

Monacan Indian Nation



April 2021

Tribal Newsletter

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

I hope all of you are healthy and continue to do what you can to stay safe. It is important that we all do our part to keep ourselves safe and keep others safe and healthy, too.

After a few updates and a bit of painting, we've now moved our administrative offices and food bank to our new Highview Monacan Community Center located at 111 Highview Drive in Madison Heights, Virginia. Senator Tim Kaine attended our ribbon cutting ceremony back in mid-February.

We are very proud of our new facility and look forward to ways that we can use this facility to help Monacan tribal members and our community. Although someone is usually in the office Monday – Friday, we are still asking that you call to make an appointment since we are limiting the number of people in the office at one time to keep everyone safe.

The Monacan Indian Nation Food Bank is also located at the community center and offers food assistance to tribal members and to local community members. Please telephone them to set up an appointment so our staff there can keep you safe as they serve your specific needs.

And while our food bank is helping to meet physical needs, we are offering classes at our new community center to meet other needs. See the brochure inside for information on the classes we are now offering. We hope to continue offering these and other classes so our tribal members can find good jobs.

Don't let the month get away from you without voting. We will be electing 7 members of our Monacan Tribal Council. You should be getting a packet in the mail with information on those running for office. I encourage you to open it immediately and read through the information. In-person voting will be held at the Monacan Nation Museum on Kenmore Road (Amherst) on Saturday, April 24, from 8 am – 4 pm. If you will not be able to make it to the Museum to vote that day, you must complete an absentee ballot. Please call our administrative offices if you have not received your voting packet in the mail.

We have been busy working for our people. Please do your part by staying safe, checking in on those who may need your help, and please vote in our upcoming election.

~Chief Kenneth Branham

SCHOLARSHIP HIGHLIGHT

April is typically tax time. Remember you will need your tax filing information when you apply for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). For more information on the FAFSA visit studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa or check with your school's financial aid office. Completion of FAFSA is required for many financial-aid based scholarships.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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

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Monacan Indian Nation Food Bank • (434) 300-5055 Ext. 109

Monacan Indian Nation Tribal Newsletter Submissions: MonacanNews@gmail.com

We've Moved!



Our New Administrative Offices

With the purchase of the Highview Monacan Community Center (pictured above), most of the tribe's daily goings-on moved from the rented space in Amherst or the tribal hall on Kenmore Road to the community center at Madison Heights (**see Contact Info on page 1**). Back on Kenmore Road—the heart of our nation—the tribal hall, the Monacan Indian Museum, and the cabin on the hill still remain a very important part of who we are as the Monacan Indian Nation, so care is being taken to ensure that these facilities are properly maintained.



Understanding Our Non-Profit Side

Our tribe is broken into two distinct parts—Monacan Indian Nation, our federal side, and the Monacan Nation Cultural Foundation, Inc., our non-profit 501(c)(3) side. The tribal hall, tribal museum, and the cabin on the hill all fall within the 501(c)(3) entity and are being managed by their own board. Diane Shields

is Board Chair; Matt Latimer is Secretary; and Lindsey Gunther serves as Treasurer. Sally Latimer and Chief Kenneth Branham are also members of the board, and other Monacans attend the board's monthly meetings.

Besides making sure that the insurance, utilities, and taxes are paid on all these facilities at the heart of our nation, the board also has responsibility for maintenance of those facilities. Recently, the board had the cabin bathrooms outfitted to enable handicap access. The board also initiated some updating in the tribal hall kitchen which included some new cabinets, flooring and paint. The board also plans to replace the ramp alongside the tribal hall, replace windows in the tribal hall, and replace the roof on the cabin sometime in the future.

The board meets monthly to make these decisions for our tribe's 501(c)(3) non-profit entity, but they cannot fulfill their mission of caring for these treasured facilities unless we all fulfill ours. For those who are able, the Monacan Nation Cultural Foundation, Inc. suggests that each tribal member make an annual donation of \$52.00 to pay for the expenses of maintaining these buildings and preserving our history.

When you're ready to do your part, there are two ways to make your tax deductible donation. You can contribute to the **Monacan Nation Cultural Foundation, Inc.**

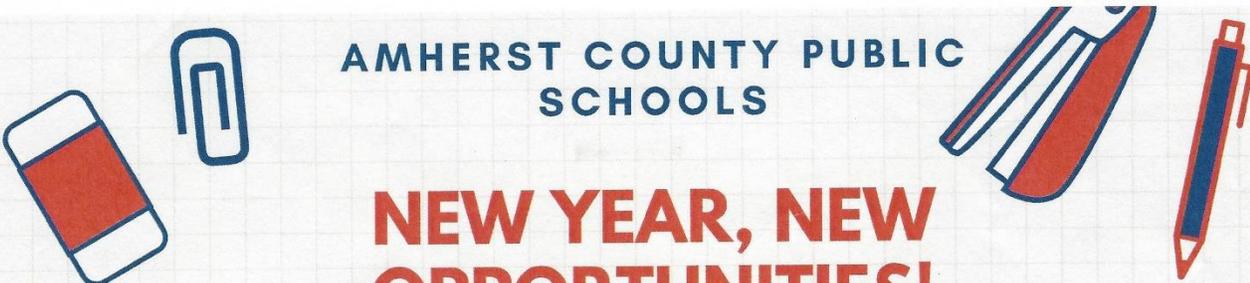
- **Through Paypal** www.monacannation.com
- **By check** mailed to the foundation at
PO Box 1136, Madison Heights, VA 24572

History of our Monacan Logo

Back in the 1990s, shortly after our tribe received state recognition, Sue Elliott designed and drew a tribal logo depicting a bear superimposed on the state of Virginia. Sue gave that design to the tribe, and the tribe has now updated and copyrighted the original design to protect its symbolism. The black bear represents, of course, Bear Mountain—the heart of the Monacan Indian Nation; the three crooked arrows were the tribal mark placed on the shoulder of tribal members to distinguish them from other tribal members when they traveled outside their home area; the inner circle of the logo is evenly divided by four different colored lines of equal length—red, yellow, black and white—signifying the four compass directions and all peoples from around the world.

History Preserved is Knowledge Gained

Monacan Indian Museum



**AMHERST COUNTY PUBLIC
SCHOOLS**

**NEW YEAR, NEW
OPPORTUNITIES!**

FREE GED Classes & Blended Learning Classes

**Beginning April 1st every Tuesday and
Thursday from 6:00pm-8:00pm.**

**Location: Monacan Community Center in
the community room**

111 Highview Madison Heights

We also offer:

Adult Education/GED

NEDP

VA Workforce

Career Essentials

ESOL

Reading help or Basic Computer Skills

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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ADULT EDUCATION LOCAL COORDINATOR

(434) 455-5940 EXT. 120 OR (434) 515-5160



Monacan Indian Nation Helps Others

The Monacan Indian Nation Food Bank logo uses the same four-color concept as seen in our tribal logo—red, yellow, black and white—in its four hands pointing in different directions to represent people from around the world and to say that *we are here to help everyone*.

New Location for Monacan Food Bank

Years ago, the Monacan Indian Nation Foodbank started in the basement of a tribal member, and later moved to a room in the tribal hall before landing in its current location as part of the Monacan Highview Community Center complex (**see Contact Info on page 1**). At its new location, the Food Bank not only has space for dry goods, but also has space for new freezers, refrigerators and much-needed office space for its three full-time employees and its volunteer staff.



Staff and volunteers outside the new food bank location

The Monacan Indian Nation Food Bank works with the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank (which is affiliated with Feeding America), to get food to those in need. Some food items are donated, some are purchased and some are provided through programs with the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture). Through their affiliation with Feeding America, the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank has access to food donations from corporate sponsors such as grocery stores and food manufacturers. These corporate donations plus food donated by food growers themselves make up more than half of all the food distributed by Blue Ridge Area Food Bank to the local food banks, like ours.



Stocked shelves in our food bank

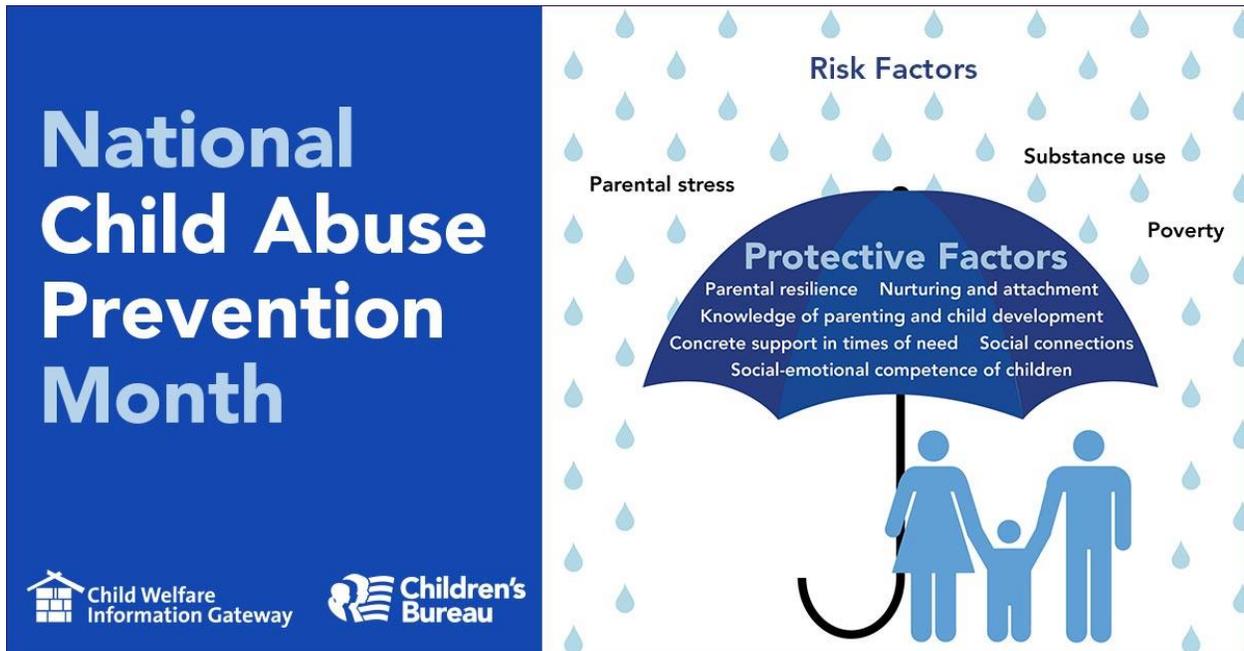


New freezers in the food bank

April's Areas of Outreach

In addition to the foods supplied through the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank, our food bank applies for grants, hosts fundraisers, and highlights areas in which we can help meet the needs of our neighbors. During the month of April, the Monacan Indian Nation Food Bank is raising awareness for **Child Abuse Prevention**.

Monacan Indian Nation Food Bank is selling face masks as a fundraiser not only for the food bank but also to raise awareness of the threats and violence that many native women and girls face.



Children are a gift and a responsibility, and as such, should be treated accordingly. They must be fed wholesome foods when they are hungry. They must be allowed to play indoors and outdoors in safety. They must be read to to encourage them to think. They must be spoken to and nurtured in a way that lets them know they are loved.

When signing the original proclamation establishing April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month, President Ronald Reagan reminded everyone that “the health and well-being of our children underlie the future of our Nation.” Let us all take our responsibility to these little ones seriously.

Another topic the Monacan Indian Nation Food Bank wants to bring to our attention during the month of April is the **Murdered & Missing Indigenous Women (MMIW)** program. From the Child Abuse Prevention Campaign we learn that poverty, substance use and parental stress can often lead to dangerous situations for children; these same risk factors can lead to dangerous situations for women, as well. The

How can you help ensure that our Monacan families thrive and that our women and children remain safe? Look around you. Be attentive. Reach out to those who might be struggling. Offer encouragement. Offer help when you see it's needed. Set a good example yourself.

For more information on the Child Abuse Prevention campaign or on the Murdered & Missing Indigenous Women programs, please contact the Monacan Indian Nation Food Bank.

Monacan Indian Health Center

The morning dawned overcast and dreary. We jumped into our vehicle to make our way to the Monacan Indian Health Center in Madison Heights. The phone call the day before let us know that the health center would be hosting another vaccination clinic today.



Upon arrival at the center, we were met by a masked greeter who politely pointed us to a set of double doors that led into a long, concrete building that adjoined the brick administrative building for the Monacan Indian Nation. Just inside the door, we were pleasantly greeted once again at the check-in table. After listening to our instructions and taking the paperwork to be completed, we were then shown to our seats by Lucy Curry, a Monacan who is employed by Mid-Atlantic Indian Health Service out of Richmond.

Lucy has been working with Indian Health Services to offer the vaccination clinics. This is the third one she's overseen, and it's directed at 50- and 60-year-olds. She's already had two other clinics to vaccinate 70-, 80-, and 90-year-old tribal members.

We take our seats and look around the room. We're one of the last ones to be seated. The chairs are safely spaced throughout most of the building. There are chairs for clients waiting to get vaccinated, and there are chairs for those who've received their vaccine and are waiting to be dismissed. We open our folders and begin completing the paperwork. Our answers to the questions help the pharmacist know whether or not we are at risk for having a reaction to the vaccine.

A pharmacist from the US Public Health Service (US PHS) sits in the corner of the room near a private area to administer the vaccines. When my turn comes, I take my seat, and he asks me a few questions about my responses to the paperwork that I've completed. He speaks quietly and calmly and asks if I have any questions; he then tells me what to expect after I receive

today's vaccine. After he administers the vaccine, I sit for 15 minutes just to make sure that I will not have a reaction.

Meanwhile, Lucy is busy trying to make sure that she's lined up enough people to take full advantage of all of the vials of vaccine that have been opened that day. She knows that the vaccine once opened must be used within hours. The Public Health Service pharmacist traveled over from Richmond and will not be administering any vaccines once he leaves the Madison Heights site, so Lucy works hard to get the vaccination schedule filled. So far, she has managed to get 81 people vaccinated during the three clinics that she's overseen this year.

Today's visit gives us a glimpse of what to expect from the proposed Indian Health Services clinic to be operational sometime in the future. Plans are already underway and work on the clinic will hopefully start soon. Until then, Lucy plans to be telephoning more Monacans as soon as she is able to offer another vaccination clinic. Her goal is to be able to offer the vaccine to all those over the age of eighteen who want to get it.

Upcoming Elections

By now, hopefully you have received your packet of information for the upcoming election for tribal council members. 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."

If, by chance, you have not received your packet, please contact the tribal office as soon as possible. Your packet will outline the specific details for voting in person or for voting by absentee ballot, if you are not able to vote in person at the Monacan Museum on Saturday, April 24.

Election results will be reported in our next newsletter.