Chairman’s Column
Wunee keesuq Tribal family,

For over 12,000 years we have remained a people on our ancestral homeland. In that time our people have persisted in the face of insurmountable odds. In that time we have remained here, on our land, as a people in spite of disease, war, forced cultural assimilation, racism, and continued political injustice.

It’s not in our nature to stand idly by while our rights as indigenous people on this land are attacked and an administration with oversight threatens to take regressive action that’s reminiscent of the Indian Termination policy of the 1960’s. It’s not right and it’s not what this Country should be aspiring towards.

Right now our land remains in trust, but it will not be secure without action from Congress and the Senate. That’s why we’ve been working tirelessly for well over a year to pass legislation that would protect our way of living and create a model for other

The Herald News Editorial: Recognize the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe

The federal government’s history in terms of its treatment of Indian tribes is replete with betrayals, deceptions, even genocide of the indigenous peoples who inhabited this continent long before European colonists decided they would claim it as their own.

Last month, the Trump administration continued to build on this litany of injustice by essentially revoking the official recognition of land taken in trust for the Mashpee Wampanoag that had been granted by the Obama administration two years ago. It is now incumbent on federal lawmakers to do right by the tribe and re-grant them the ability to have their lands held in trust.

The U.S. Interior Department issued a ruling in connection with a 2016 case brought by a group of residents in Taunton who own property bordering land on which the tribe hopes to build a casino. The neighbors argued that the tribe was not under federal jurisdiction in 1934, the year the Indian Reorganization Act was passed. As such, the Mashpee Wampanoag did not qualify as “Indian” under the federal definition of the term. A federal judge agreed, and for the past two years, the Interior Department has mulled whether the commonwealth of Massachusetts had essentially served as a surrogate for the federal government in terms of oversight of the tribe during that period.

The tribe got its long-awaited letter from the agency on Sept. 7, but it was far from the answer it had hoped to receive. Tara Sweeney, assistant secretary of Indian Affairs, wrote that Massachusetts’ authority did not constitute federal authority and, as a result, “...the Tribe does not qualify under the IRA’s first definition of ‘Indian.’ Nor does it qualify under the second definition, as that definition has been interpreted by the United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts.”

The notion that the Mashpee
New Events

October 6 - 10:00 a.m.
Mashpee Land Sovereignty Walk & Rally, Collins Lot/Mashpee Community Park to Powwow Grounds

October 14 – 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
General Body Meeting, MWTCGC

October 24 to 26
Tufts University College Visit, Deadline to apply is Tuesday, October 9

October 27 - 5:00 p.m.
Granny Squannit Walk, MWTCGC

Weekly Events

Mondays – 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Finding My Medicine, 55 Acres (starts July 19)

Mondays – 11:00 a.m.
Crazy 8 Walking Club, MWTCGC

Mondays – 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Dancing Moon Yoga, MWTCGC

Tuesdays – 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Elders Lunch & Learn, MWTCGC

Tuesdays – 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Coed Volleyball, MWTCGC

Wednesdays – 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
Tribal Health Yoga Classes with Yoga Neighborhood, MWTCGC

Thursdays – 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Finding My Medicine, 55 Acres

Thursdays – 11:00 a.m.
Crazy 8 Walking Club, MWTCGC

Thursdays – 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Elders Lunch & Learn, MWTCGC

Food Pantry Hours

Monday: 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Tuesday: 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Thursday: 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Closed Friday, Saturday and Sunday

4 Notices for Elders

1) Meeting first Saturday of the month at the Community/Gov’t Center at 11
2) Let us know of any elders that are sick, hospitalized or in a nursing home
3) Contact us when you turn 55
4) All Elders in Need of assistance or information please contact Joanne Frye, Director of Elders Department, at (508) 477-0208 Ext.140.

Annual Granny Squannit Walk on October 27

The Tribal Youth Council has organized another scary fun evening for our kids in the community with the annual Granny Squannit Walk on Saturday, October 27.

The event will start at 5:00 p.m. at the Powwow Grounds adjacent to the Tribe’s Community and Government Center with a spooky walk to 55 Acres at dusk to hear stories from Granny Squannit.

There will also be food and refreshments for all with pizza, hotdogs, sandwiches, hot chocolate and cookies on the menu. There are also plans for donuts on a string, hayrides and goody bags for the kids.

Please mark your calendar and join the Tribal Youth Council at this fun, family event.

Native American Thanks Giving on November 17

Tribal Citizens along with family and friends from the community are invited to attend the 9th Annual Native American Thanks Giving on Saturday, November 17. The annual event, which is coordinated by the Old Indian Meeting House Committee, will open at 11:00 a.m. at the Old Indian Meeting House with an opening ceremony and prayer.

The annual event is organized to bring the community together and to provide everyone a much-needed pause from their daily routine to reflect on all that we have to be thankful for.

The celebration is open anyone and everyone that would like to share. Tribal Citizens are asked to wear their traditional regalia.

Remembering Miss Helen Edwards

Earlier this spring we celebrated the life of Miss Helen Madeline Edwards.

Miss Helen was born in Mashpee on Lovell’s Lane on February 20, 1920 and attended school in Provincetown, MA

Married to Irving Edwards in May of 1939, they had three children; Irving F. Edwards, Barry W. Edwards and Lynette Edwards Radzewicz (deceased).

Miss Helen was the grandmother to seven grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren and 20 great, great grandchildren.

She was baptized at the Mashpee Baptist Church where she also taught Sunday School student to sing and she was a member of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Known affectionately as Aunt Helen to many in our community, she was the Eldest Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal member at age 98, until her passing on May 27, 2018.

We cherish the gifts she shared with many of us as visits with Miss Helen meant a very special visit filled with memories of “Old Mashpee,” and stories about some of her favorite things like gardening, reading, baking and her birds!
The Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project, a nonprofit dedicated to reviving and teaching the tribe’s long-lost language, will receive a roughly $1.4 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to help expand its teaching curriculum to native toddlers and students within the Mashpee public school system and the tribe’s language school, according to Jennifer Weston, who directs the tribe’s language department.

The money will be administered across five years and comes through the federal department’s Office of English Language Acquisition, Weston said. Thirty-seven tribes across Indian Country are already using this funding to support the revival and continuity of native languages, she said.

Tribal linguists and language teachers have worked to revive the ancient Wampanoag language since the early 1990s, beginning with the efforts of Wampanoag Tribal Council Vice Chairwoman Jessie “Little Doe” Baird. Now the tribe has a language school — called Mukayuhsak Weekuw, or the “Children’s House” — that provides Wampanoag language instruction to tribe members as young as 3 years old.

Teaching the language, which at one point had been lost for more than six generations, is part of the tribe’s effort to bolster bilingualism among its children — a project called “Numukayuhsunônak: Our Children Speak Two Languages.” Tribe members have long said the language is a vital part of the surviving culture.

“The idea is that tribal students will perform better in English language instruction if they have access to their heritage language as well,” Weston said.

Mashpee Public Schools and the tribe have also collaborated to better integrate Native American and Wampanoag education into the district’s curriculum. Students at all three Mashpee public schools can learn the language whether through after-school programs or classes during regular school hours, Weston said.

Students at Mashpee Middle-High School can take classes that teach levels 1 and 2 of the language. The grant will allow Weston and her colleagues to expand the curriculum, developing levels 3 through 5 for more advanced students.

The tribal program is one of only seven recipients of the new grant, which will go toward employing more full-time teachers of the language, Weston said.

The money will also help to extend the tribe’s programming to after school hours and support the works of Native American authors and filmmakers, she said.

In a statement, Mashpee Public Schools Superintendent Patricia DeBoer said the school district looks forward to the expanded learning opportunities resulting from the funding. “We greatly value our positive and productive partnership with Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project and with the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe,” she said.

During testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs in August, Baird said the tribe’s efforts to teach its language and open a school were directly tied to its ability to maintain its reservation, which had come under threat as part of a lawsuit challenging the federal government’s 2015 decision to take 321 acres of Mashpee and Taunton land into trust for the tribe.

“It would be nearly impossible on an off-reservation public school to exercise this level of sovereignty,” she said.

On Sept. 7, the Interior Department announced it had decided the tribe was ineligible to have land taken into trust because it was not under federal jurisdiction at the time of the passage of the Indian Reorganization Act in 1934 and therefore didn’t qualify under a definition of “Indian” spelled out in the law.

Last week, a spokeswoman for the Bureau of Indian Affairs said the Interior Department would maintain the land in trust pending an appeal of a judge’s ruling in the lawsuit brought by neighbors of a casino the tribe planned to building on its land in Taunton.
The Herald News Editorial: Recognize the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe (continued)

Wampanoag are not Indians under any definition of the word is laughable, if so much were not at stake. The tribe has inhabited this region for millennia, despite efforts to crush its customs, its language, and its way of life. Interpreting the phrase “under federal jurisdiction” in the most restrictive way possible negates the legitimacy of an entire people, and should be an affront to anyone who values both fairness and the rule of law.

Some federal Indian law experts have suggested that the Interior Department cannot arbitrarily remove any lands from trust until such time as Congress has voted on the matter. Others have called the move “unprecedented,” saying it turns decades of federal policy on its head.

Absent Congress overturning Interior’s decision, the tribe still has one route open to it, but it remains tenuous at best. U.S. Rep. William Keating, D-Mass., has filed legislation in the House to reaffirm the Obama-era ruling that recognized the tribe. A similar measure has been introduced in the Senate. If passed, the law would not only put an end to the current dispute; it would shield the tribe from any future efforts to challenge its legitimacy.

Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Chairman Cedric Cromwell responded to the news, alleging that a competing casino developer, Neil Bluhm, had helped fund the neighbors’ lawsuit in part to help bolster his chances to open a casino in Brockton. Cromwell said he held out hope that justice would prevail: “I am asking people of good will and all those concerned with justice for the indigenous people of this land – the first Americans – to stand with us in calling on Congress to protect our reservation and ensure we don’t become the first Tribe since the dark days of the Termination Era to lose its land.”

We agree. Congress has a unique opportunity, after centuries of false promises and outright lies, to act in a manner befitting of a nation that claims to value justice above all else. The Mashpee Wampanoag must be recognized and its lands placed back in trust.

The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe is now suing the U.S. Department of the Interior. Wampanoag Tribe (continued)

Tribal attorneys filed a lawsuit in federal court September 27 challenging a Sept. 7 determination from the department that reversed an Obama-era decision to secure 321 acres of tribal land into trust. The latest ruling declared that the tribe was not under federal jurisdiction in 1934 — the year the Indian Reorganization Act was passed.

The new complaint, which was filed in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia against the department and Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, alleges that the agency “failed to apply established law” by “contorting relevant facts and ignoring others to engineer a negative decision” with respect to the tribe’s land.

The suit alleges that the recent department decision “indefensibly reverses course” from the administrative decisions it has made for other tribes in regard to federal jurisdiction and “badly ignores” the case law interpreting what that phrase means, documents show.

“The (tribe) therefore files this complaint to challenge the department’s 2018 decision and correct (its) arbitrary, capricious and unlawful actions,” the suit states. The suit goes on to reassert evidence that the tribe submitted during its bid for federal recognition and throughout the course of the lawsuit to prove it was under federal jurisdiction.

“We are urgently petitioning the United States Congress and the federal courts to end this nightmare — to prevent what appears to be an intentional return to the dark days of the termination era, when tribal lands were taken out of trust and the federal relationship with tribal governments disavowed,” Chairman Cedric Cromwell said.

The Interior Department took 321 acres in Mashpee and Taunton into trust for the tribe in 2015, declaring it a sovereign reservation. Under such designation the federal government holds the title to the property but the tribe may decide how to develop or use the land for its own benefit.

Voter Registration Information at MWT Community & Government Building/Lobby Area

Since September 24 there has been a voter registration table located in the lobby of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Community and Government Center. The deadline to register for the November election is Wednesday, October 17. Native votes make the difference and we want to make sure your voice is heard on the November 6 election day.

Tribal members, residents and friends are welcome to visit the table to register to vote, check the status of their voter registration and learn more about early voting and absentee voting.

Voter Registration material at the table only applies to residents of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Native votes make the difference.
Tribe Welcomes Support for land in Trust

In the wake of the federal government’s decision to rule against the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, the Mashpees have had a few moments in the limelight recently, both in the pop culture world and the national tribal community.

Tribal leaders and drum group Eastern Suns opened a concert for alternative pop band Portugal. The Man at the Blue Hills Bank Pavilion in Boston on Sunday, September 23, in front of a crowd of thousands.

Also, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Council, leaders of the tribe that reached the nation’s consciousness through the protest of the Dakota Access Pipeline in 2016, passed a resolution in support of the Mashpee tribe in early September.

Both events have garnered awareness for the passage of HR 5244, legislation currently in committee on the US House of Representatives that, if passed, would overrule a court decision and protect the tribe’s reservation in both Taunton and Mashpee.

After the federal government granted the tribe land in trust in 2015, a group of East Taunton residents protested the decision, saying the government overreached its authority. The East Taunton residents have since won a key federal court ruling that threatens the tribe’s reservation—although HR 5244, if passed, could override that decision.

In addition to gaining national attention, the tribe has also announced a “Land Sovereignty Walk and Rally” scheduled for Saturday, October 6, starting at the Mashpee Community Park near town hall and ending at the Powwow Grounds on Great Neck Road South on the other side of town. The rally will culminate with internationally known indigenous-rights speakers, although no names have been announced as of Wednesday, September 26. All are invited.

The members of Portugal. The Man, a band known for its hit “Feel It Still,” are originally from an Alaskan town that has its own native tribe. As explained by tribal members present for the Sunday’s concert, the group tries to invite tribes among local communities during stops on its tour to their shows, in an effort to bring awareness to their struggles. The band is an alternative pop group that has toured around the world. Its hit “Feel It Still” has 180 million views on YouTube.

In a last-minute arrangement, the band reached out to the Mashpee tribe to join them Sunday in Boston. And the tribe jumped at the opportunity.

At Sunday’s concert, Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Council Chairman Cedric Cromwell opened the show with a call to members of the audience to write to and call their congressmen to support the passage of HR 5244, the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Reservation Reaffirmation Act. Mr. Cromwell also led the audience in a back-and-forth rallying cry. As captured on video from backstage, Mr. Cromwell shouted “hoka” and the audience, as instructed, shouted back “hey.” The back-and-forth proceeded a few moments. “Hoka” is a word Mr. Cromwell uses as a welcoming at many of his public appearances.

Following the exchange, the Eastern Suns, the tribal drum group, gathered around a drum and performed for the audience as a few dancers in traditional regalia danced.

“It was a really awesome experience,” said David Weeden, a member of The Eastern Suns. The drummer, also a member of the tribal council, said that the lights were bright on stage and the audience was pretty dark, so it was difficult to judge how many people were there. He said that was probably a good thing as it may have prevented some stage fright. The group performed for a few minutes before the main act came on stage.

Mr. Weeden and other tribal members were able to join the band backstage after the show. He said that the band was “very down to earth.” Mr. Weeden said that for a group of celebrities, they were humble and engaging, as well as appreciative of the tribe’s struggles.

And the tribe is appreciative of the band’s invitation.

“With a national audience, hopefully this stands out,” Mr. Weeden said, suggesting the performance could lend to awareness of the congressional bill and, of course, the Eastern Suns.

The concert followed the support from the Standing Rock Sioux, whose September 13 resolution called for the passage of HR 5244, declaring that “The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe supports and stands in solidarity with the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe in calling on Congress to exercise its plenary authority to prevent the disestablishment of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe’s Reservation.”

The resolution was passed two years after the Mashpee tribe passed its own resolution in support of the Standing Rock, as well as a financial donation to support the Dakota tribe in its fight against the Dakota Access Pipeline. The Cape tribe also held a rally at the Mashpee rotary in support of the Sioux.
Nashauonk Mittark

Chairman’s Column (continued)

Native Tribes. I ask all of you to stand with me in solidarity for the Mashpee Wampanoag Reaffirmation Act HR 5244 and Senate Bill S 2628.

I encourage everyone to contact their legislator and express their support for these two bills. We’ve placed information on our website to help you contact your legislators. It’s extremely important that we all work together and shed our light on the injustice of our people.

As we stand in solidarity as a Tribe in Mashpee, you should know that we are not fighting this injustice alone. The decision by the Department of Interior to reject the numerous pieces of evidence presented – some directly from Congress – that we have been under federal jurisdiction during various points in history have galvanized others to stand with us from across this nation. NCAI along with our friends and neighbors across Indian Country are standing with us recognizing that a wrong needs to be corrected.

Know that we will persist through this latest attack on our way of living. We will not abandon our traditional way of life and will continue to honor our culture and heritage by remaining connected to this land. This is not a fight that we will abandon. We will persist and we will succeed.

Native Tribes. I ask all of you to stand with me in solidarity for the Mashpee Wampanoag Reaffirmation Act HR 5244 and Senate Bill S 2628.

Rodney Collins Headed to Washington DC

Mashpee Town Manager Rodney Collins will be traveling to Capitol Hill to advocate for pending legislation that would end a legal challenge to the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe’s reservation.

The Mashpee Board of Selectmen issued a statement Tuesday expressing its disappointment over a Sept. 7 decision by the U.S. Department of the Interior that found the tribe was ineligible to have its 321 acres of land taken into trust. The board has authorized Collins to meet with the town’s legislative consultant and members of Congress to “further advocate for the adoption” of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Reaffirmation Act. The legislation was introduced by U.S. Rep. William Keating and U.S. Sen. Edward Markey, both Massachusetts Democrats, in the House and the Senate, respectively.

“We know that tribal officials have worked diligently and explored every possible avenue with the Interior to establish a record to support its trust application, and we share the tribe’s frustration with this most recent decision,” the statement, signed by board Chairwoman Carol Sherman, says. “The selectmen will continue to support the tribe’s endeavors to obtain federal trust status for its lands, and, otherwise, remain fully committed to undertaking any action required to fulfill the terms, purpose and intent of the Intergovernmental Agreement executed by the town and the tribe on April 22, 2008.”

The selectmen moved to formally back the legislation in May after leaders exchanged letters over the town’s concerns that the proposed legislation did not include reference to the 2008 agreement between the town and the tribe. The selectmen worried that without explicit reference to the agreement, the passage of the legislation would have created legal ambiguities.

After it was agreed that such language be added to the bill, the town hired David Mullon Jr. to lobby for its passage. Mullon served as a senior attorney on the U.S Senate Committee on Indian Affairs and as chief counsel at the National Congress of American Indians, according to biographical information on his firm’s website.

Office Support Training Opportunity

The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Employment and Training Department is accepting new client applications for an exciting Work Experience opportunity. The opportunity will provide the participant with valuable on the job office support skills. The program requires a minimum of 20 hours per week and a stipend will be provided. For more information, please call Marnell Cash at (508) 477-0208 ext. 161.

The Employment and Training Department staff are dedicated to providing its clients with the tools they need to become self-sufficient and self-reliant through gainful employment. The department accomplishes this by partnering with the local unions and career opportunities programs. In addition, the department assists adults with obtaining basic skills instruction and GED preparation.

9th Annual Ancestor’s Day

The Old Indian Meeting House Committee was pleased to continue this annual event by hosting the 9th Annual Ancestor’s Day on Saturday, September 22.
NYCP Building Pathways for Tribal Youth Plans for Fall 2018

The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Education Department has organized several fall education events and programs for tribal students. These events are made possible thanks to the NYCP Grant. Programs include college admission’s support, college visits, tutoring, college nights, mentoring, college fair and more. For more information about any of the programs listed below or to register, please contact John Hanlon at (508) 237-0041.

Assistant Admissions Director at Tufts University Visits Mashpee High School: Sean Ashburn, Assistant Admissions Director at Tufts University, will visit the Indian Education Room on Monday, October 1 from 12:30-2:00 p.m. for all Native students at Mashpee High School in grades 10, 11, and 12. Visit Tufts University: Spend the weekend at Tufts University and experience all the College has to offer October 24-26. The deadline to signup is Tuesday, October 9. Transportation will be provided. https://admissions.tufts.edu/voices/voices-home/

Tutor at Mashpee High School: Mardi Byerly, a science professor at Cape Cod Community College and Cherokee tribal member, will be available to tutor MHS students in science and math in the Indian Education room during the school day twice a month. Let John Hanlon know if you are interested and want to sign up.

College Nights at Community and Government Center: Starting in November, John will be offering college nights at the Government Center from 4:30 - 5:30 on Thursdays twice a month for help with college applications, financial aid, essay writing, college searches, GED preparation, and any other college or career things that youth would like help with.

Other exciting opportunities on the horizon:

Young men nights once a month on Fridays starting in November with John Hanlon and Levoy Foster (food, basketball, movies, mentoring, and academic/college/ career help)

A college trip Veteran’s Day weekend to Native Colleges American Indian Art Institute and Fort Lewis College in New Mexico and Colorado

A college fair at the Community and Government Center with schools such as Tufts, BU, BC, Northeastern, Brandeis, MIT, Wellesley, Williams, Amherst, Wesleyan, Trinity, and perhaps others

College trips this fall and winter to Bowdoin, Tufts, UMass Amherst, and others

One more fishing trip with Aneba before winter

Contact John Hanlon at (508)-237-0041 for more details and to register.

Suicide Prevention Day was held on September 10 “Lifting the silence on Suicide”

Thanks to a true collaboration of efforts with the Samaritans of Cape Cod and Cape Cod & Island Suicide Prevention Coalition, and Indian Health Services Behavioral Health Team, the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe’s Health and Human Services Department kicked off its first Suicide Awareness and Prevention Campaign to promote and educate the Community on Suicide Prevention.

Our goal for raising awareness among the community was successful. Throughout the day community members had stopped in and visited the series of tables that were displayed in the lobby with important information and resources to help them better understand Suicide Prevention. The Tables were displayed for the month of September with loads of resources to take. Congratulations to the raffle winners Catherine Hendricks, Shellie Tobey, and Latoya Green who all won beautiful beaded earrings made by our own Tribal Members.

Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month has now passed, but that does not mean our work to heal and protect our community is ever. Please familiarize yourself with the signs and support available below. Know the Signs:

- Talking about Suicide or wanting to die
- Withdrawing from friends, family and society
- Feeling hopeless, depressed or trapped

Increased alcohol or drug use
Sudden mood changes

24-Hour Crisis Hotline
Cape Cod: 833-229-2683
Boston Area and Fall River: 800-981-4357
Martha’s Vineyard: 508-693-0032
Samaritans of Cape Cod & Island: 800-893-9990 (Free confidential crisis line)
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-TALK (8255)
Crisis Text Line: Text “HI” to 741-741
Veterans’ Crisis Line: 800-273-8255 press 1

Remember-Together we can help Prevent Suicide. For more information on trainings and resources please contact Kim Frye (508) 477-0208 Ext. 103
Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and STEEP Superfund Research Program present a screening of the documentary film The Devil We Know

The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and the STEEP Superfund Research Program will present a screening of the documentary film The Devil We Know on Tuesday, October 16th at 6:00 p.m. The screening will be co-hosted by Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition, Association for Preservation of Cape Cod, and Barnstable Clean Water Coalition. The film will be shown at the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Community and Government Center, 483 Great Neck Road South, Mashpee.

The Devil We Know, by award-winning documentary filmmaker Stephanie Soechtig and featured at this year’s prestigious Sundance Film Festival, chronicles one of the biggest environmental scandals of our time. The film tells the story of a group of citizens in West Virginia as they take on a powerful corporation following the discovery that it had knowingly dumped a class of toxic chemical called PFASs into the drinking water supply.

These same chemicals have also been found on Cape Cod. STEEP, a five-year research project launched last year, is focused on understanding PFASs and the environmental and human health impacts of these drinking water contaminants, including here on Cape Cod. Following the film, a panel discussion with STEEP researchers will give the local community the opportunity to share their questions and concerns.

STEEP (Sources, Transport, Exposure and Effects of PFASs) is a partnership of the University of Rhode Island; Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Department of Environmental Health; and Silent Spring Institute. STEEP is funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, Superfund Research Program. For more information, visit: web.uri.edu/steep

Medicare Open Enrollment

The Medicare Open Enrollment period runs through October 15th through December 7th 2018. During this time period is when all people with Medicare can change their health plans and prescriptions drug coverage for the following year to better meet their needs.

It is particularly important for people in a MEDICARE HEALTH or PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN to always review the materials in their plans such as “Evidence of Coverage” (EOC) and “Annual Notice of Change” (ANOC). If their plans are changing, they should make sure their plans would still meet their needs for the following year.

Please contact the Tribal Health office at (508) 477-0208 ext. 166 to schedule an appointment with April Dugas, our Medicare Outreach Worker, or visit our weekly Elders Lunch and Learn Program every Thursday from 10a-2p. You can also find information about next year’s plans by calling 1-800-MEDICARE or online at www.medicare.gov.

Annual Granny Squannit Walk on October 27

The Tribal Youth Council has organized another scary fun evening for our kids in the community with the annual Granny Squannit Walk on Saturday, October 27.

The event will start at 5:00 p.m. at the Powwow Grounds adjacent to the Tribe’s Community and Government Center with a spooky walk to 55 Acres at dusk to hear stories from Granny Squannit.

There will also be food and refreshments for all with pizza, hotdogs, sandwiches, hot chocolate and cookies on the menu. There are also plans for donuts on a string, hayrides and goody bags for the kids.

Please mark your calendar and join the Tribal Youth Council at this fun, family event.
The Mashpee Wampanoag Community Development Corporation (MWCDC) provided the 102nd Intelligence Wing with a Statement of Need (SON) response on Saturday, September 15. The Letter of Interest (LOI) outlines the MWCDC’s ability to secure and operate the Joint Base Cape Cod (JBCC) Water System and Wastewater Treatment Plant for the betterment of the Cape Cod community.

“The proposed exchange provides the base with one option toward a long-term solution to water and wastewater treatment,” said Col. Virginia I. Gaglio, Commander of the 102nd Intelligence Wing. Last month, the wing provided the MWCDC with a Statement of Need as part of the process and requested the MWCDC submit an official LOI by September 15. The LOI informed the base of the skilled partners that the MWCDC have forged to fulfill each aspect of the project including the financial and operational aspects that were requirements in the SON. These partnerships include the National Development Council (NDC), a national nonprofit that specializes in work with economically disadvantaged communities; Black & Veatch, an engineering firm that specializes in water treatment; and Infra-Management Group. These partners will assist with the engineering, facility design, operation and management. MWCDC believes that this partnership will help to ensure the long-term health and well-being for all current and future tenants on JBCC and the surrounding towns.

"Protecting our land and water has and continues to be a guiding mission for our Tribe," said Cedric Cromwell, Chairman of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, who also sees this as a natural extension of Tribe’s Community Development Corporation. "Managing the Wastewater Treatment Plant under our Community Development Corporation will provide a cost-effective solution to this major problem," stated Cromwell.

The proposed exchange includes the MWCDC taking ownership, operating, maintaining and making capital improvements of the system. Working with the surrounding towns of Mashpee, Falmouth, Bourne and Sandwich on partnerships is a major point included in the LOI and will allow them to tap into these assets and meet their wastewater treatment needs.

Mark Harding, President of the MWCDC, looks forward to further assessing the JBCC resources and making a final determination quickly, "We fully understand the need to address the wastewater needs of the region as soon as possible," said Harding. "I can say with confidence that, if we complete the proposed exchange, our friends and neighbors will be relieved to know we are postured to manage this asset and will be a reliable partner. We also live and work in this area and want an affordable solution that also protects our land, bays and estuaries for the generations to come."

The Mashpee Wampanoag Community Development Corporation was organized in 2016 to engage in activities that will promote the social welfare, economic security and community development of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and its enrolled citizens that will enable the Tribe to be self-sufficient and to provide economic support for its tribal citizens. The CDC consists of at least nine Directors that are appointed by the Tribal Council/Shareholder Representatives. Current Board Members include Shareholder/Tribal Councilor Winnie Johnson-Graham, President Mark Harding, Vice President Tara Collier, Treasurer Nancy Rose, Secretary Steven Peters, and Board of Directors Talia Landry and Angela Shwom.

2018-2019 MWT Youth Council Annual Elections on October 2

The Mashpee Wampanoag Youth Council will host elections for its officer and male and female representatives on Tuesday, October 2 at 6:00 p.m. at the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Community and Government Center. Candidate speeches will be presented prior to voting. All tribal youth ages 13 to 21 years of age are eligible to vote. Youth will be able to cast 1 vote for each of the following seats on Tuesday:

- Chairperson
- Vice-Chairperson
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Female Representative
- Male Representative

Confirmed Nominees for the seats are the following:

Chairperson: Abigail Peters
Vice Chairperson: Iyano Fermino
Secretary: Taylor Rose

Treasurer: Kobi Howerton
Female Representative: Amiyah Peters
Male Representative: Caesar Hendricks
Troy Stewart
Iyano Fermino
Ziggy Peters

**Write-in candidates are eligible**
Saving the Traditional Circle With Life

"It's a Native Tradition to sit in a circle and talk- to share what is in your heart." 
John Peters (Slow Turtle) Mashpee Wampanoag

This Elder has had enough of losing our tribal youth to suicide or substance abuse. It makes me very sad and I cry for long periods of time. There's no more tears that this old bat can share and my body is aching with pain. As a matter of fact, to any of us feel like this. I'm speaking to those who now may have the same thoughts. It's not fair, first to yourself, loved ones, community or friends or to the Native cultural tradition meaning about sitting in a circle to share what is in your heart. This is one special place where we can help you heal and better understand how important you are to life especially to your family and Wampanoag human race.

We need no more missing holes in our traditional cultural circle. WE NEED YOU, OF COURSE BECAUSE YOU ARE unique AND HAVE cultural values where you can help yourself first then maybe others who you love. Try to let the trauma and hopelessness go behind you. Remember we are People of the First Light, please try to see the light by talking and listening. Some twenty-five years I lost my oldest son to dying suddenly and I felt the similar feelings such that I no longer wanted to live, for two days I thought about it and cried and cried. Meantime asking our Creator/Great Spirit to help! I'm still here (78 yrs old) with my other children, family, native community and friends. Not ready to leave this world I know. I have also been faced with many other tough challenges and hardships, but I know suicide is painful and not the answer. LIVING LIFE AND SINGING A SONG LIKE THE BIRDS HELPS. COMMUNICATION is KEY TO SURVIVAL! You have to speak to someone no matter how much it hurts. Find that special friend to talk too. If you can not talk just yell loud someone will hear you. If you can't yell, scream. You need help and we want you to be well and get to be 78 yrs and lots older. Faith and hope is key to living. Come to us, we can help. Ask yourself these questions first if any apply while your sitting under Mashpee's old oak tree or near the herring run. You may discover traces of hope and faith.

Ask yourself these questions. Do I love my family? Do I still want to visit Mashpee Pond? Do I like Fried Herring? Do I like our Native Drumming? Do I like to hunt and fish. Do I love my grandfather and grandmother, mother, father, brother, sister and cuz.? Do I love my friends? Do I love myself, if not why not?

My research tells us the following:

Amy Cunningham, Psy. D., and Heidi Bryan founders of Feeling Blue Suicide Prevention Council in Pennsylvania share the following tips for: How Do I Ask For Help From My Loved Ones?

"When you are telling someone you need help, let them know you are committed to safety and need some help to maintain the commitment. An example maybe: Mom, I really want to keep myself safe and I'm feeling really depressed now, do you think we could talk for awhile?"

"Be direct: It may seem obvious to you that you are struggling and need help, but other people may not understand. Trying saying something like, "I've been having a hard time figuring out how to get a ride to my doctor's appointment, could you help me?"

Make sure to ask a question and wait for a response. If you just say you are having hard times, people may not realize that you are asking them for help.

Important numbers to call: Tribal Health and Human Service Department 508-477-0208 ext. 148
Indian Health Service Clinic 508-477-6967 ext. 6964
Hugs, Love, Hope & Faith, Blessings to those who have crossed over and Blessings to those we can save.

Do You Want to Face a Lifetime Penalty!

Don't assume that you are covered for all parts of Medicare. If you are turning 65, or have parents who are turning 65 you/they will need to sign up for Medicare Parts: A – Hospital, B – Medical, D – Prescription

Three months before your 65th birthday and/or three months after, or you could face a Lifetime Penalty.

A Lifetime Penalty! If you are not a patient of Indian Health Services and you are turning 65, you will need to sign up for all parts Medicare, including Prescription Coverage.

Our Medicare Outreach Worker will be on site at our weekly Lunch and Learn Program every Thursday from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Or feel free to contact the Tribal Health Department at (508) 477-0208 ext. 166 to schedule an appointment.

Indian Health Services (the clinic) is separate from Tribal Health. Thank you and please call Tribal Health with any questions.
NOW RECRUITING for NEW Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe AmeriCorps Program

The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe AmeriCorps Program is currently seeking 10 motivated Native American individuals 18-24 to serve the Mashpee Wampanoag Community in FULL time (1,700 hours) service opportunities.

For more information please contact Nelson Andrews Jr or Allyssa Hathaway by email or phone.