

ONKWE'TA:KE

THE MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE NEWSLETTER

Volume 13 Issue 1

FREE

Tsiothohrhkó:wa/January 2024



2023 YEAR IN REVIEW



The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne is proud to share a few of the exciting events and services that took place throughout 2023! We are thankful for the MCA programs, staff, council and community members who made 2023 a successful year. We hope everyone has a safe and happy New Year!

UPCOMING MCA MEETINGS & SPECIAL DATES:

JANUARY GENERAL MEETING

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne's next General Meeting will take place on January 25, 2024 at the Kawehno:ke Recreation Center at 6 p.m.

The MCA General Meeting will no longer be available via Zoom.

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE 2021-2024

- Grand Chief Abram Benedict
- Kana:takon District Chief Fallon David, Chief Cindy Francis-Mitchell, 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 Donna Roundpoint A/Executive Director
- Heather Phillips Director Dept. of Finance & Administration
- Leslie Papineau Director Dept. of Infrastructure, Housing & Environment
- Cactus Cook Sunday Director Dept. of Justice
- Joseph Morin-Lauzon Director Dept. of Community & Social Services
- Amber Montour Director Department of Health
- Donna Lahache Director Ahkwesahsne Mohawk Board of Education
- Shawn Dulude Chief of Police/Director Dept. of Public Safety
- Kylee Tarbell Director Dept. of Economic Development

WAT'KWANONHWERA:TON/GREETINGS

She:kon and welcome to the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne's community newsletter, Onkwe'ta:ke, which means "For the people." The primary goal of this publication is to deliver MCA's news and updates straight into the hands of community members. Should you wish to stay connected in other ways, the following channels are provided:

- Contact: If you have any questions about MCA departments and services, please email info@akwesasne.ca or call 613-575-2250.
- E-newsletter: Register for a weekly e-newsletter delivered straight to your email inbox. It's a great way to quickly stay up to date! Sign up by visiting www.akwesasne.ca/signup.
- Social Media: Visit us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat!
- Mobile/Cell Text Alerts: Receive urgent or important messages right to your cell phone. Sign up by visiting www.akwesasne.ca/textalerts.
- Website: News and general information can be found on our website at www.akwesasne.ca. This includes job postings and Council contact information.
- Local Media: Find our news and information in Akwesasne's long-serving local media, CKON 97.3 Radio and Indian Time Newspaper.

FIVE THINGS OUR MONTHLY LIST OF FACTS, REMINDERS & IMPORTANT MESSAGES

- 1 Make recycling part of your daily routine! MCA's Environment Program would like to remind community members that recycling is collected on Tuesdays. We encourage everyone to separate your recycled materials (paper, plastic, aluminum) from your garbage to be collected. For questions or concerns, please contact Jayden Smoke at 613-575-2500 ext. 1040.
- 2 Stay in the loop with the Mohawk Council by registering to receive mobile alerts via text message! The service is free to utilize for our community members who would like to receive important updates and announcements directly (such as office closures, delays, meeting reminds, etc.) To register, please visit www.akwesasne.ca/textalerts.
- 3 Please be reminded that the Akwesasne Community Justice Program (ACJP) is now located at 55 Water Street West, Cornwall, ON. To contact ACJP, please call 613-575-5000 or 613-575-2250.
- 4 MCA's Community Health Program is offering open access to their fitness center on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 12 p.m. - 2 p.m. The fitness center is located on the bottom floor of Kanonhkwa'tsheri:io Health Facility. For more information or questions, please contact the MCA Community Health Program at 613-575-2341 ext. 3220.
- 5 MCA's Environment Program invites community members to attend World Wetlands Day on Saturday, February 3 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Cooper Marsh Conservation Area in South Glengarry, ON. Stop in and celebrate our local wetlands, enjoy a snowshoe tour, educational displays and learn about the Cooper Marsh Biodiversity Project! Admission is free and we hope to see you there!

YEAR IN REVIEW

MCA PROVIDED ONE-TIME FOOD ALLOWANCES TO KANA:TAKON & TSI SNAIHNE HOUSEHOLDS

In January 2023, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne recognized the hardship faced by community members in the districts of Kana:takon and Tsi Snaihne during the Hydro Québec power outage of January 5 & 6, 2023. On January 18, 2023, MCA distributed \$200 cheques to every household impacted by the Hydro Québec power outage.

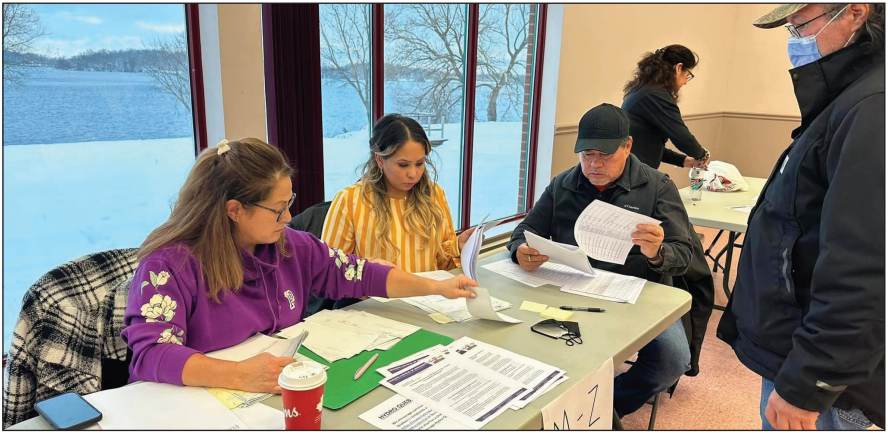
These funds were a one-time only allowance to help families recover from food loss or added fuel expenses experienced during the power outage, especially as food prices are presently so high. The overall health, safety and wellness of you and your family is our priority and remained our concern throughout the outage.

HYDRO QUÉBEC COMPLAINTS We encourage community members to utilize Hydro Québec's complaints and comments process by visiting www.hydroquebec.com/contactus/#residential or by calling 1-888-385-7252. The website has a chat option available, and you may also message Hydro Québec via social media.

NIAWENHKÓ:WA We would like to commend our team for their commitment to serving the community during the power outage through door-to-door checkups, distribution of carbon monoxide detectors, food boxes, and hot meals to our elders and vulnerable, arrangement of emergency shelter for vulnerable families, warming shelters, meeting healthcare and wellness needs, and overall ensuring the community's safety. We are continuing to plan for future emergencies and power outages.

We would also like to thank the hospitality of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe for ensuring the northern residents of Akwesasne were cared for in our time of

need and thank you as well to the Red Cross for their commitment to provide assistance. Finally, we would especially like to thank our community members who helped one another, offered shelter, loaned generators, checked in on elders or neighbors, and shared information.



YEAR IN REVIEW

SKATEBOARD PROJECT CELEBRATED INDIGENOUS ARTWORK

The Skateboard Project was an initiative aimed to promote Indigenous artwork, physical activity, and collaboration between cultural centers across multiple Indigenous communities.

In its second year, Kahnawà:ke, Kanehsatà:ke, Kenhtè:ke, Ahkwesáhsne, and Six Nations came together to create seven skateboard graphics showcasing the range of styles and cultural imagery. Two artists from Ahkwesáhsne participated this year. Joseph King was commissioned by the Native North American Travelling College and Ian Clute was commissioned by MCA's Department of Economic Development.

Skateboard culture values inclusivity, individuality, creativity, and freedom, and blending these with Indigenous traditions has created a project that connects communities through local art and skateboarding.

We hope to see more Indigenous communities being part of the project in the future!



Joseph King and Ian Clute proudly showing their beautiful skateboard deck designs.



YEAR IN REVIEW

WHOLISTIC HEALTH & WELLNESS PREVENTION PROGRAM AND THOMPSON ISLAND CULTURAL CAMP PROVIDED ELDER CARE PACKAGES

In February 2023, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne's Wholistic Health & Wellness Prevention Program (WHWPP) and the Thompson Island Cultural Camp (TICC) hosted a winter Elder Care Package giveaway at the St. Regis Recreation Center. TICC and WHWPP staff handed out 75 care packages to community elders who registered to receive a bag. Elders who registered received an email or phone call confirmation and were provided with pick-up information.

Each bag contained the following:

- Snipe Clan corn
- Strawberry drink and raspberry tea (picked and packaged by the TICC summer students)
- Venison soup
- Raw honey from Martins Farms
- Self-care items and information

Niawenhkó:wa to the staff from Thompson Island Cultural Camp and Wholistic Health and Wellness Program for putting together the care packages, providing a great assortment for our elders.



TICC HOSTED WOODEN BOAT-BUILDING WORKSHOP

In February 2023, the Thompson Island Cultural Camp (TICC) hosted a multi-day wooden boat-building workshop with Norman Peters at the Tsi Snaihne Recreation Center. The purpose of this workshop was to revive the practice of making our own wooden boats for transportation and fishing around our islands.

Community members were welcome to attend and take part in the boat-building process each day. Members in attendance assisted in cutting and nailing boards, shared their skills and told stories about life on the river. Upon completion of the workshop, two 12 ft. wooden boats were built.

Niawenhkó:wa to Norman Peters for sharing your

skills and the community members who showed up each day to participate, learn and teach one another.



YEAR IN REVIEW

SEX TRAFFICKING 101 PRESENTATION

In February 2023, the Akwesasne Family Wellness Program (AFWP) in conjunction with Akwesasne Mohawk Police Service (AMPS), hosted "Sex Trafficking 101" presentation sessions at the Akwesasne Mohawk Casino Resort. The sessions explored topics of sex trafficking and the dangers of social media, including fake "apps" used by young individuals to go undetected. Great work AFWP and AMPS for informing the community of this important topic and spreading awareness.



AMPS Detective Rachel Thomas and AFWP Anti-Human Trafficking Liaison Patrick Dussault.

JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE RECEIVED CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION FROM INDEPENDENT FIRST NATIONS (IFN)

In February 2023, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne's Jordan's Principle Program received a Certificate of Appreciation from Independent First Nations' (IFN) Jordan's Principle Coordinator, Leeann Schimoda, at a recent gathering for Jordan's Principle Programs. The certificate was presented to the Jordan's Principle former Program Manager Mavis Williamson and Jordan's Principle Navigators Rachel George, Ohentiioa Lahache-Deering, and Sheryl Thompson.

The Certificate of Appreciation was presented to the Jordan's Principle staff in acknowledgment of establishing the program in Akwesasne and all their hard work in serving the needs of Akwesasne children and youth. The presentation came at the end of a two-day gathering of Jordan's Principle Program Managers and Navigators throughout Ontario who came to hear presentations from Indigenous Services Canada - Jordan's Principle, First Nations Child and Family Caring Society, and provided networking opportunities with other First Nations operating Jordan's Principle programming.

Congratulations to our Jordan's Principle Program staff and *nia:wen/thank you* for your continued dedication to the children and youth of Akwesasne.

For more information on the Jordan's Principle Program, please call 613-575-2341 ext. 2652.



Pictured L-R: Former Program Manager Mavis Williamson, and Navigators Rachel George, Ohentiioa Lahache-Deering and Sheryl Thompson.

YEAR IN REVIEW

AMBE TEAMS COMPETED IN CORNWALL JUNIOR VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT

In March 2023, teams from the Ahkwesahsne Mohawk School and Tsi Snaihne School travelled to Cornwall to compete in a junior volleyball tournament with Cornwall area schools. It is the first year the schools have been able to take part in this volleyball gathering following a hiatus during the pandemic.

Students in Grades 5 & 6 were eligible and despite

just coming together for the first time as teams that day they performed well, improved throughout the day and celebrated their wins with enthusiasm.

Thank you to the coaches and organizers for providing students with the opportunity for sports and competition, and thank you to CCVS for providing their school as the host facility.



TICC HOSTED KANIE'N'KÉHA BINGO NIGHT

In March 2023, the Thompson Island Cultural Camp (TICC) hosted an exciting Kanien'keha Bingo Night at the Tsi Snaihne Recreation Center.

Community members were welcomed to join in on the fun by registering for the event to secure one full sheet and two half sheets for CKON's Radio Bingo, in addition to a meal and Mohawk Language lesson by the TICC staff. A Mohawk bingo word list was distributed to participants, whom were encouraged to primarily speak Kanien'keha for the duration of bingo. All families that participated in the event had a fun and exciting evening gathering together to play bingo, while learning the Mohawk language.

Stay up to date with the great events and workshops hosted by Thompson Island Cultural Camp by following their Facebook page!



YEAR IN REVIEW

DCSS PROVIDED FAMILY SUSTAINABILITY CHEQUES TO HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD IN COMMUNITY

In April 2023, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne's Department of Community & Social Services (DCSS) provided "Family Sustainability" funds (cheques) to community members in the northern portion of Akwesasne. The cheques were issued to the "Head of Household" based on the most recent Fuel Allotment list, which now includes Heads of Households that were missed during the initial Fuel Distribution. Akwesasne families residing in Cornwall were also eligible to receive the Family Sustainability cheque.

Niawenhkó:wa DCSS staff for your hard work on planning, preparing and distributing the cheques to community members.



ACFS staff assist in the distribution of family sustainability cheques to community members living in the northern portion of Akwesasne.

ACFS DEVELOPING INDIGENOUS-LED SOFTWARE SYSTEM

In April 2023, the staff of MCA's Akwesasne Child and Family Services (ACFS) and Information Services (IS) worked with RedMane, an Indigenous-led software solutions and system integration firm, to commence a two-day kick-off of ACFS's new, Indigenous-led software system.

This new and innovative software will be utilized by ACFS for record keeping and to report statistics to the Ministry of Community and Social Services, Indigenous Services Canada and other funders. In addition, it will be able to generate statistics for ACFS to utilize when advocating for additional/increased funding for new and existing programs/services for Akwesasne children and families. The software will incorporate the Kanien'keha language, culture, values, and beliefs throughout the software and will have the ability to analyze all the data to evaluate the services that Akwesasne Child and Family Services provides to the community.

Over the course of two days, the amazing team of ACFS and IS worked with the RedMane Technologies Implementation team to enter in the design phase of the "to-be-named" software system. Following this initial training, ACFS will continue the development work. After the design phase concludes, a two-year implementation plan with continued work from the ACFS team will follow. Community members will be provided with an update as this project progresses.



YEAR IN REVIEW

DCSS DONATED FUNDS TO LOCAL COMMUNITY & YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS

In April 2023, representatives from the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne presented cheques to several community non-profit organizations. The funds were donated by the Dept. of Community & Social Services (DCSS) to assist in the creation of programming for children and families, as well as ongoing operations of their respective facilities. Each organization is frequently accessed by Akwesasne community members.

"These donations represent an effort by MCA to uplift and support organizations that work hard, often through volunteerism, to benefit our entire community," said Grand Chief Abram Benedict. "The Akwesasne Boys & Girls Club has continued to offer positive and enriching programs after school and throughout the summer to children in all districts of Akwesasne and we are happy to continue supporting them. Likewise, our recreational committees and other non-profit organizations offer year-round activities and facilities that support a healthy community with diverse opportunities. Thank you to these organizations for all the work that they do for Akwesasne."

Organizations that received funds from DCSS today are as follows:

- Akwesasne Boys & Girls Club - \$1,000,000
- Generations Park - \$100,000
- Kana:takon Recreation Center - \$100,000
- Tsi Snaihne Recreation Center - \$100,000
- Kawehno:ke Recreation Center - \$100,000
- Iakwa'shatste Youth Fitness - \$131,000

"On behalf of the Dept. of Community & Social services, we would like to extend our appreciation to these organizations that have proven to be very valuable in promoting healthy families in the community,"

said Director of DCSS Joseph Morin-Lauzon. "Each of these organizations provides facilities, activities and programs that support prevention in youth which builds strong Akwesasne families and futures. We look forward to seeing their programs and services continuing to enrich the community."



YEAR IN REVIEW

KIDS FOR FISHING 2023

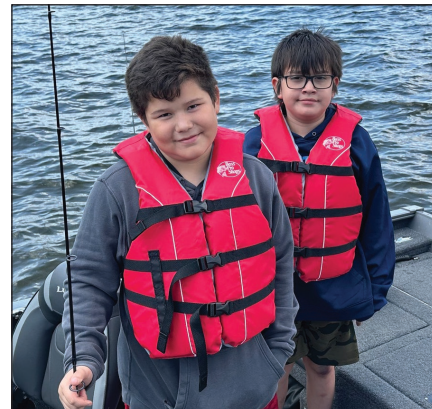
In May 2023, 40 Akwesasne children and teens embarked on a day-long fishing event hosted by the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Police and other community partners including the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne. The event coincides with Police Week.

Avid and successful fisherman PJ Burns, a tribal police officer, started Kids for Fishing 13 years ago to help spread the love of fishing and to share the knowledge he's gained over the years. Every year volunteers help to make the event a success as they share their love of the valuable sport, skill and tradition.

The participants spent the first part of the day learning about safety and prevention. In the afternoon, 20 fishing boats with volunteer fisherman lined the shore at Atsiakta ("By the River") and pairs of children boarded for an afternoon of fishing in Akwesasne waters.

At the end of the day, the boats returned to the dock with excited children sharing how many fish their boat caught, and photos of their big catches. Each participant also received a free fishing pole and a fully stocked tackle box.

The free event is one that youth talk about for years. Parents recalled their older children attending and still remembering how much fun they had. Great job to all the volunteers and organizers.



YEAR IN REVIEW

AKWESASNE MOHAWK AMBULANCE CELEBRATED EMS WEEK

In May 2023, the Akwesasne Mohawk Ambulance (AMA) celebrated the 49th annual National EMS Week. The theme for this year was EMS: Where Emergency Care Begins. A variety of events were held throughout the community such as helmet safety and sticker swap, a tour of the AMA unit, and training on how to save a life with rescue breathing, CPR, and Narcan. Great job to the AMA team and niawenhkó:wa for going above and beyond the call to serve our community!



GREAT RIVER CLEANUP 2023

In June 2023, the MCA Environment Program hosted another successful Great River Cleanup! Several volunteers came together to help clean up the shorelines of the St. Lawrence River along Akwesasne. A variety of garbage was collected including tires, plastic bottles, Styrofoam and more!

A special niawenhkó:wa goes out to our partners and planning committee from the MCA Environment Program, the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Environment Division, the River Institute, the Great River Networks, Save The River, and Ocean Wise. A special thank you to the St. Lawrence Parks Commission for sponsoring the cleanup.



YEAR IN REVIEW

AMBE HOSTED A CULTURAL CELEBRATION

In June 2023, the Ahkwesahsne Mohawk Board of Education hosted a Cultural Celebration for all students from Early Years to Grade 8. The event was held at the A'nowara'ko:wa Arena and it was a bright and vibrant celebration of our Onkwehonwe culture, filled with songs, dances, traditional outfits and plenty of smiles! Nia:wen to the singing/drumming groups, dancers, organizers, and families for helping put on this fun event for the students.



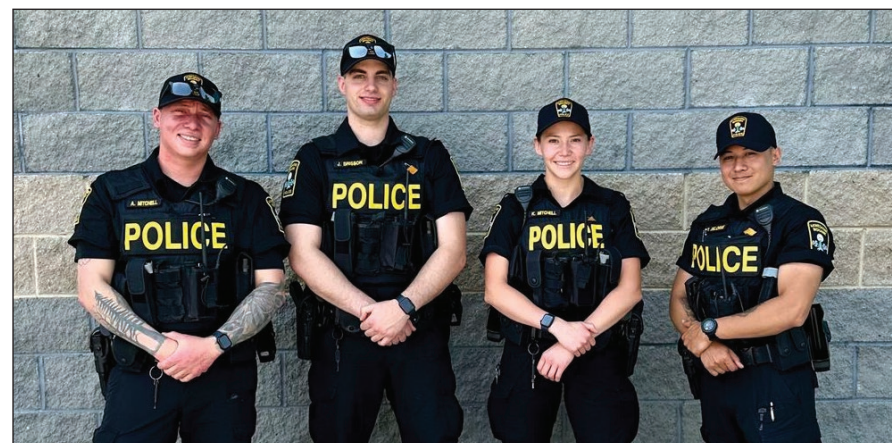
AKWESASNE MOHAWK POLICE WELCOMED FOUR NEW CONSTABLES

In June 2023, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and the Akwesasne Mohawk Police Service welcomed four new police constables who successfully completed the Basic Constable Training course at the Ontario Police College. The four officers continued their training and graduated from the Provincial Police Academy in Orillia, Ontario.

The new officers are:

- Ahwennaseh Mitchell
- Joey Brisson
- Kahettonni Mitchell
- Danai Delorme

Congratulations and best of luck to our new 4th-Class Constables! We look forward to seeing you out and serving the community.



YEAR IN REVIEW

AKWESASNE NHL DRAFT WATCH PARTY

In July 2023, Akwesasronon flocked to Generations Park for the Akwesasne NHL Draft Watch Party hosted in collaboration with the Akwesasne Family Wellness Program, Twinleaf and the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe.

Akwesasne's Carey Terrance Jr. was selected by the Anaheim Ducks, as the 59th overall pick in the second round for the 2023 NHL Draft. From Akwesasne to Anaheim – you continue to make the community proud, Carey!



NHL Watch Party organizers
Cheshire Thomas and Maria Pyke.

Niawenhkó:wa to the organizers for hosting an excellent event. Akwesasne is proud of you Carey, we wish you continued success. Go Ducks Go!



AKWESASNE SKATEPARK HOSTED GIRL'S SKATE DAY

In July 2023, the Akwesasne Skatepark was booming with female skaters of all ages and skill levels to participate in Girl's Skate Day. The goal of the event was to get more girls interested in the sport and provide them a chance to check out the skatepark.

It was an action packed day for both beginner and seasoned skaters. Participants had the opportunity to get free skate lessons from Girls+ Skate 613 and Oorbee Roy aka Aunty Skates. Attendees also had a chance to participate in the tie dye workshop led by Kit Thomas and Avnee Roy, turning their white garments into colorful creations.

Niawenhkó:wa to the organizers for hosting and Annie

Guglia, Vans Canada and City Seltzer for sponsoring this terrific event.



YEAR IN REVIEW

2023 AKWESASNE WELLNESS WEEK

In July 2023, MCA's Wholistic Health and Wellness Program collaborated with the SRMT Health Planning and Promotion Department and surrounding programs to host the 5th Annual Akwesasne Wellness Week.

The week was filled with a variety of fun and family friendly events throughout the community. Wellness Week kicked off with a community favorite, the Medallion Hunt, followed by the 35th Annual Health Fair, Bubble Run, Trails Fur Tails Dog Walk and several presentations. Each year, Wellness Week continues to grow, bringing the community together and promoting healthy living.

Niawenhkó:wa to the community members who participated in events and all the organizers for making the 2023 Akwesasne Wellness Week a success. We look forward to what's in store for 2024!



YEAR IN REVIEW

OTTAWA REDBLACKS AND UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA GEE-GEE'S HOSTED FOOTBALL CAMP AT A'NOWARA'KO:WA ARENA

In July 2023, the Ottawa Redblacks and the University of Ottawa Gee-Gee's hosted a football camp for local Akwesasne and area youth. Ben Maracle, a resident of Tyendinaga and quarterback for the University of Ottawa Gee-Gee's, hosted the event at the A'nowara'ko:wa Arena in the hopes of building the sport of football in indigenous communities.

The football camp was a collaborative effort between the Ottawa Redblacks, Gee-Gees Football, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne's Department of Health, Department of Community & Social Services, and Economic Development.

The football camp was attended by 40 Akwesasne

and area youth, who were provided with football skills and drills, a question-and-answer session with the players, and were given a swag-bag with Redblacks and Gee-Gee's team memorabilia, footballs, t-shirts, and a \$25 gift card to Akwesasne Sports. The players signed autographs and took pictures with the camp participants once the camp was complete. The Redblacks also donated a jersey signed by the team to the A'nowara'ko:wa Arena.

Niawenhkó:wa/thank you to the Ottawa Redblacks and the University of Ottawa Gee-Gee's for an amazing event and we look forward to hosting the event again in the future.



YEAR IN REVIEW

SWEARING-IN CEREMONY HELD FOR KANA:TAKON DISTRICT CHIEF FALLON DAVID

In August 2023, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) held a swearing-in ceremony for Fallon David, the newly-elected District Chief of Kana:takon. District Chief David was elected through a by-election for the district of Kana:takon.

Chief David was sworn in by Justice of the Peace Alexandra David at the Kana:takon Recreation Center with family, friends, council and community members. Words of welcome were provided to her through speeches given by Grand Chief Abram Benedict, Acting Executive Director Tessa Jocko, Kana:takon District Chief Cindy Francis-Mitchell, Tsi Snaihne District Chief Sarah Sunday-Diabo and Tsi Snaihne District Chief Dwayne Thomas. Alma Ransom, community elder and great-aunt of District Chief David, also provided warm words and advice for political success. Youth Kaienas Lazore sang the Mohawk Friendship Song, which provided a beautiful ending to a positive event.

Congratulations, District Chief Fallon David — the community looks forward to the positive contributions that you will bring.



TSIIONKWANONHSO:TE CELEBRATED THEIR 29TH ANNIVERSARY

In August 2023, the Tsiionkwanonhso:te Long-Term Care (LTC) facility celebrated its 29th anniversary. 29 years ago, the LTC opened its doors to residents in need of long-term and daily medical care.

The LTC facility started its week-long anniversary celebration with several events throughout the week, such as a performance by the local band Crosswinds, ice cream truck, entertainer Johnny M, Little Ray's Reptile Zoo, Tota Bingo, outdoor carnival and more!

Tsiionkwanonhso:te extended its sincere gratitude to all those who assisted in celebrating 29 years of caring and service. Your support and participation was

greatly appreciated. The LTC thanks their dedicated and caring staff for planning and implementing the many activities hosted.



YEAR IN REVIEW

HAVFD RECEIVED A NEW FIRE TRUCK HONOURING MMIWG

In August 2023, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne's Department of Infrastructure, Housing and Environment (DIHE) presented a cheque to Fort Garry Fire Trucks for the manufacturing and delivery of a brand new fire engine to the Hogansburg Akwesasne Volunteer Fire Department.

Fire Chief Issac McDonald accepted the beautiful new truck on behalf of HAVFD and Station #3. The fire engine is adorned with imagery to raise awareness and show support of Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls (#MMIWG).

MCA would like to extend a big nia:wen/thank you Fort Garry Fire Trucks, Wraptors Decals, Joe King, and Long Graphics for all of their work on this venture. This project was made possible through funding by Indigenous Services Canada.



ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM HOSTED A SNAPPING TURTLE RELEASE PARTY

In August 2023, it was a turtle-y awesome time at the MCA Environment Program's turtle release party!

Snapping turtles are an at-risk species and the Environment team works hard to protect eggs from vulnerable nests and enhance hatchling survival rates. Our program found this turtle clutch and relocated it

to an incubator, where they successfully hatched and were ready to return to their home.

Nia:wen/Thank you to all the community members who joined us as we celebrated our conservation efforts and released our turtle friends back into their natural habitat!



YEAR IN REVIEW

ELVIS ENTERTAINED IAKHIHSOHTHA LODGE RESIDENTS & FAMILIES

In August 2023, residents of IakhihsOhtHa Lodge and their families were all shook up by an amazing performance by Elvis impersonator Sylvain Leduc!

All those in attendance couldn't help but fall in love with this family-friendly event that was enjoyed by all. The show, which was a "Blue Hawaii" theme, enticed guests to have a little less conversation and a lot more dancing, smiles and fun!

Nia:wen to all that made this event possible, including the staff at IakhihsOhtHa and sponsors Dank Bank and Higher Ground. Thank you. Thank you very much.



SWEARING-IN CEREMONY HELD FOR KAWEHNO:KE DISTRICT CHIEF VINCE THOMPSON

In September 2023, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne held a swearing-in ceremony for Vince Thompson, the re-elected District Chief of Kawehno:ke. Chief Thompson was elected through a by-election held on September 2, 2023 for the district of Kawehno:ke.

Chief Thompson was sworn in by Justice of the Peace Alexandra David at the Kawehno:ke Recreation Center with family, Council and community members. His return was celebrated through speeches given by Acting Executive Director Tessa Jocko, Kana:takon District Chief Julie Phillips-Jacobs, and Kawehno:ke District Chief Edward Roundpoint.

Congratulations District Chief Vince Thompson — we look forward to the continuation of your good work for the community.



YEAR IN REVIEW

MCA CONGRATULATED JOYCE KING ON RETIREMENT



The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne extended congratulations and appreciation to longtime employee Joyce Tekahnawiiaks King on her retirement!

Joyce has served the community of Akwesasne in many capacities, from working with the

Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs to managing Indian Time newspaper to defending our environmental rights. In 2008, Joyce joined the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne as the Director of the Akwesasne Justice Department. As Director, Joyce oversaw the Iatathróna Raotientáhtsera Couples Property Law Referendum, which was the first to utilize online voting in the community; assisted with the enactment of the Akwesasne Court Law, the first court in Canada to operate under an independent Indigenous legal system; was instrumental in the Technical Working Group on the Administration of Justice between MCA, Canada, Ontario, and Québec; and worked

with the Canadian Institute for the Administration of Justice (CIAJ) to develop a training program unique to Akwesasne, which led to the confirmation and appointment of four new Justices. Along with holding her own federal appointment as a Justice of the Peace, Joyce has also served as the Director of the Haudenosaunee Environmental Task Force, tackling environmental degradation and restoration in our communities.

"Joyce was a true professional that led by example. She was always ready to stand up for our people and for the recognition of our laws and court system," said Kana:takon District Chief Julie Phillips-Jacobs. "Joyce's work ethic and character will be missed, but we will celebrate her legacy of achievements and commitment that she left behind and continue her fight to uphold the rights of our people. Congratulations on your retirement and all the new opportunities yet to come!"

We are very grateful for Joyce's continuous hard work through her 15 years at MCA. Congratulations Joyce and enjoy your well-deserved retirement!

OFFICIAL RESULTS OF SEAWAY CLAIM REFERENDUM

In August 2023, community members had the opportunity to cast their vote regarding MCA's Seaway Claim Referendum. The question was:

"As a voter of the Mohawks of Akwesasne, do you agree to and approve the terms and conditions of the Seaway Claim Settlement Agreement initialed by the negotiators for the Mohawks of Akwesasne, Canada, the Federal Bridge Corporation Limited, and the Seaway International Bridge Corporation Ltd. Which settles and releases the Seaway Claim?"

YES: 170

NO: 275

YEAR IN REVIEW

HOUSING'S BEN BENEDICT EARNED CONSTRUCTION PIONEERING AWARD



In September 2023, a special luncheon was held by Legalett Canada Inc. for Construction Pioneering Award recipients. MCA's DIHE (Housing Sector) Tenant and Maintenance Manager Ben Benedict was presented with the award and a jacket by Legalett National Sales Manager Ken Williams.

"The Construction Pioneering Award recognizes extraordinary achievements in the field of Energy Efficient building construction using Legalett's high performance building envelope solutions.

The individual or company that receives this award will have moved beyond the boundaries of the standard building code and been the first to successfully use cutting edge innovative equipment, building materials or building systems in their area and conform to either LEED, PH, NZE, R-200 or similar high-performance standard.

They would have freely shared their experience with anyone that asked, and the project will have been so successful that others would follow in their path to build projects of a similar type, having learned from the experiences of the "Construction Pioneer".

This award, with much appreciation was presented to Ben Benedict for his foresight and the outstanding successful achievements of many energy efficient building projects in the Akwesasne community."

Congratulations Ben on this great achievement! Keep up the great work, as it will influence and pave the way for others to follow.

AKWESASNE MEMBERSHIP BOARD ELECTION OFFICIAL RESULTS

In October 2023, an election was held for the Akwesasne Membership Board in all three districts. A by-election was held in November for the District of Kana:takon. The following candidates have been officially declared for the Akwesasne Membership Board:

AKWESASNE MEMBERSHIP BOARD			
District of Kana:takon		District of Kawehno:ke	
Carrie Benedict 2-year term	Waylon Cook 4-year term	Donna Delormier 2-year term	Ruth Seymour 4-year term
District of Tsi Snaihne		Chairperson	
Shannon L. Lazore 2-year term	Darlene Adams 4-year term	Esther Jock 4-year term	

YEAR IN REVIEW

ORANGE SHIRT DAY EVENT HONoured RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SURVIVORS AND VICTIMS

In September 2023, a sea of orange shirts filled the park for a joint event planned by Akwesasne and Cornwall organizations to honour residential school survivors. Orange Shirt Day now coincides with Canada's National Day for Truth & Reconciliation on September 30th every year.

The event at Cornwall's Lamoureux Park featured Akwesasne speakers, residential school survivor presentations, Indigenous songs and dance, art, and traditional food samples, to name a few of the event's agenda items.

Doug George – Kanentiio – provided a powerful presentation on his personal experience at a residential school. He is part of a larger group of survivors who are sharing the important and difficult stories behind residential schools that need to be heard.

Despite the somber memories and the reality of what residential schools caused, Saturday's event was a symbol of healing and friendship. Residents of Akwesasne, Cornwall, and surrounding towns gathered to share a mutual intent to be a part of the healing that is needed.

The event was a true collaboration between the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne's departments, the City

of Cornwall, the Native North American Travelling College, the Children's Aid Society, and others. The Akwesasne Freedom School was chosen as the recipient of funds raised through the sale of orange shirts.

Thank you to the City of Cornwall for the assistance in planning, coordination, and use of Lamoureux Park. We also thank the group of organizers, agencies, and the many volunteers. Special thanks to all the schools who submitted beautiful banners for display and those who attended to assist. Thank you to the demonstrators, artists, speakers, and performers.

Nia:wenhkó:wa for attending and your commitment to Orange Shirt Day and to truth & reconciliation.



YEAR IN REVIEW

Welcome our NEW MCA DIRECTORS



Cactus Cook Sunday
Akwasasne Justice Department



Leslie Papineau
Department of Infrastructure,
Housing & Environment

MCA DONATED \$500,000 TO AKWESASNE FREEDOM SCHOOL

In September 2023, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne presented a check for \$500,000 to the Akwesasne Freedom School. Friends of the Akwesasne Freedom School (FOAFS) had made a request to the MCA for assistance for the construction of a new school.

The Akwesasne Freedom School is the Akwesasne community's only private full-Mohawk immersion school. It began as a grassroots effort in 1979 and continues to provide our children with language and culture-based instruction. The school's mission reads, "Through our language, the Akwesasne Freedom School will support and encourage a process for each child to learn their roles and responsibilities as Haudenosaunee through an understanding of the Ohen:ton Kariwahtekwen as the core of their learning experience."

Operating within aging buildings, the school has begun construction of a new facility that will allow them to continue providing students with valuable education.

"It is our pleasure to support the Akwesasne Freedom School as they provide a priceless service to our

community," said Grand Chief Abram Benedict. "The preservation of our language and culture is a priority for MCA and we applaud the efforts of the school and staff, including its many volunteers, who are unwavering in their commitment to pass on our Haudenosaunee traditions and Mohawk language. We look forward to the celebration of a new school building and how it will positively impact the students and their education."

The request for a contribution was approved by Council on August 14, 2023 following a presentation on the school building project by the FOAFS. MCA's donation is derived from the Ontario Lottery Gaming (OLG) reserve fund.



YEAR IN REVIEW

MCA OPENED NEW DETOX CENTER: SAHATIHARÁ:NE

In October 2023, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne's Department of Health began accepting clients at its new detox center, Sahatihahará:ne. The 4-bed/4-client center is located on Kawehno:ke and fills a need in healthcare and addictions services that our medical teams are committed to providing.

"This is a major milestone for our healthcare services," said District Chief Sarah Sunday-Diabo, a health portfolio chief. "We have heard from our clients and their family members that this service is greatly needed. No one has to fight addiction alone; our medical and mental health staff are trained and dedicated to help every step of the way."

District Chief Vanessa Adams, also a health portfolio chief, added, "This is an answer to our community's prayers and the result of so much hard work and dedication on behalf of the Department of Health."

The detox center's name, Sahatihahará:ne, means "back on the path." It is located at the former group home facility on James Lane, Cornwall Island. The building has undergone renovations throughout the past year to fit the needs of detox clients.

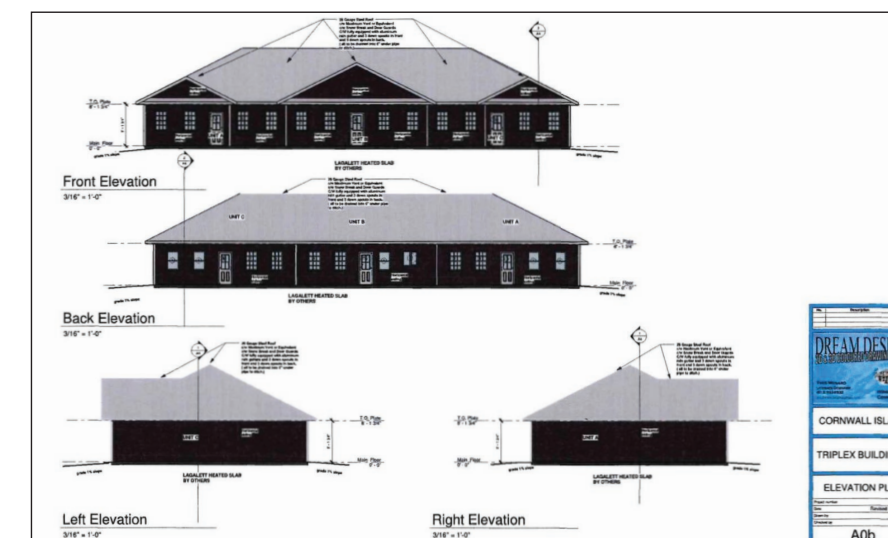
"We are excited to begin services for our community members," said Bonnie Bradley, Sahatihahará:ne Detox Center Program Manager. "We will be providing a safe, stigma-free environment for our clients who are taking the first step in their healing journey."

The attending physician for the detox center will be Dr. Cory Scott. For more information, or to schedule a pre-admission/intake screening, please contact the Sahatihahará:ne Detox Center at 613-932-5050.



Pictured L-R: Attending Physician Dr. Cory Scott, Program Manager Bonnie Bradley, Male Withdrawal Management Specialist Waylon Square, Female Withdrawal Management Specialist Carlee King, Food Prep/Cook Renna Leaf.

DIHE ANNOUNCED HAWTHORNE ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE & HOUSING PROJECT



In October 2023, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne Department of Infrastructure, Housing and Environment (DIHE) was pleased to announce a new infrastructure and housing project for 2023-2024.

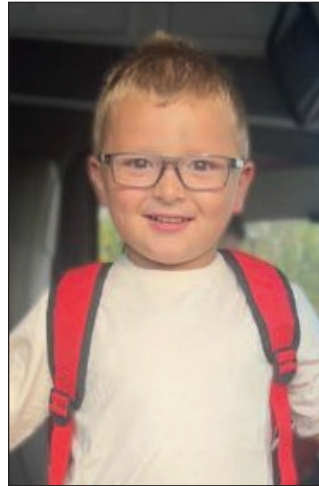
Infrastructure and site prep began in October 2023 on Hawthorne Road in Tsi Snaihne. The project consists of road extension, hydro and waterline extension, and septic installation for apartment units.

Five 3-bedroom triplexes will be constructed in the following years after the infrastructure and site prep is completed.

For more information on this project, please contact Charmaine Caldwell at 613-575-2250 ext. 1053.

YEAR IN REVIEW

BRAVE BERO



When you first meet Dennis Bero Jr., he is a normal, rambunctious three year old: excited to play with his bat and ball and slightly shy and bashful when approached. But

in 2023, this little man stepped up in a big way.

Falan Bero, who is the mother of Dennis, had been feeling unwell, but didn't think there was any cause for concern. Her husband, Dennis Bero Sr., was at work in his position as a dispatcher for the Akwesasne Mohawk

Police Service (AMPS), and she had her two children at home with her. After a coughing spell, Falan went into the bathroom, and that is the last thing she remembers. Falan fainted and was unconscious for a period of time, but young Dennis sprang into action to help out his mother.

Falan noted that she had saved the AMPS number in her phone and in the past has gone over with Dennis Jr. that if anything ever happened to her, his father or sister that he could "call this number to get help."

Dennis Jr. swiftly contacted the AMPS dispatcher. Although Dennis Sr. was working at the time, he did not answer that particular phone call. Dennis Jr. told the dispatcher that his "mommy had fell and was laying on

the floor." Although the call was disconnected, Dennis Jr. continued to make quick-thinking decisions and Facetimed his father's phone. After the young boy told his father what had happened (and showed him via video that his mother was laying on the floor), the ambulance and police were dispatched to check on Falan. While the First Responders were on their way, Dennis Jr., being a protective older brother, held his younger sister until they arrived.

Falan has made a full recovery, but three-year-old Dennis Jr. truly needs to be commended. His brave and quick-thinking actions made a difference and in any emergency, every second is precious. Great job and nia:wen to Dennis Bero Jr. who is truly a little hero!

OFFICIAL AKWESASNE ELECTION LAW AMENDMENTS REFERENDUM RESULTS

In December 2023, a referendum was held in all three districts regarding the Akwesasne Election Law Amendments. Please view the official results below. Ballot questions can be viewed on the MCA website at www.akwesasne.ca/unofficial-akwesasne-election-law-amendments.

BALLOT QUESTION #1

Kana:takon – Yes: 27 No: 18

Kawehno:ke – Yes: 36 No: 15

Tsi Snaihne – Yes: 35 No: 52

Total – Yes: 98 No: 85

BALLOT QUESTION #2

Kana:takon – Yes: 25 No: 20

Kawehno:ke – Yes: 30 No: 23

Tsi Snaihne: Yes: 23 No: 64

Total – Yes: 78 No: 107

BALLOT QUESTION #3

Kana:takon – Yes: 24 No: 21

Kawehno:ke – Yes: 30 No: 23

Tsi Snaihne – Yes: 23 No: 62

Total – Yes: 77 No: 106

BALLOT QUESTION #4

Kana:takon – Yes: 22 No: 23

Kawehno:ke – Yes: 31 No: 22

Tsi Snaihne – Yes: 26 No: 62

Total – Yes: 79 No: 107

BALLOT QUESTION #5

Kana:takon – Yes: 23 No: 20

Kawehno:ke – Yes: 23 No: 30

Tsi Snaihne – Yes: 21 No: 64

Total – Yes: 67 No: 114

BALLOT QUESTION #6

Kana:takon – Yes: 22 No: 21

Kawehno:ke – Yes: 27 No: 26

Tsi Snaihne – Yes: 15 No: 68

Total – Yes: 64 No: 115

YEAR IN REVIEW

IAKHIHSOHTHA LODGE HOSTED ANNUAL TRIVIA FUNDRAISER

In October 2023, Iakhihsohta Lodge hosted their Annual Trivia Fundraiser at the American Legion Post 1479.

Trivia participants were decked out in their finest costumes to support the Tota's activity fund for the holiday season. It was a great evening filled with laughter and friendly competition by all. Quiz Master

Dwayne Thomas and MC Mario did an excellent job entertaining the crowd.

Niawenhkó:wa to the community for support by donating baskets, participating in the Mohawk Auction and participating in trivia. The tota's had a great holiday with amazing gifts and fun activities and events.



First Place Trivia Winners.



Second Place Trivia Winners.



YEAR IN REVIEW

COUNCIL HOSTED ANNUAL COMMUNITY HOLIDAY DINNERS

In December 2023, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne was pleased to welcome families to the community holiday dinners hosted in the spirit of the holidays and New Year. The dinners were held at the recreation centers in all three districts. It was our pleasure to serve community members and visit face to face.

Council was grateful for all those who attended any of the three dinners, and especially those who helped plan and host the meals, including our staff, and the three caterers: Island Girlz, Latoya Rourke,

and TnT Deli, along with Kelly Back who provided dinner rolls for all three meals. Nia:wen also to KB Entertainment for the photo booth that added to each night's festivities, and to Santa Jack for devoting three nights to visit with Akwesasne families for the 5th year. Nia:wen also to those who volunteered to assist Council with serving, and anyone along the way who took part in anyway.

Council and our team at MCA wishes the community a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year!



YEAR IN REVIEW

COUNCIL HOSTED ANNUAL COMMUNITY HOLIDAY DINNERS





WE ARE HIRING

Join our Team!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO VIEW CURRENT EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES!

www.akwesasne.ca/employment



IF WE CAN'T FIND YOU, WE CAN'T HELP YOU

When the snow hits this season, be sure emergency services can find you.

Please ensure that your home address is visible.



CENTRAL DISPATCH: **613-575-2000**

