



# HOWNIIKAN

Mkogisos | February 2023

A resident of the CPN Eagle Aviary watches snow fall.

## A LOOK INSIDE

### Page 2



Q&A with Kansas City Chiefs center Creed Humphrey

### Page 8



Tribal member strengthens career devoted to Indian child welfare

### Page 11

Poet inspired to share culture, perspective

### Pages 14-19

Tribal Executive and Legislative updates

### Page 20

Walking on



## Nation shares holiday spirit with community

The Citizen Potawatomi Nation supported local efforts to bring holiday cheer to Tribal members and others in the community. From toy drives to distributing food baskets, employees eagerly worked to share their giving spirit with others.

### Grand Casino Hotel & Resort

Employees at the Grand Casino Hotel & Resort donated 394 toys and more than \$3,000 in cash to the Salvation Army's annual toy drive. As they gathered for a holiday lunch, staff brought dolls, board games, sporting goods, trucks and other presents.

"The staff are great people. They love (helping out). I know times are hard with inflation going up, but they love to give back, especially when it comes to kids," said Grand Casino Hotel & Resort General Manager Joe Garcia.

CPN's partnership with the Salvation Army Boys & Girls Club has been in place for several years and become a long-time holiday tradition for the Grand's nearly 700 employees.

"It just gives them a great feeling that they're able to participate in things like that. Even though it's been a rough year for (many employees), it just gives them that great feeling to help out," Garcia said.

A representative of the Salvation Army collected the donations that were then distributed to area children who might not otherwise have received a new toy this year.

### FireLake Discount Foods

FireLake Discount Foods donated food to the Salvation Army to help area families celebrate the season.

"Every year, we donate food in conjunction with the Salvation Army's Angel Tree," said FDF Director Richard Driskell. "While they (hand out gifts), they also give out a box of groceries. Our store donates some of that product. We have staff that go and help with the distribution that day."

Assisting with the food basket distribution were Driskell, Bill Rumbo, Tyler Maxwell, Jason Boyce, Tim Yates, Timmy Tucker and Nicole Sanchez.

"We've been doing this for 10 plus years, and it's a way for us to give back. We pride ourselves in giving back to the community, and that's just one of the ways that we do it," Driskell said.

This year's basket included a ham, eggs and other staples that have recently gone up in price due to inflation, which made this year's donations even more important to families experiencing economic challenges.



Grand Casino Hotel & Resort employees pack donated toys for the Salvation Army toy drive.

"A lot more people are needing and seeking donations due to inflation, high fuel prices, high grocery prices and high utility prices. There's a lot more need nowadays than there has been in the past," Driskell said.

### Workforce Development & Social Services

CPN employees attended the Shawnee Police Department's first-ever toy drive and participated in the 14th annual Shop-With-A-Cop event. The event was created to foster positive relationships between youth and law enforcement officers, the national Shop-With-A-Cop website said. School-age children are selected each year during the holiday season to shop at local stores to purchase gifts for members of their immediate family.

SPD received 751 toys that were distributed to 162 children, according to the department's Facebook page. About 150 children and their families shopped at Walmart. Officers from the CPN Police Department were among the law enforcement agencies assisting. Also present were officers from the Shawnee, Asher and Earlboro police departments, Pottawatomie County and Lincoln County sheriff's office, Kickapoo Tribal Police and the Absentee Shawnee Tribal Police.

Workforce Development & Social Services Safe and Stable Families Counselor Jamelle Payne attended both the toy drive and distribution. He nominated CPN families who participate in the department's programs to receive toys.

"I'm super thankful to Glenn Blankenship of the Shawnee Rescue Mission for inviting me to witness the community joining together with tribal police

officers, sheriffs and city officers," Payne said. "You truly forget about the troubles of the world when surrounded by kids. It was a night of smiles, laughs and memories. Each of the officers helped create a smile for tomorrow. I appreciate Glenn for reaching out to our CPN Workforce & Social Services."

While many people look forward to the holiday season, Payne said it is important to remember that others may experience depression during what is thought of as a happy time of year. He attended a workshop and learned that Oklahoma ranks third in the United States for rates of holiday-related depression, making CPN's efforts to support tribal families even more critical.

"I'm proud that Shawnee is addressing (holiday-related depression) in so many different various ways with Project Safe, the police department, along with Shawnee Rescue Mission and the Hope House Shelter, with everyone coming together to make the difference," Payne said. "It's definitely needed. (Outreach) feeds the soul of everyone around."

Garcia agreed that everyone should reach out during the holidays to care for the people around them.

"I tell our (managers) to do three things — take care of their employees, take care of yourself and take care of each other, and good things will happen," he said.

Visit FireLake Discount Foods online at [firelakefoods.com](http://firelakefoods.com). Learn more about the Workforce Development & Social Services department at [cpn.news/workforce](http://cpn.news/workforce).

# Q&A with Kansas City Chiefs center Creed Humphrey

*Creed Humphrey is a Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal member and center for the NFL's Kansas City Chiefs. At only 23 years old, the Peltier family descendant played his second season of professional football in 2022-23, ending with his first Super Bowl appearance on Feb. 12, 2023. Prior to the NFL, he gained notoriety at both Shawnee High School near CPN headquarters in central Oklahoma and at the University of Oklahoma in Norman.*

**You are known as one of the best centers in the league for your focus and your pass protection. What really keeps you going during a game? How do you get that focus that you're known for?**

For me, it's just taking everything play by play. Making sure I'm executing my assignment and really just focusing on the detail throughout everything. So really for me, it's making sure I do my job every play.

**What's it like representing CPN as a professional athlete?**

It's great. There's not a ton of representation with Native Americans throughout sports. So being able to do that and kind of just be a person for younger kids to look up to, it's really great to do. And I'm very happy to be able to do that.

**What's it like seeing kids either wear your jersey or the "Creed Is Good" t-shirts?**

It's definitely awesome just being able to be someone that they can look up to. I really enjoy that. And I make sure to make that a big part of my job as well, making sure I'm representing myself well and making sure I'm just being a good person to look up to for the younger generation.

**Who do you look up to in the NFL, and is there anyone that you especially watched and paid attention to as a kid?**

As soon as I started playing center, I started watching film on different people just to learn technique and everything like that. For me, I really enjoyed watching Nick Mangold with the New York Jets, Travis Frederick with the Dallas Cowboys and Maurkice Pouncey with the Pittsburgh Steelers. Those guys were at the top of their games during their time. It was really fun to watch them and just kind of see how they play the game.

**What do you enjoy most about game day?**

Really the interaction with the fans. Things like that. Just the atmosphere they bring. It's really cool to see that many people get behind a team and root for them. Whether we're



*Kansas City Chiefs center Creed Humphrey practices with the team on Dec. 15, 2022. (Photo courtesy of chiefs.com)*

doing good or whether we're doing bad, they're always behind us.

**What's it been like adjusting to more of a national spotlight and adjusting to playing professional football? What are some of the differences?**

In professional football, really your whole focus is on football. Now that I'm out of school and everything, graduated, I'm not worried about classes, studying, things like that. I can put all my focus on football. I really enjoy being able to do that. And I feel like it's, in a way, less stressful because you can have all your focus on making sure you're playing the way you want to play. So, I really enjoy that. And also, the national spotlight, being a professional athlete, there's a lot of people looking up to you and seeing what you're doing. So just making sure I'm doing the right things and representing myself in the way I should be. That's a big thing for me to do, too.

**With your hometown right around CPN headquarters, do you ever miss Shawnee?**

Yeah, I do. All my family still lives in Shawnee, so during the off-season, it's really good to be able to go down and see them and catch up with everybody around there. I've still got a bunch of friends that still live in Shawnee, things like that. I definitely try to make time during the off-season where I'm in Shawnee for a while.

**What was it like covering for Patrick Mahomes on your first game in the NFL?**

It's definitely a big responsibility, protecting the best quarterback in the league. But it's awesome. He makes our job so easy, and just seeing him make the plays that he makes is really cool. And it's really a blessing to be able to see that happen in real life.

**What makes you proud to be Potawatomi?**

What makes me proud is just representing my family. My family lives in Shawnee. They live in that area. I've been around them my whole life, and I've been representing the Tribe my whole life. It's definitely for me, representing my family well, things like that. And again, having this opportunity to where there's not a ton of Native American athletes in professional sports being able to do that and have different kids within CPN be able to look up to me, I think is a really cool thing.

**There was a Chiefs game recently in November where you and a team member were highlighted for Native American Heritage Month. What was that like?**

It was a really cool opportunity. Me and (long snapper) James Winchester. He's a member of the Choctaw Nation. Just us being able to shine a light on that, and like I said, being able to give kids a person to look up to and see that they can make it to the same spot that we did. We really enjoyed being able to do that.

**What kind of goals do you have personally or as part of the team in the coming years?**

Football is a team sport, so focusing on the team goals is always my first priority. And we definitely want to win a Super Bowl around here. I'm doing everything I can to make sure I'm being a part of that and doing my job for that. If you focus on the team goals, the personal goals will usually pan out. So just for me, it's focusing on making sure we win, making sure we win the AFC West, we win the AFC, and we win the Super Bowl. That's the biggest thing for me.

**Do you like football because it's a team sport?**

Definitely. Growing up in Oklahoma, I was a big OU fan. I've been around football my entire life. I've always enjoyed watching football. When I got the chance to start playing, it was kind of my first love. So being able to just do that my entire life has been really awesome.

**How long have you been playing football?**

I think I started playing flag football when I was 5, maybe 4. It's been most of my life.

**You've brought in a lot of fans who are Potawatomi tribal members. Do you have a message for those who are rooting for you?**

Thank you for being behind me. And it's really awesome to be able to represent Shawnee, be able to represent CPN, and I'm very glad I get to do that. And it's just been a dream come true so far. I've just been enjoying the ride. 🏈



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## Spring break camp includes culture, food, fun

Spring break does not mean children have to take a break from learning, thanks to activities planned by the Citizen Potawatomi Nation's Workforce Development & Social Services.

A spring break camp will take place March 14 through 16 from noon to 5 p.m. at the CPN North Reunion Hall. Students who participate in the CPN Johnson O'Malley program, ages 7 to 18, are eligible to attend, said Sandie Rogers, youth counselor.

"We'd like to invite all the JOM kids to sign up," she said. "The more, the merrier."

Signed in 1934, the JOM Act authorized the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, through the Bureau of Indian Education, to partner with tribes, tribal organizations, states and schools to address the educational needs of Native American and Alaska Native students. JOM programs focus on helping students stay in school and increase their chances of academic success, according to the JOM website.

### Cooking

The spring break camp includes cultural teachings about strawberries and their significance to Indigenous peoples.

"We're going to share a book about the first strawberries, *First Strawberries, a Cherokee Story*. All the kids will get a copy of the book," Rogers said.

Students will bake strawberry-shaped cookies and decorate them using naturally dyed icing and edible paint pens. They will also make a strawberry wreath.

"It's always about the children accomplishing something and getting to enjoy the reward," Rogers said.

The time in the kitchen also helps youth gain confidence in their cooking skills and broaden their understanding of healthy nutrition, she added.

Spring break campers will plan a grocery shopping trip. A grocery store, with its endless choices, sometimes overwhelms young people who are new to the experience.

"We are teaching them how to be efficient in the kitchen and how to shop, how to know what to buy. They shop with a list, and then they go home, they cook and they take photographs (of the food). The pictures are just amazing," Rogers said.



*Workforce Development & Social Services staff teach spring break campers how to make hand drums in March 2022.*

The project often inspires children to continue learning and spending more time in the kitchen, which is the goal.

"Parents will tell me that they can't get their kids to stay out of the kitchen now. They're always wanting to have their hands involved. That's what we want. We want them to learn to be self-sufficient in the kitchen so that they can take care of themselves when they need to," Rogers said.

According to her, many of their students spend school breaks at home, sometimes caring for younger siblings. The spring break camp helps them acquire skills to safely prepare healthy snacks and meals.

As the children learn their way around kitchen basics, they often try new cooking methods as they get older, Rogers said.

"I have some kids now that like to cook on a grill. I even had one girl cook salmon last summer," she said.

Rogers is excited when some of the participants try new foods and discover flavors they enjoy.

"We made a dessert pizza at our summer camp, and one of the kids sent in pictures of their pizza that they did over the Christmas break camp," she said. "That's what it's about, is reaching and exploring and finding new ways to

enjoy food and having fun with it as well as being confident in the kitchen."

Ultimately, the camp participants learn, even when the activity seems fun on the surface.

"There's always the educational element as well. We want them to learn something new," Rogers said.

### STEM

The fun will not be limited to the kitchen. The camp hosts activities focusing on science, technology, engineering and math, or STEM, as well. A report from the National Science Foundation expects these distinct, yet related, areas to drive innovation over the next several years. It also said Native Americans are underrepresented in STEM fields like computer science, mathematics and engineering.

That is why the spring break camp includes time for children to explore their creativity and problem-solving ability.

"STEM is important in everything we do, and I see the importance in the kids realizing the science behind everything we do and use. Our goal is to help the kids get a spark about their heritage and culture," Rogers said.

This spring, campers will be making catapults, edible slime and constructing a solar system out of fruit, she added.

### Culture

The spring break camp will also include cultural activities, such as basket weaving, making corn bead necklaces and learning how events like the Trail of Tears affected Indigenous people.

"We are always teaching the kids in a way that they will be educated about what our ancestors did prior to now," Rogers said. "We talk about using natural plants for painting, medication, making tools and other skills. We are also having a paint day where they will paint a background and use Native American animal stencils to add dimension."

While the focus is often on Citizen Potawatomi culture, Rogers said they also try to incorporate tribal knowledge from other nations as well. Many of the campers are descended from multiple tribes.

"We try to stay within the tribes that are local, and we try to stay with authors that we know are Native American and share stories that are close to home. We (discuss) more than CPN (traditions). We try to include all the area tribes, including the Absentee Shawnee, Sac & Fox and Kickapoo," she said.

Parents should not worry their child needs specific skills to participate. Every camper is welcome and will have help for the activities.

"When we work with the kids, we have a variety of ages. They are from 5 on up to 18, and they work together. It's fun to watch them," Rogers said.

Often, the older campers act as mentors for the younger children. There are high school students who volunteer as mentors to satisfy honors hours requirements.

"I believe our camps guide the children in a positive aspect in their lives," Rogers said. "It's important for them to understand and appreciate their culture and all that their ancestors have given us in our everyday lives."

Parents should contact Rogers, Peggy Walters or Jamelle Payne to register. Campers must be active clients in the CPN Johnson O'Malley program.

For more information, contact Sandie Rogers at 405-878-3854 or email [sandie.rogers@potawatomi.org](mailto:sandie.rogers@potawatomi.org). Find out more about CPN Workforce Development & Social Services at [cpn.news/workforce](http://cpn.news/workforce). ♡

## Scam awareness workshop for elders answers questions

**By Jamelle Payne, CPN Workforce Development & Social Services Safe & Stable Families Education Counselor**

Our loved ones, and elders in particular, are targeted by phone, mail and computer scams more during the holidays than any other time of year.

I have had the pleasure of teaming up with CPN Police Department Major Deputy Chief Lee Minick and Detective Sergeant Aimee May of the Criminal Investigation Division. We joined together to help ensure the safety of our Tribal elders during the holiday season.

The Workforce Development & Social Services Department held a scam awareness workshop alongside CPNPD at the Tribe's Elder Center in December 2022. We had a great turnout. Title VI Coordinator Tami Fleeman was very welcoming and helped us make it happen.

Many elders brought us their mail and shared past and current stories of scams they have experienced. Fleeman said that she always keeps information available at the center, but there is nothing like seeing people in real life to speak on important topics of safety to our elders.



*CPN's Jamelle Payne leads Tribal elders through a technology and scam awareness workshop from Tribal police.*

If you would like more information or a workshop developed, please contact:

Jamelle Payne

Workforce Development & Social Services

405-878-3854 ext. 4220

If you feel like you are being scammed, please visit [ftc.gov/complaint](http://ftc.gov/complaint) or call 1-877-FTC-HELP (877-382-4357).

To be placed on the National Do Not Call Registry, visit [donotcall.gov](http://donotcall.gov) or call 1-888-382-1222. ♡

# Career at National Public Radio expands history buff's creativity

While listening to a podcast or talk radio program, the work seems easy — record, press play. However, the path to a product that presents itself as effortless and easy to digest takes teams of people on the same page with the same goal. Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal member Devin Mellor has spent the last six years as an essential behind-the-scenes staff member at National Public Radio's New York City bureau.

"I don't think I appreciated the amount of work that went into it until I was near it, until I worked here and realized like, 'Oh, this takes a lot of time, a lot of revisions. Tracks and retracks,'" he said.

Mellor was promoted to associate project manager in July 2022, and he has worked on some of NPR's well-known shows, including *AltLatino*, *It's Been a Minute* and *Planet Money*. The position brings together his experience in office administration and stage productions as well as interest in history.

## Listener to project manager

From a family full of creatives and artists, Mellor became interested in storytelling at a young age. The Toupin family descendant wrote his own characters and comic books and participated in theater in high school. His creative writing teacher saw his talents and imagination and introduced him to his first NPR show — the comedy-trivia program *Wait, Wait, Don't Tell Me*. Mellor was hooked.

"What I ended up doing was downloading episodes onto my iPod because this was 2005. Podcasts were sort of a very abstract thing at the time. So, I would download the episodes onto my iPod and listen to them during study hall, and that's sort of how I got introduced to public media," he said.

Mellor attended Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, New York, double majoring in history and government with a minor in creative writing. He also spent a summer at American University as a part of the Washington Internship for Native Students Program in Washington, D.C., and took an Indian law class. After graduating in 2012, he began working as a clerk for a NYC law firm while considering attending law school. At that time, some of his favorite NPR shows and other podcasts included *Fresh Air* with Terry Gross, *This American Life* with Ira Glass and *Dan Carlin's Hardcore History*.

"I knew pretty quickly (law) wasn't (for me), but NPR content was really helping



Tribal member Devin Mellor's career and colleagues at NPR challenge his abilities and critical thinking skills every day. (Photo provided)

me get through the day and keeping me sane," Mellor said. "And it was kind of one of those thoughts like, 'Well, I have a background in office management and administration. Why don't I see if they need admins?' ... I was able to interview with a former NPR employee who told me when we met, 'Devin, don't take this the wrong way, but you look and sound like you already work at NPR.'"

Now, he has worked on and pitched ideas for *Planet Money*, one of NPR's successful economics podcasts, and helped produce a live stage adaptation of the *Planet Money Buys a Superhero* series in 2022.

"I can actually remember listening to my first *Planet Money* piece because it was an episode of *This American Life*. But I can remember very vividly where I was when I was listening to it, and being like, 'Oh, this is fascinating,'" Mellor said.

He has also assisted with relaunches of *Alt.Latino* and *It's Been a Minute*, a pop culture podcast focusing on Latinx community arts and music and a look back at weekly news, respectively. As an associate project manager, he appreciates the variety that each day brings.

"That's been really interesting to see how the comms team, the marketing team, all of these different business-oriented departments within NPR function and how the project manager is really kind of the center of that web. A lot

of times I'm responsible for translating the business speak into editorial speak and vice versa," Mellor said.

Mellor admits that sometimes journalists prove difficult to manage because of their inclination to question almost any decision, but they remain on the same page throughout the process.

"The people who are here care about the product they're making and care about the listeners. And of course, the mission is to make a high-quality product basically for free for people. It doesn't get much better than that," he said.

## Genealogy from afar

With a deep interest in history, Mellor satisfies his desire to learn by researching his family's stories. He is a descendant of Paul Toupin, and most of his Native ancestry comes through his mother's matrilineal line. He is also of Irish and English descent.

Mellor considers himself fortunate that some of his relatives have done genealogical research, and the pandemic presented an opportunity for him to take a closer look. He realized all the pieces of his family's history were there, but no one had put them together. Mellor began creating a book for his relatives in 2020.

"I was like, 'Why don't I try to consolidate all this into one family

tree?' And then I ended up with a sprawling tree that covered my living room floor. It was like, 'Okay. Maybe family tree wasn't the right way to represent all this information.' And so what it's become is kind of a ... series of vignettes. Each family member has their own little chapter," Mellor said.

He continues to work on the project today and finds the process rewarding. Compiling the book shined a light on "how interconnected all of humanity really is."

"When you go back a few generations and you see, 'Okay, this person had six kids, and all of those kids had kids of their own,'" Mellor said. "And suddenly, you look around and you're like, 'Oh, I might have a lot more cousins out there than I realized.' And we should treat each other with kindness and consideration because you don't know."

His extensive history knowledge paired with the decades-old photographs of his ancestors made him consider the present in a new way. It reminded him that after an event passes, the historical references that follow are snapshots, not the entire picture. However, Mellor knows his family was complicated and loving and survived hardships and accomplished great things — generation by generation.

"I felt compelled to try to restore some of their humanity and think about, 'Okay, these people we read about (were part of) a battle or a forced march or a famine.' I felt compelled by the times in which we're living — pandemic, civil unrest, climate change — to think about how we're feeling all of these things. ... They also lived these experiences. And what must that have felt like to them? How did it change them?" he said.

Mellor connects with his Potawatomi heritage while in New York by meeting with a Native employee group at NPR, attending CPN district meetings and visiting other Indigenous events in the NYC area. He also makes small pilgrimages, when possible, to visit cemeteries and find his ancestors' graves in Illinois or anywhere else he finds connections to either side of his family. His desire to learn about this culture and ancestry deepens with age, even if he lives far from family sites.

"We're all on our own journeys, right? It takes everyone different amounts of time, but I think we all get there eventually. I keep my ribbon shirt in my closet ready to go on a moment's notice," Mellor said. ♡

## Hownikan

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### CPN Executive Committee

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## Language update

By Justin Neely, CPN Language Department Director

*Bozho jayek*  
(Hello everyone),

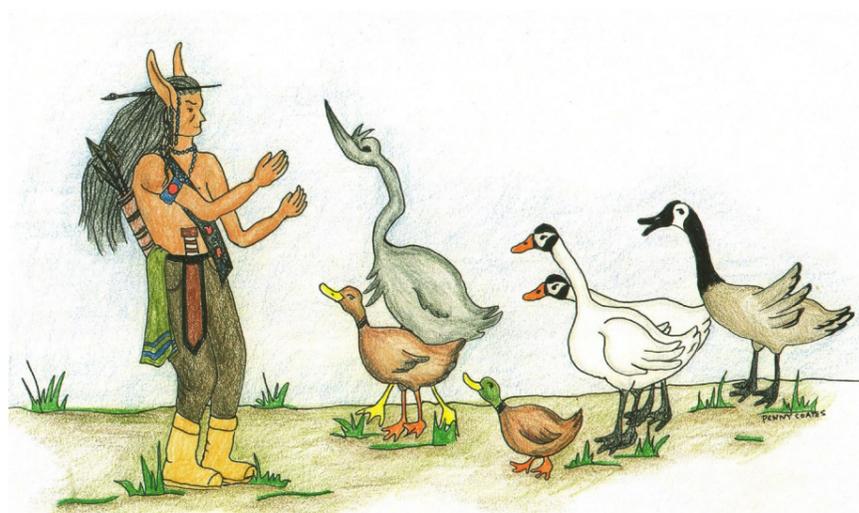
We will soon have our new beginner online course up and available. The URL for the course is [learning.potawatomi.org](http://learning.potawatomi.org). Once you get to the site, create an account, and then click on “Courses” on the left. You should see the “Introduction” course. It has 20 chapters. We also have two courses at [memrise.com](http://memrise.com). One called “A Day in the Life” and the other “Conversational Potawatomi.” They can be found after signing up on Memrise then searching for Potawatomi.

We will be having our annual Winter Storytelling event on February 21 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Citizen Potawatomi Cultural Heritage Center near Shawnee, Oklahoma. We will have food and drinks. Please RSVP to [jneely@potawatomi.org](mailto:jneely@potawatomi.org) so we can get a head count. We will also plan on streaming the event live for those who live out of the area. We have a number of traditional stories that can only be told in the wintertime. During the winter, we traditionally believe that the earth and the spirits are asleep. So, stories that involve *Wiske* or *Nanabozho*, the Trickster, and other spirits are often told at this time.

If you wish to listen to a winter story, go to one of our two YouTube channels.

***Wiske and the Gift of Fire:***  
[cpn.news/GiftofFire](http://cpn.news/GiftofFire)

***Wiske & the Gift of Maple Syrup:***  
[cpn.news/GiftofSyrup](http://cpn.news/GiftofSyrup)



*Shut-Eye dance*



*Wiske and Buzzard*

Make sure to check out our two YouTube channels by searching “Justin Neely” and “Potawatomi Language.”

Also, if you haven't already, make sure to try out our online dictionary at [potawatomidictionary.com](http://potawatomidictionary.com). We currently have over 10,000 words and around 80 percent of them with sound files. In addition to regular sound files, we have been adding example sentences with audio and historical audio files of different speakers. We also have a video component that is good with certain words.

Google's Woolaroo ([cpn.news/woolaroo](http://cpn.news/woolaroo)) is also something you will want to check out if you haven't. This is a website you can go to with your phone. Once you go to Woolaroo, you will select “Potawatomi.” Using the camera on your phone, you can take pictures of different objects, and then using AI technology, the site will identify the objects and offer an audio file to listen to. It's pretty cool with basic objects, and the audio side makes it very useful for exploring the environment around us.

We also finished our 12 children's books. We mailed out six books to those who signed up. If we haven't mailed them to you yet, we may have had a bad address, or we are waiting to get to 200 so we can mail them out at bulk rate. The next group of books will be available at the Family Reunion Festival in June. We are also looking at a few more books such as a Potawatomi version of *Winnie the Pooh*, which is now in public domain.

*Iw*  
(End) ♪

## Nightly brushing, limiting sugar key to children's dental health

By CPNHS Lead Dental Hygienist Lauren Bingham, RDH, BSDH

February is National Children's Dental Health Month, and at Citizen Potawatomi Nation Health Services, the staff in the dentistry department work hard to give parents and kids the knowledge they need to ensure children's teeth come in strong. Good dental health as an adult starts during adolescence, and knowledge and ritual are vital to long-term health.

Tooth decay is the leading chronic infectious disease among children, and according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 1 in 5 children between the ages of 2 and 5 have at least one cavity in their baby teeth. Primary dentition (baby teeth) are useful for only a small percentage of our lives yet the most susceptible to decay due to the nature of developmental integrity caused by the sugary affliction we cause.

Eating excess added sugars, particularly in the form of sweetened beverages, remains a leading cause of tooth decay in the U.S. for children. Milk, juice, Kool-Aid and even Gatorade are among the commonly forgotten contributors to dental decay.

**Nutritional tips and tricks for parents to reduce childhood cavities:**

- Drinking bottles and or sippy cups at night. Avoid making it a habit after tooth eruption begins.



- Sipping and drinking juice and milk all day. Try substituting water for sugary drinks; it's vital in a lot of ways!
- Fruit snacks, granola bars, crackers, chips, applesauce packets, candy, gum, ice cream and fruits all create copious amounts of plaque that contribute to easy decay.
- Soda, milk, juice, energy drinks, Gatorade and any other high acid, high sugar drinks bathe teeth in decay-causing formulations.

**Home care considerations:**

- Always brush twice a day and floss each night before bed. Two minutes

is key. Floss picks are acceptable as long as we work to reach the deepest part of the gum pocket, which allows for plaque removal from the base of the tissue around the tooth. Gently seesaw the floss between the teeth, hugging the tooth in a “C” shape. Rub up and down for two or three strokes with moderate pressure applied. Plaque is sticky, and gentle rubbing won't be effective.

- The most important brushing time is at night. Human bodies go through a heal and protect process at night with our cellular turnover. Skipping nighttime brushing, especially in children, increases the chance of

decay by 10 times more than if you brush only in the mornings.

- Habits are key, and learning is innate. For children under the age of 8, we suggest brushing together with your child at bedtime to ensure long-term habit formation.
- Children under the age of 6 generally cannot effectively brush. Therefore, it is recommended to let them brush first but always insist on a follow-up brushing from the adult. Focus brushing on the gums, using a gentle back-and-forth sweeping motion, and access both the cheek side and tongue side of the teeth.
- Begin brushing before tooth eruption even begins. A gentle, damp wash cloth on the gums at bathtime is a great way to introduce the intraoral habit of brushing.
- Say no to anything but water after bedtime brushing has commenced; be consistent.
- For older children, the best time is now to set the habits. If they aren't learned earlier, there is still time to intervene. Set a nightly alarm for the same time and send them to brush their teeth when it goes off. Now is now, not later. It takes six weeks to develop new habits. Stick to it!
- The key is always no eating or drinking after nighttime brushing. It is bedtime.

Find out more about Citizen Potawatomi Nation Health Services at [cpn.news/health](http://cpn.news/health). ♪

# Lareau family history

The Citizen Potawatomi Nation's 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 and video interviews.

To highlight some of the archive's 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, and to schedule family interviews, please contact the CHC at 405-878-5830.

## Potawatomi and French-Canadian roots

The Lareau family are among the Oklahoma Potawatomi with connections to French-Canadian forebears. Joseph Bertrand Sr. (1778-1865) was the son of Joseph Laurent Bertrand and Marie Theresa Dulignon. In 1804, he married Madeline Bourassa (1781-1846), daughter of Daniel Bourassa and a Potawatomi woman who resided in the village of Potawatomi leader *Topinabee*.

This Bourassa-Bertrand union brought together two well-known fur trading families of the Great Lakes area. These kinship ties created and amplified successful fur trading commerce for many CPN ancestors.

Joseph Bertrand Sr. was employed with the American Fur Company as early as 1804 and again in 1821-22. By 1833, the town of Bertrand was incorporated, with Joseph and Madeline having established a home and fur business on the west bank of St. Joseph River just below Pokagan's Creek. Joseph and Madeline were the parents of Joseph Jr., Samuel, Benjamin, Laurent, Therese (Schneider), Alexander and Julia Justine.

Julia Justine Bertrand (1823-1866) married Alva Higbee (1817-1884). Together, they had Josephine Lucille (Mainey), Mary Anastasia (Lareau), Joseph, Lewis Benjamin Delaine, Robert Alva, Lucy Emelia, George Albert, Therese and Julia.

Mary Anastasia Higbee married Joseph Lareau on July 25, 1871, in St. Marys, Pottawatomie County, Kansas.

Mary was born Sept. 25, 1853, near Bertrand Township, Berrien County, Michigan. She lived in Michigan, Kansas and, finally, Oklahoma. She attended school in St. Marys, Kansas, until she was 16.

Joseph was born Nov. 27, 1849, to Casimir Lareau and Marguerite Benjamin. Joseph spent his younger years in Canada, Michigan and Illinois. After he married, he lived in Kansas and Oklahoma. His occupation was harness maker.

After the Potawatomi signed the Treaty of Chicago in 1833, they lost millions of acres through land cessions. Many were forced to relocate further and further west. Mary's family eventually moved to Kansas, where a Potawatomi reservation had been established.

Encroachment continued as Potawatomi lands were located along the California and Oregon Trails. Settlers began pressuring the federal government



Francis LaReau (third row, far right) with parents and siblings.

to open Potawatomi lands to white settlement. The Treaty of 1861 played a pivotal role as it established allotments in Kansas and formally divided who would be Prairie Band Potawatomi and who would be Citizen Band Potawatomi. After the Treaty of 1867, the Citizen Band began preparations for the move to Indian Territory, or what would later become Oklahoma.

When the Oklahoma allotments were offered, about a quarter of the Tribe chose to leave Kansas in 1870 and 1871, according to the *Chronicles of Oklahoma*. Documents in the CHC archives reveal that Mary Lareau received allotment number 961 on Feb. 8, 1887.

## Challenges in Oklahoma

Many Potawatomi families first settled in the southern part of what is now Pottawatomie County. As individual allotments were secured, families moved to different parts of the county.

Life on the Oklahoma prairie was challenging. Those who took allotments had to carefully plan to make the journey. Moving was expensive, and some families had to save for years to afford the move. They also had to try to avoid poor weather, including snow and ice as well as extreme heat, or thunderstorms and mud.

Once they arrived, families found that allotments, some consisting of hundreds of acres, had to be cleared by hand prior to farming and building homes and infrastructure. Some families quickly built Potawatomi wigwams to live in while they completed their houses or planted crops.

Joseph and Mary Lareau came to the Wanette area with their family in 1896. They lived on a farm east of Wanette for many years where they raised their children. Some of their children settled in the same area to raise their own families.

Their son Joseph Alva was born in 1872 in St. Marys, Kansas. He was married to Rose B. Kitz. Joseph started a livery stable and feed store in Wanette. Joseph died in 1935.

Another son, Francis Casimir, was born Dec. 22, 1875, in St. Marys, Kansas. He married Sarah Elizabeth Sullivan on Dec. 8, 1908, in Wanette, Oklahoma. Francis "Cass" Lareau was a merchant in Wanette for many years. He had four children, but sadly, one son died in infancy. His youngest son Charles was born in Wanette on June 4, 1916. Charles Lareau was the postmaster at Wanette for several years. Charles died on Oct. 21, 1951.

Joseph and Mary Lareau's daughter, Mary Johanna, was born in 1879 in St. Marys, Kansas. She married Dr. John Henry Royster. Together, they had a son named John H. on Dec. 17, 1922. Mary appears on the 1940 U.S. Census at the age of 61 as residing in Wanette, Oklahoma, with her son. Mary died in 1954 in Oklahoma.

A third son, Louis Edmond, was born July 28, 1881, in St. Marys, Kansas. He married Martha Emma Bird, and together, they had Helen, Mary Alice, Joseph, Emery, Emma and John. Martha died in 1919, just a few years after John's birth. Louis married Lela Van Ness on Sept. 6, 1921. Louis Lareau died Oct. 29, 1954, and was buried in Wanette, Oklahoma.

A daughter, Lucy Isabella, was born Feb. 16, 1884, in St. Marys, Kansas. She married Robert Homer Grimmett on Dec. 1, 1901. Their children were Robert Pierre, Wanda Bernice (Jennings), Homer Delaine, Rose Marie (Edwards), Joseph Thomas, Jack Louis, William and Geraldine (Coffman). Lucy died on Nov. 11, 1953, and was buried in Pauls Valley, Oklahoma.

Another daughter, Annie Gentleleska, was born Nov. 28, 1886, in St. Marys, Kansas. She married William

O. Newell in 1904. They were the parents of Joseph, William, Anna, Gerald and Edith.

The family's youngest, Julia Cordelia, was born Dec. 6, 1893, in St. Marys, Kansas. She married Burke Bond Wyatt, and together, they had Eloise, Burke and Robert. She later married Jack Ketzler, and they had a son, Jon Roland Ketzler.

The family matriarch, Mary A. Lareau, died on Jan. 10, 1919, in Wanette, Oklahoma. She was buried in the Wanette Cemetery. Her husband, Joseph Lareau, died on April 14, 1923, in Wanette, Oklahoma. He was also buried in the Wanette Cemetery.

Through their early years in Potawatomi ancestral homelands in the north, a forced migration to Kansas and many challenges creating a new legacy in southern Pottawatomie County, the Lareau family drew upon their strength and resolve to persevere.

The Citizen Potawatomi Nation's 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 and family interviews. If interested in assisting preservation efforts by providing copies of Citizen Potawatomi family photographs, documents and more, and to schedule family interviews, please contact the CHC at 405-878-5830. Schedule interviews online at [portal.potawatomi.org](http://portal.potawatomi.org). Learn more about the Family Reunion Festival at [cpn.news/festival](http://cpn.news/festival), and find research resources online at [potawatomiheritage.com](http://potawatomiheritage.com). ♡

## Chefs, servers offer their best to customers as Tribal employees

Americans love dining out, spending more than \$675 billion at restaurants in 2018, according to the American Farm Bureau Federation. The pandemic showed the economic force of the industry as many restaurants closed for good, and millions of people lost their jobs in the following years.

However, the number of customers dining out has nearly returned to pre-pandemic levels, and they are making up for lost time. National Restaurant Association statistics showed the industry employed more than 14 million people at the end of 2021, which grew during 2022 to meet demand.

Citizen Potawatomi Nation owns seven dining establishments, and the Tribe's food service employees account for nine percent of its workforce. February 6 through 10 is Pride in Food Service Week, and the *Hownikan* talked to chefs, servers, kitchen staff and others who enjoy serving the public and find passion in food.

### Lunch, love at Title VI

CPN's Title VI program serves community elders lunch on weekdays at noon. The full-time kitchen staff begins their days early to prepare fresh, delicious meals with new recipes on a regular basis. Kitchen manager Christina Jones fills her calendar with recipes and continues adding to her bookshelf of cookbooks, some dating back to the 1920s.

"I like asking them, 'What did you all used to have at Christmas?' and then trying to recreate it. And 'What was your favorite meal when you were a kid that your mom used to make?' and then I'll go back and look for really old recipes of it," Jones said, noting their tastes range from barbecue or Shepherd's pie to liver and onions or alfredo pizza.

Jones crafts unique menus each week and looks for ways to serve some of the regulars' favorite restaurant dishes as well. Cook Julie Patterson called Jones "the sauce queen" for her ability to make various flavors from scratch. Both Jones and Patterson enjoy cooking, but Patterson's favorite part of the job is the calm after everyone hustles to get to the front of the line.

"It's so nice to hear the rumble of conversation, and then, it gets quiet. And you can hear the clinking of the



*Michelle Price prepares an omelet for a customer at the FireLake Entertainment Center bistro.*

silverware as everybody is eating. It makes me all happy. It's an honor to serve the elders," she said.

### Chefs, servers at the Grand

The Grand Casino Hotel & Resort is home to many restaurants and cuisines. Soto Sushi, Flame Brazilian Steakhouse, Grandstand Sports Grille and Grand Café range from casual to more formal — all with delicious food within steps of quality entertainment. Austin Kitsmiller is the executive chef for the Grand, and he enjoys the challenge the diversity of restaurants adds to his job.

"With all the different stuff we have here and the very talented team of chefs, we can do all kinds of cool stuff. ... The majority of our food is scratch cooking. And we just invest a lot of time into it and a lot of resources. It's a very cool place," he said.

In fall 2022, the Grand also opened a new food court in the center of the casino. It offers Italian, Mexican, ramen, pizza, a coffee and bakery bar, and more. Kitsmiller and his staff take pride in keeping the kitchens and seating areas everywhere clean and organized, and he said the chefs work hard every day for their customers. He believes cooking is "an extension of yourself." As executive chef, he is responsible for smoothly running the restaurants and hotel catering.

"It's not my ecosystem; it's our ecosystem," Kitsmiller said. "But you have to put the maintenance in to keep the ecosystem healthy and working well and everybody meshing together."

Vanessa Sumner began working at the Grand as wait staff more than a decade ago. Though she has spent time at many of the casino's dining establishments, her favorite is the Grand Café. For the self-described "people person," getting to know her regulars and mingling with guests is her favorite part of serving others.

"It's always good to come in for a new day, and you hear something positive that they've done or something positive that happened to them, or they moved or something, and they still come back to see you," she said.

The breakfast menu is her favorite, and she orders their strong coffee and an avocado and pepper jack omelet.

The Grand Café reopened to customers following the pandemic on Dec. 1, 2022, seven days a week, 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Grand Food Court is open for lunch every day from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday.

### Bar, bistro at FEC

The Tribe constructed FireLake Entertainment Center as its first

gaming establishment in 1982. Since then, it has been remodeled and improved to include the best gaming experience possible — including its dining establishments.

Janice Tiger is the bar manager of Lucky 7s. She began working with FEC 18 years ago and said it feels like a hometown casino, which keeps people coming back. Tiger enjoys hearing about a patron's day and making them their favorite cocktail.

"Some of them will ask why mine tastes different than others. And I just tell them because I make it with love. ... I make all of them with love. And you're in a casino. And I always tell them that they're lucky when they come to the bar because they always get something. It's not chance. You're already a winner when you come up to the bar," Tiger said and laughed.

Across the casino floor from Lucky 7s, chef Tylor Whittet supervises the FireLake Entertainment Center bistro during the breakfast and lunch hours. He loves cooking and finds it motivating. Whittet has been preparing food his whole life. He puts his regulars' orders on the grill as they roll in. Some customer favorites include the quesadilla and the Philly cheesesteak sandwich.

He began working for CPN approximately six years ago, and the Bistro and FEC provide customers with a homecooked meal and plenty of entertainment.

"The food is made with love and tastes so good. And after you're done eating, you can go out to the casino and play some games — hope to win some money," Whittet said.

Lucky 7s hosts karaoke on Friday nights and live music on Saturday evenings.

Find jobs across Citizen Potawatomi Nation, including its dining establishments, at [firelakejobs.com](https://firelakejobs.com).

## 2023 ELECTION UPDATE

### AFTER MARCH 1, 2023

A letter and absentee ballot request form will be mailed to all Citizen Potawatomi Nation voters. The letter will contain information on what the voter will see on their ballot. If the voter plans to vote absentee, then the ballot request form must be mailed back to Citizen Potawatomi Nation and postmarked no later than June 4, 2023.

### MAY 1, 2023

Ballots for the 2023 election will be mailed after May 1, 2023. Ballots must be returned as instructed by the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Election Committee. Ballots must be received by 10 a.m. on June 24, 2023.



## Tribal member strengthens career devoted to Indian child welfare

After 10 years working in foster care and adoption for tribal Indian Child Welfare departments, Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal member Kendra Lowden took on a different challenge in the same line of work. In August 2022, the Curley family descendant accepted a position as a senior program associate at the University of Denver's Graduate School of Social Work and Butler Institute for Families.

The Butler Institute collaborates with the national Capacity Building Center for Tribes to provide resources and act as a point of outreach for tribal child welfare programs across Turtle Island. She feels working in Indian Child Welfare "is the path I was meant to be on."

"From Alaska to Maine, from Arizona to Florida, we all deal with common issues in tribal communities, and tribal child welfare programs can say the same. It's difficult work, but with the right supports and resources like the Capacity Building Center for Tribes, it can be a really positive outcome for everyone," Lowden said.

### Trainee to trainer

As a senior program associate, Lowden helps provide and facilitate training for Indian Child Welfare workers across the country. That includes a focus on the importance of cultural connection and how to nurture that growth for the child and the entire family, as well as practical application and precedent surrounding the Indian Child Welfare Act.

"People talk a lot about the Indian Child Welfare Act and protecting cultural connections. But it's so much more than that because it also is giving families an opportunity to build connections maybe they didn't have. So that's why I know that the work done for the Indian Child Welfare Act and advocating

for the protection of it, it's critical to our survival as tribes," Lowden said.

She acknowledges the social service workforce's diversity and various paths that lead people to the field and believes that child welfare departments across the country deserve equitable training. Part of that includes "lens training," such as the Center's Tribal Child Welfare Practice Path for frontline workers. It helps them understand the unique needs of Native families and how to begin their relationship with them as a social worker. Lowden's on-the-ground experience has been beneficial to her work with the TCWPP and other projects.

"(ICW work) is emotional. It takes a toll. And I know that firsthand. And that's why I do feel so proud to get to do the work that I do because I have been in their shoes. All of these tribal child welfare workers that I am able to interact with, I can say, 'I've been there. I know.' I don't just have to sympathize. I can emphasize with them that, 'We hear you, we see you, and we're here to support you,'" she said.

Lowden has enjoyed her role expanding to support some of the Capacity Building Center's other programs, including peer groups, leadership academies, virtual webinars and more.

"An eagle can see all around them, and what I strive to have is an eagle's view in the work that I do. I've done the micro work, the direct practice, and now I'm in more of that macro work of tribal child welfare. And I like being able to help people and just have conversations," she said.

### Practice to research

In fall 2021, Lowden decided to continue her education and enrolled



Kendra Lowden

in the Doctorate of Education program at Southern Nazarene University in Bethany, Oklahoma.

"It is very time-consuming," Lowden said. "You do have to sacrifice a lot, but I know that the education I'm receiving and how I'm going to be using that moving forward is going to benefit me and, I think, the tribal community."

She plans to use her degree to further her mission of spreading training to tribal child welfare departments and improving the curriculum. Lowden still believes support remains the best way to overcome obstacles for staff and families.

"I know that I could have used more support in the beginning of my career, and I had great people around me. But just having more resources and more training opportunities, all it does is help you. It helps you develop to be a stronger advocate for families, a stronger advocate in court, and just overall a stronger person," she said.

Lowden plans for her research to focus on transracial adoptions and cultural

training and its effect on parents' views on adopting a child of another race. She emphasized that while those looking to bring a child into their home "lead with their heart first," the potential effects of removing them from their culture warrants discussion during the process.

"We can't discount that adopting children from another culture does have dynamics that have to be addressed within families," Lowden said. "I'm wanting to really dig into, did the foster and adoptive families receive adequate training and support before they took placement? And then also after they've taken placement and even after adoption, if adoption has occurred."

Unlike many of her past clients, Lowden considers herself blessed for exposure to both her Potawatomi and Osage heritage and culture since birth. Her passion for her work in Indian Child Welfare stems from the desire for Native and Indigenous peoples to deepen their connections and pass them to the next generation.

"I'm a different person because of the career that I chose," she said. "While I'm sure I would have been happy with another career path, it's the person that I developed into, and at the root of it are the families and children that I've worked with over the past decade. They've made a difference in my life and a difference in my heart."

Lowden was named a recipient of a prestigious Cobell Scholarship in fall 2022. Her expected graduation date from Southern Nazarene University is fall 2024.

Find out more about the Butler Institute for Families at [socialwork.du.edu/butler](https://socialwork.du.edu/butler).

## Preventing teen dating violence

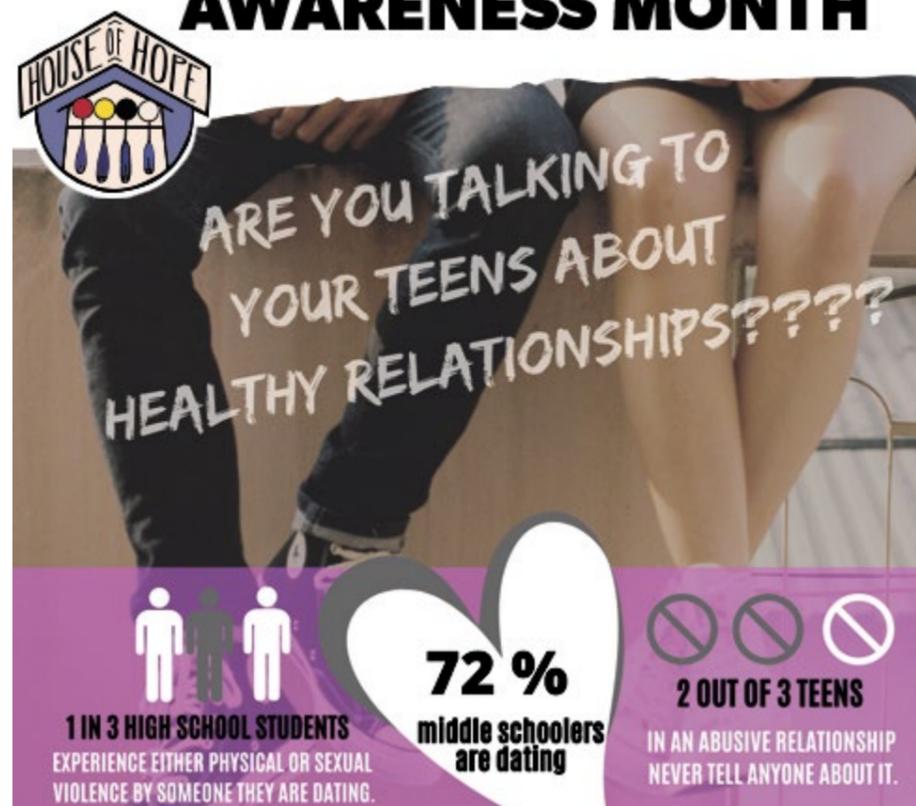
By Kayla Woody, CPN House of Hope DVPI Prevention Specialist

The teenage years can be an awkward time for an individual. There is much to learn about the world and themselves and many changes to face. Relationships and dating often do not come naturally but can improve with experience. These first-time relationships are the foundation for future relationships throughout adulthood.

When most people think of domestic violence, they see it as something that only happens to adults. However, statistics show that youth are more likely to experience violence in their romantic relationships than the rest of the population. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released a survey that looked at teen dating and found that 1 out of 11 girls and 1 out of 15 boys have experienced physical dating violence in the past year, and 1 out of 9 girls have experienced sexual dating violence.

Teen dating violence is similar to domestic violence because it is centered around power and control. One partner in the relationship is working to control the other partner through abusive behaviors. There are many different tactics used to maintain control, including isolation, belittling, guilting and manipulation. Many times, when these specific tactics are not providing the

### TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH



power and control that the abuser needs, they turn to physical and sexual abuse.

UNICEF states, "The single best predictor of children becoming either perpetrators or victims of domestic violence later in life is whether or

not they grow up in a home where there is domestic violence."

When a young person is not taught what healthy relationships look like in their home, these unhealthy signs or "red flags" may be difficult to see. These types of

behaviors are learned. When children are exposed to these types of behaviors in the home, they begin to see them as normal. They begin to believe this is what love is supposed to look like.

The best way to prevent abuse in teen dating and adult relationships is to provide information about healthy relationships and teach skills to create and maintain healthy relationships. The sooner this information can be provided to our youth, the better chance there is of correcting unhealthy behaviors. Skills that are necessary to create these healthy relationships are appropriately managing feelings and understanding how to communicate in a healthy way.

The CPN House of Hope offers many ways to provide education about healthy relationships and prevention techniques regarding domestic violence, sexual violence and stalking.

If you are interested in providing this type of education to your organization, classroom or group, please reach out to House of Hope to schedule. Find more information about prevention efforts at [cpnhouseofhope.com](https://cpnhouseofhope.com).

If you or someone you know is experiencing intimate partner violence, sexual assault or stalking and would like more information, call House of Hope at 405-275-3176 or visit us online at [facebook.com/cpnhouseofhope](https://facebook.com/cpnhouseofhope).

## Veterans report



Bozho  
(Hello),

Well, we have both feet in the New Year, 2023, now. The CPN Veterans Organization's Color Guard has a lot of parades, presenting the Colors at special events and doing U.S. Flag special education programs for the local schools lined up. We shall be very busy this year. My wife and I were so busy during the holiday season that we almost missed it when we blinked. But we have great plans for 2023 to make it better than the last. I also have a very special gift for the readers of my reports. It is a Christmas piece written by a young U.S. Marine who was serving overseas away from his home and loved ones as many of us have done during our military service. He requested that it be shared with everyone to remember these personnel on duty for their country in other lands... or just away from their homes. Read it and share, please.



THAT'S THE LAST TIME I LET YOU  
PICK THE WALL PAPER!

*'Twas the night before Christmas,  
He lived all alone,  
In a one-bedroom house made  
of plaster and stone.  
I had come down the chimney  
With presents to give,  
And to see just who  
In this home did live.  
I looked all about,  
A strange sight I did see.  
No tinsel, no presents,  
Not even a tree.  
No stocking by mantle,  
Just boots filled with sand.  
On the wall hung pictures  
Of far-distant lands.  
With medals and badges,  
Awards of all kinds,*

*A sober thought  
Came through my mind.  
For this house was different,  
It was dark and dreary.  
I found the home of a Soldier,  
Once I could see clearly.  
The Soldier lay sleeping,  
Silent, alone,  
Curled up on the floor  
In this one-bedroom home.  
The face was so gentle,  
The room in such disorder,  
Not how I pictured  
A United States Soldier.  
Was this the hero  
Of whom I'd just read?  
Curled up on poncho,  
The floor for a bed?*

*I realized the families  
That I saw this night,  
Owed their lives to these soldiers  
Who were willing to fight.  
Soon round the world,  
The children would play,  
And grown ups would celebrate  
A bright Christmas day  
Because of the soldiers,  
Like the one lying here.  
I couldn't help wonder,  
How many lay alone,  
On a cold Christmas Eve  
In a land far from home?  
The very thought  
Brought a tear to my eye,  
I dropped to my knees  
And started to cry.*

*The soldier awakened  
And I heard a rough voice,  
"Santa don't cry,  
This life is my choice;  
I fight for freedom.  
I don't ask for more.  
My life is my God,  
My country, my Corps."  
The soldier rolled over  
And drifted to sleep.  
I couldn't control it;  
I continued to weep.  
I kept watch for hours,  
So silent and still  
And both shivered  
From the cold night's chill.  
I didn't want to leave  
On that cold, dark night,  
This Guardian of Honor  
So willing to fight.  
Then the Soldier rolled over,  
With a voice soft and pure,  
Whispered, "Carry on Santa,  
It's Christmas Day, all is secure."  
One look at my watch,  
And I knew he was right.  
"Merry Christmas my friend,  
And to all a good night."*

Migwetch  
(Thank you)!

Remember: our monthly meeting of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization is the 4th Tuesday of each month, February 28 (unless otherwise notified due to weather or conflicting events) at 6 p.m. (or as soon as you can get there) in the North Reunion Hall on the CPN Powwow Grounds. All CPN Veterans and spouses and their families are welcome. Membership in the Veterans organization is not required; come and visit us and enjoy our socializing. For more information you can contact Daryl Talbot.

Daryl Talbot, Commander  
[daryl.talbot75@outlook.com](mailto:daryl.talbot75@outlook.com)  
405-275-1054

# Potawatomi Leadership Program

The six-week Potawatomi Leadership Program brings a group of 8-10 promising young Tribal members from around the world to Shawnee, Oklahoma, to learn about the government, culture and economic development of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. Where else can you get a crash course on the Citizen Potawatomi Nation? After your time in the PLP, you'll leave empowered with the knowledge and tools to be an engaged leader of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation.

While we plan to host the program in-person, we reserve the right to shift to a virtual offering should the pandemic severity require it.

TO LEARN MORE OR APPLY, VISIT [PLP.POTAWATOMI.ORG](http://PLP.POTAWATOMI.ORG)

*Application* CLOSES ON APRIL 1



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## Poet inspired to share culture, perspective

Sly Alley, the author of *Strong Medicine*, is happy for the chance to share his Potawatomi heritage and culture with his fans during poetry readings, putting an Indigenous spin and unique perspective on the artform.

“I tie in some history,” he said. “There’s a couple of poems related to myself or my grandparents. If you know your history, things that maybe didn’t necessarily happen to you but happened to someone else that ends up affecting you, that gives you a little bit more in the toolbox.”

Born in Oklahoma, Alley believes the events that shaped Native American history should be shared so that others can understand the Indigenous experience. Ancestors on both his mother’s and father’s sides survived forced removal from their traditional homelands. He is a descendant of the Melot and Laughlin families.

“Going through those changes in their lifetimes, how that affected them and how that leads us to here, is something that I think is worth noting — not just from me, but from anybody that’s willing to sit down and write something for other people to read,” he said.

Alley first developed an appreciation for the written word by visiting his local library with his mother.

“She encouraged me to read a lot,” he said. “If I had a question, I would go to the library and to see if I could find a book on it. As I got older, (I learned) I’m a lot better at expressing through writing than I am speaking. A lot of that comes from reading and seeing how different people throughout history expressed their thoughts.”

He enjoys the challenge of developing a poem on paper, from just an idea

to working through sometimes multiple drafts, saving parts he likes and arriving at a finished product.

“Most of (*Strong Medicine*) was stuff that just survived getting crumpled up, thrown away. Just about every one of those poems was, if not a first draft, maybe a second or third. But I liked something that worked and had to change something or add something (to finish). But the inspirations come through stories I read,” Alley said.

### **Strong Medicine**

Alley’s 2016 debut collection, *Strong Medicine*, won the 2017 Oklahoma Book Award for poetry. As he writes, he hopes his work will reach someone who holds an opposing viewpoint and help them consider another perspective.

“I don’t want to say I want to sway their thinking or convince them otherwise, but I want to give them an alternate viewpoint. My book was political and pretty blatantly states my feelings about Oklahoma government and national government for that time frame. (The book) gave a viewpoint that showed concern for where society and government were headed,” Alley said.

It was well-received by Goodreads, where it holds a 4.44 rating out of 5 stars, and many of the reviews mention Alley’s ability to bridge the gap between Native and non-Native readers.

“Funny, perceptive, deeply moving, insightful, his poetry takes us by surprise, stirs us in large and small ways, lays bare the hypocrisy of politicians and strips the power structure of its mealy-mouthed excuses for greed, bigotry and racism,” one review said.

*Strong Medicine* was published by Village Books Press, a small publisher in western Oklahoma. Currently difficult to find online, Alley recommends checking local libraries or online retailers like eBay or Amazon.

The offer for his first book came almost out of the blue. After a reading at an open mic, a book publisher approached him about working together. Alley only had enough finished poems for a portion of the planned book, and he almost immediately began writing.

“The first one was so unplanned. I was in college at the time, doing the creative writing thing and just going to open mics and stuff like that. I like being under pressure a little bit,” he said.

### **Newer works**

Alley has been featured in several anthologies. One book, *Level Land*, was published by Lamar University Press.



Poet Sly Alley speaks at a poetry reading. (Photo provided)

It is available through major retailers like Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

“(*Level Land*) was about travel along the I-35 corridor and seeing different places, sitting down and talking to people. It was about going somewhere different instead of just seeing the sights and going back to your hotel,” he said.

Alley has also contributed to anthologies produced by the Woody Guthrie Folk Festival. His work also appears in the *Creative Field Guide to Northeastern Oklahoma*, which highlights the 90-plus species both native and non-native to Northeastern Oklahoma and biodiversity. The publication also features original artwork, creative writing pieces and visual art activities. Alley has also contributed to a similar field guide produced by the Oklahoma Visual Arts Coalition that helps children identify plants and animals they encounter in nature.

Alley is currently working on his second book. As he completes new poems, he attends open mic events and poetry readings. He usually attends the monthly poetry reading at the Lunch Box, 217 E. Main St., in Shawnee, Oklahoma. The reading takes place on the third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m.

### **Contemporary poetry**

Alley said people sometimes think of poetry as something from the past, but it has a modern side as well, often reflecting current society and events. From Oklahomans like U.S. Poet Laureate Joy Harjo to young poets like Amanda Gorman, who was featured at the 2020 U.S. presidential inauguration, the artform is enjoying a higher profile.

“To see (poetry) finally play out on a on a bigger stage, it’s definitely helped raise the visibility. A lot of people will watch — people that probably normally wouldn’t expose

themselves or be exposed to poetry. It’s definitely on the upswing. It’s a good time to be a poet,” Alley said.

He is also enthusiastic about readers discovering new poets. Most poetry taught in middle and high schools today only focuses on a small group of poets, and he encourages people to explore more “than just the T.S. Eliots.”

### **Favorite poets**

Alley admires and recommends several contemporary poets and collections to readers. One of his favorite works is *This Earth on Turtle’s Back*, which features 52 poets from more than 35 different tribal nations, including Elizabeth Woody, Joy Harjo and Peter Blue Cloud, just to name a few.

Alley also appreciates the work of Kiowa novelist M. Scott Momaday, who is best known for his 1969 Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *House of Dawn*. Momaday’s 2020 poetry collection, *The Death of Sitting Bear*, received critical acclaim after its release.

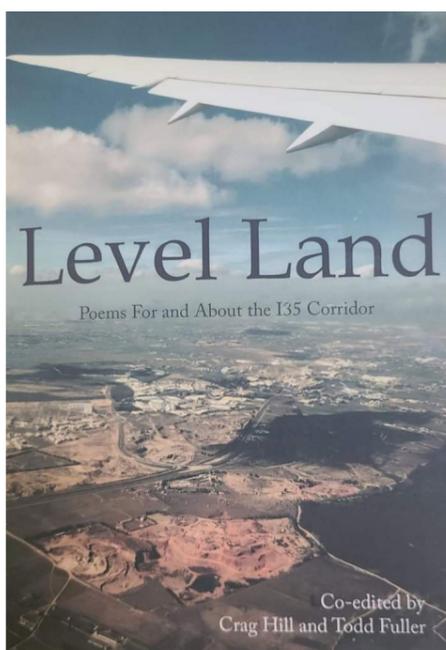
“There are a lot of people out there doing a lot of interesting things, especially on the page and the layout. Layli Long Soldier, an Oglala Lakota poet, in one of her books, she does some interesting things with the way the words are laid out on the page, the spacing and the scenery. And it gives you kind of a sense of rhythm if you’re just reading it without having a tempo or a time count,” Alley said.

The spotlight shining on contemporary Native American writers, such as Momaday and Joy Harjo, energizes him. He appreciates how television writers like Sterlin Harjo of *Reservation Dogs* are enjoying mainstream success for their work that highlights unseen parts of Native American life. Alley has often patiently answered countless questions about his culture, but that is happening less frequently, he said.

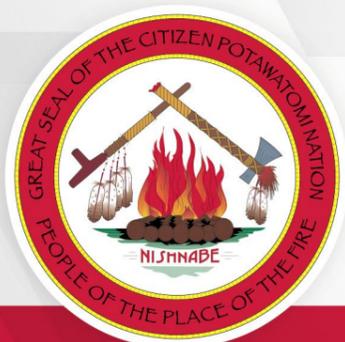
In the past, contemporary Native culture and humor were not part of the mainstream media story. If Native people were included, they were peripheral. Stereotypes, employed by non-Native creators, were frequently used. Now, Native humor and contemporary life, created by Native artists, are the focal points of the story.

“Now we don’t have to make stereotypes. We can talk about the way we grew up, and people are interested,” Alley said. “It really helps when Native people are involved in the production and creation of art.”

For more information, readers can connect with Alley via social media on Facebook. Find *Level Land* on Amazon or Barnes & Noble. ♡



Poet Sly Alley’s latest work appears in the poetry anthology *Level Land*. (Photo provided)



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# Potawatomi elder, language teacher walks on

A Potawatomi elder who was one of the few remaining native-speakers and helped lay the groundwork for current efforts to teach *Bodéwadmimwen* has walked on.

James “Jim” Thunder, Sr., of Pickerel, Wisconsin, walked on Dec. 2, 2022, at the age of 86. He was born May 25, 1936, in Soperton (Wabeno), Wisconsin, to Frank and Jennie (Mike) Thunder, according to an article in the Forest County Potawatomi’s *Potawatomi Traveling Times*.

“Thunder served the Forest County Potawatomi Community through his involvement in tribal government and in his dedication to teaching the Potawatomi language to younger generations,” it stated.

Thunder taught the Potawatomi language in Forest County, Wisconsin, and in Hannahville, Michigan, and was a language consultant for many Potawatomi bands across the U.S. He was the author of several language books and was instrumental in creating the Potawatomi Dictionary in 2014.

A U.S. Army veteran, Thunder served from 1955 to 1958. He was a Forest County tribal council member from 1974 to 1975, was tribal chairman in 1977 and led the tribe’s Constitution and By-Laws Committee.

“For many years, Jim Thunder and Billy Daniels were fixtures in our Potawatomi language conferences. These men were from a different generation. They both embodied the truest of characteristics of what it means to be a Potawatomi elder. Jim led by example. He was humble yet so full of wisdom. He had the kindest heart and the gentlest of spirits. He left us with such a wealth of Potawatomi language data. It’s now our turn to carry our ways and language forward,” wrote Justin Neely.

Neely, CPN language department director, was among the hundreds who shared their remembrances in an online memorial to Thunder.

## Thunder put people at ease

Neely first began learning Potawatomi as a teen when he received Jim Thunder’s language audio cassettes as a gift. In college, he continued to listen to the tapes, making time to study Potawatomi alongside his college assignments.

Neely first met Thunder at the 2000 Potawatomi Gathering in Forest County, Wisconsin, an encounter he still recalls more than 22 years later.

“The thing about Jim was he just had this way of making people feel comfortable,” Neely said. “He had a way of laughing and having a good time. And he made he made the experience of learning Potawatomi something that was fun and enjoyable.”

Neely believes that when language learners feel comfortable, they become even more motivated to learn *Bodéwadmimwen*.



From left, Ken Meshigaud, Jim Thunder and CPN Language Director Justin Neely at the 2018 Potawatomi Gathering in Kansas. (Photo provided)

“As a beginner in Potawatomi, you might feel like you weren’t saying it right. But Jim had a way of putting you at ease and at the same time instilling a sense of value in the importance of the language. He knew what it means to us as Potawatomi people, what it means to our traditions, our ceremonies, to even the essence of being Potawatomi, what language really means to us,” Neely said.

Thunder also used humor to engage students, teaching sentences about animals involved in various mishaps.

“(Jim) was always joking and laughing, and he always had a passion for it, and that passion came out in his teaching,” Neely said. “I never knew him not to be engaged and passionate about the language.”

## Optimism and generosity

Neely recalled the last time he spoke with Thunder, during the first Potawatomi Gathering to be held since the coronavirus pandemic began.

“I remember a brief conversation I had with him, and he just had this optimism about him, and he said, ‘There’s so many people here that want to learn the language. It’s great,’” Neely said.

He believes Thunder’s personality was perfect for teaching the Potawatomi language for so many years.

“You really have to have a great personality because it can be really easy to get disappointed. You start a class with 30, 40 people. After two or three weeks, maybe you get 20 people. After like a month, you might have 10 people. It’s easy to get discouraged but he still had an optimism about him,” Neely said.

“He had a passion for life, for the language, for the Potawatomi way of life. He cared a lot about Potawatomi people, and he gave of his time really so freely. He tried to help people out whenever he could.”

Neely recalled that Thunder invited Pokagon Band of Potawatomi members from Michigan to visit Forest County as his language apprentices. They spent four years with the Forest County Potawatomi learning the language.

“I can’t tell you how many times he was my go-to guy. If I had a question, or if I wanted to double check something, he was just a Facebook message away,” Neely said. “I was real gung-ho. Most of the guys, they’d see me come in and want to go the other direction — but not Jim. He’d sit there with you and answer all of your questions.”

## Setting an example

Thunder’s vast knowledge encompassed so many aspects of Potawatomi life that his passing reminded Neely of an old saying.

“They say when an elder passes, it’s like a library burns down. There’s a truth to that because each of these elders, they have their own unique experiences of the world around them. Not every fluent speaker is going to be an avid fisherman or avid hunter or know their medicinal plants or about different dances or cooking. Jim really was like an encyclopedia of knowledge,” he said.

Thunder’s legacy covers not only the years he spent teaching the language but also the documentation he created and shared with Potawatomi everywhere, no matter where they lived. He laid the foundation for future generations to learn Potawatomi.

“It’s a challenging language, but it’s something people definitely can do,” Neely said. “I think that’s the legacy that he left. He left us so many audio and video recordings and personal experiences that will carry on for many, many years. That’s the kind of impact I think each of us could only hope to have in our own lives.”

Neely treasures the way Thunder shared traditions as well.

“He really exemplified what it means to be a traditional Potawatomi elder and what it means to be a Potawatomi person. I definitely value those moments that I got a chance to talk with him or listen to him. You just never knew where those little gems of knowledge were going to come from,” Neely said.

## Carrying tradition forward

Neely said learning from Thunder’s audio cassette tapes are what spurred his language journey and he has continued to learn because of the influences of people like Jim Thunder. Like Thunder, Neely wants to create a space where students can thrive.

“We try to create a very positive environment when we’re working with language because we want people to have a good experience,” Neely said. “If you have a negative experience, then you just don’t have a desire to continue with it. But when you have those positive interactions and moments laughing and having a good time, you can feel comfortable in what you’re trying to accomplish.”

Neely said Thunder deeply understood the value of Potawatomi traditions and language.

“He had a serious side. He said his parents had told him that, if the language died, that the world would end. He never really elaborated on that fact. Maybe he didn’t know for certain because you just didn’t (question) your elders. You just accepted what they had to say. This had been passed down to them,” Neely said.

“Language is one of the essential parts of what makes you a unique people. When the U.S. government started terminating tribes, that was one of the characteristics they looked at — if you still had your own language, culture, ceremonies, traditions and things like that. Language is that piece that kind of ties it all together. It really is an essence of who we are as a people.”

While Thunder will be missed, Neely is hopeful Jim Thunder’s legacy will mean more Potawatomi are able to learn *Bodéwadmimwen*.

“(Jim) had such an impact across so many different groups of Potawatomi throughout the country and even into Canada,” Neely said. “He would do whatever he could to help his people. He lived the kind of life that we can only all hope to live and to follow in his footsteps and carry things forward. I remember he said, ‘We’re just here carrying this language, and now it’s time for that Seventh Fire, that seventh generation, to pick up those teachings and carry it forward into the next generation.’”

For more information about Potawatomi language, including an online Potawatomi dictionary and links to language videos, visit [potawatomiheritage.com/language](http://potawatomiheritage.com/language).

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## Leaders from Air Force Sustainment Center visit to spark collaboration

In January, several leaders from the Air Force Sustainment Center visited Citizen Potawatomi Nation's Eagle Aviary and toured the grounds of Iron Horse Industrial Park, a 700-acre plot of Native American trust land designed for manufacturing, storage and transportation of industrial goods with the added benefit of certification as a foreign trade zone.

CPN Chairman John "Rocky" Barrett and Vice-Chairman Linda Capps welcomed Air Force Sustainment Center staff, including Executive Director Dennis D'Angelo, Engineering and Technical Management Deputy Director Colonel Jeremey Thomas, Personnel Director Amy Noble and Office of Public Affairs Community Engagement Manager Angela Startz.

"I think the biggest takeaway today is that the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are both very interested in opening up some avenues of communication so that we might be able to go back and work on some things that would be good for both of us, both in education and sharing of some knowledge. We are getting to know a little bit more about how we can work together in the future," D'Angelo said.

While meeting with aviary staff Jennifer Randell and Bree Dunham, the visitors learned about their mission, their work to restore the bald eagle population and their cultural significance to the *Nishnabé* people as messengers.



*Chairman John "Rocky" Barrett and Vice-Chairman Linda Capps visit the CPN Eagle Aviary with Air Force Sustainment Center Executive Director Dennis D'Angelo.*

"What (the Tribe does) for not only for your Nation but also for the (United States) and saving those precious animals is really, really great," D'Angelo said.

CPN Economic Development Director Dr. Jim Collard showed the AFSC around the grounds of Iron Horse and Sovereign Pipe Technologies, LLC. The

site offers utilities including sewer, gas, electric and fiber optics as well as access to I-40 and Class 1 railroads. The significant economic development potential for the area showed signs of a fruitful partnership between CPN and the Air Force Sustainment Center.

"I was surprised at just all the diversity of functions. ... Just chatting with the folks here, I think we can build on some workforce development opportunities. Even some recruitment to help diversify our workforce — best practices. There's so much that I think we both can build upon," Noble said.

With a background in electrical engineering, Col. Thomas said "seeing the industrial, technical side of (Iron Horse) is pretty cool." He talked with CPN Department of Education Director Tesia Zientek about possible workforce collaborations, including internships, trainings and more to make the area more appealing for potential employees.

"I think it's really exciting to see the infrastructure (CPN is) putting in place with kind of the 'build it they will come' mentality. And I'm excited to see what comes out here

in the future because I think this will strengthen the Oklahoma City metro area community and will provide more technical jobs," Thomas said.

CPN and the AFSC are in close proximity, only a 30-minute drive from each other along I-40. D'Angelo looks forward to forging a trusting relationship between two government and economic entities that creates a legacy.

"What we do want is an opportunity to work together and partner together that's enduring and that will continue long after all of us are gone," he said.

"So, we appreciate you opening the door to allow us in to do that, to take that first step. And I think we are taking that first step, and we've got some great ideas."

Find the CPN Eagle Aviary online at [potawatomiheritage.com/aviary](http://potawatomiheritage.com/aviary).

Learn more about Iron Horse Industrial Park at [ironhorsecpn.com](http://ironhorsecpn.com).



*Air Force Sustainment Center personnel tour Iron Horse Industrial Park with CPN Economic Development Director Dr. Jim Collard (far left).*

## Embrace cultural history, heritage to improve heart health

**By Dakota LaClaire, Registered Nurse for Citizen Potawatomi Nation Health Services**

If you could take steps to increase your lifespan, would you do it?

Heart disease is one of the leading causes of death for Native Americans — but maintaining a healthy weight, managing blood pressure and quitting smoking are all ways to improve heart health and lengthen your life.

Another way to improve your heart health? Engage in traditional cultural activities.

A research team led by an Indigenous faculty member at the University of Missouri School of Medicine and two prominent Indigenous physicians at other institutions made an astonishing discovery: Engaging in cultural activities

can reduce the negative effects of stressors that cause heart disease.

In one study with a southwestern U.S. tribe, participants who learned tribal history, language and crafts lost more weight and had lower blood glucose levels than those engaged solely in mainstream exercise regimen and diet intervention.

Consider exploring your heritage. It's one tool in a heart-healthy toolbox — not a silver bullet. Hit the gym one day, then take a language class the next. Meditate in the morning to promote mindfulness, then visit a cultural heritage center or museum in the afternoon. This same approach can also apply to non-Native people as we all have ancestral backgrounds worth exploring.

As a registered nurse, I also encourage people to take advantage of their nearby



*Dakota LeClaire, R.N.*

health services. In Shawnee, local tribal members have access to multiple health clinics and a wellness center. However, these resources wouldn't be as impactful without the addition of customized programs and classes that educate about serious health concerns like diabetes and nutrition. Finding health professionals who can provide guidance and oversee your progress is a necessary step, increasing the likelihood you will continue to grow in your personal health journey.

Life is about balance and embracing all methods at our disposal to be happier and healthier, for ourselves and our families. This American Heart Month, I challenge everyone to adopt proactive routines to improve heart health.

Learn more about Citizen Potawatomi Nation Health Services at [cpn.news/health](http://cpn.news/health).

## Tribal Chairman – John “Rocky” Barrett



*Bozho nikan*  
(Hello friend),

With new offices being built for several different clinics and more changes coming in the next few years, Citizen Potawatomi Nation Health Services continues to improve and maintain its status as a well-respected health care system in the greater Oklahoma City metro. In 2021, CPNHS saw patients more than 34,500 times and filled over 280,000 prescriptions.

One of the main ways we maintain patient trust is through our quality of providers, and throughout the last decade, we have attracted some high-caliber

doctors and physicians assistants that put their patients first.

We have also had some leadership changes at CPNHS within the last year. Now, two Citizen Potawatomi women are at the helm. February 3 is National Women Physicians Day, and the two family providers who lead CPNHS deserve recognition for their hard work and ability to run a complex and comprehensive health care system.

Dr. Kassi Sexton is a family practitioner and became the CPNHS Chief Medical Officer last fall after serving as public health coordinator and medical professional director. She continues to see patients and enjoys face-to-face time with tribal members. She began working for the Tribe in August 2016, and during her time here, Dr. Sexton has helped lead the health care team through a wide variety of challenges presented by the coronavirus pandemic.

She holds her doctorate from the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences and her master's in public health from



*Dr. Kassi Sexton*

the University of Oklahoma. She is a descendant of the Vieux family and former recipient of the CPN Department of Education scholarship. In 2020, she was named one of *Oklahoma Magazine's* 40 Under 40 award recipients for her success in the medical field at a young age.

Dr. Megan Wilson started with CPNHS as a family medicine provider in August 2017 and became CPN's medical director last fall. Like Dr. Sexton, she continues to see patients while completing



*Dr. Megan Wilson*

her additional responsibilities to keep the staff and facilities running well. Dr. Wilson was instrumental in CPNHS's ability to offer telemedicine during the coronavirus pandemic.

Dr. Wilson knows the community well as she grew up in Choctaw, Oklahoma, near Tribal headquarters and comes from a family with a medical background. She attended medical school at the University of Oklahoma and came to work for CPNHS to serve her hometown and the

Tribe after completing her residency at the University of Knoxville in Tennessee.

These two Tribal members help Citizen Potawatomi Nation Health Services carry out its mission of providing high quality, evidence-based and culturally suitable medical care to our Tribal population and those of other Indigenous communities around us. Expanding health services continues to be a goal for the Nation, and under their leadership, we will work toward further improvement.

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



*Bozho*  
(Hello),

One of the benefits of working with a tribe is the abundance of government information that crosses your desk daily. It may include important rulings and policy, even from the Executive Office of the President. This information can be accessed on the internet, but notices help. I recently received one regarding the coronavirus pandemic:

Statement of Administration Policy, H.R. 382 — a bill to terminate the public health emergency declared with respect to COVID-19 (Rep. Guthrie R-KY, and 19 cosponsors), and H.J.Res. 7 — a joint resolution relating to a national emergency declared by the President on March 13, 2020 (Rep. Gosar, R-AZ, and 51 cosponsors).

I would not have known about this statement had it not been brought to my attention; however, I now realize reference to the content has been publicized for weeks.

The COVID-19 national emergency and public health emergency (PHE) were declared by the Trump administration in 2020. They are set to expire on March 1 and April 11, 2023, respectively. At present, the Biden administration plans to extend the emergency declarations to May 11 and end both on that date. This action would coincide with the administration's previous

commitments to give at least a 60-day notice prior to termination of the PHE.

Ending the emergency declarations on March 1 and April 11 might create wide-ranging chaos and uncertainty throughout the health care system. During the PHE, the Medicaid program has operated under special rules to provide extra funding to states to ensure that tens of millions of vulnerable Americans kept their Medicaid coverage during a global pandemic. In December, Congress enacted an orderly wind-down of these rules to ensure that patients did not unpredictably lose access to care and that state budgets don't face a radical cliff. The extra time to May 11 could ensure the wind-down. Disruption in services is the first concern of the original termination of the PHE.

The second concern of the public health emergency ending is the termination of the Title 42 policy affecting immigration

at the U.S.-Mexico border. Presently, Title 42 remains in place because of orders issued by the U.S. Supreme Court and a district court in Louisiana. Title 42 is often misunderstood and confusing to the American people. The program allows the U.S. Border Patrol and U.S. Customs and Border Protection to prohibit the entry of persons who potentially pose a health risk by being subject to previously-announced travel restrictions or by unlawfully entering the country to bypass health-screening measures. Its use was implemented under the Trump administration and has continued under the Biden administration to prohibit asylum seekers from lawfully petitioning for protection in the United States.

By the time you read this article, hopefully, there will be policies in place to address the wind-down of Title 42. There are studies that show heavy immigration into the United

States has substantial negative wage effects for Native American workers, but other studies show that it has a very small effect on the average wages of Native workers. I appreciate the fact that organizations or individuals conducting the studies are considering the livelihood of Indigenous peoples in their analyses.

The coming changes are interesting to me and important to the American people.

As always, I cherish serving as your Vice-Chairman.

*Migwetch*  
(Thank you).

My best,

Linda Capps  
*Segenakwe*  
(Black Bird Woman)  
Vice-Chairman  
405-275-3121 work  
405-650-1238 cell  
[lcapps@potawatomi.org](mailto:lcapps@potawatomi.org)



# SPRING SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE

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## District 1 – Alan Melot



*Bozho shishibéni*  
(Hello Citizen Potawatomi),

It has been a bit since I have written here in the *Hownikan*. The truth is, I have had little to say. I'm learning to speak less and listen more, and I've been spending time listening a lot recently.

Tragedy befell my family late last fall. My nephew, CPN member Dylan Cole, was killed in a motorcycle accident. Dylan is my sister Cheryl's son and has always been dear to me. He was 19 years old and had just married his best friend and sweetheart, Izzy, four weeks before his accident. Dylan was a peacemaker and was quickly becoming a man of integrity and purpose. Dylan was a hard worker and a good friend who was thoughtful and caring. He had a soft demeanor and was one of the most pleasant people I have ever met. Dylan was easy to be with, a quality in short supply in this world. My heart has been with Cheryl and Izzy and their families as they grieve this significant loss. Please keep them in your prayers as they find themselves having to adjust to life without him here.

Grief in these situations can be incredibly complex. We are often left with many questions, deep looks into our systems of belief and profound sorrow. My personal belief system views death as an entrance to our next life in which we shed mortality and receive the rewards of our life works and decisions — for better or for worse. I believe Dylan joined our family in Heaven when he walked on from this life. This belief mitigates my feeling of loss, but I am a degree or two away from being as close to him as others were. While I will miss him, this simply does not compare to the grief I know his family feels. This is often the case: grief increases in complexity and strength when it is less expected and closer to us. Grief typically comes in waves with unpredictable triggers and timing. If we can ride those waves like a surfer might, they become

slightly more manageable; in this way, we can maintain perspective and do what is important to us rather than being drowned and debilitated. Another critical component is to remain connected to those around you and lean into community as much as possible. The weight of grief is easier to bear if we can bear it together. Grief is difficult, but we are not without the wisdom to navigate it in a way that allows us to act on our values and honor the ones who have walked on.

I've decided to forego a spring meeting to put my full support behind the Trail of Death Caravan this summer. The Trail of Death Caravan will follow the path our ancestors took when they were forcibly removed from our homelands. Many District 1 citizens have been working hard on this event for over a year! I will share information

on how you can join us and participate, and I think you will be delighted with the way the caravan will offer different times and places to engage with each other and our history.

I've heard from some of you via email and Facebook as well as texts and phone calls, and it's been a pleasure to visit with each of you. Please reach out to me if you think I can help in any way or if you just want to chat!

I hope this year finds each of you growing and with *mno bmadzewen*, good health and life.

See you soon,

Alan Melot  
Legislator, District 1  
608 S. Sergeant  
Joplin, MO 64801  
417-312-3307  
[alan.melot@potawatomi.org](mailto:alan.melot@potawatomi.org)

## District 2 – Eva Marie Carney



*Bozho nikanek*  
(Hello friends),

### Winter Stories

It's our tradition to tell stories in the winter. Stories featuring *Nanaboozho* and *Wiske* should be told only in the winter when the earth and spirits are asleep. The PDF of the collection of winter stories I compiled in 2015 is available at [cpn.news/winterstories2015](http://cpn.news/winterstories2015).

In 2021, Legislator Dave Carney and I co-hosted a meeting at which Justin Neely, CPN's Language Director, entertained us with other great stories. The meeting recording is posted to YouTube – Justin can be heard starting at 22:05. Find it at [cpn.news/D28fallmeeting22](http://cpn.news/D28fallmeeting22).

And I just came upon this charming traditional story, accompanied by James Faubert's illustration included here. Please enjoy and share with your families during winter times.

### Turtle gets a Shell: An Anishinaabe Legend

*It was one of those days when Nanaboozho was in a strange mood. He had just awakened from a deep sleep that was disturbed by the noisy quarreling and scolding of the blue jays. He was a bit cranky; his sleep was disturbed and besides that, he was hungry. His first thought was to go down to the village and find something to eat.*

*Entering the village, he came across some men cooking fish. They had their camp located close to the water and Nanaboozho spied many fish cooking over a fire.*

*Now, being very hungry, he asked for something to eat. The men were happy to give him some but cautioned him that it was hot. Not heeding their warning, he quickly grabbed the fish and burned his hand. He ran to the lake to cool it off in the water. Still unsteady from his deep sleep, he tripped on a stone and fell on Mishekae (turtle) who was sunning on the beach.*

*At that time, Mishekae was not as we know her today. She had no shell and was comprised of soft skin and bone.*

**DISTRICT 2 MEETING**  
Saturday, February 11 / Noon-3pm CT

**LEGACY MUSEUM**  
400 N. Court St.  
Montgomery, AL 36104

**NATIONAL MEMORIAL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE**  
417 Caroline St.  
Montgomery, AL 36104

The memorial is informally known as the National Lynching Memorial. It commemorates the Black victims of lynching in the United States and is intended to focus on and acknowledge past racial terrorism and advocate for social justice in America. I've scheduled this for the long Presidents' Day weekend. We will start with lunch and visiting together at the Museum café and then tour the museum and memorial. All facilities are wheelchair accessible. This is a free event!

**RSVP BY FEBRUARY 3** to [evamariocarney@gmail.com](mailto:evamariocarney@gmail.com)  
CPN D2 Tribal Business (voicemail) 888-849-1484

*Turtle complained loudly to Nanaboozho to watch where he was going.*

*Now, Nanaboozho felt ashamed of his clumsiness and apologized to Mishekae. He wondered, "What can I do to make it up to her?" He wanted to do something to help his friend. "I'll have to sit and think it over," he thought as he followed the path back to his wigwam.*

*Sometime later, he returned to the beach and called for Mishekae. Turtle poked her head through the soft beach mud. Nanaboozho picked up two large shells from the shore and placed one on top of the other. He scooped up Mishekae and put her right in the middle, between the shells.*

*Nanaboozho took a deep breath and began. "You will never be injured like that again," he said slowly. "Whenever danger threatens," he continued, "you can pull your legs and head into the shell for protection."*

*Nanaboozho sat beside his friend on the beach and told Mishekae*

*his thoughts. "The shell itself is round like Mother Earth. It was a round hump which resembled her hills and mountains. It is divided into segments, like martyrizes that are a part of her, each different and yet connected by her."*

*Mishekae seemed very pleased and listened intently. "You have four legs, each representing the points of direction North, South, East and West," he said. "When the legs are all drawn in, all directions are lost."*

*"Your tail will show the many lands where the Anishnabek have been, and your head will point in the direction to follow. You will have advantages over the Anishnabek," he went on. "You will be able to live in the water as well as on land, and you will be in your own house at all times."*

*Mishekae approved of her new self and thanked Nanaboozho for his wisdom. Moving now in a thick shell, she pushed herself along the shore and disappeared into the water.*

*So, ever since that accident long ago, Turtle has been special to the Anishnabek.*

*To this day, she continues to grace Mother Earth, still proudly wearing those two shells.*

### February 11 meeting in Montgomery, Alabama

I am looking forward to seeing folks on February 11, starting at noon Central Time, followed by a tour of the Museum and Monument at The Legacy Museum and The National Memorial for Peace and Justice, in Montgomery, Alabama. All details for the meet-up are in the printed invitation. **Please know that you don't need to receive a postcard to attend — just email or call me to let me know you will be attending.**

*Migwetch* (thank you) for the honor of representing you.

Eva Marie Carney  
*Ojindiskwe* (Bluebird Woman) she/her/hers  
Legislator, District 2  
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Painting by James Faubert

## District 3 – Bob Whistler



*Bozho nikan*  
(Hello friend),

Well, after the horrible Christmas week weather and related flight cancellations, I pray that this month as well as the rest of the winter months treat all areas in the country with some better weather.

### Southwest flight cancellations

Just about 42 years ago, the airlines were deregulated, which brought us flights to many more destinations by a variety of carriers.

It has resulted in cheaper fares but also created some headaches that we just went through. Most of the airlines throughout the last 42 years found that they needed to adjust their operating system to quickly react to major cancellations of flights due to weather conditions. From what I have seen on the news, it appears that Southwest didn't modify their program enough to make the necessary adjustments to get the aircraft and crews realigned. I worked in this industry for over 40 years and understand that the pairings of crews and aircraft is very complicated. Hopefully, Southwest will modify their weather cancellation recovery program for the future. In the meantime, if your travel involved any of their cancellations, they are offering refunds for airfare and other expenses depending upon your situation. You may call 1-800-435-9792 or go online to [southwest.com/travel disruption](https://southwest.com/travel disruption) to request a refund.

### CCNT

On Feb. 11, 2023, at 11 a.m., the Cherokee Community of North Texas will hold a

chili cook off at the Urban Inter-Tribal Center of Texas in Dallas, which I plan to attend. Please call 214-563-6921 if you would like to attend. They are looking for new members and an opportunity to learn a little about them.

### Safety

Just a quick note. In my home and auto, I have the usual smoke alarms and fire extinguishers. I will be replacing all the smoke detectors because of their age. Most of us think about changing the batteries, but they have only a good lifetime of about 10 years. Fire extinguishers also need to have their pressure checked about every 10 years. So, I am suggesting that you look into these two areas and take any action that appears appropriate.

### Election code

On Dec. 14, 2022, a special legislative meeting was held to review and make changes

to our election code. Some of the new major changes are:

- You must be an enrolled member of our Nation to contribute to anyone's campaign to be an elected representative of our Tribe.
- Campaign contributions must be made by a natural person. No corporation, partnership, legal entity or organization may make any campaign contribution.
- No person may contribute more than \$5,000 in campaign contributions to any one candidate.
- The candidate must file a report on each and all campaign contributions that includes the contributor's full name, mailing address, phone number and email address.
- No anonymous campaign contributions are permitted.

I haven't included every change due to the space limitation of this month's article, but they can be found online at

[cpn.news/electioncode121422](https://cpn.news/electioncode121422). I suggest that if you wish to contribute to a candidate, you contact them to ensure that no part of the code is being violated. Candidates will refund ineligible contributions. If they knowingly accept any illegal contribution and use it for their election, they are subject to being disqualified from being elected and moreover are now ineligible for candidacy for any Tribal office in the future.

I hope the foregoing is helpful. I thank you and am proud of you allowing me to be your elected representative in District 3.

*Nagech*  
(Later),

Bob Whistler  
*Bmasbi* (He Soars)  
Legislator, District 3  
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## District 4 – Jon Boursaw



*Bozho*  
(Hello),

### Preparing for the 2023 Potawatomi Trail of Death caravan arrival in Kansas

Even though the caravan will not take place until late September, the planning and preparation for it have been underway for several months. I was asked to coordinate and plan the arrival of the caravan at its first stop in Kansas, which is at a trail marker in Heritage Park in Johnson County. I had previously been contacted by Susan

Mong, the Superintendent of Culture for Johnson County, who is interested in creating a permanent art exhibit at the trail marker that commemorates the caravan passing through Johnson County. As we discussed her idea further, it seemed like Susan and I shared the same idea about making a routine stop at the marker into a memorable event. She offered the idea of offering breakfast to the caravan participants and a welcome by local officials and dignitaries. She would then like to have time to visit with Tribal members about their thoughts and ideas for the art exhibit. All CPN members are invited to attend this event, which is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 23, 2023, at 9 a.m.

For those who may be interested, the caravan will depart Heritage Park at approximately 10:30 a.m. and continue onto its final stop at the site of the Sugar Creek Mission south of Osawatomic, where a mass will be held at 2:30 p.m. I will announce updates in my future articles.

### Progress on the Burnett Burial site:

The removal of the old chain link fencing and two trees, which encroached on the site, have been completed. I have just been mainly an observer of the progress. The work has been performed by my cousin, Joe Wulfkhule, and his grandson, Anthony. But I will take credit for one major accomplishment. After working with Joe in an unsuccessful attempt to remove the eight metal fence posts, we realized that we needed a skid loader to do the job. As I left the site, I passed a home that is on one of the routes into the site, and I thought I would stop and let the owner know what we were doing and that we would be using this route into the site. As it turned out, the owner was a very nice lady who said that was not a problem and was glad someone was finally cleaning up the site. I mentioned that the next thing we needed was a skid loader to remove the fence posts. She said her grandson had a skid loader. She took my card and later called me with his contact information. A week later, Joe and I met with her grandson and watched as he pulled up the eight poles in less than an hour. Next is the installation of the wrought iron fence, cleaning the monument and landscaping the site.

### Upcoming CPN Elders' Potlucks

The dates for the next two Elder Potlucks held in CPN Community Center in Rossville at noon are:

February 10 — Chicken pot pie. RSVP by Feb. 7.



*District 4 Legislator Jon Boursaw conducts a blessing ceremony at Mt. Mitchell.*

March 10 — Corned Beef and Cabbage. RSVP by March 7.

Come join us and bring your favorite side dish or dessert. If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Tracy or Brenda at 785-584-6171.

### Blessing Ceremony at Mt. Mitchell

A few weeks ago, I was asked to conduct a blessing ceremony of the prairie land that had been recently acquired by a group called the Prairie Scouts and added to the Mount Mitchell Heritage Park. The Park is located across the Kansas River, south of Wamego a few miles. Mount Mitchell means many things to many people. For American Indians, an ancient burial site is on top of the mound. For the Mitchell family, it is a place to honor an abolitionist grandfather and the Connecticut-Kansas Colony who helped make Kansas a state free from slavery. The area contains ruts and swales from an old trail that was used by the westernmost route of the Underground Railroad from 1857 to 1861. John Fremont surveyed

the area for routes that would become the first national road to California and Oregon. I was fully prepared to perform the smudging or blessing of the land with the smoke from the four gifts from the Creator burning in an abalone shell, but just before I lit the fire, I realized I was going to be standing in knee-deep prairie grass with 30 mph winds. Not a good idea. I ended up tossing the ingredients into the wind in the four directions. Those in attendance seemed pleased with this alternative. The following photo was posted on Facebook.

*Migwetch*  
(Thank you),

Jon Boursaw,  
*Wetase Mkoh* (Brave Bear)  
Representative, District 4  
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785-608-1982 cell  
[jon.boursaw@potawatomi.org](mailto:jon.boursaw@potawatomi.org)  
Office hours:  
9-11 a.m. Tuesdays  
3-5 p.m. Thursdays  
Other times: please call



*Repairs are underway at the Burnett Burial site.*

## District 5 – Gene Lambert



Bozho  
(Hello),

We made it through the holidays of Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years with a few scars, but we made it. Hopefully you were able to enjoy friends and families without drama and remember what these holidays are all about.

Too often we get so caught up in the ceremonies, we lose track of why we go through the process.

Those who are special in our lives create irreplaceable memories and moments. February is the month of love, and that's why we do it.

When we talk about love or say, "I love you," it creates a warmness, unlike any other word. What does it mean?

Valentine's Day was established to have us stop and think... What if these people, situations or things were not in our lives? Would it be as full? Would you feel as complete without them?

There are so many kinds of love. It is defined in the dictionary as 1) an intense feeling of deep affection, 2) a great interest and pleasure in something and 3) to like or enjoy something like dancing or football.

We can talk about love in a relationship or as separated and identified in Webster as EROS, erotic, passionate love; PHILIA, love of friends and equals; STORGE, love of parents for

children or vice versa; and AGAPE, love of mankind.

We will all experience different kinds of love throughout our lives. It is the one thing that can inspire or regenerate with the sound of a single word.

February was acknowledged to bring your attention to the people and things in your life that make it worth living.

How can you verbalize something so powerful that is known only from a feeling? You can't truly see it. You certainly can't touch it. Yet, you know when the feeling is there.

Sometimes it is in a hot cup of coffee in the morning. It is in a hug or the smallest of gestures as a pat. Yet, you are aware when that warm feeling of acceptance and adoration exists.

I have heard it said that the most important things in life you cannot see or touch. I believe that to be true.

The love of your Creator is the greatest of all love. It is unconditional love.

I used to tell my children, "You cannot do anything to make me not love you." You can anger me. You can temporarily put me at a distance. You can walk away. You will never lose my love. It will always be there.

The Creator loves us in the same way.

If in this moment you feel that his love has gone away, it never has and never will. You moved away from love.

I look around at all the beauty and "love" this earth has provided humans. The animal kingdom is reflected every day on social media as well as the love we have for our extended families. You can love your favorite meal or attire.

I will share a line I heard in the movie *Country Strong*. A mature woman was giving life

advice to a very young woman by saying, "Don't be afraid to fall in love. It's the only thing that matters in life. Fall in love with as many things as possible."

In the meantime, I love my people. Stay safe and love all that you do!

Take care of each other, and stay in touch.

Eunice Imogene Lambert  
Butterfly Woman  
Legislator, District 5  
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## District 8 – Dave Carney



Bohzo nikan  
(Hello friend),

I hope this edition of the *Hownikan* finds all in District 8 healthy and doing well.

I am writing this month's column on January 1 (New

Year's Day). I always enjoy the energy of the new year and watching people fall into the camp of "resolution makers" and those that embrace the status quo. Those of us that have been around more than a few decades (also known as Elders) know to go lightly on making grandiose plans for drastic lifestyle changes like extreme weight loss or massive body building gains. Sweeping behavior modifications are unlikely as well.

Additionally, making a huge improvement on the health of others is unlikely also. In my work life, I tried two attempts at this:

- One year, I offered my workers \$150 incentive to stop smoking for New Year's. I actually had people

start smoking so they could stop smoking and get the \$150! That was in the '90s, and \$150 was a lot more money back then.

- Ten years later, I still hadn't learned my lesson. On January 2, I stocked the office lunchroom with fresh fruit and muffins. The muffins disappeared in a few hours. The fruit rotted and was thrown out in a week or so. I guess you could say these employees might be part of the status quo camp when it comes to New Year's.

As it pertains to my role of legislator, the last quarter of 2022 was full of planning for the Fall Feast, responding to requests from District 8

members for information or help with existing programs, and legislative discussions/meetings. Of the legislative actions needing to take place, one of the most significant was working with my fellow legislators and our Tribal attorneys on an ordinance to amend the election code — primarily around campaign finance.

The highlights of the changes are that only a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation may make a campaign contribution; contributions cannot be made by a corporation. Campaign contributions are capped at \$5,000 per contributor — this includes the candidate themselves. Records of all contributions must be kept and reported to the

Nation's election committee at prescribed intervals.

The idea behind this reform is to preclude corporations from influencing our elections and/or having wealthy candidates attempt to "buy" an elected position or to decide an election question.

I am looking forward to seeing Potawatomi family in Oklahoma and at District meetings in 2023.

It is my honor to serve as your Legislator.

Dave Carney  
*Kagasghi* (Raven)  
Legislator, District 8  
520 Lilly Road, Building 1  
Olympia, WA 98506  
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## ELECTION COMMITTEE NOTICE APPENDIX FORM 4 – PUBLICATION OF CANDIDACY

The below individuals have lawfully filled an application declaring themselves to be a candidate for the 2023 election:

**David Joe Barrett**  
District 10 Legislator

**Charles Dwight Scott**  
District 10 Legislator Challenger

**Andrew Thomas Walters**  
District 11 Legislator

**Jay Allen Laughlin**  
District 11 Legislator Challenger

**Bobbi Lynn Bowden**  
District 13 Legislator

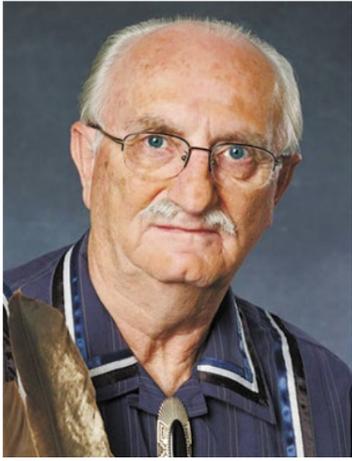
**A background check through NCIC has the following information listed:** No information requiring disclosure for the above named candidates.

**A background check through the Citizen Potawatomi Tribal Court has the following information listed:** No information requiring disclosure for the above named candidates.

**A background check of Tribal records limited to tribal employment history relating to personal behavior that has been addressed by formal disciplinary action for misconduct or dishonesty has the following information listed:** No information requiring disclosure for the above named candidates.

To view the full reports, visit [cpn.news/23candidacy](http://cpn.news/23candidacy)

## District 9 – Paul Wesselhöft



*Bozho nikan*  
(Hello friend),

### The Power of the written Word

It's unfortunate that early Native Americans, except the Mayan, did not convert their eloquent spoken languages into written languages. Had this occurred, we would have ancient Indian history, culture and customs, written and interpreted by primary sources — Native Americans. Instead we rely, for the most part, on white Western European “historians” to record North American Indian history. We know that he or she who records history shapes history.

Sequoyah invented the first Native American written language beginning in 1809. Adults and children were taught this new written language. The Cherokees took their written language to Oklahoma Territory, and there they used their written words in official documents and eventually in a published newspaper called *The Cherokee Phoenix*.

The power of the written word can be immortalized, especially when words are published and preserved in books and shelved in libraries. After the

passage of several thousand years, we still read the words of Enheduanna and Moses.

Even if your fingers are not as important and potent as the masters, when you put graphite or ink to paper, capture words electronically, or type and print them out, your very thoughts can and should endure in perpetuity.

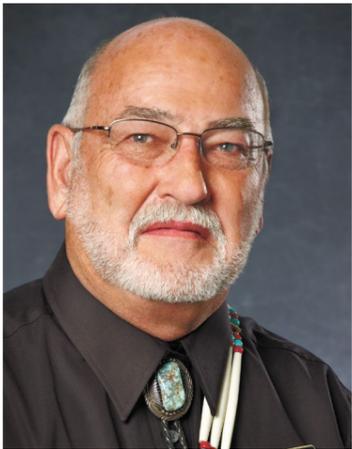
Perhaps that's why we write. We are creators in the image of our Creator. We are scribes. We are authors. We are written recorders of ideas, of reality and

fiction, of prose and poetry, of dreams and visions. Therefore, when we write we ought to revise and refine every word, sentence and paragraph. As we leave our words behind, they are our mark in time.

*Migwetch*  
(Thank you),

Paul Wesselhöft  
*Naganit* (Leader)  
Legislator, District 9  
[reppaul@gmail.com](mailto:reppaul@gmail.com)  
[pwesselhoft@potawatomi.org](mailto:pwesselhoft@potawatomi.org)

## District 10 – David Barrett



*Bozho*  
(Hello),

Finally, we got through with 2022. It had been a trying year to say the least. My wife and I started a remodeling project in March and finalized it in December. I didn't have to do all the work, but somehow, I got too involved with the process. Things got more complicated as time progressed — if you have ever removed popcorn texture or wallpaper, then you know what I am talking about.

Our veteran group had their Christmas dinner on Dec. 6, 2022. We really had a good turnout of around 55 guests. Vice-Chairman Capps dropped in and spread some Christmas cheer by passing out some gift cards that were appreciated right before Christmas.

As has been the tradition of over eight years, we had the *De'Wegen Kwek* (Ladies Drummers) to sing and drum a couple of songs for our guests.

My concern for starting a new year is about how we are addressing our “mistakes.” What

are we doing to correct the border, fentanyl and crime? Where is the accountability, and who is going to take responsibility? In researching, I found some interesting facts from Austrian entrepreneur Octavian Pilati ([octavianpilati.com/blog](http://octavianpilati.com/blog)) about how to learn from your mistakes posted on Jan. 16, 2022.

One thing he talked about is the “fight flight freeze” response. It is one of humanity's oldest neurological processes — something we have in common with any other species on the planet. In stressful situations, if seen as a threat, the FFF response kicks in. Therefore, it can stand in the way of learning from mistakes and might even be the culprit of reinforcing false behavior. Time needs to pass for the FFF response to disperse and for us to think about what happened. Moreover, if we do not take the time to pause and analyze a past mistake once we have calmed down, we might end up reinforcing the faulty behavior and then repeat it, making it worse.

Denial is a defense mechanism, which is supposed to protect us from feeling anxiety. Obviously, this is not good when you want to learn from mistakes and experiences. While we are still in denial, it is incredibly hard to work on it. Sadly, we see this too often in our society, partly due to the enormous stress that is put onto people to perform accordingly.

Are we in denial?

- You refuse to talk about the problem.



*The De'Wegen Kwek (Ladies Drummers) perform at the CPN Veterans Organization Christmas Party in December 2022.*

- You justify your behavior.
- You look to put blame on other people or outside factors.
- You keep promising to address the problem in the future.
- You avoid the problem or thinking about it.

Regret happens when you realize you made a mistake and become incredibly conscious of not making the mistake again. You stop short before there is a possibility of making a mistake. For example, if you overpaid for something and gave too much, you may always pull back and be afraid of overpaying again.

Here are some good quotes:

- “In life (1) some things are not your fault, but they are your responsibility. (2) Other things are not your responsibility, but they are your problem. (3) Many things are neither your responsibility nor your problem, but they make the world better. Take

action on all three.” — James Clear (speaker and author of *Atomic Habits*)

- “It doesn't matter whose fault it is that something is broken if it's your responsibility to fix it. Accepting responsibility is not an admission of guilt. Taking responsibility is recognition of the power that you seize when you stop blaming people.” — Adam Grant (author and organizational psychologist)

- “Some things are within our power, while others are not. Within our power are opinion, motivation, desire, aversion, and in a word, whatever is of our own doing; not within our power are our body, our property, reputation, office, and in a word, whatever is not of our own doing.” — Epictetus (Greek Stoic philosopher)

In a fixed mindset, you hold the firm belief that we are born as we are. So, you are born with certain talents and traits that are unchangeable. You are either good at something from

birth or simply bad. In a growth mindset, you believe that you can improve on things by working on them. Every failure is an opportunity to learn; every experience hones your skills.

It takes a lot of confidence to own your mistakes and then to go on and solve them. What often stands in our way is an inner voice that tells us we are not enough and that we are a failure.

It goes without saying that it is both a pleasure and an honor to serve you and our great Nation.

Thank a veteran, first responder or a person in blue. Tell at least 15 people that you love them for Valentine's Day.

*Migwetch*  
(Thank you),

David Barrett  
*Mnedobe* (Sits with Spirit)  
Legislator, District 10  
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## CITIZEN POTAWATOMI NATION TRIBAL ROLLS

The Tribal Rolls Department is responsible for determining eligibility for Tribal enrollment, burial insurance, and Tribal ID cards, and assists with genealogical and historical research. The department is also responsible for maintaining and updating the computer membership list, utilizing Tribal membership information for various types of census data, and creating the voter eligibility lists in the direction of the Secretary-Treasurer for the CPN Election Commission's Secretary-Treasurer.

**TO ENROLL OR UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION**

**Visit [portal.potawatomi.org](http://portal.potawatomi.org)**

## District 11 – Andrew Walters



*Bozho*  
(Hello),

Some people in life just aren't worth knowing. You know the ones. Always angry. Always gossiping. Always hateful, spiteful and mean. The folks you just steer away from. The kind that just sucks the air out of the room. I call them "toxic waste." For their spirits to enter your life tarnishes you. Takes away goodness. You never benefit from knowing them.

My sister isn't that way. Alma is her name. Alma Rose Gonzalez. She's probably one of the kindest, most wonderful people I have ever met. I love her dearly. She lights up a room with her smile. Her laugh is contagious. To be around her is a joy. She is an angel. Funny thing, she isn't my blood sister. She's Cora's sister. One of the seven kids in the family, born into a South Texas family, living in a two-room house. Maybe it was that adversity that made her understand that you can be however and whatever you want. You can be happy or sad. You can be in heaven or in hell. She chose the path of peace and happiness.

Although she isn't my blood, over the years, she has worked and wiggled her way into my heart. They always say you can't pick your family, but if I could, she'd be the one, no doubt. Alma is 58 years old. Young by some standards,

old by others, but there is a timelessness about her. One minute she is silly as a goose, the next a wise sage. She loves babies, laughter, family, good food and the Dallas Cowboys.

Alma, years ago, was diagnosed with diabetes. Slowly over the years, diabetes has taken her health, her vision and her leg. But Alma still smiled and laughed. Seemingly unaffected by her fate, she still glowed. Then her heart began having problems. A double bypass put her down for a while, but she still could light up a room and make you look forward to seeing her again. But then, a year ago, cancer came. Cancer is such a vicious beast. It takes you piece by piece. Inch by inch. Day by day.

She was diagnosed with cancer of the cervix. A highly curable condition, if caught early. But as fate would have it, hers was found to be stage 4. Alma now lays in a bed, waiting

to walk on. Unable to move. An angel who cannot fly. A fate as cruel as cruel can be.

I tell you this story not as a catharsis, nor in search of sympathy, but rather as a pleading. Some of us don't want to know bad things, pretending that not knowing will protect us in some way from injury. In Alma's case, ignorance of her condition provided no shield. Please get checked for diabetes. Please get checked for heart disease. We Native Americans have such a high incident of these maladies. Such simple tests can tell you the dangers and give you a chance, an opportunity, to live as long as you can. Get your Pap smears, your mammograms, your prostate exams, have those skin lesions checked. Have your kids vaccinated against the HPV virus.

It is not Alma's fault. It is the path she walked. It is her path alone, but each of

us will die a little. Sense the loss. Mourn her passing. The world will not be a better place because of her passing. The world will be a little sadder.

By the time you read this, Alma will have walked on. Left us in body, but not in spirit. Left us with good memories of times past. Please say a little prayer for her and keep her prayer in your heart. Honor her by keeping yourself safe and healthy with those that you love and who love you.

*Migwetch*  
(Thank you),

Andrew Walters  
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[nibwemko@gmail.com](mailto:nibwemko@gmail.com)



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**THE**  
*Hownikan*  
**PODCAST**






**Royce Coleman Cearley  
Greemore Family**

Royce (Chuck) Coleman Cearley passed away on Dec. 20, 2022, at the good age of 93. He was born Nov. 18, 1929, to Sim and Aretta Cearley and was the oldest of five children: Floreen, Clem, Dessa, and Dan. Chuck grew up around Pittsburg County, Oklahoma.

From 1951 to 1953, he served in the Korean conflict in ordinance and supply. Chuck married Mary Dingman in Bayard, New Mexico, in Sept. 1955. After they were married, they worked on a chicken ranch in New Mexico and as fire spotters on a tower for the forest service. They moved to Idaho in 1957 where Chuck worked for the U.S. Forest Service as a firefighter, crew boss, heavy equipment operator and a member of the engineering department. He worked for the Idaho Forest Service for 26 years.

Chuck was a devoted family man and an avid woodsman, hunter and fisherman. He will be remembered for his songs that were never sung the same way twice and his brave but gentle spirit.

He is survived by his wife of 67 years; two children, Royce Eugene and Carla (Cearley) Lamson; brother, Clem Cearley; sister, Dessa Cole; four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

**Elton Britt Tinney  
Scully Family**

Elton Britt Tinney of Wright City, Oklahoma, passed away Sunday, Aug. 28, 2022, at the age of 80. He was born to parents Jack Columbus and Josie (Raines) Tinney, on Thursday, Jan. 15, 1942.

Elton was born in Wright City, later moving to California where he attended Porterville High School. After graduating, he proudly served his country in the United States Marines. His career included working as a psychiatric tech at Porterville State Hospital. He worked as

a registered nurse at the state hospital, Sierra View District Hospital, in the emergency room in Porterville and as a standard compliance coordinator at the North Kern State Prison in Delano, California. After retirement, he eventually moved back to Wright City. He enjoyed hunting, fishing and spending time with his family and friends. He will be greatly missed by all that knew and loved him.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Jack and Josie Tinney; his wife, Brenda Gayle Tinney (2020) and wife, Mary JoAnn Tinney (2009); son, Steve Tinney; and his siblings, J.C. Tinney, Lucille Saba and Linda Criswell.

Elton leaves to cherish his memory his son and daughter-in-law, Ronald and Josie Staley, of Porterville, California; brother, Donald Tinney of Tulare, California; grandchildren, Ronald Joseph Staley, Amanda Barbee and Vickie Waggoner; great-grandchildren, Mason Barbee, Layla Barbee and Bjorn Waggoner; special friends, Roy and Sherry Jones; and numerous nieces, nephews, a host of family and friends.

**Eugene E. Burnett  
Burnett Family**

Our loving brother, Eugene (Gene) "Pigpen" E. Burnett, walked on Sept. 18, 2022, in his sleep. He was born in Wichita, Kansas, on April 26, 1952, to William G. Burnett and Phyllis I. Burnett.

His grandfather was Abram Burnett and his grandmother was Marie Jayne (Pappen).

Gene leaves behind his brothers Earl, David and Daniel; sisters, Karen, Janice, Kathy, Judy and Barb; nieces, Michelle, Suzie and Wendy; grandnieces, Nicole, Selena, Tiffany, Coco, Jenna, Trin and Madie; grandnephews, Kyle, Steven, Shawn, Kevin and his girlfriend, Lilly.

"Some would say he was a character."

Until we see you again. Hug mom for us, our angel. We love you, our brother.

**Marilyn S. Clark  
Navarre Family**

Marilyn S. Clark, age 82, of Shawnee, Oklahoma, passed from this life Wednesday, January 25, 2023, at her home.

She was born on September 13, 1940, in Harrah, Oklahoma, to Ray and Jessie (Navarre) Moore.

Marilyn was raised in Harrah and attended Harrah Public Schools where she graduated from Harrah High School. In high school, Marilyn and her sister Rosa were avid basketball players and met their future husbands, Don and Hub, while they were supposedly "scouting basketball teams" for their coach. Marilyn and Don were married in 1958 in Sapulpa, Oklahoma.

Marilyn earned her bachelor's degree and master's degree of education from Central State University.

She taught family living at COJAC, an extension of Tecumseh Public Schools, for 26 years until her retirement.

Marilyn was a proud member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. She loved living on the ranch and enjoyed looking for arrowheads and rattlesnake hunting.

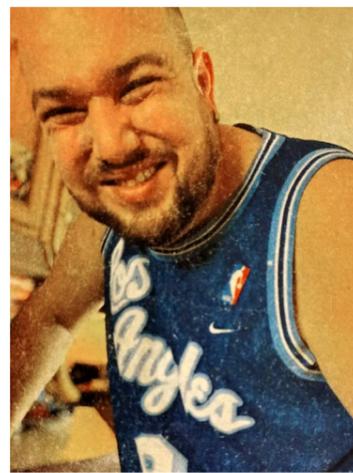
She was preceded in death by her son, Donnie Clark; grandson, Maverick Donovan Clark; parents, Ray and Jessie Moore; brothers, Eddie Moore and Harold "Ticky" Moore; sisters, Evelyn Hopcus and Julia Walden; and brothers-in-law, Roy Capps and Belvin Cantrell.

Those left to cherish her memory are her loving husband of 65 years, Don Clark of the home; daughter and son-in-law, Jan and Bob Cain of Shawnee, Oklahoma; son and daughter-in-law, Greg and Julianne Clark of Shawnee; grandchildren, Stephanie and Jason Hawk, Michael

Cain and Amanda, Madeline and Andrew Beach, and Carter and Chloe Clark; great-grandchildren, Memphis Beach and Krew Beach; sisters and brother-in-law, Rosa and Hub Reed of Shawnee, and Linda Capps of Shawnee; sister-in-law, Sue Moore; aunt, Ruby Whitaker; and many loving friends and extended family.

The family request that memorial contributions be made to Macomb School Lunch Program in lieu of flowers.

A service was held on Saturday, Jan. 28, 2023, at Cooper Funeral Home Chapel with Reverend Tony Peak officiating. Burial followed at Resthaven Memorial Park in Shawnee.

**Tyler George Chesney  
Bourassa Family**

Tyler "T" George Chesney walked on May 13, 2021. He was born Feb. 28, 1988, in Long Beach, California, to Diana and George Chesney. The following year, Diana and George were blessed with his first brother and longtime best friend, Justin C. De Baca. Five years later, Diana, Tyler, and Justin moved to Pecos, New Mexico, where Tyler grew up with his family. Diana was blessed with another son, Cameron Tallman. Tyler later had two more siblings come into this world, brother, Cole Steven Chesney and sister, Caitlin Chesney, born to George and Melissa Lee Chesney. Tyler "T" was the oldest and the leader of his young brothers and sisters.

In the 1990s and 2000s, Tyler and Justin would return to California to visit their dad, Melissa, Cole and Caitlin. Together, Tyler and his siblings really enjoyed Knott's Berry Farm, Hollywood, the beach, Disneyland, eating, joking, laughing, swimming in the pool together, watching TV, and most of all, enjoyed family time together. They also enjoyed visiting the home of their grandparents, Andrew and Viva Palumbo, where they

would also visit with Tyler's aunts, Scarlette Almero and Sabrina Rodia; his uncles, Moe McIntyre and Mario Almero; and cousins, Brianna McIntyre, Leonard Almero and Marianne Almero.

Later, George and Jennifer Nguyen adopted Tom Bui, Jennifer's son from Vietnam, into the family. Tyler still kept his role as the oldest and the leader of his siblings and accepted Tom into the family as his own blood. Tyler loved his family in California yet continued to grow up and go to school in small-town Pecos. He often spent time with his grandmother, Bernie; his other grandmother, Gloria; and his grandfather, Daniel C. De Baca, who is still living at 92 years old.

Later on, Tyler moved to Santa Fe and started his own family and was blessed with four children, Khalila, Ava, Tobie and Faith Chesney. Justin and his wife, Samantha Garcia, also blessed Tyler with two nieces, Harmony and Everly.

Tyler and Justin were always inseparable growing up, and this did not change when they each had a family. They loved doing things together with their families and having big get-togethers just as they did when they spent time as kids in California. Tyler was always a family man and also enjoyed quiet time with his children, especially his oldest daughter, Khalila.

Tyler loved to get his parents, siblings, and all his children and nieces and nephews together to go out and have fun. Bowling was one of Tyler's favorite things to do with his family. Once, "T" bowled a perfect turkey on the last three frames and won. The family celebrated together and tried to get a re-match. He won two out of three that day, beating his brother Justin and dad George, and the third game was a tie. All three had a competitive nature, and Tyler always strived to do the best, especially with bowling and baseball. Tyler and Justin growing up often fought because of their competitive nature, but no matter what, they stayed best friends and were always in one another's corner.

Tyler loved church and always enjoyed a big meal after with all his family. Tyler is remembered by his friends and family members as being a loving and kind individual who treasured his family more than anything else. He leaves behind a legacy that will never be forgotten. We love you and miss you, "T," and we know we'll meet again someday.

**Submitting  
obituaries**

To submit an obituary, please send a word document with **no more than 300 words**, a 300dpi photo and a contact phone number to

[hownikan@potawatomi.org](mailto:hownikan@potawatomi.org)

**CPN burial assistance through Tribal Rolls**

The \$2,000 CPN Burial Assistance Fund is automatically available to all enrolled CPN members. You may fill out a burial assistance fund form if you would like for us to keep it on file in case of any change in resolutions.

**Please note:** Once a CPN tribal member has passed, the Tribal Rolls office must be notified in order for CPN to provide burial funding. Information and instructions for the burial process will be sent to the next of kin and will be discussed then.

For more information, please call Tribal Rolls at 405-878-5835 or email [tribalrolls@potawatomi.org](mailto:tribalrolls@potawatomi.org).