

## Pow Wow!

by Chandler Rudd

Everyone's heard the name Pow Wow. I know I had the picture of a big bonfire with Indians dancing around it but that is like saying a wedding is just a bunch of people sitting around eating cake.

Dee and I were looking for a fun place to go with our five year old grandson, Sean. We usually head up to the White Mountains to see the foliage but that's no fun for a little boy. We had heard about a Pow Wow being held at our friend's campground in Milton, NH and when asked about it, were told that it would be a great time for us and the young one.

So up to Milton we drove.

We couldn't have asked for better fall weather. The leaves were almost at peak and the temperatures promised to be in the upper 60s and low 70s for the whole weekend with no threat of rain. Our campsite was right on the lake. Not one boat broke the tranquil scene as we looked across the water. Brilliant yellows and fluorescent oranges mixed with the deep greens of the pine trees. Their reflections colored the water so it was almost impossible to see where the shoreline was.

Saturday morning dawned to the sound of drums and the soulful singing of many voices. After breakfast we took the short walk to the ball field where the Pow Wow was being held. There was a large fire pit in the middle of the field and booths lined the outside perimeter. There were flags lining the field, each one with hand painted symbols. I guessed that each one represented a different tribe. Many people were still arriving

for the celebration but already there were hundreds of Native Americans gathering. We walked over to where a group was gathered, banging on their drums and singing. One man dressed in colorful regalia came over to us and explained that this was a song to welcome the sun and to ward off any evil spirits that might be around. He told us that later that day they would be having many dances. Some would be dances by individual tribes and some would be inter-tribal dances. He said that we should come and see the inter-tribal ones because they were the most beautiful and significant.

Later that afternoon we heard the drums start, rising and falling in a mesmerizing beat. We could hear the singing of many strong voices so we decided to take the dogs and the grandkid to watch.

We entered the ball field and were greeted

with a beautiful sight. Men with regalia made from feathers and skins and women with long colorful robes were dancing around the fire pit. The drums were deafening. The very ground seemed to vibrate with the beat. As we watched the dancing I noticed that there was something else going on. People were looking over at us and pointing. We're used to that when we have Lucy with us, but this was different. Slowly some of the women came over and asked about Lucy. We told her story as we have hundreds of times. They listened and stroked her fur. Soon some of the men walked over. They too listened to her story. They thanked us for caring for her and we continued to walk around. We poked in the many booths and Bennie and Lucy were fascinated



Lucy and the Medicine Man.

*Photo courtesy of Chandler Rudd*

with all the smells of the furs and skins that were displayed there. We were continually asked to stop so people could pat her and thank us.

We had just stopped to watch another dance when an older man came over to us with three or four others and as I watched, he put both hands on Lucy. Lucy, in return, lifted her head and closed her eyes. The old man murmured a sing-song under his breath. For many minutes the two of them remained motionless.

Finally the man stopped, stood up and said to us, "I am the Medicine Man for the Abenaki Tribe. This dog has a very strong Spirit. We all felt it when you came in. It took us a while to find where the Spirit was but when we saw her, we knew she was

the source. I put my hands on her and I could feel the Spirit within her and we communicated."

I looked down at Lucy and she continued to lay in her carriage with her eyes closed.

"Thank you for bringing her here today," the Medicine Man said. "We will all draw our energy from this beautiful creature. Because she is here, the sun is shining and the temperature is warm. Thank you."

With that, he bent and placed his hands upon her and again, she raised her head and closed her eyes.

The rest of the day, we were treated like royalty...or at least Lucy was. I'll chock this up as another magical Lucy moment!

**Ed. Note:** Lucy was found as a five week old puppy, discarded in a dumpster as she was paralyzed from the waist down due to a canine form of spina bifida. One rear leg was amputated as it was interfering with her mobility. Lucy is able to walk and run short distances on her front legs only, though she has a special stroller she rides in. Lucy is a TDI therapy dog, making regular visits to hospitalized children where she is an inspiration to all who meet her. Lucy was named Outstanding Rescued Golden of 2001 in the G.R.A.C.E. award program sponsored by Rescue A Golden of Arizona. Now nine years old, Lucy lives in Hampton Falls, NH with her owners Chan and Dee Rudd. Both Lucy and her "big brother" Bennie were adopted through Yankee Golden Retriever Rescue.