



Art mask by one of the students at Nanitch Sahallie Youth Treatment Center.

NANITCH SAHALLIE Youth Treatment Center

Nanitch Sahallie Youth residential Treatment Center's recovery process involves many aspects. As part of the program, students must write a fully researched report about their people and heritage. The activity gives the client an opportunity to learn about their tribes, while enforcing the idea that being Native American is something to be proud of. The following story is printed with permission.

Kalispel Indians

Kalispels are nomadic hunters, diggers, and fishers, noted for their sturgeon-nosed canoes. They settled in the secluded valley of the Pend Orielle River. The climate there is mild, with hot summers and cold winters. Kalispel Indians are related to Coeur d'Alenes, Spokanes, Flatheads, Chewelahs, Pend Orielles, Colvilles, and so on.

The earliest lodges were pit houses. The builders of these dwellings began by digging a circular pit, three or four feet deep and twelve to eighteen feet in diameter. Over the pit they constructed a frame of light wooden poles, which they covered with mats and grass and banked on they outside with up to three feet of earth. A hole was left in the center of the roof, through which smoke from fires could escape. A village contained between five and fifteen lodges, each of which housed several couples and their children who were related either by blood or marriage.

Kalispel villages had a population of 50 to 200. However, a few large settlements existed. The largest village, located near the present-day town of Union Gap, Washington, was regularly occupied by about 2,000 people. The inhabitants of each permanent village recognized a certain portion of land around their settlement as their territory. However, they shared their hunting and gathering grounds with people in other villages, who in turn, allowed others to use their land.

We used deer hides and other animal skin to stretch, tan, and make our clothes from. We also did elaborate and had beautiful designs on our moccasins.

Basket making was also a skill our women were famous for. To hold roots, they made Wasco baskets or "Sally Bags"---soft, cylindrical bags made of taxus (Indian hemp) and often decorated with human and animal figures using bear grass or corn husk. They wove large, flat, flexible storage wallets, known as cornhusk bags.

My people were hunters of deer and other game and they were also fisherman of trout and the women were berry gatherers. My people speak Salish.

The standard currency was haiqua, the region's trade language for dentalium. This shell was harvested from ocean beds off the west coast from present-day Vancouver Island.

Many of the customs, beliefs, and other practices were passed on through writing and by passing on knowledge of them orally through their ancient tales. Most legends depict an age before humans existed, when animals thought and acted as humans do now. These animals also had extraordinary powers that prepared earth for humankind. Many legends tell about Speeljay (also known as Coyote), a mischievous trickster whose plans and schemes sometimes greatly benefited the world. Sometimes, however, Speeljay's plans went astray and he became the victim of his own scheming.

Human beings' long occupation of this region is confirmed by the findings of archeologists-scholars who study physical evidence of past human societies. Archeologists have found evidence that people were living here about 12,000 years ago. They have also identified many prehistoric seasonal living sites in caves, rock-shelters, and camps scattered throughout the area.

The men were recognized as headmen or chiefs of their village. These positions tended to be inherited, and headmen were generally respected by their wisdom and generosity. Elderly women were also held in high regard and exerted influence on village decisions. Several respected men of each village were chosen by consensus to be members of a council that helped headmen settle disputes and help maintain informal control over the village activities and relations with other villages. The headman also had an assistant who went through the village every evening,

repeated the headman's speeches in a loud voice, and making announcements of important news. Another man, the "Whipper", was charged with the responsibility of disciplining the children who would not be quiet at ceremonies. Usually a family member's threat to summon the Whipper was all that was needed to make misbehaving youngsters obedient. Other leadership positions were held by men and women who were noted for their special skills as riders, hunters, fishers, root diggers, basketry weavers, ritual leaders, shaman (medicine doctors), orators, or warriors. Special status was also given to professional gamblers, outstanding athletes, people who owned many horses, and people who sponsored many feasts and giveaways. Positions of leadership had a tendency to overlap.

A headman might also be skilled at hunting and be rich in horses. We've always, unlike others, regarded both our father's family and our mother's family members as blood relatives. But families were also linked by marriage and felt special ties to one another. These were formally recognized by feasts and a series of ritual gift exchanges.

One of the most important of these was the wedding trade, which often took place after the birth of a couple's first child. The wife's family would invite the husband's family to a feast. There the host would offer their new in-laws pshatani goods-women's gifts

present their in-laws with shaptakay goods, men's gifts such as blankets and tanned hides, carried in a raw-hide container known as shaptakay. The wedding trade was the first formal public recognition of marriage. Before it was held however, a man and women lived together with one of the two families, usually the woman's.

Following a treaty agreement made in 1855, the Kalispel moved to our present reservation located in Northeastern Washington, north of Spokane, surrounded by the National Forest. The western boundary of the reservation follows the Pend Oreille River. Some of our special events include the Barter Fair, an Indian Pow-wow held the 3rd weekend in May and the last weekend in September. Another one is the Buffalo Bar-B-Que, an event that includes a barbecue and a contest dancing. It is held the first weekend in August.

Some of my benefits are I get money when I turn 21, funding so I can go to school, and health benefits. If I wanted to work for my tribe, I could get a place on the council, like a Chairwoman. I am proud to be a member of my tribe.

GED CLASSES RESUME

During the months of July and August Tribal GED classes will continue on Monday and Wednesday mornings from 9:00 am to 11:30 am at the Tribal Community Center. Pre-testing, assessment, and preparation activities are conducted by instructors from the West Valley Academy. Classes are free to tribal members who have completed an Adult Education application. You can obtain an application by contacting the Tribal Education Office, 1-800-422-0232. Non-tribal members can also participate in the GED class for a small monthly fee. For more information contact the education office.

STUDENTS: 1992-93 School Year Almost Here

A notice to all HIGHER EDUCATION & ADULT VOCATIONAL TRAINING students, the 1992-93 school year is almost at hand. Have you received the following items:

- *Federal Student Aid Report
- *Financial Aid Award or Notification of Financial Aid Offer
- *Verification forms from Financial Aid Office

Please forward a copy of these documents to our office as soon as possible. During the month of August we will begin the process of determining student grant awards for the 1992-93 school year.

If you have filed your FINANCIAL AID FORM, or FEDERAL STUDENT AID APPLICATION form more than three months ago, and still have not yet received any notification of SAR, or award, please contact us as soon as possible. We will contact Financial Aid Offices to see if the situation can be corrected.

Be forewarned, if you did receive the Federal STUDENT AID REPORT, and did not sign it and submit it to your college Financial Aid Office, no award will be forthcoming! Don't sit on these forms, if you have them in your possession, you need to turn these into your Financial Aid Office at your respective college, university, or community college.

For all continuing students, no financial assistance will be provided by the Tribe until your 1992-93 budget is completed by the Financial Aid Office. Also, if you have not submitted your Spring Term grades to Education Department, no financial assistance will be provided.

If you have any questions regarding Higher Education or Adult Vocational Training Programs, please call the Education Program.