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## NATIVE LANGUAGE: PASS IT ON

**10** Native language immersion schools are one of the best ways to breathe life into a dying language say Native language experts. In Arlee, Mont. on the Flathead Indian Reservation, Patrick Pierre (Pend d'Oreille/Salish) teaches students the magic of speaking the Salish language in Nkwusm, a nonprofit preschool. Robert Struckman meets the school's founders Melanie Sandoval (Salish/Navajo), Tachini Pete (Salish/Navajo), Josh Brown (Salish/Gros Ventre), and Chaney Bell (Salish/Kootenai) and describes the efforts it takes to keep the language alive.



## NATIVE PLACES

**35** Ed Readicker-Henderson invites us on a unique trip to Alaska where he visits Native places. At the Alaska Native Heritage Center in Anchorage, visitors learn about cultures like the Alutiiq, the Tlingit or the Yup'ik. Alaska Heritage Tour boat tours give historic and contemporary information about Native cultures like the Athabaskan who live in the village of Eklutna, 25 miles north of Anchorage, where hundreds of Athabaskan Spirit Houses stand. At the Palmer Musk Ox Farm, musk oxen are carefully combed to gather their light brown fur, called *qiviut*, soft as cashmere. Native knitters turn the *qiviut* into hats and scarves sold at the Musk Ox Producer's Co-Op in Anchorage. A peaceful rest at the luxurious Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge with spectacular views of the Alaska Range gets visitors ready to explore the nearby Denali National Park.



## EARTHKEEPERS

**24** In Wisconsin, the management of forests and natural resources by the Ojibwe, the Menominee, the Potawatomi, and the Odawa, are so highly regarded that their plans have become models for other Native nations. Winona LaDuke outlines the history behind the Wisconsin tribes's land management struggles and achievements. The good news is that today, partnerships have been built between conservation groups and tribal governments to protect land and watersheds for the future.

## TRIBAL COLLEGES: TEACHING, PRESERVING, NURTURING

**17** Teaching and reinforcing Native culture and language are as important as opening doors to better employment opportunities at the 34 tribal colleges and universities (plus one in Canada). "Our knowledge is important and we need to honor and use it," says Gerald Gipp (Hunkpapa Lakota), executive director of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium. Many colleges offer two-year certificate and associate degree programs that focus on needs within the communities. Ten of the tribal colleges and universities award Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts degrees. Maureen Littlejohn writes about the colleges' successes at responding to market demand as well as to community values.

**Correction:** In the last issue of *American Indian* magazine (Vol. 5, No. 1), we incorrectly identified Chief Pushmataha as Creek. He should have been identified as Choctaw.

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*On the cover: Rose Nerl (Mescalero Apache) (left) and Emma Rosebud Giordano (Oglala Lakota) photographed by Anthony Two Moons (Southern Arapaho)*





SEPTEMBER 21, 2004



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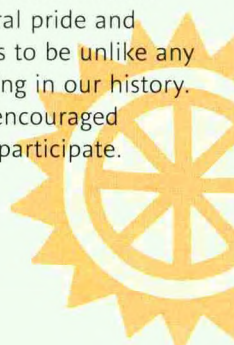


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# Landmark objects by Nathan Jackson and Roxanne Swentzell are nearly ready to grace Mall Museum

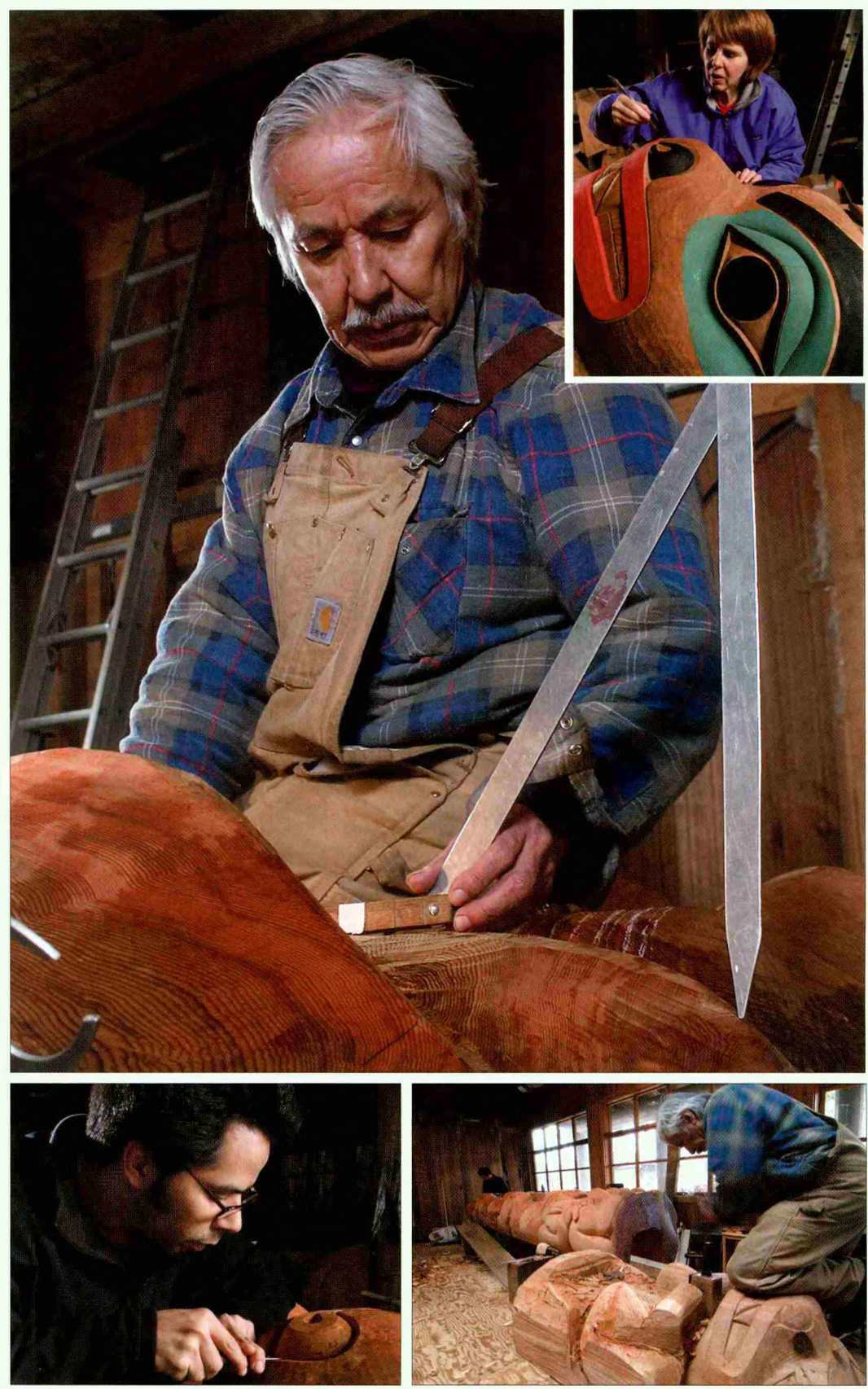
For most of 2004, much of Nathan Jackson's time and talent have been focused on a 20-foot-long cedar pole. Lying in the Tlingit carver's workshop in the Saxman Tlingit community in Alaska, the pole is a key design component of the new National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C. "Decades ago, totem poles were taken from Native communities without permission and dispersed throughout North America," says Jackson, a carver since the late 1960s. Many of them turned up in museums.

A 40-foot Bear Clan totem pole from the Saxman Tlingit community (also known as Cape Fox) near Ketchikan, Alaska, was one of these displaced poles. It became a part of the NMAI's collection, and in 2001 it was repatriated to Cape Fox. In return, the Cape Fox Native Corporation, on behalf of the community, presented a 20-foot cedar log to the NMAI as a token of goodwill and appreciation. Bruce Bernstein, NMAI's assistant director for cultural resources, commissioned Jackson to create the totem for the Mall Museum.

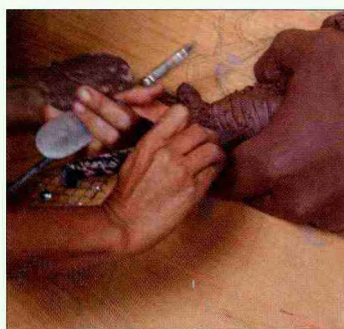
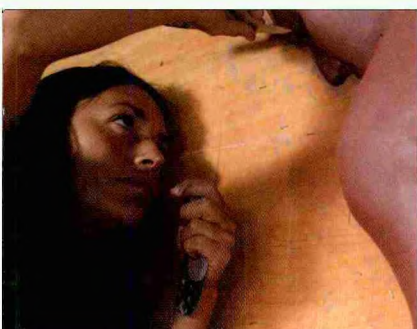
Jackson chose the repatriated totem as his inspiration for the latest carving. Like its predecessor, the new totem features the story of Kats, the Bear Hunter, a traditional figure in stories of the Cape Fox region Bear Clan.

Unlike most poles, which are usually carved in one piece, the pole destined for the NMAI has been created in three sections. In its intended location in the museum, the commissioned pole will be visible from all angles and include carvings on the reverse side as well, which is not usual.

For the past 30 years, Jackson's wife, Dorica Jackson, has painted the poles he carves, adhering to the Tlingit's traditional color scheme.







The couple's son, Stephen, assisted his father with the carving. On May 18, 2004, the totem pole will be installed in its permanent home inside the Chesapeake Museum Shop on the Mall Museum's ground floor.

Jackson's pole is one of a series of large commissioned works considered landmark objects in the new museum. Linda Greatorex, NMAI's project manager of landmark and nongallery spaces, says these works, located in transitional spaces between galleries, shops, and theaters, will serve as gathering points for visitors.

Bernstein also commissioned Santa Clara Pueblo sculptor Roxanne Swentzell to create a

series of bronze figures that will sit outside the museum's ground-floor performance theater entrance. Swentzell, who began sculpting as a child, is creating a three-section collection of six 8-foot-tall bronze figures and a series of eight ceramic masks. The central four figures represent the indigenous peoples of the Americas. Two males and two females clasp right hands in the center, their left arms reaching out to the four cardinal directions. "This piece symbolizes the main concepts of the Native world: the circle, balance, a spiral in motion, and the four directions," Swentzell says. "I can't get specific about any tribe's culture except my own, but I

also wanted to honor all of the indigenous peoples of the Americas. So I chose to represent several universal symbols in the central figures."

On either side of the central piece stand two Pueblo rain dancers. "Because this is a theater wall I thought there should be 'performers' – although we do not think of them as such – to acknowledge this place in the museum," she says. "Because I am from Santa Clara Pueblo I chose rain dancers, one female, one male. They dance for rain, which nourishes all life." The eight ceramic masks are placed between the central figures and the two dancers. "The faces on the masks represent Native people who are still here today, alive and vibrant."

The pieces are being cast in bronze on the Hawaiian island of Kauai, where she has worked on the figures since last autumn. A mock wall, identical to the one in the Mall Museum, was built in her studio to ensure that the proportions were exact. Swentzell first designs the figures in clay – some

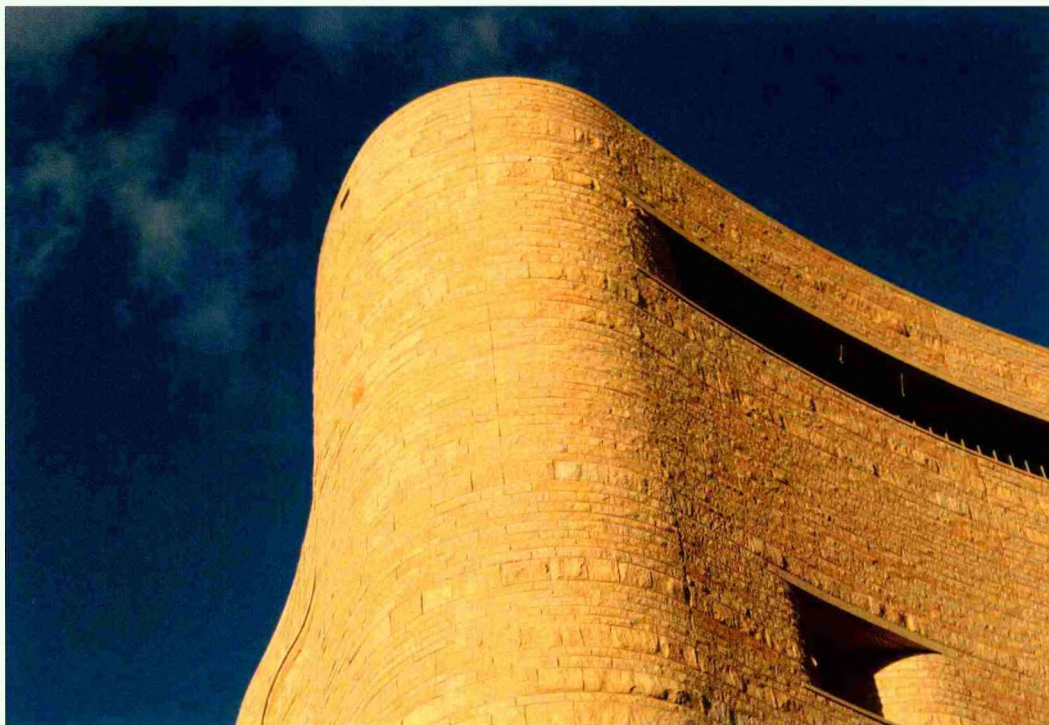
*Facing page, left, clockwise from top: (top left) Nathan Jackson measures Kats, the Bear Hunter. (top right) Dorica Jackson paints in a Tlingit tradition. (bottom right) Nathan Jackson creates totem in three parts. (bottom left) Stephen Jackson assists his father with totem carving. This page: Roxanne Swentzell pays close attention to the sculpting of hands that clasp, to a hand holding corn and to the figure's eye.*

of which she had flown in from her New Mexico home in Santa Clara Pueblo – and then makes a mold from which the bronzes are cast.

Swentzell looks forward to the museum visitors' reactions. "I want this piece to invite people to look inside themselves, to see what really matters, and to get a sense of connection to something far deeper – that indigenous peoples and cultures still matter."

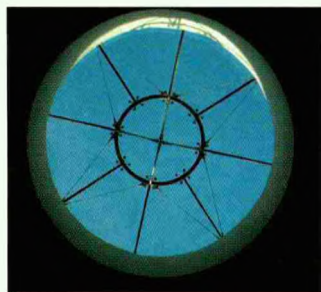
- Jason Ryle





Above: View of southwest corner of new Mall Museum building at 4th St. and Independence Ave. in Washington, D.C. Below: Closeup of skylight in the Potomac, the central space in the Mall Museum.

# Mall Museum down to finishing touches



As another spring day ends in Washington, D.C., activities around the new National Museum of the American Indian's curved exterior stonework – already more than 85 percent complete – near a crescendo. Construction workers, architects, and museum employees busy themselves as the official opening date, Sept. 21, 2004, moves closer.

Inside the museum, the 120-seat circular Lelawi Theater is almost finished, save for the installment of a multimedia presentation that introduces museum goers to

the themes and messages they will encounter. Inside the museum's larger, 320-seat circular Main Theater, wood paneling that resembles a dense forest has been installed on the curved walls.

The Potomac, the museum's 120-foot-high showcase rotunda, awaits the installation of a copper screen wall in May. At the center of its floor, 30-inch circular red pipe-stones will be placed one month later. The red stones – brought from Minnesota, where they are used by some Native Americans to carve sacred pipes – “are like a fire and, like a hearth, mark the figurative heart of the new museum,” says Duane Blue Spruce (Laguna/San Juan Pueblo), the NMAI's facilities planning coordinator.

Meaning “let's eat” in the language of the Piscataway and Delaware peoples, the nearly finished Mitsitam Café will feature

indigenous cuisine from five regions across the Western Hemisphere with meals like turkey in maple brine and a blue and yellow potato casserole. Blue Spruce says visitors can sample menus from the Northern Woodlands, the Great Plains, the Northwest Coast, Meso-America,

and South America.

Outside, work continues on the four microenvironment landscape elements – woodlands, meadow, wetlands, and traditional croplands – that existed in the D.C. area before European contact. Blue Spruce says the microenvironments recognize the importance of land to Native peoples and embody a theme that runs central to the NMAI: that of returning to a Native place.

Part of the landscaping includes four cardinal direction markers that will be laid for setting in May. The four stones run along the north-south and east-west axis of the site and intersect at the pipe-stone center of the Potomac. The stones originate from four points on the hemisphere and represent a coming together of all the indigenous peoples of the Americas; the northern marker comes from Yellowknife in northwestern Canada, the southern stone from Chile, the western from Hawai'i and the eastern marker from the Washington, D.C. area.

On April 15, 2004, the Smithsonian officially took over beneficial occupancy of the resource center, conference center, patrons' lounge, and the exhibition spaces for the upcoming *Window on Collections: Many Hands, Many Voices*. The final push is on. The remainder of the building will be complete in mid-July.

- Jason Ryle

## Treaty Exhibition Makes Fascinating Reading

The National Museum of the American Indian will exhibit 19 U.S.-Indian treaties, treaty-related documents, and other historically significant papers. On loan from the National Archives in Washington, D.C., the documents will be on display at NMAI's Mall Museum from September 2004 until September 2005.

After Europeans arrived in the Western Hemisphere, Native nations made formal treaties with, at first, England, France, the Netherlands, and Spain, and later with the United States and Canada. The U.S. Constitution divides sovereignty between the states and the federal government and recognizes Indian tribes as a

*Continued*

Photos by Leonda Levchuk



The early treaties are treaties of peace and friendship and illustrate diplomacy and alliances between the United States and the sovereign Indian nations.

third, independent sovereign. The U.S. Senate recognized the sovereign-to-sovereign relationship and ratified 367 treaties with tribes between 1778 and 1871.

The early treaties are treaties of peace and friendship and illustrate diplomacy and alliances between the United States and the sovereign Indian nations. As the United States became more powerful, the government's relationship with Native nations changed. Treaties increased the land cessions, and Native people came to rely upon the annuities that resulted from the Treaties to survive. What began as a tool to separate the Indian tribes from the colonies eventually led to the removal of many Native people from their homelands. The 1828 Treaty with the Potawatomi was the 20th of 43 treaties signed by the Potawatomi that led to their removal from their homelands in Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, and Wisconsin.

One of the treaty-related documents that will be on display is the John Ross Scroll – the petition signed by 15,665 Cherokee tribal members and delivered to the U.S. Congress in April 1838, requesting that the United States void the 1835 Treaty of New Echota because it had been signed by unauthorized members of the Cherokee Nation. That treaty (also on display) ceded all the Cherokee's remaining land in Alabama, Georgia, and Tennessee to the U.S. government in exchange for \$5 million and a large tract of land in Oklahoma. During the fall and winter of 1838-1839, the U.S. War Department forced the Cherokee to make a 1,000-mile forced march to Oklahoma – the "Trail of Tears" – in which 4,000 Cherokee people died of cold, hunger, and disease.

The United States ended formal treating with Indian tribes in 1871, reverting to less formal agreements, regulations, and legislation. However, no part of any treaty has been held unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, and treaties ratified before 1871 retain the sanctity of law. Today, although Indian treaties have been violated and ignored in many respects, the terms of U.S.-Indian treaties continue to support Native peoples' sovereign rights to land, cultural autonomy, and self-government.

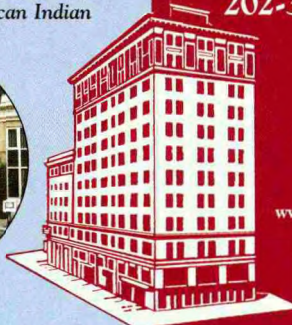
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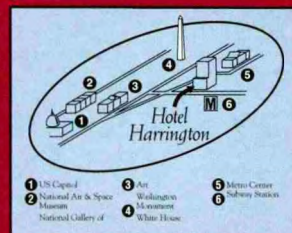
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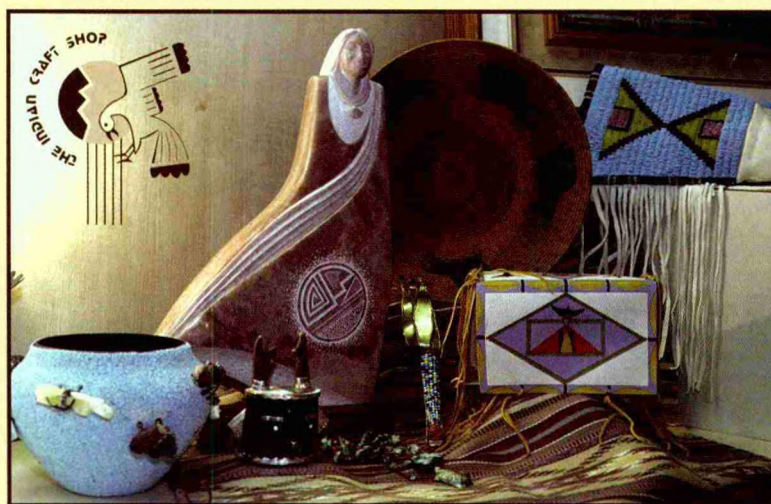


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# Pass It On

Immersion school  
founders realize  
the language is  
within their grasp

By Robert Struckman

**O**N A SNOW-PACKED AND CLOUDY WINTER MORNING Patrick Pierre (Pend d'Oreille/Salish) asks a question and then sits forward with a grin, his elbows on his knee. The 75-year-old preschool teacher, seated at a low chair, repeats his question to the small group of squirming students who sit cross-legged on square mats around his feet and then gestures with his hands. In response the children, ranging in age from three to five, stand up one at a time to tell him their names and then sit back down. Soon the children are answering questions about the sky outside (it's cloudy), whether they can see the mountains (they can't), and the day (it's a Tuesday in February).

Photos by Susanna Gaunt

*Above: Teachers Patrick Pierre and Stephen Small Salmon with the children during morning lessons at Nkwusm, an immersion school on the Flathead Reservation near Missoula, MT. Left: Patrick Pierre with Susep Kipp (facing camera) and other students look out Nkwusm's window. Patrick is asking the kids to use Salish to name all the things they see outside.*





**People always** come up to us and say the school was meant to be," Sandoval said. "The dream has been there, within our community. It's almost like the whole community was working toward this and formed us and put us together."

*Above: Dorothy Felsman (center) with Tachini Pete and Melanie Sandoval, two of the Nkwusm directors who spent many dinners with Dorothy learning Salish.*

*Facing: Melanie and Mars Sandoval during morning lessons at Nkwusm.*

It's time for "circle," a classic component of early-childhood education. But at Nkwusm, a nonprofit preschool housed in the rear of a tribally owned bowling alley in Arlee, Mont., on the Flathead Indian Reservation, the time serves more than the usual purposes. The students learn about animals, the calendar, the weather and seasons, and they learn it all in Salish.

Pierre, whose first name the children pronounce as "Pat-ah-leek," wears his silver-streaked hair in a ponytail. He asks a girl, Siliye (Salish), to find a table and touch it. Then he asks a 5-year-old named Michael (Salish) to find a doorknob and point to it. When Michael stands rooted to his square mat, his eyes scanning the room, the kids next to him offer whispers of help. Finally the lit-

tle guy runs to the front door and points at the knob.

Standing across the room near the preschool's kitchen, Melanie Sandoval (Salish/Navajo) says in a low voice, "I love it when they give hints in Salish." Sandoval, 29, is one of the school's four founders. She and the others, all in their late 20s and early 30s, treasure the quiet moments like this when the Salish language feels so alive, when the troubles and pitfalls of immersion-style language schools fade before the miracle occurring between the elder language speakers and the children.

Moments later the circle ends and the children wash their hands and get ready for lunch. The phone rings in the back office. Sandoval hustles to answer it.





**N**ative language immersion schools are one of the best ways to breathe life into a dying language, according to Native language experts. In contrast, adult classes at tribal colleges, summer language camps, and bilingual programs in public schools rarely, if ever, produce fluent speakers. But few efforts are more difficult to start and run than an immersion school. “Every tribe wants an immersion school, but the hurdles are just tremendous,” says Inee Yang Slaughter, of the Indigenous Languages Institute in New Mexico. “Most fail.”

Nearly all of the vastly diverse languages from Brazil, Guyana, and Chile to Mexico, the United States, and Canada are in danger of extinction. In the United States, 90 percent of 155 Native languages are near extinction. Only 20 are spoken by mothers to their children. The rest have a dwindling, elderly population of speakers. The average age of the 75 fluent Salish speakers is 65.

“The United States is a global economic and cultural bulldozer. We’re tearing down these languages. These languages are core symbols of identity and carriers of culture and tradition,” says Leanne Hinton, a linguistics professor at the University of California at Berkeley and the author of *Flutes of Fire: Essays on California Indian Languages*.

Yet immersion schools present serious obstacles. Native language curricula must be written from scratch. Tribal politics are often fractious and chaotic. Steady funding is hard to come by. The most endangered languages lack skilled speakers who can also teach. And few people have the management skills to tie all the components together. In fact, a previous Salish immersion school in Arlee closed its doors a decade ago because of a lack of curriculum and other problems, says Tachini Pete (Salish/Navajo), another of Nkwusm’s founders. Pete, 31, knows first hand. He was a teacher’s aide in the failed school.

Immersion programs that have succeeded, such as the Piegan Institute in Browning, Mont., and language schools run by Maoris in New Zealand and Natives in Hawaii, have raised money from numerous sources and stubbornly persevered through other problems, says Jaune Evans of the Santa Fe-based Lannan Foundation. “In Hawaii the curriculum was paramount,” says Evans, whose foundation has given over \$6 million for language preservation. About half of that figure has gone to the Piegan Institute and the Hawaiian school. “They had activists who were comfortable rubbing elbows with foundation types and politicians. That’s rare.”

**N**kwusm was born five years ago as a dream in a kitchen in Missoula, a small city a short drive from the Flathead Reservation’s southern boundary. Sandoval, Pete, Josh Brown (Salish/Gros Ventre), and Chaney Bell (Salish/Kootenai) had met for dinner and the chance to put their heads together on their idea for an immersion school. “That’s the day we got the name, Nkwusm. It means ‘One family,’” Brown says. “With the name, for me, it became real.”

None of them had grown up speaking Salish. All felt its lack personally. “It’s like an ache not to know your language. It hurts,” Pete says. All four of them separately, over the previous years, had begun to pursue the Salish language seriously. All their efforts were impressive – they essentially taught themselves – but Pete’s was the most extraordinary. Unsatisfied with Salish classes offered at the local tribal college, Pete had begun in 1994 to ask elders to explain words and verb conjugations to him. He filled notebooks with the things he learned. After three years of work and dozens of people asking him for copies of his notes, Pete realized he had something invaluable. In 1998, with the help of the tribe, he published an expanded dictionary.

After settling on the name, the four completed



# The 17 preschool students enrolled in January 2004 seem to absorb the Salish language and its point of view remarkably quickly, Pete says. He, Brown, and the others know that the road to a lively Salish language will be a long one, a few pupils at a time.

the tax documents to incorporate as a nonprofit. In 2001 the Maryland-based Innovation Center granted them \$1,000 as seed money. The money helped the four research other immersion schools and curricula and create a plan. More important, though, the grant cemented the founders as a foursome on their way to achieving their goal. The next summer Nkwusm held a fundraiser at the annual Arlee Powwow, the major yearly cultural celebration on the reservation. "We didn't think we'd raise much money," Brown says. "And we didn't, really, but the support from the community was just tremendous."

That fall, events quickened. The Arlee Head Start Program vacated the spot behind the bowling alley. "There's no way to plan enough. At a certain point, we knew we just had to go for it and view it as a learning process," Sandoval says.

The organizers presented a plan to the tribal council. With the support of tribal elders, a budget, a board of directors, a model language curriculum, and two state-certified teachers – Pete and Sandoval – the four answered every question before it could be asked. The council voted to fund the school with nearly \$100,000 for the 2002-2003 school year.

Eighteen months later, the school is in something of a groove. Pete believes that Nkwusm has escaped some of the problems that plagued the Salish language school of a decade ago. The differences between the two schools are illusory. Perhaps the first school simply broke the ice, he says, making Nkwusm possible by its failure. Still, Nkwusm has its rough spots. Attendance is sporadic. Funding and management issues are always struggles. Daily labors get in the way of long-term planning. Last year the school lost its oldest student and best speaker, a first-grader, to the public schools in part because a curriculum for grade school has been slow to develop.

Jon Reyhner, a professor in the teacher's college at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff with a long history of involvement in Native lan-

guage schools, says, "Running an immersion school is a balancing act. These are experimental projects and they're all unique."

"We're committed to working through the problems. It's not perfect, but it's the only way," says Brown, who is the recipient of a two-year \$60,000 Echoing Green fellowship for his efforts to revitalize his language. There are many encouraging moments. The tribal council increased the funding for this year. Best of all, the children are learning Salish.

The magic of the language creeps up on a person, says Pete. "I got a glimpse into the Salish world the other day. I realized that the parts of the word *nemtews*, which means 'waiting,' literally translate to 'sitting in the middle.' In English 'waiting' is so static. It's a whole other mindset to say, 'I'm sitting in the middle.'"

Also, Pete has begun to notice the Salish interest in interactions between objects, rather than the objects themselves. For example, a relatively new Salish word is *pupuishion*, for "automobile." Its literal translation is "wrinkled feet," a reference to tire tracks, Pete says. "It's like the trace of the car is more important than the thing you sit in."

The 17 preschool students enrolled in January 2004 seem to absorb the Salish language and its point of view remarkably quickly, Pete says. He, Brown, and the others know that the road to a lively Salish language will be a long one, a few pupils at a time. The elders aren't getting any younger – the window to produce a core of young speakers is small. Nevertheless, the modest goals are within reach. These children attend school where Salish is the primary language, and the school's organizers are planning for the school to grow with the pupils, adding grades and each year bringing in new classes of four-year-olds to fill the ranks behind them.

"It might be a return to the one-room schoolhouse," Brown says, adding that Nkwusm's board is looking for a larger facility with the space to group lower- and higher- grade students together.

After lunch at Nkwusm, Pierre settles into a chair. "You see these kids jumping around?" he asks. "Sometimes it seems to me they're not listening. And then they come out with some words that I didn't even know they knew."

Learning and teaching language is a funny and wonderful thing. Before teaching, Pierre had never spoken Salish to children in the same way that elders, when he was a child, spoke to him. He loves it. "Our language. They take right to it," he said. ■

*Robert Struckman lives and writes near St. Ignatius, Mont.*





# Master & Apprentice

A long and rewarding friendship with a fluent elder gave Gerald Hill (above) the priceless gift of a deep understanding of the Oneida language

*(above) Gerald Hill mentored with Amos Christjohn and learned to speak Oneida.*

Years after beginning his twice-weekly lunch meetings with Amos Christjohn (Oneida) at the tribal complex in Oneida, Wis., Gerald Hill (Oneida) heard the term “master-apprentice” applied to their relationship. “I never liked the term,” said Hill, who retired several years ago from a career as a lawyer with his tribe. The 67-year-old Hill is at the end of a 4-year term as president of the board of the Santa Fe-based Indigenous Languages Institute; years ago, he earned his bachelor’s degree in linguistics. He’s more than familiar with the state of Native languages in America and the struggle to keep them alive.

“My friendship with Amos grew in slow increments, built on intricate courtesies, inquiring about people,” Hill said. “We never set out to be ‘master’ and ‘apprentice.’” The clinical sound of the term irritates him. Nevertheless, it is a relationship that has become important in passing on languages in danger of dying out.

Hill had long been interested in his Native language. He had developed an ear for it as a child, hearing other people speak it though never learning it himself. He found that many people talked about learning Oneida, a language spoken today by no more than a few dozen individuals, almost all over age 70. So Hill organized lunch get-togethers in an effort to bring speakers together with potential students, but each time the groups fizzled down to Hill and Christjohn. The two turned

those lunch meetings into an ongoing ritual, talking about the linguistics of Oneida in elliptical conversations that ranged over all kinds of topics. Increasingly, as the years passed, the two spoke Oneida together. By the time Christjohn died four years ago, at 93, Hill could carry on conversations comfortably in Oneida.

The master-apprentice model of language immersion is one of the most efficient methods of teaching the subtleties of language, especially when only a few elderly speakers remain. Just as immersion-school curricula recreate the way parents pass a language to their children, master-apprentice programs imitate the common and effective ways that knowledge has been passed on for thousands of years, according to Leanne Hinton, a linguistics scholar at the University of California at Berkeley.

The method has been gaining popularity in recent years in California and Alaska. The Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival has paired more than 60 master-apprentice teams since 1993. The Sealaska Heritage Institute in Juneau began last year to give modest financial support and training for eight language teams.

Roy Mitchell, at the Sealaska language program, said one of the biggest challenges is for the people to find time to get together. The goal is 20 hours per week, but commonly the pairs meet for about 10. Participants include high-school students and people from ages 20 to 40. Another challenge is for the master to teach the language without resorting to translation. Mitchell said, “We give the apprentices about three dozen phrases to help them elicit useful language, things like, ‘Tell me what I’m doing now.’ or ‘I don’t understand.’”

“The goal is to immerse the students in the language, if only for 20 minutes at a time.”

There’s no telling how many informal master-apprentice relationships exist in Native communities across America. For years the founders of Nkwusm, the Salish immersion school on the Flathead Indian Reservation in Montana, ate weekly dinners with an elder Salish speaker named Dorothy Felsman (Salish) and others. When told that the dinners at Felsman’s home resembled the master-apprentice model, Melanie Sandoval (Salish/Navajo) was excited by the connection.

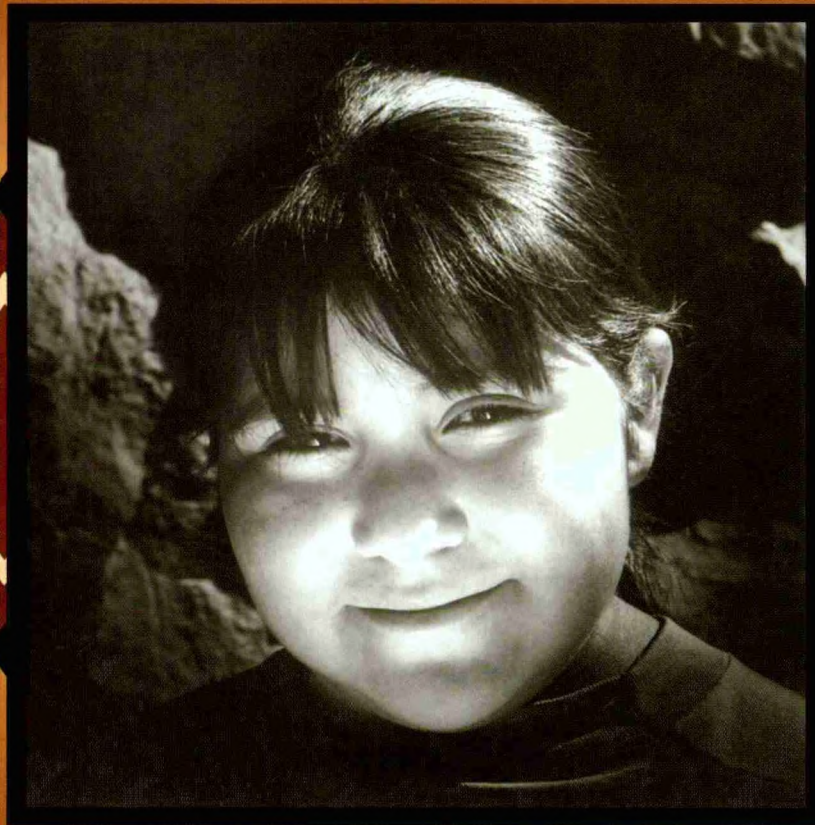
“People always come up to us and say the school was meant to be,” Sandoval said. “The dream has been there, within our community. It’s almost like the whole community was working toward this and formed us and put us together.” ■

— Robert Struckman



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# Tribal Colleges

Preserving culture  
Teaching skills  
Nurturing dreams

By Maureen Littlejohn

**T**he sharp smell of diesel exhaust slices the air as metal scrapes against rock and hard-packed dirt. A hard-hatted driver maneuvers his lumbering bulldozer toward heaps of earth. He pushes it forward, slowly backs up, and pushes again. It's a typical scene in the life of any construction worker — or a construction-worker-in-training. Welcome to Wayne Vanderberg's classroom.

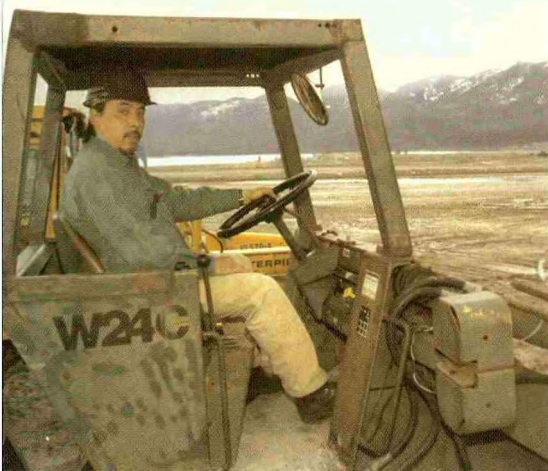
Bulldozers, backhoes, loaders, and road graders are just a few of his teaching tools. Not to mention the 18-wheel tractor-trailer trucks." Sometimes I'll take a student out in a 16-ton vehicle for the first time and they'll try to operate it like a Nissan pickup. It gets real interesting," says Vanderberg (Salish), an assistant instructor with (and graduate of) the highway construction certificate program at Salish Kootenai College in Pablo, Mont.

Across 12 states, on any day, the experiences of the 30,000 students enrolled in 34 tribal colleges and universities (plus one in Canada) are vastly different. At Salish Kootenai College a few wrestle with monster machinery while others sit in a history class or others struggle to raise a tipi outside. Some write computer code at Sinte Gleska University in Mission, S.D., while at Bay Mills Community College in Brimley, Mich., others pick berries with an elder. In Bismarck, N.D., at United Tribes Technical College, safety-masked students set off a shower of sparks in a welding class.

*(left) A dreamcatcher hangs outside a window of the Cultural Preservation Building at the College of Menominee Nation in Keshena, Wisc.*

Photo by Mary Annette Pembler





(top) Virgil Dupuis in the Salish Kootenai College greenhouse built by one of his students and used as a teaching tool at the college.

(above) Wayne Vanderberg operates one of the machines he uses for teaching heavy equipment at Salish Kootenai College.

The first tribal college to open its doors was Diné College (formerly called Navajo Community College) in Tsaile, Ariz., in 1968. One of the latest, Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College in Mount Pleasant, Mich., started in 2003. The majority of colleges are located on reservations in remote areas, are chartered by tribal governing bodies, and do not receive state funding but instead depend on federal government appropriations. Support also comes from corporations, foundations, and individuals, many of whom are involved through the efforts of the American Indian College Fund, a nonprofit organization based in Denver, Colo., which raises money for scholarships, endowments, and operations.

Despite a myriad of challenges, the colleges successfully produce the next generation of Native participants in the work force, including teachers, tribal managers, truckers, writers, artists, computer technicians, accountants, social workers, and health professionals. Teaching and reinforcing Native culture and language are as important as opening doors to better employment opportunities.

"For so long the government said we need to

be assimilated into the mainstream. But Native people have scientifically based knowledge acquired over hundreds of years. Our knowledge is important and we need to honor and use it," explains Dr. Gerald Gipp (Hunkpapa Lakota), who has a doctorate in educational administration and is executive director of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC). He points to the medicinal use of plants and herbs; for example, the Chippewa crush wintergreen leaves, boil them in water, and inhale the steam to cure headaches. The leaves contain salicylate, the same chemical in aspirin that reduces inflammation and relieves headaches.

AIHEC, the united voice of tribal colleges and universities, promotes policy and regulation at the national level and also advocates for change at the congressional and federal levels. The 35 AIHEC tribal colleges and universities serve more than 250 federally recognized tribes. Many offer two-year certificate and associate degree programs that focus on needs within the community, such as nursing, early childhood education, sustainable development, tribal record management, business administration, and agriculture. Often graduates



**"For so long the government said we need to be assimilated into the mainstream. But Native people have scientifically based knowledge acquired over hundreds of years. Our knowledge is important and we need to honor and use it."**

**— DR. GERALD GIPP**

will transfer to other institutions, such as a state university, to continue their education.

Ten of the tribal colleges and universities award Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts degrees. A Master's in Leadership can be obtained at Sitting Bull College in Fort Yates, N.D., and at Sinte Gleska University. All the schools vary in background, size, and curricula. Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kan., was opened as an industrial boarding school (grades one to five) in 1884 by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. It was accredited as a junior college in 1970 and by 1993 began awarding Bachelor of Science degrees in elementary education. Today, its 900 students come from as far away as Alaska and from more than 150 tribes.

"Each of the tribes has an individual club where they'll speak their language and cook Native foods. I never knew there were so many different tribes," explains Althea Eaton (Navajo), who graduated from Haskell with a Bachelor of Science in business administration in 2001.

College of Menominee Nation, in Keshena, Wisc., by contrast, serves students who live in the area. It offers two-year associate and certificate programs in areas such as natural resources, nursing, sustainable development, and police science. "Many go on to study elsewhere after they graduate from here, but 80 percent return. "They're proud to be able to contribute to the tribal community," says Dr. Verna Fowler (Menominee), who has a doctorate in educational administration and is the college president. The largest tribal institute, Diné College, has an enrollment of 1,912; one of its strongest programs is teacher education. Diné graduates are in high demand. "There are 300 schools in the Navajo Nation and we get calls from

them all the time. Everyone who has graduated from the program is working," says Benjamin Barney (Navajo), director of the Center for Diné Teacher Education.

Unique among the tribal colleges is the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, N.M. It is the only establishment dedicated solely to Native arts and culture. Founded in 1962 by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, its current enrollment is 151 students from 58 tribes and 25 states.

Programs offer Associate of Arts, Bachelor of Arts, and Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees in subjects such as museum studies, three-dimensional arts, creative writing, and visual communications. Formerly housed in World War II army barracks, the school moved to a new, six-building campus in 2000.

"It feels good to have a permanent home. We can see the mountains in all four directions and there's a real sense of renewal for students and



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"Many go on to study elsewhere after they graduate from here, but 80 percent return. "They're proud to be able to contribute to the tribal community," says Dr. Verna Fowler (below), who has a doctorate in educational administration and is the president of the College of Menominee Nation.



Photo by Mary Annette Pember





**“We started the course** in January with 16 students and they all have job placements with places like oil companies and the National Parks commission already,” says Henry Bigthroat (above), vice president of the Red Crow Community College’s student services.

staff,” explains Marita Hinds (Tesuque), a graduate and the school’s major gifts and alumni outreach officer.

New courses are introduced every year at the colleges in response to market demand as well as community values. At Red Crow Community College near Cardston, Alberta (the first tribally managed community college in Canada), the Kainai Land Use certification program teaches students to map out the reserve with global positioning systems and geographic information systems. The resulting surveys are used to identify and protect sacred sites that otherwise might be destroyed

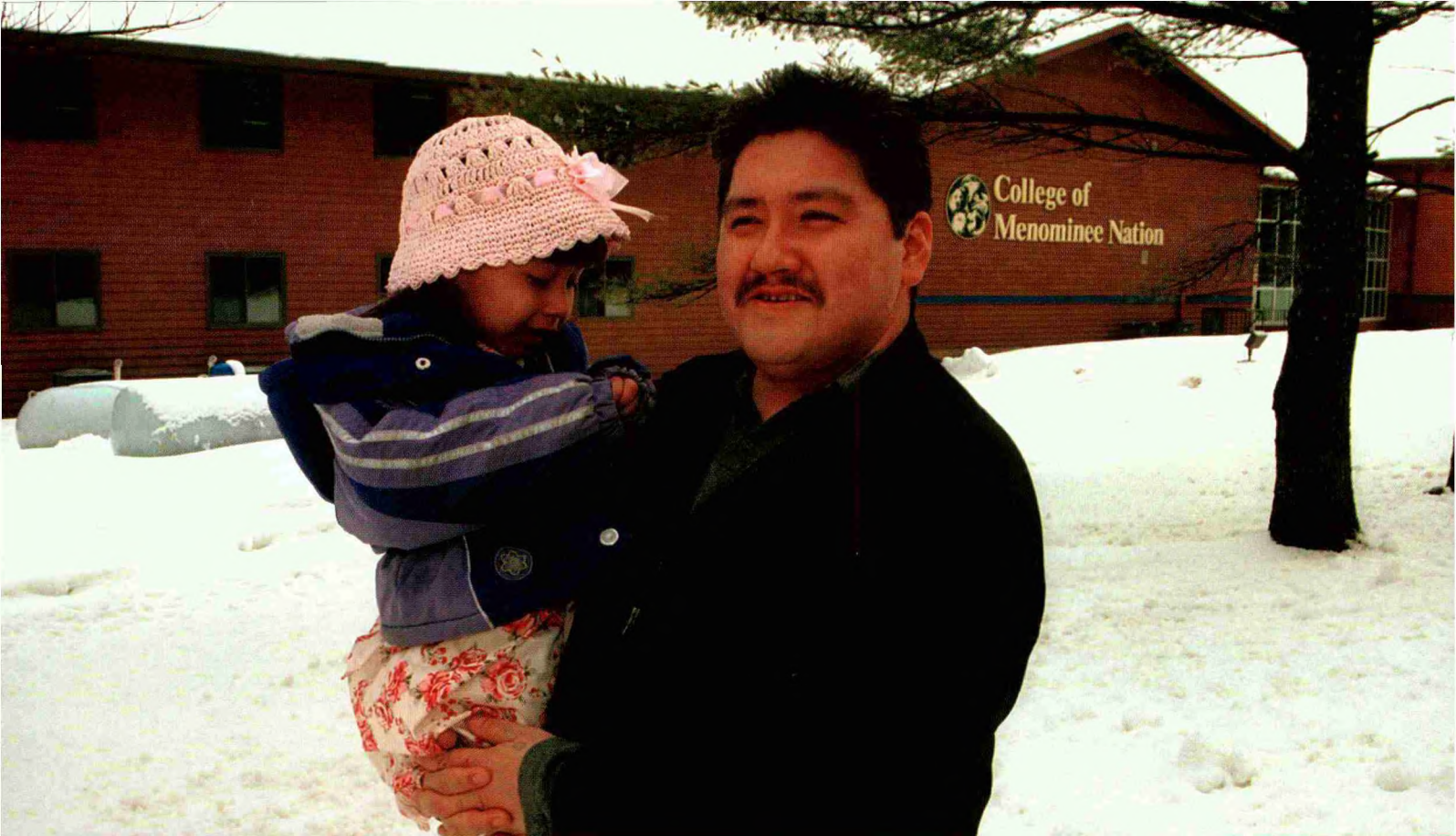
when a highway is built, pipes are laid, or a new building is erected. Sacred sites provide a link between past and present and resonate with deep cultural and spiritual significance. They are often areas that are important historically or are the location of herbal and food sources. Tipi rings dot the landscape of Alberta, marked by stones that identify Plains people’s habitation patterns. Woman’s Buffalo Jump near High River, Alberta, is where the Blackfeet drove herds of buffalo to their death and gave thanks to the great creatures for providing them with food and clothing. Plants that need protection include fields of sweet grass,

which is used in many ceremonies.

“We started the course in January with 16 students and they all have job placements with places like oil companies and the National Parks commission already,” says Henry Bigthroat (Blood/Blackfoot), vice president of the college’s student services.

Although jobs are important, culture is paramount. “It’s very important that we don’t forget where we came from,” says Joe McDonald (Salish/Kootenai), who has been president of Salish Kootenai College since 1978 and has a doctorate in education. He explains, “For so long,





# Graduates Speak

## » Chris Caldwell (above)

“I’m proud we have our own college on the reservation. It has helped to raise expectations and awareness. Now there’s training in areas like computers, natural resources, and education. It prepares you for employment or furthering your studies, and the college also provides jobs for people in the community,” explains Chris Caldwell (Menominee), who graduated from the College of Menominee Nation in 2002 with an associate degree in sustainable development. He graduates from the University of Wisconsin-Madison this spring with a Bachelor of Science in sustainable development. He hopes to land a full-time job with the Forest Products Lab, the nation’s leading wood research institute in Madison, Wis., where he was an intern last summer.

## Joyce Country

“I went to Sisseton Wahpeton College four nights a week and got my Associate of Arts in social services. The faculty members were so encouraging, I went on to become a licensed social worker,” says Joyce Country (Sisseton Wahpeton), whose 21-year career includes working for state, tribal, and private agencies. She now coordinates a tribal employment education program called Developing the Productive Employee.

## Althea Eaton

“What you put in is what you take away. I was involved in off-campus programs, worked at the business center, and coordinated a babysitting co-op while going to school. I became more comfortable deal-

ing with people and learned how to get things done,” says Althea Eaton (Navajo), who graduated in 2001 from Haskell Indian Nations University with a Bachelor of Science in business administration. She is now employed by the federal government as a social insurance specialist in Topeka, Kan.

## Don Sam

“Going to college and learning from the elders has helped me get to know who I am. It has also reinforced what I want to do culturally when I get out,” says Don Sam (Salish), who graduates this year with a Bachelor of Science in environmental science from Salish Kootenai College. He currently works with the Salish Kootenai Cultural Preservation Office as a geographic information system specialist, mapping out sacred sites.



the federal government took away our cultural practices. Our tribe could not have a powwow or medicine gathering. By the 1960s there was a cultural void. Now the main objective of the college is to fill in those gaps before the knowledge is lost."

Teaching a subject like history from a Native perspective also helps to combat years of negative portrayals and works to restore pride, says McDonald. All full-time students are required to take nine Native American credit courses; some of the most popular are traditional cornhusk basket making, drumming and singing, hide tanning, beading, dance dress, plant identification, and tipi construction. "The elders are our part-time instructors for the hands-on courses and they are really dedicated folks," says Mike Dolson (Upper Pend d'Oreille/Flathead), a Native studies instructor who specializes in history and policy. He believes their contribution is invaluable in building strong tribal ties. "They are passing on cultural traditions that connect us to our ancestors and the world around us," he explains.

The schools serve the students and the community by offering additional services such as health seminars, small-business support, and daycare. Last fall Sisseton Wahpeton College (Sisseton, S.D.) introduced a Dakota language immersion course at its daycare center. Walk by and you might hear the chorus of "London Bridge Is Falling Down" sung in Dakota or hear elders speaking a Dakota word they've written into a preschooler's book.

"We don't want the language to be lost. Parents, toddlers, and faculty are all learning at the same time," explains William LoneFight (Natchez Muscogee), the college president. With a doctorate in cultural resource management, he is studying for another doctorate in leadership for higher education at Capella's School of Education and is also a Ph.D. candidate in educational anthropology at Stanford University.

A safe and nurturing place to learn, grow, communicate, and share – tribal colleges and universities work hard to keep Native American culture alive. ■

*Maureen Littlejohn is a freelance writer who lives in Brooklyn, N.Y.*



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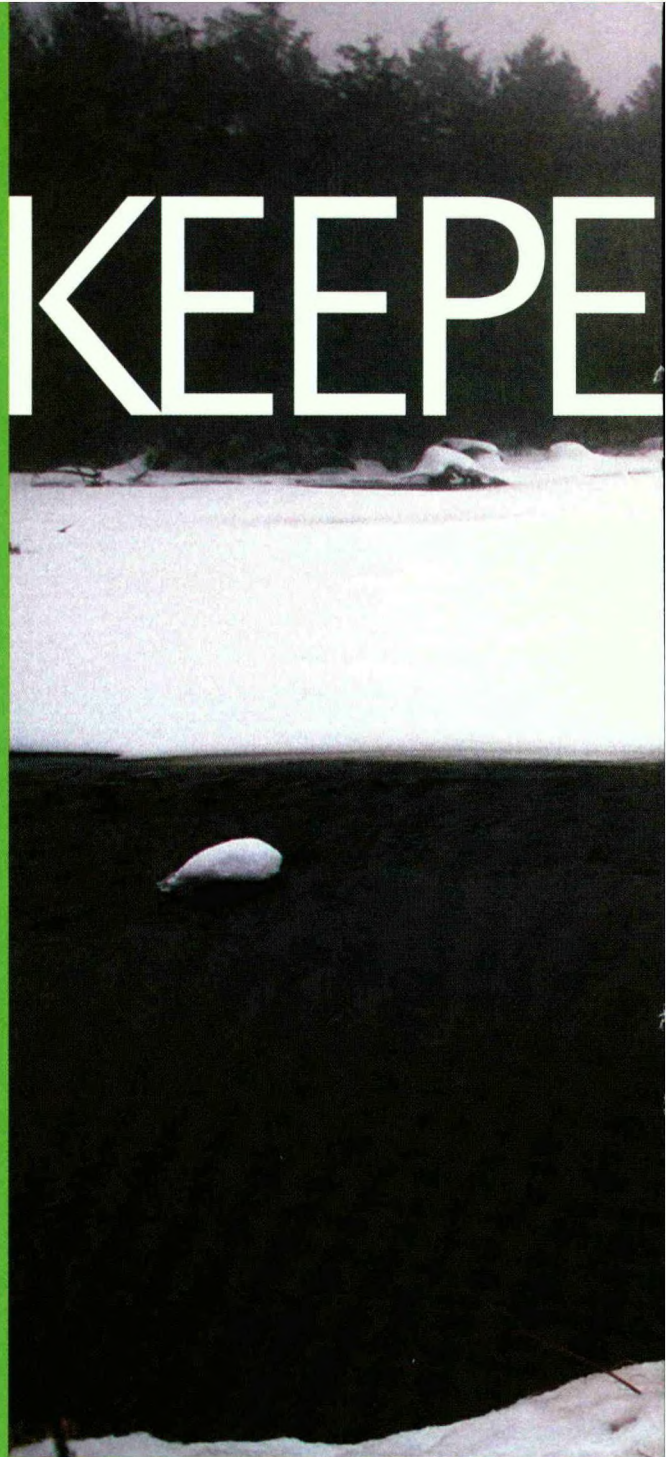
# EARTH KEEPER

By Winona LaDuke

Once the forests were thick with great pines, hemlocks, and cedars on the shores of Gichi Gummi (Lake Superior). Those forests, lakes, and wild rice sloughs of the north bear the footprint of Nanaboozhoo, the Ojibwe spirit-hero, whose presence is marked on the land and remembered in song, dance, story and ceremony to this day in the Great North Woods. Indeed, the Ojibwe, or Anishinaabeg as they call themselves and the people who surround them, the Menominee, Potawatomi, and Odawa, are forest cultures, whose way of life emanates from the forests of the north.

It has been a long hundred years of cutting in many of those forests, but, this generation, the time known to the Ojibwe as the Seventh Fire, those trees are returning, as Ojibwe, Menominee, and Potawatomi peoples protect their forests and lakes for generations ahead.

Indeed, tribal forestry and natural resource management plans in Wisconsin are some of the most highly regarded in the country, and new partnerships are building between conservation groups and tribal governments to protect land and watersheds for the future.





# RS

A photograph of a person standing on a snowy bank, looking across a dark, partially frozen body of water. The water has patches of ice and snow. In the background, there is a dense forest of evergreen trees under a hazy sky. The person is wearing a dark jacket and a hat, and is standing on a patch of snow and dry grass.

Three Native forestry and resource management programs in Wisconsin are proof that care of the land is both an ancient tradition and a modern necessity.

*(above) The Mole Lake Ojibwe and the Forest County Potawatomi purchased a 5,000-acre site formerly destined to become a copper zinc mine. The purchase saved Wolf River and its ecosystem from cyanide and mine tailings contamination.*

Photos by Mary Annette Pember



# Menominee

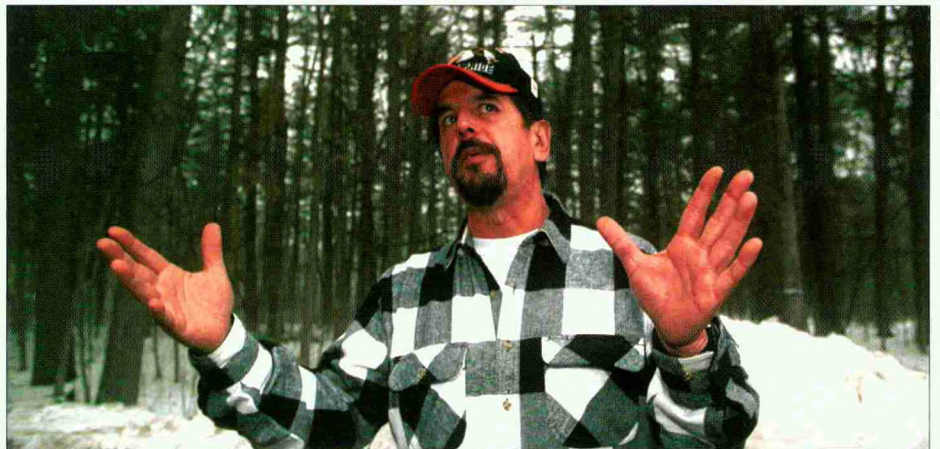
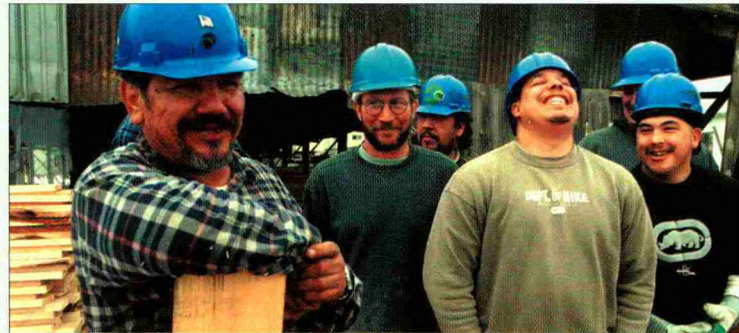
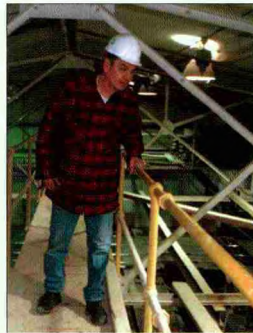
*"Start with the rising sun, and work toward the setting sun, but take only the mature trees, the sick trees and the trees that have fallen. When you reach the end of the reservation, turn and cut from the setting sun to the rising sun and the trees will last forever."*

— MENOMINEE CHIEFS IN 1854

**V**iewed from the air, the reservation is a dark-green wooded rectangle, which stands boldly against the patchwork of cuts and pastures of northern Wisconsin's landscape. The Menominee forest was one of the first internationally certified "green cross" forests in the United States, and because of its sustainable harvesting practices it not only commands a premium price for its timber but secures a forest for the generations to come.

In 1850, the Menominee forests caught the eye of the U.S. government, which tried to move the Menominee people from their territory to Minnesota. Chief Oshkosh refused to allow the removal, saying that even the poorest of the Menominee holdings in Wisconsin was better than the land the U.S. government was offering. The Menominee reservation itself was established four years later.

Oshkosh's words of refusal in many ways symbolized the tenacity of the Menominee and their ability to hold onto their lands. The Menominee



(above left) In Neopit, Wisc., Ray Fish (Menominee), sawmill safety coordinator, observes mill operations above from a catwalk in Keshena, Wisc. (above right) Menominee sawmill workers ready to head home after a day's work. (above) Dave Oshkosh, Chief Oshkosh's descendant, helped formulate the Menominee's sustainable development forest plan in Wisconsin. (below) Lumberjack John Peters (Menominee) expertly fells a hemlock tree in the tribe's forest.





forest escaped the crosscut saw and became an island of large trees surrounded by pastures and regenerating forest.

The forests have been the economic bread and butter for more than a century. The sawmill began operations, and between 1870 and 1890, cut approximately 100-million board feet from dead and downed timber. In the following two decades, the sale of green timber was added to dead and downed, and 290-million board feet of timber were cut and sold. Over the next 50 years the Menominee were able to cut more than 1-billion board feet of timber from their reservation. That forest has been a cornerstone for the Menominee Nation's financial security.

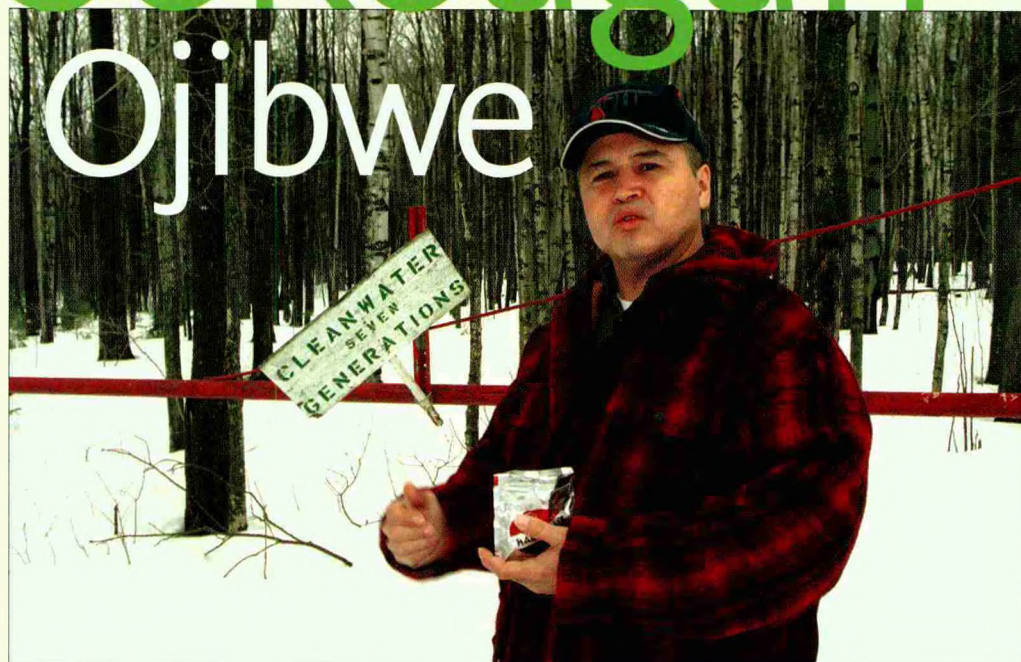
The financial viability of the tribe drew more attention from Washington. Federal pressure to "terminate" Native governments that had managed their tribal assets according to federal expectations came to bear in the form of a national policy, which would eliminate federal trust relationship and essentially turn tribal members of "terminated tribes" into shareholders of a corporate enterprise, in turn liquidating many assets. The policy was applied to the Menominee in 1959 and was a devastating blow to the community. For 14 years, the Menominee, led by Ada Deer, battled Washington, and in 1973 the Menominee Restoration Act was passed, returning the land and political status of the Menominee. Indeed, the Menominee have led "terminated tribes" nationally in their model for restoration.

The Menominee have cut the forest the equivalent of three times over, and they have more trees and timber now than when they started 150 years ago. That sustainable forestry earned them an international "green cross certification" and has made the Menominee a model for Native nations nationally. The certification is based on a management plan to maintain ecological balance within the limits of a harvest. The management plan and the forest are closely monitored with inspections by the certifying agents, as are timber shipments from certified forests.

More tribal governments in the region will have an opportunity to manage their forests in the upcoming years, as lands recovered by tribes consolidate tribal holdings. What tribes have learned may have broad application and benefit for all. The 1983 Voight Decision (*Lac Courte Oreilles vs. Wisconsin*) reaffirmed Ojibwe rights to the northern third of the state and has opened the door for new partnerships with Wisconsin.

The Menominee example, more broadly applied by organizations like the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Authority, represents the tribal governments' leadership in restoration of ecosystems and species into all of the land of northern Wisconsin.

# Sokoagan Ojibwe



**"The people need to do the basic things, the cultural ways of living, the deer hunting, fishing, gathering, picking of medicines. We're supposed to do it in the natural way, using tobacco and talking to the spirits on the land." – Robert VanZile**

**"W**e have a responsibility to this land, to the trees, land, animals and water and the Anishinaabeg have to take our portion back and redefine our relationship to the law. It's not black and white, *zhooniyaa* (money)," explains Robert VanZile, cultural preservation officer of the Mole Lake Band of Anishinaabeg. It is, instead, "about the tobacco and the Anishinaabeg law." The use of tobacco in prayer, and to reaffirm the people's relationship to all of creation, is central to the Anishinaabeg way of life and the future. Mole Lake reservation exemplifies both the tenacity of a community and its wish to recover that responsibility.

In the fall of 2003, the Mole Lake Ojibwe and the Forest County Potawatomi were able to avert proposals for mining near Mole Lake and the Wolf River and purchase the 5,000-acre site formerly proposed as a copper zinc mine. For the past three decades, a succession of mining companies had proposed to extract a 55-million ton deposit of copper and zinc. The mining would have contaminated the lake and ecosystem with cyanide and mine tailings. "The most significant thing was taking back the land," Robert VanZile remembers.

"This was 28 years of some people's lives. Now there is a sense of relief that they don't have to look over their shoulders. Now the people can dream again."

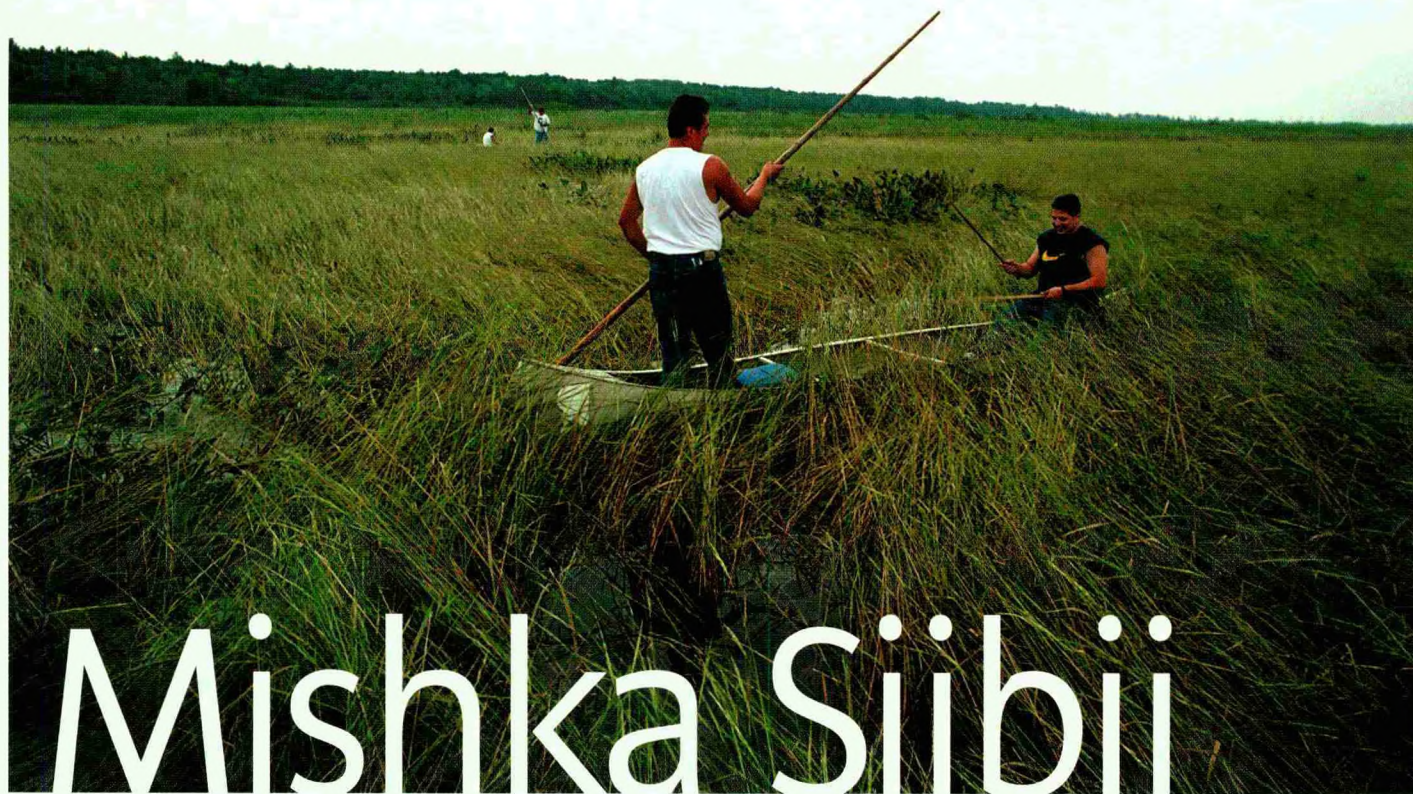
This fall, the Mole Lake and Potawatomi pooled casino revenues to buy the mine site. The two tribes that came together in the effort to protect Mole Lake are still formulating their management plan, but the instructions from Mole Lake spiritual elders are clear. "The people need to do the basic things, the cultural ways of living, the deer hunting, fishing, gathering, picking of medicines. We're supposed to do it in the natural way, using tobacco and talking to the spirits on the land," explains VanZile. Those teachings involve both traditional knowledge and long-term management plans like those at Menominee. Mole Lake's rice harvest, estimated at about 30,000 pounds annually, is now protected in perpetuity, and with it, the medicines and way of life that come from the lake and the land. "There were a lot of medicines in this area," VanZile remembers. "One of our elders said, 'This is our pharmacy here, all the area. If the pollution would have got there, that would have killed all of that off.' All is safe now."





*Junie Butler (left) and Dates Denomie (both Ojibwe) harvest rice in a traditional manner in the Kakagon Sloughs which were preserved by perhaps one of the largest tribal land conservation purchases nationally. (facing page) Bad River tribal members harvest rice in the Kakagon Sloughs in Wisconsin.*





# Mishka Siibii

## Bad River Ojibwe Reservation

**T**here is a never-ending banter between Ojibwes as to who has the best wild rice in northern Wisconsin. The Lac Courte Oreilles people will tell you about the rice from "Secret Lake," so-called because the people keep the location secret in order to guard their harvest area, the Flambeau Ojibwe will spout the virtues of their rice beds, and then there is the Bad River rice of the Kakagan Sloughs which, due to its unusual ecosystem, is rumored to be some of the best and most coveted crop. The debate will rage on, but the rice itself may indeed be saved, through some innovative work and partnerships between Ojibwes and conservation groups.

On the shore of Lake Superior is a watershed of the Chequamegon Bay, at the heart of which is Mishka Siibii Ishkoniganing, the Bad River Ojibwe Reservation. Mishka Siibii, or Bad River, churns water in the river bottom, and feeds the fertile land and the lake. At the center of this ecosystem is the Kakagan Sloughs, 16,000 acres of wild rice beds fed by both the Mishka Siibii and the sometimes gentle, other times raging waves of Gichi Gummi. The rice bed is considered to be a part of the migration story of the Anishinaabeg, who were instructed to travel to the place where the food grows upon the water.

This ecosystem is incredibly biologically diverse. It is the home of a vital *namewag* or lake sturgeon population, an immense dune system,

and some small birds known as piping plovers. The area is treasured as the Everglades of the North, and has been eyed by conservation groups like the Nature Conservancy for many years as critical habitat for preservation. It is the "last remaining place where wild rice grows on Lake Superior," says Matt Dallman of the Ashland, Wisc., office of the Nature Conservancy. "All those other places like Duluth, Superior, Green Bay were places that had shallow warm water bays. Great Lakes coastal wetland systems have been beat up and decimated, dredged, filled, and made into ports." Donna Lynk of the Bad River Band of Ojibwe surmises, "This is the last place left because the Anishinaabeg people were the caretakers of this ecosystem." And now the Chequamegon watershed is on its way to being protected forever.

The Nature Conservancy is the largest conservation landholder in the country. In northern Wisconsin, it has used its power for land and the people. Last year, the Conservancy arranged a purchase agreement with the Plum Creek Timber Corporation, and thus was able to protect 21,322 acres of forest land and 24 miles of river and stream frontage within the Bad River Reservation. Recognizing the long-term viability of tribal management systems, the Conservancy then assigned its rights to purchase the land to the Bad River Band for long-term ownership and management.

The land purchase consolidates more than 70

percent of the Bad River Reservation into tribal land ownership and protects the forest, in a diverse management plan, which then protects the river and the Kakagan Sloughs. This is the largest conservation purchase in Wisconsin's history and one of the largest tribal land conservation purchases nationally, as tribes work to recover sacred sites, graves of ancestors, and territories of cultural significance to the community.

We're not here for this generation; we are here for our children," explains Irv Soulier, director of natural resources for the Bad River Band. That long-term view, from the prophecies of the Ojibwe and the time of Nanaboozhoo's footprints on the land are characteristic of Native land management programs. Caring for forests is not like farming; the work of foresters will be seen by the grandchildren of that generation. And so it is, that after a hundred years, the footprint put on the great woods and lakes by the timber and mining barons begins to be wiped away. Communities rejoice as the footprints of Nanaboozhoo return to the landscape, and a culture based on forests and lakes continues into the future. ■

*Winona LaDuke is an Anishinaabe writer on the White Earth Reservation, and is involved in local and national work. Her upcoming book, *Recovering the Sacred*, will be out in the Fall of 2004 from South End Press.*



"Join me at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Reservation Tour with Running Strong for American Indian Youth®, September 5-11, 2004. Come see our programs in action."

*Billy Mills*  
Billy Mills, Oglala Lakota

## While On the Tour, You Will...

**Meet Billy Mills!** Olympic gold medalist and Running Strong National Spokesperson will join us to share his powerful story and answer your questions just weeks before the 40th anniversary of his Olympic victory!

**Learn Lakota!** The best way to understand a culture is to learn its language. The first morning of our Tour begins with a Lakota language lesson.

**Take part in a wacipi (pow wow)!** Dance or observe; there is nothing quite like a community wacipi.

**See our programs in action!** Throughout our trip on the Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River Sioux Indian Reservations, you will see the water wells, dialysis clinics, basketball court, housing programs, youth center, food pantries, and organic gardens that Running Strong helps make possible.

**Spend time with Running Strong staff, board members & volunteers!** You'll join the Running Strong staff and volunteers who call these communities home.



### Visit local points of interest!

In air-conditioned comfort, we visit the Black Hills, Crazy Horse Mountain, Wounded Knee, Mount Rushmore, Badlands National Park, Fort Robinson and so much more!



## About Billy Mills...

Olympic Champion, Billy Mills (Oglala Lakota(Sioux)), serves as Running Strong's National Spokesperson, encouraging Native youth with his message based on character, dignity and pride. He plays an integral role in our youth programs and is an invaluable resource with our work in Indian country. In Lakota culture, someone who achieves success has a 'giveaway' to thank the support system of family and friends who helped him achieve his goal. Billy's work with Running Strong is his way of giving something back to American Indian people.



To learn more about the 15th Annual Running Strong Tour, Running Strong programs and Billy Mills, call us toll free at 888-491-9859 or visit [www.indianyouth.org](http://www.indianyouth.org).



1964 - 2004



# CALENDAR of EVENTS

MAY/JUNE/JULY 2004

## EXHIBITIONS

### CONTINUUM: 12 ARTISTS

Through Nov. 28, 2004

This 18-month exhibition series features works by contemporary Native American artists, two at a time, from a changing selection of those who represent the succeeding generations of art begun by George Morrison (1919-2000; Grand Portage Band of the Lake Superior Ojibwe) and Allan Houser (1914-1994; Warm Springs Chiricahua Apache), two major figures of 20th-century Native American art. Like Morrison and Houser, these artists draw from a variety of influences, both inside and outside art schools and universities. Exploring new directions, they have established reputations as groundbreakers in the realm of contemporary art and Native American art history. The series has showcased the works of Kay WalkingStick (Cherokee), Rick Bartow (Yurok-Mad River Blood Band), Joe Feddersen (Colville), Harry Fonseca (Nisenan Maidu/Hawaiian/Portuguese), Richard Ray Whitman (Yuchi), Hock E Aye Vi Edgar *Heap of Birds* (Cheyenne/Arapaho), Nora Naranjo-Morse (Pueblo Santa Clara) and George Longfish (Seneca/Tuscarora). The works of Shelley Niro (*Bay of Quinte Mohawk*) opens on May 22 and Judith Lowry (*Maidu-Hamowi Pit River*) on June 5. Other artists in the series will include Jaune Quick-to-See-Smith and Marie Watt. The artists in the exhibition represent the Arapaho, Cherokee, Cheyenne, Colville, Cree, Flathead, Hamowi-Pit River, Hawaiian, Mohawk, Mountain Maidu, Nisenan Maidu, Pueblo Santa Clara, Seneca, Shoshone, Tuscarora, Yuchi, and Yurok cultures.

### CURATOR'S AND ARTISTS' DIALOGUES

May 20, 5 p.m.  
Collector's Office  
Shelley Niro

June 3, 5 p.m.  
Collector's Office  
Judith Lowry



Photo courtesy of Judith Lowry

*The Obedient Wives* by Judith Lowry. Acrylic on canvas 65" x 90" – from the exhibition *Continuum: 12 Artists* at the National Museum of the American Indian.

### THE LANGUAGE OF NATIVE AMERICAN BASKETS: FROM THE WEAVERS' VIEW

Through Jan. 9, 2005

This exhibition features more than 200 baskets from the NMAI collection and presents basketmaking according to the Native cultural viewpoint, focusing on the process of making a basket rather than on the finished basket as an object.

### FIRST AMERICAN ART: THE CHARLES AND VALERIE DIKER COLLECTION OF AMERICAN INDIAN ART

Through Oct. 31, 2005

First American Art: The Charles and Valerie Diker Collection celebrates the rich aesthetics of North American Native peoples through the display of more than 200 objects from the private collection of Charles and Valerie Diker. The exhibition is organized according to concepts about Native American aesthetic systems that emerged from discussions with contemporary artists and scholars about the Diker collection. The exhibition's presentation emphasizes Native voice and reveals the way Native people see the world through their objects.

## PUBLIC PROGRAMS

### CELEBRATING THE YEAR OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN

May 13, 6:30 p.m.

#### Auditorium

Celebrate the United Nations' Year of Indigenous Women of the World in an evening of guest speakers and performers. This program is presented in collaboration with the Flying Eagle Woman Fund, American Indian Community House, and the United Nations Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Scheduled speakers include Mr. Ole Hnerik Magga, chairman of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues - United Nations; Noeli Pocatterra, president of the International Congress of Indigenous People and co-founder of the Indigenous Initiative for Peace; and Mililani Trask, Pacific representative to the Permanent Forum of Indigenous Issues.

#### ART TALK

May 14, noon

Video Viewing Room, second floor  
Artist John Hitchcock (Comanche) will conduct a visual lecture based on his multimedia work featured in the American Indian Community House Gallery exhibition *E-Motion*.

### ANNUAL CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL GAMES, GAMES, GAMES

May 15 and 16, noon - 5 p.m.

#### Museumwide

Join us for two full days of Native American activities. This year's children's festival will include World Eskimo-Indian Olympic game demonstrations with Lee McCotter (Athabaskan), Alaskan Eskimo Indian Yo-Yo with Chris Kiana, lacrosse demonstrations, basket hand games with Kimberly Stevenot (Mewuk), ring-and-pin game, and much more.

### STATEMENTS FROM THE HEART: CONTEMPORARY NATIVE AMERICAN ART FAMILY WORKSHOP

June 24, 5 p.m.; June 25, noon

Education Classroom, second floor  
Contemporary Native artist Wil Grant (Anishinabe) will lead participants through the exhibit *Continuum: 12 Artists* to explore the works of Native artists featured in the exhibition and will follow up with a classroom art activity that the whole family can enjoy. Pre-registration required. Call (212) 514-3714. Appropriate for ages 12 and up.



Smithsonian  
National Museum of the American Indian





Photo by Mary Gattyn Rahn

Paul Betancourt (Seneca), education workshop coordinator, helps children make bead bracelets.

## FROM THE SHELVES OF THE RESOURCE CENTER TO THE CLASSROOM

### Storybook Readings and Workshops

#### May 8, noon

**Resource Center, second floor**  
Listen to readings from the books *The Great Ball Game of the Birds and Animals* by Deborah L. Duvall, *Hide and Sneak* by Michael Arvaarluk Kusugak, and the story "How Bat Learned to Fly," read from *How Chipmunk Got Tiny Feet: Native American Origin Stories*, by Gerald Hausman. Learn about the ring-and-pin game, played by Native cultures throughout the Americas in various forms, which teaches hand-eye coordination. In the classroom, make a ring-and-pin of your own.

#### June 12, noon

**Resource Center, second floor**  
Listen to readings from the books *Strawberry Thanksgiving* by Paulla Jennings, *Did You Hear Wind Sing Your Name?: An Oneida Song of Spring* by

Sandra De Coteau Orië, *Sing Down the Rain* by Judi Moreillon and a special reading of *Home to Medicine Mountain* by Chiori Santiago and illustrated by artist Judith Lowry (*Maidu-Hamowi Pit River*) whose work is featured in the *Continuum: 12 Artists exhibit*. Then go into the classroom to make an Iroquois style cornhusk doll and learn about the various uses of the corn plant.

#### July 10, noon

**Resource Center, second floor**  
Listen to readings from the books *White Bead Ceremony* by Sherrin Walkins, *Powwow Summer: A Family Celebrates the Circle of Life* by Marcie R. Rendon, and *Jingle Dancer* by Cynthia Leitich Smith. Back in the classroom, learn the importance of beadwork while making a bead bracelet of your own.

#### HORSES RUN WILD

June 26, 2, 3 and 4 p.m.  
**Children's Museum of Manhattan**  
Listen to stories about horses, animals that have played an important role in Native Plains cultures. Look at traditional Native patterns used to decorate horses and then create your own designs on felt horses led by Paul Betancourt (Seneca) of the NMAI-GGHC Education Department.

#### PEYOTE AND LAZY STITCH BEADING WORKSHOP

July 8, 4:30 p.m.  
**Education Classroom, second floor**  
Amy Tall Chief (Osage) will conduct a beading workshop focusing on the peyote and lazy stitch used by many Native beaders. Participants will bead a pen of their own using the peyote stitch, and will learn how to apply beadwork to clothing with the lazy stitch. All materials will be

provided. A materials fee of \$25 (\$22 for members) applies. Pre-registration required. Call (212) 514-3714. Space is limited.

#### FROM THE WEAVERS' VIEW: BASKET WEAVING DEMONSTRATION AND LECTURE

July 23, 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m.  
July 24, 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m.  
Join basket weaver Terrol Johnson (Tohono O'odham) as he conducts a series of basket weaving demonstrations and lectures. See him conduct morning basket weaving demonstrations in the NMAI exhibit *The Language of Native American Baskets: From The Weavers' View* at 10:30 a.m., or listen to his afternoon lectures on his work and Native basketry in the Video Viewing Room at 2 p.m.

## FILM & VIDEO

### AT THE MOVIES

*At the Movies* presents premieres and cinema classics in New York City and celebrates the work of Native Americans in the movies—directors, producers, writers, actors, musicians and community activists. Introduced by the filmmakers and other speakers, eight programs will be screened between May to August 2004. The opening program in May will be presented in cooperation with the Tribeca Film Festival, May 1 to 9.

Among the directors and actors featured in previous series have been Evan Adams, Chris Eyre, Gary Farmer, Jim Jarmusch, Shelley Niro, Sandra Surmising Osawa, Randy Redroad, and Loretta Todd.

#### May (dates TBA)

*At the Movies* and Tribeca Film Festival present:

**EDGE OF AMERICA** (2002, 57 min.). United States. Director: Chris Eyre (Cheyenne/Arapaho). Writer and co-producer: Willy Holtzman. Produced by Showtime Productions. Actors: James McDaniel, Wes Studi (Cherokee), Irene Bedard (Inupiat Eskimo/Cree), Delanna Studi (Cherokee) and Tim Daly. Inspired by a true story, Chris Eyre's *Edge of America* is an upbeat feature film about a girls' high school basketball team in dire need of motivation, and an African-American teacher from Texas who reluctantly becomes their coach. While the girls learn that the basics of basketball can also apply to life, the coach learns that Native traditions can achieve successes that can't be measured on the court. New York premiere.

June 10, 6 - 9 p.m.; June 12, 1 - 4 p.m.  
**Auditorium**

**FOLLOW ME HOME** (1997, 140 min.). United States. Director: Peter Bratt (Quechua). Actors: Benjamin Bratt (Quechua) as Abel, Afre Woodward as

Evey, Jesse Borrego as Tudee, Calvin Levels as Kaz, Steve Reevis (Blackfeet) as Teddy, with an appearance by Salma Hayek

Four mural artists set out from Los Angeles on a quest to paint the White House in rainbow colors that are resonant with their diverse identities - African-American, Chicano, and American Indian. Each artist bring dreams and history along on a road trip that abounds with myth-busting encounters.

For information about purchasing tickets to *Edge of America* go to [www.tribecafilmfestival.org](http://www.tribecafilmfestival.org). All other *At the Movies* programs are free; for the 2004 schedule go to [www.nativenetworks.si.edu](http://www.nativenetworks.si.edu). To be added to the mailing list, e-mail [FVC@si.edu](mailto:FVC@si.edu) or call (212) 514-3737.

*At the Movies* is made possible with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a State Agency, and with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

## NATIVE SPIRIT, NATIVE GAMES

May 10 - Aug. 1

Daily at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. and Thursdays at 5:30 p.m.

Viewing Room, State Street Corridor, second floor

May 10 - 23

**HEART OF THE SEA** (2002, 57 min.). United States. Lisa Denker and Charlotte Lagarde. In celebration of the United Nations Year of the Indigenous Woman. The life of the champion Hawaiian surfer Rell Kapolioka'ehukai Sunn, who carved the way for women in a sport dominated by men and became a cancer survivor activist and a hero to Hawai'i's Native community and surfers everywhere.

May 24 - June 13

**Indian Running**  
For many Native peoples, running holds a significant place in culture and spiritual practice, as seen in this program of short works from the film and video collection of the National Museum of the American Indian.

**TOKA** (1994, 24 min.). United States. David Wing and Cyndee Wing. Women and girls of the Tohono O'odham tribe of Arizona play an exciting game of stickball.

**RARAMURI: PIE LIGERO** (1994, 10 min.). Mexico. Dominique Jonard. Drawings and voices of Raramuri Indian children from northern Mexico bring life to a traditional ball game.

**END OF THE RACE** (1981, 27 min.). United States. Hector Galan. Produced by the Southwest Center for Educational Television. The documentary profiles four



Pueblo champion cross-country runners and explores Pueblo life and the religious roots of Pueblo running as well as the complexities posed by the world of competitive sports.

#### June 14 - July 11

**SPIRIT OF THE GAME** (2003, 48 min.). Canada. Annie Frazier Henry (Blackfoot/Sioux/French). Produced in association with the National Film Board of Canada. The award-winning documentary focuses on the rich sports legacy of First Nations young people, profiling young participants in the Indigenous Olympic Games held in Winnipeg, Manitoba. NYC premiere at the 2003 Native American Film and Video Festival. July 12 - August 1

**HAND GAME** (1999, 90 min.). United States. Lawrence Johnson. The documentary explores the cultural background of an ancient Native tradition of gaming - the hand game, also known as the stick game or grass game - and travels to eight reservations in the American Northwest to show the games in play.

### ESPECIALLY FOR KIDS

May 10 - August 1  
Daily, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
The entire program lasts for one hour and is played twice.  
Viewing Room, State Street Corridor, second floor

#### May 10 - 23

**THE BEGINNING THEY TOLD** (2003, 11 min.). United States. Joseph Erb (Cherokee). Produced for the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. In Cherokee with English subtitles. The animals living in the sky work together to bring about the

creation of the earth from a tiny piece of mud. NYC premiere at the 2003 Native American Film and Video Festival.

**TALES OF WESAKECHAK: THE FIRST SPRING FLOOD** (2002, 14 min.). Canada. Gregory Coyes (Métis Cree), and George Johnson. Stories of the Seventh Fire series. An animated story about the Cree trickster Wesakechak, who watched over Earth's creatures before people came to live on Turtle Island (North America). NYC premiere at the 2003 Native American Film and Video Festival.

**SKYWALKERS** (1998, 11 min.). United States. Pat Ferrero for the Carnegie Museum of Art. Interviews with Iroquois ironworkers and their families explore connections between their work and their roles in the family and community.

**CREATION and KLUSCAP AND HIS PEOPLE** (1992, 12 min.). United States. Produced by Maine's Indian Island Intermediate School. Two animations made by Penobscot children tell of the creation of the world, people, and animals.

**BEAR DANCE** (1988, 13 min.). United States. James Ciletti. A look at the experience of young people who participate in the annual Bear Dance of the Southern Utes of Colorado.

#### May 24 - June 13

**BOX OF DAYLIGHT** (1990, 9 min.). United States. Janet Fries for the Sealaska Heritage Foundation. The Naa Kahidi

Theater of southeastern Alaska presents the Tlingit story of how Raven brought daylight to the world.

**WE'LL STILL BE DANCING** (1992, 3 min.). United States. Dan Jones (Ponca). Shown with permission of Sesame Street. Ponca children in Oklahoma prepare to dance at a tribal gathering.

**HOW THE REDBIRD GOT HIS COLOR** (2003, 4 min.). United States. Produced by the American Indian Resource Center, Tallesquah, Okla. In Cherokee with English subtitles. Cherokee students at the Dahlenegah Elementary School make a claymation of a traditional story that tells of a kind deed rewarded. NYC premiere at the 2003 Native American Film and Video Festival.

**LAS OLLAS DE SAN MARCOS** (1992, 11 min.). Mexico. Teófila Palafox (Ikkood). In Spanish with English subtitles. Women of a Zapotecan village in Oaxaca, Mexico, make large ollas, or clay pots.

**PAULINA AND THE CONDOR** (1995, 10 min.). Bolivia. Marisol Barragan. In Aymara and Spanish with English subtitles. An animated story of an Aymara girl who goes on a journey from her mountain home to the capital city of La Paz.

**SHARING ONE EARTH** (1993, 20 min.). United States. Produced by the Indian Island Intermediate School. In Maine, Penobscot and non-Indian students share in a cultural exchange and filmmaking project.

#### June 14 - July 11

**HOLY DOG** (1999, 9 min.). Canada. Judith Norris (Cree). A Native woman pays tribute to the Horse Nation and her own beloved horse through poetry, song, and video.

**LEGEND OF THE CARIBOU** (2002, 13 min.). Canada. Gregory Coyes (Métis Cree) and Tantoo Cardinal (Métis). Stories of the Seventh Fire series. A legend tells how the caribou herds came to migrate.

**WE'LL STILL BE DANCING** (1992, 3 min.). See previous listing.

**TOKA** (1994, 24 min.). See previous listing.

**SKYWALKERS** (1998, 11 min.). See previous listing.

**TALES OF WESAKECHAK: HOW WESAKECHAK GOT HIS NAME** (2002, 13 min.). Canada. Stories of the Seventh Fire series. Gregory Coyes (Métis Cree) and George Johnson. An animated story of the Cree trickster Wesakechak, who watched over Earth's creatures before people came to live on Turtle Island (North America).

**LETTER FROM AN APACHE** (1983, 12 min.). United States. Barbara Wilk. An animated film tells the remarkable story of Carlos Montezuma, or Wassajah, who became one of the first American Indian medical doctors.

**TOKA** (1994, 24 min.). See previous listing.

#### ADDRESS:

National Museum of the American Indian Smithsonian Institution, George Gustav Heye Center  
One Bowling Green, New York, NY 10004

#### MUSEUM SHOPS:

For special-occasion shopping, jewelry by Native artists, books, and children's gifts are available in the Museum shops located on the gallery and ground floor. Open daily 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
For information, call 212-514-3767.

#### WEB SITE:

Have you visited the NMAI Web sites?  
<http://www.AmericanIndian.si.edu>  
<http://www.conexus.si.edu>



**LOCATION:** The NMAI Heye Center is located at One Bowling Green in Lower Manhattan. Subway: 4 & 5 to Bowling Green or R & W to Whitehall Street. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day, except December 25. Thursdays to 8 p.m., made possible by grants from the Booth Ferris Foundation. Admission to the Museum and all public programs is free. To become an NMAI Charter Member, call 1-800-242-NMAI (6624).

The George Gustav Heye Center is located at One Bowling Green, New York, N.Y., and is open daily, except December 25, from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m., and, through the generosity of the Booth Ferris Foundation, Thursdays until 8 p.m. Admission is free. All programs are subject to change. For membership information, call (800) 242-NMAI. For program updates, call (212) 514-3888. Produced by NMAI, One Bowling Green, New York, N.Y. Rachahd Garguilo, Calendar Editor.



# TOMORROW'S ACHIEVEMENTS DEPEND ON THE CONTINUED HELP OF VALUED FRIENDS LIKE YOU TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A LASTING CONTRIBUTION



Would you like to increase your spendable income and receive a fixed income for life that exceeds the rate you would receive from stock dividends, a certificate of deposit, or a Treasury note?

If the answer to this question is "yes," we invite you to establish a charitable gift annuity with us.

A charitable gift annuity is a simple contract between you and the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI). The minimum gift to establish an annuity is \$10,000 using cash, credit card, or appreciated securities. In return, you will receive a fixed income for life — part of which is tax-free — and a charitable deduction for your gift while helping to support the vital mission of the NMAI.



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Annuity rates, based on an individual's age, increase to 11.3 percent for a single-life annuity and 9.3 percent for a two-life annuity. To assist in determining whether a charitable gift annuity meets your financial objectives, the following chart lists the rates for a single life annuity based on age.

If you would like to know the rate you would receive by establishing a charitable gift annuity with the NMAI, please complete and return the reply form below. Should you have any additional questions, you may contact Todd Cain, Development Officer, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, at PO Box 23473, Washington, DC 20026-3473, by telephone at (202) 357-3164 ext. 176, or by email at [plannedgiving@si.edu](mailto:plannedgiving@si.edu).

AGE WHEN ESTABLISHED	ANNUITY RATE
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# EXPERIENCE Native Alaska

By Ed Readicker-Henderson

Photo courtesy of Alaska Heritage Tours

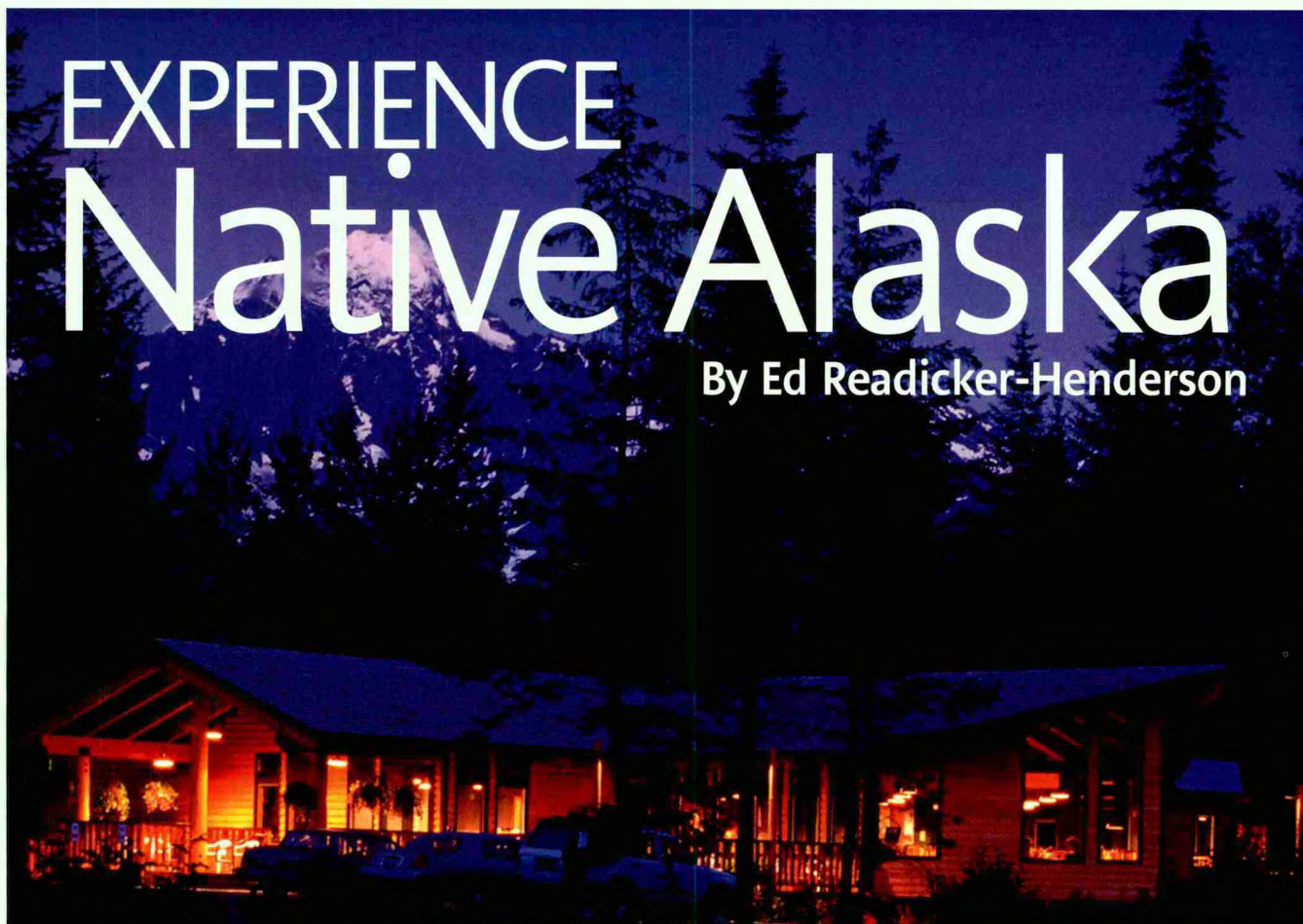


Photo by Chris Arend



(above) The Native-owned Seward Windsong Lodge. (left) Oomingmak members Ida Wesley, (left) Nellie Forbes and Susie Shavings knit quiviut or musk ox wool into soft-as-cashmere garments.

**“The diversity** contained within Alaska’s huge geographic size is matched by the diversity of our Alaska Native cultures,” says Allison Knox (Athabascan). Once, you would have needed to travel Alaska from end to end to hear stories of the Athabascan and the Alutiiq, the Tlingit, and the Yup’ik. But now, just north of Anchorage, more than 150,000 visitors each year can see Alaska’s Native cultures from around the state, all in a single place – the Alaska Native Heritage Center.

The Heritage Center was built in 1999 as a collaboration of the Alaska Federation of Natives. Its main draw consists of five traditional houses, representing the 11 cultures comprising the AFN. The Inupiaq/St. Lawrence Island Yupik house is completely authentic but for one detail: It has a front door instead of the long tunnel that originally would have served for an entrance. Nearby, a clan house, redolent with the scent of cedar wood, shows the building style of Southeast Alaska’s Tsimshian, Eyak, Haida, and Tlingit. The Aleut and Alutiiq put their living quarters underground to withstand the rough weather along the Aleutians and Gulf of Alaska. The Yup’ik and Cup’ik also went partly underground, with solid, round houses made of wood, stone, and earth. There are some modifications at the Heritage Center, as half the house is built in Aleut style (the Aleuts didn’t have much wood) and half in Alutiiq, reflecting their more wooded islands – but there is new forest sprouting on the half-buried house.





(above top) Artists like Rick Beasley (Tlingit) from Juneau demonstrate their work to visitors at the Alaska Native Heritage Center.  
(above) An aerial view of the Alaska Native Heritage Center features the Chugach Mountain range in the background.

Finally, the Athabascans, with the fewest weather worries, built homes much like modern log cabins.

Annette Evans-Smith (Athabaskan/Alutiiq) says that the center showcases "Alaskan Native language, values, and traditions for all Alaskans. We want to connect with the entire state, and that's crucial for the preservation of our culture."

Dances in the main building are a big attraction, and next to the museum craftsmen make traditional yo-yos or carve masks. The center's outreach program, with language lessons, after-school programs, and more, is just as vital. "In winter, we get Natives from Anchorage coming here to learn about their own cultures," says Kay Ashton, the center's director of public relations.

Cook Inlet, where Anchorage now sits, was part of the Athabaskan world. The Athabascans caught salmon and halibut in the rich waters of the inlet and hunted moose and caribou inland. One of the places where Athabascans hunted and fished was Prince William Sound, an area now traveled by Anchorage-based Alaska Heritage Tours, which runs day-long interpretive boat trips into the sound. "We're trying to represent the environment and the traditional heritage of our area," says Knox, manager of corporate communications at Cook Inlet Region Inc., which offers trips into

Kenai Fjords National Park and Resurrection Bay, past seal colonies and hundreds of puffins, and also manages lodges in Seward and in Talkeetna.

The Athabaskan environment includes not only the waters of Prince William Sound, in which the tour travels – a landscape filled with salmon, tiny, pristine islands lapped by peaceful waters, and humpback whales breaching in front of glaciers. It also stretches inland to the Chugach Mountains and beyond. In the village of Eklutna, 25 miles north of Anchorage, are hundreds of Athabaskan Spirit Houses, brightly painted structures placed over graves. The planed wood shows a Russian influence, but the colors represent the local Dena'ina clans, a subgroup of the Athabaskan. Houses are put up 40 days after a burial; a few are houses inside houses, representing a woman who died with a child. Daily tours explain the houses and more than a thousand years of Dena'ina settlement here.

It's a short drive from Eklutna to have a chance to tour a remnant of the Ice Age. At the Palmer Musk Ox Farm, adult musk oxen – a species that once shared the tundra with woolly mammoths – eat dandelions while their calves frolic, tossing huge red rubber balls you'd usually find on a boat, not in a pasture.

Photos courtesy of the Alaska Native Heritage Center





To the Inupiaq, the musk ox was Oomingmak, the bearded one – not really an ox, but more like a 1,000-pound hairy goat that provided meat and hide. Today the animals are raised with a different goal. Musk oxen have light brown fur, called *qiviut*, soft enough to make cashmere feel like sandpaper and eight times warmer than sheep wool. Every year, the herd of musk oxen is carefully combed – it can take up to eight hours, spread out over a week or more, to comb a single animal, yielding 4 to 7 pounds of *qiviut*.

The wool is sent to as many as 250 Native knitters in villages throughout the north. They turn the *qiviut* into hats, scarves, and blankets, to be

sold at the Musk Ox Producer's Co-Op Anchorage store, at 604 H St. Each village uses a different traditional pattern; in Unalakleet, for example, the pattern is based on a wolverine dance mask. Says knitter Elsie Hooper (Yup'ik), "I feel that when I knit, I'm accomplishing something beautiful that people all over the world will use."

That outreach to the world is what all of Anchorage's cultural attractions have in common – an awareness that for Alaska's Native heritage, preservation is a daily way of life, and the best way to preserve culture is to share it. ■

*Ed Readicker-Henderson is the author of nine guidebooks to Alaska.*



Photo courtesy of the Dimond Center Hotel

(top) Visitors can expect to see Alaska Native performers like the Kingikmiut Dancers and Singers of Anchorage (Inupiat Eskimo), one of many dance groups who appear at the Alaska Native Heritage Center during the summer. (above) The Dimond Center Hotel, located just 15 minutes from downtown Anchorage, features decor which captures the spirit of the beautiful Kachemak Bay Region.



## Anchorage Events & Contact Info

In 2004, the Alaska Native Heritage Center begins a 2-year educational program, "Living from the Land and Sea," which highlights traditional hunting and fishing methods from around the state. Visitors can learn everything from how to track a moose to traditional ways to fish a salmon stream. (800) 315-6608; [alaska-native.net](http://alaska-native.net).

**The Spirit Days Festival** features drum and dance performances and arts and crafts from Native groups around the state, June 19-20, at Anchorage's Kincaid Park. (907) 272-8756.

**Eklutna's Annual Potlach and Powwow**, for music, food, and more, June 12-13. (907) 688-6020. Eklutna Historical Park. (907) 688-6026; [alaskaone.com/eklutna](http://alaskaone.com/eklutna)

Farther afield, the **World Eskimo and Indian Olympics** will be held July 21-24 in Fairbanks. Events include the high kick and ear pull. (907) 452-6646.

Base your visits to Anchorage in the **Dimond Center Hotel**, owned by the Seldovia Native Association, (886) 770-5002, or Courtyard by Marriott, owned by the Northwest Alaska Native Association, (907) 245-0322.

The best place in town to buy authentic arts and crafts is the **Alaska Native Medical Center's gift shop**. (907) 257-1150.

**Alaska Heritage Tours**. (877) 777-2805; [alaskaheritage.com](http://alaskaheritage.com).

**Palmer Musk Ox Farm**. (907) 746-4831; [muskoxfarm.org](http://muskoxfarm.org).

**Musk Ox Producers' Co-Op**. (888) 360-9665; [qiviut.com](http://qiviut.com).





Left (L-R): Frank Cornplanter, Bacon Rind, and Henry Red Eagle (Osage), Pawhuska, Okla., 1903. Inset: Nema Magovern, NMAI researcher and great-great-granddaughter of Henry Red Eagle

Photo by Col. Frank C. Churchill. Inset photo by Janine Jones

# Family Album

A priceless historic record, the NMAI's enormous photo collection is also a precious resource for Native people seeking connection to their ancestors

By Martha Davidson

**G**eorge Horse Capture (A'aninin Gros Ventre), Nema Magovern (Osage), and Dorene Red Cloud (Oglala Lakota) have discovered family pictures in the National Museum of the American Indian's photo archive. With approximately 125,000 photographs ranging from daguerreotypes to digital images, the collection is considered to be one of the most important in the world for documentation of indigenous cultures of the Americas. Museum founder George Gustav Heye started the collection, which was established as an archive in 1955.

When George Horse Capture began working with the NMAI in the early 1990s, he found pictures of his grandfather Paul Horse Capture and of other relatives from the Ft. Belknap Reservation in Montana. Some faces he recognized immediately; others he saw for the first time when he read their names in the captions. "We are a small tribe," he says. "We have many stories about ancestors with names like Eagle Child and Red Whip. They are

our heroes. We know their names, and now it's incredible to be able to see them in these photographs."

Dorene Red Cloud, formerly with the Cultural Resources Center in Maryland, is a great-great-granddaughter of Chief Red Cloud, famous for defeating the U.S. Army and defending Indian rights in the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie. She had seen photographs of Chief Red Cloud in books and museums but she had few family pictures. Her father was from the Pine Ridge Reservation, and although Dorene was raised in Chicago, she feels strong ties to Pine Ridge. Photos of Chief Red Cloud and of Pine Ridge in the Photo Archive make strong impressions on her. "I've never seen a photo of my dad as a kid, and very few of my grandparents," she says. "When I see these old photos of ancestors, I think, 'That's what they looked like. I wonder what they were thinking?'... My dad's been gone nine years, but when I look at these photos, they remind me of him."

Nema Magovern, NMAI researcher, found family photos while working on the Photo Archive

database. In her family and in the Osage tribal museum in Oklahoma are many pictures of relatives, but in the NMAI archive she came across a few she had never seen before, including pictures of her great-great-grandfather, the medicine man Red Eagle, as a youth, and of his wife, Rose Red Eagle. "I was so thrilled," Magovern exclaims. "I can't get over the joy of that moment, of seeing the face of someone I'm related to but had never seen before." From a photograph of the National Congress of American Indians, she discovered that her grandfather was one of the charter members.

The museum has highlighted photos from the archive and explored issues related to their creation and use in a book (1998) and exhibition (2001) titled *Spirit Capture*. A photo of Magovern and her daughter was in that exhibition and subsequently became part of the archive. She encourages others to seek their family photos and to help the museum by identifying people who were not named by the photographers. "It's amazing to see faces you recognize and think, 'I know who that person in the photo is related to.'" ■

## AN OPEN COLLECTION

Tribal delegations frequently visit the archive and have been very helpful in providing information about the pictures. The archive's policy is to give the delegations any photos they request and to respect their wishes regarding sensitive subjects. "We are caretakers of the images; we don't 'own' the material," explains Lou Stancari, NMAI photo archivist. Researchers wishing to publish or otherwise use any photos of a sensitive nature are required to contact the tribe for approval.

Access to the archive is temporarily restricted while preparations are made for the Mall Museum. The collection will remain in its present site at the Cultural Resources Center when it reopens to the public in October 2004. Visitors must make an appointment at least one week in advance.

Martha Davidson is a Washington, D.C.-based writer who contributes frequently to American Indian.

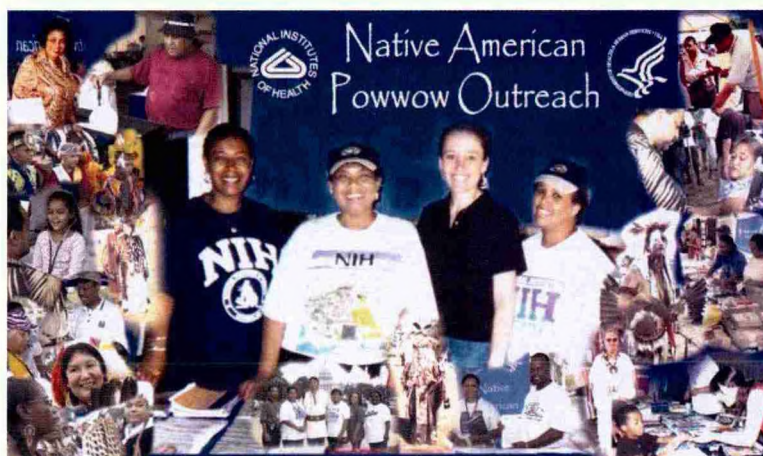




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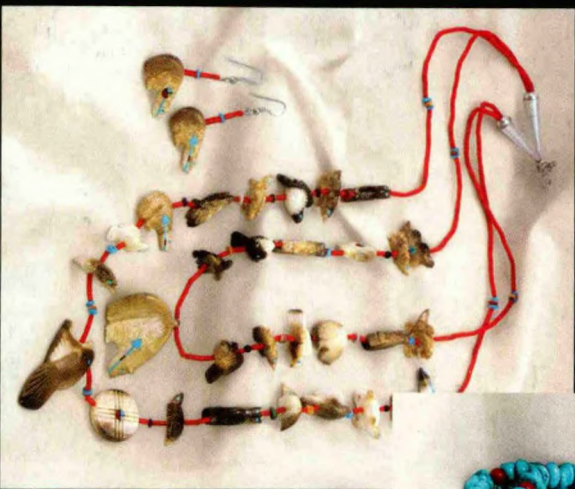
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