

# INDIAN LEAP NEWSLETTER

## TRIBAL MEETING

The tribal meeting held on June 10, 2007, from 2:00PM to 5:00PM, at the VFW Hall located on Raymond Hill Road in Uncasville, CT, was attended by 40 members who brought material relevant to proving that we have been a “community” for many years and not just a collection of loosely associated families. Members brought all the information they had collected that they felt was relevant to the material requested in the April 17, 2007, letter to all Tribal Members.

The research staff was on hand to review documentation that many members felt was relevant to the material requested in the April 17, 2007, letter to all Tribal Members. The staff came equipped with equipment to copy any and all documentation that was brought to the meeting

Tribal Council and especially the Research Staff would like to thank those members who took the time and made the effort to follow up on the request for documentation.



Betty Allard and Dave Lewis prepared to copy and catalog member documentation.



Members comparing notes.

This is an ongoing process and it is important for members to continue to look for documentation. If anyone finds anything that they feel is even remotely relevant, please notify Toni Cook at (781) 944-3580.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

*Native American Mohegans' Annual Intertribal Powwow*

*September 8/9, 2007*

Lebanon Fairgrounds, Mack Road, Lebanon, CT

We need volunteers to help with the preparations. If you would like to volunteer, call Dave Lewis at (860) 691-0099, or send email to [info@nativeamericanmohegans.com](mailto:info@nativeamericanmohegans.com).

With your help we can have another successful Powwow!

---

*National Museum of the American Indian National Powwow 2007  
Verizon Center, Washington DC, August 10-12, 2007*

The National Powwow 2007 will be held on August 10-12, at the Verizon Center in Washington DC. For more information, see their web site at <http://www.americanindian.si.edu/powwow>. If you do go to the powwow, make sure you go to the National Museum of the American Indian while you are in Washington.

---

A CHANCE TO VOLUNTEER

Tribal Council is looking for a member to assume the position of editor of the "Indian Leap" newsletter. The current editor has been publishing the newsletter for eight years and has decided to retire from this activity. So if you have always wanted a way to volunteer and you believe you have the necessary writing skills, please contact Frank Cook at 781 944-3580.

---

NATIVE AMERICAN MOHEGAN COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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

**Back to School: Working Together for School Safety**

Recent local and national events may be making parents, educators and youth uneasy about the safety of their school and community. No school or community is immune to the threat of violence but by being prepared, knowing warning signs and seeking interventions, we can all send our children off to school feeling a little more comfortable. All parents, educators, youth and community members must be part of creating a safe school environment. This article will explore some characteristics of a safe school, early warning signs for violence and interventions for youth who are in need of services.

**Characteristics that a school is safe:** Well functioning schools foster learning, safety, and socially appropriate behavior. They have a strong academic focus, support students in achieving high standards, foster positive relationships between staff and students, and promote meaningful parental and community involvement.

Research shows that a positive relationship with an adult who is available to provide support when needed is one of the most critical factors in preventing student violence. Youth spend the majority of their day in school and look to the adults in the school for support and guidance. These relationships reduce the feelings of isolation often felt by many adolescents. Effective schools also foster positive interpersonal relationships among students. This builds a sense of community within the schools as well as a respect for the fellow student.

Open communication is key to parents, youth and educators creating a safe environment. Addressing concerns openly, educating youth about the dangers of firearms, teaching and modeling appropriate responses to anger and resolving conflict, are all important to school safety. Open communication strengthens the school community and creates an environment where students, educators and parents are valued and respected.

**Early Warning Signs:** In many of the cases of school violence, there have been signs that a student may have needed help. Such signs may or may not indicate a serious problem. These signs do give us an opportunity to talk with the youth about our concerns and address the youth's needs. Early warning signs can help to frame these concerns. However, it is important to avoid inappropriately labeling a student because he or she fits in to a particular profile. Building relationships with students first is important to interpreting warning signs correctly.

Some early warning signs include: social withdrawal; excessive feelings of isolation, rejection and being alone; being a victim of violence; feelings of being picked on or persecuted; low school interest and school performance; expressing violence in drawing and writing; uncontrolled anger; patterns of impulsive and bullying behavior; and a history of discipline problems. Although this list is not inclusive of all early warning signs a complete list and explanation can be found at [www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/earlywrn.html](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/earlywrn.html). Adults in schools can use their knowledge of early warning signs to address problems before they escalate into violence.

**Interventions for youth in need:** If you have identified a youth who may be exhibiting some of these warning signs, what should you do? It is a shared responsibility of parents, educators, fellow students and the community to create an environment which offers help to students who are in need rather than further isolating and stigmatizing them. First and foremost, parents should be informed as soon as possible if there is a concern about their child. If a youth is identified as needing help, schools may have guidance counselors, social workers and psychologists who may be able to talk to the youth and parent about where to get help. They may suggest a counselor for your child, a faith-based support, the local youth service bureau or a town social service program. While youths are sometimes unwilling to talk to their parents, they may be looking for someone to talk to about their feelings. If a youth is in an immediate crisis, Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services (EMPS) can respond to the youth and family in their home, school or community. EMPS can also assist with connecting the youth to longer term services.

School safety is everyone's responsibility. By working together parents, students and educators can work toward a safe school environment. Have a safe and productive school year!

Information for this article based on "Early Warning Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools" retrieved from: [www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/earlywrn.html](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/earlywrn.html).

Cara Westcott, LCSW  
Director of Community Based Behavioral Health Services  
United Community and Family Services

---

## GERONIMO'S GREAT-GRANDSON WANTS APACHE LEADER'S REMAINS RETURNED

Monday, June 18, 2007  
Associated Press



SANTA FE, N.M. - Legend has it that Yale University's ultrasecret Skull and Bones society swiped the remains of American Indian leader

Geronimo nearly a century ago from an Army outpost in Oklahoma.

Now, Geronimo's great-grandson wants the remains returned.

Harlyn Geronimo, 59, of Mescalero, N.M., wants to prove the skull and bones purportedly taken from a burial plot in Fort Sill, Okla., are indeed those of his great-grandfather. They're now said to be in a stone tomb that serves as the club's headquarters.

If they are proven to be those of Geronimo, his great-grandson wants them buried near the Indian leader's birthplace in southern New Mexico's Gila Wilderness.

"He died as a prisoner of war, and he is still a prisoner of war because his remains were not returned to his homeland," Harlyn Geronimo said. "Presently, we are looking for a proper consecrated burial."

Harlyn Geronimo grew up hearing stories about his great-grandfather and other Apache warriors who fought the Mexican and U.S. armies.

After their families were captured and sent to [Florida](#), Geronimo and 35 warriors surrendered to Gen. Nelson A. Miles near the Arizona-New Mexico border in 1886. Geronimo was eventually sent to Fort Sill, where he died of pneumonia in 1909.

If the bones at Yale aren't those of Geronimo, Harlyn Geronimo believes they belonged to one of the Apache prisoners who died at Fort Sill. He said they should still be returned.

Harlyn Geronimo wrote last year to President Bush, seeking his help in recovering the bones. He thought that since the president's grandfather, Prescott Bush, was allegedly one of those who helped steal the bones in 1918, the president would want to help return them.

But, Harlyn Geronimo said, "I haven't heard a word."

The White House did not respond to messages seeking comment.

President Bush and his father, former President George H.W. Bush, both attended Yale and joined the elite club. Massachusetts Sen. John Kerry, the Democratic presidential nominee in 2004, is also a Bonesman, as are many other men in powerful government and industry positions.

Members are sworn to secrecy — and that's one reason they won't say whether the club has Geronimo's bones.

"The reason there's all these conspiracy theories around Skull and Bones is because their loyalty to one another goes beyond their public differences," said historian and former Yale Alumni Magazine editor Marc Wortman.

Skull and Bones is one of a dozen secret Yale societies, according to Yale spokeswoman Gila Reinstein.

"If it's true about the bones, that's disrespectful and disturbing," she said.

John Fryar, a retired Bureau of Indian Affairs special agent in antiquities recovery and a member of Acoma Pueblo, said if the secret society does have remains, they should be returned to Fort Sill.

"To ignore a request like this for the return of human remains is totally uncalled for. Look at our guys going to Vietnam to recover remains. It's the same thing," he said.

---

## INDIANS STAKE CLAIM IN POLITICS

More are joining state legislatures  
By Sam Howe Verhovek, Los Angeles Times, April  
29, 2007

HELENA, Mont. -- Jonathan Windy Boy was a longtime champion of the international Grass Dance competition, a tribal event in which the object is to simulate the natural movement of tall prairie grass swaying in the wind.

But, recalled Windy Boy with a laugh, "that was many years and about 40 pounds ago."

Now, Windy Boy moves his considerable frame around the House chamber in the state capital here, bargaining and cajoling as a leader of the 10-member American Indian caucus in Montana's state Legislature.

The caucus has the highest number of Indians ever elected to the 150-member chamber and reflects a broader trend of increased participation by American Indians in state politics across the United States.

When legislatures convened earlier this year, some 73 Indian, native Alaskan, or native Hawaiian lawmakers were sworn in, the highest number in US history, according to the National Congress of American Indians, a tribal advocacy group.

Windy Boy recalls that while he was growing up on a Chippewa-Cree Indian reservation in north central Montana, "there was a lot of skepticism, a lot of cynicism about the idea of voting at all.

"Some people didn't vote as a point of pride -- defiance, even," he said. "But that's all changed. There's much more of a sense today that we can work within this system."

The Indian vote was important in several state races in 2006, and turnout on the reservations and among urban Indians in Montana was crucial to Democrat Jon Tester's close victory over incumbent Republican Conrad Burns in the recent US Senate election here.

For now, the Indian vote in Montana is solidly Democratic, and all 10 Indian members of the Montana Legislature belong to the party.

"An Indian voting Republican is like the chicken voting for the colonel," explains Governor Brian Schweitzer, who is himself a Democrat.

Republicans obviously reject that notion, saying that 15 of the 73 native lawmakers belong to the GOP, according to figures tracked by the Denver-based National Conference of State Legislatures. And perhaps the best-known American Indian politician of recent years, former US senator Ben Nighthorse-Campbell of Colorado, a member of the Northern Cheyenne tribe, started as a Democrat but switched to Republican in 1995.

Oklahoma has the most native legislators, with 19, while Hawaii and Montana have 10 each, followed by Alaska with eight.

Casino wealth and other development has made American Indians increasingly politically active as they deal with regulation of their businesses as well as access to state funds for healthcare, tribal policing, and other matters.

And while the poverty and unemployment rampant on many reservations leaves many disillusioned with politics, others have a sense of optimism about the impact of their vote.

"There's been a sea change in my lifetime," said Jefferson Keel, lieutenant governor of the Chickasaw Nation in Oklahoma and a first vice president of the National Congress of American Indians.

"What we have now is a lot of tribal development," Keel said. "It's not just casinos. There's a lot of manufacturing. So people feel a real stake in the system."

---

#### ANNIVERSARY REMINDS VA. INDIANS OF LONG STRUGGLE AGAINST PERSECUTION

By David Alexander, Reuters, May 13, 2007

WASHINGTON -- For most US citizens, the 400th anniversary of the first permanent English settlement in America is a time to celebrate pioneers who crossed the ocean in sailing ships and braved hardships to forge a nation.

But for American Indians, whose ancestors lived in America when the English adventurers slogged ashore on Jamestown Peninsula in what is now Virginia, it is at once a reminder of their long

struggle to overcome persecution and prejudice and a chance to reintroduce themselves to the world.

"We're celebrating 400 years of survival in a fairly hostile environment," said Anne Richardson, chief of the Rappahannock, one of several Powhatan tribes involved in the commemoration events this month that included a visit by Britain's Queen Elizabeth II.



Indians danced Friday to mark the 400th anniversary of Jamestown, Va., America's first permanent English settlement. A measure recognizing six tribes has passed the Virginia House. (Lisa Billings/Associated Press)

The struggle is not over. The last time the queen visited Jamestown, 50 years ago on the 350th anniversary, it was illegal in Virginia to register as an Indian, and violators faced up to a year in prison.

Even today, the state's Powhatan tribes -- the descendants of the people who helped the first English settlers survive -- are not officially recognized by the federal government, a move that would make their 3,175 members eligible to receive aid available to other Indians.

A measure recognizing six Virginia tribes -- the Rappahannock, Chickahominy, Eastern Chickahominy, Upper Mattaponi, Nansemond, and Monacan -- passed the House last week. But it has yet to clear the Senate and must be signed by the president.

Five of the tribes are Powhatan. The sixth, the Monacan, had contact with the English in 1608.

Given the history of discrimination, the groups might have been justified in skipping Jamestown events, including the queen's tour last week and a visit by President Bush this weekend.

But Richardson said the tribes decided two years ago to participate.

"We saw an opportunity with the 400th anniversary to get the truth out about our history instead of that colonialized version that the world now knows," she said.

Many people know the story of the Jamestown settlers and how they were helped by Chief Powhatan and his daughter, Pocahontas. Disney spun the tale into an animated Hollywood movie, but much of the tribes' interaction with Europeans would not make suitable viewing for children.

The influx of Europeans following the success of the 1607 Jamestown settlement brought the sides into conflict. After a second war with the English, the Indians signed the 1677 Treaty of Middle Plantation with Charles II, which is still observed annually when tribes pay a tribute to the state governor.

"It's the oldest Indian treaty in existence today," Representative James Moran of Virginia told a House debate.

By the 1700s the tribes had lost most of their land. They became increasingly marginalized over the years, but some of the worst persecution came in the 20th century.

Virginia adopted a racial law in 1924 that required all citizens to be registered at birth as either white or "colored."

"This law allowed the Commonwealth of Virginia to destroy the documents that proved the existence of these Native American families," Moran, a Democrat, said.

A white supremacist who headed the Virginia Bureau of Vital Statistics used the law to systematically alter records to identify tribe members as "colored" instead of Indian.

"We could not get medical care for our people during that time, we could not get educated during that time, we could not get jobs during that time," Richardson said.

The discrimination lasted more than 40 years and did not end until the US Supreme Court struck down part of the law in 1967 and the state repealed the remainder in the 1970s.

Since then, the Virginia tribes have begun to reclaim their heritage.

Many won state recognition in the 1980s, but most had little chance of winning federal status through the Bureau of Indian Affairs because their records had been destroyed.

For seven years they have sought recognition by an act of Congress. The measure that passed the House Tuesday could bring as much as \$8 million in assistance annually, but it would also be an acknowledgment of their history and culture.

History and culture are something the tribes have tried to highlight with their participation in the Jamestown commemoration.

"It was the opportunity to raise our profile, to make people more aware of who we are," said Wayne Adkins, second assistant chief of the Chickahominy and leader of the federal recognition effort. "Many people don't realize there are tribes still in Virginia."

---

## **BOOK REVIEW**

MAYFLOWER

By Nathaniel Philbrick

With *Mayflower*, Nathaniel Philbrick turns the romantic notions of the first New England settlement on their head with his intent to tell the true history. The two-month journey across the Atlantic was long and painful, and when they arrived (not at Plymouth Rock), they first encamped on an Indian graveyard. The Pokanoket tribe had been suffering from a mysterious plague which left their numbers weakened enough that they couldn't confront the new settlers, but were forced to make peace with them. After the first Thanksgiving, the number of settlers increased rapidly with new arrivals, and interactions with the natives became more confrontational. Indians were sold into slavery, forced off their land, and within a few generations, outright warfare was brought to them. *Mayflower* has received positive reviews with the New York Times saying, "He has written a judicious, fascinating work of revisionist history. *Mayflower* is a surprise-filled account of what are supposed to be some of the best-known events in the American past but are instead an occasion for collective amnesia."

---

## TRADITION !

### AMERICAN INDIAN BASKETS

Basket weaving is one of the oldest known Native American crafts. There are ancient Indian baskets from the Southwest that have been identified by archaeologists as nearly 8000 years old. As with most Native American art, there were originally multiple distinct basketry traditions in North America. Different tribes used different materials, weaving techniques, basket shapes, and characteristic patterns. Northeast Indian baskets, for example, are traditionally made out of pounded ash splints or braided sweetgrass. Cherokee and other Southeast Indian baskets are traditionally from bundled pine needles or rivercane wicker. Southwest and California Indians make baskets from tightly coiled sumac, yucca, or willow wood, and Northwest Coast Indians typically weave with cedar bark, swamp grass, and spruce root. Northern Indian tribes like the Ojibwe and Dene craft birchbark baskets, and the Inuit even make baskets from whale baleen. As native people were displaced from their traditional lands and lifestyles, their traditional tribal basket weaving styles started to change somewhat as they adapted to new materials and absorbed the customs of new neighbors and in places like Oklahoma where many tribes were interred together, fusion styles of basket weaving arose. However, unlike some traditional native crafts, the original diversity of Native American basket styles is still very much evident today.

---

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Frank and Antoinette Cook would like to congratulate their nephew, Corey Howard Basch, son of Laura Lee Basch, on his graduation from Delmar High School, DE. Corey was a member of the Honor Society and graduated in the top 5% of his class. He will be attending Salisbury University in the fall.

Kasey A. Clark of Oakdale, CT, has recently received her Bachelor of Science Degree, in Biology, specializing in Wildlife Management and Preservation from the University of Findlay in Findlay Ohio. Kasey is the daughter of Brad and Leane Clark of Oakdale and the grand daughter of Carol Lebitz of Uncasville. Kasey has accepted a position as a Biological Technician for the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife at the Monimoy Nature Reserve on Cape Cod performing documentation and protection of endangered bird species. All Kasey's family and friends say "Congratulations" for a job well done!!

Serena and William Walker would like to congratulate their grandsons, Kevin and Bryan Gallenstein and granddaughter, Alane Howard, on their graduations. Kevin graduated from Trabuco Hills High School, CA, in the top 6% of his class of over 800 students and will be attending UCLA in the fall. Bryan graduated from Rancho Santa Margarita Middle School, CA, and will be attending Trabuco Hills High School in the fall. Alane graduated from high school in Monroe, WA, and has been accepted at Thomas Aquinas College and Thomas More College of Liberal Arts.

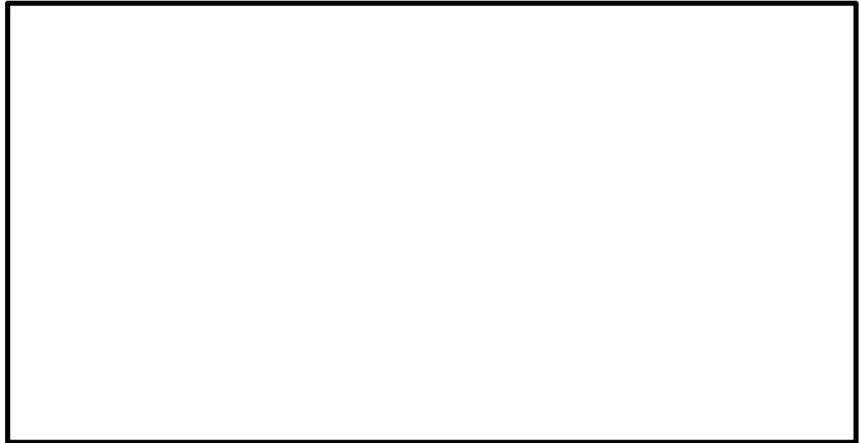
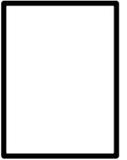
Carol Lebitz would like to announce the marriage of her grandson, Andrew Blackstone, son of Donna and Gary Blackstone, to Tiffany Gay. The ceremony will take place on Saturday, July 14, 2007, in York, PA.

Robert D. Eldridge Jr., chaplain/service officer & Jr vice commander for the DAV in Florence, SC, would like to congratulate his nephew, Shawn Merrills, and niece, Elizabeth Merrills, children of Chris and Dawn Merrills, graduated HS. Shawn was diagnosed with cancer last year, but despite his condition, he was home schooled and graduated with honors. Liz is in basic training at FT. Jackson, SC.

*(If you have any announcements you would like printed in the next newsletter, send them to the office at 77 East Town Street, Norwich, CT, 06360, or call (860) 892-1039 or email to:*

*info@nativeamericanmohegans.com.*

*Native American Mohegans, Inc.*  
77 East Town Street  
Norwich, CT, 06360



---

*MARK YOUR CALENDAR!*

---

*Native American Mohegans' Annual Intertribal  
Powwow*

*September 8/9, 2007*

*Lebanon Fairgrounds, Mack Road, Lebanon, CT*

---

*National Museum of the American Indian National  
Powwow 2007*

*Verizon Center, Washington DC, August 10-12, 2007*

---