



# NIPMUCSPOHKE

NIPMUC PEOPLE EVERYWHERE

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE NIPMUC NATION

Volume V, Issue 1

## Nipmuc Health Center in Focus

By Rae Gould

Through the leadership of Liz Cold Wind Kiser of Worcester, the Nipmuc Women's Health Coalition (NWHC) has made great progress toward developing health care programs for Nipmuc people. Since the organization's inception in 1997, Kiser has worked with a core group of Nipmuc and non-Nipmuc people to realize a long-awaited goal: quality health care for our tribe.

In addition to Kiser, others who serve on the 15-member NWHC

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## NIPMUCSPOHKE Returns After Hiatus

More than a year and a half after its last issue, NIPMUCSPOHKE returns to Nipmuc mailboxes throughout the country. Several situations had prevented the newsletter from being published during that time.

Cheryl Stedtler, NIPMUCSPOHKE editor, said that the problems she ran into were not political. "Oh, it had nothing to do with anything like that," she said. "What it boiled down to is that things just got bottlenecked in my life. I had 2 babies, 16 months apart, we moved, I have a home office and my son needed a little extra help in school this year."

Additionally, there were not many newsworthy events occurring and she felt that "it would be best to conserve what money NIPMUCSPOHKE had left for important information".

Stedtler reports that it costs approximately \$500 to \$600 each issue to print and mail the newsletter.

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## Acting Tribal Chairperson Resigns; Gould Chosen As Replacement

For reasons of a personal nature, Nipmuc Nation Tribal Chairperson Ron Little Crow Henries resigned his position on October 4, 1999. No other information was available other than Henries' statement that he and other members were "on different cultural paths". The resignation prompted the remaining Tribal Council members to select a new acting Chairperson to fill the position.

On October 6, the Council voted in favor of East Killingly CT resident Bill Running River Gould, a member of the Nipmuc Nation Tribal Council for several years. The Council vote tally was: 9 'yes' votes, 2 abstentions, and 0 'no' votes.

In a brief interview following the May 6 Nipmuc Community Meeting in Worcester, Gould spoke with confidence regarding his new appointment. "I try my best to be open and fair," Gould said. "I have a lot to offer and will continue to do it using every single tool available to achieve federal recognition -- investors, lobbyists, whatever --, like our ancestors did with bone and hides, etc."

While some Nipmucs are apprehensive about the new chairperson because they say he is known to be 'hot-headed', Gould addressed those comments with a broad smile and agreed, "Oh yes, I can get very emotional." But he also acknowledged that he has made changes in his life over the past two years and is better able to think before he reacts.

Gould said that while he is staying focused on the monumental task of federal recognition, there are other things on his future agenda to help Nipmucs and their community. "I'm not saying when yet, but we are looking at an Emergency Assistance Fund."

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JOIN THE FREE NIPMUC MESSAGE GROUP  
AT: [WWW.EGROUPS/GROUP/NIPMUC](http://WWW.EGROUPS/GROUP/NIPMUC) FOR  
CURRENT INFO. NIPMUC LINKS. CHATS. ETC.  
POST YOUR MESSAGE TO THE NIPMUC  
COMMUNITY!

## Check out these websites for Nipmuc info



<http://www.nativetech.org/Nipmuc/>

<http://community-2.webtv.net/Ninnouck/AQUENE/>

<http://www.dickshovel.com/nipmuc.html>

<http://www.timelinesinc.com/nipmuc.htm>

<http://www.hemingway.net/heps.htm>

<http://community.webtv.net/Nipmuck/NipmucWomensHealth>

Contact NIPMUCSPOHKE at: [Nipmucnews@aol.com](mailto:Nipmucnews@aol.com)

## HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING!



**THRU THE END OF JUNE** - "Presence & Persistence: Nipmuc Indians in New England, Worcester Historical Museum 30 Elm St. Worcester, MA, 508-753-8278

**JUNE 24-25 - NENAI:** Summer Solstice Spiritual Gathering: Sterling Springs Campground, Sterling, MA 781-886-6073

**JULY 8 - CHAUBUNAGUNGAMAUG COUNCIL:** Strawberry Moon Festival & Potluck. Chaubunagungamaug Res. School Street, Webster, MA 413-436-5596

**JULY 30 - HASSANAMESIT:** 47th Annual Native American Fair & Powwow, Hassanamesit Reservation, 80 Brigham Hill Rd, Grafton, MA 508-393-8860

**SEPT. 9-10 - CHAUBUNAGUNGAMAUG COUNCIL:** 20th Annual Nipmuck Powwow, Greenbriar Park, Rte.12, Oxford, MA 508-865-9828

**OCT. 14 - CHAUBUNAGUNGAMAUG COUNCIL:** Harvestfest & Pot Luck, Chaubunagungamaug Res. School Street, Webster, MA 413-436-5596

**OCT. 29 - NENAI:** Tour- Old Growth Forest, Mt. Wachusett, Princeton, MA 508-886-6073

**DEC. 9 - CHAUBUNAGUNGAMAUG COUNCIL:** Nikommo & Pot Luck United Church of Christ, Church St., Webster, MA 508-865-9828

For more powwow info, visit:  
<http://www.wanderingbull.com/powwow.html>

## Newsletter Returns

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"But it's not just the printing of the newsletter. Many people send in requests for genealogical info and there are copying and postage fees incurred. I usually do that for free -- family's family. All Nipmucs are my family."

"Now postal rates have gone up and printing costs as well, and I can no longer make ends meet. I will have to ask for donations now -- anything that anyone can send -- \$2, \$3, \$5, or even 33 cent stamps," the editor said. "And articles, art, poetry from other Nipmucs are very helpful -- I don't like to write the whole thing myself; I'm sure I get boring," she laughed. "This newsletter is for YOU (Nipmucs) -- you should use it to be heard."

*Contributions of money, postage stamps & writing are encouraged & can be made to:*

NIPMUCSPOHKE or Cheryl Stedtler  
460 Whiton Rd.  
Neshanic Station NJ 08853

## Chairperson

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In addition to plans for the fund, he spoke of a website for the tribe and the hopes of bringing one computer into the home of every Nipmuc family to improve communication and "get the word out." Gould had also pledged increased communication and support for the newsletter, NIPMUCSPOHKE, and has delivered on his promise.

"I'm not taking credit for all this. The Council members get the credit. As long as I am chairperson, I'm only as good as the people behind it, he said."

*Brothers and Sisters,  
Please remember those Nipmucs who are in need of our  
prayers & positive thoughts:*



*-Eagle Sun Strong Heart, recuperating from heart trouble  
-Jim Eagle Hawk Cossingham, undergoing heart surgery  
-Nealoni, daughter of Denise Cossingham Quimbey,  
undergoing surgery  
May you walk in Manitoo's light & swiftly start a  
healing path. Aho.*



**CHERYLL HOLLEY**  
 COMMISSIONER  
 NIPMUC & CENTRAL  
 279 HARVARD STREET #11  
 CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

Hello everyone:

I am Cheryll Toney Holley and I am the Commonwealth of MA Commissioner on Indian Affairs representing both Nipmucs and Central MA. This is a governor-appointed position for which I was nominated by our tribal council. There are seven Commissioners in all, each representing a different area of the state. In addition, four of the Commissioners also represent Indian groups. The Commission's function is to act as a liaison between the state and local government and Indian people. We offer tuition waivers for tribally affiliated Indians regardless of tribe to all state colleges and universities. We also deal with a multitude of Native issues such as reinternments and repatriation, aboriginal rights, Indian Child Welfare Act, health issues, Native education, and some legal issues. Recently, Indians in MA were granted the right to fish and hunt without paying the government for a license. We represent Indian people in nearly any matter one can think of. If you have a question or concern, need assistance, or if you believe that the Commission can serve Native people in other ways, please contact me. The telephone number is (617) 727-6394.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
 COMMISSION ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

**NOTARY SERVICES**  
**NOW AVAILABLE AT NIPMUC**  
**NATION TRIBAL OFFICE**



**Robin G. is a Notary and will notarize  
 items for Tribal Members**  
**Please call for an appointment.**  
**508-865-9800**

**Native American Spiritual Gathering**  
**Celebration of the Sun**

**June 24 & 25**  
 (Open for setup 4 PM Friday)  
 Sterling Springs Campground, Sterling MA  
 Info: 508-886-6073  
 (offered by NENAI)

**COLLEGE for FREE?**

**STUDENTS  
 ARISE!**



*Did you know that if you are Nipmuc  
 & a Massachusetts resident, you can attend any of  
 the MA state colleges or universities FREE?*

- ✓ Part/Full time
- ✓ Days/Evenings
- ✓ Spring/Summer/Fall/Winter

Interested? You should be! Contact Cheryll Holley,  
 Nipmuc Commissioner on Indian Affairs, at  
 617-727-6394



**NIPMUCSPOHKE** has a new mailing address & phone:  
 460 Whiton Rd., Neshanic Station, NJ 08853 (908)-371-1832

# Nipmuc Nation Tribal Council

## CURRENT OFFICERS

ACTING CHAIRPERSON  
WILLIAM W. GOULD, SR.  
East Killingly CT  
860.779.7505

## ACTING COUNCIL MEMBERS

LOIS A. BOYD  
Uncasville, CT

FRANCES M. GARNETT  
Ashland, MA

DONALD R. GOULD  
Putnam, CT

CHARLES O. HAMILTON  
Worcester, MA



ROBERT E. HAZZARD  
Leicester MA

CONRAD L. LUSTER  
East Providence RI

EUGENE F. MARTIN, SR.  
Charlton MA

ARTHUR L. SELDEN  
Nashua NH

CHIEF NATACHAMAN  
WALTER A. VICKERS  
Northboro, MA

## OFFICE STAFF:

CONRAD LUSTER  
Riverside, RI

PATRICIA GARWOOD  
Harrisville, RI

CAROLE PALAVRA  
Harrisville, RI

ROBIN GIGUERE  
Pascoag, RI

LOIS BOYD  
Uncasville, CT

Office Address and Phone:

156 WORCESTER-PROVIDENCE RD. STE.28 SUTTON MA 01570 508-865-9800

## THE NIPMUC WOMEN'S HEALTH COALITION IS SEEKING VOLUNTEERS



If you have good writing skills and would like to research and write articles for our newsletter, or computer skills and can work with desktop publishing software, we need your support.

If you like organizing or working with youth, we want to hear from you.

If you are thirteen years old through nineteen years and want to have fun and learn ways to help the Nipmuc community, then join our new Nipmuc Leadership group.

Please contact Liz Cold Wind Kiser at 508-798-2875 or write Nipmuc Women's Health Coalition  
c/o: CM AHEC, 50 Lake Avenue, Worcester MA 01604

# Nipmucs Receive Grant Aiding Community Development

By Cheryll Toney Holley

In September, a group of concerned Nipmucs received a \$20,000 grant from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development to start a community development corporation. Named the Nipmuc Indian Development Corporation (NIDC), its mission is to assist in the revitalization of the Nipmuc Indian community through the promotion and provision of culturally-appropriate community and economic development programs. The initial committee is comprised of members from each major Nipmuc family line.

Membership in the NIDC is open to all Nipmucs aged 18 years or older currently residing in Massachusetts, Rhode Island or Connecticut.

The areas most likely to be addressed by the NIDC include:

- Job training & placement
- Elder services
- Economic development projects (including tribal or NIDC-owned businesses, small business development/entrepreneurial training, & the formation of business cooperatives)
- Affordable & safe housing with an emphasis on home ownership;
- Services for families including daycare, educational/cultural opportunities, & youth program development.

NIDC is currently seeking volunteers from the Nipmuc people to serve on a variety of committees. Six committees have been established and all Nipmucs are

invited to participate in any or all of them. The committees are:

**Fundraising** - The NIDC is a non-profit organization that runs primarily on membership fees and grant funds. We need assistance in locating sources of funding and writing grant applications.

**Public Relations** - Volunteers are needed to come up with creative ways to involve tribal members in reaffirming our community ties.

**Feasibility Study** - NIDC plans to start a business this coming year to create jobs, promote our culture, and create a corporate economic base for our people. While on this committee, people will learn how to write business plans and conduct market and cost-analysis studies.

**Needs Assessment Follow-up** -- A survey was recently sent out to all tribal members in Southern New England. We need people to go out into the community and help those who did not or could not answer and return the surveys. We are hoping that this one-on-one type of activity will also help us grow closer as a community.

**Culture and History** - This committee will help to plan different types of cultural and traditional activities for our people to learn and enjoy.

**Planning** - This committee will help to plan future programs based on information on gathered from the community.

To volunteer for a committee or to join, contact NIDC at: 156 Worcester-Providence Rd. Ste.28 Sutton MA 01570 508-865-9800

## NWHC (cont. from pg.1)

Advisory Board include tribal members Cheryll Holley, Conrad Luster, Robin Giguere, Joy Carter, Richard Massey, Joyce Freeman, Pat Garwood, Gene Martin, Eleanor Hawley, Shelleigh Wilcox and Carol Waryick. The remainder of the Advisory Board is comprised of local health care professionals.

The coalition has received several state and foundation grants to fund their work, including the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant awarded last year. This grant has funded quarterly newsletters, study circles, and the Nipmuc Youth Program.

The major focus of Liz's work, however, has been to establish a health clinic for Nipmuc people. On Aug. 15, Coalition members met with Worcester area health professionals to gather input regarding the establishment of the clinic. Several established clinics have offered to help get the Nipmuc health clinic operating. Right now the nearest health clinic that serves Native Americans is located in Boston.

"This is a big problem for our Nation," Kiser commented, "which is one of the reasons I focused on this (establishing the health clinic). I want the clinic up and going in the year 2000." The goal of the NWHC is for all Nipmuc people to receive culturally sensitive, quality health care.

*Editor's Update:* At the May 6 Nipmuc Community meeting, Kiser announced that there are currently 2 land offers for the health clinic & plans are being developed. She stressed that it is "important to be able to heal our own way. If we want to have sweats, we can do that. If we want to have ceremonies, we can do that." She asked for input from Nipmucs: "Do we really want to go back to our roots?...We need feedback as to: do we reach out to other nations, do we look within our nation, what is acceptable to most Nipmucs?" Opinions can be shared with Liz Cold Wind Kiser at 508-798-2875 or coldwindnipmuc@hotmail.com.

# BIA urges Indians to put end to feud

Pequots are on verge of recognition

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

**NEW LONDON, Conn.** — The U.S. director of Indian Affairs says he has lost patience with the decades-old dispute between the Pawcatuck Eastern Pequots and questions whether the Bureau of Indian Affairs can recognize both tribes.

Since the 1930s, one group within the Eastern Pequot tribe has sought to oust another faction, claiming the other group has no Pequot heritage. The dispute has been marked by acrimony on both sides.

Kevin Gover said he also finds it distasteful that the rift is along racial lines. The Pawcatuck Easterns are the perceived "white" tribe and the Eastern Pequot tribe is made up largely of the extended Sebastian family, which is black and Portuguese.

"There obviously are no full-blooded Pequots anymore, but we don't care if they intermarried with whites, blacks, yellows or greens. From our perspective there was enough evidence in the record to satisfy us" that both groups were legitimate, Gover told *The Day*.

In the 1970s the schism erupted into a full-fledged political row before the Connecticut Indian Affairs Council. The ensuing rift created the faction known as the Pawcatuck Easterns. The tribes share a Lantern Hill reservation.

The Pawcatucks contend that the Eastern Pequots do not descend from the historic Eastern Pequots and that the group's members have "stolen" parts of the Pequot and Pawcatuck histories to boost their tribal claims. The Pawcatucks have continued to press those

allegations with the BIA while seeking federal recognition.

The Eastern Pequots, meanwhile, have maintained throughout that they and the Pawcatucks are really one tribe and have tried several times to reconcile with the Pawcatucks.

Gover, assistant secretary of the Department of the Interior, told *The Day* that the BIA has determined that both factions descend from the historic Eastern Pequots.

In March, the BIA issued preliminary recognition to both groups. Gover said the tribes' petitions were among the strongest he's ever seen during his tenure.

"These petitions did a real good jog of presenting evidence as to each of the (BIA's) seven criteria," he said.

Gover said the BIA has told the supplicants their best chance of achieving recognition might be to merge. The BIA might not be able to recognize a tribe that may have just come into existence during the past century, he said.

He added that although splinter groups of a tribe can and have been recognized by the BIA, most of those cases — such as the split in the Sioux Nation in the 1800s that created several Sioux tribes — happened long enough ago for the groups to establish themselves as separate and distinct political entities.

"Basically, we're confident that there is a tribal institution that exists here," he said, referring to the Eastern Pequots and Pawcatuck Easterns.

## WORCESTER MUSEUM SPOTLIGHTS NIPMUC PAST AND PRESENT



From now the end of the school year, the Worcester Historical Museum (WHM) is offering an interesting exhibit that tells the tale of the Nipmuc People. "*Presence and Persistence: Nipmuc Indians in New England*" was developed under the advisement of Nipmucs Richard Massey, former Nipmuc Nation Tribal Council member and President of the New England Native American Institute (NENAI), Hassanamisco Chief Walter Vickers, and Kenneth White, NENAI and Chaubunagungamaug Indian Council member.

Included in the exhibit are numerous stone artifacts from the 'pre-contact' period that were found in the Worcester area, such as bowls, arrowheads, hammer stones and pestles. Also on display are several Nipmuc baskets, a dugout canoe and heirlooms from Hepsibeth Crosman/Hemenway, a well-known Pakachoag (Worcester) Nipmuc woman

who lived from 1763 to 1847. Hepsibeth was recently voted Number 10 on the list "Important Historical Women in Worcester County". "I always knew she was a ten," smiled Massey. A direct descendent of the Hemenway line, Massey said he has loaned family treasures to WHM from the Crosman/Hemenway family including "my Grandmother's Indian dress, which is my most prized possession. She made it when she was 11 years old. It's close to 100 years old." Also included are some of her medals she wore as Past President of the local Daughters of Union Veterans. Nipmucs interested in seeing a small piece of their heritage can call WHM at 508-753-8278.