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Toqaqiw (It is Autumn)

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Brenda Commander - Tribal Chief
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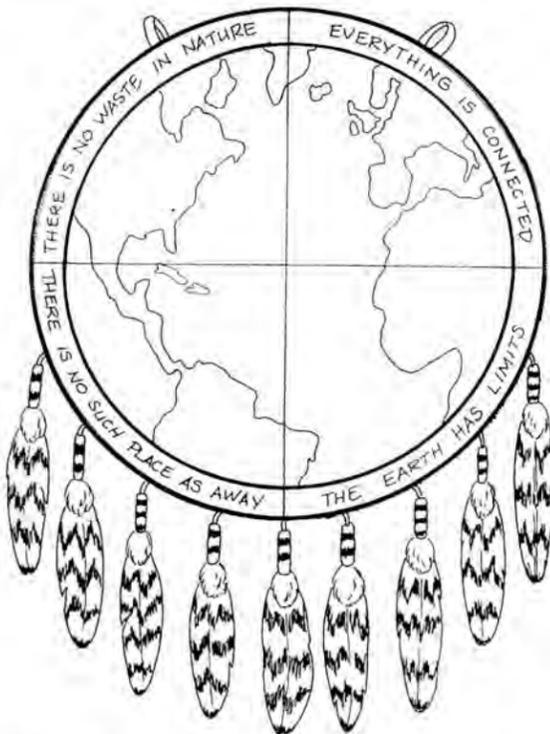
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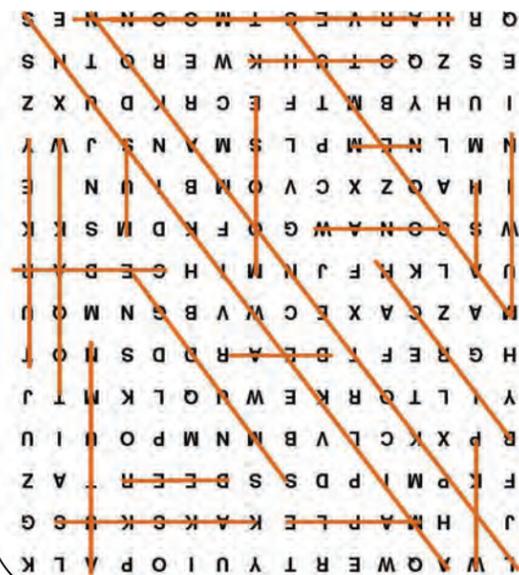
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MEDICINE CIRCLE WITH LAWS OF NATURE



Word Search Answers



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Skitkomiq Nutacomit
Earth Speaker

Calling All Future Archeologists, Ecologists, and Environmentalists!!! *By Cara O'Donnell*

Maliseet high school aged youth took the opportunity to learn about future career paths in environmental science during the last weeks of August.

Four students participated in hands on work within the Natural Resources program learning about the current projects the Tribe is working on.

Students spent their time learning about medicinal plants found on tribal lands, using professional survey equipment as part of the Meduxnekeag River Restoration Project and digging at an archeological site with UMPI Professor Dave Putnam.

There is still time to get involved! In October, the Aroostook Band of Micmacs will host the 2015 EPA New England Tribal Environmental Training conference in Presque Isle, and high school aged tribal youth are invited to attend.



(left to right) Dustin Shaw and Mia St. John doing survey work for the River Restoration Project, to determine how the river bottom has changed since last year by the structures placed in the river.



(left to right) Kayla Shrou, Dustin Shaw, Caleb Ward (UMPI grad student in Archeology) and Caleb Connors. Digging an archeology pit in the North Maine Woods at a site where flint (chert) artifacts have been found.

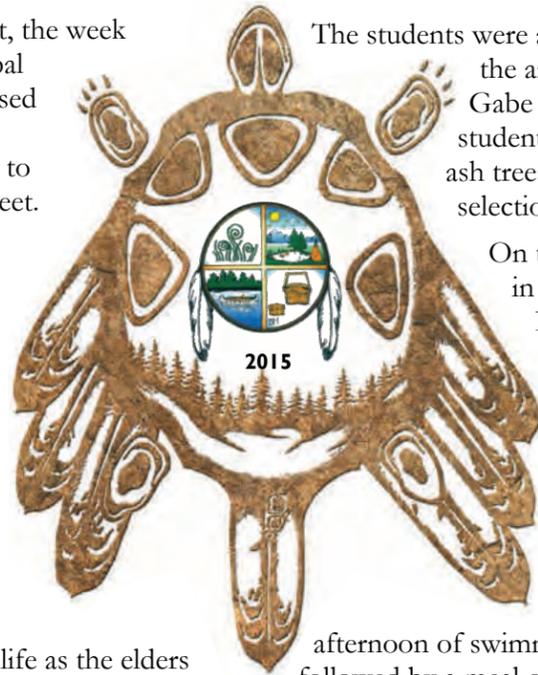
Professionals representing various federal agencies will have booths set up so that students can learn about internship opportunities and ask questions about what kind of careers are open to them in the future. Call for more information. Sue Young 532-4273 ext. 202 or Cara O'Donnell ext. 212.

Skitkomiq 2015 - Youth in Science Camp by Ben Flewelling

Funded by a BIA Youth Initiative Grant, the week long Skitkomiq science camp taught tribal students both the cultural traditions passed down from their ancestors along with modern environmental practices we use to maintain land that is sacred to the Maliseet.

Students were shown the ancient art of smudging by Elder Danya Boyce. They learned the four sacred plants and had the opportunity to make their very own medicine bundles. Students also learned Maliseet creation stories passed down through the generations by Fred Tomah, Maliseet Elder and basket maker. They were also shown the ways the natural resources team works to not only protect and grow, but ensure that the next generations have the same access to clean water and abundant wildlife as the elders once did.

A more scientific and archaeological side was shown by Dave Putnam from the University of Maine at Presque Isle. He not only showed them ancient pieces such as ancient arrowheads and clay pottery shards but got the students involved with an actual dig.



The students were also given a hands-on lesson in the art of basket making by Sue and Gabe Frey. A lesson in which students were taught how to identify ash trees and make the right tree selection for basket making.

On the final day students participated in a water ceremony with Elder Imelda Perley. With Chief Brenda Commander on hand, students showed great respect and interest in Imelda's presentation that included singing and dancing.

The camp came to a close at Wilderness Pines Campground where campers enjoyed an afternoon of swimming, canoeing, and kayaking, followed by a meal of native foods prepared by the staff.

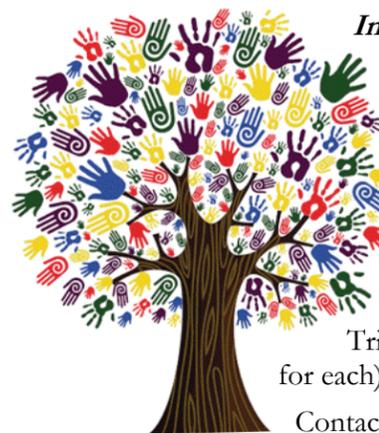
The 2015 Skitkomiq Youth in Science Camp drew very good numbers in its inaugural year. With great interest from the youth and great presenters the Skitkomiq camp is sure to be around for years to come.

(see pages 4, 5, 7 for photos from the camp)

More Images from Skitkomiq 2015



Calling All Tribal Members



Interested in serving your Tribe? Concerned about how pollution may be affecting the health of your community?

Your Tribal Government is looking for 4 people to serve on an Environmental Health Committee, along with individuals from the Tribal Council, Health and Natural Resources Department. This Committee will:

- meet 4 evenings per year
- work to better understand tribal concerns, and
- look into ways to address those concerns.

Tribal Council will appoint an elder and tribal member to the Committee; (plus one alternate for each). The alternates will be called in if primary members become unavailable.

Contact Sharri Venno at ext. 215 or envplanner@maliseets.com to find out more.

Put your name in the hat today!



Find these English and Maliseet words in the puzzle at right

ASH	WIKP	L W A Q W E R T Y U I O P A L K
AUTUMN	TOQAKIW	J I H M A P L E K A K S K U S G
BEAR	MUWIN	F K P M I P D S S D E E R T A Z
BIRCH	MASQEMUS	B P X K C L V B M N M P O U I U
CEDAR	KAKSKUS	Y I L T O R K E W U Q L K M T J
DEER	OTUHK	H G R E F T B E A R D D S N O T
HARVEST MOON	AMILKEWI-KISUHS	M A Z C A X E C W V B G N M Q U
LEAF	MIP	U A L K H F J N M I H C E D A R
MAPLE	SONAW	W S S O N A W G O F K D M S K K
MOOSE	MUS	I H A Q Z X C V O M B I U N I E
SMUDGE	LIPKOTENOMAKON	N M L N E M P L S M A N S J W Y
TURKEY	NEM	I U H Y B M T F E C R K D U X Z
		E S Z Q O T U H K W E R O T H S
		Q R H A R V E S T M O O N N E S



Skitkomiq Youth in Science Camp 2015



Fiddleheads with the "Hawk"



By Andrew Harris
I can personally remember talk of fiddleheads and Ron Tomah before I was ten years old; the two were synonymous in my young mind. Three decades have passed since that memory and the man that I was introduced to as "Hawk" has been a constant friendly face in Wellsville. Many may know him has just Tomah.

Fiddleheads have long been on my list of missions to accomplish: learn more about them, find them and share them with people just like Hawk. I've managed to locate a few small patches of ostrich fern fiddleheads, but the big patches of fiddleheads were still a mystery. Every year I daydreamed about Tomah's patch of fern and all the perfect spiral heads of a delicate wild annual plant that we mostly take for granted.

Fiddleheads are the most common name for fern shoots, harvested as they pop up out of the ground, usually in the middle of May. Of the many fern species that can be found, only a few are really good eating, and most fiddleheads come from the ostrich fern (*Matteuccia struthiopteris*). These ferns are a very common plant, populating riverbeds and bordering wetlands throughout New York and New England. Fiddleheads are only in season for a few weeks of the year, typically at the same time as the trees start to leaf out.

Ron Tomah is part of the Maliseet Nation, a tribe of Algonquin from New Brunswick. He came to Wellsville as a matter of chance, well actually because of football. His parents moved the family off the reservation and to Maine when Ron was ten. When his brother-in-law got the job coaching Wellsville High School football, Ron moved to town and found a home. He has passed the years as an interior painter, rarely missing a golf tournament at Wellsville Country Club, and donating countless hours to the Wellsville American Legion and Elks Lodge. The Hawk has served his adopted village well.

"I can remember being in a canoe with my grandparents all day picking fiddleheads. We traveled up and down the St. John River, stopping at patches until we had burlap potato sacks full. It wouldn't take two or



This photo of Tomah and his family was taken at the Elks Club.

three hours to sell them all at the farmers market," Tomah recalled. Fiddleheads were a major cash crop in New Brunswick and Maine, and many members of Maliseet Nation foraged for them as seasonal income.

When he settled in Wellsville it didn't take long for Tomah to find several large fern patches and enlighten his friends to the all-natural delight. With a taste and texture similar to asparagus, fiddleheads are very nutritious, providing doses of phosphorus and vitamins A and C. Tomah taught his friends how to cook them with salt pork and has hosted dozens of fiddlehead dinners at the Elks Lodge 1495. A typical dinner served over twenty pounds of fiddleheads with "potato salad and a dessert, maybe a ham...nothing fancy". Tomah has shared his spring forage with hundreds of friends and Elks.

I was lucky enough to tag along with the "Hawk" for one of this year's hunts on the Genesee River bottom. When I picked Tomah up, he got in the car and gave me directions to a place I knew well. I'd been walking past thousands of fiddleheads that had turned to ferns all my life on the Genesee River. As I wandered through thousands of fern mixed with "skunk cabbage," Ron shared some knowledge from his grandfather:

"Can you see these heads that have a dusty blue surface? I don't pick these; I guess they can make you sick. I only pick the bright green heads from a plant with a shine to the stalk."

In all my research on fiddlehead foraging, I hadn't heard that advice. They say don't eat the smaller species of ferns or the

ferns with too much fuzz, and don't eat fiddle heads that have unfurled too much. In my, 'not exactly expert' opinion, any reported sickness that was associated with fiddleheads comes from the Bracken Fern, a smaller common fern that doesn't digest well for some. I would avoid all the smaller species of fern and always wash and cook fiddleheads thoroughly.

Tomah will tell you that he's getting tired, but then again he is eighty five. Our recent forage included over a mile of walking and picking and a customary Pabst Blue Ribbon to celebrate. Tomah and his companion Jan Hungerford took some time to show me pictures from when his tribe met King George VI and Queen Elizabeth when they arrived for royal tour of Canada in 1938.

Gathering fiddleheads each spring is a worthy tradition that was bestowed on me and many others in Wellsville, largely by Ron Tomah and the Maliseet tribe. A slice of his culture will live on in ours for many generations to come. Give fiddlehead foraging a try! Not only are they a great source of free, nutrient-dense food, but foraging in the spring can be magical.

My three year old has gathered and eaten hundreds this season and her recipe is worth sharing:

Gather 20-30 heads per person and soak in water for ten. Rinse and remove as much casing as possible before boiling for at least 3 minutes. Drain and sautee' heads in butter until they start to brown. Finish with a teaspoon of apple cider vinegar and a dash of hot sauce. Eat with your fingers or a fork!

Reprinted with permission from the Patriot & Free Press Cuba, New York May 27-June 2, 2015

Special thanks to Karen Tomah for sharing this with us

Summer Storm '15

On August 26, 2015 northern Maine was hit with an intense summer rain storm. Here in the Natural Resources Department we recorded .62 inches of rain in 30 minutes, with a total of 2.48 inches in just a few hours. Even though most of the surrounding fields were fully covered with crops, the sheer volume of rain received in a short period, caused a great deal of soil to run off the fields and turning the Meduxnekeag River brown. Luckily the system recovered quickly and the river was running clear again the next day.



Looking south from the Lowery Bridge towards Houlton



Looking north from the Lowery Bridge



Looking north east from the Lowery Bridge

What's Going On With the Maple Trees?

While driving around Houlton lately you may have noticed that a lot of the local maple trees are in pretty rough shape. If you have looked closely you may have noticed some black spots that look like black tar has been dripped all over the leaves.

The problem, a disease called tar spot, is mainly confined to the leaves of maple trees, Though not all maple trees are affected. Norway maples have the worst infection. It is fairly uncommon on silver and red maples and does not seem to infect Japanese maples at all. Thankfully, the disease is not as serious to tree health as it looks.

The cause are a couple of fungi from the genus Rhytisma. Spores of the disease become active in cool, wet springs, and infect the leaves resulting in the tar spots by mid to late summer. Although tar spot will not harm or kill the maples itself, it does weaken the tree making it more susceptible to other diseases and insects. The tree's ability to process energy through the leaves is affected. If the leaves stay on the trees until normal leaf-fall time in the autumn, the tree is probably not too badly affected. If the infection is severe, the tree can lose its leaves as early as late June and early July. Since leaf infection happens in the spring, spraying the tree in the spring is too late to stop the growth of the fungus.

Your best change to halt the fungus is to rake up the infected leaves and burn them or put them into the garbage. You should never compost these leaves since the temperature in most home composters does not get hot enough to destroy the fungus, and you will introduce it into your garden. Cleaning up the infected leaves is the most important thing you can do because otherwise the spores will over-winter in the soil and on the branches. All you need is more cool, wet weather the next spring to encourage the spores to grow and bring the disease back again. You can also prune your trees to allow air flow through the mass of leaves and branches. Since the fungus only thrives in moist conditions, opening up the canopy will allow the leaves to dry out more quickly. Seriously infected trees should be treated with a copper-based fungicide just as the leaves start to unfold. Please contact the Maine Forest Service or the University of Maine Cooperative extension to help you choose an appropriate spray and learn how to apply it.

For more information:

http://www.maine.gov/dacf/mfs/forest_health/diseases/tar_leaf_spot_images_on_norway_maple.htm



Norway maples infected with black tar spot - (Maine Forest Service)

Cemetery Groundbreaking



At long last, Meduxnekeag Overlook (Metahsonikqewi Puskonikonihkuk) Cemetery is one step closer to completion.

On Sunday, September 6, 2015 with 3 eagles soaring on the winds, under a beautiful blue sky, the official groundbreaking ceremony took place.

With the Tribal Chief, and members of the Tribal Council and community present, Elder Danya Boyce began the dedication ceremony with her hand drum and a song. Danya, along with Dolores Crofton-MacDonald smudged the field that will soon be transformed into the cemetery by Brown Development of Houlton. Following words from Chief Commander and Deacon Al Burleigh of St. Mary of the Visitation Church, the cemetery sign, designed by Heidi Kelley was unveiled. Chief Commander performed the official groundbreaking.

The community then gathered together for a feast at the gym to celebrate this milestone.

