

Features

*New York State
Lobbying Report*

*Homeowners Assistance
Fund Program Launched*

*Tribal Courts Justice
Needs Assessment
Survey*

*Coping with Childhood
Depression*

Kawennì:ios



Community & Family Services Division
Welcomes Three Program Managers



Good Words of Welcome

Wa'tkwanonhweraton/Greetings Akwesasne,

We are pleased to be able to return to our normal publication schedule for Kawenni:ios. All of our Akwesasne Mohawks have been through a tremendous amount during the past 2 years, as we continue to move through the COVID-19 pandemic. I am going to take this opportunity to express thanks to so many who have helped us through the last 2 years.

First, I would like to recognize and remember all of our community members who we have lost since our last publication. Some were lost due to various reasons, many were lost due to COVID-19 or the after effects. We remember them always.

Since our last publication, we have witnessed our Casino close for over 5 months with long-lasting effects that we are still feeling today. During that time, our Casino Management team developed a top-notch safety plan that put the safety of our community, employees, and players as the top priority. We were comfortable with holding off on reopening so that the safety plan could be developed, and we were among the final Tribal gaming operations in the country to reopen. Some reopened with little to no safety enhancements, some simply turned off every other machine. Our Casino invested in the safety of all with a complete floor re-configuration to enhance COVID safety protocols, along with many other departmental improvements. For that, we thank all of their team members who contributed to their enhanced safety plan.

Niawen:kowa to our EOC (Emergency Operations Center) employees who have put the safety of our community first over the past 2 years. They have worked endless hours planning and responding to a pandemic that has directly affected every one



of us, thousands of us, in some way. Most community members did not see how much work was done behind the scenes to keep our community safe, healthy, and alive. Tensions rose in our community at different times, but our EOC team kept health and safety as their top priority. For that we thank every one of them involved with keeping our community as safe as possible, and for everything they continue to do for us.

Niawen:kowa to so many of our Tribal employees who have been dedicated to our community in so many ways over the past 2 years. In 2020, we had countless employees who went above and beyond to make sure that CARES Act funding received was distributed in several ways to our community members. Some of those ways were direct household pandemic relief, elders emergency relief, business relief, along with many projects. Our dedicated employees found a way to distribute thousands of checks on top of their normal daily, weekly, monthly duties. In 2021, our employees are doing it again on a much larger scale. There were approx. 1,750 household relief checks in 2020. In 2021, there are over 12,000 individual checks being processed. Again, our dedicated employees are going above and beyond and taking on a much larger project. In addition, they have processed elders relief checks again, business relief checks again, and individual home heating checks. For that, we thank all of our dedicated employees who have done so much to assist our community with pandemic relief checks. We are all grateful.

Niawen:kowa to all members of our business community who have cooperated with the EOC guidelines put in place for the

safety of our community, employees, and the customers of each business. The guidelines in place have, no doubt, helped to slow the spread of COVID-19 through our community. Each business has been a great partner with the mask mandates, occupancy limitations, and other safety enhancements. Again, we could not have kept our community as safe as we have without the cooperation of our Akwesasne businesses.

Finally, Niawen:kowa to our community members who have gone through so much in the past 2 years. Lock downs, COVID positive cases, quarantines, isolations, hospitalizations, masks, symptoms, asymptomatic, meal deliveries, virtual learning at schools, virtual meetings, occupancy limits, no home wakes (for a period of time), travel radius, vaccinations, vaccine boosters, vaccinations percentages, work from home, drive-thru birthday parties, zoom parties, spectator-less sports, vaccine requirements, and more have all become common items that were not thought of too much prior to 2 years ago. We all would like to return to how we lived prior to 2020. But we need everyone's help to do that.

Please be/remain kind and respectful to each other. You may not know what the other person is going through or has gone through in the past 2 years or before that. Being kind, understanding, and respectful is free.



HOW TO ACCESS TRIBAL COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS

1. Log into the Tribal Members Portal at www.srmt-nsn.gov
2. Scroll down to "Tribal Council Resolutions, Publications & Notices"; and
3. Click the dropdown menu "Tribal Council Resolutions"

For help accessing the Tribal Members Portal, please contact SRMT Communications at (518) 358-2272 or email communications@srmt-nsn.gov



Kentenhkó:wa/November 2022

National Native American History Month

- 5 - Tribal Monthly Meeting - 10:00 a.m. - Lobby
- 11 - Veteran's Day holiday - Tribe closed
- 24 - Thanksgiving - Tribe closed
- 25 - American Indian Heritage Day - Tribe closed

Tsiothóhrha/December 2022

- 3 - Tribal Monthly Meeting - 10:00 a.m. - Lobby
- 25 - Christmas Day
- 26 - Christmas Day observed - Tribe Closed

HAZARDOUS WASTE: E-Cigarettes

A series by David Casales, Recycling Coordinator

E-cigs, vapes, or rippers aren't just terrible for your body, they're terrible for the environment. E-liquid nicotine is listed as an acute hazardous waste and is considered a commercial chemical product when disposed. It has some of the 4 characteristics of hazardous waste. The 2022 Hazardous Waste Material Flow Project data demonstrates the many pieces of e-cigarettes found in the trash samples at Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Transfer Station. This is important data that indicates certain hazardous waste volumes in Akwesasne.

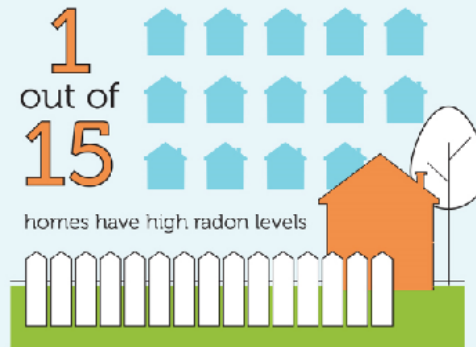
Discarded vaping products can contain harmful substances like unused e-liquid. Lithium-ion batteries have been linked to explosions in recycling trucks. Improper storage and disposal may lead to exposure and poisoning. **E-cigarettes and e-liquid should not be thrown in the trash or flushed down a sink.** These items should be taken to a hazardous waste facility during a household hazardous waste collection event.

E-cigarettes, including rechargeable batteries and cartridges containing e-liquids (liquid nicotine mixtures), can be harmful to human health and the environment if disposed of improperly. Best practices for disposal are removing the rechargeable battery, storing it in a hazardous waste-labeled container, taking it to a facility and asking us questions.

The nicotine solution in an e-liquid product can seep into the ground or water and contaminate nature. As e-cigarette batteries degrade, the compounds can also seep into near water. Let's be responsible and do the right thing. Contact the Transfer Station or the Recycling Coordinator (518-558-4632), to find the best way to identify and handle anything that you think can be a hazardous waste item or substance. Don't let e-cigarettes become litter.

Protect Your Family from Radon

Radon is a gas that you can't **see, smell, or taste** — but it can be dangerous. It's the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S.



Learn more by calling the National Radon Hotline:

1-800-SOS-RADON (1-800-767-7236)

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Sign up for your FREE radon test today! Did you know that elevated radon levels are common? About 1 in every 15 homes has a dangerous amount that can cause serious health issues such as lung cancer. This gas is odorless and invisible, says the EPA, and it causes no immediate symptoms when exposed to humans or pets. The only way to know if your home is affected is by testing your individual residence. If you would like to schedule your free your home test, please call Dillon Point of the Air Quality Program at (518)358-5937 ext 5055. For your family's safety, **it's always best to test!**

Kawennì:ios "Good Words" is published quarterly.

Subscriptions are available in print or digital versions.

Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe
Communications Department
71 Margaret Terrance Memorial Way, Akwesasne, NY 13655
(518) 358-2272

communications@srmt-nsn.gov

www.srmt-nsn.gov

Connect with us...



Brendan White, Director
Mandy Chase, Publications Manager
Alyson Thompson, Communications Officer
Denita Ireland, Communications Specialist

Elder Interview: Margaret Terrance

Featured in Ahkwesahsne Tribune, February 7, 2000. Editor Victor Martin

Kaientatie "scatter", age 76, Snipe Clan, born: Kahnawake

Parents: Louise Regis/*Waienhaw*i (Carrying Fruit), George Terrance/*Kanienkaroton* (Ripples on the Water)
Sisters: Mary & Isabel

“I grew up in Akwesasne up to age six, then went to Caughnawaga to go to school up to grade 8. After grade 8, I went to high school in Massena, N. Y. I worked for a while then went to Mater Dei College. During the war I worked for the Federal government in New York City Port of Disembarkation.” Was this during the first or the second world war, I asked? After she tried to throw something at me, she said, “The second world war, of course! In Helena Road, I was the youngest of three children. That’s all everybody did then was plant gardens and work on the farm, when I was a child. We had two barns then. My mother would cook for us all, she was an excellent cook. And I’m such a lousy cook. There were always 8 to 10 people at my house. Neighbors, relatives and friends all helping on the farm, everybody worked. During the depression, people work all day for just a hot meal. Nobody locked their doors then. People helped each other and everybody walked where you needed to go. Unless you had horses. The horses we had used to be tied next to the church. We had a team of horses that were smarter than people. If the men took too long somewhere, the horses would somehow untie themselves and slowly walk home along the side of the road. Arriving home, they would stand beside the barn. Seeing them alone, we knew the men were drinking and the horses knew enough to come home by themselves. Their nicknames were Bell and Dick. I really cried when the horses died. They were almost human. If children were playing they would move, and they never broke anything. In the morning the horses knew where to stand in front of the cutter or the wagon.

“During the Depression milk was 65 cents for a 100 pound can; gas was 13 cents a gallon; bread was 8 cents a loaf. Everybody was poor, but we always had enough to eat with family and friends

always around having a good time.

“In Caughnawaga, it was 10 cents to see a move. Weddings were always held in the family’s home. All the relatives cooked and brought the food to their home for the reception. Nowadays the girls all wear an expensive white wedding dress and they don’t know what it means to wear white. Things today don’t have the same meaning. I know of one wedding where the bride’s mother paid \$1,100 for a white wedding dress, and the bride was pregnant at the altar. The \$1,100 could have been spent on other things that were really needed and they didn’t understand wearing white meant she was supposed to be a virgin, pure.

“Here in St. Regis, almost every other house was selling fish: walleye, sturgeon, bullheads, perch, eels, catfish, everything. A lot of people used to make their living selling fish. All kinds of white people would come and buy the fish. Shine George used to smoke sturgeon and sell it to us. It was delicious. The fish would be traded for other things people needed. Besides that a lot of people made baskets, which also were traded for what was needed.

“My father spoiled me rotten. He wouldn’t let me do much work or cook or wash the dishes. I was his favorite. When I was growing up, even though everybody was poor, we never went hungry because we all worked, we helped each other and we were all happier than people are today. It seems to me like it was just yesterday. Those were the days.”



Tribal Council Hosts New York State Native American Relations Chair

STATE LOBBYING REPORT

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council continues its longstanding efforts aimed at strengthening the Tribe's voice in the New York State Government. Beginning with the 2019 revival of the New York State Senate Select Committee on State-Native American Relations, the Tribal Council has continued to engage in productive dialogue with the committee to advance tribal concerns and issues.

During a June 6, 2019 roundtable discussion held by the State-Native American Relations Committee, the group made a commitment to regularly visit tribal communities throughout the State to identify areas where tribal concerns can be voiced in the State Legislature. Their most recent visit to Akwesasne took place on September 19th-20th and entailed hosting NYS Select Committee Chair Senator Timothy Kennedy (D, IP, WF), 63rd District

The event began with a meal prepared by Atsiakta's Janine Rourke, while the Tribal Council discussed with Senator Kennedy the need to permanently establish a NYS Native American Relations Office and recognition of the tax exemption status of tribal purchases made off-territory. An update on the land claim court case and

negotiations was provided, as well as the opportunity once more to meet representatives from the Tribe's state lobbying firm of Bolton-St. Johns.

On September 20th, Senator Kennedy was joined by NYS Senator Danial Stec (R, C, IP), 45th District, and Town of Homer Mayor Hal McCabe, who currently serves as the NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources Executive Director. Throughout the day, they received personalized tours of tribal programs and community organizations to learn about their unique challenges and services.

The group visited with Chief of Police Matthew Rourke who shared efforts to recruit and retain Mohawk police officers and the department's ongoing work with outside law enforcement agencies. Chief of Police Rourke noted the jurisdictional challenges when responding to emergency calls from locations within the 1796 Treaty boundary and the need to develop mutual aid agreements.

Their second visit was to Health Services, which included a tour of the facility's recent expansion and discussions with



Pictured are (from left, front row): Tribal Chief Ron LaFrance, SRMT General Counsel Dale White, NYS Senator Tim Kennedy, Tribal Sub-Chief Derrick King, Tribal Chief Beverly Cook, and Tribal Chief Michael Conners, as well as (back row) Akwesasne Mohawk Casino Resort (AMCR) General Manager Scott Freeman, SRMT Executive Director Tsiorsas Barreiro, and AMCR Director of Operations Craig Fuller.

Assistant Health Director Kim McElwain, Clinical Director Connie Thompson, and Assistant Clinical Director Melerena Back. They discussed the difficulty in filling job vacancies and transferring/recognition of credentials between jurisdictions. They also shared the inability of some grant requirements to



Pictured from left: Sub Chief Derrick King, Senator Kennedy, Tribal Chief Beverly Cook, Boys & Girls Club Director Jessica Cree-Jock, Senator Daniel Stec, Tribal Chief Ron LaFrance Jr., Tribal Chief Michael Conners Jr.

consider preventive measures and treatments that are often uniquely tailored and incorporate culturally appropriate services.

The group next traveled to the St. Regis Mohawk School to meet with Salmon River Superintendent Dr. Stanley Harper and Principal Alison Benedict. They spoke about the \$17.8 million slated for the Mohawk School in the 2023 State Budget for repairs and improvements, but much of the discussion was on the need to construct a new elementary school -- away from a flood prone area on land to be donated by the Tribe.

In February 2028, the St. Regis Mohawk School was significantly impacted by a flood that inundated their basement and parking lot, which forced all classes to temporarily relocate to the Salmon River campus in Fort Covington. A tour of the school's boiler room revealed the extent of the water damage to the nearly century-old building.

The two State Senators and Mayor McCabe also visited the Akwesasne Mohawk Casino Resort where political support is needed to eliminate the ArriveCan requirement for Canadian

travelers. The ArriveCan requirement is mandatory for all travelers to Canada, including for Canadians coming back from Akwesasne. Accounting for approximately 40% of casino patrons, the inability to regain Canadian customers continues to have an impact on the casino revenue and the Tribal General Fund.

The tour concluded with a visit to the Akwesasne Boys & Girls Club, followed by a recap at the Tribal Administration Building where the Tribal Council was presented with a proclamation from Senator Kennedy that proclaims September 30, 2002 as Every Child Matter Day in New York State.

On behalf of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe; we express appreciation to State Senator Tim Kennedy, State Senator Daniel Stec, and to Mayor Hal McCabe for their recent visit to Akwesasne. We trust that the opportunity to meet in-person has provided them with an increased understanding of our community's most pressing issues and challenges.



Tribal Chiefs Ron LaFrance (left) and Michael Conners view a proclamation from Senator Kennedy that memorializes Every Child Matters Day on September 30, 2022 in New York State.

Squeaky Clean Dental Hygiene

'Filling' you in on services to keep your child's smile healthy

By Raelee Simcox, Dental Hygienist

American Indian children suffer more from dental disease due to less access to dental care. For example, Indigenous children age two to five have 4 times more decay or filled teeth than that of Caucasian children. You can double that compared to the next highest minority, US Hispanic children.

Tribal dental clinics and Indian Health Services (IHS) are working together to improve children's dental health. Parents and their children to avoid sugary drinks which are extremely acidic and damaging to the teeth and to instead drink lots of water. Tap water is preferred by the dental professionals due to the minerals that naturally occur in it that comes from the rocks, soil and air. The program also encourages oral hygiene instruction, healthy nutrition, brushing two minutes twice daily and teaches the importance of flossing.

Our own SRMT dental team provides our local community schools (St. Regis Mohawk School and Salmon River Central) a sealant program with the help of their dental hygienist Joanne Labarge. Joanne goes into schools and does screenings or places sealants and fluoride varnishes and refers back to the

clinic for cleanings and fillings when the need is found. All these measures create easy access for preventative dental care for Akwesasne children, easing financial or transportation issues families may be facing.

The SRMT Dental Clinic has other providers, such as Dr. Joseph Park, Dr. Stefanie Davis and Hygienist Raelee Simcox, who provide further radiograph screenings along with fillings and other dental repair. Cleanings, F12 and sealants are also available at this location.

Oral hygiene instruction and all these forms of preventative measures will go a long way in keeping children healthy down the road. By practicing these preventative measures and offering constant education to the children and their parents, not only will we be healthier for our families, but our youth will grow up having the knowledge on how to better care for the next generation.

For more information, contact the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Dental Clinic at (518) 358-3141.



Raelee Simcox, SRMT Dental Hygienist

SRMT Homeowner Assistance Fund Program Launched

Housing counselors find holistic solutions for homeowners facing hardship

By: Jennifer Brown, Community and Family Services Office Manager

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA), passed by the 117th Congress and signed by the President on March 11, 2021, contains \$9.961 billion nationwide for a Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF). On June 27, 2022 the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe was approved and awarded funding by the United States Department of Treasury to implement and operate the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Homeowner Assistance Fund Plan Program (SRMT HAF Program).

The purpose of the Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF) is to prevent mortgage delinquencies and defaults, foreclosures, loss of utilities or home energy services, and displacement of homeowners experiencing financial hardship after January 21, 2020.

Funds from the HAF may be used for assistance with mortgage payments, homeowner's insurance, utility payments, and other specified purposes. The law prioritizes funds for homeowners who have experienced the greatest hardships, leveraging local and national income indicators to maximize the impact.

HAF programs can help homeowners determine their best options to address housing-related financial hardships as a result of the pandemic. Housing counseling and plain language education materials can help homeowners determine the best option for themselves—temporary financial assistance through the HAF program is just one option available. For example, if a homeowner would be unable to keep up with regular mortgage payments once HAF assistance ends, that homeowner might be better served by first exploring loss-mitigation options such as a loan modification to lower the interest rate or lengthen the payment term.

All HAF programs are encouraged to integrate housing counseling services into their HAF program plans to help find

the best solution for homeowners. Housing counselors are fluent in the various options available to homeowners and can also help homeowners assess their financial situation holistically, often providing budgeting support and referrals to other available resources.

Applications are available by contacting or more information Alexandra David or Chad Smoke at (518) 358-2272, ext. 256, or HAF@srmt-nsn.gov. Visit srmt-nsn.gov/homeowners-assistance-fund to access the application or take our prescreening questionnaire.



Program Manager Alexandra David and Administrative Assistant Chad Smoke look forward to guiding you through the application process.

Creating Akwesasne Tourism Industry Businesses & Jobs: Part One

Series by Penny Peters, Akwesasne Travel Manager

Akwesasne Travel is the official Destination Marketing and Management Organization (DMMO) for Akwesasne and is based out of the Office of Economic Development of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe in Akwesasne, NY. Since 2008, the Akwesasne community has had a vested interest in the development of cultural tourism to restore our cultural heritage and provide alternative employment opportunities. Many reports and documents followed including *Sharing the Spirit* (2009) and the *Akwesasne Comprehensive Community Development Plan* (2009), which once again identified cultural tourism as an opportunity for economic development.



Carrie Hill walks guests through the steps of creating a Mohawk basket inside her Chill Baskets Studio.

In 2017, the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe was awarded the Administration for Native Americans Social and Economic Development Strategies Grant to establish Akwesasne Cultural Tourism. This grant allowed for dedicated staff to pursue major areas of tourism development, including establishing a Destination Marketing and Management Organization, tour operations, tour development, and tourism infrastructure. A U.S. Economic Development Administration Grant was also

awarded to the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe in 2017 that assisted with developing a Marketing and Branding strategy.

It has been demonstrated time and time again that tourism is a vital economic stimulus to local economies. Akwesasne Travel has helped create and promote several local small businesses and also fostered cultural revival within the community through numerous community engagement projects. Keep reading to learn more about what Akwesasne Travel has been up to this past year:

Tourism Industry Development

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Akwesasne Travel quickly pivoted their official launch with four virtual tours on AirBNB Experiences. Virtual tours allowed guests a chance to peek inside Akwesasne Travel from the security of their own homes. These four exclusive tours offer unique perspectives from local talent; such as Carrie Hill, ‘*Exploring Mohawk Basketry with a Master*’, Evan Cree, ‘*Mohawk Tour from Log to Lacrosse Stick*’, Bailee Rourke, ‘*Cornbread from a Mohawk Perspective*’, and Native North American Travelling College, ‘*Living Culture with Mohawk Interpretation.*’ Just as the virtual tours were vamping up, the international border revised their restrictions to begin allowing international travel and in-person cultural tours.

In Fall 2021, Akwesasne Travel finally launched three exclusive in-person cultural tours that included Traditional Lacrosse Stick Making with Evan Cree (NY), Come Weave with Chill Baskets (NY), and NNATC’s A Tour of Mohawk Life (Ont). Each tour follows a strict COVID-19 policy for safety of all Akwesasnon and guests, and can be customized for your group. You can read more about virtual and in-person cultural experiences by visiting the recently launched website [Akwesasne.Travel](https://www.akwesasne.travel). Here, you can also read ‘*Our Stories*’ blog,

find links to book virtual and in-person ‘*Cultural Tours*’, ‘*Plan Your Visit*’ to Akwesasne, and explore ‘*Destination News*.’

“The training I received as part of the Tourism Product Development was an excellent training to have in order to get my business ready for the tourism scene,” commented Carrie Hill, owner Chill Baskets. “Akwesasne Travel are excellent. They provided a knowledgeable and helpful team to help prepare me, and the trainings were very interesting.”

Maie Thomas takes guests through the newly renovated exhibit at the Native North American Traveling College



Community Involvement

Fostering cultural revival is another great benefit of tourism in Akwesasne. Akwesasne Travel works diligently to instill traditional cultural values through community engagement projects. Previous annual community engagement projects have included *Onkwathereko:wa* “Our Big Basket,” *Ionkwatsi'tsiaienthon* “We Planted a Flower Garden,” and Sharing the Mohawk Spirit, 2019. These projects help to promote the continuation of traditional skills such as basket making and beadwork, and provide *Akwesashro:non* with a great sense of community pride. The next community engagement project is well on its way and will be covered in more detail in our next community update.

Akwesasne Travel has made many great strides this past year,

but there is still more work to be done. Akwesasne Travel will conduct another call out for tour suppliers, these are individuals in the community who want to share their cultural knowledge and need help designing their business. There will be training to help with crafting your story, developing your cultural tour, and providing continual support along your entrepreneurial journey. There is also a need for tourism support businesses, such as transportation providers, seasonal tour guides, and tour operators. If starting a business does not interest you, you can also help by simply promoting our activities through social media with friends and family.

For more information, contact Akwesasne Travel at (518) 358-4238 or email at info@akwesasne.travel



Evan Cree, owner of Traditional Lacrosse, answers questions outside during one of his From Log to Lacrosse Stick factory tours.



Akwesasne Travel

Child Support Enforcement Unit Surpasses 100th Case

How CSEU serves local families

By: April Lauzon, CSEU Program Manager

As of August 2022, the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Child Support Enforcement Unit (CSEU) has surpassed their 100th case. Appropriately timed, August is recognized as Child Support Awareness Month. This milestone has been years in the making and highlights the great work being done for our Mohawk children and families.

The SRMT Child Support Enforcement Unit, or CSEU, became the first comprehensive Tribal IV-D program in New York State and all of Region II in April 2014. Special recognition was given from Regional Administrator Joyce Thomas and the Commissioner of the US Department of Health and Human Services Vicki Turetsky for this accomplishment. The CSEU can assist with the location of persons responsible for child support, establishment of paternity, establishment of court orders for support, enforcement of court orders and modification of child support orders. Services are available to any parents or children who are eligible for tribal membership, regardless of residency. The CSEU cannot provide legal advice nor assist with custody or divorce action, but will refer you to the correct agency.

The CSEU hosted an end of summer Family Fun Day Carnival to celebrate Child Support Awareness Month on August 31st at the Travis Soloman Memorial Lacrosse box. The annual event aims to draw attention to Child Support Services, and celebrating the children and families of our community.

“The community has been very supportive of our program and we are honored to be able to give back to Akwesasne by offering a fun filled family celebration,” Program Manager April Lauzon says of the annual family event. “Our program exists to serve the community, and we couldn’t do that without the support of Tribal Leadership and community programs advocating for us and making referrals. We look forward to growing the program and helping as many families and children as possible.”



What sets SRMT Child Support Enforcement Unit apart?

1. SRMT does not charge interest on arrears. (Arrears accrued prior to case transfer are still owed).
2. SRMT does not charge an annual receipt and disbursement fee.
3. SRMT Case Managers have smaller caseloads than state Case Managers.
4. SRMT reviews child support cases every two years, not every three years as the state follows.
5. SRMT encourages parents to participate in mediation in effort to eliminate court appearances when appropriate.
6. SRMT can help families mediate alternative options for child support including non-cash payments or in-kind support (if agreed upon by both parties).

For more information, contact April Lauzon Child Support Enforcement Unit Program Manager at april.lauzon@srmt-nsn.gov or (518) 358-2272 ext. 2406

2022 Mid-Year SRMT Employee Enrichment Awards

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe (SRMT) workforce is made up of many hardworking, dedicated community members and neighbors, each committed to the success of Akwesasne. The teamwork of each employee has a deep and lasting impact on Akwesashró:non. Every day, our colleagues push forward and seize the opportunity to build a better tomorrow.

The SRMT Employee Enrichment Awards promote and recognize the contributions of our dedicated team members for their outstanding professionalism, collaboration, initiative and integrity as they serve the Akwesasne community.

On Friday, July 22, 2022, a Summer Beach Day Celebration was held to honor SRMT staff for their contributions and announce the 2022 Mid-Year Enrichment Award Winners.

They are:

- Raienkonnis Edwards, Mental Health Administrative Assistant
- Mandy Chase, Communications Publication Manager and Webmaster
- Brent Herne, Planning and Infrastructure Construction Manager
- Colleen Coe, Health Services Billing Accounts Payable
- and group winners:
- Mary LaFrance, Economic Development Program Support Officer
- Raeann Adams, Economic Development Community Planner
- Edward “Edge” Smoke, Economic Development Business SVC. Specialist

Congratulations to all, and niawen:kówa/thank you so much for all that you do.



Fall Home Maintenance Checklist

By Jamie Bay, Home Improvement Division Director

As winter nears, we come to a critical time of year - where a little time and attention on your home's maintenance can go a long way in assuring your household runs smoothly. Although autumn can be one of the busiest seasons for homeowners preparing for winter, it's also the best time to take advantage of the moderate weather to repair any damages before the first frost sets in.

1. Check Windows and Doors for Air Leaks

- Lower temps mean higher thermostat settings, and we all know the pain of opening a gas bill in the dead of winter.
- Keep cold air out and utility bills in check by checking all of your windows and doors for air leaks. Include checking all windows (including basement) for drafts, loose frames or cracked panes.
- Some low-budget options for fixing minor issues around leaky doors and windows include caulking around gaps, adding or updating weather stripping, and using foam sealant.
- For major issues, calling in an expert for window seal repairs can run between \$70 to \$120 - still a bargain compared with the cost of replacing an entire window or door.

2. Clean the Fireplace and Chimney

- Fall is a great time to give your fireplace a thorough cleaning and inspection.
- Maintaining a clean fireplace is the simplest and best way to remove creosote, a by-product of wood combustion that contains tar and toxins. Eliminating this from the chimney liner and the smoke box reduces the risk of a fire.
- If you've been keeping up with cleaning your chimney on a yearly basis, you can handle this task on your own, as long as you feel capable of using an extension ladder

to get to the roof and scrub the chimney.

- If you haven't cleaned the chimney in a long time, its recommended that you call an expert to do a thorough clean. You can expect to spend anywhere from the low \$100's to upwards of \$300, depending on how fouled the chimney has become.

3. Schedule a Furnace Tune-Up

- Don't wait until the first bitterly cold day to finally turn on your furnace. If you have any issues, you'll want to know before the mercury drops and you find yourself shivering indoors.
- Listen for strange noises like booming, clicking, and squealing and pay attention to odd odors.
- If you notice anything unusual, call an HVAC professional.
- Change your filter regularly and often.
- Every season, homeowners should replace the furnace filter. Vacuum dust and debris from around the furnace. Even if you change your filter regularly, it's a good idea to schedule a furnace tune-up.
- HVAC pros can inspect and clean the air ducts, check and adjust the pilot light, lubricate the furnace bearings, and inspect and tighten fan belts and pulleys.

4. Test Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors

- It's easy to forget about smoke and carbon monoxide detectors (unless a cooking disaster sets off the alarm—we've all been there).
- Simply press and hold down the "test" button for a few seconds on each of your detectors.
- If working properly, detectors will emit a siren. Should the sound be weak or not there at all, replace batteries and test the detector once more.

Check fire extinguishers and replace if necessary. Review

your home fire evacuation plan with your family.

5. Air Quality and Home Heating Efficiency

Run Ceiling Fans in Reverse

- That's why now is the perfect time to reverse the direction of fans in the home to make the space warmer.
- Reversing the direction of your ceiling fans helps circulate warm air near the ceiling back into your living space. (Heat rises, remember!) This can cut your heating costs by as much as 10%.
- All you need is a ladder or stool for this task—and make sure the fan is off. Then simply flip the switch that is commonly found on the side of the motor to change the fan's direction.

Air Conditioners and Humidifiers Maintenance

- Vacuum internal parts of air conditioners. Remove units from windows or wrap outside box with an approved tarp or plastic air conditioner cover in order to prevent rusting of vital parts.
- Clean your humidifiers regularly during the heating season. Bacteria and spores can develop in a dirty water tank resulting in unclean moisture misting out into your room.

6. Clean the gutters

- Throughout the year, your gutters fill up with leaves, sticks, and other debris. Failing to clear this gunk from your gutters can mean rain and melting snow won't be able to drain easily, causing seepage and leaks into your home.
- Using a bucket, gutter scoop, and heavy-duty gloves, you can remove any debris found in your gutters.
- Use a hose to wash away any remaining debris and to make sure the downspouts are working properly.

If you're not keen on climbing, you can call in a professional.

7. Fuel Tank Maintenance

- Can you see any corrosion, rust, cracks, or warping on the tank body, bund, welded joints, or on the pipework?
- Is there evidence of any fuel leakage or damp spots on the surrounding ground around the tank?
- Is the tank base and any supporting structures in a good,

safe condition?

- Is there any damage to the tank, that you can identify (oil stains, dents, or indications of tilting or settling)?
- Is the tank labelling and any operating instructions still present and legible?
- Is there any problematic water content or nasty looking sludge present in the tank?
- Have the inside of your fuel tank cleaned once every five years. This averts the buildup of water and sludge, which leads to leaks and corrosion.
- Ensure all tank components are in working order

8. Hot Water Heater Maintenance

There are several easy and inexpensive ways to increase your water heater's operating efficiency and longevity.

While some things – such as adding insulation and setting the temperature – only have to be done once, there are other things that you should have done annually:

- Visually inspect the condition of your water heater tank
 - Are the seams in good shape (there are no bulges or leaks anywhere)?
 - Are there any rust spots or corrosion anywhere on the tank?
 - All the connections look secure?

Annually, you should consider having a specialist inspect your tank conditions, and if necessary, have the following done:

- Flush the Tank
- Making sure a viable anode rod hangs in the tank will help prevent its inside from rusting out.
 - A used up rod is far cheaper to replace than a new heater.
- Check Insulation on the Water Heater Tank or Consider Having Insulation put on it
 - Proper insulation can reduce heat loss by up to 45 percent and can shave as much as 9 percent off water-heating costs.

Avoid future costs and mishaps but developing an annual maintenance check-up for your home.

For more info contact the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's Home Improvement Division at (518) 358-2272.

Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Courts Unveil New Logo

By Brendan White, Communications Director

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Courts unveiled a new logo that better reflects the Tribe's judicial branch of the tribal government. The winning design and artist were introduced during an afternoon unveiling event that was held at the Tribal Court Building located at 882 State Route 37 on Thursday, Kenténha/October 6, 2022.

Beginning in the early-1990, efforts were undertaken to development and implement a judicial system in the southern portion of the Akwesasne community. Initially created through the Tribal Procedures Act of 1994, the Tribal Courts first administered a Traffic Court that oversaw traffic matters. Judge Lois Terrance and Judge Steven Cook presided over traffic cases in the beginning, with Rosebud Cook serving as the Court Clerk.

Since that time, the Tribal Courts has expanded to include the Iohahiio Iakwarakwas Healing to Wellness Court and it has been working to expand its Family Court to include custody and child neglect matters. The Court currently exercises general civil jurisdiction to hear civil disputes, land disputes, child support, contracts, torts, and probate matters.

A variation of the tribal logo was previously utilized to depict the Tribal Courts. As progress is being made to expand its jurisdiction involving certain Family Law matters, the Tribal Courts believes it was time to update its logo to reflect the Court's evolution and expansion of its inherent and coordinated jurisdiction.

In March 2022, the Tribal Courts conducted a three-month callout for interested Akwesasne artists to submit a design for consideration. Specifications for submitting a logo design were provided and included their own original work.

The logo contest resulted in 17 submissions from local artists, with some artists submitting more than one entry. To help select the winning design a review committee

was assembled that was comprised of staff from the Tribal Courts and Communications Department, as well as Tribal Sub-Chiefs Benjamin Herne and Sub-Chief Agnes "Sweets" Jacobs

The selection committee is proud to announce that Mohawk artist Brue Boots provided the winning logo design, which earned him a monetary prize of \$1,000 (U.S.). Judge Lois Terrance, the longest serving judge of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Court expressed that, "the logo is very clean and professional and beautiful in appearance." The winning design includes the scales of justice to represent the fairness provided to all court cases. There are two sides to every story and each side of the case must be heard.

Surrounding the scales is an inner circle to represent Earth, which rests upon it the Mohawk motif for the Sky Dome (also known as Sky World) that is a central part of our culture and represents where all life came from. Within the Sky World are two (2) spirals to represent the two (2) twins for good and evil and the struggle that often exists in everyone.

Our culture is then surrounded by our People, who are united and working together. This is further enclosed within an outer circle to signify how everything contained within the assorted spheres all work in unison for the betterment of the Akwesasne community.



Tribal Courts Launch Justice Needs Assessment Survey

By Brendan White, Communications Director

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Courts is continuing its efforts to develop a justice system that reflects the needs of the Akwesasne community. To support this effort, the Tribal Courts received a Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation (CTAS) grant to gain feedback from tribal members on their thoughts and experiences with court systems in and around Akwesasne.

The CTAS grant was provided by the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance to support three (3) phases of the justice system's continued development, with an important component being a needs assessment through the engagement of community members. This entails holding listening circles with focus groups and key stakeholders, as well as conducting a Justice Strategy Needs Assessment Survey.

"The CTAS grant provides tribal members with a chance to study and better understand justice as it affects the Akwesasne community," shared Chief Judge Carrie Garrow. Judge Garrow added, "This is an important opportunity for tribal members to have their voice heard and to help shape our community's justice system into the future."

The justice survey poses questions to tribal members in five

(5) areas: (1) Elder Abuse Prevention and Response; (2) Reentry/ Reintegration and Recidivism Prevention; (3) Youth Justice Alternatives; (4) Domestic Violence Protective Orders; and a (5) Tribal Criminal Justice System. Before the Tribal Court would exercise criminal jurisdiction, the proposed plan would be brought before tribal members for approval in a formal referendum.

The survey is currently open for anyone to complete online at

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WZDD9C2>. It is informal and all responses will be kept anonymous. For help accessing the portal, please contact the Tribe's Communications Department at (518) 358-2272.

A printed version of the survey is also available at the Tribal Courts Building located at 882 State Route 37, or by emailing tribal.courts@srmt-nsn.gov. The deadline to complete the justice survey is Monday, Tsiothóhrha/December 19, 2022. Individuals who complete the survey will be eligible for a \$50 Twin Leaf Gift Card and other prize drawings.

The data collected from the Justice Needs Assessment Survey will be used to develop a long-term Justice Strategic Plan to address identified needs, so it is important to share your thoughts and experiences with court systems associated with the Akwesasne community.



Newly constructed Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Court building

November Monthly Meeting Update

Kentenhkó:wa/November 5th 10:00 a.m. at the Tribal Administration Building and via Zoom. To participate virtually, please click the registration link located on the Tribal Members Portal. Chief Beverly Cook will chair, with the following tentative agenda topics:

1. Homeowners Assistance Fund Program

Action Items (from October 2022 Monthly Tribal Meeting):

- a) Request for the Tribe to look into the map that displays the Massena Mile Square and Indian Meadows (Grasse River) that was in the old community building and request for it to be displayed in the lobby of the Tribal Administration Building. **Completed**
- b) Request for handicap access for parking and seating to be included in the planning phase of Generations Park - Phase I Amphitheater Project. **Completed** *There is handicap parking and seating available for the Amphitheater as shown in the amphitheater drawing in the November Tribal Meeting Agenda Package.*
- c) Request for a study regarding the noise of the amphitheater. **In Progress.** *The civil engineer on this project is researching options for a sound barrier wall, to be installed along the property boundary near the Amphitheater. The approved plan for the sound barrier will be shared when available.*
- d) Request to look into sponsorship of amphitheater to offset costs of maintenance during its life use. **In Progress** *The maintenance costs will be added into the annual Tribal General Fund and the Tribal Council and EDO are discussing what a sponsorship program may entail.*
- e) Request for AMCR financials. **In Progress** *The Mohawk Gaming Enterprise Board of Managers has agreed to present financials to membership regularly throughout the year. More details will be shared with the community when available.*
- f) Request for information on when the Ethics Officer term was extended. **In Progress** *The SRMT Ethics Ordinance (TCR 2007-61) contains no employment term length*

for the Ethics Officer position. Ethics Officers, once properly appointed, serve until the individual resigns or is terminated.

November 2022 Tribal Meetings & Events:

- November 5th -- Monthly Tribal Meeting @ 10:00 a.m.
- November 8th -- Tribal Council Monthly Radio Talk Show @ 10:15 a.m.
- November 9th -- Police Commission Meeting @ 3:00 p.m.
- November 11th -- Veterans Day - Offices Closed
- November 16th -- Tribal Council Work Session @ 9:00 a.m.
- November 16th -- Residency Board Open Session @ 4:00 p.m.
- November 24th -- Thanksgiving Day - Office Closed
- November 25th -- American Indian Heritage Day - Offices Closed
- November 30th -- Tribal Council Work Session @ 9:00 a.m.
- November 30th -- Community Consultation Session on Membership @ 5:30 p.m.

Tribal Council Resolutions:

- a) TCR 2022-43 to Approve the Akwesasne Housing Authority (AHA) 2022 Indian Housing Plan and Authorize AHA to Apply for Indian Housing Block Grant Funds
- b) TCR 2022-44 to Establish and Name New Roads for the Tribe's Housing Development
- c) TCR 2022-45 to Support an Application from the Tribe's Home Improvement Division to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Lead Hazards Control and Healthy Homes

Tribal Members Portal Video Recordings:

- October 26th -- Tribal Council Work Session
- October 17th -- Tribal Council Work Session
- October 13th -- Election & Referendum Ordinance Meeting #2
- October 12th -- Home Improvement Program Focus Meeting
- October 1st -- Monthly Tribal Meeting Tribal Courts Justice Needs Assessment Survey -- Deadline: Monday, December 19th





Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Health Services

Download today to stay in touch!



Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe
71 Margaret Terrance Memorial Way
Akwesasne, NY 13655

ECRWSS
PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
MAILED FROM
ZIP CODE 13655
PERMIT NO. 26

POSTAL PATRON

On the Cover: The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's Community & Family Services Division welcomes three (3) new program managers. Pictured from left are Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program Manager Mary LaFrance, Family Support Program Manager Sarah Borgett, and Homeowners Assistance Fund Program Manager Alexandra David.