

THE GREAT sickness sweeping across our land these last two years is finally relenting! The oldest among us do not remember such death and fear! Disease rampaged mercilessly from the north, and everyone in 40 of our villages is gone.

Elders and the weak were taken, with people of all ages, even children and infan19.9 (1)

fled to relatives in living villages, praying the sickness did not follow. No one was left to bury the dead, and their bones lay strewn across the land.

Runners from the northern nations inform us that this disease came with ships from across the water. They too have lost thousands to this horrid death. Entire communities are gone, and with them generations of knowledge and wisdom.

The prayers and ceremonies of the Medicine people had no effect. This has terrified communities, as nothing like this has ever been known to happen.

Sachems, councils, and clan mothers still among us are coming together to formulate the rebuilding of our nation. We must carry on our responsibilities as the people of this land.

AMONG THE Indigenous nations of what is now New England, one method of delivering important news and information was by using young men as runners to carry messages. They were often able to run 90 to 100 miles per day — that's the equivalent of going from Hyannis to Boston!