

Congratulations to the Performance-Based Awardees for 2002–2003

Each individual will have his/her base salary increased by \$574.71, retroactive to the beginning of the 2003–2004 fiscal year.

Aguiar, George	Huling, Dianne	Ryczek, James
Anthony, Jason	Johnson, Deborah	Salemi, Alan
Augenstein, Suzanne	Kilpeck, Corrine	Salemi, Kristen
Babiana, Andrea	Konicki, Donna	Sasso, Kathryn
Baker, Brian	Konicki, Joseph	Schenck, Susan
Bergeron, Timothy	Lavin, Thomas	Shadoian, Holly
Bomba, Princess	Macaulay, Michael	Shein, Robert
Boyajian, Mariam	Maine, David	Shellard, Gerald
Bradley, Thomas	Maine, Elizabeth	Shumate, Janet
Brennan, Kevin	Marques, Maureen	Simpson, Charles
Budano, Nicholas	McAllister, Susan	Sousa, Amy
Carlino, Anthony	McEnery, Linda	Sousa, Melissa
Conrad, Robert	McGovern, Dennis	Stark, Dana
Conti, Robert	Mello, John	Suggs, Deborah
Costa, Joseph	Murrell, Shana	Sundermeier, Elisabeth
Dionne, Karon	Nesbitt, Julia	Swigart, William
Dunphy, Deborah	Nightingale, Jayne	Szczepanek, Charlene
Enos, Elizabeth	O'Connor, Janet	Thomson, Debra
Gammell, Gregory	O'Neill, Ellie	Tow, Phillip
Giacobbi, Sharon	Otto, Lyn-Su	Turcotte, Susan
Gibbons, Scott	Page, Cynthia	Valencia, Maurício
Goncalves, Jessica	Paolucci, Mark	Vessella, Donna
Gonzalez, Alvaro	Park, Janet	Weaver-Paquette, Ellen
Gorman, Michael	Passarelli, Dolores	Wilczek, Elaine
Guenther, Gray	Patrie, Arthur	Wilson, David
Hanbury, James	Ragosta, Raymond	Yu, Bin
Hanrahan, Catherine	Riley-Wilcox, Teresa	Ziroti, Dorene
Hennessey, Kathryn	Roy, Scott	
Hittinger, Victoria	Rubino, Karen	
Hoogasian, Nancy	Russo, Gerald	

The PSA@RIC Report

Professional Staff Association at Rhode Island College
600 Mt. Pleasant Avenue
Providence, RI 02908-1991

INSIDE AN INTERVIEW WITH KEN COULBOURN “PEOPLE OF THE DAWN”



THE PSA@RIC REPORT
The Professional Staff Association at Rhode Island College

Profiles of Our Professionals
EQUAL PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

November 2003 Issue

reviews. There are those who received an increase who are thankful because they had always been passed over before, but there were many who objected after we learned that in some cases people who didn't meet their goals were given awards and in other cases people who completed the goals were denied the award.

Our patience is wearing thin.

During this past year one of our 20-year PSA employees has been dismissed, another was threatened with dismissal, and a third was suspended for two weeks without pay. We believe all three actions

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT . . .

are without just cause and we are working to seek appropriate remedies. The suspension involved signing off on overtime for another employee who did not work the assigned overtime and lied about it.

Where is the responsibility of the Administration? I learned that time clocks were removed by the Administration years ago over the objections of PSA supervisors, so where's the culpability?

Our patience is wearing thin.

We are nearly six months into a new contract year without an agreement. Early on I extended an olive branch to the Administration, hoping for an early settlement in this special Sesquicentennial year and with a bitter taste lingering from the last round of negotiations. The response was a slap in the face with the appointment to the Administration bargaining team of someone whose position was the subject of a unit clarification before the Labor Board, and in a preliminary ruling had been designated as appropriate to be in the PSA@RIC. The Administration's stance on this has held up negotiations. While we have kept the lines of communication open and hope to reach an agreement one way or the other, in the mean time we have seen other union contracts fall into place with one year "rollovers" preserving health insurance benefits but offering no across-the-board increases.

Our patience is wearing thin.

For months our time sheets have displayed either inaccurate or no accruals for vacation, sick leave, or comp time. When the usual letter came around alerting us to the need to disburse unused vacation time before the end of the year, I heard from angry employees, upset that they have such difficulty getting accurate data and dismayed at the lack of communication from the Administration. When will it be fixed and where can we go to get answers in the mean time?

Our patience is wearing thin.

Who is "Big A" Administration?

It's the holiday season and there should be warm and fuzzy feelings, particularly at Rhode Island College as it celebrates the 150th year of its founding. Unfortunately, the feelings among Professional Staff Association members at the College are far from warm and fuzzy. Recent actions (or lack of action) by the Administration have had a chilling effect on many of our members and they bristle at the mention of such things as merit pay, dismissals and suspensions, contract negotiations, and accurate reporting of vacation, sick leave, and comp time accruals.

A recent meeting of the PSA@RIC executive board was dominated by discussion of why those who were selected to receive a share of the performance-based fund have not yet been paid. A resolution was made to demand that the Administration move the paperwork to the state to ensure that payment be made as quickly as possible. Even with a quick response it is doubtful that the increase will be seen in 2003. One would have thought that a lesson could have been learned from last year, when the retroactive portion of the payment was delayed until January after the end of the evaluation period in May of the year before.

Our patience is wearing thin.

This, after two years of a performance-based assessment process that virtually everyone agrees didn't work. Though more than half of our members received much-deserved increases to their base salaries, there were decidedly mixed

Teachings for the Peaceful Warrior: Books One and Two. It is a compilation of the thoughts of various teachers who have aided him on his journey.) I also have a company I started back in 1994 called Spirits on the Wind where I share a lot of my teachings. It's gotten a lot smaller since then, but I continue to hold conferences and workshops. I also teach relaxation and meditation to Upward Bound students here at RIC.

Gita: Where are you now in your life?

Ken: The drive to travel isn't as strong anymore. I love being at home. I can go home and reflect on the day, on the week, on my life. I love films. I rent and buy a lot of films—that's my escape; it shuts my brain down. I also like music and I love to read. Reading is my passion.

Gita: Do you care that people might look upon you as another New Age metaphysician?

Ken: No. But human beings do amaze me. I marvel at us because we are such walking contradictions. We have this desire to learn, but that learning has to fit within certain parameters, and anything that makes us uncomfortable we dismiss.

Gita: In your journal you write, "a warrior literally means one who is brave. The key to warriorship is not being afraid of who you are."

Ken: Yes. Being a warrior is not about aggression, it's not about riding out in war paint, waving a tomahawk. A warrior's biggest battle will always be with himself. The battle is always internal, and all bravery is, is making fear your companion. Fear is a part of the human experience. Fear doesn't go away. All you do is change your relationship to it.

Gita: Ken, I am very glad that we met and that you chose to share this leg of your journey with me. ■

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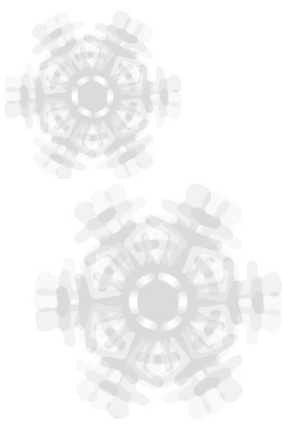
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Ken: I don't know if you're familiar with Sadona, but one of the famous sites there is Oak Creek Canyon which has beautiful boulders in this national forest. I found the highest point and just sat there with only water. I was in a state of meltdown; it's the only way to describe it. I would lay down from time to time, stare at the sky, or close my eyes. Everything he had said during the ritual kept resonating loud and clear in my head. It was as if he was still there talking to me. I couldn't focus on anything other than his voice. It took four days for me to ground myself.

Gita: You said the Sun Dance ritual brings empowerment and embracement. I can see how the two would work together. When I embrace who I am I become empowered.

Ken: And this empowerment isn't preceded by some big drum roll. It's more subtle than that. It's basically a shift. I've lived my life for as long as I can remember at this point, but I woke up today and I am now here, at this point. I found that I was reacting to my life experiences differently. It was the difference between flowing with the current and flowing against the current. I flow with things more easily now, whereas before my reactions would be more emotional.

Gita: Fascinating. So many of us live our lives in a perpetual state of routine—a kind of sleepwalking.

Ken: One of the things I've learned is to change the course of the wind and not get stuck in routine. The way to change the course of the wind is to do something outside the routine. Break up the direction of the wind.

Gita: So on Saturday instead of spending five hours cleaning the house, I'll spend it in a stuffy old bookstore. Something I haven't done in years. Something that I love. It makes sense, you know. No one safely sleepwalks if they're suddenly put in a strange place. You become an explorer again in your own life.



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Ken: Exactly. I spent the next eighteen years in travel and study—exploring. I became involved in personal growth and development work. Though I lived in Providence, I traveled to forty-five of the fifty states and to Europe and Egypt. I attended conferences, workshops, lectures. I became certified in transformational psychology. And what I discovered was that these teachings were all based on the ancient teachings.

Gita: Echoes of your grandmother.

Ken: Echoes of all the ancients. That's why I love it when people use the term "New Age." The natives were a root culture. The stones you find in New Age shops that are used for healing were called vibrating rocks by the natives because quartz does vibrate. The natives didn't have the filters created by technology, so they were much more open and attuned to the things around them. The ancients knew about the healing qualities of water and that all living things have an energy field. The ancients also knew how to connect with the energy of the universe through chant and dance. When you see Native Americans dancing, say, at a pow wow for long periods of time, that's when they are most connected to the energy of the universe. It is the interaction between human essence and all the other life essences in the universe. It is a connection to everything.

Gita: Have you been there?

Ken: Yes.

Gita: Have you been able to stay there?

Ken: No one ever gets to stay there. The things that were taught by the ancient cultures, the root cultures, are to be used as a place to go back to when you need it. If you're a high-strung person, the next time you're in a state of chaos or tension you have a point of reference to go back to, a point of centeredness.

Gita: Have you written any of your experiences down?

Ken: (Ken hands me his journal bound in buckskin titled

I was approached by the Administration with a potential solution to the comp time accounting problem that seems to benefit PSA members. Comp time is admittedly difficult to track because unused time cannot be carried more than six months from the date it is earned, so for those who have difficulty using up comp time, hours can disappear on a regular basis. PeopleSoft apparently can't handle this process, so it was proposed that every six months (June and December) adjustments be made for the previous 12-month period. Thus depending on when in the six-month period the comp time was earned an employee might have up to a full year to disburse it (until the end of the six-month period after the one in which it was earned). While this may sound reasonable, it is different from what is called for in our Agreement. And it is not clear how such a system might affect decisions on cash payment in cases where it is requested and at the discretion of the Vice President for Administration, as provided for in our Agreement. The time may be right to change the comp time language in the Agreement, but we have seen no language proposed yet.

Our patience is wearing thin.

So where is the Administration in all of this?

Administration with a capital "A" is defined in our Agreement as "the President, the Vice Presidents, and other top-level supervisors of the College excluded from the bargaining unit by the Rhode Island State Labor Relations Board." Those other top-level supervisors include such positions as Director of Human Resources, Director of Facilities and Operations, Director of Security and Safety, Budget Officer, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, Recreation, and Intramurals, as well as assistant vice presidents, executive support staff, etc.

For many years Administration was nearly synonymous with one man: John Nazarian. He brought the College through some difficult times, financial and otherwise, and he deserves the accolades he is getting this year. He sincerely loves this place and has attempted to instill a sense of community. Until recent months he ran a tight ship with little escaping the attention of the Captain. As the College geared up for a major capital campaign, he began to let loose a bit and delegate some of the decisions. This has allowed him to devote more time to the important duties of fund raising.

This transition should normally be seen as a positive devel-

opment. But it's a major culture change for the College, and it is something new and different for the rest of the Administration to be empowered to make important decisions.

A colleague asked me the other day if all these problems seem like they are being purposefully carried out. He asked me if they sound like things John Nazarian would typically do. I admitted that they do not.

So what gives? I believe we are in a critical moment in the history of Rhode Island College. John Nazarian has been associated with this College for fifty of the 150 years of its existence, an unparalleled achievement. In all fairness, he may be years from retirement. But whether it is months or years, it is clear that much of the next 150 years in the life of the College will be shaped under new leadership.

If John Nazarian were to step down today, the College would be ill prepared to carry on. As he lets loose the reins of power, the College is being tugged this way and that. Many of the issues discussed above should not have gotten out of control. A good example is the unit clarification. If the College's attorney had his way all middle managers with supervisory responsibilities would be classified as "top level" and he would "bust" the union.

The faculty and staff have been asked to go the extra mile in recent months and, for the most part, they have responded. Instead of earning the respect of the Administration, we are confronting issues with which we are losing patience. Many of these issues could have and should have been addressed by top-level supervisors long ago. If the Administration wants to get rid of dead wood, they would do well to examine their own ranks.

As we begin to prepare for the next 150 years, we must seek to develop a true system of shared governance that implements sound policies and procedures and applies them fairly to all. My understanding is that the College is embarking on a strategic planning process mandated by the Board of Governors for Higher Education. This may be an opportunity to begin the transition to something like what I have outlined. If President Nazarian could leave as his legacy a well-managed College with faculty, staff, and Administration empowered to make a difference, that would be the brightest jewel in his retirement crown.

—Rob Bower

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Health

INSURANCE BENEFITS

Rhode Island public higher education employee contracts renegotiated this past year are falling into a pattern of rolling over benefits from the previous contract into a one-year agreement. Current health insurance benefits are largely being preserved, with no co-pay on the premium and modest increases in the prescription co-pay as negotiated with the state provider.

This is not surprising in that the current state contract for employee health insurance benefits extends through December 2004, so health care benefits will be a major issue in future negotiations. What changes can we expect?

It is not yet clear if there will be enough competition among major providers to avoid large increases in the cost of benefit plans offered in the next state health benefit contract, but it is clear that existing plans will change in attempts to keep health care affordable.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Rhode Island has shared with labor representatives what one such plan might look like in the future.

HealthMate Personal Choices is a new product Blue Cross is

developing that encourages healthy lifestyles and rewards good behavior. The plan encourages preventive care by providing coverage for things like diabetic counseling, cardiac rehabilitation, foreign travel immunizations, and nutritional counseling. Studies have shown that the annual savings in claims for a participant in a diabetes treatment program, for example, will be approximately \$1,300 (claims for a participant typically are less than \$5,000 annually while those for a nonparticipant are over \$6,000 annually).

A key part of the proposed plan is personalized communication. The communications are tailored to each individual member, who can choose the preferred method of communicating (on-line, mail, work site, or by telephone). Members would have access to a twenty-four-hour nurse advocate line and a personal health coach. Discounts would be available for access to a national fitness network, personal trainers, and exercise equipment.

Participants would be required to sign a Lifestyle Pledge, obtain annual health exams, and participate in certain health, life style, and personal care programs.

If we are to hope for modest or no increases in our share of the cost of health insurance, these are the types of plans we'll need to take a serious look at in the future. More traditional plans may still be available but will no doubt come at a higher cost.—Rob Bower, President

work with me or not. I wrote to him and got an immediate response to come out to Arizona.

This was very exciting for me because all the while I was growing up I looked upon my mother and grandmother as medicine women. If we were sick they didn't buy over-the-counter medicines. They made medicine from foods and herbs. I wanted to grow up and be the counterpart of my mother and grandmother—a medicine man. I wanted to be able to travel between the two spirit worlds. So, when I went out to Arizona to see this shaman I was very psyched.

Gita: Was the shaman what you expected?

Ken: I was expecting him to look the way Hollywood has depicted them, old and loaded with feathers. But this man was middle-aged and highly educated. He spoke like a Harvard graduate. He wore jeans and a buckskin shirt. I found out later that he had access to any area of any reservation in the country. That's unusual. On most reservations, there are areas where you can't simply walk into. But this man could make a call and they would honor him.

Gita: What happened there?

Ken: He performed what he called the Sun Dance ritual, which is the ritual of empowerment and embracement. Originally the Sun Dance was called the Ritual of Manhood and was performed when a male child hit puberty. But when the natives were put on reservations the government banned the ritual. The natives then changed the name to the Sun Dance.

So, we entered a kiva (a ceremonial structure that is round and partly underground) and I waited for him to call forth my shaman. I asked him, "Who am I?" And he said, "A warrior." My heart sank. He went on to explain the role of the warrior in a clan. Usually the warrior is portrayed as a kind of soldier who does all the fighting. We don't get to see what they do in between the fighting. I discovered

that when warriors are not preparing to go to war, they're the main teachers of the tribe. Their job is to teach the young ones how things are done and why they are done. For example, when you kill something, you honor it and take in its spirit. The shaman, on the other hand,



is far removed from the tribe. You have to go seek a shaman. Whereas a warrior intermingles with the members of the tribe and is always available to them.

A fire was built that got tremendously hot, but it wasn't like a sweat lodge where they use heated stones with water. He said the first part of the ritual would be to teach me how to get out of my own way. He said, "You've been conditioned to react to the world and to think and view the world in a certain way. It's not a bad thing, but it serves no purpose here. I'm going to strip you of all your structures."

Gita: At any point did you become afraid?

Ken: Not during the ritual, but afterward I realized that I had had absolutely no control over the experience. It just swept me up.

Gita: Were you aware of time passing?

Ken: There was no time. Time became irrelevant. The first twenty-four hours I was still on our time (whatever that means) and then I began to slip away, and I didn't care after that, and I didn't realize it was a three-day event. I couldn't tell you when it was day or night.

Gita: Did you step outside of the kiva at any point during the ritual?

Ken: No. In those three days we never moved outside. The things I was geared to normally pay attention to didn't matter anymore. At the end of the ritual he took a knife (my hair was relatively long at that time) and he took the back of it and cut it. He said that I was never to cut my hair again. That's why I wear this (Ken holds up the ponytail at the nape of his neck).

Gita: Did you find it hard to come back to the daily grind after that?

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NOTE ON FINANCES

At the end of the previous fiscal year ending 12/31/02, we were able to finish in the black and added approximately \$800 to our prior year's fund balance of \$42,300 to \$43,100. This represented a reversal from the two prior fiscal years of 2000 and 2001 where we had overspent each year's revenue. Our overall goal was to maintain a fund balance of \$50,000. I project that for the current fiscal year we will be able to finish with a net increase to the fund balance of approximately \$2,000. We were able to reverse the reduction in our fund balance due to two factors: (1) We adjusted our biweekly dues by \$1.50 per pay period in April, 2003, (please make note that in June 1999 the Finance Committee recommended and the Executive Board approved a self-imposed reduction in the biweekly dues deduction of \$2.00 per pay period); and (2) we curtailed some of the discretionary expenditures that the union was incurring the last few years. Our annual dues amount is considerably lower than the faculty's.

—Tom Bradley, Treasurer

pendant that fascinated me. The stone was black obsidian, and in the middle of the stone was a triangular-shaped gem. It was a soft yellow, almost topaz. The stones were set in this troy silver setting. She had a ritual every night where she would take off her jewelry in a certain order and place them on a table in her bedroom.

My father, on the other hand, was the opposite of my grandmother. My father demanded respect. He demanded it with an iron fist. My grandmother “commanded” respect. She was the matriarch of the family. She could walk into a room and break the tension with a smile or a word. When Sun Bear said power is a gentle thing, I think of my grandmother. She didn’t talk a lot but she didn’t need to. I think she spoke volumes through who she was rather than what she said.

And she conveyed lessons to me through stories. Now I find that I, too, convey my ideas in the form of story. Though it was fascinating listening to her it was also frightening because I wasn’t hearing anybody else in the outside world use any of the terminology or believe the things that she believed. When she moved out of our house, I basically went with her. She used to call me her little husband. I could have been outside playing baseball, instead I spent most of my free time with her, sitting at the table discussing life with her.

My grandmother was forgiving, wise, stable, and solid. She never judged anyone.

Gita: So when you came home from school and told your grandmother, “The kid across the street just snatched my so-and-so and called me a so-and-so . . .”

Ken: Her reaction would be, “That makes me sad. Find compassion for that person

because that was done in ignorance.” Unfortunately, when she died, her wisdom went with her because the rest of the family wasn’t keeping up the traditions.

Gita: How many siblings did you have?

Ken: My family had nine girls in a row before I came along. After I was born, my grandmother said, “Now we’ve finally got our little general.” I became known in the neighborhood as “Gen.” It was like being a boy named Sue.

Gita: Were you able to keep up the traditions that your grandmother had passed on to you?

Ken: Well, years after my grandmother died, a nonnative friend came to me and said that there was some kind of conference going on up in Maine. This was about 1981. It was called the Sun Bear Gathering, and she wanted to know if I’d be interested in going. The gathering literally changed my life. There were two speakers: Wal-

lace Black Elk and Clyde Bellecourt. Clyde was a warrior who had been involved in Ruby Ridge and some of the controversial confrontations with the U.S. government. Wallace was a shaman or medicine man. But they were both conveying the same message—“re-embracing your heritage.” They talked about what it meant to be a Native American, that it is something to be proud of. For me, it was like going home. I heard echoes of my grandmother in everything they said. There were over a thousand Native Americans at this conference from all over the country. Imagine over a thousand people sitting in three concentric circles with the two speakers in the middle.

Later I spoke to some of the elders at the conference who told me that a great man out in Arizona worked with people to help them find their path. They told me I’d have to write to him and that he would decide whether he wanted to

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(as of December 1, 2003)

Note: Executive Board members are in bold

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PEOPLE OF THE DAWN

An Interview with Ken Coulbourn by Gita Brown

"It is said, as long as there is a native to greet the dawn, life will continue."

Long before the Pilgrims landed in New England and settled in Plymouth, the area was home to the Wampanoag, called "people of the dawn." The Wampanoag lived by farming, fishing, hunting, and gathering. In the spring, whole villages moved to the seashore to fish and plant crops—corn, squash, and beans. Since their homes were often made of woven mats stretched with wood frames, they could carry the mats with them and leave the wooden structures behind for their return. In the fall and winter they moved inland to the forests of oak, maple, and pine where they hunted deer, wolf, bear, beaver, moose, wild turkey, raccoon, otter, and wildcat. From the streams, rivers, lakes, and ocean they took fresh and salt water fish; in winter they fished through the holes of the ice.

The earliest contacts between the Wampanoag and Europeans occurred during the 1500s as fishing and trading vessels roamed the New England coast. Judging from the Wampanoag's later attitude toward the Pilgrims, most of these encounters were friendly. Some, however, were not. European captains were known to increase profits by capturing natives to sell as slaves. Such was the case when Thomas Hunt kidnapped several Wampanoag in 1614 and later sold them in Spain. One of his victims—a Patuxet named Squanto (Tisquantum)—was purchased by Spanish monks. Eventually gaining his freedom, Squanto was able to work his way to England and signed on as an interpreter for a British expedition to Newfoundland. From there Squanto went back to Massachusetts, only to discover that, in his absence, epidemics had killed everyone in his village. Smallpox decimated most of the indigenous tribes. Between 1614



and 1620 three epidemics were especially devastating to the Wampanoag and neighboring Massachusetts with mortality in many mainland villages (i.e. Patuxet) reaching 100%. As the last Patuxet, Squanto remained with the other Wampanoag as a kind of ghost.

Living in Holland at the time was a small group of English religious dissenters who, because of persecution, had been forced to leave England and to immigrate to the New World. They were loaded onto two ships (Speedwell and Mayflower) with other English immigrants not of their faith. The little



fleet set sail in July only to have the Speedwell spring a leak 300 miles out to sea. Repairs failed to fix the problem, so in September everyone was crammed aboard the Mayflower on its way to

the New World.

When the Pilgrims landed in 1620 (less than half were actually Pilgrims), they decided to settle, of all places, at the site of the now-deserted Wampanoag village of Patuxet. There they sat for the next few months in crude shelters—cold, sick, and slowly starving to death. Half did not survive that first winter. The Wampanoag were aware of the English but chose to avoid contact with them for the time being.

In keeping with the strange sequence of unlikely events, Samoset, a Pemaquid (Abenaki) sachem from Maine hunting in Massachusetts, came across the growing disaster at Plymouth. Having acquired some English from contact with English fishermen, he walked into Plymouth in March and startled the Pilgrims with "Hello Englishmen." Samoset stayed the night surveying the situation and left the next morning. He soon returned with Squanto. Until he succumbed to sickness and joined his people in 1622, Squanto devoted himself to helping the Pilgrims who were now living at the site of his old village. What-ever his motivations, with great kindness and patience, he taught the English the skills they needed to survive.

Massasoit, who was leader of the Wampanoag, accompanied by Samoset, visited Plymouth and signed a treaty of friendship with the English giving them permission to occupy the approximately 12,000 acres of what was to become the Plymouth plantation. It is very doubtful, however, that Massasoit fully understood the distinction between the European concept of owning land versus the native idea of sharing it. For the moment, the friendship and cooperation continued, and the Pilgrims were grateful enough that fall to invite Massasoit to celebrate their first harvest.

After 1630 the original 102 English colonists who founded Plymouth were absorbed by the massive migration of the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony near Boston. On the other hand, the native population continued to decline from continuing epidemics. The Puritans' solution to this was to convert the natives and settle them in small communities of "Praying Indians." Attendance at church was mandatory and clothing and hair changed to proper colonial styles. Even Massasoit fell in with the adoption of English customs and before his death in 1661, petitioned the General Court at Plymouth to give English names to his two sons. The eldest was renamed Alexander, and his younger brother became Philip.

Alexander led the Wampanoags after his father's death, but the English were not pleased with his independent attitude, and invited him to Plymouth for talks. After eating a meal at one of these "talks," Alexander became violently ill and died. He was believed poisoned. Philip succeeded his brother and became known by the English as King Philip. Philip was determined to prevent further expansion of English settlement. He won promises of support from the Nipmuc, Pocumtuc, and Narraganset and thus began King Philip's war. Drawing from virtually every tribe in New England, Philip commanded more than 1,000 warriors, and even the tribes who chose to remain neutral were often willing to provide food and shelter.

Particularly disturbing to the English was the defection of most of the "Praying Indians." When Puritan missionaries attempted to gather their converts, only 500 could be found. The others had either taken to the woods or joined Philip. Their loyalty still suspect, the Praying Indians who remained were sent to the islands of Boston Harbor and other "plantations of confinement."

The war was costly for both sides. Only 400 Wampanoag survived the war. The Narraganset and Nipmuc had similar losses, and the Pocumtu disappeared as an organized group.



Gita: Ken, as a Wampanoag, yours is largely an oral history.

Ken: Yes.

Gita: What do you recall of your history?

Ken: Well, I know that the Wampanoags, in addition to intermarrying with blacks and whites, also married into other clans, such as the Narraganset clan. This makes tracing family lineage difficult. We know, for example, that my grandfather was a full blooded, but my grandmother was a mixture of Wampanoag and Narraganset.

Because it has gotten so confusing, at family gatherings we simply refer to ourselves as the fishing tribes.

Gita: How influential has your heritage been for you?

Ken: My grandmother lived with us until my youngest sister was born. Of all the members of my family, she was the one who most closely followed the native traditions. As I grew, I spent most of my time with her. She left our house to make room for my sister, but she only moved two houses down from us.

My grandmother was classic Native American. She had the high cheekbones, a rugged strong body, and her eyes were the blackest I'd ever seen, shiny like marbles. She fascinated me because she had a light in her eyes. To this day I don't know what that was all about. It was something that shone from the inside out. She also wore a