THIS IS THE 402ND ANNIVERSARY OF WHAT'S BEEN RECENTLY KNOWN AS THE FIRST THANKSGIVING

The day we now recognize as Thanksgiving commemorates a series of feasts between Native people of what is now Eastern Massachusetts and the Pilgrims in October of 1621, but documents are inconclusive as to whether or not honoring these feasts was the intention of the federal holiday when it was first instituted. In 1864, over 200 years after the Pilgrims landed here, in the midst of the Civil War, President Lincoln declared the last Thursday of November "as a Day of Thanksgiving and Prayer to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens", and those original Native and Pilgrim feasts were not mentioned in his proclamation. It it unclear when we began correlating Thanksgiving with these 1621 feasts. Sadly, a very different event was originally called the “Day of Thanks”. On may 26th, 1637, colonists and native allies massacred an entire Pequot village in what is now Mystic, Connecticut, and churches celebrated this sacrifice the day after, naming it a “Day of Thanks”. Along the way, we’ve come to celebrate the 1621 feasts and survival of the Pilgrim colonists due to the intertribal support of Indigenous peoples, yet most people don’t know who those Indigenous people are. The history of Thanksgiving is complex and challenging and this packet is designed to offer learning and supportive actions. We encourage folks to do their own research and acts as well.

LET'S LEARN THEIR NAME

It's been over 400 years since the Wampanoag and other allies helped the Pilgrims survive their first year by teaching them to grow, hunt, and forage for their first Patuxet harvest

Not "the Indians"

the Wampanoag

WAAM-paan-awg

After 400 years, It's time we at least know their name

The Wampanoag have multiple surviving bands including the Patuxet or Herring Pond, the Mashpee, the Aquinnah of Gay Head, and the Chappaquiddick. The Patuxet are the people of Plymouth who saved the lives of an immigrant refugee people (the Pilgrims) in 1621 and who gave the Pilgrims land in 1629. Ironically, the Patuxet are not federally recognized. Neither are the Chappaquiddick.

The Aquinnah band of Wampanoag did not receive federal recognition until 1987, 210 years after the "founding" of this country, or 367 years after the pilgrims landed in what is now Plymouth, Massachusetts. The Mashpee Wampanoag did not receive federal recognition until 2007, and with their recognition they received close to 400 acres of sovereign land in a trust and were able to develop social services like a Montessori school where they teach their language, a police department, and services for healing drug abuse. After a long legal battle that risked losing this land, they've received the rights to keep their land in trust and not lose all of the resources and services they've built.

Multiple other indigenous people, including the Nipmuc tribe, came from across the state to help these new people. Only one band of the Nipmuc tribe, the Hassanamisco band of Nipmucs, received federal recognition in 2001. This tribe is a 501C non-profit.

Author note: I was raised on unceded Wampanoag land in Falmouth, Massachusetts, and I myself have Indigenous ancestry from what is now northern Jalisco, Mexico.

photo credit mashpeewampanoagtribe-nsn.gov

SINCE IT'S BEEN OVER 400 YEARS, AND PART OF GIVING THANKS IS TO ACTIVELY GIVE, HERE ARE SOME OPTIONS TO GIVE WHAT WE CAN OF OUR TIME, OUR HEARTS, OUR VOICES, AND OUR WALLETS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ROAD TO JUSTICE

1st: Let's acknowledge them by saying their name:
Wampanoag
(WAAM-paan-awg)

2: Some, but not all, options for actions follow.
Please share and add more <3

18 Recipes that Celebrate Indigenous American Food Traditions (make sure to acknowledge where the recipes came from)

LEARN about the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe's history, culture, and work by exploring their website

LEARN more about and donate to the Nipmuc Nation, who do their work as a non-profit 501(c)

DONATE to the Mashpee Wampanoag to help their services, language & culture programs, and more

LEARN about the Aquinnah Wampanoag of Gay Head on Martha's Vineyard

LEARN about the Herring Pond or Patuxet Wampanoag & watch two great shorts

BRING a genuine, heart-felt, and honest land acknowledgment with options for actions to your Thanksgiving feast.

If you're ready to dive deeper into rethinking Thanksgiving and the social justice issues interconnected with this holiday, check out this toolkit

Actions to support

INDIGENOUS FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Watch the beautiful documentary “Gather” on itunes, netflix, or amazon

Keep it local and support Indigenous led organizations that promote, practice, and celebrate food sovereignty:

- Eat at ʔálʔal Café, on the ground floor of the Chief Seattle Club alalcafe.org
- Check out educational classes and resources at GRuB in Olympia @ goodgrub.org
- Check out and support the work of Na’ah Illahee Fund @ naahillaheefund.org
- Check out educational resources and support FEED 7 Generations, a Muckleshoot based non-profit @ feed7generations.org
- Hire chef Jason Vickers, of the Nipmuc tribe, to cater your event or do food prep for you @ natoncksmetsu.com

If you'd like to learn about the native people of the land you live on, native-land.ca is great place to start

created by Daniella M Nicholas
@dani.sea.creatrix

Tilth Alliance