

ONKWE'TA:KE

THE MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE NEWSLETTER

Volume 11 Issue 1

FREE

Tsiothohrhkó:wa/January 2022

2021 YEAR IN REVIEW



The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne would like to share the different events and services that were provided to the community in 2021 throughout this issue of Onkwe'ta:ke. We are thankful to all of the programs, staff, council and community members who worked hard, particularly with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We hope that everyone has a safe and happy 2022!

UPCOMING MCA MEETINGS & SPECIAL DATES:

JANUARY GENERAL MEETING

A Zoom General Meeting will be held on January 27, 2021 at 6 p.m.

Please send an email to meetings@akwesasne.ca to receive a link to watch the video.

You can also send any questions you may have to meetings@akwesasne.ca as well.

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE 2021-2024

Grand Chief

Abram Benedict

Kana:takon District

Chief Cindy Francis-Mitchell

Chief Ryan Jacobs

Chief Julie Phillips-Jacobs

Chief Tim Thompson

Kawehno:ke District

Chief Vanessa Adams

Chief Jackie Benedict

Chief Edward Roundpoint

Chief Vince Thompson

Tsi Snaihne District

Chief April Adams-Phillips

Chief Sarah Lee Sunday-Diabo

Chief JoAnn Swamp

Chief Dwayne Thomas

Administration

Heather Phillips

Executive Director

Leslie Papineau

A/Director,

Department of Infrastructure,

Housing & Environment

Joyce King

Director,

Akwesasne Justice Department

Joseph "Joey" Morin-Lauzon

Director,

Department of

Community and Social Services

Amber Montour

Director,

Department of Health

Donna Lahache

Director,

Akwesasne Mohawk Board

of Education

Shawn Dulude

Chief of Police,

Akwesasne Mohawk Police

Service

Kylee Tarbell

A/Director,

Tehotienawakon

WAT'KWANONHWERA:TON/GREETINGS



She:kon/Wat'kwanonhwera:ton,

The MCA Communications Team is proud to bring you a new issue of our print newsletter, Onkwe'ta:ke. The name Onkwe'ta:ke means "For the people" and the newsletter is our way of reporting MCA news and information to those we are serving...you, the people. MCA prides itself on transparency and accountability, and the news and reports in the pages to follow are MCA's attempt to ensure you receive informative and helpful news.

There is always a lot to learn about Council and the MCA departments, so we hope you find the newsletter both interesting and useful. We look forward to sharing our most valuable news with you in this format, and welcome you to provide feedback or suggestions by emailing our team at communications@akwesasne.ca.

FIVE THINGS

OUR MONTHLY LIST OF FACTS, REMINDERS & IMPORTANT MESSAGES

1

Effective January 5, 2022 at 12:01 a.m. in Ontario, social gatherings and events will be limited to up to five people indoors and up to 10 people outdoors for social gatherings. When outdoors, there are no limits for public events but physical distancing is strongly recommended.

2

In the month of January, the MCA Community Health Program has several vaccine clinics scheduled at the Kanonhkwa'tsheri:io Health Facility. To book an appointment or for more information, please contact the Community Health Program at 613-575-2341 ext. 3220, visit the MCA Facebook Page or visit the MCA website at www.akwesasne.ca.

3

Due to the increasing rates of COVID-19 in the community, all visits to the MCA organization must be made by appointment only.

4

The Seaway International Bridge Corporation (toll booth) has resumed "no contact" passage for Akwesasne card holders. This is an effort to continue to protect travelers, community members and SIBC Staff.

5

The Eastern Ontario Health Unit (EOHU) updated its public health measures and guidance as the number of Omicron variant COVID-19 cases across the province rapidly rises. Changes were made to: Testing Guidelines; Isolation Period; Fourth Doses will be made available to long-term care residents; Return to Class after Winter Break; and limiting the spread of COVID-19 in Large Indoor Settings. Please visit akwesasne.ca or eohu.ca for more information.

NEWS

2021—YEAR IN REVIEW

As 2022 has officially arrived, we want you to take a look at all of the things that took place in 2021 throughout the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne.

We can't talk about 2020 without discussing COVID-19. On March 16, 2020 the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe declared a state of emergency due to the ongoing global pandemic. In 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continued, and as we reflect back, we want to thank all of the community members and neighbours who adhered to our regulations in order to ensure the safety of Akwesasronon.

Nia:wen to you all in doing your part.

A big niawenhko:wa also goes out to the essential staff and front line workers who had to work during the shutdown to ensure services were provided to the community.

It has been a trying year to say the least, but through all the obstacles there were still a lot of great things happening. The community of Akwesasne certainly knows how to come together and it was more important than ever for everyone to come together during these times.

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne wishes you and your family a safe and healthy 2022 as we strive to continue providing services to the community.

MCA FIBRE-TO-THE-HOME BEGINS IN TSI SNAIHNE

Fibre-to-the-Home construction began in January 2021 in the district of Tsi Snaihne. The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne thanks the on-site crew (Ontario East, DirectBore, DTC Trucking and various MCA programs) for their hard work and dedication to the project. We would also like to say nia:wen to the community for their patience and understanding as the service providers work to complete the construction.



NEWS

BACKPACK FULL OF SUPPLIES DELIVERED TO HOMELESS AKWESASRONON

In early 2021, concerned community members informed the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne that there were several Akwesasronon who are living homeless in Cornwall. Council, together with the Akwesasne Child and Family Services, the Community Support Program, the Akwesasne Family and Wellness Program, the Wholistic Health and Wellness Program, as well as Unity Street in Cornwall, created backpacks that contained personal items, COVID-19 care supplies, gift cards and resources to assist Akwesasronon in need. Seven Dancers Coalition provided sage and water bottles for each backpack. Also included is the Community Contribution Application for Akwesasronon to apply for further monetary assistance.

On January 22, 2021, Chief Vanessa Adams, Chief April Adams-Phillips, AMPS Community Service Officer Norman King and representatives from Unity Street in Cornwall safely distributed these backpacks to Akwesasronon in Cornwall.



COVID-19 PRE-REGISTRATION

In January 2021, the Department of Health (DOH) offered pre-registration for the COVID-19 vaccine.

The initial roll out of the vaccine began with long-term care facilities residents and staff having received the

first dose.

Nia:wen to everyone who did their part to get their vaccination!

SRMT & MCA SHARE CONDOLENCES FOR COVID-19 COMMUNITY DEATHS

Since January 2021, in the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne jurisdiction, there have been 12 COVID-19 related fatalities and for the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe jurisdiction, there have been 6 COVID-19 related fatalities. We offer our deepest and sincere condolences to the family and friends of those who have passed. There are no words that can be provided to lift the sorrow that you are feeling at this moment. Please know however, that we feel your loss and share our most heartfelt thoughts and prayers.

Those losses made the early weeks of the new year difficult and painful. We extend our gratitude to those who are continuing to risk their own health in order to care for our community members. We also extend appreciation to all those who are continuing to be vigilant in practicing COVID-19 precautions, which helps to keep our entire community safe.

Our sincere wishes for speedy recoveries is extended to all those who are battling COVID-19.

NEWS

COVID-19 UPDATE WITH HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

In February 2021, MCA's health professionals provided an update on the COVID-19 vaccine with CKON's Reen Cook in an edition of Tetewatharen. The panelists included Dr. Ojistoh Horn, NP Janet Brant, NP Katelyn Fedorak and guest panelist Dr. Brittany Jock.

These experts provided reasons on why it is important

to receive your COVID-19 vaccine immunization, the scientific background on vaccines and much more valuable information. If you want to watch the entire Tetewatharen, please view on the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne's Facebook page.

To pre-register for your COVID-19 vaccination, please contact Community Health at 613-575-2341.



CBSA & MCA DOMESTIC LANE PILOT PROJECT SURVEY

In February 2021, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and Canada Border Services Agency concluded their six-month CBSA & MCA Domestic Lane Pilot Project. Afterwards, a survey was conducted to receive community feedback to help provide direction regarding the future of the domestic lane.

The full survey for the CBSA & MCA Domestic Lane Pilot Project can be found on the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne website: www.akwesasne.ca

Nia:wen for all that participated and provided important input for the project.

After the survey was completed and analyzed, it was determined by the MCA and CBSA that in the new year, the Domestic Lane pilot project would continue.

NEWS

COMMUNITY IN QUARANTINE PROGRAM CREATED

In February 2021, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne created the Community in Quarantine Program to assist community members affected by COVID-19 that must complete a 14-day quarantine.

This program provides basic food, supplies and essentials for the quarantine period for those who have no assistance or resources.

This service is available to those who reside in the northern portion of Akwesasne.

If you need supplies, please call:

Monday-Friday (8 a.m.-5 p.m.): 613-936-1548 ext. 1300

After Hours :1-800-480-4208

Niawen to all doing their part to keep Akwesasronon safe and providing these important services.

Please be reminded that if you are exposed to COVID-19, be sure to quarantine as instructed by health care provider.

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE

COMMUNITY IN QUARANTINE PROGRAM

To assist community members affected by COVID-19 that must complete quarantine.

TO ORDER SUPPLIES:

MONDAY-FRIDAY

8 A.M.-5 P.M.

613-936-1548

ext. 1300

AFTER-HOURS

1-800-480-4208



Packages include basic food, supplies and essentials for a 14-day period for those who have no assistance or resources.

Service available to those residing in the northern portion of Akwesasne (Tsi Snaihne (Snye), Kawehno:ke (Cornwall Island) or Kana:takon (Saint Regis)).

If exposed to COVID-19, be sure to quarantine as instructed by health care provider.

NEWS

MCA PROVIDES WEEKLY FOOD DISTRIBUTIONS TO ENSURE FOOD SECURITY

Throughout 2021, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne Department of Community and Social Services hosted food distributions to the community. This program is intended to ease food insecurities that have been cre-

ated by COVID-19 factors, and it helps families avoid grocery stores. Here are the staff in March 2021.

Nia:wen to all who made this possible!



OPG BUTTERFLY AND HERB GARDEN

In 2019, Iroquois Sullivan Joint Venture (ISJV) successfully completed Phase One construction of a Butterfly and Herb Garden as part of a long-term sustainable landscape plan for the Ontario Power Generation (OPG) Saunders Hydro Dam Visitor Centre in Cornwall, ON.

Building off of the success of the newly constructed Butterfly and Herb Garden, planning for Phase Two of this development began in March 2021. The Phase Two concept, includes trails guided by interpretive signage, trail maps, a variety of native species and traditional elements that will be used for educational purposes.

ISJV was in consultation and seeking input from

horticultural and medicinal experts in the Akwesasne, and Cornwall communities.

A more detailed diagram, and a full species list can be made available upon request. If you would like to get additional information about this project, or have any questions, please contact:

Alicia Cook

Iroquois Sullivan Joint Venture

Email : canoewomanherbs@gmail.com

Phone : 315-600-7175

Facebook Messenger App : <https://www.facebook.com/alicia.cook.756>

NEWS

ARTISTS AND ENTERTAINERS HONORED AT IONKWAKWÉ:NION VIRTUAL CELEBRATION

In April 2021, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne held the first ever virtual celebration to honour the artists and entertainers of the community in the Ionkwak'wé:nion Book of Accomplishments!

Congratulations to the recipients: Montana Adams, Katsitsionni Fox, Shelby Mitchell-Adams, Jaiden Mitchell, Brandon Oakes, Kiawentiio Tarbell, and surprise recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award, the host for the evening, Reen Cook.

Nia:wen for all you do! It was an evening full of laughs, tears, and positivity.

You can watch the full awards ceremony on the MCA Facebook page.

Nia:wen to all who made this possible!



NEWS

MONTH OF MAY CELEBRATES HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

Nia:wen to our healthcare staff for all you do for our community! Every day we are appreciative of the amazing healthcare staff who are here at the MCA. From Personal Support Workers to nurses, physicians to mental

health counsellors, Emergency Medical Technicians to Administration, we appreciate every single one of you! Nia:wen for doing all you can to keep Akwesasne safe and healthy!



**THE MANY FACES OF OUR
FRONTLINE HEALTH WORKERS**



NEW STOP SIGNS IN KANA:TAKON

In an effort to enforce pedestrian and mobility safety, stop signs were installed in May 2021 at two intersections within the village of Kana:takon (St. Regis) located at Second Street and Akwesasne

The Akwesasne Mohawk Police monitored these new conditions.

NEWS

AKWESASRONON JOSEPH KING IS PORT LANDS LOGO WINNER

In June 2021, the Port Lands team and the co-owners announced that Joseph King, an artist from Akwesasne, won their art contest!

Joseph incorporated two landmarks of Cornwall that stand out to him: the Seaway International Bridge and the clock tower. He also included the St. Lawrence River, which connects the two communities. To accompany the two symbols, he added a native pattern and the tree of peace. You will also find the two row wampum, which symbolizes the peaceful relations between the two communities. Joseph will be going home with a prize valued at five hundred dollars.

The organizers thanked every individual who participated and appreciated the time and effort that went into each submission.



ARTIST: JOSEPH KING
AGE: 38
FROM: AKWESASNE

WALKER CLIMATE CARE DONATES TO AKWESASNE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

In June 2021, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne accepted a donation on behalf of the Akwesasne Cancer Support Group from Walker Climate Care in Cornwall. The company donates monthly to a local charity as part of giving back to the community and requested a recommended charity from Council.

Grand Chief Abram Benedict and Kawehno:ke District Chief Vanessa Adams accepted the check from Walker Climate Care Branch Manager Tom Rand and their associate Amos Conners. The check was delivered to a representative of the Akwesasne Cancer Support Group.

Nia:wenkowa to Walker Climate Care for the generous donation.



NEWS

MCA RECOGNIZES JUSTICES' FOR YEARS OF SERVICE

In June 2021, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne recognized the service, contributions and commitment of Justice D. Darlene Francis and Justice Shannon Hall in this position and wished them both well-wishes as they move on to other endeavours.

In 1999, the Council took a historic step in appointing Justices Hall and Francis as the first inherent right justices of the Akwesasne Tekaiat'orehthà:ke (Akwesasne Mohawk Court). Their appointment paved the way for other indigenous communities seeking to establish inherent right courts.

For the past 20 years, Justices Francis and Hall have demonstrated a deep commitment to the evolution of the Akwesasne Court process. Through their tireless work and professionalism, they have made substantial contributions to the Court's credibility and acceptance within the community.

The MCA Council thanks both of these individuals for their many years of service and dedication, and for paving the road for future Akwesasnon wishing to be a Justice. Niawenhko:wa!



NEWS

KANA:TAKON SCHOOL HONORS RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL CHILDREN

In June 2021, Kana:takon School staff and students formed a heart as they recited their Ohen:ton Kari-watehkwen and sang "Sken:nen" to honor the 215 children who were found at the Kamloops Residential School.

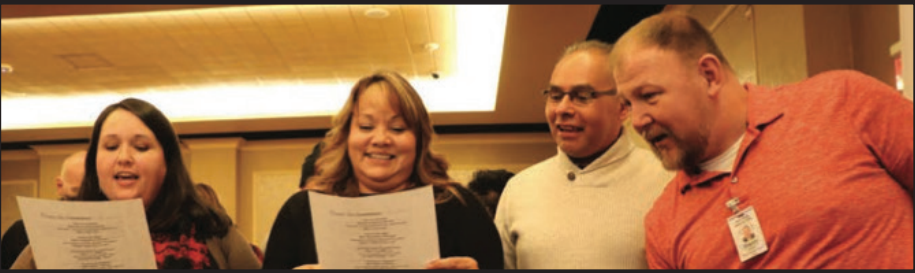
Principal Courtney Thomas opened up the heart and explained to the students why they were gathered outside.



COUNCIL ANNOUNCES PASSING OF KANA:TAKON DISTRICT CHIEF DARRYL LAZORE

In June 2021, it was with deep sadness that the Mohawk Council announced the sudden passing of Kana:takon District Chief Darryl "Kermit" Lazore.

Chief Lazore wore his heart on his sleeve and his love and respect for the people of Akwesasne was widely known and felt. He was nearing the end of his second elected term in office, having served the community for six years with a passion for issues in housing and public safety. In the office, Chief Lazore was known for his humor, kindness and friendliness; He is missed by Council and staff. Our thoughts continue to be with his family and children.



AKWESASNE MARCHES FOR FAMILIES OF RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

On July 1, 2021, hundreds of community members marched in orange to recognize and honour the indigenous children across the nation who never returned from residential schools, and those were never the same. We grieve for their loss and for pain families endured and continue to endure. Every Child Matters. Nia:wenkowa to those who organized the event.



NEWS

MCA HOLDS SWEARING IN CEREMONY FOR 2021-2024 COUNCIL CHIEFS

In July 2021, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne held the official swearing-in ceremony for the 2021-2024 Grand Chief and Council at the A'nowara'kowa Arena Pavilion. The election was held in June 2021. Justice Stephanie Cross conducted the ceremony as the newly-elected chiefs took their oaths of office. Nia:wen to all those who helped make this event possible. Congratulations

to the 2021-2024 Council Chiefs: GRAND CHIEF — Abram Benedict; KAWEHNO:KE — Vanessa Adams, Jackie Benedict, Edward Roundpoint, Vince Thompson; KANA:TAKON —Cindy Francis- Mitchell, Ryan Jacobs, Julie Phillips-Jacobs, Tim Thompson; TSI SNAIHNE— April Adams-Phillips, Sarah Lee Sunday-Diabo, JoAnn Swamp, Dwayne Thomas.



TREE PLANTING CEREMONY IN MEMORY OF CHIEF DARRYL LAZORE

On July 8, the MCA held a tree-planting ceremony in honour of the late Chief Darryl Lazore at the Kana:takon Recreation Centre. The beautiful Colorado Blue Spruce that was planted overlooks the St. Lawrence River and a plaque will be installed to commemorate Chief Lazore.



NEWS

AKWESASNE HEALING CENTRE AIMS TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS AND IMPROVE SERVICE ACCESSIBILITY

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne is nearing closer to the launch of its Akwesasne Healing Centre located in Cornwall, Ontario. The MCA Department of Community & Social Services (DCSS) has been developing the pilot project for the past several months with the goal being to address the issue of homelessness being experienced by Akwesasronon in and around the community.

In July 2021, Ontario’s Associate Minister of Mental Health & Addictions Michael Tibollo toured the facility and had a meeting with Council and the department staff who have created the centre. He

pledged his support of the endeavor and commended Akwesasne for the initiative taken and the strength behind indigenous-based healing.

The centre is located within the former General Hospital on Second Street and has been renovated to fit the needs of a homeless shelter, with an initial set up of beds for 8 men, 2 women, and 1 family. The facility is designed with emphasis on wellness, health and safety. Cozy healing rooms are available for counseling, bedrooms are large and comfortably furnished, for security there are separate areas for men and women.



NEWS

AMBE WELCOMES BACK STUDENTS FOR THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR!

In August 2021, the Ahkwesahsne Mohawk Board of Education was very excited to welcome back all of our students to the 2021-2022 School Year! We continue to wish each student a safe and healthy school year!



MOHAWK COUNCIL HOSTS VARIOUS EVENTS FOR ORANGE SHIRT DAY

In September 2021, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne hosted a variety of events for September's Orange Shirt Day, also known as Truth & Reconciliation Day. Council distributed free orange t-shirts to community members featuring a logo drawn by Akwesasne artist Joe King for a CBSA campaign last year to raise awareness of residential school history and their impact on indigenous communities.

There was also a breakfast sandwich and traditional meal giveaway, Paint Akwesasne Orange (which encouraged Akwesasne to display orange lights at their homes), social media posts to engage community, and much more!

Nia:wen to all who participated to commemorate this day.



NEWS

MOHAWK COUNCIL PARTICIPATES IN GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY WITH CORNWALL HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Earlier in 2021, the MCA was approached by Cornwall Habitat for Humanity and a member of Akwesasne requesting a partnership to assist in helping an Akwesasne member and his family. The Saucier-Leaf family were a successful recipient of a Habitat home through the Habitat for Humanity Cornwall organization.

The MCA advanced this opportunity and initiative to benefit a family and decided to become a partner by donating some off-reserve land to the project. In October 2021, MCA was honoured to participate in the groundbreaking ceremony to begin the construction.



2021-2022 AKWESASNE HEATING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

In October 2021, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne informed the community that the Akwesasne Heating Assistance Program was once again offered for the upcoming 2021-2022 winter months.

The application process is open to Akwesasronon who reside under the jurisdiction of Mohawk Council of Ak-

wesasne, as well as Akwesasronon in Cornwall, Ontario.

Nia:wen to everyone that makes the Akwesasne Heating Assistance Program possible! It is greatly appreciated!

NEWS

INUK SINGER SUSAN AGLUKARK VISITS THE AHKWESAHSNE MOHAWK SCHOOL

In October 2021, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and Ahkwesahsne Mohawk Board of Education was excited to thank the award-winning Inuk singer Susan Aglukark for making a stop at the Ahkwesahsne Mohawk School.

The talented artist spoke about her career and performed several songs for the 6-8th grades in a socially distanced gymnasium. One class which was

in quarantine was able to watch via live stream.

Grand Chief Abram Benedict presented Ms. Aglukark with a sweetgrass basket.

We hope Ms. Aglukark can visit again in the future when we have fewer COVID-19 restrictions. Nia:wenkowa to Ms. Aglukark for sharing her inspiration with our children.



NEWS

VACCINATION EFFORTS: MCA HOSTING 3RD DOSE AND AGES 5-11 CLINICS

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne is continuing to ensure the community has timely and adequate access to life-saving COVID-19 vaccines. A 3-day vaccine walk-in clinic was held in November 2021 on Kawehno:ke (Cornwall Island) for those who wanted to receive their third dose or any dose of Moderna or Pfizer. Vaccine walk-in clinics were scheduled to be held in December and the upcoming year. MCA's first vaccine clinic for children ages 5-11 was held in December 2021. Additional dates will be scheduled and announced. Help keep yourself and others safe from COVID-19 and its variants by getting vaccinated. It is safe and effective.



NEWS

AKWESASNE TOY DRIVE

The 2021 Akwesasne Toy Drive was a success!

The Akwesasne Family Wellness Program would like to thank all the MCA programs that donated toys to give out to the community for December 2021!

We would also like to send a niá:wenhkó:wa to all programs within the community that also donated funds, such as CKON, Kawehnoke Recreation Center, Dr. Dubuc's office in Kanonhkwa'tsher:io, and a special

shout out to Akwesasne Career & Employment Support Services for not only their monetary donation but also helping us organize and allowing us elves to use their space to distribute toys! Huge niá:wenhkó:wa, we gratefully appreciate it!!

AFWP would also like to thank Akwesasne Child & Family Services for collaborating with us in this big project! Niá:wenhkó:wa!



NEWS

IAKHIHSOHTHA LODGE CELEBRATES THE HOLIDAYS

Nia:wen to all of the staff that held fun holiday festivities for all of the residents at Iakhihsohta Lodge!



NEWS

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT SPREAD HOLIDAY CHEER

In December 2021, the Akwesasne Mohawk Police of Kana:takon spreading holiday cheer. Nia:wen to Services and the SRMT Tribal Police were in the village those that participated!



NEWS

SHOEBOX PROGRAM

In December 2021, the Akwesasne Community Justice Program and Akwesasne Family Wellness Program showed their gratitude and thankfulness to the Montreal's Shoebox Program who donated 35 shoeboxes for community of Akwesasne. Nia:wen!



FAN MAKING CLASS

In December 2021, the Iohahi:io Akwesasne Education and Training Institute hosted a fan making class to the community hosted by Ian Clute of Two House Designs.



◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆
*Love begins with a smile,
grows with a kiss & ends
with a tear*



**IN MEMORY OF THOSE WE LOST IN 2021.
FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS.**