

# November is National Native American Heritage Month

2013 Theme: Guiding Our Destiny with Heritage and Traditions

“National American Indian Heritage Month” had its origins in 1986 when Congress passed Pub. L. 99-471 which authorized and requested the President to proclaim the week of November 23-30, 1986 as “American Indian Week.” In 1990 Congress passed Pub. L. 101-343 which authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation designating the month of November 1990 as “National American Indian Heritage Month.” Similar proclamations, under variants on the name (including “National Native American Heritage Month” and “National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month”) have been issued each year since 1990.



Cherokee Basket.

## SPOTLIGHT: Mary G. Ross, Cherokee, First Native American Woman Engineer



Mary G. Ross  
(August 9, 1908 – April 29, 2008)

Ms. Ross was born in Oklahoma in 1908. She attended Northeastern State Teachers College (now Northeastern State University) and graduated with a degree in mathematics. She then taught math in public schools for approximately ten years before returning to school to complete a master's degree in math, which she accomplished in 1938 when she graduated from Colorado State Teachers College (now University of Northern Colorado). Ms. Ross next worked for Lockheed Aircraft Corp. in California and continued her educational pursuits by taking courses in engineering from UCLA, where she received a mechanical engineering classification in 1949. She rose through the Lockheed engineering ranks and was included among the first 40 employees, and the only female engineer, of Lockheed's Missiles Systems Division. In her career she contributed to the developmental work on the Poseidon and Trident missiles, engineering systems for manned space flights, and satellite orbits. She retired in 1973. Ms. Ross was a pioneering member of the Society

of Women Engineers (SWE), which bestowed the honor of electing her a SWE Fellow. The Santa Clara Valley Section of SWE offers a scholarship in her name. In 1985, Ms. Ross received the Ely S. Parker award from the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) and in 1992 she was inducted into the Silicon Valley Engineering Hall of Fame.

Taken From: <http://www.agnesscott.edu/lriddle/women/maryross.htm>