



TRIBAL NEWSLETTER

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

With the recent hiring of three individuals, the Monacan Nation now has a fully-staffed tribal office. Teresa Covington continues as the Tribal Enrollment Clerk, and Kaleigh Pollak continues as the Tribal Administrative Assistant. These two ladies have been joined by our new Accounting Manager, Linda Van Tassell, our new Tribal Housing Department Director, Christy Moyers, and our new Tribal Administrator, Adrian Compton.

Each of these individuals is well qualified with many years of experience in their respective fields, and I look forward to working with all of them in tribal business. Now, Monacans and the general public will have one place to call or visit for any inquiries that you or they may have about the tribe. (See their contact information in the Contact Information block below.)

We are all working hard to understand our roles and responsibilities in the tribe. On March 7 – 8, we will have two tribal lawyers, who formerly worked for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, conducting training for all members of the Monacan Tribal Council. I hope to see all Tribal Council members attend this training at Sweet Briar so we can all learn about the responsibilities of the Tribal Council position. Several of our Tribal Council members will also be attending Human Resources training on March 10, 11 and 12.

And lastly, please remember our powwow in May. And use this opportunity to contact the tribal office to see what types of donations are needed.

~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 and studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa or check with your school's financial aid office.

The **American Indian Education Fund Scholarship** provides funding to undergraduate or graduate students attending 2-year or 4-year vocational schools, colleges/universities, or graduate schools. Applications are due April 4, 2020. Full application requirements and additional information regarding this scholarship opportunity can be found at http://www.nativepartnership.org/site/PageServer?pagename=aief_services_scholarships.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Tribal Mailing Address: PO Box 960, Amherst, VA 24521

Monacan Ancestral Museum: 2009 Kenmore Road, Amherst, VA 24521

www.monacannation.com • Facebook: Monacan Indian Nation

Newsletter Submissions: MonacanNews@gmail.com

SPRING PLANTING

The vernal equinox—Thursday, March 19—heralds spring, and with it comes longer days and slowly warming temperatures—the perfect time to think about what vegetables you could grow. Vegetables have fairly specific needs. Some prefer growing in cooler temperatures; some like it hot. Some need ample moisture; others can tolerate drier conditions. When deciding what type of vegetables you'll grow this year, start first by figuring out the average date of the last spring frost in your area. (You can contact your local extension office, or better yet, talk to one of the Monacan elders and learn from their experience.)

Some plants, like beets, carrots, collards, kale, mustard, peas, lettuce, radishes and spinach, are hardier than others and can tolerate some cooler temperatures, so they can be planted before the last spring frost. With careful planning, you can follow these spring plants with summer and fall plants to provide fresh vegetables from your garden in the spring, summer, and fall.

Make sure to locate your garden where it will get about eight hours of sunshine a day. Find a well-drained site out of the wind but not too close to trees, shrubs and buildings. Think about how you'll water your plants when the spring rains stop and the hot, summer days arrive. In learning from our ancestors and continuing our agricultural heritage (see History Corner), we Monacans can carry on the tradition of producing healthy foods for healthy bodies.

IN THE NEWS 2020 Census

Everyone should be receiving 2020 Census information in the mail in the next few weeks.

We recommend members to select “American Indian or Alaska Native” only. Please put in the tribal designation “Monacan Nation”. This will ensure that we are being counted correctly.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our Tribal Office.

<https://my2020census.gov/>

Announcement from Monacan Nation

Powwow Committee

At this time, our Annual Powwow is going forward as scheduled. The Committee will continuously evaluate the Center for Disease Control (CDC) advice and will decide whether or not to postpone the powwow at the beginning of May.

We hope that everyone stays safe and healthy and abides by the CDC advice.

28TH ANNUAL MONACAN INDIAN NATION POWWOW

Saturday, May 16th-Sunday, May 17th

10am-9pm

Grand Entry at Noon

Albert Family Farms

Rt. 130, 6 miles west of Rt. 29 in Elon, VA

Special performances by Native American singers and dancers from across North America, featuring Native American food and crafts.

Host Drum: Red Clay

MC: Keith Colston, Tuscarora/Lumbee

Arena Director: Clark Stewart,
Chickahominy

Contests:

Drum Contest

Men's Contest (18+)

Women's Contest (18+)

Teens Contest (13-17)

Admission:

Adults, \$10

Seniors (62+) and Children (5-12), \$5

Children under 5 are free

Contact the Monacan Tribal Office for more booth and event information.

TRIBAL CONSULTATION

As one would expect, the joys of federal recognition bring with them the realities of tribal responsibilities. Because the tribe is now considered a sovereign nation with a "government-to-government relationship with the United States," (Bureau of Indian Affairs) the tribe must pick up the responsibilities that come along with its own self-government. As Chief Branham noted in his message, the tribe now has a fully-staffed tribal office ready to address some of these responsibilities and training in place for tribal council members so they will better understand their responsibilities.

Tribal Consultation is a Difficult Process

Another tribal responsibility is the tribal consultations that now take place between the tribe and any federal agency when "federal actions, policies, rules, or regulations will directly affect" the tribe. With hundreds of federal agencies and 573 federally recognized tribes in the United States, creating and maintaining an atmosphere of trust and cooperation between those federal agencies and those 573 tribes can prove difficult. Therefore, a recent United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) study released in April, 2019, analyzed input from federal agencies and tribal officials in an attempt to find ways to improve tribal consultation on infrastructure projects such as buildings, roads and power supplies.

In this GAO study, tribes noted that they felt a lack of respect for their sovereignty. They felt like they were contacted too late in the consultation process and that their input "was not adequately considered." The federal agencies, on the other hand, said that they struggled to find up-to-date contact information for all federally recognized tribes; they felt that their own resource

inadequacies hindered tribal consultations; and they found that their task was complicated by having to work with other, sometimes many other, federal agencies on a single project.

Attempts are being made to Improve the Process

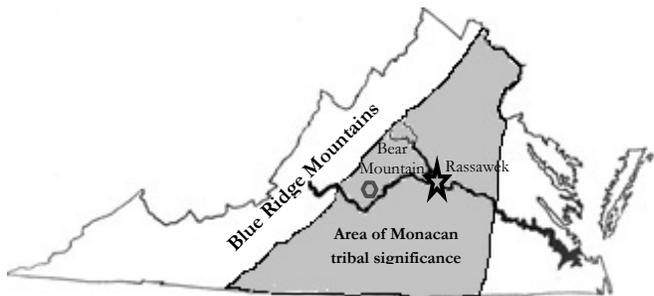
After their review, the Government Accounting Office made several recommendations, one of which was "developing a government-wide system to identify and notify tribes of consultations." Each of the 573 tribes has their own areas of natural and cultural resources, and cataloguing this information for all 573 tribes is an arduous task. However, understanding the need, the Department of Housing and Urban Affairs has already begun compiling tribal contact information along with "geographic areas of interest" for over 500 of the federally recognized tribes. The push now is to have that information catalogued and accessible for all federal agencies to improve the tribal consultation process.

Monacan Representation

Marion Werkheiser and her husband, Greg Werkheiser, of Cultural Heritage Partners law firm, are currently representing the Monacan tribe in two projects where an agency of the federal government is involved—Rassawek and the Mountain Valley Pipeline (Southgate). In the case of Rassawek, the United States Army Corps of Engineers has been asked to issue a permit to the developer (James River Water Authority). Whereas, in the case of the Mountain Valley Pipeline, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is involved in the pipeline permitting process.

Both projects have been identified as potentially impacting areas of Monacan tribal significance and are therefore eligible for input from the tribe in the approval process. And although this does not mean that the tribe will definitely be able to block or prevent either of these projects, our recent federal recognition does increase the significance of our voice in speaking out to preserve these areas of significance when at all possible.

UPCOMING TRIBAL EVENTS		
March 7	Culture Class 2pm	Culture Tribal Hall
March 14	Class 2pm	Tribal Hall
Marh 21	March Tribal Meeting is Cancelled	Tribal Hall
March 28	Culture Class Cancelled	Tribal Hall
April 4	Culture Class 12pm	Tribal Hall
April 11	Culture Class 12pm	Tribal Hall
April 25	Council Meeting 10 am	Tribal Hall
	Tribal Meeting 11am	Tribal Hall



Map showing an approximation of the geographic area of interest for the Monacan tribe historically located between the fall line at Richmond in the east and the Blue Ridge Mountains in the west.

PLACES TO VISIT

Bear Mountain School

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.



Adjacent to the Monacan Ancestral Museum is the original log cabin school used by the Monacan children

who lived at Bear Mountain and the surrounding area until the desegregation of local public schools in the 1960s. Built around 1868, the log cabin originally functioned regularly as a church and occasionally as a school until a permanent church building was built in 1908. That same year, the log cabin was expanded and a permanent teacher was procured, increasing the availability of more regular education to the Monacan children and increasing the school enrollment to 150 students. In 1922, another schoolhouse was added next door to the log cabin and the log cabin began functioning as a soup kitchen where daily lunches were prepared for the children. As the school continued to grow with each new generation of Monacan students, the new schoolhouse building was itself expanded in 1957 and today functions as the Monacan Ancestral Museum.

The original log cabin school is open to visitors of the Monacan Ancestral Museum by appointment only, so visitors should call ahead to schedule an appointment.

HISTORY CORNER

The Monacan Indian Nation has a long history of involvement in agriculture and the use of traditional foods in Monacan cuisine. Historically, the Monacan and Mannahoac tribes, both of Siouan ancestry, lived in the piedmont of Virginia, between the fall line at Richmond in the east to the Blue Ridge Mountains in the west. The tribes hunted local animals including deer, elk, small game, and fish, and raised a variety of crops including the traditional corn, beans, and squash commonly referred to as “The Three Sisters” because of the companion planting technique that allows the beans to climb supported on the stalks of corn while the squash leaves shade the ground beneath and inhibit weed growth. But ancient Monacan agriculture was not limited to these three crops and instead also included the cultivation of grapes, nuts, fruit trees, and sunflowers. In fact, bone analysis of ancient Monacans by archaeologists have revealed that the Monacan diet was presumably very well balanced and nutritious as it resulted in healthy and physically fit tribal members.

In more recent history, many Monacans in the early 20th century worked in the apple orchards surrounding Bear Mountain, some of which have since closed, but others—such as Morris Orchard where Monacans Will and Lil Hamilton lived and worked in a white farmhouse that still stands today—continue to operate. Late on a fall Saturday in October after the Annual Monacan Homecoming, many tribal members can be found frequenting the local orchards to stock up on apples, pumpkins, and other crops for fall and winter use, continuing a tradition of using local food sources in everyday diet.

For more information on Monacan agricultural history and foods, check out the *Monacan Indian Cookbook: A Collection of Contemporary Recipes* published in 1998 by the Monacan Indian Nation Women’s Circle, available for \$15 in the Monacan Ancestral Museum.



We Fight On: Update on JRWA's Meeting Yesterday

Dear Save Rassawek Supporters,

We are humbled and deeply grateful for the incredible turnout at yesterday's James River Water Authority meeting. Despite the intentional access barriers so many of you encountered—the early morning meeting time on a weekday, the gated community location, and the lack of timely notice that the vote was on the agenda—**over 100 people** showed up to provide passionate and informed arguments and to assure the JRWA members that they could still change their course and avert disaster.

The issue before JRWA yesterday was whether to vote to proceed with the plan to destroy Rassawek, the Monacan Nation's historic capital, or to defer that vote to [consider an alternative site the Monacans have identified](#) as worthy of collaborative exploration. JRWA's counsel has insisted that the primary obstacle to considering alternatives was that the Monacans had not yet identified an alternative site they might find acceptable. So, we removed that obstacle (called their bluff) and yesterday was a test of JRWA's integrity—would they take more time now to genuinely consider an alternative or plow ahead despite all of the warnings?

Of the 100 supporters of Save Rassawek who attended, overflowing available seats, 50 rose to speak against the JRWA's plans, while others stood beside them in agreement. Not one person spoke in favor of JRWA's plans. What was so striking was the deep respect citizens of the region afforded to the Monacan people, in contrast to JRWA and its counsel, who, as multiple attendees noted from the podium, repeatedly rolled his eyes while listening to taxpayers' objections.

Louisa County taxpayers who have followed this process for years expressed concerns about the arm twisting and lack of transparency that have characterized this project. Religious and civic leaders passionately argued for the sacred nature of Monacan burials and the Rassawek site. County residents with expertise in environmental quality and civil engineering said they don't believe the project has been well-vetted. We heard from property owners who have been asking for this project to be moved for years only to have been told repeatedly that the decision was already made. Former community elected officials who made their own tough choices urged JRWA to have a change of heart and reverse their misguided efforts to force the project on Rassawek. And, of course, we heard from leaders of multiple tribes who are prepared to fight to preserve their culture, heritage, and the sanctity of their burials, as they have been compelled to do for 400 years.

In the end, ignoring your principled and eloquent warnings, [JRWA voted to proceed on its doomed path](#), requesting that the Army Corps grant federal permission to destroy the sacred village site and burials located at Rassawek. We are disappointed, but not surprised that they did not heed your loud, clear and unanimous message.

As JRWA members voted to ignore you, many in attendance suddenly and silently stood and turned their backs. Some exclaimed in frustration, "Shame, shame." It was an arresting moment. For those unable to be

there today, stay tuned as we work to compile a full video of the two hours of public testimony.

Take heart. We're still in the beginning stages of what we expect to be a long fight. With your support we will continue to oppose JRWA's plans, demand an alternative route or none at all, make the case to Virginia Department of Historic Resources and the Army Corps of Engineers to deny any relevant permits, and fight in every available forum.

Nothing was lost today except perhaps the remaining dignity of the JRWA. Much was gained, however, including new allies in an even stronger and broader coalition committed to seeing right done and wrong thwarted.

We ask that you continue to grow our Save Rassawek movement by talking about the project and what you witnessed yesterday. Your thoughtfulness and commitment are needed to share concerns with the Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of Historic Resources, and Governor Northam. Please contact us if you would like to offer any other assistance or expertise. And [track our collective progress](#).

Thank you for standing in solidarity with the Monacan Indian Nation. Onward.

The Save Rassawek Team

P.S. A personal note from Greg Werkheiser of Cultural Heritage Partners, legal counsel to the Monacan Indian Nation: "Today was one of those days that makes me deeply grateful to be a lawyer. I have been at this law practice for 20 years. I've experienced a lot of public meetings including ones, as here, where communities were offered the false choice between development and destruction of sacred cultural sites. But I've never seen one quite like today. The professionalism, wisdom, eloquence, and fearlessness of the citizenry of Louisa and Fluvanna and surrounding towns and villages in standing up against ignorance and disrespect left me completely awed. Thank you for affirming my faith and the faith of the Monacan people that good folks are found when trouble is near and that we will ultimately prevail. It will be my and my colleagues' privilege to continue to work with and alongside you in the days ahead."

Thank you for standing with the Monacan Indian Nation! The tribe welcomes contributions to their [GoFundMe campaign](#), and please [contact us](#) for information on making a formal expression of support.

Questions? Email Marion Werkheiser, attorney for the Nation, at marion@culturalheritagepartners.com.