

Monacan Indian Nation



October 2021

## Tribal Newsletter

### A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

I hope you all are well and that you continue to do what you can to stay safe from the COVID virus.

We have so many things going on that we are happy to share with you. The groundbreaking ceremony for the new Indian Health Services Clinic on our Highview Monacan Community Center site was held on **Wednesday, October 20**. This new facility will provide both medical and dental services. And, for those in need, we will be able to offer transportation to the clinic with our medical transport system. To learn more about this, please call our office.

Also, the permits have been filed for two new modular buildings that will give us an elder center, some teaching space and additional office space at our Highview Monacan Community Center. Once the area has been

cleared, we hope to have those buildings installed and fully operational sometime in the spring.

We are also happy to tell you that we were able to purchase the Laurel Cliff Farm in Monroe near High Peak Road and Route 29 using money given to us by the federal government for economic development. We continue to have tribal discussions on the ways that we can use this land to improve the Monacan Nation. Please let us know if you have any ideas. And, feel free to email our tribal administrator, Adrian Compton, with any questions you may have. Our next tribal meeting is November 20.

*~Chief Kenneth Branham*

### SCHOLARSHIP HIGHLIGHT

The EGIA Foundation Scholarship is available to students pursuing an HVAC technical education. This \$2,500 scholarship can be used at a community college, technical or vocational school, or approved technical institution. The application period for the 2022-2023 academic year started on October 1 and ends on February 1, 2022. Students must have a minimum GPA of 2.0, and preference is given to high school seniors and students age 26 and younger. For more information visit: <https://egiafoundation.org/what-we-do/scholarship>

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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## Monacan Nation Purchases Laurel Cliff Farm

When talk about purchasing Laurel Cliff Farm first started, tribal members began circulating development ideas for the property—ideas like using the site for a drug and alcohol rehabilitation center, a retirement center, a day care facility, a youth center, a wedding venue, and a location for affordable housing. Each of these ideas and any other ideas that might be suggested, however, need to be evaluated as to how well they fit into the tribe’s overall development plans for the 1,294-acre site.



Amherst County real estate map showing boundary of newly acquired Laurel Cliff Farm off High Peak Road, State Route 636.

The farm, which is currently zoned for agricultural use, has about 575 acres of pasture, 715 acres of woodlands, a large pond, and several homes and barns. While some tribal members have asked about using the farm for hunting and fishing this year, tribal leaders have asked that **no one use the property for hunting and fishing at this time** for the safety of those currently living on and farming the property.

To go about creating a plan for future use of the property, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Office of Indian Economic Development offers several suggestions. First, the BIA suggests that tribes **create a strong comprehensive community plan by pulling together tribal government members and tribal citizens to discuss** “where their (tribal) community has been, where it is now, and what it should be for future generations.”

Next, the BIA suggests that development goals consider **“how a tribal society’s values and identity can be permanently preserved”** without having the tribe “engage in any development strategy that conflicts with its basic principles.”



Two-story brick manor house on Laurel Cliff Farm.

The BIA then recommends **bringing in a trained consultant from outside the tribe who has the expertise and experience to help the tribe evaluate potential business ideas.** Each development idea should be evaluated to determine its feasibility based on, for one thing, tribal resources like work force, transportation system, water and sewage systems, and electric system, as well as available communication networks.



View of pasture land on Laurel Cliff Farm.

Lastly, the BIA suggests that tribal leaders work to **ensure that the “entire tribal economy benefit from economic development”** by considering how the

different development ideas can be linked to support one another, to use the same infrastructural resources, and to provide a quality product or service that the local community needs and wants to purchase.

Tribal leaders and staff are busy recording member suggestions for development of the Laurel Cliff Farm, but everyone recognizes that creating a successful comprehensive community plan to benefit the entire Monacan tribal community will take time. The purchase of the farm was made with federal funding given to the tribe and designated for economic development aimed at improving the tribe’s standard of living without losing the tribe’s identity by compromising Monacan tribal values—values like hard work and perseverance that have helped many Monacans live productive and good lives despite the struggles they have faced.

### Monacan Indian Nation Food Bank Gets Greenhouse



New greenhouse at Highview Monacan Community Center in Madison Heights.

As evening temperatures begin to drop, the Monacan Indian Nation Food Bank continues harvesting their garden’s final offerings—tomatoes, peppers, and greens. Meanwhile, the food bank’s latest addition, the greenhouse pictured above, stands ready and waiting to help extend the current growing season and to help get a jumpstart on next spring’s growing season.

The food bank will also be hosting food drives this fall so they will have an ample supply of holiday foods, like pumpkin pie filling, cranberry sauce, green beans, instant mashed potatoes, and cake mixes to offer their patrons. Check out the Monacan Indian Nation Food Bank Facebook page for information on collection dates for those holiday food donations.

### Monacan Medical Transport Grant Renewed

The Monacan medical transport system has been very successful in providing transportation for tribal member medical appointments and other health-related needs. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has renewed the grant to cover the cost of those services for another year, at which time the new Indian Health Services clinic should be open and seeing patients.

If you have health-related transportation needs or you need a ride to get groceries, please contact Brooke at the tribal office to schedule an appointment with the transport system.

### Homecoming Canceled, but Tribal Members Come Through with Financial Support



Photo showing final stitches being added to the 2021 Virginia quilt—a hand-embroidered cornerstone of the annual homecoming at St. Paul’s church.

On Saturday, October 2, the hollow around St. Paul’s Episcopal Mission was relatively quiet as concern over

rising rates of COVID-19 infections caused church vestry to cancel the annual homecoming again this year. Once tribal members learned of the cancellation, though, they called in their canned goods and baked goods orders, anyway, making this another successful year for the tribe.

The money from the sale of canned goods, baked goods, and this year’s handmade items (including the 2021 embroidered Virginia quilt and a wolf lamp) goes towards the continued support of St. Paul’s Mission church—a long-standing part of Monacan history. With the homecoming canceled, however, the Monacan Museum, which also benefits from homecoming visitors, saw little traffic.

The Museum has many Monacan items for sale, some of which are handmade by tribal members. Give a call or plan a visit to the museum to learn about the variety of items now being sold in the Monacan Museum Gift Shop.

## Groundbreaking Ceremony for Indian Health Services Clinic



Tribal members, federal government representatives, and a representative from the construction company carrying out the work sink their shovels in at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Indian Health Services clinic.

Tribal members gathered at the Highview Monacan Community Center in Madison Heights on Wednesday, October 20, to celebrate the groundbreaking ceremony for the new 13,000 square foot Indian Health Services Clinic that will offer a host of medical services. The clinic will provide health care for federally-recognized tribal members from across the country.

Work on the new facility should begin in November with the demolition of the barber shop building and the Aqua Pools building adjacent to the community center. Indian Health Services will run the clinic and hopes to employ 23 individuals with medical and administrative backgrounds from the following fields:

- primary care
- behavioral health
- dentistry
- pharmacy
- medical laboratory
- diabetes prevention & management
- nutrition
- community health
- public health

Once available, job postings for the new Indian Health Services clinic can be found at [www.USAJOBS.gov](http://www.USAJOBS.gov)

## I Want To Help

Two ways you can help this fall:

- donate holiday food items to the Monacan Indian Nation Food Bank (contact: Sally Latimer)
- cut and deliver firewood to elders in the community (contact: Pam Thompson)

