

## Features

*Akwesasne Cultural  
Restoration Program  
Hosts Community Event*

*Community Television  
Station Launched  
in Akwesasne*

*Community & Family  
Services Receives \$3M  
Grand Awards*

*Environment Division  
Conducts Indoor Air  
Quality Study*

# Kawennì:ios



“We Give Greetings to All”

# Akwesasne Business Feature:

## The Grand Mohawk Inn

*By Mary Lafrance, Economic Development Program Support Officer*

On the banks of the Raquette River sits an elegant residence that has recently opened its doors to the public as a new bed and breakfast. Built eight years ago, the home spares no expense when it comes to luxury. Several expansive bedrooms feature exquisite views of the river, a sweeping patio and an underground pool. Other features of the home include a sauna, theatre room, full-sized basketball court, fitness center and beauty parlor.

“We had this big house and thought it might be a good idea to open it up as a bed and breakfast,” said co-owner, Tisha Thompson. Thompson, along with her mother Rosalie Jacobs and family friend Lindsay Mitchell, opened The Grand Mohawk Inn on July 1, 2015 and were immediately inundated with wedding requests.

“The original idea was a bed and breakfast, but when I received so many wedding requests the focus changed to weddings and events,” noted Thompson, who prepared for seven weddings this summer alone.

“It’s amazing!” said Jennifer Thompson, a recent guest at The Grand Mohawk Inn who came with her fiancée and two young children

for business reasons. “I came in and didn’t have this expectation for the room – very nice and the bed is very comfortable.” She added that her children enjoyed the pool and appreciated having access to the kitchen to make meals for her little picky eaters.



*The Grand Mohawk Inn on the banks of the Raquette River*



The Grand Mohawk Inn is still undergoing renovations and improvements, but once complete, it will feature seven lavish guest rooms: a Master suite with a bonus room, a safari-themed room and guest rooms named after her nieces and nephews: Alan, Alisha, Bryce, Braylin, Ella and Jemma.

Guests can reserve single rooms for personal stays or the entire house for events, as well as rent kayaks. On Sundays, The Grand Mohawk Inn serves up a full-course homemade brunch from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. that is open to the public and prepared by Chef Vanna White.

The Grand Mohawk Inn is located at 18 Laughing Road, Akwesasne, NY. For reservations call (518) 521-4170 or visit [www.GrandMohawk.com](http://www.GrandMohawk.com). Also, look them up on Facebook and [www.AkwesasneBusinessDirectory.com](http://www.AkwesasneBusinessDirectory.com). ♦

# Good Words of Welcome



*Shé:kon Akwesasne,*

To every single one of our community members who voted in June, I express my gratitude. It is an honor to have been chosen by the people of Akwesasne to serve as Tribal Chief. It is a privilege that I take very seriously. During my inauguration speech, I spoke of the teachers I have had in my life and for showing me how to approach issues and work toward solutions. I am fortunate to have had great instructors who have taken time to share their knowledge, experience and provide mentorship. My teachers, my mentors, have demonstrated to me the value of perseverance, patience and reason. In recognition of not only my teachers, but all teachers who contribute to shaping the minds of our youth by allowing exploration and providing learning both inside and outside of the classroom, *niawen:kowa*. You may never know the extent of how deeply your efforts influence our children.

Environmental concerns in our community remain a serious priority with Council. The former GM/RACER site remediation is an ongoing struggle. Between our Environment Division Team and Council, we continue to fight for stricter standards in air, land and water quality monitoring. Each time Council travels to Washington, D.C., we remind every single legislator we meet with how the former GM site and RACER remediation impact the environmental health of Akwesasne.

It is imperative we continue raising awareness of the environmental health issues that we face. Our community is plagued with disproportionately high rates of diabetes, thyroid disorders, asthma, arthritic, autoimmune disease, heart disease and cancers. Our efforts will always have the health of our community as a priority. Heading

into cold and flu season, it's important to recognize the caregivers in Akwesasne. We appreciate you.

On behalf of Council, we are inspired by the healthy living initiatives we see in Akwesasne. Watching kids play at Generations Park and exercise on the walking trail are ways we can work together to focus on prevention and wellness. To our coaches and volunteers who dedicate countless hours to our kids, *niawen:kówa*.

Council has recently engaged with the Army Corps of Engineers to conduct studies of our southern shorelines that have experienced significant erosion. They've given us several possible methods that will address the shoreline. We are in review of these and intend to adopt and address the problem of shoreline erosion in a manner that sustains our land.

Broadband has been a game changer for our community. The Tewathahonni Board created an LLC, Mohawk Networks, to provide services off territory. In doing so, the Tribe has started the foundation for creating a new revenue source and diversification of our economy, an investment in our future. We intend to expand our services off territory and provide our entire region with access to high speed internet, technology advancement and continue to build jobs; simultaneously, Akwesasne TV officially launched and our community has its own television station focused on community events, culture and entertainment. *Niawen:kówa* to our teams that bring our community together. We are building a better tomorrow. *Niá:wen, Tribal Chief Eric Thompson* ◇

[www.srmt-nsn.gov](http://www.srmt-nsn.gov)

Brendan White, Director/Editor  
Aimée Benedict, Publications Manager  
Alyson Thompson, Production Assistant

# The Áse Tsi Tewá:ton Experience

## *Community Gathering Showcases Cultural Knowledge*

*By Amberdawn LaFrance, ACR Program Office Manager*

The Akwesasne Cultural Restoration Program, or Á:se Tsi Tewá:ton, which translates to mean 'To make new again,' held their second event on Kenténha/ October 4-5, 2015 at the Akwesasne Freedom School garden site. The annual community gathering is where Program Masters and their Apprentices showcase and share the cultural knowledge they acquired throughout the year in the areas of horticulture and traditional foods, fishing and river use, traditional medicines and healing, and hunting and trapping.

The kickoff started on Saturday with the Ohénton Kariwahtékwén, or The Words That Come Before All Else, followed by a welcoming by ACR Program Manager, Katénies Barbara Tarbell and guest speaker Dr. Taiaiake Alfred, consultant and professor at University of Victoria who assisted with the design of the program.

Over the two days, visitors experienced cultural teachings in each of the program areas. There were demonstrations on hunting, trapping; and a workshop on how



*Children learning about different fish species.*



*Karihwénhawe and Kakiokkwaronkwás teaching Kanien'keha to community members.*

to clean, skin, and flesh a beaver and deer. Outside the building, a beaver pond and habitat was built to view and explore. Inside, there were many different traps available for display as well as furs, hand-made leather products, hide processing materials, and diagrams of various animal body parts.

Demonstrations in medicines and healing included how to make plantain salve, skunk oil, and various types of traditional teas. Visitors were able to taste teas and sample different salves for healing remedies.

Fishing and river use demonstrations included fish cleaning, net tying, cooking and smoking fish in a homemade wooden smoker. Visitors tried smoked sturgeon and catfish, and viewed a collection of live local fish and crayfish. A handmade wooden boat was also on display.

In horticulture and traditional foods, visitors were shown how to make fresh apple cider, apple sauce, juice, apple cider vinegar, dried apples, and canned apples. They also got to try their hand at making cornbread using white corn flour and kidney beans.



*Left: Apprentices and community members discussing how to tie nets by hand.*

*Right: Horticultural Group*

*Center: Medicines Group*



The second day included a two-hour long Mohawk language class presented by the Program's Language Specialists Karihwénhawe Lazore and Kakiohkwaronkwas 'Akat' Smoke. The day also treated visitors to a medicine walk around the property where Program Masters and Apprentices showed them how to properly give thanks, identify and harvest medicinal plants.

*Niarwenkó:wa* to everyone that was able to attend the gathering.

Note: The Á:se Tsi Tewá:ton Program was established from funds recovered from the Natural Resource Damage Assessment settlement associated with injuries to natural resources and cultural uses, from industrial contamination in Akwesasne lands and waters. The Áse Tsi Tewá:ton Experience will continue each year with new and expanding cultural knowledge to share with all of Akwesasne.



*Left: Fishing Group*

*Right: Trapping Group*



# Second Hand 'Vape'

*By Angela Benedict, Air Quality Program Manager*

They look like the real thing. The end glows as you inhale and as you exhale a cloud that looks like smoke is released, but it's vapor. All e-cigarettes work basically the same way. Inside, there's a battery, a heating element, and a cartridge that holds nicotine and other liquids and flavorings. Using an e-cigarette is called "vaping."

Vaping is increasing in popularity. I know some people who vape. They vape in their car, at home, at work or inside other places. They vape around their family and friends. But, is vaping as harmless as they would like us to believe? I have always been a firm believer that if you can smell it, you are being exposed to it; even if it is made to smell good. Flowers smell good, but if you're allergic to them they can make you sick at the same time.

People shouldn't assume these e-cigarettes are completely safe just because it is vapor and not smoke. One harmful effect is that nicotine inhalation inhibits your ability to produce saliva; which can leave you susceptible to bacteria buildup, dry mouth and tooth decay. However, you can choose how much nicotine you want in your e-cig, so lower levels are better for oral health. Saint Regis Mohawk Health Services Dr. Michael T. Guldan, DDS states "I have not seen enough people using e-cigs to determine the effect they have on the dentition. However, those whom are heavy smokers may have already destroyed their dentition through the use of tobacco products."

Anytime you subject your body to something that's not normal, you risk some type of impact. I have heard people say it's only water vapor, but is it? Last time I smelled water, it didn't smell like

grapes or cherries. Yes it's vapor, but depending on how the strong the nicotine/flavoring is and the voltage of the vaporizer, you can get different exposures. They say if you vape at a higher voltage, it produces more formaldehyde. The lower the voltage means little to no formaldehyde.

"Vapors still become airborne and expose people to particulates (droplets), toxins and nicotine. Formaldehyde, acetaldehyde, acetic acid and other toxins have been measured in the vapor at

lower levels than conventional cigarette emissions." Timothy McAuley, MS, PhD, CHANGE, LLC says, "Colleagues have found the exposures to emissions from the e-cigs were below risk levels. Others have found that the emissions of ultrafine particles from e-cigs are actually fairly high. Because e-cigs are relatively new, we don't have the epidemiological and toxicological studies for e-cigs as we do for regular cigs, and translating the ultrafine particle

emissions to risk is not straightforward."

"In theory...e-cigarettes are a safer product because they don't have tobacco, which has known carcinogens," Avrum Spira, Boston University School of Medicine Professor says. "The question is - does safer mean safe?"

I contacted a lot of people about this subject from Dentists to Doctors to Professors to Research Scientists and they all say about the same thing: there just isn't enough information about this yet.

There are enough toxics in the world, so for now and the next seven generations let's not expose our children or elders to things we don't have to. ♦



# Jordan Thompson Artwork Selected for 2015 NIEA Annual Convention

*By Brendan White, Director of Communications*

Renowned Mohawk artist and Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Johnson O'Malley employee Jordan *Téhaweiakaron* Thompson received recognition at this year's National Indian Education Association's Annual Convention & Trade Show. Thompson's artwork was chosen to represent the theme for the national gathering of Native educators that was hosted in Portland, Oregon on *Kenténha*/ October 14-17, 2015.

Titled "Passing Knowledge," Thompson received notification on Enniskó:wa/March 3, 2015 that his artwork was selected from among national submissions to represent the conference theme "Building Education Nations Through Traditional Foundations." His winning artwork best depicts efforts to ensure the academic success of our youth by instilling Native traditions and culture as the foundation for educating Native students.

"I designed the piece to show that education and tradition are an important part of our lives. The grandfather reading to his grandson, depicts an elder teaching the future. The large hand is the Creator's hand holding a turtle shell that represents Turtle Island/ Mother Earth. The Creator is showing everyone across the world that education is important. The Eagles are beings that act as guardians who watch over us all. They can fly the highest and relate messages back and forth from Earth to the Creator. I did a juvenile and adult eagle to show that all creatures of this world pass down knowledge to the next generation.

The adult eagle is also teaching the younger eagle, the ways of being a messenger and guardian for our world."

According to Thompson, "To have my artwork be recognized by the NIEA is a great honor. I never thought too much about it when I submitted my piece. I just wanted to put myself out there and see how I can do against other native artists across the country. When I saw how excited the Education Department was for me, it made it that much more special."

Thompson's selected artwork received wide exposure at this year's event and earned him a complimentary vendor's booth at the 2015 Trade Show. His artwork was also used on a variety of marketing and promotional materials for the event; including website banners, member announcements, event advertising, program cover, on-site signage, tote bags and other items.

In addition to the 2015 NIEA Annual Convention & Trade Show; Thompson's work has also been featured at the Akwesasne International Powwow, 2015 World Indoor Lacrosse Championship and the Kanawa:ke Christmas Craft Fair. His rendering of

Saint Kateri Tekawitha was presented to and blessed by the Pope as the official portrait of Kateri to hang in the Vatican.

For more information and to view Jordan Thompson's artwork, please visit his website at [www.mohawk-art-design.com](http://www.mohawk-art-design.com) or his facebook page at [www.facebook.com/mohawkartdesign](http://www.facebook.com/mohawkartdesign). ♦



*'Passing the Knowledge'*

Building Education  
Nations through  
Traditional Foundations  
Innovation | Creativity | Culture  
PORTLAND, OR OCT 14 - 17  
**NIEA 2015**  
46TH ANNUAL CONVENTION & TRADE SHOW



# Akwesasne TV Holds a ‘Soft Launch’

*Community Channel to Provide Language and Cultural Programming*

*By Ian Oakes, Akwesasne TV Journalist*

The media landscape in Akwesasne is changing — an Indigenous television station has emerged that is bringing a fresh approach to how the community can ‘tune in’ and get information.

The words *Akwékon Énsken* are used to describe Akwesasne TV’s motto, which means ‘we are all one’, and serves as the guiding vision for the community’s first television station.

“The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe and Broadband has brought a much needed service/utility to Akwesasne,” said Jeff Beekhoo, General Manager-Broadband Department for the SRMT. “Akwesasne TV will provide a much needed resource to the community that will help promote and preserve the language and culture through unique storytelling. It will create economic development opportunities on the territory, at the same time allowing people to keep up to date on current events, sports news, etc. Our soft opening was meant to inform the community on the development and current success of Akwesasne TV.”



*Akwesasne TV Staff (L-R): AkwesasneTV staff Judy Laffin(Sales Manager), Holly Loran(Assistant), Becky Smoke(Producer), Jeff Beekhoo (General Manager Broadband), Regan Jacobs(Consultant/Executive Producer), Kahentawaks Perkins(Technician), Allena Jacobs(Technician), Ian Oakes(Journalist)*

A ‘soft launch’ was held on Kenténha/ October 2, 2015 at the new Broadband Building on Route 95, where Akwesasne TV studios and offices are now located. The launch was open to the public, and although there was no official ribbon cutting ceremony, a significant number of community members and local elected officials attended the event.

The three hour event saw appearances from Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Chiefs Beverly Cook, Ron Lafrance, and Eric Thompson; Sub-Chiefs Cheryl Jacobs and Michael Connors Jr; as well as Mohawk Council of Akwesasne

Kana:takon District Chief Ryan Jacobs. There were also tribal division directors and representatives from community organizations in attendance.

“I am quite pleased with the progress that we have made on this endeavor. The possibilities are quite expansive and will make a positive impact on Akwesasne,” stated Tribal Chief Eric Thompson. He added, “When first contemplated, the offering of language

and cultural programming immediately sprung to mind, almost instantaneously, however; the broader implications and applications became apparent and included a broad palette of programming from sports to politics to culture, current events and news. Akwesasne TV has done a great job in bringing this vision to fruition.”

During the soft launch, on-camera interviews were conducted by ATV staff as they showcased some of their technology, such as the Chroma key ‘green screen’ that is a special effects technique for compositing two images together. The event also entailed a guided tour to see how the station will function and how a taped interview could possibly look.

The station’s Executive Producer Regan Jacobs, who serves as the Tribe’s consultant for the development of Akwesasne TV said, “We wanted to focus on our success in launching our channel, our full digital model, creating and continuing to develop a ‘community station,’ and of course seeing this project come to fruition after two years. In my opinion, there is no better way to celebrate than with community members who are at the root of why we began this venture.”

Jacobs says the station and its programming are still in development. “We will function like any other television station.



*Iroquois National Final Game Aired on Akwesasne TV*

Mohawk Tribe to promote our language and culture and develop programming that is unique to us.” Jacobs says this project couldn’t have been possible without the vision and support from the Tribe and Broadband.



*Brendan White in production on the Tribe’s television pilot program.*

Akwesasne TV will focus on airing Indigenous-produced content; including language, cultural, sports and news programming. It is currently available on Akwesasne’s Broadband Network channel 2, and online at [www.akwesasnetv.com](http://www.akwesasnetv.com). You can follow them on Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Instagram.

For more information on how to acquire Akwesasne TV and Broadband video services, please call (518) 333-0231.

*NOTE: Akwesasne TV is owned by the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe and Mohawk Networks, LLC; the newly developed television station will be broadcasting traditional and contemporary television programming utilizing the latest information-sharing technology. ◇*

# Living with Loss Returns

## SRMT Seniors Center Hosts Group Support Meetings

*By Tewentahawih'tha' Cole, Health Educator*

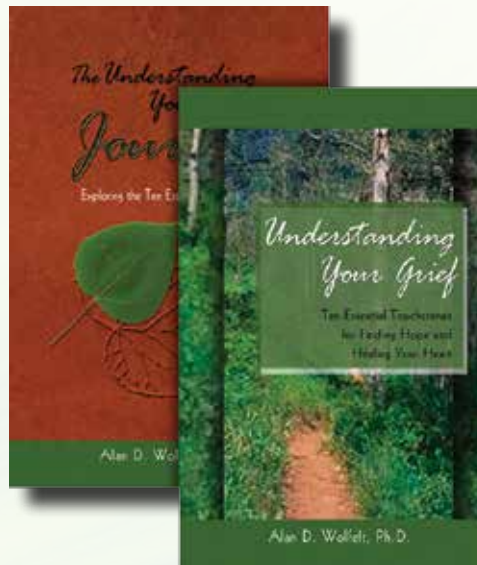
Living with Loss Support Group is a 10-week program for adults coping with the adjustment and feelings associated with the loss of the loved one through death. It is a compassionate and sensitive look at the phases of grieving and mourning that we all face. As a practical and supportive program, on the knowledge and the skills that are essential on our grief journey, it will guide people to a better understanding of their loss and beyond. The program will be a safe place where people can feel comfortable with their emotions in a confidential setting.

The program will follow the “companioning” model of Dr. Alan Wolfelt of the Center for Loss and Life Transition. Dr. Wolfelt notes “We believe that those who companion the bereaved by walking with them as they journey in grief have a wondrous opportunity: to help others embrace and grow through grief—and to lead fuller, more deeply-lived lives themselves.”

Through collaboration between the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Tsi Tetewatatkens Office for the Aging and Kanikonri:iohne “Good Mind Counseling Center” at the Health Services, Anita Plann will be the leader for this program. She is a licensed Mental Health Counselor who has worked in the counseling field for over 30 years and has worked in Akwesasne since 2008.

Anita is passionate about the work she does. She notes that

much of her time is spent working with individuals who have experienced grief and loss and other traumatic events in their lives. She believes in providing holistic care focused on meeting the needs of the individual and their family.



*Dr. Wolfelt's international best seller "Understanding Your Grief" and the companion journal will be provided to group members*

Individual appointments will be scheduled for Wednesday, November 18 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. to meet with Anita to discuss the group, your individual needs, ask questions and pick up the group materials. Appointments are required for this day, please call Tewentahawih'tha' to book yours at (518) 358-2963.

The first meeting of the group begins on Wednesday, November 25, and continues every Wednesday for 10 weeks at the Saint Regis Mohawk Senior Center Sunroom from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

The first hour will be for education regarding grief and loss. The second hour will be to process personal losses and to provide support to other members of the group. A healthy snack will be provided. The group is limited to 10 individuals who must be willing to attend all ten sessions. This way it ensures the group that starts the process of Living with Loss, ends the process together.

For more information, please contact Tewentahawih'tha' Cole, Health Educator, SRMT Office for the Aging at (518) 358-2963 or e-mail [tewentahawihtha.cole@srmt-nsn.gov](mailto:tewentahawihtha.cole@srmt-nsn.gov). ♦

# Program Snapshot:

## Forestry Resources Program, Environment Division

*By Aaron Barrigar, Forestry Technician*

The Environment Division's Forestry Resources Program (Program) inventories, plans and monitors community forestry resources. The Program administers a hazard tree assessment and a downed woody debris program that helps tribal members understand and meet their forest management goals.

The hazard tree assessment program identifies trees that pose a danger to life and property and, if needed, schedules them for removal. The downed woody debris program offers removal of tree limbs that have fallen during winter and spring storms, which helps reduce the need for open burning - greatly improving fire safety and reducing smoke in the community.

Due to the large number of requests for the hazard tree assessment, the program is not able to meet them all this year. As a result, there is now a two-year waiting list. The list's priority is based on the risk the tree poses to people and property. Priority is then given to the elderly, retired and disabled members of the community. The additional priority list is compiled as elders are usually on fixed income and aren't able to obtain resources for this type of work, which can often be quite expensive.

If you have signed up for the hazard tree assessment program, you will be contacted for a site assessment, if one hasn't already been performed. If you are on the waiting list, you will be contacted regarding work to be done in 2016. Please feel free to contact Aaron Barrigar at (518) 358-5937, extension 137 for questions regarding this project, or if you have an interest in learning more about your woodlot and how you might manage it.

The Forest Resources Program is pleased to report it has recently completed an inventory process in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service's Tribal Urban and Community Forest (UCF) Program. The purpose of the UCF inventory was to identify the types of trees and their abundance, their locations and their overall health.

This information will be used to develop a UCF plan for the community to ensure tree health. The plan will provide guidelines for tree selection, tree removal (if necessary), tree care and protection from insect pests and disease. If you are interested in working on the plan as a committee member, please contact the Program to learn more.

Lastly, this past Seskéha/August the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) was identified on Kawehnó:ke (Cornwall island)—bringing this threat even closer to some key ash tree resources. As a result, the Program will be working to reduce the risk of EAB with a Forest Stand Improvement (FSI) Project. The project will identify ash trees and if there are greater than 20 percent in a wood stand, the risk will be reduced by thinning. Forestry Technician, Aaron Barrigar, works closely with landowners to conduct the inventory and develop treatments for specific stands to meet project goals, including wildlife habitat and firewood production. One of the

outcomes and benefits to the landowner, in addition to an improved and healthier stand, is a report that provides information about the trees on their property. ♦



*Forestry Technician Aaron Barrigar conducts a stand inventory*

# Planning & Infrastructure:

## Water Filtration and Distribution System

*By Shawn Martin, Water Plant Manager*

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's water filtration and distribution system is a network. It has piping, pumps, filter systems, disinfection systems, computer programming, storage reservoirs, gate valves, hydrants and service line connections. They run in unison according to flow, as well as supply and demand.

Most of the supply and demand factor is controlled by the water level in the water tower located on McGee Road. The water tower pulls water from the filtration plant when the level gets to a certain point and shuts off. The tower provides the correct amount of water pressure in the system, which is done by simple gravity. The system can also remain pressurized by direct feed from the filtration plant, but is not as easily controlled.

The system produces and supplies an average of 450,000 gallons of water each day. The amount of water increases to 600,000 gallons a day during the summer months. The filtration plant itself has the capability of producing one million gallons of water each day, with the water tower having the storage capacity of up to 500,000 gallons of water. A second 500,000 gallon water storage tank is available for fire protection.

The distribution system consists of approximately 70 miles of water line—



*Above: A curb box or curb stop can be marked with blue paint*

*Below: If a curb stop is in the ground, a wooden stake is a good marker*



ranging from six to ten inches in diameter. It has more than 950 service connections that include piping from  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch to two inches in diameter, most of which have their own curb box for emergency shut off. Three hundred and fifty fire hydrants are also situated along the distribution system for the protection of life and property—only the fire department or water operator personnel are authorized to use hydrants. This is to ensure proper opening and closing of the hydrants, properly connecting valves, as well as maintaining the integrity of the water system. *(For the community's protection, keep an eye out for any unauthorized use of a fire hydrant and report it to the proper authorities.)*

Hydrants are flushed twice each year to keep fresh water in the system. Valves are inspected to ensure they are not damaged by plows and vehicles. Curb boxes are the responsibility of the homeowner or business owner to make sure they are not damaged by plows, lawnmowers or recreational vehicles. Marking your curb box will prevent accidental closure of your service line and damage to the curb box. It is also important before doing any type of construction that requires digging or if you are unsure of where the main or service lines are, do not hesitate to contact the Public Works office at 518-358-4205. ♦

# Community Welcome Sign Unveiled in Akwesasne

*By Brendan White, Director of Communications*

Following a two-year planning process, a new community welcome sign was unveiled on *Kenténha*/October 7, 2015 to great visitors to Akwesasne. Located on the west end of the Akwesasne Territory, near Twin Leaf Gas & Tobacco on Route 37, the sign features the sculpture of a partridge with the words *Tekwanonhwera:tons* to express “Greetings to all,” above the words “Akwesasne” and “Land Where the Partridge Drums.”

The sign’s development began in August 2014 when the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe’s Office of Economic Development (OED) requested community feedback and comments for a west entry welcome sign for Akwesasne. Preliminary designs resulted and cooperative efforts began between the OED, Planning & Infrastructure, and Maintenance; as well as Sign-It Signs and the New York State Department of Transportation (St. Lawrence & Franklin Counties).

The purpose of the sign is to greet visitors into the community, serve as a first impression that reflects the community of Akwesasne and reflects the feeling of peace and respect for Mother Earth. Community beautification and revitalization was also identified for the sign’s purpose and stems from the 2009 Comprehensive Community Development Plan and the Akwesasne Cultural Tourism Strategic Plan.

The sign replaces the old green metal road sign that once welcomed visitors and its final design was completed by Noella Cotnam of Sign-It Signs in Williamstown, Ontario. Cotnam was onhand for the unveiling along with SRMT Tribal Chiefs Beverly Cook and Eric Thompson, Sub-Chiefs Michael Conners and Cheryl Jacobs, Executive Director Tsiorasa Barreiro, OED Director Christopher Thompson, Communications Director Brendan White, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne Grand Chief Abram Benedict, Akwesasne Museum Coordinator Sue Ellen Herne, Akwesasne Chamber

of Commerce Assistant Business Director Casey Swamp, NYS Department of Transportation Engineer Rob Haynes, along with tribal staff and community members.

Words of appreciation were extended to Economic Development Planner Lindsay Tarbell for overseeing the completion of the new sign, which is accompanied with a second sign directly across the road with the words “*Niá:wen tsi wesewakwátho*/Thank you for visiting.”



*Left: Thanksgiving address by Rohonwa'kiehrha (Logan Herne)  
Right: New “Thank you for Visiting” sign*

Both signs are part of the ongoing “Experience Akwesasne” tourism initiative by Akwesasne aimed at strengthening the community’s economic position by promoting and supporting local businesses, artisans and cultural organizations. ♦

# Division Update:

## Community & Family Services Receives \$3M in Grant Awards

*By Brendan White, Director of Communications*

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's Division of Community and Family Services (DCFS) have been very busy this year securing funding to support its programs and services. Their efforts have recently paid off as the tribal division received word that \$3,063,128 in funding has been secured for up to five years to support Family Support, Three Sisters, Child Support Enforcement Unit and the Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

"We are extremely excited to be able to continue providing these much-needed services to the community of Akwesasne," said Community and Family Services Director Jamie Bay. "We look forward to serving the ongoing needs of tribal members, particularly those with diagnosed developmental disabilities and individuals suffering from domestic violence and sexual assault. We will be conducting more outreach in the upcoming year on Community and Family Service's programs, but we encourage individuals to begin accessing our services right away to improve their lives today."

Below is a summary for some of the grant awards DCFS received and the programs to be supported:

### ***Family Support Program--\$517,645 (5 years)***

The Division's Family Support Program received a contract renewal with the New York State Office for Peoples with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) for a five-year period. The multi-year grant amounts to \$517,645 and covers the contract

period of January 1, 2015 thru December 31, 2019. It supports the program's efforts to assist individuals with developmental disabilities to live as independently as possible and to participate as vital and contributing community members.

Family Support has approximately 70 clients in Akwesasne who receive community-based services; such as employment and living skills, opportunities to participate in community activities and other resources for them to have fulfilling lives. They also provide referrals for counseling, training and respite services to assist family members who provide primary care for individuals with developmental disabilities.

The need for Family Support continues to increase, and to accommodate the need the program underwent a few changes to improve its services. The Family Support Building, located adjacent to the Tribe's Community Building at the former-

Senior Center, was recently renovated and expanded during the Summer of 2015 to accommodate more clients. The program also works closely with the Tribe's Individual Residential Alternatives (IRA) Program and construction will be completed in November 2015 for six clients to move-in. Located on Frogtown Road, the new IRA home will allow clients currently housed in Fort Covington to relocate to a house in the community to learn life skills that helps support their personal independence.

The Family Support Program is located at 420 State Route 37. They can be reached by calling (518) 358-9481.



*Family Support provides program information at Disability Awareness Day held in September 2015.*

### ***Three Sisters Program--\$370,000 (3 years)***

The Three Sisters Program received \$370,000 from the Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) to support their Sexual Assault Advocacy Program for a three-year period. The grant is a continuation of funding initially received for the same time period in 2013 to enhance and support crime prevention in a number of areas, including violence against women. The funds will be used to provide a safe location for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, as well as salaries for a Sexual Assault Advocate and one Safe Home Advocate.

The Sexual Assault Advocate is able to step into a survivor's life during some of the most terrible moments: domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, harassment, and other personal traumas. The advocate can support the survivor during the police interview, the district attorney's meeting and the trial. The Sexual Assault Advocate can also assist the survivor get back their independence and confidence by accompanying them through the healing process.

The OVW grant also provides funding to cover a portion of the salary for one of the Safe Home Advocates who provide support and resources to survivors and their children during their stay at a 24-hour-monitored safe home. The Safe Home Advocates have the ability to transport, accompany survivors to appointments, and provide constant support in getting their lives back on track.

Perhaps the most difficult step in accessing their help is contacting them for the first time. This can take a lot of courage. For more information call (518) 358-4406, or to access their 24-hour services, please call toll-free 855-3SISTER.

### ***Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation (TVR)--\$2,030,000 (5 years)***

The Tribal Vocation Rehabilitation (TVR) Program has been re-funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) for another five-year period. It marks the fourth grant cycle that TVR has been awarded funding from RSA and amounts to \$2,030,000, which breaks down to

\$406,000 for each of the next five years. It supports TVR's efforts to provide vocational rehabilitation services to tribal members with disabilities; so they can prepare and engage in gainful employment or business ownership.

Funded under Title I, Section 121, of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the TVR Program's services are open to disabled tribal members, as well as members of other federally recognized tribes, who reside in or near Akwesasne. It requires individuals to have a documented physical or mental disability that serves as an impediment to finding, gaining, and maintaining employment.

Some of the services offered are; job placement, on the job training, assessments, vocational counseling, technical evaluations, and other services required for the consumer to become successfully employed or self-employed. For more information, please feel free to contact the SRMT TVR Program at (518) 358-2276.

### ***Child Support Enforcement Unit--\$515,113 (1 year)***

The Division's Child Support Enforcement Unit Program received a \$515,113 award from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Administration for Children and Families (ACF) for the period from October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016. This funding supports the program's mission to improve the well-being of children and families by promoting the emotional and financial responsibility between parents and their children. This CSEU program allows for the establishment of paternity, the establishment of child support, the modification of child support orders, the location of parents and their assets and finally, conditions to enforce child support orders. It is the primary focus of the CSEU to enforce the regulation and the laws of the Tribe by taking a family-centered approach by attempting to reach stipulations (agreed-to-agreements) with parties in the action and by providing referral services when a family or individual is in need of assistance.

The CSEU office is located at 412 State Route 37. They can be reached by calling (518) 358-2272. ♦



*Disability Jeopardy led by Buck Cook.*



# Tribal Monthly Meetings

***Seskehkó:wa/September 12, 2015***  
***Chairperson: Tribal Chief Beverly Cook***

## ***Agenda***

1. Welcome - Chairperson
2. Reading of Action Items  
Tribal Clerk
3. Stanley Harper, Salmon River Superintendent
4. Introduction of School Board Candidate  
Stephanie Cook
5. Update on Land Claims
6. Update on Diabetes Program Facilities
7. New Business
8. Reading of Action Items - Tribal Clerk
9. Adjournment

## ***Follow-up Actions Items from Seskéha/August Meeting***

1. As per education contracts with Salmon River and Massena Central School, educational reports are required twice a year. Make documents available.

*The documents will be available at September's monthly meeting.*

2. Present results of education survey to define what the students and parents want.

*The Education Division will undertake a Community Education Survey in 2016.*

3. PCB issues at old GM site and to hold community wide public meetings on these issues.

*Tribal Council are in discussion on this matter.*

***Kenténha/October 3, 2015***  
***Chairperson: Tribal Chief Eric Thompson***

## ***Agenda***

1. Welcome - Chairperson
2. Reading of Action Items - Tribal Clerk
3. Update on Hogansburg Dam Removal - Tony David
4. Introduction of Natalie Hemlock - Corporate Compliance Officer
5. Introduction of Jamie Bay - Director of Community & Family Services
6. Introduction of School Board Candidate - Stephanie Cook
7. Update on Summit - Karonienhawi Thomas
8. Overview of Cancer Support Group - Monica Jacobs
9. New Business
10. Reading of Action Items - Tribal Clerk
11. Adjournment

## ***Follow-up on Action Items from Seskehkó:wa/September Meeting***

1. PCB issues at GM site and to hold community wide public meeting on these issues.

*Internal meetings are on-going and once a date has been set, the community will be informed.*

2. To have Tribal Council have the maps available for the three/four properties that they are thinking of purchasing.

*Maps will be available at the October Tribal Monthly Meeting.*

3. ATV safety concerns

*This issue has been referred to the Police Commission*

4. Look into the \$20.00 county tax begin charged at DMV.

*The legal Department will provide an update on this issue.*

## ***Action Items from Kenténha/October Meeting***

1. None ◇



# Calendar

## ***Kentenhkó:wa/November 2015***

7 - Tribal Monthly Meeting - 10:00 a.m. - Lobby

9 - ACE Study Presentation - 5:00 p.m. -

*Tsi Tetewatakens* (Senior Center)

10 - Social Security - 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. - Tribal Clerk's Office

11 - Veteran's Day holiday - All Tribal Offices closed

14 - Akwesasne Recycling Day - 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. -

Transfer Station

16 - 2016 Budget Presentation - 5:00 p.m. - Lobby

18 - Police Commission - 3:00 p.m. - Executive Boardroom

24 - Diabetes Extravaganza - 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. -

Diabetes Center for Excellence

26 - Thanksgiving holiday - All Tribal Offices closed

27 - American Indian Heritage Day holiday -

All Tribal Offices closed, Transfer Station open

## ***Tsiothóhrha/December 2015***

5 - Tribal Monthly Meeting - 10:00 a.m. - Lobby

8 - Social Security - 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. - Tribal Clerk's Office

9 - Police Commission - 3:00 p.m. - Executive Boardroom

25 - Christmas Day holiday - All Tribal offices closed

Wednesdays - Tribal Council Work Session - 9:00 a.m. - Executive Boardroom, Community Building

# New Faces

Arlene R. Jock

Kora Mitchell

Holly Loran

Patrick A. Connors

Joni Garrow

Rebecca White

Nash Sunday

Ida May LaBillois-Montour

Darlene E. Dilcox

Margaret Cook-Chaussi

Shelley Ann Jacobs

Mathew E. Smoke

Patrick Michael Brewer

Early Childhood Development

Early Childhood Development

Tribal Administration

Health Services Administration

Intensive Preventive Program

Planning & Infrastructure

Tribal Administration

Three Sisters Program

Three Sisters Program

Family Support

Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation

Akwesasne Group Home

Finance - Accounting

Teacher Aide - Floater

Admin Assistant

Administrative Assistant

Budget Analyst

Parent Advocate

Administrative Assistant

Receptionist

Program Manager

Office Manager

Habilitation Aide

Project Manager

Youth Worker

Emergency Hire

# Donations

Community Events - \$ 1,500

Funerals - \$ 6,000

Sports - \$ 3,250

Elders - \$ 900

# 2015-2016 Hogansburg Dam Removal Project

*By Tony David, Water Resources Program Manager*

*The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe is restoring the natural flow of the St. Regis River, improving fish habitat and reclaiming Tribal lands.*

On March 13, 2015, the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe became a co-licensee of the Hogansburg Hydroelectric Project and took a lead role to decommission and remove this obsolete dam. The Environment Division has reviewed studies conducted over a five-year period that examined both license renewal and dam removal. The results support complete dam removal to restore the ecology of the St. Regis River. It is the first impassible barrier to fish from the St. Lawrence River and fails to meet State and Tribal water quality standards. The removal of this dam will open up 274 river and stream miles for fish species like walleye, muskellunge, Atlantic salmon, lake sturgeon and American eel.

In late-September of 2015, the water behind the dam was drawn down, then gradually refilled. The drawdown was necessary to inspect upstream conditions prior to its removal in the summer of 2016. Dam removal is planned for July through September of 2016, when flow rates are lowest. The project lands will then be returned to the Tribe.

Another series of public meetings will be scheduled in the spring to present study results, dam removal approach and post-removal conditions.



c.1910



1937



2015

## *Why Remove the Hogansburg Dam?*

- Federal operating license expired on September 30, 2015
- Cost to renew the license and retrofit was \$3.5 to \$5 million
- Required extensive repairs and upgrades including fish passage
- Not in compliance with State/Tribal water quality standards
- Current annual losses are more than \$100,000 per year
- Removal increases spawning habitat for fish species
- Return of project land to the Tribe
- Ability to create a park and repurpose the powerhouse

## *Examining the Alternatives*

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe examined a range of options on the future of the Hogansburg Hydroelectric Dam. Initially, the owner proposed to obtain a new operating license. The new license would have required significant improvements to meet Tribal/State water quality regulations. The facility could never produce enough power to off-set this investment.

A range of project decommissioning options were examined, including removing some parts of the dam, but these options failed to meet

safety and environmental standards. Leaving the dam in place was also examined, but this would violate the Federal Power Act. The best outcome, based on economic and environmental concerns, is total project decommissioning and removal. As a co-licensee of the dam, the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe will oversee the dam removal, set restoration goals that advance Tribal resource management strategies and work with State and Federal agencies on the approval process.

### *Hogansburg Dam Sediment Investigation*

All dam removals must deal with the accumulation of sediment. Areas within and above the dam were monitored, with an overall volume estimated at 17,000 cubic yards. Any movement of this relatively small volume of sediment is expected to behave similarly to the annual load of sediment during spring ice jam. The dam does not allow vast quantities of sediment to accumulate in the reservoir. The few areas where sediment does accumulate are exposed to currents and flushed out by the river's natural flow.

### *Comparison of Fort Covington Dam Removal*

It is important to understand the differences between the Hogansburg Dam and the one previously located in Fort Covington. The St. Regis River has higher-sustained flow throughout the year to disperse sediments faster, while the Fort Covington dam had acted like a sediment trap. The Hogansburg impoundment is also much smaller in length, with less opportunity to accumulate sediments.

### *Comprehensive Review and Consultation*

In addition to the standard dam removal concerns such as engineering feasibility, sediment and water quality - the Tribe also reviewed potential impacts to fish, cultural resources, recreation, ice jams, aquatic insects and archaeological concerns. The Hogansburg Dam removal project represents more than five years of study and consultation with experts across the country.

### *Temporary Reservoir Drawdown*

In the fall of 2015, the Hogansburg Dam had a temporary drawdown to conduct additional environmental surveys. The timing of the drawdown reduced the potential impact to fish. The lowered reservoir revealed a natural pool upstream of the Route 37 bridge and allowed the Tribe to verify conditions and water levels post-removal.

### *Dam Removal Process*

Dam removal is planned for July through September of 2016. These months are ideal for their low flows and reduced impact to fish. The removal will occur in two phases, first on the west side opposite the powerhouse and then on the east side. A coffer dam will be used to isolate the work area. Removal of the dam will be performed in an environmentally responsible manner with excavators and other equipment. During the first removal phase, about 210 feet of the dam from the west bank will be removed. Phase two will remove the remaining 35 feet of the dam, as well as the stoplog gate structure and the concrete walkway. All that will remain is the powerhouse.

### *Our Future River*

The greatest change in water elevation will occur from the Hogansburg Dam up to the State Route 37 bridge. From the bridge, a natural pool will be revealed that extends upstream. The impact of dam removal diminishes with distance upstream.

Below the Hogansburg Dam, there will be very little change, as water levels are controlled by St. Lawrence River.

### *Contact*

Please call the Water Resources Program, SRMT Environment Division at (518) 358-5937 if you have any questions or concerns.♦



*The pink flags show how much the water level dropped during the drawdown upstream from the dam.*

# Employee Spotlight

## Tillman Voted Vice-President of National Native American Human Resources Association

Anthony Tillman, Employee Relations Specialist with the Human Resource Department of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe, was voted as the Vice President for the National Native American Human Resource Association (NNAHRA) for a two-year term. Voting took place at the NNAHRA's Annual Conference held at the Marriot New Orleans located in New Orleans, Louisiana on September 22, 2015.



NNAHRA is now in its fifteenth year of existence, with more than 800 members who represent over 80 Tribes.

Tillman is a Mohawk from Akwesasne who joined the Tribe as the Employee Relations Specialist in May 2013. His focus is to assist employees in resolving disputes and development of training programs for tribal staff, including coordination of an orientation program in all tribal areas. He possesses a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management and a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership.

NNAHRA is a non-profit organization based in Washington, DC comprised of Human Resource professionals who work for and provide professional services to Tribes and tribal enterprises in Indian Country. Association business is conducted by an elected Board of Directors, who each serves two-year terms on a volunteer capacity.



Anthony Tillman is located on the first floor of the Community Building and can be reached at (518) 358-2272, extension 2214. ♦

## Jim "McDuck" Retirement Luncheon

Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Maintenance workers and other tribal staff gathered on Kenténha/October 9, 2015 in the Community Building Lobby to wish Jim "McDuck" McDonald "Happy Retirement." Following 20-years of service with the Tribe, a retirement luncheon was held for McDuck that included the presentation of gifts from Tribal Council and Administration. ♦



# Environment Division Receives Funding for Dioxin Study

*By Taylor Smoke, Air Quality Technician*

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's Environment Division has received a grant for more than \$170,000 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) for an indoor air quality study called, "Investigation of Household Dust for Dioxins and Dioxin-Like Chemicals in Akwesasne." The year-long study will collect dust samples from community member's homes or offices and have them analyzed. The study is being conducted as people on average spend about 65 percent of their time in their homes, 25 percent at work and the rest of the time in various places—indoors and outdoors.

Dioxin exposure in animals and fish has been shown to cause cancer, birth defects, liver damage, endocrine damage, and immune system suppression. Concentrations of dioxins are found in all humans, with higher levels found in persons living in more industrialized countries. According to the USEPA, 80 percent of dioxin emissions are caused by coal burning plants, municipal waste incinerators, metal smelting, diesel trucks, land application of sewage sludge, burning treated wood, trash burn barrels and the consumption of meat and dairy products. Dioxins are also generated in bleaching fibers for paper and textiles.

The Environment Division is looking for approximately 80 Akwesasne households to participate in the study. To help the southern portion of Akwesasne has been divided into sections and approximately 16-17 homes will be taken from each section.

As an added bonus, participating households will receive a gift for taking part in the study. Sampling is scheduled to start in early-2016.

The initial visit will take from one to two hours; with a technician collecting both vacuum and wipe samples. Once the results come back, the technician will return to provide a copy of the final report and to explain the results. If dioxins are found at high levels, we will provide education to help reduce your dioxin exposure. Each household will get a copy of the final report containing all the results. One of the requirements is the area to be tested cannot be cleaned for two weeks before to be sure we get enough dust. So if you're like me, where sweeping and vacuuming only happens once every two weeks, your schedule shouldn't change.



*Taylor collects a sample by wiping a small section of household dust*

If you would like to participate in this study or have any questions, please feel free to contact Taylor Smoke at the SRMT Environment Division by calling (518) 358-5937 extension 115 or by email [TSmoke@srmt-nsn.gov](mailto:TSmoke@srmt-nsn.gov). ♦

## Diabetes Extravaganza

The Let's Get Healthy Program "Tsitewatakari:tat" invites you to the 8th annual Diabetes Extravaganza on Tuesday November 24, 2015 from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Diabetes Center for Excellence.

Educational booths, guest speakers, blood pressure & blood sugar screenings, prizes, food and more!

For more information, please call (518) 358-9667.



## Akwesasne Business Directory

The annual Akwesasne Business Directory is accepting updates for the 2016 edition. It is the first stop for shoppers in Akwesasne. With over 4,000 directories distributed, your business will get noticed!

Businesses are encouraged to update/renew an existing profile or add a new business profile by calling the SRMT Office of Economic Development (518) 358-2835 or emailing [mlafrance@srmt-nsn.gov](mailto:mlafrance@srmt-nsn.gov). The deadline is December 2, 2015.

[www.AkwesasneBusinessDirectory.com](http://www.AkwesasneBusinessDirectory.com)

## Future Mohawk Leaders Award

The Higher Education Program has once again received a very generous donation from an anonymous donor. This donation, along with assistance from the Tribal Council, will allow scholarships to be awarded to eight undergraduate and two graduate students. The scholarships will be in the amount of \$3,000 and are nonrenewable. This scholarship is open to all Mohawk students who are enrolled with the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe, regardless of where they attend college.

To apply for the Future Mohawk Leaders Award, applicants must submit an original essay outlining the following criteria; career aspirations, specific financial need and expenses the scholarship will meet. Last year's recipients are not eligible for this year's scholarship program, except if an undergraduate student who received the scholarship last year is now applying as a graduate student. All applicants must be currently enrolled as a college student.

Specific instructions and requirements are available on the Tribe's webpage at [www.srmt-nsn.gov](http://www.srmt-nsn.gov) or contact Stephanie Cook or Rod Cook at (518) 358-2272.



## Community Building - Health Facility Parking Lot Improvements

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe is reminding individuals accessing Health Services or the Community Building of improvements being made to the main parking lot. It has been reconfigured in response to several accidents and near misses, as well as to better serve community members.

The parking lanes located in front of Health Services have been re-lined to address problems entering and exiting the clinic. The entrance and exit lane has been widened, which has improved the visibility of pedestrians. The reconfiguration has provided for a much safer parking lot at the cost of losing just a few parking spaces.

To deal with the loss of the parking spaces, the Tribe has made more parking available for community members by requiring tribal staff to park behind the Community Building or the Family Support building. Designated employee areas will continue to use their reserved spots marked by signs. A permit program is also being considered.

We ask individuals to abide by areas designated as non-parking areas. We need to keep the fire lanes around the buildings free. To avoid confusion, we will be installing barriers and clearly marking where the parking lanes end.

We appreciate your continued patience. Once the reconfiguration is complete, the Tribe will be enforcing the parking rules to ensure everyone's safety. If you have any questions contact Adrian McDonald, Safety Officer at (518) 358-2272 ext. 2292. ♦

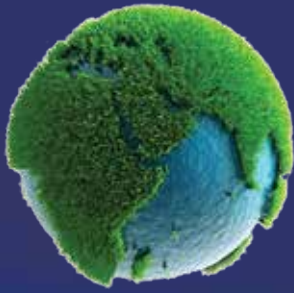
# Parking Lot Improvements



Visitor - Patient Parking



New/Existing Employee Parking



# 4th Annual Akwesasne Recycling Day

Saturday, Kentenhkó:wa/November 14, 2015

10:00 a.m to 2:00 p.m. at the SRMT Transfer Station

179 County Route 43, Ft. Covington, NY

***Come and learn how making the right choices with our waste not only benefit the community but also the animals and the environment.***

## Benefits of Attending Akwesasne Recycling Day:

- » Facility tours
- » Recycling and composting demonstrations
- » Adirondack Wildlife Refuge animal showcase
- » Free lunch
- » Door prizes

## Free Disposal of the Following Items:

- » Electronic waste
- » Household recyclables
- » Batteries - every type
- » Scrap metal - washers and dryers
- » Freon containing scrap metal - fridges, freezers, air conditioners, dehumidifiers and water coolers

***For more information please call: Transfer Station at (518) 358-4632 or Recycling Coordinator (518) 358-4529***



Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe  
412 State Route 37  
Akwesasne, NY 13655

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

POSTAL PATRON

*On the Cover: A new welcome sign was unveiled on Kenténha/October 7, 2015 for the community of Akwesasne. The sign serves as a first impression for visitors to Akwesasne and is a proud reflection of the community. It is the latest community beautification project that will help to promote and support our local businesses, artisans and cultural organizations.*