

**FOREST COUNTY
POTAWATOMI**
Keeper of the Fire

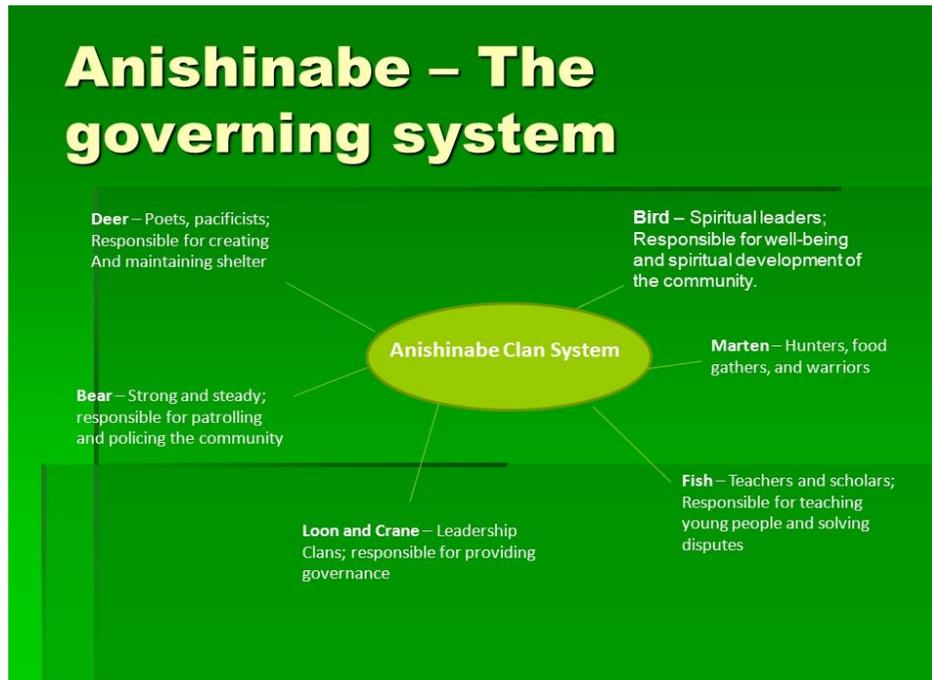
**The Potawatomi Nation of
Wisconsin**
By Ava L. McCall

*Based on Native People of
Wisconsin by Patti Loew*



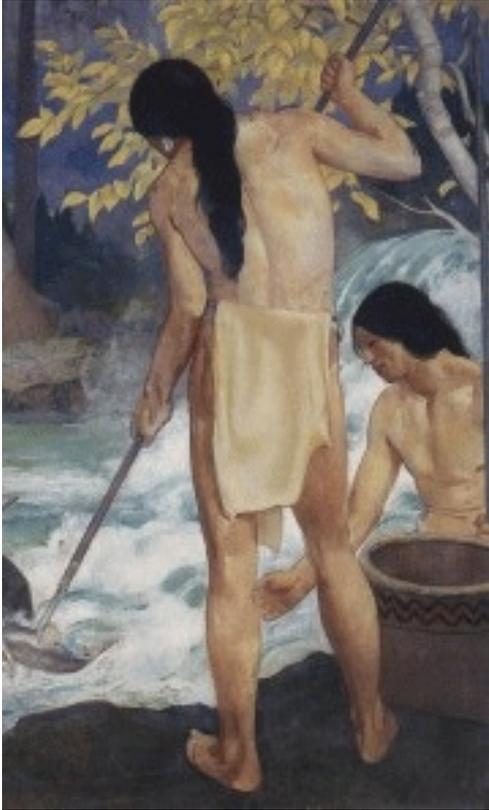
The Potawatomi and Ojibwe were originally part of the Anishinabe. The Potawatomi believe they began in the Great Lakes area, then moved near the Atlantic Ocean. When they returned to the Great Lakes area, the Potawatomi's job was to carry the sacred fire. Fire was important to the people's survival. The Potawatomi are still called "Keepers of the Fire." The Potawatomi's homeland was parts of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin.

Tribal Traditions

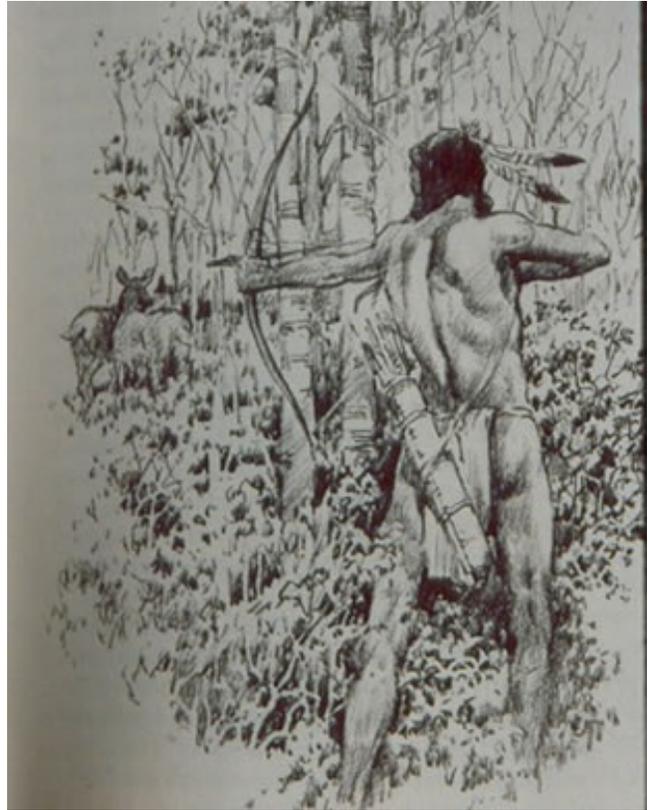


The Potawatomi organized themselves in clans with each clan having a specific responsibility to help the people. Potawatomi people must marry someone outside their clan. The Potawatomi also called themselves the Anishinabe.

The Potawatomi organized themselves into clans. Each clan had a specific responsibility to help the people, such as leading or protecting. When the Potawatomi married, they married someone outside of their clan. The couple lived with the husband's family in the village of his clan. The children remained close to both parents' clans.



Potawatomi fished for food in summer.



Potawatomi men hunted animals for food and clothing in fall.

In summer, the Potawatomi fished and women and children planted gardens and gathered berries and wild plants. In fall, men hunted and trapped animals for food and clothing while women gathered nuts and fruits to eat.



In winter, Potawatomi people stayed inside their wigwams, repaired traps, made clothing, and told stories.



In winter, Potawatomi women made clothing for everyone in the family to wear.

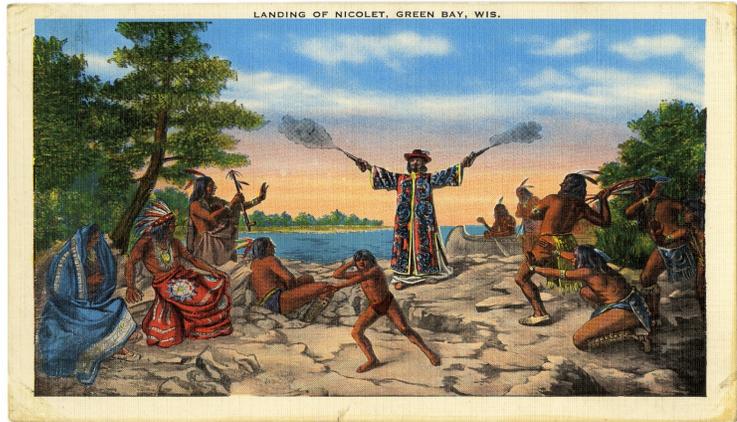
In winter, men hunted and people stayed inside their wigwams and repaired traps, made clothing, and told stories. Some stories were not supposed to be told unless snow was on the ground. In spring the Potawatomi collected maple sap to make maple syrup and sugar. They also speared fish and large groups of people hunted bison on the prairie.

Tribal History

Washington Island, Rock Island, and Red Banks



The Potawatomi settled on Washington and Rock Islands in the 1600s.



The Potawatomi met Jean Nicolet when he landed in Green Bay in 1634.

By the early 1600s, the Potawatomi settled on Washington and Rock Islands off the tip of Door County in Wisconsin. In 1634, the Potawatomi met Jean Nicolet when he landed in Green Bay. They wanted to trade their furs for metal knives, iron kettles, cloth, beads, and guns from French fur traders.



The Potawatomi took furs to French fur traders in Montreal from many different Native nations living in the Great Lakes area.

The Potawatomi became leaders in the fur trade. They filled their canoes with furs from different Native nations living in the Great Lakes area. The Potawatomi tied canoes together for long trips to Montreal, Canada to meet the French fur traders. They fought with the Five Nations (Oneida, Mohawk, Cayuga, Onondaga, and Seneca) who also wanted to control the fur trade.



Potawatomi women married French fur traders. The Potawatomi and French fur traders got along well with one another.

The Potawatomi traded with the French for many years. Many French fur traders married Potawatomi women. The Potawatomi helped the French when the French fought the British in the French and Indian War.



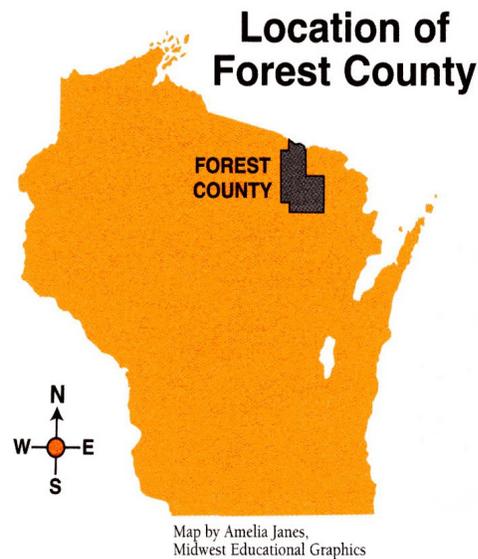
The Potawatomi and other Native nations attacked British forts because they did not like how they traded with Native people.

The British won the French and Indian War and took over the fur trade. The Potawatomi did not like trading with the British. The British raised prices on trade goods and did not provide some trade goods the Potawatomi wanted. The Potawatomi and other Native nations attacked British forts to make them leave. The British did not leave, but finally began trading with the Potawatomi as the French did. They provided trade goods the Potawatomi wanted.



Most Potawatomi fought with the British during the American Revolution.

Most Potawatomi fought with the British during the American Revolution when the Americans fought for independence from Great Britain. The Potawatomi chose to fight with the British because they feared if the Americans won, the Americans would move onto Potawatomi lands.



The Potawatomi have a reservation in
Forest County, Wisconsin after giving up
all of their homelands.

After the American Revolution and War of 1812, the United States government forced the Potawatomi to give up their homeland. The government wanted the land for the lead and for Americans to live. The Potawatomi also had to sell some land to pay fur trading debts. The United States government wanted the Potawatomi to move west out of Wisconsin. A group of Potawatomi refused to move and bought reservation land in Forest County, Wisconsin. Finally, in 1988, the Potawatomi were given reservation status by the United States government.



Potawatomi children were sent to boarding schools. They were not allowed to speak their Native language or practice their traditional customs and religions.

The United States government encouraged the Potawatomi to give up their traditional customs and religions. The government built mission schools and churches. Potawatomi children were sent to boarding schools away from their families. The children were not allowed to speak their Native language or practice their customs and religions. Many Potawatomi accepted the Christian religion, but not everyone. Some mixed Christian beliefs with their own beliefs.

Potawatomi Life Today



The Potawatomi have a casino on their homeland in Milwaukee. The casino makes a lot of money for the Potawatomi for education, health care, and housing.

Today the Potawatomi have two casinos. One is on their reservation in Forest County. The other is on their homeland in Milwaukee. The Milwaukee casino makes a lot of money for the Potawatomi. They also developed other businesses, such as a construction company, a logging cooperative, and a red deer herd to provide venison to restaurants.



The Potawatomi help pay for the Indian Community School in Milwaukee.
Only Native children can attend the school.



The Indian Community School in Milwaukee helps Native students learn all subjects and develop pride in their traditional tribal values.

The Potawatomi use some of the money from their casinos to support the Indiana Community School in Milwaukee. This school helps Native children develop pride in their culture.



The Potawatomi Health and Wellness Center on their reservation provides medical, dental, and mental health care for all Potawatomi people.

The Potawatomi also use money earned from their casinos to build a health and wellness center that all Potawatomi can use to meet their medical needs. The Potawatomi have a daycare center to care for young children and a senior center to provide food and activities for all Potawatomi age 55 and older. The Potawatomi want to improve housing for all tribal members and find jobs for all those who are able to work.