

# HOWNIIKAN

Nmébné Gizes | April 2026

Important  
election info  
inside!



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# CHC receives National Medal for Museum and Library Service

CPN's Cultural Heritage Center is the recipient of the Institute of Museum and Library Services 2025 National Medal for Museum and Library Service.

The award, first given out in 1994, recognizes institutions for "significant and exceptional contributions to their communities." For 2025, five libraries and five museums, including the CHC, were honored across the country. CHC Director Blake Norton said CPN is the fourth Indigenous community to have received the medal since its inception.

"It's a very prestigious award," Norton said. "It's the highest recognition that an institution can receive in the United States. It is a very big deal for us, and I'm extremely grateful. I'm so proud of what we've been able to achieve, CHC staff, past and present, as well as our collaborative departments throughout CPN. We are very appreciative of leadership and administration for their unwavering support and confidence."

To be considered for the award, an institution must first be nominated, and from there, Norton said it is a rigorous process that takes about a year and a half from nomination to the announcement of the awards. Institutions must advance through three stages of peer review, where professionals and specialists from all over the country evaluate and determine the final nominees.

Norton said even to be nominated and advance the first review stage was a big deal.

Once in the running, they had to go through a multi-step evaluation that required an intensive screening process, including letters of support from the community, CPN leadership and even congressional leadership.

Institutions must also submit photos of their facilities. Fortunately, Norton said, the CHC's website includes a virtual tour that enhanced visibility to reviewers.



"Visitors can virtually tour all aspects of the museum," he said. "It's kind of funny that we've won awards for our website and online programs, and those same resources were used to fulfill and improve our evaluation for the National Medal."

Along with the medal, the CHC also received a financial award that Norton said they will be able to use to apply to programming such as language education and community resource development.

The CHC has yet to receive the actual medal. Typically, Norton said, an award ceremony is held at the White House, where the first lady presents the medals. However, he said this year it will be in a more public space, and presenting officials have yet to be announced.

And while Norton said it is nice to be recognized and celebrated by peers on a national level, the real benefits of receiving awards like this one are the resulting impact.

"The most valuable part of being recognized is the exposure and showing the world what a community can do when working together to achieve a common good. This highlights the power other Indigenous communities have to develop cultural, communal and educational spaces for their people. We are often asked by other tribal communities to assist in their development of institutional and educational programs and facilities. It's an awesome way to pay it forward," Norton said.

For more information about the award, go to [cpn.news/nationalmedal](https://cpn.news/nationalmedal).

See more about the CHC at [potawatomiheritage.com](https://potawatomiheritage.com). 🔥

## Interested in going to the Potawatomi Gathering?

Contact our travel department at [travel@potawatomi.org](mailto:travel@potawatomi.org) or 405-275-3121

Render of the new administration building



## Construction projects near completion as new ones begin

CPN continues to expand as multiple construction projects move forward, bringing new opportunities to the community.

“The goal is to create a place where people can live, work and enjoy a variety of amenities without leaving the area,” said David Oman, director of the Planning, Design and Engineering Department.

### Administration building

The new administration building is almost ready for move-in.

“The admin building is expected to open before this year’s Family Reunion Festival,” said Jackie Gamble, director of construction.

The four-story building spans 89,000 square feet and includes 158 single-room offices. Each floor features a conference room, common area and access to two elevators. The Tribal Court, located on the ground level and attached to the four-story building, provides space for judges, clerks, juries and court proceedings.

“The west entry is supported by seven pillars and framed overhead with an arrow fletching

pattern that carries through the lobby and up the north and south vertical window framing, accented at night by illumination,” said Oman.

“It’s beautiful inside and out and is something the Nation has needed for a long time,” Gamble said. “This building will serve the Nation for decades to come.”

The new administration building is partially funded by American Rescue Plan Act allocations: the Fiscal Recovery Fund and the Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund. Federal Highway Administration funds and Tribal funds are also utilized.

### Softball championship field

Softball fields 5-10 were completed in 2025, and crews have begun work on a new championship field. With a capacity of 4,100, the stand-alone field will be the second largest in the state. It is scheduled for completion in early 2027, in time for softball season. The stadium will feature a 24-by-32 digital scoreboard and will also be designed to host events beyond softball.

“All fields were designed with Division I guidelines in mind,” said Oman.

Render of the softball championship field



The softball championship field is funded solely by Tribal funds.

### Old casino redevelopment

Crews plan to repurpose the old FireLake Casino by taking it down to its structural frame. At 43,000 square feet, the new facility will include a centrally-located food court with four food stations and indoor and outdoor seating for more than 400 people. The west end of the building will have 12 batting cages and indoor turf flooring, designed to support softball tournaments. The east end will be reserved for future use.

The redevelopment of the old casino is also funded solely by Tribal funds.

### Child development center

Plans are underway to expand the Child Development Center. The current administration building will be removed to make way for a new space that will be connected to the existing center. The expanded facility is expected to serve more than 600 children, nearly tripling the center's current capacity. It will also include classrooms by age group, separate outdoor playgrounds and a splash pad.

### Future projects

In addition to current construction, several projects are in development. Construction of the new FireLake Discount Foods in Asher, Oklahoma, is expected to begin soon, with a projected opening in 2028. Plans are also underway for housing and other developments in Choctaw, Oklahoma, as well as behind FireLake Hotel and Casino in Shawnee, Oklahoma.

“Crossland Construction has done a really good job on all projects they’ve done for us,” Gamble said. “They did the new hotel, casino and administration building and are working on the softball fields, so they’ve been really great to work with.”

The construction department and the planning, design and engineering department work closely with in-house teams, including the batch plant, mechanical, electrical and rural water teams on these construction projects.

“Working with in-house teams is a huge deal to the Nation in terms of saving money. We all work well together,” Gamble said.

These projects are expanding the Tribe’s benefits and services while also encouraging economic development. 🔥

Render of the proposed food court and batting cage facility



# Vice-Chairman election candidates Q&A

Editor's note: Responses from candidates appear exactly as they were submitted without editing for content or style.



## Jason Smalley

### What experiences do you have that can be applied to this position with the Tribe?

My experience combines service, public leadership, and private-sector management. The United States Marine Corps shaped my discipline, accountability, and mission-first approach. I was elected to the Oklahoma House and later the Oklahoma Senate, representing

nearly 70,000 constituents and working across party lines to deliver results. In those roles I learned budgeting, policy, oversight, and how to listen to people with different needs. Professionally, I've led teams and built partnerships in the private sector, where performance, transparency, and follow-through matter every day. That mix prepares me to lead and manage effectively for the Tribe, and to honor sovereignty with steady judgment.

**What do you hope to accomplish during your time in office if elected?** If elected, I want to build on the momentum and success the Nation has already achieved. My focus will be setting clear, measurable goals for every department, supported by mission statements and performance standards that keep our work citizen-centered and results-driven. When we raise expectations and strengthen accountability, we expand opportunities for everyone—because when the Nation grows stronger, our citizens benefit. I also want to prioritize education for both youth and adults. Education is the most powerful tool we can provide to help someone shape their future and change their life. Finally, I will work to streamline government operations, reduce inefficiencies, and partner with our elected officials to strengthen policies and services for citizens in every district.

**Describe an effective Tribal leader.** An effective Tribal leader listens first—patiently and with both compassion and discernment. Leadership often requires hard decisions, but those decisions should be guided by what is best for the Nation as a whole, not personal interests or politics. An effective leader takes ownership: if there is a problem, it is our problem, and I am responsible for helping solve it. That mindset builds accountability and keeps the focus on solutions rather than blame. Strong leaders serve the people and the mission, remaining accessible, respectful, and consistent. They communicate clearly, set expectations, and follow through. They also handle disagreement with tact, seeking common ground while standing firm on core values, sovereignty, and the long-term well-being of all citizens.

**How do you plan to engage Tribal citizens?** I will engage Tribal citizens through consistent communication and regular face-to-face conversations. I plan to continue monthly updates through the *Hownikan* so citizens can track priorities, progress, and decisions. Locally, I want to host a monthly "Coffee & Conversation" for citizens and employees, built around a short list of topics and an open Q&A. I will also respectfully request to participate in legislative meetings—virtually or in person—so I can listen, share updates, and stay aligned with district needs. Just as important, I will visit every department to meet employees and see first-hand how programs are serving citizens. I want honest feedback on what is working, what isn't, and how we can improve. Open communication leads to better solutions.



## Martha Kimberly Nootbaar

### What experiences do you have that can be applied to this position with the Tribe?

I am very organized. I have written manuals, reorganized and computerized file rooms, gathered information used to help companies become more effective and efficient with Toyota, Arthur

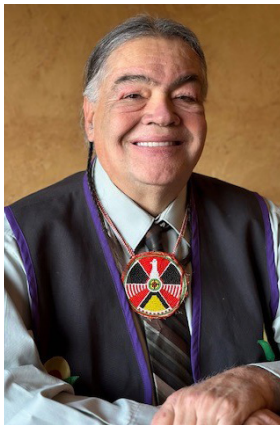
Young and General Dynamics to mention a few. I have planned, managed committees, and implemented camps and competitions for local and international ice skaters, band organizations, bible school programs and taught Sunday School classes. Throughout all these experiences there are specific skills that would in one way or another directly apply to being Vice Chairman.

**What do you hope to accomplish during your time in office if elected?** I would like to create and implement nutrition programs to educate our members. I will listen to our fellow tribal citizens and help when and where I can. Our Cultural Heritage Center has wonderful programs that have been recorded. I would like to see them become accessible online. We also have wonderful health facilities here in Shawnee and there are fellow citizens that are not in our area that may have access to health facilities wherever they live and don't know what benefits they have. I would like to create a comprehensive list of those facilities. And much more!

**Describe an effective Tribal leader.** An effective Tribal leader is one who listens. Listens to fellow tribal citizens, to ancestors, to others in leadership positions and discerns the best course of action. She would put

their needs above her own interests. They would have unifying skills. Leaders should bring people together when there are differing opinions and ideas by finding common ground. A leader encourages others and does not disparage those that disagree with her. She would be trustworthy, compassionate and a person of integrity.

**How do you plan to engage Tribal citizens?** I would encourage our citizens to get involved and participate where they can. Voting in all tribal elections is a good way to participate. Requests for the absentee ballot have just been sent out. That is an easy way to make your voice heard. Each legislative district should have quarterly meetings. I know several do. We need to encourage every district to hold meetings. The event calendars are difficult to locate, and either they or the instructions for accessing them should be made available. Involvement is the key! Knowledge is power and power should be in the hands of the people.



### Charles Scott

**What experiences do you have that can be applied to this position with the Tribe?** I have spent most of my life serving others. I've served in both the U.S. Army and U.S. Navy, I've worked in mills and factories as a Union Organizer. From serving and protecting Soldier, Sailors to protecting workers rights. I'm grounded in my abilities to lead or follow. Our Constitution

allows the Chairman to assign the duties of Vice Chairman, I can follow orders and will assist wherever I am needed or I can lead Legislative Committees or our workforce.

**What do you hope to accomplish during your time in office if elected?** I will be the bridge as we change from one generation to the younger generation. As we replace outgoing Elected Leaders, I will assist the new folks and guide them to accomplish their political goals. I will also advocate for increasing benefits to our out of state members, advocate for changing the hours of operation for our health clinics to include evening and weekend services. Also I will work with our Chairman to bring in both a pediatrician and OBGYN Physician. Additionally I would really like to see our tribe start an Elder Assistance program for both In State and Out of State Elders.

**Describe an effective Tribal leader.** Effective Leaders set goals and accomplish them. I can work up the chain of command as well as down the chain of command. Good Leaders listen, form a plan and get problems solved. I have always lived by the old military saying, "Lead, Follow or get out of the way." I can make good leaders great and I can make not so good leaders better.

**How do you plan to engage Tribal citizens?** My plan is to use technology and Social media. Weekly, Bi Weekly and monthly town hall style meetings for each district as well as Oklahoman. You have my phone number, 918-650-8631, I will always be available and my door open.

*Migwetch*, I hope to earn your vote, if you have questions, concerns or comments, call, text, find me on FB "Charles Dwight Scott" or "Charles Scott for CPN Vice Chairman". 🔥

## Legislative election candidates Q&A

Editor's note: Responses from candidates appear exactly as they were submitted without editing for content or style.

### District 5



### Lorrie Underwood

**What experiences do you have that can be applied to this position with the Tribe?** I have over 15 years experience as a Technical Trainer of software programs before I purchased and successfully managed a manufacturing business from 2014 to 2023. I bring a wide variety of transferable skills to the table. I am experienced at interacting

with people and understanding their challenges, then helping them achieve solutions. I have extensive knowledge of planning and managing events, understanding budgets, research, and organizing and coordinating work flows. I genuinely like people, which leads to my

greatest gift; the ability to really lean in and listen to people, hear their needs, and assist in resolutions.

**What do you hope to accomplish during your time in office if elected?**

- Promote policies that lead to transparent and accountable leadership. Clear communication establishes trust regarding leadership decisions.
- Identify and create opportunities for citizens where education and participation can help each one comfortably and confidently embrace their identity as a Citizen Potawatomi person.
- Engage more completely with citizens across District 5. Increased connection and involvement opportunities can diminish apathy and increase voter turnout.
- Advocate for citizen input and participation in ways such as mentorship and councils.

Continued on the next page

- Provide ample notice when scheduling events and classes. Advanced notice allows for planning, and results in greater participation.

**Describe an effective Tribal leader.** An effective Tribal leader must focus on being the balance between tradition and culture, and organizational operations and progress. This is a very difficult position and requires a person who can set aside his or her ego and their personal measures and ideas of success, and really listen and hear what makes the whole citizen population feel like we are successful as a Nation. What good is enterprise growth when it is not felt at a personal level? This is the most frequent angst that I personally hear at the ground level from other Citizen Potawatomi people.

**How do you plan to engage Tribal citizens?** We live in a time where we are blessed with a variety of ways we can communicate and engage with each other. I actively use many communication methods currently such as the District 5 website, District 5 facebook page, text, email, and my personal favorite: face to face. If elected I will also schedule regular district meetings, district-specific meetups during larger events, and meet in person when needed. People crave human connection and I am blessed to be comfortable using any and all means of communication to engage with Tribal citizens in their comfort zone.



### Ryan Hubble

**What experiences do you have that can be applied to this position with the Tribe?** The purpose of the legislative branch is to appropriate tribal funds, create tribal employment positions and contract on behalf of the tribe. In my career, I've worked with firms that range in size from small to billion-dollar companies. Within each of these companies, it's important that they stay on

budget and appropriate funds correctly. I've been involved in these processes and feel like I could contribute to the Tribe. I have a financial background that helps me understand what is critical to companies and what is unnecessary. As I've said before, my goal is to see the Tribe grow and do it in a fiscally responsible way, which will enable us to have the multiple programs our Tribe has and our people need.

**What do you hope to accomplish during your time in office if elected?** My goal is two-fold if I'm elected. I want to make sure our tribe is set up for success when it comes to financial stability. I love the various programs (health, employment, scholarship, etc.) our Tribe offers and want to see that continue. My next goal is to make sure the members of my district feel a closeness to the Tribe and understand history, culture, and the various programs that are available to them.

**Describe an effective Tribal leader.** An effective tribal leader is someone that can listen to the needs of their constituents and ensure solutions are put into effect which maintain the overall goals of the tribe and appropriately address the voiced needs.

**How do you plan to engage Tribal citizens?** The first step would be to reach out to the individuals in our district and gain an understanding of their interests and needs. After that, I would plan regular gatherings/district meetings throughout district 5. In those gatherings, I think it's important to bring activities and learnings the tribe has at the annual family reunion festival each year to our meetings. As I've mentioned before, I have 4 young kids, and I think it's important to have district meetings that incorporate the whole family.



### James Newberry

**What experiences do you have that can be applied to this position with the Tribe?**

My time in nonprofit/volunteer management always had me thinking "outside the box" for financing, creative ways to recruit volunteers, etc. I'll bring that same open mindedness to the position. I spent time at the NM State Capital's legislative sessions during my

time as Director Search and Rescue. I experienced real government in action. The good and bad. I hope I can bring the good I learned to the position.

The Army taught me how to keep my mouth shut and my eyes and ears open.

**What do you hope to accomplish during your time in office if elected?** 1st- My wish is to bring all the cousins from district 5 together for fun, fellowship and a connection to the tribe. 2nd- I want to do my part to see that the tribe continues on the economic path it's on. The current leadership has done a wonderful job over the last bunch of years and I will do what I can to maintain their forward thinking and continue the growth and prosperity that we have and will achieve in the future.

**Describe an effective Tribal leader.** Every good leader always keeps their decisions based on what's good for the many and not just the few. Never ask's 'What's in it for me?'. Always listens. Always look's for a better way. A good leader is willing to be the first one to arrive and the last to leave. The last one to eat after everyone else is taken care of. "Every wolfpack is only as fast as the leader!"

**How do you plan to engage Tribal citizens?** I plan to engage the cousins with information in the Hownikan, Zoom type evening meetings, email, text, mailing from the tribe, Ham Radio, carrier pigeon, smoke signals. Whatever it takes! And of course. District meetings with culturally significant activities, classes ( beadwork, moccasin, regalia, language, etc), tours, native drums, native dancing, even modern music and dancing if we have any musicians in the family. I'd like to see all day affairs from sunrise past sunset. Not just a few hours of listening to a legislator blather on and on and a free lunch. :) I'm open to any ideas. Let me know. I also plan on reaching out to legislators from the adjoining districts to see if we can get some awesome POTAWATOMI parties happening!

# District 7



**Katie Bowie**  
Challenger

**What experiences do you have that can be applied to this position with the tribe?** I have served on several committees in my local community & I am familiar with how a lot of tribal politics work and function. I am also an incredibly fast learner. I have been following the Quarterly legislative meeting minutes in the Hownikan so I

am familiar with the different items of business which are discussed and motioned on. But most importantly, I am a people person. I love meeting new people and being helpful, I love facilitating gatherings & online zooms to bring people together. I believe that community is one of the most important parts of belonging to a tribe.

**What do you hope to accomplish during your time in office if elected?** The most important thing for me is being able to have the opportunity to serve my tribe. It can feel very isolating living so far from our reservation & unfortunately there are not a lot of opportunities for members to actually contribute. I would like to facilitate more gatherings inside our actual district, preferably twice a year once in Sacramento and then also in Reno so that it takes the hardship off members to be able to attend. I would also like to offer frequent online zooms for members to come together & learn a craft or have listening sessions.

**Describe an effective tribal leader?** An effective tribal leader is someone who has a responsibility to not only the community as a whole, but also to our ancestors & our next seven generations. They take into consideration & will always prioritize acting in the best interest of the whole tribe, economically, culturally, morally, with transparency, legally & ethically. They will listen to the smallest voice & treat it just as important as the loudest. They make themselves available to those they have a responsibility towards & treat people with respect and kindness, always being mindful to keep themselves humble and honest.

**How do you plan to engage tribal citizens?** I plan to organize & host two gatherings each year within our D7 area, as centrally located as possible. I would like to take advantage of technology by hosting frequent zoom gatherings to teach different cultural activities, host speaker panels, or just provide a convenient space for members to meet, get to know each other & build community. I would like to help members who feel disconnected & isolated find a sense of belonging within our tribe. I would like to create an official online district site to post information about relevant events happening throughout our surrounding community to give additional opportunities to get together.



**Mark Johnson**  
Incumbent

**What experiences do you have that can be applied to this position with the Tribe?** Besides serving you in this position for the last 16 years, I was blessed to have had a 40+ year career as a professional firefighter, retiring from the rank of Chief from CAL FIRE. I have managed million-dollar budgets and worked collaboratively

with others to solve various issues. I have broad experience collaborating with the other tribal legislators to solve issues and strengthen our Tribe, while my working knowledge of the tribe allows me to navigate the system on behalf of our members when they need help. My upbringing in tribal culture has enabled me to build trust with members and advocate effectively for their needs.

**What do you hope to accomplish during your time in office if elected?** The Tribe will surpass 40,000 members soon, our future is one filled with opportunity and optimism, but also a future with challenges that we must navigate. As a current Legislator, I know that the demands for services and benefits that we are providing today as a Tribe will require our full attention to protect and grow those services, especially for our members outside of Oklahoma. I will push for our Nation to continue being a leader in preserving our heritage and culture, along with the economic health and stability of our Tribe, and needs of our members is the top priority.

**Describe an effective Tribal leader.** An effective Citizen Potawatomi Tribal leader balances tradition, responsibility, and vision. They listen first, especially to elders while honoring cultural teachings, language, and ancestral values while guiding the tribe through modern challenges. Integrity, humility, and service to people define their character. They protect tribal sovereignty, advocate for the community's rights, and make decisions that strengthen future generations. A strong leader unites the people, respects differing voices, and builds consensus. They safeguard land, culture, and resources while pursuing education, economic stability, and health for the tribe, ensuring that the community remains resilient, proud, and self-determining. These are all traits that I hold close.

**How do you plan to engage Tribal citizens?** Engaging our Tribal members has always been a bit of a struggle since members of the legislature do not have direct access to our members' information unless they reach out to us. I will continue to have district meetings that move around the district and hold our fall festival along with District 6. I am currently working on making available a virtual office, where members can reach out to me either for a video chat, phone, or email as the need arises. But as always, I encourage members to reach out to me anytime if you need information or help. 📞

**EXPERIENCE MATTERS**

# RE-ELECT MARK JOHNSON

**For District 7 Legislator**

It has been my honor to serve as the District 7 Legislator since 2010. I am proud of my voting record and the work I've done on behalf of our members. I am asking for your continued trust and your vote in the upcoming election.

**Standing together, we are strong.**

Our Nation now has almost 40,000 members. Through hard work, we have maintained a strong financial position and protected and expanded benefits on which so many of our members depend. I hope to continue this work on behalf of the members I represent.

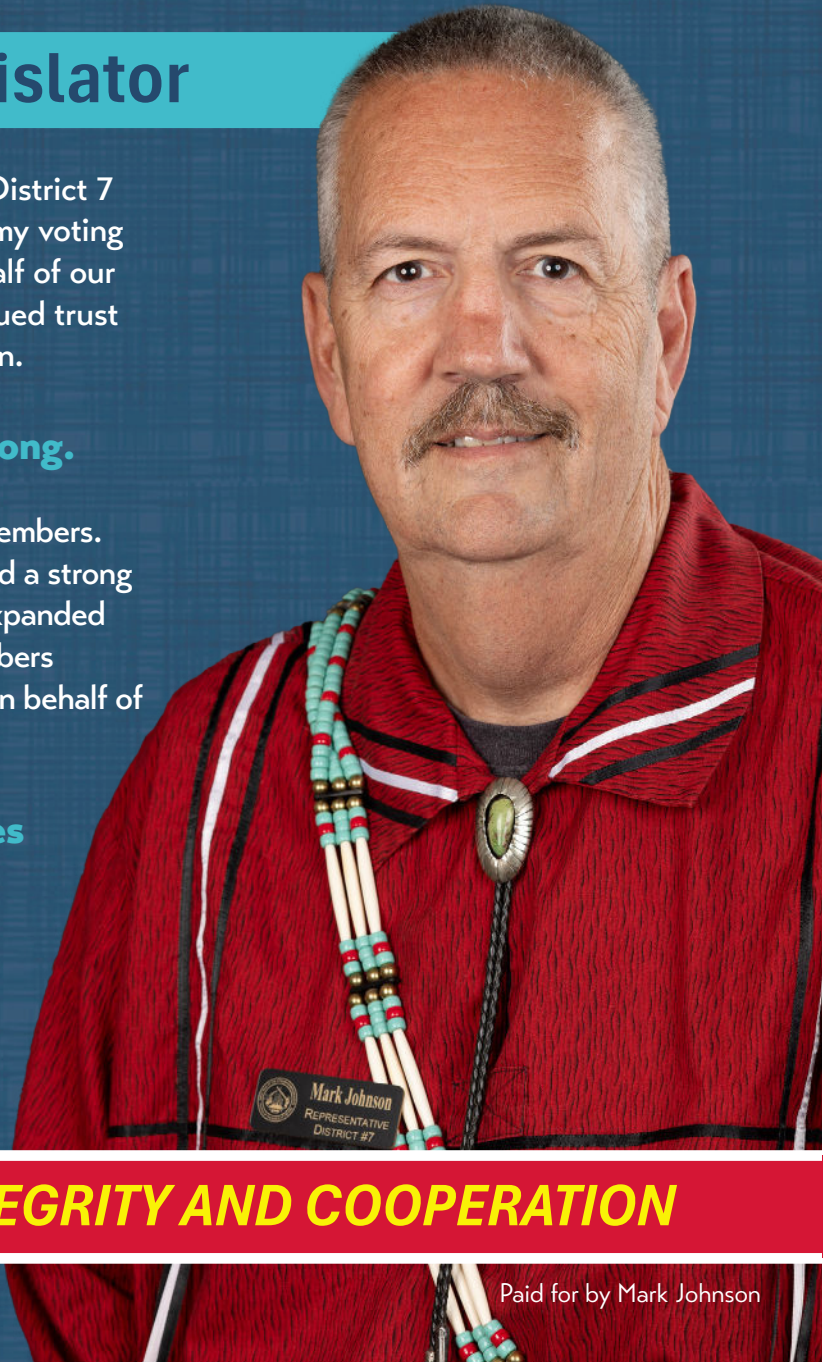
**I can only do so with the votes  
of the members of District 7.**

**PLEASE EXERCISE  
YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE!**



**HONOR, INTEGRITY AND COOPERATION**

Paid for by Mark Johnson





# April is Financial Literacy Month

By Bobby "Trae" Trousdale

"Financial Literacy" may very well bore you enough to skim or skip this piece. Please do not! I'll attempt to make this fun and sexy enough to be worth your time and energy. When we think about what we're *supposed* to do with our finances, giants of literacy and education may jet to mind. Dave Ramsey, Suze Orman, or your richest relative all provide amazing insight and have storied histories about what has worked for them and benchmarks that you "have to check out." If room for improvement isn't the largest room in the world, then it surely must be the room between theory and practice.

For the Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation (CPCDC), this room is our entire field. We're honored to be humble guides and cheerleaders as you make your way through it. We offer these services year-round, but we believe April is a great time to start given its national designation as Financial Literacy Month. Plus, by this point in the year, unsustainable new year's resolutions have fallen off, and dusty Pelotons may be haunting reminders of excitement without strategy. We're aiming to ensure those expensive drying racks aren't the fate your bank accounts and financial future are headed towards.

A resource we provide to our commercial clients is a "10 Steps to Starting a Business" sheet that oversimplifies the steps needed to get started. This is a big hit and one we can't seem to stock enough of. My hope is to provide a shortened consumer version of that for you below.

**1. Check.** Personal budgets are the bedrock of understanding and being able to set financial goals. Don't change a thing yet, simply check and see where your money is going. If you don't like it, that's okay! Let that discomfort fuel your hate fire and think critically about your wants versus needs.

**2. Partner.** Find a friend that will be tackling finances alongside you. You aren't alone and people aren't meant to thrive in silos. You need someone in your corner to strategize with, to dream with, and to hold you accountable.

**3. Celebrate.** This is a critical step when starting something new and/or sustaining momentum. Honor yourself thus far and add checkpoints going forward. Don't let finances get too boring. If I stay under my weekly budget, I get Starbucks on Friday or if my partner and I are paying off a debt, then we get a bottle of champagne. Make it your own!

**4. Deploy.** Act on your plan, your strategy, and pursue your celebrations! Use the tools available to you to save money, minimize debt, and diversify what you're doing in the fight for your finances. There is no one-size-fits-all solution. Keep reading, keep learning, and keep mastering your own game of personal finance.

**5. Communicate.** While you're in it and when you *eventually* reach your goals, talk about it. Model financial literacy for your children, nieces, and nephews. Share your planning process and the pathways that work for you with friends. Our people are relationship-based. Financial literacy does not belong to the colonizer. Own it.

See? Financial literacy can be as approachable as simply remembering C-P-C-D-C. Whether you are searching for a partner, needing an emergency alternative to a payday loan, or are ready to embark on the challenging work of taming your personal finances, 75% of our staff is trained, certified, and willing to help in ways that work for you. Visit our offices, our website, or follow us on social media for more information. Happy Financial Literacy Month! 🍷

VOTE

# RYAN HUBBLE

MSKO MTEK "REDWOOD TREE"

FOR DISTRICT 5  
LEGISLATOR



★ FAMILY FOCUSED ★

★ FINANCIALLY MINDED ★

★ TRIBE CONSCIOUS ★

★ COMMUNITY DRIVEN ★

PAID FOR BY RYAN HUBBLE

# LEADING THE WAY FOR THE POTAWATOMI



I'M ASKING FOR YOUR VOTE.

# JAMES NEWBERRY

PAID FOR BY JAMES NEWBERRY



## Bay Area D7 Meet-Up

**Meet Katie Jäger-Bowie — Candidate for District 7**  
Enjoy a short presentation, hands-on crafts, and a light lunch.  
Families welcome!

*Ad paid for by Steven Tingey, Inverness, California*

May 9, 2026  
Saturday

11 AM - 1 PM

Embassy Suites  
101 McInnis Parkway, San Rafael

RSVP (optional but appreciated):  
D7Katie@gmail.com

## Let's Meet! Lorrie Underwood for District 5 Legislator

District 5 Citizens, I invite you to come meet up and participate in an open forum to discuss Citizen Potawatomi topics. You can text your RSVP to 303-507-4393.

April 25, 2026 9:00 to 11:00am  
The Chocolate Bar  
116 West 3rd Street Grand Island, NE

May 2, 2026 1:00 to 3:00pm  
Glendale Public Library  
5959 West Brown Street Glendale, AZ

May 3, 2026 2:00 to 4:00pm  
Roswell Public Library  
301 N. Pennsylvania Avenue Roswell, NM

May 9, 2026 1:00 to 3:00pm  
Fort Morgan Public Library  
414 Main Street Fort Morgan, CO

All candidates and citizens are welcome to attend and participate in this forum.

NOTE: Refreshments will be provided.



paid for by Lorrie Underwood

# Veterans Report

Bozho (Hello),

It's April and spring is in the air; actually, it has been in the air since the end of February. Wind and pollen, more wind and more pollen, sneezing and coughing, and eyes itching and dry. I'm allergic to this wonderful planet of ours. Why would anyone want to leave it? There have been some changes in the Tribe and our Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization. We have a new secretary, Lauren Samsel, who is also one of our new members. Bill Wano, our secretary of many years, has decided to retire. He set a high standard for the office that others can use for guidance.

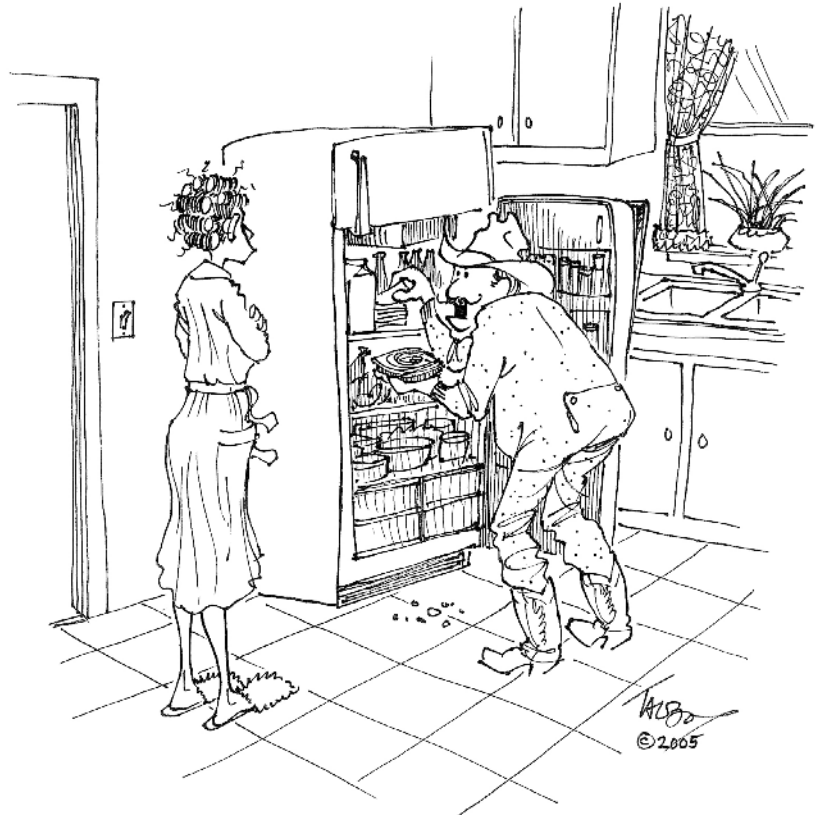
We shall miss Vice-Chairman Linda Capps. It is one small step for Miss Linda and one giant vacancy in our hearts. We of the CPN veterans will miss you. You are always welcome to visit us.

Remember that the monthly meetings of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization are on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. (or as soon as you can get there) at the CPN Cultural Heritage Center in Shawnee, Oklahoma. The meeting dates are listed below:

April 28 at 6 p.m. | May 26 at 6 p.m. | June 27, Saturday at 9 a.m. on the second floor of the CPN Golf Club | July 28 at 6 p.m. | Aug. 25 at 6 p.m. | Sept. 22 at 6 p.m. | No meeting in November | December date to be arranged.

We hope to see you at as many of the meetings you can make.

Migwetch (Thank you),



OF COURSE I KNOW THE FOUR BASIC FOOD GROUPS! BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER, AND MIDNIGHT SNACK!

Daryl Talbot, Commander, 405-275-1054

Daniel Castaneda,  
Vice Commander/Event Contact, 209-207-2317

David Barrett, Treasurer, 405-613-7313

Lauren Samsel, Secretary, 253-970-2900

Chris Lenggenhager, Facilitator, 405-878-5840 🍷

*Ngi-wénabjégé*  
**STICKER DESIGN Contest**

*Your design here*



- Open to all **Tribal** members
- Design should reflect **Potawatomi** culture
- Include the phrase **Ngi-wénabjégé** and **2026**
- Design should be a **3"x3"** square or **3"** circle

Cash prizes for 1, 2, and 3 place winners in each age group

**12 & under**   **13 to 18**   **18 & up**

Winning designs will be printed and distributed to voters at **2026 Family Reunion Festival**

Designs are due at **cpn.news/stickercontest** by **April 30, 2026**



# Sacramento Area D7 Meet-Up

Meet Katie Jäger-Bowie — Candidate for District 7

Enjoy a short presentation, hands-on crafts, and a light lunch. Families welcome!

*Ad paid for by Lisa Lewis Riddle, Elk Grove, California*

May 10, 2026  
Sunday

11AM - 1PM  
Elk Grove

**RSVP: D7Katie@gmail.com**  
Please include the number attending to receive the event address.

**EXPERIENCE MATTERS**

# RE-ELECT MARK JOHNSON For District 7 Legislator

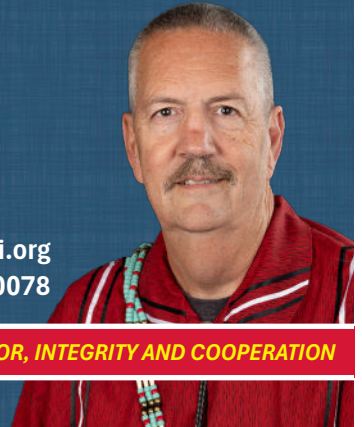
A member of the Vieux and Johnson Families

mark.johnson@potawatomi.org  
559-351-0078



*As a professional firefighter for 40+ years, I have always lived by three guiding principles: HONOR, INTEGRITY AND COOPERATION*

Paid for by Mark Johnson



## Lorrie Underwood for District 5 Legislator

I am so excited for this chance to earn your vote. Attending past District 5 meetings hosted by our wonderful and greatly missed Gene Lambert opened the door for me to connect with District 5 citizens near me. Social media has expanded that connection to include so many Citizen Potawatomi who are skilled in food sovereignty, regalia crafting, politics and my personal passion, our beautiful language.

**VOTE!!**

- ★ Transparent and accountable leadership
- ★ Citizen engagement across District 5
- ★ Balance between progress and tradition

Find my other Hownikan ad for scheduled Meet Ups near you.



paid for by Lorrie Underwood

# Watch your Savings BLOOM

We have a variety of options like savings, money markets and CD accounts that can work for you.

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Burnett  
Family



Thunder  
Clan

Vote

**Martha Kimberly (Kim) Nootbaar**  
*Niganbekwe (Woman who sits in the Lead)*  
for  
Vice Chairman

Compassionate, Dedicated, Optimistic  
Taking our nation into the future!

[nootbaar@aol.com](mailto:nootbaar@aol.com) 469-867-6724  
Facebook: Kim Martin Nootbaar  
M Kimberly Nootbaar for CPN Vice Chairman

Paid for by Kim Nootbaar



**HAVE A  
VOICE**

in our Tribe's future,  
cast your vote in June!



**RE-ELECT  
MARK JOHNSON**  
For District 7 Legislator

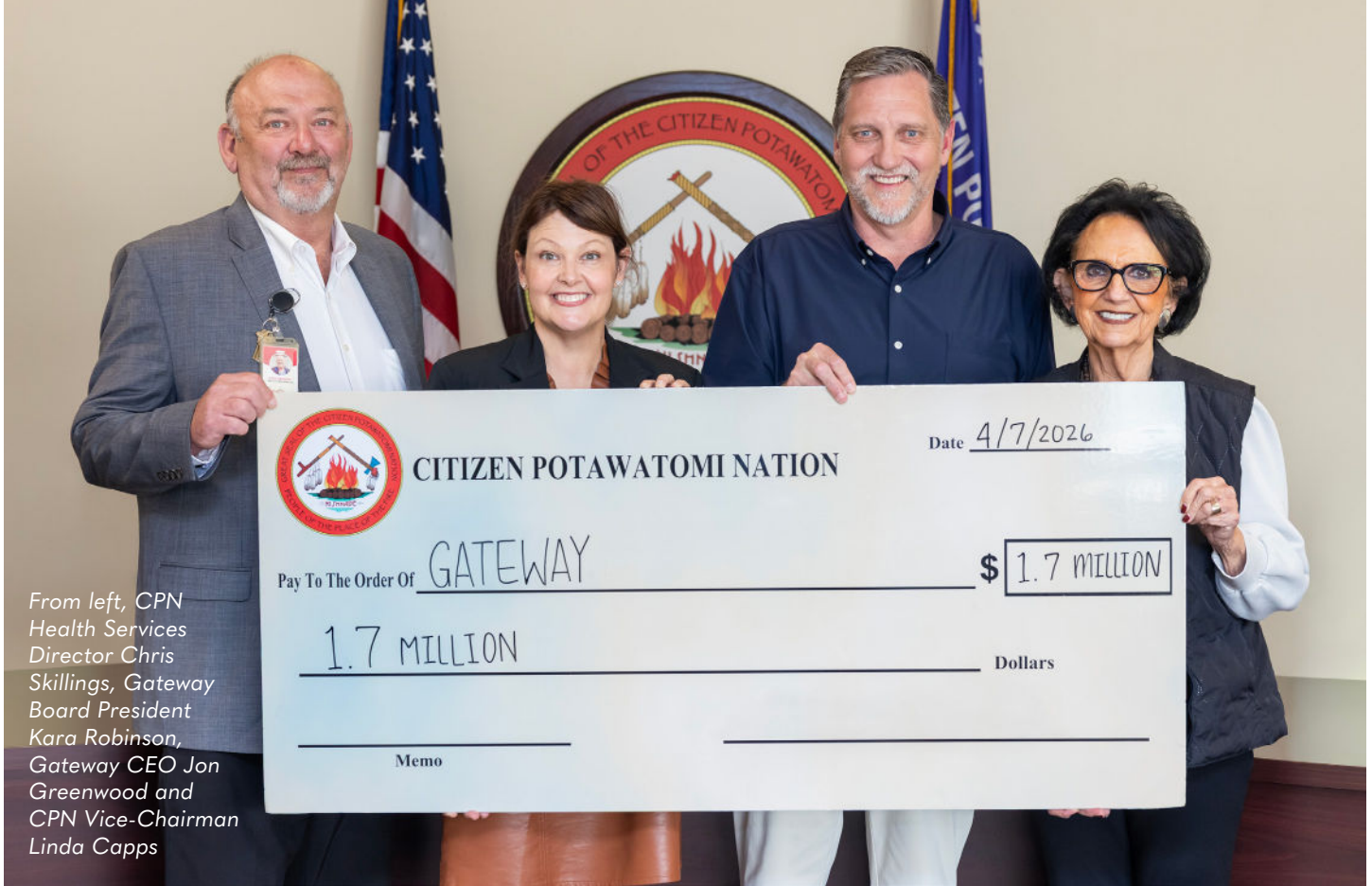
EXPERIENCE MATTERS

It has been my honor to serve you as the District 7 Legislator since 2010. I am proud of my strong voting record and the work I've done on behalf of our members. I am asking for your continued trust and your vote in the upcoming election. Standing together, we are strong. Our Nation now has almost 40,000 members. Through hard work, we have maintained a strong financial position and protected and expanded benefits for our members outside of Oklahoma. I hope to continue this work on behalf of the members I represent.

**PLEASE EXERCISE YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE!**

**HONOR, INTEGRITY AND COOPERATION**

Paid for by Mark Johnson



## CPN donates \$1.7 million to Gateway to Prevention and Recovery

The Citizen Potawatomi Nation recently agreed to make a \$1.7 million donation to Gateway to Prevention and Recovery, Inc. to help the local agency continue to serve people after state funding cuts threatened to cripple their operation.

Gateway, located in Shawnee, Oklahoma, is a non-profit organization that offers treatment services, wellness programs and more to address mental health, substance misuse, and gambling addiction in rural Oklahoma.

The donation will help Gateway retire the debt on its newly constructed facility after it was one of many providers in the state that failed to receive expected funds from the Oklahoma State Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services in 2025.

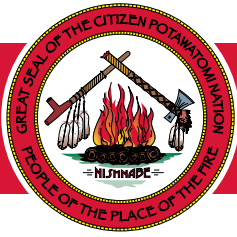
The agreement between CPN and Gateway states that the organization has provided services to prevent and treat opioid use, as well as other substance use and mental health conditions, among both Native and non-Native clients in Pottawatomie County and in CPN's reservation.

The funds for the donation come from the National Opioids Settlement Agreement proceeds, which can be used to promote and prevent opioid use disorder and other substance use and mental health conditions.

"This is an incredibly generous donation," said Jon Greenwood, CEO of Gateway. "It means the world to us. It means our mission and vision can still be accomplished."

Greenwood said the cuts from the state agency had forced them to downsize staff and operations and close an office in Seminole. Without this donation, they might have had to sell the new Shawnee facility in order to survive. However, the donation will allow them to maintain the facility and continue providing important services to Tribal citizens and to the community within and nearby the Potawatomi reservation.

"These services are important. We are happy to be able to provide the funding Gateway needs to continue to help people and families in our community. This is another example of how tribal partnerships can benefit everyone," CPN Tribal Chairman John "Rocky" Barrett said. ♡



# CITIZEN POTAWATOMI NATION 2026 REQUEST FOR BALLOT

If you would like to receive a mail in ballot, please fill in, cut out, and mail the form below to:

## **Citizen Potawatomi Nation**

Election Committee

PO Box 310

Tecumseh, OK 74873-9900

Cut along the black dotted line. **MUST BE CUT OUT**

### **Citizen Potawatomi Nation • Request for Ballot • 2026 Election**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
please print

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

I reside within the boundaries of CPN Legislative District No. \_\_\_\_\_  
**(Oklahoma residents should write OK in the blank above)**

Under penalty of perjury, I hereby declare this to be my legal signature and Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal roll number.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Ten Digit Tribal Roll # \_\_\_\_\_

**(If you do not know your roll number, call 800-880-9880 and ask for Tribal Rolls)**

**Must be postmarked no later than June 7, 2026**

# May 5 is day of awareness for MMIP

For generations, Native communities have experienced alarming rates of violence and have mourned the abductions and deaths of relatives and loved ones. Even now, Native individuals experience the negative impacts of original displacement and the disempowerment of their ancestors.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP) is an ongoing crisis. Statistics show American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) populations are disproportionately impacted by violence compared to other communities.

- The Department of Justice (DOJ) reported that more than 84 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) women and men have experienced violence in their lifetime.
- More than one in three have experienced violence in the past year.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that homicide is the fourth leading cause of death among American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) males and the sixth leading cause of death among AI/AN females.
- More than one in three American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) female victims (38 percent) and more than one in six AI/AN male victims (17 percent) were unable to get the services they needed.

Currently, there are 930 missing American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) individuals registered in the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs). These missing individuals reside in all parts of the U.S., on and off reservations.

As of March 2026, the state of Oklahoma had 87 Native individuals registered as missing, ranking third in the nation, according to NamUs. Unfortunately, the number of missing Native Americans/Alaskan Natives can be significantly higher due to many contributing factors, including jurisdictional authority, racial misclassifications within law enforcement reporting, lax data collection protocols, and the inability of family members to file police reports.

May 5 has been designated as the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous People to bring acknowledgment and understanding to this crisis. Oklahoma currently has a designated office with the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) that

provides a framework for coordination between state and tribal offices on the MMIP crisis. Many grassroots organizations throughout the state provide support in communities, which has led to the development of state legislation targeting violence against Native individuals.

**Savanna's Act:** Named after Savanna LaFontaine-Greywind, a member of the Spirit Lake Nation of North Dakota, who was murdered while eight months pregnant in August 2017.

This law directs the Department of Justice to review, revise and develop law enforcement and justice protocols to address missing and murdered Native Americans.

**Marsy's Law:** Named after Marsalee (Marsy) Nicholas, a University of California Santa Barbara student, who was stalked and killed by her ex-boyfriend in 1983.

This law ensures that victims have the same co-equal rights as the accused and convicted.

**Ida's Law:** Named after Ida Beard, who went missing on June 30, 2015. Her family reported it to police, but the investigation did not open until two weeks later.

This law outlines the creation of the Office of Liaison under the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation for MMIP and provides a framework for coordination between state offices

**Not Invisible Act Commission:** Aims to address the crisis of missing, murdered and trafficked American Indians and Alaska Natives

This act established the commission as a cross-jurisdiction advisory committee composed of both federal and non-federal members, including law enforcement, Tribal leaders, federal partners, service providers, family members of missing and murdered individuals, and survivors.

As a Tribal organization, CPN House of Hope strives to provide education and resources, not only to those experiencing violence but also to those who choose to understand and help make a positive impact.

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



# Wall offers final reflection following *Mdamen*

*Mdamen* is a leadership program where Tribal members spend nine weeks establishing connections to their Potawatomi heritage.

Each participant in the class is asked to complete a final reflection, including a tangible manifestation of their experience, whether that be a poem, song, painting or other ways they choose to express themselves.

The *Hownikan* is highlighting one of the final reflections from the most recent *Mdamen* class, a poem by Zach Wall.

1. It's *Mko Gises*, Bear Moon

And I'm writing this poem, on stolen Piscataway land  
Thirteen hundred miles away from Shawnee  
With *Séma* clutched in my left hand  
Intention set, reflecting on what it means to be *Nishnabe*  
What I've learned from the Seven Grandfathers  
Miraculous seeds of knowledge, values to embody

2. Since the Prophets spoke of fires

We've always been here, and we still are  
Crossed Turtle Island, with Megis shell GPS  
To that sacred place where food grows on the water  
We called *Nishnabek* together, saving our council's embers  
And we've kept that fire burning, glowing, growing  
We gather, dance, and share stories to remember

3. Voyageurs with long knives arrived

Promises of brotherhood and promises of death  
We found a middle, muddy ground at first  
But Wendigo, always hungry, eats and  
eats til nothing's left  
So, they pushed us from our lakes, grabbed  
our wild rice beds  
And Chemokman tricked, removed and  
cheated, and pushed us once again

Until we reached this new home,  
among our other Native kin

4. Now we hold Wendigo to account

For the debts they owe and always will  
There is no alternative but to thrive  
And remind them of what they could never kill  
We tend a vibrant garden and diversify portfolios  
Relearn forgotten words, break ground on new casinos  
Amplify our prayers with braids of *Wishkpemishkos*

5. We remember, more than ever

Our fellow living beings, treat them in a good way  
Four-legged, winged, rooted, all relatives  
Listen, with humility, to what they have to say  
Though we're scattered all over, in cities and rural places  
We're tethered, forever, fragrant strands of sweetgrass  
Dreaming up a better world, for  
the next Seven Generations

6. Is my blood Indian enough?

Those cruel quantum questions linger  
"How much are you, what percentage, I mean?"  
But finally, the answer, right here at my fingers  
*Bodéwadmí ndaw, Shishibéni ndebendagwes*  
I'm hundred percent Potawatomi, actually  
Was the answer all along; what else did I expect?

7. And here is *Kishko*, Second Born,

Once a baby chicken-lookin' lil guy  
Now basking in the golden Oklahoma sunset  
*Bodéwadmí* wings outstretched, eager to take flight  
*Hownikan*, will you carry our prayers up to Creator?  
After you finish that quail, and your snack of mice?  
Either way, just please know we're  
proud; *bama pi*, see ya later!

lw 🔥

CONTROL IS NOT REAL LOVE



CITIZEN POTAWATOMI NATION  
**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM**

**24/7 CRISIS HOTLINE 405-878-HOPE**  
VISIT US ONLINE AT [CPNHOUSEOFHOPE.COM](http://CPNHOUSEOFHOPE.COM)

# Tribal member takes up skeleton, hopeful to qualify for Olympics

Alex Samples, a member of the Slavin family, found a link online encouraging athletes to try to join Team USA in the Olympics, and now he's training to qualify in the sport of skeleton.

Skeleton is one of the events in the Winter Olympics in which athletes start with a 30-meter sprint to build speed before launching themselves onto a sled, sliding face down through an ice track. Athletes then steer with knees, shoulders and toes, reaching speeds of around 80 miles per hour.

Samples originally competed in track and field, primarily the long jump, as a D1 athlete at Oklahoma State University. After college, he saw an advertisement online encouraging athletes to try to make Team USA, so he sent the information to his mother, who encouraged him to try.

Samples went to Salt Lake City, Utah, in 2024, where he participated in a combine and was selected to try skeleton.

According to a press release advertising the most recent combine, athletes at the combine are tested in five events: 40-yard sprint, 5-10-5 pro agility shuttle, vertical jump, kneeling power ball toss and prowler push test. Top performing athletes are then invited to attend a rookie camp to take the next steps.

When it comes to changing from track and field to skeleton, Samples said the events are actually similar for about 40 meters when he's sprinting to start. After that, the experience changes.

"It's definitely exhilarating," he said. "I mean, to go head first downhill, being two inches off the ice, going 80 miles per hour ... it's definitely a wild feeling, especially going around some of the curves. We pull about 5Gs when we're going our fastest. That, to me, was the biggest shock on my body. I've never felt anything like that."

Samples started his first camp in November 2024. Now he is training to try to give himself the best odds for a ticket to the Olympics.



Alex Samples, second from left in the back row, poses with others on the ice track used for skeleton.

"It's been very interesting, especially being from Oklahoma. We're a flat state. No one considers us a winter state by any means. So it's definitely been something I've had to adapt to," he said.

While at home, he does lifts and strength and speed training. He estimates he probably lifts three or four times per week for an hour.

"We can't actually slide or push a sled anywhere except Utah and Lake Placid in New York," he added. "That's very minimal, because we slide and it takes a minute to get down the track. So our true ice time in a year could be less than an hour. It could be around two hours a year where we're actually sliding on the ice and getting those reps in."

Much of training, Samples said, is keeping himself in shape and taking advantage of any opportunities he gets to slide. During the season, which starts around November and typically ends in March, he is able to go to Lake Placid to train about once a month for one or two weeks at a time.

"It's a lot of travel, a lot of expenses, and a lot of time taken away from work, family, friends," he said. "I'm



getting used to that and getting used to being gone and making that sacrifice, but I've enjoyed every minute of it."

And on top of his Olympic aspirations, Samples also holds down a full-time job as a commercial real estate agent in Oklahoma City. It's something he said many athletes have to do to financially support their goals.

Now that the 2026 Winter Olympics are in the books, the "quad year," or the four years between every Olympics, begins. During this time, Samples said he and other athletes will race on a circuit, earning points by competing in races throughout the year. Only 25 sleds go on to the Olympics, so the goal is to get enough points to be in the top 25 and to get a bid to qualify.

When it comes to considering his odds, he said he tries to stay positive.

"I hope they're pretty high. It's a sport that doesn't have a lot of people," he said. "There's some great athletes within the program that I'm going to have to compete against throughout my career, but I'm going to do everything I can to put myself in positions to have that opportunity."

For now, his plan is to race the North American Circuit, then hopefully progress up to a European Circuit or the World Cup Circuit in an Olympic year to get as many points as he can. 🔥

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## February Legislative Meeting minutes

**Present:** Chairman John A. Barrett, Vice Chairman Linda Capps, Secretary-Treasurer D. Wayne Trousdale and Representatives David Barrett, Jon Boursaw, Bobbi Bowden, Dave Carney, Eva Marie Carney, Mark Johnson, Steve Livingston, Rande Payne, Paul Schmidlkofer, Brenda Trevino, Andy Walters, and Paul Wesselhöft.

**Absent:** None.

**Guests:** Jason Smalley, Greg Quinlan, Geroge Wright, Kim Nootbaar, Bobby "Trae" Trousdale and Jamie Moucka.

**Call to order:** Chairman Barrett called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. followed by the invocation.

**First item of business:** Minutes from the previous meeting of Dec. 9, 2025. Motion to approve the minutes as read was made by Representative Schmidlkofer and seconded by Representative Walters. The motion passed with 15 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 absent and 0 abstaining.

**Second item of business:** Resolution 26-32-LCoE: A resolution enrolling 104 applicants into the membership of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. Motion to approve Resolution 26-32-LCoE was made by Vice Chairman Capps and seconded by Representative Trevino. The motion passed with 15 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 absent and 0 abstaining.

**Third item of business:** Resolution 26-33-NR: A resolution approving a fee-to-trust acquisition application to the Bureau of Indian Affairs and request for trust acquisition of the (non-gaming/on reservation) Harris property. Motion to approve Resolution 26-33-NR was made by Representative Barrett and seconded by Representative Walters. The motion passed with 15 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 absent and 0 abstaining.

**Fourth item of business:** Resolution 26-34-TC&A: A resolution approving the Citizen Potawatomi Nation's application for funding under the Institute of Museum and Library Services fiscal year 2026 Basic Library Services

program. Motion to approve Resolution 26-34-TC&A was made by Representative Payne and seconded by Representative Wesselhöft. The motion passed with 15 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 absent and 0 abstaining.

**Fifth item of business:** Resolution 26-35-J&PS: A resolution approving the Citizen Potawatomi Nation's application for funding under the United States Department of Justice fiscal year 2026 Office for Victims of Crime Tribal Victim Services Set-Aside Formula program. Motion to approve Resolution 26-34-J&PS was made by Representative Wesselhöft and seconded by Representative Walters. The motion passed with 15 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 absent and 0 abstaining.

**Sixth item of business:** Resolution 26-36-J&PS: A resolution confirming the nominees for tribal judicial office subject to electoral confirmation by the General Council. Motion to approve Resolution 26-36-J&PS was made by Representative Bowden and seconded by Representative Wesselhöft. The motion passed with 14 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 absent and 1 abstaining.

**Seventh item of business:** Resolution 26-37-App: A resolution approving a 2026-2027 annual budget of \$1,840,000 from the estimated earnings and interest on program money from judgment funds awarded by the U.S. Court of Claims, subject to approval by the General Council pursuant to Article 5, Section 3 of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Constitution. Motion to approve Resolution 26-37-App was made by Vice Chairman Capps and seconded by Representative Payne. The motion passed with 15 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 absent and 0 abstaining.

6:55 p.m. Recess (Executive Session)

7:53 p.m. Reconvene

**Ninth item of business:** Adjournment: Motion to adjourn was made by Representative Schmidlkofer and seconded by Representative Trevino. The motion passed with 15 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 absent and 0 abstaining. The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m. on Feb. 26, 2026. 🔥

# Language update

By Justin Neely, CPN Language Department Director

*Bozho, jayek* (Hello, everyone),

The year is moving fast. Before long it will be time for our beginner immersion course held from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday, May 11-22. In years past, we did an eight-week, eight hours a day for five days a week immersion. Although the results from this event were quite impressive, we realized that it is hard for many people to stay away from their family/plants/home for two months. So, we revamped the program a little bit to simply be two weeks for beginners, running May 11-22.

Then intermediate/advanced class will be 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday, June 1-12. Please contact the language department at [language@potawatomi.org](mailto:language@potawatomi.org) with any questions and to RSVP for your spot.

We are also hosting our first Youth Language and Culture Camp the week of July 6-10 from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. for youth ages 6-13. Please contact the language department for more information, questions and to RSVP for a spot.

We have a 52-week elders class every Tuesday from about 11:40-11:55 a.m. at the Elders Center. We also have a 52-week ongoing class from 3-5 p.m. Thursdays at the Cultural Heritage Center. You can join both of these classes at any point. We are happy to work with you wherever you are in your language journey.

We took student to the Annual OU Language Fair on April 6. We entered in a number of categories and will post results and pictures. We are entered in a number of categories and will post results and pictures.

We just wrapped up our Beginner 2 Class with Shelly Watson. She did an awesome job and had a good turnout. The beginner class with Josey Wood is just wrapping up. He does a great job working with both kids and adults. We had our quarterly Lunch & Learn and had a nice turnout.

Our intermediate/advanced course will be starting April 1 and go for six weeks. We will be offering this class in person and online. Please email for more information at [language@potawatomi.org](mailto:language@potawatomi.org).

Use the QR code to listen to the words.

I'm also including photos of the winners of our coloring contest.

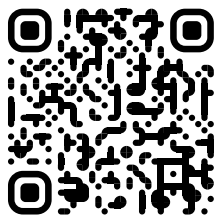
## Getting to know someone

*Ni je na?* How are you?

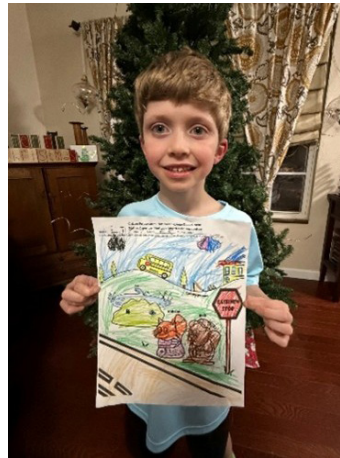
*Anwe she shena.* I am fine.

*Gin je?* And you?

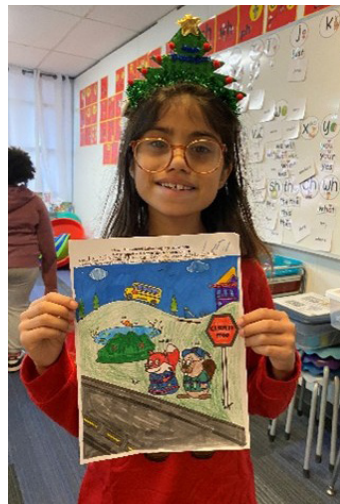
*Nde-yekwes.* I am tired.



Ruby Ostermiller 1st Place 4-6



EJ Ostermiller 1st Place 7-8



Prestynn Neely 1st Place 9-11

*Bgéji ndaknoga.* I am a little sick.

*Ni je ezhnekasyen?* What is your name?

*Justin ndezhnekas.* My name is Justin

*Ni je ezhnekasot?* What's his/her name?

*Cole zhenkazo.* His name is Cole.

*Widmoshen bgéji eyawyen?* Tell me a little about yourself.

*Ggi-nkweshkew ne bwamshe?* Have I met you before?

*Wéni je eyawyen?* Who are you?

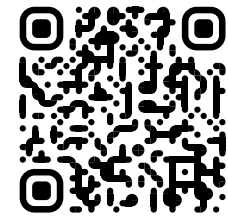
*Wéni je eyawet o kwe?* Who is that woman?

*Wéni je eyawet o nene?* Who is that man?

*Nos yawe.* He is my dad.

*Ngiye yawe.* She is my mom.

*Nitawes yawe* (He is my cousin).



## Weather

*Ni je ngom ezhewék?* How is the weather?

*Gshatemget.* It's hot.

*Wiskedémget-* It's blazing hot.

*Wi gmowen ne?* Is it going to rain?

*Gzhenamdé.* It's humid

*Mno gishget.* It's a nice/beautiful day.

*Wi mno gishget.* It's going to be a nice day.

*Wi gmowen.* It is going to rain.

*Jigwek bmosewat.* The thunders are walking.

*Myash-gishget.* Bad weather. 🌧️

# Hayes, Sisco make waves in growing sport

Girls wrestling is the fastest-growing sport in America. With 40 states now hosting championships and more than 75,000 participants nationwide, its rise has been nothing short of remarkable.

Among those leading the way are standout athletes from the Citizen Potawatomi Nation.

McCloud, Oklahoma, sophomore Carli Sisco recently captured her second consecutive Oklahoma State Championship. Meanwhile, Vivian Hayes, who won a state title for Tecumseh, Oklahoma, last year, has already made waves at the collegiate level, finishing as a National Junior College runner-up in her freshman season for Murray State.

Hayes, a member of the Bourassa family, originally stepped onto the mat simply to help a friend. Her high school needed more girls to form a team, and she volunteered. What began as a favor quickly turned into a passion and an opportunity to excel.

"I just kind of tried it for her, but after that, I really started to love it and do it a lot," Hayes said. "I love the one-on-one competition. In wrestling, all the work that I put in, I get to see my results. My success comes directly from that work."

Sisco's path to wrestling began in junior high when she was focused on cross country. A conversation with her coach changed that.

"He asked if I played a winter sport. I said I didn't, and he told me I should try wrestling," said Sisco, a member of the Bourbonnais family. "I tried it and ended up loving it. What I love most is the family I've gained and the sense of community."

Beyond their achievements on the mat, both athletes take great pride in their heritage and what it means to be Citizen Potawatomi Nation Tribal members.



Carli Sisco, at the center on the podium, takes first in the Oklahoma State Championship.



Vivian Hayes, at right, wins a match at the Junior College National Tournament.

"It's really important to my family," Sisco said. "We strongly identify as CPN, and it means a lot to us."

Hayes echoed that sentiment.

"I love telling people about my heritage and expressing it," she said. "It's very important to me."

On her way to the national finals and earning Junior College All-American honors, Hayes faced one of her toughest challenges, facing the No. 1 seed in her weight class.

"I wasn't seeded, so I knew I'd face her sooner or later," Hayes said. "I could tell she was reacting to what I was doing, so I kept pushing the pace. She started to panic a little. When she pushed on me, I used that pressure to throw her and get the fall."

For Sisco, a defining moment came during her freshman year when she defeated a returning state champion in a tournament. That victory sparked a new level of confidence.

Both young women are determined to continue representing their schools and their Tribe at the highest level. Hayes is focused on building on her runner-up finish and pursuing a national championship next season. Sisco, along with her teammates, has already helped secure back-to-back state titles and now has the opportunity to make Oklahoma high school wrestling history with continued success. 🔥

# BRET MICHAELS



**MAY 29**

**GRAND CASINO**

H O T E L ♦ R E S O R T

[GRANDBOXOFFICE.COM](http://GRANDBOXOFFICE.COM)

# Wright wins IAVM 30|UNDER|30 award

Alexandria Wright, a CPN tribal member, has been named a 2025 International Association of Venue Managers (IAVM) 30|UNDER|30 award recipient. IAVM supports professionals who work in venues such as arenas, stadiums, convention centers and performing arts facilities. The award recognizes 30 professionals under age 30 who are making an impact across the venue industry.

Wright began working in the events industry at age 18.

"I was immediately drawn to the energy of it all," she said. "I loved seeing how much work happens behind the scenes to create a single experience for guests. Over time, that interest turned into a passion for leading teams, solving problems and creating environments where people can come together and make memories."

Wright, director of events at Angel of the Winds Arena in Washington, operated by Oak View Group, said she was motivated by personal and professional growth to apply for the award.

"I have always tried to take advantage of opportunities that challenge me and push me forward," she said. "Applying for this award felt like a chance to reflect on my journey so far and represent the work my team and I have done. It was also important to me to help create more representation for women like me in this industry, so others can see themselves in these roles and know that it's possible."

Wright had been nominated three years in a row, so she was happy to finally receive the award.

"It felt like all the hard work and growth over those years had come full circle," she said.

She also received the award right before her 30th birthday, which she said made it even more special.

The award application and selection process includes multiple rounds, beginning with nomination by an IAVM leader. Nominees then submit an essay sharing their experience, leadership skills and qualifications. Next, the top 50 nominees submit a video presenting their achievements and how IAVM has contributed to their growth. From there, 30 recipients are selected based on their overall submissions.

Wright said the award recognition has already impacted her career.

"Shortly after receiving the award, I was promoted to director of events, which was an exciting next step in my career," she said.

She added that the recognition has connected her to a network of venue professionals she can learn from.



*Alexandria Wright sits in front of Angel of the Winds Arena.*

"Having that level of support and shared knowledge has been invaluable, and it continues to push me to grow as a leader," Wright said.

Wright, kin to the Navarre family, said her CPN heritage has influenced how she approaches leadership, community and responsibility. She also said it has made her more aware of the importance of representation.

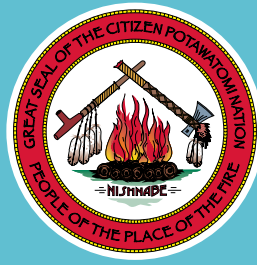
"As both a Native American and a woman in this industry, I recognize that there aren't always a lot of people who look like me in leadership roles," she said. "That's something I carry with me, and it motivates me to show up in a way that creates visibility and opportunity for others."

She hopes that in this position she can help open doors and inspire the next generation to see themselves in these spaces. Wright also offered advice to young professionals hoping to follow a similar career path.

"Be willing to start anywhere and learn everything you can. This industry is built on experience, relationships and how you show up every day. Don't be afraid to ask questions, take on new challenges and step outside of your comfort zone. Most importantly, stay consistent and take pride in your work. People notice work ethic over all things," she said.

Wright emphasizes the importance of giving back and supporting the next generation. She believes in helping others find their path and succeed as a part of leadership.

"I've been fortunate to have mentors who invest time in me, and I try to do the same for others," she said. 🍷



CITIZEN POTAWATOMI NATION DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
**2024-25 ANNUAL REPORT**

## SCHOLARSHIPS



### FALL 2024

1,267 full-time  
**\$2,496,500**  
 288 part-time  
**\$220,595**  
 1,555 total  
**\$2,717,095**

### SPRING 2025

1,186 full-time  
**\$2,316,500**  
 317 part-time  
**\$247,250**  
 1,503 total  
**\$2,563,750**

### SUMMER 2025

208 full-time  
**\$404,500**  
 375 part-time  
**\$282,900**  
 583 total  
**\$687,400**

### TOTAL

2,661 full-time  
**\$5,217,500**  
 980 part-time  
**\$750,745**  
 3,641 total  
**\$5,968,245**

## TOP 10

### UNIVERSITIES

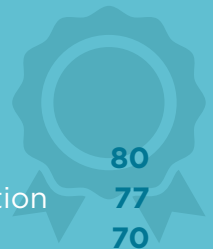
University of Oklahoma	95
Oklahoma State University	70
University of Central Oklahoma	60
Oklahoma City Community College	40
Rose State College	40
Kansas State University	36
East Central University	34
University of Kansas	30
Seminole State College	30
Western Governors University	26

### STATES

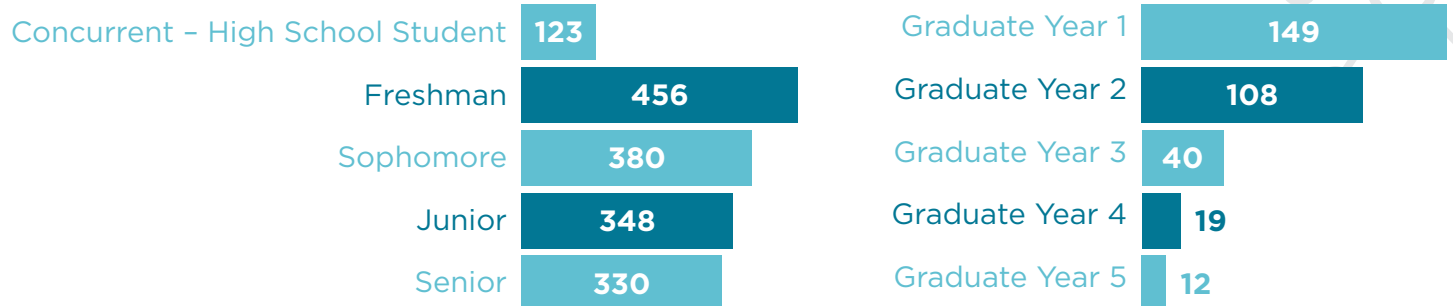
OK	712
TX	219
KS	199
CA	173
MO	60
WA	46
AZ	44
CO	37
TN	34
IL	30

### MAJORS

Nursing (RN)	80
Business Administration	77
Business	70
Nursing	43
Psychology	42
Elementary Education	40
Mechanical Engineering	40
Biology	40
Finance	38
Computer Science	37



## GRADE LEVEL DISTRIBUTION

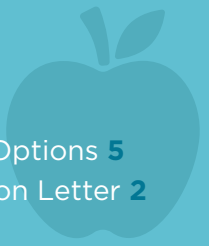


# ADVISING

## SERVICE TYPES

Scholarship and Financial Aid **41** | Scholarship Technical Assistance **18** | Other **11** | Vocational Options **5**  
College Search Options **4** | College and Degree Research **3** | Essay Review **2** | Recommendation Letter **2**

**86 TOTAL SESSIONS**



# CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS

**\$126,250** | **90** Students awarded scholarships

## TOP FIELDS OF STUDY

**Beauty**      Cosmetology  
**Trades**      CDL Certification  
**Healthcare**      LPN Training



# INTERNSHIPS

## FALL 2024

3 Interns

## SPRING 2025

10 Interns

## SUMMER 2025

20 Interns

## TOTAL

33 Interns



# OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**4** Virtual talking circles | **9** Potawatomi Leadership Program participants  
**20** Mdamen participants | **24** Students attended Potawatomi college courses  
**7** Students attended “Coming into the Circle” | **28** Tribal consultations with school districts  
**60** Students honored at 2025 Graduation Celebration | **48** Honor cords distributed  
**476** Students attended the 2025 Wzhitawen College Fair



# STOLES

**97** Sold | **\$4,850** benefitted miscellaneous education requests



**\$179,500 IN RECOVERED FUNDS**



CPN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
education@potawatomi.org | 405-695-6028

# From the executives



## John “Rocky” Barrett Tribal Chairman

*Bozho, nikan, (Hello, my friend),*

Our government long ago made the decision to focus on investments that benefit our people, and consequently our local communities. In partnership with Vice-Chairman Linda Capps and dozens of former and current elected Tribal officials, we sought to be a source for Tribal citizens to succeed — ideally, right here with us in our Tribal jurisdiction.

Thanks to qualified leaders like Vice-Chairman Capps, we’ve made significant progress in these efforts. With her declining to run once more, our Tribe is losing a highly intelligent, capable and caring executive who has helped steer the ship for more than two decades. Running our Nation is a massive undertaking. With 46 departments, over 2,300 employees, and a \$679 million operating budget, we are the largest employer in Pottawatomie County. Because we manage the interests of nearly 40,000 Tribal members, it’s essential that our team has the high-level skills needed to protect our funds and grow our businesses.

You’ve trusted us to look out for your families, from your children’s education to your own needs as you age. To continue that, we’re focused on growing our economy as fast as our population and turning those earnings into top-tier services and great jobs for our community.

With that in mind, I wanted to note the progress we’ve made in one such community investment that will serve our Tribal citizens and neighbors in southern Pottawatomie County. It doesn’t get all the attention it deserves, but to our citizens and neighbors down south it will be a game changer. We recently advertised a project solicitation seeking a qualified construction manager for a new grocery store in Asher, Oklahoma. The project involves developing a roughly 6–8-acre site to build a full-service grocery store spanning approximately 18,000 to 22,000 square feet, featuring a loading dock and a partial second-story office space. Interested firms are required to notify the Tribe via email by 2 p.m. on April 30, 2026. You can see the solicitation at [cpn.news/asher](https://cpn.news/asher).

This isn’t a flashy investment, and it is not a giant revenue maker like a casino. But it matters. The fresh foods, the jobs, the presence of a reliable enterprise in a community — it’s a game changer. It means customers living there who are in need of groceries won’t need to spend 30 minutes on the road, burning expensive gasoline, to drive to the closest full-sized grocery store in Tecumseh, Ada or Purcell.

Outside, commercial entities do not care about our rural, Oklahoma communities the way those of us who live here do. Our elected officials in Oklahoma City and Washington D.C. forget about these communities. But at Citizen Potawatomi Nation, their success is tied to our success. Having elected leaders who can evaluate these opportunities and put them into practice is vital.

Thank you for the honor of serving as your Tribal Chairman these past 40 years. It is the greatest honor of my life.

*Migwetch (Thank you),*

John “Rocky” Barrett | Keweoge (He Leads Them Home) | Tribal Chairman



## Linda Capps Vice-Chairman

*Bozho* (Hello),

**M**y column this month is to pin-point some important occurrences during and right before my tenure with the Tribe as Vice-Chairman since June 1990. Prior to that time, I served on the Grievance Committee for two years. I have also noted what I believe is a monumental component of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation's economic success. In addition, I included an introduction to my experience working with Indian students and teaching school in Pottawatomie County.

I have a documented timeline of important events that occurred in the 1980s before I became the Vice-Chairman of CPN (June 1990). I began noticing Tribal matters when I became the Indian Education Coordinator for Tecumseh Schools in August of 1977. Tecumseh Public School Superintendent Alva Melot (enrolled member of CPN) informed me of the position in case I wanted to apply. It was the first year Tecumseh Schools had received the grant award. I was honored that the superintendent told me about the position, but there was not adequate grant funding for a full-time position. There was a need for a part-time high school business teacher, so I chose to teach for half a day. The jobs complimented each other, because many of my high school students were also participants in the Indian Education Program.

My late husband was the high school boys' basketball coach, a driver's education instructor, and social studies teacher at the school. We enjoyed the community, and I appreciated being close in proximity to the Tribal headquarters, which was a new experience for me. Most tribal students attending the school were members of CPN, Absentee Shawnee, Sac & Fox, Kickapoo and Seminole tribes. Working with the Indian students sparked my love for Indian education and instilled appreciation for the local Indian people of the various tribes.

None of the elected official positions in the Tribe were full-time jobs, and so I continued to teach in public school and later worked at the local vocational education school until I retired from education in the late fall of 1998. At that time, I came to the Tribe as Vice-Chairman and I officed in administration, where I am today.

During the **1990s**, progress was beginning to evolve in Indian Country. Our Tribe, too, was making progress with internal structure. There were some strategic developments initiated, of which a major portion was due to Chairman Barrett's Tribal involvement in the '70s and '80s when he served as Vice-Chairman and Tribal administrator. He was elected Chairman in **1985**. Some of the key developments were the establishment of the Tribe's Tax Commission (**1984**), opening of the first Tribal Convenience Store (**1984**), taking control of High Stakes Bingo with a name change to FireLake Bingo (**1985**), and establishing the Tribal Court System (**1986**).

A monumental landmark for all tribes occurred in **1988** with the passing of the Self-Governance Amendment (Public Law 93-638) to the 1975 Self-Determination Law and Education Assistance Act. Although the Rule of Law did not become effective until Aug. 23, 1996, it was the beginning of the framework that helped tribes to increase control of their own programs and services, which contributed to the overall growth and development of Indian Tribes. The change allowed them to improve services, have flexibility of choosing options, concentrate on their tribe as a community and begin to thrive economically. I believe this to be a highly important ingredient to CPN's success and economic growth that occurred during my tenure.

Thank you for allowing me to represent you for so many years as your Vice-Chairman. It has been a blessing to me and the highlight of my career.

*Migwetch* (Thank you),

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

# From the legislature



## Steve Livingston District 1

Bozho (Hello),

As I begin, I want to acknowledge that this column will sound more appointed than what you may be used to from me. Today I am choosing to be more direct. I believe low voter participation is one of the greatest threats to our sovereignty, and it deserves honest reflection.

Before I get into that, I want to invite District 1 citizens to join us for our next meeting on May 16 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Laura and Brian Hewuse will be joining us to help lead a loom craft project. For details and to RSVP, visit [cpndistrict1.com/events/may16](http://cpndistrict1.com/events/may16). To stay informed about upcoming events, visit [cpndistrict1.com/events](http://cpndistrict1.com/events).

We are nearly 40,000 citizens strong. That number should represent energy, vision and participation. Yet in recent CPN-wide elections, total ballots cast have hovered under 2,500 voters. Out of nearly 40,000 citizens, that is roughly 6 or 7 percent participation. As our citizenship continues to climb, our civic participation appears to be stagnant or in decline.

What does it mean to be Potawatomi? What does it mean to be a citizen of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation?

Being Potawatomi is identity. Ancestry, language, ceremony and survival all define who we are and where we come from. Citizenship is participation in a sovereign government. It is the community to which we belong. It is how we protect our rights and ensure our Nation continues as a self-governing body with real authority.

Sovereignty is not symbolic. It is practiced.

Our sovereignty has never been guaranteed. We endured forced removal, boarding schools meant to erase our identity, and federal policies during the termination era that openly sought to dissolve tribal governments altogether.

Our constitutional authority, courts, enterprises and elected leadership are not accidental. They exist because previous generations protected them.

When we choose not to vote, we step back from one of the clearest expressions of that sovereignty.

A Nation cannot be sustained by heritage alone. Culture and pride matter, but sovereignty is exercised through participation. When turnout remains in the single digits, it narrows the mandate behind our leadership and weakens the visible strength of our government.

In his October *Hownikan* column, Chairman Barrett pointed out that I was elected with 121 votes. He was right to note it. In a district of roughly 3,000 citizens, that number should cause all of us to pause.

But when Nation-wide races like last year's Chairman election were decided by just 1,883 ballots out of nearly 40,000 citizens, the same reality exists at every level of government.

This is not about any one office. When turnout stays low, leadership across the board is supported by only a small fraction of our community. That should concern us all.

I understand why some people do not vote. Some do not feel informed. Some feel disconnected. Some believe one vote does not matter. We are busy and life pulls on all of us. Those concerns are real.

Still, participation is not optional if we want to remain a Nation that governs itself. Citizenship requires more than pride in who we are. It requires engagement in how we are governed.



**District 1 Meeting**  
Saturday, May 16 | 10AM-2PM

**Country Club Christian Church**  
6101 Ward Parkway Kansas City, MO 64113

**Lunch provided**  
*Laura and Brian Hewuse will be joining us to help lead a loom craft project.*

**RSVP by May 4**  
at [cpndistrict1.com/events/may16](http://cpndistrict1.com/events/may16)

If we want stronger mandates, stronger institutions, and a stronger voice as a sovereign Nation, that begins with us. It begins with conversations in our homes. It begins with reminding one another when elections are approaching. It begins with taking the time to learn about candidates and casting a ballot, even when the choices are imperfect.

We have endured too much in our history to drift into the background of our own government.

The next chapter of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation is ours to write.

Steve Livingston | Legislator, District 1 | [steve.livingston@potawatomi.org](mailto:steve.livingston@potawatomi.org)

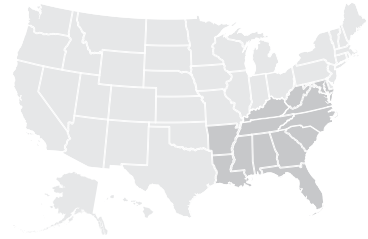


## Eva Marie Carney District 2

*Bozho, nikanek* (Hello, friends),

### Legislative Meeting Update

At our end of February legislative meeting we voted to admit to our citizenship rolls 104 persons living across the U.S. (Folks outside the country who qualify for membership can be enrolled, as well — I did not see anyone in that category on this quarter’s enrollment resolution.) I consider voting on enrollment to be one of our most exciting and hopeful legislative actions — we Citizen Potawatomi are still here, and our descendants will be Citizen Potawatomi, long after we, here today, have walked on.



### Migwetch for Beading Instruction and Class Participation

Maryland Institute College of Art student and CPN citizen Mars Pursley did a terrific job instructing a group of us in two needle flat stitch beading on Feb. 21. I even got the hang of it! One needle is used to hold the beads on the top of the beading foundation; the second needle is used to secure the beads. I have included some photos taken during the workshop.

An easy-to-follow video is at [cpn.news/twoneedle](https://cpn.news/twoneedle). This channel also includes an edge beading demo and a single needle beading technique video. Another good beginner tutorial can be found at [cpn.news/begtutorial](https://cpn.news/begtutorial). We used 8/0 beads, Pellon 71f interfacing, standard nylon thread, and size 10 John James sharps (needles), among other supplies, to start a simple medallion.

The visiting we did during the workshop was terrific as well. Folks joined us from across the DMV (D.C., Maryland, and Virginia) and shared sewing tips, moments of sewing frustration and family stories. *Migwetch* to Mars for making the trip from Baltimore to teach us; *migwetch* to everyone who made the time to participate.

Next month I will report on our March 14 meeting outside Tampa, Florida.



*CPN citizens learning two-needle beading in Alexandria, Virginia, February 2026*

### Hand Games Team 2026

Are you attending the Family Reunion Festival this year? Are you interested in joining our seven-member D2 hand games team? Beginners and veteran players are welcome. Please let me know if you are interested. The Hand Games Tournament will take place starting at 6 p.m. on Friday, June 26, at the CPN Festival Grounds Roundhouse. Game rules can be found at [cpn.news/handgamesemc](https://cpn.news/handgamesemc) — or you can wait for pre-game instruction.



Art student and CPN citizen Mars Pursley, our beadwork instructor, February 2026

## Louise Erdrich's Latest Novel

I recently read U.S. Indigenous author Louise Erdrich's latest novel, *The Mighty Red*. I loved it and recommend it. Set in North Dakota's Red River Valley, it is a book about family and community. Here is an excerpt from my favorite review, written by Ron Charles in *The Washington Post* ([cpn.news/mightyreview](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/arts-features/wp/2021/07/15/louise-erdrich-the-mighty-red-review/)):

In *The Mighty Red*, humor and sorrow are fused together like twined tree trunks that keep each other standing. ... Erdrich is so good at romantic comedy, with her special blend of Austen sense and Ojibwe sensibility. As the funny scenes flow one after another, you may not even notice the stray drops of blood scattered along the novel's margins. ... As usual when closing a book by Louise Erdrich, I'm left wondering, how can a novel be so funny and so moving? How can life?

## Request to Share Future Meeting Location Ideas and Family News

Do you have a suggestion for a future D2 meeting location? It should fit at least 40 and ideally 75 people comfortably. Please let

me know if you do! Our best meeting locations have been suggested by local Citizen Potawatomi.

Do you have family news to share? Please send me a note as I would love to include it in a future column.

Migwetch (Thank you),

Eva Marie Carney | *Ojindiskwe* (Bluebird Woman) | [ecarney@potawatomi.org](mailto:ecarney@potawatomi.org) | [evamariecarney@gmail.com](mailto:evamariecarney@gmail.com)  
[evamariecarney.com](http://evamariecarney.com) | PO Box 5595 | Arlington, VA 22205 | Toll Free: 888-849-1484 (voicemail)



## Brenda Trevino District 3

*Bozho jayek* (Hello, everyone)!

The numbers at our meet-and-greets are growing. On Feb. 21 in The Woodlands, we had 30 RSVP and 20 attend. This is more than double the number that attended the prior meeting. My hope is that the trend will continue. It is such a privilege to meet each of you face-to-face.

I have included a photo of the wisest (Katherine Meier), the youngest (Matthew Morgan) and the one who traveled the farthest to attend (Gary Risinger) at The Woodlands meeting.



From left: Gary Risinger, Katherine Meier, Brenda Trevino and Matthew Morgan

The graphic included with this article provides details for the larger upcoming meeting in Waco in April. Similar to the earlier meetings, there will be announcements from our Nation, handouts on our website, portal, the CARE program, Department of Education and Language Department. For the Waco meeting our special topic will be the CPN Community Development Corporation.

I ask those who plan to come also to bring questions and ideas about what you would like to see for our district in the future. If you have a particular interest in learning a specific aspect of our culture or services, I want to know. A suggestion box will be provided if you would like to share your ideas that way.



## CPN District 3 Regional Meeting

*Come for the family. Stay for the fun!*

**SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2026**  
10:30AM-1:30PM

**DEWEY COMMUNITY CENTER**  
925 N. 9th St, Waco, Texas 76707

District meetings are for members, their spouses and immediate family.

Bring your tribal IDs to sign in.

**RSVP by April 14, 2026**  
to [brenda.trevino@potawatomi.org](mailto:brenda.trevino@potawatomi.org) or call 281-466-7427

Finally, please send me your email address and any other contact information you consent to provide so you can receive communication directly from me.

Feedback so far has been:

The small/rural meeting format is personable and easier to attend because they are closer to where we live. (Most who are coming have been to a meeting in the past, but it has been more than five years).

There is a broad multi-generational interest in our history and cultural teachings.

Updates on the Nation's benefits and enterprises bring connection. They give us a sense of pride and a basic vision for the Nation's future along with the understanding of how and which of the services that can be applied outside of Shawnee and surrounding areas of Oklahoma.

Several have indicated they plan for the first time (or for the first time in multiple years) to attend the Family Reunion in Shawnee this June.

I will continue to share feedback in the coming months and plan to use the feedback to improve the way we communicate and grow as a district.

May the peace of our God and Creator be with you always. *Aho!*

*Migwetch* (Thank you) for allowing me to serve each of you! Please reach out if I can be of assistance.

Brenda Trevino | *Mkedewankwetkwe* (Black Cloud Woman) | [brenda.trevino@potawatomi.org](mailto:brenda.trevino@potawatomi.org) | 281-466-7427

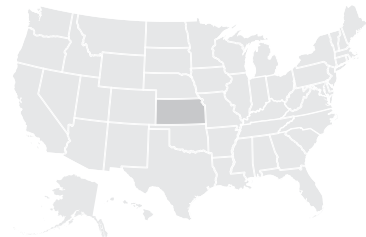


### Jon Boursaw District 4

#### The Departure of Tracy Kinderknecht, RN

As the Legislator for District 4, I have the privilege of having a few things that are not found in the other seven Districts outside of Oklahoma. One is rather high concentration of Tribal members within an hour's drive from where I live, numerous Tribal historic sites nearby, and a Tribal housing complex and community center. But most important, I've had the privilege of working with a CPN Registered Nurse; and for the past 13 years that nurse has been Tracy Kinderknecht. A few weeks ago, Tracy announced that her last day will be May 21. What has she done for us? Tracy got us through COVID, she has administered hundreds of flu shots, she has always been willing to listen and give sound advice, and she has trimmed enough toenails to fill a large trash can. She has made countless home visits, filled dozens of pharmacy trays, treated and bandaged cuts and bruises, distributed food commodities to the homes of CPN members, and the list goes on.

In addition to all of her nurse's duties and services, for the past two years she has served as the Housing Manager for the CPN Housing Complex in Rossville. Wait, one more, since being hired she has also served as the chief cook and organizer of the monthly Elders Potluck held in our Community Center. Needless to say, we will all miss Tracy and wish her well.





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## Upcoming CPN Elders' Potlucks

Dates for the Elder Potlucks held in Rossville at noon are:

May 8      Fried Chicken      RSVP by the 4th  
June 12      To be determined      RSVP by the 9th

Bring your favorite side dish or dessert. Please RSVP to Tracy at 785-584-6171.

## My Story-Part One

I recently received a request from a high school student in Westbrook, Maine, requesting my life's story. I thought you might relate to what I sent him.

Part One of Three:

- I mowed a lot of yards, and it was several years before we had a power mower.
- During my High School summers, I picked up and stacked hay bales at farms in the area.
- The majority of my spare time as a kid was spent outside playing sports, Cowboys and Indians, and war.
- Obviously, we did not have cell phones. If you were away from home, you used a pay phone for a nickel.
- We had one phone, on a party line, until I was probably 16, as there was an additional fee for a second phone.
- We didn't have a TV until I was probably 14, and then we only received two channels (NBC and CBS) and they were in black and white.
- TV Broadcasting ended at midnight with the national anthem and the poem "High Flight."
- Before we had TV, I went to neighbor's house on Saturdays to watch football games.
- I was a Cub Scout and later a Boy Scout.
- I was on the Safety Patrol in the 8th grade, entitling us to free movies. Some Saturdays we attended three movies.
- I participated in three sports (Football, Basketball and Track) all four years of high school.
- I played the trombone in my high school band all four years.
- I was selected to attend Boys' State the summer between my junior and senior years.
- I was elected as the Associate Judge on the Student Court my senior year.
- Sneakers (or tennis shoes) were only worn during gym class.
- Girls wore dresses or skirts every day — no jeans or shorts allowed.
- The guys wore jeans.
- In the second semester my senior year I was a student teacher in an Algebra I class.

Migwetch (Thank you),

Jon Boursaw | Wetase Mkoh (Brave Bear) | [jboursaw@potawatomi.org](mailto:jboursaw@potawatomi.org) | 785-608-1982

2007 SW Gage Blvd. | Topeka, KS 66604 | Office Hours: Tuesday 9-11 a.m. | Thursdays 3-5 p.m. | Other times as requested

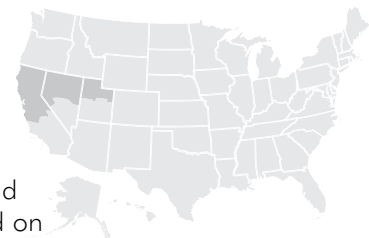


## Mark Johnson District 7

*Bozho nikanek* (Hello friends),

The first week of March, official ballot request forms should have arrived in your mail. Tribal members 18 and older are eligible to vote each year during the general election, with in-person voting and election results announced during the general council meeting held on the last Saturday in June at the Family Reunion Festival. Participating in the 2026 Tribal elections for the Citizen Potawatomi Nation is both a civic responsibility and a vital expression of Tribal self-determination. For a sovereign nation with almost 40,000 enrolled citizens, voting in these elections shapes how the government functions.

Tribal citizens can vote in person or use absentee ballots if they are unable to travel to Oklahoma, ensuring broad access irrespective of



where they live. These elections make voter engagement crucial to shaping the Tribe's future and how services and programs that directly impact individuals and families are protected, or not.

This year, key legislative seats are scheduled for election, including Vice-Chairman and your District 7 Representative. Please study the candidates and issues, make an informed vote and participate in your Tribe. Voting in Tribal elections is especially important given recent patterns of voting participation. In recent election cycles, fewer than 10% of eligible Tribal citizens cast ballots. Tribal elections also embody the exercise of sovereignty. The Citizen Potawatomi Nation governs itself under its own constitution and laws; voting is one of the clearest ways Tribal members assert that sovereign authority. High participation signals to those governments that don't necessarily have the best interests of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation that our political will is unified and actively engaged in contexts where tribal sovereignty and federal, state or local policies intersect.

If you didn't receive your ballot request form, or if it was misplaced, look for one in this publication or online at the Tribal website, [potawatomi.org](http://potawatomi.org). One of the reasons that I have heard for not sending back the ballot request form is that your personal information including Tribal ID may be stolen; remember that you can always place the card inside another envelope, to the same address as the card and mail it back to the election committee. Remember that all Tribal citizens over the age of 18 are eligible to vote, and voting in the Citizen Potawatomi Nation's 2026 elections is important. Tribal citizens who vote are not just fulfilling a duty, they are actively shaping the future of our Nation and honoring their heritage.

And speaking of heritage, attending the Family Reunion Festival is a great way to reconnect with yours. If you haven't been before, or it has been a while, start planning now and join us June 26-June 28 in Shawnee. You can then vote in person at the festival. There is no better way to spend your summer vacation. The honored families in 2026 will be: Acton, Bergeron, Bruno, Curley, Delonais, Greemore and Slavin.

Once again, I would like to say what an honor it is to serve you as your District 7 representative. As always, give me a call and I will be happy to work with you on any questions you may have or provide you with additional information you may need to access Tribal benefits that are available to you. Please also take the time to give me a call or send me an email with your contact information so that I can keep you informed of the happenings within the Nation and district.

Migwetch (Thank you),

Mark Johnson | Wisk Mtek (Strong as a Tree) | 559-351-0078 | [mark.johnson@potawatomi.org](mailto:mark.johnson@potawatomi.org)



## Dave Carney District 8

*Bozho, nikan* (Hello, friends),

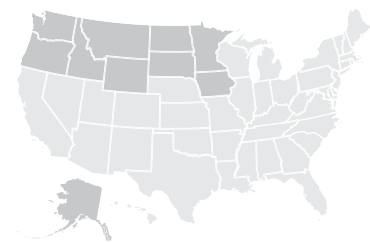
Spring is just around the corner and the daffodils are springing up, reminding us that summer isn't too far away. However, if you've lived in the Northwest any length of time, you are aware of what we call "fake spring" and "fake summer." In preparation for more indoor time, I am revisiting the topic of good books regarding our Tribe. On the other hand, a worthwhile book on the beach this upcoming summer sounds pretty inviting too.

These books are readily available in the Potawatomi Gift Shop at our Cultural Heritage Center and on Amazon. Like everyone else, I love the (almost instant) gratification of Amazon.

*The Potawatomis: Keepers of the Fire* (Volume 145) (The Civilization of the American Indian Series), paperback – 1987 by R. David Edmunds, (about \$25). This is a serious history book that details the history of the Potawatomi from the fur trade through alliances with the French and English, wars and treaties. A "need to have" for your library.

*The Last Blackrobe of Indiana and the Potawatomi Trail of Death*, paperback – 2010 by John William McMullen, (about \$25). This is the true story of Benjamin Petit, a French attorney turned missionary priest, and his mission to the Potawatomi people. Petit joined the northern Indiana Potawatomi in 1837, a year before their forced removal west. The author retells the incredible journey of Petit, who traveled with the Potawatomi people and became part of their history.

*Two-Moon Journey: The Potawatomi Trail of Death*, paperback – 2018, by Peggy King Anderson, (about \$10). You've heard me talk or write about this book several times, but it is dear to my heart. It is a work of historical fiction and is written by the widow of a Tribal member. It is the story of a young Potawatomi girl named *Simu-*



quah and her family and tribe who are forced from their village in Indiana, where they have lived for generations, to Kansas.

If you are looking for a really nice gift for a young Potawatomi in your life (even possibly yourself) I'd say take a look at *Dancing for Our Tribe: Potawatomi Tradition in the New Millennium*, hardcover, 2022, by Sharon Hoogstraten (about \$80). This very beautiful book was crafted by Citizen Potawatomi Nation photographer Sharon Hoogstraten as she visited nine Potawatomi Nations capturing modern day Natives in their regalia. It contains more than 150 portraits and corresponding handwritten statements from our members.

There are several good books written by George Godfrey, a CPN citizen, academic and fixture on the powwow grounds during the Family Festival. Some of his writings are historical and some are historical fiction. Titles include: *Watchekee*, *Walking in Two Cultures*, *Once a Grass Widow*, *Watchekee's Destiny* and *A Perilous Journey*. Mr. Godfrey lives in Illinois and is involved with the Trail of Death Association and caravan.

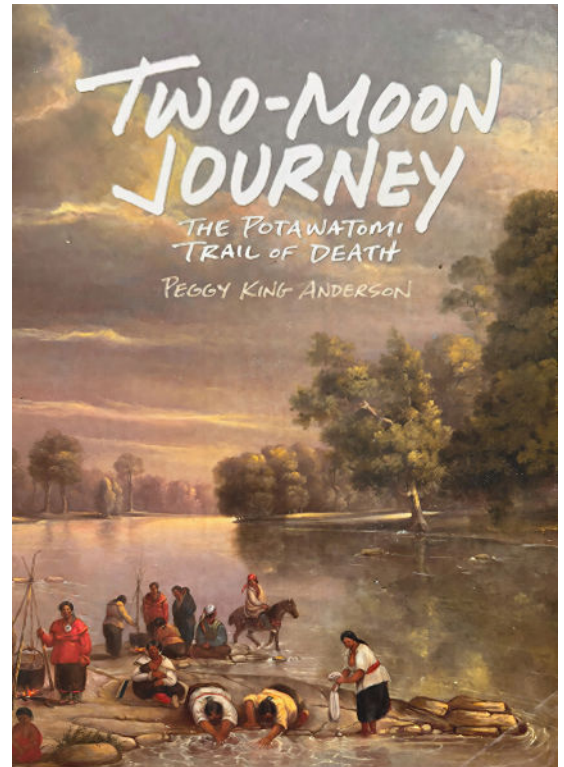
Of course, no Potawatomi reading list could be complete without mentioning Robin Wall Kimmerer's whole body of work. Her books are available in paperback, for about \$17, making them accessible to just about everybody.

I am looking forward to seeing Potawatomi family in Oklahoma and in the district in 2026. Don't forget that the Family Festival (powwow) is June 26 through June 28.

The date for this year's fall feast has been set for Saturday, Oct. 24 for a meeting and mid-day meal at the Great Spirit Church in Portland. We have met at this location in the past and found it to be accommodating, friendly and with ample parking.

It is my honor to serve as your Legislator,

Dave Carney | Kagashgi (Raven) | [dcarney@potawatomi.org](mailto:dcarney@potawatomi.org) | 360-259-4027



## Paul Wesselhöft District 9

Bozho, nikan (Hello, friend),

### Eradication

Native Americans, African Americans, Jews

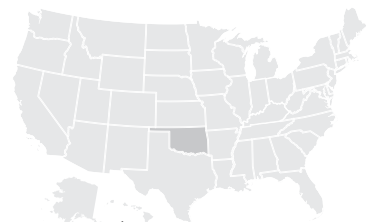
The mass killing of a people did not and does not occur in a vacuum — it takes decades, no, centuries, of dehumanization. For such a killing to happen, one people must reduce another people to the level of animal, below the animal. Most animals are not despised, and only necessarily killed for food and survival.

A person must be convinced over time that a certain people do not constitute a human being, that they are not human as humanity is conceived and defined. These lowly creatures, they believe, are a thing that need not exist and should never exist in their neighborhood, their world.

The Darwinian theory of evolution and the eugenics philosophy and movement led to many killings. The Nazis, for example, believed that they were the super-race and they wanted to eliminate those "lesser" humans.

All genocidal killings, Native American, African American, Jews, and others, is visceral hate but much deeper than hate: it's a fear, a fear that a certain people will personally harm them, threaten their believed superiority, or contaminate and degrade the human species. Their answer, historically, for African Americans is segregation, their answer, historically, for Native Americans and Jews — eradication.

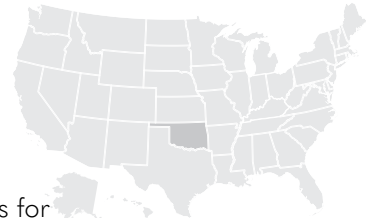
Paul Wesselhöft | Naganit (Leader) | [reppaul@gmail.com](mailto:reppaul@gmail.com) | [pwesselhoft@potawatomi.org](mailto:pwesselhoft@potawatomi.org)





## David Barrett District 10

Bozho (Hello),



What are heavy rare earth elements and why are they crucial for the United States?

DYSPROSIUM and TERBIUM are used in high-temperature magnets for electric vehicle motors and wind turbines. China’s processing capacity for these specific elements is extremely high, making the West heavily reliant on its supply chain. China also has a near-monopoly on the processing of these light rare earth elements (NEODYMIUM and PRASEODYMIUM), which are also used in permanent magnets for various electronics and motors.

Beyond these heavy and light rare earth elements, China has dominance that extends to a wider “basket” of 17 rare earth elements that are critical for technology like smartphones, televisions and fighter jets. China is the world’s largest supplier and processor of rare earth elements, the minerals used in a broad range of key products. These elements have become a key area of contention in the trade friction between the United States and China.

Although negotiations have slightly resolved the impasse lately, dependence on China for these key components remains a vulnerability in the manufacturing supply chains for many military and high technology products.

In late 2025 and early 2026, the United States launched major initiatives to reduce reliance on Chinese rare earth elements by signing deals with Australia, Japan and several Southeast Asian Nations. Key agreements include an \$8.5 billion U.S.-Australia deal for processing, a strategic framework with Japan, and pacts with Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia.

The United States, European Union and International Partnerships planned a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to increase transatlantic rare earth production, while a broader, multi-country initiative (involving over 50 nations) was discussed to create a secure, non-China supply chain.

For too long, the United States has sat on the sidelines while China forged ahead with the mining investments throughout the Asia Pacific. These new agreements indicate a strategic shift. Washington now intends to build its own minerals investment presence in the region and actively counterbalance Beijing’s dominance.

China’s refining process turns them into the final components needed in manufacturing. China mined 69% of the world’s rare earth ores in 2024 ([cnn.com/news/rareearthores](https://cnn.com/news/rareearthores)).

Environmental and regulatory costs and risks are the main reason why supply chains are not yet fully developed outside of China.

Take time to thank a veteran, first responder and a person in blue when you have an opportunity.

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

Migwetch (Thank you),

David Barrett | *Mnedobe* (Sits with the Spirits) | [d Barrett@potawatomi.org](mailto:d Barrett@potawatomi.org)  
1601 S. Gordon Cooper Dr. | Shawnee, OK 74801 | 405-275-3121

## Are you dually enrolled?

To remain an enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, you are not allowed to be enrolled in any other Indigenous tribe. If you are dually enrolled, or if you think you might be, please contact Tribal Rolls at 405-878-5835 or [tribalrolls@potawatomi.org](mailto:tribalrolls@potawatomi.org).



# Walking On

## **Carole Janice Powell** Ogee Family



Carole Janice Powell was proud to be one of six children born to Cecile Ogee and WJ Powell in Clovis, New Mexico. From birth on Dec. 30, 1937, she was designated a “Christmas Carole” of joy, music and spirit of generosity by everyone she met. She excelled at piano in early childhood and enjoyed majoring, playing and teaching it. She played piano right up until a few weeks before she walked on — just before her 88th birthday in 2025.

Carole graduated Lubbock High School with friend and fellow musician Buddy Holley. She soon “jitter-bugged” her way into a wonderful marriage with George Passmore in 1956 at Texas Technological College in Lubbock. She left school to follow George in his corporate accounting career and raise her family — two children, Greg and Pam. She enjoyed their 49-year marriage traveling all over the world in George’s employment with Brown & Root (KBR). Sometimes she worked alongside him in administrative support.

Carole lived and worked in Louisiana; Brussels, Belgium; Anchorage; St. Croix; Thailand; and Malta. She and George settled in Sugarland, Texas, after he retired, and they spent time traveling the country and working in church ministry. Once settled in America, Carole also traveled to several Family Gatherings in Shawnee to see family members and meet other descendants of the Ogee family.

After George’s passing in 2005, Carole moved to Spring, Texas; Fort Lauderdale, Florida; Carrollton, Texas; and finally Missouri City, Texas, to live with daughter Pamela and son-in-law Tom. Carole and Tom formed a house duo — she on piano and Tom on violin! She spent her last years with family, her favorite place to be. Everywhere she lived, Carole made many friendships, kept up with relatives by phone and letters, and was a mathematical card game savant. At the TE Harman Senior Center, she reigned as Canasta champion! She enjoyed life to the fullest and was never known to speak a negative word about anyone.

Farewell, *Wabe kwe* (Dawn Woman). Your son Greg Passmore and wife Cynthia of Buda, Texas; daughter Pamela Passmore and husband Tom McEville of Missouri City, Texas; and many friends and relatives around the world will miss your sunshine in their lives.

## **Matthew J. Scott** Peltier Family

To know Matt was to have a friend.

A man who loved his family, friends, driving, music and his dogs, Matt lived the kind of life that most men dream of.

He was blessed with a loving wife of 31 years, Tina, who always stayed by his side. Matt was the best father to his four kids. Jonathan, his only son, had gifted Matt with his first granddaughter, Tessa. Later, Jonathan and his wife, Kristine, gave Matt three more grandchildren: Kaiden, Kyler and Ophelia. Jennifer, Matt’s eldest daughter, gave him a grandcat: Cass. Jessica and her husband Andrew gave him two granddaughters: McKinley and Amelia. And Matt’s youngest daughter, Amanda, and husband, Sam, gave him a granddog: Lady K.

Matt spent his younger years driving across the country creating adventures and memories to brag about to all his friends. He was a fisherman and hunter, which of course made him a well-versed fibber. Matt was a man of many words, and if he had your phone number, you know exactly what we mean. He was consistently there for his friends and family, always willing to lend a hand or some tools — or an opinion you didn’t ask for.

Matt’s legacy lives on in his best friends from every stage of his life. His biggest wish was for his life to leave a happy memory to those he knew. He wanted us to carry on, live life, make memories, smile when we think of him and endeavor to persevere.

There was a celebration of life at 2 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 28, 2026, at the Lehman Funeral Home Chapel. Arrangements were under the direction of Lehman Funeral Home of Wellston.

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## **Dustin Shawn Tabor** Anderson Family



We announce the passing of Dustin Shawn Tabor, who went home to be with the Lord on Jan. 8, 2026, in Wichita, Kansas, at the age of 50.

Dustin was born on March 18, 1975, in Lakin, Kansas, to Don and Kathy (Skipton) Tabor. He grew up in southwest Kansas and graduated from Deerfield High School in Deerfield, Kansas, in May of 1993. On July 16, 1999, Dustin married Shana Porterfield,

and together they shared many years until June 30, 2022.

Dustin was a devoted father to his three daughters: Taryn Tabor of Wichita, Kansas, Taylee Tabor (Joaquin Castillo), and Teegan Tabor, both of Garden City, Kansas. He was also a proud grandfather to Amara Castillo.

He is also survived by his mother, Kathy Skipton Tabor of Garden City, Kansas, and his siblings Travis Tabor of Holton, Kansas, Joseph Tabor of Garden City, Jediah Tabor of Portland, Oregon, Mariah Tabor of Lubbock, Texas, and Nathaniel Tabor of Hays, Kansas.

Dustin was known for his big heart, his love for joking and laughter, and his genuine care for others. One of his favorite sayings was, "Never let the hard days win."

Dustin was immensely proud of each of his daughters, and they each held a special place in his heart. He loved being present for them, faithfully attending their dance recitals, cheer competitions, volleyball games, tennis matches and basketball games. Some of Dustin's greatest joys were the simple moments spent with his girls.

Dustin was a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and took pride in his heritage. He was a hardworking man who was employed over the years by Burtis Motors, Cox Communications, Meis and Son's Trucking, and UPS.

Dustin is preceded in death by his father, Don Tabor, and his grandparents, Joan and Clifford Tabor and Hoy and Mary Skipton.

Though we grieve his passing, we take comfort knowing Dustin is now healed, whole, and at peace in the presence of Jesus. His legacy of love, faith, perseverance and devotion to family will live on through all who knew and loved him.

### Sherry Kay Beavers

Slavin Family



Sherry Kay Beavers, 63, of Leander, Texas, passed away on Feb. 7, 2026, after her courageous nine-year fight against stage 4 colon cancer. She fought with conviction and determination, understanding that with each round of chemo would buy her more time with everyone that she loved. She wore no cape but nonetheless was a superhero to her family and friends.

Born on Jan. 13, 1963, in Vinita, Oklahoma, Sherry was the eldest of two children of Jerry and Nita Winton.

She attended Blinn College in Brenham, Texas, and then transferred to Southwest University in San Marcos, Texas, where she earned her bachelor's degree in journalism.

Sherry and Joseph were married in September of 1984 in Bay City, Texas, then moved to start their

lives together in Austin, Texas, where they had their three daughters and lived a majority of their lives.

Sherry was an elementary school teacher for several years. Teaching was her calling, and she was dedicated to countless children.

Sherry retired from teaching in 2005 when she and her husband founded the surveying company Landesign Services, Inc.

Joe and Sherry always wanted a ranch, and in 2005 they started their dream together, buying land in Goldthwaite, Texas, that would become Beavers Ranch. Ultimately, they built their dream home in 2017.

Sherry was preceded in death by her parents, Jerry and Nita Winton.

Sherry leaves behind her husband of 42 years, Joseph; three daughters, Lauren, Katherine and Jillian; her son-in-law Chandler; her brother, Michael Winton, and nephew Preston and niece Kendal.

Sherry's children were the loves of her life, and she was so proud of them. They inherited Sherry's love of music, sports, her family's Native American history, food and mostly friendships. Her family and friends will carry on her love of cooking, the Astros, Longhorns and Texans, gardening, music and entertaining.



*Hau ndenwémagnek*

Ho my relatives

*Ébyé yak shote gnom*

We have come here today

*Éwi nesh myé yak ode wdenwéma*

To lay our brother to rest

*Ngom she épam sét ode*

Today he walks

*Ga wje zhyé wat gi gambojek*

Among those who have passed on

*I yé i ébgednoyak ode ngemwen*

That is why we offer this song

*Émno shketot wa je zhyat ibe shpemsegok*

That his journey will go well where he goes above

*Iw énaj moyan*

That's all I have to say

A Potawatomi prayer for a specific loved one who has walked on.

By Don Perrot

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# HOWNIKAN

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## Address change?

Send to Tribal Rolls ([tribalrolls@potawatomi.org](mailto:tribalrolls@potawatomi.org))  
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