



APHIS Native American Notebook

[an e-update on Native American Program Delivery in APHIS]

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APHIS' First Tribal Scholar—in Her Own Words

By Eugenia Tashquinth

Editor's Note: When the agency's first "1994 Tribal Scholar," Ms. Eugenia Tashquinth, arrived in Riverdale for her first summer of employment with the Animal Care program, we asked her to give us a biographical piece for the *APHIS Native American Notebook*. She complied right away, but we are extremely late in getting this issue to press. Eugenia wrote the following first-person article in early July, while she was still physically present at headquarters. Now, of course, she has returned to school in Arizona. But we'll be seeing her again next summer because working for APHIS during school breaks is one of the requirements of the 1994 Tribal Scholars program.

My name is Eugenia Tashquinth. I am APHIS' first 1994 Tribal Scholar. I am 21 years old, the youngest of seven siblings, and the first in my family to go to college. I'm going into my second year at Tohono O'odham Community College, where my focus is on agriculture and natural resources, though it might change. My dream is to become a veterinarian. I've thought about specializing in equine, but I am still undecided. I come from Sells, AZ, which is located in the southern part of the State in the Sonoran Desert. I am of the Tohono O'odham (People of the Desert) and the Akimel O'odham (River People), who are also known as Gila River, Salt River, Pima, and Maricopa Indians. I'm an enrolled member of the Tohono O'odham Nation (the second largest tribe in Arizona). In the past, the Tohono O'odham and the Akimel O'odham used to be one big tribe called the Papago. We are descendants of the Hokokam, and our language comes from Uto-Aztecan. The dialect is broken into two parts (the Gila River Indians speak the language differently than we, the O'odham, do). The history of my people dates to way before Christ, and we lived off the land growing our own crops, using the land's resources to make a living. When we grew crops we did not have an irrigation system—we used the pattern of the rainy season to grow our crops. We grew pinto beans, corn,

and cotton. We also gathered wild plants and vegetables from the desert. Like all other tribes, we have a creation story: our creator is I'toi.

I first found out about the USDA 1994 Tribal Scholars program through a posting on the bulletin board at TOCC. I walked by the posting for 3 months, and as time went on I grew curious and wondered what it was about. In March of 2009 I finally decided to check out the 1994 Tribal scholar scholarship in detail. I went to the financial aid building to inquire about the posting. I received a *thick* packet. I was hesitant for another week and didn't even open it. I had just stuffed it in my backpack and continued on my way. I then mentioned it to a classmate while preparing for a speech competition. I asked her whether I should or shouldn't apply. She replied, "Go for it, girl. It wouldn't hurt to at least try, even if it is 20 pages long. Just do it." Then I consulted my mother, uncle, best friend, and numerous other friends to see what they thought I should do. They all replied with a "Yes." After that, I was encouraged. I read through the packet and learned that it would be a good opportunity for me. So I got in touch with the faculty member listed as the point of contact, Paul Buseck. He was TOCC's agriculture and natural resources instructor. When I asked him about the scholarship, he was a lot more excited than I was that someone was interested in applying. He helped me with the steps for applying, and when he wasn't sure, he called the USDA tribal college liaison for our region, Velma Real Bird. It didn't help that I only had a few weeks to send in my application, but after getting all the paper work together and writing my personal essay, I was finished. Once I completed the paperwork, I was reluctant to submit it because I was fearful that I might be rejected. After submitting, it was even more nerve racking to have to wait for a reply.

It was summer (2009), and I decided to take some summer classes. Still no reply. The summer had come and gone, it was already time for the fall semester, and still no reply. By the time for midterm exams, I finally gave up hope that I was still in consideration for any type of USDA scholarship. Paul Buseck, who was just as anxious to find out the results, decided to call Ms. Real Bird to ask what was going on. Velma then called her boss, who informed her that there were **two** agencies considering me, and that I had to choose one. They were the Food Safety and Inspection Service and APHIS.

It took me some time to weigh the pros and cons of both agencies. I decided to go with APHIS. Another month passed before Ken Johnson called in November of 2009 to officially offer me the scholarship. I was in disbelief.

In December of 2009, all the parties signed a service agreement. I felt like I was joining the military with all the need for signatures and consensus that I understood the terms and regulations. The many months of waiting for the Department's decision on my application made me lose all excitement until the conference call about the agreement. That confirmed that it was real, and I was awarded the 1994 Tribal Scholarship with USDA/APHIS. During this call, Mr. Johnson set me up with my mentor, Dr. Rachel Cezar from Animal Care. The agreement stipulates that I would be working for AC during the summer of 2010.

My spring semester seemed to breeze by, and it was already summer—time to travel to Maryland and work at APHIS headquarters. I was very anxious and excited to meet new people and gain experience and knowledge from the individuals I'd be working with. I was also very anxious to meet the people I'd been having conversations with on the phone, especially with my mentor, Dr. Cezar. I left Arizona on May 25 and arrived in

Washington, DC, that same day. Dr. Cezar greeted me and took me to dinner and my apartment afterwards. The picture I painted of the people I'd been having conversations with over the phone was different than how they looked in real life. The only thing that wasn't different was that they were just as excited to meet me as I was to meet them ☺ . The first day was somewhat of a blur; I met more people than I could keep count of. I filled out a lot of paperwork, and that took up most of my first day. After the first week I became comfortable and well adjusted to the flow of things.

I feel very blessed to have this opportunity to work with such great people, and to get hands-on work with the USDA/APHIS/AC. This summer has been my first summer **far** away from home. I've really enjoyed my time here in Maryland, Washington DC, Silver Spring, and Riverdale, working and living. I also got to do quite a bit of traveling. I traveled to Tennessee to see my first Tennessee walking horse show, where I got to observe what inspectors and veterinary medical officers do. I traveled to Tallahassee, FL, for Ag-DISCOVERY to give a PowerPoint presentation on "Opportunities with APHIS" to high school students (yes, I was very nervous!). My last trip was to Santa Fe, NM, for the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) leadership conference. I networked with a lot of great American Indian leaders from all over the United States and Canada who are active in their tribal colleges and communities. On my flight from Albuquerque, NM, to Dallas-Fort Worth Airport, I did not meet but saw Joan Jett and the Blackhearts! I was sitting next to a member of the Blackhearts (one of the guitarists). Though I didn't get any pictures or autographs, it was awesome! I was too nervous to even ask. The only thing managed to ask was, "Where are you off to?" He replied, "Back home to New York," and that was it: a flight of 1 hour and 10 minutes, and that was all I could say. That is as close as I've ever gotten to a celebrity/ artist.



I am sad that the summer had to come to an end, but there is always next year. I do hope to continue working for Animal Care and be under the mentorship of Dr. Cezar. She is a great individual who is teaching me a lot, not only about veterinary school but about life, and she has encouraged me in numerous ways. I've also earned a lot from the staff of AC with their great sense of humor, optimism, and leadership skills.

I encourage any Native American/ American Indian who is attending one of the tribal land-grant colleges, or wants to, to apply for the 1994 Tribal Scholar's scholarship,

and/or any other scholarships. Do not let the obstacles, hardships, or fear of succeeding discourage you. *Anything worth having doesn't come easy; anything easy isn't worth having.*



During the summer, Eugenia traveled to horse shows where Animal Care veterinarians inspect animals for signs of soring—an illegal practice designed to train them more quickly to perform the high-stepping gait desired in the show ring. In the first picture, Eugenia tests a horse using state-of-the-art equipment. In the second photo, the same horse gets a manual examination. Below, Eugenia in front of the White House and with a pal in Maryland's horse country.



“Safeguarding Natural Heritage: Tohono Land Connections” Swings into Year 4

Right after Memorial Day, APHIS proudly sponsored the fourth renewal of the Tohono Land Connections (TLC) program on the reservation of the Tohono O’odham Tribe and the campus of the University of Arizona (UA). This year’s activities were funded by the Office of the Administrator rather than by individual line programs—a great boon for Native American Program-Delivery Manager (NAPDM) Janet Wintermute because it took her out of the fundraising arena altogether.

On-the-ground program manager Casey Kahn-Thornbrugh, a Ph.D. candidate at UA in climate change and adjunct faculty member at the Tohono O’odham Community College, stepped into his role from the #2 slot when longtime TOCC science professor Paul Buseck left the college in late spring. Casey and Paul’s assistant, Josh Garcia (an undergraduate student in UA’s College of Agriculture and Life Sciences), took a more prominent role this year in terms of planning and course management. Paul had been the real linchpin in our operations since 2007, but his seconds in command stepped right up to the plate, and the TLC program ran smoothly again this year.

We maintained most elements from the old curriculum, which featured modules on activities from Animal Care, Biotechnology Regulatory Services, Plant Protection and Quarantine, Veterinary Services, and Wildlife Services. Super thank-yous go out to instructors **Dr. Laurie Gage (AC); Carl Etsitty, Joel Floyd, and Tess Acosta Williams (all PPQ); Dr. Kerry Forsyth (VS); and Bill Stricklin (WS)**. It’s important to note that the travel costs for out-of-town presenters are covered by their own programs—a significant, but hidden, cost every year. Arizona ANAWG rep **Glen Ball (PPQ)** helped again with recruitment in the Yuma area this year. And **Tessie Acosta Williams** also told our story in the high schools of Phoenix.

For 2010, we added a new curriculum module to coordinate with USDA’s “Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food” initiative: we took the students to a farmers’ market in Tucson, bought some food items from the vendors there, and incorporated those foods into the participants’ regular supper that night.

This year’s class of 14 students, ranging in age from 14 to 17, included 3 Latino participants for the first time. The 9 tribal students came from Tohono O’odham, Navajo, San Carlos Apache, and Hopi. We’ve never had that many different tribes represented before.

Two former students, Gwynn Roach and Kristen Honie, returned as peer educators, helping the teenagers navigate campus life and stay on track with the academic parts of the program. Two new program assistants, Miriam Zmiewski–Angelova and Sky Antone, also took an active role in instruction modules.

That old saw about a picture’s being worth a thousand words is incorrect. A good picture is worth way more than a thousand words! Rather than tell you about the TLC program, we’d rather show you. First, a word from our sponsor: the desert of south-central Arizona. Joel Floyd snapped these wonderful images during Week One of the TLC program.



Spring 2010 was unusually wet in Arizona, and many local plants bloomed for the first time in more than a decade. This mountain—Baboquivari Peak—is the highest on the Tohono O'odham Nation. A cave near the summit is where the Creator brought the “People of the Desert” into being.



A young red-tailed hawk looks down at Joel from the top of a huge saguaro cactus that has just come into bloom. Saguaros grow straight up from a single stem for the first 70 years or so and then the big, curving branches begin to grow out and up. The dark holes in this very old specimen were excavated by smaller bird species looking for safe homes.



It may be dry in the desert, but it's not barren. Above, an Iron cross blister beetle. Below, a tarantula. TLC participants studied Arachnids in two separate modules during the program—one in the field and the second at UA's entomology museum.



Everything needs water, including these butterflies that Joel spotted drinking near a mud puddle. Below, Janet Wintermute found this butterfly in a mesquite tree at the tribe's water-restoration area on the San Xavier District about 20 minutes south of Tucson.



At the Cowlic Farm on the reservation, TLC participants learned about traditional dryland farming methods. Here, one of the girls winnows corn to separate the kernels from the chaff. The wind did its part (below), helping TLC students winnow garbanzo beans.



When the July monsoon rains hit the desert, farmers in the Southwest have to try to hold onto that invaluable water for their crops. Tribes that have been farming in the desert for centuries, like the Tohono O'odham, have developed special low-cost methods to conserve rainwater. During their trip to Cowlic Farm, the TLC students learned how to make a catchment dam.



First, farmers dig a straight ditch. They dump mesquite branches in the bottom of the ditch and bend sheets of wire (above) to make a loose "basket" to contain rocks. The rocks are manually stacked to assemble the catchment dam. Finally, the wire sheeting is wrapped around the line of rocks to hold everything together. Getting those rocks into position requires lots of heavy lifting. Below, the students form an assembly line to help tote the rocks to the dam.



Working in high heat demands cooperation. The man in the background in the cowboy hat is Paul Buseck, head of the TLC program from 2007 to 2009. Those legs at the bottom right-hand corner belong to students who are resting after their work digging the ditch.

In the next photo, students learn about soil properties by agitating samples through successively finer sieves:



Nearly all the participants think that the highlight of Week One is “horse camp.” Tribal member Si Johnson and his adult sons bring a string of well-trained horses, plus all the necessary tack, to a site on the reservation chosen for the purpose. There, Si teaches the teenagers about the challenges of his own life and about what it means to be an Indian today. He also provides plenty of hands-on instruction on how to take care of a horse, how to maintain saddles, bridles, and blankets, and how to ride safely.



Si Johnson sets up a traditional campfire and has the students arrange logs in a circle to sit on during his talk about spiritual traditions and right living. Horse camp helps the students reconnect with their tribal equine traditions and contributes to group solidarity.



In the background, students practice calf roping with an ingenious dummy animal mounted on a sawhorse made of metal piping. Foreground, a painted gourd and food gifts are set out to honor the Creator. The wooden staffs with their eagle feathers and colorful streamers represent the ancestors and are installed as a sign of respect for the ones who have gone before.



Around the ceremonial campfire, Si tells stories about challenges he has faced down in his personal life. Just to the right of the fire circle is that roping dummy from an angle that shows its head and horns.



Peer educator Gwynn Roach (left) demonstrates how to get a horse to accept the bit. Gwynn wants to establish a rodeo stock-production ranch after college.



Si has the students run the horses around the ring for a while before everybody saddles up. The gorgeous palomino at the right is his own mount.



If this is your first time in the saddle, it's a good idea to let somebody on the ground take the lead while you just get used to the view. In the middle, students capture the moment with their cellphone cameras.



As their confidence builds, the students ride unassisted.



Si talks about spirituality (note Baboquivari Peak in the background) in a prayer at sunrise while Casey Kahn-Thornbrugh, a member of the Wampanoag Tribe of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, holds up a saguaro rib that has an eagle feather attached. It is customary at Native American events to begin with a prayer. Remember this when you put on APHIS meetings where tribal members will be present.

Photos from Week 2 were taken by different contributors, who are acknowledged in each caption.

Did you ever wonder what makes a ribeye steak worth the USDA Choice seal? TLC program participants learned that firsthand when they visited the University of Arizona's meat lab in the northwestern part of Tucson. Dr. John Marchello explained to the students what physical qualities make a live steer likely to grade out well at slaughter. He showed color photographs of about six steers right before they were slaughtered at the lab and then matched the photographs to their dressed-out carcasses:



Once the students learned what to look for, it became apparent just how much variation there is from one cow to the next. Note that each of the carcasses has been sliced at a specific place. That cut reveals the ribeye, which gets measured for length and width to reveal the dimensions that determine (along with fat marbling characteristics) what USDA grade that steaks from that carcass will get. (APHIS photo by Janet Wintermute)

The students' bus trip to Nogales features PPQ and VS activities. First, the group toured the Main Customs Building and learned from PPQ employees how to inspect trays of seeds to find invasive species:



TLC participants quickly discovered the seeds of invaders deliberately mixed into pans of native seeds in a simulation exercise at the port of Nogales. (APHIS photo by Janet Wintermute.)

Then the group met with U.S. Customs and Border Protection inspectors at a huge truck intake facility near the U.S.–Mexico border. Our tour guides told hair-raising stories about huge shipments of illicit drugs hidden inside fruit and vegetable crates and subsequent shootouts as the drug traffickers, perched on a nearby hill in Mexico, saw that their “goods” were being confiscated.

Next we drove to the Nogales cattle-crossing point. Every livestock animal being imported into the United States at Nogales (mostly steers for finishing in America prior to slaughter, but some horses) gets sprayed with anti-tick medication just before running down a hill toward corrals where the animals drink, eat, and rest prior to shipping. The point of the spraying is to rule out the accidental importation of ticks that cause cattle fever, a serious threat to our beef industry.



Veterinary Services' veterinarian **Kerry Forsyth** (left) holds a notebook where stats are maintained on every steer that enters the United States at Nogales. The animals are only too happy to rush downhill and enter the orange-fenced corrals in the background, where cool water and plenty of hay await them. VS inspectors make sure the cattle are not put onto trucks and whisked away before the animals have had a chance to rest and eat.

TLC students visit Tucson's Reid Park Zoo every year during Week Two of the program. Animal Care's **Dr. Laurie Gage**—the agency's big-cat specialist—gives a slide presentation of her work as a veterinarian and helps the students understand what kind of preparation they'd need in order to get into vet school and prepare for a similar career with APHIS.

Then Zoo education specialist Jennifer Stoddard takes everybody on a behind-the-scenes tour of the zoo to explain what zoo keepers do. These non-veterinarians are in charge of seeing that all the animal species get the precise kind of food best for them, and much of the food is the same stuff you'd put on the dinner table at home:



Jennifer Stoddard holds the zoo's "cookbook," with recipes for appropriate foods for every species. Certain items that are not commercially available for human consumption, like horsemeat, figure into the diets of the big cats. (APHIS photo by Janet Wintermute.)

But zookeepers also worry about the psychological condition of the animals. Are they getting bored? One answer is to hide food items so the animals have to work for their supper. And sometimes the keepers provide treats like this tasty favorite destined for the polar bears' pool:



Zookeepers at the Reid Park Zoo concocted these special treat foods to keep the polar bears amused. First, the keepers drill holes through the coconuts and then they insert a fish or several mice and refreeze the whole thing. Since the coconuts float, the bears can bat the treats around their pool for a while before eating them. (Photo by TLC Program assistant Miriam Zmiewski-Angelova; reproduced by permission.)

Last year's article about the TLC Program covered the module at PPQ's pink bollworm lab extensively, so we're omitting that here. But we did add one all-new module to the curriculum this year: an afternoon visit to a farmers' market on the west side of Tucson.

In line with USDA's "Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food" initiative, we took the students to where they could meet grower-sellers and sample lots of foods with native significance. Janet supplemented our purchases at the market with some other varieties of heirloom (nonhybrid) tomatoes she picked up at a local organic grocery store. The kids taste-tested all the varieties and liked the one called 'Trest' the best. Trest was grown hydroponically by one of the vendors at the farmers' market. It comes from Holland.



One vendor offered gorgeous garlic, including a local version called 'Sonora Red.'
(APHIS photo by Janet Wintermute.)



This local vendor comes from an anti-diabetes community organization. She's showing two of the TLC students nutritional information and recipes. Diabetes is an extremely serious problem on reservations nationwide. Our modern 21st-century diet does not resemble the way Indian people ate before Europeans arrived.



Casey Kahn-Thornbrugh, on-the-ground manager for the TLC Program in 2010, consults with a tribal vendor who's showcasing several varieties of beans grown organically from ancient seed stocks. The Tohono O'odham have a couple unique bean varieties, and other tribes in the Southwest do, too. If you want to try growing some of these special varieties, get in touch with Seed Savers Exchange or Seeds for Change. A google search on the Web will reveal lots of sources for exotic beans of the Southwest. (APHIS photo by Janet Wintermute.)

As we do every summer, we close out the TLC Program with a visit to the San Xavier District's riparian restoration project. The tribe is bringing back to life what is now a dry wash but what used to be a major tributary of the Rio Grande River. They've installed a lake and replanted native species like mesquite and cottonwood trees. Some Tohono O'odham elders remember when the area looked like the restored section everywhere.

The tribe is justly proud of this effort. They've built a stunning ceramic tile entry monument:



(APHIS photo by Janet Wintermute.)



Parents rejoin the students at the riparian restoration site on the last day and everybody enjoys a feast prepared outdoors by program cooperators from the tribe. Right before that meal, everybody posed under a lath shade structure near the edge of the lake. At the far left is program assistant, and photographer, Miriam Zmiewski-Angelova. (APHIS photo by Janet Wintermute.)

APHIS is hopeful that the Tohono O’odham Community College will join forces with us again in 2011 for the fifth year of this progressive student-enrichment program.

The ANAWG’s Biennial Training Event and 2010 Awards

Thirty-five ANAWG representatives (both field-based and “voting” members) met in Albuquerque the week of August 23 for the Group’s biennial training session. We will be posting a full-length article about the training on the ANAWG’s Intranet page soon, and a GroupCast e-mail will go out to all employees calling their attention to the posting.

Suffice it to say, here, that the training vendors were terrific, and **Under Secretary Edward Avalos’** awards-banquet speech struck just the right note. He’s from New Mexico, and his Pueblo is close to receiving Federal recognition, so he had many useful and appropriate things to say to us.

The following 10 individuals received a stained-glass feather award for their outstanding contributions to the agency’s program-delivery efforts in Indian Country:

Plant Protection and Quarantine: Vicki Wohlers (NE), Al Tasker (Riverdale), Robert Clement (CA), Bob Baca (Riverdale), JoAnn Cruse (WI), Phil Bell (NC, accepting for the Emerald Ash Borer Team), Yvonne DeMarino (NY)

Veterinary Services: Sheryl Shaw (MN)

Wildlife Services: Dave Bergman (AZ) and Jason Suckow (WI)

Only four of the awards went to individuals nominated by ANAWG members. The rest of the candidates came to our attention because APHIS managers around the country put forward their names for recognition. Bob Baca, JoAnn Cruse, and Jason Suckow enjoyed the distinction of being nominated independently by two different recommenders.

Nebraska's All-Tribes / USDA Listening Session: An Idea Worth Replicating Elsewhere

One reason **Vicki Wohlers**, the PPQ State Director in Nebraska, got her award is that she took a lead role in creating a 1-day open meeting where members of that State's four federally recognized tribes and representatives from 10 USDA agencies could talk together about issues of mutual concern. Most such listening sessions are put together from the Washington, DC, level, but this one grew out of a grass-roots effort on the part of USDA employees across Nebraska.

The May 11 get-together was a smashing success: all the tribes had both their tribal council leaders and tribal business management representatives onsite. In all, 72 individuals participated at the meeting, which was held at the Life Long Learning Center at Northeast Community College in Norfolk, NE. The State Food and Agriculture Council spearheaded the effort.

The tribes included the Omaha Tribe of Nebraska, the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska, the Santee Sioux Nation of Nebraska, and the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska.

USDA agencies participating were APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine, the Food and Nutrition Service, the Forest Service, the Farm Service Agency, the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, the National Agricultural Statistics Service, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Risk Management Agency, and Rural Development. The Department's recently established Office of Advocacy and Outreach also joined in.

In her keynote speech, Rural Development's South Dakota State Director, Elsie Meeks, spoke of her own experiences as a Native American using USDA programs before coming to work for RD. She emphasized the Obama Administration's commitment to working with the tribes.

Each USDA agency sent an exhibit booth to the event (the ANAWG exhibit made a house call) so tribal members could pick up relevant publications about the Department's programs all at once. Breakout sessions included land-use management, economic and

community development, health and human services, and housing. All sessions featured presentations by USDA specialists.

A tribal opening prayer and the noon prayer and Spirit Plate—all customs of the tribes—were shared with everyone. Bison, *the* traditional protein source for Plains Indians, was served at lunch.

What the Nebraskans Did to Ensure a Successful Listening Session

If you want to host a similar event in your State, pay close attention to the next few paragraphs. These are the “best practices” you can build into your own plans!

First, tribal chairs were invited to offer input into the agenda and develop the meeting invitation list early in the planning process. They were empowered to select tribal spiritual leaders to provide the prayers and Spirit Plate ceremony.

Because many USDA employees have not worked extensively with Native Americans yet, organizers put on sensitivity training a month before the meeting for all USDA participants. Roylene Rides at the Door, a tribal member and the Natural Resources Conservation Service’s State Conservationist in Washington, provided training on American Indian culture. Rides at the Door was born on the Blackfeet Reservation near Browning, MT, on a ranch that has been in her family for five generations. She is a graduate of Montana State University and began working for NRCS while in college. She started as a soil conservationist and has worked for the agency in Montana, Arizona, and Rhode Island in addition previous to her current assignment. She has led more than 60 workshops on Native American culture with more than 3,000 participants.

Ms. Rides at the Door worked with Levi Montoya, an NRCS employee out of Trinidad, CO, and with Timothy Oakes of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians to teach the 2-day employee training session called “Working Effectively With American Indians.” The venue was the Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center, a nature center in Denton, NE.

NRCS hosted the sensitivity training. That agency maintains a substantial training staff of experts in tribal culture and can put on similar workshops for you all over the country at reasonable cost.

The training covered topics as diverse as cultural awareness, tribal barriers, the meaning of the Federal trust responsibility, tribal histories, and tribal governance and political structure as they relate to cultural values. Ms. Rides at the Door closed the session with her presentation, entitled “Walking in His/Her Moccassins” and afterwards, everyone shared their thoughts about the personal highlights of the training.

The *APHIS Native American Notebook* gratefully acknowledges the work put in by NRCS Deputy State Conservationist/Operations Doug Gahn (Nebraska) in preparing the material that appears in this writeup, and also Vicki Wohlers’ help in getting the information to the newsletter.

The idea behind the event was to break down the “stovepiping” that characterizes USDA’s relationships with the public, tribal and otherwise. Most people not working for the Department have no idea what the individual agencies do. Events like this

Nebraska-wide meeting help our constituents find out where to go for specific assistance across the full spectrum of agricultural issues.

Other ANAWG reps who are intrigued by the possibilities of this kind of meeting should contact Vicki Wohlers through Lotus Notes or on (402) 434-2346 for hints about organizing something similar in their State. Janet Wintermute (301 734-6336) can assist with linking over to the NRCS training unit.

Hails and Farewells on the ANAWG

Florida has long been represented on the ANAWG by **Bernice Constantin**, of Wildlife Services, but new WS State Director **Ed Hartin** took over at the end of June. In **Nevada**, PPQ has swapped **Jordan Krug** in for **Frankie Cervantes**.

Washington State ANAWG rep **Margaret Smither-Kopperl** (PPQ) left the agency this spring. No decision has been reached about her replacement. **Tara Woyton** (VS), long-time ANAWG rep from upstate **New York**, left the agency in August. Ditto for **Oregon's** very productive ANAWG rep **Terry Hensley**. The VS veterinarian, who initiated major assistance efforts with the Warm Springs tribe around the feral-horse overpopulation issue, left APHIS to become Assistant State Veterinarian in his home State of Texas. PPQ and VS get first dibs on replacing these outgoing reps, but readers from other programs should not hesitate to apply! Send Janet Wintermute an e-mail if you're interested.

Georgia, Kentucky, New Hampshire, Vermont, and **West Virginia** still have no ANAWG representation. But we can take **Tennessee** off the no-reps list. Newsletter reader **Gregg Aydelotte**, a plant health safeguarding specialist from PPQ in Murfreesboro, TN, responded to the notification here that his State had no ANAWG rep by volunteering for the job himself!

Readers who work in the States without coverage and are interested in helping Native Americans are encouraged to contact Janet Wintermute (301 734-6336) about becoming involved with the ANAWG. Naturally, supervisors must concur. Numerically, more reps come from PPQ than from any other APHIS program. But we are happy to work with employees from all line and support programs in this effort.

In mid-August, PPQ Western Regional Director **Phil Garcia** announced the selection of PPQ's new tribal liaison, **Carl Etsitty**. Carl had been working in Fort Collins for Biotechnology Regulatory Services and representing that staff as its voting member on the ANAWG. Carl—an enrolled member at Navajo—is a great addition to the agency's little family of tribal liaisons. We'll do a feature on Carl in an upcoming issue of the newsletter.

Any PPQ employee with questions about our trust responsibilities to the federally recognized tribes can begin looking for answers by getting in touch with Carl at (303) 494-7559 or by e-mail.

What To Look for in Our Next Issue

A new “In the Spotlight” feature on an APHIS employee who makes a big difference in Indian Country.

The Washington Internships for Native Students (WINS) interns and their exciting summer in Washington, DC.

The outlook for USDA-wide training about working with Native Americans.

Introducing Carl Etsitty, PPQ’s new tribal liaison.

“BugFest 2010” in North Carolina

“Fast Facts”—a new Q&A feature answering real-world questions about how best to work with tribal officials

And more.

Questions or Comments?

To reach out to your own State’s ANAWG rep, get contact info from <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/anawg>. In the blue box at the right-hand margin, click on the “Contact a State Representative” bullet.

To get in touch with Janet Wintermute, phone (301) 734–6336 or send her an e-mail through Lotus Notes or the Internet (janet.s.wintermute@aphis.usda.gov).