

TALKING STICK

THE VOICE OF METTANOKIT



Spring/Summer 2004

Tribalism Revisited CIRCLE WAY VILLAGES

by Medicine Story

Back in the sixties the extensive commune movement was recognized as an attempt to retrieve the roots of human community in tribalism. Even the musical play and film *Hair* was considered by its creators as a tribal celebration. Most of the people in communes were seeking personal freedom, freedom of self-expression, free love, and freedom from the nation's orders to bear arms and kill people they didn't know who posed them no threat. But many of them also believed that what they were attempting was the creation of a truly human society that would attract all people and eventually transform society.

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Summer Camp

by Medicine Story

I dreamed of a place where people come together as the tribes did every summer for a week or two. Where they come together in mutual respect and equality. Where they may come closer to old friends and relatives and make new ones. Where they may open their hearts and listen to one another, share their stories, their

struggles, their losses and triumphs, their hopes and their fears, and find understanding and support. Where they may play and work and create and have fun together. Where families and solitary people all become one family in a tribal village to experience how our ancestors pursued the good life in sharing

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Scene from camp



CIRCLE WAY cont. from page 1

With no experience in tribal living and many unhealthy patterns brought from their culture, most of their experiments were doomed to a brief existence and many of the communards went home disillusioned. But a few stuck it out and learned how to live together cooperatively, and those communes have continued quietly through two generations. Slowly, through the last generation, new communities have been founded by people who have learned more about themselves, about relationships, families, and living in community. And this movement continues to grow, although little known to the general public. I visit many of them each year.

My life's work has been to introduce people to the circle, demonstrate and provide experiences of it so that people will feel the benefits of it and wish to adapt it into their lives. These experiences we have provided in prisons, in workshops and seminars, and in camps of a week or two duration. It is my great hope that, given enough of that experience, people will not be satisfied to struggle with their old isolated and isolating lives any longer. That they will become so devoted to the circle as the only way for human beings to be free and secure, and at the same time empowered and equal, that they will use all their intelligence and creativity to live wholly within a circle.

The stirrings of this movement have been growing for a few years in our large camp in Germany, and this past year a new circle has been coming together for the purpose of finding land to settle and grow a community. Since they have been inspired by our circle way at camp and by our book *The Circle Way*, I consider the community, whatever name it will be called, will be a "Circle Way Village".

So I daydream now of this first Circle Way Village, and then of another and another and another, proliferating throughout Europe and spreading to other continents, around the world. I dream of a network of Circle Way Villages that will communicate and learn from each other, help and trade with each other. There are already networks of various kinds of communities, spiritual communities, egalitarian communities, ecovillages, for instance, and I would like to see our Circle Way Villages join with them and bring all networks together to broaden and strengthen the tribal movement (contact Daniel about out search for land at d.a.werner@web.de).

What is special about the Circle Way is how it helps us get closer to each other, to deal with emotions of all kinds, to encourage and appreciate the best in all of us, to listen to each one and work together to solve our problems, and to keep our children free from more of the

patterns that oppressed us when we were young. I would like, as we have in the past, for people from our villages to be available to teach the Circle Way, to any group or community that requests it.

At Easter I have been thinking of how Paul traveled throughout his world, the Roman Empire, from what is now Syria to Spain, and inspired so many diverse peoples of different races and cultures with the story and ideas of a tiny sect of Jews, who couldn't even agree with each other about how to establish their religion. But the circles Paul started in all those lands grew and within a few centuries Christianity was the only religion in most of

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Notes

Native people and friends of Medicine Story are invited to help him celebrate 75 years of living on his birthday Saturday, July 17, 2004, at the Wampanoag Reservation in Assonet, Massachusetts. Medicine Story will follow native tradition in which gifts are not expected from guests but rather will give-away to the guests. A circle will begin about midday, and afterwards people can stay for a potluck feast. For those wishing to camp overnight, there will be singing and dancing and storytelling in the evening.



THE WORLD RIGHT NOW

by *Medicine Story*

I want to tell you about a young man who is part of our Greenville community. His name is Jeremiah. He is only a bit younger than my sons and has grown up with them. I have watched him grow from the moment of his home birth through his achievements in school to our recent primaries where he helped with the campaign to nominate Howard Dean, because Dean was so clear and strong and early in his opposition to the Iraq war. Jeremiah had joined the National Guard for educational benefits otherwise denied poor people in this country, and he was ready to serve and defend his country here in America.

What Jeremiah and the rest of the country didn't know was that his president had already decided before he was elected that he would use the armed might of America to topple Saddam Hussein. What Jeremiah didn't plan on was that George W. Bush would send him off to a country where people spoke a language he didn't know, a country which did not threaten the United States, where many people would hate him and try to kill him.

Did we support Jeremiah? Of course. Were we proud of him? No. We were afraid for him, but what pride, what honor could there be in going off to fight people who had no idea in the world of attacking us? It has been

made abundantly clear Iraq had no connection with international terrorists, and such a war would only be a diversion and a distraction from the war on terrorism. Even Israel felt that Iraq was no threat to them or anyone.

Jeremiah was confused and afraid, and no one in leadership, from his Commander-in-Chief to his company commander explained to him just why they were going to ship him around the world to put him in harm's way. The whole community here waited for the telephone calls from Iraq that would let us know he was still okay.

Then his stepfather, Jim Johnson, got a call with news from Baghdad. The caller said they heard a Jeremiah had been killed, but they weren't sure of the last name. Jim said nothing to Jeremiah's mother and sat awake all night worrying by himself. The next day a call came to say Jeremiah Crosby was safe. It was a different Jeremiah who was killed.

Now we can all relax and breathe again. Only now we are thinking of another family over in Maine, a wife and two children without a husband and father. We don't know them and our hearts are breaking, because we understand. We are a family. And all over the country our children are being taken from us to fight in someone else's war.

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NEW HAVEN

The lessons of history, like the lessons of religion, sometimes neglect examples of tolerance. A thousand years ago on the Iberian Peninsula, an enlightened vision of Islam had created the most advanced culture in Europe. A nun in Saxony learned of this kingdom from a bishop, the caliph's ambassador to Germany and one of several prominent members of his diplomatic corps who were not Muslims; the bishop most likely reported to the man who ran the foreign ministry, who was a Jew.

Al Andalus, as the Muslims called their Spanish homeland, prospered in a culture of openness and assimilation. The nun, named Hroswitha, called it "the ornament of the world." Her admiration stemmed from the cultural prosperity of the caliphate based in Cordoba, where the library housed some 400,000 volumes at a time when the largest library in Latin Christendom probably held no more than 400. What strikes us today about Al Andalus is that it was a chapter of European history during which Jews, Christians and Muslims lived side by side and, despite intractable differences and enduring hostilities, nourished a culture of tolerance.



CAMP continued from page 1

and cooperation.

For many years we have been building this summer camp together, exploring relationship, creativity, and learning in beautiful natural settings. In many circles we can consider the desires and needs of young people, young adults, parents, couples, men, women, and elders. We can share our special knowledge and skills with each other, and advance our thinking and exploring the kind of communities and the kind of society we want to have.

Our problem has been a 10,000 year history of violence and greed that informs all our culture, our public and private institutions, our education,



Dinner at camp

and tells us our only options are conformity or ostracism and isolation. So we escape into the culture's diversions, into reading, viewing films and television, playing

electronic games, drugs, shopping, isolating ourselves further. We even go on vacations alone, or with only our nuclear family, never really getting close

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Ellika



Play time



CIRCLE WAY cont. from page 2

them, well established in the others, and eventually spread through the whole world.

I don't want to suggest the circle way as a religion, although spiritual expression is an essential part of how it may be used. But I do think it is time we spread its message to the world as a way of life: the best and most liberating, most empowering, most loving, and most human way of life.

Environment

The only thing in my mind about the environment now is that this current administration is a disaster to our natural resources such as we haven't known since the eruption of Krakatoa. There's just too much to write about in every area as the government strips away all environmental protections to give the country to the rich and powerful. Join all environmental organizations and support them. And vote the despoilers out in November!

Where there is true hospitality, not many words are needed.

- Arapaho proverb

Creator gives us each a song. - Ute proverb

SCHEDULE 2004 MANITONQUAT & ELLIKA

Date	Place	Contact
MAY		
1 - 2	Watuppa USA, New Year, Spring Moon Ceremonies	
14 - 16	Toscana, Italy	(39) 02 348 2261999
21 - 22	Torup, Denmark	(45) 45 886 974
28 - 30	Heckenbeck, N. Germany	(49) 5563 6170
JUNE		
11 - 13	near Lüchow, Germany	(49) 5843 7739
18 - 20	near Graz, Austria	(43) 3117 2948
30	Home Education event, Vingåkers, Sweden	
JULY		
1 - 5	Umeå, Sweden	(46) 90 29066 or 070 604 0309
6	Ängsbacka Festival, Sweden	hari@angsbacka.se
7 - 11	Mundekulla, Sweden	(46)471 50450
17	Manitonquat 75th Birthday, Watuppa, USA	(603) 878-2310
24 - Aug 1	Summer Camp, Germany	(49) 5156 780 627
AUGUST		
4 - 11	near Dresden, Germany	(49) 351 802 5211
11 - 14	Tamera, Portugal	
14 - 22	near Graz, Austria	(43) 3117 29480
SEPTEMBER		
10 - 12	(Manitonquat) Extertal, Germany	(49) 5262 992133
10 - 12	(Ellika - women workshop) near Lüchow, Germany	(49) 5843 7739
17 - 21	Kiel, Germany	(49) 431 561 541
24 - 26	near Hof/Bayreuth	(49) 921 150 1143

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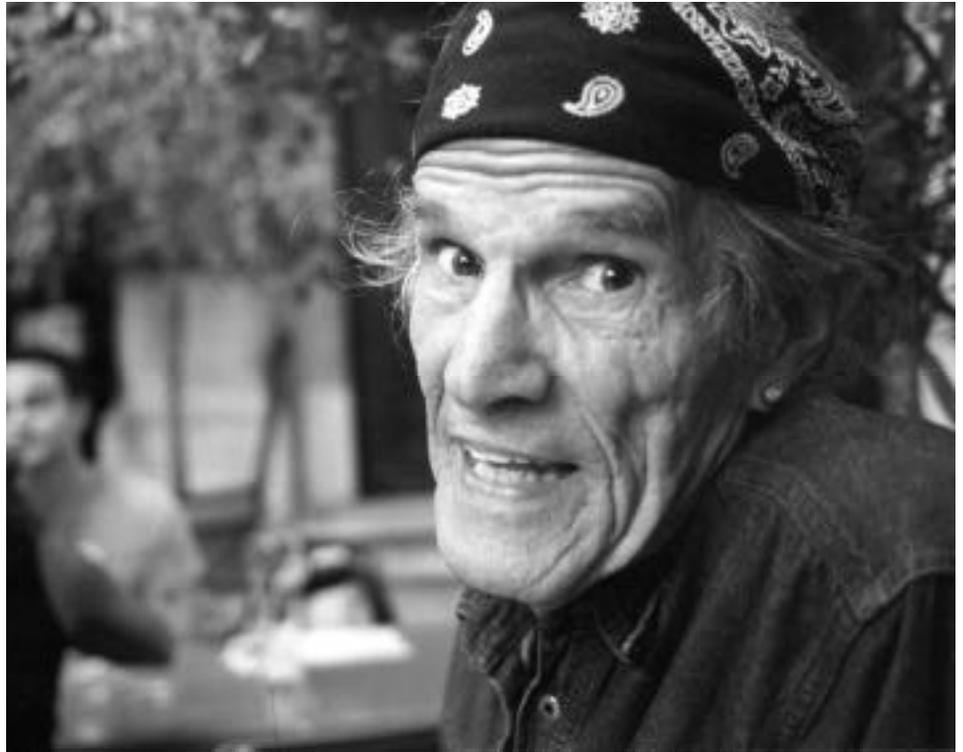


CAMP continued from page 4

to other people.

But human beings are tribal by nature. People need closeness to other people. The greatest crime of our culture is to make us suspicious and fearful of each other. The importance of human beings in our lives is reduced to what goods or services we can buy or sell each other.

My goal for our camps is to help us all come as close to each other as we can in the time we are together, to discover what it is to be a real human being, caring and sharing, laughing and weeping, dreaming and planning together. That is why we provide classes that show us how to help each other with feelings and emotions, thinking and deciding, with relationship, and with liberation from oppressive social patterns.



Grandfather

That is why we come together to tell stories, to sing and make music and dance, and to share our

creative talents.

And that is why the heart of the camp is the clan. A group



Camping meadow





Lorenza



Water attack

small enough that all can open their hearts to each other every morning in the space of about an hour, can cooperate in providing food and giving attention to children, and can create songs and rituals for tribal celebrations.

Our camps don't try to reproduce an "Indian" experience. Since I am a Native American that is my closest experience of tribal living, but tribal ways are human being ways once lived by all people. Here we are learning and building a new tribal way for the future. We have ceremonies in camp, but they are not derived from any tradition. Because human beings have spiritual thoughts and yearnings, we create for ourselves the ceremonies that may express those for who we

are at this time.

My dream is to change the world. By our creating a tribal life for only a week or two every summer, we can experience

true human community and explore and experiment and plan together how to create Circle Way Villages that welcome us home all year long.



Young people at lunch



GAY MARRIAGE

by Medicine Story

Opponents of gay marriage take the position that allowing same-sex marriages would somehow weaken the family.

Traditional Native American experience does not support this view. There were, of course, in earlier times, both men and women who had sexual orientations towards their own sex. They were perhaps not numerous, but they were not discriminated against.

They were considered special. If the Creator had seen fit to give them a very different kind of orientation, that was not to be questioned. Since no one would choose to be so outside of the ways of the community, there had to be a reason why they had been given this role. Therefore the community must allow for them and the person and the role were to be honored. Very often they were considered sacred.

So it was that occasionally “manly-hearted” women warriors married women and sometimes had several wives, and men who acted in the roles of women usually also married other men, and that did not seem to be considered strange or wrong. If the Creator made these people this way, it made sense that they should also be married, as the family was the heart of the community.

I am surprised that there is not a more vociferous support of same-sex marriage at this time. Why aren't people questioning the

assumption that these marriages weaken the family? Family, that is to say closeness among blood relatives, is good for human society. To place some human beings outside of the possibility of making families would seem to me bad for society as a whole. Surely these individuals deserve not only the equal rights and protections the rest of us enjoy, but a commendation for wanting to endorse and commit to the closeness of their relationships and to create family. Family of any kind, if it is functional and nurturing to its members, is good for society.

When I lived in San Francisco I met some same-sex couples who had lived in committed relationships for many years. The atmosphere in their homes was warm and loving. Their commitment was a good thing for them and for society. And what about the children being raised in these relationships? Surely society must extend its support to those families equally.

The children I have seen in these families are very nurtured and cared for. The only problem they face is the discriminatory attitudes of the society. That is the only problem that should be addressed.

The objections all seem to derive from some religious notions. The only religion that I feel is authentic is love. I am waiting for the churches to make a stand in favor of love, to support

loving people committing to each other and loving families caring for children.

In marriage, in politics, in business, in international affairs, in law and justice, in all human activity I have but one question - where is the love?

The Finnish Line

From the department of creative activism: You've heard of hunger strikes, but what about baby strikes? Hundreds of Finnish women have signed a petition declaring that they will not bear children for the next four years unless the country's Parliament scraps plans to build a fifth nuclear reactor in their homeland. The protest has a precedent: In 1986, following the Chernobyl disaster, some 4,000 Finns signed a similar petition to block construction of a nuclear power plant. The government eventually caved and agreed not to build that reactor, but it now claims a new one is necessary to meet the country's growing energy demands without increasing greenhouse emissions. Elina Venesmaki, one of the organizers of the current petition, said, “This form of protest is logical because this issue doesn't concern just our generation.”



WORLD continued from page 3

This is what war is. It is not about regime change, or oil, or power plays of nations. It is about our children being killed and being forced to kill other people's children. To anyone who still says it was a good thing to go and get rid of that horrific dictator Saddam, I would ask, "Are you willing to trade the life of your child for the life of this foreign dictator," because that is just what it means. Don't think it may not be your child. Jeremiah is your child and mine, and every child in Iraq belongs to us.

I want to tell you all that I am weeping as I write now. I want to tell you all to weep and to rage, and then to demand that our politicians and military leaders understand that there is no longer a necessity for war because human beings have learned there are alternatives. The Iroquois have led the way in creating the first United Nations hundred of years ago. Isn't it time we teach alternatives to violence in school? Especially law school, where most of the politicians come from? Isn't it time the US administration includes a Department of Peace?

You can't get rich if you look after your relatives properly.
- Navajo proverb

The greatest strength is gentleness.
- Iroquois proverb

Nature School

The Nature School Foundation, providing children and their guardians a curriculum of whole life Earth Education, seeks support. As a 501.C.3 non-profit corporation it welcomes donations in its struggle for existence and to make a difference in the lives of children, families, society and the environment. They are being assisted by Mettanokit, Jim and Donna working on the restoration of the old Main House, Medicine Story, Ellika, and Charles Terry offering their time as teachers. The foundation has a new board of directors that are dedicated to the mission and visions of Cynthia Ann DeSantis, the founder.

The Foundation also is seeking the return of the property at 173 Merriam Hill Road, Greenville, NH, a 10 acre parcel it purchased in 1999 to be the national headquarters and teacher training facility, with woodlands, wetlands, pastures and waterways intended for its classroom. Due to lack of funds and fundraising, the lien holders took back the property. Funds are desperately needed to return this land and the Main House to the Nature School. All who might be able to help in this fund raising are encouraged to contact the Foundation at this address.

Mettanokit Outreach
167 Merriam Hill Rd.
Greenville, NH 03048

For more information about The Nature School Foundation see their website: www.natureschoolfoundation.org

Website

Mettanokit's home on the web will be moving from www.mettanokit.org to www.circleway.org as of July 19, 2004.

PRISONS

The new sweat lodges in Massachusetts prisons at Gardner and Shirley maximum are going very well, both inmates and administration seeing right away the great benefits for all from this ancient sacred ceremony. Raven (Jim Farnham) is holding it together and providing a great service for which everyone should be truly grateful. We are still working on the court appeal to have this available in New Hampshire prisons.



A message from Leonard Peltier

Below is Leonard Peltier's annual message delivered in conjunction with the anniversary of his incarceration on February 6th. This is a message to all people regardless of color:

Hau Kola, Hello my friends,
my relatives:

You can never imagine the heartfelt comfort it brings to know you're not forgotten in prison. This is my 28th year, and I've seen others come and go and return again. I can't help but feel a great sorrow for many of these young men who keep coming back for one reason or another; most of which are alcohol related offenses. So much has changed since I came here and yet, in many ways, it's still the same.

The government, under the pretext of security and progress, liberated us from our land, resources, culture, dignity and future. They violated every treaty they ever made with us. I use the word "liberated" loosely and sarcastically, in the same vein that I view their use of the words "collateral damage" when they kill innocent men, women, and children.

They describe people defending their homeland as terrorists, savages and hostiles, and accuse us of being aggressors. We have never fought a battle or war that was not on our own land; we never fired the first shot... ever. My words reach out to the non-Indian: Look now before it's far too late – see what is being done to others in your name and see what destruction you

sanction when you say nothing. Your own treaty, the one between yourselves and the government, is being violated daily; this treaty is commonly known as the Constitution.

With us, they started a little at a time, encroaching on our rights until we had none at all. It will be the same for the Constitution; this is not conjecture, but fact. We are not embattled with the color of man, but with the weakness of man, a mindset that lusts for power and wealth at the expense of life.

Men of all colors, cultures and religions must stand together to oppose the genocidal policies that face us all as the corporate world seeks to enslave all, and pit one nation against another.

If you avoid breaking laws and do what you're told and ignore the poor, the oppressed and the downtrodden – you probably won't be bothered. If you try to right what is wrong, however, you will surely meet great opposition and run the risk of imprisonment or death.

I am a Sun Dancer. I took a vow for my people. I chose to seek the Creator's will and to follow it to the best of my ability. I WILL NOT STAND DOWN FROM THAT VOW. I will continue to speak, write and organize until Grandfather himself quiets my life.

If I can do this in prison, I have no doubt you can do much better from where you stand.

I encourage you to do your best, be kind to one another, seek harmony and balance with all natural life, enjoy what freedom you have left, and most of all, never, never give up.

In the Spirit of Crazy Horse,
Leonard Peltier

PO Box 583
Lawrence, KS 66044
www.leonardpeltier.org
Leonard Peltier Defense
Committee

Know that we are eager to share our gifts in the name of love.
- Seneca proverb

"Mankind is at its best when it is most free. This will be clear if we grasp the principle of liberty. We must recall that the basic principle of liberty is freedom of choice, which saying many have on their lips but few in their minds."

- Dante Alighieri

The one who tells the stories rules the world.

- Hopi proverb



Native American Teachings and Stories for Healing Ourselves and Our World

Books



The Circle Way Medicine Story
Story Stone Publishing
Paperback (90 pgs.) (adult) A manual of how to start and enhance circles of any kind.

Return to Creation Medicine Story
Bear Tribe Publishers
Paperback (175 pgs.) (gr. 7 adult) [ISBN 943404-20-7]
Using the history, traditions and prophecies of his Wampanoag ancestors and other native peoples. Medicine Story illustrates common human values and offers solutions to the problems confronting people today of all ages and cultures.



Children of the Morning Light Medicine Story
Simon & Shuster
Hardcover (71 pgs.) (all ages) [ISBN 0-02-765905-4]
Illustrated collection of Native American tales and legends of the Wampanoag Native of southeastern Massachusetts.



TEMPORARILY OUT OF STOCK

Ending Violent Crime Medicine Story
Story Stone Publishing
Paperback (71 pgs.) (adult) A concise report on working prison program circles which focus on a violence-free society.



Other Publications

Talking Stick
Newsletter of Mettanokit Outreach
Quarterly newsletter with articles and schedules of Mettanokit and Medicine Story's writings, workshops and other events. Yearly subscriptions available. \$15.00 annual subscription.

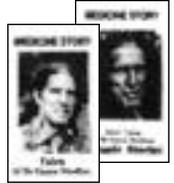


Heritage Medicine Story Editor
Rational Island Publishers
A Re-Evaluation Counseling Journal for Native Liberation.



Cassettes and CDs

Tales of the Eastern Woodlands I & II
Medicine Story/Story Stone Publishing
(Each tape running time 1 hr.) (all ages) Native American tales & legends of the Eastern Woodlands Indians of Canada.



The Song of Creation
Medicine Story/Story Stone Publishing
(running time 1 hr.) (all ages) Creation Tales of the Wampanoag people.



Maushop Tales
Medicine Story/Story Stone Publishing
(running time 1 hr.) (all ages) More Wampanoag creation tales of Maushop.



The Singing Stone
Ellika Linden & Medicine Story
Story Stone Publishing
(running time 1 hr.) (all ages) A fairy tale for children and a political and spiritual story for adults.



Native American Poetry
Recited by Medicine Story/Story Stone Publishing
(running time 1-1/2 hrs.) (all ages) A collection of Native American poetry recited by Medicine Story on WFCR radio.



Free Spirit
Traditional MicMac singing.

Dark Feather
Contemporary songs of Native life by Wampanoag musicians.

Raven Spirit Gerry Ouellette
Our friend Gerry Ouellette learned the art of flute-making in a spiritual manner from Grandfather Hollis Littlecreek. Now that Hollis has left us, Gerry's flutes keep his spirit singing for us. Gerry has also made a lovely meditative recording of his own playing with sound of nature and other enhancements, "Raven Spirit".
cassettes \$10, CDs \$15, flutes \$130.

Prices for products are listed below. Checks may be made out to: Mettanokit

Shipping and Handling: Please add \$2.50 for 1 item and \$1 for each additional item ordered.

Books

- The Circle Way (\$8)
- Return to Creation (\$10)
- Ending Violent Crime (\$6)

Other Publications

- Talking Stick Newsletter (4 Issues \$15)
- Heritage Journal (\$3)

Cassettes and CDs

- Tales of Eastern Woodlands I (\$10) cas
- Tales of Eastern Woodlands II (\$10) cas
- The Song of Creation (\$10) cas
- Maushop Tales (\$10) cas
- The Singing Stone (\$10) cas
- Native American Poetry (\$10) cas

- Free Spirit (\$10) cas
- Dark Feather (\$10) cas (\$15) CD*
- Raven Spirit (\$10) cas (\$15) CD

Musical Instruments

- Flute (\$130)

Enclosed is a check in the amount of: _____ (this check amount includes S&H costs for each item requested)

Please send my order to:

Name: _____ Telephone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

This order form may be mailed to: METTANOKIT, 167 Merriam Hill Road, Greenville, NH 03048

Mettanokit is a non-profit learning center which is dedicated to healing ourselves and our world. Programs and services respectfully incorporate the ancestral wisdom of Native Americans and others who honor harmonious living with Mother Earth and spiritual connections with Creation.





METTANOKIT

A division of The Nature School Foundation
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A downloadable pdf version of this issue of the Talking Stick, along with the previous three issues can be seen at www.circleway.org

