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Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma  
Tribal Administration  
C/O Wilma Mankiller  
Tahlequah, Oklahoma 74464

12/31/92  
received

December 24, 1992

Dear Chief Mankiller;

I am writing to you in regards to information I would like to recieve, not knowing whom it is I should write, if not you.

I am an inmate at Lansing Correctional Facility in Lansing, Kansas, here for a 4 to 12 year sentence on a drug (marijuana) case.

I am a member of, and the Speaker of Women, in United Tribes Indian Culture. Many of us in the group are Cherokee (in part or full) and seek knowledge and information that pertains to us as Cherokees. This knowledge and information is difficult for us to recieve being in the penitentiary. We enjoy United Tribes Indian Culture and learn a great deal from one another about different tribes and customs. Yet, many of the Cherokees in the group still have the desire to know more specifically about our people. Some have never lived and have no knowledge of the Cherokee way, they come into United Tribes and learn OUR way, but still gain little knowledge of their own heritage and people.

I was born to an Italian father and German mother, so biologically I am not of Cherokee descent. After my father died, my mother married a Cherokee man who adopted me when I was five. Although he was a military man and we traveled the world, he still taught me a great deal of his, and my people, as did his sisters. I am married to a Cherokee, and together my husband and I have two children. They reside in Salisaw, Oklahoma, which was my home prior to my conviction, and will be again in 1994.

Like I said earlier, I am the Speaker of Women in our group. The other four women, all of natural Cherokee descent, have far much less knowledge than I do, which is part of the reason I hold my position. Still, I am aware there are a great many things I don't know, and want to know, for myself, my own children, and also for the other four women in our group. It is my desire to not only give them general information, but also to bring them closer to their own people.

I would appreciate any assistance in locating the proper person that can provide information on Cherokee newspapers, books, tapes or anything that will help us gain knowledge. I am not concerned with the fees for these items as we do have access to funds for this purpose, as well as my own personal funds.

Thank you for your time and attention, I appreciate it very much!

Sincerely,  
Karen (Sky Eyes) Chaney