



## A Note From Father Emmett

What happened to our usual cold and snowy Montana winter weather? During the winter of 2010, we had over 70 days of snowfall, yet this year we are experiencing an early spring. Flowers are blooming and birds are singing while building their nests. My little dog Fergie and I love to hear the meadowlarks and robins announcing their arrival, although Fergie would much rather chase them as listen to their songs. But I know that in Montana the weather can change in 5 minutes.

How well I recall my first Montana winter in 1954-1955, which was unbelievably warm. We didn't have any rain or snow from July until Palm Sunday, when we had over three feet of snow in eighteen hours. This year we are praying for rain to protect the ranchers' crops and to prevent grass and forest fires, which have seriously threatened the Heritage Living Center on more than one occasion.

However, since ancient times, the Cheyenne have welcomed the smoke of healing plants such as cedar, sage and tobacco in their ceremonies. Tobacco smoke, symbolizing prayers rising up to the Creator, heralded the Cloth

Ceremony at the Heritage Living Center this spring.

Staff member, DeWanda Little Coyote requested that elder Charles Little Old Man lead the Cloth Ceremony for the residents and employees at the Center on March 18<sup>th</sup> and she offered the gift of tobacco to him at the beginning of the ceremony.

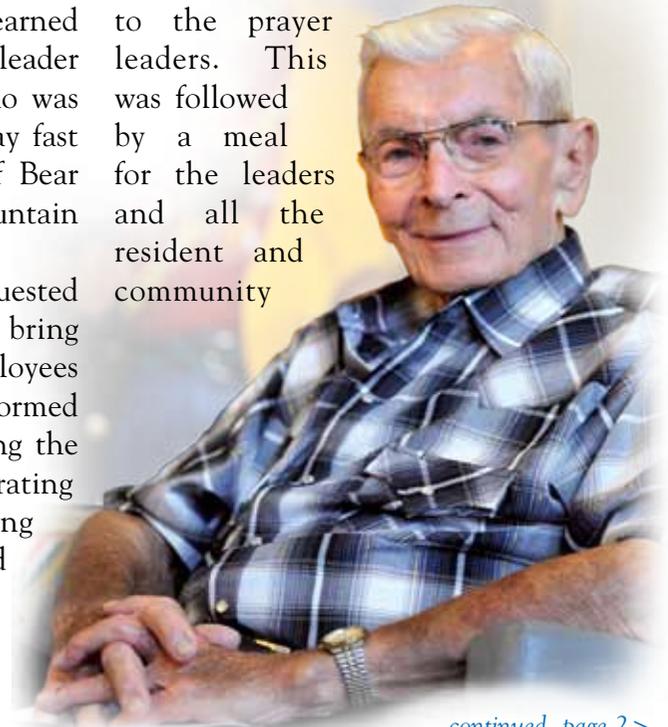
Richard Tall Bull, a resident elder at the Center shares his interpretation of the Cloth Ceremony. Richard earned the right to become a prayer leader from the late Lee Lone Bear, who was Richard's instructor during a 4-day fast without food or water on top of Bear Butte, the Cheyenne Sacred Mountain in South Dakota.

The Cloth Ceremony was requested to wipe away sickness and to bring blessings to the residents and employees at the Center. This ceremony is performed on many different occasions asking the Creator's blessings for those celebrating a birthday, wedding or during hardships, illnesses, depression and other special needs.

The ceremony began with the blessing of the earth, with the smoke of burning sage rising to

purify the ground. Charles Little Old Man then offered prayers as burning cedar rose into the sky for the blessing of the white, yellow, red, black, green and blue cloths held up by helper Francis Limpy. The residents, staff and community members were then wiped off with the cloths while facing the four cardinal directions.

When the ceremony ended, gifts were distributed to the prayer leaders. This was followed by a meal for the leaders and all the resident and community



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participants. Afterward, everyone felt refreshed, purified and full of good cheer. One of the most important factors about the Heritage Living Center is our

ongoing respect for traditional Cheyenne ceremonies and culture.

Today, it's hard to believe that the Center was dedicated ten years ago, in August 2002. The "Miracle on the Hill" above Ashland has been a blessing for many Cheyenne elders who have been able to enjoy their old age in a warm, safe home, never worrying about where their next meal is coming from.

On Friday, August 31, 2012, we are planning a 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Heritage Living Center Celebration. Plans are underway to be part of the Northern Cheyenne Labor Day Pow Wow, so it will be a big weekend for us. If you are coming our way, give us a call so that we can assist you in finding suitable

accomodations. You are welcome to come and take part in our celebration.

If you are planning a summer vacation that includes Montana, we would love to see you. Other than the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary weekend, we usually have overnight lodging for one or two families. Please call our Soaring Eagle office at 406-256-8500 to arrange a visit. Fergie and I will be delighted to see you.

Your beggar friend,

*Father Emmett Hoffmann*

Father Emmett Hoffmann

On a recent evening Peter John Wilson took to the hills surrounding the HLC to locate an eagle-trap site he had seen up there before. Built by Northern Cheyennes along the Tongue River long ago, an eagle trap such as this was the only way to capture the bird and obtain its prized feathers. A tandem of Native Americans would crouch in a shallow pit while hidden beneath timbers, on top of which a rabbit was

placed to attract the eagles. When the bird landed on the frame to inspect the rabbit, one of the Indians would reach through the timbers, grab the raptor by its talons, and the other man would kill it. Asked how long ago he thought it may have been in use, Peter John noted he hadn't the faintest idea. "I ain't no anthropologist," he chuckled. Along the way Peter John also inspected a massive clump of pine branches

molded to a tree which was (obviously to him) an owl's nest. When not exploring the outdoors, Peter John can be found in his cozy apartment making ceremonial pipes and other native artifacts, or back outside preparing the sweat lodge. "I have to be doing something!" he says. Residents at the HLC get to choose whatever pace of life they desire. For Peter John, that's one of his life's simple pleasures.



Prayer Cloth Ceremony



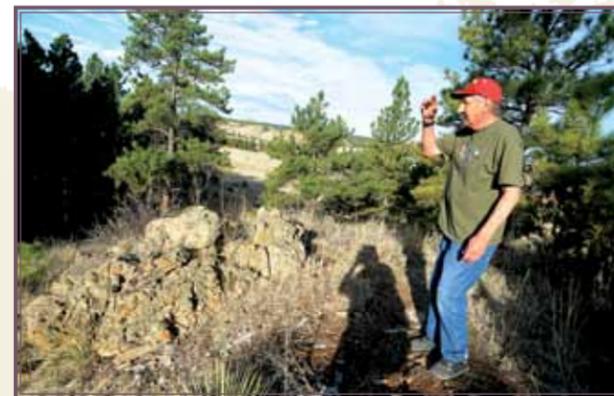
Eagle Trap



# A HIKE WITH Peter John



Owl's Nest



# “Don’t Ask Me If I Am Related to *Geronimo!*”

BY RENEE SANSOM FLOOD

Bertha Alice Soontay Hogan, a resident at the Heritage Living Center, has called Montana home for 62 years. Originally from Oklahoma, Bertha grew up in a large farm family of eight children, all lovingly cared for by her Kiowa mother, Alice Domebo and her Mescalero Apache father, Harold Soontay.

Bertha’s dad, a well respected spokesman for his tribe, acted as liaison between Mescalero tribal leaders and government officials. Orphaned at an early age, Harold Soontay was raised and educated at the local Presbyterian Mission. In later years, his farm was a flowered oasis of fruit orchards, providing crops of peaches, cherries, plums, apricots, wild pears, walnuts and delicious pecans. His industrious wife sold colorful, handmade quilts and shawls to help provide for her family.

Folklorist and educator Mody C. Boatright hired Harold as interpreter for his book of Apache stories, *The Sky is My Tipi*, but he soon found out that Soontay was a force to be reckoned with. Harold was sick and tired of people asking him about Geronimo and he let Boatright know from the start, “Don’t ask me if I am related to Geronimo!” This surprising admonition shocked Boatright as he had assumed that all Apaches considered the

courageous Chiricahua Apache war chief a hero. Harold Soontay was well aware that Geronimo had led his warriors against the “Americans,” when they had invaded



Bertha Hogan — 2012

Apache homelands, but Soontay’s tribe had dwindled to 100 members by 1918. He believed that more Apaches would have survived if Geronimo had taken a stand for peace instead of war.

Boatright was astonished again to find that Soontay bought the Sunday issues of

the *Chicago Tribune* and subscribed to the *National Geographic Magazine*, carefully storing every issue in his basement. The Mescalero could talk politics as well as any and he knew in 1934, before most Americans, that Adolph Hitler would someday become a threat to the world. Boatright later noted, “Harold was by far the best interpreter in the tribe. I knew I could always rely upon him and depend upon him. He was a real friend and I am proud to call him that.” In a fascinating twist, after years of difficult translations, Harold Soontay’s name does not appear in Boatright’s book. We surmise that Soontay, a humble man, had asked the folklorist to use an anonymous name instead of his own.

Another interesting fact is that Bertha’s mother, Alice, was a close relative of Chief Lone Wolf, the much feared Kiowa warrior, who, like Geronimo, fought nearly to the death to protect his people, only to die in military captivity far from his homeland. Bertha does not recall her mother and father discussing the old ways and perhaps peace in their home was secured by Alice’s wise and quiet nature.

In 1950, Bertha graduated from high school and entered nursing school in Lawton, Oklahoma. After finishing her nursing degree, she was sent to her first

post with the Indian Health Service at Poplar, Montana, where she suffered from the harsh weather. “That first winter,” she recalled, “it was so cold, I couldn’t breathe when I stepped outside.” After three years, Bertha transferred to the Crow Reservation, also in Montana, where she met her future husband, George Hogan III. George had served under General Douglas MacArthur in Japan during World War II and Bertha admired him.

The devoted couple married and raised three children; Gregory and Howard Hogan and Nettie Kinard. Their oldest adopted granddaughter, Georgette Boggio, graduated from law school at Stanford and is presently the Big Horn County Attorney in Montana. Bertha’s youngest adopted granddaughter is Charissa He Does It of Crow Agency.

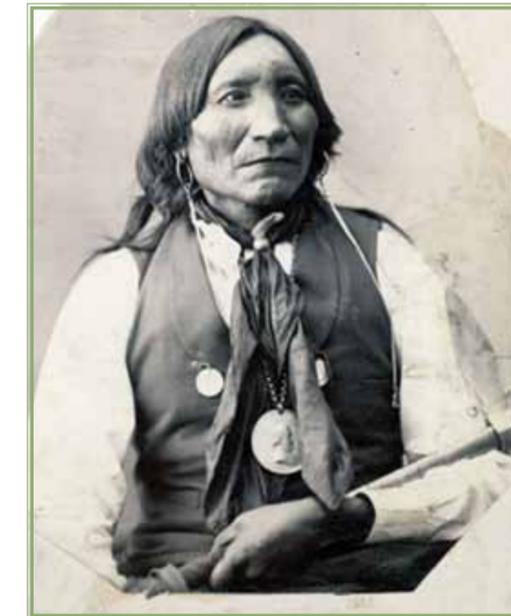
Retired after 30 years of nursing, Bertha explains her philosophy of service: “I always thought that if a patient was

my sister or my aunt, I’d want her to be treated right. I treated every person like my own relative.” But like her father, Bertha speaks her mind about changes in the current Indian Health Service. “Conditions are worse than when I first started nursing. We are losing our doctors. People must wait long hours to be seen. Pregnant mothers are sent by ambulance an hour away to deliver their babies and they are frightened of giving birth in the ambulance.”

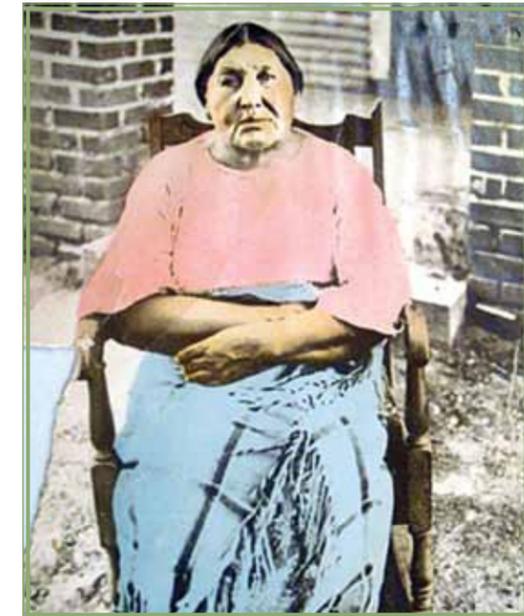
Yet, despite her concerns about government Indian hospitals, Bertha is “comfortable” living at the Heritage Living Center. “My transportation, physical and spiritual needs are met,” she says. “Here I can live independently without imposing on anyone. I love it.” Her father, Harold Soontay, Chief Lone Wolf and yes - even the famous Geronimo - would be proud of Bertha’s long and devoted service to thousands of Native people.



Bertha Alice Soontay in her nurse’s uniform



Kiowa War Chief, Lone Wolf



Sahnema or Snake Woman, Bertha’s Kiowa Grandmother



Mescalero Apache Tribal Leader,  
Harold Soontay — Bertha’s Father



# Easter Sunday

Easter Sunday was gloriously sunny and warm - perfect weather for the annual Easter egg Hunt at the HLC. Children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of residents and staff fanned out across the grounds with their baskets looking for brightly colored eggs hidden in the grass.



DETACH, MOISTEN GLUE STRIP AND SEAL



## Greetings From Big Sky Country



Mike Skaggs

I truly enjoy. I find them to be wonderful, warm and friendly people, with a touch of humor that keeps me on my toes.

For example, I recently spent time sharing stories with our Kiowa/Apache resident, Bertha Hogan, a gracious lady who always has a cheery greeting. Every time I see her, she reminds me that elders have a wealth of knowledge to share. Bertha is so open and interesting, I soon found myself sharing my own life history with her.

Come to find out, Bertha and I were born about 70 miles apart in Oklahoma. We shared some laughs and marveled at how two Oklahomans ended up in the north country of Montana, far from the red dirt and chiggers of our youth. We both remember tracking in red dirt on our shoes all over the house, visiting grandparents and watching for tornadoes. Many of our relatives still live in Oklahoma and family is still the most important aspect of our lives. I invite

you to read more about Bertha's family and her long, productive career in this issue of *Signals*.

I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce you to a new section of our newsletter that contains vital information for donors to use when contemplating their future plans and the future of loved ones and causes that are important to them.

I want to communicate my willingness to help you, your family members and advisors in any way I can. In future issues of *Signals* we will send more thoughtful information you can use in your daily life. Call me with questions and I will make myself available to you, because I know that future financial planning is of critical importance to us all in this complex, changing world.

In our youth we look forward with eagerness. In old age we look backward to fond memories. But all too often, we are so absorbed in today, we forget that our greatest legacy comes when we plan for the future of our children and grandchildren.

So long from Big Sky Country,

Mike Skaggs  
Soaring Eagle CEO



## 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.

# Giving Options —for— Soaring Eagle Donors



Soaring Eagle and the Northern Cheyenne elders living at the Heritage Living Center are grateful for the generous support our donors provide to operate our assisted living home. For all your gifts we say a heartfelt, "Thank You!"

Cash gifts are always welcome to help us pay our daily expenses of caring for the elders. We know that our friends have limited resources with many living on fixed incomes. We want our donors to live safe, stable and comfortable lives. We rely on you and know that our faithful donors are those who are secure and have the freedom to give generously. Yes, sometimes a friend will sacrifice and do without to benefit

our work. For these sacrificial gifts, there are no words in the English or Cheyenne languages that can express our gratitude. Please know that your ongoing gifts are needed and much appreciated.

In this new addition to our *Signals* newsletter, we want to introduce you to ways of giving that may stimulate some thought and be of help to you, your loved ones, and Soaring Eagle in the future. In most cases, the methods of giving will take some time to plan. It may involve family members and trusted advisors such as attorneys, financial planners, and accountants. Often, the charity is involved in helping with the giving

plan. This type of giving is usually called, "Planned Giving."

A planned gift speaks volumes about you and the people and charities important to you. Your plans can be an example for adult children and grandchildren who will handle the resources given to them or earned during their lifetimes. Your example can be a wonderful gift to them.

For you, satisfaction and peace of mind comes from knowing that your plans will meet your current and future needs and the needs of loved ones. And when appropriate, your plans can support Soaring Eagle and other charities that are important to you.

## Giving Through Your Will

Did you know you already have a will? That may surprise you. Your state of residence has written a will for you and if you do not prepare a will of your own or a living trust with specific instructions for transferring your property, state law will dictate where your property goes. Chances are that generic, state laws will not meet your needs, the needs of your loved ones, and certainly not those of

Soaring Eagle and other favorite charities.

Only by preparing a will or living trust can you provide for your loved ones and the charities important to you. Through your will you can continue supporting Soaring Eagle by giving:

- ♦ A specific amount
- ♦ Specific property such as securities, real estate and other property
- ♦ A percentage of the value of your estate
- ♦ A remainder or residual gift (what is left after other gifts to beneficiaries are made)

## Giving Through Your Retirement Plan

Similar to a remainder gift through your will, a gift through your retirement plan can benefit our work in the future. By naming Soaring Eagle as a beneficiary to your retirement account, you make a gift of what remains after you no longer need it, usually at death.

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## Giving Through Your Retirement Plan

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You maintain control of your funds, enjoy the income it produces, and utilize that income as your needs change throughout your lifetime. By giving through a retirement plan beneficiary designation, you make a future gift to us. At the end of life, the amount left in your account is transferred to Soaring Eagle. Additionally, giving through a retirement account can be a tax-wise way to give to charity and preserve other assets for family and friends.

## Gifts of Securities

Although the stock market has fluctuated in recent years, many investors are starting to see recovery in the value of their stock portfolios. Rather than selling stock and giving cash to Soaring Eagle, some donors find they may benefit and save on taxes by giving stock and making a larger donation at the same cost. For example, a donor making regular gifts to Soaring Eagle for several years may consider the advantages of transferring stock instead of giving cash. If the stock was sold, a tax on the capital gain would be paid. By giving the stock, no capital gains tax is paid and the donor can also claim a charitable deduction for the full fair market value of the stock as allowed by law.

## Giving and Receiving – Gift Annuities

Many Soaring Eagle donors have discovered they can give and receive a fixed income for the rest of their lives by utilizing a gift annuity. The donor transfers cash or stock to Soaring Eagle in exchange for an annuity payment. Payments can be made annually, semi-annually, quarterly or monthly. A Soaring Eagle Gift Annuity pays a rate of return based on the donor's age (1 or 2 persons) and once established, the rate never changes. Donors find that a gift annuity is a good way to give **and** continue to enjoy income from the assets they gave away.

Gift annuities provide a charitable tax deduction in the year of the gift, up to the limits allowed by federal income tax law. Excess charitable deductions can be carried forward for up to five years. Some states allow a charitable tax deduction. If the gift annuity is funded with appreciated securities, some of the capital gain income is spread over several years and a reduction in estate taxes may be possible.

Many Soaring Eagle donors have used gift annuities to augment their retirement income or provide an income for a loved one. Some donors have even deferred receiving the income until they need it during their retirement years.

See the Gift Annuity Chart on the right for current rates, or send in the gift annuity information request form for a free, no obligation proposal.

## Let's Talk

We hope these ideas cause you to consider not so much, "Should I give?" but, rather "How should I give to Soaring Eagle?" By carefully planning what and when to give, you can have a dramatic impact on our worthwhile work of caring for Cheyenne elders at the Heritage Living Center. We would be pleased to work with you and your advisors when you consider, "Planned Giving." For more information contact Mike Skaggs, Soaring Eagle CEO, P.O. Box 879, Billings, Montana 59103, or call us at 406-256-8500.

*The information in this newsletter is presented to Soaring Eagle's donors and friends to provide general information and encourage charitable giving. Soaring Eagle is a public charity incorporated in the state of Montana and does not engage in rendering legal, tax, financial, or any other professional advice. Consult your own professional advisors as it pertains to your individual situation. Consult an attorney if your plans require the creation of or revision of a will or other legal document. Tax deductions vary based on numerous factors including personal financial circumstances, tax codes, and applicable federal discount rates, which can change each month. Charitable gift annuities may not be available in all states.*

## SOARING EAGLE Annuity Rates

One Life Annuity Rates Effective 1-1-2012

| Age   | % Rate |
|-------|--------|
| 65    | 4.7    |
| 66-67 | 4.8    |
| 68    | 4.9    |
| 69    | 5.0    |
| 70    | 5.1    |
| 71    | 5.3    |
| 72    | 5.4    |
| 73    | 5.5    |
| 74    | 5.7    |
| 75    | 5.8    |
| 76    | 6.0    |
| 77    | 6.2    |
| 78    | 6.4    |
| 79    | 6.6    |
| 80    | 6.8    |
| 81    | 7.0    |
| 82    | 7.2    |
| 83    | 7.4    |
| 84    | 7.6    |
| 85    | 7.8    |
| 86    | 8.0    |
| 87    | 8.2    |
| 88    | 8.4    |
| 89    | 8.7    |
| 90+   | 9.0    |

Lower two life rates are available. Please contact us for information.

## Plan for your future & the future of the Cheyenne elders.

*Consider for a moment how you can...*

- ◆ Receive a fixed income for life.
- ◆ Save money on your taxes.
- ◆ Help Cheyenne elders at the Heritage Living Center.

Soaring Eagle offers gift annuities with **income rates as high as 9.0%**

To learn how a Soaring Eagle charitable gift annuity can benefit you, please request our free, no-obligation proposal.

Please return the gift annuity reply slip in this newsletter or call Mike Skaggs at 406-256-8500.



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

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**YES, I'm interested in a Soaring Eagle Charitable Gift Annuity.  
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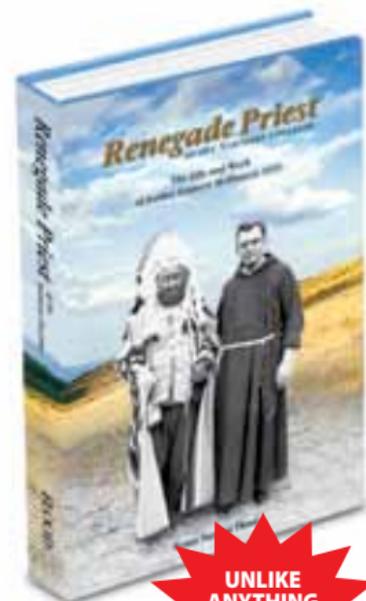
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City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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