Capps and Barrett awarded Pottawatomie Power top spots

By Suzie Campbell and Alex Sloan, Countywide & Sun

Countywide & Sun originally published the following photograph and stories on Nov. 5, 2020, and the Hownikan is reprinting a compilation here with permission and light edits.

Every decade, the Countywide & Sun newspaper conducts the Pottawatomie Power Polls. Readers and residents nominate Pottawatomie County leaders and then vote to determine the top 10. In 2020, two of Citizen Potawatomi Nation’s executive team received rankings as the county’s two most powerful people.

Vice-Chairman Capps soared to the top of the polls and accepted first place during a gala held Oct. 10 at Crossing Hearts Ranch in Tecumseh, Oklahoma. Chairman John “Rocky” Barrett came in second.

“I like for my directors and managers at CPN to think of me as ‘working with them,’ instead of them ‘working for me,’” Capps said. “That attitude changes the whole undertone with relationships in the workplace. I want to have a supportive role, and I want our employees to feel empowered to make decisions on their own. I think if you have done your job as their leader, they should know the limitations of that empowerment.”

Capps believes growing up and living in a small town gave her ample opportunities to be a leader. She attributes part of what she learned about leadership skills to her family. She said, “As the youngest sibling of seven, I learned a lot from watching my brothers and sisters achieve throughout the years.”

Before being elected to Tribal office in 1987, Capps spent 25 years as an educator in Pottawatomie County and held several other jobs — all of which she believes have helped her develop her leadership skills.

She said, “CPN progress has been a true team effort. In fact, our CPN workforce is the largest and most successful CDFI in the United States. Capps felt called to bring CPN, including working with Tribal Rolls shortly after 2001 to develop picture ID for Tribal enrollment. “This was a huge undertaking for thousands of Tribal members,” Capps said. “Charles Clark, director of Tribal Rolls, has done a tremendous job with that endeavor.”

Capps and Barrett were both honored at the gala in recognition of their impact on the Pottawatomie Tribe and Pottawatomie County.

**Community work**

Through their work, Barrett said he hopes that the people of Pottawatomie County see the Tribe as a benefit to the whole community.

“I hope that people in the county begin to realize that it’s not a zero-sum game,” Barrett said.

He said the Tribe’s success enables it to create jobs and pursue investments that benefit the county as a whole.

“The rising tide lifts all boats,” Barrett said.

Capps is proud of several initiatives she brought to CPN, including working with Tribal Rolls shortly after 2001 to develop picture ID for Tribal enrollment. “This was a huge undertaking for thousands of Tribal members,” Capps said. “Charles Clark, director of Tribal Rolls, has done a tremendous job with that endeavor.”

Capps also was instrumental in acquiring the Knight Farm, the Giverny Golf land, and the Luman property — all important parcels of land for CPN. She was involved with the electrical project “to bring CPN out of the dark” in 2005, installing streetlights on Hardcyst Road from Gordon Cooper to Highway 177 as well as Gordon Cooper past CPN.

If there’s a theme to CPN Chairman Rocky Barrett’s legacy, it’s the philosophy of reinvestment in the community. He was elected to his current office in 1985 and has worked to improve the Tribe and Pottawatomie County ever since.

“I had the privilege to write the new constitution that the Tribe operates under,” Barrett said. “And that’s made all the difference in the world.”

He said the re-written constitution established the legislative and executive structure that are still in place today.

Since then, Barrett’s philosophy of community reinvestment has put the CPN on an upward trajectory. One of the earliest such investments, Barrett said, was the purchase of First National Bank in 1989.

“And it was a little double-wide trailer in a gravel parking lot,” Barrett said. “And it’s grown to over $300 million in assets that we have now.”

In addition to First National Bank, Barrett said the Tribe has established other entities to promote growth and opportunity in the community.

“The Community Development Financial Institution is a treasury department entity that is designed to make higher-risk loans to individual Indians or businesses, or to tribes,” Barrett said. “We’ve used that money to help our people develop their own businesses.”

It now has $27 million in lending capital. According to Barrett, it’s the largest and most successful CDFI in the United States. Capps felt called to assist the greater community through her work with the CPDC as well.

“My heart was in the middle of establishing the employee loan program at CPDC, our Community Development Corporation, to help our employees with low-interest loans that can be repaid by payroll deduction,” Capps said.

Continued on page 6
**Walking the Red Road**

After receiving her MBA, Dotson worked as a liquor sales representative.

**Continued on page 8**
Almost 86 percent of pilots and flight engineers are white, while less than 1 percent are Native American, according to the 2018 American Community Survey from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal member and former Navy pilot Paul Wynns believes his growing business, Flex Air, “can change the face of aviation.”

The flight school founded by his partner Charlie Copeland has two locations — Manhattan, Kansas, and San Diego, California, where Wynns is located.

Wynns’ mother was Vietnamese and his father was a descendant of the Upton family. In a recent Hownikn interview, he said he rarely saw people like him in the aviation industry.

Wynns’ mother immigrated to the U.S. after meeting his father during the Vietnam War in the 1970s. After a successful military career as an active duty Navy pilot for more than a decade followed by corporate positions, he sees Flex Air his chance to give back.

### Mentorship

Wynns’ mother always told him his first word was “airplane,” and seeing the movie Top Gun in high school sealed his fate to become a pilot. After graduating, Wynns immediately earned his bachelor’s in aerospace engineering at the Naval Academy, followed by flight training. His experience there varied greatly from a commercial flight school, which often offers no career advice or counseling.

Flex Air’s mission is “to provide aviation education and airline career opportunities to minorities, veterans, and students from low-income backgrounds.” He and Copeland share the same entrepreneurial desires to make it happen.

### Investment

To improve Flex Air’s methods, Wynns enrolled in a doctoral program in fall 2020 at the Rady School of Management at the University of California San Diego with assistance from the CPN Department of Education scholarship. He plans to study “social impact investing” as a way to analyze success by more than financial reward.

“Many students lack the knowledge to choose between numerous paths in aviation. Flex Air begins a student’s program by asking about their desires for work-life balance, time spent traveling and where they want to live to help determine their end goals, whether flying for an international airline, cargo planes, jets for smaller companies or something else. That’s kind of a niche that we try to fill with that individualized approach,” Wynns said.

### Bystander intervention could save others from abuse

By Kayla Woody, CPN House of Hope DVPI Prevention Specialist

Domestic violence is gaining more coverage in our society today. We hear about it on our news outlets and social media. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, more than 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men will experience rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by the hands of their intimate partner. The real question that most people ask is, “What can I do to help out with this epidemic?”

The most effective way to help victims of domestic violence is learning to be an active bystander in your community. Bystander intervention is a vital part of the fight against domestic violence. An engaged bystander will be able to help someone by intervening before, during or after the situation. Many people will hesitate to intervene if they do not know the proper way to handle it.

### Warning signs that a situation may be abusive

If the person you think is an abuser is:

- Acting excessively jealous of his/her partner
- Insulting or embarrassing his/her partner in public
- Yelling at or trying to intimidate his/her partner

Or, if the person you suspect is a victim is:

- Acting submissive
- Showing physical injuries or wearing unusual clothing as if to hide an injury (i.e., sunglasses indoors or long sleeves in summer)
- Anxious to please his/her partner
- Afraid of his/her partner
- Talking about his/her partner
- Limited in access to money or a car
- Depressed, anxious or suicidal

### Bystander barriers

- I am unsure what to do or say.
- I am not sure if it is safe to intervene.
- I do not want to embarrass myself or the person involved.
- What if it is not really abuse?
- I do not want to offend anyone.
- I do not know the people involved.
- It is really none of my business.
- I do not feel comfortable judging someone else’s behavior.
- No one else is doing anything.
- I hate conflict.

### How to be an effective bystander

Depending on the situation, it may not always be safe to confront the perpetrator. Here are some tips on how to be involved at every stage of a situation.

1. **Intervent or distract.** When you witness the altercation, simply pretend to ask for directions, or act as if you know the victim and start a conversation.

2. **Confront the perpetrator.** You can intervene by respectfully telling the harasser that their actions are not OK.

3. **Request assistance from others.** The more people who can assist you in stopping the situation, the more likely the violence will end.

4. **Make a scene.** Sometimes you can bring attention to the situation, and this could delay an escalation.

5. **Call in professionals.** If the situation is a threat to your safety or the safety of others, it is best to contact law enforcement for assistance.

6. **Familiarize yourself with local domestic violence shelters.** The best way to assist someone after the fact is to give them contact information to a local domestic violence shelter to seek safety and resources.

### How can you make a difference?

With the startling statistics of domestic violence, we all may know someone who is affected by it. Most of the time, violent situations remain behind closed doors, but if you pay close enough attention, you will see that perpetrators will also act aggressively in public. It is important to educate yourself on red flags to look for and spread the word in the community about helping.

- Recognize that domestic violence is a real problem in the community.
- Recognize the warning signs of violence or the perpetrators to abuse.
- Speak up about bystander intervention and the importance of helping others.
- Don’t brush off uncomfortable situations; say or do something.

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault and would like more information, please contact CPN House of Hope at 405-275-3176 or visit us online at facebook.com/cphinhouseofhope.
Teacher receives grant to uncover the untold stories of Native American veterans

History books often overlook Native American involvement in the military and their roles in protecting the United States’ sovereignty. This inspired Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal member and middle school teacher Bret Godfrey to apply for a prestigious Fund for Teachers grant. His proposal includes bringing to light this often-undiscussed part of American history through research and first-hand experience.

Godfrey teaches seventh and eighth grade history and geography at the American Indian Magnet School in St. Paul, Minnesota. With the significant fellowship, Godfrey will travel to Europe and study Native American’s service during World War II and add his findings to his curriculum.

“It certainly goes back to being an American Indian magnet school. You’re trying to find relevant material for our students, and there isn’t much in the books beyond the Code Talkers,” Godfrey said.

While he believes the Code Talkers play an important role in American history, Godfrey wants to uncover personal, deeper stories and highlight the traditions within tribes to serve others. Godfrey hopes to pay homage to those who never made it home, many of whom were not even U.S. citizens at the time. “I don’t want to sound morbid, but if someone wants to reach out to me, we would love to have their communication through email at bret.godfrey@spps.org.”

Once coronavirus traveling restrictions are no longer in place, Godfrey will visit Europe and complete the fellowship. While he knows of other Native Americans who never made it home, he would like to learn more about Potawatomi servicemen and women buried in Europe due to the war. “We want to honor them when we end up there,” he said. “The cemeteries don’t (organize the graves) by rank or race. You just have to go there and study to find out who these people are.”

“Someone wants to reach out to me, we would love to have that piece of information.” Godfrey welcomes communication through email at bret.godfrey@spps.org.

Learn more about Fund for Teachers at fundforteachers.org.

Pandemic disrupts plans

Godfrey received notification of his Fund for Teachers grant award around the coronavirus pandemic’s onset in the United States. This disrupted his ability to travel to Europe and conduct research over the 2020 summer.

“Your hopes get dashed,” Godfrey said. “So that’s an emotional piece that a person has to work through.” However, he sees the delay as an opportunity to dive deeper into his studies and focus time on adapting to virtual instruction.

“It’s nothing profound in what I am saying — it’s across the board. (All teachers) are struggling with trying to keep our students engaged,” he said.

“You don’t (organize the graves) by rank or race. You just have to go there and study to find out who these people are.”

“If someone wants to reach out to me, we would love to have that piece of information.” Godfrey welcomes communication through email at bret.godfrey@spps.org.

Learn more about Fund for Teachers at fundforteachers.org.

**HOW DO I APPLY?**

Visit Potawatomi.org/cares to apply online or call (833) 481-0638 for an application to be mailed.

**ARE FUNDS STILL AVAILABLE?**

Funding is limited and applications are processed in the order they are received. Tribal members are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

**DO I NEED TO BE AN ENROLLED CPN MEMBER TO APPLY?**

Yes. Tribal members must have had their applications submitted to Tribal Rolls prior to Dec. 1, 2020 in order to be eligible to apply for the CARES Act programs.

**WHEN WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT?**

Most applications are processed within two weeks. Once an application is approved, it can take two to three weeks to receive payments. Tribal members may not receive payment until 2021.
Birch bark biting merges traditional skill and contemporary art

Several types of birch trees are indigenous to North America’s Eastern Woodlands area and the Great Lakes. Nishnabét people use their wood for many different facets of everyday life, such as making canoes, wigwams, baskets, and art, including Birch bark biting. Some of these date back centuries since they arrived in the area.

“Birch bark is one of the most versatile and most beautiful trees,” said Gun Lake Potawatomi Tribe citizen Kelly Church. She discussed Birch bark biting during a webinar in early October as part of the Collections Spotlight program from the Coe Center for the Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Church has harvested bark on her own for decades, with basketry as her primary art form.

Collecting supplies

She enjoys Birch bark biting for the uniqueness of the creativity it requires. Artists create images — inspired by oral traditions, animals, other natural elements and more — with their teeth. The process all starts with picking the right piece of material.

“Winter bark” is darker and more challenging to harvest, whereas “summer bark” is lighter with almost a yellow tone. Harvesting and selecting the right piece of material without harming the trees during a short period that comes in late June and early July, usually at the same time berries ripen. Church described the bark as peeling off the surface of the tree trunk.

“You will not come off unless it’s ready to come off,” she said.

As they cut the bark, Church said, “You’ll see the layers coming up. It’s kind of telling you, ‘I’m ready to be picked.’” She reinforced the importance of never forcing the bark off the tree and not collecting more than needed.

According to Church, once separated from the trunk, the layers peel back from each other like an onion as they continue to get thinner and thinner as they curl away from one another. Pliable sheets a little thicker than paper are ideal for biting.

Methods and practice

Creating symmetrical art in this form requires a specific technique. First, fold a thin piece of bark in half like a book, then fold the sheet corner to corner, creating a triangle. Use the canine tooth of the upper jaw — also known as the eyetooth — to bite a pattern into the bark while moving it around to craft the image.

During the webinar, Church closed her eyes as she began to demonstrate the technique on a piece of bark in her studio. “I can’t look at people when I bite,” she said and laughed.

After a few moments, Church unfolded it back into a single sheet.

“You have to open it very carefully,” she said. “As you open it, you’ll see I have a circle. For me, this is the beginning of a turtle.”

Church creates several animals and symbols on demand due to repetition throughout the year in her family’s practices to achieve additional requests.

Nishnabét people still carry on the rare art form through oral traditions and participation in other Tribal cultural practices. Church teaches others as she learned from an elder and encourages all Potawatomi people to try this beautiful way to create images with no apprehensions.

“Number one: there’s no wrong bitings… Every biting is a good biting,” she said. “If it’s not a turtle, what is it? A snowflake!”

Many artists learn how to imagine the final piece in their minds as they move the bark back forth while making indentations with their mouths. The most important and productive way to improve that technique is practice.

Beyond art

While many people frame and display Birch bark biting pieces on their own as art, the technique itself serves a much more utilitarian purpose. Women mostly learned how to bite patterns; the practice fits into their daily lives, as nursing traditional images in modern regalia and accessories.

To watch the full webinar with Kelly Church, visit cpn.news/churchcoe.

We also completed 29 home visits and dozens of referrals provided to families for both tribal and community programs.

Adult Protective Services

Adult Protective Services provides vulnerable Citizen Potawatomi adults with protection from abuse, neglect or exploitation as well as offers services. The services help with proper medical care, self-care, education and prevention, personal hygiene, adequate food, shelter and protection. We received a grant in January that has greatly enhanced the ability to provide services and needed supplies to at-risk elders.

Our staff completed 12 investigations alleging abuse or neglect of each elder. We made referrals to many programs, including social services, health care, legal advocacy and financial assistance. We completed 87 home visits; all of them focused on ensuring clients have safe and stable housing. While there are limitations to in-person contact due to the pandemic, some home facility visits, we still maintained meaningful relationships with elders and have plans for even more specialized contact.

With 2021 approaching, FireLodge Children & Family Services is continuing its commitment to offer safe and supportive services to Native American families in need. Find out more information, visit potawatomi.org/firelodge or call 405-878-8431.
The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act is a federal law that protects Native American remains, funerary and sacred objects by establishing a requirement for museums, universities and other institutions that receive federal aid to repatriate and return these oftentimes stolen artifacts back to the tribal nations from which they originated. NAGPRA also sets guidelines for excavation on federal or tribal lands, and this year marks the 30th anniversary of its inception.

According to the National Park Service, “With this law, Congress sought to encourage a continuing dialogue between museums and Indian Tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations and to promote a greater understanding between the groups while at the same time recognizing the important function museums serve in society by preserving the past.”

Dr. Kelli Mosteller, Citizen Potawatomi Nation’s Cultural Heritage Center director, oversees the Nation’s efforts to uphold NAGPRA by working with Native communities across the United States to ensure the accountability of museums and other institutions. She strives to assist with returning Potawatomi ancestors, artifacts and funerary objects back to their final resting place.

Process

According to NAGPRA, those with Native American funerary objects, remains and/or sacred items in their holdings must conduct inventories of their collections to identify cultural affiliation and then consult with the tribes involved.

“One, they are supposed to discuss how they are cared for while they are still in possession of the institution. Two, if there is going to be repatriation, how that repatriation is going to happen. And three, look at their practices to make sure they are not continuing to bring in these objects,” Dr. Mosteller said.

The goal of NAGPRA is for Native American remains and funerary objects to no longer exist in museums, universities and other institutions.

Importance

Since its inception, some universities and institutions have upheld the law, working with communities to repatriate their holdings. Some did not abide for years but are now trying to complete inventories and return items, whereas others have done little to no work in following the federal law.

“It’s one of the hardest parts of my job because whenever we do have consultations and we go out, we are given the chance to spend time with the ancestors to see how they’re being taken care of, and it’s traumatic,” Dr. Mosteller said.

When Dr. Mosteller learns about objects or remains, she consults with the museum or university to determine which community should receive the items and writes letters of support on behalf of fellow tribes. She also partners with Native Nations who still call the Great Lakes home, helping return ancestral remains and objects as close to their original resting place as possible.

“Our approach is that if there were ancestral remains found back in the Great Lakes … we don’t remove them and bring them back to Oklahoma — they were never from Oklahoma. They never lived here,” she said.

Dr. Mosteller is passionate about being as respectful as possible throughout the process and finds NAGPRA work to be the hardest yet most rewarding part of her job at CPN.

“Sometimes you go in and think you’re going to have a conversation about the remains and you end up with ‘how will we get these ancestors home?’ And you get there, and you realize that ‘Oh, I have to start from the beginning and explain to you that there are people with families and loved ones,’ “ she said.

Not everyone involved in research and archival holdings understands the trauma and negative cultural implications involved with taking Native American ancestral remains and objects from their communities or final resting place, and she works hard to bridge that gap.

“When I went to a reinventory ceremony in Michigan, one of the elders was speaking directly to the ancestors whose remains were in this lodge with us, and he said, ‘I am sorry because we don’t have a ceremony for this. We don’t have a ceremony that was passed down to put ancestors back in the ground who had already been placed in the ground with proper ceremony. … We’re going to do the best we can. We are sorry if we’re not honoring you in the right way. This was something that was forced upon us.’ ” she explained.

Her efforts help educate others about NAGPRA as well as Native American history and culture.

Accountability

Institutions obtain Native American remains and objects in a variety of ways. Occasionally, individuals or businesses uncover them during a building project. Others instances, researchers or collectors do so deliberately, often through illegal means.

“The end result is the same — the ancestor is still removed from the place they were intentionally placed with respect and love,” Dr. Mosteller said.

Although NAGPRA does outline the potential loss of federal funding for non-compliance, tribal communities must hold universities, museums and others that receive federal aid accountable for their actions. Dr. Mosteller takes her role seriously as a Native American. Her work is staying up-to-date with changes in faculty, keeping in touch with universities and fellow Native communities and conducting investigations.

“There is a great amount of unpaid legwork being placed on tribes,” she said. “It’s following all these paper trails of what institutions were working in and what area.

“However, universities can apply for grants to help them follow through on the requirements and bringing our tribes for consultations.”

Future

Although NAGPRA has reached a 30-year milestone, the next three decades will require extensive time, effort and cooperation between all parties involved, including tribes, museums, universities, municipalities and states.

“I think it’s going to be a lot of proactive activity,” Dr. Mosteller said. “Hopefully, the work moving forward is finishing up and making good progress on getting ancestors who are already on shelves back where they belong and doing the hard work of protecting those ancestors who are in their resting place but are vulnerable because of continued building and human activity.”

Learn more about the Citizen Potawatomi Nation’s Cultural Heritage Center online at Potawatomi.com and NAGPRA at nps.gov/nagpra.

Tribal election notice for 2021

Tribal election season will soon be underway as Citizen Potawatomi Nation voters prepare to elect candidates for four legislative seats and Tribal Chairman. Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4 are all up for election this year. Election Day is June 26, 2021.

Candidates must be 18 years old prior to Election Day.

To run for Tribal Chairman, candidates must reside in Oklahoma six months prior to the filing deadline.

Legislative Districts 1-4 are located outside Oklahoma. Candidates must reside in their district for at least six months prior to filing deadline.

Declarations of candidacy must be mailed through the U.S. Postal Service and in the CPN Election Committee’s hands no later than 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 13, 2021. Request filing forms via email at elections@potawatomi.org or by calling 405-275-3121 and requesting the CPN Election Committee.

Applications will be available on Dec. 1, 2020.

Current incumbents are:

• Tribal Chairman
  John “Rocky” Barrett

• District 1 – Jon Boursaw

• District 2 – Eva Marie Carney

• District 3 – Robert Whistler

• District 4 – Jon Boursaw

Tribal members will also vote on the budget that manages the Nation’s trust earnings. No principal from the fund is spent, but the budget pays for national service projects and the executive branch of the Tribe.

CPN members who are at least 18 years old on Election Day will be eligible to vote. All eligible Tribal citizens around the country can cast ballots for Tribal Chairman and the Tribal budget. In addition to those two elections, citizens of Districts 1-4 can vote only for the specific legislative district in which they reside.
Tesia Zientek furthers service to Indian Country through new board positions

Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal member and CPN Department of Education Director Tesia Zientek expands service to Native American education and overall well-being through the National Indian Education Association and American Civil Liberties Union of Oklahoma board service.

The NIEA focuses on uplifting Native American education, ranging from curriculum development to student access and teacher preparation. Its mission mirrors Zientek’s passions, and she looks forward to serving on the NIEA board of directors.

“IT’S A huge honor and responsibility that I do not take lightly,” she said.

During the annual NIEA convention’s general assembly on Oct. 7, the organization announced election results for two at-large positions. The Oklahoma Council for Indian Education nominated Zientek for one of the positions, and NIEA members nationwide cast their votes. She then attended a virtual swearing-in ceremony on Oct. 9.

“I would have thought about it seriously for that job, but not people who reached out and said, ‘We think you are, and we support you.’ And I was willing to accept that nomination because of my work over the past two years with the Oklahoma Council for Indian Education,” she said.

Giving back

The Weld family descendant dedicates her career to Indian education. She has led the CPN Department of Education since its formation five years ago, which now oversees Tribal scholarships, internships, college counseling and the Potawatomi Leadership Program.

“When I think back, pretty much all of my pivotal life moments can some way be traced back to Tribal educational programming,” Zientek said. “I received a Tribal scholarship, I attended (Johnson O’Malley) functions. I attended employment and training summer camps. In a lot of ways, Tribal programming has been such a huge, integral part of my life that I recognize its importance, and I now want to give back.”

For Zientek, her drive centers on uplifting and educating future tribal leaders across the country, and the NIEA board position provides that opportunity.

“That’s something that I think tribal nations need to be conscious of and intentional about,” she said. “We need to be aware of how we are investing in our younger generation to prepare them for future tribal leadership. I think that’s something that the CPN has done really well since 2003 through the (Potawatomi Leadership Program). Some other tribes have similar programs, but that is one way that I see the CPN promoting Native control of education.”

In addition to her new board position, Zientek now co-chairs the NIEA Native education systems committee and serves on the fiscal and membership committees. Her experience allocating the education department’s budget and Tribal scholarships gives her a firm grasp on bookkeeping for a larger institution. She felt the two committees go hand-in-hand as the membership dues allow the organization to hold conferences and direct those funds towards tribes to teach each other and collaborate.

American Civil Liberties Union

In October, Zientek also accepted a position on the American Civil Liberties Union of Oklahoma board. She said the organization’s values align with her own, and she felt that the time had come to heighten her involvement.

“Personally, as an Indigenous woman, there are a lot of civil liberties that we received relatively recently in history. So it’s just important to me that we have an organization like ACLU monitoring any attacks on those freedoms and making sure that they’re protected,” Zientek said, including immigration rights, first amendment rights and social justice.

“These are things I care about, and ACLU, one gives me an opportunity to be educated and informed and involved. And then, two, they’re an organization that I trust to give me nonpartisan and clear positions on issues. And I think that that strengthens my position as an advocate and ally,” she said.

Though these new roles bring additional responsibilities into her life, Zientek attributes her ability to accomplish her goals to the strength she receives from others who see her potential.

“For both of (these positions), it was totally because there were strong Indigenous women that encouraged and supported me to run, or else I wouldn’t have even considered it,” she said.

Find more about the CPN Department of Education at cpn.news/education.

Visit the National Indian Education Association online at niea.org and the American Civil Liberties Union of Oklahoma at acluok.org.

First National Bank & Trust Co. gives back to our communities

By Amanda Estala, Marketing Director/AVP

This year has been a challenging year for many people. From the COVID-19 pandemic to wildfires in the Western states, hurricanes in the Gulf and along the east coast, and the ice storm in central and western Oklahoma, there are many in our communities dealing with unemployment, loss of loved ones, damage to property and other challenges.

The holiday season is a time of togetherness and giving back, but that feels even more important than usual this year when so many are struggling.

At First National Bank & Trust, there are several ways we give back to our communities during the holiday season.

The Angel Tree program is a cause near to our hearts at FNB, as it provides holiday gifts for children and senior citizens in need. Each holiday season, participating companies set up a tree adorned with Christmas wish list tags for individuals and families in need. People who want to give back through this program take a tag, purchase the items and return them to the participating location.

In addition to having a tree in our lobby for both employees and customers to select a tag from, our Shawnee branch has hosted the Angel Tree kickoff event the past two years. Other participating businesses in our area come to our main branch to pick up their packet of information and tags, so it’s a great way to help out and meet other business and community leaders.

Annette Stuckey, CFO of First National Bank, enjoys cranking in her free time.

This year, she has the goal to ensure that every one of our Angel Tree children receives a warm winter hat through a group she formed called Heart4Hats.

This year, their goal is to collect 850 hats that have been knitted or crocheted by members of the community to be distributed with Angel Tree gifts to four different counties in Oklahoma.

Many of us know the familiar sound of the Salvation Army bell ringers each holiday season, whether they’re greeting you outside the post office, pharmacy or somewhere else around town. And perhaps you’ve dropped some extra change or a few extra bills in that bright red bucket to help those in need. Employees all take shifts as a bell ringer to help spread Christmas cheer and raise funds to support those in need in our community.

Many of our employees, and even more of our customers, are also involved in local community groups like the Lions Club, Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs. Others find ways to give back through specific nonprofits or through their church communities.

How are you giving back this holiday season?

We encourage our fellow businesses and any individuals who are able to seek out new opportunities to give back during this challenging year. Whether you sign up as a bell ringer, adopt a family through the Angel Tree program or simply spread cheer through a random act of kindness in your community, we thank you for taking the time to make this holiday season extra special.

For information regarding First National Bank & Trust and our many locations throughout Oklahoma, please visit fnbokla.bank.

ARE YOU GRADUATING THIS MONTH?

SEND THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION TO GRADUATION@POTAWATOMI.ORG

BY DECEMBER 20 AT 5PM

FULL NAME, HOMETOWN, POTAWATOMI FAMILY NAME, HIGH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE, AND DEGREE TYPE AND MAJOR
Pandemic brings surge in online ordering to FireLake Discount Foods

With more families staying home due to the coronavirus pandemic, online sales account for a larger portion of grocery store revenue in 2020.

According to data compiled and published in September by the market research firm Statista, the number of online grocery orders nationwide for pickup or delivery almost quadrupled between August 2019 and August 2020, going from 16.1 million to 59.5 million. In terms of sales, that is an increase of $4.5 billion.

The explosion in online grocery shopping pushed the U.S. Department of Agriculture to announce on Nov. 2 that it was expediting the expansion of its SNAP Online Purchasing Pilot Program to include select grocery stores across 46 states and the District of Columbia.

Prior to April, the only states accepting Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits for online grocery shopping were New York, Washington, Alabama, Iowa, Oregon and Nebraska.

Pandemic brings surge in online ordering to FireLake Discount Foods has experienced the surge in online sales as well. The location on South Gordon Cooper Dr. launched its own online shopping platform in 2018, and throughout the first year, the store saw some mild growth with approximately 15 to 20 orders per day for a two-person team.

And then came the coronavirus pandemic.

"When COVID hit, we saw that increase in the end of March, all through April, most of May," FireLake Discount Foods manager Mike Lester said. "We saw our online orders increase by 100 times.

"There were days when we were filling 300 orders per day."

To accommodate the steep uptick, personnel from other grocery departments quickly found themselves moonlighting as personal shoppers. Originally, the shift was just among departments within the grocery store that talk about shutting down early on to prevent spreading the virus, such as the bakery and deli.

However, it quickly became apparent that the store needed even more help to keep up with the increased demand for groceries.

"However, it quickly became apparent that the store needed even more help to keep up with the increased demand for groceries, so we reached out to our employees from other Citizen Potawatomi businesses and programs to slide over and start pushing shopping carts."

Now, a large percentage of the store's revenue in 2020. The store has been able to adjust its operations to accommodate for the greater online shopping demand. FireLake Discount Foods plan to launch a mobile app by the end of 2020 to help facilitate ordering.

"Early on, we were adjusting on the fly," Lester said. "We have figured a lot of things out and are very close to offering the same personalized feel to our online shopping as we do for our in-person shopping. We've been working every day to help make the service better from a staff perspective."

Since the initial surge that required assistants from Lawrence and other employees, the store has been able to adjust its operations to accommodate for the greater online shopping demand. FireLake Discount Foods plan to launch a mobile app by the end of 2020 to help facilitate ordering.

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Shop online with FireLake Discount Foods at firelakediscountfoods.com. Visit the store on Facebook @discountfoods.

Dotson continued...

However, she struggled with sobriety for many years, and she decided that she no longer wished to work in the industry and stopped her consumption entirely.

"I was able to get clean this year. It's a huge deal, especially in the Native American community. I want others out there struggling with addiction, as I struggled with it for more than 20 years, to know there is so much freedom on the other side — so much," she said.

Dotson hopes her success encourages others struggling with addiction to seek help.

"I've started my new chapter in life, and I'm exhilarated, terrified, full of hope, full of potential and chomping at the bit to get started," Dotson said. "Tristen has given me the gift of clarity, grit, determination and revealed to me my own true resilience. It is my gift to his memory to be the biggest, baddest, most successful version of me that I'm capable of."

Premium Promos & Logos

Dotson aids her sobriety by continuously improving herself and furthering her education. To establish an even greater business foundation, she enrolled in a program with Sandler Training to enhance her sales skills.

"Even though I was I was very successful in liquor sales, I knew that I needed far more support and help if I was going to do it on my own," Dotson said. "(Sandler Training) have been a catalyst for my growth in sales."

Dotson said Premium Promos & Logos provides a boutique, concierge service through her expert consultation.

"I typically work with businesses who are tired of having their advertising on TV and radio ignored and spending enormous amount on advertising dollars just to be ignored — businesses who are just frustrated having all of their hard-earned money money with promotional products thrown in the trash because they didn't have people to help them find just the right promotional product," she said.

By discussing goals and aspirations with clients, Dotson provides the perfect advertising and promotional solutions to make businesses flourish.

"I walk them through what it could look like from point A to B, and then I hand deliver all their products because I want to make sure that they're happy," Dotson said.

Since establishing her business early 2020, Dotson has focused on providing the highest-quality customer service. Now, a large percentage of new business comes from referrals.

"I have a personal rule that if I am within 3 feet of somebody, I try to discuss and talk about what they do and then bring up what I do, and it works out quite a bit," she explained.

Although establishing a new business amidst the coronavirus pandemic has created unforeseen difficulties, Dotson believes her attention to detail and track record for helping businesses succeed will carry Premium Promos & Logos through.

Learn more about Premium Promos & Logos by visiting sweeterwag.promo or facebook.com/PremiumPromosandLogos.
Bergeron family history

The Citizen Potawatomi Nation Cultural Heritage Center provides resources to keep the Tribe’s history safe and accessible for generations to come. One key way the Nation does this is through the CHC’s archives. To highlight some of these holdings, the Hownikan is featuring photographs and family history of every founding Citizen Potawatomi family. If interested in assisting preservation efforts by providing copies of Citizen Potawatomi family photographs, documents and more, please contact the CHC at 405-878-5830.

Potawatomi connections

The Bergeron Potawatomi family roots begin along the Kankakee River in Bourbonnais Grove, Illinois, with Watchokee, the daughter of Potawatomi/Onawa Chief Shabonna and Menasha. Shabonna (Buh Like a Bear) was an ally of Tecumseh and Tecumseh’s war during the War of 1812. He joined Maire Pre and other Potawatomi leaders including Waushere and Wiwashem to fight American forces. However, after the war, Shabonna abandoned his total opposition of the United States.

Watchokee was born around 1810 and had a reputation for being intelligent and beautiful. Although she had mixed tribal heritage, because of her father’s leadership with the Tribe, Chief Shabonna raised her in a Potawatomi village. Family records indicate she was born during a bright star. Potawatomi often used natural phenomena to denote time rather than years. After the Potawatomi signed the 1833 Treaty of Chicago, she was among those removed to Council Bluffs, Iowa, in 1837.

Watchokee never forgot her home in the Great Lakes and traveled back and forth from the reservations west of the Mississippi in Iowa and Kansas to Illinois by foot on multiple occasions, and because of this, was ultimately removed numerous times. Bergeron descendants estimate she walked more than 6,000 miles on her travels.

French-Canadian Francis Xavier Bergeron was born between 1815 and 1819 and arrived in the Great Lakes region as a young man where he met Watchokee on one of her trips back to the region. In 1849, she received the name Josette or Zozetta after her baptism. She and Francis wed around that same time, but it was not her first marriage. Before marrying Bergeron, she had two other husbands named LeVasseur and Hubbard. She had four children: Jean Baptiste, Catherine (Kate), Matilda and Charlie.

Watchokee’s children grew up in a pivotal, difficult time in Potawatomi history. They experienced forced removal, relocations and the countless adversities associated with navigating being Woodland people on the prairies of Kansas. Although Potawatomi had hopes the reservation would be safe from outside encroachment, it did not go unnoticed by settlers and travelers.

The Oregon Trail brought thousands through the area, and the railroad saw many economic opportunities. As a result of Westward Expansion and commerce, the federal government approached the Tribe about the chance to take allotments and become U.S. citizens in 1861. The Bergeron family were among the Citizen Potawatomi listed on the 1863 census. However, this did not prove advantageous for many who gained American citizenship, and the allotted lands quickly passed from Potawatomi ownership to white settlers. A clause in the 1861 treaty provided opportunity for the Potawatomi to sell their remaining lands in Kansas and purchase a new reservation in Indian Territory.

In 1872, the Bergeron family joined six other Kansas-based families to become part of the original Potawatomi to settle on the new reservation in present-day Oklahoma. Watchokee was one of the very few to live in the Great Lakes, experience removal and eventually settle on the reservation in Indian Territory. However, her influence in the Great Lakes region remains today with the city of Watseka, Illinois, near the Indiana border derived from her name. According to Daily Journal, community leaders renamed the town in 1865 from Middleport to Watseka to honor her kindness toward settlers. Today a large mural in town features Watchokee, serving as a visual reminder of the community’s past.

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In late September, the Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation named Cindy Logsdon as its new director. She sat down for an interview with the Hownikan after her first full week leading the CPCDC.

“My head has just been full this week thinking about opportunities,” she said. “I am just thrilled that trust has been placed upon me and that they asked me to take this position.”

Logsdon’s husband and children are Tribal members and descendants of the Anderson family, which feeds its excitement and drive at CPN.

“Zero to hero”

She started working for the Tribe’s accounting department in 2003. With 15 years of banking experience, Logsdon quickly received a chance to transfer to the CPCDC as its second employee.

“The CPCDC in my last 16 years has grown financially from zero to hero,” she said. “I mean, it’s really exciting, the upward trajectory that we’ve always been able to accomplish. We’re one of the largest Native (Community Development Financial Institutions), nonprofits in the country.” CDFIs act as a source of cash and capital to promote economic revitalization in underserved and distressed communities. However, Logsdon said the CPCDC offers more that makes it valuable to Natives across the state.

“We’ve had some great programs, and we are cheerleaders. And sometimes a business just needs someone to know that ‘I have someone to call. I have somebody that’s my cheerleader. I have somebody that’s going to help hold me accountable. I have a friendship with someone at the CPCDC,’” she said.

The staff offers assistance buying a home, starting a business, establishing financial goals and much more through credit counseling and access to federal programs designed to serve CDFIs.

“That’s something I feel passion about, getting access to capital to Native Americans,” Logsdon said. “It’s all the other feel-good stuff, too, but bottom line, that’s our bread and butter. We’re a 45 million dollar organization, net worth and assets at this point, and we’re self-sufficient. … And I just want to carry on and try to look towards the future and what that means to Native American families.”

Learning through doing

After high school, Logsdon sporadically attended college classes into her 30s. She spent 15 years in the banking industry, achieving promotions by putting in the effort and learning something new every day. Logsdon said gaining knowledge “through actually doing” serves her best.

“I do think it is important for a leader to be able to jump in there with the troops, you know, show that it is really teamwork that makes this engine work. And that’s exactly what we have (at the CPCDC) is an economic engine,” she said.

Logsdon graduated with a bachelor’s in organizational leadership from the University of Central Oklahoma in 2017. She shared that achievement with several others on the CPCDC staff who attended college classes into her 30s. The team has taken advantage of the ability to educate to everyone being challenged. You know, why not? And it’s been a really, really good experience for the majority of us,” Logsdon said.

She also served as the secretary of the Tecumseh Ag Booster Club, the secretary of the Oklahoma Native Asset Coalition, treasurer of the Native CDFI Network and a board member for the Credit Builders Alliance — all invaluable experience while managing the CPCDC.

“Joining Citizen Potawatomi Nation staff in 2003, Cindy Logsdon now serves at the Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation director. Educated to everyone being challenged. You know, why not? And it’s been a really, really good experience for the majority of us,” Logsdon said.

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“At the same point in time, we had five of us within probably a year and a half received our degrees. So, we went from a staff that was not very knowledgeable to everyone being challenged. You know, why not? And it’s been a really, really good experience for the majority of us,” Logsdon said.

She also served as the secretary of the Tecumseh Ag Booster Club, the secretary of the Oklahoma Native Asset Coalition, treasurer of the Native CDFI Network and a board member for the Credit Builders Alliance — all valuable experience while managing the CPCDC. Logsdon includes connecting with employees and intuitive forethought as leadership essentials.

“I think somebody that knows how to inspire you, is a good listener, is a trait of a good leader,” she said. “I think that training your staff and giving them the tools that they need and pre-thinking the bigger picture. What does this look like in three years, five years, 10 years? … And one day, when I pass this off, I’m going to be very proud of the accomplishments of the CPCDC.”

Managing the future

Although Logsdon began working with CPN more than 15 years ago, she said the consistent challenges and opportunities for improvement — for both clients and CPCDC staff — keep the job interesting and exciting.

“You don’t do the same thing every day. I think that’s what I like, the variety. It’s not a lot of repetition. But seeing the lives that we can impact and change, I think that is huge … we have seen a lot of success stories through the years,” she said.

The CPCDC has improved and grown as a resource with support from the tribe, turning it into one of the most successful organizations of its kind in Indian Country. Logsdon hopes to add the staff and members to the CPCDC’s assets and expand its offerings to clients during her tenure as director.

“We are an influencer in the industry, and I really am proud of that,” she said. “But, I can only imagine in the future that we will continue to grow programs. We’re going to be innovative. We’re going to think outside the box. We’re going to do programs or offer programs that truly benefit and complement tribal members’ lives and financial futures.”

For more information on the Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation, call 405-878-4697 or visit them online at cpcdc.org or on Facebook at @CPNCDFI.
The Citizen Potawatomi Nation Cultural Heritage Center recently honored Tribesman Dr. Dennis Hopkins for his essential position on the high seas. He served four tours aboard the USS Aluidra during the Vietnam War from the spring of 1966 until the fall of 1969 when the military decided to decommission the ship. CHC Curator Blake Norton chose to feature Hopkins in the Spotlight case for his essential position on the high seas.

"We wanted to honor his distinguished career and thank him for the invaluable contribution he made to the permanent collection with his vast donation of military artifacts," Norton said. "All will help the community better understand what it means to be a Potawatomi during conflict."

Hopkins donated several pieces to the museum in 2008, including a navigator's plotting instrument set, his dog tags, a plotting instrument set, his dog tags, and all that stuff," he said.

"I'd make mom mad because I was trying to have a fox hole (in the yard)."

Hopkins was born in Norman, Oklahoma, and has three uncles who served in World War II — one in each the Air Force, Army and Navy. He attended the University of Oklahoma after graduating from Norman High School. As a junior in college, Hopkins decided to seek advice about military service.

I had an uncle that was in the Navy, and I talked to him. And he told me what he did, and he was in WWIII. He told me about his adventures and how he handled his commitment. . . . I followed Uncle Spot into the Navy," he said.

USS Aludra

After boot camp in San Diego in 1966, Hopkins joined the crew of the USS Aludra. The refrigerated cargo ship supplied other warships with goods and food, and the sailors sometimes moved their haul from ship to ship for up to five hours at a time.

"We were their grocery store," Hopkins said.

"Semi hazardous because the weather would get kind of bad and the ships could get kind of close together. . . . Other than that, it was tedious with long hours," Hopkins said. Hopkins spent most of his deployments in the Gulf of Tonkin located in the southeastern portion of the South China Sea bordering Vietnam. The Spotlight case displays a patch that reads "Tonkin Gulf Yacht Club," a nickname for the U.S. Seventh Fleet during the Vietnam War. The Aludra became an "unofficial" member for its service to the destroyers and battleships.

Another patch reads, "Hong Kong Blood Transfusion Service," which Hopkins and other crewmembers received for donating blood several times when illness and infection caused low supplies and an urgent need for blood in Hong Kong.

Stars at sea

Hopkins spent his time as a quartermaster, assisting in the navigation of the nearly 460-foot-long ship. His duties also required logging all of the happenings on the Aludra, no matter how small. He learned how to read stars using a sextant to locate the ship on a map.

"I had no idea when I joined the Navy that I'd be doing this," Hopkins said. His favorite shifts included the overnight hours and watching the stars move as it rose or set on the open water with no obstacles.

People who have never been out at sea don’t know how exactly how many stars there are. From the ground, where the ocean is, was like black, and all around you in every direction as far as you can see . . . just nothing but stars. I mean, you don’t see one-hundredth of what people do at night (on land)," Hopkins said.

He still enjoys looking at the night sky and picking out planets, although nothing beats the sight of the night sky on the ocean.

Hopkins received an honorable discharge on Valentine's Day in 1972 along with numerous commendations, including the National Defense Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, and Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal.

Ever humble, Hopkins said, "I’m not anything special; I know that. I’m just a sailor. I just did what I was told to do." Following his military service, Hopkins had a long career as a United States Postal Service worker until he retired in 1999.

"Just the fact that I got to do it was a big thing to me. I’m really proud that I gave service to my country because a lot of my passing friends did it and didn't get to come home," he said.

If you are a veteran and a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and would like your place on the Veterans Wall of Honor at the CPN Cultural Heritage Center, please call 405-878-5830 and ask for KeAnne Langford or Blake Norton or email keanne.langford@potawatomination.org or blake.norton@potawatomination.org. The CHC also encourages family members of CPN veterans to provide photos of their loved ones to feature on the Wall of Honor. Visit the CHC online at potawatomiheritage.com.

December language update

By Justin Neely, CPN Language Department Director

The Citizen Potawatomi Nation Language Department applied for and received a Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development Living Languages Grant. This one year grant will help pay for the development and publication of 12 children’s books. We will develop six books for Level 1, or very young children, and six for Level 2, or pre-K children. These books will be used at the Tribe’s Child Development Center. They will also be available for distribution and/or purchase from the Language Department or through Potawatomi Gifts, the Nation’s gift shop, online at potawatomigifts.com.

We are excited about this opportunity to create original stories within the language to use with our Tribal youth.

The CPN Language Department recently wrapped up a short promotional video for a breakdown of some many language learning opportunities and tools that we have developed. It includes our various online language courses, online dictionary and two YouTube channels. This can be

found by going to youtube.com and searching “Potawatomi language promo” or visiting cpn.news/langpromo.

Just in time for Halloween, we wrapped up a Potawatomi version of the 1968 classic Night of the Living Dead. We did two versions: one with the closed captions in English and another with the captions in Potawatomi. We thought the English captions would be helpful for beginners, and for more proficient students, we included the captions in Potawatomi. Night of the Living Dead is one of a number of early films in the public domain. Once in public domain, we are able to reuse these films and make them available. Other films we have done in Potawatomi include the cartoon version of Gulliver’s Travels and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer. We have also completed a number of smaller pieces such as Casper the Friendly Ghost. We are currently wrapping up Popeye the Sailor Man and Aladdin. All of these as well as our Mrkt Wigoum children’s puppet shows are available on one of our two YouTube channels found at cpn.news/IN or cpn.news/lang.

We have also been working on some original artwork for the Seven Grandfather teachings, which are making into posters and T-shirts. The shirts and posters will be available from Potawatomi Gifts at the Cultural Heritage Center. We are also planning a postcard series once we have finished all of the Seven Grandfather teachings. The Seven Grandfathers are a series of values that were important to our ancestors and continue to be important to us today and include wisdom, love, respect, bravery, honesty, humility and truth. Our online high school course has been well received and is currently being offered in four school districts throughout Oklahoma. There is also a college variation at Arizona State University. We have had interest from a couple of other school districts and would love to partner with more schools in Oklahoma in the future. Currently, our certification allows the course to be offered anywhere in the state, and the course counts toward a high school graduation credit for students.

We will be looking in the near future into doing some more live online classes on the Potawatomi language Facebook group page for if you haven’t joined our group, definitely take a look. We here in the language department are eager and ready to help you with your own language journey. Let us know how we can help.
Whether it be from science, experts, your elders, or your own curiosity, the environment is so all-encompassing, you have to be open to its stakeholders,” she said.

Background
As a Rhodd descendant, Freeman believes in the importance of honoring and caring for CPN land and its resources for generations to come.

“I’m incredibly proud to be where I am today,” Freeman said. “I’m so grateful to have my position at the Nation and work to benefit my Tribe after everything they’ve done for me.”

Freeman recognized as one of Oklahoma’s NextGen Under 30 recipients

Every year, JonOklahoma selects a group of leaders and achievers from throughout the state for its NextGen Under 30 awards. The publication receives nominations across 30 career categories, and this year, recognized 379 Oklahomans from 241 companies, including Citizen Potawatomi Nation’s Lexi Freeman.

“The NextGen under 30 mission has been to identify and honor these very talented young Oklahomans, as a way of encouraging them to follow their lifetime career goals in Oklahoma,” said Donald Swift, JonOklahoma publisher. In her role as the CPN Department of Environmental Protection environmental coordinator, Freeman teaches students about science, technology, engineering and math opportunities, oversees water testing across CPN land and waterways within Tribal jurisdiction, writes and manages grants to improve efficiency and reduce the Nation’s carbon footprint, and more.

“It’s such a big honor to be recognized, especially as a Native woman with most of my community teachings being around the Tribe,” Freeman said. “I’m so proud to represent, and be a part of, the Nation and all the incredible things we’re doing.”

She believes good leadership requires many attributes, including the willingness to learn and listen.

“Whether it be from science, experts, your elders — the environment is so all-

With her experience in product development and Walters’ reputation with some of Hollywood’s most recognizable faces, the two have become a force in the industry. They own a clinic in West Hollywood where they serve clients one-on-one, and their line includes the Regenerative Oil Complex and the Brightening Oil Complex. The oils combat a variety of issue such as wrinkles, moisture restoration, sun damage, reversing signs of aging and more.

“The market is so saturated, and there are so many products,” Stamoszegi said. “I’m very, very picky, and this is why we only have two products that we sell online because I am very particular about the quality of ingredients that go into them.”

Although using the best components increases costs, it is something Mindi Walters SkinCare refuses to change.

“I think it is reflective of the fact that we’ve literally never had, whether it’s our clinic or any of our products, we’ve never had less than a five-star review on anything,” he said.

Celebrities have caught onto the benefits their products and services, helping their business flourish.

“We launched our product, and right after, Megan Fox posted about it. Then Chelsea Handler posted about it, and now we have customers in over 30 countries,” Stamoszegi said.

Heritage and pride
Stamoszegi lost his Potawatomi father a few years ago, which forever changed his desires to learn more about their shared heritage. Shortly after, he turned in the information required to become an official CPN tribal member.

“He was always proud to be Potawatomi — so, so proud — and after he died and because he was so proud to be part of it, I wanted to follow in his footsteps,” he said.

When the Hownikian approached Stamoszegi about his business and to schedule an interview, Stamoszegi said he felt a sense of honor.

“My first thought was, ‘I want to call my dad, he would be so excited,’ but obviously, he passed away,” he said. “We’ve been featured in multiple publications like Cosmo and Elle and on Chelsea Handler’s show, but to me, being featured (in the Hownikian) is more personal and more important than any of that.”

Traversing the pandemic
At the end of October, personal care businesses across Los Angeles County could reopen with new restrictions. Before the notification, Stamoszegi used the extra time due to the coronavirus pandemic to build the brand and its e-commerce sales.

“It was super exciting to learn we could reopen,” he said. “But we have to wear a face mask and face shield while doing a facial. Anyone coming into our building, we have to do a temperature check and ask them if they’ve had any symptoms.”

In addition to being an esthetician at Mindi Walters SkinClinic and developing products, Stamoszegi overseas marketing, social media, content creation and manages the Mindi Walters brand.

Although the coronavirus pandemic impeded serving customers in person, since its onset, their online sales have grown by 300 percent.

“It gave us an opportunity to buy new equipment, create new facial treatments and launch a new product,” Stamoszegi said.

With the new lifted restrictions, he feels excited for their clients to experience Mindi Walters SkinClinic’s new facial add-ons and treatments. He is also focused on expanding Mindi Walters SkinCare’s online sales and their line while reopening the clinic.

To learn more about Mindi Walters SkinCare, visit mindiwalters.com or follow them on Instagram @mindiwaltermind, and follow Szamosszegi on Instagram @chrisstomszegi.
Bootmaker finds artistry in tradition

Citizen Potawatomi Nation member Terry Don Peltier began his business Top Hand Boots located near Prague, Oklahoma, four years ago. He loves cowboy boots — a combination of versatility, strength and rugged beauty. The Peltier family descendant’s collection spans both his closet and the workshop in his barn.

“I like Western culture. I raise cattle. I raise horses. And I’ve always had a fascination with cowboy boots. I don’t know what that is, but I’ve always had a fascination with cowboy boots,” he said.

Peltier remains dedicated to his craft after learning the basics six years ago. Now a skilled bootmaker, he handmakes footwear for friends, family and clients.

“There is nothing that’s pre-manufactured,” he said. “It all started out as a fl a piece of leather at one time, and (you) cut it out and you mold it. You stitch it all together.... The thing that makes it so gratifying is when that person puts that boot on their foot, and you see that smile and how happy with the fit, that’s what makes it all worthwhile, right there.”

Preserving the craft

Peltier spent more than 26 years in the oil industry before its downturn in 2015. He has always enjoyed working with his hands and chose to learn how to make cowboy boots, a physical process that requires precision and patience. Peltier then spent two weeks as an apprentice in Texas.

“And I just knew barely just enough to be dangerous when I got out of that,” he said and laughed. He continued to learn from others, and developed his own style and way of working. Peltier also built a workshop in his barn and spent two years traveling throughout the Southwestern United States collecting equipment from retired bootmakers. The refurbished parts fill the 14-by-40-feet workspace.

“Some of it’s right after the turn of the century, the 1900s. That’s how old this stuff is,” he said. “I got a Singer sewing machine that I stitch on that was made in like 1923, and I’ve got another machine that I stitch the souls. That was made in 1944, during (World War II). So, all this stuff is either being found in a scrap bin, or no one knows what it is and it’s just getting hauled off.”

Peltier and other bootmakers from across Oklahoma meet up a couple of times a year. They number fewer than 10, with some of them forced into retirement by arthritis and other health complications. The two that taught Peltier no longer practice their craft.

“I honestly think that, especially with some of these master bootmakers that are older and actually, you know, they’re passing away, a lot of this knowledge I don’t think is getting passed on,” he said.

The right fit

Peltier considers a good pair of boots an essential piece of equipment for a cowboy, and the fit often determines their utility. There is little to no breaking in a pair from his shop.

“I take most of the stretch out of (the leather), and when you put them on your feet, they should be like a glove,” he said.

“I’ve had people put on a pair of custom made boots, and they’re like, ‘All right. I’m done. I’m done with going and getting a pair off the shelf.’”

Clients receive five different measurements on their feet before Peltier builds a pair of custom boots. He uses somewhat unconventional equipment to ensure a perfect fit, including where he records the information.

“I have an old accounting journal — one of them old-time accounting journals that are about a foot and a half long, and you open it up. Well, I set their foot on there, and then I trace the outline,” Peltier said.

He spends up to two hours with a client, designing and measuring for their one-of-a-kind pair. Peltier knows they enjoy participating in the process and picking out their leather, stitching, heel height and more. Some people’s specifications cover everything down to the color of the thread.

“Or they’ll just tell me, ‘Hey, you’re the bootmaker. Surprise me,’ which when someone tells me that, I like that because it gives me my freedom to try new things,” Peltier said.

His collection from antique shops and thrift stores inspires him as well as the desire to keep designs alive that he learned and received from other master makers. Peltier also believes his creativity comes from men on the Potawatomi side of his family, which adds pride to his work.

“A lot of my artistic ability was from, of course, my grandfather and my dad,” he said. “My grandfather, he would sit down with me, and he was really good at sketching and stuff like that. And my dad, he was a wood carver, so I think that’s where I got my artistic eye from was from them two.”

Raymond Peltier, his grandfather, was chairman of the Tribe in 1974, and is the namesake of CPN’s Raymond Peltier RV Park.

A pair of Top Hand Boots starts at $600 and takes Peltier approximately 40 hours to complete. He also requires a six-month work period, although he often completes them sooner. Find Top Hand Boots on Facebook @ TopHandBoots.

Made with love, gifted with prayers

By Tracy Kinderknecht, CPN Senior Support Network RN

Two retired ladies had to find something to do with their time when the coronavirus forced an end to activities at the CPN Center at the Elder Village in Rossville, Kansas.

Barb Smith, a retired hair stylist, had just spent a few weeks at the Rossville Manor following foot surgery and remembered the need for some colorful, pretty lap robes. The wheels started turning, and she enlisted the help of Felicia Brown, a retired nurse, to join her in making some new lap robes for the facility. Barb, a descendant of the Degraff family, and Felicia, whose husband was a descendant of the Bouzaw family, both had a stash of fabric that needed to be put to a good use. They started the Lap Robe Project in April with a goal of 25 blankets by the end of July.

The ladies must have sewn day and night, as they met that goal, and as of mid-September, they have made 110.

Each lap blanket takes about 3 yards of fabric to complete. Assorted patterns and prints are cut into two-three and 1.5 inch strips that are sewn onto an 8-by-8 inch square of plain cloth used as a foundation. After the strips are sewn on the foundation, it is pressed and trimmed to the eight-by-eight inches, then sewn into rows of four squares. The lap blanket takes 20 squares — five rows of four squares. A backing is then pinned to the sewn squares, stitched around, turned right side out and tied with crochet thread to complete the blanket. Barb had some triangles already cut from another quilt project that she incorporated into some of the blankets.

Fifteen blankets were given to the Oakley Place, a memory care home within walking distance of the Elder Village. The Manor at St Mary’s will receive 40 lap robes, and the Rossville Manor will get 55 blankets. This project has given the two ladies something to do, and they used their fabric to spread joy — such a beautiful and needed gift. As long as these ladies have material and time, they will keep up on this project and gift more nursing homes with their love.
December is National Impaired Driving Prevention Month

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported an average of nearly 30 people in the United States die in drunk driving crashes every day — more than 10,000 people a year. The holiday season brings more parties around Christmas and New Year’s Eve, causing the number of car wrecks caused by impaired drivers to increase in December.

Police began cracking down on drunk driving in the 1980s, and the average cost of an initial DUI charge now reaches up to $10,000. More options exist than ever before for alternatives to drunk driving, and Citizen Potawatomi Nation Police Department Police Major Mike Hendrickson encourages everyone to remember them all.

“You need to have more than one means of getting home safely — be that a cab, Uber, phone a friend, or whatever it may be,” he said. “Or be prepared to spend the night wherever you’re at.”

Hendrickson also recommends having one reliable person to call for a ride, even while in a group.

“Always have someone you can call on, even if you have a designated driver. … Because as we all know, sometimes the designated driver will become more intoxicated than anyone else,” he said.

More than 1,800 people died in drunk driving crashes in Oklahoma between 2009 and 2018, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The state issues between 10 and 20 licenses per day to individuals convicted of drunk driving in the last five years, Hendrickson said. “So if they get in their vehicle and drive, and they’re intoxicated, and we catch them, that’s a 100 percent chance they’re going to go to jail.”

CPN has seen a drastic decrease in drunk driving in the last five years, despite owning various establishments that sell liquor such as convenience stores and casinos. The Tribe requires Training for Intervention ProcedureS certification, also knowns as TIPS, for all staff serving and selling alcohol. Servers, bartenders and store clerks learn the skills necessary to recognize intoxication and interact with inebriated customers to prevent drunk driving.

“They notice somebody is a little tipsy. They contract security, and then security will try to find alternate means of transportation or encourage them to get a hotel room. And then we get involved if it goes beyond that. Normally, that’s where it ends we try to get them a place to stay, somebody to pick them up. We just don’t release them out into the public,” Hendrickson said.

As a result, CPN police arrested only two people for DUls in fiscal year 2020.

“Chairman, came up with the phrase ‘The safest place to play.’ And that’s true in more than just the COVID pandemic,” Hendrickson said.

For more facts and information about drunk driving, visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's website at nhtsa.gov.

The Coronavirus Food Assistance Program provides eligible producers with direct financial assistance due to market disruptions and associated costs because of the pandemic.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture will use funds from the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act and CARES Act to support row crops, livestock, specialty crops, dairy, aquaculture and many additional commodities.

Producers can apply for at USDA’s Farm Service Agency county offices. This program provides financial assistance that gives producers the ability to absorb increased marketing costs associated with the recent health crisis. Producers will be compensated for ongoing market disruptions and assisted with the associated marketing costs.

New customers seeking one-on-one support with the application process can call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee. This is a recommended first step before a producer engages the team at the FSA county office at their local USDA Service Center. Producers can also download applications and other eligibility forms from farmers.gov/cfap.
Tribal Chairman – John “Rocky” Barrett

I am one of the coronavirus officials around the country that are describing as a dark winter. At the time of writing, both Oklahoma and our country continue to see exponential growth of case numbers and deaths from COVID-19. It is frustrating to see science and our most highly qualified officials disregarded, even scorned, out of misunderstanding or plain defiance based on politics. At Citizen Potawatomi Nation enterprises and Tribal government properties, mask mandates will remain until we are past this.

We are anxiously waiting for vaccines that are able to help protect our people and neighbors. CPN will be a leader and an integral part of this process by offering storage of the vaccine, transporting the ultracold vaccine to other locations, and serving as a vaccine distribution site. To be selected for this task requires recognition of the brilliant foresight and lifesaving predictions of Dr. Adam Vascellaro and Dr. Kassi Roselius who began full emergency planning for this pandemic in January — long before many were even aware of the threat. Many lives were saved and serious illness prevented by their medical expertise. I am proud to call them my friends and, in the case of Dr. Vascellaro, my personal physician.

As we look back over the nearly two years, we are now entering what many public health officials around the country are describing as a dark winter. At the time of writing, both Oklahoma and our country continue to see exponential growth of case numbers and deaths from COVID-19.

In this holiday season, I often encourage you to share your family and Tribal stories at your get-togethers. However, with the virus making such large-scale gatherings unsafe, I think a bit of adaptation is in order. As much of us have learned in 2020. If you are distancing from loved ones but still plan to call or video chat with them, write down or record the stories you share about your elders and ancestors who may have walked on. Keep small notes that will remind you to write them out later.

Continued to be kind, have compassion and show grace to those who may not warrant it. As always, it is an honor to serve as your Tribal Chairman.

Migwetch (Thank you),
John “Rocky” Barrett
Keweoge (He Leads ‘Them Home)
Tribal Chairman

Vice-Chairman – Linda Capps

It is my sincere wish that everyone had a happy Thanksgiving while trying to stay safe from the coronavirus. Staying safe from the virus is a major undertaking within our part of the country. I am pleased to announce, however, that I am one of the coronavirus survivors. Both my daughter and I had the virus a few weeks ago. I have tested negative for the antibodies and am negative for COVID-19. It is a good feeling, but I am not sure how long that status remains. Regardless, I am pleased to be safe for a period of time, whatever that may be. It does not keep me from wearing a mask, which is a mandate at both CPN and within our community. I hope you and your Potawatomi family members have already applied for the CARES Act funds. There is a strong possibility that by the time you read this column, the funding will have been exhausted. As of this week, we are closing in on the $40 million allocation for our Tribal members. The money is sure to last no longer than the first half of December. Please note: that does not mean you would have received the money then — rather it means that we cannot take new applications past that time. We will still be processing applications that have been keyed into the system. There is a rather lengthy process to each application. It is matched with a Tribal membership number, and all information has to be entered correctly.

One huge positive from June until now is that our Tribal membership has vastly grown. If a person did not get a dime out of the rush to get loved ones enrolled, at least that endeavor is completed. The procrastination is over, and you will have reaped the benefit of having your loved ones enrolled, at least finally. When you have the CPN picture IDs of everyone in the family, you will realize the true benefit. I must say that it has been a magnificent project. Our employees have worked so hard to distribute these funds. They have processed applications, mailed the information, made phone calls, emailed and even tested on cell phones to reach out to Tribal members. I call it a supreme effort that has resulted in a project well done.

Ironically, at one time we feared that we could not give out all the funds. Today, we are faced with no longer taking applications. Although, it seems like a short time, it actually comes together quite beautifully. Perhaps, if we had discontinued taking Tribal enrollment applications in about September, we could have come out just right. I am thankful that we did not do that because we all received more enrollees. Our enrollment has grown by more than 1,000 Tribal members during this time. Chairman Barrett did the right thing in encouraging enrollment. The tail end of the enrollments in December may not receive CARES funds, but each person enrolled can be proud of the effort.

Approving the CARES funds and knowing that so many Tribal members were receiving checks is one of the most rewarding tasks that I have accomplished during my tenure. Having Tribal members write, call, email, and text words of thanks has been a sheer delight. I appreciate having served our membership for all these years. My love and respect for this Tribe runs deep.

Migwetch (Thank you),
Linda Capps
Sogenkwe (Black Bird Woman)
Vice-Chairman
405-275-3121 work
405-650-1238 cell
lcapps@potawatomi.org
HOWNIKAN

Bâzhô nikanek (Hello friends),

We now meet only virtually, 2 Fall Feast. But, it's lovely 2018. It includes recipes that may also mention the name of a local treaty. Some people who write me to confirm their membership in the state of Illinois. As I noted in the cookbook introduction, I strongly believe that one of my responsibilities as the CPN District 2 legislator is to grow and solidify community. Running annual contests like this recipe contest (and a similar contest in 2013), along with hosting district meetings, museum tours and other gatherings — including our annual Fall Feast — aim to do both. That is until this pandemic.

To all those who wrote me to confirm their membership in the state of Illinois. As I noted in the cookbook introduction, I strongly believe that one of my responsibilities as the CPN District 2 legislator is to grow and solidify community. Running annual contests like this recipe contest (and a similar contest in 2013), along with hosting district meetings, museum tours and other gatherings — including our annual Fall Feast — aim to do both. That is until this pandemic.

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District 3 – Bob Whistler

Honoring our country
For roughly the last eight to 10 years, it appears our country has fallen out of favor by our own elected officials, schools, city government and citizens. U.S. flags are being burned in protest. Schools are no longer allowing students to conduct the Pledge of Allegiance. Students are being disciplined and even expelled for saying “God bless America.” The justification is that the word “God” is being used and it is forbidden, supposedly in regard to the separation of government and religion. There may be some of our children who still wish to use the words most of our U.S. presidents have used at the end of a presentation for decades, which is “God bless America!” Since there is no need to place any of our citizens in danger of being criticized or students expelled, I offer them this phrase in Potawatomi. Our CPN Department of Language Director Justin Neely was gracious enough to provide the translation: Mamoganun zhewdagedoowin chesoomak kik – God bless America.

For those of you that remember the Creation Story and that we are Nishnabine and our continent is referred to as Turtle Island, that translation would be:

Mamoganun zhewdagedoowin mobile moos – God bless Turtle Island.

I offer this not only as a way to honor our country but also as a step in learning our language. We have too many of our ancestors as well as current tribal members who are veterans or are now serving our country and fought, as well as died, in honor of this country. If we cannot openly say, “God bless America” in our common, English language, then why not reverberate our Native tongue and say it in Potawatomi or Bodéwadmimwen?

YouTube presentation
On Oct. 8, the Allen Public Library in Allen, Texas, allowed me the opportunity to make a PowerPoint presentation about our Nation to share on YouTube. I made the live presentation that night, and it was shown again on Oct. 31. If I have your email address, I was able to alert you to this event, and a number of District 3 citizens were able to view the presentation. Our Chairman John “Rocky” Barnett originally created the presentation in roughly 2007, and I updated it with some current information. You will find that it covers our historical and geographical migration from our Canadian origin to where we are today. I included references to several books at the end that cover Native American as well as our Trial of Death history. There was mention of The Other Slavery: The Uncovered Story of Indian Enslavement and Walter Echo-Hawk’s In the Courts of the Conqueror: the 10 Worst Indian Laws Ever Decided. At the end of the presentation, I did give a short briefing on prayer as well as using the drum, rattle and other items in ceremonies and in prayer. For those of you that have never attended one of our district meetings with a historical presentation, you may find this is a way to learn more about your Nation. I want to thank the Chairman for the initial creation of the PowerPoint. Thanks also go out to our District 3 citizen, Ms. Robin Green Heisig, who suggested to Tom Keener, the manager of the Allen library, that she offered the opportunity to be on YouTube. Credit also needs to be given to Kevin Vought who took photos that have been used to promote the presentation. I thanked the library for the opportunity by presenting them with a copy of the book An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States for Young People by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz. This book is under consideration as a text for use in high schools to provide an unbiased historical review of our history. The YouTube presentation is now available 24/7 here: cpn.news/D3TX.

I hope that you find it informational and time well spent. The presentation is just over an hour in length.

CPN CARES Act programs
Application for the various CARES Act programs must be received and registered with CPN by Dec. 30, 2020, in order to be eligible to receive appropriate funds. I personally am in favor of granting as much money as possible for distribution within compliance of the federal guidelines. In addition, I requested that we review the programs as a legislative group each month during the final quarter to modify them where appropriate to ensure all the funds are used and no excess exists for return to the federal government. Please go online again to our Tribal website potawatomii.org/cares and check the CARES program offerings to be certain you have not overlooked anything you could be eligible to receive. If you have applied, but have family who may not have, please contact them now. Our funds must be spent by Dec. 30 unless Congress takes action to extend the spending deadline before the end of the year. Send those relatives or fellow Citizen Potawatomi this column if it helps.

Before closing, I am again asking you to send me your email address. If we are still required to continue delaying the holding of onsite district meetings, I may initiate Zoom meetings to reach you. Thank you for the honor and privilege of representing you.

Gwich qweyern (Thank you very much),

Bob Whistler
Bnashit (He/She) Representative, District 3
112 Bedford Road, Suite 116
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817-282-0868 office
817-229-6271 cell
817-545-1507 home

rwhister@potawatomii.org

cpn/legislator@yahoo.com

District 4 – Jon Boursaw

Honoring our country
For roughly the last eight to 10 years, it appears our country has fallen out of favor by our own elected officials, schools, city government and citizens. U.S. flags are being burned in protest. Schools are no longer allowing students to conduct the Pledge of Allegiance. Students are being disciplined and even expelled for saying “God bless America.” The justification is that the word “God” is being used and it is forbidden, supposedly in regard to the separation of government and religion. There may be some of our children who still wish to use the words most of our U.S. presidents have used at the end of a presentation for decades, which is “God bless America!” Since there is no need to place any of our citizens in danger of being criticized or students expelled, I offer them this phrase in Potawatomi. Our CPN Department of Language Director Justin Neely was gracious enough to provide the translation: Mamoganun zhewdagedoowin chesoomak kik – God bless America.

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rwhister@potawatomii.org

cpn/legislator@yahoo.com

Holiday greetings
Peggy and I would like to sincerely wish you and your family a very merry Christmas and a happy new year. We hope that your holiday season is safe and only filled with joy and happiness. Despite COVID-19, this past year has been a very active and rewarding year for me. I look forward to 2021 with great expectations and enthusiasm as I continue to foster the awareness of the history and presence of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation in Kansas and my endeavor to connect with and serve our CPN members across the state. This coming year is also important to me, as I have announced that I will seek re-election in 2021.

Kansas City Chiefs recognize Native American Heritage Month
The Kansas City Chiefs celebrated Native American Heritage Month in a variety of ways on Sunday, Nov. 1, at Arrowhead Stadium. One of the ways was to use the traditional pre-game drum ceremony to recognize a season ticket member as Sunday’s drum honoree, and that person was CPN member Sandy Bentch, a member of the Bourassa/Opae families. Sandy has been a season ticket member since 2002 and a Kansas City Red Coat since 2006, Sandy volunteered with the Wounded Warriors Family Support organization, and for the last five years, she has been a driver for the High Five Treat that travels around the country to help bring donations into the organization. In addition to the drum ceremony, Native Americans from other tribes participated in the recognition activities: A ceremonial blessing of the drum, conducted by Alan Redbird, a member of the Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribes based in Oklahoma, was viewed virtually during the pregame events. Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska member Pete Fire, a veteran of the Army, Navy and

CNP member Sandy Bentch proudly represents the Nation during the Kansas City Chiefs pre-game ceremony on Nov. 1, 2020.
bolstered by the knowledge of the ancestral cycles.

As the days change, so do the moon's phases. The full moon represents the culmination of a phase, while the new moon marks the beginning. The moon's influence on the tides, weather, and ecosystems is well-documented, and its cycles are deeply ingrained in the culture and traditions of many societies around the world. The next full moon is on January 15, 2023, and it will be a beautiful time to observe the moon's phases and see how it impacts the world around us.

In conclusion, the moon is a vital element in the world's culture and history. Its cycles have influenced the ways we live, work, and think about the world. As we move through the cycles of the moon, we are reminded of the cyclical nature of life and the importance of living in harmony with the natural world. The moon is a reminder of the interconnectedness of all things and the importance of respecting the natural world.

References:
- NASA: Lunar Phases
- National Geographic: The Moon's Impact on the World
- The Astronomical Society of the Pacific: The Moon's Influence on Human Activity

About the Author:

Paula Johnson is an astrophysicist and moonologist. She has studied the moon's cycles for over 30 years and has written extensively on the topic. She is the author of the book, "The Moon's Influence on Human Activity," which was published in 2022. She can be reached at paulajohnson@moonology.com.
District 7 – Mark Johnson

Bezhoo nikanek
(Hello friends),

Well, I hope by the time you read this that winter is here and you are warm by your lodge fire. I do not know about you, but I am ready for 2020 to go away. I am tired of all the pain that this year has brought to our nation and the people who I care about (you) — from pandemics, to fires, to governors who think that tribal governments should bend to their will. I hope that 2021 brings a collective sense of well-being to us all. To that end, a vast majority of your Tribal legislature has worked hard to make sure the CARES Act funding awarded to the Nation has been provided to you as best we can with the ever-changing rules from the U.S. government. Time is very short. Visit potawatomi.org/cares to apply, if you haven’t already. If you have family, send them this column and ask if they’ve applied. I will hate to see the money returned to the government, so apply; there is no income limit.

On Saturday, Oct. 24, Randy Payne and I hosted a Zoom meeting in place of our fall festival, which we promise to bring back as soon as we can be sure our elders will be safe. It was a good opportunity for those who joined to interact and ask questions of Chairman Barrett and Secretary/Treasurer D. Wayne Tousdale. Many questions centered on the CARES Act benefits. While not as many members as we had hoped for attended, I believe it was successful for the first try at this type of district meeting. All questions were answered, and those in attendance were thankful for the meeting.

December also marks the start of the election season in Tribal government. As someone who has watched or participated in our Tribal government for many years, I can tell you that we, as a Tribe, are absolutely blessed to have stable executive leadership whose vision has made our Tribe what it is today. That is not necessarily the norm in Indian Country; we are blessed.

As always, I am thinking Potawatomi. Merry Christmas! I love and miss you all. Eunice Imogene Lambert Butterfly Woman Representative, District 5 270 E Hunt Highway, Ste 229 San Tan Valley, AZ 85143 480-228-6569 euniceellambert@gmail.com

District 11 – Lisa Kraft

Bezhoo
(Hello),

As this year could not get any more bizarre, central and western Oklahoma suffered through a crazy ice storm Halloween week, knocking out power to more than 300,000 homes. Our neighborhood power was out for nine days. Additionally, there is a puppet caravan that combines English and Potawatomi, put together in a story. It’s called Mtek Wigwam, and it’s available at gnn.news/zt. Just try it.

Before I go, I would last but not least like to know more about your personal family histories in your own words and experiences. It would be nice to be able to write about specific families in our community. Others would love to hear them. All the contact information for me is below, as always. And please, do let me hear from you. I have heard stories that made me cry and some that make me laugh, but they are all your stories.

In the meantime, please please please make this holiday special as no other. Find a way to celebrate as you have never before. Do something everyone will remember.

Once again, I would like to say what an honor and privilege it is to serve you as your District 7 legislator. As always, give me a call, and I will be happy to work with you on any questions you may have or provide you with additional information you may need to access Tribal benefits that may be available to you.

Migwetch
(Thank you),

Mark Johnson,
Wick Mtek (Strong as a Tree)
Representative, District 7
1565 Shaw Ave., Suite 202
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Facebook: Lisa O’Connor Kraft

Lisa Kraft
CPN District Legislator 11
Oklahoma At Large
Citizen Potawatomi Nation
Lisa@copperbearconsulting.com

As always, I am thinking Potawatomi.

4X5 POUND BALE SPRAYED AND FERTILIZED FOR SALE

CONTACT TONYA IN AG OPERATIONS AT 405-395-0113 OR TONYA.KITCHEN@POTAWATOMI.ORG
Delia Zientek

A dedicated homemaker and nurse of nearly 70 years, proud member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and devoted parishioner of St. Benedict's Catholic Church, Delia was beloved for her gentle smile and quick wit. A native of Shawnee, Oklahoma, she shared her musical talent as a band clarinetist and church pianist. Her father, Autwin “A.B.” Pecore, was a former Tribal Chairman. Delia grew up around Tribal events and programming, even remembering that the Tribe’s food distribution program operated from their front porch. As an adult, she opened her door, kitchen and heart to everyone.

Delia passed in death by parents, A.B. and Iness Logan Pecore; brothers, Anthony “Tony,” Edward, and David Pecore; brothers-in-law, John Ogleby and Wayne New; and sisters-in-law, Frankie Dickenson Pecore Bland; son, Andrew Zientek; daughter, Janette Steele Lenggenhager, remembered fondly by longtime family friend, Marvin Vinson, and numerous cousins and friends, especially long-time close friends Pam Shaw and Patricia Stevenson.

Bill Cecil Powell

Bill Cecil Powell (Ogee Clan), of Round Rock, Texas, passed away on Oct. 22, 2020, at the age of 91 after a six-year battle with Alzheimer’s disease.

He was born in Maud, Oklahoma, on May 13, 1929, to Mr. and Mrs. William Jefferson Powell of Clower, New Mexico. He was the third of six children. He is survived by his wife of 68 years, Marilou of Round Rock; sons, Marc (Karen) Powell of Georgetown, Texas and John (Jule) Powell of Round Rock, Texas; daughter-in-mar, Marcia Powell of Austin, Texas, seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents, three sisters, daughter, Gaye Temous and son, Gary Powell. He is also survived by his brother, Jerry Powell of Shawnee, Oklahoma, and sister, Carole Passmore of Carrollton, Texas.

He attended elementary and secondary school in Clower and graduated from Lubbock High School in Texas in 1947. He received a bachelor’s in architecture and a commission as a second Lieutenant in the Regular Army from Texas Tech University in June 1952. He entered military service in August 1952 and served continuously until his retirement as Commandant of the U.S. Army Security Agency School in 1978. Throughout his career, he received numerous awards and decorations.

In 1959, he was selected for in-service graduate school and attended the University of Florida, graduating in 1961 with a bachelor’s (with high honors) and Master of Science in building construction. He was a graduate of the Army Command and General Staff College, the Army Command Management School and the Army War College.

After military retirement in June 1978, he moved his family to Round Rock and worked as a construction contract administrator. In 1984, he helped form the firm of Gill, Spencer, Powell Architects. After retiring in 1987, he spent the remainder of his years pursuing his love of golf, skiing, gardening, woodworking, building, grandparenting and pursuing his time and energy into his expanding family.

He always liked to be active, have fun, and had a great sense of humor, which he maintained to the end.

In later years, his typical response when being greeted was “If I was any better, I couldn’t stand myself!” Finally, he is better. He is fully restored and in the company of his Savior.

Barry Scott Branscum

Our beloved brother, uncle and friend, Barry Scott Branscum, passed away Oct. 21, 2020, at the age of 69 from complications of Leukemia.

Barry was born Jan. 23, 1951, in Shawnee, Oklahoma, to Truman T. and Joyce Baxter Branscum. The family moved to Seminole in 1958, where Barry attended school, graduating from Seminole High School in 1969. He continued his education at Oklahoma State University, where he graduated in 1974 with a degree in political science. After working in the oil business for several years, Barry changed career paths, working in the health care field and Indian wound care.

Barry loved all sports, animals, politics, all things Native American, and most importantly, his family. He was extremely proud of his Native American heritage and was a proud member of the Peltier family of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. Barry was preceded in death by his parents. He is survived by his sisters, Leslie Helmy (David) of Katy, Texas, and Lissa Runsey of Sapulpa, Oklahoma; niece, Brooke Demers (Dax) of Sapulpa; nephews, Matt Masilon of Hemet, California, and Trent Masilon of Oklahoma City; uncle, Johnny Branscum and W.R. Branscum of Shawnee; great-nephew, Xander and Max Demers of SAPULPA; and numerous cousins and friends, especially long-time close friends Pam Shaw and Patricia Stevenson.

George David Miller

George David Miller was born on June 13, 1936, in Pawnee, Oklahoma. His father was Raymond Earl Miller and his mother, Olivia Nadeau Miller. He had a sister, Party, and two brothers, Gilbert and James. He passed away from complications of cancer on Oct. 24, 2020.

He was a graduate of St. Gregory’s High School and Central State College where he got his bachelor’s in music.

He played upright bass and worked professionally with his wife Suzanne, a piano player, as jazz musicians/singers in Hollywood, west Los Angeles and all across the country.

He also worked as a graphic artist for Metropolitan Water District of Southern California in Los Angeles. He was a talented painter, and his paintings can be seen on his wife’s Facebook page (Suzanne Miller).

His father, mother, sister Party, and brothers, Gilbert and Jimmy, and Max Demers of Sapulpa, and numerous cousins and friends, especially long-time close friends Pam Shaw and Patricia Stevenson.

Fay Orr

Fay Orr (Dement), born on Dec. 19, 1932, went to our Heavenly Father on Sept. 9, 2020, at age 87. She was preceded in death by husband, Roy Orr; parents, Jack and Evelyn Dement; and siblings, Delores Waggoner, Carl Dement, Patricia Cooper and Jackie Dement. She is survived by son Roy Orr Jr., a granddaughter, and several nieces and nephews.

Paula Mae Wheeler

Paula Mae Wheeler, 82, of Emporia, Kansas, passed away on Oct. 21, 2020, at Midland Hospice House in Topeka, Kansas. A funeral service was held on Nov. 6 at Maplewood Memorial Lawn Cemetery, Patio Garden.

Paula Mae Love was born in Arkansas City, Kansas, on July 18, 1938. She graduated from Ark City High School in 1956 and attended Arkansas City Junior College. Paula was a proud Tribal member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation.

Paula was married to James R. Kenney from 1957 to 1968. Later she married Wesley T. Wheeler (Wee), on July 1, 1977. They were married just shy of 39 years. Together, they enjoyed time with family, working in the yard, lake fishing, riding, canoeing, scenic drives and church activities.

Paula worked at Dolly Madison Bakery as a lead lady for 32 years. After retiring, Paula was a paraprofessional at Village Elementary School. She enjoyed going on walks, reading, working in the yard and spending time with her beloved dog, Parker. She was actively involved in her church, Harveste, the bakery and Confectionery Union as well as other community organizations.

Paula was survived by her daughters, Julie Page and Suzanne Kenney; her stepson, Brian Wheeler (Dane); her sisters, Mary Emig; three grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Wesley, and her son, Robert J. Kenney.