

In Remembrance of Zora Susanne Aikman

January 1, 1945 to June 21, 2014



The 2014 Denver American Indian Festival was dedicated to Susie's memory. She made her final journey home on June 21, 2014. Susie was one of the original founders of the festival. Planning began in August 2013, with the help of Karen Bueno, Good Shepherd United Methodist Church member, and Lynne Holman, Cherokee Elder. Ms. Aikman was well known and respected in the American Indian community. She was a member of the Colorado Cherokee Circle; an artist; author; director at Colorado Public Television; and founder of Alternative Native Voices radio show which ran for over 20 years. Susie was a lifelong Methodist and a national Native American ministry leader in the United Methodist Church. She served on many committees for both American Indians and the Methodist conference. Her lifelong ambition was to help bring communities together to help them realize and understand that everyone makes a difference. Ms. Aikman was loved by many and is missed, but not forgotten.

Lynne Holman, President, Denver American Indian Festival

Goodbye from Lynne Holman

Cherokee Elder and President of DAIF

As a founder and president of the Denver American Indian Festival, I have been blessed to be surrounded by volunteers, Native American vendors, artistic performers, and the best attendees any festival could hope for. Our goal was to be a bridge of understanding between the Native and non-Native American peoples. How well all of you made that happen! We have a great reputation as a free, family friendly event which has also been a safe, respectful venue for my fellow Native Americans. There was an abundance of sharing and learning by all, and my heart is filled with emotional memories of love, respect, and understanding. I am stepping down from my active position after this 2021 festival. I thank you all. Those who are continuing the festival are experienced and motivated, and will continue to offer you this wonderful annual event and maybe some new ones too.



First Nations Foundation



Come soar with us

Welcomes you to the 8th Annual Denver American Indian Festival



September 25 & 26, 2021

Riverdale Regional Park
Adams County Fairgrounds
9755 Henderson Road
Brighton, Colorado

2021 Festival Schedule

Sacred Circle

10 am	Ground Blessing Rev. Richard Silversmith Welcome Jr. Conquering Bear, Lynne Holman, and Carrie Howell Posting of the Colors Indigenous Veterans of Colorado Honor Songs for Elders and Veterans
11 am	Seven Falls Indian Dancers
12 pm	Eric Herrera, Flute
1 pm	Rose Red Elk, Red Feather Woman, Storyteller
2 pm	Bear Limvere, Flute and Storytelling
3 pm	Saturday – Native American Music Sunday – Azteca Dance Grupo Huitzilopochtli
4 pm	Seven Falls Indian Dancers
5 pm	Retiring of the Colors Indigenous Veterans of Colorado

Cultural Corner for Children

A story will be read before each cultural art project.
Books will be given away throughout the festival.

10 am	Pinch Pots – Sue Clem (Sunday only)
11 am	Yarn Baskets – Carrie Howell
12 pm	String Bead Necklace & Bracelet – Verla Howell
1 pm	Corn Husk Dolls – Carrie Howell
2 pm	Earrings
3 pm	Decorated Tipis
4 pm	Cherokee Shaker

Cultural Corner for Adults

10 am	Pinch Pots – Sue Clem (Saturday only)
11 am	Dreamcatcher – Verla Howell
12 pm	Yarn Baskets – Carrie Howell
1 pm	Chokers – Robert Williams
2 pm	String Bead Necklace – Debbie Howell
3 pm	Corn Husk Dolls – Carrie Howell
4 pm	Beaded Wire Earrings – Laura Wilson

Volunteers

Thank you so much to all of the volunteers who have provided their time and talents to help make this festival a success. We appreciate all of your support.

DAIF – Our Past, Present, and Future

When we first started this event, it was supposed to be a small fun gathering. Our aim was to offer families a fun, free event where they could learn about Native Americans. During the first few years, we struggled to get funding, but stayed true to our vision. In the process, we gained a nice reputation as a fine family event for attendees and a safe, respectful event where Native Americans could enjoy and be appreciated for sharing their culture and concerns with others. Our focus continued to be on learning and sharing.

The first six festivals were held on the grounds of Good Shepherd United Methodist Church in Thornton. We are grateful for the support the congregation and community provided. As our popularity grew, we outgrew the space the church could provide. We are excited for the possibilities this venue at Riverdale Regional Park offers.

Of course, the pandemic required us to rethink our 2020 festival. Our creative committee assisted with making our virtual festival a success. We are grateful to our Creator that we are able to gather together this year.

In February 2020, the First Nations Foundation was formed to address the bigger needs of Native Americans. A six-week art show was curated this year in Thornton, Colorado. An AMPLIFY program, held at the Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities, was critically acclaimed for its quality of entertainment and attention to the more serious problems Native Americans currently face.

Thank you for attending our festival this year. With your help, we will continue to grow in our ability to educate, share the culture, and support Native Americans. For more information, visit:

DenverAmericanIndianFestival.org &
FirstNationsFoundation.org

and moved unevenly. Also, traditionally Grass dancers were used to clear camping sites, trampling down grass, so they used slow spins and squats in their dances.

Women's Traditional

Women's Traditional includes several different dance styles, including Northern Traditional, Southern Cloth, and Southern Buckskin. Each style has its own outfit, but share most of the same steps. The outfits can include extensive beadwork and applique. Many times, the patterns reflect the dancer's national or family traditions. Northern Traditional and Southern Cloth carry shawls and purses with long fringe. Southern Buckskin dancers wear dresses made of doeskin, with very long leather fringe. The women step or dip to the beat of the song, with grace and dignity. They strive to get the fringe in their outfits swaying in time with their steps.

Women's Fancy Shawl

Women's Fancy Shawl dancers wear brightly colored dresses and carry shawls during their dance, flipping them and spinning to make the fringe flare. The dance is very exuberant, with high steps, spins, and fancy steps. The dancers strive for athletic grace and endurance. Like the Men's Fancy, the Women's Fancy Shawl is typically a young women's dance.

Women's Jingle

Women's Jingle dancers are very noticeable because they are the only women dancers who wear noise makers. Their dresses are covered in jingles hanging from ribbons. The jingles are made from rolled snuff can lids. Each dress can have anywhere from 200 to 1,000 jingles. The dresses have extensive applique and may include beadwork. The dancers dance in a bouncy step, striving to make all the jingles sound to the beat of the drum. The dancers may include fancy footwork. As they dance, the jingling of the dresses makes a unique sound in the arena.

About this Festival

The Denver American Indian Festival is a celebration of and introduction to Native American culture via food, dance, storytelling, music, and more. The purpose of the festival is to affirm the value and role of tradition and the culture of Native Americans living in harmony within our community. All persons are welcome, accepted, and encouraged to participate as we build bridges of understanding and acceptance.

First Nations Foundation was incorporated in February 2020 to provide more support for American Indians through advocacy, culture, education and community. Our mission is achieved by transforming perspectives by deepening understanding and enlightenment of American Indian culture.

Donations for Native American Housing Circle

The Native American Housing Circle (NAHC) was formed as a community response to the overrepresentation of Native Americans experiencing homelessness and housing instability in the Denver Metro area. Since 2019, NAHC has been working as a community coalition of Native-led and Native-serving community organizations, community members, and allies who advocate and create affordable housing opportunities. Charitable cash or check donations will be accepted during the festival.

Cultural Corner

The Cultural Corner provides an opportunity for children and adults to learn more about Native Culture with hands-on activities and conversation with the session leader. A story will be read to children to introduce each cultural art project.

Festival Vendors

Why are handcrafts more expensive than factory made goods? Because they are made with time, love, passion, and tradition. Please visit with the artists and learn how their items were created. Each vendor has many interesting stories to tell.

Native American Participation in the U.S. Military

American Indians and Alaska Natives serve in the Armed Forces at five times the national average and have served in every major conflict for over 200 years. Native people have the highest per-capita involvement of any population in the U.S. military. They also have a higher concentration of women servicemembers than all other groups. Nearly 20 percent of American Indians and Alaska Natives servicemembers were women, while 15.6 percent of all other servicemembers were women.

Native American Code Talkers were used in WWI and WWII with the most famous being the Navajo Code Talkers, but member of the following Tribes used their languages to also send vital messages more securely:

Assiniboine	Basque
Cherokee	Choctaw
Comanche	Cree
Meskwaki	Mohawk
Muscogee (Seminole and Creek)	Navajo
Nubian	Tlingit
Welsh	Wenzhounese

These are our Warriors.
Thank you to all who have served!

2021 Festival Board

Chief Operating Officer – Carrie Howell
President Emerita – Lynne Holman
Vice President – Rev. Richard Silversmith
Secretary Pro Tem – Karen Bueno
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Members At Large – Carolyn Hayes, Bob Bird,
Sandy Nelson, and Renee Fajardo
Concessions – Susie Silversmith

various other pieces of regalia. They always carry decorated dance sticks, clubs, fans, etc. in their hands as they dance. Northern Traditional dancers dance with power and grace, emulating the actions of warriors hunting prey or opponents.

Southern Straight dancers are also traditional dancers. They do not wear bustles, but their outfit usually includes a porcupine-hair headdress, long aprons worn front and back, ribbon-work, and a drop made of otter goes from the neck to the floor in back. They wear other items such as German silver armbands, beaded belts, and woven sashes, and carry tall sticks and mirror boards. Southern Straight dancers imitate birds; tracking and hunting, weaving and gliding in a stately manner. Their style is typically more upright, as they step gracefully to the beat.

In both traditional styles, the dancer never dances backward, as this is a sign of cowardice or defeat.

Men's Fancy

Men's Fancy dancers wear two bustles: one at their waist and one on their shoulders. They may also wear small bustles on their arms. They wear goat skin leggings with bells, and a porcupine-hair headdress on their head. Their outfits can be very colorful, with extensive beadwork and applique, competing with each other for beauty and flash. They are much more flamboyant and energetic in their dancing, striving for athletic grace and endurance. They incorporate spins, splits, and other acrobatic moves in their dance. Because of this, Men's Fancy is typically a young man's dance.

Men's Grass

Men's Grass dancers wear outfits that are covered in yarn or ribbon fringe. They also wear a porcupine-hair headdress with bells on their legs. The outfits can be very colorful, with striking contrasts in the colors of the fringe and with extensive beadwork. The dancers strive for an athletic and graceful style, trying to get the fringe to move with them. Many times, their style emulates the movements of the person believed to have created the Grass Dance, who was disabled

Festival Dance Descriptions

Composed by Bear Limvere and used with permission. Thank you for sharing!

Dances

There are various types of dances that may be called by the Announcer. These include Specials, Intertribal, and Honor songs.

A Special is a song that is called by the Announcer for a specific dance style. Only the dancers in the called dance style should participate

Anyone can participate in a Social dance. Listen for the Announcer to call for a two-step or round dance.

Intertribals are dances where everyone is invited to dance. This includes people who are not in full outfit. Each dancer dances in his or her style. Anyone not in outfit typically dances parade step, which is a rhythmic stepping to the beat. It is preferred that women wear shawls, but in our festival, we would rather you dance anyway.

Dance Styles

Following are the descriptions of many of the typical pow-wow dance styles. There are many more regional styles that are not described here.

In all the dance styles, the dancers must dance with the beat of the drum. Also, the dancers must stop, with both feet planted, on the last beat of the song. In competitions, if the dancer does not do this, points will be taken from their score.

Each dancer has a unique personal style within their chosen dance style. Watch different dancers in each dance style to see how they make the dance their own.

Men's Traditional

Men's Traditional includes two styles: Northern Traditional and Southern Straight.

Northern Traditional dancers typically wear a single bustle that consists of many eagle feathers. They wear a head roach (the headdress made of feathers and porcupine and deer hair resembling a Mohawk hair style). In addition, dancers may wear vests, leggings, bells, tobacco bags, knife sheaths, and

Festival Tips and Hints

Outlined by Bear Limvere & Raven Dancers and used with permission.

Please feel free to enjoy the dance, music, and regalia of the dancers and singers. Visit the vendors to purchase from their excellent merchandise.

- Listen to the Announcer. They may make announcements or personal requests.
- Alcohol, drugs, and firearms are strictly forbidden at any festival/pow-wow. We want a safe and fun environment and do not believe that these items are necessary or wanted. Any person bringing these items to the festival will be asked to leave.
- Please do not walk directly across the Sacred Circle. This is a blessed ground used by the dancers. It is disrespectful to sit or stand within or walk directly across it. Walk around the edge of the arena if you need to get to the other side.
- Respect the following rules of etiquette about photography and videotaping:
 - Do not take picture of any individual dancer or parts of his or her regalia without asking permission first.
 - Do not enter the arena to take pictures.
 - Do not record any songs or any drums unless you have permission from the Lead Singer for that drum circle.
 - Some of the dance troupes will be teaching a dance. When invited, please feel free to join in – all are welcome.
- Notice and enjoy the artistry and craftsmanship of the dancer's regalia; however, please do not touch any part. Regalia requires hundreds of thousands of hours of work and large sums of money to make. Most regalia represent spiritual and cultural significance of the dance.
- No littering; we are blessed with the beauty of our surroundings; we do not want to dirty the face of our Mother.
- DAIF is not responsible for any lost or stolen items.
- It is usually disrespectful to refuse to dance when asked by the Arena Director or an Elder. Don't worry if you don't know the steps. You learn by participation, and you may just have a lot of fun at the same time!

The Denver American Indian Festival is grateful to the following organization for the generous grants awarded to support this annual event.

Wells Fargo Philanthropic Services has provided significant funding in support of the 2021 Denver American Indian Festival sharing our goal to be a bridge of understanding with the culture, arts, and humanities of the Native American. We thank them for their generous support.



Colorado Housing and Finance Authority has provided generous funding to support the Denver American Indian Festival and the programs it fosters. CHFA strengthens Colorado by investing in affordable housing and community development. They offer financial resources to strengthen homeownership, affordable rental housing, and businesses.



Bonfils-Stanton Foundation has provided partial funding for our 8th annual Denver American Indian Festival, cultivating arts and leaders for a vibrant community. We thank them very sincerely for their support of our festival.



DAIF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Thank you to the 2021 Festival Sponsors

Platinum Level - \$1000 or more



- Adams County
- Arvada Center for the Arts & Humanities
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- Jodi DiRenzo
- Carolyn Hayes
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