



Joseph J. Chosa

July 6, 1921 - May 23, 2016

Joe Chosa was born on July 6, 1921 in Lac du Flambeau. His Indian name was Ozaawaabik, which means “gold metal.” He was raised by his grandparents after his mother passed away when he was two years old. After his grandfather passed away, his grandmother raised him by herself and they only spoke Ojibwe language at home, which he credited as the reason for his fluency in the language. After graduating from Minocqua High School, Joe enlisted in the Army and served for 37 months in the Foreign Service during World War II, participating in the Sicilian, Naples Foggia, Rome Arno, Tunisian, Algerian, and French Moroccan campaigns. Returning in 1945, he moved to Milwaukee to join his wife Billie (Wilhelmina) and after a year and a half, moved back to Lac du Flambeau and raised a family of five children. Joe worked as a manager of Simpson Electric Company for 42 years and served as manager for 25 years, also serving on the Board of Directors. After he retired, he began teaching the Ojibwe language as a member of the Elders Resource Council of the Family Circles program. He taught Ojibwe language and was a dedicated and hard-working advocate for language preservation and revitalization in the community. He was the director of the Lac du Flambeau Ojibwe Language Program for over 10 years, making many Ojibwe language lessons, tapes, videos and manuals for this program, as well as providing Ojibwe words and phrases for many other language programs in Wisconsin and Minnesota. He gave people their Indian names, said prayers and performed ceremonies in the language, and was a rich and valued

resource in the community, not only for language but also for Ojibwe culture, stories, and teachings.

Joe was elected as a Lac du Flambeau Tribal Council member four times. He also held numerous leadership roles in the Lions Club, Knights of Columbus, VFW and was a Commander in the American Legion. He held the position of Tribal Wild Rice Chief for many years, which involved surveying the rice beds and determining when they should open for harvest, working cooperatively with the DNR. He taught family members and many younger people in the community about harvesting and processing wild rice, as well as about fishing, hunting, and gathering traditional foods and medicines. He said, "I think, being an Indian person, people should be proud of their culture, be proud of their heritage, be proud of the fact they are Indian people... That's why I try to help people with the language. I'm proud of the fact that I talk the Indian language, and I hope people will be interested in preserving their language."

Joe was preceded in death by his parents and grandparents, loving wife Billie Mae, and two beautiful daughters, Leanna and Cheryl. He is survived by his two sons Jody (Ann) Chosa, Bill (Esther) Chosa, his daughter Kathy (Jeff) Schneider, and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Traditional Native American Services will be held from Thursday, May 26, 2016 until Friday, May 27, 2016 at the Multi-Purpose Building in Lac du Flambeau, followed by full Military Honors and interment at Memorial Cemetery in Lac du Flambeau.

Cemetery Details

Memorial Cemetery

Lac du Flambeau, WI

Previous Events

Traditional Native American Services

MAY 26. 4:00 PM (CT)

LDF Multi Purpose Building
Lac du Flambeau, WI 54538

Traditional Native American Services

MAY 27. 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM (CT)

LDF Multi Purpose Building
Lac du Flambeau, WI 54538

Tribute Wall

KK

“ It’s been a long time since my great grandfather passed away. It’s now 2022, almost the new year of 2023. I have never forgotten the time I spent with him, the memories we shared, the late night laughs, and seeing his smile. I wasn’t raised to be too much into the culture, and that is my biggest regret. I wish I could’ve had more time with my sweet grandfather to learn his teachings as I know he’d have so much to teach me. I miss his smile, and my hand in his. You may be gone, but you will never be forgotten. You are forever in my heart. I hope the life that I lead is one you would be proud of.

kayleigh kathleen - November 21, 2022 at 09:43 PM

KS

My dear Granddaughter Kayleigh,

Grandpa would be SO proud of you! I'll never forget you coming to help me take care of him and you making his favorite peanut butter sandwiches for him. He loved you wholeheartedly, as we all do. He was so loving and wise and he recognized your beautiful heart!

Love, Grandma Kathy

Kathleen Schneider - September 30, 2023 at 09:56 PM

RU

“ To all remaining family I send my prayers for you in this time of sorrow. May you be blessed by the memories you hold dear in your hearts. Prayers and hugs to all!

Ruth - June 25, 2016 at 02:24 PM

SK

“ Kathy so very sorry to hear about out dear Joe! Please know you and your family are in my thoughts and prayers. Will always have a special place in my heart ! Some awesome memories for life. God bless!! Hugs!!

Stacey L. Klein - May 30, 2016 at 07:52 PM

DS

“ I REMEMBER WHEN JOHNNY MAYER TOOK OUT SOME OF JOE'S BIG PINE TREES WHEN HE CRASHED HIS BLAZER INTO THEM ON CTY D IN LDF!!!!
DAVE SLUSAR
MY REGARDS TO THE FAMILY!!!!

DAVE SLUSAR - May 27, 2016 at 02:49 PM

SP

“ So sorry to hear of this great loss to the Lac du Flambeau community and to his family. He was truly a wonderful man who has left behind an honorable legacy. "Fly high with the eagles Mr. Chosa. You have earned your rest and peace with God". You will be missed.



Sherrie Paulson-Tainter - May 27, 2016 at 01:42 PM

JJ

“ *Kathleen and Family,*

I know this is a great loss but the tribute is beautiful. I wish you strength and peace in this time or sorrow.

Love

Julie Jaap



Julie Jaap - May 26, 2016 at 07:08 AM