

---

# *EDUCATION NEWS*

---

Where History is Shared and Stories Continue

*Kunoopeam Netompaûog, Welcome Friends!*

## *FROM TOMAQUAG'S EDUCATION DEPARTMENT...*

It's Harvest Moon also called moon of the falling leaves and the time of our sassamineash tabutamtomooank (cranberry thanksgiving). Personally, this is my favorite time of year. So much color in the natural environment, so much variety to be harvested; sunflower seeds, askootahsquash (squash) such as pumpkin, butternut, acorn..., ewáchimneash (corn) in varieties of sweet, silver queen (my father's favorite), flint in white, blue, and colorful; and all the beans, tomatoes, eggplants, carrots,.... Visit any garden stand at this time of year and there will be so many varieties of these foods from native varieties to cultivated. If you are of the mind to jar any of these foods, now is the time. Besides all these wonderful vegetables packed with vitamins and nutrients, there are the native grapes of red, green and deep blue, and the cranberry ripe and ready to be dried and stored as well. Along with the leaves falling this time of year are the many nut varieties such as black walnut, acorns, chestnut, hickory, hazelnut,...., to provide fiber and protein to make a body feel full. Are you watching the animals this time of year? See the squirrels and



Click here to [Contact](#) the education department with any questions.

chipmunks gathering their supply of nuts to be stored through the long winter season ahead. So it was for many generations before the European came to these shores whose lives were completely dependent upon the harvest of the land and waters, and for the generations after who, because of economic constraints and hardships continued to depend upon the land and its harvest, and even today as we continue to teach our children an appreciation for where food comes from and what the land provides.

Among Tomaquag's archives are notes of Red Wing (Mary Glasko) who wrote, "The harvest of the hickory nuts was celebrated by a special chant during this particular moon as the women in baskets of nuts and herbs for winter storage. Nuts were widely used for food in the winter when there was a scarcity of small animals. The English translation of the chant of the hickory harvest was:

"We're gathering hickory nuts, we're  
gathering hickory nuts, walnuts, butternuts  
hickory nuts. We're gathering hickory nuts.  
Our baskets are filled, our baskets are filled."



Hickory Nuts are Indigenous to US and found prevalent in the Eastern Region



Walnuts originate from central Asia making their way to Europe and imported to US in late 1700s

Unlike some imported nuts, many native nuts have tiny cavities. My mother has often shared with me stories from her childhood of the many adventures she and her siblings had foraging for nuts, berries and all kinds of other edible vegetation to eat. However, when it came to gathering the hickory and black walnut, the gathering was enjoyable but not the work of removing the nut meat from the cavities. Because of her young, small fingers, it was her job along with a couple siblings to do this. She said it took hours! Her mother was a fabulous cook and would use the black walnut meat in cakes. However, my mother didn't prefer the bitter taste of this nut. All that work with no tasty reward.

Click here to [Contact](#) the education department with any questions.



Also harvested during this moon time is sassamineash (cranberry). The last berry of the season and the time of sassamineash tabutamtomooank (cranberry thanksgiving). Ever wonder why cranberries are so bitter? Here's a traditional story to answer that question.

Many many moons ago Kahtantowwit, the Creator saw the Nahahigansek (Narragansett) people working hard in their village. For their hard work he gifted them with a variety of muneash (berries). He told the muneash (berries) that they were to raise their heads each morning toward the neepun nippauus (summer sun) so that they could soak in all of its sweetness. When they were full of sweetness and deep in color, they would be ripe, and the Nahahigansek (Narragansett) people would be able to pick them, eat them, and dry some for the cold papone (winter) months to come. So each morning the muneash (berries) did as Creator said and lifted their heads to the nippauus (sun). First the wuttah muneash (heart berries), then the peshau muneash (blue berries), next sukqua muneash (dark/black raspberries), but the sassamuneash (cranberries) just slept.

Day after day and moon after moon all the muneash (berries) would wake with the warmth of the Neepun nippauus (summer sun) and soak in its sweetness. But not the sassamuneash (cranberries)! They, being lazy, just kept sleeping. All the other muneash (berries) would call out to them. (rattle sound) wake up! (rattle sound) wake up! (rattle sound) wake up! But the sassamuneash (cranberries) ignored their calls and continued to sleep.

Eventually, one by one all the other muneash (berries) were gathered by the Nahahigansek (Narragansett) people until there were none left. Still the sassamuneash (cranberries) kept on sleeping.

Kahtantowwit (Creator) grew angry. It was now the time of the moon of Taquonk (Autumn) and the Nahahigansek (Narragansett) needed these last muneash (berries) so they could dry them and store them before the cold season of papone (winter). He sent mishaupan (a cool wind) to wake them up.

The sassamuneash (cranberries) awoke and realizing that they had slept all neepun (summer) long, desperately tried to soak up as much sweetness from the nippauus (sun) that they could. But as the Nahahigansek (Narragansett) people noticed them poking out their heads, they picked them at once.

And thats why they aren't as sweet as the other muneash (berries) but the people ate them and enjoyed them just the same.

*~Chrystal Mars Baker for October 2023*

Click here to [Contact](#) the education department with any questions.



## FOR THE CHILDREN:

It's Harvest Moon and school is in session. You will be learning so many new things or building your knowledge on subjects already introduced. But did you know that historically, for Native children, school was not an indoor classroom but the great outdoors. And teachers were not hired by a committee but were their parents, grandparents, aunties, uncles, the animals, plants, waters and all of nature? Listening, watching and doing were the ways in which they learned. These are still excellent skills for learning even today!

This month's story time books is Little Moar and the Moon by Roselyn Akulukjuk. Roselyn is an Inuit filmmaker and writer living in Iqaluit. She was born in Pangnirtung, Nunavut, in the Canadian Arctic.



In this story, the character Moar is a young boy who loved the autumn season — being able to play outside with his friends, feeling the weather getting a bit colder — but noticing the days becoming shorter as the moon seems to be looking down on him. He thinks it has a scary face and smile. Moar is determined to run home before the moon appears in the night sky but there's so many fun things to do on the way! What if he runs out of time!

You will notice in this book that it looks like winter with snow on the ground. This is different from our autumn season here in the eastern region of the U.S. This is because both the author and main character in the book are from the far Northwest region of Canada where the season names are the same, but the weather and its resources are very different from ours. But one thing that is the same — the moon! The same moon that shines there is the same moon we see here.

Our craft for this month will be to create an image of the Autumn Moon, Harvest Moon, Moon of the Falling Leaves the many names for the same moon as it is called by the Native people of our east coast region and specifically the Narragansett. But if you were to name this moon and “create” your own image of it to represent the autumn season here, what would you call it and what would it look like? Don't be afraid to be as creative as you like and have fun! When your done, we would love to see your creations. Feel free to send them to me via email at [cbaker@tomaquagmuseum.org](mailto:cbaker@tomaquagmuseum.org). I'd love to see them and share them on our website. Make sure you have permission from your family first!

Click here to [Contact](#) the education department with any questions.



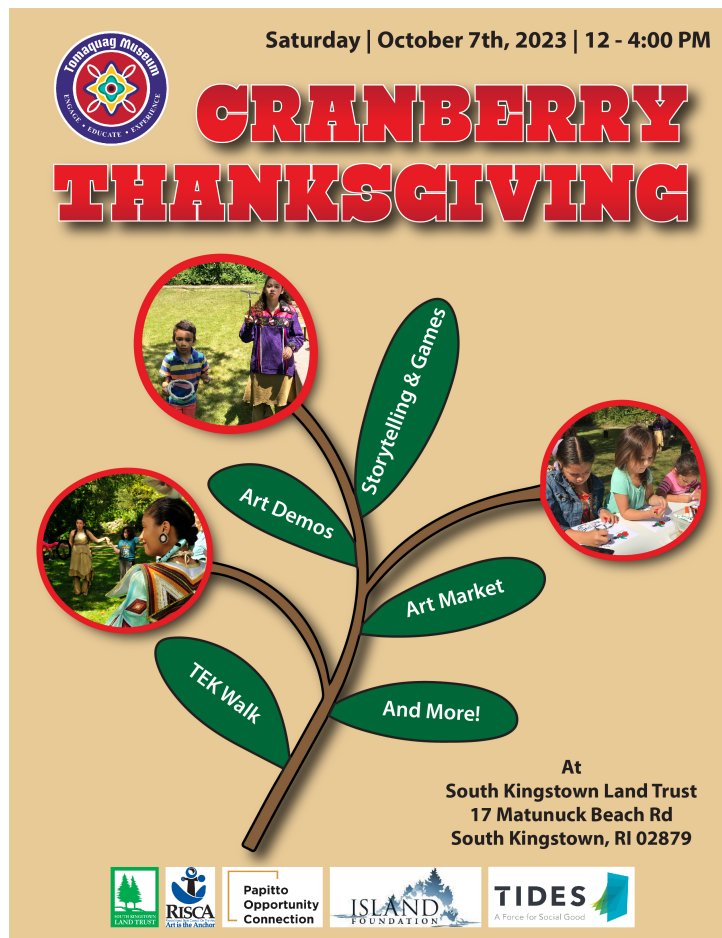
## RESOURCES:

At Tomaquag we are continuously doing the work of educating new generations of children as well as the general public about the lives, traditions and life changes of the Indigenous peoples of Rhode Island and neighboring communities. Follow us on our website at [tomaquagmuseum.org](http://tomaquagmuseum.org), [Youtube](#) and [Facebook](#). Check out these resources!

To support Indigenous authors and purchase your own copy of Little Moar and the Moon visit this [link](#):

To hear the author present an animated version of Little Moar and the Moon visit this [link](#):

Please join us at Tomaquag's Cranberry Thanksgiving Event! A free event for all.








The flyer is for the Cranberry Thanksgiving event, held on Saturday, October 7th, 2023, from 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM. The event is organized by the Tomaquag Museum, which is located at the South Kingstown Land Trust, 17 Matunuck Beach Rd, South Kingstown, RI 02879. The flyer features a central graphic of a brown branch with several green leaves. Each leaf is labeled with an activity: 'Storytelling & Games', 'Art Demos', 'Art Market', 'TEK Walk', and 'And More!'. There are three circular inset photos: one showing a woman and a child, one showing a woman in traditional Indigenous attire, and one showing children at a table. At the bottom of the flyer, there are logos for the South Kingstown Land Trust, RISCA (Rhode Island State Cultural Affairs), Papitto Opportunity Connection, ISLAND FOUNDATION, and TIDES (A Force for Social Good).

**Tomaquag Museum**  
Saturday | October 7th, 2023 | 12 - 4:00 PM

# CRANBERRY THANKSGIVING

Storytelling & Games  
Art Demos  
Art Market  
TEK Walk  
And More!

At  
South Kingstown Land Trust  
17 Matunuck Beach Rd  
South Kingstown, RI 02879

Click here to [Contact](#) the education department with any questions.