

Amistad

(continued from page 1)

Atlantic slave trade. The men, women and children, were carried from Cuba across the ocean on the Amistad after being sold twice. Amistad ironically means "friendship."

During the last part of the middle passage, Sengbeh, known as Cinque, freed himself and others from the chains and led a revolt against their captors. The Africans tried to make two surviving Cubans sail them back home, but instead they ended up in U.S. waters, just off the New England coast.

They were taken into custody on arrival and Spain demanded they be taken to Cuba to stand trial for piracy and murder. Abolitionists caught wind of the situation and mounted a legal defense that made it to the Supreme Court. In 1841, former president John Quincy Adams joined the Abolitionists and helped to win the surviving 35 Africans' freedom. By 1842, three years after they were forced onto a slave ship, they returned to their homelands.

Sengbeh returned to Sierra Leone in West Africa to find that his wife, son and daughter were gone. It is presumed they were sold into slavery.

Sengbeh then moved to Bauya, which is an interior village. Mr. Pieh's father, Peter, was born there and became a minister who worked with the missions his entire life. Samuel Pieh has six brothers and two sisters. Only one of them still lives in Sierra Leone, the rest live in the U.S.

Mr. Pieh did not know of this family history until he was an adult. "In the Pieh family tradition that story was never told. We knew that our great-great grandparents disappeared in the ocean. Only in adulthood did the some of these facts start revealing themselves. I began to listen to the Paramount chiefs (traditional leaders who are custodians of history and land)," said Mr. Pieh.

"My ancestors came here in chains. I came here for hope and aspirations of education."

Samuel "Hingha" Pieh
Descendant of Amistad revolt leader

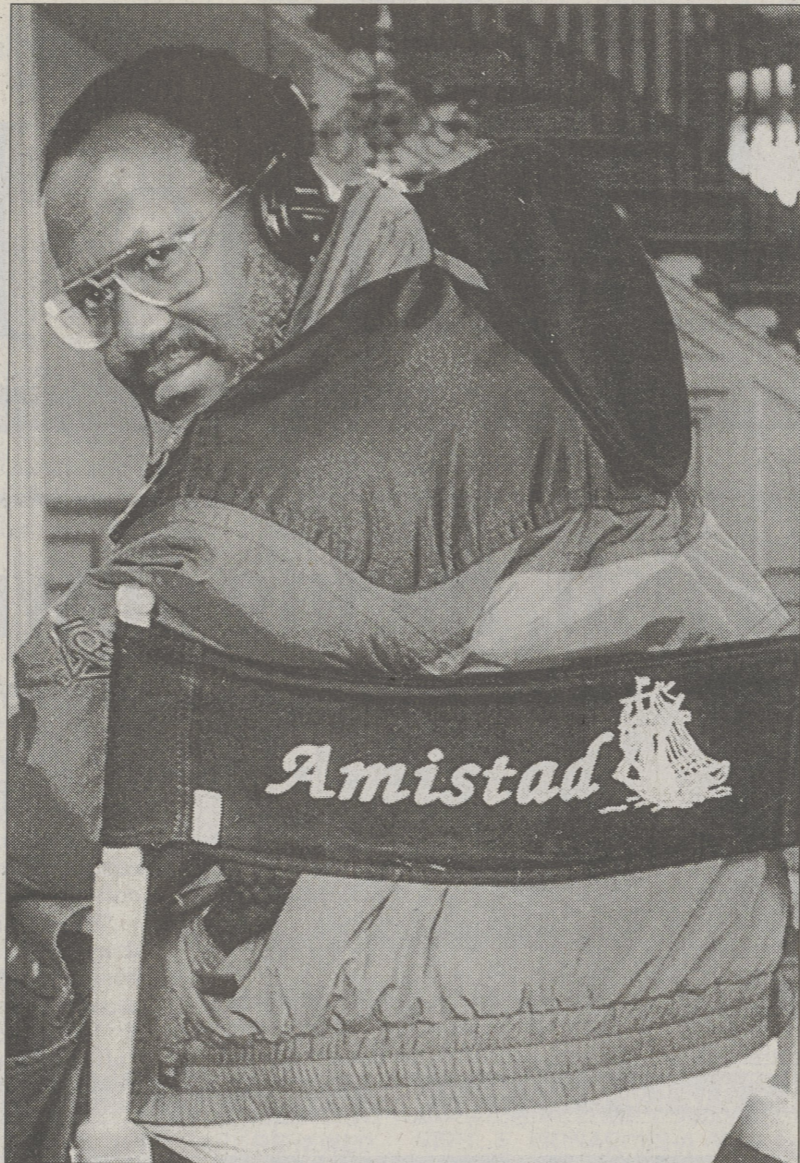
The chiefs provide great resources in a country torn by civil war, where many records were destroyed. "Oral history (has always been) passed on. My family lived with it all our lives. It is nothing unique or special," he said.

Mr. Pieh, who is an assistant professor of biology at State Technical Institute Memphis, is on a one-year sabbatical to "share Amistad with a human face." He has been sharing the true story of Amistad since 1980.

"The movie is not 100 percent accurate, it is not a documentary. My intent is to tell the story of who this man is. He had a vision of freedom. I hope to share (Amistad) with young people and future leaders. Hopefully the feature film will whet their appetites to read more about it," explained Mr. Pieh, who will explore the ramifications of a country not being taught about incidents such as this in their history.

It's a mixed bag having such history in your family. "Sometimes it's very overpowering and puts pressure on me. If my ancestors can do so much with so little..." he said, his voice trailing off.

Mr. Pieh was not just an observer on the movie, he was the dialect coach and acted in it. Through Dr. Clifford Johnson of the Amistad Research Center at Tulane University, Mr. Pieh met Debbie Allen, one of the film's producers who had been trying to



Samuel Pieh, the great-great grandson of Sengbeh Pieh, will speak about his ancestor's experience and what it means to American history at College Misericordia Sept. 11. Sengbeh Pieh led the revolt on the slave ship Amistad, for which a movie was made last year.

get the story told for 10 years.

Allen hired him as an information resource and dialect coach. Spielberg expanded his role to play an elder in the movie. "The last year has been full of excitement and challenges, thank God," he said.

Mr. Pieh also formed the Mid-South Africa Link in 1994. It is a non-profit organization set up to

link people with opportunities. "It's to help make the global village a better place."

He lives in Memphis with his wife, Clara, and their three sons, Hingha, 19; Semche, 16; and Hindowah, 14.

"My ancestors came here in chains. I came here for hope and aspirations of education," he said.

Hospice St. John relocates offices

Hospice Saint John, a ministry of Lutheran Services Northeast, has relocated its offices in Wilkes-Barre and Dickson City to 1007 Oak Street, Pittston Township, Pa. 18640. The telephone number for the new office is (717) 603-7380. Callers from outside of the local calling area may call (800) 622-3315.

A specialized health care system that provides comfort and support, both physical and emotional, for terminally ill patients and their families, hospice care neither hastens death nor prolongs life. The goal is to make the patient as comfortable as possible during the last stage of life. When curative treatments are no longer working, comfort, dignity and quality of life become the focus of treatment.

The services provided by Hospice Saint John range from a specialized knowledge of medical and nursing care, to psychological and

emotional support, spiritual counseling and bereavement care. Social workers, chaplains, bereavement care coordinators, and professional consultants, such as physical and occupational therapists are available to serve patients and their families.

In addition to the office in Pittston Township, Hospice Saint John has an office in Hazleton and operates the Neal E. Soifer Hospice Saint John Inpatient Unit at Mid-Valley Hospital in Peckville.

Hospice Saint John is Medicare certified and accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations.

Founded in 1979, Hospice Saint John is a program of Lutheran Services Northeast. One of the original hospices in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, it is also among the largest hospices in the state and one of the few hospice-only programs.

Baer family reunion September 7

The 36th annual reunion of the William Edward Baer family will be held on Labor Day, September 7, at the home of Gilbert Ide of Idetown.

A picnic lunch is scheduled for noon. Games and prizes are on the agenda for the afternoon. Fun for all.

Family members are encouraged to attend, also family friends are welcome.

Please bring a picnic lunch to share. Plates, utensils, cups and napkins will be provided.



Irem Temple hosts family picnic

Irem Temple held its annual family picnic at Irem Temple Country Club, Dallas, Thursday, Aug. 13. Members and guests, including mostly children, enjoyed races, pony and fire truck rides and all the food, drinks and treats they could handle. Pictured above are co-chairmen of the event: Keith Murray, Oriental Guide and Scott Shuster, High Priest and Prophet.

PROPERTY TRANSFERS

The following property transfers were recorded at the Luzerne County Courthouse for the week of August 21 - 27:

Elmer D. Labarre, estate al, to Frederick Hockenbury, 605 Main Road, Dallas Twp., \$32,500.

Luzerne County Sheriff, et al, to Nationscredit CDC, 347 Hemlock St., Harveys Lake Bor., \$8,017.

David F. Rimple, et al, to Frederick R. Buchman, et ux, Lot

2 Rimple Sub, Harveys Lake Bor., \$45,000.

David F. Rimple, et al, to Pizzolato, ux al, Lot 3 Rimple Sub, Harveys Lake Bor., \$95,000.

Luzerne County Sheriff, et al, to Mellon Bank, 131 Inman St., Kingston Twp., \$1,540.

George W. Nichols, III, executor, to Kevin W. Bonham, 115 Warden Ave., Kignston Twp., \$77,500.

Literacy volunteers to be honored Sept. 13

In celebration of National Literacy Week, the Wyoming Valley Literacy Volunteers will hold a reception on Sept. 13 from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Wallace F. Stettler Learning Resources Center. It is located on Sprague Avenue, Kingston, across from the clock tower at Wyoming Seminary.

No previous teaching experience is needed to become a literacy tutor. Workshops are held throughout the year to train volunteers in the Laubach method of

teaching adults how to read.

The reception will feature the presentation of achievement certificates to Senior Tutors who have completed 40 or more hours of tutoring. Everyone is welcome: tutors and their spouses, students, and anyone who would like to become a part of the literacy program. Refreshments will be served. Those planning to attend are asked to call the Literacy volunteers office at the Hoyt Library at 287-2013, by September 9.

Legion asks for bells to ring September 2

At 9 a.m. on Sept. 2, 1945, the World War II officially ended as representatives of the Japanese government signed the surrender treaty aboard the battleship Missouri.

Daddow-Issac Post 672 and the American Legion, Dept. of Pennsylvania ask all places of worship to ring their bells for a full minute beginning at 9:04 a.m. Wed., Sept. 2. This will provide the residents of our communities an opportunity for reflection on the sacrifices borne by our countrymen and women.

Gate of Heaven A&R will meet Sept. 8

Gate of Heaven Altar and Rosary Society will meet in the Parish Center at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 8. The upcoming September 20 Birthday Tea will be discussed. All women of the parish are invited to attend. Hostesses will be Peg Canfield and Linda Scholl.

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NEWS

Coverage area: The Dallas Post covers the "Back Mountain" area of Luzerne County, including Dallas, Kingston, Lehman and Jackson townships, Dallas Borough, Harveys Lake and the Dallas and Lake-Lehman school districts. We try to get to as many events as possible, but staff and space limitations make it impossible to cover everything. If you have news about your family, town or organization, please send it to us and we'll try to get it in. Photographs are welcome; we prefer black and white, but color will usually work.

Corrections, clarifications: The Dallas Post will correct errors of fact or clarify any misunderstanding created by a story. Call 675-5211.

Have a story idea? Please call, we'd like to hear about it.

Letters: The Dallas Post prints all letters which have local interest. Send letters to: Editor, The Dallas Post, P.O. Box 366, Dallas PA 18612. All letters must be signed and include a phone number at which we can reach the author. Deadline is Noon, Monday prior to publication.

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