

LOCAL NEWS

Akwasasne Mohawk Police Report April 4-18, 1995

Calls Responded to Ontario:

3-Domestic
3-Dog Complaint
1-Property Damage
1-Juveniles
2-Mischief
1-Theft/Fraud
2-Theft-ATV-Motorbike
1-Attempt Suicide
1-Alarm
1-Gunshots
1-Harassment
1-Prohibited driver
1-Civil matter-child custody
1-Abandoned children
2-Assault
1-Trespassing
1-Erratic driver
1-Switched plates
2-Assist other agency
1-Suspicious person

Calls Responded to Quebec:

1-Stolen auto
2-Alarms
1-Threats

1-Suspicious auto
1-General incident
2-Mischief
1-Assault
1-Juveniles
1-Disturbance
1-Theft-boat
1-Break & Enter-theft
1-Impaired driver

15 April 95 - Akwasasne Mohawk Police responded to a report of an assault on the Cornwall Island at 11:32 p.m. on the 15th of April, 1995. Charged with common assault was Randy Day, of Cornwall Island. He was taken into custody and then transported to the Cornwall County Jail, where he was remanded into custody until April 18, 1995, when he was scheduled to appear in Cornwall Provincial Court.

17 April 95 - Akwasasne

Police received a call of a structure fire on the Kit Kat Island, located east of Cameron's Island. Upon investigation police report that the summer cottage of Jim Williamson, South Lancaster, Ontario was completely destroyed by fire. Police are seeking the assistance of the community and surrounding areas, that anyone having any information contact Crime Stoppers at 937-8477 or 1-800-265-TIPS or Mohawk Police at 575-2000.



Honoring Our Basketmakers

The Akwasasne Cultural Center, Library and Museum, is opening a small exhibit room adjacent to the main museum space. The first exhibit is a display of basketry to honor the basketmakers of Akwasasne. The basketmakers have won numerous awards both individually and as a group. Two of the awards that were given to the Akwasasne basketmakers are on permanent display at the museum; the Governor's Award, presented in NYC in 1988 and the North Country Heritage Award, presented in Canton, NY in 1994. The museum's permanent basket collection contains many fine examples of Mohawk splint and sweetgrass basketry, a number of which will be a part of the new display. Also, the 1995 Winter Carnival prize-

winning basketmakers have loaned their work for this special exhibit. Vintage photographs from the museum's collection and student's work from the museum's most recent class round out the exhibit, by showing the past, the present, and the promising future of the basketmakers of Akwasasne.

The Akwasasne Cultural Center will be hosting an opening reception on Saturday, April 22nd from 1:00-3:00 p.m. in honor of the basketmakers and their work. The public is invited. Light refreshments will be served.

The exhibit room will be open to the public from the day of the opening reception until the closing of the exhibit in late summer. Museum hours are: Monday-Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. and Saturday 11:00a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Educators From Across Six Nations Country Come Together To Look At Mohawk Language Situation

Educators from across Six Nations Country came together on April 10th to look at our Mohawk language situation and what can be done to keep it alive.

Chenail District Chief, Dorothy Lazore, welcomed people from Tyendinega, Kahnawake, Oswekon and Akwasasne to the session. Educators and parents expressed concern at the approaching extinction of our language and sought solutions.

Dan Thompson, Coordinator of the Akwasasne Mohawk Board of Education's Mohawk Language Program shared his dreams with the gathering. He envisions not only a language program but standardized curriculum, Mohawk immersion curriculum, videos, tapes and a resource center.

Kevin Deere of Kahnawake was con-

cerned with the "fracturing" of our language as our children learn it as a second language. It changes very rapidly and words or expressions are not used properly.

Jimmy Gilbert of Kahnawake told the gathering that it was time to stop using "we can't do it" as a crutch. He said, "Let's not be the weak link in the chain (of generations). Extinct is forever." Jimmy also shared with the group how he uses music to build the confidence of children to speak Mohawk. He likes to find fun ways of teaching. Curtis Nelson of Kanasatake related a recent visit his family had with children from Akwasasne who still played and visited with each other in Mohawk. These children attend the Akwasasne Freedom School. At Kanasatake they have a small immersion school with 10 to 15

children.

Bonnie Maracle of Tyendinega shared what it was like for many who live and work in a Mohawk community that doesn't speak the language. She said, "there are only six people who speak the language and they are all over 75 years of age. We are fighting to re-establish the language."

It was moving to hear from one young Mohawk man from Tyendinega who is struggling to learn the language. He wants to be a Mohawk language teacher some day. He asked the crowd, "There are five young guys from Tyendinega that are committed to learning the language. We are looking for a home to live in where we can be immersed in the language. Some of us are looking for two or six months. One guy wants to study with someone for

two years. We are quitting school to learn the language. That's how important it is for us. Then we'll go back and finish."

In the afternoon, the gathering broke out into six groups to look at ways we can preserve and promote the language.

The recommendations that came out of the groups fell into several categories. One was total Mohawk immersion schooling for pre-K to grade 12. This means developing curriculum.

Another recommendation was to have every community donate to a central curriculum development center. Core curriculum would be designed for daycare programs, pre-K to grades 12.

Daycare programs need to go to total immersion. Summer language camps are wanted for not only children but parents.

There needs to be



teacher training as well as parent support and training in the language.

Many more options will be explored since the group was committed to monthly meetings that might rotate among the communities. *The next gathering will be May 20th and anyone interested can watch for the advertisement.*

