

# INDIAN LEAP NEWSLETTER

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## HARVEST GATHERING

Our annual Harvest Gathering was held on November 16 at the VFW in Uncasville, CT. As usual, this year's gathering was a success. There were over 90 members in attendance this year. Darlene Currier led with a prayer prior to dinner. There was plenty of food and desert for everybody. Needless to say, nobody went home hungry. A special thanks to Betty Allard for coordinating the food and to everybody in the kitchen for preparing the food as it arrived.

After dinner general announcements were made by Darlene Currier. This included information about the Gung Skeedumbork culture club. Email addresses were also requested from tribal members as a way of sending out information from the office such as notification of new newsletters being posted on our website. This year's winners of the volunteer award were also announced.

Elizabeth Corey organized the raffle table which was full of items and yielded many happy winners. There was also a table set up by the Elders Council for donations of food items. The food collected was used for holiday gift baskets for tribal members that could use a little extra help for the holidays. The table was loaded food, thanks to everybody who donated.

As the day came to a close there were a number of people helping to clean up, do the dishes, put the tables and chairs away and take out the trash. Thanks to all helping hands.

We look forward to seeing you at the next social, April 5th!

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## CAROL LEBITZ AND RALPH FOWLER RECEIVE THE 2008 "VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD"

At the Annual Harvest Gathering that was held on Sunday, November 16, 2008, at the VFW Hall located on Raymond Hill Road in Uncasville, CT. The Annual Native American Mohegans 2008 "Volunteer of the Year Award" was presented to Carol Lebitz (aka Spring Mountain Laurel) and Ralph Fowler (aka Two White Deer) for their continued efforts in the support of the Tribe. The presentations were made by last year's recipients, Betty Allard and Nelson Carey.

Tribal Council would like to thank Ralph Fowler and Carol Lebitz for their continued efforts in the support of the tribe.

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## TRIBAL HISTORIAN ON THE ROAD AGAIN

NAM Tribal Historian, Nelson (Snow Eagle) Carey, is currently out west and meeting with the Brothertown and the Stockbridge Indians on a research/work trip. Nelson's last such trip to Florida provided information on Mary Ann (Dennis) Fowler. Nelson is hopeful that these meetings will open up some new information on our search for information regarding the ancestors of the NAM core families.

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## ELDERS COUNCIL NOTEBOOK

A special thank you to the Elders' Council for their coordination of collecting donations for the 4 Thanksgiving baskets given to those Tribal members in need during the holiday season.

Elders' Council member, Virginia Carey, has made a patchwork quilt that she is donating for raffle at the upcoming April 5th Gathering. Virginia is known for her beautiful work so this is truly a very generous gift. Thank you, Virginia!

Congratulations to Elders' Council Chairperson, Carol Lebitz, for being named one of the Tribe's 2008 Volunteer of the Year! Great job, Carol!

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### ***MARK YOUR CALENDAR!***

*Native American Mohegans'  
Social  
VFW Hall, Uncasville, April 5, 2009*

Our annual Winter Social will be held at the VFW on April 5, 2009, from 12:00-3:00pm. The VFW Hall is located on Raymond Hill Road in Uncasville, CT.

Please bring a dish to share.

Please come and enjoy the social. It's great to get together with all of our Native American families and friends. Hope to see you there.

Directions: I-395 to exit 79A, CT-2A; take CT-2A East for 0.5 miles to exit 1, CT-32 (Norwich New London Tpk); turn right onto CT-32 and go South for 2 miles to Raymond Hill Rd; turn hard right onto Raymond Hill Rd and go Northwest for 0.2 miles to 97 Raymond Hill.

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### 2009 MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE DUE

Tribal Council would first like to thank all Tribal Members for their financial support through 2008. As a result of your support, we were able to maintain our Tribal Office, publish the quarterly newsletter, pay for the function halls we use for meetings and gatherings, and support the culture club for our children.

Send your dues (\$36) to Toni Cook at the address below and if you do not know where you stand with respect to your dues obligation, call Toni at (781) 944-3580.

Tribal Council continues to offer "Active" Tribal Members an opportunity to purchase a "Lifetime" membership. No more worrying about whether your dues are paid up, no more worrying about future increase in dues.

In order to qualify today, your dues must be paid-up through the end of 2009. Then for a one-time fee of \$150, you can become a "lifetime" member of the Tribe. Just send a simple note requesting a "Lifetime" membership along with a check made out to the Native American Mohegans to:

Mrs. Toni Cook  
94 Salem Street  
Reading, MA 01867

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## 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.

### United Community and Family Services Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services Program

United Community and Family Services (UCFS) provides Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services (EMPS) to children who are in acute psychiatric crisis. This article will discuss what a psychiatric crisis is and how EMPS can be utilized to respond to families who find themselves in need of help.

Many are familiar with the motto "Be Prepared." As a parent it is very scary to think about what to do if your child stops sleeping, has a change in his or her appetite, begins to experience mood swings and/or begins to think and talk about death. In some situations the child may begin cutting themselves or even take pills to deal with the pain he or she is feeling. As a parent do you know what you would do? Or who you would call for help? What if your child is angry all the time and becomes aggressive with you? Are you prepared as a parent if you needed to answer these questions? Hopefully you will not need to, but since research tells us that one in five children under the age of 18 will experience some type of emotional distress significant enough to cause some decrease in functioning while growing up, it is better to be prepared.

UCFS has many services that can assist you and your family on an ongoing basis. However, what if this is the first time you have seen your child act this way or it is at night or on the weekend? EMPS can help you and your child or adolescent. Your child may have been feeling sad or angry for some time, but unable to put his or her feelings into words. When your child is able to tell you or someone else how he or she is feeling, it is important to act immediately, especially if your child is out of control, despondent or talking about death. The first thing to do is determine if your child is safe. If your child has severely cut him or herself, ingested anything, has a weapon or has hurt you, take action by calling 911 and get immediate medical attention. If your child is still in the talking or yelling stage, you or your child can call EMPS.

When you call EMPS you will be asked a few questions such as your name, your child's name and what your child is doing. You will also be asked to give your phone number and address where your child is. You will be asked if you are involved with any other service providers. The operator will then transfer you to the trained crisis response worker from EMPS.

The EMPS worker will talk with you and if you agree, come to your house to do a crisis assessment on your child. If you do not want the EMPS worker to come to your house he or she will talk with you and/or your child by phone to try to problem solve the situation by giving you suggestions on how to handle the situation. The EMPS worker can also talk with your child to create a plan to be safe for the night. Some times, talking with someone not emotionally connected to the situation can help diffuse the crisis.

If you choose for the EMPS worker to come to you, he or she will conduct a full safety assessment on your child. The EMPS worker will work collaboratively with you to create a plan for safety. If you are involved with other providers, after the crisis is taken care of, EMPS may offer to work with you and your provider to develop an on-going safety plan for your child. The EMPS worker will also talk with you about next steps for your child's treatment. If the EMPS worker determines that your child needs to be further assessed and observed in a hospital setting, he or she will work with you, the psychiatric hospital and your insurance carrier to find the right place for your child.

Regardless of the outcome of the crisis, the EMPS team is available to provide follow-up service to you and your family the next day.

If your child is in need of longer term services EMPS will provide referrals and short term treatment services until your child is connected to the ongoing service provider. It is important for families to know that EMPS services are voluntary and the decision to utilize any ongoing services is determined by the family.

For more information about the EMPS program or to schedule an informational session about EMPS please call the EMPS Program Coordinator, Brian Tessier, at (860) 892-7042 extension 592. If your child is in psychiatric crisis please call 211.

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### The Gung Skeedumbork Culture Club

The Gung Skeedumbork Culture Club classes have started but it is not too late to enroll your children, ages 6 to 12. The classes are once a month on Saturday from 10:30AM to 12:30 PM. Call the office at 860.892.1039 for more information or send an email to [info@nativeamericanmohegans.com](mailto:info@nativeamericanmohegans.com).

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### MOHEGAN SUN CASINO SLASHING PAY, BENEFITS

By MATTHEW KAUFFMAN | The Hartford Courant  
January 12, 2009

Mohegan Sun is unilaterally reducing employee pay and benefits in the face of "unprecedented market conditions" that have cut into revenue at the 3.1 million square foot casino.

The Mohegan Tribal Gaming Authority announced Sunday that effective Feb. 1 it will cut pay for all employees, with salary rollbacks of 10 percent for vice presidents and above, 7.5 percent for middle managers and 4 percent for all line and hourly employees.

In addition, it will eliminate annual raises and merit-based salary increases and is scrapping its matching contribution to employee 401(k) plans.

Casino officials said the cuts in pay and benefits would allow it to keep its record of not laying off employees and also "align the Authority's cost structure with the current economic environment while ensuring minimal impact on the guest experience."

The announcement comes a month after the casino's parent company reported a double-digit percentage decline in net earnings, primarily due to a drop in gambling revenue. For the year ending Sept. 30, Mohegan Sun reported \$1.36 billion in net revenue, down about \$68 million from the previous year.

That revenue decline came despite the August 2007 opening of Sunrise Square, a \$16.7 million expansion that included an 8,500-square-foot Asian-themed gambling area, a 5,000-square-foot bus lobby and a 4,000-square-foot "Hong Kong" street food outlet.

Sunrise Square was part of Mohegan's "Project Horizon," the casino's second major expansion, elements of which have now been halted because of the recession.

The tribal gaming authority also said Sunday that it planned to cut marketing expenses and reduce hours at some outlets and will try to cut costs for supplies and services.

Mitchell Etes, president and CEO of Mohegan Sun, said the economic downturn has had an unprecedented impact on the casino, which opened in 1996. He said the cuts were "difficult, but necessary."

"In addition to respect for our employees, we also have a responsibility to our banking partners, bondholders and stakeholders who continually support our vision," Etes said.

The economy has also taken a toll on Foxwoods Resort Casino, owned by the Mashantucket Pequots. Last month, Foxwoods offered buyouts to all 729 employees of tribal government except the seven members of the tribal council, on top of about 900 casino jobs and 200 tribal jobs already cut last year.

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### NATIVE CANDIDATES OFFERED TOP POSITIONS AT INTERIOR

Friday, February 13, 2009, [Indianz.com](http://Indianz.com)

In his first appearance before Congress, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar on Thursday said President Barack Obama is making good on his promise to include Native Americans at the highest levels of the federal government.

Within the Interior Department, tribal members are typically tapped for leadership posts at the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Office of the Special Trustee for

American Indians, the National Indian Gaming Commission. But Salazar said the Obama administration is vetting Native American candidates as Solicitor of the Interior and as Commissioner for the Bureau of Reclamation.

"Those are not traditional positions for Native Americans to hold within the department," Salazar noted in his testimony to the Senate Indian Affairs Committee.

"But I think the people that we have here, that hopefully will get confirmed by this Senate in the next month or two, are the kind of '800-pound gorillas' that you want to work on the major problems that face the department," Salazar said.

Salazar did not mention names but he said he extended offers to Native candidates for both positions. If the nominations move forward, it would set a precedent for Interior and for Indian Country.

The Solicitor is the top attorney at the department and someone with a strong Indian law background could bring about a big shift in policy. The last administration saw the birth of negative legal opinions and views about sacred sites, Indian trust management, the federal-tribal trust relationship and Indian preference.

Additionally, the Office of the Solicitor under the last administration was criticized by the department's Inspector General for failing to ensure top officials followed the law. Several former officials, including Interior's second-in-command, pleaded guilty for ethical lapses.

As for Reclamation, a Native candidate could provide a tribal voice in a wide range of issues, from water rights settlements to fishing rights to irrigation projects. Under the Bush administration, tribes in the Klamath Basin of northern California and southern Oregon lost out big when it came to water management policies.

The Solicitor and Reclamation picks would join Larry EchoHawk, a member of the Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma, as the expected assistant secretary for Indian Affairs. The White House has not made a formal announcement but key members of Congress, tribal advocates and a former member of Obama's transition team have touted him as the nominee.

So far, Salazar is the only Senate-confirmed nominee at Interior. David Hayes is awaiting

consideration as deputy secretary, the number two position at the department.

Sen. Byron Dorgan (D-North Dakota), the chairman of the Indian Affairs Committee, pressed Salazar to fill the leadership positions, citing a void during the Bush administration that left the top BIA post for over three years. Three people held the assistant secretary job under the last president, with none lasting more than 18 months.

"I know there are some wonderful people that work in the BIA but I could tell you stories that just make you furious about the lack of things getting done over there," said Dorgan, who cited energy development as one area of concern.

Interior, often seen as one of the less prestigious of government agencies, has already benefited from high-level attention under the new administration. Last month, Obama brought Salazar to the White House last month to highlight efforts to clean up the department after being connected to a slew of corruption scandals.

Earlier this week, First Lady Michelle Obama took her star power to the department and touted her husband's initiatives to elevate Indian policy. The visit came after the president announced the hiring of a Native woman to serve in a top post at the White House, with another Native appointment expected in the coming weeks.

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## **BOOK REVIEW**

### **EHANAMANI "WALKS AMONG"**

Dr. Allen Ross



The Santee Dakota author of Mitakuye Oyasin shares a "sundance experience"--one that led him to discover that the Federal Reserve System is controlled by private bankers. With updated and additional information, this book tells how the rich escape paying their share of taxes, how American Indian poverty is perpetuated by the Fed, and how we can learn to rid ourselves of the national debt.

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## TRADITION !

### NATIVE AMERICAN FLUTES IN POWWOWS AND INDIAN CEREMONIES

Native American flutes are enjoyed and played in many cultures around the world. I have always appreciated Native flute music for its beautiful sound quality and ability to bring a peaceful calm to the ambiance where it is played. Hearing Native flutes always take me back to my mother's kitchen where she often played flute music to create a tranquil environment in her home. Soothing flute music revives and calms the soul. If you look at the history of Indian musical instruments, you will find that like the drum, the flute has a significant role in the daily lives, ceremonies and traditions of many Indigenous Tribes. Native American flute music takes you on a cultural journey where descendants look to their forefathers for guidance, and use their instruments to unite them with the spiritual world.

Flutes in one form or another have existed for hundreds of years and have been part of many Tribes around the world. The study of flute instruments in historical times shows us that they did exist in ancient Tribes.

The origin and design of the Native American flute is a little harder to trace due to the fact that no North American Tribe had a written language to keep record. It wasn't until explorers documented their journeys, that the Native American flute is reported.

You can't appreciate the true value of Native flute music until you realize that men came close to crushing this beautiful art with rigorous assimilation rules. The 1900's brought with it tough rules for Native Americans that tried to squelch their culture and people. Along with many other Native customs, these rules greatly affected the dispersion of Native flute music. It wasn't until the mid-1900's that assimilation laws started to change and Native customs were able to be exercised within the Tribe and in public once again. Throughout the years, the popularity of the Native American flute flourished to the extent that flute makers began making these instruments in large numbers to sell, and not just for individual use. The materials used to make the flutes also shifted from rustic and primitive to more improved with the use of modern power tools and the greater accessibility to various types of woods, plastics and metals.

These days, there are various options available when choosing a Native style flute, and it is just a matter of personal opinion. There are a few guidelines you should keep in mind though when buying an instrument. There are many different types of flutes, but all have one of two different sound tones. The sound style of the flute depends on whether it is a Plains style or a Woodlands style. A Plains style flute produces a buzzing type sound while a Woodlands style produces a bell tone. No matter which type of flute you purchase, it is important to look over the characteristics of that individual instrument, including the mouthpiece, size, shape and number of holes, in order to buy one that fits your needs. Native American flutes are also fashioned from a variety of woods ranging from exotic, rather pricey woods, to simple pieces of pine, cane or bamboo.

Because of the widespread popularity of flute music, you can easily buy Native American flutes online, in various music stores, and in specialty shops that sell Indian musical instruments and southwestern home decorating accessories. If you are searching for an easy instrument to learn to play, or are looking for authentic Indian musical instruments for use in Native rituals and powwows, consider keeping the culture and music of Indigenous people alive with Native American flutes.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pat Knapp wishes to thank everyone for their condolences on the death of her son Ralph.

We all wish Sandy LeBitz the best as he recuperates at home after recent surgery.

Congratulations to Andrew and Tiffany Blackstone who are expecting their first child in August. Andrew will be graduating in May with a Bachelor Degree in Ministry.

A reminder that the Elders Council meets monthly on the last Saturday of the month unless otherwise informed. Pat Knapp is working on another afgan to raise money for the Elders Council.

*(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.*



## **Special Remembrances**

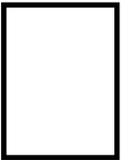


RALPH C. BREARLEY III  
July 25, 1960 to August 27, 2008

Ralph C. Brearley III ("Salmon Catcher") was born in New London on July 25, 1960. Ralph attended Southwest School, Clark Lane Junior High School and Waterford High School.

He is survived by his mother, Patricia Knapp and her husband, James, of Waterford; two daughters, Katie O'Neill of Sterling, and Sarah Elhers of Oakdale; two sisters, Mary Ann Renaldi and her husband, Lauren, of Oakdale, and Catherine Knapp of Tenn.; his nephews, Chris and Lauren Renaldi and his wife, Kim, and their two children, Zachary and Lauren.

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



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