

Woodland Trails

By Frank A. Schersing

Woodland Trails is a project of HCCDC that opened its doors for business in 2006. It displays Arts and Crafts of the Winnebago Ho-Chunk and other Woodland Tribes. It is located within the Ho-Chunk Village Center; rather difficult seeing from Hwy 77, but it's there. The retail store/art studio incorporates a local and regional outlet store for products created by Native American artists and others. Woodland Trails heavily promotes the Woodland Tribes style of art. Although not as recognizable as the style of the Southwest Tribes, Woodland Trails will create a market niche for customers and artists that prefer the Woodland style. When the retail shop opened in 2006, sales from the items started at \$15,681.85 and in 2009 these were increased to \$23,464.90, even during a recessionary market. The foot traffic through the store has also increased to 3,750. This is another way that HCCDC is helping the Community by assisting the artists and crafters in the community to earn extra funds. If you aren't taking advantage of this you could be losing out on extra income that would be beneficial during these trying times. You could also start selling items to create a Christmas Fund to help out the Family. If you do not know what to charge for items, our staff can assist with pricing so that you can cover your costs for making the items and turn a reasonable profit.

The Center was built to create more awareness of the Ho-Chunk and Woodland art form and is unique in that the creations displayed in the gallery and the items available for sale in the retail area depict and incorporate traditional woodland Indian items that were used in everyday life and celebrations. Within the Center artists and crafters not only have a setting for creating their work but a location for demonstrating and educating others about their craft. The displays in the store are changed seasonally to focus on different aspects of the traditions.

More quilts are starting to come into the store just in time for the fall and winter seasons. Our quilts will be featured in the June 2010 edition of Patchwork Magazine. The magazine is running a story on the quilts of Winnebago. The Center is also used to hold classes for artists and crafters. There is a small fee charged to cover the cost of the instructor. We generally hold at least monthly classes on different topics. Some of the upcoming classes are on PAX-GI, another one on Fabric-work, and we just concluded one on making Star Quilts. These classes are in response to community input as to what they would like to learn. In the past there were also training classes on making regalia prior to the Pow Wow that went over very well, along with a discussion on basket making. This could turn into a lost art if the knowledge is not passed to a new generation. We are willing to hold any training or classes that have community support.

There is also meeting rental space that is available in the building. If your organization needs a place to meet, with an opportunity to look for Native crafts contact Woodland Trails to host your meetings and make arrangements for lunch if it is going to be a long meeting.

The Gallery in the Woodland Trails Building is named after Chuck Raymond. The Chuck Raymond Gallery features different shows and exhibits throughout the year. Most recently the gallery featured the Weed and Seed High School art exhibit and before that it was artist Jesse Clifford.

Here is a little information about who the Gallery is named after. Charles Raymond III was born on January 22, 1931. Chuck was a member of the Winnebago



Tribe of Nebraska and a graduate of Morningside College in Sioux City, IA. When Chuck was 4 years old he massaged a ball of clay into the form of a face

and gave it to his grandmother who said that boy is going to be an artist all his life. Chuck Raymond, a member of the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, went on to brush his way into cultural history by becoming the most famous artist to come from the Winnebago tribe. Until his death in 1989, he taught many people about daily American Indian life along with creating sports scenes and portraits of well-known people.

Chuck Raymond had a major impact in the Siouxland Area. His murals can be seen at West High School. They depict such events as the burial of Sgt. Charles Floyd in 1804 and the events that led up to the founding of Sioux City. He painted murals for Radio Stations, Banks, and in 1975 for Winnebago High School. One of the images was of U.S. Medal of Honor winner Mitchell Red Cloud.

As a Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War, Chuck was a deeply patriotic individual as illustrated in his works of art. His multi-media and detailed drawings and paintings attracted national attention for over 40 years. Especially popular were his works that depicted Native American life in the Woodlands and his Plains Indians in the mid to late 1800's. Many of his sketches were often simple and realistic, uncluttered works of art that would many times be used as backdrops for other items. He died months before he was set to graduate but was posthumously awarded his Bachelor of Science degree in 1989. It is remarkable how, despite having little formal training, Raymond was able to teach so many about art and American Indian life. He educated people through his art on what Native American daily life was all about. Chuck Raymond died on August 16th, 1989, at the age of 58. He is someone that the Winnebago Community can feel very proud of.



While up in the area of Woodland Trails in the Ho-Chunk Village please visit the Statue Garden. It is an area dedicated to honoring the twelve major clans of the Winnebago Tribe. These statues were created by local Winnebago artist Charles Aldrich, an alumnus of the University of South Dakota. The sculptures are constructed of concrete composite, acid washed and colored, and have accent pieces created in bronze. Each statue pedestal includes educational signage describing the clan and its duties in the community. The signage is in both Ho-Chunk and English in order to retain and share the Ho-Chunk language with anyone interested. It is important to preserve the history and culture of a people so we can understand how and why things were done the way they were. Sometimes when we are confused it is a good idea to share these problems with the past, the clan elders and/or creator to learn from their insight on how they would deal with the issues or to get help in dealing with it.

Sometimes it's not a bad idea to see where an organization has come from to see where it is going, in the next article I will discuss the things that HCCDC has done for the community in the past and take a look at where we are going and what we are going to do for the community in the future.