a national organization to speak out on behalf of equality for African-Americans. After a meeting with other concerned citizens in his apartment building, including social worker Mary W. Ovington, the NAACP was organized in 1909. Its only Black officer was W.E.B. Du Bois, who served as the first editor of its magazine, *The Crisis*.
10. a. Beginning in 1947, Dr. Ralph J. Bunche was involved with the Arab-Israeli conflict. He served as assistant to the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, and thereafter as the principal secretary of the United Nations (U.N.) Palestine Commission. In 1948, he traveled to the Middle East as the chief aide to Count Folke Bernadotte, who had been appointed by the U.N. to mediate the conflict. In September, Bernadotte was assassinated by members of the underground Jewish group Lehi. Bunche became the U.N.'s chief mediator and concluded the task with the signing of the 1949 Armistice Agreements, for which he received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1950. He continued to work for the United Nations, mediating in other strife-torn regions including the Congo, Yemen, Kashmir and Cyprus. He rose to the position of Undersecretary-General of the United Nations in 1968. 🌍



Choices of the Journey by Paul Le Continued from Page 2

A few days went by and our initial stop was in Singapore; but they didn't allow us to land. Apparently there were too many refugees there already. We docked on shore for one week, to refuel and accept food and supplies that were brought in for the refugees from the United States Navy. The Navy directed our vessel to Guam, which was the nearest refugee camp that could take on more people. As the boat approached the island of Guam, the thousands of refugees on the ship cheered and collectively roared a sigh of relief. We finally reached safe land, a refugee camp, which would be the next step in our destination.

We stayed in Guam for two weeks, and when it was time for us to determine what country we wanted to go to next, our choices were between France, Canada and the United States of America. Although my father knew how to speak French, it just made sense to go to the refugee camps in America, the land of opportunity. Our next choice was to decide between the different branches of the military: the Marine Corps in Camp Pendleton (California), the Army

in Fort Chaffee (Arkansas), Eglin Air Force Base (Florida) or the National Guard in Fort Indiantown Gap (Pennsylvania)

My father narrowed the choice down to two locations: California and Pennsylvania. Each had its own pros and cons. We heard the weather is beautiful in California all the time; however, we would have to wait in Guam longer because everyone wanted to go to California. If we chose Pennsylvania, the weather isn't always quite as good, however we could go immediately. The rest of our aunts and uncles decided they would wait for California. We however, did not want to stay in Guam any longer, so we decided to move to Fort Indian Town Gap, Pennsylvania.

At Fort Indian Town Gap, my father volunteered as a translator to help out the military headquarters with the other refugees there. He was very grateful for all of the help we had received, so it was his way of giving back. Not only was this beneficial for the National Guard, we also

knew we, like everyone, were waiting for their chance to be sponsored, so as a volunteer, he was able to learn more English and also be well connected.

In the first month, we had many sponsor opportunities. There were a lot from Washington DC, Philadelphia, Virginia and one particular family in Pennsylvania. As my

father describes it, there was a rich older couple, who owned a candy manufacturing plant. They told my father that they would teach him how to run the business and leave him with part of their business after they retired. My father turned them down. (To this day, I give him a hard time about how we could have been the successors of a company that makes chocolate with a hard candy-coated shell.) But for whatever reason, it didn't feel right to him. In fact, none of the families did. Until one day, two months after living in the refugee camp in Pennsylvania, my father received a call from Bill Smith, a sponsor in Omaha, Nebraska. This could be the match he was waiting for... 

He was very grateful for all of the help we had received, so it was his way of giving back.

Having Diversity in the Workplace by LTC Byron Diamond Continued from Page 1

knowledge of the management or leader. The new worker would look to the leader for direction, answers and guidance until they gain the experience necessary to go it alone. This passing of knowledge from expert to beginner also builds upon the culture of an organization.

Age

Age is a great contributor to the diversity of the workforce, especially considering that companies today employ people from 18 to 85 years of age. With a range this large, there are bound to be differences in experience, values and education, all of which contribute and influence human behavior. There was a time when people thought about retiring at age 55, and then it was age 65. Now when you ask someone when they plan to retire, their answer is, "when I die." More and more of today's workforce is staying past 65, which is causing a change in how

organizations view the older worker.

Older personnel have the advantage of experience, education and job tenure. They also tend to be more reliable, miss fewer days of work and have lower turnover rates. While larger organizations are finding these older workers have outdated skills, smaller companies are finding value in their age with higher performance, stability, experience, and lower avoidable absences. Considering the aging workforce in the United States today, it would be wise for the larger companies to hold on to the older staff for as long as they can. It will take many years for the next generation to acquire the experience, skills and knowledge of those they will be replacing.

The younger inexperienced worker who is fresh from college brings with them a completely different view on how things should work. Young personnel have preconceived ideas that older people are

stuck in the past and the young people do not want to listen to how things used to be done. As well, the older worker thinks that the new ways are a waste of time and money and they want to stick with what is tried and true. This can cause considerable conflict between the old and the young and will require the organization to find ways to incorporate the two ideas to build on a totally new idea. The melding of these two groups will create a stronger workforce and build stronger work cultures.

Conclusion

There are many different forms of diversity that affect human behavior and the culture of organizations. The many different values, skills and abilities, ages and occupations will be a challenge for managers today to find creative new ways to incorporate each individual's ideas into their operations and to create a productive culture that values every form of diversity. 

Diversity Strategic Plan Continued from Page 14

rely on our recruiting and retention force to satisfy these requirements, when in fact, every one of us shares in the responsibility. This plan identifies strategic focus areas to be applied at appropriate levels of the organization in the effort to bolster a diversified work force. It will involve active participation over the course of the foreseeable future to satisfy the intent. This plan articulates our organization's current and future endeavors to embrace diversity as a mission imperative and a necessity in preserving our future as a viable force structure in the 21st Century.

Reviews and assessments of this plan and its results will be conducted in conjunction with the five year affirmative action plan cycle.

Vision Statement

The strength of our individual differences is leveraged to maximize mission effectiveness, readiness and productivity. The Nebraska Military Department represents an integrated, capable and diversified force engaging in foreign, national and state operations. We constantly remain committed to inclusionary practices that recruit and retain persons representative of Nebraska's diverse demographics.

Mission and Purpose Statements

Mission Statement: Increase and enhance awareness of cultural diversity throughout the Nebraska Military Department. The mission of the Special Emphasis Program (SEP) Group is to work with management in carrying out their joint responsibility to identify barriers to the recruitment and advancement of special emphasis groups, devise solutions and draft plans to implement the solutions.

Purpose Statement: The Nebraska Military Department's Diversity Strategic Plan is the tool by which we realize The Adjutant General's diversity vision. The Diversity Group, as directed by The Adjutant General, provides strategic oversight of the SEP Group activities and works to remove barriers to mission accomplishment when necessary.

Strategic Focus Areas

1. Community Outreach and Partnerships
 - a. Enhance outreach and exposure in minority and under-represented communities.
 - b. Partner with both private and public community agencies to network diversity initiatives, programs and training.
 - c. Include diverse individuals and groups in creation of heritage month celebrations to enhance shared knowledge of the Nebraska Military Department employees and the respective culture.
2. Recruitment and Retention
 - a. Emphasize and support recruiting opportunities within emerging demographic communities to meet current and future readiness needs.
 - b. Identify and involve community partners and centers of influence to enhance communication between the Nebraska Military Department and diverse communities.
 - c. Emphasize retention of all qualified minority and female members.
 - d. Recognize the contributions of Nebraska Military Department members and employees through our state Excellence in Diversity award. Award winners at the state level will be forwarded for recognition at the national level.
3. Education and Training
 - a. Provide annual opportunities for education and training of senior leaders, managers, commanders as well as Soldiers, Airmen and civilians at all levels of the organization.
 - b. Recognize specific cultures during respective heritage months.
 - c. Commanders, leaders and managers are encouraged to conduct heritage events in their specific units and organizations, and forward documentation of such activities to the State Diversity Initiatives Coordinator (J-1). 

Kevin Locke Continued from Page 9

children, teens and adults, join him on stage to perform parts of the Hoop Dance with him.

Once again, I was not disappointed as I encountered Kevin Locke for the second time, with his ensemble adding more depth and poignancy to the performance. Overall the show was very enriching, spiritual, educational, humorous and entertaining.

Recommended Books courtesy of
<http://www.kevinlocke.com/kevin/nativeam.html>

Indian Givers by Jack Weatherford; grades 10-up. How the cultural, social and political practices of Indians have transformed the way of life as lived throughout the world. Traces the crucial contributions made by American Indians to government, democratic institutions, medicine, agriculture, architecture and ecology. A Fawcett Columbine Book, Ballantine Books, 1988.

Black Elk Speaks as told through John G. Neihardt by Nicholas Black Elk; grades 10-up. Black Elk's profound visions of the unity of humanity, together with historical accounts of the Lakota Nation's struggle for survival in the late 19th century. University of Nebraska Press, 1932.

Waterlily by Ella Cara Deloria; grades 7-up. An evocation of the life of a Dakota woman before Europeans settled the Northern Plains. Born in 1889 on the Yanktown Reservation, Ella lived as a child on the Standing Rock Reservation, where Kevin and his Hunkpapa Lakota tiyospaye live now. A Bison paperback from the University of Nebraska Press, 1932.

Land of the Spotted Eagle by Luther Standing Bear; grades 4-up. Standing Bear looks back at his Lakota culture and the key values that enabled the society to thrive in interdependence prior to the European invasion. University of Nebraska Press, 1933. 



PLEASE FILL OUT THE SURVEY BELOW FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A FREE LUNCH!

BRIDGING THE GAP ISSUE 14 SURVEY

All entries must be in
by March 21, 2009
to be eligible

Complete the Survey for a
Chance to Win a Free Ticket to
an upcoming SEP sponsored
Heritage Luncheon

Please return completed
Survey Form to:

Mary Schmidt-Rodriguez
1237 Military Road
Lincoln, NE 68508

m.schmidtrodiguez@us.army.mil

Please rate the following Bridging the Gap articles in terms of how much they interest you:

	Not at all	Little	Neutral	Somewhat	Very Much
Having Diversity in the Workplace	<input type="radio"/>				
Choices of the Journey Part 2	<input type="radio"/>				
St. Patrick's Day Celebration Origins	<input type="radio"/>				
Women Taking the Lead to Save Our Planet	<input type="radio"/>				
An Extraordinary Person: SGT Adrian Velez	<input type="radio"/>				
Website Review: Holidays Around the World	<input type="radio"/>				
African-American Trivia	<input type="radio"/>				
A Short History of Native American Tribes	<input type="radio"/>				
Children's Book Review: The Night of Las Posadas	<input type="radio"/>				
The Kevin Locke Native Dance Ensemble	<input type="radio"/>				
Restaurant Review: La Mexicana	<input type="radio"/>				
Becoming Citizens of the World: South Korea	<input type="radio"/>				
Diversity Strategic Plan	<input type="radio"/>				
Book Review: Miracle at St. Anna	<input type="radio"/>				
2008 Native American Celebration Recap	<input type="radio"/>				
SEP Group's Year-In-Review & Future Planning	<input type="radio"/>				
SEP Member Highlight: Capt Amy Johnson	<input type="radio"/>				
Diversity Dates	<input type="radio"/>				
Diver-Cipe Corner: Chicken & Dressing Casserole	<input type="radio"/>				
Upcoming Events	<input type="radio"/>				

Please rate the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Bridging the Gap is useful and valuable to me	<input type="radio"/>				
Bridging the Gap is easy to read	<input type="radio"/>				

In general, how would you rate the quality of the newsletter?

	Poor	Needs Improvement	Good	Excellent
How would you rate the writing?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How would you rate the look and design?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What might we do to improve the publication to suit your interests and information needs?

What type of topics would you like to see in upcoming newsletters?

What is your affiliation with the Nebraska National Guard?

Air Guard — Rank: _____ Army Guard — Rank: _____

Federal Civilian State Civilian Other — Please explain: _____

Please provide us with your name and email address if you would like to participate in the contest or contact you about your comments.

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Contest is open to all employees of the Nebraska Military Department (except SEP members) and everyone who reads Bridging the Gap! Thank you for your time.

DIVERSITY DATES: FEBRUARY / MARCH 2009

February 2.....	Candlemas (Christian)
February 2.....	Groundhog Day (U.S.)
February 2.....	Imbolc (Celtic, Pagan)
February 3.....	Setsubun (Japan)
February 3.....	Suyapa Day (Honduras)
February 4.....	National Day (Sri Lanka)
February 5.....	Constitution Day (Mexico)
February 6.....	Waitangi Day (New Zealand)
February 8-9.....	Tu B'Shevat (Jewish)
February 9.....	Lantern Festival (China, Taiwan)
February 11.....	Kenkoku Kinen-no-Hi (Japan)
February 14.....	Race Relation's Day (U.S.)
February 14.....	St. Valentine's Day (U.S.)
February 15.....	Brotherhood/Sisterhood Week (Christian, Jewish)

February 16.....	Independence Day (Lithuania)
February 16.....	President's Day (U.S.)
February 18.....	Independence Day (Gambia)
February 19.....	Rashtriya Prajatantra Divas (Nepal)
February 21.....	Shaheed (Martyr) Day (Bangladesh)
February 22.....	Abu Simbel Festival (Egypt)
February 23.....	Maha Shivaratri (Hindu)
February 23.....	Republic Day (Guyana)
February 24.....	Shrove Tuesday (Christian)
February 25.....	Ash Wednesday (Christian)
February 25.....	Fiesta sa EDSA (Philippines)
February 25.....	National Day (Kuwait)
February 26.....	Ayyam-i-Ha (Baha'i)
February 27.....	Independence Day (Dominican Republic)
February 28.....	Memorial Day (Taiwan)

March 1.....	Martenitza (Bulgaria, Romania)
March 1.....	Samiljol (South Korea)
March 1.....	St. David's Day (Wales)
March 2.....	Great Lent Begins (Eastern Orthodox Christian)

March 3.....	Hinamatsuri (Japan)
March 3.....	Throne Day (Morocco)
March 4.....	Casimir Pulaski Day (Poland, U.S.)
March 6.....	Independence Day (Ghana)
March 8.....	Daylight Savings Time Begins (U.S.)
March 8.....	International Women's Day
March 8-9.....	Mawlid al-Nabi (Islamic)
March 9-10.....	Purim (Jewish)
March 11.....	Hola Mohalla (Sikh)
March 11.....	Holi (Hindu, Sikh)
March 11.....	Restoration of Statehood Day (Lithuania)

March 12.....	Moshoeshoe's Day (Lesotho)
March 15	Memorial Day for the 1848 Revolution and War of Independence (Hungary)

March 17.....	Charshanbesuri (Iran)
March 17.....	St. Patrick's Day (Ireland, U.S.)
March 19.....	St. Joseph's Day (Christian)
March 20.....	Equinox (International)
March 20.....	Independence Day (Tunisia)
March 21.....	Benito Juarez's Birthday (Mexico)
March 21	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (U.N.)

March 21.....	Noruz (Iran)
March 21.....	Ostara (Celtic, Pagan)
March 22.....	Emancipation Day (Puerto Rico)
March 25.....	Independence Day (Greece)
March 26.....	Swadhinata Dibash (Bangladesh)
March 29	Goranda Day (Central African Republic)
March 31.....	Cesar Chavez Day (U.S.)



**PEGGY'S
DIVER-CIPE
CORNER**

**CHICKEN AND
DRESSING CASSEROLE**



“Soul food” is labeled an American cuisine. This term originated from the cuisine developed by the African slaves mainly from the American South. This type of cooking is an example of the really good food southern African-American cooks created with what they had available: chickens, wild game, chitlins (offal), “leftover” and “undesirable” cuts of meat, and greens and vegetables they had grown themselves. These meager ingredients evolved into simple and delicious southern food.

However, if you want to be technical on the subject, while all soul food is southern food, not all southern food is soul food. The term “soul food” became popular in the 1960s, when the word “soul” became used in connection with most things African-American.

Chicken and corn bread stuffing is a soul food favorite for the holidays. Below is a simple version of the holiday recipe and can easily be made any time of the year.



- 3 cups crumbled corn bread
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 cup minced onion
- 1/2 cup melted butter
- 2 1/2 cups cooked chicken, cut in pieces
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup milk
- 1 tablespoon melted butter
- 1 tablespoon flour, rounded
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1 egg, well beaten

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Toss together in a bowl the corn bread, celery, 1/2 teaspoon salt, onion, pepper and 1/2 cup melted butter. Spread in buttered casserole dish and arrange chicken evenly over the top.

In a skillet, heat a tablespoon melted butter, flour and salt. Blend well and stir in broth. Stir until smooth. While heating this, combine egg and milk; add to sauce. Cook until sauce thickens slightly and pour on top of chicken. Bake approximately 45 minutes. 🌍

UPCOMING EVENTS



African-American Heritage Celebration

February 12

Featured Speaker: Fire Chief Niles Ford

“No One Succeeds Alone”

Lunch Catered by: Famous Daves

Menu: Pork or Chicken, Wilbur Beans, Drunkin’ Apples, Beverage

Cost for Lunch: \$6.50

Please RSVP to Pam Makovicka NLT February 6 (309-7511)

Irish-American Heritage Celebration

March 4, 2009

Featuring The Lincoln Irish Dancers

Women’s History Month Celebration

April 2009

Asian-American Heritage Celebration

May 2009

Featuring the Kokyo Taiko Drummers

THE NEBRASKA MILITARY DEPARTMENT VALUES DIVERSITY

The purpose of the SEP Group is to work with leadership and management in carrying out their joint responsibility to identify barriers to the recruitment and advancement of special emphasis groups, devise solutions and draft plans to implement the solutions.

SPECIAL EMPHASIS PROGRAM (SEP) GROUP MEMBERSHIP

- | | | |
|--|--|-----------------------|
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| Jessie Bockelman | MSG Colin Jones | SrA Winston Sanniola |
| Peggy Brown | CPT Richard Jones | SSgt Casey Svitak |
| CPT Dale Burrage | MSgt Anne Krotz | 2LT Carlos Van Nurden |
| 1SG Reynold Castaneda | SFC Kim Moore | SGT Adrian Velez |
| MSgt Kim Davila | MSG Melissa Oehm | 1LT Juan Vidal |
| | | Denise Wald |

Interested in becoming a member of the SEP Group? Please contact one of the members with an email address listed above.