

# Native powwow planned for Georgetown in May

By Dianne Cornish

A local committee of volunteers has been busy in recent weeks laying the groundwork for Georgetown's first native powwow to be held May 29-30 at the Gordon Alcott Arena.

"We expect to attract as many as 6,000 visitors over the two-day event," Ed Cochrane, one of the key organizers of the powwow, said last week.

Cochrane and his wife, Jean, have two daughters who compete regularly in native dance competitions at powwows across Canada and the United States.

Nine-year-old Julie Cochrane and her elder sister, 13-year-old Elizabeth, have recently won native dance competitions in Dearborn, Michigan and Chicago.

Both girls are excited about the possibility of a powwow in Georgetown and their opportunity to participate in it. The dance competitions in the upcoming event will be open only to children between the ages of six and 18 years.

Cochrane said native dancers and drummers representing several tribes in Canada and the U.S. are expected to attend the Georgetown powwow.

Besides dance competitions, the festivities will include native craft displays, food and native drumming demonstrations.

All of the powwow proceeds, after costs, will be donated to the Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital, Cochrane said. Vi Haines, a hospital employee, is chairperson of the powwow committee.

Hospital administration has been informed of the committee's plans and has agreed that the proposal sounds promising. However, as yet, the hospital board has made no formal commitment to endorse the event because details of the powwow program are still in the early planning stage.

The hospital has provided a meeting room for organizing committee members.

Right now, organizers are hoping to garner community support through donations of money or merchandise prizes. According to Cochrane, local support is needed to collect prize money for the winning competitors.

Georgetown will reap economic benefits from the powwow, Cochrane said, noting that participants and spectators will be spending money at town stores and restaurants.



Thirteen-year-old Elizabeth Cochrane of Georgetown, dressed in traditional native costume, practices native dancing in preparation for Georgetown's first powwow to be held May 29-30. Organizers plan to donate proceeds from the event to Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital. Elizabeth and her younger sister, Julie, 9, plan to participate in the native dance competitions. Photo by Dianne Cornish

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