

6A SUNDAY, May 15, 2016

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TOWNS BRIEFS

'World War II Quilts' author in Hyde Park

Women on the home front during World War II applied their skills in making quilts for the benefit of U.S. soldiers, either as gifts or as raffle items to raise money for good causes.

Sue Reich, author of "World War II Quilts," will give a talk, today at 2 p.m. in the Henry A. Wallace Center at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Home, Route 9, Hyde Park. Following the presentation, Reich will be available to sign copies of her book. This is a free public event.

From 1941 to 1945, most able-bodied women expended their energies to include work in the defense industry, volunteering for the Red Cross, planting Victory Gardens and keeping the "home fires burning." These were essential activities of women on the home front.

"World War II Quilts," by Reich has 335 color photos with text identifying many colorful, patriotic quilts with military symbols and insignia. When possible, the original patterns and designs that inspired the quilts are included.

Copies of Sue Reich's book will be available for sale after the talk.

Contact Cliff Laube at 845-486-7745 or email clifford.laube@nara.gov with questions about the event.

Good deeds wanted for Mitzvah Day

Today is Mitzvah Day, an annual day of community service.

A mitzvah is usually thought of as a good deed and opportunities are available for families and individuals of all ages to participate. There will be active outdoor projects as well as sedentary ones, such as preparing mailings for nonprofit agencies.

A kickoff breakfast is set for 9 a.m. at Temple Beth El, 118 South Grand Ave., Poughkeepsie. Afterward, participants will go to their respective projects.

Many projects will take place both in the City of Poughkeepsie as well as Grace Smith House, Children's Home, Astor Home, Fahnestock Park trails, Gomez Mill house, and nursing homes in southern and central Dutchess.

Other activities of the day include the collection of boxed breakfast cereals to be distributed to those in need ("Cereal Counts!!!") and the assembly of birthday bags to enable children who otherwise wouldn't have a birthday party to have one.

For details and to sign up for a project, go to www.jewishdutchess.org

Spiritual leader 'walks in two worlds'

ED WOLF-WALKER CONLEY

FOR THE POUGHKEEPSIE JOURNAL

Editor's note: This is the second in a series of columns on the history of the Schaghticoke First Nations which, in partnership with the Town of Dover, is hosting a Unity Gathering in Wingdale with a cultural heritage festival June 4.

"Pummean weeche neen netomp"

Walk with me, my Friend (Algonquian)

Greetings, may we walk united in thought this day. I, for one, firmly believe that nothing is by chance in our lives. The trails we walk each dawn present us with the rising mist of yesterday's travel.

One fine day in the Kesos of Ashaunt, the month of July, I was invited to the 300th anniversary of Old Stone Church in East Haven, Connecticut. This landmark house of worship served as sanctuary for some of my ancestry during those dark years of displacement.

At this event I meet a young man, Hawkstorm Birch, and within minutes our lives forever changed. We spoke as if friends for years; our childhood, families and the dreams all shared a commonality. We spoke of our walk in two worlds, one white, one red and the confusion that it made of our daily lives.

In the days that followed, we spoke each night and rebound ties broken by years of family disconnect. We found



COURTESY PHOTO

Ed Wolf-Walker Conley, left, and Sachem Hawkstorm are working on uniting the families of the Schaghticoke people, First Nations.

ourselves questioning the future of the old reservation bordering Kent, Connecticut, and the need to unite those scattered by the winds of time.

Nothing by chance prevailing, Hawk and I started the journey home. Ancestral research, historical record digging and long hours on the road revealed the dawn, the rebirth of the Schaghticoke people, First Nations. We are the eastern woodland native people, the diaspora of displaced Mahican, Potatuck, Weantinock and Podunk, among others, who banded together as their own tribes found it impossible to survive.

The historic home base: a reservation bordering Kent, Connecticut, granted in 1736 by the General Assembly of the Colony of Connecticut. This land has become greatly reduced by encroachment, forcing many to move to surrounding villages and become assimilated into the New England landscape.

Our mission: to unite these families and relight the home fire so that a rich, self-sustaining culture would once again flourish in the Hoosic-Hudson River Valley. A revised tribal government would be required for such a task. We gathered those few we had shared the vision with and formalized the council. The young Hawkstorm was the natural choice for Sachem, his unbroken bloodline coming from the old founder and leader of Schaghticoke, Gidion Mauwehu (Mauwee), Hawk's seventh great-grandfather. As in the Sioux myth of the Hawkstorm, we now had a young warrior to carry our voice farther than the four winds. Several nights passed with my having the same confirmational dream:

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"I saw my young brother Hawkstorm as a child once again, maybe 4 or 5. I approached him as he played with a small hoop and asked what game he played. I then saw the hoop and its' details, it was a small medicine wheel made of grape vine and spider web with a stick run through the center. The four colors of man were blending as he turned the wheel top-like with both small hands as if making a fire. Hawk looked up from his task and replied, making things right grandfather. Will you help me?"

Since that short time ago, Hawkstorm has assumed the role he was born for. Many Schaghticoke who wanted a more traditional tribe based on cultural values, rather than pursuing a casino, have joined. The following are a few of the activities we have been involved with under his watch:

- » United Nation's Forum on indigenous issues
 - » United Nation's UNDP/Program for Sustainable Development
 - » Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign
 - » Drafting a Constitution of the Schaghticoke First Nations
 - » Formalizing tribal rolls and membership ID cards
 - » Outreach programs to assist membership enrollment
 - » Incorporating as a New York state non-profit organization
 - » Uncovering the historic location of the Schaghticoke within New York
- Travel well my friends.
Ed Wolf-Walker Conley is elder and spiritual leader of the Schaghticoke First Nations tribe. He is a traditional indigenous storyteller and wood-carver of spiritual masks.

