

# HAMPTON *Connects*

Volume 2, Issue 4 | Summer 2026

## Beth Regan, Proud Mohegan

*“Home is where my ancestors are.” -Beth Regan*



*Beth Regan -  
The Mohegan Tribe Photo*

For over 35 years, Hampton resident Beth Regan was a successful and innovative history teacher and coach at Tolland High School. But even before her retirement in 2014, she worked extensively with the Mohegan Tribe in a variety of roles, devoting her innovation and work ethic to her Mohegan community. In 2024 she became Chairwoman and one of seven Justices on the Council of Elders. The dedication and passion Beth brings to her work in this capacity not only make her successful, but also allow her to

celebrate her identity and strengthen the connection she has to her ancestry and tribal community.

Beth explained that the Mohegan Tribe is one of only two Connecticut tribes federally recognized as a sovereign nation. (The Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation is the other.) However, Beth considers the federal recognition as “re-recognition,” pointing out that the Tribe has always been sovereign but previously with a loss of rights. By securing federal status in 1994, the Tribe gained the authority to manage its own land, create its



*4 Directions Medicine/Wheel fire pit in Beth’s backyard*

own government, and develop its own economy. Two important parts of the government are the Tribal Council, which handles legislative and business matters, and the Council of Elders, which handles both judicial matters and the preservation of Mohegan culture and traditions.

The Mohegan judicial system under the Elders includes an on-staff attorney and seven Justices who act as the Supreme Court. The Justices don’t rely on a punitive approach to solve problems. They review each situation to see how they can help people change their behavior. Tribal members know that before a serious issue develops, they can turn to the Council for a variety of services: housing, educational programs, family counseling, etc. This positive approach gives credence to the tribe’s philosophy: “We are on earth to take care of each other.”

Beth’s enthusiasm was evident when she talked about the many ways the Council works to preserve Mohegan culture and traditions. Tribal and outreach programs have proven successful in revitalizing the Mohegan story, past and present. One of the most popular tribal events open to the public is the Wigwam Festival. At this annual celebration in August, tribal members give thanks for the harvest and honor the Tribe. Activities include dancing, drumming, storytelling, arts and crafts, and native foods. Another invaluable resource to learn Mohegan history



*Beth in her traditional regalia in  
Dartmouth powwow circle*



*Beth warming up for Eastern Blanket  
Dance at the Mohegan Wigwam Festival  
(Powwow)*

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is The Tantaquidgeon Museum in Uncasville, the oldest Native American-owned and operated museum in the US.

A special source of pride for Beth and the Tribe is the reclamation of their native Mohegan-Pequot language. The last fluent speaker, Fidelity Fielding, died in 1908, making the revitalization of the Mohegan language an on-going challenge. The process to reclaim the language began with diaries and other historic documents, dating back to the 18th century. Through research and the study of similar languages, the Tribe has made progress in its reclamation efforts. There are now five language teachers working diligently in the classroom and beyond, not only to honor the historic importance of the language, but also to encourage tribal members to use it daily. Beth believes the Mohegan language is a gift that strengthens the bonds to their ancestors and tells their story in a meaningful way.

Beth hopes the Tribe will continue to promote Mohegan culture and history with the programs it has already initiated, such as school curricula, language schools, short films, and library resources. She also looks forward to the Tribe finding new ways to educate tribal members and others about how Mohegan history is deeply rooted in Connecticut's history. With that knowledge, people will understand that Mohegans are not just a group from the past, but also a fundamental and integral part of the present.

Beth embodies the spirit of the Mohegans when she says, "To be a Mohegan is my identity, and I've come full circle to be here as a proud Mohegan woman who serves the Tribe." She believes tribal members must stay together on their journey through the strength of their ancestors. We are grateful that she and the Tribe continue to share that journey with the public.

### Join the Celebration

The Hampton Antiquarian and Historical Society is partnering with the Hampton Recreation Commission for some good ol' fashioned fun to celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our nation. On Friday, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. on the Burnham-Hibbard House Museum lawn at 185 Main St., families are invited to play and learn about 1800s vintage games. The Museum and barn will be open for tours. There will also be some games across the street near the Pavilion. Work up a sweat? No problem! Cool off at the Ice Cream Social with complimentary ice cream and fruit under the Pavilion, hosted by the Recreation Commissioners.

Before the Hampton celebration, a presentation, "Daily Life During the Revolution," will be held on June 20th at the Huntington Homestead in Scotland. This is a cooperative program between the town of Scotland and the Hampton Historical Society. The Huntington Homestead will be open from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., and there will be a special presentation and discussion about colonial life at 1 p.m.

Contributors to our Summer 2026 issue include: Beth Regan, Andrea Kaye, Sue Hockstetter, Lena Fontaine of Gulemo Printers, Joan Fox, and Claudette Russell.

Please email your comments/suggestions to:  
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## Weeds: A Losing Battle

By Claudette Russell

Those of you who devote time and energy to backyard horticulture and/or lawn maintenance are already familiar with Public Enemy #1. You know what I'm talking about: weeds. These intractable and devious plants exist only to ruin all your hard work, and they do so without remorse. For the uninitiated who might be considering the farm-to-table dream or an attempt to garner the lawn envy of all the neighbors, beware of what you'll be up against.

**Weeds are ubiquitous.** After you stake out a patch of dirt for your garden, weeds invade before you can even take your shovel out of the garden shed. To make matters worse, they divide and conquer before your very eyes. First they're wreaking havoc in your would-be garden, and then before you can order a case of weed killer, they're climbing up the fence, winding around the mailbox post, popping up in the cracks in the driveway, and overrunning the potted plants on your deck. They grow faster than the lawn seed you just planted, making your decision to buy a riding lawn mower before the first blades of grass even appear a complete joke.

**Weeds are tenacious.** Worse than the unexpected houseguest who refuses to leave, weeds stand their ground. If you think you can eliminate them just by pulling them up by the handfuls, your naivete is off the charts. To even attempt weeding by hand, you have to build upper body strength, buy bionic garden gloves, and develop a vengeful mindset. Breaking up weeds with a hoe seems like another good strategy, but unless your hoe is made of high-carbon steel, expect it to crack or break fighting the tangled and impervious roots of your new archenemy. By the time you Google how to pull weeds effectively, they've already doubled their population and grown their root systems to unprecedented depths.

**Weeds are tireless.** They work around the clock. While you're sleeping, dreaming of a foolproof way to conquer them, weeds are still working to undermine your efforts. Nothing stops them. They thrive in adverse conditions, undeterred by rain, cold, drought, heat, sprays, and homemade remedies. Some grow flowers to distract you and weaken your resolve, but don't be fooled by a pretty face. Occasionally some may die only to have their offspring carry on the family mission. And don't think freezing temperatures will solve the problem. Some weeds survive and even grow during the winter months just to see the expression on your face when you step outside on the first day of spring and discover they already have the upper hand.

Although weed control is usually an impossible task, don't be discouraged. There are alternatives to fighting this losing battle. Astroturf is readily available, and as for fresh vegetables, hydroponics anyone?