



AMERICA'S 400TH ANNIVERSARY

The Journey That Changed the World

Sandra Day O'Connor, Honorary Chair

For Immediate Release
July 6, 2007

Contact: Michele Cranford/Jamestown 2007
(757) 253-4982
michele.cranford@jyf.virginia.gov

Courtney Quattrini/Ruder Finn
(202) 974-5029
quattrinic@ruderfinn.com

Virginia Indians Perform At Smithsonian Folklife Festival Drum and Dance Program Previews Upcoming Intertribal Cultural Festival

Please note: Descriptions of the dance performances and information about Virginia's eight state-recognized Indian tribes is included at the end of this news release.

Williamsburg, Va.—Virginia Indian tribes will showcase their cultures through drum and dance performances on Saturday, July 7 at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival as part of the “Roots of Virginia Culture” program sponsored by Jamestown 2007.

Dancers representing Virginia's eight state-recognized Indian tribes will perform on the National Mall at 1 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. to drumming by the Virginia Intertribal Drum. The term “drum” refers to the drum itself as well as the drummers. Often called “the heartbeat of the People” in honor of past generations, the drum sets the pace for the dancers. Through a series of traditional and more modern dances, performers will welcome observers, symbolize hunting expeditions, honor the importance of corn in native culture and offer fellowship among visitors.

The drum and dance performances are a preview of the upcoming free American Indian Intertribal Cultural Festival in Hampton on July 21-22. The Virginia Indians are hosting seven tribes from across the United States during this two-day program, offering visitors an opportunity to compare and contrast the rich variety of American Indian cultures present in America today. Both are Signature Events of America's 400th Anniversary, an 18-month series of events and programs honoring Jamestown as America's first permanent English settlement. The anniversary of Jamestown is an

opportunity to explore Virginia's cultural heritage along with the traditions of free enterprise and representative government that began there in the early 17th century.

The Virginia Indian community is one of three cultural groups representing the commonwealth during the 41st-annual folklife festival. Performers, artists, musicians, dancers, storytellers, chefs, farmers and artisans have performed in front of thousands of visitors to the festival since it opened on June 27. Groups and individuals from Senegal, West Africa; Kent, England and Virginia are showcasing their cultures to the public

The "Roots of Virginia Culture" theme reflects the three cultures—Indian, English and African—that converged at Jamestown in the early part of the 17th century.

For more information on the Smithsonian Folklife Festival or the upcoming Native American Intertribal Festival, visit www.americas400thanniversary.com.

Jamestown 2007, a sub-agency of the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, is coordinating efforts to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Jamestown, Va., the first permanent English settlement in the Americas. The nation's first representative government, free enterprise system and culturally diverse society began at Jamestown. State, national, and international commemorative events to salute these legacies began in May 2006 and continue into 2008. Major corporate sponsors of America's 400th Anniversary include Norfolk Southern Corporation (NYSE: NSC), Verizon (NYSE: VZ) and The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. Other supporters include Anheuser-Busch Companies, Inc. (NYSE: BUD), AirTran Airways (NYSE: AAI), Dominion, James City County, Philip Morris USA, SunTrust, and Wolseley PLC/Ferguson Enterprises, Inc. More information about the commemoration is available at www.Americas400thAnniversary.com.

###

VIRGINIA INDIAN DANCE DESCRIPTIONS

CEREMONIAL:

A dance of prayer, another traditional dance involving men and women, the men dance to the four directions – North, South, East and West – and bow to the women in an offering of prayer. The first time, the women turn their backs to the men as if rejecting the prayer. The second time, the women step forward to accept the prayer as the men bow.

WELCOME/BLESSING OF THE GROUND:

Involves both men and women in traditional dress. The women start the dance, followed by the men. The dance ends with all dancing together. At various times throughout the dance, the dancers bow to symbolically sprinkle the ground to offer a blessing and extend a welcome to those who are observing.

RABBIT DANCE:

Done by couples and represents the hunting of an animal that is a source of food for the Virginia Indians. The dancers start out searching, then change steps to give chase when they spot a rabbit. They change steps again when they lose sight of the rabbit, continuing to search the area where it was last seen. In the final set of steps, the dancers move to a new area and start searching again. In this dance, the rabbit always gets away!

TWO-STEP:

A relatively new dance done by many tribes, the Two-Step is an opportunity for couples to interact in a social dance. The lead dancers make a move and the other dancers must follow with the same move. This dance is different each time it is done. It is similar to social dances of many other cultures and is probably borrowed from the Europeans who came to America.

WOMEN'S GREEN CORN DANCE:

Honors the importance of corn in the native culture and the women's responsibility as the provider of the village garden. The traditional women form the spokes of a wheel and dance in a circle, planting corn as they go, stopping at each of the four directions to give honor to the Creator. After completing the circle, the women form an arc and raise their baskets to the sky, asking the Creator to bless the planting of the corn so that it produces a bountiful harvest for the Green Corn Feast and for the upcoming winter.

ROUND DANCE:

The dancers join hands to form a circle, the geometric form with no beginning and no end. The dancers move clockwise, then counterclockwise, in a slow, simple side-step. This dance is especially popular with young children. Because the audience is sometimes invited to join in, this is also called The Friendship Dance.

NANTICOKE DANCE:

Is a fun dance in which the men and women dance together. Unlike other dances, the drum rhythm changes throughout and the dancers must slow down and speed up with the drum. At various times, the lead dancer shouts "onay", signaling the dancers to change their formation.

CANOE DANCE:

A group of men and a group of women, each in a separate boat, travel along the river during the Canoe Dance. The men spot the women and begin to pursue them, hoping to get better acquainted. The women paddle away from the men but stay just close enough that the men don't lose interest. Eventually, the two groups join together in one canoe and paddle off together.

VIRGINIA'S EIGHT-STATE RECOGNIZED INDIAN TRIBES

Mattaponi Tribe

Chief: Carl "Lone Eagle" Custalow

Web site: www.baylink.org/mattaponi

Chickahominy Tribe

Chief: Stephen R. Adkins

State Recognized: March 25, 1983

Web site: www.chickahominyindiantribe.org

Rappahannock Tribe

Chief: G. Anne Richardson

State Recognized: March 25, 1983

Web site: www.rappahannocktribe.org

Pamunkey Tribe

Chief: William P. Miles

Web site: www.baylink.org/pamunkey

Nansemond Tribe

Chief: Barry Bass

State Recognized: February 20, 1985

Web site: www.nansemond.org

Eastern Chickahominy Tribe

Chief: Gene Adkins

State Recognized: March 25, 1983

Web site: www.cied.org

Upper Mattaponi Tribe

Chief: Ken Adams

State Recognized: March 25, 1983

Web site: www.uppermattaponi.org

Monacan Indian Nation

Chief: Kenneth Branham

State Recognized: February 14, 1989

Web site: www.monacannation.com