

A Day in the Life of the Nawakwa Lodge American Indian Dance Team

The Nawakwa Lodge Dance Team is a branch of the OA that is entirely devoted to reliving the ways of the Native Americans through singing, dancing, dress, crafting, and sleeping under the stars or in a Tipi.

We are the only branch of the BSA that makes sure that our regalia is crafted according to the nation and time period that we represent, and it is our top priority that our regalia is non-offensive to Native Americans.

The Dance Team dances at all lodge functions and at other events ranging from Cub Scout ceremonies to Pow-Wows to events in and around our community.

At the Nawakwa Lodge Ordeals, the Dance Team will meet at the following times;

Friday night:

- 7:00 pm at Indian Point, to listen and dance to the Drum.
- 9:00 pm at Pre-Ordeal Ring, to watch new braves begin their ordeal.
- 10:00 pm at a preset location for Crafting last minute items.

Saturday:

- 7:00 am we meet at the Dining Hall, and share our breakfast.
- 8:00 am at a preset location for Crafting and learning new dance.
- 2:45 pm Brotherhood at Ceremonial Ring, for Dance
- 6:00 pm Final Prep full Regalia
- 6:30 pm at Ceremonial Ring, for Dance between Ceremonies
- 10:00 pm clean up crafting area and join together to discuss the days events

Sunday:

- 7:00 am we meet at the Dining Hall, and share our breakfast.
- 8:00 am disassemble the Village; everyone departs when the job is done.

We are always looking for new members, so if you are in the Nawakwa lodge and are interested, then please visit our website and sign-up.

During the winter we gather to craft on our individual Regalia. We use this time to process collected animal parts from local hunters, pieces like Feathers, Deer Toes, and animal Hides. They find the time to practice their Dance steps and Choreograph new routines. We try meet at least three times over the winter as the scout camp has availability during the months of December, January, and February. We only hold these sessions when we are able to secure one or two of the heated buildings for crafting and sleeping.

A typical outfit contains the following pieces and constructed in roughly this order; Breech Cloth, Choker, Hat Item, Leggings, Moccasins (beaded), Shirt, Vest, Deer Toe Anklets, Bandolier, Spreader, Feather Bustle, Breast plate, Haversack, Shield, Bull tail, more Hand Items, More Bandoleers, More Beadwork, Arm bade, Porky Roach.

There are many weekends which the team has been asked to attend various District Camporees for the Heart of Virginia Council, Here we provide our own Tipi's and our Tomahawk Stands and requested. With safety in mind and dressed in Full regalia we challenge Klondiker's, frontiersman, Scouts and Scouters to throw the hawks and slick them in wooden slabs. Afterward, we challenge ourselves to throwing competitions matched against each other. This helps us get better and better for our next competition.

Besides performances at Blue and Gold Dinners or Arrow of Light Ceremonies in the spring, the team has been asked to provide Indian Lore Merit Badge at local and other Council MB encampments. Here is their one great chance to teach others what they have learned. They get to display all of their regalia, and describe what the item is, how they constructed it as well as other interesting information they may have come across while researching their items.

The Dance Team receives requests for performances for number of other functions such as Woodbadge and community events such as the Old Buckingham National Cowboy Day.

You cannot make an outfit overnight, nor can you hear all Dace Songs in one evening. A word of Wisdom to any Scout that wishes to further explore Native American Culture, begin somewhere and keep trying. It took you some 13 years to learn how to walk; to dance it will take a little practice to get your feet moving in step with the drum. The dance team can get you out into the Dance Ring Arena performing by the end of the first day. Come with us, expand your regalia pieces and compete against your peers from other Lodges at the Spring Conclave. Challenge yourself to learn, to try all, to construct your desired regalia, using the time honored traditions. Can you carry yourself far enough into the Native America Traditions, to test yourself at NOAC against all other Lodges in the Order of the Arrow. We will be there, will you?