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(Neb.)-Story Of Northern Cheyenne On Display At Sandoz Center



By: Chris Fankhauser Posted at: 11/07/2013 09:40 AM

(Chadron)-The exhibition, "Coming Home: The Northern Cheyenne Odyssey," will be on display at the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage at Chadron State College until Dec. 20. The exhibit was created by a team of Northern Cheyenne curators and staff as part of the Western Heritage Center's American Indian Tribal Histories Project.

The Western Heritage Center is located in Billings, Mont. and serves the Yellowstone River watershed, which includes much of eastern Montana, northern Wyoming, and the western reaches of North Dakota.

The exhibit highlights the Fort Robinson outbreak of 1879 and the courageous efforts of the Northern Cheyenne to return to their Montana homeland.

It is a story of the sacrifices, the strength, and the survival of the Northern Cheyenne people. The "Coming Home" story is told through an exhibit of display panels, interactive kiosks, artifacts, and computer stations.

Bentley Spang, a Northern Cheyenne guest curator, said the "Coming Home" exhibit presents a Northern Cheyenne point of view.

"For the first time in my experience, Northern Cheyenne people are speaking about the Northern Cheyenne experience. As a Northern Cheyenne, I wanted to be a part of this ground-breaking exhibition, to be able to contribute to what I knew would be a refreshingly new dialogue."

Spang said as he searched through the mass of grim details, he discovered something remarkable.

"My relatives in the past possessed a level of courage, physical stamina, intellectual capacity, and love for one another that is unrivaled," he said.

Center Director Sarah Polak said what makes this exhibit unique is that the story is told from the Northern Cheyenne perspective.

"Fort Robinson does a great job in telling the story of the Cheyenne Breakout; however, this exhibit is literally the voices of the Cheyenne telling their story."

This is the first time that this exhibit has been in Nebraska.

The exhibit is free to the public and is funded through Chadron State College and the T. R. Hughes Endowment for the promotion of understanding of American Indian culture in the High Plains.

The center is open 8 a.m.-12 p.m. and 1-4 p.m. Monday-Fridays and 9 a.m.-12 .m. and 1-4 p.m. Saturdays. For more information about this exhibit, please call Sarah Polak at 308-432-6401.

—CSC Information Services