

Haida storyteller speaks at the 4th Annual Tribal Storytelling Festival and Workshop

Referring to the woman who is at the base of Haida totem poles: "... not only does that female energy tie together water, earth, and sky, (but) the balance of the cosmos is entirely dependent on the stability of that female energy. - Woodrow Morrison, Haida storyteller

Eight master tribal storytellers will share traditional stories at the Fourth Annual Northwest Indian Storytelling Festival being celebrated in Portland Friday through Sunday November 13-15. Friday and Saturday are festival events which open at 7:30 PM, and the Tribal Storytelling Symposium is Sunday afternoon, November 15 at 1:30 PM at Lewis and Clark College's Agnes Flanagan Chapel, 0615 SW Palatine Hill Road, Portland, OR (97219).

One of the featured storytellers is guest storyteller Woodrow Morrison, Haida elder, master storyteller, History Keeper, filmmaker, and attorney. Created by his ancestry to be an oral historian and storyteller, he is coming to Portland to share inspirational stories from his rich cultural heritage. On Friday evening, he will tell of "the early beginnings of the Humans - all Humans. It is referred to as, "Sangaay "alaa heathgii aasang" (When the Atmosphere was always Pleasant) - our "Garden of Eden" story." Woody says, "It is a very long story but I can tell it in 20 minutes."

"Woody" will also participate in a panel discussion at Sunday Afternoon's Storytelling Symposium which begins at 1:30 PM, also at Lewis and Clark College's Agnes Flanagan Chapel. He tells why storytelling and his heritage saved his life. He says, "At age three, I was taken to the History Keepers. Then when I was thirteen, I was sent to Boarding School and when I was 21, I left Haskell Institute to join the Navy. Then after over 4 years in the Navy (18 years away from home) I returned home, disillusioned, lost, Spiritually empty and filled with rage. And as soon as I returned, my training resumed but I wanted nothing more to do with it."

"Somehow during the ensuing years, the years of training kept me from hurting myself... it was a long journey to the Sweat Lodge; the lessons began to return to conscious memory. By chance I met Paula Underwood, who was a History Keeper. She told me a part of the history and it matched with Haida history. Later, in New Zealand ,Maori History Keepers told me of their early beginnings and again they matched with Haida. The road back to balance had begun."

The weekend of storytelling events will open at 7:30 PM on both Friday and Saturday evenings, November 13-14 with tribal drumming and singing. Aat the Storytellers Symposium, which opens at 1:30 PM Sunday, November 15, the public is welcome to hear storytellers from Northwest tribes share their rich perspectives and colorful experiences about the essential role of storytelling that is contributing to today's cultural renaissance in Indian Country. Three separate Silent Charity Auctions will be held during these public events to support the growth of the Northwest Indian Storytellers Association.

Tribal members, whether enrolled or self-identified, can request information about Northwest Indian Storytellers Association membership and the emerging storytellers' workshop being held all day Saturday, November 14 and Sunday morning, November 15. NISA and workshop registration forms are at www.wisdomoftheelders.org. You can email NISA@wisdomoftheelders.org or call (503) 768-6155 for more info. The all day workshop starts with breakfast at 8 AM on both Saturday and Sunday. Saturday events include dinner at 5 PM followed by the festival at 7:30 PM. Sunday events begin with breakfast at 8 AM and conclude with the Storytelling Symposium from 1:30 to 4:00 PM. No one will be turned away for lack of funds, but you need to register in advance for the workshops so meal counts can be accurate.

NISA was formed in October 2005 to encourage, preserve and strengthen traditional storytelling among Northwest tribes and to share these gifts with public audiences. NISA was organized by Wisdom of the Elders, Inc., a Portland area non-profit committed to Native American cultural preservation, education, and race reconciliation.

Festival and workshop funding has been provided in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, McKenzie River Gathering Foundation, Regional Arts and Culture Council, & Multnomah County Cultural Coalition. Festival hosts include the Indigenous Ways of Knowing Program at Lewis and Clark College and Wisdom of the Elders, Inc.

We have arranged special hotel rates for out of town members during the weekend with most rooms allowing 4 occupants per room. Call these 2 hotels directly to make your reservations and mention NISA to get your special rate.

Motel Option #1: Holiday Inn Express at Lake Oswego (4.7 miles from L&C College)

\$69.00 + 10% tax of \$6.90 = \$75.90 per night. Call Amy or Steve (503) 620-2980. They will need a credit card to book. They provide complimentary hot breakfast bar and high speed internet, heated pool and fitness room. They will honor this rate up until 6 November.

Motel Option #2: Milwaukie Inn in Milwaukie (3 miles to L&C College)

\$55.00+ 7% \$58.85; they will need a credit card to book Call Dipen Patel (503) 659-2125 milwaukieinn@yahoo.com We put a hold on 10 rooms w. 2 queens; plus 1 is a 2 bed suite and love seat with a jacuzzi for 5 for \$74.00 plus 7% tax; please reserve a week in advance.

Tickets will be available at the door on a sliding scale at Lewis and Clark College's Agnes Flanagan Chapel, 0615 SW Palatine Hill Road, Portland, OR (97219). Driving directions are at <http://www.lclark.edu/visit/directions/>