Important Dates:

May 9th - Mothers Day
May 14th - Onöndowa'ga:' Day**
May 17th - Tax deadline
May 31 - Memorial Day **

**Seneca Nation departments, including the clinics and pharmacies, are closed. Please plan accordingly.

Director’s Update

By Beth Lay

Nya:weh Sgë:no’
I hope you are well and enjoying spring. In April, we celebrated the retirement of Trish Patterson and Karen Bucktooth, two dedicated and valuable staff members at AOA. We will miss them greatly and wish them well in their retirement. Ja:göh!

We continue to work diligently towards reopening our elder centers and hope to begin a carefully planned, phased re-opening of our congregate dining services soon. We are developing new safety protocols, enhancing our cleaning procedures, training our staff, and acquiring new thermal scanners and personal protective equipment. Also, new UV air filtration has been installed into our HVAC systems. We are doing everything that we can to provide a safe and comfortable environment for our elders. As vaccines become more widely available, I encourage everyone to get vaccinated to protect yourselves and our community.

It’s a beautiful time of year to be active and spend time outside. If you do venture outdoors for walks or yard work, please remember to be safe and careful. Carry your phone or let someone know what you are doing or where you are headed. You are important to us and to your families.

We hope to see you soon! In the meantime, stay safe and stay well.
Soon the Seneca Nation AOA will make an exciting change in the trays used for most of our home delivered meals. We will replace the tray you now throw away with a re-usable tray. These trays will be easier to open, will keep your food warm longer, and are eco-friendly. Re-usable trays also mean supply savings and less waste.

These handsome, easy-opening trays will be collected upon the next day’s delivery. They should be rinsed out and given to your driver for return to the kitchen for sterilization. You may microwave them, but do not put them in the oven. Remember, your driver cannot leave another meal without picking up a rinsed tray and lid from the day before.

We hope you will enjoy the re-usable trays! If you have any questions, please call our kitchen staff in Cattaraugus or Allegany.

Need help finding services?

Contact Briana Snyder, Seneca Nation AOA Options Counselor at (716) 945-8991.

Briana can:
- help you identify available services and supports and choose what will best meet your needs, regardless of diagnosis, age or payor source.
- coordinate with other agencies to guide you through eligibility processes.
- provide seamless linkages for any necessary assessment you may need.
- help with application and enrollment in public assistance benefits.
The 2020-2021 Cooling Assistance benefit will open on May 3, 2021. To be eligible for a Cooling Assistance benefit the applicant or somebody in the household must have a documented medical condition that is exacerbated by extreme heat. If you are eligible, you may receive one Cooling Assistance benefit per applicant household for the purchase and installation of an air conditioner or a fan to help your home stay cool.

Only one air conditioner or fan, not to exceed $800 with installation, will be provided per applicant household. No additional HEAP cash benefits are available.

You may be eligible for a Cooling Assistance HEAP benefit if:
- Your household's gross monthly income is at or below the current income guidelines for your household size, or
- You receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, or
- You receive Temporary Assistance (TA), or
- You receive Code A Supplemental Security Income (SSI Living Alone), and
- You and your household members are United States Citizens, and
- Includes an individual with a documented medical condition that is exacerbated by heat, and
- You received a Regular benefit greater than $21 in the current program year or reside in government subsidized housing with heat included in your rent, and
- You currently do not have a working air conditioner or the air conditioner you have is five years old or older, and
- You did not receive a HEAP funded air conditioner within the past five years.
- Your household eligibility requirements include filing an application with your local department of social services, providing all necessary documentation, and the household must reside in an eligible living situation.

For more information or to see if you qualify for HEAP Cooling Assistance please call:

Briana Snyder
Seneca Nation AOA Options Counselor,
at (716) 945-8991.
"When I think about spring I think about our garden in Quaker Bridge. It’s mostly under water now. My parents, Rose and Leroy Cooper, did the planting. We had lots of potatoes, tomatoes, all kinds of veggies. There were five of us kids; we helped weed and get rid of those little bugs on the potatoes.

Back in the day when it was safe for kids to walk around the roads by themselves, we’d leave in the morning and come back at lunchtime when we got hungry. Then we’d go back out and come back at suppertime. It was a community, Quaker Bridge, and kids met in the morning and decided what we were going to do. This horde of kids would be going here and there, going swimming in the river or B.A. Beach, playing softball or fishing, whatever we decided to do."

Pauline "Snap" John
Deputy Director, Seneca Nation AOA

AOA at the Community Fair
In April, the SNI Education Department’s annual Community Fair was held in Cattaraugus. AOA asked families to help brighten an elder’s day by making cards to be sent home with their meal deliveries.
How to Recharge as a Caregiver

If you are a caregiver, you’re probably accustomed to feeling overwhelmed. Medication schedules, cooking meals and keeping track of your loved ones finances are just a few things you currently juggle every day. It’s important not to lose yourself in the process of taking care of someone else.

So, here are a few tips to take a short amount of time every day to do something that recharges your batteries and gives you some relief.

**Take Time for Yourself** - You already have plenty on your plate—it’s okay to say no sometimes. This could be declining an invitation to dinner on a stressful day, asking to reschedule a visit with family, or even making arrangements for alone time. Having some quiet time to yourself can reduce your stress, leaving you feeling rejuvenated.

**Eat Healthy and Exercise** - You don’t have to be a gym rat or a gourmet chef to improve your overall physical health. Having a balanced diet can be as simple as choosing more fruits and vegetables and limiting portion size. If you are able, take more walks, stretch daily, and drink more water. Your physical health is important to both you and your loved ones.

**Stay Organized** - Don’t get overwhelmed by all of the information you’re in charge of. There are many different planners, apps, and online tools that can help you keep on track of your to-do’s. Find what system works best for you and your loved one, keep copies of important documents and contacts, and make sure other people know how to access important information.

**Remember, You’re a Care Hero** - You took on a new role, without any formal training, and you make a positive impact on your loved one’s life every day. Some days are harder than others. Some days are more fulfilling than others. But no matter what, you show up and give your loved one the best care possible. You are resilient, patient, and compassionate beyond belief. We are impressed by what you do every day, thank you.
When Mothers Day is Hard

Laura Richards
www.familyeducation.com

Mother’s Day is usually a day of togetherness, a day of family and celebrating Mom. But it's not a happy day for everyone. For those who have lost a child, lost their mother or are estranged from their mother, it's a tough day to get through.

If you've lost a child—whether through accident, illness or miscarriage—or your mom, the pain of that loss can be nearly unbearable on a day that celebrates the bond between mother and child. If you're estranged from your mother, the impending holiday can increase that strain.

The important thing to remember is you're not alone, and there are things you can do to cope with your loss on Mother’s Day.

If you know Mother’s Day will be a difficult day for you, there are a number of ways to get through it:

- Engage in an activity or tradition that honors what you have been through. If you're in pain from the loss of your mother, cook one of her favorite recipes or shop in her favorite store. Find a way that makes you feel more connected.

- Only spend Mother’s Day with loved ones if they are supportive and don’t create additional stress. Otherwise, it’s imperative that you avoid family activities and gatherings. You must give yourself permission to opt out of situations that increase your stress while you're feeling vulnerable.

- If you’ve lost a child or are experiencing other forms of loss, practice a few key responses to people's inevitable questions that set a clear boundary. I recommend saying, “I’m doing as well as I can be under the circumstances, tell me about what’s new with you?”

- Pain is personal, so there’s no right or wrong way to handle it. Tune into what you need, not what others need from you. All your feelings are worthy of your attention and nobody else gets to decide this for you.

May is mental Health Awareness Month. If you are struggling or feeling alone, please reach out to the Seneca Nation Health Center Behavioral Health Unit at:

Allegany - (716) 945-9001
Cattaraugus - (716) 532-5583

It is essential to prioritize our mental health and stay connected with family, friends, and peers. No one should feel alone in their mental health journey or without the resources and support they need.
Spring Word Scramble

Instructions: Unscramble the letters to find the Springtime words.

Irbettuyf

iaosflidd

woelfrs

irinang

peldusd

dregna

roibanw

Irllembua

nuishnes

olbssmo

nigfshi

Riddles

1. I am full of holes; I can hold water. What am I?

2. What gets wet when drying?

3. What has two hands and a face, but no arms and legs?

4. What can't be used until it's broken?

5. What has many keys but can't open any doors?

We want to hear from you!
For hints and answers, please give our AOA offices a call.
Cattaraugus (716) 532-5777  Allegany (716) 945-8990