

INDIAN LEAP NEWSLETTER

The Native American Mohegans Intertribal Powwow

IT WAS HOT! However, all Powwow events went off as scheduled, thanks to David Kahn, who, once again, did an outstanding job as Master of Ceremonies. Saturday started off two days of dancing and ceremonies by "Cleansing of the Circle" and "Lighting of the Sacred Fire".

After preparing the Sacred Circle, the circle was ready for "Grand Entry". Every traditional Powwow begins with the Grand Entry with the dancers dressed in their regalia making their formal entry into the circle. The procession was led into the circle by the flag bearers bearing our Native American Mohegan Tribal Flag and the American Flag, followed by the Flag of Canada, the Veteran POW flag, and other Native American Flags. The flag bearers



The most popular dance of the Powwow, the Candy Dance, is a display of endurance, patience, and fortitude, as each participant fights the heat and other contestants in an attempt to grab as much candy as their little hands can hold. *(Photo courtesy of Dave Lewis)*

were followed by the elder men to the youngest male followed by the elder women to the youngest female. An honoring song was performed to pay respect to all war veterans. This ceremony is never intended to glorify war, but to honor true warriors and soldiers, those individuals who put themselves in front of the enemy to protect OUR homes and families.

It was quite a sight to see and hear and especially feel!

The children from the Gung Skeedumbork Culture Club participated in the opening ceremonies and danced in their regalia throughout the weekend. They all danced traditional and then the girls danced a Shawl Dance and the boys danced the Sneak-Up. All the children performed

the Candy Dance where they gathered candy to the starting and stopping of the beat of the drum as they danced. The enthusiasm of the children and all who observed was obvious. The Elders were impressed and proud as they watched the young ones of their Tribe dance. All of the children were excited about participating, especially in being able to dance in the Sacred Circle.

At the conclusion of these ceremonies the intertribal dancing commenced. There was plenty of singing and dancing all weekend thanks to the Turtle Drum, our Host Drum, who got a break every once in a while from our own Shadow Wolf Drum.

The presence of the Powwow's Head Dancers, Darlene Spear (Ghost Dancer) and Paul Lassard (Roaring Wind) honored the festivities.

During one of the Drum breaks, Willow told a wonderful collection of stories with traditional Native American themes that captivated young and old alike.

Michael Addison again showed his dancing skill performing a Grass Dance before a very appreciative crowd.

The dancing continued all afternoon until it was time to "Retire the Colors" and end a great day.

In the afternoon there was a special ceremony. Our Tribal leader, Eleanor Fortin Michaud/Queen Rippling Waters and her new husband Patrick Michaud/Standing Wolf were wed in a traditional Native American ceremony. Lost Wolf of the Schaghticoke Nation officiated the ceremony. Standing for the groom were, Nasreen Hyde/Apple Blossom, granddaughter to the bride, Vicki Welch/Blue Sky, and Darlene Currier/Eyes of the Wolf. Standing for the groom was Harry Baker, Sr./Chief Silver Fox.

The groom laid out gifts for Lost Wolf to either accept or deny. After inspection of the gifts, Lost Wolf accepted them. After this was completed, the women that stood for the bride escorted her to the circle with her face covered. Lost Wolf then spoke to the couple and then the women who stood for her uncovered the bride. While the couple spoke their vows, they were covered with a blanket. Once this part of the ceremony was concluded, the people that stood for the happy couple all congratulated them. At this time, the Turtle Drum played a song for the couple to dance their first dance together.

After their first dance, the people that stood for them danced in the circle with them. On this conclusion, all well-wishers entered to give their blessings and present gifts to the couple on a blanket near the sacred fire.

The Bride and Groom then thanked everyone for being a part of their special day and proceeded to leave the circle. We all wish them a long and happy life on their path as one.

On Saturday night, we had our annual Powwow feast for all Tribal Members and Powwow participants. Thanks again this year to the efforts of Linda Donovan and Orren Weber there was plenty of food for all. Every one enjoyed the feast immensely.

The rest of the night was spent drumming and singing and talking about everything under the moon. Eventually only the Firekeeper was awake to make certain that the Sacred Fire would stay burning through the night.

Sunday festivities again started with the "Grand Entry". The music, the flags, the men and women dressed in their traditional regalia, the smoke from the Sacred Fire, and the meaning of the moment have an emotional effect on all who watch and listen.

At 2:00PM, a ceremony for those Native Americans who had "passed over" since the last Powwow. Frank Cook (Gray Owl) read the names of those Tribal Members and other Native Americans who died over the past year. A moment of silence was observed after all the names were read and then all paid respect by entering the circle and dancing while Turtle Drum drummed and sang an "Honoring Dance".

The festivities continued all afternoon until it was once again time to "Retire the Colors" announcing the end of the day and the end to a wonderful and fulfilling weekend.

Once again the Powwow was a great success due to the contributions of a select few but highly dedicated volunteers. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the volunteers who helped make this event so special; John Sweet who spent both Saturday and Sunday collecting admissions, Elizabeth Corey for running the



Dove never missed a Powwow. She was an extraordinarily enthusiastic and loyal tribal member and she will be missed (see Special Remembrances). She is being helped by Spirit Dancer, Chief Silver Fox, and Queen Rippling Waters.

(photo courtesy of Dave Lewis)

raffle, Virginia Miner and Donna Shank for selling our liquid fudge (did I tell you it was hot!), Jim and Pat Knapp for running our crafts table, Linda Donovan and Paul Allard for the successful Saturday night feast, Harry Baker, Darlene Currier, Roger Corey Sr., Roger Corey Jr., Bill Lewis, David Lewis, Alvin Corey, Valerie Corey, Reginald Corey, and Kevin and Tammy McIntyre, for their help in getting the grounds prepared with the Sacred Circle and Fire, tents, benches, picnic tables, trash barrels, and for assembling the beautiful cedar arbor, as well as many of the other tasks that need to be done for a successful Powwow.

I would like to especially thank the young men of our Tribe who helped make the Powwow a success. I would like to thank Alvin Paris Corey, Jacob Cameron Corey, Dwight James Storms, Robert Lafleche, Jonathan Surrette, and Shane Knox for all their hard work throughout the weekend.

I know I have forgotten someone and I apologize if I have failed to mention anyone who volunteered his or her time and effort.

I would like to thank, once again, my wife Antoinette Cook. Without her help during the course of the year, I am certain that this event would never have run so smoothly!

Frank Cook
Powwow Coordinator

POWWOW VOLUNTEERS

We are looking for volunteers willing to help with the organization of next year's Powwow. We can use help with site selection, vendor selection, facilities, advertising, announcements, raffle, programs, etc. If you would like to help, please call Darlene at the office, (860) 892-1039.

GUNG SKEEDUMBORK (YOUNG PEOPLE) NEWS

The Gung Skeedumbork class will be attending the Nipmuck Indian Council of Chaubunagungamaug Powwow on September 10th. The children going on the trip must wear regalia and dance in the circle. If children or adults attending do not wish to dance and/or wear their regalia, they must pay the gate price. The bus will be leaving the Norwichtown Green at 9:00am and will leave from the powwow at 3:00pm. Please bring a bagged lunch. There will be some seats available to Tribal members. It is on a first come first serve basis. Please call the Tribal Office if you are interested. Please remember, seats are limited.

There will be an outing for the class on August 27th at the home of Roger Corey, Sr./Eagle Spirit. The outing will begin at 10:00 am. Anyone that does not know the directions to Roger's home can meet at the Better-Value parking lot in Voluntown at 9:30am.

Our Gung Skeedumbork classes will resume on September 17th at 9:30-11:00am. There will be many new activities and a new dance teacher for the boys. Mike Addison/Dancing Hawk has so kindly agreed to teach our young boys. I cannot wait to see you all again.

Until then I say, Nahunsha'sh (see you later),

Darlene Currier/Eyes of the Wolf

ELDERS COUNCIL

Tribal Council has asked Tribal Leader, Eleanor Michaud, to begin the process of restarting the Tribe's Elders' Council. Eleanor enthusiastically accepted this important challenge. As a first step, Eleanor asked that this article be included in the newsletter, as a means to encourage members over 55 years of age, who would like to participate in this important organization, to step forward to serve on this council.

The Elders Council typically advises the Tribal Council on matters of culture, conducts consultations with off-reservation entities regarding cultural matters and administers the cultural preservation activities of the Tribe. As a source of traditional wisdom, the Elders Council plays an active role in the Tribe's governance by providing insight on diverse issues, including resource management, leadership responsibilities, environmental issues, cultural practices, and youth programs.

Traditional Mohegan culture is based on an intimate spiritual connection with and knowledge of the natural world. The elders believe that such connection and knowledge are necessary to respect one's self, other humans and all living things. For today's elders, to be Mohegan is to be able to think for one's self, to know the rich history of their peoples, to speak the Native tongue, to participate in ceremonies, and to act responsibly and respectfully towards other humans and the natural world.

Please contact Eleanor at (860) 885-0589 if you would like to be considered a candidate for the Elders' Council. Your only commitment is your experience and your time. The Elders' Council will meet on a monthly basis and you will be required to attend all meetings.

NEW READING AND REFERENCE LIBRARY

The Tribe is developing a new reading and reference library as part of an effort to provide a literary base upon which to educate our members, especially our younger members, about their history, heritage, culture, and tradition.

If you have any books on Native American topics that you would like to contribute, please deliver or send them to the office. You can deliver them to 77 East Town Street, Norwich, CT, or, mail to P.O.Box 1066, Norwich, CT, 06360. If you plan to deliver them, make sure you call ahead, 860.892.1039.

As part of this initiative, NAM has developed a relationship with "Books For America", a small non-profit 501(c)(3) organization based in Washington, DC that is having a huge impact on thousands of disadvantaged individuals in the Nation's Capital through its "Books for DC" program.

BFA has already donated a number of titles for our reading and reference library. We thank BFA and BFA's President and Founder, Mr. Steve Hersey for this donation and for future donations.

BFA's mission is to promote literacy, life-long learning, and understanding by distributing donated new and used books of all types and other forms of educational media to organizations serving disadvantaged communities and individuals.

The majority of BFA's current programs focus on collecting books for children. However, because they collect all types of books, they are able to provide books to people of all ages. This makes BFA unique among most non-profit organizations in the United States. Recipients include adult and youth literacy programs, youth centers, transitional homeless shelters, hospitals, inner-city and rural schools, military bases, assisted living communities for seniors, veterans hospitals, women's shelters, hospices, and other such organizations.

BFA obtains needed items both from donation drives held in communities, and also directly from publishers.

If you have any new or used books that you would like to contribute to BFA, check out BFA's web site, <http://www.booksforamerica.org>, for more information on how you can make a tax-deductible contribution.

NATIVE AMERICAN MOHEGAN COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

As a result of the Native American Mohegans Needs Assessment Survey and in an attempt to address some of the issues raised in the survey, we have decided to include a regular column in the newsletter of health related programs for those who live in the greater Norwich, CT, area. This column will be written and provided by our health services partner, United Community and Family Services. As we have said in the past, if you are interested in finding out more about similar programs in your area contact our Health Services Specialist, Darlene Currier,

or Health Services Coordinator, Toni Cook. They may be able to assist you in finding programs in your local area. Here is the first in that series:

THE MOBILE DENTAL PROGRAM

Southeastern Connecticut Oral Health Collaborative, “Smiles Across Southeast Connecticut” (SMILES), was formed in August, 2001, by a group of safety net dental providers and health and social service professionals concerned about access to and the availability of dental care for all, especially the underserved children in Southeastern Connecticut.

United Community & Family Services is pleased to be a member of this Collaborative. UCFS provides a mobile dental program to children who live in the towns of Montville, Griswold, Norwich, Sprague, and Ledyard. In the 2005-2006 school year, the program will be expanded to include Voluntown, Groton, and Preston schools.

WHAT IS MOBILE DENTAL?

Understanding that access to dental care can sometimes be a barrier to receiving dental services, UCFS provides a dental hygienist who currently goes to schools in Griswold, Montville, Ledyard, Norwich, Sprague, and TVCCA sites.

The child has a 30-minute appointment and during this time receives a cleaning, education and fluoride treatment.

The program is designed for underinsured and uninsured students and services are free to children on HUSKY AND T-19. If a child does not have insurance, the cost is \$30.00. If needed, funds are available to assist with payment.

The Mobile Dental Program is made possible through The Backus Foundation and Smiles Across Southeastern Connecticut, which was awarded a five-year grant from the Connecticut Health Foundation. SMILES aims to provide access and availability to dental care for all, especially the underinsured and uninsured.

By 2008 as part of the CHF grant, SMILES will double access to and utilization of oral health services among HUSKY insured children in Southeastern Connecticut.

BOOK REVIEW

GEORGE CATLIN
NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS
edited by Peter Matthiessen

From 1831 to 1837, George Catlin traveled extensively among the native peoples of North America, from the Muskogee and Miccosukee Creeks of the Southwest to the Lakota, Mandan, and Pawnee of the West, and from the Winnebagos and Menominees of the North to the Comanches of eastern Texas. Studying their habits, customs, and modes of life, he made copious notes and numerous sketches of ceremonies, buffalo hunts, symbols, and totems. Catlin’s unprecedented fieldwork culminated in more than five hundred oil paintings and his now legendary journals, which, As Peter Matthiessen writes in his introduction, “taken together, constitute the first, last and only ‘complete’ record of the Plains Indians ever made at

the height of their splendid culture, so soon destroyed by traders’ liquor and disease, rapine and bayonets.”

This one-volume edition of Catlin’s journals, edited by Peter Matthiessen and illustrated with more than fifty reproductions of Catlin’s incomparable paintings, brings the Native Americans of the nineteenth century vividly to life.

TRADITION !

MOTHER EARTH AND FATHER MOUNTAIN
by Ken Edwards

As long ago as the Earth is old, the never-ending story of a simple love began that people can watch grow stronger every day. That love started a chain reaction and created everything as we know it today.

I will do my best to tell this story of love and wonder.

When the Creator decided to create the world, he wanted the beginning to be full of life, beauty and wonderment. It started very simply, with mountains high and low as far as the eye could see, and the ground, which surrounded the mountains that stretched out seemingly forever.

Creator breathed life into the mountains and earth (for we know now that all things, whether stone or tree, has a spirit). After doing so, Creator waited and watched for the miracle given from his heart to unfold. Mother Earth, her name was given, and the mountains were the first to know her. The mighty mountains were also given a name: Father Mountain.

Farther Mountain heard a beautiful voice singing one day on the winds, blowing and swirling around his peaks. He listened and wondered where this beautiful sound was coming from. At times he felt the sound all around him. It was so pleasant that one day he just had to know whose the beautiful voice was.

He called out, "Who are you? I hear your voice in song, but I see nothing. Please tell me who you are."

Ever so gently - almost timidly - a gentle breeze brushed past him, saying, "My name is Mother Earth. I am all that surrounds you as far as the eye can see and beyond. May I ask who you are?"

"I am called Father Mountain. The Creator made me. Do you know of the Creator?"

"Yes" the breeze answered. "Creator made you and me." Father Mountain remained silent for a while, for he was deep in thought about what he was just told.

Finally he spoke. "Why do you think he made us? Do you know? I know I can see as far as I am tall, but as I look out I see nothing. Also, I am lonely, and my days and nights are long."

The breeze twirled about and couldn't give Father Mountain an answer, for she did not know the answer to his question.

"Well, maybe we need not know," Father Mountain said, "but can we talk a while? Your songs make me happy and now I do not feel alone anymore."

Mother Earth was also lonely, so they talked and talked and talked! Before long they were as one, enjoying each other's company. The days and nights were not so long anymore.

Father Mountain, from deep inside the rock from which he was made, felt a strong feeling for Mother Earth - a feeling very new to him, something he never felt before. As I was told, this feeling was called love - the first love.

One day, as Father Mountain listened to Mother Earth's song, he felt he had to tell her of his feelings. He said, "Mother Earth, I am so happy we have found each other. I have a very special feeling for you deep inside me. I can ignore it no longer.

Without you, I stand a lonely mountain who would endlessly sit. You have taught me laughter and kindness, and I must tell you that these feelings are new to me, but so are you. I will call these feelings love. Do you hear me Mother Earth? I love you."

Mother Earth was so surprised. The words that Father Mountain shouted out to her touched her, for she loved him, too. She was so touched and filled with happiness that she cried, not out of sadness, but with joy.

When she cried, something wonderful and new happened. Everywhere signs of life started to appear. Trees grew, as well as flowers, grasses and bushes with fruit. Everywhere there were new beginnings. Her tears made lakes and streams and beautiful waterfalls that flowed over Father Mountain. (They say waterfalls are Father Mountain's tears of happiness.)

Father Mountain and Mother Earth were more than surprised at what they saw. The Creator did have a plan, a plan to start new life as we now know it. The Creator put living creatures on Mother Earth, the bird, wolf, bear, turtle, snake and more. The world was a place for life to start. All the tools to survive had been given to the creatures, including food and shelter.

It was our start so long, long ago. So when you look and see the mountains and a flower and trees, or hear a stream rushing over rocks and a gentle breeze brushes past you, you know this is love and it goes on forever. It's a love that not even man can destroy today.

Ken "Rainbow Cougar" Edwards, from the Colville Indian Reservation in Washington, is an accomplished

painter and storyteller. Edwards is a graduate of the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe and is a long-time cartoonist for Indian Country Today.

(If you have any announcements you would like printed in the next newsletter, send them to the office at P.O.Box 1066, Norwich, CT, 06360-1066 or call (860) 892-1039 or email to: info@nativeamericanmohegans.com.)

Special Remembrances



MARTHA LOUISE FOWLER JALBERT
January 11, 1928 - July 3, 2005



Martha Louise Fowler Jalbert, died on Sunday, July 3rd at Camelot Health Care in New London, CT.

Martha was born to the late Robert and Minnie (Woodward) Fowler on January 11, 1928 in Norwich, CT. She married her late husband, Robert V. Jalbert, in Manchester, CT on April 26, 1956.

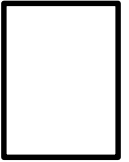
She was proud of her Native American Mohegan heritage and was known by her tribal name of "Dove". She was one of the oldest students at Norwich Adult Education where she obtained her G.E.D. She was last employed at Electric Boat until her retirement.

Martha is survived by her daughter, Susan Mills, her brother; Donald Fowler, and her four grandchildren; David Paul Morgana, Jr., Edward Victor Morgana, Crystal Marie Morgana, and Jade Venus Mills.

We will all miss her energy and her selfless devotion to her Native American roots.

On behalf of the Native American Mohegans, the Tribal Council would like to extend their condolences to all of Martha's friends and relatives.

Native American Mohegans, Inc.
P.O.Box 1066
Norwich, CT, 06360-1066



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

SEPTEMBER 18TH FAMILY GATHERING

A Family Gathering will be held at Mohegan Park, Norwich, on Sunday, September 18th from 12:00PM to sunset. Come and learn more about the status of the tribe's activities, see relatives and friends, reminisce about the past and plan for the future.

Plan to bring a picnic meal for you and your family and a dish for all!

For more information call the office at 860/892-1039 or send email to info@nativeamericanmohegans.com.
