



Smoke Signals

A Publication of the Prairie Trail Federation
December 2004



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Sharpen Up Those Old Double Runners!

The Federation is hosting a family skate at the Darien Sportsplex on Sunday, January 2, 2005 (can you believe it—2005!) from 11:30—1:30. This event is open to everyone—family, friends, prospective new members, you name it! We will have an entire rink reserved just for our group, so you'll have plenty of room to show off those double axels and triple lutzes. As the flyer notes, for most of us coming from the east, you cannot enter the complex from Plainfield Road, so make your way to 75th Street and use the south entrance to the parking lot. And while Nation Chief Jack Gallagher notes (correctly) that the Sportsplex has a fantastic snack bar, your intrepid Smoke Signals chief would like to remind everyone that there is a Culver's located just across the parking lot, where you will be likely to find me trying to set a record for most Butterburgers™ consumed.

Native American Facts

Did you know that not all Native Americans organized themselves as tribes? It's true—see page 2 for details

'Tis the Season for the Christmas Tree Sale

If you haven't already done so, be sure to consult the attached schedule and make arrangements to get your tribe together to assist with the annual Rich Port YMCA Men's Club Christmas tree sale. Remember, this year, the Trailblazers have been scheduled to assist, so please be sure to look for your initials and come on out to join the fun! The amount of goodwill that is generated with the Y thanks to our annual assistance with this program really can't be overemphasized, gang, so once again, many thanks to all of you for helping out!

Good Seats Still Available for 'Christmas Pageant'

Time is running out (who knows, given the vagaries of periodicals class mailing, it may already have run out by the time this arrives) to get your tickets to the Theatre of Western Springs presentation of "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever!" on Thursday, December 9. Nation Chief Doug Ashburn is accepting ticket orders via e-mail and phone, as indicated in the enclosed flyer. Don't delay, get yours today!

Season's
Greetings

Don't Let This Be 'The One That Got Away!!'

Once again, the Federation is being asked to protect one of Chicago's great landmarks from almost certain doom! Federation Chief Ichthyologist (look it up, folks) Mike Baker reports that a monster fish has been spotted in the waters of Lake Michigan, and appears to have designs on gobbling up the John G. Shedd Aquarium! Shadowy government officials have requested a force of 200 of the Federation's finest to investigate this phenomenon on Sunday, January 30, from 3:00—6:00PM. The enclosed flyer has all of the details you will need to participate in this endeavor. Remember—only the first 200 volunteers will be accommodated, so be sure to sign on ASAP!

Trailblazers to Covenant Harbor

The Trailblazers are headed to picturesque Covenant Harbor for what's sure to be a fun-filled campout on January 7-9, 2005. The attached flyer details all the activities and provides all necessary registration information. Many thanks to Scott Jensen for organizing this always exciting event!

**NEXT
LONGHOUSE**

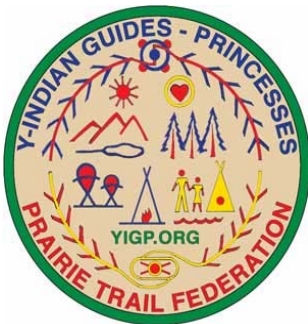
JANUARY 3, 2005

**7:00 -- Board and
Nation Chiefs**

8:15 -- Tribal Chiefs

Check Out the New Logo!!

Federation Sandpainter Scott Denton has released the new Prairie Trail Federation patch, as set out in all its splendor below. Next month, we'll have more details on the symbols in the patch, and what they mean to our organization. In the meantime, tribal chiefs, be sure to pick up your patches at an upcoming Longhouse!



Native American Facts

While the tribe was one form of organization common to Native American cultures, there were many other commonly used organizational structures among Native Americans. For example, the Lipan Apache Indians were organized into small groups, and did not have a leader beyond the head of each group (what we might think of as a "chief"). The Comanche Indians, on the other hand, were organized as bands, composed of groups of families organized under a single leader, but there was no one leader or chief that exercised control over all the Comanche bands. Occasionally, several bands would join together temporarily to fight a common enemy, but such loose confederations were not considered to be "tribes." Only when several bands stayed together permanently under a single leader could they be considered a tribe.

Source: www.texasindians.com/cultanth.htm

Federation Website: www.yigp.org

Log on and check it out!

THE NUTS & BOLTS OF TRIBAL IDENTITY: A PRIMER

Indian Guides and Princesses is what you make it. Creativity, energy and imagination will give your tribe its own unique identity, and enable a meaningful tribal life. Activities and things unique to your tribe are remembered by kids. Tribal activity also fosters father and child companionship.

Aside from the ever present Tribal Property, here are other things that bring magic to tribal life.

TRIBAL WEAR

A tribe that has its own style of matching t-shirts looks great. Tribal t-shirts celebrate and unite a tribe. In addition to the Vest, tribal clothing is a kind of casual uniform that is easily recognized. Kids love clothing sporting their tribe's name. Kids become possessive of these items and as a result become more deeply franchised into tribal spirit.

Last week I saw a High School Student (not my kid) wearing an Arapaho Guides T-shirt. I didn't recognize the boy, now grown up, and the t-shirt must have been his father's, but there he was, at least 16 or 17 years old, trucking down the sidewalk on Brainard wearing a T-shirt from youthful times with dad.

T-shirts are not the only form of tribal wear. There are sweatshirts, flannel pajama pants, hair bands, sweatbands, baseball caps, stocking caps, and water bottles. There is tons of stuff you can label that says: "This is my tribe!"

A SIGNATURE TRIBAL GAME

Develop and build a game that is your tribe's alone. A signature game adds to the fabric of your tribal identity. The Arapaho Guides have Frisbee Golf; the Huron Guides are a Bocce Ball crowd and the Pawnee Princesses have a three-person-surgical-tube-slingshot game launching a soft baseball from Princess to Dad. It's a big hit!

But my new favorite is the Shoshone Guides' Home Run Derby which takes place in a set up that looks like "Field Of Dreams." The boys love it!

When dads and kids see a Signature Game there is instant recognition. The kids remember playing the game before. They also remember what tribe owns the game: "Hey it's the Home Run Derby. The Shoshone must be here!"

A Signature Tribal Game is a continuing work in progress. Just like tribal property, you'll be asking: How do we improve it, what needs fixing, who's the keeper of the game, let's have the kids work on it, and so it goes taking on momentum while adding character to your tribe.

TRIBAL TRADITIONS

Tribal traditions provide a sense of program continuity year to year and give children an expectation that can be achieved.

I started a tradition in the Arapaho Guides that I am proud to say continues to this day and has spilled over into the Seneca Princesses. The First Meeting of the year is a campfire. Kids look forward to it and talk about it afterwards. Last year another dad added a new aspect to this

tradition: mini-torches for each father and child. Now we have a torch-light parade to our campfire site.

Native American Stories are another tradition that can provide Indian lore education, and at the same time give our kids that nice, warm, fuzzy feeling from hearing a familiar yarn. The Snake Guides are great at this and have a well read notebook full of stories. In both of my tribes we have a popular action story that the kids request called The Flight of The Eagle. This was invented by Tom Lakars, founder of the Arapaho Guides in 1988.

The Seneca Princesses have developed a tradition of carving their tribal name into a series of pumpkins at every Fall campout. A second Seneca tradition is also taking root: Piñatas at campouts thanks to the energy and creativity of a new dad.

Here's some more: There is a Princess tribe that has a summer campout at Starved Rock every year. There are tribes who use members' summer homes for gatherings. Some tribes have Christmas parties and invite all their alumni, and some tribes are float-builders and march in parades other than just the Pet Parade. Other tribes research their tribal namesake and incorporate the symbols and traditions of the real tribe into their Guide or Princess Tribe.

In Riverside, the Kachina Princesses have a tribal tradition of meeting twice a month in a cabin in the woods by the Des Plaines River. The cabin has a huge fireplace and is in a beautiful setting. I can picture grown up Kachina Princesses, driving by that cabin years from now, thinking fondly of their dad and their tribe.

Civic Projects are important traditions. There are legions of civic projects that your tribe can adopt has their own. Secret Santa Participation is now a rock-sold tradition for almost all tribes. This teaches our children benevolence, generosity and thankfulness. But keep an eye on Nation Chief Dave Hight's Honor Tribe Reports in the Smoke Signals, and you'll find other ideas for new and meaningful civic projects. For example, some tribes plant trees every year in the woods with a Cook County Forester. For those tribes, tree planting has become a satisfying tradition that results in high participation.

TRIBAL TALLY BOOK

Each and every Tribe should have a Tally Keeper. This is your tribe historian and photographer who compiles your Tribal Tally Book. This is a tribal scrapbook of keepsakes, songs, photos, records of activities, and tokens of tribal life. Look around at the next campout, find a tribe with a good tally book, and you'll see kids and dads looking through it.

TAKE ACTION

I encourage you to develop creative tribal features. You don't have to be the chief to do this. Anyone can step forward. Initiate an activity. Start an annual tribal event. Be the catalyst to order tribal clothing. The sum of these things is a tribal identity and character that will be unique to your tribe and create vivid memories for you and your children.

But how do you know when you've chosen a good tradition, game or activity? It's simple. Everything you do should foster father and child companionship.

Peace,

John C. Lorenzen, Federation Chief Keokuk