

# LOCAL NEWS

## Caravan of Four Attend Traditional Medicine Workshop

On Sunday, April 9, 1995, a caravan of four vans left Akwesasne with seventeen people, made up of elders, traditional medicine people and support staff, left for Manitoulin Island and the Anishnabe Spiritual Center to attend a traditional medicine workshop co-hosted by the North American Indian Travelling College and the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation.

The three day workshop started on Monday morning at 7 am with an Ojibwe ceremony. Introductions took place after the ceremony and there were participants from Timmins (Cree), Manitoulin Island (Ojibwe), Six Nations (Oshweken) and Akwesasne (Mohawk).

The morning session started at 9:30 with an explanation of why there was a need to bring together traditional medicine people and elders to discuss how the medicines should be preserved and passed on. The facilitator talked about medicine people and the responsibility that comes with such knowledge. At this point a Mohawk medicine woman was asked to give her thoughts on traditional medicine and how important traditional medicine is for the Indian people.

The afternoon session was a break-up of the group into three small groups. The smaller groups talked about how traditional medicines, and how can traditional medicines be implemented in the communities. The groups discussed these topics for two hours and

then the participants switched sessions and continues until dinner time.

On Tuesday, the group went to Wikwemekong and were able to meet with traditional medicine man, Ron Wakegijig. Ron works in the traditional medicine lodge attached to the health facility. He works closely with the health professional staff including doctors and nurses who help monitor his patients. Ron's main area of concentration on traditional medicine is finding a cure for diabetes and cancer. Just the idea of finding acceptance by his own people for tonic herbal medicine, blood purifier and other sicknesses dealing with allergies, fever and the common cold. Ron stated that he welcomes the opportunity to work with other medicine people of different Nations which would put them in a position of exchanging ideas, as well as identify specific ailments and cures.

The final day of the workshop, Wednesday, opened with the traditional Iroquois thanksgiving address. The speaker was Richard Cook. After the opening and breakfast, Rosella from a local reserve, spoke about the program she works with on Manitoulin Island. Rosella is a registered nurse knowledgeable about Indian medicines. Working with the doctors and her patients, they have developed an excellent working relationship combining Indian medicine and the white medicine. Rosella also told the group about the special

diabetes program which operates on the island through her project. The program includes a diabetic weekend retreat where the diabetic and family spend a weekend together. The activities include speakers (eye doctor, foot doctor, or traditional medicine person), exercise, meal planning and socializing. This program has received rave reviews from the communities.

The final activity of the workshop was a talking circle where each participant explained why the workshop was of such importance, what was learned and shared and that this should continue. The response to the workshop was excellent. The sharing of knowledge of medicines was wholeheartedly embraced. A report on the workshop will be written by Gail McDonald of Akwesasne with recommendations for funding and structure. It was mentioned from the workshop that elders and traditional medicine leaders would have to take a lead role in advising the health facilities as well as the leadership on the objectives and involving traditional medicine within our communities.

The coordinators were encouraged to secure funding for future workshops and to host the workshop in Six Nations or Mohawk Valley where medicines grow abundantly. The participants departed for their homes on Thursday, April 13 remarking that new friendships had been made and a giant step towards helping our people had been taken.

## Doug Smoke Comments on Issues

Having announced my candidacy in last weeks edition, I would like to present to you some of my thoughts on key issues I hope to address. I will

provide these insights continually up to the election to prevent any misconceptions about my direction and purpose. Considering the leader-

ship we've endured the past seven years I know this may be unique.

**Akwesasne Power Authority.**

For the past two years

## Akwesasne Mohawk Police Report

Akwesasne Mohawk Police arrested Terahonrake Montour, 19, of Hogansburg, New York early Sunday morning (23 April 95) for Dangerous driving and mischief. Mr. Montour was observed driving in the village of St. Regis, Quebec in a dangerous manner. Police activated their emergency lights in an attempt to stop the vehicle. The vehicle failed to stop for police and was then pursued by police. After a short chase in the village, police set up a roadblock, caus-

ing the vehicle to stop. The driver then exited the vehicle and was subsequently placed under arrest by police. While being transported to the police station, Montour then kicked the back side window out of the police cruiser he was being transported in. He was also charged with mischief for the damages to the police cruiser. Mr. Montour was transported to the Montreal jail. He was scheduled to appear in Valleyfield Provincial Court on April 24, 1995.

the Akwesasne Power Authority (APA) has been formulating plans to establish a community based Mohawk-owned and operated electric company. The Niagara Mohawk corporation is the current provider of electrical services on the U.S. portion of our territory. Unfortunately these are the highest utility rates in the country.

Residents of the Canadian portion of the reserve have an additional complaint about frequent blackouts and slow emergency services provided by both Ontario Hydro and Quebec Hydro.

A model for a municipality owned power company is located right in our own backyard. Massena, New York has one of the most efficiently run public utilities in the country. The Massena Electric Department (MED) provides its customers with reliable service and rates which are two-thirds lower than we pay Niagara Mohawk.

I urge everyone to look at your next electric bill and take two-thirds of that and try to imagine what other bill or fee you could apply that to. By projecting that savings throughout the entire year I'm sure you'll be satisfied with the results.

The members of the APA are residents of both sides of the border and are

striving to accomplish this enormous task in order to bring these savings to residents on both sides of the border. On top of that this project will create 25-30 permanent positions constructing and maintaining this electric company.

The APA has reached a dead-end with our Tribal Council Chiefs. The Chiefs are establishing ties with outside consultant groups to duplicate what has already been done by the APA. One particular consultant wanted to provide services to Akwesasne at twice the cost the APA projected. Most of the savings we might have realized would now be lost to this non-native consultant group.

My position on this issue is to assist the APA in establishing a Mohawk-run power utility for the entire reserve.

I have been very pleased with the response my candidacy has generated at this point. Many people have approached me with ideas and thoughts on how they would like to see Akwesasne progress. I will continue to keep this line of communication open to all concerned residents of Akwesasne.

Thank you for your attention and your support.

Doug Smoke  
Sub-Chief

