

# HERITAGE



# The History of The Native Americans Of Council Bluffs

## How the month came to be:

Through the course of U.S. history, Native American peoples have struggled through oppression and forced assimilation. Through events such as the Trail of Tears, where the Cherokees' land was taken and they were forcibly relocated, the Native American people have continued to fight for equal rights.

November is Native American Heritage Month, which was made official in August of 1990 by George H.W. Bush.

It was established to help illuminate the contributions that the Native American peoples have made to help the United States grow, and to help people be aware of not only the struggles they have faced throughout history, but also the discrimination that they still face in current times.

The month itself has greatly helped in preserving and helping cherish Native American history. There are a plethora of activities and ceremonies within communities to help Native peoples express themselves through traditional art and music. No matter the harsh or evil condition they were put through, the Native American people were, and still are, able to persevere in times of tragedy.

“Opening yourself to another worldview will assist you in understanding what occurs both in and outside of native communities.”

- Lakota Elder Dottie LeBeau

“May the stars carry your sadness away, may the flowers fill your heart with beauty, may hope forever wipe away your tears, and, above all, may silence make you strong.”

- Chief Dan George

## History in Council Bluffs:

The history of Council Bluffs is rich with Native American history. The Otoe-Missouria tribe separated into two tribes, but both still traveled towards the Missouri River in Southwest Iowa and Southeast Nebraska, where they still lived within close proximity to each other.

For many years, they lived in peace as hunters and farmers, with many acres of farmable land. However, everything changed for these tribes with the arrival of the early American settlers and the exploration of Lewis and Clark.

In 1804, the Otoe and Missouri tribes met with Lewis and Clark, where the men wanted to offer peace, but also forced the Natives to be controlled by the new government.

The tribes had already diminished greatly because of new diseases that the settlers had carried. This caused the tribes to once again join with each other again with the hope that they would once again be a large tribe.

The tribe's land was taken from them, and they were forced to relocate to Oklahoma, where many of the members still reside.



Artist's rendition of Chief Big Horse, a native of the area who was awarded a peace medal by Lewis and Clark. This would lead to Big Horse's punishment as he did not have the rank to accept the award.