



DELAWARE INDIAN NEWS

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DELAWARE TRIBE OF INDIANS

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A Trip to the Delaware Water Gap National Park

CeCe Biggoose

A trip to the Delaware Water Gap National Park came to life in July when five Delaware teens, ages 14 to 17, embarked on a 12-day journey of their lifetimes. The trip made possible by the tribal leaders of the Delaware Tribe of Indians, including the

help of Greg Brown and Brice Obermeyer, Delaware Nation of Anadarko, Stockbridge Munsee of Wisconsin, the National Park Service, Cultural Preservation committees, archeologists, professors, many elders, leaders, volunteers and so many people

behind the scenes who envisioned, discussed, planned, set aside funds, wrote grants for this special event. The vision of this event spanned a decade or more.

This Summer Youth camp made it possible for our future generation of tribal leaders to see

through their eyes, learn through their hearts and minds, experience hiking through their original homelands. An experience the youth never envisioned possible, none of the youth groups had ever flew on a plane or traveled so far from home!

The trip attendees from our tribe included Cece Biggoose as the chaperone. Youth ambassadors were Tiana Long, Shu-Day Johnson-Biggoose, Hopie Thicknail, Kamren Pisachubbe, and Michaela Provence. They were joined by the Delaware Nation and the Stockbridge Munsee

youth groups at the Pocono Environmental Education Center, where the groups were provided yurts to stay in and daily meals and snacks. PEEC and their staff provided the youth with educational environmental hikes throughout the trails surrounding their youth camp facilities. It was a very busy place! Check out the Facebook pages and websites for both the PEEC and Delaware Water Gap National Park (www.peec.org and <http://www.nps.gov/dewa/>).

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Special Notice to Tribal Members

GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING SATURDAY NOVEMBER 7, 2015

This year the annual General Meeting will be held Saturday, November 7, 2015 at the Delaware Community Center, 5100 Tuxedo Blvd. in Bartlesville, OK. Doors will open at 11:30 AM and lunch will be provided at noon. The business meeting will start at 1:00 PM. The State of the Tribe address and staff department reports will be given. Following the meeting Lenape stomp and traditional dances are planned. Please attend !!!!!

Delaware Water Gap *continued from page 1*

Linda Poolaw, an elder of Delaware Nation, flew up for the first day to pray and smudge all with our sacred cedar. She explained the importance of this trip to everyone who participated. She provided us with spiritual guidance. She was one of many elders, including our own leaders, who envisioned this event. She explained to us why we were there. She took us to the reburial site and we prayed.

National Park Service (NPS) employees were our personal guides throughout entire the visit. We were treated like royalty and given the red carpet treatment. More than once we were told, "You are the very reason we love the jobs we do to preserve and protect your history." The NPS employees were so enthused to share their experiences with us and learned from our youth as well. The youth groups said it made them very proud to hear how much our visit meant to the NPS. Our youth presented the Superintendent of NPS at Delaware Water Gap a gift, our Tribal Flag.

A castle called Grey Towers was an impressive visit due to the origins and history of National Parks. We were the honored guests at an ice cream social, set up like an extravagant affair, specially prepared for the youth on the first day touring the area in a chartered bus!

The groups camped on the river, canoed 18 miles over a two-day journey down the beautiful

Delaware River, stopping along the way at various important sites where our ancestors lived many, many years before anyone else inhabited the area, rich in natural beauty, plentiful in food and water. Understanding, sadly, that was the very reason we were killed, forcibly removed or fled our homelands.

So many learning experiences made possible, including a field trip to an important archeological dig site conducted by Temple University students and archeologists. The youth received hands on experience. The teens actually found arrowheads, tools, points, and items! They were so focused, to see them was amazing. All finds were logged and placed in bags with other archeological finds, tools our ancestors made by hand hundreds and hundreds of years before any other people invaded our original homelands. They learned the basics of pottery making and shown pottery our ancestors made. They will ship the pottery the teens made back soon.

The groups swam and fished thanks to the NPS guides. They visited the Historic Preservation archives and viewed items donated, found, protected in climate controlled buildings, not available to the public for viewing. A night hike to a beautiful waterfall and viewed stars through telescopes was fun. They hiked a portion of the Appalachian Trail to an overlook. They met with biologists researching turtles affected by disturbed natural habitat due to the huge power lines overhead.

NPS set up a Career Day to show all the different roles they have in protecting our natural resources and the wildlife and the many people who visit the area. They encouraged our youth to check out opportunities such as internships for youth in the park. They want Delaware youth to return and work in their original homelands for the National Park Service.

In return, the youth took pictures of all their experiences with GoPro cameras provided to each group by NPS. The youth collaborated together and made a short picture presentation of their own for the NPS. Tiana Long brought her Delaware clothes to wear during the presentation.

The trip ended with a smudging and prayer ceremony conducted by CeCe Biggoose, Shuday and WeeKah, who built the fire, burned cedar and fanned all who attended before our journey home. Many good words, handshakes, hugs, feelings expressed, a special prayer by Larry Hilaire, tears flowed from youth and adults alike. That is how awesome this trip was. Lifetime friends were made and history was made once again. We brought back gifts of heirloom Indian corn, tobacco seeds, beans and earth from our homelands. The youth presented items at Tribal Council and shook hands with their Delaware leaders thanking them for this wonderful experience.

A planning committee is working together with the chaperones to plan and prepare for next summer's Youth Camp. I hope this event is the first of many for our future, our Delaware youth.

Wanishi!!
CeCe Biggoose
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Bonnie Thaxton Named AARP Honoree

Tim Hudson

A Delaware Tribe of Indians Elder is set to be honored by the AARP as a key Oklahoma-based Native American Elder.

According to a release from the AARP, Delaware Tribe of Indians Member Bonnie Thaxton has been "nominated and selected" as an honoree for the 2015 AARP Oklahoma Indian Elder Honors. The 7th annual Honor banquet will be held on October 6th at the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City.

"I'm 92-years-old and I'm certainly proud of my heritage with the tribe," Bonnie said.

"And I plan to go to Oklahoma City for the ceremony."

"This is one of AARP Oklahoma's most prestigious and visible awards, given to recognize outstanding Native American Elders who are making a powerful difference in their communities, and Indian Country, in ways that are consistent with AARP's mission and vision, and who inspire others to service," said Mashell Sourjohn, Associ-

ate State Director of Community Outreach for Oklahoma AARP.

"AARP Oklahoma takes great pride in congratulating Mrs. Thaxton on all that she has done for her nation, state, community and for Indian country."

Delaware Tribe of Indians Chief Chet Brooks says that he's known Bonnie "at least 33 years."

"And she is one of the Delaware Tribe's most deserving elders to receive this AARP award and I'd like to personally thank Bonnie for all the years of service to the Delaware Tribe."

AARP, Inc., which was formerly the American Association of Retired Persons, is a non-profit membership and interest group, founded in 1958 for people over the age of 50. It is one of the most powerful lobbying groups in the United States.

Sourjohn says Thaxton's record of achievement, service, and commitment to the community is "making a difference and bringing purpose to those around her."

"She is an extraordinary example of the difference that can be made in the lives of individuals and in the well-being and vitality of a community," she said.

Tim Hudson
918-815-2653 ■

Donations for Education Scholarships Gratefully Accepted

We invite tribal members and others to contribute to a special fund for educational scholarships. Donors are recognized in five levels:

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| Brass Level | up to \$ 100 |
| Silver Level | \$ 100-500 |
| Gold Level | \$ 500-1,000 |
| Wampum Level | \$ 1,000-5,000 |
| Wampum Belt Level | above \$ 5,000 |

Send donations to

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