

# TURTLETALK NEWSLETTER

A Quarterly Publication of  
Mass. Center for Native American Awareness, Inc.  
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## SPRING 2010

**LEADERSHIP TEAM:** President: Burne Stanley-Peters; Board Members: Dawn Duncan, Claudia Fox Tree, Kim Orben, Anthony Silva, and Maria Wilkins.

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:** Don Barnaby, Eva Blake, Autaquay Chacin, Anne Foxx-Whitford, Len Rose, and John Sly Fox Oakley.

**FOUNDER:** Burne Stanley-Peters

**NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS:** Eva Blake, John Goff, Kim Orben, Len & Marie Rose, Anthony Silva, and Burne Stanley. ■

## MCNAA NEWS & INFORMATION

### SUMMARY OF MID-WINTER SOCIAL AND POTLUCK SUPPER

*by Kim Orben, MCNAA Leadership Team Member*

On Saturday, January 23, 2010, MCNAA held its annual Mid-Winter Social and Potluck at the VFW Hall in Middleboro, MA. We were grateful to have had three great drums join us. They were Eastern Medicine Singers of Rhode Island, Eastern Suns of Mashpee, and Iron River Singers of Southeastern Massachusetts.

In addition to the large potluck meal and intertribal dancing, we held a small silent auction. Funds raised were applied to our scholarship fund. A scholarship drawing was also held. Checks were drawn by some of the Native students who are attending colleges in Massachusetts.

The drawing results are as follows:

Alicia Babcock, Narragansett - \$200 - A scholarship in memory of Nanepashemet  
Porsha Goodman, Coharie Tribe of N. Carolina - \$300  
Christopher Martin, MikM'aq - \$150



*(Front center) Anne Foxx, MCNAA Advisory Committee Member and others enjoying intertribal dancing.*

*Photo by Bobby Thunderhawk Jones*

Simone Miles, Herring Pond Wampanoag - \$250  
Stefanie Pofit, Cherokee - \$500  
Jana Turner, Natick Nipmuc - \$100

Students who didn't draw a scholarship check received a gift card to Papa Ginos/d'Angelos.

As always, we had a great time coming together with tribal members from the different Native communities in the region. ■

## **BENEFIT DANCE**

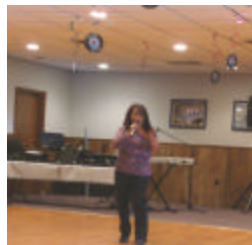
*by Eva Blake, MCNAA Advisory Committee Member with input from Burne Stanley  
Photos by Autaquay Chacin, MCNAA Advisory Committee Member*

In efforts to raise funds for MCNAA's scholarship program, we planned a fund raising dance for Sunday, February 28, 2010. During the planning, we learned about Mashpee's Medicine Man, Guy Cash, needing a kidney transplant and that a fund had been set up for him. We felt we wanted to support this cause and help in some small way so we decided that from a portion of the dance proceeds, we would make a donation to the transplant fund. The balance would go toward scholarships for Native students.

The dance was a smash! Although Monster Mash was not on the playlist, the fabulous dj, Russ McQueen, played a medley of golden oldies---music from the 50's and 60's---that had most of us swinging and swaying the afternoon away.

The VFW in Middleboro, where the benefit was held, had been decorated the night before by Burne, Tony, and Burne's sister Jai and nephew Alex. The next day a small group of MCNAA volunteers came in and added the final touches. When you walked in, you were immersed in the atmosphere of the 50's era. Displayed on all the tables, as part of the overall decor, were reserved signs with a logo of saddle shoes; juke box center pieces; and real vinyl records with a note encouraging guests to take them home as a souvenir commemorating the event. NECO and other candies of this era as well as the expected root beer soda were displayed on the buffet tables. Dangling from the ceiling were attractive vinyl record whirls designed to add the feel of the 50's era.

When I arrived, volunteers were busy in the kitchen heating the chicken wings, turkey sausage, Swedish meatballs and a number of other hot hors' d oeuvres that were prepared for our guests by Fred Walden Catering Services.



After enjoying the dancing and good company for a while, we had the opportunity to hear from Guy. He gave an update on his upcoming kidney transplant and shared the

news that his beloved wife, Marnel, was to be his donor. He then acknowledged MCNAA and its board and advisory members with a gift of tobacco. A surprise to all, including himself, was an impromptu karate demo by my dad, Windsong Blake (photo on right), in honor of Guy. Other guests took this opportunity to speak and offer their good wishes to Guy.

And finally, a real treat was listening to the melodious songs sung by Hobie Sanford and then Laura James that covered the 50's and 60's era. The talent between the two was undeniable. What a great and fun way to raise funds for two important causes. Can't wait for the next one. ■

## **MINI POW-WOW WHEELOCK COLLEGE**

*By Burne Stanley, MCNAA Leadership Team Member*

*Photos by Justin Beatty*

**T**wo full days of rain before, and rain on the event day, didn't stop the mini pow-wow from taking place on Monday, March 29, 2010 at Wheelock College in Boston, MA. Invited dancers from the south shore, southeast Massachusetts, Rhode Island and north and west of Boston came to support MCNAA and the students of the African, Latino, Asian and Native American (ALANA) group at the College. We knew that parking in the college area was going to be difficult so Tony, one of our Board Members, shuttled participants from the parking garage to the venue. Slowly students and spectators arrived and more and more joined us throughout the evening. Because of the number of people who attended, we ended up opening all doors to the room. This drew more interest from passers-by as they heard emcee Marvin Burnette explain the significance of the various dance styles and some of the Native traditions. Dancers engaged the students and the rest of the audience in the intertribal and social dances offered by the Urban Thunder Singers. They learned that they were dancing to the heartbeat of Mother Earth.

Because of very low funds, students from ALANA waited almost a year to move forward with plans to hold the event. When plans resumed, no one expected such a strong outpour of support from the MCNAA participants to help bring this Native American cultural event to the college for these students. What made this such a tremendous event was the commitment kept by these participants knowing the parking situation and seeing what a rainy, windy evening it was and they still made the trek to Wheelock College to help out. We thank the following people who participated in this successful mini pow-wow - Ray LaChance from Boylston Mass. who shared Native stories and flute songs; the Urban Thunder Singers of Greater Boston; and dancers Doug Mitchell, George Thomas, Milly McGowan and her friend Terry, Don Barnaby, Leslie Tuplin, Harry Edmonds, Lee Edmonds, Autaquay Chacin, Aquayah Peters, Claudia Fox Tree, Cheyenne Fox Tree-McGrath and others who came unexpectedly and took part in the intertribal and specialty dances. At the conclusion of the event, students expressed their gratitude for us having shared our culture with them and for planning such an "awesome" event. ■



## 21<sup>ST</sup> YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

by Anthony Silva, MCNAA Leadership Team Member

Photo by Liz Feitelberg

On April 11, 2010, the Massachusetts Center for Native American Awareness (MCNAA) held its 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary celebration. Due to the inability to find a suitable date at the Comfort Inn [formerly the Holiday Inn Randolph] the event was held at the VFW in Middleboro.

Despite the change in venue and a number of other conflicts with tribal meetings, family birthday parties, tribal ceremonies, etc., a large contingent of MCNAA supporters was able to attend this occasion.

This event, which celebrates MCNAA's success in the Native Communities, is also an opportunity to acknowledge and honor an individual or group who, over the years, has helped MCNAA



*Don Barnaby and Claudia Fox Tree*

maintain its programs and remain an important organization for all Native people. As MCNAA and its Leadership Team are 100% volunteers, we must rely upon the support of our constituents as well as our general membership to help sustain our programs. This support comes in many forms including donations as well as volunteering and giving of oneself at the many events MCNAA presents. This may include performing at a pow wow or helping with the preparation and promotion of MCNAA events. The selection process is never easy as there are numerous

people who give so much to MCNAA.

Don Barnaby, or DonDon as we affectionately call him, has been a mainstay at nearly all MCNAA events. Whether there is a need for a head dancer at a cultural presentation or help with procuring a drum or an emcee in a pinch or if there is a need for a grille or coolers for MCNAA's pow wow kitchen or reaching into his own pocket to pay for a dumpster each year at the Marshfield pow wow, DonDon has stepped up without reservation. These things, as well as his ongoing promotion of MCNAA's goals and mission, made him a solid choice for this honor.

Because of the nature of this year's program, we invited two drum groups to take part in the celebration. One group, Urban Thunder, had been introduced by DonDon at our National Native American Heritage Month Pow Wow in November 2009. Although the drum was new to our events, one of its individual members, Little Mike, was no stranger to MCNAA. As well, the Fresh Water Singers from Nipmuc Country graciously joined us. Both drums were able to keep the spirit alive all day with an honor song and intertribal songs for many of us to dance to.

In addition to the honoring ceremony and a review of MCNAA's many accomplishments throughout the year, a silent auction was held in the back of the room. There were some very unique pieces for people to bid on including a very beautiful stained glass shield of an eagle. It was crafted and donated by MCNNA member and fellow Native Chris Howlett who was also present at this celebration. This item, along with a beautiful old-style turquoise and silver pendant anonymously donated by a MCNAA friend, provided the impetus for some very spirited bidding. ■



*Five of our six Leadership Team members: l-r Claudia Fox Tree, Burne Stanely-Peters, Anthony Silva, Kim Orben, and Maria Wilkins. Dawn Duncan was unable to be present. Photo by Liz Feitelberg*

## SEEKING NOMINATIONS FOR MCNAA'S LEADERSHIP TEAM

We're still seeking nominations of interested Native Americans who are Massachusetts residents to fill a vacancy on our Leadership Team. The ideal candidate would be someone who:

- has experience in various types of fund raising
- has served on other boards or committees
- is or would enjoy being involved in MCNAA cultural and educational events
- really wants to help with the governance of MCNAA

Please submit names to [mcnaa@aol.com](mailto:mcnaa@aol.com) or call 617-642-1683.■

### UPCOMING EVENTS FOR THE MASSACHUSETTS CENTER FOR NATIVE AMERICAN AWARENESS

May 29-30, 2010 Annual Spring Planting Moon Pow-wow, Marshfield Fairgrounds, Marshfield, MA 11AM

Sept. 11-12, 2010 Annual Intertribal Pow-wow, Plug Pond, Haverhill, MA 11AM

Sun., Oct. 24, 2010 Annual Benefit Auction & Reception. 1PM

Sun., Nov. 14, 2010 Nat'l Native American Heritage Day Pow-wow, Bridgewater State College, Bridgewater, MA 11AM ■

## OTHER NEWS, INFORMATION, & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### NATIVE FISHWEIRS IN NANEPASHEMET'S REALM

by John Goff

Reprinted with permission from John Goff

One of Salem's best kept secrets is that in and before 1629 it was part of a place called Naumkeag. Another is that before 1619 it was part of a Massachusetts Native American tribal domain of a visionary sachem or leader named Nanepashemet. Naumkeag meaning "fishing place" or "fish processing place" was called Naumkeag because it abounded in fish, called "Namas" or "Namasuck" in the Massachusetts or Wampanoag dialect of Algonkian.

Fish and sea animals were anciently caught in many ways by the Massachusetts Natives. Clams and quahogs were dug. Mussels were harvested. Seals, dolphins and porpoises were likely speared. Eels (Nahumash) were caught in woven basket-like traps.

Great canoe loads of fish in ancient Naumkeag were caught using the clever technology of wooden fishing weirs. A fish weir is a kind of woven wooden fence that anciently when built in tidal waters was used to catch hundreds of fish.

The weirs were great fish-catching machines. Schools of fish swimming along the shore at mid or high tide would get caught in the weir enclosures. At low tide they would be left more exposed where they were caught by net and by hand.

Here in Salem, we believe ancient Native American fish weirs were used to catch fish both west of Winter Island (in what is now Salem's Cat Cove)—and across the mouth



*Fishweir Project Builders - Thompson Island*

*Photo by Bruce Hamilton*

of a shallow tidal inlet that since 1930 has been the pond at Salem in 1630: Pioneer Village. Ancient weirs of Native American and/or colonial construction were also built in Salem or Naumkeag's Ruck's Creek where the Holyoke Mutual Life Insurance building downtown now stands.

Naumkeag's and Salem's landscape has changed significantly in the 300 plus years that have elapsed since Nanepashemet died in 1619. No more

old fish weirs still survive, except perhaps remains that have survived archaeologically, below grade where constant damp and lack of air have kept organic materials preserved. Demand dropped for building new fishing weirs after fish ceased coming close to shore, and as more aggressive methods were invented for catching fish at sea.

Although our coast no longer abounds in fish, there are an increasing number of places where one can go to gain insights into how fish were caught here centuries ago. Since 2003, at least three new Native fish weirs have been reconstructed for educational purposes—and to provide glimpses into a world that once was.

The first new Native fish weir was built about 2003 on the Boston Common, close to where, some 5,000 years ago, Back Bay fishing weirs were once used. For photographs of the Boston Common fish weir construction, see <http://www.fishweir.org/photosbuild.html>

In September 2007, a second reconstructed Native fish weir was built at Salem's Pioneer Village, close to the pond that was once a tidal cove. This Native weir was built by sachem or leader Gill Solomon and other members of the Massachuset Ponkapoag Tribal Council (MPTC).

On Earth Day in April 2010, a third new Native fish weir or fish weir model was built near the middle of Thompson's Island in Boston Harbor, a short distance south from Logan Airport.

The Native fishing weir on Thompson's Island was erected by the Boston Harbor Island Alliance of the National Park Service, supported by the Native American interest group of the Boston Harbor Islands' Advisory Council. The Massachuset-Ponkapoag Tribal Council and Jim Peters Jr. of the Massachusetts Commission on Indian Affairs guided the building of this fish weir, with the support of the National Park Service Rangers, graduate students from U. Mass. Boston, and a group of sixth grade students from one of the Boston schools.

Jeanne Anne Foster of the MPTC explained "The Director of the Outward Bound Program on Thompson Island was of great help in providing the wooden stakes and branches...used to build the weir. Everyone enjoyed working together for a common goal... Some of the adults were very emotional after the work was completed, and Sachem Gill Solomon made closing remarks along with the Ranger."



*Jeanne Foster (r), her daughter Ericka (c) and granddaughter (l), Astasja, age 9 stand near a new Native American fish weir built for educational purposes on Thompson's Island in Boston Harbor on April 22nd.*

*Photo by Jeanne Foster*

All these new fish weirs remind us of the ancient bounty of the sea and the specialized crafts, skills and technologies first used by Native Americans to catch and land fish in great quantities. We are grateful to the many interested people and groups who are helping to keep ancient history—and these time-honored traditions—alive. As spring gives way to Summer, we look forward to more people enjoying the new fish weir(s) and also a new Native Festival on the Boston Harbor Islands. ■



## ANNOUNCEMENT

**A**dvisory Committee Member, Len Rose, and wife Marie, proprietors of Bayrds Indian Trading Post in North Reading, are still offering classes to people who may be interested in learning how to make some of what they see in the store. Here is a list of the classes they are offering:

### **Kids Drum Making Class**

Learn how to make leather covered kids drum from start to finish. Participants will leave with a completely assembled drum and a beater, and a pattern to use to make another drum whenever they want to. Minimum of 10 participants at a cost of \$20.00 per person

### **Dream Catcher Class**

Learn how to make a dream catcher, you will learn how to weave a pattern into your dream catcher and how to attach a feather at the center or hanging from the sides. Participants will leave with a completely assembled dream catcher. Minimum of 10 participants at a cost of \$18.00 per person

### **3 Row Crow Bead, Bone, Horn or Antler Choker Making Class**

Learn how to make a 3 row choker, you will select your own beads to work with and will follow along in learning how to string your choker together and how to secure the ends. Participants will leave with a completed choker and a pattern to use to create other chokers whenever they wish. Minimum of 10 participants at a cost of \$28.00 per person

### **Basic Brick Stitch, Fringed Beaded Earrings Class**

Learn how to make a pair of brick stitch earrings using seed beads for the earrings and for the fringe. As with the choker class you will select your own beads to work with and will follow along in learning how to string your weave your earrings together. Participants will leave with a completed pair of earrings and the know how to make other earrings. Minimum of 10 participants at a cost of \$20.00 per person

### **Raw Hide 15inch Northeastern Style Drum**

Learn how to make your own personal raw hide hand drum. This class requires individuals to be able to sit and work for several hours. Participants will also create their own beater for the drum. Participants will leave with a rawhide hand drum and beater, and a pattern to use again. Maximum of 5 participants at a cost of \$225.00 per person

### **Storytelling for “Kids” of All Ages**

Come and enjoy traditional storytelling by Willow. Willow is an Abenaki storyteller with a warm and inviting presence who has a true gift for telling the stories of the people. Refreshments will be provided for participants. Minimum of 10 to 15 participants at a cost of \$10.00 per person

Contact Len at 978-357-3525 or [www.bayrdsindiantradingpost.com](http://www.bayrdsindiantradingpost.com)  
[Leonard@bayrdsindiantradingpost.com](mailto:Leonard@bayrdsindiantradingpost.com) ■

## HÄFFENREFFER MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY

**R**eimagining the Americas, the Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology's newest exhibit, brings together innovative anthropological approaches and evocative artifacts from the Arctic to the Amazon to plumb the cultural diversity and hidden pasts of the ancient Americas. Building on new archaeological and anthropological approaches, Reimagining the Americas re-examines the indigenous American past through themes that capture the spirit of their own times and resonate with our present and future concerns.



Exhibition Opens May 29, 2010  
Manning Hall Gallery, Brown University Campus  
Museum Hours beginning May 29<sup>th</sup>  
Tues. – Sun., 10 am – 4 pm  
Closed Mondays and Brown University Holidays ■

## ANCIENT FISHWEIR PROJECT AND EVENTS – BOSTON COMMON

Exploring the ancient history of the place we now call Boston

The Ancient Fishweir Project combines public art, education, and community events in celebration with the contemporary Native American community. Annual building of the fishweir brings the ancient fishweir history into our current imagination honoring all Native peoples.

### 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Fishweir Events

Come see the fishweir on Boston Common (Charles Street side)  
May 6 – June 7, 2010

#### **Thurs., May 6, 2010 11 am**

Reflection on the Fishweir by Gill Solomon

Construction of the fishweir begins on Boston Common  
Participating schools include Josiah Quincy Elementary School  
and the Conservatory Lab Charter School

#### **Wed., May 26, 2010 12:30 pm**

Interactive performance with the Wampanoag Nation Singers & Dancers

#### **Mon., June 7, 2010 12:30 pm**

Interactive performance with the Wampanoag Nation Singers & Dancers  
and Making History Day on Boston Common

For more information: [www.fopg.org](http://www.fopg.org)

In this area between 3,700 and 5,300 years ago, fishweirs were built along the edge of the tidal flats to catch fish during the spring spawn. ■