



CHEROKEE NATION

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Wilma P. Mankiller
Principal Chief

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Deputy Chief

August 17, 1993

To: Gail Ross

From: Wilma Mankiller

Re: Intro

You can use any or all of the following. Editing for grammatical reasons is fine with me.

"When I was a child growing up in the isolated Cherokee community of Mankiller Flats, we had no telephone, television or other direct link to the outside world except a battery operated radio. Like generations of Cherokees before us, we relied on storytelling to pass cultural and historical information from generation to generation. Storytelling was also a great way for adults to entertain others, especially young people, and to teach important value lessons about honesty, personal responsibility and the importance of sharing with others.

From tiny Alaska Native Villages to the Great Iroquois Nation, Native people have an astounding array of wonderful stories passed down from generation to generation. As long as these stories survive, the oral histories of Native people will survive. No stories are more important than the stories of Rabbit which have been presented so well in this outstanding book.

Gail Ross and Murv Jacobs have contributed greatly to the preservation of the stories of Rabbit by creating this wonderful collection of stories and illustrations. This is a very readable book. I actually "test read" from this collection of Rabbit stories at a private and public elementary school. The response from the students was overwhelmingly positive.

These stories will help the reader appreciate the art of storytelling in this highly technological age. Once I asked Alex Haley, a master storyteller and the author of "Roots" related to me that he had tried to pass on a piece of oral tradition to a youngster in his family. The response was "you