

PEACE PARTY

A peace party takes place when two different tribes can't reach an agreement. After a meeting on both sides (Ravens and Eagles) they select high caste people to be hostages. These hostages or "deer" are designated as peacemakers, the deer being a very peaceful animal.

A brother-in-law (naa kanee) is chosen, one by each tribe, to act as a go-between for each tribe respectively. This naa kanee is the one who gets the hostages from his tribe and makes the speeches to his tribe, repeating word for word as related to him for that purpose by his kanee. Then he carries the "deer"-to-be-man to his brother-in-law's tribal house. Here the "deer" has attendants who wait on him hand and foot. Also during this time the "deer" is presented with new clothes, blankets, etc. and in general treated like a king. They then give out their rules or agreements, which are followed with songs. That night they dance. The dancers come in dancing and stomping all around. After everyone is in the building each person has his own song to sing. They also dance to their songs with a choir singing until everyone has had their turn. Then the opposite tribe would start their songs and dances until everyone in their tribe has had his or her turn. Even the children take part in this party.

The hostage, or "deer", has two men to care for him whether he is dancing, eating, walking, or getting ready to dance. The "deer" always finishes up all the dances, he dances last. For about eight days they go through this routine.

Before each person or group starts dancing they make speeches. The peace dancers dance, sing, make speeches, and put out money, blankets, skins, and furs. On their last dancing they give this wealth to the opposite tribe. It takes lots of speeches and singing and dancing which puts weight on the whole thing. This creates lots of respect for each other and each other's property. Everybody takes part in this affair--the whole village or maybe two villages. Each party must fulfill all the rules-if they don't its bad luck for the tribe or village. At the very end of the peace party they carry on their shoulders four times around the house, with loud singing, the "deer". They try to outsing the opposite tribe. The loudest singers win.