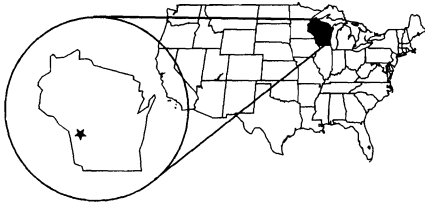


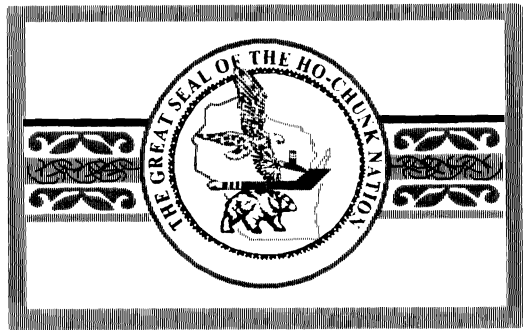
HO-CHUNK (OR WINNEBAGO)



The Ho-Chunk's present name means "sacred language" or "master language", a term based upon *Hocak Wazijaci*, the name of their language, a Siouan-based tongue unique in the Great Lakes region. For a long time their name for themselves was

Hochungara, "the people of the big speech". Earlier, they were saddled with many different names, several unflattering. Centuries ago the neighboring Sac and Fox tribes called them "Winnebago", meaning "people of the filthy waters". Another poor translation of *Hotcangara* was "fish eaters", but "Winnebago" endured. The return to their native language for the tribe's name is part of a larger effort to revive and save the *Hocak Wazijaci* language.

Wisconsin has been the home of the Ho-Chunk for centuries, their traditional lands being the Door Peninsula separating Green Bay from Lake Michigan. (A branch of the tribe still calling themselves Winnebagos is located in Nebraska, but has no flag.)



The Ho-Chunk flag was adopted in 1992 (*Tribal Flag*, undated pamphlet). It is white with a green border, and bears an ornate horizontal stripe across the middle and the tribal seal in the center. The flag's five basic colors—red, white, green, blue, and black—represent specific animals in the kinship system in which each clan is associated with a particular animal and hopes to gain the admirable qualities of that animal. Each color also has special meanings in sacred tribal stories which are recalled by their use in the flag.

The seal, adopted in 1984 (*ibid.*), is white with black edges. It includes two of the most important animals in Native American beliefs, the thunderbird and the bear. The thunderbird, depicted as a brown eagle, represents the six upper clans from which all Ho-Chunk chiefs must come; it carries a pipe for the peace enforced by the upper clans—the pipe has yellow feathers and a red pipe head. Below it is the bear, in black, representing the six lower clans and the “Chief of the Earth” in Ho-Chunk belief. In the Ho-Chunk society the members of the Bear clan maintain order, providing the soldiers and the police. A brown war club separates the thunderbird from the bear. This design was common among the many tribes in the western reaches of the Great Lakes.

These images overlay a green outline map of Wisconsin within a ring with the legend “THE GREAT SEAL OF THE HO-CHUNK NATION” arching across the top. 🍷