

DENT COUNTY LIFE

A Missouri Hildebrand Route Trail Segment in Texas County receives new marker

By Deloris Gray Wood
Special to The Salem News

Alex Evoy has not just taken a Trail of Tears National Historic Hildebrand Route Trail Segment into his own hands, he has also taken the history and the personal connection he holds as a native American into his heart in trying to find different ways to tell the tragic Cherokee Removal Story in Texas County, which was once Ashley County, Missouri.

Alex and his wife, Linda Gojohn, purchased a property west of Licking on

Boiling Spring Road and are renovating it to their liking.

Alex said Larry Dillion, who lives down the road along with many other locals, said he had the Trail of Tears historical marker on his land, not knowing it was smack dab in the middle of the entrance!

At the top of the sign was a teardrop painted red, like the road grader blade, painted, this sign however had faded and was almost unrecognizable.

Linda spent a lot of time cleaning the marker and repainting their find.

Alex ordered a brown sign like the National Park Service's old Original Route Trail of Tears National Historic Trail signs. He has nailed it to an old Oak Tree, a testament to his dedication to preserving and commemorating the Trail's history.

Reynolds County Road 903, across Highway 72 to Marcoot Fire Tower near the edge of Dent County, is the nearest Trail of Tears National Historic Trail sign. It states a 31-mile trail segment that goes east. It was installed in October 2013 on the Hildebrand Route in the Mark Twain National Forest.

Alex and Linda commissioned a Native American Statue. It is made of cement, painted, and anchored on a cement pad that he had a neighbor, Larry Dillion, construct the base for the Sacred statute.

Alex volunteered at a young age for a non-profit called Force Ministries, which worked with special forces. The ministry owned a property in Hopkinsville, Kentucky, that Alex lived on. Alex discovered it was on the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail's Northern Route. This property is where Alex became a born-again Christian and found his strong, steadfast ways.

It is exciting for Alex and Linda to discover that he now owns a trail segment like he lived on in Kentucky.

The difference is that 1 of the 11 Cherokee Detachments passed his



Submitted photo

Deloris Gray Wood, Linda Gojohn, and Alex Evoy on the property in Texas County.



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Alex Evoy is part of the Shabot Obaadjiwan community, a line of Algonquin lineage. This statue is a testament to all tribes across the American continent, or, as Alex said, we natives like to call it, "Turtle Island."

place in Hopkinsville, Kentucky, including the Peter Hildebrand Detachment with 1,766 Cherokees, 801 Horses, and 88 wagons that passed the land they now own at Boiling Springs as well.

Alex and Linda are the owners of GOJOHN Holdings LLC. The company has owned many properties across Missouri.

In February 2004, Deloris Gray Wood, President of the Missouri Chapter Trail of Tears Association, gave a tour of Boiling Springs to Aaron Mahr,

Historian, and John Conboy, Deputy Assistant Superintendent, National Park Service National Trails Office, Santa Fe, New Mexico and went right by this property.

As past president of the Missouri Chapter of TOTA, Wood gave Jill Jenson, Angelic Sanchez-Clark, and Jarred Jordan from the Santa Fe Office a tour of Boiling Springs when the Big Piney River was flooded. The ladies had to take a detour to get to Boiling Springs and missed passing Alex and

Linda's property. From there, the ladies went to Montauk State Park and had lunch.

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This stone monument shows the resilience of the Native American people for all tribes north, east, south, or west.