

## The Center's News

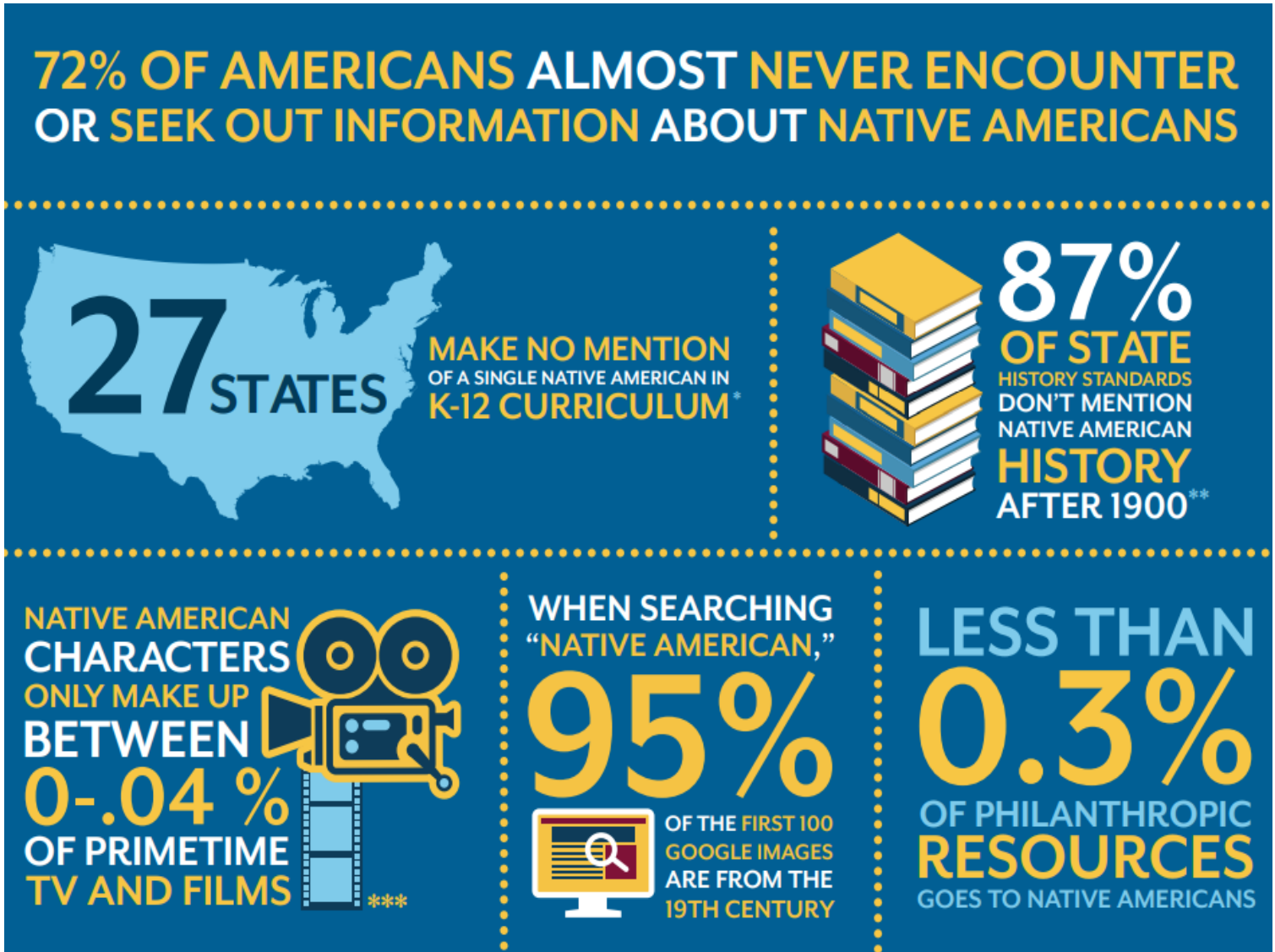
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In 1990, Congress passed and President George H. W. Bush signed into law, designating November to be Native American Heritage Month according to the U.S. Senate. President Barack Obama signed “The Native American Heritage Day Resolution 2009” designating the Friday after Thanksgiving as “Native American Heritage Day” as reported by *Tribes - Native Voices*.

This month is a time to celebrate the diverse cultures, traditions, values and histories of Indigenous peoples in America, the nation’s original inhabitants. This is also a time to educate and bring awareness to the unique challenges that Indigenous people have faced historically and in the present. With these unique challenges, Native Americans have worked hard and continue to do so to conquer these challenges.

Invisibility is the modern form of racism that contributes to bias, discrimination, institutional and systematic racism. This endangers Indigenous peoples' mental, spiritual and physical wellbeing. It also endangers Indigenous tribal sovereignty- their authority to make their own decisions for their tribes. Remaining blind to the adversities Indigenous peoples continue to face, further contributes to making them invisible. It is important that we educate ourselves on different populations in order to be allies and be advocates.



There are 574 federally recognized American Indian & Alaska Native Tribes in the U.S., each with their own traditions, styles of housing, dress and food. With this population, there are many adversities such as social, cultural, economical and by physical measure that they face as stated by *Native American Life Today*.



Briefly going over some of these adversities may help to you to better understand what challenges in life are like for an Indigenous person in America.

1 in 3 Native Americans are living in poverty. They have the highest poverty rate amongst all minority groups with 25.4% compared to White people with a 10.1% poverty rate according to U.S. Census data. According to the Bureau of

Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate is 7.9% but peaked to 28.6% due to the Pandemic. The composition of the labor force for Native Americans is 1%.

Indigenous persons also experience cancers such as kidney, liver and stomach at higher rates as well as obesity and diabetes than the general population according to NICOA (National Indian Council on Aging). There are additional factors that contribute to inadequate healthcare such as language and communication barrier, high rates of poverty, lack of insurance coverage, lack of diversity in the health care force as well as discrimination.



Native Americans on tribal lands also face the worst housing needs in the U.S. and experience poor living conditions as well as lack of infrastructure. Even though there are federally recognized tribes, the federal government is still

stripping the Natives of their land. They are oftentimes unable to make free choices about their economic affairs nor given a full voice.

These are just a few challenges Indigenous people have to face in America. It is imperative we continue to learn about different cultures so that we can practice cultural humility – self-reflecting on our own beliefs and culture, but also showing a willingness to learn about other people’s beliefs and cultures.

## Remembering Veterans Day

**Randy Berg – Front Desk/Social Media**

Veterans Day is an important day for every American and is intended to honor and appreciate all servicemen who served the United States in all wars, mainly living veterans. On this day, parades and church services are organized, and in many places, the American flag is hung at half-mast. Sometimes a period of silence lasting two minutes is held at 11 am. Many schools are closed on Veterans Day, while others do not close, but choose to mark the occasion with special cultural activities.

Veterans Day is observed on November 11th. Whenever it falls on a weekday, several communities celebrate on the weekend closest to this date. This is to help more people attend and participate in the events. On November 11,

Federal Government offices are closed. If Veterans Day falls on a Saturday, they are closed on Friday, November 10. If Veterans Day falls on a Sunday, they are closed on Monday, November 12. State and local governments, schools, and non-governmental businesses are not required to close and have the option to remain open or closed. So, remember to say “**Thank You**” to a veteran on November 11<sup>th</sup>.



# Independent Living Program

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## Winter Blues

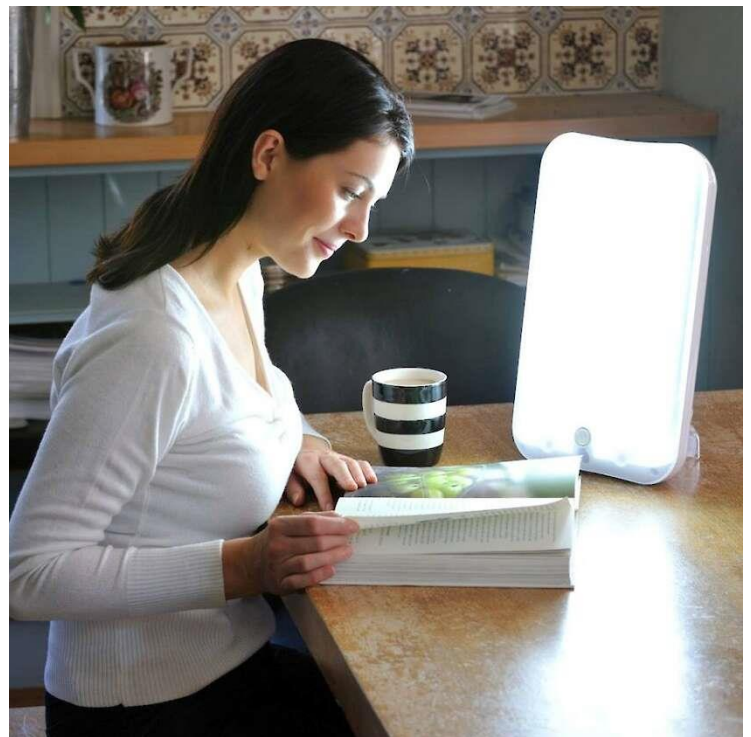
Holly Neil – IL/Transition Coordinator

What are the signs and symptoms of SAD?

- Feeling depressed most of the day, nearly every day.
- Losing interest in activities you once enjoyed.
- Experiencing changes in appetite or weight.
- Having problems with sleep.
- Feeling sluggish or agitated.
- Having low energy.
- Feeling hopeless or worthless.
- Having difficulty concentrating.

Do these sound familiar to you? The above are a few of the symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder. This is a very common occurrence in the winter months with people feeling “blue or down”. It is believed that these symptoms occur due to the shorter days and longer periods of darkness. A “SAD light” can be bought online for around \$20 that will help with these symptoms. You sit for a few minutes each day with the light on and get a good source of vitamin D to combat these feelings. Trying to get out and being social will also help you feel less depressed.

Maybe go to a store, attend that meeting or event that you were invited to. Try to find ways to socialize. Ask for help if you feel your symptoms are getting worse. Know that there is help out there for you and you are not alone. The good news is that most of these symptoms will go away when spring arrives, and the days are longer. So, get outside and soak up vitamin D which comes from the sun!



**If you are struggling with suicidal thoughts or experience a mental health crisis, call or text the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988.**

# A Few of My Favorite Things

**Jared Price – IL/Transition Coordinator**

Since having back surgery in 2020, there are some items I have grown to love. These items have helped me to regain some independence and the ability to be self-sufficient. This has helped to improve my self-esteem and has taught me that there is more than one way to accomplish a task.



The first item I can't live without is a sock-aid. This item comes in various colors and sizes. It is cylindrical in appearance and usually has a rope on either side or can be attached to both sides creating a loop. The back of the item has a foam pad. This helps the user to orient it correctly. It also helps the sock to slide off once the sock has been stretched over the form. Place your foot inside and then pull up and you will be able to put your socks on.

The next item is a grabber or reacher. This can be long or short depending on your preference the top of it has a handle with a squeeze trigger. Squeezing the trigger will cause the clamp on the opposite end to close. Releasing the trigger will allow it to open again. This can also be used when trying to pick up dropped items. It can also be used to help pull up trousers or shorts.



The next item is called a dressing stick. This is a pull device with two separate ends. On one end is a rounded hook which is helpful for pulling on pants or helping to zip up jackets or pants. The other end has a push or pull fixture. This can be helpful when trying to put on jackets, pants, or shirts. Depending on whether you want it on or off will determine which side you will use. One faces up and the other down. So if you want



to take a sock off use the downside and hook it behind the ankle to pull the sock off.



Putting shoes on and keeping them tied is another challenge when you have limited range of motion and shouldn't be bending. I have two solutions for this. The first is called a foot funnel, as I can't use a traditional shoehorn due to limited foot flexibility. The foot funnel was a game changer it is made out of solid plastic and it sits

on the back of your shoe like a saddle. You can insert your foot from any angle and gravity and a forward motion will take care of the rest. Then use the attached string to pull it out.

The second item is a Lock Lace. This is made from elastic and is threaded through the shoe strings and cut to length and then a faster keeps both ends locked in place with a piece of plastic. Once this is done, there is a clip that is added to tighten or loosen the shoe. This product was invented by a runner who got tired of dealing with shoe laces.



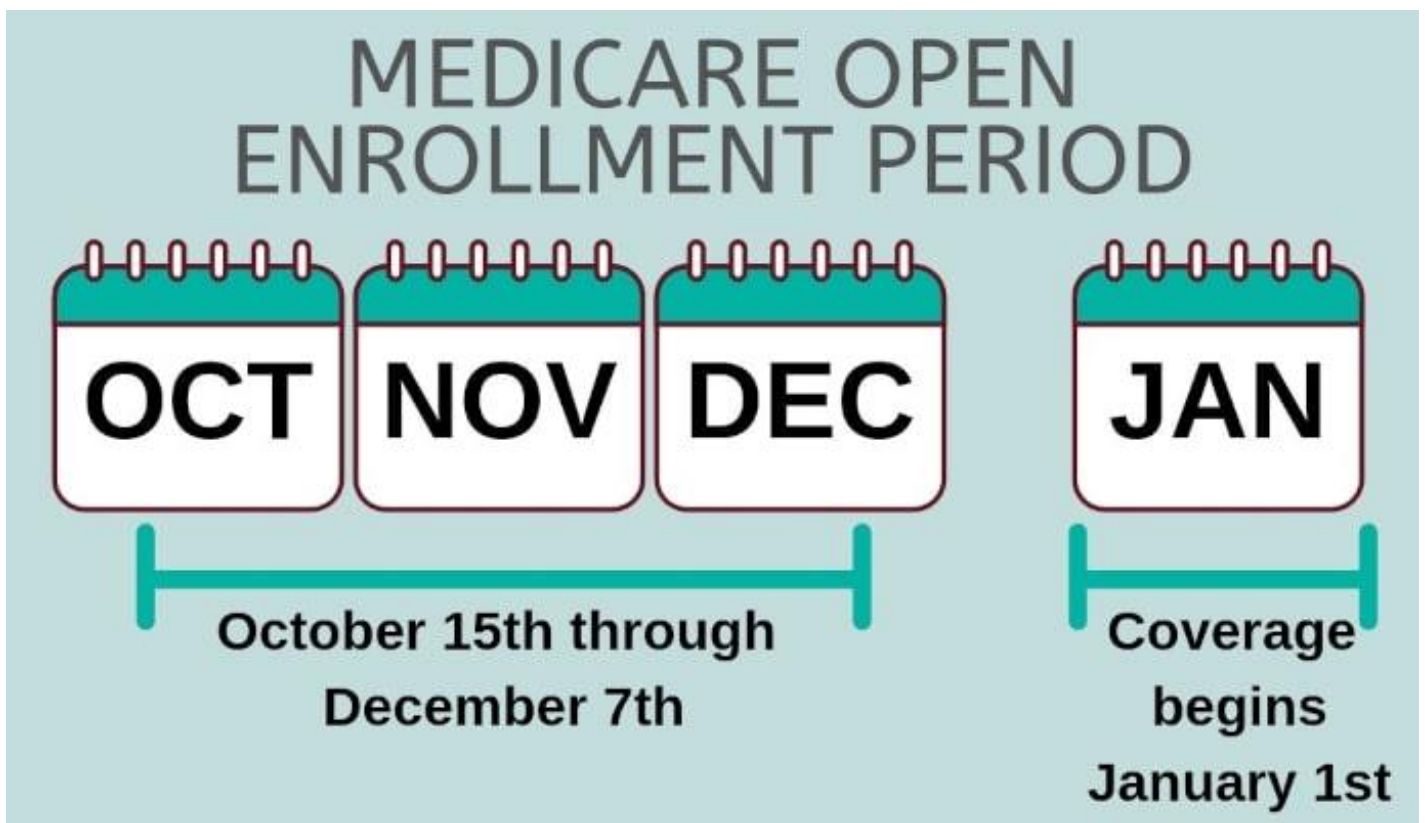
These items can be found through Walmart or on Amazon for reasonable prices.

# Medicare Enrollment

**Gloria Stamper – Assistant Director/SHIP Counselor**

Medicare Open Enrollment begins on October 15th and runs through December 7th. This would be the time to see about changing your health plan or your drug plan. You can also drop a plan and go back to your original Medicare.

Call The WILL Center at (812) 298-9455 ext. 211 to make an appointment with Gloria Stamper to discuss your personal health coverage.





# L.I.V.E Program

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## 100 Women Who Care Putnam County

**Eve Fears – Low Vision Program Coordinator**

100 Women Who Care Putnam County is a group of women who care deeply about the community. They come together four times each year to make a significant impact by giving together as a group. The women come from all levels of society, all ages, all parts of the county and even unites members with women who grew up here but have moved away.

The group is open to all women — the more women who become involved, the greater the impact will be. The group is part of a national movement and modeled after similar organizations located throughout the United States and Canada. Putnam County is the third county in Indiana to form a group.



The Putnam County Community Foundation helps women join the organization and sign commitments to donate \$500 total during a calendar year. The first \$100 commitment supports an endowment administered by the Community Foundation for the 100 Women Who Care organization to use in addressing future needs of the community.

In addition, every member pledges to donate \$100 at each of four quarterly meetings to be given to a Putnam County non-profit public charity selected at the meeting. The involvement of 100 members means that four worthy local non-

profits will each receive \$10,000 during the year. The larger the group, the greater the impact it will make.



This year our very own Von Braden was selected to be the recipient of \$7,700.00. Von works for The WILL Center part time in Putnam County insuring residents know of the center's upcoming events and hosting our low vision meetings. She also covers the front desk at Putnam County Community Services,

who provides services to individuals with disabilities in order for them to reach their optimum potential in attitudes, habits and skills through training and integration, making them contributing members of their community; and to promote community awareness and acceptance of people with differing abilities. Von has chosen to give her funding to a group near and dear to her heart, the Special Olympics of Putnam County. She will be able to send approximately 75 athletes to this summer's game. Here's to Von Braden for a job well done!

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A festive graphic with the word "Happy" in a cursive font and "THANKSGIVING!" in a bold, blocky font. The text is decorated with autumn-themed icons: a turkey, a red maple leaf, a green apple, a yellow leaf, a green oak leaf, and a red hot plate with steam. The background is a light beige color.

Happy  
THANKSGIVING!

A row of five small orange pumpkins on a wooden surface. Each pumpkin has a word written on it in black cursive script. The words are "health", "home", "family", "friends", and "food". The background is a light-colored wooden wall.

**What are YOU  
Thankful For?**

health

home

family

friends

food