

After an unusually cool spring and early summer with thunderstorms almost every evening and many tornado warnings, with one touching down less than a mile from the Heritage Living Center, we thought we were out of harm's way. But on June 20th, a tornado hit Billings, taking the roof off a large metro-plex center and destroying businesses. High winds, hail the size of golf balls and flash flooding reeked havoc on our office, just a five minute drive from where the tornado hit. We are replacing the roof and gutters, which thankfully will be covered by insurance. One of our staff members was in the office and watched in horror as the tornado went past. Thank God, no one was killed in the wake of the storm.

On a much lighter note, I know it was not possible but I wish you could have attended my 84th birthday celebration on July 27th. There must have been nearly 200 people from the reservation plus special donors from Maryland and other out of state visitors. It was a semi-surprise party since I didn't realize that many old friends from way back and former students I had in classes years ago were coming to celebrate with me.

Three powwow drum groups provided the music for traditional dancing and Indian gourd dancing. Under a tent to protect them from the sun, donors joined the Cheyenne in playing old-time hand games. The afternoon and evening celebration was topped off with a feast of roast beef, delicious fried chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, sweet corn on the cob

## A Note From Father Emmett

and birthday cake topped with ice cream. Tribal member Warren Spang was the MC for the event and Charles Little Old Man led the Cheyenne prayer. His prayer included a blessing for our friends and benefactors who make the Heritage Living Center a comfortable home for the elders. He also prayed for everyone present, especially the staff who worked so hard to make this wonderful event possible.

As I celebrated my birthday, a number of you and some of our employees asked a legitimate question. What will happen to Soaring Eagle and the Heritage Living Center if something happens to Father Emmett? My health is good but this is an important question that cannot be ignored. The Soaring Eagle Board of Directors has been diligently looking for the right person who can successfully carry on their goals and mine. The person selected must be a competent, experienced manager and have a solid background in fund raising and planned giving. The good news is that we are close to making a final selection. I will, however, remain as President of the Board.

I always want you to know that not a day goes by without our prayers asking "Maheo," Creator God, to bless you for your love of the elders and your sacrifices to provide for their needs.

Your grateful beggar friend,

*Father Emmett Hoffmann*

Father Emmett Hoffmann



Heritage Living Center resident Susie Cain greets Father Emmett during his birthday celebration.



# Celebrating a Lifetime of



*Northern Cheyenne chiefs stand behind Father Emmett while singing the sacred Chief's Song honoring him for his work on behalf of the Cheyenne people. Warren Spang (top, right), MC's the event, while Gourd dancer's (right) move rhythmically to the drum beat.*

It's not as much a birthday party as it is a celebration of Father Emmett's life. Arriving on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation in 1954, the man was so shocked at the conditions he saw that he could not imagine himself being of any meaningful use. That thought quickly gave way to a tenacity to get things done, done now, and done the right way (albeit spiritually of course). This unabashed relentlessness to make each day



productive has changed and altered the lives of thousands. On this lazy afternoon, three drum groups sang out songs, while master-of-ceremonies Warren Spang narrated a day filled with impromptu speakers

called to the microphone to give background stories on histories and just about anything that came up. During it all, a feast took shape as lines flowed along tables of food and servers while folks visited with family and friends under shaded tables outdoors.

And as the drum groups beat out a steady cadence, men and women fancy-dancers, traditional dancers, fancy shawl and jingle-dress dancers strolled across the lawn in their resplendent regalia,

then eased into their collective rhythms showcasing their colorful costumes and finest dancing skills. One speaker told of how the seed was planted to build the Heritage Living Center. In decade's-old reel-to-reel recordings, it was discovered the Cheyenne chiefs were heartbroken that their relatives would move into nursing or retirement homes off the reservation and invariably perish, seemingly

Father Emmett sat solemnly and closed his eyes as Northern Cheyenne Chiefs sang a song in their Native language reserved only for the highest of achievements, as onlookers watched in quiet admiration. Then everyone took a breath, looked about, and collectively smiled as a line formed to greet, hug and shake the hand of the man who has meant so much to so many on his 84th birthday.

It's the best excuse we have to call for a get-together. Every summer Father Emmett's birthday appears on the calendar, and every summer what is thought will be a modest afternoon affair eases seamlessly into the evening, going down as a perfect day at the Heritage Living Center. If folks thought they had a pressing reason to leave earlier, it could wait.





# Service!

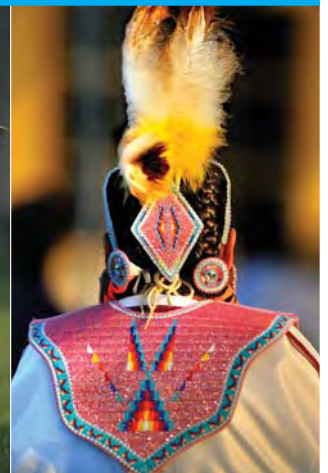
overnight. Homesickness was the primary cause, they said. They were going to ask Father Emmett for ideas – he could help. Decades later, Father Emmett listened to the recordings and heard the voices of the departed chiefs, and the Heritage Living Center began to rise on that day.

While time marches on and changes occur, *no one* sees Father Emmett as an old man in a wheelchair. They see him as larger-than-life, passively awestruck – not for his personal achievements – he doesn't get those – rather for what he has helped others become. People who know what he has done are perhaps as stunned at his lifetime body-of-work as Father Emmett was that eventful day he arrived here in 1954. "What I see, is just how much he is loved by the Cheyenne people," said a friend as she surveyed the scene across the lawn. "They come to *honor* him."



Friends Adaline Fox and Patsy Brey pose for a picture with Fr. Emmett during the afternoon meal.

Generations come together as Northern Cheyenne Princess Rosalia Bad Horse and Clinton Bird Hat (world champion fancy dancer) two-step.





“Not since the death of Abraham Lincoln has a tragedy touched so many Americans as did the loss of Will Rogers.” These words appeared in print seventy-five years ago, after the most beloved American of his time died in a plane crash on August 15, 1935, in a remote area of Alaska. After the tragedy, Will’s young nephew, “Billy” (William Quisenberry) sat down with the rest of America and cried his eyes out.

The world famous Cherokee Cowboy, humorist, actor and philanthropist was Billy’s favorite uncle Will Rogers, who behind the fame and stardom was a faithful family man who would stop and talk to everyone. He truly believed, “I never met a man I didn’t like.”

When Billy was eight years-old, his aunt Betty Rogers, the wife of Will Rogers, visited her sister, Virginia, in Joplin, Missouri. Before she left, she asked, “Can I take little Billy home?” Billy recalled, “I was a spoiled child. I got to go to California to stay with Uncle Will and Aunt Betty.”

Will Rogers was at home when Billy arrived. He took a liking to the boy and taught his nephew to ride and rope and gave him his first job at 10 cents an hour. Uncle Will lived on a 375 acre rambling, unpretentious ranch above Santa Monica, complete with a polo field. It was Billy’s job to “exercise each pony for ½ hour a day and when my uncle hosted a polo match, I got to be the timer.” Ten cents an hour seemed like a lot of money to Billy and it was certainly more than Will Rogers made when he was a young boy back in Oklahoma.

“Willie” Rogers was a mixed-blood Cherokee Indian of the Paint Clan of the Cherokee Nation, born near Oologah, Indian Territory in 1879. His father, Clem Rogers, a prominent rancher, became a Cherokee judge and his mother, Mary America, was an attractive, witty woman who liked to have fun. She often pulled back the carpets to sing and dance with her seven kids.

But the vitality went out of the Rogers home when Mary died of typhoid fever when Willie was 10 years old. Torn with grief, he often stayed for days with his mentor and his dad’s best cowboy, Dan Walker, an African American bronc rider and skilled cattleman. Dan had developed roping into an art form. He could make a perfect spinning loop of any size and his young protégé practiced every chance he got. From then on, Willie was never without a lariat in his hands.

# Will Rogers

## A Family Remembrance

By Renee Sansom Flood



*Will Rogers and his wife Betty (in polka dot dress) stand with Betty’s family before his flight to Alaska. William (Billy) Quisenberry) sits on the lawn in front of his Uncle Will.*

Willie’s father wanted his strong-willed son to go to school but the boy had other ideas. He only lasted through 10th grade. Summing up his education, he quipped, “I spent ten years in the fourth grade.” The adventurous young cowboy preferred a horse, a lariat and the wide open spaces. Willie’s first real experience away from home was the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair, where he saw the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show. That was all it took.

Will Rogers joined Texas Jack’s Wild West Show billed as, “The Cherokee Kid: Fancy Lasso Artist and Rough Rider,” fulfilling his dream of traveling the globe. One reviewer wrote of Will’s act, “The Cherokee Kid...fairly dazzled

the crowd.” Will often told his audience: “There is nothing of which I am more proud than my Cherokee blood.”

In spectacular performances, while working multiple ropes independently, Will Rogers chewed gum and spun yarns at the same time. His funny stage antics and spontaneous jokes were just as popular as his rope tricks. He told a crowd, “I have chewed gum more than any living man. Why, I have had gum that wouldn’t last you over half a day, while there are others which are like wine – they improve with age.” On the subject of politics, Will just grinned, “Once a man holds public office he is absolutely no good for honest work.” The audience roared.



It wasn't long before he was chewing gum in vaudeville, a career which scandalized his girlfriend, Betty Blake. She refused his proposal of marriage and it would take Will Rogers eight more years before Betty would take him seriously enough to marry him. Years later, Betty recalled, "He hated to lose a moment of his life: he wanted to do everything right now." From then on, Betty knew her restless husband would always be on the move. And move they did, right into silent films and then to talkies. As his fame grew, Will kept his head. "I'm just an old country boy," he said, "trying to get along." Rogers remained a humble man even after his prolific stage, screen and radio career brought the rich and famous to meet him at his stage door every night. He starred in the Ziegfeld Follies, had a popular radio program, made over 71 movies and wrote thousands of nationally syndicated newspaper columns read by 40 million readers every day.

After the Stock Market Crash and the Great Depression left people broke in the "Dirty Thirties," Will's wise and witty sayings were broadcast over the radio while one-third of the nation listened. His delivery was like a folk song fresh from the heart. "The quickest way to double your money," he said, "is to fold it and put it back in your pocket!" On another broadcast he gave the advice: "The time to save is now. When a dog gets a bone, he doesn't go out and make a down payment on a bigger bone. He buries the one he's got."



*Children loved Will Rogers*

Rogers was appalled by the poverty he saw during the Depression. Instead of just talking about it, he barnstormed the country by plane, landing in pastures and fields to give benefit performances in order to give rousing, uplifting speeches to people who had lost everything – the country folks he loved so well. Will Rogers gave enormous amounts of money to the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army to aid Depression victims. On one plane trip across the country, he came home exhausted after visiting 50 towns in 18 days.

On his beloved ranch in Santa Monica, Will Rogers was always humbled when famous people came to visit. His nephew Billy from Joplin, Missouri came every summer and

**"There are two ways to argue  
with a woman – and both don't work."**

\*\*\*\*\*

*Will Rogers*

remembers, "I waited for Uncle Will to come home from the movie studio and then, we'd saddle up. I rode a horse named "Chocolate" and Uncle Will rode "Soapsuds." We'd ride around the ranch checking on the progress of the crew working on the riding trails." Billy recalled many a barbecue on the patio and one dinner he will never, ever forget. The youngster knew he was dining with important people. "I was sitting at the table with Uncle Will, Louis B. Mayer of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Jack Warner, President of Warner Bros. Studio and Darryl F. Zanuck from Twentieth Century Fox. I chomped down on something during dinner and my tooth fell out! I grabbed my mouth and turned to my Aunt Betty. We were embarrassed but my aunt excused us from the table and everybody laughed. But I was disappointed because somehow, the tooth fairy never found my tooth!"

One year in late summer, "Uncle Will wanted to fly me home but mother said no. Another year Uncle Will and Aunt Betty flew in to visit us in Joplin. We picked them up at the airport and took Uncle Will to a radio station where he was to speak to the nation. Dad was driving down the street when all of a sudden, we ran out of gas! My dad, Uncle Will and I had to push the car out of the middle of the road. We got a good laugh and we made it to the radio station in time."

Will Rogers was fascinated with airplanes. He and his aviator friend Wiley Post had planned a long trip across Alaska and Siberia. Before they took off, Will sent a small fox fur to his wife with a precious note. The last words were "Lots of Love. Don't worry. Dad" On August 16, 1935, the Rogers family was shocked and heart broken when the news flashed across the world that Will Rogers, age 55 and his pilot Wiley Post had perished in a plane crash near an Eskimo village in Alaska. Days later, Betty opened Will's final gift and read his note. She wept, but she was not alone. The world mourned with her.

Will Rogers captured the hearts of millions of Americans when they needed him the most. Twelve year-old Billy and his mother were barely able to board the private funeral train in Kansas City. Billy remembers the trip. "We almost lost our luggage. Thousands of people met the train at every station all the way to California. Mobs of

people were held back from the funeral cortege on the route from Santa Monica to Pasadena along Sunset Blvd." The casket lay in state at Forest Lawn Memorial Park and 50 thousand people stood in the hot sun awaiting their turn to file past. One of the best loved celebrities of all time was gone but the Cherokee Cowboy and his home-spun wisdom and humor will always bring a smile to our hearts.

Nine years after her husband's death, Betty Rogers succumbed to cancer in 1944. Upon her death, her children fulfilled their mother's wish to bequeath the Will Rogers Ranch to California for a state park.

After graduating from Annapolis Naval Academy, William "Billy" Quisenberry spent 33 years in the Navy. He served as lead navigator clearing mines from bays in Japan, Guam and the Philippines. He later became an intelligence officer using stealth submarines to watch Russian ships. William then went to the Pentagon and retired from the Defense Intelligence Agency 35 years ago. Today, he is a successful entrepreneur for a human Genome DNA vitamin supplement business. William follows in his Uncle Will's footsteps, donating to worthwhile projects, including Father Emmett Hoffmann's Soaring Eagle Heritage Living Center for Cheyenne elders.



# A Donor's Birthday Wish Comes True

Harry, Susan and daughter Katherine came all the way from Maryland to attend Father Emmett's 84th birthday celebration on July 27, 2010. The trip was Katherine's special gift to her father. Last spring Katherine had asked, "Dad, if you could go anywhere on your 70th birthday, where would you like to go?" Harry's answer came effortlessly but it surprised Katherine. "I'd love to go to Montana and meet Father Emmett Hoffmann and the Cheyenne people. I can't believe there is really such a man who has given his whole life helping people who needed him."

Harry and Susan were Soaring Eagle donors but it was not until Harry read Father's biography, *Renegade Priest of the Northern Cheyenne*, that he became really interested in the Cheyenne people and Father Emmett's lifetime commitment to them.

It's not often when a daughter can give such a meaningful gift to her dad. But Harry is no ordinary dad and Katherine is no ordinary daughter. Ashland, Montana was their destination, a remote little village surrounded by rolling, pine-covered forests and fantastic sandstone outcrops overlooking the

eastern edge of the Northern Cheyenne Reservation.

On the way, they passed the Little Bighorn Battlefield site, Lane Deer Agency, St. Labre Mission and the Range Riders Museum, but the real treat was still to come and Harry was excited to meet Father Emmett. The weather was perfect with a little breeze on the lawn in back of the Heritage Living Center. Harry's birthday wish came true when he met Father Emmett and the Cheyenne elders and friends. Both men had tears in their eyes, especially Harry, who took a while to compose himself. Before long, the Cheyenne invited Harry to join a hand game and he was right at home.

A description of the birthday party can be found elsewhere in this newsletter but needless to say, Harry and his family had a marvelous time and after meeting the Renegade Priest, Harry summed it up. "Father Emmett has restored my faith and it was truly a privilege to meet him."

*Traveling from Maryland to meet Father Emmett, this family also saw the West for the first time.*



## Your Will Keeps on Giving

**Please use one of the following sample forms of bequest when preparing your Will:**

A. (Whatever is left after other bequests have been granted) "All the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate, I bequeath to Soaring Eagle Public Charity, a corporation created under the Laws of the State of Montana, located at Billings, Montana."

B. "I give, devise, and bequeath to Soaring Eagle Public Charity, a corporation created under the Laws of the State of Montana, located at Billings, Montana, \_\_\_\_\_% of my estate."

C. "I give, devise, and bequeath to Soaring Eagle Public Charity, a corporation created under the Laws of the State of Montana, located at Billings, Montana, the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_."

D. "I give, devise, and bequeath to Soaring Eagle Public Charity, a corporation created under the Laws of the State of Montana, located at 745 Indian Trail, P.O. Drawer 879 in Billings, Montana, 59103, the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ for the Wall of Living Memories Fund, to care for Cheyenne elders, the principal of which shall remain in perpetuity."

These are sample forms only. Consult your attorney when preparing any legal document.

# A CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY IS A SMART IDEA

Warren Donovan is an energetic, 88 year-old, retired business owner. He and his son David just returned from Florida, after helping people who had lost their livelihoods in the fishing industry after the Gulf Oil Spill.

Warren and his wife Janet first met Fr. Emmett in 2002, when they came to the opening of the Heritage Living Center. At that time they were both 80 years-old. The couple loved the Center and enjoyed visiting with the elders. They decided they wanted to help the elders by setting up two separate Soaring Eagle Gift Annuities of \$10,000. Each spouse named the other as beneficiary. The annuity rate at that time was 8.1 percent and they each received annuity payments of \$810 a year.

In addition, the couple filed an itemized Income Tax Return that year and claimed the annuities as income tax deductions of over \$4,000 each. This was a smart idea and a unique opportunity because in effect, the charitable deductions reduced the cost of making their gifts by offsetting income taxes that would otherwise have been payable by the donors.

Sadly, Mrs. Donovan passed away in 2006 and as her beneficiary, Warren now receives his late wife's annuity benefit, as well as his own. He regularly keeps in touch with us and last week he called to say that he wants

another \$10,000 Soaring Eagle Gift Annuity at 5.2 percent, with his 65 year-old son David named as beneficiary. At the current rate, Warren will receive a charitable tax deduction of \$2,898 and a yearly income payment of \$520. When he passes away, his legacy of charitable giving will live on, both as a gift and a life-income arrangement for his son.

A Soaring Eagle Gift Annuity is a meaningful way to make a gift that will help Father Emmett provide loving care for 40 Northern Cheyenne elders, while securing your income for life, as well as your designated beneficiary.

Planned gifts can be made during a donor's lifetime and they can also be made in a donor's Will or Living Trust. The appropriate arrangement for each donor varies according to the donor's age, the type of assets being used and the donor's own financial needs and goals.

All Soaring Eagle Gift Annuity rates follow the guidelines of the American Council on Gift Annuities and are based on your age at the time the annuity is established. If you are interested in exploring the rewards of a Soaring Eagle Charitable Gift Annuity, (minimum of \$5,000) please call or email our Office Manager, Kim Flagen, to request a no-obligation annuity proposal at 406-256-8500, or email her at [kflagen@msn.com](mailto:kflagen@msn.com).

## Soaring Eagle Annuity Rates

*Rates effective 7-1-2010  
One Life*

Age	Rate	Age	Rate
<b>65-66</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>7.0</b>
<b>67</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>7.2</b>
<b>68</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>7.4</b>
<b>69-70</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>7.5</b>
<b>71</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>7.7</b>
<b>72</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>7.9</b>
<b>73</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>8.1</b>
<b>74</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>8.3</b>
<b>75</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>8.6</b>
<b>76</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>8.9</b>
<b>77</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>9.2</b>
<b>78</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>90+</b>	<b>9.5</b>

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*Sharing a chuckle at the Heritage Living Center.*



*Evening light highlights a Cheyenne dancer spinning in her regalia at the Heritage Living Center during Father Emmett's birthday celebration.*



Father Emmett's Biography,  
Renegade Priest of the  
Northern Cheyenne

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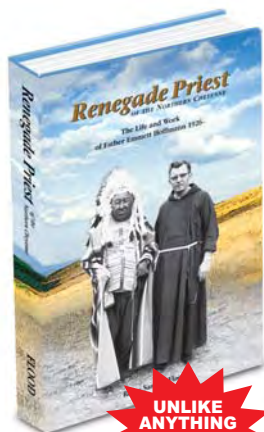
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This is a non-binding proposal. Upon receipt of actual payment for an annuity, a formal contract will be mailed. For more information call (406) 256-8500.





## Renegade Priest of the Northern Cheyenne

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