

ONEIDA

QUARTERLY MEMBER NEWSLETTER

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Winter 2022



A Message from the Nation Representative

Shekólih. We are quickly approaching the end of what has turned out to be a remarkable year for the Oneida Indian Nation. On the heels of the unimaginable circumstances brought on by a worldwide pandemic and economic uncertainty, we have emerged as strong as ever in our mission to preserve and protect our Nation's sovereignty and way of life. And we have done so together.

In September, we came together to celebrate the groundbreaking of our new community and cultural center. Located between the Villages of the White Pines and Territory Road, the Community Center will play an integral part in our Oneida Neighborhoods initiative – the latest step in the Nation's ongoing revitalization of its homelands and investment in the preservation of a vibrant community for generations to come.

ONYOTA'A:KÁ:

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NOTE: Council meetings are not being held at this time for health and safety concerns for our Members during the Covid-19 pandemic. Contact: The Oneida Indian Nation, P.O. Box 1, Vernon, NY 13476 or use the Member App.

The sustained success of a burgeoning community relies on the creation and cultivation of regional partnerships and friendships. Those shared threads tie our region together. We've come together with many groups and organizations over the last year to reflect and build on collaborative efforts for the betterment of our community at large

In November, a ceremony was held at Colgate University to repatriate more than 1,500 funerary objects and cultural artifacts back to the Oneida People from the collections of the university's Longyear Museum of Anthropology. It was among the largest single transfers of cultural artifacts in New York State history and included a variety of objects that were interred with Oneida ancestors during burial. Colgate's president, Brian Casey, offered the Nation an official apology on behalf of the university and pledged its commitment to continuing the respectful return of our cultural artifacts.

For decades, too many educational and cultural institutions have followed indefensible practices regarding the ancestral remains and cultural artifacts of American Indians. These practices have been allowed to continue under the belief that preserving history is of the ultimate importance without questioning the means of doing so.

Through the restoration of our sacred and ceremonial cultural artifacts, we are reclaiming nothing less than the



Nation Representative Ray Halbritter and Colgate University President Brian Casey sign a proclamation commemorating the repatriation of more than 1,500 artifacts to the Oneida Indian Nation in November.

history of our people and our story in this region. And, just as importantly, we are preserving those stories for the future generations yet unborn, and telling them in our own voices – the voices in which they are meant to be heard.

Universities like Colgate play powerful roles in our society, and their influence in these matters is profound. We look forward to the continuation of these conversations and the growth of a truly multicultural dialogue that allows museums and other institutions to work side-by-side with Native people to correct the mistakes of the past and prevent them in the future.

Earlier in October, we partnered once again with the Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia to celebrate Indigenous Peoples Weekend. The entire second-floor atrium at the Museum is named for the Oneida Indian Nation.

A prominent gallery inside the Museum, complete with recreated settings, pays homage to the Oneida Indian Nation's legacy as America's First Allies. The gallery proudly displays the Nation's culture and shares its historic bonds with the founding fathers to ensure that generations to come can learn about the Oneidas' important contributions to establishing the foundation of the United States.

Visitors to the Museum during the weekend were treated to Haudenosaunee dance exhibitions sponsored by the Nation, along with traditional craft demonstrations and presentations on American Indian history, culture and involvement in the Revolutionary War.

At our annual Veterans Recognition Ceremony and Breakfast, we honored more than 400 veterans and their guests – many of whom were Oneida Indian Nation Members and Oneida Nation Enterprises employees. At the event, Nation Member and Viet Nam War Veteran Vaughn "Chip" Isaacs was recognized for his dedication to the United States with the Warriors Circle of Honor Pendleton blanket, designed by Harvey Pratt (Cheyenne/Arapaho), the same artist who designed the National Native American Veterans Memorial that sits prominently next to the Smithsonian's Museum of the American Indian.



Nation Representative Ray Halbritter and Viet Nam War Veteran Chip Isaacs (Turtle Clan) at the Veterans Recognition Ceremony.

This summer, we were fortunate to be able to gather for our Member Picnic for the first time since 2019. Coming together with family and friends and seeing smiles on the faces of so many was a wonderful experience for all. The return of this and other events reminds us of the importance of maintaining strong bonds among Nation Members to preserve our community and its most important cultural traditions.

As the summer came to a close, we announced several new initiatives to diversify our economic base and create separate revenue streams to support our vital government programs and services for the Oneida people. Included in these operations are a cannabis cultivation and production facility and the Wáhta' Maple Farm. These businesses will be operated entirely by the Oneida Indian Nation and are an example of the commitment we have to creating a brighter future for our Members and all of Central New York.

Just as we are thankful for the blessings we have received throughout the year, we remain mindful that we must stay on the path the Creator has provided, and continue to build on the foundation that will sustain our nation for the future generations.

Na ki' wa,
Ray Halbritter
Nation Representative



Viet Nam veteran Chip Isaacs (Turtle Clan), second from left, was honored for his military service at the annual Veterans Recognition Ceremony and Breakfast held Nov. 1. Attending the event with Chip are (left to right) Kitty Salmon, Cheyenne Isaacs and guests.

Nation Honors Member, Employee and Local Military Veterans

More than 400 veterans and their guests, including Oneida Indian Nation Members and Oneida Nation Enterprises employees who are veterans, were honored for their service at the Oneida Indian Nation's Veterans Recognition Ceremony and Breakfast held Nov. 1 at Turning Stone Resort Casino.

As America's First Allies, the Nation takes great pride in being able to host this annual event and come together with the community to honor and celebrate local veterans. A sacred bond was formed centuries ago when the Oneida People chose to support the American colonists. As the only nation of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy to side with the colonists, the Oneidas made the difficult decision to break with their brothers and sisters. It was

an excruciatingly hard decision, but one grounded in the Nation's belief that all people are entitled to sovereignty and self-determination.

To this day, many Oneida Members continue to honor this bond with service in the United States military.

The event began with the posting of colors by VFW 2246 of Rome, NY followed by the Thanksgiving Address recited in Onyota'a:ká: by Chelsea Jocko (Wolf Clan). It was Chelsea's first time attending the event and she was honored to share in the

recognition of Member and local veterans.

Nation Representative Ray Halbritter, Major General Gregory K. Anderson from Fort Drum and Vice Admiral (Ret.) Robert B. Murrett of the Maxwell School of



Nation Representative Ray Halbritter is joined by guest speakers Vice Admiral (Ret.) Robert B. Murrett (left) and Major General Greg Anderson.

Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University all shared remarks at the event about the special relationship between the Oneida Indian Nation and the United States Military and the service of local veterans.

“The Oneida people were proud to stand alongside American colonists as they fought for their freedom. We believed then, as we do today, that all people deserve the right to self-determination and self-governance,” Halbritter said. “Today, our support for the U.S. military remains as steadfast as it was during the Revolutionary War. It is in recognition of this long friendship that we host this annual celebration of service and support veterans with a variety of programs, such as extensive job recruitment outreach, PGA Hope, Project Healing Waters, and more.”

At the event, Nation Member Vaughn “Chip” Isaacs (Turtle Clan) was recognized for his dedication and commitment to the United States. Chip served two tours in the Viet Nam war from 1966-1969 as a long-range reconnaissance patrol specialist with the Army Rangers. He’s an honored warrior and appeared in fellow Veteran and Officer Bill Goshen’s book, *War Paint: The 1st Infantry Division’s LRP/Ranger Company in Fierce Combat in Vietnam*, which provides a first-hand account of that division’s battle against the Viet Cong.

Later in life, Chip became an iron worker and an award-winning artist – mainly working with ornate jewelry and carvings. Over 25 years ago, Chip developed throat cancer, which took his voice. He’s endured multiple surgeries and treatments but continues to live life to the fullest.



Several Oneida Nation Enterprises employees who are veterans of the U.S. military forces attended the event.



Nation Representative Ray Halbritter presents Rich Synek, founder of Feed Our Vets, New York Mills Pantry, with a donation of \$1,000.

Halbritter presented Isaacs with a Pendleton blanket inspired by the Warriors’ Circle of Honor memorial at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian. “Like the memorial, it commemorates the service and sacrifice of Native American veterans like you,” said Halbritter as he presented Isaacs with the gift.

David Ernenwein (Turtle Clan), a veteran of the U.S. Air Force and current YBR Casino & Sports Book Operations Manager, also was in attendance.

In addition to the Veterans Recognition Event, the Nation supports local veterans in several ways throughout the year, including offering free golf lessons for Central New York veterans through PGA Hope and salmon fishing at Salmon Acres through Project Healing Waters. The Nation also partners with several local military and veteran organizations, including Feed Our Vets, Cell Phones for Soldiers, Ft. Drum, and more.

Oneida Members who are veterans of the armed services are encouraged to contact the Oneida Indian Nation Communications Department to make sure your service information is documented and complete by calling Kandice Watson at 315-829-8363. ♦

More photos from the event are available on the Oneida Indian Nation Facebook Page.



Museum Celebration Highlights Indigenous Culture, Oneida History

The Oneida Indian Nation joined with the Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia, PA to celebrate Indigenous Peoples Weekend during what is historically recognized as Columbus Day weekend. The three-day event was held on Oct. 8 – 10 to honor Indigenous history and culture, as well as the role many American Indians played in the founding of the United States.

Visitors to the Museum during Indigenous Peoples Weekend were treated to Haudenosaunee dance exhibitions sponsored by the Oneida Indian Nation, along with traditional craft demonstrations and presentations on American Indian history, culture and involvement in the Revolutionary War.

Oneida Indian Nation Members Brooke Thomas (Wolf Clan), Wes Halsey (Wolf Clan), Nathaniel Homer (Turtle Clan), and Jamisin Cathers (Turtle Clan), along with George White, participated in Haudenosaunee social dance exhibitions on the Museum plaza on Saturday,

entertaining and educating visitors with the intricacies and beauty of traditional dance.

“I felt so proud and honored to be able to celebrate Indigenous Peoples Weekend through song and dance,” Brooke said. “To me, it meant that we are still here and that our rich history is being honored.”



Above: Nathaniel Homer (Turtle Clan).
Left: Jamisin Cathers (Turtle Clan).



Mary Homer (Wolf Clan) talks with a visitor to the Indigenous Peoples Weekend at the Museum of the American Revolution.

Skilled Oneida crafter Mary Homer (Wolf Clan) showcased her work for guests while also demonstrating the painstaking process of beadwork throughout the weekend.

Museum educators led a discovery cart for visitors to learn more about Oneida woman Tyonajanegen (“Two Kettles Together”), who fought alongside her husband Han Yerry in the Battle of Oriskany that took place on Aug. 6, 1777, during the Saratoga Campaign. Screenings of “The People of the Standing Stone,” a 25-minute film that explores the little-known history of the crucial contributions of the Oneida People who chose to commit themselves to the revolutionary cause, were held daily.

The complete story of the American Revolution is detailed at the Museum, including an exhibit dedicated to the Oneidas’ role as the fledgling country’s First Allies. Dedicated to taking an unvarnished look at the establishment of this country, the museum provides a setting for the often-untold stories of the Revolutionary War.

“More people need to visit the museum,” Brooke continued. “It was eye-opening and very educational. The Oneida Indian Nation’s important role in the founding of the country needs to be seen and heard.”

The Oneida Indian Nation is a founding sponsor of the Museum of the American Revolution, which stands as



Top: Wes Halsey (Wolf Clan) served as the MC/Singer for the social dances.
Above: Brooke Thomas (Wolf Clan) and Nathaniel Homer (Turtle Clan).

a tribute to the ideals of equality and liberty on which America was founded.

A prominent gallery, complete with recreated settings, pays homage to the historical account of the Oneidas fighting alongside the colonists during several key battles, including Oriskany, Barren Hill and Saratoga, during America’s war for independence.

Make sure to visit www.OneidaIndianNation.com/ our-story-memorialized to see how collaborations with museums like the Museum of the American Revolution are helping to ensure our story is told for generations to come so that Oneidas stand proud and embrace their heritage. ❖

Photos courtesy of the Museum of the American Revolution.

Nation Hosts Largest Ever American Indian Holiday Craft Fair

On December 3rd, hundreds visited the Oneida Indian Nation's annual American Indian Holiday Craft Fair held at the Turning Stone Event Center atrium. With fifty vendors in attendance, it was the largest in the event's history.

In addition to the numerous vendors selling hand-made, American Indian art and crafts, the event also featured Chris Thomas and His Smoke Dancers, including Nation Member Wes Halsey (Wolf Clan) who danced and sang. The dancing was a hit with attendees, with lines filling up most of the atrium and the adjoining hallway. With two presentations, one at 1 p.m. and another at 3 p.m., everyone had an opportunity to see the nearly 45-minute show.



Event organizer, Oneida Indian Nation Member and employee, Tina Walker (Turtle Clan), was thrilled to see the enthusiasm for the event's return.

"It was amazing to see the turnout and everyone having a great time," Tina said. "Having the social dancing really makes the event special and is a favorite for many." Among the many vendors at the event were Nation Members Deb Ninham (Turtle Clan), Claire Patterson (Wolf Clan) and Melissa McCann (Turtle Clan).

"Being here with family has been wonderful," Deb said. "People have been coming through most of the day, which is great."

"It's been busy, nearly non-stop," Claire said toward the end of the event. "There hasn't been much down time and it's been great to see people again."

With the fair scheduled to conclude at 6 p.m., Melissa was nearly out of stock.

"I've been coming to this event since the 90s," Melissa said. "This was the biggest one-day event I can remember and it's always nice to have a sell out!" ♦





Top: Social dancing demonstrations by Chris Thomas and his Smoke Dancers were a popular draw during the craft fair. Oneida dancers included Wes Halsey (Wolf Clan), Brittany Ninham (Turtle Clan), Frances Waterman (Turtle Clan) and Wava Homer (Wolf Clan).

Above: Tina Walker and her daughter and grandson, Shanah Walker and Kade Osorio (all Turtle Clan).



Nation Elder Named 2022 American Athletic Union Athlete of the Year; Sets 27 World Records

Ray Fougner (Wolf Clan) returned to the mat and continued his exceptional abilities in powerlifting at the 2022 Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) Powerlifting World Championships held in Las Vegas, NV earlier this month. Building on his prior successes, the 79-year-old set 27 new World Records and earned eight gold medals at the competition. Fougner also added the 2022 AAU Strength Sports Overall Male National Athlete of the Year Award, which includes powerlifting, weightlifting, body building and feats of strength. This award includes all competitors, regardless of age.

Fougner has competed at the AAU North American, World and International Powerlifting Championships for eight years, setting new records each time in the raw master's division, where participants within his age range (75-79) do not use equipment to assist their lift.

“My advice to other American Indian Elders is to be committed and consistent, both in exercise and diet.”

- Ray Fougner

At the 2022 World Championships, Fougner competed in the raw master's and equipped master's divisions, successfully completing eight of nine lifts in each division (three for each lift type). After completing a World Record third lift, participants can ask for a fourth to increase their scores. Using a special formula that utilizes each competitor's best lifts, the AAU presented Fougner with the Lifter of the Year Award and the Athlete of the Year Award for previous competitions.

The Oneida Indian Nation is proud to sponsor Fougner at powerlifting events across the country as a strong advocate for his inspiring mission to promote healthy living and exercise for Native Americans of every age.



Nation Elder Ray Fougner (Wolf Clan) continues to set new records in powerlifting.

“I try to take care of myself physically, first and foremost,” Fougner said, reflecting on his performance. “As long as you do that, and train safely and methodically, you can live a healthy life at any age. My advice to other American Indian Elders is to be committed and consistent, both in exercise and diet.”

In addition to his success in powerlifting, Fougner is also an accomplished educator, administrator and academic. After growing up in the homelands of the Oneida Indian Nation in Upstate New York, the weightlifting champion was selected to serve as the first Director for the American Indian Program at Cornell University. He also served as a teacher and administrator in the East Syracuse-Minoa, Solway, Westhill and Syracuse City school districts. ❖



Nation Member and Daughter Experience Women's World Lacrosse Championships

The Haudenosaunee Nationals lacrosse program is building for a bright future. Developmental teams for ages 10-18 are growing, which means the Creator's game is being taught and learned for generations to come. As Nation Member Jo-Ann Trice (Turtle Clan) headed to the women's World Championships in Maryland this July, she was proud to see a bright future ahead for her daughter, Allyson Trice, as well.

Ally played defense on the women's team, and Jo-Ann couldn't be more proud.

"Having grown up in the West Genesee School District, lacrosse was always such a big part of the community," Jo-Ann said. "So she really took to it and excelled at it. It was a nice outlet to stay active, be healthy and ultimately gave her the opportunity to play in college. I'm so proud of what she has accomplished."

Ally started playing lacrosse in the third grade when Jo-Ann signed her up for summer camp. She stayed with it throughout grade school and eventually earned a scholarship offer to play at Syracuse University in 2017. Jalyn Jimerson (Onondaga) was also on the team and quickly became a close friend of Ally's. It was actually Jalyn's mother, Claudia, who encouraged Ally to try out for the Haudenosaunee Nationals.

"Most of us played in college so we were finishing up our seasons in May," Ally said. "It was a unique experience having not played together all the time, but I was amazed how quickly we found our chemistry."

Training camp for the World Championships began in the summer of 2021. There was only one other camp held in the winter to determine who would make the team and head coach Elizabeth Bevell, who also coaches the Le Moyne College women's team, released the full roster in



Ally Trice, daughter of Jo-Ann Trice (Turtle Clan) played for the Haudenosaunee women's lacrosse team at the World Championships this summer.

late February of 2022. In addition to Jalyn, Lois Garlow (Cattaraugus Seneca), another friend of Ally's who played at Niagara University, also made the team.



Ally and Jo-Ann Trice (Turtle Clan).

"I was humbled and honored to play on the Haudenosaunee Nationals team," Ally said. "Being on the team helped me find my love for lacrosse again because that can get lost on the collegiate level. I could go back to the roots of why I started playing in the first place."

The World Championships took place during the first two weeks in July. ♦

Read the full story online at www.OneidaIndianNation.com and click on Nation Member News under the 'About' tab.



First Allies Craft Fair a Success

The Oneida Indian Nation, in partnership with the National Park Service's Fort Stanwix National Monument and the Rome Historical Society, hosted the First Allies Craft Fair in October. Strawberry drink and fry bread were available for sale with proceeds benefiting the Shako:wi Cultural Center. Thank you to all that came out to support local Haudenosaunee vendors and share in the social dancing. ♦

