



IAQ : Indigenous Affairs Quarterly

Baltimore Yearly Meeting Indigenous Affairs Committee

Winter, 2025

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In the News

The American Indian Society of DC (AISDC) sponsored its annual fundraising bazaar on December 6 with the help of Sandy Spring Meeting.



Reed Brown, Jr. of Wanblee, South Dakota, an Oglala Lakota, lends a hand at the AISDC bazaar in the Sandy Spring Community Hall.

(Did you miss it? Oops, you forgot to check out coming events in the fall issue of the IAQ.) **Thanks, Sandy Spring, for being a great ally!**

Also in the news...

In December of 2025, the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina finally achieved Federal recognition. This gives Tribal members access to Federal benefits and establishes a government-to-government relationship between the Tribe and the Federal government. This news is also local. Many Lumbee came to Baltimore, Maryland to find work and are represented in the

Baltimore American Indian Center (BAIC). BYM member Dellie James has long provided essential volunteer support to the BAIC.

And finally...drum roll!...the Indigenous Affairs Committee is thrilled to announce that a resource we've been working on for two years is at last available. [Quick Facts About Indigenous Americans](#) provides facts and citations about Native Americans, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians. It is intended to serve as a resource for indigenous peoples who are engaged in education, lobbying, or grant writing and make their work a bit easier. To this end, the online document offers live links for nearly every citation, making it possible to go directly to the source for more information. We also hope that meetings in BYM and the wider Quaker community will find the document a useful educational tool. We have used our committee



The president of AISDC, Allie Myers-Hall, and one of the bazaar coordinators, Jessica Harrah.

budget to order hard copies and will have them available at Quarterly Meeting in February. If you have a use for more copies, please write us.

Thanks to our contracted data expert and primary author, Alexis Contreras of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and to Pat Powers, who tirelessly reviewed and enhanced the resource. Check it out and pass the word!

What We're Learning

Dedicated Tribal members are determined to preserve the endangered language of Passamaquoddy, which has a declining number of Native speakers who are fluent in the language – less than 7 percent of the 3400 enrolled members. Many older people died in the COVID pandemic, taking vital and irreplaceable knowledge with them, and as elders continue to pass on, more is lost. An organization called “Speaking Place” hosts English “fasts” where members speak only Passamaquoddy and offers online training.

Tribal members see their Native language as a critical link to their identity. Passamaquoddy is very different from English, emphasizing relationships and descriptions rather than simple nouns that can easily be placed within a hierarchy. For example, to speak of the moon in Passamaquoddy, one might use the word “nipawset.” But, as a recent article explains, the word does not exactly mean moon. It translates to something moving along at night, or night-walker. Gail Dana observes, “If the language that you’re speaking tells you that there’s life to everything here, then your thought process is different.” Learn more at:

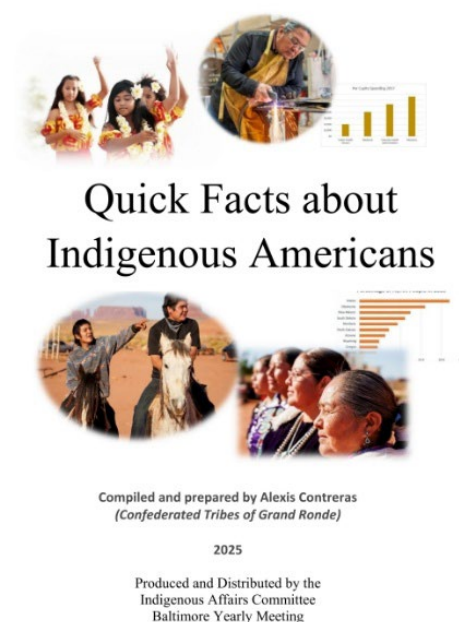
<https://www.pressherald.com/2025/12/21/to-fight-loss-passamaquoddy-speakers-are-talking-new-life-into-their-language/> You may also want to explore the Tribe’s website: <https://www.passamaquoddy.com/>

Resources

Attention, library committees! Check out Heartdrum, which offers books for children and teens by Indigenous authors and illustrators. “Heartfelt, groundbreaking, and unexpected, these beloved books emphasize the present and future of Native peoples and the strength of young Indigenous heroes.” Here is the link: <https://www.harpercollins.com/collections/heartdrum-books-by-native-american-authors>

Special Events

The Penn Museum, located on the campus of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, spent two years redesigning its Native North American Gallery with the help of about 80 Native



American curators. The renovated gallery opened on November 22, 2025 with a focus on Native American history. If you're planning a visit, here's a great opportunity for listening to our history as told by Native voices.

In January and February, Towards Right Relationship with Native Peoples, a program of Friends Peace Teams, is offering a four-part online series with Nia To Go There, A Return to Earth. Nia illuminates how colonial cultural perspectives negatively impact our relationships and how Indigenous perspectives can guide us into right relationship, bringing a deep awareness of our interconnectedness to the forefront of our consciousness. These webinars are presented as a series, in which each session speaks to the others. However, registration for each is separate. The first session is January 10. : Register here: <https://friendspeaceteams.org/return-to-the-earth-module-1/>

Opportunities to Partner

Speaking Place, which we discussed above, welcomes contributions to help preserve the Pasamaquoddy language. Check out their mission and program here: <https://www.speakingplace.org/> You may also want to check out the MICA group, a nonprofit with a robust program to revive Native languages: <https://micagroup.org/language-justice/>

Newly elected Congresswoman Adelita Grijalva (AZ-07) introduced legislation in early December of 2025: the Save Oak Flat from Foreign Mining Act. First introduced by her father in 2015, the landmark bill would repeal the 2014 controversial National Defense Authorization Act rider that handed over 2,422 acres of Arizona's Tonto National Forest, including the sacred site of Oak Flat (Chi'chil Biłdagoteel), to a foreign mining corporation. Advocates point out that the Chinese-owned copper mine would not only destroy a site sacred to Apache people, but also endanger Arizona's water supply and harm the environment. Consider calling your Congressional representative and asking him or her to support the bill! Also, three lawsuits aiming to keep the U.S. Forest Service from turning over Oak Flat to the mining company have gone before the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for arguments Jan. 7.