



CURVE LAKE FIRST NATION VETERANS EAGLE STAFF PROTOCOL

POLICY 01.004

Policies and Procedures

Policy Framework and Support Procedures to guide and properly manage the Eagle Staff.

Approved by Council on August 28 2017.

CONTENTS

Introduction..... 3

Definitions..... 4

CHAPTER 1 - EAGLE AND EAGLE FEATHERS TEACHING..... 5

Eagles & Eagle Feathers..... 5

CHAPTER 2 - USE..... 7

Presence of Staff..... 7

Carrying the staff..... 7

CHAPTER 3 - CARETAKING..... 7

Laid Down..... 7

Smudged..... 7

Wipe Down..... 7

Repair 7

CHAPTER 3 - FEASTING..... 8

When to feast..... 8

Where to feast..... 8

What to feast..... 8

Who to feast..... 8

CHAPTER 4 - HONOURING 8

Council Meetings..... 8

Appendix A- Assembly of Staff..... 9

Story- Council Meeting of October 10, 2006..... 9

Appendix B- Assembly of Stand 11

Story- June 25, 2008..... 11

INTRODUCTION

Acknowledgements

The Veteran's Eagle Staff was assembled by Elder Merritt Taylor with the assistance of Stanford Taylor.

The stand for the Veteran's Eagle Staff was assembled by Rhonda Taylor.

Application:

This policy applies to the Veteran's Eagle Staff.

Exclusions:

Responsibilities:

Council is responsible to ensure that Policy is in place to ensure transparent and effective governance.

Administration is responsible to ensure that the Policies and Procedures of the Curve Lake First Nation are followed and to identify areas of policy concern.

Human Resources is responsible to ensure employment practices and procedures conform to legislation and the approved Curve Lake First Nation Policies.

Employees are responsible to meet the requirements of this policy and their job description, and carry out the functions in a professional manner

Review:

This policy will be reviewed every three years and may be amended from time to time.

Dates:

This policy was created on April 6 2017.

It was implemented on August 28, 2017.

DEFINITIONS

IN THIS POLICY,

- a. **"Veterans Eagle Staff"** is the staff created by Merritt Taylor and referred to as "the staff" in this policy.
- b. **"Chief's Designate"** is the designated person to care for and honour the staff. If possible this should be a veteran. If there is no Veteran available then the Chief can designate a member of council, preferably a relative of a veteran, to be the designate.
- c. **"Appointed Person"** is the person appointed to carry the staff at a particular event.

CHAPTER 1 – EAGLE AND EAGLE FEATHERS TEACHING

EAGLES & EAGLE FEATHERS

1. The Eagle (Migizi in Ojibway) holds a very special place for Native peoples. The Eagle soared so high in the heavens that Native peoples held it in high esteem since it was so much closer to the Creator. The Eagle became a power of vision, strength, and courage. There are many special meanings and special uses for the Eagle.

Many Native teachings explain that Eagle is the Principle Messenger of Creator. Eagle flies the closest to Creator and, therefore, can see the past, present, and future at a glance. Eagle sees the flow of change. Eagle alerts us to the changes so that we can respond appropriately. Eagle is the great illuminator and soars above us all, sometimes out of sight to us, but never out of its own sight. Eagle sees and hears all and sits in the east on the Medicine Wheel with the direction of leadership and courage.

In other words, Eagle is connected both to the spirit of Great Mystery and to the Earth and does both with ease. Eagle, therefore, is a powerful symbol of courage; that is why its feathers are such powerful tools for healing, and why there are special ceremonies for Eagle feathers. Eagle teaches us that it is okay to combine wisdom and courage — it is okay to be wise enough to know that a change needs to be made in one's life and then finding the courage to execute the change.

A gift of an Eagle Feather is a great honor. It is a mark of distinction, one that could indicate that a rite of passage has been earned. The Eagle Feather represents the norms, responsibilities and behaviors that are all a part of the conditioning, learning and commitment to a spirit. It is in this way that life is honored and becomes whole.

The quill of an Eagle Feather represents stability, strength and foundation. In the Cycle of Life or wheel of life, it represents the spirituality of the people. This is where the beginning and ending meet. The quill represents the beginning and ending in the spiritual journey of life. Birth and death are represented here as rites of passage from and to the spiritual world. Conception, the nine month journey and childbirth are sacred and begin here. Traditionally, there were ceremonies or celebrations for the beginning of life.

The plume of an Eagle Feather or fluff is white, billowy and soft. It represents the purity, lightness, and gentleness of a child full of the spirit and so new to the cycle of life. The plume is distinctive and usually a token of honor.

The plume in the Cycle of Life is the beginning of the formative years, childhood. It is the age of innocence, pride, and dreams – a time for bonding and attachment to relationships, values, attitudes, behaviors, personalities, character, and to the environment. It is a time for security and integration.

The vane of an Eagle Feather represents flexibility and adaptability with gentleness and firmness. The vane has a unique design as each feather is unique. Each individual is also unique. This is the expanded part of the feather just as youth are now expanding into the world and each is responsible for themselves.

In the Cycle of Life, the vane is the continuation of the formative years. The children have achieved their rights of passage, a boy becomes a hunter or warrior and a girl has reached womanhood. During this phase, there is learning and guidance. The mind, the mouth, heart and hand (avenues for the spirit) are being nurtured. Example and reinforcement are given in the proper direction to strengthen their spiritual well-being and identity. It is a time of enrichment, logic, and proof.

The entire feather is straight, strong, firm, and gentle. The top portion represents the peak of life. The conduct of adulthood is to bring out the best in beauty and goodness. Men have achieved bravery, skill or character and have been renamed accordingly. Women have achieved a level of knowledge basic to the survival of the people. Self-discipline, survival skills, loyalty, solidarity, and respect within family are above all individual interests. The foundation laid for them is intact. Interdependence, empathy, insight, and foresight enables them to be keepers and protectors of the culture. It is at this phase that marriage and child-bearing are foremost.

The opposite vane continues to represent flexibility and adaptability with gentleness and firmness. In the Cycle of Life, a level of seniority is established. Conduct of parenthood has been proven and movement into grand parenthood is inevitable. Relationships, community, and nationhood are important. Responsibility for the welfare of others, young and old, is the purpose of guidance. To encourage and support others is to give back what was given and to give more of one's self.

As in the opposite, the plume of the Eagle Feather represents purity, lightness, and gentleness. Purity in mind, body, and spirit is achieved in old age. Elders become frail and weak like children. It is a very honorable age that speaks no arrogance or greed but the fulfillment of life to the best of one's ability. They become the keepers of the wisdom with peaceful energy, authority, and purpose. Elders are as highly esteemed as the Eagle.

Once again the quill represents the beginning and ending in the spiritual journey of life. Death is at the end of the Cycle of Life and is also a rite of passage into the spiritual world. The spirit lives on in the hearts and minds of loved ones into eternity. One has known his natural space, only once does he pass this way, he has made his journey. To honor death is to honor life as both are important in the spirit world.

CHAPTER 2 – USE

PRESENCE OF STAFF

2. The Veteran's Eagle Staff should be present at all events where Veterans are being honoured.
3. The Veteran's Eagle Staff shall be present at other events of significance to the community when deemed by Council.

CARRYING THE STAFF

4. The Chief will appoint who will carry the staff at events.
5. The appointed person could be a veterans relative or whomever the Chief decides.
6. The appointed person does not need to be the same person at every event.

CHAPTER 3 – CARETAKING

LAID DOWN

7. The staff may never be laid down except;
 - (1) For transportation purposes.

SMUDGED

8. The staff should be smudged every day using Sage or Sweetgrass.
9. The above will be done by the person designated by Chief.
 - (1) The designate will be:
 - (a) Available each day to smudge;
 - (b) Be familiar with smudging.
10. A second and third designate will be named, in case of emergencies.

WIPE DOWN

11. The Eagle Staff should be wiped down every other week with a soft damp cloth by the designate.

REPAIR

12. Repairs to the staff should only be done in consultation with:

- (1) Elder Merritt Taylor;
- (2) Chief's designate;
- (3) And cultural centre.

CHAPTER 3 – FEASTING

WHEN TO FEAST

13. The staff is feasted on June 21, the equinox, each year.

WHERE TO FEAST

14. The staff is feasted at Kinomaage Waapkong.

WHAT TO FEAST

15. Feasts should be kept to simple traditional food, that could include:

- (1) Black rice;
- (2) Fish;
- (3) Strawberries;
- (4) Corn;
- (5) Squash.

WHO TO FEAST

16. Feasts could be a staff pot luck or as part of a community event.

CHAPTER 4 – HONOURING

COUNCIL MEETINGS

17. The staff should be recognized and honoured at each council meeting.



APPENDIX A- ASSEMBLY OF STAFF

STORY- COUNCIL MEETING OF OCTOBER 10, 2006

Chief Keith Knott informed Council that as per previous Council meeting, Merritt Taylor is here this evening to present to Council, the Veteran's Eagle Staff. Chief Knott welcomed Merritt at this time.

Merritt thanked Council for giving him this time to present the Veteran's Eagle Staff.

Merritt explained to Council that about five years ago he had a dream about the stick that he was holding. Knowing that Curve Lake First Nation had many Veterans to acknowledge, Merritt had a dream of the stick and in his dream he also saw seven white Eagle Feathers. Merritt stated that he had approached an Elder asking how he would go about getting the white Feathers. The Elder responded by telling Merritt to pray for the Feathers to come. Merritt explained that he did pray in the Sweat Lodge for someone to bring the Feathers to him.

Last year he received a phone call from a man stating that he had heard that Merritt was looking for some white Eagle Feathers. He had said that he was coming up this way and would drop them off, but never did come by and Merritt was getting anxious to get the Feathers so he could make the Veteran's Eagle Staff. This year, the gentleman contacted Merritt again and told him that he was coming up to the Curve Lake Annual Pow Wow and would drop the Feathers off to him then. Merritt told him that this would be great and he would prepare the Veteran's Eagle Staff for the next annual Pow Wow, as the Pow Wow was too close, and he did not feel it could be ready in time.

Following the phone call, Merritt received a visit from Stanford Taylor. Stanford presented Merritt with Tobacco requesting him to be the Elder for the Pow Wow this year. Stanford then unraveled seven White Eagle Feathers and presented them to Merritt, and asked if he would like to get the Veteran's Eagle Staff ready. Merritt told Stanford that as it was two days before the Pow Wow, he did not want to rush this, as he has been waiting four years to complete the Staff. Stanford stated that it would not take long, and he and Merritt worked together putting the Feathers onto the Staff. On the Saturday of the Pow Wow, the gentlemen who had previously contacted Merritt about the Feathers

approached him with the seven white Eagle Feathers as he promised. Merritt stated that he now had 14 Feathers in a span of three days after waiting four years for them. Stanford and he decided to put the seven additional white Eagle Feathers on the Staff. Merritt explained what the original seven feathers stood for stating that they represented the four directions, as well as the past, present and future. Although, Merritt only saw the seven feathers in his dream for the Veteran's Eagle Staff, he could not ignore the additional seven Feathers that he received, therefore decided that they should be on the Veteran's Eagle Staff.

Merritt stated that he received a list of Curve Lake First Nations Members who served in the Armed Forces, as well as names that have been given to him. He did not want to leave anybody's name out; therefore he put everyone's name on the Veteran's Eagle Staff.

Merritt presented the Veteran's Eagle Staff to Council and asked that they look after it. We all have to be reminded that we are all related in some way to the Veteran's that are listed on this Eagle Staff, and that we do appreciate and acknowledge their involvement as Veteran's serving our Country. Merritt stated we must not forget who these Veterans are and that the Veteran's Eagle Staff is to Honour and Acknowledge each and every one of our Curve Lake First Nation Veteran's.

Merritt also presented Sweet Grass to Council and asked that the Feathers be smudged every once in a while, as this will let the Veteran's know how important they are and that they have not been forgotten.

Merritt acknowledged Stanford for his assistance in helping him complete the Veteran's Eagle Staff in time for this year's Annual Pow Wow. He stated that it was worth all the wait and that it really felt good to see two of our Veteran's, Murray Whetung and Grant Taylor holding the Eagle Staff at the Pow Wow.

It was agreed that Rhonda Taylor, Cultural Coordinator be asked to smudge the Veteran's Eagle Staff daily.

Chief Knott asked Merritt if there was anything else that Chief and Council should do in order to take care of the Veteran's Eagle Staff. Merritt stated that the Eagle Staff should not be laid down, and if there is an occasion where Veteran's are honoured the Eagle Staff should be present to acknowledge this honour.

Chief and Council thanked Merritt for the Honour to hold on to the Veteran's Eagle Staff and for all the work that he and Stanford have done in order to prepare and complete the Veteran's Staff.

Chief Knott also expressed his acknowledgment and appreciation to Murray Whetung for the eagle feather which now hangs on the Veterans Eagle Staff. Chief Knott advised this was the feather that was presented to Murray on November 11, 2007.



APPENDIX B- ASSEMBLY OF STAND


STORY- JUNE 25, 2008

A letter has been received from Rhonda Taylor, Cultural Centre Coordinator with regards to the stand that Chief Knott had asked her to find for the Veteran's Staff that was presented by Merritt Taylor at the October 10th, Council Meeting.


Rhonda has indicated that she tried to find part of an oak tree but could not find one that was suitable. After much thought, a Maple Tree came to mind. The Maple Leaf, Maple Sugar and the Maple Leaf on the Canadian Flag was much more appropriate for our Veteran's. With the assistance of Carl Sunday and Douglas Knott to put a hole in the middle of the stand, she peeled off the bark, and Rose Taylor donated sand paper that was used to sand down the maple. Rhonda stated that she has stained the Maple stand and has painted the four colours on top of it to represent all races. She has also placed four small hooks where each of the four sacred plants hang.

POLICY APPROVAL


This Policy was passed during a duly convened meeting of the Curve Lake First Nation Council held on August 28th, 2017.




Chief Phyllis Williams




Councillor Laurie Hockaday



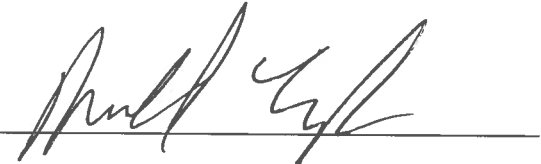
Councillor Gary Williams




Councillor Tiffany Taylor



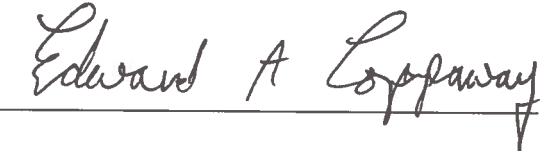
Councillor Shane Taylor




Councillor Arnold Taylor



Councillor Deborah Jacobs



Councillor Ted Coppaway



Councillor Lorenzo Whetung
