



# TurtleTalk Newsletter

## January - March 2024

A publication of the Mass Center for Native American Awareness, Inc.  
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### WHAT WE'VE BEEN DOING AT MCNAA

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#### MASS. CENTER FOR NATIVE AMERICAN AWARENESS (MCNAA) BOOK DISCUSSION, "WARRIOR GIRL UNEARTHED"

by Erin McCormack, Advisory Council Member. Screenshot by Claudia Fox Tree.

MCNAA continues its virtual book discussion series into 2024, during the winter months, the traditional time for storytelling. For the January 14th discussion, we discussed *Warrior Girl Unearthed* by Angeline Bouley, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa/Ojibwe. Lead by Claudia Fox Tree, assisted by Erin McCormack and Xóchi Kountz, the group was not large, but discussion was rich and rewarding. As before, the program included a guest speaker, Heather Leavell, who spoke on her efforts to decolonize the Dallin Museum in Arlington, MA.



This was our second book by Boulley, following *Firekeepers Daughter*, set in the same location, with many of the same family and community members. Of many new books by Native authors, these books have proven very popular, climbing the charts and under consideration to be made into films. Boulley borrows from mainstream culture, i.e., Nancy Drew and Lara Croft, using them for her own purposes: the main character, Perry, sets out to return Native remains, rather than raid tombs. As young adult novels, they are accessible to many readers, and introduce Native themes and concerns in a natural way, necessary to the story. They are both mirrors of Native youth experiences and windows into another mindset and worldview for non-Native readers.



*Warrior Girl Unearthed* focuses on Perry's attempts to recover stolen Native remains and grave goods, mandated by the Native American Graves Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), but delayed by inaction or remaining in private collections. While dealing with typical teenage dilemmas, Perry wrestles with how to be a "warrior for her people" – and whether to recover artifacts by stealth or to work through the official channels, which are slow and ineffective. In the course of her quest, she runs up against Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW+) cases, including a friend and young mother who disappears. A concluding scene of the book takes place in a "hidey hole" on the reservation, where

parents formerly hid children to keep them from being taken to boarding schools. Throughout the book, the author incorporates words and phrases of Perry's Native language, which informs her thinking.

As with earlier MCNAA book discussions, the program opened with music, "Woman's Warrior Song" with Auntie Martina, and a Land Acknowledgement, followed by slides on MCNAA's mission and programs, illustrated with wonderful artwork by Claudia herself. Readers were asked to bring in a quote from the book that struck them to be shared in the larger group. Heather Leavell, co-founder of Italian Americans for Indigenous Peoples Day, spoke about her role at the Cyrus Dallin Art Museum, in creating a context for Dallin's sculptures of Native Americans (including the statue "Appeal to the Great Spirit" at the Museum of Fine Arts as well as the statue of Massasoit in Plymouth, Mass.) Foremost, was attention to the Native land that the museum occupies and inviting comments from local Native people about Native American representation in museums. As in the past, the program concluded with a poem by a Native author that speaks to a theme in the book in a way that is emotional and impactful. ■

## MASS. CENTER FOR NATIVE AMERICAN AWARENESS (MCNAA) BOOK DISCUSSION, “BECOMING KIN: AN INDIGENOUS CALL TO UNFORGETTING THE PAST AND REIMAGINING OUR FUTURE”

by Erin McCormack, Advisory Council Member.

On February 18, 2024, MCNAA hosted its seventh virtual discussion on Indigenous authors and issues, featuring Patty Krawec’s book, *Becoming Kin: An Indigenous Call to Unforgetting the Past and Reimagining Our Future*. While the first part of the book analyzes all the ways that relationships between and to Native Americans have been broken, the second part offers approaches to repair the bonds and reestablish a web of healthy connections. Guest speaker, Jennifer Wolfram, shared her experiences as part her town’s efforts to work with local Native people to bring awareness and address problems from the past, and making change for better relations in the present.

Led by Claudia Fox Tree, with assistance from Erin McCormack and Xóchi Kountz, the program opened with a song, “All My Relations” by Joanne Shenandoah, Oneida, and included Native land acknowledgements, as well as information on MCNAA mission and programming. To introduce the book, we shared a short, powerful video, “All My Relations” by Ulali, a Native women’s group, which illustrates the all-encompassing nature of the interrelatedness of all things, including the harmed and the harmer.

Participants gathered virtually for discussion, touching on questions related to the book, but also, the profound ways the book touched them and made them question things or see things differently. The author also included, “Aambe” or action items – specific things readers can do to improve relationships with Indigenous people – primarily by learning true history, looking for absences or gaps in the records, seeking to understand meanings of Indigenous place names, attending Indigenous sponsored events, and taking initiative to introduce yourself and offer to volunteer or otherwise support efforts led by Native people.



Guest speaker, educator Jennifer Wolfram, spoke of her work as a white ally with the Pigsgusset Initiative, a working group of Watertown Citizens for Peace, Justice and the Environment. In collaboration with members of the Native community and other organizations, they have held celebrations of Indigenous Peoples Day and brought Mashpee Wampanoag chef and James Beard award winner, Sherry Pocknett, to prepare and talk about indigenous food at Branch Line restaurant in Watertown. Be on the look-out for this annual event in Watertown as we approach Indigenous Peoples Day in October. Other goals are to seek change of a marker in the town center that honors Christopher Columbus, and to improve and expand curriculum about Native Americans.

The idea of “All My Relations,” is prevalent throughout Native America: the name of a podcast, several songs, poems, and other forms of art. Patty Krawec comes at it from a background in social work and her own personal history of being raised outside the Anishinaabe community by her Ukrainian mother’s family and having to actively re-establish bonds with her father’s family. In seeking to learn more of the native language, she shares words and phrases with readers, showing their origins and meanings, essential to cultural understanding. This book serves as yet another example of Native authors highlighting the strength of culture and traditions to suggest better ways for all people to live together on this land. ■

*The programs above were funded, in part, by a grant from Mass Humanities and Mass Cultural Council.*

## MCNAA CONTINUES TO PROVIDE HEATING ASSISTANCE TO FAMILIES

*by Burne Stanley-Peters, Board Member*

In 2022, the Mass. Center for Native American Awareness (MCNAA) received a small multi-year grant to help eligible median income households, supplements our Social Assistance Program that assists Native families and Elders in Massachusetts pay their winter heating costs. Payments are made directly to the utility companies.



The program, for this heating season, runs through April 2024 or until all funds are expended. If you are experiencing temporary financial hardship and need help paying your heat bill, please reach out to Kim or Burne at [mcnaa@aol.com](mailto:mcnaa@aol.com) to apply for assistance by requesting an application. We will be happy to help eligible families as long as funds are available. ■



The Salem Housing Authority and the Marblehead Housing Authority recently informed us that they are now accepting housing applications for all State Public Housing Programs and Section 8. These opportunities are for eligible low income elders, families and handicapped persons.

To apply to the Salem Housing Authority, please visit their website: [www.salemha.org](http://www.salemha.org) and apply online.

To apply to the Marblehead Housing Authority, please visit their website: [www.marbleheadha.org](http://www.marbleheadha.org) and apply online. ■

## INDIGENOUS AUTHOR ROBIN WALL KIMMERER SPEAKS AT BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY AND RECEIVES THE RICHMOND FELLOWSHIP

by Claudia Fox Tree, MCNAA Board Member.



Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer. Photo by Dan Holmes

On Wednesday, February 28, 2024, I had the honor and privilege to see Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer (RWK) at Brandeis University. MCNAA has had a relationship with Brandeis for nearly a decade, especially with Professor ChaeRan Freeze. Brandeis was the first local University that I knew about, who celebrated Indigenous Peoples Day on October 12, before cities, towns, and other Universities began to make this a reality. On Wednesday, RWK was the

recipient of the 2024 Richmond Distinguished Fellowship in Public Life which was created by Brandeis alumni Carol Richman Saivetz and her children in honor of her parents. Past recipients include Anna Deavere Smith (2019) and Rebecca Cokley (2020).

I love RWK's book, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants*, which was published in 2013. More than six years later via word of mouth, in February 2020, the book reached the New York Times bestseller list where it stayed for the next 129 weeks. I listen to the audiobook every summer as I do my outdoor yardwork. It reminds me to respect the land, talk to the plants, and ask permission as I work. On Wednesday, I was on the edge of my seat, captivated, again, by RWK's words, just like when I listen to her audiobook each year.

Some important questions RWK wanted us to consider were:

- How do we tell the truth when we occupy someone else's homelands?
- Do we want a world that is a source of belongings or a source of belonging?
- What does the earth ask of us and what can we give back?
- We live in an economy that asks, "What more can we take?" How do we change that?
- Do we want Native landscapes or lawns?

RWK spoke about "colonial erasure." I think of this as the invisibility of Indigenous history, culture, contributions, and knowledge from systems, including educational systems. Specifically, RWK noted that in the dominant culture of the United States, some forms of knowledge are privileged over others. School, medical, and governmental systems often look at "western" and "scientific" knowledge as more truthful than Indigenous knowledge. The Medicine wheel is

helpful to visualize that there are at least four ways of knowing the world – EMOTIONAL (feel), SPIRITUAL (connection), PHYSICAL (movement), and MENTAL (thinking).

RWK also spoke about challenging “linguistic imperialism.” Language can restore our relationship to place. If we want to repair and return the ecosystem to its “original form,” how we do this restoration depends on how we think of land. This led to a discussion of pronouns. When we use “it” to describe plants, “it” creates a hierarchy with humans on top. She suggests using “someone” instead of “something.” We wouldn’t say, “It gives me warm cookies” when we speak about our grandmother because it is disrespectful to our relatives. If we think of plants as our relatives, then maybe we should use relational and familial pronouns because they give to us, too.

RWK talked about sweetgrass. She argued that science typically only includes western knowledge of the plant. It should include Indigenous knowledge of the plant and the plant’s own knowledge of itself. Those three forms of knowledge are braided within three strands, like when we braid sweetgrass. The scientific name for sweetgrass is *Hierochloe odorata* or *Hierochloe hirta* or *Anthoxanthum nitens*. *Hierochloe* means “holy grass” and *odorata* means “fragrant,” so “sacred fragrant holy grass.” The Potawatomi name is wiingashk, which means, “the sweet- smelling hair of Mother Earth.” Those different descriptions come from different views of history, culture, and knowledge.

RWK left us with the words, “raise a ruckus” and heal the damage we have done. “We’ve had the feast and now we need to do the dishes.” Did you know that there is a “Remembrance Day for Lost Species” every year on November 30th? It is a chance each year to explore the stories of extinct species. Ecosystem reciprocity is part of restoration. She called it “re-story-ation.” We need to tell a different story that uses Indigenous knowledge and raise a ruckus about it.

After the official presentation, there was an intimate reception for RWK across the quad. I sat with RWK at a reserved table because the table was empty, except for two Richmond Fellowship representatives. RWK had been at Brandeis walking from class to class for over six hours and sitting at a table was a welcomed relief to her. People came and went from the table offering heartfelt thank yous for her teachings, having books signed, and making other connections. By far, the biggest hit of the reception was the Shagbark Hickory nuts that Russ Cohen brought to the table to enhance the appetizers that were already provided by Brandeis. He explained that they were from a couple of years ago because last year that set of trees had not produced any nuts.

In closing, several folks approached me before the presentation and afterward in the reception. They wanted me to know that they had attended the MCNAA virtual book talks, which motivated them to be at this presentation. They were excited to introduce themselves to me. ■

Photos by Prof. ChaeRan Freeze of some friends who caught up with Claudia at the event.



*Claudia Fox Tree, Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer and Russ Cohen.*



*Claudia Fox Tree and Evangelina Marcias.*



*Prof. ChaeRan Freeze and Claudia Fox Tree.*



*Claudia Fox Tree and Rebecca Smoler.*



*Full Hall*



*Milly Sanford, Maria Wilkins, Rena Maliszewski and Claudia Fox Tree.*

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE OFFICE!

by Burne Stanley-Peters, Board Member

\* Visitor guidelines are still relaxed allowing for scheduled visits in the office with a mask. If you'd like to visit and reconnect with us, please e-mail us at [mcnaa@aol.com](mailto:mcnaa@aol.com)

\* We worked on varied administrative tasks that included the following:

- processed new memberships as well as renewals,
- attended informational webinars,
- researched new grant opportunities,
- responded to general e-mail inquiries, and
- updated our website and face book pages.

\* We continued culturally sensitive mentoring, helped identify vital educational resources, wrote letters of recommendation, as well as provided other supportive services to our college students during the current 2024 Spring Semester.

\* We continued to assist needy Native families and Elders with food purchases, gasoline for their vehicles, and other utility bills such as electricity.

\* Responded to requests for guidance and information as well as requests for speakers.

\* Board Member, Dawn Duncan, continues to sit on the Bureau of Substance Abuse Services (BSAS) Community Advisory Board (CAB). Her experience from a program development, policy, and public health perspective makes her the ideal MCNAA Board Member to provide input to this board. As we stated in early 2021, the goal of CAB is primarily to keep one another (tribal communities and Native non-profits) apprised as to what is going on as well as to hear from BSAS on new initiatives. They meet regularly every other Wednesday.

\* Board Member, Claudia Fox Tree, maintains a seat on Essex County Community Foundation's Racial Equity Committee. The purpose of the Committee, as is described by ECCF, is to advise their staff and trustees in its current and evolving racial equity strategy and hold them accountable for the actions needed to effectively bring about change. ■



### Board Members

*Dawn Duncan, Claudia Fox Tree,  
Kim Orben, Anthony Silva, and  
Burne Stanley-Peters.*

### Advisory Council Members

Eva Blake \* Erin McCormack \* Autaquay  
Peters-Mosquera \* Patricia D. Rocker  
Kate Yeomans.



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## SAVE THE DATES

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### MCNAA WILL PARTNER WITH BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY ON MAJOR INDIGENOUS DANCE EVENT

MCNAA will partner with Brandeis University on a major Native dance event that will be held during the larger Leonard Bernstein Festival of the Creative Arts at the University in Waltham, MA on Thursday, April 11, 2024 from 6-8pm.

We are excited to share that internationally recognized and distinguished dance artist, Daystar Rosalie Jones (Pembina Chippewa-Cree), who is now in her 80's and one of the oldest Indigenous modern dancers, will be joining the event entitled "*Niiksokowaiks My Relatives: An Evening of Dance and Conversation with Evangelina Macias and Daystar Rosalie Jones.*" The event will begin with an opening by Larry Spotted Crow Mann (Nipmuc), followed by an excerpt of "No Home but the Heart" performed by Daystar Rosalie Jones, then a formal showing of Evangelina's solo dance work "Niiksokowaiks My Relatives."\* The evening will conclude with a conversation and light refreshments. The event is free and open to all but registration is required. Please use this URL <https://Macias-Brandeis.eventbrite.ca> to visit the event page where you will find more details on the program, the agenda, registration, seating and parking. ■



### WILD EDIBLES PLANT WALK – LED BY RUSS COHEN, NATURALIST AND WILD FOOD ENTHUSIAST

On Tuesday, June 25, 2024 from 11am-1pm, MCNAA will host a Wild Edibles Walk with Russ Cohen at the Essex County Greenbelt's Cox Reservation, Essex, MA.

The day will begin with general orientation by Russ Cohen then opening words and a song with hand drumming by Dawn Duncan. The walk will include identification and the sharing of knowledge of wild edible plants, as well as samples of treats made with wild edible ingredients for you to sip and nibble on. Space is limited so pre-registration is required. A \$10 donation per participant will be requested. To register, please look for the URL on our website at the beginning of June. ■



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## INTO THE SPIRIT WORLD

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### SANDRA “SANDY” SODANO

*by Burne Stanley with excerpts from her obituary*

**I**t is with deep sadness that we share the news about the recent loss of our dear friend and long-time MCNAA member.....Sandy Sodano. She left on her spirit journey to join her adoring



*Claudia and Sandy at one of MCNAA's Anniversary Celebrations at Lombardo's.*

husband Steve who passed away in 2018. Sandy, 77, passed peacefully at her home in Melrose, MA on Monday, March 18, 2024, surrounded by her loving family.

Sandy was born in Boston, MA and was a resident of Medford where she and her late husband Steve lived for over 50 years. They loved sailing, taking walks on the beach, and spending time with one another. A few years after Steve's death, she moved to Melrose to be closer to her daughter Renee, her husband Tony and their children.

A long-time member of the Mass. Center for Native American Awareness, Sandy, along with Steve, her sister Suzanne and their good friend Peggy, attended nearly all of MCNAA's special events that included our anniversary

celebrations, benefit auctions, lectures and socials. She also couldn't be kept away from our annual pow-wow in September at Plug Pond in Haverhill where her heart soared from being surrounded by the beautiful Pond and all her Native and non-Native friends.

Shortly after I met Sandy in 1993 at one of our workshop series in Reading, I ran into her at the Continental Restaurant in Saugus. I didn't know her well but she definitely remembered me from one of the lectures. She was sitting with a large group of friends and when she saw me come in, she waved hard and came running across the room to greet me. She wasn't shy. She didn't care who saw her hugging me like I was a family member or long-time friend. I knew she was sincere and that the warm hugs were genuine!

Close and deep personal relationships developed between Sandy, me, Slow Turtle, and many of our Board Members as well as with so many individuals she met while attending MCNAA events. Everyone she encountered, Native and non-Native, she embraced and made them feel welcomed, treating all like family. She remained a dear friend of ours for the past thirty years.

As a passionate advocate for Native American Tribes across the county, her research assisted numerous tribes with various initiatives. One in particular was the repatriating of Native artifacts to the originating tribes that she collected over the years. She remained friends and in contact with most of her tribal contacts and even invited several of them for visits to her home when she lived in Medford.

Sandy leaves behind her twin sister Suzanne Murphy of Medford; her son David Sodano (and his wife Michele) of South Carolina; her daughter Renee Sousa (and her husband Tony) of Melrose; grandchildren Anthony, Michael and Deanna Sousa (and her fiancé Shane); Stephen and MacKenzie Sodano; and great grandson Shane Jr.

Representing the Mass. Center for Native American Awareness, Kim Orben, a board member and personal friend of Sandy's, attended the visitation, the church services, and repass on Monday, March 25, 2024 in Melrose along with hundreds of Sandy's family and friends. Kim remarked that Sandy had a "beautiful send off." All of us who knew Sandy are now left to cherish the beautiful memories we have of her. She will never be forgotten. ■



**James Steam Mill offers apartments for eligible elderly applicants (62 years of age or older) and disabled individuals and their families of all ages. All apartments are federally assisted with residents paying thirty percent of adjusted gross income for rent and utilities.**

**James Steam Mill consists of 99 units and is a non-smoking community. There are 91 one-bedroom apartments and 7 two-bedroom apartments; five of which have been adapted for accessible use. The property was originally built in 1845 as a mill, which was subsequently converted to elderly apartments in 1984. The building is conveniently located within walking distance of downtown Newburyport. The Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority provides transportation services and the Newburyport Council on Aging also runs shuttle vans.**

**We are told that there are no apartments currently available, but the ADA units wait list is very thin and it's possible that an ADA unit is coming available in the near future. Also, 10% of the units are reserved for people with disabilities who are between the ages of 18 and 49. We are told that wait list is very low at the moment as well.**

**If interested in getting on a wait list, please call the property manager at 978-465-5166 for more details and to schedule a tour. ■**

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## **FOR SALE**

### **DONATED NATIVE AMERICAN-STYLE FLUTES**

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In efforts to help raise funds for our programs, several, basically new Native flutes, in different keys, were donated to MCNAA. (One has been sold leaving three.) They are all from High Spirits Flutes in Arizona. These adult-size instruments come with an instructional manual if you are a beginner. However, there are also several song books that might be of interest if you are proficient in flute playing. Each of these flutes are of very high quality and if you purchase one, you won't be disappointed.

Here's the descriptions and photos of each flute:

#### **Spirit Flute Bass..... Key D minor.....Spanish Cedar**

This Spirit Flute is a Traditional Bass flute in the key 'D' minor. It is handcrafted from Spanish Cedar, a softwood that gives the flute a rich bass voice, warm high notes, and the versatility to be played as a contemplative bass flute or a lead instrument.



This 19-inch length flute makes this one of the shortest bass flutes, which allows for the possibility for those with smaller hands to play this deeper-toned flute. It is adorned with 5 Thunderbird nicely carved along the top. The short mouthpiece is convenient for travel, it provides ample back-pressure to accentuate clarity on the higher register notes and minimizes moisture buildup. This flute is valued at \$289 but we will accept \$189 or any reasonable offer.

#### **The Crow Flute, Key A minor.... Ebonized Walnut**

The Crow flute is handcrafted from Ebonized domestic Walnut, a hardwood. It is keyed in the key of "A" minor and can also be played in the relative major diatonic scale in the key of "C". The Crow has a very special musical tonal quality because of the Ebonize Walnut wood flute body. This flute is 19 inches long. This flute is valued at \$315 but we will accept \$225 or any reasonable offer.

The Crow flute goes through a time-consuming, multi-step process that involves being ebonized multiple times and then repeatedly sealed with coats of non-toxic oil, to create the final high-gloss look and finish along with an enhanced tonal voice. The flute is then decorated with Turquoise cabochons to enhance the natural beauty of the instrument and adding to its character as both a musical instrument and a piece of functional artwork. *NOTE: This photo differs slightly from the actual flute that is for sale. Our donated flute has less turquoise cabochons on the top.*



completed with  
enhance the natural beauty of the

### Signature Hummingbird Flute, Key F#m.....Aromatic Cedar

The 2022 Hummingbird Signature Flute is tuned in the key of 'F#' minor is the newest design in the Hummingbird Signature Series. It can also be played in the relative major diatonic scale in the key of A. The dimensions of the flute are approximately 22 inches in length with a 1-inch (2.5 cm) bore diameter. This beautiful instrument is valued at \$470 but we will accept \$350 or any reasonable offer.



This flute is handcrafted from Aromatic

Cedar with a beautifully hand-carved Hummingbird attached atop. Aromatic Cedar was chosen for this flute because of its exceptional tonal qualities, which give the flute a clear, warm, balanced musical voice. The entire flute is adorned with hand carved Hummingbirds and flowers inlaid with abalone shell which was chosen because of its vibrant iridescent color. This is another extremely well crafted flute and is more beautiful in person.

This Signature Series flutes utilizes a unique airflow design that provides exceptional responsiveness and player control, superior amplification, and makes it ideal for a wide range of styles. It is designed to be both concert quality musical instruments and functional artwork.

The flutes are housed at our office in Danvers for anyone who is seriously interested in purchasing one (or all) of them. If you'd like to make an appointment to drop by and see them, please e-mail us at mcnaa@aol.com Conversely, if you'd like to purchase one and have it mailed or delivered, based on the photo and description above, please e-mail us with your selection and we'll follow up with you via phone or e-mail. Funds raised from the purchases will go toward MCNAA's programs. We hope some of you will take this great opportunity to own and learn to play a flute or gift one to a loved one. Thank You. ■

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## MCNAA's MONTHLY GIVING PROGRAM

*Become A GEM Donor Today!*

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The Massachusetts Center for Native American Awareness is a non-profit organization that does not receive consistent grant funding. When we do receive a grant, it's usually for heat assistance which is greatly needed but doesn't help with other program needs such as: scholarships for students; food & essential basic needs for elders and families; cultural programs, social change initiatives; and youth activities.



Additionally, since early 2020, all of our in-person fundraising events, that helped bring in much needed program funds, had to be canceled. Because of this, we felt it necessary to create a monthly giving program to help provide a reliable, steady influx of income. Monthly donations are a sure way to help our organization receive recurring funds on a regular basis and will complement the few small grants we receive.

In the spirit of “paying it forward”, we invite you as well as large, medium, and small businesses, to become a GEM (Give\*Every\*Month) donor and help make a difference by joining the circle of monthly giving. Donations will be applied to either our college scholarship program, our social assistance-needy fund, or our social change/social justice initiatives.

If your heart speaks and you would like to support the organization this way, please scan the QR code below. Or go to your PayPal account and make a donation to the Mass. Center for Native American Awareness (or [mcnaa@aol.com](mailto:mcnaa@aol.com)) then select “make this a monthly/reoccurring donation.” One-time donations are greatly accepted as well. Thank you. ■



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# TEN PRACTICAL LESSONS FROM BRAIDING SWEETGRASS FOR YOUNG ADULTS: INDIGENOUS WISDOM, SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE, AND THE TEACHINGS OF PLANTS

*by Robin Wall Kimmerer*

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**1.** Cultivate gratitude: Embrace a mindset of gratitude towards nature and the interconnected web of life, recognizing the gifts that the natural world provides.

**2.** Embrace reciprocity: Understand the importance of reciprocity in our relationship with the natural world, acknowledging the need to give back and care for the earth in return for what it provides us.

**3.** Cultivate a deeper connection with nature: Develop a conscious and respectful relationship with the natural world, fostering a sense of interconnectedness and mutual respect.

**4.** Honor indigenous wisdom: Embrace the wisdom of indigenous cultures and their deep understanding of the natural world, recognizing the value of traditional ecological knowledge.

**5.** Foster environmental stewardship: Take proactive steps to care for the environment and advocate for the protection of natural spaces, recognizing our responsibility as stewards of the earth.

**6.** Embrace the teachings of plants: Learn from the wisdom of plants and the natural world, recognizing the valuable lessons they have to offer about resilience, adaptation, and interconnectedness.

**7.** Cultivate a sense of belonging in nature: Foster a deep sense of belonging and connection to the natural world, recognizing that humans are an integral part of the larger ecosystem.

**8.** Practice sustainable living: Embrace sustainable practices and advocate for environmentally conscious living, recognizing the importance of living in harmony with nature.

**9.** Learn from indigenous storytelling: Embrace the power of storytelling as a means of transmitting wisdom, knowledge, and cultural values, recognizing the importance of preserving and sharing indigenous stories.

**10.** Advocate for environmental justice: Stand up for the rights of marginalized communities and the protection of natural resources, recognizing the interconnectedness of social justice and environmental sustainability.

BOOK: <https://amzn.to/3v6DyxI> You can also get the audio book for FREE using the same link. Use the link to register for the audio book on Audible and start enjoying it. ■

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## HOW TO CELEBRATE EARTH DAY 2024!

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**E**arth Day is a time to adopt environmentally friendly practices into your daily life and spread awareness of climate change all year long. There are plenty of activities to participate in, both in groups and independently. They are:



**Join or Donate to an Environmental Nonprofit** - Find an environmentally focused nonprofit to volunteer for. Plenty of organizations are willing to accept help from like-minded people. Find one that's right for you. If you can't volunteer, you can still do your part by donating.

**Plant a Garden** - There are more straightforward ways to celebrate Earth Day and do your part to help the planet. Planting a garden is a great way to show your support for sustainable food and energy resources. You can plan a community event or make it your own.

**Start a Nature Art Project** - Show your dedication to the Earth and environmental awareness by making art. Using plants and natural resources to create art is a great way to express your creativity and call attention to Earth Day's message. You can start one on your own or make it a small event.

**Start a Recycling Tour** - You don't have to be part of the U.S. government to fight pollution. Simply walking around your community and cleaning up any trash you see can help. Organize a group of friends/family to clean up your community, ensuring recyclable materials are recycled.

**Avoid Fossil Fuel Transportation** - There have been great strides in reducing the amount of fossil fuel vehicles used, but the transportation sector remains one of the greatest sources of harmful emissions. Earth Day is a great time to avoid driving. Walking or riding a bike over short distances can get you where you need to be while reducing your carbon footprint.

**Replace Disposable Items With Reusable Ones** - Switch to reusable cloth bags and containers on Earth Day instead of using plastic bags and bottles to hold your groceries and drinks. This decreases the amount of plastic and other harmful waste in landfills and on the street.

**Go on a Picnic** - Going out on picnics with friends and family is an excellent way to spend time together while enjoying the outdoors. Earth Day is also the perfect time to visit a local farmers market to get some healthy meals to enjoy outside. ■