Native News compiled by Dyani Bingham

Did you know?

Montana is home to the Assiniboine (Nakoda), Blackfeet (Niitsitapi), Crow (Apsaalooke), Chippewa Cree (Anishinabe Ne-i-yah-wahk), Gros Ventre (Aaninin), Northern Cheyenne (Tsitsistas and So'taeo'o), Sioux (Dakota), Salish and Kootenai (Selish Ktunaxa) and Little Shell Tribes?

Okan painted lodges

Indian Summer

Interested in exploring your surroundings this summer? Visiting Indian reservations is a fantastic way to learn more about Native art, culture, history and heritage.

It's powwow season. Here's a schedule of upcoming gatherings:

• 38th Annual Head Start Powwow, May 10 in Ronan (406-676-4509)

• Red Bottom Celebration, June 20-23 in Frazer (406-768-2416)

• White River Cheyenne Indian Days, June 21-23 in Busby (406-592-3252)

• Fourth of July Powwow, July 3-7 in Lame Deer (406-477-6284)

• Arlee Fourth of July Celebration, July 3-7 in Arlee (406-275-2727)

• North American Indian Days, July 11-14 in Browning (406-338-5194 or www.blackfeetnation.com)

For more information on powwows, go to www.visitmt.com and search Pow Wow Events.

The state tourism website also offers an Indian Nations travel guide, with an audio pronunciation guide, a guide to understanding and enjoying powwows, information on tribal histories and more. Go to www.visitmt.com/Places_To_Go/indian_nations/.

Seven Lodges

Another great travel resource is the Seven Lodges – Montana Tribal Tourism Handbook, which highlights American Indian hospitality, powwow etiquette, traveling tips, Indian Arts and Crafts Law, driving tips, cell-phone service and law enforcement info. The Seven Lodges guide also provides introductions to each tribal nation in Montana and highlights places to shop, eat and stay.

Find it at sevenlodges.dirxion.com.

Foundation offers fellowships for Native American artists

The Native Arts and Cultures Foundation, a philanthropic organization dedicated exclusively to the revitalization, appreciation and perpetuation of indigenous arts and cultures in the United States, is accepting applications through May 3 for its 2014 Artist Fellowships.

Through the fellowship program, the foundation seeks to foster the creativity of indigenous artists, allowing the opportunity for study, reflection, experimentation, and discovery. Last year, the first year of the Artist Fellowship Program, artist applicants had to be nominated. This year, the foundation is not requiring applicants to be nominated.

Awards will be made in six disciplines: visual arts, filmmaking, music, dance, literature, and traditional arts.

Applicant artists must demonstrate excellence, significant impact in their discipline, respect from their colleagues, and recognition in their field. The artist's work must be evolving and current. Native artists are defined as American Indian from federally and state-recognized United States tribes, Native Alaskan or Native Hawaiian.

Film fellowships will be considered for artists who have completed narrative or documentary films at least 60 minutes in length.

Traditional arts include practices in pottery, carving, basket making, textile weaving, jewelry making, or regalia making.

Fellowships provide $20,000 in support; application deadline is May 3. Guidelines and application procedures are available at the NACF website at nacf.us/2014-fellowships.

Deadline May 31 for Community Spirit Awards Nominations

The Community Spirit Awards is a national fellowship award for American Indian artists. First Peoples Fund chooses honorees for their commitment to sustaining the cultural values of native people.

The process of bringing spirit back to community is an important responsibility for artists – it is part of a sacred honor system. First Peoples Fund works to strengthen that honor system by recognizing these exceptional artists for knowing themselves, honoring others, and sustaining spirit in their own communities.

Nominees must be:

• Practicing artists of demonstrated maturity in their field;

• Continually practicing artists for a minimum of 10 years;

• Documented affiliate of a United States tribe (Native Alaska or Hawaii included);

Note: In addition to visual arts, First Peoples recognizes contemporary and traditional forms of performing arts and literary arts.

Fellowships will be awarded to artists who demonstrate:

• An artistic practice that passes on the traditions and the life ways of the people;

• A commitment to building the strength of native communities by sharing their skills and talents with others in their respective communities; and

• Artists who are deeply rooted and maintain direct ties to their tribal community.

Nominate artists by May 31 online at www.firstpeoplesfund.org/nomination_form.html or send a postcard, including complete names and addresses of both nominee and nominator, to PO Box 2977, Rapid City, SD 57709. Nominated candidates must be from an American Indian community; applications will be mailed out after nomination deadline has passed.

A national selection committee will review nominees and select awardees from those that meet the outlined qualifications. Fellowship recipients will receive $5,000 designed to give them the opportunity to "practice their art."

SKC hosts Traditional Native Games Conference

Salish Kootenai College in Pablo and the International Traditional Games Society are hosting a Traditional Native Games Conference, June 26-28. Keynote Speaker is Dr. Gregory Cajete of the University of New Mexico, author of Spirit of the Games. Other presenters include scientists working in the field of social intelligence and brain research.

This unique conference offers a historical perspective of cultural values, reveals the purposes of the traditional native games, and explores the importance of restoring the games as relevant tools for social development for today's youth and family.

Registration is $325 for adults and $125 for youths before June 1, and an additional $50 after June 1.

Register online at www.traditionalnativegames.org.

For more information, call Deanna Leader at 406-226-9141 or Craig Falcon at 406-226-9018.

News for Nonprofits

Renewed purpose: Four steps to focused, productive board meetings

Board meetings can inspire members and remind everyone you're part of something meaningful.

But just a few well-meaning yet misguided procedures can turn meetings into snooze-fests.

How do you keep everyone focused and get the most out of meetings?

Here are four key steps to energetic, productive meetings:

1. Do the work at home

The most common problem among deadly dull meetings: Time spent reviewing business info, when it could be done off-site.

Consent agendas allow boards to vote on items all at once, which means you can get voting done in as little as a few minutes.

This approach requires:

• A board chair or governance committee that gathers all the information needed and puts it in a format the board gets to read ahead of time, and

• All board-members doing their homework so they're prepared to vote.

Of course, if board members aren't prepared ahead of time, this approach won't work.

To get buy-in, make it clear how much time you expect board members to spend preparing for meetings. That way you'll have a better shot at getting them to study up in advance.

2. Make it meaningful

The second big time-eater: Long-winded discussions that get off-track.

This one can be a little tricky because board members need to have meaningful, substantive discussions during meetings.

The key: Choose one topic to discuss per meeting. The board chair can then draw people back to the topic when they start to get sidetracked.

"Board meetings are the centerpiece of the board's contribution," says Melanie Raymond, who's been chair of five different boards. "I'd rather err on the side of discussion so we don't end up just rubber stamping a bunch of management reports."

3. Share something good

In addition to discussing a meaningful issue, it's also a good idea to include one success story on the agenda.

You may want to work with the staff so you can share a testimonial or give an update on what your organization has achieved lately.

Keep it short – possibly as a feel-good element for the end of the meeting.

4. Be willing to change

Even great board meetings can get better. One way to keep improving: Assign a committee to take responsibility for monitoring board meetings.

The committee can be tasked with suggesting changes to make meetings more productive and interactive.

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