

Charles A. Lone Chief, Jr. honored by AARP for his lifelong contributions

By Toni Hill  
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Charles A. Lone Chief, Jr., vice-president of the Pawnee Nation Business Council, (PBC), receives highest praise from the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).

Lone Chief is the recipient of the 2011 AARP Oklahoma Indian Elder Honors. He will be presented with a medallion by AARP national board member Jack Penn during a banquet held in Oklahoma City, Okla. on Oct. 4.

“We chose Mr. Lone Chief due to his overall commitment to the [Pawnee] Tribe and because of his many years of service in education,” said Craig Davis, AARP representative.

“Nominations were accepted from all tribes and individuals, but we felt that Mr. Lone Chief’s accomplishments surpassed the other candidates and felt that he would be a great representative. AARP is working to develop better relationships with the Tribes so that we as an organization can find additional ways to help Indian elders.”

Lone Chief, born June 18, 1937, is a member of the Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma and of the Skidi Band and Pumpkin Vine Clan. His previous duties to the Pawnee Tribe include serving as a Council member from 1993 to 1997 and from 2005 until elected as the vice-president in 2009.

“I’m very proud to be Pawnee and to be identified with Indians and the heritage that comes with that distinction,” Lone Chief said. “I love that our foundation is built on believing that there is one Creator and that everything we do is about helping others.”

Additional accomplishments include recognition as a renowned artist specializing in portraiture and athletic excellence.

A few accolades include

receiving the Most Valuable Offensive Player recognition from the Tulsa Football Oilers in 1965 and the honor of being a Will Rogers Track Hall of Fame Inductee in 1984. Lone Chief was also named as the Indian Nations Conference Track Coach of the Year in 1986.

He also holds a place in the Oklahoma Coaches, the Oklahoma Track Coaches and the National Coaches Associations.

The councilman’s previous professional endeavors include teaching science and physical education at both Mingo School and Hale High School, both located in Tulsa, Okla.

He also served youth by coaching football, girls basketball, cross country, track, softball and baseball.

While at Mingo School, Lone Chief also organized the Galaxy Basketball Conference where his girls basketball team won the Galaxy Conference Championship.

Preserving the freedoms of others also constitutes a priority for Lone Chief evidenced by his military background.

Lone Chief began his career in the armed forces as a private with the 95th Infantry Division. He served with the 486th Civil Affairs Group. He achieved the rank of corporal in the Special Forces Division out of Ft. Bragg, N.C., with his last rank listed as staff sergeant.

Previous honors earned by Lone Chief include the Jim Thorpe Sports Excellence Award by the City of Tulsa and Greater Tulsa Area Indian Affairs Commission during their 3th Annual Dream Keepers Awards Banquet. He was recognized for his athletic accomplishments in addition to his individual achievements.

Lone Chief is the only son of the late Charles Lone Chief, Sr. and Mae Lone Chief. Other family members include wife Wanda and his children, Chris and Alicia. One sister, Marlene Kent currently resides in Del City, Okla. His other sister, Patricia Lone Chief Tiger passed away in 2003.

Lone Chief's legacy continues evidenced by former students continuing to greet him as "Coach Lone Chief."

Favorite pastimes include fishing, hunting, camping, hiking and creating art.

"Receiving this recognition is an honor," Lone Chief said. "However, the greatest honor I could ever gain is the opportunity to continue to serve the Pawnee people. I also desire to help ensure a greater future of prosperity and achievement for all the people that I come in contact with regardless of nationality."