

HAUDENOSAUNEE CONFEDERACY ANNOUNCES POLICY ON FALSE FACE MASKS

The Grand Council of the Haudenosaunee, The Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy, issues the following policy statement regarding all medicine masks of the Haudenosaunee:

Medicine Societies

Within the Haudenosaunee there are various medicine societies that have the sacred duty to maintain the use and strength of special medicines, both for individual and community welfare. A medicine society is comprised of Haudenosaunee who have partaken of the medicine and are thereby bound to the protection and perpetuation of the special medicines. Such medicines are essential to the spiritual and emotional well-being of the Haudenosaunee communities. The medicine societies are a united group of individuals who must uphold and preserve the rituals that guard and protect the people, and the future generations.

Among these medicine societies are those that utilize the wooden masks and corn husk masks, which represent the shared power of the original medicine beings. Although there are variations of their images, all the masks have power and an intended purpose that is solely for the members of the respective medicine societies. Interference with the sacred duties of the societies and/or their masks is a violation of the freedom of the Haudenosaunee and does great harm to the welfare of the Haudenosaunee communities.

Status of Masks

All wooden and corn husk masks of the Haudenosaunee are sacred, regardless of size or age. By their very nature, masks are empowered the moment they are made. The image of the mask is sacred and is only to be used for its intended purpose. Masks do not have to be put through any ceremony or have tobacco attached to them in order to become useful or powerful. Masks should not be made unless they are to be used by members of the medicine society, according to established tradition.

Sales of Masks

No masks can be made for commercial purposes. Individuals who make masks for sale or sell masks to non-Indians violate the intended use of the masks, and such individuals must cease these activities as they do great harm to the Haudenosaunee. The commercialization of medicine masks is an exploitation of Haudenosaunee culture.

Authority over Medicine Masks

Each Haudenosaunee reservation has a medicine society that has authority over the use of masks for individual and community needs. Each society is charged with the protection of their sacred masks and the assurance of their proper use. The Grand Council of Chiefs has authority over all medicine societies and shall appoint individual leaders or medicine societies as necessary. However, no individual can speak or make decisions for medicine societies or the displacement of medicine masks. No institution has the authority over medicine masks, as they are the sole responsibility of the medicine societies and the Grand Council of Chiefs.

Exhibition of Medicine Masks

The public exhibition of all medicine masks is forbidden. Medicine masks are not intended for everyone to see and such exhibition does not recognize the sacred duties and special functions of the masks.

The exhibition of masks by museums does not serve to enlighten the public regarding the culture of the Haudenosaunee as such an exhibition violates the intended purpose of the mask and contributes to the desecration of the sacred image. In addition, information regarding medicine societies is not meant for general distribution. The non-Indian public does not have the right to examine, interpret, or present the beliefs, functions, and duties of the secret medicine societies of the Haudenosaunee. The sovereign responsibility of the Haudenosaunee over their spiritual duties must be respected by the removal of all medicine masks from exhibition and from access to non-Indians.

Reproductions, castings, photographs, or illustrations of medicine masks should not be used in exhibitions, as the image of the medicine masks should not be used in these fashions. To subject the image of the medicine masks to ridicule or misrepresentation is a violation of the sacred functions of the masks.

The Council of Chiefs find that there is no proper way to explain, interpret, or present the significance of the medicine masks and therefore, ask that no attempt be made by museums to do so other than to explain the wishes of the Haudenosaunee in this matter.

Return of Medicine Masks

All Haudenosaunee medicine masks currently possessed by non-Indians, including Museums, Art Galleries, Historical Societies,

St. Regis Parish News

Evening of Reflection for

Catechists: A reminder to all catechists who signed up to attend the reflection evening at St. Joseph's in Massena on Sunday, April 28th from 4-7. If interested in car pooling please call Debbie or Lucille at the Hall. Sr. Catherine Livers will be guest speaker addressing the topic 'Come Follow Me, Go Teach All Nations' and dinner is included.

Confirmation Candidates are reminded to be at the Kateri Hall on Saturday April 27th at 6:45 a.m. to board the bus to attend Youth Alive 96 in Watertown. All students need to have their registration forms and fee turned in to the Hall by Tuesday, April 23rd at the latest. The \$25. Registration fee will include the bus charge as well. The group will return after participating in the day's activities around 8:30 p.m. Any parents with questions may contact Debbie at 358-2931.

Community Service Recognition: As part of their curriculum, students attending Wadhams Hall College in Ogdensburg par-

ticipate in volunteer hours at various area parishes and organizations. On Wednesday, April 24th there will be a recognition and appreciation evening in Ogdensburg to congratulate volunteers and sponsoring parishes

Universities, Commercial Enterprises, Foreign Governments, and Individuals should be returned to the Grand Council of Chiefs of the Haudenosaunee, who will ensure their proper use and protection for the future generations.

There is no legal, moral, or ethical way in which a medicine mask can be obtained or possessed by a non-Indian individual or institution, as in order for a medicine mask to be removed from the society it would require the sanction of the Grand Council of Chiefs. This sanction has never been given. We ask all people to cooperate in the restoration of masks and other sacred objects to the proper caretakers among the Haudenosaunee. It is only through these actions that the traditional culture will remain strong and peace will be restored to our communities.

Dawnaytoh,
Chief Leon Shenandoah, Tadadaho
Grand Council of the
Haudenosaunee
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and agencies.

St. Regis Parish is thankful for Mr. Jeffrey Lester, who has been volunteering in our religion program teaching on Tuesday afternoons, a grade 4 class from Salmon River. Thanks to Jeff and the Wadhams Hall Community for including our religious education program in their community service program.

Mass Change: A reminder that the Saturday anticipated mass time has been changed from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. and will remain at 7 p.m. throughout the summer months. This change will be in effect starting Saturday, April 20th.

Spring Fund Raiser Tickets: First drawing will be April 29th. Stop by the Hall or Rectory this week to purchase your ticket for \$20 Can. or Am. to be eligible for the 10 - \$100 drawings weekly through July 1st. Thanks to all those who are supporting this fund raising endeavor for our religion program.

Parents who took tickets to sell are asked to turn them in to the Hall by Friday, April 26th please.

Baptisms for April: If parents are interested in having their baby baptized this month, please call the Rectory for an appointment. Baptism date for the end of the month is April 28th.

Dredging Verified By Sampling

After the dredging was completed, the river bottom was divided into section of "grids", and samples of remaining sediments were collected to ensure that the dredging program had met EPA's cleanup goal of 1 part per million (ppm). An analysis of the samples indicated that PCB concentrations in all areas except one averaged less than 3 ppm.

The area adjacent to the GM plant outfall, however, continued to show elevated PCB levels during dredging. Despite repeated dredging attempts, final sampling results showed an average of 25 ppm. With the exception of one sample at 6,000 ppm (out of a total of 113 different sample locations in the river), none tested above 100 ppm. By early November, EPA determined that continued dredging was not likely to result in further PCB reduction.