



## **In Memory**

***Carl L. Barnes***  
***June 18, 1928 – April 16, 2016***

I stand in a radiant Glory.  
My roots in the heart of Mother Earth.  
My crown in the clouds of Father Sky.

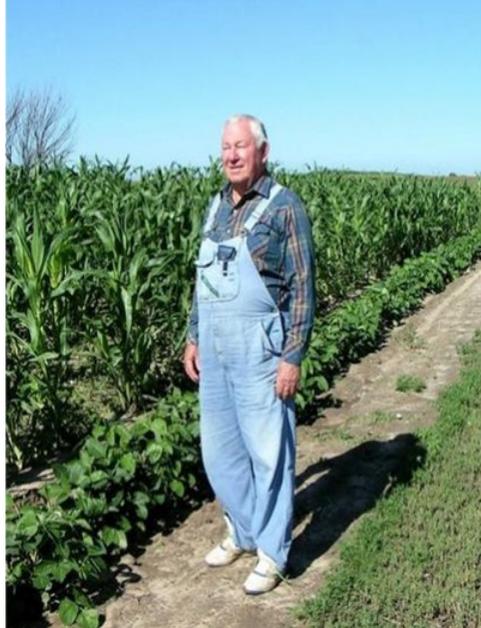
The Four Winds encircle me in spirals of Love.  
One going up, then down,  
One going down, then up.  
They meet in the Center of Complete Perfection--  
The Human Stalk of Corn.  
~ Carl Barnes

Family, friends, and the seed saving community mourn the passing of Carl Barnes, who died in Grove, Oklahoma on Saturday morning, April 16. Carl was known for his years of work with heritage corn, enabling many Native tribes to recover and reunite with their sacred seeds.

Carl was of half Cherokee, half Scotch-Irish ancestry, and he was born in the original farmhouse in the Panhandle of Oklahoma. His father had moved the family west, acquiring land and setting up farming on the High Plains. Carl spent his childhood on this homestead, and the family lived through the Dust Bowl years, staying to survive the ordeal, rather than leave as many did at that time in our history.

As a youth, Carl began to seek out his Cherokee roots, and to explore the knowledge of his ancestors and of Native American traditions in general. Much of this quest centered on the ceremonies surrounding planting, harvest, and honoring of the seeds. Later in his adult years Carl worked with the Cooperative Extension Service, and several years serving with the Kansas Highway Patrol, at the same time continuing to work the farm, along with his wife Karen, where they raised a family.

In the course of growing some of the older corn varieties still being farmed at that time, Carl began noticing ancestral types re-appearing in his crops. As he isolated these, he found that many of them matched up with traditional corns that had been lost to various Native tribes, particularly those peoples who had been relocated to what is now Oklahoma during the 1800s. Thus he was able to re-introduce specific corn types to the elders of those tribes, and this helped their people in reclaiming their cultural and spiritual identities. Their corn was, to them, literally the same as their blood line, their language, and their sense of who they were.



Carl went on to acquire and exchange other traditional corn seed from a variety of people he had befriended around the country. To those that he met, he became known by his spiritual name White Eagle. Through being of service with the seeds, Carl awakened to the more esoteric nature of corn and its mystical relationship to human beings. This led to further insights, which he shared widely, inspiring many people over the years. His

philosophy and teaching could be summed up in three words he repeated so often: *the seed remembers*.

After the passing of his wife Karen in 2005, and later his son A.V. Barnes, Carl stepped back from public life and encouraged the next generation to carry on the work of seed-keeping. In 2012, Carl became known for having originated a unique rainbow colored corn that became known as “glass gem,” which has become an inspiration in our current-day seed saving movement.

Carl will be remembered for his generosity, wit and humor, and for the seeds he passed to willing hands. These will continue to multiply beyond his time, to nourish and enrich the coming generations.

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