



TRIBAL NEWSLETTER

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

In these very unsettling times, please know that we are doing all we can to abide by the necessary social distancing orders. First, the tribal office is open by appointment only for tribal members only. It is not currently open to the general public. Tribal members are asked to please telephone the office if you need to stop by to make sure that someone is there expecting you. (See Contact Information at bottom of page.) Secondly, we canceled our March and April Council Meetings and our May Powwow. Our next regularly scheduled Tribal Meeting will be in June, assuming that the social distancing orders are lifted by then. And, we continue to look at the possibility of rescheduling our Powwow for later in the year.

We are continuing to carry on our tribal business as best we can in the current situation. Several have been taking

important online training that will help the tribe. We have also been applying for grants for tribal use.

I am happy to report that, before the social distancing orders went into place, the Monacan Tribal Council training in early March went well. Input from the consultants was very helpful, and we are continuing to talk with them about possible future programs that they could help us with such as establishing a once-a-month free clinic and creating a Monacan judicial system.

Thankfully, as of early April, I was not aware that any Monacans had the coronavirus. But please, continue to abide by the orders, stay inside, and remember to call and check on those around you—especially the elderly and the less fortunate.

~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 **Association on American Indian Affairs Scholarship** provides funding to undergraduate or graduate students who are tribal members of a federally or non-federally recognized tribe, have a 2.5 GPA or better, and are enrolled as a full time student and working towards an Associate's, Bachelor's, or Graduate Degree at an accredited institution. Applications become available on May 15 are due June 30, 2020. Full application requirements and additional information regarding this scholarship opportunity can be found at <https://www.indian-affairs.org/scholarships.html>.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Tribal Office: 357 South Main Street, Amherst, VA 24521 • (434) 363-4864

TribalOffice@MonacanNation.com

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

MONACAN FOOD BANK

Sally Latimer and her mother, Lucy Curry, are coordinating efforts behind the Monacan Food Bank housed in the Tribal Hall, but they don't work alone. Matthew Latimer, Sally's husband, and Jennifer Austin work alongside the two women to help distribute food to needy Monacans and other local community members in Amherst and the surrounding counties. If you, or someone you know, needs food, please contact the Monacan Food Bank at 434-207-2161 for instruction on what you need to do.

The Blue Ridge Food Bank provides close to 98% of the food distributed through the Monacan Food Bank. And while income requirements have been relaxed during the current COVID19 pandemic, the Monacan Food Bank will still need to know the name, address, birthdate, and phone number of the person requesting help, as well as the names and birthdates of all household members. This information provides

important statistics as to who the Food Bank is serving. For instance, on March 27, the Monacan Food Bank served 9 seniors (age 62+), 44 adults, and 30 children from 27 families.

According to current COVID19 guidelines, once you contact the Monacan Food Bank and give them your information, you'll be given an appointment date and time. Then you'll be instructed to stop at the Tribal Hall to pick up your boxed food items that will be waiting for you. All you have to do is ring the doorbell to let them know you're there.

For those with computer access, visit the Monacan Food Bank Facebook page for the most current changes and updates to the food bank guidelines. www.Facebook.com/MonacanFoodBank

NATIVE GRAIN

Originating in the Americas, corn, one of our most important grains and a longtime staple of native diets, is relatively easy to grow and very versatile. The five main varieties grown today differ by the characteristics of the corn's endosperm (the main part of the kernel). Both popcorn and flint corn have a hard endosperm which makes popcorn ideal for popping and flint corn—being “as hard as flint”—good for coarsely ground grits and polenta. Flour corn has a mostly soft endosperm perfect for grinding into fine corn meals. Dent corn, used mostly for animal feeds, has both hard and soft endosperm that dry differently (giving the kernel its characteristic “dent”). And lastly, sweet corn has a sugary component to its endosperm and is grown to be eaten fresh for its delicious kernel.

While people are most familiar with growing sweet corn (for themselves) and dent corn (for their animals), it's not too difficult to grow some of the other corn varieties, if one can locate seeds. Unusually high demand, this year, has caused many seed companies to stop taking phone and online orders, so you'll want to check your local stores to see what varieties they have available. Once you've located some seed, use the following tips to help you and your family grow your own corn, maintaining the long tradition of Monacan agriculture.

PLANT

Because it is wind-pollinated, corn cross-pollinates easily, so keep a good distance (250 feet) between the different types of corn, or plant so there's 2-week intervals between harvests.

While popcorn, flint corn and dent corn may be planted earlier, wait to plant sweet corn until after the danger of frost is past. Plant your sweet corn in several short rows rather than fewer long rows to aid pollination.

CARE

Corn is a heavy feeder; so side dress with 3 tablespoons 10-10-10 fertilizer per 10 feet of row when plants are 12 to 18 inches tall.

Corn matures during the drier summer months, so mulch your corn plants from pollination to harvest to ensure your plants get enough moisture to develop full ears.

HARVEST

Sweet corn is usually ready for harvest about 20 days after the first silks appear. Feel for full ears and test individual kernels by poking to see if the liquid has a “milky” appearance.

Sweet corn should be eaten shortly after harvesting because its sugar quickly converts to starch

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.

Sources: New Mexico, South Dakota, and Virginia Cooperative Extension

TRIBAL SELF- DETERMINATION

Forty-five years ago, after years of assimilating tribal members and terminating tribes, Congress enacted **Public Law 93-638 the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975 (ISDEAA)**. This federal policy, championed by President Richard Nixon, advanced self-determination and self-governance for federally-recognized tribes. As Nixon told Congress on July 8, 1970, “The time has come to break decisively with the past and to create the conditions for a new era in which the Indian future is determined by Indian acts and Indian decisions.”

Several significant amendments by subsequent administrations have strengthened the original act’s intention of tribal self-determination and self-governance—especially the Indian Self-Determination and Education Act Amendments of 1994 (or the Tribal Self-Governance Act). According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, tribes now not only have the right to form their own governments, they also have the right to “make and enforce laws, both civil and criminal; to tax; to establish and determine membership (i.e., tribal citizenship); to license and regulate activities within their jurisdiction; to zone; and to exclude persons from tribal lands.”

Strommer and Osborne in their article titled “The History, Status, and Future of Tribal Self-Governance under the ISDEAA” found that Public Law 93-638 with its subsequent amendments has helped tribes with the decisions and skills necessary to be self-determining and self-governing. Tribes decide which programs and services are most needed at the local level and contract with the federal government (using “638 contracts”) for the funds necessary to meet those needs. By bringing these decisions to the local level, the tribe continues to develop important skills necessary for sustaining a strong and determined tribal government in keeping with the intent of the ISDEAA passed forty-five years ago.

NEWS AND UPDATES

Upcoming Tribal Events

Please note that all tribal events, including the 28th Annual Monacan Indian Nation Powwow originally scheduled for May 16-17, have been cancelled or suspended at this time due to the COVID-19 outbreak and current Virginia shelter in place orders.

Tribal meetings and activities are currently scheduled to resume in June, but please check the Monacan

What Does Tribal Government Look Like?

How does a tribe carry out self-determining and self-governing activities? As you can imagine, there is great variability within the 573 federally recognized tribes. According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, “Many tribes have constitutions, others operate under articles of association or other bodies of law, and some have found a way to combine their traditional systems of government within a modern governmental framework. Some do not operate under any of these acts, but are nevertheless organized under documents approved by the Secretary of the Interior. Contemporary tribal governments are usually, but not always, modeled upon the federal system of the three branches: Legislative, Executive, and Judicial.

The chief executive presides over the tribe’s legislative body and executive branch. In modern tribal government, the chief executive and members of the tribal council or business committee are almost always elected.

A tribe’s legislative body is usually called a tribal council, a village council, or a tribal business committee. It is comprised of tribal members who are elected by eligible tribal voters. In some tribes, the council is comprised of all eligible adult tribal members. Although some tribes require a referendum by their members to enact laws, a tribal council generally acts as any other legislative body in creating laws, authorizing expenditures, appropriating funds, and conducting oversight of activities carried out by the chief executive and tribal government employees. An elected tribal council and chief executive, recognized as such by the Secretary of the Interior, have authority to speak and act for the tribe, and to represent it in negotiations with federal, state, and local governments.

Furthermore, many tribes have established, or are building, their judicial branch – the tribal court system – to interpret tribal laws and administer justice.” As Chief Branham mentioned in his message, with the executive and legislative portions of Monacan tribal government in place, the tribe is currently talking with consultants about creating a tribal judicial system—modeling Monacan tribal government after the US federal system.

PLACES TO VISIT

Virginia Indian Archive

There are multiple locations throughout Amberst 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.



Image courtesy of the Virginia Indian Archive <http://www.virginiaindianarchive.org>.

The Virginia Indian Archive is an online collection of historical resources related to Virginia's Native American Tribes including photographs, audio/visual files, and historical articles. It is a collaborative effort between the Virginia Indian Heritage Program and the Virginia Humanities and was begun in 2011 with funding provided by Dominion Power and the Mary Morton Parsons Foundation. The archive is searchable using the search bar on the home page, and resources can also be sorted by tribe.

There are currently over 45 items in the archive related specifically to the Monacan Indian Nation. These include historic photographs of Monacan tribal members, transcripts of radio programs and interviews with tribal members, digitized copies of articles from the Monacan Ancestral Museum's collection, and photographs of Monacan historical sites, handiwork, and recent events.

The Virginia Indian Archive can be viewed online at <http://www.virginiaindianarchive.org>.

HISTORY CORNER

Thirty years ago in 1990, the Monacan Tribe received a grant from the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and Public Policy—today known as Virginia Humanities—to research the tribe's history through the Monacan Indian Heritage Project. Phyllis Hicks served as director of the project and was assisted by Chief Ronnie Branham, Dr. Jeffrey Hantman of UVA, Mary Lou Hultgren of the Hampton University Museum, and Mary Zoller of the Virginia Council on Indians, Helen Roundtree of Old Dominion University, and the Monacan Project Tribal Committee. The brochure, *The Monacan: Reclaiming a Heritage*, and a portable museum display were both results of this project.

In 1993, the tribe received another grant from the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities to begin development of a museum. With additional funding from the Sweetgrass Foundation and the Easley Foundation and with the return of the land surrounding the Bear Mountain Mission to the Monacan Tribe by the Episcopal Church in 1995, the Monacan Ancestral Museum was opened in the building that had once served as a school for the Monacan children. The adjacent log cabin school building has since been renovated and serves as an additional exhibit for the museum.

In 1997, Sharon Bryant created a video documentary on the history of the Monacan Tribe with support from the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and the Virginia Folklife Program as well as funding from the Jessie Ball duPont Fund and the National Endowment for the Humanities. The video aired on Charlottesville cable television and was made available for purchase in VHS form.

All of these projects over the past 30 years, as well as many additional projects both large and small undertaken by tribal members, have helped to collect and preserve pieces of Monacan Tribal History and present it in a way that is more easily shared with others. A sign outside the Monacan Ancestral Museum states: "History Preserved is Knowledge Gained." By preserving our history, we can better share that history with our children and our children's children so that the history of the Monacan Indian Nation and the stories of our ancestors can be remembered for generations to come. Hopefully in this way we can learn from the experiences of the past as we move forward into the future as the Monacan Indian Nation.