OSAGE NATION HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE ハスハスロ よのにしまった。

PRESS STATEMENT

The Traditional Cultural Advisors (TCA) Committee serves as the Osage Nation's committee of elders that works towards the preservation, maintenance, and revitalization of Osage culture and traditions. As part of this mission, the TCA makes important decisions regarding culturally sensitive materials.

The TCA Committee, over multiple meetings for the past year, has become very concerned about the increase in public use of sensitive Osage symbols. In particular, the Osage Spider symbol, an ancient symbol of extreme significance, has been found online free to be used by those unfamiliar with its meaning and status. The TCA Committee has requested the following statement be published in the Osage News to address this growing issue:

"The Osage Spider symbol should receive great respect and care. This symbol is one that comes from long ago and has been passed down to our people through both oral tradition and in the form of a sacred tattoo. The spider is the life symbol of the VUNKA UDAKONPA or Isolated Earth people. This symbol is to be understood as a representative of VOKA or Snare of Life. The spider itself explained to the people how it is the snare and that all things necessary for life come to it. In fact, life itself is in the snare and only through escaping the snare, or in other words death, can one return to the spirit world. This symbol could be tattooed on the hands of the wives and daughters of those KONONNA, or Clan Priests, who had earned all thirteen ODON, or War Honors, and had first been tattooed themselves. This symbol could not be taken at will, freely, or carelessly but had to be earned. The tattoos forever marked those individuals and gave them new responsibilities within the traditional tribal beliefs.

The right to recreate this symbol, especially in tattoo form, was the sole right of the LO^LO^KN or Clan Priests who kept the HYOPO DO^KN Great Bundle or Tattooing Bundle. The last known keeper of such a bundle has been gone for approximately 100 years. This would indicate that no one for the past 100 years has had the right to recreate this symbol in any form."