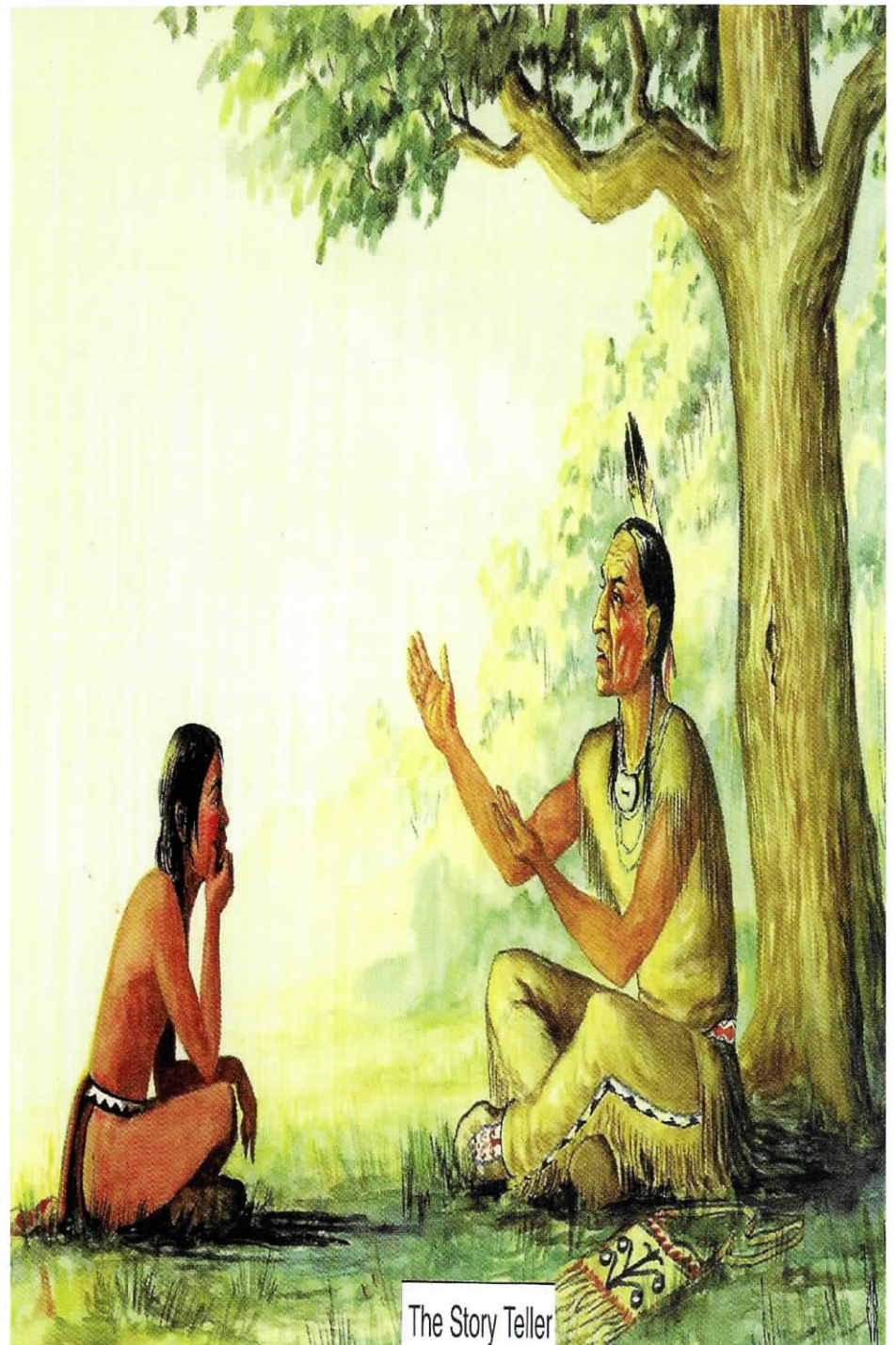


The
2023
***Legends
And
Stories
Commemorative
Calendar***

Presented by:
The Tonawanda Reservation
Historical Society



This Commemorative Calendar for 2023 focuses on stories and legends of the longhouse. Most of the stories we all know and have grown up with. A few were unknown to us, for example – “How Mice Kept the Peace”, and “The Vampire Skeleton.” Some stories we may have forgotten some interesting details.

We had planned on putting this calendar out last year. But like many other projects planned by everyone throughout the world, the pandemic prevented us from doing so. After much deliberation, we decided to redo some of our work, change publications, and pictures, etc.

We found all our pictures in various publications that we have cited, or we found them on the Internet, or they belonged to members of our community. We also found artists in the community to make original art for this project.

ON THE COVER: THE STORYTELLER

The Iroquois people of North America spoke this story...the story of creation. Settlers from Europe wrote it down.

The first people lived beyond the sky because there was no earth beneath.

...

Hence, the “Creation Story”, or origin of earth, began and has been passed down orally from the beginning.

Myths and legends have also been preserved in this same way and recorded in wampum and recitation.

“The Storyteller” has always been a traditional way of keeping our history alive.

Story chosen by Cheryl Sundown, 2022, inspired by http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/iroquois_mythology

Most of the stories have been shortened a little or a lot, due to the size of the page. We’re hoping that you will look all these stories up in their various books and read them in their entirety.

The Tonawanda Reservation Historical Society wishes to thank each member who contributed, and to each artist who contributed to this publication. We hope you enjoy it.

Mission Statement

The Tonawanda Reservation Historical Society was established for the purpose of preserving and disseminating the history of the Tonawanda Seneca Indian Nation for our people, for the generations yet unborn and for the education of non-Indians about our culture. To achieve this purpose, the Historical Society's goals are to collect and preserve materials pertaining to the history of the Tonawanda Nation and its people; to record and document historically valuable information; make such materials available to researchers, the public, and especially to Tonawanda Nation residents and their descendants; sponsor exhibits, publications, and other methods to inform and educate people about the history of the Tonawanda Seneca Nation.

**The Tonawanda
Reservation
Historical Society**
P.O. Box 516, Basom,
NY 14013

LEGEND OF THE SKY WOMAN

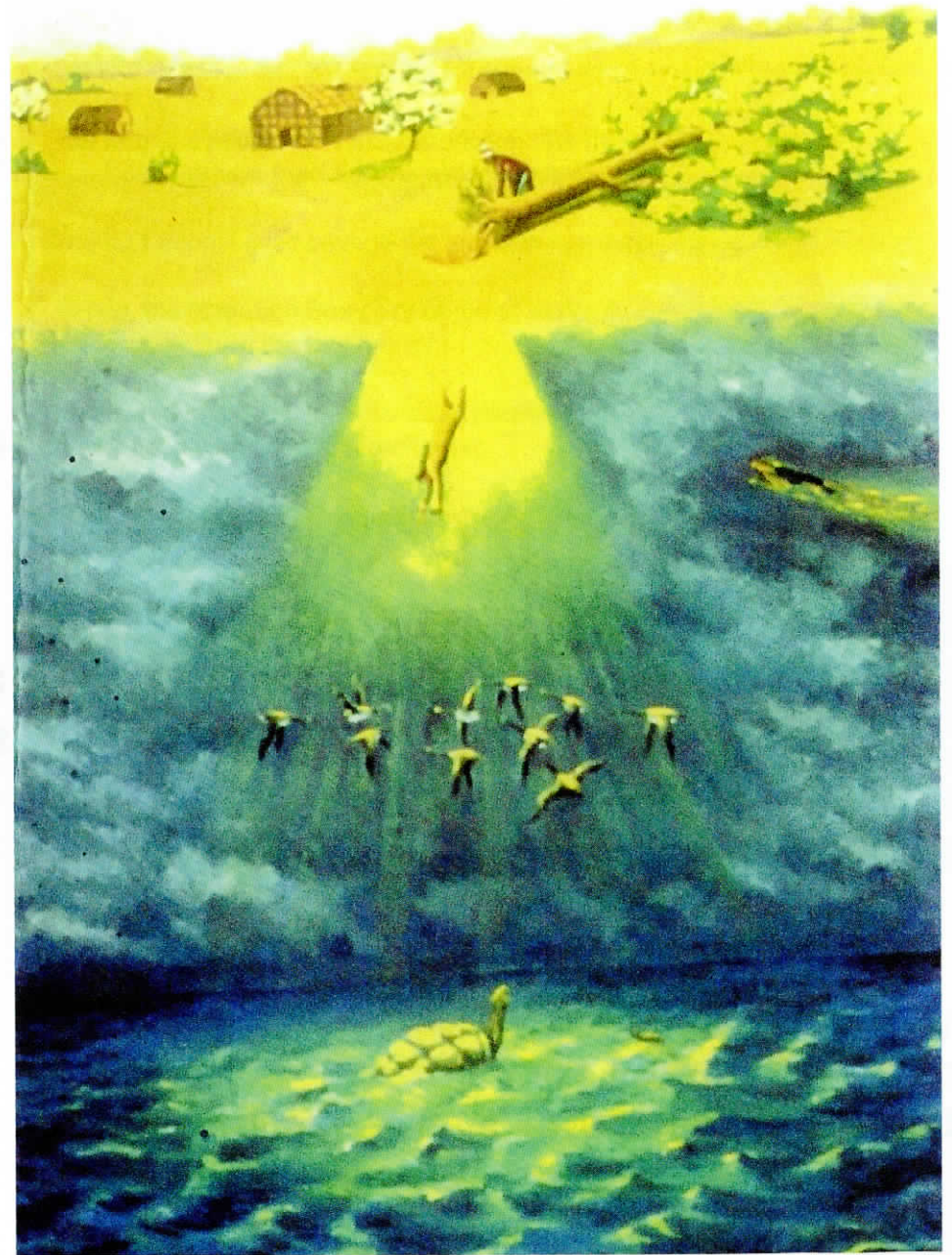
According to Haudenosaunee mythology there was a celestial world above with all living beings, there was no sun, but light came from the white blossoms of a celestial tree.

The Chiefs' wife was soon to become a mother from the breath of the "fire dragon", the chief was angry about this and uprooted the celestial tree and then pushed his wife through the hole. The light from the tree shone through the hole to form the sun.

Below was the water world with all water animals. As the woman fell the waterfowl flew up to catch her. Meanwhile the best divers brought up mud to put on a "great snapping turtle's" back. Then the sky woman was placed upon the turtle's back. She shuffled around the turtle's shell, spreading the earth and planting sky world seeds.

Today, this world is known as "Turtle Island" or the north American continent.

Story chosen by Juanita Poodry Dunn, 2021, from the book, "Legends of the Longhouse," by J.J. Cornplanter, J.B. Lippincott, 1938



"Sky Woman," oil painting by Ernest Smith, Tonawanda Reservation, 1936. From the collection of the Rochester Museum & Science Center, Rochester, N.Y.

Nisgowakneh

January

2023

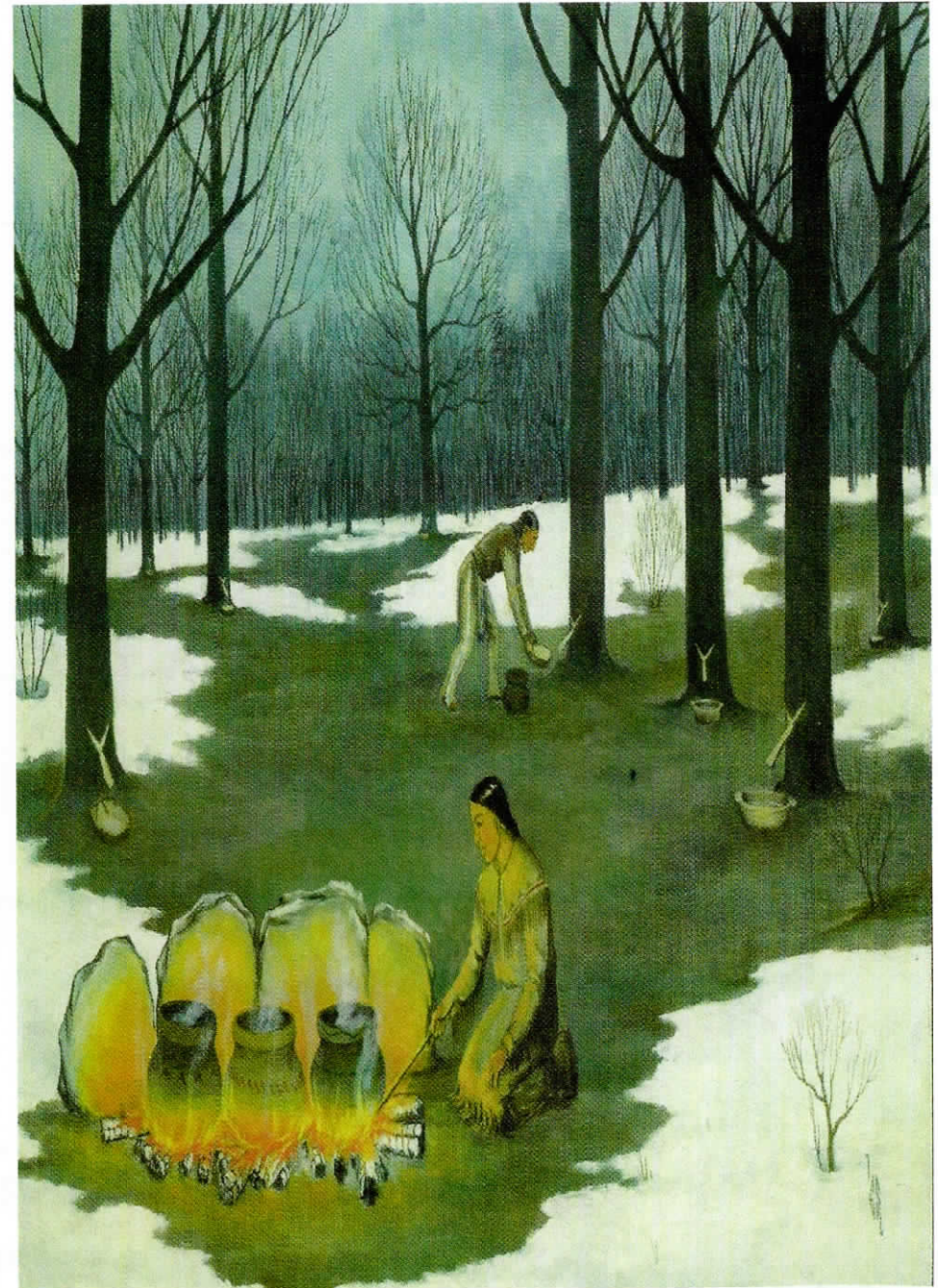
SUNDAY Awëdadogëhdöh	MONDAY O'wëdë:dat	TUESDAY Swëda:dih	WEDNESDAY Ha'dewëdaëh	THURSDAY Ëyohë'tgeh	FRIDAY Wë:da:k'ah	SATURDAY Wë:da:k
1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5	6 ○	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 ●	16 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	17	18	19	20	21 ●
22	23	24	25	26	27	28 ●
29	30	31			DECEMBER 2022 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	FEBRUARY 2023 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28

The Legend of Maple Syrup

Long ago when human beings were new to the part of Turtle Island, few would live through the long cold winters, their bodies and spirits were weakened by the cold and the dark. Though they worked to gather and preserve food for the winter it was not enough to keep them well and strong. The Creator saw the sadness of the people so he decided to ask the tree nation if there was something which could be done to restore their happiness.

The leader of the trees, offered to give its blood to the people so they may be restored to good health. So it was, that at the end of the winter months the sap flowed freely from the maple. The sap was dark and sweet. Satisfied that the people were once again happy and strong the Creator left to attend to his duties in other worlds.

Story chosen by Levi Winnie, 2021. Doug George-Kanentiio, (2011-May 10) A Mohawk Legend-Origins of Maple Syrup and Sugar, retrieved from <https://www.indiancountrynews.com/index.php/columnists/doug-george-kanentiio/11541-a-mohawk-legend-the-origins-of-maple-syrup-and-sugar>



"Maple Sugar Time," painting by Ernest Smith, Tonawanda Reservation, 1937. From the collection of the Rochester Museum & Science Center, Rochester, N.Y.

Niyo'not'a:h

February

2023

SUNDAY Awëdadogëhdöh	MONDAY O'wëdë:dat	TUESDAY Swëda:dih	WEDNESDAY Ha'dewëdaëh	THURSDAY Ëyohë'tgeh	FRIDAY Wë:da:k'ah	SATURDAY Wë:da:k
			1	2 Groundhog Day	3	4
5 ○	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13 ●	14 Valentine's Day	15	16	17	18
19 Presidents Day ●	20	21	22 Ash Wednesday	23	24	25
26	27 ●	28			JANUARY 2023 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	MARCH 2023 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

At A Place Where the Wild Onions Grow

It's over there where the water runs close to the bank, so close, yet further back.
It's almost as old as time immemorial.
It harkens to ancient times where the villages were built.
When the people gathered to listen, and the little ones struggled to hear.
Stories of giant beings who roamed the land before you or me.
At a place where the wild onions grow.
I hear whispers of days gone by where people of skin and stone fought down
in a ravine, some ran until they were no more.
Their nation destroyed by greed of land.
For those that remember the stories, they can talk of people with stone
bodies.
At a place where the wild onions grow...
In my mind is the remaining burial.
The ancient being who fought with might as he and kin tumbled down, out of
sight.
The giant stone from days long gone sits quietly waiting at the bottom of the
hill.
At a place where the wild onion grows...

Story written by Cookie Jonathan, 2022. Inspired by the story "Legend of the Stone Giants," from the Book "Legends of the Longhouse," 1936, by J.J. Complanter, J.B. Lippincott, page 44-51



Picture taken by Wase MacKenzie Smith, 2021

O'not'a:h

March

2023

SUNDAY
Awëdadogëhdöh

MONDAY
O'wëdë:dat

TUESDAY
Swëda:dih

WEDNESDAY
Ha'dewëdaëh

THURSDAY
Ëyohë'tgeh

FRIDAY
Wë:da:k'ah

SATURDAY
Wë:da:k

<p>FEBRUARY 2023</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td></tr> <tr><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> </table>			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	<p>APRIL 2023</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td></tr> </table>						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30			1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4																																																																			
5	6	7	8	9	10																																																																			
11	12	13	14	15	16																																																																			
17	18	19	20	21	22																																																																			
23	24	25	26	27	28																																																																			
					1																																																																			
2	3	4	5	6	7																																																																			
8	9	10	11	12	13																																																																			
14	15	16	17	18	19																																																																			
20	21	22	23	24	25																																																																			
26	27	28	29	30																																																																				
5	6	7 ○	8	9	10	11																																																																		
12 Daylight Saving Time Begins	13	14	15 ●	16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18																																																																		
19	20 First Day of Spring	21 ●	22	23	24	25																																																																		
26	27	28	29 ●	30	31																																																																			



Pair of Corn Husk Dolls made by Lil Printup, 2018

THE LEGEND OF NO FACE

This is one of many stories how no face cornhusk doll came to be.

As my story goes a baby girl named O'we:oh was born with exceptional beauty. As a child she was taught to say nya:weh when people complimented her on her beauty.

As she grew older her heart became proud. She began to believe the lie that she was worthy of worship and adoration by the Creator. She developed a negative attitude and treated the members of the tribe with great disrespect.

If the gifts from the Creator are disrespected the Creator will correct it...He sent a giant screech owl down from the sky to snatch her reflection from the water.

She glanced into the water to admire her beauty; her reflection was gone!

Seasons passed, during that time she learned kindness and to be humble. Seeing beauty as the Creator sees it.

Story chosen by Rita Sage, 2021. Story inspired by "The Legend of the No Face Doll." <https://native-americans.com/legend-of-the-no-face-doll/>

Ganö'gat

April

2023

SUNDAY
Awëdadogëhdöh

MONDAY
O'wëdë:dat

TUESDAY
Swëda:dih

WEDNESDAY
Ha'dewëdaëh

THURSDAY
Ëyohë'tgeh

FRIDAY
Wë:da:k'ah

SATURDAY
Wë:da:k

MARCH 2023 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	MAY 2023 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31					1
2 Palm Sunday	3	4	5	6 Passover ○	7 Good Friday	8
9 Easter Sunday	10	11	12	13 ●	14	15
16	17	18	19	20 ●	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30				●		

The Legend of the Tree of Silver Arrows

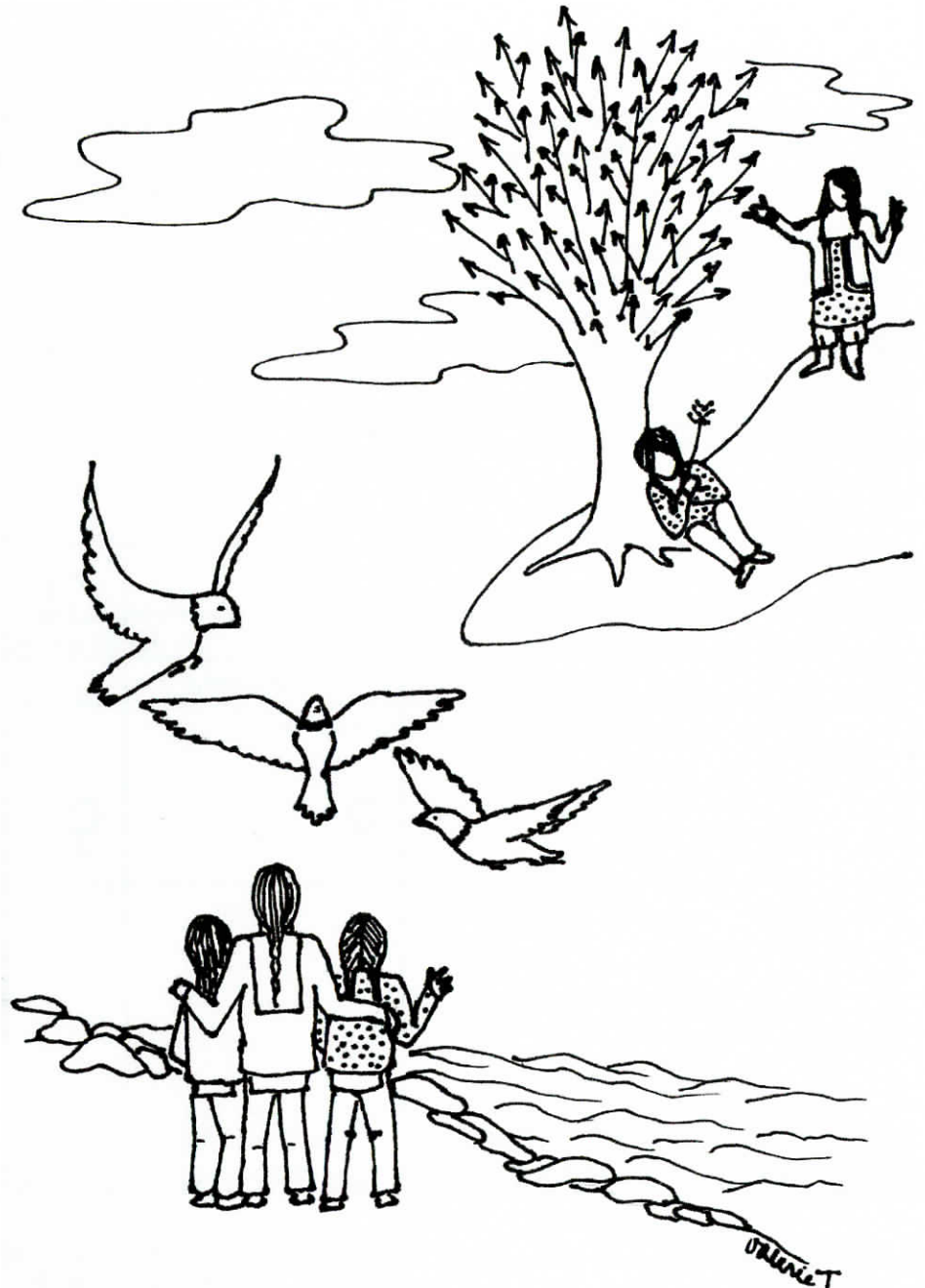
Listen, please, to the ancient Iroquois Indian Legend of the Tree of the Silver Arrows.

This legend came to us from Nickodemus Bailey of the Senecas. Even though "Nick" graduated from the famous old Carlisle Indian School, he is still thoroughly a Seneca, and he and his wife live much in the traditions of the past. The Tree of the Silver Arrows is a legend that was recited to Nick many times by his grandmother, to whom it had been handed down by the tribal story tellers of long, long ago.

It seems that a father and two sons left their lodge and determined to travel to the rim of the earth and then across the crystal lake to the Spirit Land. They came to the lake and there they found three great eagles who spoke to them saying they would carry them across the waters. The father and two sons sat on the broad backs of the eagles and away they flew until they came to the silvery shores of the Spirit Land. Here they were greeted by the shadowy forms of chiefs and braves and maidens who had been claimed by the Great Spirit, and among them was one maiden far more beautiful than any of the others. The moment the younger son saw her he loved her, and from the adoring glances that shone from her eyes that she returned his affections.

For three days the father and his sons remained in the Spirit Land and each day the younger one wooed the lovely spirit maiden, urging her to return to earth with him and share his lodge. But she tearfully explained that this could not be. She was of the Spirit World and never could go back to the Earth Land. The only way they could be together would be for the young brave to return to earth and await the Death Call of the Great Spirit and then join her in the Spirit World.

So, at last came the hour of the departure of the father and his sons, but the younger brave was not to be found. They searched in crystal groves, in misty valleys, among the silvery trees until at last they found him. He was lying beneath the Tree of the Silver Arrows, the tree that had silver shafts instead of boughs and silver arrows instead of leaves. He had plucked one of the arrows from the tree and plunged it into his love-laden heart, so that he might join his beloved in the Spirit Land.



Yaiknea

May

2023

SUNDAY Awëdadogëhdöh	MONDAY O'wëdë:dat	TUESDAY Swëda:dih	WEDNESDAY Ha'dewëdaëh	THURSDAY Ëyohë'tgeh	FRIDAY Wë:da:k'ah	SATURDAY Wë:da:k
	1	2	3	4	5 ○	6
7	8	9	10	11	12 ◐	13
14 Mother's Day	15	16	17	18	19 ●	20 Armed Forces Day
21	22 Victoria Day, Canada	23	24	25	26	27 ◑
28	29 Memorial Day	30	31		APRIL 2023 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	JUNE 2023 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

The Legend of the Maid of the Mist

Long ago the Seneca people lived on the side of the Niagara River, and the thundering falls. Behind the falls the Thunder God, He'no* and his two sons made their home.

There came a time when the people began to suffer from an unknown illness, killing many people. Medicine men could find no cure.

It was decided that a sacrifice must be made to appease the Thunder God. The chief's daughter, LelawalꞫ was chosen for this sacrifice. She would be sent over the falls in a bark canoe filled with gifts for He'no.

As she sailed through the rushing water, over the falls, she flew out of the canoe, but as she fell one of He'no sons rescued her just before she would have struck the rocks below. He'no informs LelawalꞫ that a giant serpent is the cause of the sickness and deaths of her people, the serpent is poisoning the water.

She is then instructed to carry the message to the people that when the tribe moves north, he will send a thunderbolt down to destroy the being that has plagued her people.

The serpent is killed rolling down the rapids. The serpent becomes wedged upon rocks at either side of the river, in death his body curled, that is how the Horseshoe Falls took its shape.

**In the book the Thunder God is called "Hinun," editors decided "He'no" was the Thunder God more recognizable to the Seneca people.*

Story chosen by Natalie Parker, 2021. This story is from the book, "Legends, Lore and Secrets of Western New York," by Lorna McDonald Czarnota, 2009, pages 32-34.





Picture of Olive Doctor Charles, 1940

Hayë:niah

June

2023

SUNDAY Awëdadogëhdöh	MONDAY O'wëdë:dat	TUESDAY Swëda:dih	WEDNESDAY Ha'dewëdaëh	THURSDAY Ëyohë'tgeh	FRIDAY Wë:da:k'ah	SATURDAY Wë:da:k
MAY 2023 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	JULY 2023 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31			1	2	3
4 	5	6	7	8	9	10 
11	12	13	14 Flag Day	15	16	17
18 Father's Day 	19 Juneteenth	20	21 First Day of Summer	22	23	24
25	26 	27	28	29	30	

THE BIG ROCK

As far as I remember "the big Rock" was here, between Parker Road and Meadville Road.

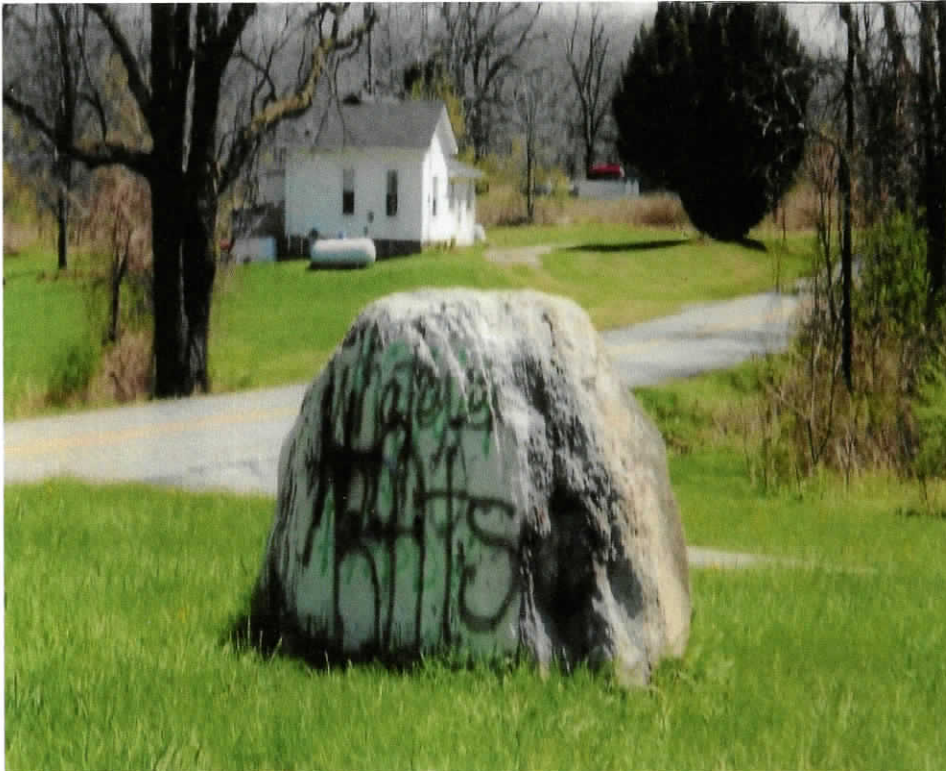
It is said that during the 1800's there was an epidemic, and a lot of Indians died. According to legend, supposedly the Indians that died were buried under the rock.

It was very contagious, so they were buried with all their belongings, so as not to spread the epidemic. It was a bad time in our land, however, some survived so we're still here. The "Big Rock" of course is still here too.

However, as I look back, it seemed that the rock was huge. Today the "Rock" still stands as a constant reminder of our dark days.

Story by the late Delores Carpenter.

"The Big Rock" on the reservation, 4-28-08. Photo by Jeanne Taradena.



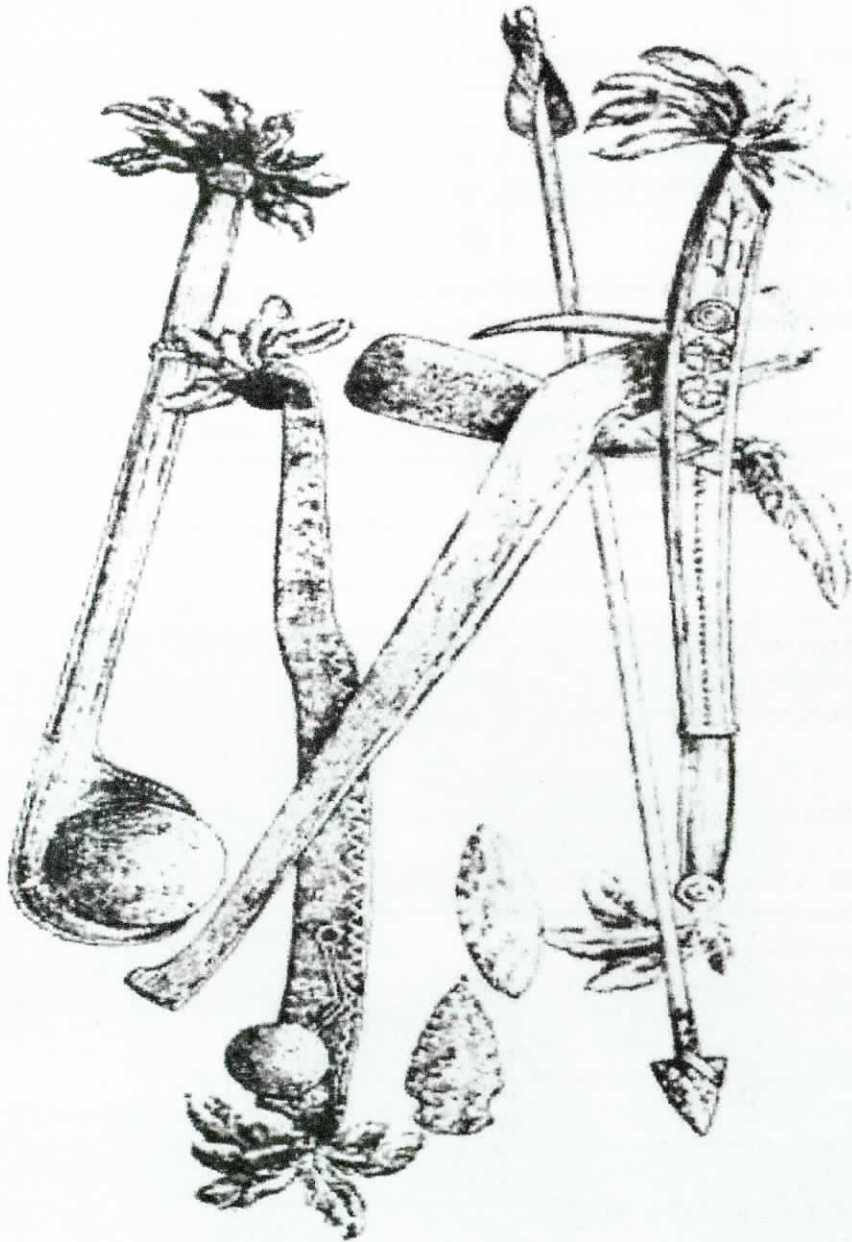
JoAnn Sillloway Peters, approx. 1 yr. old, circa 1937

Saisgekneh

July

2023

SUNDAY Awëdadogëhdöh	MONDAY O'wëdë:dat	TUESDAY Swëda:dih	WEDNESDAY Ha'dewëdaëh	THURSDAY Ëyohë'tgeh	FRIDAY Wë:da:k'ah	SATURDAY Wë:da:k
<p>JUNE 2023</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30</p>	<p>AUGUST 2023</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31</p>					<p>1</p> <p>Canada Day, Canada</p>
2	3 ○	4 Independence Day	5	6	7	8
9	10 ●	11	12	13	14	15
16	17 ●	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	●				



HOW MICE OVERCAME THE WARRIORS

Once a tribe of Iroquois became very warlike and cruel. They liked to follow the warpath rather than the hunting trails.

These warriors thought only of the war dance. They forgot to give thanks. They forgot the planting season, the sweet waters of the maple, and even forgot to praise the Great Spirit, in song and dance. They forgot the strawberries and even the green corn.

To fight was the one desire of their lives, the one thought that filled their lives, the one thought that filled their minds. They boasted that no one was so fierce and bloodthirsty as they.

One day, a dispute arose in a neighboring tribe of their nation. A fierce cry was raised, and the war dance was begun. The chiefs painted their bodies, donned their war shirts, sharpened their weapons.

By the time they had made ready the sun had set, and council was called, it was decided that war would not start until moonrise. So, the warriors lay down to sleep.

As they slept, another council was called, a council of mice. Hundreds and hundreds of mice who had heard the warriors boast of their strength. The leader of the mice spoke: "The Creator did not give men strength, that they should fight and kill one another.

Let every mouse destroy at least one weapon before the moon shall rise." At this, the mice set to work.

When the warriors awoke, every weapon was useless, and the mice had scampered away.

Story by "Iroquois Folk Tales, Stories the Iroquois Tell Their Children." By Mabel Powers, pages 82-84, story chosen by Gary Moses

Gedë'okneh

August

2023

SUNDAY Awëdadogëhdöh **MONDAY** O'wëdë:dat **TUESDAY** Swëda:dih **WEDNESDAY** Ha'dewëdaëh **THURSDAY** Ëyohë'tgeh **FRIDAY** Wë:da:k'ah **SATURDAY** Wë:da:k

<p>JULY 2023</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31</p>	<p>SEPTEMBER 2023</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30</p>	1 ○	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 ●	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16 ●	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 ●	25	26
27	28	29	30	31 ○		

The Blanket of Human Eyes

Three Indian maidens are seated on a bench sewing a blanket embroidered with human eyes. One Indian who has lost his eyes carries a second Indian who refuses to gaze upon the blanket.

The boys' eyes were stolen by the maidens in the painting and then the maidens sewed to eyes into a quilt. The Haudenosaunee were very concerned about preserving their vision.

There are several other versions of this story.

Story chosen by Loren Jones, 2021. From the book, "Seneca Myths & Folk Tales," by Arthur C. Parker, University of Nebraska Press, 1923



Watercolor painting "The Blanket of Human Eyes," by Ernest Smith, Tonawanda Reservation, 1937.
From the collection of the Rochester Museum & Science Center,
Rochester, N.Y

Gë:ökneh **September** 2023

SUNDAY
Awëdadogëhdöh

MONDAY
O'wëdë:dat

TUESDAY
Swëda:dih

WEDNESDAY
Ha'dewëdaëh

THURSDAY
Ëyohë'tgeh

FRIDAY
Wë:da:k'ah

SATURDAY
Wë:da:k

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
AUGUST 2023 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	OCTOBER 2023 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31				1	2
3	4 Labor Day	5	6 ☾	7	8	9
10 Grandparents Day	11	12	13	14	15 ●	16
17	18	19	20	21	22 ☾	23 First Day of Fall
24	25	26	27	28	29 ○	30



Original Artwork by Ian Blackchief, 2021

THE VAMPIRE SKELETON

Tonawanda Reservation, 1937. It was said there was a man who had died, it was known he was a witch. It was also known he was not dead in some manner. He was a very strange sort of man, and his people knew very little about him or his habits. His people were very afraid of him.

While he lingered in his deathbed, he made known his wishes as to the manner of his burial. He wanted his remains to be kept in his lodge and that anyone hunting could use his place without any trouble. But no children nor even women must ever stay there, for it would not be safe if they did. That was the wish of the old man.

A day's journey from that old man's hut lived a hunter, his wife, and a small girl. The village was unusually large as villages go in those days, so the hunter and his family had not heard the last wishes of the hermit witch. So, when hunting season came along, he took his wife and their little girl with them. Upon coming to the shack of the hermit witch, they thought everything was so good and handy, they decided to stop there. They noticed the dead man in the next room; but it was a common custom in those days, they thought nothing of it.

They arrived late in the afternoon, the woman started to make dinner. She saw corn braids hanging in the house. She would make bread. Meanwhile her husband lay down with their daughter. It was getting darker, and the woman thought she heard a noise. It was like an animal gnawing on bone or an animal eating. She looked at her husband and asked him, "Are you sleep?"

At that very moment, she saw the terrible bloody pools of her husband's blood, growing ever larger. The vampire skeleton's face and hands were covered in blood. He had eaten her husband; nothing could be done to save him. She must grab up her daughter and try to save herself and her daughter. She had to RUN! That vampire skeleton was chasing after her!

*Story from "Legends of the Longhouse", by J.J. Cornplanter, pages 140-150,
chosen by Melissa Smith*

Gahsa'kneh

October

2023

SUNDAY Awëdadogëhdöh	MONDAY O'wëdë:dat	TUESDAY Swëda:dih	WEDNESDAY Ha'dewëdaëh	THURSDAY Ëyohë'tgeh	FRIDAY Wë:da:k'ah	SATURDAY Wë:da:k
1	2	3	4	5	6 ●	7
8	9 Indigenous People's Day	10	11	12	13	14 ●
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 ●	23	24	25	26	27	28 ○
29	30	31 Halloween			SEPTEMBER 2023 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	NOVEMBER 2023 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

The Dance of the Little People

This legend is very old and is known only by a very few. This is the story of the "Dark Dance" or the Dance of the Little People. Long time ago when people lived closer to nature and were able to converse with animals, when we were so near to being what the animals are, that nothing was unusual for a Hunter or traveler to be aided by some animal from being lost or from death; such were the conditions of the times when our legend begins.

There lived a small boy and his grandmother in their little lodge at the end of the village. As was the custom of the day, the boy had a small bow and arrow to hunt small game as part of his training.

One day he wandered farther and farther. He came upon the edge of a cliff where he heard voices at the base of a tree. The voices were very strange. He recognized the voices as being human like himself, only very much smaller than himself. The two small beings were hunting a black squirrel, because black squirrel was very much desired. In fact, black squirrel meat to them was just like buffalo meat to our people. The Boy helped kill the squirrel and the two little beings invited the Boy to come with them.

Just a short distance from where they were, they were home. There was an old man and an old woman who were the parents of the two little friends. The old man said, "We are what you people must call the 'Djonh-geh-onh,' the Great Little People." There are three tribes of us. We are the Hunters. The second group are called the Stone Throwers. The last tribe are those that wake up the plants and cause them to grow in the spring, they paint the fruit red when it ripens, we are created by your Maker, and he has ordained duties to us which we must always be doing to help your people. We have been waiting all this time to get in contact with your people so our relationship would be made known to each other.

This is the first time, and we will rejoice with our own ceremony, which will be yours from now on. This ceremony is the Dark Dance, and really belongs to us, you must observe everything that takes place, and remember everything so you can carry it back to your people, which will bring them good luck. They in turn will remember us and our relation by getting up the ceremony for our enjoyment.



Story by Melissa Smith, 2022, taken from the book, "Legends of the Longhouse," by J.J. Cornplanter, J.B. Lippincott, 1938, pages 32-43.

Picture from "Project Gutenberg's Iroquois Folk Tales-Stories the Iroquois Tell Their Children," by Mabel Powers, 2007, EBook, <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/22096/22096-h/22096-h.htm>

Jodto:h

November

2023

SUNDAY
Awëdadogëhdöh

MONDAY
O'wëdë:dat

TUESDAY
Swëda:dih

WEDNESDAY
Ha'dewëdaëh

THURSDAY
Ëyohë'tgeh

FRIDAY
Wë:da:k'ah

SATURDAY
Wë:da:k

<p>OCTOBER 2023</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31</p>	<p>DECEMBER 2023</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31</p>		1	2	3	4
5 Daylight Saving Time Ends ☾	6	7 Election Day	8	9	10	11 Veterans Day
12	13 ●	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 ☾	21	22	23 Thanksgiving	24	25
26	27 ○	28	29	30		

The Orphan Girl, A Legend of the Horned Serpent

Long ago there was such a thing as a snake-like animal that lived in the deep waters near the land of the Seneca. He was a terror but could also be kindhearted as shown in the legend of the Horned Serpent or Djo-nih-gwa-dohn. A young female child found herself without family and lived place to place. She was an orphan and was shunned because she had no relatives or home for herself.

The people distained her because of this and cunningly invited her to join in a canoe trip to go to an island where the huckleberries were known to grow plentifully. The people plotted that she would be encouraged to go off to pick the berries on her own and meet up with the others at an appointed time. When the time arrived the people and their canoes were gone, and the girl was left to fend for herself.

As the time grew dark, she lay on the bank by the water and cried for her misfortune.

Suddenly a voice emerged from the cloud of darkness and spoke to the girl telling her that he was aware of her plight and had been nearby to hear the people leaving the island. The voice continued speaking introducing himself as Djo-nih-gwa-dohn and he would help her to get back to her home where the people lived.

He cautioned her about his appearance as she was instructed that come the morning, he would carry her across the water by sitting atop his head in between his two horns. He told her to go and prepare twelve willow whips and that she should use these when she noticed that he was beginning to sink down into the water. When she was to use the whip one at a time, she was told to tell him "Jah-gonh" and throw the whip away. This would continue to allow his massive body to glide along the water.

He told her that she should be safe unless they were spotted by the Thunder Spirit. They began their journey in clear sky with her continuing to encourage his swimming as the clouds came into view and the threat of a storm began to brew.

Onward they raced across the waters with her finally being let off near the shoreline where her home awaited. Djo-nih-gwa-dohn told the girl that she was never to reveal how she was able to return to the people but only to teach them a dance to honor him and that this would be for all time.

This girl was befriended by this being and given a token of their friendship that she was to have as it would bring her luck and protection. In the days to remain, this girl was treated kindly and revered by those who had formally shunned her.

Story chosen by Cookie Jonathan, 2021. From the book "Legends of the Longhouse," by J.J. Cornplanter, J.B. Lippincott, 1938, pages 58-65.



Original artwork by Lloyd Thomas, Jr., 2021

Nis'ah

December

2023

SUNDAY
Awëdadogëhdöh

MONDAY
O'wëdë:dat

TUESDAY
Swëda:dih

WEDNESDAY
Ha'dewëdaëh

THURSDAY
Ëyohë'tgeh

FRIDAY
Wë:da:k'ah

SATURDAY
Wë:da:k

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 2023 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	JANUARY 2024 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31				1	2
3	4	5 ☾	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 ●	13	14	15	16
17	18	19 ☾	20	21 First Day of Winter	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	Christmas Day	Boxing Day, Canada	○			

The Tonawanda Reservation Historical Society wishes to thank
the Rochester Museum and Science Center, especially the
Collections Department and Archivist-Librarian for the use of
some of the images presented here. Copyright for these
images belong to the Rochester Museum and Science Center,
657 East Avenue,
Rochester, N.Y. 14607.

Printing by Hodgins Engraving, 3817 West Main Road
Batavia, N.Y. 14020 • 585-343-4444

