Features

Marijuana Referendum Certified Vaping Purchase Age Increase Recycling in Akwesasne

Small Business Saturday



Election Board Certifies Referendum

Medical Marijuana Ordinance Adopted, Future Development of Adult Use Marijuana Regulation Will Move Forward

Press Release

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Election Board announced today they have officially certified the voting results of the tribal referendum that was held on Saturday, *Tsiothórhrhal* December 14, 2019. The referendum posed two questions to tribal members on the adoption of the Medical Marijuana Ordinance and the future legalization of Adult Use (Recreational) Marijuana through a similar regulation. Voters approved both measures, with 86% and 76% voting in favor respectively.

In accordance with the 2013 Tribal Election and Referendum Ordinance, tribal voters were provided five (5) business days to submit any appeals regarding the *Tsiothórhrha/*December 14th referendum. The Election Board did not receive any appeals by the close of business on *Tsiothórhrha/*December 20th therefore, the Tribe will now move forward with implementation of the Medical Marijuana Ordinance. The second referendum question for Adult

Use (Recreational) Marijuana did not approve any regulations, as it simply asked if members supported its legalization subject to future regulations.

The development and subsequent adoption of the Medical Marijuana Ordinance follows a 2016 referendum that approved the Tribe exploring the legalization, licensing and regulation of Medical Marijuana. Since that time, numerous community informational sessions and public meetings enabled tribal members to contribute to the ordinance's development, which passed on *Tsiothórhrhal* December 14th by 175 "Yes" versus 29 "No" votes.

For the future legalization of recreational marijuana, 155 "Yes" versus 49 "No" votes approved following a similar process in the drafting of regulations that would control its use, sale, processing and cultivation on the Territory. To assist with the regulation's development, similar opportunities will be provided for membership to give input and feedback in a series of consultation sessions and public meetings. The dates, times and locations for those discussions

will be announced in the future.

Following the adoption of the official referendum results by the Tribal Council through a Tribal Council Resolution, the Medical Marijuana Ordinance requires the establishment of two regulatory bodies to oversee all aspects of its availability within the Territory — the Akwesasne Public Health Authority and the Akwesasne Medical Marijuana Advisory Board.

The three member Public Health

Authority will administer the rules and regulatory requirements of the ordinance, while the five member Advisory Board will provide guidance on scientific and technical matters. Both regulatory bodies will be filled through a community callout and need to be in place prior to medical marijuana being available in the Territory at a tribally licensed dispensary. The qualifications, responsibilities, and other requirements of board members will be shared in the callout.

To view the Ordinance, please visit the Tribe's website at www.srmt-nsn.gov or the Tribal Clerk's Office located in the Ionkwakiohkwaróron Tribal Administration Building at 71 Margaret Terrance Memorial Way 37 in Akwesasne. ◊

Good Words of Welcome





Obserase! Obserase! Greetings and salutations Akwesashró:non,

I am excited for the opportunity to greet you all with the first Words of Welcome in the New Year, and further, the new decade. It is a great privilege to assist community members in all aspects of Tribal Clerk duties, and surrounded by a strong support team.

As one large family, we've welcomed the many changes 2019 has brought us; the Grand Opening of Ionkwakiohkwaró:ron Tribal Administration Building, the inauguration of Tribal Sub-Chief Ken Jock and many milestones in every department of the Tribal organization.

We've also celebrated the many achievements of our wonderful team members, filling our work environments with birthday wishes, congratulations of many kinds and happy retirements. I give another acknowledgment to Mrs. Terry Cree who retired in July of 2019 and thank her for time and dedication to the Tribal Clerk's Office and the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe.

I thank everyone for their patience as the Tribal Clerk's Office is experiencing a change of staff, which may result in longer processing times as our team ensures that every inquiry and/or application receives due diligence.

Looking forward, I embrace every opportunity to continue to support Tribal members and their families in securing a healthy and prosperous Akwesasne for many generations to come. The Tribal Clerk's Office is a resource for members and it is never too late to update your information for our records. As I work to strengthen the enrollment and land files/records, there may be times where additional documents or information is requested.

I encourage everyone to keep their contact information updated, provide any pertinent documents and feel free to ask questions that you may have. Please make us aware of name changes, births/deaths or changes to marriage status or physical and mailing addresses.

Remember, Tribal ID cards expire every five years and can be renewed by mail if you are not within a reasonable driving distance. If you have your Tribal ID, there are an abundant amount of resources available round-the-clock on the Tribal Members Portal. This includes membership applications and renewal forms, surveys and video recordings of Tribal monthly meetings, and so much more.

I have enjoyed working with everyone this past year and look forward to a continued positive relationship in the future. Best wishes,

Summer Bero Tribal Clerk

Program Snapshot:

Tribal Learning Assistance Program (TLAP)

By Tewentahawih'tha' Cole, Intake Coordinator

The Education Division has changed the process of applying for services. They are combined under the new Tribal Learning Assistance Program (P.L. 102-477). The application process is like a one-stop-shop and includes:

- Child Care and Subsidy Services
- Youth Services
- Higher Education Services
- Education, Employment and Training Services

How do I apply?

The application process is generally quite simple. Our

Intake Coordinator can assist you in completing the Tribal Learning Assistance Program application. You can stop in at the office at or call to schedule a quick visit. And depending on your situation, the application can be complete over the phone, by e-mail, or at a home visit.

The mission of the Education Division of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe is to promote, support and respect the culturally-relevant and academic needs of our community members by empowering lifelong learners through quality educational learning opportunities and experiences

The Education Division is now located at the Ionkwakiokwaró:ron Tribal Administration Building, on the first floor. If interested in applying for Child Care and Subsidy Services, make sure the Education Division office is your first stop to apply.

What documentation should I provide?

To avoid delays in processing your application, it is important to provide the following required documents:

- Tribal enrollment card or letter
- Two proofs of residency

If you hand in an application without these two required documents, then your application is pending. From that point

you will have 30 days to submit everything. Keep in mind, each service requires different documents to determine eligibility. The Intake Coordinator will provide you with a check list of additional documents you will need to submit for the service you request.

Also, expectant parents have the option of enrolling into Child

Care Services before baby-to-be is born. Expectant mothers will complete the application in their name and update information once the baby is born. For parents requesting Child Care, Subsidy, or Youth Services, the application is filled out in the child's name.

What are the steps to take after the application is handed in?

Once your application is complete, you will be introduced to your Service Manager. The two of you will complete an assessment to find out your education level and job readiness. You will discuss your career and educational goals, and talk about any needs you and/or

your child(ren) may have. Service Managers help by connecting you with resources to help you succeed in your educational and employment goals.

What is the wait time?

The wait time depends on the service. Some services can start once the application is complete and all the required documents are submitted. If you are applying for Child Care at the Early Learning Center or for Child Care Subsidy, you will be placed on a waiting list.

For more information, contact Tewentahawih'tha' Cole, Education Division Intake Coordinator at (518) 358-9721 ext. 2275 or email, education@srmt-nsn.gov. ◊

Vaping Purchase Age Now 21

Flavored Products Banned

Press Release

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council signed Tribal Council Resolution 2019-58 on *Tsiothóhrha*/December 6, 2019 in response to public health concerns associated with vaping and e-cigarette products and their appeal to youth and young adults. The TCR sets 21-years old as the minimum purchase age for all products associated with vape, e-cigarettes, electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS), or similar devices. The resolution also prohibits the retail sale and distribution of all flavored vaping products. Both became effective *Tsiothohrkó:wa/January* 1, 2020.

"Most tobacco use is established during adolescence and often leads to a host of health problems associated with a lifetime of nicotine addiction," stated Tribal Chief Beverly Cook. Chief Cook

noted, "Because youth are more likely to take risks with their health and safety, they are at a greater risk of using vaping products that are being marketed with them in mind."

In 2016, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released a report that confirmed the use of e-cigarette products is growing rapidly among youth and

young adults. Vaping products, such as JUUL, are available in enticing flavors for youth and come in a small, sleek device that resembles a USB flash drive—making it easy for middle and high school students to conceal.

"E-cigarette flavors like crème brûlée, mango and fruit medley are being produced and marketed specifically for one consumer group—our youth," stated Tribal Chief Michael Conners. Chief Conners added, "With so many adverse health effects and fatalities that are just now being made known from inhaling aerosols containing toxic chemicals, we needed to implement measures

intended to protect the health and safety for a vulnerable segment of our population."

Due to the concerns associated with vaping amongst our youth, the Tribe's Alcohol/Chemical Dependency Prevention Program provided a presentation on the ill-effects of vaping at the *Kenténhal* October 5, 2019 Monthly Tribal Meeting. It was followed by a proposed TCR that was introduced on *Kenténhal* October 30, 2019 at the Tribal Council Work Session that sought to increase the purchase age for vaping devices and ban flavored products.

A 30-day public comment period was provided; which concluded on *Kentenhkó:wa*/November 28, 2019; for tribal members to submit

feedback and input on the proposed resolution. It included three public presentations on the proposed measures—October 30th Work Session, November 2nd Monthly Tribal Meeting and a November 12th Public Meeting. Copies of the proposed TCR were also available from the Compliance Department and the main reception desk at the Ionkwakiohkwaróron Tribal Administration Building.



"TCR 2019-58 supersedes any previous resolutions and sets 21-years of age as the minimum age to purchase vaping, e-cigarette, ENDS or similar products beginning on *Tsiothohrkó:wal* January 1, 2020," noted Tribal Chief Eric Thompson. Chief Thompson added, "On the same time, it prohibits the retail sale and distribution of all flavored vaping products that have a taste or aroma distinguishable from tobacco or menthol."

For more information, please contact Elliott Lazore, Compliance Director at (518) 358-2272. ◊

Akwesasne is Awesome at Recycling!

By Lisa Furnace, Solid Waste Program Manager

Niá:wen/Thank you! The efforts at recycling in the Akwesasne community have been

showing great progress over the past decade. Recycling and reusing are ways to keep solid wastes from reaching our landfills and Community members have done a great job reducing the impact on Mother Earth by recycling. It's a great way to achieve a cleaner, healthier environment.

Unfortunately, recycling costs continue to rise throughout the United States and Canada. We have seen a sharp increase in rates for tires and electronic waste in the past 18 months: the costs to dispose of used tires and electronic waste have risen 150% for tires and 120% for electronic waste. As a result of the dramatic increase, we must adjust costs for disposing of materials.

Saint Regis Mohawk community members enjoy free recycling at the Recycling Depot and in the recycling bins at the Transfer Station. This service is paid for by Transfer Station revenues with contributions from the Tribal General Fund. In 2017, the cost of plastic/glass/mixed papers was \$50 per ton; a year later, in January 2018, the cost went to \$126.50 per ton. That is an increase of 153%. The tipping fee in 2019 for recyclables has grown to \$136.50 per ton which equates to a 173% increase in costs between 2017 and 2019.



HOW TO PROPERLY RECYCLE A CARDBOARD BOX

Remove all packing materials

Like packing peanuts, bubble wrap and air pillows. These packing materials cannot be recycled in a home recycling program, even if a recycling symbol is printed on the material.

Keep it Flat

Keep scissors handy to cut through tape and collapse boxes flat. Flat boxes make transportation and sorting more efficient for recycling. If there is any loose tape, peel it off and dispose of in the trash.

Keep it clean and dry

All cardboard that goes in your household recycling bin should be clean and dry, free of food, liquid and other residues.

Recycling costs took a sharp increase mainly due to improperly recycled items – such as soiled

and contaminated products. China had previously accepted the majority of the United States' recyclables, but China's National Sword policy, enacted in January 2018, banned the import of most plastics as the soiled, non-recyclable items began to create an environmental issue for the Asian country. For more information, visit https://www.wired.com/story/the-worlds-recycling-is-in-chaos-heres-what-has-to-happen/.

Initially, the United States did not have the recycling facilities nor other markets to "sell" our recycled waste to, therefore, increased costs for citizens and businesses. There have also been set-backs in some communities recycling programs. However, as the solid waste community has been forced to handle recyclables differently, this has become a blessing in disguise. New facilities are being constructed within our country and are creating jobs. The recyclable materials that used to be sent to China are now being converted into usable products here in our country and Canada. We are told that within the next few years, new recycling facilities will be coming on line to reduce the burden.

How can you help to relieve the burden? We all need to do our part to protect Mother Earth and keep costs down. Recycling is the right thing to do! However, there is a right way and a wrong way to recycle. Help keep costs down by separating garbage from recyclable materials.

Recyclables need to be clean of debris and dry. Please rinse your cans and bottles. Not all plastics/glass/mixed papers can be recycled. Papers contaminated with food or grease are garbage. Many take-out food containers and pizza boxes fall into this category. Single use plastics such as: styrofoam, prescription bottles, plastic "silverware", motor oil bottles and wires should not go in the recycling bins. Broken glass, ovenware, ceramics and electronics cannot be recycled either. All of these items are garbage.

The recycling depot and Transfer Station bins have helped many families dispose of recyclables at no cost. However, there have been a few incidents with improper dumping. Recently, we have observed business owners using the depot to drop off large amounts of cardboard and liquor bottles. This is causing an increase in costs for the recycling program. If you are a business, please bring your recyclables to the Transfer Station to be weighed and pay the small fee associated with it. As an alternative, if you are located closer to Massena, you can take your recyclables there. There are signs at the depot explaining the rules, please take a moment to read and understand them.

As we approach the New Year, we will be working harder to promote the recycling/reuse efforts and reduce costs for the Tribe.

And now for some good news! Beginning in *Enniskó:wal* March 2020, a single-use plastic ban will go into effect in New York State. This means plastic shopping bags won't be available at most stores. You will need to bring your re-usable shopping bags with you on all shopping trips, not just to Aldi. Eight states have now banned single-use plastic bags. New York was the third state. So be prepared and start stocking up!

If you have questions, you can:

- call the Transfer Station at (518) 358-4632.
- come see us: 179 County Route 43, Fort Covington, NY
- send mail: 71 Margaret Terrance Memorial Way, Akwesasne, NY 13655
- or email <u>lisa.furnace@srmt-nsn.gov</u>.

We welcome your ideas make 2020 another successful year.

Solid Waste Management Code Available for Public Comment

Major updates being proposed are:

- Defined duties of the Compliance Department to investigate credible complaints and undertake enforcement action(s).
- Updated penalties for non-compliance with Code.
- Operational requirements for the SRMT Solid Waste Transfer Station added.

A printed copy of the Code is available at the Environment Division and accessible online through the website at www.srmt-nsn.gov.

The deadline for submitting comments on the proposed Tribal Solid Waste Management Code is Friday, *Enníska*/February 2, 2020 to Lisa Furnace, Solid Waste Program Manager.

Transfer Station Changes Tsiothobrkó:wa/January 1, 2020.

The first and most important change involves the Transfer Station schedule. The operating schedule for the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Transfer Station is Monday through Saturday from 7:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. Starting in January 2020, the Transfer Station will have a five-day schedule. The hours of operation for the general public and commercial haulers is Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from 7:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. The Transfer Station will be closed on Thursdays to conduct: staff training, preventative maintenance on vehicles & equipment, safety and housekeeping audits.

The second change involves the increased recycling cost for tires and electronic waste. We were informed that the price for recycling tires and electronic waste was expected to increase by year end. The cost for disposing of tires will almost double between 2019 and 2020. Electronic waste will increase a significant amount as well. For this reason, the service fees at the Transfer Station will need to be adjusted accordingly. We will continue to accept tires for personal vehicles for \$5.00 each. Larger tires will be charged \$0.40 per pound. The new fee for electronic waste will be \$4.00 per item. ◊

Alexa is an Airhead

By Angela Benedict, Air Quality Program Manager - Environment Division

Alexa can turn on your lights, tell you the weather and play your favorite music. But did you know, she can also tell you what the relative humidity is or if the air in your home is healthy? Sensor technology is one thing that's been up and coming in the new era of technology. Aprilaire, and other companies that specialize in indoor air products, are working with Alexa and other voice-activated bluetooth devices to help you keep track of your indoor air quality. Some will also trigger "non-smart" devices such as humidifiers, de-humidifiers, air purifiers and fans to help maintain healthy indoor air. Considering they are fairly new in the market, they are not overly expensive. They range between \$75 and \$200. Some do only a couple things while the others may monitor up to six pollutants

Indoor air quality instruments can track temperature, relative humidity, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and/or volatile organic compounds like odors from paints, varnishes, cosmetics and cleaning products. You must really investigate what you want to monitor and what you want to do. Are you concerned about someone with asthma, allergies, heart/lung disease or have young children or babies? Do you want Alexa to turn on your devices or

do you want her to just record the information or let you know when to turn something on?

Alexa can even 'talk' to your smart home thermostat giving you complete control over your heating and cooling without lifting a finger. Aprilaire has a thermostat that connects to your smart phone to give you a three-day weather forecast to help you track mold and pollen counts, control fresh air throughout your home and control humidity. I am not completely sure on how this works but it does sound cool.

All this new technology makes me think re are starting to get closer to a Jetson's house. I hope so because I need a Rosie robot asap! We used Alexa as an example just because it was fun calling her an airhead. Many other voice activated

bluetooth devices are around to help with your indoor air quality.

If you would like help on picking out an indoor air quality monitor that suits your needs, we are here to help. Contact us by calling (518) 358-5937 or email <u>airqualityprogram@srmt-nsn.gov</u>.

So, for now and the next seven generations, let's make sure that our future has the best indoor air.

Bringing It All Back Home

Remember when we used to get together and have a Pampered Chef or Princess House party? People went over to each other's homes and talked face to face. I remember them and I kind of miss it. Getting together, talking and laughing; the kids running around and playing...good times. Now people have watch parties where you can stay in your pajamas in the privacy of your own home and buy, buy, buy. So, I have this new idea of bringing it all back home. Contact the Air Quality Program (AQP), set a date and time, invite some of your friends and family over and have a party. I know what you're thinking. Why would we call the AQP

to have a party? Because YOU can have an indoor air quality party. Most people I know have questions about their indoor air quality...I smell something; OMG I have mold; my kid spilled a gallon of milk on the carpet, what should I do? Well, you've got questions, we've got answers (hopefully.) If we don't, we have the means to get the answers. And the great part of it is, it doesn't all have to be about indoor air. The AQP is versatile. Not only do we bring information but we bring gifts for the host and the participants too! So for now and the future generations get on that phone, call us at (518) 358-5937, call your family call your friends and lets stoodis. \Diamond

Tribal Water Quality Act Amended

PCB Testing Added

By Denita Ireland, Communications

In Seskehkó:wa/September 2019, the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Clerk provided notification to membership that the Environment Division's Water Resources Program had recommended amendments to the Tribal Water Quality Standards. These changes

included a proposed reclassification of the St. Regis River from Class B to Class C based on observed conditions. The Tribal Clerk made it known the changes would maintain the same level of protection for tribal uses. There were also proposed improvements in how substance standards for selenium, cadmium and aluminum are calculated.

The purpose of these water quality standards is to facilitate sovereign self-determination and the restoration and preservation of traditional hunting, fishing, gathering and cultural uses in, on and around Tribal Surface Waters. The Environment Division is committed to providing cleaner, safer water for all of creation. The water quality standards will, in turn, promote the general welfare and well-being of the community by allowing the Tribe and its members to utilize the water for traditional, cultural and ceremonial purposes.

The Water Quality Standards are required to undergo a review every three years to make corrections and updates based on the latest scientific information. Tribal Council presented the proposed amendments to tribal members during a 30-day comment period that ended *Kenténha*/October 18, 2019. Following the comment period, Tribal Council took action to enact the amendments through a Tribal Council Resolution (TCR).

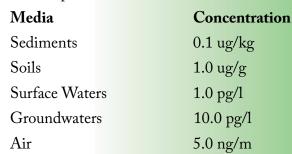
The Tribal Water Quality Standard Act has been amended to include PCB testing as follows:

Toxic substances shall not be present in receiving waters in quantities that are toxic to humans or aquatic life, or in quantities that interfere with normal propagation, growth, and survival of sensitive indigenous aquatic life. For toxic substances lacking published

> criteria, bioassay data for sensitive indigenous test species/lifestages may be used to determine compliance with these narrative criteria

> SRMT Applicable or Relevant and Appropriate Requirements (ARARs) for Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs):

SRMT has an ARAR specific to a class of pollutants called Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) (TCR NO. 89-19). The ARARs are applicable to ambient conditions and cleanup standards as follows:



Tribal surface waters shall be free from substances, whether attributable to point sources discharges, nonpoint sources, or instream activities, in concentrations or combinations which would impair the structure or limit the function of the resident aquatic community as it naturally occurs.

For more information, contact Shawn Martin, Water/Wastewater Program Manager at (518) 358-4205. ◊



Hail to the Chiefs

Three Decades of Tribal Leadership Attend Historic Gathering

By Darren Bonaparte, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer

It is not every day you get to see history unfold before your eyes, but that is what happened on the evening of *Kentenhkó:wal* November 25, 2019, when past and present chiefs of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council came together for the first time. It all took place at Maple Steak & Ale of the Akwesasne Mohawk Casino Resort where an excellent meal was prepared for Council, a few lucky staff, and the guests of honor.

As the former chiefs arrived, they were individually photographed by the staff of Akwesasne TV. A group photo was taken of past and present chiefs once they had all arrived. They then settled down to hear the opening comments by former Chief Harold Tarbell, the facilitator for the event. He explained that the gathering was to allow the current leadership to learn from and appreciate the struggles and accomplishments of their predecessors. It was a time not only to celebrate the growth and success of the last three decades, but to take stock of the work that remains. Mr. Tarbell asked the former chiefs to be very candid about their time in office when the microphone came to them.

First on the guest list Formerwas Chief Rosemary Bonaparte, who holds the distinction of being the first female chief ever elected to Tribal Council. She explained that she used to take minutes for the chiefs as a part-time job and remembers being admonished by them when she tried to offer an opinion at their meetings. She eventually ran and won a seat on Council in the mid-1980s. She recalled that a vote was held to reinstate many people who had been removed from the tribal rolls over the years but the two other chiefs would not sign it into law. She also participated in a march on illegal speakeasies that operated on the Reservation in the days when there was no tribal police force. She was also part of the 1988 border protest that sparked MCA Grand Chief Mike Mitchell's federal border crossing court case. She mentioned being joined on Council by Brenda Lafrance and Harold Tarbell, two very capable and talented individuals.

L. David Jacobs' time as chief came after Former-Chief Bonaparte. It was a very contentious time in the community over casino gambling. He spoke of being new on the job and being a little unsure of what was involved. From the outside, of course, it looked to everyone else like he had taken over the place, but he admitted to having had those new Chief jitters.



Former-Chief Paul Thompson spoke Kanienkeha, and translated his words into English. He commented about different how things were those days, when the Tribal Council had little money to operate on and was in danger of shutting down

essential services. He and his fellow Chiefs gathered the business community together and proposed to them that they should pay a dollar back to the Tribe for each carton of cigarettes they sold on the Reservation. They eventually agreed to it and Tribal Council was able to expand services and keep existing staff working.

Former-Chief Hilda Smoke shared the efforts it took to develop and open the Akwesasne Mohawk Casino, while Alma Ransom saw her term as an opportunity to help expand and strengthen relationships with tribal Nations across the country.

Former-Chief Alma Ransom talked about the effort to create the Tribe's own casino enterprise, and how the goal was to get

our own people working. She mentioned how important it was to resist the desire by some to issue per capita payments to community members. This had been tried by other communities with gaming operations and has resulted in an increase in social problems like drug abuse. Since her time on Council, she has continued to stay active and is always advocating for community members who work for Council and its gaming enterprises. In his own comments later on, Chief Michael Conners acknowledged that whenever he travels to big meetings across the country, he is always asked about Alma Ransom. She has had a big impact on those she encountered in Indian Country and they still talk about her to this day. This got a big round of applause from everyone present.



In attendance were Alma Ransom, Monica Jacobs, Harold Tarbell,
Rosemary Bonaparte, James Ransom, Paul Thompson,
Barbara Lazore, John Loran, Beverly Cook, Ken Jock,
Benjamin Herne, Hilda Smoke, Michael Conners,
L. David Jacobs, Norman Tarbell, Agnes "Sweets" Jacobs,
Margaret Terrance, Eric Thompson, Brenda Lafrance,
Phil Tarbell, Randy Hart and Lorraine White, Unable to attend,
but invited were Alan Terrance, Mark Garrow, Larry Pyke and
Ron Lafrance.

Former-Chief Norman Tarbell also spoke about his time in office and the great pride he took in the work he did. He took pride in signing the construction contracts to build the casino.

Former-Chiefs Barbara Lazore and Lorraine White spoke about how hot things got between them during their time on Council when they could not even speak to each other. They noted that it's alright for council members to occasionally disagree, as a divergence in opinion often brings to light alternate perspectives for the betterment of the community.

Former Chief James Ransom recalled a unified effort amongst the Mohawk councils in reaching the 2005 land claim settlement and to take similar approaches in facing today's challenges in a similar manner.

Good words were also shared by Former-Chiefs Monica Jacobs,

Phillip Tarbell, Randy Hart, John Loran and Brenda LaFrance.

After all of the Chiefs had the opportunity to speak, the current Council members got their chance. They thanked everyone for their comments, which were not only inspiring and deeply moving, but at times hilarious. When each of them had had the chance to speak, gift bags were handed out to each of the Former Chiefs as a gesture of appreciation.

There was no question that every former member of Council greatly loved their community, regardless of the differences in political views they may have had in the past, and that they were still committed to seeing good governance at Akwesasne. There was a great sense of comradery and wisdom in this gathering, which everyone

present could not help but feel. For some of the younger staff, it was a great history lesson and a chance to learn from the "pillars" of our past. It was a great walk down memory lane and a chance to see things from another perspective. \Diamond

Extreme Weather

Winter Preparedness

Katrina Jacobs, Emergency Planning

Be Prepared - What supplies do you need?

- Water: at least a three-day supply; one gallon per person per day
- Food: at least a three-day supply of nonperishable, easy-to-prepare food
- Flashlights, battery-powered or hand crank radio, extra batteries, cell phone with chargers
- First aid kit
- A seven-day supply of medications and medical items: hearing aids with extra batteries, glasses, contact lenses, syringes, cane
- Personal hygiene items and sanitation
- Copies of personal documents (medication list and pertinent medical information, proof of address, deed/lease to home, passports, birth certificates, insurance policies)
- Extra cash
- Baby supplies: bottles, formula, baby food, diapers
- Pet supplies: collar, leash, ID, food, carrier, bowl
- Tools /supplies for securing your home
- Sand, rock salt or non-clumping kitty litter to make walkways and steps less slippery
- Warm coats, gloves or mittens, hats, boots and extra blankets and warm clothing for all household members
- Ample alternate heating methods such as fireplaces or wood- or coal-burning stoves

On the road

If traveling is necessary, before hitting the road, check your vehicle:

- · Remember to keep your gas tank full to avoid freezing water in fuel line
- Check tires and spare tires for proper inflation
- · Check vehicle fluids; oil, antifreeze, windshield washing fluid, etc

Other supplies

• Jumping cables, ice scraper, small shovel, extra blankets, water, flashlight, batteries, sand or non-clumping cat liter, reflective warning signs; in case you get stranded

Keep updated during an emergency

Getting information during an emergency situation is vital, especially at the height of the event when evacuation may be required ... tune your radios to CKON 97.3 FM.



Winter is here; time for skiing, sledding, kids making snow angels and snowmen, and sharing in the holiday season. But before we explore and enjoy our winter wonderland of new fallen snow, we must take precautions and prepare to keep ourselves and our families safe and warm during theses winter months.

In the past, winter storms brought extreme cold temperatures, freezing rain, snow, high winds, widespread power outages, and a combination of all of these. Many community members were left unprepared which would serve as a reminder that home preparedness is a must and should include all family members including your pets.

This quick guide is designed to help you jump start your preparedness efforts at home.

Remember safety first, not only for you but for our local first responders.

Best wishes for the New Year! Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Emergency Planning Office

Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Increases Tribal Minimum Wage to \$12.18

Minimum Wage Increase Becomes Effective Tsiothohrkó:wa/January 1, 2020

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is pleased to announce that it has increased the tribal minimum wage for all tribal government employees. The new tribal minimum wage of \$12.18 went into effect on *Tsiothohrkó:wal* January 1, 2020 and will immediately benefit 148 employees of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's government operations.

The new tribal minimum wage represents an increase of \$.36 per hour

over the past year and a \$1.15 compared to three year ago when it was increased to \$11.03 on *Tsiothohrkó:wa/J*anuary 1, 2016. The latest increase will apply to all tribal government employees. Tribal LLCs continue to set their own pay rates based on the needs and capability of each business.

Discussions on increasing the tribal minimum wage takes place each year between members of the Tribal Council, the Executive Director's Office and the Chief Financial Officer. Talks focus on balancing the living needs of all tribal employees, the services provided to the Akwesasne community, and the need for the tribal organization to remain competitive in Northern

New York State as the employer of choice.

The new tribal minimum wage of \$12.18 assures that all employees of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe will continue to receive compensation greater than the New York State Minimum Wage. The increased wage will serve as the base rate for the SRMT Wage Scale that compensates all incoming and current tribal government employees according to job code and classification.

No tribal government employee of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe may receive compensation less than the new tribal minimum wage; with the exception of trainees and student interns who are specifically designated to receive a rate below the federal minimum wage due to program requirements. \Diamond



Tribal Council Resolutions (TCRs) Kenténha/October 10 to Tsiothóhrha/December 10

TCRs are the recorded decisions of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council on matters requiring a formal expression of such decisions. Some examples include, but are not limited to, adoption and amendment of tribal ordinances or laws that do not require referendum vote, approval of grant applications, appointment of Administrators of estates and conduct of day-to-day tribal business operations requiring a written record of Tribal Council approval. (Source: Tribal Procedures Act, adopted by referendum Ohiari:ha/June 1, 2013.)

TCR 2019-51 Support Partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension 4-H Office for a Tribal Youth Mentoring Program

TCR 2019-52 Authorization to seek funds for the Akwesasne Art Park/Art Gallery

TCR 2019-53 Appoint Tribal Residency Board Members

TCR 2019-54 Appoint Akwesasne Housing Authority (AHA) Board of Commissioners Chairperson

TCR 2019-55 Appoint Election Board Members

TCR 2019-56 Appoint Election Board Member

TCR 2019-57 Appoint Tribal Residency Alternate Board Members

TCR 2019-58 To set minimum age to purchase all products associated with vape, e-cigarettes, electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS), or similar devices and prohibit the retail sale and distribution of all flavored ENDS \Diamond

Make Akwesasne Count

Census 2020

By Brendan White, Communications Director

In 2010, only 45.8% of households in 13655 mailed back their census questionnaire, requiring more costly and difficult in-person follow up to count the remaining 54.2%. According to the Census Bureau, this tract is one of the hardest to count in the country.

Based on the latest census estimates (for 2013-2017), 3,292

people live in 1,180 households and group quarters in 13655. As of *Tsiothohrkó:wa/*December 2019, the SRMT Tribal Clerk's Office reports 6,837 tribal members note this tract as their home residence.

Tribal members need to be counted to secure federal dollars. About \$600 billion in federal funding is distributed annually based on population counts obtained by federal agencies.

- Each person counted equals \$3,000 in funding for our community. A 2000 study determined that undercounting in the 2000 Census cost tribal communities nearly \$3,000 per person.
- Dollars that impact Tribal communities are lost if you are not counted. In 2016, federal funding disbursed based on people counted in Census surveys included \$361 billion for Medicaid, \$40 billion for roads, and about \$37 billion in programs for families and children including TANF, CHIP, and WIC.

Tribal members need to be counted to protect tribal sovereignty.

The Census count is used to determine voting boundaries in non-Tribal elections. You need to be counted to have an equal voice to elect candidates who will respect Tribal sovereignty, preserve your culture, and fairly allocate resources to Indian Country.

Tribal members need to be counted to preserve our languages.

Census data is used to require non-Tribal governments in many areas to provide assistance in American Indian and Alaska Native languages for voting, social programs, and emergency services.

What can you do? There are many ways you can make a difference in helping Tribal Members count in 2020.

• Join the Tribal Complete Count Committee. The Tribal Complete Count Committee helps, educate, and ensure Tribal Members count in our community. Contact Tribal

Sub-Chief Agnes 'Sweets' Jacobs at (518) 358-2272 if you have any questions or would like to participate.

• Go to the Natives Count website. Visit http://census.narf.org/ for the latest information on the Census, tool kits, and other information to help Tribal Members count! ◊



Small Business Saturday

5th Year Most Successful Ever

By Mary Lafrance, Program Support Officer

Small business Saturday is a nationally recognized day to celebrate the many small businesses that make our communities unique. In Akwesasne, we have over 300 small businesses - each offering distinct products or services. This was our 5th year participating in Small Business Saturday and it featured

dozens of small businesses, three vendor popup events and one big giveaway.

The Akwesasne Chamber of Commerce, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne Economic Development and Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Office of Economic Development collaborated on a shopping passport for Small Business Saturday. The shopping passport included 13 small businesses and three vendor pop-up events as stops along a shopping trail. Holiday shoppers were encouraged to stop in at each location to collect a unique stamp. A completed passport included 12 stamps and entered shoppers into a drawing for one of six \$50 gift cards and a chance at a \$500 Akwesasne Mohawk Casino Resort certificate.

"Everything was very convenient and everyone was very friendly," said Victoria Roman of her Small Business Saturday experience shopping with friends. "We didn't know all this was here! There are so many different places in Akwesasne that I think next year could be expanded."

Small business owners who participated in Small Business Saturday reported it was a busier day than normal with more shoppers than anticipated. Other small businesses said they sold out of their inventory and were happy with the turn out for the event. The economic impact of Small Business Saturday was between \$8,000 and \$12,000, which is significant, because out of every \$1 spent locally, approximately \$0.69 stays within the community

and supports local charities, community development and employment.

"I have never had so many people show up to my store," stated Lindsey Roundpoint, owner of Tree Top Boutique, a children's clothing and accessories shop. "Many people showed up and said they never even knew that our store existed!"

In addition to the individual storefronts, there were multiple pop-up vendor stops, including Kateri Hall annual craft sale, Twinleaf Gas and Convenience and Akwesasne Art Market. SRMT Cultural Tourism coordinated the Akwesasne Art Market, which featured over 21 artisan vendors and brought in over 300 shoppers.

Thank you to the community of Akwesasne, and to our many small businesses and artists that participated in making this year's Small Business Saturday a huge success. Thank you also goes out to our supporters: Akwesasne Convenience Store Association,

Speedway Convenience, Tarbell Management Group, CAA Management, and the Akwesasne Mohawk Casino Resort. For a comprehensive list of Akwesasne small businesses, you can visit www.AkwesasneBusinessDirectory.com. \(\rightarrow \)



By collecting their 12 stamps, Ashley Tarbell-Johnson and her daughter, Willow, were lucky winners of one of the \$50 gift cards.



Business Planning Program

Want to start your own business?

Are you curious about small business?

Are you ready to apply for funding?



Akwesasne Career & Employment Support Services (ACESS) in partnership with Sierra Consulting is hosting an eightweek entrepreneurship program to assist aspiring and existing business owners learn the skill of business planning.

Let's learn together about:

- Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship
- Business Plan Preparation
- Practical Small Business Management
- Designing a Start Up / Expansion Budget
- Key Funding Sources Available to You
- Your Idea's Industry Outlook and Market Potential
- Marketing and Operations
- Preparing and Understanding Financial Projections to determine the overall feasibility of your idea

The 16-session program will be held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at Iohahi:io Akwesasne Education & Training Institute starting January 21, 2020

To register or for more information, contact Carmen Cook, Programs & Services Officer at ACESS. Call (613) 575-2626 or email cook@acessjobs.ca. If you are not eligible for services through ACESS, please contact Mary LaFrance at SRMT Economic Development by calling (518) 358-2835 or email mlafrance@srmt-nsn.gov. ◊

Did you notice?



You may have noticed a new sign placed across from Truck Stop #9 announcing a future housing development. The need for family housing was central to the Tribe's decision to reacquire the treaty land. In the coming months, more information will be shared on how individuals can apply and other community projects that are envisioned for the collective benefit of all *Akwesashró:non*. It's just the lastest example of how we are all "Working Together Today to Build a Better Tomorrow." \Diamond

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Connect with us...







Brendan White, Director/Editor Aimée Benedict, Publications Manager Alyson Thompson, Communications Officer Denita Ireland, Communications Specialist

Kentenhkó:wa | November 2, 2019 Chairperson: Chief Michael Conners

- 1. Review of previous action items:
 - a. Request to look into starting a carpentry/electrical class held out of the IGA building that would assist with renovations. Complete. There are a number of trades programs offered by Iohahi:io, BOCES, and St. Lawrence College. The Education Division Director and Tribal Council determined it is not feasible to start a carpentry/electrical class or hold it out of the IGA.
 - b. Motion was made by Andria Cooke, that "we return to the original 62 years of age for seniors to the money allotted to seniors;" it was seconded by Ruth Bell. In favor 13, Against 6, Abstentions 11. Complete. Tribal Council reviewed the motion and an associated fiscal analysis showing the increased deficit that would occur if such a change is implemented. The data is clear that sufficient and sustainable revenue does not currently exist to support the current age threshold of 68. A change to age 62 would increase the deficit of the benefit program to a level that would threaten existing Tribal programs and services. For this reason, no changes to the pilot-program will be made at this time.
- 2. 10:05 am | New Business
- 3. 10:50 am | Introduction of new CFO, Henry Roy
- 4. 11:00 am | Introduction of Residency Board Members
- 5. 11:05 am | Compliance Update by Brandon Smoke
 - a. Heating Assistance Program and LIHEAP Application Dates
 - b. Proposed Resolution to set minimum age to purchase all products associated with vape, e-cigarettes, electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) or similar devices and prohibit the retail sale and distribution of all flavored ENDS
- 6. 11:25 am | Agriculture Program Update by Wally Ransom
- 7. 11:50 am | Presentation on Tribal Council Priorities by Harold Tarbell and James Ransom, Tarbell Facilitation Network

- 8. 12:20 pm | Announcements:
 - a. Medical Marijuana Ordinance and Adult Use Regulation Public Meetings November 13th at 5:00 pm at Ionkwakiohkwaro:ron for the Tribal Referendum on Saturday, December 14th.
 - b. Healing with Humor, Free Comedy Event with James Junes on November 15th at AMCR Winter Ballroom, show times at 6:30 pm and 8:30 pm.
 - c. Small Business Saturday is a national day to celebrate the small businesses that make our communities unique. On Saturday, November 30, small businesses everywhere will be hosting shopping events that include customer appreciation, discounts, and giveaways. See enclosed flyer for more information.
 - d. Alcohol/Chemical Dependency Prevention Program Akwesasne Recovery Center Soft Opening on November 4th, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, at 347 State Route 37 (AHA Administration Building Lower Level)
 - e. 2020 Draft Tribal Budget will be released on Monday, November 11th and community presentation on November 14th at 5:00 pm

Turning a new page – It has been a pleasure sharing good words with you for the past 12 years. While this has been one of the most satisfying and rewarding jobs I've ever had, I feel that it's time for me to explore new challenges and diversify my experience. I am moving on to a new position within the Tribe and will no longer be part of the team to publish the Kawennì:ios Newsletter. I will enjoy receiving and reading the newsletter along with you for years to come.

Aimée Benedict Publications Manager/Webmaster

Tsiothóhrha | December 7, 2019 Chairperson: Chief Beverly Cook

1. Review of previous action items:

- a. Request for report from Education Division regarding the high [employee] turnover rate at the Early Learning Center. Completed. In the last two years, at the Early Learning Center (ELC) two employees accepted positions elsewhere, one employee went back to school, and two employees moved to other positions within ELC. There was also a retirement and other personnel status changes. Council and Administration consider the ELC to have a normal employee turnover rate.
- b. Follow-up on discussions about concerns of the location of the Akwesasne Recovery Center. **Completed.** Prior to opening, the Akwesasne Recovery Center addressed any concerns with the Akwesasne Housing Authority and the AHA Board of Commissioners addressed it with residents.
- c. Request to develop a fee structure on vaping products.

 Completed. At this time, the logistics of the vape industry and the availability of internet purchases would not make the introduction of a fee structure feasible. However as federal regulations and guidelines are implemented on vape or ENDS products, there may be opportunity for the Tribe to implement a structure and fee that would be feasible and fair to retailers. Compliance monitors updates on federal regulation and policies and should they change, Compliance would make the recommendations to apply a fee for Tribal retailers.
- d. Request for Compliance training on vaping products. **Completed.** Compliance is always looking and following the latest updates on many products including vapes and electronic nicotine devices (ENDs). Compliance attended the local presentations and are currently in contact with other organizations that provide educational training on the effects of the use of these products. Compliance utilizes the SRMT Alcohol/Chemical Dependency Program (ACDP),

which is well educated on this. Compliance will continue to research more available training in the future.

- 2. 10:05 am | New Business
- 3. 10:50 am | Abandoned Homes Project Presentation by Julia Jacobs, Brownfields Redevelopment Specialist
- 4. 11:10 am | Update on North Country Community College Courses by Stephanie Cook
- 5. 11:50 am | Compliance Update By Elliott Lazore
 - a. Heating Assistance Program
 - b. TCR to set minimum age to purchase all products associated with vape, ecigarettes, electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) or similar devices and prohibit the retail sale and distribution of all flavored ENDS
- 6. 12:20 pm | Announcements:
 - a. Tribal Referendum on Medical Marijuana Ordinance and Adult Use (Recreational) Marijuana Regulation on Saturday, December 14th 9:00 am-5:00 pm. Early voting is scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday, December 10-11th from 6:00-9:00 pm at Ionkwakiohkwaro:ron Tribal Administration Building.
 - b. Tentative: Informational Session on a potential revenue generating opportunity. More information will be announced in the near future.

Calendar

Tsiothohrkó:wa/January 2020

- 1 New Year's Day Tribe Closed
- 11 Tribal Monthly Meeting 10:00 a.m. Meeting Room #124
- 14 Social Security 11:45 to 2:45 p.m. Tribal Clerk's Office
- 20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Tribe Closed

Enníska/February 2020

- 8 Tribal Monthly Meeting 10:00 a.m. Meeting Room #124
- 11 Social Security 11:45 to 2:45 p.m. Tribal Clerk's Office
- 17 President's Day Tribe Closed

Health Services, Nutrition

Wednesdays - Tribal Council Work Session - 9:00 a.m. - #307

Jessica C Ayotte Program Manager

Tabitha J Baker Teacher Aide Education, Early Learning Center

Francis R Cole Custodian Facilities, Maintenance

Coral E Cook Teacher Aide Education, Early Learning Center

Kameron O LaFrance Night Security Community & Family Services, Three Sisters Program

Payton SM Logan Substitute Education, Early Learning Center

Ryan J McDonald Custodian Facilities, Maintenance

Darryl S Mitchell Language Specialist Environment, Akwesasne Cultural Restoration

Tiara M Oakes Receptionist Health Services, Medical Clinic

Coree T Phillips Teacher Aide - Floater Education, Early Learning Center

Rikki MK Square Safe Haven Visitation Monitor Community & Family Services, Three Sisters Program

Retirees

Estate of Mary Pecore - Early Learning Center

Robert Phillips - Maintenance

Bryan J Garrow - Early Learning Center

Donations

Funerals - \$ 4,000

Sports - \$ 4,500

All current positions with the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe are

All current positions with the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe are posted on the Tribe's website at **www.srmt-nsn.gov**.

Positions with our gaming operations are posted on the Akwesasne Mohawk Casino Resort's website at www.mohawkcasino.com.

Akwesasne and surrounding area employment opportunities are posted at the Akwesasne Employment Resource Center (AERC) at www.myaerc.org.



AKWESASNE The MOHAWK SPIRIT

CALL FOR ARTISTS

Akwesasne Tourism is seeking original artwork (all mediums) to create the design for a public sculpture. The artwork can illustrate the many concepts and elements that speak to our strong, proud, vibrant and resilient Mohawk spirit.

Appointments are being accepted to photograph artwork on January 15th and 22nd from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

The Cultural Tourism Office is located on the second floor in Suite 202 of the Akwesasne Business Center, Frogtown Road.

For more information, please call (518) 358-4238 or email <u>tourism@srmt-nsn.gov</u>.



Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe
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POSTAL PATRON

On the Cover: Tribal Leadership of the past met with current SRMT Tribal Council for an evening of conversation. Past and present leaders had the opportunity to speak on their unique perspective; discussing the importance of strong governance and sharing memorable moments in Tribal history.