

The Mohegan Way

SUMMER 2008

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Questions and Answers about TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY

Question: What is the meaning of Tribal Sovereignty and why is it important to the Mohegan Tribe?

Chairman Bozsum: Tribal sovereignty means the Mohegan Tribe, like all federally recognized Native American Tribes, is an “independent governmental entity” and that they have certain rights and privileges that are protected by the Constitution of the United States of America. The Mohegan Tribe existed long before Europeans arrived in this land, and we have maintained our status as a Native Tribe continuously through to the present time.

Question: What is the history of Tribal Sovereignty in the United States?

Chairman Bozsum: Some of the most important principles we honor as Americans were borrowed from the Native Tribes that were here when Europeans settled in what was to become the United States. For example, the Constitution of The Seven Iroquois Nations, which was called “The Great Law of Peace,” governed an alliance of Indian Tribes, and was already in place 400 years before the Europeans came to this land. *continued on page 2*

The Mohegan Tribe’s Tantaquidgeon Museum

Celebration marks the reopening of the Oldest Native-Owned Museum in the United States

On June 18, 2008, the Mohegan Tribe gathered together to celebrate the new, renovated home of the Tantaquidgeon Museum on the grounds of the Tantaquidgeon homestead on Mohegan Hill. *continued on page 3*



Photos: Bill Gurtz, Mohegan Tribal Publications





Photo: Bill Gurts, Mohegan Tribal Publications

Melissa Tantaquidgeon Zobel Mohegan Tribal Medicine Woman

Melissa Tantaquidgeon Zobel has followed in the footsteps of her mentor, her great-aunt Gladys Tantaquidgeon, and has been named Medicine Woman for the Mohegan Tribe. Gladys Tantaquidgeon served as the Tribe's Medicine Woman until her passing in 2005 at the age of 106. Melissa received extensive knowledge of Mohegan history, culture, and artifacts from Gladys Tantaquidgeon, and worked with her at the Tantaquidgeon Museum during her childhood. In making the appointment, the Council of Elders noted that in her post as Medicine Woman, Zobel is "preserving the spiritual, physical and emotional health of individual Tribal members."

Question and Answers... *continued from page 1*

In addition, for over 350 years, Europeans and then Americans recognized the sovereignty of Mohegan Tribe. As far back as 1638, when the English formed the "Connecticut Colony," the new settlers formally recognized sovereignty of the Mohegan Tribe through the "Treaty of Hartford."

When the United States was formed following the Declaration of Independence in 1776, the new U.S. Constitution recognized the Tribal Nations and put in place the language that helps guarantee the Native American sovereignty today.

In the 1830s, the United States Supreme Court finally ruled that Native Americans had the full legal right to manage their own affairs, govern themselves internally, and engage in legal and political relationships with the federal government and its subdivisions. Despite repeated attempts to take away the rights of Native Americans, the Supreme Court has said that Native Americans retain "their original rights as the undisputed possessors of the soil from time immemorial" and "the very term nation, so generally applied to them, means a people distinct from others, having territorial boundaries, within which their authority is exclusive, and having a right to all the lands within those boundaries, which is not only acknowledged but guaranteed by the United States."

Question: How does Tribal Sovereignty exist today?

Chairman Bozsum: The United States Constitution and the laws of the federal government require that individual states have an obligation to sit down with Native Tribes as equals, and

negotiate and approve compacts that govern the relationship between the two sovereign entities.

Today, these compacts serve as "treaties." For example, the compact between Connecticut and the sovereign governments of the Mohegan and Mashantucket Pequot Tribes governs the development and oversight of the two Native American casinos. As agreed upon in the compacts, the state and Tribes have joint criminal jurisdiction over the casinos, while the Tribes maintain civil jurisdiction. In some ways, it is like having the states of Connecticut and Massachusetts agree that some things they will do together and some things they will do on their own.

Question: What do you see as the future for Tribal Sovereignty?

Chairman Bozsum: The Constitution of the United States guarantees the fundamental principles of sovereignty. When our forefathers, both the Native Americans and new Americans, created the treaties and laws that govern the relationship between the United States and the Tribes, they developed an extraordinary system of government that serves as a shining example to the entire world of how people can work together for the common good.

Here in Connecticut, we've seen what can be achieved when we build lasting relationships. We've proven that, together, as we strengthen our historical and legal relationships, we can achieve great partnerships that are based on mutual respect and communication.

Museum... continued from page 1

The Tantaquidgeon Museum is the oldest Native American owned and operated Indian museum in America. The Museum was founded in 1931 by John Tantaquidgeon, his son Chief Harold Tantaquidgeon, and his daughter Gladys, a medicine woman of the Mohegan Tribe. Blind in one eye and on crutches, John built the museum, along with Harold. Gladys contributed artifacts obtained in her travels all over the country. Throughout the following decades, the late Tantaquidgeons welcomed visitors from Connecticut and all over the world.

The renovated structure blends the old and the new. It has retained the museum's original rustic feeling, while also offering a more up-to-date, climate-controlled environment. Members of the Mohegan Tribe serve as staff and volunteers at the museum, and can speak knowledgeably about the collection.

Bruce "Two Dogs" Bozsum, Chairman of the Mohegan Tribe and also its ceremonial Pipe Carrier, offered a welcome to the crowd as they assembled in a clearing near a stone fireplace built many decades ago by Chief Harold Tantaquidgeon. Following tradition, Mohegan Tribal members scattered tobacco on a ceremonial fire, while Tribal Elder William "Dancing Shadow" Andrews played the flute and Tribal Member Chris "Painted Turtle" Harris played the drum.

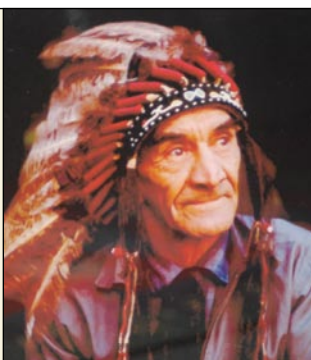
Members of the Tribal Council, Council of Elders, and revered individuals known by the titles of "Nonners" and "Sagamores" were present at the ceremony, as well as the Tribe's newly named Medicine Woman, Melissa Tantaquidgeon Zobel, who was mentored by Gladys Tantaquidgeon.

The museum is located at 1819 Norwich-New London Turnpike in Uncasville. It is open from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Wednesday through Saturday from May through November. Tours are available for groups by appointment. For more information, please contact 860.848.0594, or visit the Tribe's website at www.mohegan.nsn.us.

The Day: Recognizes Historic Museum

Editorial: June 21, 2008

"The museum, which Gladys Tantaquidgeon and her brother Harold opened in their backyard, is a testament to the tribe's deep roots in the community and lifelong dedication to teaching others about native peoples... That tribal members recognize it as their most important building says a lot about the Mohegans, who they are and what they stand for."



Chief Harold Tantaquidgeon



John Henry Clark, Chairman of the Council of Elders which oversees the Museum

Photo: Bill Guca, Mohegan Tribal Publications



Photo: Bill Guca, Mohegan Tribal Publications

Mohegan Tribal Council

Front row (left to right):

Allison D. Johnson: Recording Secretary
Bruce "Two Dogs" Bozsum: Chairman
Marilynn "Lynn" Malerba: Vice Chairwoman
William Quidgeon, Jr.: Treasurer

Back row (left to right):

Cheryl A. Todd: Councilor
"Matahga" Mark F. Brown: Ambassador
Ralph James Gessner, Jr.:
 Corresponding Secretary
Mark W. Hamilton: Councilor
Thayne D. Hutchins, Jr.: Councilor



Photo: Bill Guca, Mohegan Tribal Publications

Mohegan Tribal Elders

Front row (left to right):

Maynard L. Strickland: Elder and Justice
Marie Pineault: Elder and Justice
Robert (Bob) Francis Soper:
 Secretary and Justice

Back row (left to right):

William "Dancing Shadow" Andrews:
 Elder and Justice
John Henry Clark: Chairman and Chief Justice
Joseph "Wolf Who Walks Alone" Gray:
 Vice Chairman and Justice
Austin Fish, Jr.: Treasurer and Justice

Letter From the Chairman

Please consider signing up for an electronic version of "The Mohegan Way"



Photo: Bill Guha, Mohegan Tribal Publications

Friends,

As I have written here before, the Mohegan Tribe has always recognized our sacred duty to honor and respect our natural environment. We take that responsibility very seriously and have consistently sought to be environmentally sensitive in all of our Tribal activities.

We've utilized cutting-edge technologies, such as fuel cells and photovoltaic systems, along with more traditional techniques such as broad-based recycling of food and other waste materials. Our expansion projects use up-to-date green building standards and we are now utilizing green cleaning products throughout our facilities. *The Mohegan Way* is even printed on 100% post-consumer recycled fiber.

As part of our collective efforts to do even more, we are asking you to consider signing up for the electronic version of this newsletter so that, together, we can further reduce the use of precious natural resources. If you'd be willing to receive *The Mohegan Way* via e-mail, please go to www.mohegan.nsn.us, where you can click on the sign-up at the top of the page.

Sincerely,

Chairman Bruce "Two Dogs" Bozsum on behalf of the entire Mohegan Tribal Council

The Mohegan Way: Published by the Mohegan Tribal Council.
For further information, contact: mweditor@moheganmail.com or check us out on the Web at www.mohegan.nsn.us.

The Mohegan Way is GOING GREEN

In the Mohegan Tribe's continuing efforts to become more environmentally responsible, we have made a decision to now print *The Mohegan Way* on Mohawk Options paper, which is:

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