



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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GANONDAGAN CELEBRATES 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF NATIVE AMERICAN DANCE & MUSIC FESTIVAL, JULY 23-24

*Headliners are Award-winning Singer/songwriter Darryl Tonemah and
Zuni Olla Maidens from New Mexico*

Victor, NY— With the opening of its new Seneca Art & Culture Center last October, Ganondagan has been celebrating many firsts. On **July 23-24**, it celebrates a milestone anniversary—the **25th year of its signature Native American Dance & Music Festival**.

To note this distinguished anniversary, Friends of Ganondagan has programmed **two headliners**, one traditional and one contemporary in keeping with ancient and living Native American culture. Making his Ganondagan debut is **award-winning singer songwriter Darryl Tonemah** (Kiowa/Comanche/Tuscarora) with his back-up band. Returning after a number of years is the popular group from New Mexico, the **Zuni Olla Maidens** who dance with highly decorated traditional pots atop their heads.

A singer/songwriter in the purest sense, **Darryl Tonemah's performances combine the energy of rock, the intelligence of folk, and the heart of country to create a musical niche he calls "Native Americana."** Over the years, he has played thousands of shows, appeared numerous times on radio and television, and released six albums with multiple awards and nominations, all while building up an international fan base. His live shows include performances at the 2002 Winter Olympics, The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, The Smithsonian Institute's Museum of the American Indian, The Native American Music Awards Show, and The New Orleans Jazz Festival. He retains a deep connection with his roots and a gift for intimate storytelling that has become his trademark.

The Zuni Olla (pronounced Oy-ya) Maidens formed more than 90 years ago, and continue in various incarnations today. Dressed to dance in colorful, matching regalia and donning Zuni silver and turquoise jewelry, **their final addition is a large traditionally designed clay pot (olla) balanced on each woman's head.** These vessels reflect Zuni pottery-making tradition going back more than a thousand years. Their performances both honor and promote the beauty and culture of Zuni women who traditionally transported water in large ollas carried on their heads.

Additional daily performances feature Iroquois Social Dancers led by singer Bill Crouse (Seneca), traditional artisan demonstrations, storytelling, a popular Native American arts market, tours of the Seneca Art & Culture Center and the Bark Longhouse replica, guided trail walks, special family programming, and raffle opportunities.

"We are so excited to be celebrating our 25th year of the Native American Dance & Music Festival," said Friends of Ganondagan Program Director Jeanette Miller. "Over the years we've supported and promoted some of the best indigenous traditional and contemporary performers from across North America and as far away as New Zealand, showing that we've also adapted and excelled as contemporaries. We're proud to welcome our dedicated visitors, many of whom travel annually from around the country. And, we are extremely grateful to our amazing volunteers, because without them, none of this would be possible."

Festival tickets are available at the event and **include all performances, activities and tours of the bark longhouse and the Seneca Art & Culture Center. Admission prices** are: \$12/general, \$10/members; seniors (62+) \$10/general, \$6/members; students (18+) with ID \$7, \$3/members; children (3-17) \$5/general, \$2/members; children 2 and under are free. For more information, visit www.ganondagan.org or call 585-742-1690. Ganondagan State Historic Site is located at 1488 State Route 444 in Victor.

Free parking and shuttle service is available from Victor Fireman's Field from 10:00 am - 6:30 pm. Fireman's Field is located off Maple Ave. (Rte 444) in Victor, NY.

In keeping with the Iroquois "Seventh Generation" principle in which decisions are guided by consideration of the welfare and wellbeing of the seventh generation to come, festival waste will continue to be separated into compostables, recyclables, and returnable bottles and cans.

This year's festival is made possible in part by funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, and through support of more than 100 volunteers. The 2016 **media sponsor is Kidsoutandabout.com.**

NOTE TO MEDIA: Interviews and photos are available on request.

CALENDAR:

What: Ganondagan's 25th Native American Dance & Music Festival

When: Saturday and Sunday, July 23 and 24, 10 am-6 pm

Where: Ganondagan State Historic Site, 1488 State Route 444, Victor, NY

Admission: \$12/general, \$10/members; seniors (62+) \$10/general, \$6/members; students (18+ w/ID) \$7/general, \$3/members; children (3-17) \$5/general, \$2/members; free for children 2 and under.

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