



# WOMPATUCK NEWS

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## Pow-wow Planned for 09

By Jim Rose, FOW Editor and Historian

Wompatuck State Park is planning a pow-wow for next year. Park director Steve Gammon said, "Given that the park was named in honor of a Native American, Chief Josiah Wompatuck, it is only fitting that we have a pow-wow. It will be our first time."

FOW will meet with the Massachusetts Center for Native American Awareness this fall for help.

A modern day pow-wow is usually a gathering of both Native American and non-Native American people where they dance, sing, socialize and honor American Indian culture.

The word derives from the Narragansett word *powwow* which translates to "spiritual leader."



**Stanford Seneca**

The Hingham Naval Ammunition Depot employed Native Americans when it operated from 1904 to 1962. Most notable was Ordnanceman Stanford Seneca. He came from the Seneca tribe of New York. He was also a

World War II Marine veteran who saw action in the Pacific theater.

Sadly, he was killed at the Depot cleaning five inch shells. Apparently, Seneca stood too close to an acid bath for shells and was overcome by the fumes.

Former Ordnanceman Jim Larsh of Middleborough has fond memories of Seneca. "His nickname was Chief," said Larsh. "He was on the quiet side and was a very good worker. It was a sad day when he died."

Jim Larsh is part Native American on both sides. His mother is part Algonquin, and his dad has Chippewa blood. He grew up in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. He plans on attending the future pow-wow. ■



Quote from colonial theologian Roger Williams. This history plaque can be found at Wilbur's Woods in Little Compton, Rhode Island.



Bunker N-9 before and after the Eagle Scout restoration.

## Eagles Soar At Wompatuck State Park

By Andy Mills

Three boy scouts from Kingston have completed their trail to Eagle Scout. Colby Alves, Tim and Dan Benza worked together on three phases of renovating the N-9 bunker at WSP. Each has now attained the BSA rank of Eagle.

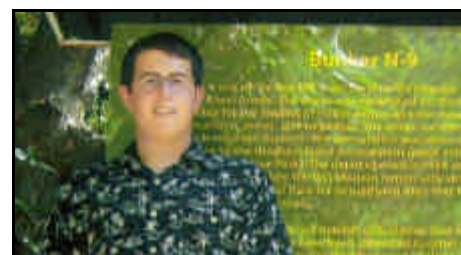
The project began more than two years ago. At an early meeting of the Friends of Wompatuck, the bunker project was on a wish list for restoration. The exact history of the bunker was unknown to FOW. It was also different than the other bunkers, most of which have been removed from the park. This bunker had a double set of doors, indicating something important was stored inside. It was used by the Navy during their tenure on the landscape, but for what?

As a leader in Kingston BSA Troop 4480 and a member of FOW, I first suggested the project to Life Scout and history buff Colby Alves. Colby realized the size of the project and decided to get some help. The Benza brothers gained interest, and each boy chose a phase of the project. The original

thought for the area was to make it a place to remember the park's military past. The bunker loading area was about four feet above the surrounding grade. It had also seen some graffiti vandals leave their marks on the area. The surrounding landscape was overgrown with underbrush and small trees. Colby chose the history part of the project. The elder brother Tim chose the landscaping and ramp. Dan chose the general site clean-up, painting and beautification.

Each boy wrote a plan for one phase of the project. They then gained approval from Troop 4480, Friends of Wompatuck, Park Supervisor Steve Gammon, and Old Colony Council, BSA. The project began in the fall of 2006.

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Eagle Scout Colby Alves at Bunker N-9 sign.

## Eagles Soar At Wompatuck State Park *(cont. from page 1)*

The first phase was the landscaping. Tim led a team of scouts and volunteers clearing the underbrush, removing Naval asphalt, laying out the garden area and beginning the ramp needed to access the loading dock. Tim's phase stalled for a while due to broken promises from numerous contractors.

While the site work was underway, Colby began to research the history. He joined forces with FOW Historian Jim Rose. "My father told me about the bunker a year before he died," said Rose. "He worked at the ammunition depot as a Leadingman. He revealed that the bunker was used for storing nuclear weapons (rocket depth charge). It was all "TOP SECRET," my dad emphasized. In 2004, I met the ordnanceman who was in charge of the operation, the late George Dwyer. He said he supervised the bunker with Clarence Vaughn who was my next door neighbor when I lived in Rockland. With my brother Steve, a Navy veteran, we found out that the weapon stored there was the RUR-5 ASROC (anti-submarine rocket), which is now obsolete."

The result of Jim and Colby's re-

search was printed on a sign now displayed at the site. For a full text of the sign, visit [friendsofwompatuck.org](http://friendsofwompatuck.org) or visit the bunker. Although there is no sign on Union Street, you can find the bunker about one quarter mile past the Foley Visitor Center on the right.

Dan's part spanned the two years. At the start, Dan recruited helpers to remove debris and trash from the site. They then sanded, primed and painted the vault doors. He maintained the



Photo by David Schmitt via USS Goldsborough Website.

**RUR-5 ASROC during launch.**

military markings on the interior of the doors. Dan also patched the concrete walls and applied paint to hide graffiti.

After overcoming the contractor problems, Tim was able to continue in the summer of 2007. With help from

donations, Tim built the concrete ramp and installed handrails. As the site work was completed, Colby installed the sign and planted the memorial garden in the fall of 2007. The garden, complete with two stone benches, is at the end of an unpaved path a few hundred feet off Union Street. The benches overlook the bunker, ramp, and sign, and some perennial flowers and shrubs.

The boys have now completed each of the three phases. BSA National Council granted approval of each scout's Eagle Scout award. The project is now complete. There will be a public opening at the site on Nov 8. The public is invited to come down and see where the missiles were stored and take in some history.

Donations to the project were from the Benza Family, the Alves family, John Foster Lumber Company, L.E. Cook Monument, Jack Mills Carpenter-BUILDER, PA Construction, Shawn Donnelly, Kingston Block Company, Southeastern Concrete, Andy Mills, Goodrich Lumber, Kingston Troop 4480, Friends of Wompatuck State Park and other assorted benefactors. ■

## PARK RULES *by Jim Rose*

### DUMB



"That's my last brew (belch). This park is so nice (flatulence)...not now. I guess I am "silent but deadly." Sorry, Al Gore. Now we're doomed."

### DUMBER



"How's that for High Anglo-Saxon? Anyhow, who needs a thesaurus for this fine art. But isn't thesaurus a type of dinosaur?"

### DUMBEST



"I love destroying nature. I already wiped out a bed of lady slippers and squished a litter of newborn rabbits. Fawn ahead...this is a challenge!"