



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
October 5, 2011

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## COMMEMORATION OF 217<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF CANANDAIGUA TREATY

### *President of Seneca Nation is Keynote Speaker*

Canandaigua, NY—Much has changed in the 217 years since the signing of the **Canandaigua Treaty of 1794**, but its commemoration of peace and friendship between the Six Nations Confederacy (Haudenosaunee) and the United States still is recognized today. On **Friday, November 11, 2011**, as has been the annual tradition, members of the Six Nations and the United States government gather on the front lawn of the courthouse in Canandaigua, New York to commemorate this seminal federal treaty. This year, Ganondagan is honored to have secured **President Robert Odawai Porter, President of the Seneca Nation**, as the keynote speaker.

The commemoration day begins **at 1:30 pm with a parade led by Haudenosaunee Chiefs and United States officials** beginning at the Canandaigua Primary School on W. Gibson Street to the Ontario County Courthouse on Main Street. **At 2:00 pm, the traditional commemoration ceremony** takes place on the front lawn of the Courthouse with Peter Jemison as master of ceremonies. Quaker representatives will be in attendance as they were at the original signing in their role as people of peace who could read English and help to ensure fair negotiations.

After the ceremony, attendees are encouraged to view one of only two original copies of the treaty and pertinent letters at the Ontario County Historical Society. A **potluck dinner at 4:30 pm** for all attendees culminates in the **keynote speech by Seneca President Porter at 6:00 pm in the School Auditorium**. Posters of last year's **painting by artist Robert Griffing** memorializing and capturing for posterity the Treaty signing scene from 1794 will be available for sale. All activities are free and open to the public. For more information, visit [www.ganondagan.org/TreatyCelebration.html](http://www.ganondagan.org/TreatyCelebration.html) or call 585-742-1690.

“We are extremely lucky to have President Porter as our keynote speaker,” said Ganondagan State Historic Site Manager Peter Jemison. Porter (Heron Clan) was elected president last November. He is the founder of the Tribal Law and Government Center at the University of Kansas, joined the SU College of Law as a professor and Dean's Research Scholar of Indigenous Nations Law, and established a Center of

*(more)*

Indigenous Citizenship, Law and Governance at the College of Law. Mr. Porter received his J.D. from Harvard University in 1989. His degree from the Maxwell School was in political science and economics. In 1993, he received SU's Outstanding Young Alumni Award.

The Canandaigua Treaty brought about peace between the Six Nations (Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, Mohawk, and Tuscarora) and the U.S., and was negotiated and signed by sachems representing the Grand Council of the Six Nations and Colonel Timothy Pickering, the official agent of George Washington. It also recognized the sovereignty of the Six Nations to govern and set laws as individual nations. This yearly commemoration is a time of rededication of the agreement, helping to ensure that the “chain of friendship” and agreements between nations remain current and vibrant.

This event is organized by the Friends of Ganondagan and is made possible by the collaboration of Canandaigua City School District, City of Canandaigua, and the Friends of Ganondagan; and sponsored by the Haudenosaunee Peace & Trade Committee, Mohawk Nation Council, Tonawanda Seneca Nation, and the Tuscarora Nation of Indians.

### **Schedule**

#### **COMMEMORATION OF THE CANANDAIGUA TREATY OF 1794**

***Wednesday, November 11, 2011 in Canandaigua, New York***

*1:30 pm: Parade from W. Gibson Street to Ontario County Courthouse, 27 N. Main Street*

*2:00 pm: Commemoration Ceremony; front lawn of Ontario County Courthouse*

#### ***Activities at the Canandaigua Primary School, 96 W. Gibson Street:***

*4:30 pm: Potluck Dinner; Cafeteria(bring a squash dish or pie to share)*

*6:00 pm: Keynote speaker Seneca Nation President Robert Odawai Porter; Auditorium*

***All activities are free and open to the public. A Native American Arts and Crafts sale will take place from 10:30 am - 6:00 pm at the School.***

*Note: Photos of President Porter are available on request, as are images from past Canandaigua Treaty Commemorations.*

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**Ganondagan State Historic Site** ([www.ganondagan.org](http://www.ganondagan.org)) in Victor, NY stands at the location of what was one of the largest, most vital 17<sup>th</sup>-century Seneca towns until its destruction in 1687. Today, it is a destination for visitors to explore the replica of a bark longhouse and hunting lodge and enjoy self-guided tours through trails on the Site's 600+ acres. It also acts as a resource for students and educators about the Iroquois Confederacy, or Haudenosaunee, and its message of peace. Every summer, *Friends of Ganondagan* hosts the Native American Dance & Music Festival, attended by more than 4,000 people from all over the world. *Friends* also sponsors the annual Canandaigua Treaty Day and presents lectures, workshops, and programs reflecting the vibrancy of a living culture and promoting a sustainable future.

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