We call ourselves Anishinabe. Other people have called us Chippewa or Ojibewa people. But we are Anishinabe.

—Eddie Benton, Anishinabe educator & spiritual leader
Booshoo! Friends!

("Booshoo" means "hello" in the Anishinabe language. It is a form of welcome and greeting. With that we would like to welcome you to learn something about us, your Anishinabe neighbors in northern Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. Most of the Anishinabe people, or Chippewa Indians as we are also known, live on reservations in these three states.)

How we came to the Lake Superior Area

Although we have been called "Ojibwe" or "Chippewa," our name is Anishinabe, which means the original people. The Anishinabe have lived in the Great Lakes Region for hundreds of years. The Anishinabe name for themselves is Anishinabe, which means "original people." The Anishinabe have lived here long before the European settlers came to our region. The Anishinabe were guided there by the Great Creator to make their way to the Lake Superior Area.

The Anishinabe found good land to live on when they came to the Lake Superior Area. Madeline Island became one of the Anishinabe homelands. Anishinabe people would share stories as they walked from one camp to another. Today, we still gather for the Anishinabe. We no longer come to reservations.

Original Man Walks the Earth

The Anishinabe legends tell us that the history of the Anishinabe people has been passed down through the years. Our ancestors told stories of days gone by. We have no written language, but we carry on our traditions through the oral history. We use the stories of the past to help us understand the present and the future. The stories are passed on by word of mouth from generation to generation. The stories tell us who we are and where we come from.

Storytelling: An ongoing oral history

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Eagle Way-"n"-booshoo in Anishinabe legends, (thank-you)!

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Anishinabe parents are concerned that their children learn about the history of the people. Being part of a minority, a group different than the dominant society, Anishinabe teachings, values, and language are not part of school. Their history does not enter the viewpoints of Indian people. For instance, we don't think that Columbus discovered America because we simply hate the way things happen. So, many of the tribal councils and parents try to preserve and transmit traditional knowledge and an understanding of the Anishinabe way. They promote opportunities to learn our language in reservation classes, bring us as new words and expressions, and make sure the Anishinabe way is included in our way of life.

One particularly important program is called TRAILS, which stands for Tribal Reservation Activities and Liaison Services. TRAILS is a week-long camp for several age groups. TRAILS offers a variety of activities for reservation kids. For instance, the Red River TRAILS recently began in the forests on reservation lands, which has met with good success. TRAILS encourages kids to learn about the history and culture of the Anishinabe nation. In the course of a week, traditional aspects of the Anishinabe nation are transmitted. Cultural crafts, language, stories, and spirituality are learned during these sessions.

Kids on the reservations

Anishinabe youth prepare gates for a sweat lodge — one of several traditional projects during a summer youth camp on the Red Cliff Reservation, Wisconsin.

Tribal governments today

The Chippewa tribes in northern Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan have retained off-reservation hunting, fishing and gathering rights in treaties that were made with the U.S. government in the early to mid-1800s. These treaties were made between the United States' government and the Chippewa nation to purchase land and settle the tribe on reservations. The treaties were made in the 1805, 1837, 1842 and 1854 treaties. Treaties are agreements made between governments. In these treaties the United States government made agreements with the Chippewa nation to purchase land, make other agreements, and stop hunting and gathering rights. The tribes could not own or control land for services and housing. The amount of money paid to the tribes per person was never a large amount. However, the tribes did receive all of their rights, but rather than fight, the Chippewa nation was always very small.

Tribal elders are much respected by the Anishinabe and their skills are much needed. Anishinabe elders participate in a ceremony. He holds a tobacco pouch.

Tribes are governed by tribal councils. Each city or county has elected officials, and these officials are elected at the council. Council members include tribal chairmen and others. However, the tribes did not receive all of their rights, but rather than fight, the Chippewa nation was always very small. They never fight, but they do have the right to speak.

This is why the Chippewa tribes have the right to do this. They gather off-reservation rights through negotiations that are adopted by tribal members. The forest is very important to the Anishinabe people, but they are also good for the economy.

Vistaan has always been an important part of the Anishinabe diet and remains so today. Historically, they catch with an extended family, elders and the community.
Maple sugaring

Spring is traditionally another special time of year for the Anishinabe because the sap starts to run in the sugarbush (maple trees). Many of the people who gather sugar every spring for the family. Maple syrup and maple sugar were traditionally used as sweeteners by the Anishinabe people.

The maple sap is collected from the sugarbush, or tap, wooden spouts, in the same manner as honey. Containers are nailed below each sugarbush tap. The sap is then collected and is emptied into a vat and heated from long fires. It is boiled and stirred until the evaporate turns the liquid into a thick syrup.

Maple sugaring is very special because not too many people do it anymore. Many of the older people will use maple syrup and candies as a sweeter than their family regularly, but now is more of a treat.

The Pow Wow

Pow Wow time is a special time for the Anishinabe people. It is special in many ways, but it is an opportunity for the community to come together, enjoy each other's company, and celebrate life. It is a time of much dancing, singing, and the drum.

Most reservations have pow wows throughout the year. During a pow wow there will be a variety of dances as well as make the special dance outfits. These may include various types of outfits, including traditional and fancy dancers, and single drum groups. There are also special groups from other reservations and different purposes. The drum will provide the music, and the dance will follow the rhythm and movements of the dancer.

Chiefly dancing is also an important part of the pow wow, and the drum is the most important part of the dance. It is the center of the pow wow, and the drum is the heart of the dance. The drum is played in different ways, and the dance is performed in different styles. The drum is a very special part of the pow wow, and it is used in many different ways.

Many people participate in pow wows, and there are usually special events during pow wows. These events may include special dances, cassettes, or贝西 dances, and single drum groups. There are also special groups from other reservations and different purposes. The drum will provide the music, and the dance will follow the rhythm and movements of the dancer.

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Anishinabe environmentalism

The Anishinabe are a spiritual people and believe in taking time to give respect and thanks to the Great Spirit. We are taught to honor the earth and to live in harmony with nature and all the other forms of life. This includes the four-legged creatures, the winged creatures, and those that swim in the water. The Earth is our mother and provides for us all that we need, but we must respect her well-being and be sure to care for her.

For these reasons, the Anishinabe are very concerned today about the well-being of the Earth and all her creatures. Modern day problems such as pollution, toxic waste, acid rain, over harvest of trees and animals are of great concern to Anishinabe tribes. Tribal councils and tribal experts work with others in the larger community to promote a healthier environment - a healing process that is needed by a much abused Mother Earth.

We look to the future - to the well-being not only of ourselves, but for the generations which will follow us. This is as our ancestors did, and the ways which we continue to follow. Therefore, we concern ourselves with issues such as mining and the impact that mining operations may have on the Earth in the coming years that our eyes may not live to see.

The Anishinabe people have been spiritually instructed that they are “Keepers of the Earth.” This is a great responsibility and also a great opportunity to apply our values and our wisdom towards caring for the Earth.

CREDITS
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