



Nashauonk Mittark™



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March 2015

DRUM BEAT

IN THE NEWS

DEPARTMENTS

COMMUNITY

Chairman's Column



Dear Tribal Family,

The ballots have been cast. The votes have been tallied. The people have spoken.

With 11 actively engaged candidates who ran spirited campaigns in the quest for six Tribal Council seats in the election last month, I'd say we are all winners - in so far as the 553 tribal citizens who voted had such an array of choices.

I've said it before and I'll say it again: while it is easy to complain and criticize, it can be difficult to take on the actual challenges of governing. And for that reason, a note of gratitude is in order for not just the winners but also for those who were not elected.

If you haven't already, I hope you will take a moment to welcome two newcomers to the Tribal Council: Robert Dias and Winona Pocknett.

Robert is an up-and-coming leader and role model for our youth. As a father himself, his passion for guiding young people with the wisdom of the elders is an excellent addition to the Tribal Council.

Winona, mother of our 2010 Powwow Princess, is another dynamic young leader. Like Robert, Winona has a heart for our youth, yet is grounded in the traditions of our elders. Her commitment in working with the Tribal Council to establish a homeland for our people that will create a space for self-determination is something we can all get behind.

I sincerely look forward to working with Robert and Winona as we embark on what will be a momentous year for us, as our land-into-trust application moves closer to an official decision.

Yet, even as I congratulate the win-

(Continued on page 3)

State Approves Environmental Report

On Friday, January 30 the Commonwealth of Massachusetts approved the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe's Final Environmental Impact Report for Project First Light, another key milestone for our plans to build a destination resort casino.

"The Commonwealth's approval is one more step forward for our proposed destination resort casino in Taunton," Chairman Cedric Cromwell said. "This report not only represents the final step in the state's environmental review process, it also affirms the significant economic benefits the project will bring to the region. The approval allows us to accelerate the final design phase of the overall project."

The tribe submitted the FEIR on Project First Light to the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs last month in accordance with the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA).

The analysis in the report includes responses to comments submitted during the public comment period on the draft report,



which was released last year. It also includes changes recommended by state agencies to improve traffic flow and protect the environment.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs released its Final Environmental Impact Statement on the tribe's land in trust application in early September. The MEPA certificate will now be submitted to federal officials as they prepare a final decision on the tribe's land in trust application.

(Continued on page 5)

Tribe Beefs Up Support for Substance Abuse

As the drug problem on Cape Cod continues to intensify, the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe is seeking ways to provide added substance abuse treatment for those members who need it.

Tribal Members will vote on March 8 during the General Membership Meeting to appropriate \$250,000 toward funding additional substance abuse treatment for its members. Hope Shwom, who is the tribal action plan coordinator, said the money will be used to defray the cost of detox and inpatient rehabilitation programs members would otherwise have to pay for out-of-pocket.

The move to appropriate the surplus funds comes after budget cuts forced the Indian Health Service to reduce its substance abuse services for tribe members for

Fiscal Year 2014. Tribal Council Vice Chairwoman Jessie (Little Doe) Baird said the money will be available for use immediately, following a vote by the tribal council next month.

"All of us are affected by this," Vice Chairwoman Baird said, calling the tribe's substance abuse issues a "microcosm" of the larger drug problem facing the Cape. "We've all lost a parent, uncle, sibling, or someone close to us over the years."

The \$250,000 will address the immediate needs facing the tribe, Hope said. That includes funding to send members to detox programs and to residential treatment at the Partridge House, a long-term treatment facility on the Akwesasne Reservation in upstate New York.

"They're a part of the community

(Continued on page 4)

Events Calendar

New Events

March 8 – 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
General Body Meeting and Budget Vote, MWTCGC

March 12 – 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Free Hearing Test for Elders, MWTCGC

March 21 – 6:00 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.
Mashpee Wampanoag Ball, *Sea Crest Beach Hotel, Falmouth*

March 22 – 3:00 p.m.
Harlem Rockets vs MWT Dream Team Basketball Game, MWTCGC

March 26 – 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Wópanâak Language Charter School Forum, MWTCGC

Weekly Events

Mondays – 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Youth Boys Basketball, 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. & 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Tribal Health Yoga with Virginia and Kimma, MWTCGC

Wednesdays – 5:30 p.m.
Enrollment Committee, MWTCGC

Wednesdays – 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Tribal Health Zumba with Shirley, MWTCGC

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

Thursdays – 5:30 p.m.
Recovery Group, *Old Indian Meeting House*

Fridays – 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Tribal Health Zumba with Shirley, MWTCGC

Monthly – 6:00 p.m.
Housing Commission, MWTCGC, *It is held the first Thursday and third Monday of each month.*

Monthly – 6:00 p.m.
Chief's Circle, *Old Indian Meeting House* *It is held the first Tuesday of the month.*

Monthly – 5:30 p.m.
Public Safety Commission, MWTCGC, *It is held the third Thursday of the month.*



Tribal Announcements



» Billie Red Dove Mills, 24, graduated from the University of North Carolina at Pembroke on December 13, 2014, and received a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Management. Billie is currently working as an Account Representative and Loan Specialist for Mariner Finance LLC in Lumberton, North Carolina. She is also mother to an amazing 16-month-old boy named Forest. Long-term goals include moving up in the field of business finance and eventually breaking out and starting a business of her own.



» Ryan Dauphinais just won the Impact Athlete Honors award and is one of two that gets to go to Australia for nine days followed by three days in Hawaii to represent Massachusetts in a football conference. Ryan is a junior at Barnstable High School where he rushed for over 1,000 yards and four touchdowns this season. His achievements are the result of his commitment to his team and his 'extreme power to find the open holes and breaking out of a lot of tackles. Ryan is the son of Mika Miranda and the grandson of Rita Pocknett Gonsalves.

Youth Attend UNITY Conference in DC

Native American and Alaskan youth of all ages joined together in round table discussions, ice breakers, networking, motivational games and confidence boosters while advisors branched off to attend activities of their own. The youth spoke about topics that relate to them directly, including Generation Indigenous, an initiative recently launched by President Obama to combat barriers that native youth face to help them succeed.

On the second day Tribal Youth Council (YC) Chairwoman and YC Female Representative Danna Jackson; YC Co-Secretary Autumn Jackson; YC Co-Secretary Chenoa Peters; YC Treasurer Ciara Jackson; YC Male Representative Attaquin Weeden; UNITY Male Co-President Brian Weeden and 2014 MWT Powwow Princess and UNITY Executive Vice Chairwoman Sassamin Weeden visited Capitol Hill with several issues in mind to express to our State Senates. The youth met with Senator Elizabeth Warren, Senator Ed Markey, Congressman Bill Keating and Congressman Joe Kennedy and confidently discussed issues of drug abuse in their community and ways to conquer the issue. The youth also expressed the idea of allowing the Wampanoag language to be a credited course to all native students.



Congressman Joe Kennedy with member of Youth Council, Secretary Marie Stone and Chairman Cedric Cromwell



Youth Council Chairwoman Danna Jackson with Senator Elizabeth Warren

Tribe to Host Conservation Forum

The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe will host a section of the Southeastern Massachusetts Regional Conservation Forum on March 11 at the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Community and Government Center.

The section held at the Tribe will focus on the restoration and management of pine barrens. Two of the largest remaining pine barrens in the world are right here in Massachusetts—one at Myles Standish State Forest in Plymouth, Carver and Wareham and the other inside and bordering the Massachusetts Military Reservation in Bourne and Sandwich.

Chuckie Green, the Tribe's natural resources assistant director will be one of the presenters. Several county, state and federal officials as well as representatives from several organizations will participate in the forum.

During the section, they will focus on fire science and land management and include a field trip to the pine barrens in Mashpee led by the North Atlantic Fire Science Exchange (NAFSE) and the Forest Guild Northeast Region.

During the field trip, Green will speak about the Tribe's efforts to preserve the pine barrens as an ecological habitat. "There had not been a fire on the South Mashpee Pine Barrens in over 50 years," said Green. "So when we went in with our partners and safely conducted a prescribed burn, we were able to return to our traditional ways of maintaining a productive, healthy ecosystem."

The other section of the forum will be held at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy in Buzzards Bay. There, topics will include invasive plant control, the Conservation Assessment and Prioritization System (CAPS), initiatives for key sites in the state and off-road vehicles (ORVs) and conservation areas. Mary Griffin, the state Department of Fish & Game commissioner is scheduled to speak.



Chairman's Column *(continued)*

ners - Winnie Johnson-Graham, Robert Dias, Winona Pocknett, Yvonne Avant, Carlton Hendricks Jr, and Cheryl Frye-Cromwell - I also want to extend my thanks and appreciation to Aaron Tobey Jr., Robyn Tobey Stamps, Danielle Hill, and especially to incumbent council members, Laura Miranda and Patricia "Trish" Keliinui.

I single out Trish and Laura because, as incumbents, I have had the privilege of working alongside them on the Tribal Council. I understand well the passion and commitment they brought to the job. Whether we agreed on everything isn't the point. I respect each of them for their service - Trish for her steadfast work in coordinating our community relations efforts; and Laura, whose strong positions served to clarify the views of the general membership and helped to refine the focus of the Tribal Council's goals and aims.

Now, as we look ahead, in addition

to securing land into trust, there are a number of important immediate issues we need to tackle, not the least of which is passing the proposed Tribal Council budget. That's why I hope you will take the time to read though this month's Mittark as it covers several important facets with regards to tribal finances.

There is a story on funds we are proposing to allocate for substance abuse treatment, news about a \$619,000 Affordable Housing Grant we received, as well as an overview of our Tribal Gaming Authority.

Last but not least, I urge everyone to attend our March 8 General Membership Meeting where will take up and vote on the proposed budget.

Kutâputunumuw;

Cedric Cromwell
Qaqemasq (*Running Bear*)

Sponsor the Powwow

The Powwow Committee has gotten a jump on raising funds to organize and promote this year's powwow. The committee is now accepting sponsorships of all levels and will continue to accept them through mid June. This will be our 94th Annual Mashpee Wampanoag Powwow and is being held July 3 to July 5 at the Barnstable County Fair Grounds. The annual powwow draws thousands of visitors from the Cape and across the country and provides great visibility for a wide range of businesses.

As in past years, the powwow committee has five levels of sponsorship that range from \$2,500 to less than \$500. Sponsors of the powwow are recognized in the event program and handed to visitors at the admissions booth. If you would more information about being a sponsor, please contact Cassie Jackson at (508) 477-0208 x162 or at cjackson@mwtribe.com.

Open Basketball for Youth Boys

Tribal Council Member Carlton Hendricks, Jr. is hosting open basketball for boys between 5th and 8th grade on Mondays from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM. The games are fun and open to all. Bring your boys down for a game or contact Carlos at chendricks@mwtribe.com for more information.



2 Open Seats on Housing Commission

The Housing Commission currently has two open seats and is searching for a new committee members to assist with the Housing Department. The mission of the Mashpee Wampanoag Housing Department is to provide safe affordable housing to eligible tribal members, and other Native Americans who reside in the Tribe's

service area. It is the Housing Department's mission to provide housing assistance and opportunities specific to our needs. Tribal Members interested in serving on the Housing Commission should send a letter of interest to Housing Director Deirdre Lopes at dlopes@mwtribe.com by April 15, 2015.

Language Program Looks Ahead to Charter School

After learning from the successes of other language immersion schools across the country, representatives of the Wopanaak Language Reclamation Project are in the midst of drafting a second bid for a charter school.

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education denied a bid for the Weetumuw Wopanaak Charter School last year in the second round of the three-round process. No new charter schools were approved last year in Massachusetts, but advocates for the Wampanoag school are hopeful that Governor Charles D. Baker Jr., who has expressed support for removing last year's cap on charter schools, will give his support.

The reclamation project representatives hope to draw on the successes of other immersion schools in the state, such as the Pioneer Valley Mandarin Immersion Charter School in Hadley, as well as similar schools across the country founded by Blackfeet, Cherokee, Mohawk, Native Hawaiian, Navajo, Yupik and other communities.

If accepted, the school would open in August 2016.

Jennifer Weston, language department director and Judi Urquhart, business and development manager for the project, hosted a meeting for parents Wednesday night, February 18, at the Mashpee Public Library to give

an update on their progress and to recruit students. They will meet with parents in other school districts over the coming months to spread the word further.

Jennifer said the group has narrowed its focus to recruiting students in Barnstable County instead of from the 39 school districts in Barnstable, Bristol, Duke's and Plymouth counties they hoped to recruit from last year. That approach might have confused the state, Ms. Weston said.

And while last year the group's application was geared toward almost strictly teaching the Wampanoag language, this year's thought is to scale back to ease the state's concerns on students' standardized testing results.

The reclamation project "is presently writing and piloting a Wampanoag and Common Core standards-based curriculum in order to prepare our future teachers and paraprofessionals to deliver classroom management and instruction in Wopanaak," a new project overview reads.

After research at the Pioneer Valley school, which teaches students Mandarin Chinese, Jennifer said the group considered scaling back the intensity of its language immersion mission. She said that they are thinking that for students in kindergarten through 1st grade, 75 percent of the lessons could be in Wopanaak and 25 percent in English, while

grades 2 through 5 could be a 50/50 split and then grades 6 through 8 could be 25 percent Wopanaak and 75 percent English, similar to the Mandarin charter school.

Ms. Weston said the Wampanoag reclamation project originally intended for the school to be taught through 90 percent of the traditional language.

The Pioneer Valley Mandarin school opened in 2007 and currently enrolls almost 400 students in grades K-10 from nearly 30 communities in the region, the school's website reads. The school plans to add grades 11 and 12 for 2016.

Members of the Mashpee reclamation project are discussing opening their school with students from kindergarten through grades 3 or possibly grade 4. They plan on adding an additional grade each year up to grade 8. Jennifer said they might apply for kindergarten through grade 8 to remove that future application process, but continue to accept only kindergarten through grade 3 or 4 students in its first year.

The group is currently looking for a location or building to house the school, not necessarily in Mashpee. Jennifer said they have looked in Woods Hole and other areas of Falmouth, as well as in Bourne. Judi said that they are looking for an "angel investor" for the school or property. Donations can be made online at www.wlrp.org.

Support for Substance Abuse *(continued)*

there," Vice Chairwoman Baird said of residents at Partridge House. "If the tribe is having a social, they're a part of that social. It feels like being home."

However, the tribe is also looking at long-term solutions to tackling substance abuse, including running its own sober and transitional housing and a rehabilitation facility to better assist members with dependency issues. These services ideally would provide members with a step-by-step process for integrating back into life after treatment while still managing their sobriety.

"Some people coming out of treatment are looking for jobs," Baird said. "Some people need to get a license. They need help adjusting to daily life again."

"The bottom line is people are going to come home [to the Tribe] again, and if they're going to do that, they need better services," she added.

Hope Shwom said the tribe's community outreach team is meeting with members to get input as to what services



they feel are most needed. Community outreach meetings, which are open to the public, are held the first Monday of every month from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM at the Community and Government Center on Great Neck Road South. She said the Tribe's first priority is to set up sober housing, after which it may look into setting up and staffing transitional housing and an in-patient rehabilitation center.

Vice Chairwoman Baird said she hopes the tribal council will continue to earmark money for substance abuse treatment in the budget moving forward.

Free Hearing Test on March 12



Free hearing tests by Mass Audiology will be held in the Craft Room at the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Community and Government Center on March 12 from 10:00 AM to 2:30 PM for elders 55 years of age or older. To sign up or for more information, please contact Nutritionist Program Director Donald Peters at (508) 477-0208 x 117.



Principles of Peacemaking *(Continued from February)*

The Principles below are a continuation of the “Principles of Peacemaking” written by Douglas Noll. The Principles examine other aspects and the techniques of Peacemaking. What it is and what it does when in practice. Tribal Court hopes you enjoy reading about these Principles and that it will give you a better understanding of Peacemaking and what it can offer for our Tribe as an alternative to Tribal Court.

4. *Peacemaking techniques are creative, exploratory, and filled with risk, fear, and excitement of discovery.* Peacemaking is a fearful undertaking because no one, not even the peacemaker, knows where people will end

up. Once the process is underway, however the fear generated from the anxiety is transformed into the fear of discovery, which creates a certain excitement in people.

5. *Peacemaking is a refuge – a safe haven from the incivility and outright nastiness of conflict.* Conflict can be nasty and brutal. Very few people enjoy the emotions involved by conflict situations. The Peacemaking process creates an environment of safety and security where the conflict issues can be dealt with carefully and respectfully.

6. *The peacemaker is charged with the sacred duty of creating a refuge where people from different backgrounds know they will be*

heard and understood, where their needs and ideas will be respected, and where they can safely do the difficult work of reconciling their differences. This is a primary value difference between peacemaking and other forms of conflict resolution. The peacemaker takes on the obligation of protecting everyone, seeing that all are given equally high respect and dignity, that all may fully express themselves or not as they wish, all in a place where there will be no personal attacks, insults or other emotional or physical violence of any sort.

Principles of Peacemaking is part of a series submitted monthly by our Peacemakers.

Granny Squannit: Tales from the Blizzard

Our indigenous oral and written stories by Native American people are closely associated with inspiring traditions, which include encouraging mythical creatures that have enriching tribal identity and sometimes celebrated with ceremony and dance.

As a Mashpee Wampanoag I believe in our millennia old traditional folklore because they have meaning, power, and historical value.

Remember last week’s historical blizzard? Who can forget?

Charles Orloff, executive director of the Blue Hill Observatory and Science Center mentions that the “moisture effect” pushed inland by the north wind making for heavier snowfall. What he may not know is that Moshop the Giant and his wife Squannit, the Sea-woman, continue to move about in the Atlantic ocean, streams, rivers and they also come along with the wind and snow in a massive way, believe it or not! Why, because they are legendary and continue to mischievous despite the fact they will shake up Mother Nature. These mythological figures of names were raising a ruckus long before Europeans came to our shores.

According to Moshop the Giant, who is responsible for unpredictable forces of nature, and many years ago was chief of the whales where he would stand on large stones to catch a whale and other fish by the tail and with his mighty arm with one swing he would fling them across Moshop’s Devil’s Bridge (located on Aquinnah/Gayhead) down into a cauldron where a fire was always kept smoking. To restock the fire, he pulled up large trees and threw some in a cauldron and many sailed through the air bringing up the wind and

snow whipping across Cape Cod that he built.

These swift actions are the leading reasons why the January blizzard arrived.

Maushop is no joke and there are many stories. It is noted that an unknown enemy conquered him on the mainland where we live and drove him to the western point of Aquinnah on Martha’s Vineyard, where he lived comfortably for a while with his wife Squannit and family. It has been reported that they have twelve daughters.

Maushop was not afraid to travel and go on a mission. He wanted to save a papoose that had been carried off by the devil; he filled his pipe with tobacco and puffed so hard that the fogs, which wrapped around the area later turning into ashes. This is what formed Nantucket. I recall that during the January Historical Blizzard, Nantucket was in total darkness and had a measureable amount of snow. I was told that Moshop and Squannit had a squabble and the heavens opened, the Sun-Spirit was not awake that’s why Nantucket was in darkness.

Not only did my grandmother Mabel L. Avant (Nakoomis) continue the traditional stories, Moushop also told his share.

Still today Moushop and his wife Squannit are sending messages that there are more storms coming as he continues smoking his long pipe.

Note: In my research Cultural Hero Moshop has been recorded and spelled several different ways, for example Moshup, Maushop and Maushope.

Environmental Report *(continued)*

The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe is proposing to build a casino, with hotels, restaurants, shops, and an events center on a 151-acre site in Taunton. The Tribe is now waiting for the final piece - a decision by the Department of the Interior to place the land into trust on behalf of the tribe.

The construction phase of the project will generate over 1,000 jobs and stimulate approximately \$837 million in total economic activity in Massachusetts. Once completed, the resort’s operation is expected to generate more than 3,500 full and part-time jobs as well as nearly \$512 million in economic activity each year.

The Mashpee tribe is known as the “People of the First Light,” hence the project’s name. “The tribe has both a strong and long tradition of natural resource conservation, which is also reflected in the project planning. Since the environmental review process began, the tribe has continued to refine the project’s design to avoid and minimize various impacts to the city,” said Chairman Cromwell.

The tribe has worked with city of Taunton and state officials on an ongoing basis to improve traffic flow in the area, including proposed improvements to the Route 24/140 interchange and has successfully developed a comprehensive plan that works for everyone.

Celebrating WLRP's Workbook Graduates

Kuhk8tamwuhtyáeenun Nitana Hicks Greendeer awarded certificates of congratulations to her students who recently completed the entire series of WLRP language workbooks over a five year period: Wunee Anuhkôs8ók! Neewuchee pâkachuchteôw wamee Wôpanâôt8âôkaneë wôpanusuhqahôkaneë katnuhtôhtakamuqash.

The first class of language students to attend and complete the full workbook series for tribal community members includes Siobhan Brown, Leslie Jonas, Judith Sanford-Harris, and Maria Wilkins—all Mashpee Wampanoag tribal citizens. These committed language students persevered through Boston evening traffic, Skype sessions, and advanced grammar homework year after year. Great job, ladies! WLRP's community instructors hope to see some of the new tribal employee lan-

guage students – and students from evening language classes – follow in your footsteps! Kutâputunumuw for setting a great example for the community.

For a list of all Wôpanâôt8âôk (Wampanoag Language) classes offered in Mashpee, Boston, etc., visit www.wlrp.org.



Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Receives Affordable Housing Grant from Feds

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is handing out more than \$650 million in grants to 586 Native American tribes in 34 states across the country, and the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe will receive nearly \$619,000. The Aquinnah Wampanoag tribe will also receive just over \$462,000.

Indian Housing Block Grant funds primarily benefit low-income families living on Indian reservations or in other American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

The amount of each grant is based on a formula that considers local needs and

housing units under management by the tribe or designated entity.

The grants are intended to be used for affordable housing.



Developing Overall Good Mental Health

What is good mental health and why is it so important? Good mental health is your overall psychological/emotional state of mind. It's how you 'feel' and 'think' about yourself, how you manage your personal relationships, and how you deal with emotional and distressing difficulties. It doesn't mean that you won't have bad days or feel sad – it means that you manage life events and difficulties as best as you can, using good coping skills and building resiliency.

Here are some simple steps that you can take to increase good overall mental health...

- » Eating healthy
- » Sleep
- » Exercise

- » Meditation / Relaxation
- » Art and Creativity
- » Spend time with family friends
- » Volunteer or do something to help others.
- » Set Realistic Goals
- » Laughing
- » Participate in Spiritual-Religious-Cultural Gatherings

Increasing your overall good mental health takes time and practice. Some changes are easier to make than others, but it is worth the efforts! To discuss your mental health needs, please contact the Mashpee Wampanoag Health Service Unit at (508) 477-6967 and speak with a Clinical Therapist for consultation or on-going support. Or you may

Charter School Forum on March 26

Learn about local opportunities for elementary education in the Wôpanâak language! The Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project and Weetumuw Wôpanâak Charter School founding trustees are opening a year-round language immersion school beginning in August 2016. The proposed school will enroll Kindergarteners (and possibly students up to grades 3-4), expanding by one grade annually to serve K-8 students. This monthly information session with WWCS organizers will include opportunities for parents to commit to enrolling their children, establish a parent committee, and contribute expertise to the WWCS culture- and language-based curriculum, as well as the chance to review a sample school day schedule and lesson plans. For more information and additional upcoming community language forums visit www.wlrp.org/events.html or call Jennifer Weston at (508) 477-0208 ext. 168.

Wôpanâak Language Charter School Forum

Thursday, March 26
5:00 PM to 6:30 PM

Mashpee Wampanoag Community and Government Center, Language Classroom

483 Great Neck Road South
Mashpee, MA 02649

call PumukQien Collins at ext 2562 or Nadine Phillips-Smart at ext 6965.

Always remember – it's important to take care of your Mind~Body~Spirit. You can do it through simple steps that can be practiced all year long!





Gaming Authority: Developing and Managing our Casino

The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Gaming Authority (MWTGA) is responsible for the development and management of our gaming operations, including project First Light Resort Casino. The Tribe setup the MWTGA as an instrumental tool to organize and manage gaming activities and to protect Tribal Members and Tribal assets.

The MWTGA is different from the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Gaming Commission. The Gaming Commission is responsible for ensuring our casino is compliant with regulatory requirements, including the National Indian Gaming Commission regulations. The Commission will also be responsible for interacting with the State and ensuring proper licensing of employees and games.

The MWTGA was setup as a separate business enterprise that is responsible for all loans associated with the project. It's very similar to a business owner setting up a Limited Liability Corporation (LLC). The owner,

in this case the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, sets up a business enterprise to keep personal assets like our Community and Government Center separate and not liable for the business's debt. That's why the Tribe and Tribal Members are not responsible for any loans associated with project First Light Casino.

We are in the final stages of securing our Land in Trust and are now prepared to break ground on a \$500 million dollar destination resort casino as soon as our land is taken into trust. The proposed budget being voted on at the March 8, 2015 General Membership meeting includes over \$300 million in loans that will be tapped into as soon as we are able to break ground. Additional funding to bridge the gap between funds needed to break ground and to complete the \$500 million dollar project will be borrowed from either the Genting Group or third parties, whoever offers the best terms.

The Gaming Authority has currently

invested close to \$99 million in the preparation of the casino. The amount spent and our current progress on the project has placed us in a good financial position since our competitors in the State have spent significantly more on preparation of their casinos. Also, since this debt will be paid back from Casino/Resort assets only, if we do not open a casino/resort we will not have to pay back the debt (The MWTGA would essentially be disbanded). The Genting Group would be forced to write off the entire amount of debt to zero unless we are able to salvage any value of the project assets.

The MWTGA is currently comprised of Cedric Cromwell, President; Robert Hendricks, Sr. Treasurer; Yvonne Avant, Secretary; Charles Foster, Board Member; Marie Stone, Interim Board Member; and Melissa Hill, Project Associate. If you have any questions about the MWTGA, please contact Project Associate Melissa Hill at mhill@mwtribe.com.

Tribal Council Election Results

The Ballots were tallied for the Tribal Council Election held on Sunday, February 8 and two challengers and four incumbents came out on top. The 553 tribal members that came out to vote set a new record turnout for a non-officer election.

Incumbents Winnie Johnson-Graham, Yvonne Avant, Carlton H. Hendricks Jr., and Cheryl Frye-Cromwell were reelected to the council; challengers Robert Dias and Winona Pocknett also gained seats. Incumbents Laura E. Miranda and Patricia (Trish) Keliinui were beat out by three and nine votes respectively. Also running for election were Aaron Tobey Jr., Robyn Tobey Stamps and Danielle Hill.

"I want to first thank all tribal citizens who voted in this important election," Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Council chairman Cedric Cromwell said. "I also want to extend my congratulations to the winners. I look forward to working with each of them as we embark on a critical year for the future of our tribe."

Winnie received the most votes with 280; Robert and Winona each received 266 votes; Yvonne received 262; Carlton received 257; and Cheryl received 248.

"I would be remiss if I didn't also thank the candidates who ran but were not elected," Chairman Cromwell said. "I thank them for sharing their views and for their willingness to step up and make their voices heard."

Laura received a total of 245 votes;

Trish got 239 votes; Aaron received 222; Robyn received 190; and Danielle received 161.

Incoming council member Robert Dias, a Mashpee Department of Public Works supervisor and Mashpee resident, said that his top priority is to keep the youth educated and on the right path, "as they will be the future of our tribe."

Another newly elected member, Winona Pocknett, said that she chose to run to help her tribe. "I love my tribe and would love to keep the traditions and the culture alive," she said. She said that when the children of the tribe are older and the current leaders are gone, the children should know how to keep the traditions alive.

Winnie Johnson-Graham.....	280
Robert Dias.....	266
Winona Pocknett.....	266
Yvonne Avant.....	262
Carlton Hendricks Jr.....	257
Cheryl Frye-Cromwell.....	248
Laura Tobey Miranda.....	245
Patricia "Trish" Keliinui.....	239
Aaron Tobey.....	222
Robyn Tobey Stamps.....	190
Danielle Hill.....	161

Harlem Rockets to Perform on March 22

The Harlem Rockets, a comedy basketball team, will play the Mashpee Wampanoag Dream Team on Sunday, March 22 at the Community and Government Center at 3:00 PM. The fun, family event is sure to bring cheers and laughs to all. Our Elders are hosting the event.

Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for students if purchased in advance at the front desk at the Community and Government Center. Tickets will also be available at the door for \$12 and \$7 for students. Tickets are discounted to \$5 in advance and at the door for elders.

To help cover the costs associated with this fundraising event, elders are looking for sponsors. There are a variety of sponsor levels from \$1,000 to less than \$500.

Tribal Councilors Carlos Hendricks and Robert Dias are organizing 25 to 30 basketball players for the Mashpee Wampanoag Dream Team. If you are interested in playing on the team, please contact Carlos or Robert at chendricks@mwtribe.com or rdias@mwtribe.com.

All proceeds from the event will benefit elder services. For more information or to sponsor the event, please contact Joanne Frye or Latoya Green at (508) 477-0208 x182.



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COMMUNITY



19th Annual Wampanoag Ball: Celebrating Our Circle of Life

The 19th Annual Wampanoag Ball will be held on Saturday, March 21. Once again the Ball will be held at the Sea Crest Beach Resort Hotel in Falmouth. The doors will open at 6:00 PM and the Ball will go on from 6:30 PM to 12:30 AM. Undoubtedly the Ball has become an occasion within our Tribe to come together with family, friends and neighboring tribes in the spirit of Community and Unity.

In addition to opening drumming and the presentation of awards, DJ Robert Peters and a performance by Live Band Chops will provide entertainment. Tickets for the Ball may be purchased at Puritan Clothing in Mashpee and at the Community and Government Center. Tickets are \$30 and discounted to \$20 for elders.

Thanks to a handful of dedicated Tribal Members who created this annual event almost two decades ago, we have true community event. With this in mind and carrying on this tradition the Mashpee Wampanoag Ball Committee selected this year's theme - "Celebrating Our Circle of Life."

In addition to being a celebration, the Ball provides needed funds to a select program or service. With great consideration, the Ball Committee has decided that this year's proceeds will directly benefit the construction of a playground to be built near our Community and Government Center. The intent of dedicating funds toward a Tribal playground is for our young ones to have a safe and secure area outside our new, state-of-the-art building to enjoy being a youth.

If you would like to make a direct donation towards the construction of the playground, please send a check to the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe attention Ball Committee at 483 Great Neck Road, South, Mashpee, MA 02649 or contact Wampanoag Ball Committee Chairwoman Suzette Spinola at (508) 360-2578.



Budget Vote March 8

A vote on the proposed 2015 Annual Budget will be held at the Sunday, March 8 General Membership meeting at 2:00 PM.

Copies of the budget along with an overview from Chairman Cedric Cromwell were mailed to all Tribal Members in February. A review of the annual budget was held on Sunday, February 22 where Treasurer Robert Hendricks provided a detailed presentation and answered questions from Tribal Members.

