

Press release

Adai Caddo Indian Nation hosts 26th Annual Powwow

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Chief Davis and Falconer Phillip Nette of the Adai Caddo Indian Nation at its 2024 Powwow

Last month, the Adai Caddo Indian Nation hosted its 26th Annual Powwow in Robeline, Louisiana. With over 4,000 attendees, it is the area's largest annual event attracting performers, artisans, vendors, and visitors from all over the country.

"I thank God first for the weather, which could not have been better! I am very thankful for all the participants and volunteers, you make me very proud. Without you, this couldn't be done. A special thanks to Marty Johnson and our Vice Chief, Debrah Garrett for all the sacrifices you've made with your time and resources to ensure that this powwow went off without incident," said Chief John Mark Davis. "This powwow was one of the most memorable and meaningful we've had!"

The powwow is held each year on the third Saturday in October at the Adai Caddo Cultural Center and Ceremonial Grounds. The event is open to the public and family-friendly. Parking and entry are free. The vendors showcased local cuisine such as authentic Adai fry bread, Cajun boudin balls, Natchitoches meat pies, and traditional Indian tamales (L&W Tamale House in Zwolle). Throughout the day were dance competition prizes, gun and knife raffles, and an awards ceremony.

The head gourd dancer was Chief Thomas Rivers of the Choctaw Apache Tribe of Ebarb. The head man dancer was Dustin Langley of the Bear Clan of the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana. Lorene Yellowfish Guerro of the Comanche Nation was the head lady dancer. The powwow featured renowned drummers Comanche Thunder.

During the powwow, the tribe unveiled the plaque for the Chief Rufus Davis, Jr. Award, which is the tribe's highest honor. The annual award recognizes a member's selfless service to the tribe whose actions have gone above and beyond, greatly benefited or protected the tribe, and honors the sacrifices, service and memory of Chief Rufus. This year's winner is Tribal Councilwoman and Historian, Dee Niette Thompson. Her name is inscribed on the plaque. The tribe also presented Dee with a personalized walnut plaque and a tomahawk that functions as a peace pipe.

The tribe dedicated a bronze plaque to commemorate Saint Anne as their official patron saint. The tribe worked closely with the Diocese of Alexandria to formally recognize their saint. The local church and cemetery are also named for Saint Anne.

Both of the plaques and the tribe's great seal were designed by Adai Caddo cousins Robert Brevelle and acclaimed artist Paige Holsapple. The plaques may be viewed at the tribe's cultural center.

For history aficionados, the tribe showcased several artifacts ranging from military items to maps, which show Louisiana and Texas in the 1700s. Visiting Texans were surprised to learn that the first capital of Texas was in present-day Louisiana and remained so for nearly 50 years. The Texas capital was named Los Adaes for the Adai people. A map from the 1763 Treaty of Paris showed two of the tribe's villages: Los Adaes and the main village which was located on the El Camino Real's crossing of the Sabine River (near present-day Pendleton Bridge). The Spanish, French, and British originally named the Sabine River the Rio de los Adiais after the Adai villages along its banks.

The tribe received an official statement of recognition from the Governor's office to acknowledge the Adai Caddo's 26th consecutive annual powwow. LSU Libraries provided a Land Acknowledgement certificate recognizing the Adai Caddo Indian Nation for its strength and resilience as one of the state's native tribes.

"We very much appreciate Governor Jeff Landry, Indian Affairs Director Chandler Vidrine, Mayor Gordon O'Con, Louisiana State University Libraries, and our fellow Native American tribes for their continued support and collaboration," said Tribal Councilman Robert Brevelle. "Powwows are an important aspect of Native American and Louisiana history, and we are honored that so many have come from across the country to share in this time-honored tradition. We look forward to seeing everyone at next year's powwow."

For the latest information about the Adai Caddo, please join us at www.facebook.com/@AdaiCaddoNDNZ/ or at www.adaination.com.