

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER NEWSLETTER

September Edition | 2010



Changes Coming to NACC

Rebecca Riall
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Dear Friends,

Thank you for your support of NACC and our work through the last two years. I've been honored to serve NACC as Chair of its board of directors during this time—working, scheming, crafting, laughing, and crying with many of you.

I'm also about to leave Bloomington for the next year to conduct field research for my PhD. I'm very pleased to be replaced as Chair by Marilyn Cleveland (Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and White Mountain Apache descent), with assistance from new Executive Director Del Criscenzo.

I also want to invite each of you to nominate yourself or someone else to our Board of Directors at any time. Directors make a hefty time commitment to the NACC—time which is compensated by

the satisfaction of building resources for the Native community, and not in money. Directors must attend meetings, help fund-raise, make critical decisions, keep on top of the nuts-and-bolts legal requirements of a nonprofit, and take responsibility for staffing and programming at the NACC. They are rewarded by a community center that is vibrant, welcoming, and meets its two-part mission to serve the Native community and educate the general public about who we really are.

The Board of Directors is open to anyone, but 2/3 of its members must be Native American at any given time. The Board is the primary governing body for NACC.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to work together the last two years. I can't wait to hear about NACC while on the road!

Sincerely yours,

Rebecca Riall

How to Get Involved

Visit the *Bloomington Volunteer Network* for a full listing of volunteer opportunities at NACC.

Their website can be found at:
<http://volunteer.united-e-way.org/cob-vn/volunteer/>

A few opportunities include:

- Office/Gift Shop Staff
- Lending Library Staff
- One-time Programming Staff

...Along with many more!

How to Donate

Donations can be mailed to :

1101 N. Dunn St.
Bloomington, IN 47404

They are greatly appreciated
AND tax-deductible.

A Gift Shop at the NACC

Delphine Criscenzo

treasurer@naccbloomington.org

In September 2010, the Native American Community Center will open a gift shop within our office on 1101 North Dunn Street. Items for sale will include Native American style jewelry, all handmade and donated by local artists.

These include necklaces, chokers, earrings, bracelets and key chains. Prices range from \$1 to \$40 for the most expensive pieces. All the proceeds from the sales benefit the Native American Community Center, a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. The center hopes to expand sales to include books, CDs, and DVDs in the future. The NACC gift shop will help the center financially, but it also aims to promoting local Native artists and introduce the Bloomington community to different types of Native art.

What often comes to mind when we hear “Native American style jewelry” are chokers, turquoise rings, or beaded work. And the NACC’s gift shop carries some of these, but we also sell original pieces from local Native American artists that move away from well known traditional artistic patterns. One of the missions of the NACC is to educate about the diversity of Native cultures throughout the United States and Canada, and also to emphasize the contemporariness of these cultures. By giving local Native artists a chance to display their work, the NACC emphasizes that Native art is not just defined by what it looks like, but rather by who made it.

For our most current open hours, please visit our website at <http://www.naccbloomington.org> or call (812) 548-NDNS.

Want to Subscribe to the Newsletter?

This newsletter will be sent out bi-monthly (every 2 months), and will contain articles from NACC board members, news on upcoming events and other various content pertaining to NACC activity.

If you are interested in receiving the NACC Newsletter for *free* via email, contact: **info@naccbloomington.org**.

To receive a print copy, please send your name, address, and a check for \$12 to the NACC at 1101 N. Dunn St., Bloomington, IN 47408. This helps us cover postage and printing costs.

Welcome to FNECC Director Brian Gilley

The NACC Board of Directors welcomes Brian Gilley as the new Executive Director of the IUB First Nations Educational and Cultural Center. Prof. Gilley is of Oklahoma and Eastern Band Cherokee and Oklahoma Chickasaw descent. He grew up in Shawnee, Oklahoma, on the historic Citizen Potawtomie Band reservation. We are looking forward to continued partnerships among NACC, FNECC, and the Native student groups at IUB.

For more information about the FNECC, please visit <http://www.indiana.edu/~fnecc/>.



*A selection from the
NACC gift shop.*

Native American Representation in Video Games and Movies

Laura Reagan
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On a list of the top ten most controversial video games in history is the game Custer's Revenge. It was a video game made for Atari in 1982. One of the tasks one had to perform in the game was to rape a Native American woman who was tied to a pole. Granted, this was an old school pixelated Atari game, but the object of the task still stood: to rape a Native Woman. The game was outlawed in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and Suffolk County, New York. The backlash against Custer's Revenge was so strong that the game eventually was pulled from circulation.

Another, more recent video game that was released is called Gun. It was developed by the Neversoft and released in 2005. When the game is starting, there is an animation of some Spanish soldiers walking through the hot desert. They are attacked and killed by a savagely portrayed group of Apaches. The end of the animation is a priest cowering behind his oversized cross staff, and he is brutally killed. One of the missions in the game is to kill as many Apaches as possible and you earn bonus points for how brutally you kill them. Later in the game you have to work with the Apaches, after you have already murdered them.

Being an Apache myself, I find this offensive. My partner bought the game, not knowing my feelings about it. I told her that I did not like that game and I found it offensive. She asked me why because she didn't understand why it was "such a big deal" to me. I explained it this way. I grew up a bouncy dark haired dark eyed dark skinned girl in a suburb of Indianapolis. Most of my friends did not look like me. The only place where I saw on TV people who looked like me was old westerns where my people were supposed to be the bad guys. We were portrayed as brutal, savage and less than

human. The first place where I saw someone on TV where I could see myself represented positively was in the Michael Jackson music video Black or White, where he is dancing with pow wow dancers. To this day that is my favorite Michael Jackson song.

When all you see is yourself and your family represented as the bad guys, it is not a good feeling you get. And when children and teenagers see these video games and movies, what do they learn from it? In recent years, there has been more of a positive Native influence in film. Film makers make an effort to seek advice from Natives and use actual Native actors in movies. The famed crying "Indian" Iron Eyes Cody of the 1970s anti-pollution commercials was Italian. He had no Native ancestry. But, still, every so often a movie or game is released showing Natives in the same old stereotypical less than human way. Even when film makers work with Native populations on their films, Natives are still often portrayed stereotypically—the old sage in touch with nature, or the beautiful woman who can't wait to throw herself at the feet of the strong European man who is the hero in the story. Natives are portrayed as communing with nature and able to talk to or transform into animals. I was so happy to see actor Adam Beach join the cast of Law and Order SVU because he wasn't playing a Native American cop on the show. He was playing a cop who happened to be Native American. Unfortunately, his character was only on the show for one season. There is a need for more positive representation of Native people in film and video games. Not in stereotypical roles but as average people.



*Gourds at the NACC
Community Garden*

About the Native American Community Center of Bloomington

The Native American Community Center of Bloomington is a nonprofit serving the American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian community of southern Indiana, as well as educating the general public.

