



Hear the Ancient Voices

Many millennia-old insights into humankind's responsibilities for its own continued prosperity make perfect sense for the immediate, intermediate and long-term future of the Earth. Make it your business to hear and understand alternatives to currently failing "conventional wisdoms" about humankind's place on Earth.

Many indicators suggest we are in danger of reaching a "tipping point" in Earth's ever increasing degradation. If that turns out to be true, the economic crises of 2009-11 will be remembered as the 'good old days' when the real impacts of global climate change and environmental degradation are in full swing.

Join other *Ancient Voices* Forum participants at the rustic Kanatsiohareke Mohawk Community conference center near Fonda, New York to explore opportunities to alter humankind's future.

October 8-10, 2011

Ancient Voices - Contemporary Contexts Forum

"Peace, Power and the Good Mind
of the People of the Longhouse"

Understanding Our Shared Responsibilities

In a period of growing demands and dwindling resources, when the effects of global climate change are clearly in play and the most often heard voice is that of self interest, we need to hear an alternative voice; an ancient voice of reason.

The ancient voice of reason speaks from a holistic view of environmental and social responsibility; offers a way back to understanding humankind's responsibilities to the Earth, each other, and generations yet to come. It is a non-judgmental voice that offers realistic solutions to the problems humankind now faces. It taps into the individual's inherent, yet often little understood, personal ancestral wisdoms.

Participants at *Ancient Voices* Forums have the opportunity to share perspectives with traditional Native American leaders as well as their fellow participants. Together they:

- Explore common concerns about the human condition in modern times.
- Seek ways of living within the natural capacities of the Earth.
- Seek ways of influencing mainstream society to alter practices that harm the environment.
- Recognize what the future holds for our children, and explore remedies for ills that have arisen and threaten to arise.

Each day of the Forum features a keynote address by a widely respected indigenous leader. Keynotes lay the foundation for small-group discussion sessions that follow. Each discussion session is led by one or more traditional indigenous leaders. These sessions provide the opportunity for close exploration and discussion of traditional indigenous wisdom and its modern relevance and implications for today's realities.

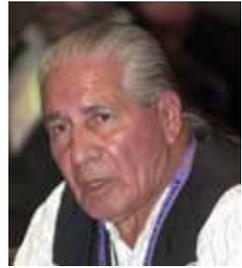
These are serious working sessions; they are aimed at giving practical, workable insight into what needs to be done to reclaim the future. It is hoped that participants will find incentives to take meaningful action at home after the Forum.



About the Keynotes

Oren Lyons, Joagquisho, Faithkeeper, Turtle Clan of the Onondaga Nation, is a clear, persistent, and respected voice for Indigenous peoples throughout the world.

His perspective is known and respected by business leaders, environmentalists, artists, academics, politicians, spiritual leaders, entertainers, and athletes from around the world. He is equally well known to traditional leaders among various Indigenous communities around the world. His message of peace proclaims that human beings can no longer afford to act irresponsibly toward Creation; nor can people of the modern world continue to disregard the messages emanating from Indigenous peoples.



Louise McDonald, Tewakerahkwa, a Bear Clan Mother from the Kaniekehaka (Mohawk Nation) at Akwesasne. A long-time advocate for the preservation of the Kaniekehaka language, her recent work centers on women's wellness and the restoration of puberty rites for youth within her community. She has travelled to the United Nations advocating the rights of Indigenous women and children.

Tom Porter, Sakokweniónkwaw, a member of the Bear Clan of the Mohawk Nation at Akwesasne, is the founder, director, and spiritual leader of the traditional Mohawk Community of Kanatsioharé:ke. A champion for the revitalization of native languages and traditions, this respected Elder has devoted his life to educating Native and non-Native people about the true history, culture and spirituality of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois).



A nationally recognized figure in Indian Country since the 1960s, he cofounded the Akwesasne Freedom School and the White Roots of Peace, a group of Iroquois Elders who toured the country encouraging Indians to embrace their respective Native traditions.



About the Setting

Mohawk Community of Kanatsiohareke, site of the *Ancient Voices - Contemporary Contexts Forum* is a unique Mohawk/*Kanienkaha* community on the north bank of the Mohawk River, west of Fonda, NY, part of the ancient homeland of the Kanienkehaka (Mohawk).

The Mohawk River Valley was important to transportation and migration to the west as a passage through the Appalachian Mountains. It allowed easier passage than going over the mountains to the north or south of the valley. As a result, it was strategically important during the French and Indian and Revolutionary Wars, and a number of important battles were fought here.

In 1779, George Washington ordered Major General John Sullivan to attack Indigenous people inhabiting the valley. He said, "lay waste all the settlements around...that the country may not be merely overrun, but destroyed." In the course of the carnage and annihilation of Indian people, Washington also instructed his general not to "listen to any overture of peace before the total ruin of their settlements is affected." Indians who survived later re-named the nation's first president "Town Destroyer."

Many survived by fleeing north. With them they took the prophesy that one day the Mohawk people would return to the valley to reclaim their homelands. That happened in 1993 when Mohawk Elder Tom Porter and a group of people from the Mohawk reservation in Canada came back down south and settled on a piece of land next to the Mohawk River where the Mohawk Community of Kanatsiohareke now stands. As it turned out that land is the site of an ancient Mohawk Bear Clan village.

The primary mission of the community is to preserve traditional values, culture, language and lifestyles in the guidance of the *Kaienerekowa* (Great Law of Peace).

October 8 - Saturday

Forum Registration
Plenary Welcome and Introductions
Keynote Address
Discussion Circles
Community Cross-Cultural Activities

October 9 - Sunday

Morning Ceremony
Keynote Address
Discussion Circles
Community Cross-Cultural Activities

October 10 - Monday "Columbus Day"

Morning Ceremony
Keynote Address
Plenary Roundtable &
Summary Discussions
Community Cross-Cultural Activities
Closing Ceremony

**For more information Call Toll free: 877-587-6001
Email: lisa@twocircles.org or Visit: <http://www.twocircles.org>**

American Indian Institute and The Traditional Circle of Indian Elders and Youth

Ancient Voices - Contemporary Contexts Forums are a program of the American Indian Institute as mandated by Elders from the Traditional Circle of Indian Elders and Youth.

The Traditional Circle is a spiritual circle open to all Indian people. It constitutes the continuation of an ancient practice of joint council among the most respected leaders of Indian nations. Its purpose is to nurture a grass-roots renewal of traditional values and worldviews among Indian peoples, to ensure the continuity of Native wisdom, and to bring that wisdom to bear on important issues facing all peoples of the Earth.

The values inherent in the traditional Native worldview - faith, thankfulness, love, and respect for all Creation - are essential for living well on this Earth. These values are the foundation of life. Discussions of education, economics, environment, and other issues are secondary to this basic understanding of Creation and one's place and function in it.

The Circle is organized in the traditional Indian way. There are no signatures, no hierarchy of officers, and no membership restrictions or limitations. Those who come to Circle gatherings on a regular basis represent grassroots communities and are empowered by consensus to speak on behalf of the people of their communities. They have the respect, trust, and support of those whom they represent. Their guiding principles are moral, not legal in origin.

Actions of the Circle are based on consensus. All dimensions of issues are discussed. Consensus is formed by the persuasiveness of the positions presented and their consonance with traditional perspectives. A core group of Elders who participate in nearly all activities of the Circle are its respected leaders. This group represents most areas of Indian Country in North America.

The Elders and Youth Circle and the American Indian Institute are sister circles related through mutual trust. The Institute's role is to provide the Elders and Youth Circle administrative and financial support for its programs and activities.



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