WHAT IS A POWWOW?

- A cultural celebration, social gathering and educational opportunity to share the Native American culture with others.
- A way for Native American people to keep their traditions alive.

REGALIA

The attire worn by dancers. It is NOT a costume. The development of a dancer’s regalia is a very personal process with deep meaning.

POWWOW ARENA

Dance circle—this area is blessed before the dance and must remain pure throughout the ceremony.

There is a single entrance to the arena facing East. You should not enter the arena unless invited, and this is the only entrance that should be used to enter.

The Master of Ceremonies (MC) officiates over Powwow proceedings and is a guide to the events.

Listen to the MC’s directions. He or she will announce when to sit and stand for honor songs.
THE DRUM

The heartbeat of Mother Earth. It puts prayers to motion and song. Powwow songs are prayers. The dancers put these songs into motion. Songs can be sung in traditional languages or sets of vocables. Without the drum, there is no Powwow!

HEAD MALE

Lead dancer—he will begin and guide the other dancers through the dance.

HEAD LADY

Lead dancer—she will begin and guide the other dancers through the dance.

GRAND ENTRY

Opening processional of officials and dancers. All dancers enter in a particular order determined by their dance category.

Dancers are led in by the Eagle Staff and Color Guard carrying the American and State flags, followed by the Head Dancers and the attending Tribal Royalty.
INTERTRIBAL DANCE

• Social dance—open to visitors to come join the dancers in celebration.

• Pictures may be taken with the permission of the dancers, but not during honor songs (Veterans Songs, Flag Songs or Prayers). These special songs will be announced by the MC.

DANCES AND STYLES

Men’s Traditional • Men’s Fancy • Men’s Grass

Women’s Traditional • Women’s Fancy • Women’s Jingle

POWWOW DO’S AND DON’TS

• Always stand respectfully when the MC calls for it (men taking off hats).

• Do not touch a dancer’s regalia unless given permission.

• Do not touch a dancer’s feathers.

• If you see a lost or dropped feather, do NOT pick it up. Notify the nearest member of powwow staff.

• Do not cross the arena floor. This is sacred space and should be honored.

• Have fun, enjoy yourself and always ask if you have any questions!