



## TRIBAL NEWSLETTER

### A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

I trust that you all are well and are making sure to check in on those who might need assistance during this time.

We are doing our best to continue to handle tribal business in the midst of the social distancing orders in place to help prevent the spread of the Coronavirus. We decided to go ahead and try a conference call style tribal meeting at the end of May to discuss tribal business, and we plan to do the same for our June tribal business meeting. We hope to be able to have a regular-style tribal business meeting in July.

Members of the tribal council met recently with a native consultant from Oklahoma for more training on their responsibilities. Our tribal council creates the laws that govern our tribe. They also oversee the appropriation of tribal funds.

We have begun work on a tribal budget. Portions of our tribal properties and programs remain under 501c(3) designation (the Museum, Tribal Hall, Cabins, and Food

Bank) and still need your donations to help maintain them. Our federal recognition, however, gives us access to money for other programs that we have or hope to fund—like a clinic. Our Tribal Administrator, Adrian, continues to write grants and find sources of funding, and the tribal council is working to understand what can and cannot be done with that money as they begin learning about the tribal budgeting process.

One recent source of funding is the money set aside by the Trump administration to help tribes in their response to the Coronavirus. Our tribe may be able to access this money for use in purchasing a new tribal center with room for our tribal office, food bank and a future tribal clinic.

As we work hard at improving things for our tribal members, I ask that you look around and see what you can do to help those around you. Let's all work together to help each other.

*~Chief Kenneth Branham*

### SCHOLARSHIP HIGHLIGHT

*There are many scholarships available to both state and federally recognized Native American Students. This section highlights a sample of scholarships with upcoming deadlines for the benefit of current and future students. For information on additional scholarship opportunities, visit [www.bie.edu/ParentsStudents/Grants](http://www.bie.edu/ParentsStudents/Grants) and [studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa](http://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa) or check with your school's financial aid office.*

The **HBCU Connect Minority Student Scholarship** is a YouTube video-based \$1,000 annual scholarship for minority students who choose to attend Historic Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), with preference given to underrepresented minorities (Native Americans are considered an underrepresented minority). There are multiple HBCUs in Virginia including Virginia State in Petersburg and Virginia University of Lynchburg. The deadline for this scholarship is August 1, 2020, and more information can be found at: <https://hbcuconnect.com/scholarship/>

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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## STUDY TIPS

Performing well in school can increase your chances of getting an academic scholarship. While there are multiple components that contribute to learning, studying is one of the key components that can lead to more effective learning and better performance on exams and quizzes. With a new academic year starting soon, here are five study tips that can hopefully help you to improve your performance in school.

1. When studying do your best to avoid distractions. Find a quiet place and turn off all electronic devices not directly used for studying—maybe even your phone!
2. Set goals when studying such as a goal of studying for 2 hours or finishing a specific topic. After you've achieved your goal, reward yourself with a break or other reward that will motivate you.

### CORN REMINDER

Fall-maturing sweet corn will usually be the highest quality, since cool September nights increase the sugar content. To get a fall crop, plant an early maturing variety in July.

## OUR FISHING HERITAGE

With supply train disruptions from COVID-19 leading to decreased availability of some food and toiletry items in American supermarkets, many people are turning to alternative and more traditional means of obtaining food and other items. Some are turning to gardening and hunting, while others are purchasing meats directly from farmers.

Because our ancestors historically farmed and hunted for survival, we Monacans can look to our heritage as inspiration to get through the shortages we are currently facing. We can grow gardens in our yards, fish our local streams and rivers, and hunt the surrounding forests for game. Our elders who grew up through the Great Depression in the area surrounding Bear Mountain can help us to learn these skills.

One such skill that many of our ancestors used in the past and that many of our tribal members continue to practice today is fishing. As tribal members, there are special provisions regarding our freshwater fishing rights in Virginia. See the side bar at right for suggestions and regulations on fishing Virginia waters.

3. When studying always ask yourself why something is the way it is or why an answer is the correct answer. Asking yourself why can help you to be sure you are actually learning and processing the information and not simply memorizing.
4. Connect to personal experience to increase your ability to remember the material. Memories tied to emotions are much stronger than memories you find meaningless, so find ways to make the material you are studying personally meaningful to you.
5. Don't forget to sleep. Sleep will not only help you to perform better on tests and quizzes but it also helps your brain to better process and store the information you have studied in your long term memory.

### FISHING IN VIRGINIA

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) has a robust trout stocking program that ends in late May and usually resumes in October. Trout are not stocked during the summer months due to typically low water levels and warm water temperatures that are less than ideal for trout. During these warmer months, many anglers searching for a fish dinner, go in search of some type of sunfish.

The Maury River of Rockbridge County offers redbreast sunfish—especially along the stretch of river from Glen Maury Park in Buena Vista to the VDGIF Locher Landing near Glasgow. Fish around submerged rocks or along overhanging banks with small spinner baits, spinner bucktails, grubs and tiny crankbaits to catch these sunfish. Because they eat insects and other aquatic life, the redbreast is a healthier option than bottom-feeding fish like catfish. In addition, cooking methods that allow the fat to drain off—like grilling, baking, or broiling—are safer as any potential pollutants are stored in the fatty tissue of the fish.

Being a member of a Virginia-recognized tribe in the Commonwealth, you are not required to have a **freshwater** license; however, you must carry your valid tribal identification card with you.

**Sources:** Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, and Environmental Protection Agency

## RASSAWEK ADDED TO LIST OF ENDANGERED HISTORIC PLACES

In May, Preservation Virginia—formerly the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA)—released its 2020 list of Virginia’s Most Endangered Historic Places and included Rassawek on that list. According to the report, Rassawek is “considered one of the most important archaeological sites in Virginia.” Preservation Virginia goes on to encourage the James River Water Authority to identify an alternative location for the proposed pumping

station in order to address the water needs of Louisa and Fluvanna Counties and to use the preservation of Rassawek as an opportunity to reverse a state-wide historical trend of overlooking and sometimes intentionally destroying sites of Native American significance. To read the report in its entirety and learn about some of the other historic sites around the state considered to be in danger of being lost, please visit [PreservationVirginia.org](http://PreservationVirginia.org)

## COVID-19 IMPACT ON NATIVE AMERICANS

According to preliminary reports, minorities appear to be more significantly impacted by the current COVID-19 pandemic both medically and economically, and Native Americans are no exception. Tribes such as the Navajo have been devastated medically by the pandemic, with death rates on the Navajo reservation—the largest US reservation with a land area roughly the size of West Virginia—rivaling the death rates of entire US states. Other tribes who rely heavily on tourism as a tribal industry, such as the Hualapai tribe who operate the Skywalk at the Grand Canyon, have been economically devastated as stay-at-home and shelter-in-place orders around the country have limited tourism and travel, reducing tribal income and jobs.

Monacan tribal members have also been impacted by the pandemic, though gratefully to a lesser extent than many other tribes. Tribal leaders are currently unaware of any tribal members being diagnosed with COVID-19, but tribal members have been impacted economically through furloughs and reduced work hours, and the food bank has seen an increase in families requesting assistance since the start of the pandemic in Virginia.

To address the physical and economic impact of COVID-19 on Native Americans, as part of the CARES ACT, the United States Government has provided grants to federally recognized tribes to help address and offset these impacts in addition to the already available resources from the Indian Health Service (to learn more about the IHS, please see page 4). But the government isn’t the only one stepping up to help Native Americans in need. According to a May 5, 2020 article by Onize Ohikere in *World Magazine*, the Navajo and Hopi reservations have received multiple gifts from Ireland as the Irish remember the gifts of Native Americans almost 175 years ago to address needs that arose during the Irish Potato Famine.

### PAST EPIDEMICS

Much like the novel COVID-19 virus, many viruses and other diseases brought to the Americas in the 1500s were highly contagious and caused outbreaks known as “Virgin-Soil” epidemics because of the lack of immunity to the disease in native peoples who had no prior exposure. Entire families often perished during these epidemics when all members fell ill and no one was left to care for them. Each new disease would create a new epidemic as acquired immunity was specific to each disease and surviving one disease did not provide immunity to the next disease. (Native Voices, National Library of Medicine)

The *Times Dispatch* reports that Dr. Ennion G. Williams, State Health Commissioner, suggested playing a phonograph-recorded version of his lecture on tuberculosis prevention to a “tribe of Indians” located in Amherst. It states that at this time there are only two organized tribes of Indians in the state, one located in King William, and the other in Amherst. “Heart-to-Health Talk with Virginia Red Men.” *Richmond Times Dispatch*, August 25, 1908. (Copy, Monacan Tribal Archives)

When a tuberculosis epidemic threatened to ravage western reservations in 1914, physicians encouraged quarantining people with active infections to slow the spread of the disease, much as doctors today have done during the current viral pandemic. (Native Voices, National Library of Medicine)

## THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

Some Monacans have enjoyed long and fruitful lives into their nineties; some, like Edmund Branham, have even lived to be more than one hundred years old. But such longevity is not the case for most Native Americans. According to Timothy M. Smith, in a May 13, American Medical Association newsletter article, “The American Indian and Alaska Native people have long experienced lower health status when compared with other Americans.” Smith went on to say that “diseases of the heart, malignant neoplasm (cancerous tumors), unintentional injuries, and diabetes are leading causes of American Indian and Alaska Native deaths (data from the years 2009 - 2011).

The disparities in health status between native populations and other Americans has long been known, but the theories as to why these disparities exist are numerous and complicated, necessitating a multi-pronged approach when trying to improve the health status of American Indians. One of the primary approaches is getting the health care and educational materials *to* native people, and today’s Indian Health Service (IHS) has been charged with that responsibility.

### History of Federal Funding of Native American Health Care

In 1909, Congress set aside \$12,000 for a national health program for federally-recognized Native Americans. At that time, most of the attention was focused on western Native Americans who were suffering from many maladies including outbreaks of tuberculosis and trachoma (eye infections that when left untreated led to blindness). While many of them lived on reservations or in the rural towns close to those reservations, not all reservations had adequate medical facilities. So most of the native people were forced to travel to obtain medical care which meant leaving family members and “breaking the extended family ties that (were) central to their cultures.” (Native Voices, National Library of Medicine)

Shortly after World War I, Congress passed the Snyder Act (1921) that defined “the government’s responsibility for American Indian health care and (was) one of several legislative reforms in the works to improve the living conditions for American Indians.” Later, the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (1976), Public Law 94-437 (now known as the “437” act), expanded the authority and implementation of the Snyder Act. These two laws “comprise the basic legislative authority for (today’s) Indian Health Service.” (Legislation, Indian Health Service)

### Indian Health Service

According to their website, the Indian Health Service (IHS), an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services, is responsible for providing federal health services to American Indians and Alaska Natives and provides a comprehensive health service delivery system for approximately 2.6 million American Indians and Alaska Natives who belong to 574 federally recognized tribes in 37 states.

### Purchased/Referred Care Program

Since there is no IHS or tribal-administered IHS facility in the immediate proximity of the historic Monacan Nation, Monacans can utilize the Purchased/Referred Care (PRC) program to help cover medical or dental expenses. The PRCDA (Purchased/ Referred Care Delivery Area) for the Monacan Nation are the counties of **Amherst County, Nelson County, Albemarle County, Buckingham County, Appomattox County, Campbell County, Bedford County, Botetourt County, Rockbridge County, Augusta County, and the independent cities of Lynchburg, Lexington, Buena Vista, Staunton, Waynesboro and Charlottesville, Virginia.** If you do not live in one of the counties listed, you can still call and register, but you will not be able to use the PRC program at this time.

To register for the PRC Program, tribal members must first telephone Tabitha Garrett (804-622-0011) or Diane Garrison (804-622-0012) in the Indian Health Service Richmond Unit to complete the registration process and request a referral. Once the referral is received, the tribal member makes their scheduled visit to their personal doctor or dentist. The Indian Health Service will then review their request to determine if it meets the medical priority and if funds are available to cover what insurance or other health programs do not cover.

PRC is the payer of last resort and requires patients to exhaust **all** health care resources available to them from private insurance, state health programs, and other federal programs (including Veterans Affairs) before the PRC program can provide payment. Do NOT cancel your current health insurance just because you qualify for PRC.

With the PRC program now available to many Monacans to help with medical and dental expenses and with lifestyle choices that promote good health, we Monacans can continue our heritage as healthy and physically fit tribal members.

## PLACES TO VISIT

### St. Paul’s Episcopal Mission at Bear Mountain

*There are multiple locations throughout Amherst and the state that are pertinent to Monacan history and culture. In this section we feature a brief summary of one of these locations for educational purposes and to encourage visitation of these sites by tribal citizens.*



The current St. Paul’s Episcopal Mission church building at Bear Mountain in Amherst, Virginia, was built on the site of the original 1908 church building after the original building was destroyed by a fire in 1930. The white church building features ten stained glass windows that work together to tell the story of the life of Jesus. Though the current building itself is less than 100 years old, the history of the mission itself goes back many years earlier.

The original mission at Bear Mountain was the log cabin mission built in the 1860s to serve as a church and occasional school for the Monacan Indian Nation with church services provided by Baptist and Methodist ministers. In 1908, under the direction of Arthur Gray the Episcopal Church took over the mission and built a designated church building, expanding and converting the original log cabin to a permanent school with an assigned teacher.

The St. Paul’s Episcopal Mission church continues to function as a church for the Monacan people to this day, and in 2008 the Reverend Phyllis Hicks was ordained as the first Monacan Episcopal priest, a role she continued to fill until her death in 2015.

#### NEWS AND UPDATES

##### Upcoming Tribal Events

Please note that all in-person tribal events have been cancelled or suspended at this time due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Tribal meetings are currently being held by conference call, and information on upcoming calls will be posted on the official Monacan Nation website or Facebook page as dates and times are determined. We hope to resume in-person meetings in July.

##### Tribal Office Hours

Please note that the tribal office is currently open only to tribal members and by appointment only. Please call the office if you need to set up an appointment.

#### HISTORY CORNER

July marks 50 years since the purchase of 5.2 acres of land adjacent to the St. Paul’s Episcopal Mission on July 15, 1970, for use as a recreational area. This recreational area will be very familiar to many Monacans as it has become the location for many tribal events including the annual homecoming held each October. The land also features an enclosed children’s play area that is a popular spot among younger Monacans at any tribal gathering. In 1980, ten years after the land was purchased, a parish hall was built. The parish hall today also functions as the tribal center where tribal meetings, cultural classes, meals, and other events are held on a regular basis.

In 1995, the Episcopal church returned this land and additional adjacent land on which the log cabin school, Monacan Ancestral Museum and cabin on the hill are located to the Monacan Indian Nation.

## TRIBAL ELECTIONS

In the next several months, you'll be hearing more about our upcoming tribal elections. While our Chief Kenneth Branham was elected in 2019 and will continue to serve in this role until 2023, there will be several Tribal Council positions to be filled in the upcoming election.

Remember from our May – June newsletter, our Tribal Council is our legislative body. Much like the legislative bodies of state and federal governments, our Tribal Council is responsible for “creating laws, authorizing expenditures, appropriating funds, and conducting oversight of activities carried out by our Chief and tribal government employees.”

According to our Constitution, members of the Tribal Council are voted in for terms of four years. A council member shall be eligible to serve consecutive terms until such time as they may be voted out of office, impeached, or recalled under this Constitution.

Anyone interested in running for a seat on the Tribal Council must meet the following qualifications:

- They must be an enrolled member of the Monacan Nation.
- They must be at least 18 years of age.
- They must be able to attend at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  of all Tribal Council meetings in person, with  $\frac{1}{4}$  of those to be allowed via teleconferencing.
- They must permanently reside within 50 linear miles of the Tribal Center to be eligible for election and must continue to reside within 50 linear miles to remain seated as a Tribal Council member.

We want to make sure that every tribal member has the chance to read our tribal newsletter, so if you know of an older tribal member who needs a printed copy, please let us know. You can leave a message with the tribal office or you can email us at [MonacanNews@gmail.com](mailto:MonacanNews@gmail.com).