

HOWAWUKKAN

Nmébnegises | March 2025



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Walking On



Trauma-informed approach to social media

By Kayla Woody,
CPN House of Hope Prevention Specialist

We wake up every morning, pull ourselves out of bed and immediately grab our phones to see the newest notifications. Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, X and TikTok have become integral parts of our lives. They allow us to stay connected, share experiences and access information.

We encounter thousands of people daily, sharing space and content, without ever seeing the real struggles and pain that those individuals hold close. The impact of social media on our relationships and mental health is a headline topic. Many people are feeling the negative impact of the loss of empathy from those they encounter online.

To lighten that burden, try using a trauma-informed approach when it comes to online connection. Trauma-informed means taking into consideration a person's experience of trauma and their reactions to what they may see on social media.

The National Sexual Violence Resource Center gives some great tips on how to be more trauma-informed while we are online.

- Happy photos don't mean happy people

It is easy to assume that all is fun and exciting from those vacation pics and date-night snaps. What we don't see behind the post is disagreements, tears and unhealed trauma. Remember that one second out of someone else's life captured by a photo doesn't constitute their permanent situation, mood or feelings. We have no idea what others might be going through in life and can't tell that information by looking at their social media.

- Try to imagine the one person you are helping

When we engage with others online, we can either be a help or a hindrance. Though we are not always able to see the impact we make, even if one person sees your content and feels better, that is a great gift.

- Put up your boundaries

We must give ourselves the same compassion we give others. Don't think that you are obligated

to participate or interact with those who do not accept you or support you. This may include not turning on your camera during video conferences, increasing privacy settings, and blocking or reporting those that harass or cause a negative impact.

- Avoid Doom Scrolling

Social media is a great source of information but an abundance of it can lead to negative impacts on our mental health. Doom Scrolling is spending excessive amounts of time absorbing negative news.

**IF YOU FEEL INTIMIDATED
OR FEARFUL IN YOUR
RELATIONSHIP,
WE ARE HERE TO HELP.**

24/7 Crisis Line: 405-878-4673



**CITIZEN POTAWATOMI NATION
HOUSE OF HOPE**

We assist anyone, Native or Non-Native, experiencing abuse



This can lead to depression, anxiety, guilt, anger and hopelessness. There is nothing wrong with putting up a boundary and actively choosing not to take in negative news for the sake of one's mental health. Not watching the news, not reading a triggering article or unfollowing content that upsets you are measures you can take to avoid trauma overload.

- Our perception is our reality

We start observing media imagery at such a young age that we tend to think of depictions as a mirror of reality instead of constructions. Those depictions of false reality then become expectations we place on ourselves or others in the real world. Just as we experience this in our own way, other people create their own reality too. It is vital to remember that the online world is a world of media, of constructions, which can change our reality depending on what content we have in front of us.

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

Chairman Barrett speaks to Harvard University Native Nation Building Class

Chairman John "Rocky" Barrett spoke to the Harvard Kennedy School of Government class on Native Nation Building Jan. 16.

The class, *Native Americans in the 21st Century: Nation Building I*, led by Prof. Joe Kalt and Prof. Angela R. Riley (CPN's Supreme Court Chief Justice), "examines the challenges that contemporary American Indian nations face as they endeavor to rebuild their communities, strengthen their cultures, and support their citizens."

"The class is a flagship offering of Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government," a letter to Chairman Barrett from Professor Kalt said. "It has been taught every year for more than 25 years."

Chairman Barrett spoke on turning history around through government reform.

"As a key part of the course, we expose our students to leaders working in various capacities in Native governance around Indian Country," Kalt said. "As we do every year, we will feature approximately 20 Indigenous leaders during the five days of the course."

In the letter, Kalt also said that Chairman Barrett had spoken to the class several times, and that hearing from experienced leaders such as Chairman Barrett helps students understand the "real-world challenges of nation building."

Riley and Kalt presented the Chairman with questions to lead a conversation with adult students, focusing on what CPN has "built in both the provision of government services and in economic development" and what key governmental reforms CPN has put in place to help build the Nation into what it is today.

Students were given information on CPN and its background before the course, and Kalt explained the class was not made up of typical young college students.

"The students in the class are almost all mid-career professionals, usually in their 30s and 40s (sometimes into their 60s and even 70s) and with their own amazing records of leadership and accomplishment," Kalt said.

The class was also open to students from other departments, schools and even area universities, including those who fly in to audit the course.

"Not surprisingly, it attracts most of the Native students at Harvard; but the course has also become particularly popular with students and leaders from developing countries (who immediately see the parallels of the colonial power loosening control but leaving its legacies behind as communities struggle to chart their own courses)," Kalt said.



Chairman John "Rocky" Barrett signs Harvard's registry of Heads of State. (Photo by Julia McNicholas)

He added that students who have enrolled in the class have included former members of Congress, past presidents of African countries, finance ministers of Latin American countries, tribal councils from tribes in the U.S. and Canada, and delegations of Māori and Australian Indigenous leaders.

Other speakers that day included Meredith Drent, chief judge of the Tulalip Tribes Tribal Court, and Lance Morgan, president and CEO of Ho-Chunk, Inc., Winnebago of Nebraska.

While at Harvard, Chairman Barrett also signed the registry of Heads of State, which is signed by all heads of state who have spoken at Harvard, from George Washington to Winston Churchill to King Charles of England. The signing was conducted by Harvard University Marshal Katherine G. O'Dair, Ph.D, the University's Chief of protocol. Her position is described as:

"The Marshall connects and represents the Harvard community to the world, welcoming guests and celebrating key moments, while also providing guidance and support to university partners, all in service to the mission of the university." The Marshall's Office has been official since 1896. 🔥

Language update

By Justin Neely, CPN Language Department Director

Ni je na ginwa (How are you all)?

We had an awesome turnout for our annual Winter Storytelling event. We had 70 people come to the Cultural Heritage Center to listen in person and another 100 or so join us online. Folks seemed to have a good time. *Migwetch* (thank you) to my staff, Shelly Watson and Josey Wood, who helped make the event a success. Online we had folks join us from all over the country and several from Canada. At least 17 states and three provinces in Canada joined us to listen to winter stories. All seemed to have a good time. Some comments we received were “Great visiting on Zoom—best CPN Winter Stories yet! It was very enjoyable! Great turnout with some good food! *Migwetch ode mawjeshnowen* (thank you for this gathering).”

We are in our second semester of high school courses. This semester we have students at Shawnee High School, North Rock Creek High School and Tecumseh High School. It’s awesome we are able to make the language available for students who would rather learn Potawatomi than Spanish or another language.

We are going to be starting a new six-week beginner class April 3-May 8 every Thursday. Shelly Watson, the newest member of our language team, will be teaching this class. This is Shelly’s third class. She has taught a beginner class on-site before, but this time she will be adding the online option so our people who live far away can join in. She also teaches a class every Wednesday for our elders at the Elders Center. We are proud



Cake and a meal were provided after the Winter Storytelling event.

of her accomplishments with the language and look forward to what the future holds. It will be from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Cultural Heritage Center and online. For more information email language@potawatomi.org.

I will be teaching an online six-week conversational course. This will be Feb. 12-March 19 from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Central Time. We have come to a point where many people are getting good at reading and writing our language. This class will be about getting used to hearing the language and then being able to reply back. We will start with basic everyday statements, but the goal is to get folks to start feeling comfortable enough to start talking. Being able to read and write is one thing, but we want people to feel comfortable talking and to get used to hearing the language. These are different skill sets.



The 2025 Winter Storytelling event brings 70 attendees to the Cultural Heritage Center

Josey Wood is also working on a traditional story about Rabbit being arrogant. It’s a story which was first recorded in the 1940s by linguist Charles Hockett working with Jim and Alice Spear.

Remember learning the language doesn’t happen overnight; it may take a lifetime, each day working a little more. You can learn our language if you want to make it a priority. We have created a number of tools, such as our online dictionary at potawatomidictionary.com and online self-paced classes as well as real-time classes. When you are ready, we stand ready to help you connect more with your people through learning your language. 🔥

Burnett family history

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

Beginnings

The Burnett family has a long, rich history with the Potawatomi people. *Kaukima*, daughter of Potawatomi Chief *Nanaquiba* (Water Moccasin) and sister to Potawatomi Chief *Topinabee* (He Who Sits Quietly), married French fur trader William Burnett.

Kaukima and William had seven children: James, Abraham, John, Isaac, Jacob, Nancy and Rebecca.

In 1826, Abraham received three sections of land near Logansport, Indiana, and a community 13 miles west of it bears his name — Burnettsville.

Although Abraham never married, he would later adopt a younger cousin. *Nanweshmah* (He Prays With Plants) was born in Indiana near the Tippecanoe River in November 1812 to Chief *Shauquebe* and his wife, *Conezoquah*. Abraham Burnett was a cousin of *Conezoquah*. After *Conezoquah* and Chief *Shauquebe* passed away, Abraham Burnett adopted *Nanweshmah*.

Nanweshmah took his adopted father's name and became known as Abram Burnett.



Abram Burnett

Leadership

Following in his adopted father's footsteps, Abram studied at the Carey Mission in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and the Choctaw Academy in Kentucky. The skills Abram obtained while in school proved important in the trying years to come, and he worked as an interpreter for church and governmental purposes.

Burnett married a wealthy Potawatomi woman named *D'mooshkeeekewah*. English artist George Winter captured sketches of Potawatomi and kept written records on his experiences. He wrote, "She was an Indian woman of much personal attraction. She excited the admiration of white men as well as that of the Indians. ... Abram Burnett appeared always proud."

As more and more settlers wanted land in the Great Lakes region, Potawatomi and other Native American tribes lost most of their ancestral homelands. In 1830, President Andrew Jackson signed the Indian



Abram Burnett's children gather for a photo.

Removal Act, granting the government authority to remove tribes west of the Mississippi.

Federal officials called a meeting with the Potawatomi in the fall of 1838, supposedly to get the Tribe and its leaders together. Instead, volunteer militia detained as many Potawatomi as possible, including Burnett. On Sept. 4, 1838, the Potawatomi began their forced removal, walking 660 miles from present-day Indiana to present-day Kansas known as the Trail of Death. More than 40 Tribal members perished on the journey, mostly women and children.

Because of Chief Burnett's background, he also served an interpreter on the Trail of Death, helping lend a voice to his people. Jesuit priest Benjamin Petit joined the Potawatomi on the removal and fell ill once arriving on the new reservation. Burnett took it upon himself to take Petit to the nearest Jesuit seminary in St. Louis to receive care. Fr. Petit was too weak to make the complete journey on horseback. Although he hoped to recover in St. Louis and return to Indiana, Petit passed away Feb. 10, 1839.

Post removal

Adapting to the new lands in present-day Kansas proved difficult. The lack of provisions promised by the federal government hindered the Potawatomi tribe's ability to successfully settle on the new reservation. Many more perished, including Burnett's wife *D'mooshkeekewah* in 1842.

Burnett represented the Potawatomi in Washington, D.C., on numerous occasions, and on one trip, he met his second wife Mary Knofflock. They wed in 1843 and had six children: Joseph W., Mary J., Mary A., Catherine, Clara and Abraham Lincoln.

As Eastern woodland people, the prairie lacked many of the resources familiar to the Potawatomi. However, Burnett and others established successful businesses and took advantage of the Oregon Trail that cut through the Potawatomi Reservation. In 1848, he settled on what remains the highest elevation in Topeka, Kansas, and became a successful farmer and sold livestock.

According to Joseph Murphy's book *Potawatomi of the West: Origins of the Citizen Band*, Abram came to considerable prominence in Kansas. During this time, the community had several factions of Potawatomi with varying views. He supported efforts to create a community-approved business committee. This ideal continues today with Tribal-member elected legislators and executive body members. While in Kansas, he also wrote and spoke on behalf of the Tribe, and Burnett's signature appears on the Treaty of 1846, Treaty of 1861 and Treaty of 1867.

Burnett passed in 1870. Afterward, Mary and the children relocated to present-day Oklahoma where the Burnett children carried on the family legacy of leadership and entrepreneurship.

Today, the site in southwest Topeka, Kansas, known as Burnett's Mound is marked by a tall, marble monument. CPN and the Shawnee (Kansas) County Parks and Recreation Department partnered to create three informational panels at the site to educate visitors about Burnett's leadership. Burnett's final resting place is on land west of Topeka's Skyline Park and his descendants have worked together to improve and maintain the site.

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

Mary Jane Burnett Pearce



2025



POTAWATOMI FIRE

By Chris Cox, Arena Communications Director

After a historic season in 2024, the Potawatomi Fire look to continue making history in 2025.

2024, in a lot of ways, was a season of destiny for the Fire. The Fire went 28-0 and won The Basketball League (TBL) Championship for the second straight season. The undefeated record and the back-to-back titles were both firsts in TBL history.

"We started working on the 2024 season the day after the 2023 season ended," said Fire general manager David Qualls. "First, we wanted to figure out what we did right, what we did wrong, and what can we do to make it better. It was such a gratifying experience winning one championship and the only thing we wanted to do was make the program better for 2024."

2024 was clearly better as the Fire won their second straight TBL Championship. The Fire used an explosive offense to lead them to the 2024 title, setting new TBL records for points per game (131.0) and assists per game (28.4) along the way. The Fire were efficient on that end of the court as well, shooting just under 54% from the field.

"I thought our guys really bought into their roles on the court," said two-time TBL Coach of the Year Mark Dannhoff. "Even if we got down, especially early, we never felt like we were out of any game. We had a veteran team, and a confident team, which allowed us to come back after some poor starts. We really made a

point to get guys that were versatile so when we subbed guys in and out, we don't lose or change much."

While the offense was explosive, this wasn't a team built to simply outscore their opponents. The 2024 Potawatomi Fire were suffocating on defense as well, holding opponents to 105.7 points per game.

"We play defense a little different than some people," said Dannhoff. "Our guys are good at scrambling and when you can scramble like we can, you can make up for a lot of errors on the defensive end."

While the Fire's defense was one of the best in TBL, Dannhoff believes there is still room for improvement.

"Going back and looking at film, I actually thought we could've been better defensively," Dannhoff said. "It's odd to say after you have the season we had that you're disappointed but maybe that's why we're who we are and where we are. It's never good enough. We can always get better. We might be pleased where we are, but we know we can get better. I really felt we could've been a better defensive team and have a lot of room for improvement."

Following the history making season of 2024, what's left for the Fire to accomplish and how will the Fire measure success in 2025 after going undefeated and winning another Lillie (TBL's Championship trophy)?

"It's hard to have less expectations than we did last year but as I said on the night we won the championship, I

feel like we have a dynasty forming,” Qualls said. “We have all the pieces in place and the support of the community and CPN. I feel like we have the roster that can win a third straight title, and while that’s a goal, my expectation as general manager is to give our fans the best bang for their buck. As the GM, I can’t judge success based solely on if we win or if we lose. I believe as long as our fans are here with us and this is a viable program as an enterprise for the Tribe, then we will always have success on the court as well.”

With history on the line every time they step on the court, the Fire know they will get everyone’s best effort throughout the season. To handle that physically and mentally daunting task, Qualls and Dannhoff have put together a roster that could be better than last year’s.

Returning for the Fire are 2024 TBL MVP Chuck Guy and Sixth Man of the Year Ricky Artis. Also back is the Fire’s longest tenured player and two-time TBL Playoff MVP (2023 and 2024), Deshawn Munson. Returning alongside those three players are Jachai Simmons, Isaiah Wade and Jaylen Mahone. Rounding out the returners from last year’s historic team is TBL’s only three-time champion, Paul Harrison.

“We wanted to get our key player recommitted to coming back early on,” Qualls said. “Everyone has bought into the Fire but there is always a negotiation that goes on and we were able to come to agreement with almost everyone we wanted back. We did lose a couple of players, and we wish them the best, but we are very happy with the guys we have coming back.”

“You always have to have a good foundation,” said Dannhoff. “Anytime you can bring your core back, you’re already off to a good start. We are really excited about our returners. We certainly will miss some guys that aren’t with us this season, but I have the utmost confidence in the guys coming back, and the new guys coming in, that we can be successful.”

In addition to the seven returners, the Fire have signed four new players for the 2025 season. They are Jay Hedgeman, Kam Williams, Charles Lampton and Buay Koka.



“Kam and Hedgeman both have a lot of experience both in TBL and overseas,” said Dannhoff. “I think they can come in right away and step right in. There won’t be a real learning curve for them outside of what we do. Both Kam and Jay bring a lot of experience, talent, skill, and versatility. Buay and Charles are coming in to support us in the post. I think both of these guys have really high ceilings. They play hard and protect the rim. They not only block shots but they change shots and they are both something we haven’t had over the past couple of years. They are also very skilled, can handle the ball, and do a lot of things well, especially for being seven feet tall. We are really excited about them and can’t wait to see their progress.”

While 2024 was historic in many ways, history can continue for the Fire in 2025. Along with looking to become TBL’s first ever three-time and back-to-back-to-back champs, the Fire are also entering this season with a TBL record 30-game win streak, which dates back to the 2023 TBL Championship series. The Fire have also won 36 consecutive home games inside FireLake Arena. That streak dates back to May 14, 2022.

If 2024 was a season of destiny, then 2025 has dynastic potential for the Fire as they look to, again, claim their spot atop the TBL.

The Fire are set to play a 20-game regular season schedule. The regular season tipped off Sunday, March 2 when the Fire visited Little Rock Lightning. The Fire’s first home game was Saturday, March 8th against the Western Oklahoma Sky Kings.

For a full schedule and to purchase tickets, visit potawatomifire.com. Be sure to follow the Fire on Facebook, Instagram, X, and YouTube. 🔥

KEEPING OUR CULTURE STRONG

FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS



Under the **leadership** of Chairman John "Rocky" Barrett, the Citizen Potawatomi Nation continues to **honor** and **preserve** our **traditions** and **language**.

The Cultural Heritage Center **connects tribal members** to our **history** through immersive exhibits. The Eagle Aviary **protects** our **prayer messengers** while providing feathers for ceremonies and regalia. Expanded **language programs** ensure **Potawatomi language** is passed down to **future generations**.

RE-ELECT JOHN "ROCKY" BARRETT

PROTECTING OUR CULTURE. STRENGTHENING OUR FUTURE.

Paid for by John "Rocky" Barrett



"MNO GIZHGET
BODWEWADMI EYAWYAN!"

VOTE FOR
CHARLES DWIGHT SCOTT

**FOR TRIBAL CHAIRMAN OF THE
CITIZEN POTAWATOMI NATION**



VOTE FOR

- **Leadership with Integrity:** A chairman who will govern with love, kindness, humility, and respect, staying active within our tribe and accessible to our people.
- **Financial Transparency:** A chairman who will ensure open communication about tribal funding, budgets, assets, and spending, giving our people a voice in how funds are allocated.
- **Economic Opportunity:** A chairman committed to creating jobs for our people by prioritizing the hiring of qualified tribal members within our businesses and projects.
- **Cultural Preservation:** A chairman who values our people and culture above all, allocating funding for language and cultural programs while establishing an Elders Council, Youth Council, and Veterans Council to guide leadership in restoring and preserving our heritage.



June 28, 2025



It's A Good Day To Be Potawatomi

Paid for by Charles Scott

Vote for **BRENDA TREVINO** (OGEE FAMILY)

District 3 Legislative Representative



District #3 Family, I am asking for your vote for the following reasons:

• **Commitment:** It has been a personal goal of mine to give back to the tribe for the assistance I, my children and my elders have received over the years. This is the perfect way to utilize my talents to do just that...by committing to this position and to you.

• **Availability and Dedication:** Recently retired from a director's position at Port Houston after 17 years, and a prior position as the Construction Department Manager at the Harris County Flood Control District I am available to serve you every day without a competing full-time job.

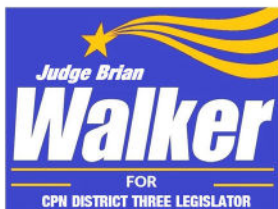
• **Improved Connectivity:** I plan to expand the connectivity of our District 3 members to foster even stronger community internally and externally with other CPN Districts and our Executive Leadership. I would also like to introduce a Potawatomi Leadership Program Alumni group to keep those connections strong between the tribe and past program attendees.

• **Listening and Innovation:** I will listen to your ideas and your stories to bring forth new ideas that can benefit our District and the Tribe. I now have a phone number and email address that are only being used for the CPN campaign. They are below. Feel free to reach out to me any time.

We stand on the shoulders of many great leaders, past and present. I would be honored to work for you, to pick up where others have taken us, and to walk with you into the future.

Paid for by Brenda Trevino

brendatrevino924@gmail.com / 281-466-7427



PLEASE VOTE
"JUDGE BRIAN WALKER" FOR
CPN DISTRICT 3 LEGISLATOR

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT JUDGE BRIAN
WALKER, PLEASE VISIT HIS JUDICIAL PAGE AT:

WWW.VOTEFORWALKER.COM

VOTE

Jennifer Bertelsen

Kno Migwenkwe [Eagle Feather Woman]
for District 3 Legislator

- Transparency
- Accountability
- Accessibility
- Culture
- Enterprise
- Youth Initiatives
- Elder Programs



Love Wisdom Respect
Bravery Honesty Humility
Trust

knomigwenkwe@yahoo.com



Thank you

Dear CPN Family,

Migwetch for your ongoing support. I am excited to serve as District #2's Legislator for another term. Please contact me to visit, or if I can assist. I look forward to seeing you around our District soon and perhaps on our reserve lands in June, when I take the oath of office.

Eva Marie Carney

Ojindiskwe

evamariecarney@gmail.com

1-888-849-1484

Mail to: 5877 Washington Blvd, #5591
Arlington, VA 22205-9998



This advertising space was provided to me free of charge: the HowNikan offered to all candidates an equal amount of free space in this March edition.

**I'm Anna Johnson & I'm running for District 1
I am committed to representing the district's needs
and culture. I want to hear directly from you; your
concerns, ideas and hopes for the future of our tribe**

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Paid for by Anna Johnson

District 1

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

ANNA JOHNSON, MBA
FOR DISTRICT 1 LEGISLATOR 2025

For privacy, Tribal Rolls **DOES NOT** share your information
I will **never** be able to reach out, unless you do first!



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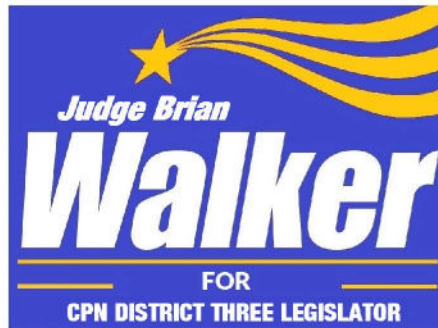
Vote for
BRENDA TREVINO (OGEE FAMILY)

**District 3
Legislative Representative**

Available, Committed and Ready to Serve
Vote absentee by June 8, 2025, or in person at the Festival

Paid for by Brenda Trevino

WALKER



**JUSTICE ON THE SECOND COURT OF
APPEALS OF TEXAS**

**AND
SMALL BUSINESS OWNER**

PREVIOUSLY:

**FIRST JAG IN AIR FORCE HISTORY TO SERVE
AS A DRILL INSTRUCTOR AT THE U.S. AIR
FORCE OFFICER TRAINING SCHOOL**

**ASSOCIATE AT HEADQUARTERS OF SUCCESSFUL
U.S. PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN AND ASSISTANT
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS OF TEXAS SENATE**

**WHILE STILL UNDER 40, VOTED "LAWYER ON
THE RISE" BY TEXAS LAWYER MAGAZINE (TOP
2 LAWYERS IN TEXAS IN PRIVATE PRACTICE)**



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WWW.VOTEFORWALKER.COM

PAID FOR BY JUDGE BRIAN WALKER



STEVE LIVINGSTON ANDERSON / HARDIN FAMILY

bozho ginwa (greetings to you all) -

My name is Steve Livingston, and I am running to represent the citizens of District 1. I live in Toledo, Ohio, and I am a descendant of John Anderson and Elizabeth Hardin through my 2x great grandmother, Julia Anderson McEvers. For years I have been a passionate learner and advocate for our bodwéwadmimwen (Potawatomi Language), and equally I have been passionate about being involved in our tribal government. It's our civic duty as citizens of a sovereign nation to be informed, engaged, and involved, and one of the best ways in doing that is through interactions with your legislators. In addition to providing opportunities for us to gather and learn traditions at district gatherings, I want to engage in a partnership with you all to advance ideas and proposals that are important to you. I believe in open governance, transparency, supporting our language and traditions, and leading with the grit, determination, and the traditional values our ancestors set for our example. Over the next few months, I hope to share with you all my ideas and proposals through the Hownikan, including my **proposed Open Meetings Act**; an example of how I will lead and my commitment to open governance. To learn more, visit <https://cpndistrict1.com>.



A (PROPOSED) ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT

Section X-1-004 Findings

The Citizen Potawatomi Nation Legislature finds:

- (a) Open governance is essential to maintaining trust between the Nation's leadership and its citizens. Ensuring that government proceedings are accessible allows citizens to stay informed and engaged in decisions that affect the community.
- (b) Transparency strengthens accountability by allowing citizens to oversee the actions of the government. When meetings are conducted openly, officials are more likely to make decisions that reflect the best interests of the Nation as a whole.
- (c) Government actions should be accessible to all citizens, as they are undertaken on behalf of the entire Nation. However, in certain situations—such as legal matters, personnel discussions, or sensitive negotiations—confidentiality may be necessary to protect the interests of the Nation. In such cases, limitations on disclosure should be applied cautiously and only when absolutely required.
- (d) Public participation leads to more effective governance. When citizens have access to information and opportunities to voice their perspectives, decisions are more representative of the community's needs.
- (e) Technology provides new opportunities to expand accessibility. By utilizing digital platforms and remote access tools, the Nation can ensure that all citizens—regardless of location—have the ability to observe and engage with government proceedings.
- (f) An informed and involved citizenry strengthens self-governance. By maintaining an open and transparent system, the Nation reinforces its sovereignty and ensures that future generations can participate in the democratic process.

READ MORE @ <https://cpndistrict1.com/proposals>

Paid for by Steve Livingston

KEY ISSUES & BELIEFS

These are just a few of the positions I take on key issues. It takes the support of other legislators, and **ALL OF YOU** and your support to bring about positive change in our community. **I believe in the power of one's voice**, and I intend to use my position to be a vocal advocate for many of these issues and more.

- **PERSONAL TRANSPARENCY**
 - Open Forum & Townhalls
 - Post-Vote Reporting on Social Media
 - Public Expense Reports
- **GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY**
 - Open Meetings
 - Budget & Financials Accessibility
 - Expanded Legislative Tracker
- **FOR THE POTAWATOMI CONFEDERACY**
- **ESTABLISH COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARDS**
- **ESTABLISH YOUTH & ELDER COUNCILS**
- **MORE FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR LANGUAGE AND TRADITIONAL CRAFT LEARNING ACCESSIBLE TO ALL CITIZENS**

Chairman election candidates Q&A

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

John "Rocky" Barrett



Incumbent

Potawatomi name (if applicable) and family:

Keweoge (He Leads Them Home). My Mother was Annetta Peltier Barrett, Grandfather was Oliver A. Peltier, my grandmother was Ozetta Bourassa Peltier

Residence:

Shawnee, Oklahoma

Education and/or other achievements:

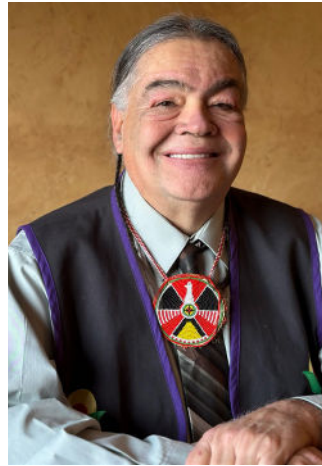
I attended Princeton University from 1962 to 1965 before earning a Bachelor of Science in Business (Marketing and Management) from Oklahoma City University in 1967. I continued my education at the Oklahoma City University Graduate School of Business from 1967 to 1968 and was later awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Commercial Sciences from St. Gregory's University in 2003. Over the years, I have worked to transform CPN primarily through Constitutional changes, creating virtual Tribal Legislature, expanding services, and growing our economic impact to \$822 million. I am honored to have received the Sovereignty Award and multiple Harvard Honoring Nations Awards for my efforts. I was inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame in 2024.

Employment: Chairman, Citizen Potawatomi Nation 1985 (the longest serving chief tribal elected official in the United States).

General statement: Running for Tribal Chairman is important to me because I want to continue guiding the progress we have made over the past 40 years. We have just come through one of the toughest periods in our history fighting the Covid epidemic and the economic crisis that followed it and which continues into today.

It is vital that Citizen Potawatomi Nation plays a key role in helping our people recover and emerge stronger. Our unprecedented growth has allowed us to serve our people like no other tribe in the U.S. It would be my greatest honor to continue leading our Nation, ensuring a future built on truth, caring for our people in need, economic resilience, and enhanced opportunity for all Citizen Potawatomi.

Charles Scott



Challenger

Potawatomi name (if applicable) and family:

My Potawatomi name is *Wenbisa*, which translates to Light Rain. My Christian name is Charles Scott, and I am from the Peltier, Vieux and Ogee Families.

Residence:

Norman, Oklahoma

Education and/or other achievements:

BA in Philosophy and Religious Studies from St. Gregory's University. I'm also a graduate of our *Mdamen* program, which I highly recommend.

Employment: I'm a veteran of the Army and Navy. I have worked as a Maintenance Mechanic, a Union Organizer, and a Paramedic.

General statement: I'm a running for Chairman. Our Tribe is experiencing a Generational Change in Leadership. We will inherit a Tribe with a good financial foundation. For past 30 years our Elder Generation has built this foundation by focusing on businesses and education programs. My personal Pledge: I will be bringing transparency to our Government, Businesses and Budgets. We will refocus our government on using our businesses to support, restore and preserve our Language and Culture. We will restore our community and focus on how we do government in a more Traditional way. I will establish a Elders Council, a Youth Council and Veterans Council, who will then work with our Legislature to fund our Cultural programs. We will have more than 1 family event per year.

Legislature election candidates Q&A

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

District 1 candidates

Steve Livingston



Challenger

Potawatomi name (if applicable) and family:
Waszo. Anderson/Hardin

Residence: Toledo, Ohio

Education and/or other achievements:
Associates in Computer Programming & Associates in Information Systems

Employment:
Senior Engineering Manager at Sinch,

a global telecommunications company based in Stockholm, Sweden.

General statement: For more information, please visit my website at cpndistrict1.com.

bozho ginwa!

Steve Livingston *ndezhnēkas. nyéwwabdēk ndetsēponges.* New Britain, Connecticut *ngi ndades nesh thé* Toledo, Ohio *ga thē mathigēyan miné mégwa zhe ngom odē wpi ndeda.* Hello to you all! My name is Steve Livingston. I am 40 years old. I was born in New Britain, Connecticut but I grew up and was raised in Toledo, Ohio and still live here today.

Shawnee, Oklahoma *ga thē mathiget o ngēthē meshomes i thé miné mana ngothi 1930 iw ga byé anthit zhi* Toledo, Ohio. My great grandfather was raised in Shawnee, Oklahoma and then sometime around 1930 he moved here to Toledo, Ohio.

bodwēwadmiwnēnē ndaw miné zhisibēniyēk è zhē dbéndagwzēyan

gigo wdodémwan gi ndankwēbtheegnēk. I'm Potawatomi and I'm enrolled with the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. My ancestors were fish clan.

nish nnithansēk ndesak. ngot shkénigesh miné o ngot shkénigkwé ndesak. Chase *miné* Caitlyn *zhenkazwik. mdatso nseth ngotwatso wdē tsēpongezé o ndanes miné nishwabdēk nseth nish wdetsēpongezé o ngwes.* I have two children. One young man and one teenage girl. Chase and Caitlyn are their names. My daughter is 16 and my son is 22 years old.

Software Engineering Manager *éngezyan. miné zhē nangodgen nwi kenomēwak gi nwith bodwēwadmiyēk èwi gkéndēmwat odē bodwēwadmiwēn.* I work as a Senior

Software Engineering Manager, and after work I sometimes help and teach others this Potawatomi language.

mbégesh na èwi nē gigidownēnēwēyan èwi nishokmēwga godē gdeneshnabēymenanēk. nnédwéndan èwi kkéndēmwat odē neshnabēmwen miné èwi mno bmadzēwat.

ttho shna mégwa bodwēwadmik gwi nē yawsimen gishpen bon neshnabēmygo, gi kedok gdē gēkyamenanēk. I wish to become your representative to help our people. I want them to know this Indian language so that they will live a good life. We will no longer be Potawatomi people if we stop speaking our language, our elders have said.

mbégesh na nēwetth wnishokmēwawan ni gbēmzadimnanen gi naganthēk, miné gdē gēkyamenanēk miné gi gnithansēnanēk. nnédwéndan èwi nishokmadwat thayék gi bodwēwadmiyēk. Potawatomi Confederacy *gwi zhnēkangomen.* I wish our leaders would better help our people, our elders and our children. I want them to work with each other, all of the Potawatomi people, the Potawatomi Confederacy as we call it.

gnédwéndamen èwi gkéndēmgo i è zhē gnenēmwat nzhonyamnan ègmé gizhēk. gda byé widmagwananēk i wa dodēmwat i budget shna. thak shna gégo gda widmagwananēk gi naganthēk. gda byé wabdē'égwananēk ni mzen'ēgnen miné wa nakwnēmwat.

We want to know how they are managing and holding our money. We want them to share the budget (and our finances). Our leaders should be open and transparent. They should show us those papers and their decisions (public records).

wi nē é'dēmen gizes è gothēk. gizha byé yazhdéyakw-byémēwshēk. In June, I ask that please vote for me.

Anna Johnson



Challenger

Potawatomi name (if applicable) and family:
I am a descendant of Julia Bruno and Ellen Vieux

Residence:
Mishawaka, Indiana

Education and/or other achievements:

- BS in University Studies and Biblical Studies; Kentucky Christian University 2010
- CPN Partnership program graduate; Masters of Business Administration, Oklahoma Baptist University 2020
- Published author

- Completed a Spartan Race 2x Trifecta in 2019 (Two 5k, 10k, and 21k obstacle races in the same calendar year)

Employment: Owner/operator of My Ribbon Closet since July 2024 and Full time wife and mother since 2020

General statement: Running for District 1 legislator allows me to say “Thank you” to my Potawatomi Family in the biggest way, for the many benefits I’ve experienced throughout my life; which directly inspired my recent in-depth reconnection journey. My desire is to acknowledge the concerns of tribal members in my district, to advocate and participate in the strengthening and sharing of Potawatomi culture throughout the entirety of District 1, and to give clarity of the legislative decisions made & how tribal members’ will benefit.

I hope to continue to connect with you on socials (Facebook, Instagram, etc.) or email at annajohnsond1@gmail.com. I look forward to hearing from you! Please keep me in your prayers and thank you for the consideration of your vote.

District 3 candidates

Brenda Trevino



Challenger

Potawatomi name (if applicable) and family:
Ogee is my family name. *Mkede’wanqwetqwe* (Black Cloud Woman) is my Potawatomi name. I love my name. Chairman Barrett selected this name for me due to the adventurous trail I have walked through life. It describes the cloud that follows a buffalo heard as they travel across the plains. I was born in Shawnee, Oklahoma, and moved to Texas as an adult where I met my husband and raised my family. I am now widowed with a daughter and son-in-law in Arkansas and a son in Texas near me.

Residence: I live in Shenandoah, Texas (a few miles north of Houston) in Montgomery County. Prior to my current location, I lived in Harris County Texas from 1987 through 2017. I also lived in Corpus Christi, Texas, for 5 years in the 1980’s.

Education and/or other achievements:
I received a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Oklahoma State University (1981). I hold a Texas Professional Engineering License (1993-present) and a Project Management Professional certification (2009-present). I received an MBA from Texas Women’s University (2014) while working full-time. I also served on the Houston Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee for

Port Houston for 4 years. Always eager to learn and grow in preparation for new opportunities.

Employment: My career spans 42 years; 12 years for Exxon USA South Texas Division and Exxon Marketing in engineering and regulatory capacities, then 13 years for Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD) in charge of building flood prevention projects, and finally 17 years for Port Houston. I was hired as the Port Chief Civil Engineer and retired in 2024 as the Director Technical & Business Analytics with a staff that evaluated business opportunities, managed grants and environmental sustainability for the port.

General statement: My entire life I have been known as one who brings people together to get things done, a person of **connection**. I care about others. I ask questions until I understand the needs and issues that need to be solved and then solve them with the assistance of others. Working in the public and private sectors, I see more than one point of view. I confidently believe I am the best candidate for the position, and being recently retired, **I have the time and availability to work for you without competing priorities.**

Brian Walker



Challenger

Potawatomi name (if applicable) and family:
I am a descendant of the Hetzell family. Based on research that my grandmother (Ina Mae Wheeler Walker) did years ago, it appears that I am also a descendant of the Vieux family. I have not yet requested a Potawatomi name.

Residence: I am a Seventh-Generation Texan on my mother’s side. With the exception of overseas and out of state military duty, I have been a Texas resident my entire life. I have lived in Fort Worth since 2008.

Education and/or other achievements: I graduated Magna Cum Laude with a B.S. from Texas State University in 2000.

I later received two master’s degrees. I graduated with an MA in International Relations from OU while earning a perfect 4.0 GPA. And, I have a master’s degree in theology from Dallas Theological Seminary. I graduated “with honors” from DTS.

I received my Doctor of Jurisprudence from the University of Houston in 2003. While attending U of H, I served as the President of the law school chapter of the Christian Legal Society.

I was the first Judge Advocate in the history of the U.S. Air Force to serve as a Flight Commander/ Instructor (drill instructor) at the U.S. Air Force Officer

Training School in Alabama. This milestone received international coverage on Air Force Television, The Citizen Airman magazine, and various newspapers. You can watch a video that the Air Force did about my service at OTS by visiting voteforwalker.com. You can read about my other awards, accolades, and background on my judicial website via that link.

Employment: I serve at the second highest level in the Texas judiciary. I have been a Justice on the Second Court of Appeals for over four years. Our court has jurisdiction over twelve counties in North Texas serving well over four million constituents.

In addition to my work as a judge, I also have an ownership interest in a small number of businesses. My wife and I own a 14,000-square-foot commercial property in north Texas, and a fellow Air Force veteran and I own an 80-acre equine training facility in East Texas.

General statement: I am running for this position based on a desire to serve my tribal family. I am very proud to have dual citizenship in the United States and our sovereign tribal nation.

You might remember that I ran for this position when it was originally instituted back in 2008. I came in first place in the initial election, and then my friend Bob Whistler bested me in the runoff by a handful of votes. If given the opportunity, I feel confident that I will be able to do the job well.

My three-part platform is simple:

I want to use my vast experience to serve our people in developing sound tribal policy.

I want to maximize benefits for all tribal members while making sure that the tribe continues to thrive long into the future.

I hope to use my vast political experience and ties to network with leaders in D.C. - in order to attain the greatest federal benefits possible.

Jennifer Bertelsen



Challenger

Potawatomi name (if applicable) and family:

My tribal name is, *Kno Migwenkwe* (Eagle Feather Woman). I am a descendant of the Bourbonnais family through my 5th Great-Grandmother Catherine Chevelier "Catish" Bourbonnais, Peter Bourbonnais, Mary Margaret Bourbonnais, Effie Mae Dike, Hazel Francis

Coder, Emma Mae Fry, and father Andrew Walters

Residence: My husband and I reside in Sanger, Texas.

Education and/or other achievements:

Rather than following the traditional path from high school to college, I built my career through hands-on experience and continuous learning. Now that my children are grown, I am working toward completing my business degree to reinforce my commitment to lifelong learning.

I am also a graduate of the second Mdamen class, a CPN leadership program designed to help members connect with tribal identity and better understand our culture, government, and community.

Employment: I am the Regional Vice President of a global logistics company, overseeing four offices and a territory that spans eleven states in the Western United States. Throughout my career, I have had the opportunity to travel the world, leading international sales initiatives and developing strategic supply chain solutions for our customers. Alongside my corporate responsibilities, my husband and I also own a small business.

General statement: I believe in the principles of responsible government, economic sustainability, transparency, and creating opportunities for all tribal members. Our nation deserves leaders who understand the value of hard work, can make tough decisions, and are committed to building a strong future. I will use my business experience and problem-solving skills to serve our District and our Nation, strengthening our economy and ensuring a prosperous future for generations. We must continue to grow our business enterprises and enhance our educational, healthcare, and cultural programs. We must also find new and better ways to engage our youth.

It would be an honor to serve as your legislator, and I look forward to earning your trust, support, and vote. 🔥



The National Native American
Boarding School Healing Coalition

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

NABS will be in **Wichita, Kansas** from **March 24-28, 2025** to interview boarding school survivors. **If you attended a federally supported boarding school before 1970, sign up below.**

LOCATION: Mid-America All-Indian Museum
650 N Seneca St, Wichita, KS 67203

OPENING CEREMONY: Mon, March 24

INTERVIEW DATES: March 25-28

CLOSING CEREMONY: Fri, March 28

SIGN UP:

Call: **(651) 650-4445**

Email: **OralHistoryProject@nabshc.org**

Visit: **bit.ly/OHPsignup**



Through a grant from the Department of the Interior, this unprecedented effort is a crucial part of the DOI's Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative.



Taking action to prevent fire devastation

Just after the new year began, wildfires erupted across the Los Angeles, California, area. The Palisades fire started on Jan. 7, 2025, in Pacific Palisades, California, followed a few hours later by the Eaton Fire in Altadena, California.

Fueled by extreme high winds and dry brush, firefighters described it as one of the worst fires they had ever seen. Thousands of people evacuated, and hundreds of people lost their homes. Sadly, at least 29 people died before the fires were fully contained on Jan. 31.

While the official causes have not yet been determined, it is a scenario that is familiar to one Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal member.

Mark Johnson, District 7 legislator and retired firefighter, watched as disaster hit another California community.

“(Television reporters) kept saying this was unprecedented but in the 2018 Camp Fire, it burned more than 153,000 acres and more than 18,000 structures and wiped the town of Paradise off the map,” Johnson said of the northern California wildfire.

The Vieux-Johnson family descendant spent his entire professional career in public service. Beginning as a volunteer firefighter, he retired in December 2020 as unit chief of the Fresno-Kings unit of CAL-FIRE and chief of the Fresno County Fire Protection District, after commanding the Creek Fire, the single largest wildland fire in California state history.

These dangerous wildfires have some factors in common.

“Cities let people build in canyons and on hills,” Johnson said. “These wind driven fires start in the hills and go right into towns.”

Add to that, plenty of brush fuel and high winds, and it is a dangerous situation for both homeowners and firefighters.

“The blowing embers, with 70 to 90 mile per hour winds, you could have 10,000 fire engines and 100,000 firefighters and you’d still not be able to get ahead of it,” he said. “With these types of fires, (firefighters) you have to try and keep the edges contained and prevent it from getting wider and wait for the weather to improve.”

“The biggest spreader of fire is wind and when it’s blowing like that, all bets are off,” Johnson said.

Prevention

“Think about the radiant heat just from a campfire. You can only get so close before it’s too hot,” he said. “Now think about your neighbor’s house on fire and it’s that close. There’s nothing you can do to keep yours from burning.”

Fortunately, there are some ways homeowners can help protect their property and safety.

Homeowners should make it a priority to protect the first five feet around the house, Johnson said. This measure

can help safeguard a home on an average day with 5-10 mile per hour winds, giving firefighters time to respond.

Any large objects burning nearby can result in flying embers. If a home uses propane, the propane tank should be at least 30 feet from the home. A storage shed should be at least 10 feet from the home.

"The embers can pile up against the side of the house like a snowdrift," he said. "You have to protect the house and prevent (embers) from getting up against it."

Annual grasses can dry out in the summer and should be cut to two inches to prevent radiant heat from reaching a home.

Johnson said no flammable items should be within five feet of a home's walls. Brush is the worst fuel for fire and should be kept away from the home.

Homeowners can retrofit vents, especially in homes with a crawlspace and vents around the foundation. Applying a one-eighth inch mesh over the vent can prevent embers from entering the vent.

No matter where they live, every homeowner should visit [readyforwildfire.org](https://www.readyforwildfire.org) to learn more, Johnson said.

"In California and the southwest, even some areas of Utah and Colorado, there are many fire-prone areas," he said. "Fire season tends to be in summer and late fall when the winds kick up and affect hills and mountains."

In low-elevation areas like Oklahoma, homes tend to be more spread out and fire season is generally in winter when grass and brush are dry, he said.

Insurance complications

Homeowners also face additional challenges, particularly in California.

"My insurance canceled my policy last October. If your house has certain kinds of plumbing or the roof is over a certain age, they will tend to cancel your policy, if you live in wildfire prone rural areas, most likely you will need a wildfire preparation home certification," Johnson said.

To receive certification, Johnson had to make several changes both inside and outside his home. He estimated that he spent more than \$13,000 to upgrade his home with prevention measures. University studies have shown these methods are effective, he said, but he wonders how many homeowners can afford the upgrades.

Johnson replaced 36 attic vents at a cost of over \$50 each. Other restrictions include wood fences and lawn furniture. The fence must be chain link up against the house. The portion not touching the home can be made of wood. Lawn furniture should be steel with removable cushions that can be stored.

"You can't have a flammable wood deck, or green lawn within five feet of the house," he said. "I had to remove four feet of lawn from the front of my house."

Potted plants must be moved away from the home unless they are in a ceramic container. Flowerbeds should not have wood chips or edging and must be at least five feet from the home.

Uncertain future

Johnson was able to be reinsured but the cost of his insurance has increased exponentially.

"My next renewal is next fall. We'll see what happens," Johnson said. "It's not going to be pretty in California next year."

He said in 2020, while fighting the last major fire before his retirement, 379,000 acres and 840 structures were lost. Only 10 percent of the previous homeowners have returned and built new homes.

"With these latest fires, we have to see if people have left, or if they're not going to rebuild. There are a lot of fire related laws for building back. The cost of homes is going to go up," he said. "I was able to get my insurance back, but will others?"

To learn more about wildfire preparedness, revisit Johnson's February *Hownikan* column at cnpn.news/wildfire or [readyforwildfire.org](https://www.readyforwildfire.org), [wildfireprepared.org](https://www.wildfireprepared.org) or fire.ca.gov/dspace. 🔥





Tribal member Kristy Kelley is honored by Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee with the Spring 2024 Governor's Excellence in Service Awards.

Kelley honored by Tennessee governor

Kristy Kelley, Nadeau/Tescier descendant, was honored by Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee with the Spring 2024 Governor's Excellence in Service Awards.

Kelley is Supervisor 1 and Trackmaster for the Tennessee Law Enforcement Training Academy (TLETA), where she works on a daily basis with cadets going through a 12-week training program. She's the lead driving instructor, but said she also specializes in domestic violence, child abuse, child sex abuse, sex crimes, mental health crisis intervention and sexual assault.

Kelley was nominated for the governor's award by her director, William Kain, who selected her because of her work with a school resource officer program.

"I was so moved that he would even consider me for such an award. And then when I found out I received it, I just couldn't hardly believe it," she said.

Historically, TLETA had not included school resource officer training among its specialty areas. However, because of how difficult it was to find quality training for that specialty, especially training that departments don't have to pay for, TLETA took on an initiative to develop it.

"These school resource officers are keeping our kids safe in school," Kelley said. "It's important that we invest in them."

The first year TLETA offered the training was in 2023, starting with two to three days and then expanding to a week-long basic SRO school.

Kelley said the work was already meaningful, but to be recognized by the governor for it was an honor.

"It wasn't just me," she added. "There are a lot of people that helped make that all come together, and they all do it to help these officers, who are currently in those very important roles."

Fulfilling a lifelong dream

Kelley said going into law enforcement had been a lifelong dream, but one that took some time to come to fruition.

"In the early '90s, I had applied and had a negative experience where I was told by that agency that they weren't going to hire any females," she said. "So, I got a little discouraged."

Though it took some time, 10 years later she saw an ad in the Murfreesboro newspaper and decided to give it another try. This time, she was hired by the Murfreesboro Police Department. Through the years, she worked as a field training officer, Special Victims detective, Special Investigations Division detective, and for the vice unit.

After more than 14 years with Murfreesboro PD, Kelley accepted a position at TLETA in November 2017.

Now that she works with cadets, she said her own background has allowed her to help others find their way.

Starting at the academy in January of 2004 after being hired at Murfreesboro PD, Kelley was in her 30s and one of the older cadets.

"I was at a crossroads. I had just gone through a really bad divorce, and I'd given up on my dreams before, but TLETA changed the trajectory of my life," she said. "For the first time in my life, I really believed that I could do it."

One of the requirements to pass the training is an obstacle course that must be completed within three minutes. Kelley was able to cut her time down from 4 minutes 30 seconds at the beginning of the program to 2 minutes 58 seconds at the end.

"Two seconds to spare," she said. "To this day, it is the thing that I'm most proud of, because nobody did that for me. I did it. TLETA gave me that, and that's why it means so much to me to be a part of it."

Having been in their shoes before, Kelley said she likes to ask cadets to write down their reason for why they want to go through the program, and then to be able to use that "why" for when times get difficult and they need some extra motivation.

Her experiences in life and in her career have also helped her guide others.

Kelley talked about a difficult case she worked when a college student was murdered, and how she has carried that student's story with her ever since.

"The blessing of all of that tragedy is that you cross paths with these people, and I will forever take a piece of her with me, and I'll share her story with these cadets," she said, adding that she tells those stories so cadets realize the importance of what they're doing for victims and their families.

"It's so much bigger than me," she said. "Someday, and not too far from now, I'm not going to be around. But it's the investment that people made in me, and the investment that I continue to make, because they're going to be the ones making that difference in the next generation."

Seeing cadets who have passed their POST Test (Police Officer Standards and Training) and graduate from the program is one of the most fulfilling parts of the job, Kelley said.

"I'm just so honored to be a part of that and to be a part of their journey. It's an incredible blessing. It's also a huge responsibility, because they're our future," she said.

Early lessons in middle Tennessee

Today, Kelley lives in Nashville with her red heeler Annie Oakley. However, she grew up in Bedford County, Tennessee, where she attended high school at Cascade and had "the best teachers ever." She later earned a bachelor's degree from Middle Tennessee State University.

She was active in 4-H and loved to show horses.

Her maternal grandparents, Dean and Dorothy Nadeau, taught her a love of nature and of animals, and her mother did rescue work with animals.

She said she is blessed to come from a wonderful family, where she is close to her sister, mother, and aunts, and that her family also helped instill values in her from a young age.

"My mother raised my sister and I, and she worked two and three jobs to make sure we had what we needed. So that work ethic is just ingrained in me," Kelley said.

She added that her grandfather also taught her to have a good work ethic, and that he was an inspiration for her.

"My grandfather was my hero. He was a World War II veteran. And, while I wasn't in the military, when I became a police officer, he was so proud of me. He would call me the 'high sheriff' every time I was around," she said.

Kelley spoke about her gratitude to all the people who have helped make her successful in life, and said she often tells her cadets that there's nothing special about her other than the people who have invested in her and helped her find her way — family members, teachers, and colleagues and mentors at Murfreesboro PD and TLETA.

Planning for the future

Looking to the future, Kelley hopes she can continue to make a difference as a civilian someday.

Her dream is to help domestic violence survivors, whether working with her Tribe or in a place like Montana.

"I would love to get connected where I can make a difference for people in those communities that may not have that voice," she said. "That's my after-law-enforcement dream."

Aside from working with survivors in her career, Kelley herself has experienced domestic violence situations in her life, and she often shares her story with others to emphasize that it's important not to be ashamed of those experiences.

"I tell those cadets, because a lot of them have had horrific experiences, that what you have survived makes you a warrior," Kelley said. "In our culture, a warrior means a lot of things. And it's powerful, and it's empowering."

She views her own trauma as a gift, because she can take her experiences into the communities that she serves and use her insight to help others break the cycle.

For now, Kelley has another five years to serve at TLETA, a place she loves and where she loves helping each new class of cadets find their way.

"I have been blessed to stand on the shoulders of giants," she said. "And I'll do my very best to make sure that I continue to give those cadets every ounce of knowledge that I have, because they're the future." 🔥

Program changes may benefit Tribal members

The Citizen Potawatomi Nation will boost collaboration among Tribal service programs such as FireLodge Children and Family Services under public law 477.

The Indian Employment, Training, and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 (477 Program) was passed in 1992 with the goal of reducing unemployment through workforce development and job training in tribal communities by reducing and streamlining certain administrative requirements. With tribal self-determination in mind, 477 programs can be tailored to suit the needs of each tribe.

Previously, tribes had to navigate a complex network of federal agencies and each agencies' requirements. Today, administration of federal program dollars is made much easier.

CPN Indian Child Welfare Director Ashlee May is hopeful the focus on tribal self-governance will further enhance how FireLodge Children and Family Services serves Tribal members.

Background of the 477 Program

Congress passed Public Law 102-477 in 1992 to reduce unemployment in tribal communities by creating employment opportunities. The 1992 Act also consolidated budgeting, reporting and auditing systems. However, the 1992 Act only applied to programs from the Departments of Interior, Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services.

In 2017, the 477 program was expanded to include the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Energy, Homeland Security, Housing and Urban Development, Transportation, Veterans Affairs, and Justice.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs manages the distribution, monitoring and auditing of funds provided to tribes through the 477 Program. Once a tribe receives these funds, they are consolidated into a single budget, allowing the tribe to exercise self-determination through flexible administration of those funds across activities from the approved plan. The tribes then report on outcomes for the program services and activities in the approved plan.

CPN also participates in the 477 tribal working group, co-chaired by CPN Workforce and Social Services Director Margaret Zientek and made up of tribes with existing 477 plans and federal partners.

Child Welfare programs expand

When the opportunity arose to place Child Welfare under the 477 umbrella, May jumped at the chance. CPN Child Welfare is the first tribal child welfare program to be placed under public law 477.

"Both in terms of funding and how we run our programs, it has allowed us to provide more direct services to our clients, too. It also has helped with employee appreciation. It's great to be able to give back to the employees who work 24/7, 365. We're always on call, always working long hours and after hours," May said.

Previously, some Child Welfare services may not have been available or only available in a limited capacity.

"Some services may now be open for our Tribal members that maybe we weren't able to help with before or we needed to get approval from many different people to assist the client. Now if we have that written into our plan, we can assist with that," she said.

The FireLodge staff have spent the past several months attending training and preparing for the change.

"I had meetings with Margaret Zientek and the Office of Self-Governance, and we came up with a plan. Several tribes have reached out to us to ask more questions and learn how we did it. We always try to set the example here at CPN," May said.

Tribal members may be eligible for additional direct services under public law 477.

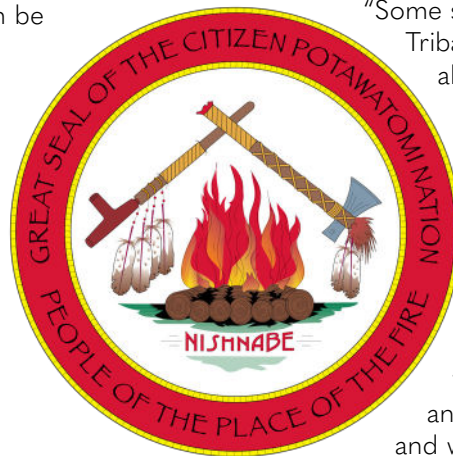
"On a case-by-case basis, Tribal members may be eligible for things like financial services to assist them with what they're experiencing. Maybe they're experiencing contact with the child welfare system, or they want to prevent that contact with the child welfare system. If a family is really struggling with something, we have these services put in place and also help support our foster care and adoption program as well," May said.

Reducing red tape benefits Tribal members as well.

"I think the Tribe itself, not from just FireLodge, this allows us to be more legally involved in our cases across the United States, too. If there's a (CPN) child involved in the child welfare system, we are notified and we are involved in some capacity. We may not be able to be boots on the ground, but we can still provide some services to that family," she said.

May said the department hopes to pursue additional ways to reach CPN children who are in foster care outside of Oklahoma.

"When I became director in 2019, that was my biggest goal. A lot of our Tribal members do live outside of our original jurisdiction, so that was important to me," May said.



In 2019, the staff developed a cultural box that could be shared with children who are in another state. To date, they have sent boxes to several states.

"We share a traditional story, information about our language department, our education department, our health care system and their CPN family. We have teamed up with the Cultural Heritage Center and they have given us family videos to teach them about their culture and about the Tribe," May said.

The boxes have been well received from the children and families they serve and the child welfare workers in other states.

"They say, 'We've never seen another tribe do something like this and this is beneficial for us.' Maybe while they're visiting their parents, they get to color a language page. Maybe they can make a tobacco pouch together. So, we really try to be innovative and reach all of our Tribal members," May said.

The department hopes to create a connection between children and families and the Nation that will endure.

"We want the families to know that while we're there to ensure that child's safety, we're going to do whatever we can to get that child home with the family if it's safe to do so," she said. "We're going to support them. Our goal is to support those who are caring for the child while the family is getting the help that they need."

New opportunities

A program under 477 can also help establish a more collaborative relationship between tribes and the federal government. Tribal officials have more opportunities to share the challenges they may face in administering programs and services, while federal partners can learn best practices from tribal officials.

Program changes can also further enhance collaboration among Tribal departments, allowing for more departments

to serve families and children. Sometimes it has resulted in new and beloved traditions for CPN families.

"One thing we started doing at our foster care Christmas party are traditional Christmas stories. Everyone made wreaths and we gave them traditional berries, little animals and what those meant to the Tribe," May said. "The children and their foster families are hearing a story that goes along with the activity they're doing."

May said she is proud of the services the Nation can offer.

"Something that I've always said is I want the Nation to be a one-stop shop. You come here and you can get all the services you need. We have child welfare, we have Workforce and Social Services. We have domestic violence prevention, behavioral health, our clinics. I just think that is so incredible and unique for us."

Enhanced cooperation

May is grateful for the assistance of Zientek and the Office of Self Governance.

"Obviously I lean a lot on Margaret Zientek. She's really been my guiding light, and I'm very thankful for her mentorship through this. And (Office of Self Governance Director) Jeremy Arnette, (Policy Analyst) Terry Withrow and (Sr. Grant Manager) Senta Rowan, they worked very hard on this as well," she said.

With the new program changes, May is optimistic about the future.

"Just being able to have this opportunity has just been a huge blessing to the Nation and then also to FireLodge in the work that we do and to our clients and our families and our children," May said. "It's just been a very nice thing to witness and the collaboration it's provided. It makes us very joyful in our hearts to see that as well." 🔥



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Morrison produces films exploring 2008 housing bubble

While working as a house painter to fulfill his desire to pursue a career in film, CPN tribal member Jimmy Morrison observed the effects of the peak of the 2008 housing bubble. Now, after years of research, interviews and screenings, this year he will release the last in a trilogy of films covering that event.

The first film, co-written by *New York Times* best-selling author Tom Woods, is described as a “critical, non-partisan examination of the policies and events that shaped the United States economy into one bursting bubble after another.”

“*The Housing Bubble* is just the first film in a trilogy, looking back at the causes of not just the bubble leading up to 2008, but other bubbles from the past century like the dot com bubble and the Great Depression,” Morrison said.

The second and third films in the trilogy, *The Fall of 2008* and *The Bigger Bubble*, follow, with the second releasing March 14 and the third during the summer.

How it all started

Morrison, a member of the Muller family, was studying economics and entrepreneurship at the University of Iowa in 2007. However, that path was not his ultimate goal.

“I knew if I got a degree, I’d never pursue my dream of becoming a filmmaker, so I dropped out and used my house painting business to fund my early projects,” Morrison said.

Not long after, the U.S. housing crash took place, and he found himself listening to an audiobook of *Economics in One Lesson* by Henry Hazlitt. Though the book was written in 1946, he described the housing bubble “perfectly.” Morrison, intrigued and hoping for insight to avoid future bubbles, sought others who might have predicted the bubble. However, he found a shortage of economics documentaries, so he set out to create his own.

“I drove over 35,000 miles, sometimes sleeping in my car before interviewing some of the most successful investors of the last century,” he said.

He said Ron Paul is the most well-known of the people he interviewed for the film, but he shot 15 interviews from 2011 to 2013. Among those were Peter Schiff, who appeared on cable news networks as a critic of the housing bubble; David Stockman, who was budget director for Ronald Reagan and resigned to protest deficit spending; and Doug Casey, who wrote the bestselling non-fiction book, *Crisis Investing*.

Finishing touches

Morrison, as he put the documentary together, previewed footage at the Warsaw School of Economics



Jimmy Morrison is pictured with his wife, Kelsey, and daughters, Molly (on the left) and Audrey.

in Poland, led talks in Lithuania, Estonia, Mexico, and Canada, and did an initial test screening in New York City, with more to follow in locations such as Sioux Falls, South Dakota, the Cheyenne River Reservation, Fort Peck Indian Reservation and Spokane, Washington.

“I knew I needed more time to make the film more accessible to the general public,” he said. “It had to be easy to understand so that people with no economics background whatsoever could follow every scene.”

The process was not without its difficulties, including “essentially going bankrupt” and a producer attempting a hostile takeover of the project.

However, in 2018, Morrison premiered the film at the Anthem Film Festival in Las Vegas, drawing a large audience among the attendees.

“Even after adding 50 seats, the 320-plus crowd spilled out into the hallway,” he said. “*The Housing Bubble* earned an Audience Award and still holds the attendance record at the festival.”

The initial premiere was followed by a tour across the U.S., a sold-out New York City premiere at the Angelika Film Center in 2019, and a digital release that was followed by a Blu-ray and DVD release.

Though Morrison said the project continued to face setbacks — including the cancellation of events during COVID-19 and Facebook banning the website until an employee overturned the decision in 2021 — they made sales in every state in the U.S. and in more than 70 other countries.

Profits from the release of the film were reinvested to finish the second and third films in the trilogy.

"The Fall of 2008 covers the responses to the financial crisis from 2008-2010 and will be out in March," Morrison said. "The Bigger Bubble covers the following decade of permanent bank bailouts and money printing that led to the problems we are dealing with today. The Bigger Bubble will premiere this summer."

Other projects along the way and ahead

Morrison has also worked on other projects, filling roles such as script consultant, producer and director.

He was script consultant for *Grid Down*, a documentary about the electrical grid that earned a Storyteller Award at the DOCLA Film Festival. He also worked with his composer/sound editor, Jake Dilley, to handle the motion graphics for the film, which was narrated by Dennis Quaid.

Morrison said he has traveled throughout the U.S. to film Dilley's band, The Color Pharmacy, including filming the music video *Aperture* and a feature-length film titled *Rocksteppy* about "two brothers on their quest to 'make it.'" *Rocksteppy* features cameos with Oscar winning directors David Lynch and Peter Farrelly and was the first of four films that Morrison made with editor Matthew Hartman.

He also premiered his short film, *My Dad The Honor Flight Director*, in 2023 at a film festival in Memphis, Tennessee. The film follows his father, Bob Morrison, who spent years taking thousands of veterans to see

memorials in Washington, D.C., but has to "step back and refocus" after a battle with dementia.

"The film screened at the longest running movie theater in the world. My grandparents grew up in Washington, Iowa, going to that same theater in the 1920s, 100 years before they were projected on the big screen," Morrison said.

As Morrison nears the completion of his trilogy, he said he has ideas for what he might highlight next.

One of those ideas is something focusing on alternative education. He said he started an RV School in 2019, hoping to allow children to "take charge of their education and expand it outside of the classroom," and that his children attend a nature school called Tamarack Discovery School. With topics like this being important to him, he said it will "probably be in the mix" for what he might pursue next.

"Whatever project ends up being next, I just want to tell stories," he said. "My company is Let Us Disagree Films, because I believe every single person has their own differing beliefs and life to live, so the only way we can move forward and grow is by sharing our stories with each other. By being willing to let others make different choices than us. We have to be able to disagree."

Learn more about Morrison and his work at letusdisagree.com. Morrison said Tribal members could get his movies for free on his website with the code `keepersofthefire`. 🔥

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Veterans Report

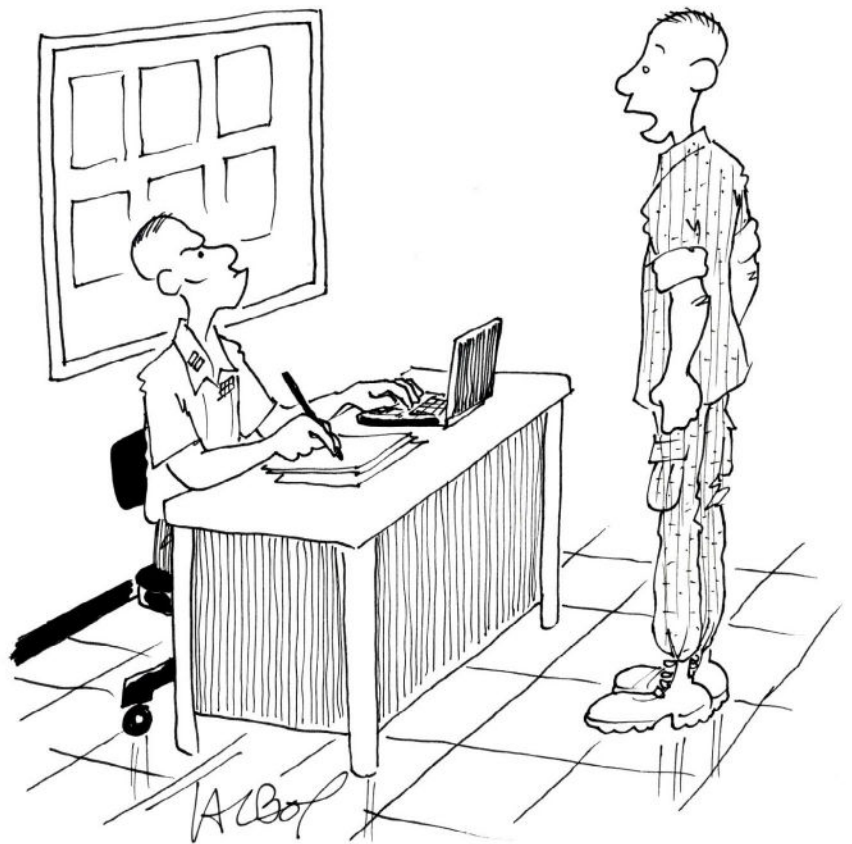
Bozho (Hello),

The Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization has hit the ground running with more activities and events scheduled for this year with our Color Guard. We have had more requests for folding and retirement ceremonies with the U.S. Flag demonstrations. Any organization or function requiring our services can contact Daniel Castaneda at 209-207-2317. Daniel is our vice commander, Color Guard and Honor Guard contact person.

With this report, I am introducing a new addition to my monthly reports. I have been contacted by a CPN veteran who is interested in being active in the organization but lives in North Carolina, which is too distant to participate physically. So, I suggested she could report about veteran activities in her area that may be of interest to our veterans who would enjoy reading about what is being done with and for veterans in other locations. It could be a way of linking our brother and sister CPN veterans internationally. She can send her report to me, and I will include it in my monthly reports. Other CPN veterans may have information from their area that they would like to share.

Master Sergeant (E-8) Beverly McCoy of the Bergeron Family served in the U.S. Army from November 1995 to February 2025. She attended basic at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina, and advanced individual training at Ft. Lee, Virginia, and Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri, as a fuel operations specialist. Her first duty assignment was with 2/B/214Avn Reg at Ft. Lewis, Washington, where she did a humanitarian tour in Honduras. After her three-year hitch ended, she joined the North Carolina National Guard. Upon completing an Automated Logistics Specialist School, she participated in various state active-duty missions for snowstorms and hurricanes. After transitioning to the Active Guard Reserves, she was deployed during Operation Iraqi Freedom, attended various schools, and earned a B.S. degree in sports and health science from American Military University. She ended her career with the rank of master sergeant (E-8) and numerous awards:

- Meritorious Service Medal (2nd Award)
- Army Commendation Medal (3rd Award)
- Joint Service Achievement Medal
- Army Achievement Medal (3rd Award)
- Army Good Conduct Medal (7th Award)



SIR, I BELIEVE THAT I'M A VICTIM OF IDENTITY THEFT!

- National Defense Service Medal with Bronze Service Star
- Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal
- Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
- Humanitarian Service Medal
- Non-Commission Officer Professional Development Ribbon (4th Award)
- Army Service Ribbon
- Overseas Service Ribbon (2nd Award)

Remember, the Citizen Potawatomi Veterans Organization meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. (or as soon as you can get there) in the North Reunion Hall at the CPN Powwow Grounds. This month's meeting will be on Tuesday, March 25. We will have pizza, socializing and a fun time. Remember, you don't have to be a member of the organization to attend our meetings, and you can bring your family. Hope to see you there.

Daryl Talbot, Commander
405-275-1054

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

Machines dispense lifesaving medicine

Three vending machines that dispense free, lifesaving medicine are now available to the public, courtesy of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation.

The Narcan, or naloxone, vending machines are located at FireLake Discount Foods, FireLake Entertainment Center and the Grand Casino Hotel & Resort.

"We have been working on these machines since last year. The CPN Medical Education Department received a grant (to fund the machines). So, we've been working to get these machines into action," said Chad Stieben, CPN Health Education Department.

Stieben is hopeful machines like these can contribute to the efforts to reduce the rates of fatal drug overdoses.



According to National Public Radio, national surveys compiled by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show an unprecedented decline in drug deaths in 2024 of roughly 10.6 percent. This is a large reversal from recent years when fatal overdoses regularly increased by double digit percentages, the NPR report said.

Dr. Rahul Gupta, the White House drug czar, told NPR that he would like to see more funding for addiction treatment and healthcare services, especially in Native American and Black communities where overdose deaths remain high.

"There is no way we're going to beat this epidemic by not focusing on communities that are often marginalized, underserved and communities of color," Gupta said.

CPN and community support

Stieben is proud of the fact that the effort to produce and deploy the machines was fully supported by CPN. The decorative wrap around the machine was even designed in-house by CPN Graphic Designer Trey DeLonais.

"The machines hold 75 boxes per machine and there are two doses per box," he said. "The one at FireLake Entertainment Center, we will eventually be moving when the new casino is finished."

Stieben is pleased with the rollout process and the public reception. Within six weeks, more than 800 boxes were dispensed.

"We are restocking with another round of Narcan," he said. "It's been a successful rollout with people coming in and getting a box even if it's just to have 'just in case.' They might not ever have to use it, but even if it's just precautionary, it's still a good idea."

He is encouraged by the number of people who have asked when more boxes will be available.

"The numbers are really what I was looking forward to seeing. It was a really good reception in the community," Stieben said. "Even if it just helps one or two people, that's enough."

Easy to use

Stieben said the Narcan is free of charge and the machine is easy to use, like vending machines where food or drinks are dispensed.

"It's much like any other vending machine; you just select the number. For example, if it's 22, just type 22 into the machine and then it will vend you out a box of Narcan and you just grab it and go on your way," he said.

There is no age restriction on the machine, so even young people may obtain a box of naloxone and keep it on hand in case of an emergency.

There is no risk of adverse effects from administering Narcan.

"In our classes we cover that there are no adverse effects to naloxone. If you were to use that Narcan and they weren't overdosing but maybe displaying symptoms that were similar to an overdose, (Narcan) is not going to hurt the person," he said.

Given the positive reception the machines have had, Stieben said there are plans to place two additional Narcan machines in the community.

He hopes that increased awareness will continue to save lives.

"If we can be a part of that, trying to turn the tide, because I know that there's been a lot of families and especially young people that have been affected by this," he said. "And it's just so important to get the word out and spread awareness." 🔥

Diabetes Program launches prevention initiative

In March, the CPN Diabetes Program is adding a new initiative to its programming designed to help individuals reduce their risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

Diabetes Prevention Program

The Diabetes Prevention Program aims to delay or prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes through targeted lifestyle modifications, with a focus on healthy eating, regular physical activity and stress management. CPNHS patients may be eligible to participate in the Diabetes Prevention Program if they:

- Are at least 18 years of age,
- Have a BMI of 25 or higher,
- Have not previously been diagnosed with type 1 or type 2 diabetes,
- Are not currently pregnant, and
- Have a recent blood test result in the prediabetes range.

The program begins with weekly sessions for the first 16 weeks, providing participants with the tools and knowledge necessary to make lasting changes. After this initial phase, the program transitions to monthly sessions offering continued support and guidance.

Participants benefit from the expertise of Certified Lifestyle Coaches and Registered Dietitians at the Eye Care and Diabetes Clinic, ensuring a personalized and supportive experience.

Proven methods

Key short-term goals include achieving a 4-7% weight loss and committing to 150 minutes of physical activity each week. These goals have been proven to significantly lower the risk of developing type 2 diabetes, said Katie Brown, CPN Diabetes Program coordinator.

When it comes to nutrition therapy for managing diabetes and preventing or delaying the onset of type 2 diabetes, the program utilizes a method called “the plate method.”

The plate method (cpn.news/mynativeplate) sections a plate into three parts corresponding to essential food groups. One half of the plate is dedicated to non-starchy vegetables, which are low in carbohydrates. One quarter of the plate is filled with grains, starchy vegetables, or legumes, and the remaining quarter is reserved for proteins such as meats, eggs or fish.

The plate method is evidenced-based care and backed by the USDA, CDC, NIH and ADA.



Impact of diabetes

“In addition to improving individual health outcomes, the Diabetes Prevention Program aims to foster long-term, generational change by enhancing the overall health and quality of life of our community,” said Brown.

Brown served as the diabetes and nutrition expert during an October session of Oklahoma’s Public Health Committee, where she presented key information about the health and economic impacts of prediabetes and diabetes in Oklahoma, as well as about efforts to address the issue in tribal communities.

In Oklahoma, approximately 390,400 adults have been diagnosed with diabetes, which accounts for 12.6 percent of the population. This rate is notably higher within the Native American population, with some tribes seeing an incidence rate of over 50 percent.

The economic impact of diabetes is also staggering, with the annual cost of the disease in the U.S. totaling over \$400 billion in direct medical costs and reduced productivity. In Oklahoma, the annual economic burden of diabetes is estimated to be \$3.8 billion.

Additionally, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 1 in 3 Americans have prediabetes, but 80 percent of them are unaware of their condition.

“This highlights the need for increased awareness and preventative measures to reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes,” said Brown.

Learn more about the CPN Diabetes Program at cpn.news/diabetes. Anyone interested in participating in the Diabetes Prevention Program should contact the Diabetes Clinic at 405-214-5117. 🔥

From the executives



John "Rocky" Barrett Tribal Chairman

Bozho, nikan, (Hello, my friend),

Fifty years ago, the Citizen Potawatomi Nation faced an uncertain future. Our resources were so meager and our governing ability so limited, we barely functioned as a government. We had so little impact on our people with so few services, we were unable to preserve and promulgate our culture and language. We had no ability to provide health, education and job opportunities to our 11,000 members at that time. The policies of the Bureau of Indian Affairs restricted our ability to function and the other branches of the federal government simply ignored us.

With only \$550 in Tribal government funds and less than three acres of land in 1975, our ability to sustain and grow as a Nation from month to month was in question. Our people had so little contact with their Tribal government that thousands did not even bother to enroll.

Finally, our citizens recognized that our very governmental form, our Constitution, had to

be changed to break us out of the downward spiral we were caught in. I am very proud to have been a part of that history-changing effort. Through hard work, careful planning, thrift, strategic investment and a firm commitment to self-governance, we have built an economic and cultural foundation that ensures our prosperity for generations to come. Even more, we have one of the most inclusive tribal governments in the United States. Every adult member of our Tribe can vote in our elections. It is so very vital that they do so. We cannot continue to prosper unless we elect capable leadership with our votes!

Running the operation of the Tribe is no small task. Today, the Citizen Potawatomi Nation has an annual economic impact of \$822 million. We are the largest employer in Pottawatomie County, responsible for 70% of new jobs in the area. Sovereign Bank, 100% owned by the Citizen Potawatomi people, is the largest tribally-owned bank in the United States. It has surpassed \$1.25 billion in assets, also making it the 19th largest in Oklahoma. Our Community Development Corporation has over \$75 million in lending capital providing over \$135.4 million in loans to Native-owned businesses. These achievements are not just numbers — they represent greater economic security, increased opportunity and the ability to direct our own future.

Economic success is only meaningful if it benefits our people. Economic self-sufficiency is the only way we can truly call ourselves a "sovereign nation." No tribe can call itself "sovereign" if it is dependent on the federal government to operate or survive.

Our first obligation is to our future generations. In 2023 alone, we awarded \$6.1 million in scholarships to 3,509 students, empowering our youth to pursue higher education. The next most vital obligation is to the health and welfare of our people. Our healthcare programs provided over 291,000 prescriptions and nearly 9,300 physician visits, plus the new telemedicine service, ensuring access to vital medical services.

We continue to expand our support for our elders, with continued construction of new housing, health visits in elders' homes, plus serving more than 9,200 meals in community settings and delivering over 11,000 meals to those who need them most. These efforts reflect our commitment to improving the lives of every Citizen Potawatomi member, from the youngest to the oldest.

Beyond economic and social progress, we remain steadfast in preserving our culture and traditions. Our language programs through the Cultural Heritage Center continue to grow, fostering a deeper connection to our Potawatomi heritage among younger generations. The CPN Eagle Aviary stands as a testament to our respect for the land and the sacred role of eagles in our traditions. Protecting our sovereignty and cultural identity is just as important as economic growth, and we will continue to invest in initiatives that strengthen both. Utilizing economic advantages was an important part of our history and culture for over 300 years – from the fur trade in the Great Lakes before the United States even existed, to the present day, our culture has included trade and commerce. This aspect of our culture, we called it "survival" in the old days, continues to this day.

We know that today we are again living in uncertain times. But just as we have overcome challenges in the past, we will rise to meet them now. Our ancestors endured hardships far greater. Their example of resilience carries us forward. Their example must continue to be our strength. We stand together, and together, we will get through whatever comes next.

While we have achieved significant milestones, our work is far from finished. We must continue expanding economic opportunities, enhancing healthcare and social services, and safeguarding our

sovereignty from external threats. The strength of our Nation depends on the choices we make today, and I am honored to serve as your Tribal Chairman as we move forward together.

The Citizen Potawatomi Nation is stronger than ever, but we must remain vigilant and proactive to ensure our continued success. By standing together, we will secure a future that reflects the resilience, independence, and shared values of our people. That can be accomplished through experienced and capable leadership.

Migwetch (Thank you),

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



Linda Capps Vice-Chairman

Bozho (Hello),

The Citizen Potawatomi Nation is gearing up for numerous events during 2025. Plans are already in place for the eighth CPN Balloon Festival on Aug. 8 and 9. The balloon festival committee's first meeting was held on Jan. 16. It takes a massive effort to plan this huge festival. The 2024 CPN Balloon Festival had 60,000 people visit during the two-day event. That is a sizeable number of people visiting the headquarters area. Parking is a problem and make-shift parking areas must be located in each direction. Every empty field around the complex is designated for parking. The fact that we have at least three empty fields is the only way we can contemplate hosting the event. Otherwise, there would be no possibility of having ample parking space for such a crowd.

Every year we have a lot of preliminary work to do for the annual CPN Family Reunion Festival. The glory about this event is we have repeated the preparation for so many years that it is pretty much second nature to most of our employees. One new event that we will have for the festival is a PowerPoint presentation about Potawatomi Trail of Death with Matt Beil as the moderator. Sharon Hoogstraten will present the historical background of the Potawatomi removal, Rich Meyer presents the operation of the commemorative caravans, and George Godfrey outlines the process of designated landmarks and what the future holds. In addition, Sharon will also have the second edition of *Dancing for Our Tribe* available to sell. This year's festival dates are June 27 through the 29. The honored family members are Bourassa, Burnett, Melot, Navarre, Peltier, Wamego, Willmet and Vieux. Hopefully, this will be a record year for attendance.

There is a very big bowling event May 18, 2025. It is the TAT FireLake Bowling Championship presented by True Amateur Tournaments of Las Vegas, Nevada. First place grand prize is \$20,000. Division champions receive \$5,000. Divisions are divided by: Senior, 215 & Under, 189 & Under, Scratch Division Champions seeded to Final Match, Progressive Pot starts at \$5,000, and \$500 for making a Division Cut. There is a \$350 entry fee, which includes a Storm Bowling Ball. 2 Sweeper Squads – Wednesday \$500 for 1st Place, and \$250 Daily Division Bonuses – Wednesday and Thursday. This is a true Las Vegas Megabuck Amateur Tournament coming to FireLake Casino! This tournament should draw 500 to 700 entries. Contact 1-844-321-8100 or info@tatbowl.com for additional information.

Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation (CPCDC) presents programs for our employees and Tribal members on a regular basis. A Time and Stress Management Lunch & Learn is scheduled for Thursday, March 20, 2025, at the Grand Casino Deer Room at 777 Grand Casino Blvd., Shawnee, OK. A free lunch is provided with pre-registration. To register, contact Angela Franklin at 405-878-4697 ext. 4257 or email angela.franklin@cpcdc.org. Sonja McDaniel is the speaker, and the event lasts from noon to 1 p.m. The CPCDC is greatly appreciated for the types of financial literacy and economic opportunities that they offer throughout the year. Established in 2003, the CPCDC provides financial products and counseling services to the Citizen Potawatomi Nation members. In addition, they provide loans to small, Indian owned businesses, regardless of Tribal affiliation.

These are four excellent examples of events that take place at CPN all year long. There is a program, presentation, organization meeting, or athletic event on an on-going basis. CPN is fortunate to have excellent employees to provide or coordinate these services.

I cherish the opportunity to serve as your vice chairman yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Migwetch (Thank you),

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

From the legislature

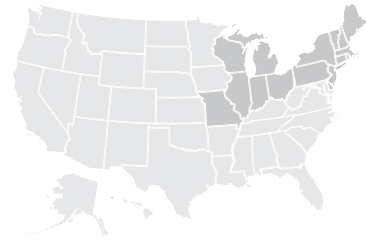


Alan Melot District 1

Bozho, jayek (Hello, everyone),

I hope this message finds you well, as we anticipate the arrival of spring. I am grateful for the changing seasons — winter’s restfulness gives way to spring’s renewal, and this is truly a gift. Both rest and renewal are essential for a balanced life.

I want to follow up on what D2 Legislator Eva Marie Carney shared in the January issue of the *Hownikan* on the *Bodéwadmi* Confederation. I am supportive of CPN becoming part of the confederation. In an era of uncertain relationships between the federal government and tribal governments, I believe that speaking as one amplifies our collective strength and influence.



Potawatomi people have lived on this continent since time immemorial. Historically, we were many bands, yet one people, even as we lived in different places — just as residents of Detroit, Grand Rapids, and Traverse City are all citizens of Michigan, despite living in different towns. It was not until forced removal by the U.S. federal government that we became separated in the way we are today. Again, we were many bands, yet one people. By joining the confederation, we have an opportunity to reclaim that unity — not as a single Nation, but as a strong alliance of Potawatomi Nations. I believe that a return to this model by being many Nations and one confederation is a powerful way to exercise our own sovereignty, a way for Potawatomi to determine what it is to be Potawatomi and who we associate with rather than the federal government determining that. In many ways, U.S. President Andrew Jackson is responsible for our current tribal experience of removal and separation from our own people. It is high time that we assert ourselves and not allow U.S. presidents to tell us who we are and who we can be. We are Potawatomi, who have been here since time immemorial. It is our sovereign right to be united as one people.

Joining the confederation is not without risks and has details that need to be worked out. I do not want our Nation to be undermined by irresponsible partnerships. As we consider this important step, I encourage each of you to share your thoughts with our legislators and executives. You can find their contact information in this issue of the *Hownikan* or online at potawatomi.org.

With the election season upon us, we now have two confirmed candidates for District 1, with Anna Johnson and Steve Livingston both qualifying for and stepping forward to run for the seat I currently hold. I know both Steve and Anna personally and am deeply appreciative that both of them are willing to put themselves in front of all of you to be viewed critically and thoughtfully so that you can choose one of them to take on the duties of leadership. Anna and Steve are very different people, with different positions of life and varied perspectives, but I truly believe that both are strongly committed to the betterment of our nation. District 1 has two high quality candidates, and I am proud that we are in such a place that with either choice our district will be well cared for over the next term. I encourage you to engage with both candidates, learn about their positions and make an informed decision when you vote. Both have stated they are available during this time and have invited connection; I expect you will find their contact information elsewhere in this issue of the *Hownikan*. Voting is a vital part of our governance, and I strongly encourage each of you to make your voice heard at the ballot box!

Until next time,

Alan Melot | Legislator, District 1 | alan.melot@potawatomi.org | 608 S. Sergeant | Joplin, MO 64801 | 417-312-3307



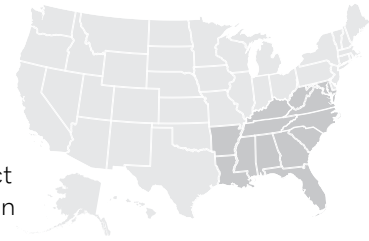
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Eva Marie Carney District 2

Bozho, nikanek (Hello, friends),



Continuing as Your District 2 Legislator

I did not draw an opponent in the upcoming election for the District 2 Legislative seat. I am excited to report that I will be sworn in again in June during our Family Reunion Festival weekend. I look forward to continuing my work as your legislator and to visiting with you and your families throughout this next term. *Migwetch* (thank you) for the opportunity to serve.

Family Reunion Festival

If you are planning to attend this year’s Family Reunion Festival, which will take place Friday, June 27 through Sunday, June 29, 2025, it is likely that the hotel next to the powwow grounds will be open then. You can call for reservations at the new hotel or the Grand Casino by calling the Grand Casino Hotel at 405-964-7777. A couple of reminders:

- The Honored Families for 2025 are Bourassa, Burnett, Melot, Navarre, Peltier, Vieux, Wamego and Willmet
- CPN members and their immediate family household members are welcome
- The Family Reunion Festival is always held on the last full weekend in June
- In-person voting on candidates and other ballot measures takes place on Saturday before General Council and by absentee ballot; all ballots are counted immediately before Saturday afternoon’s General Council meeting, when voters’ decisions are announced
- Voting is an important responsibility; please vote!

New book by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Beloved CPN author Robin Wall Kimmerer has a new book! It already is on the *New York Times* bestseller list. The book is *The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World*. Please check it out of the library, buy yourself a copy, or listen to it streaming, at no charge, at cpn.news/serviceberry.

In keeping with the book’s theme that the serviceberry is the “embodiment of reciprocity, interconnectedness and gratitude,” Robin is donating her advance payments from the book as a reciprocal gift, back to the land, for land protection, restoration and justice.

More exciting book news

Another beloved CPN author, photographer Sharon Hoogstraten, told me she is working on a second edition of her incredible book of Potawatomi history and breathtaking photographs of Potawatomi people in regalia, *Dancing for Our Tribe: Potawatomi Tradition in the New Millennium*. I understand that both Robin Kimmerer (mentioned above) and our Vice-Chairperson Linda Capps provided commentary for the new book jacket. I cannot wait to see the new edition. I will share purchasing information when available. You can find examples of Sharon’s extraordinarily beautiful large-format canvas portraits of Potawatomi on our Cultural Heritage Center page (potawatomiheritage.com/dancing-for-my-tribe/).



Cover of first edition of Sharon Hoogstraten’s book, “Dancing for our Tribe — Potawatomi Tradition in the New Millenium.”

Bandolier bag, beading and other crafting update

About 10 of us had a grand time on Saturday, Feb. 1, meeting up to continue work on the bandolier bags started at our Fall Feast and on ongoing beading and knitting projects. I have included a photo of the in-process bags of two attendees, Peggy and Shelby Hurlock, grandmother and granddaughter, respectively, of the Pettifer family. *Migwetch* (thank you) to folks who travelled from distant parts of Maryland and Virginia to meet.

Resources Available

Please visit my website, evamariecarney.com, for updates on District meetings, Family Festival and Potawatomi Gathering dates, and more through the Calendar page. You will find Winter stories, information



Phyllis and Shelby Hurlock's bandolier bags in process

on eagle feather care and more under the password-protected Heritage page (write me if you need the password). A while back, CPN District 2's Lyle Simmons prepared a step-by-step guide (cpn.news/moccasinguide), with photographs, for making Potawatomi-style, soft sole, center seam, pucker-toe *mkesinen* (moccasins) that you'll also find uploaded to the Heritage page. I hope you will explore the site.

Migwetch (Thank you),

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

Bob Whistler District 3

Bozho nikanek (Hello friends),

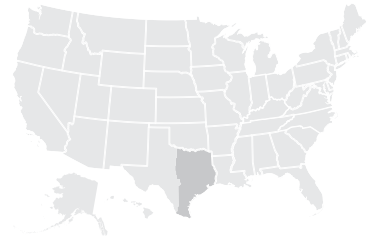
District 3 Meetings

My November/December article advised I would be running for another term. Since then, I have had to cancel after contracting a medical condition that limits my driving to city streets. There will be a district meeting on April 5th. The meeting will be held at Texas Motor Speedway, 3545 Lone Star Circle, Ft. Worth, TX 76177. A postcard will arrive with those details. RSVPs have a deadline for meal ordering. Please send your RSVP to the postcard contacts by March 25.

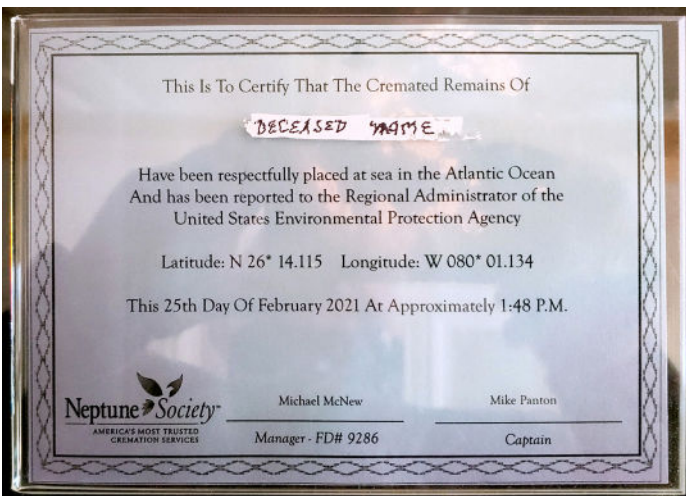
Namings

On Jan. 25, I hosted a naming ceremony at my home for the Mullen family. John Mullen contacted me to say that his three children would like to have Potawatomi names. I accepted the request and asked both Czarina Thompson of the Cultural Heritage Center and Justin Neely, language director, for help with research into the family history. They are descendants of the Bergeron/Melott family, with the Bergeron link leading me into some history about their ancestor, Chief Shabbona. Mr. Mullens' daughter, Alyssa, had some very good traits that were similar to a fifth great-grandmother. In our namings, it is an honor if such a relationship or similarity is found and the name is passed down by the one doing the naming. My fellow elder and CPN member George Godfrey wrote an investigative work on this woman's history (*Watcheke* – Overseer). When I began my search, I didn't realize I had a copy of that

book. At the naming, in addition to giving each an eagle feather, I gifted her the book. Her two brothers that received names are Kyle and Christopher. Attached is a photo of the family with me in the prayer circle I arranged around a table. An abalone shell was in the center of the table and used for smudging and blessings. My youngest daughter, Kim, blessed the circle with cedar.



Mullen family naming, January 2025



The Neptune Society offers the scattering of cremains at sea

Walking On

Several months ago, I wrote about the new columbarium CPN constructed for our Nation's members to use for cremains. This is a free benefit to our members, and a service may also be held at no cost. Our Nation provides you with a \$2,000 death benefit that you must request from Tribal Rolls. When we walk on, there

are several options for handling deceased remains, and I want to give you some pricing expenses. A regular funeral with a casket, service and burial in a cemetery may run well past \$10,000. One that I oversaw in 2024 was closer to \$25,000. You may use cremation with burial locally, which could be \$4,000. There could also be memorial engraving or other service costs added on. A final choice that I am using the Neptune Society. Their basic cost for cremation and return of the ashes is \$2,490. They offer scattering of ashes at sea and will provide a certificate giving date and location. A copy of a certificate accompanies this article. Their full service with scattering the ashes and certificate is around \$3,000. As far as paperwork, there will be a death certificate fee of around \$75, and in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area a \$10 fee for each copy. You may need 10 or less. For elders, I suspect many have already looked into this and decided how they will be handled. But as each of us gets up each day, we never know what the day may hold. An unexpected walking can cause stress and incur expenses that could be more affordable. So, I chose to offer this information to you.

Nagech (Later),

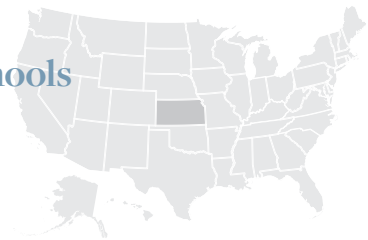
Bob Whistler | *Bmashi* (He Soars) | rwhistler@potawatomi.org | cpn3legislator@yahoo.com
1516 Wimberly Ct. | Bedford, TX 76021 | 817-229-6271 | cpndistrict3.com



Jon Boursaw District 4

Native American Education in Kansas Public Schools

My involvement in introducing Native American Education into Kansas Public School has definitely been intensified over the past several weeks. This included attending two conferences at the University of Kansas. The first was a day-long conference at which we met with teachers from across Kansas to give them a brief overview of what is included in Native American Education. It is much more than those people who lived in teepees and hunted buffalo on the prairie. We introduced them to topics like treaties, relocations, culture, language, Native agriculture and more. Needless to say, the responses centered around "I didn't know that." The second conference was scheduled to start the day after I submitted this article to the *Hownikan*. The three-day program centered around bringing tribes into the modern era of data innovations. The conference speakers and panel members included a wide assortment of Native Americans



from several tribes. These included faculty members and graduate students from the Osage, Muscogee/Creek, Apache, Pawnee, Tohono O'odham, Shoshone, Comanche and several more tribes. I was fortunate to serve on two panels on the third day to discuss tribal cultural centers and standards of care of museum collections.

Don't forget I was still scheduled to give my presentation on the removal of the Potawatomi from Indiana to Kansas in 1838 at a Junior High School in Overland Park, Kansas, later in February. What I originally thought was one presentation turned out to be four: two in the morning and two in the afternoon.

Upcoming CPN Elders' Potlucks

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

April 11

Roast Beef & Mashed Potatoes

RSVP by the 8th

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

Five Timeless Native American Proverbs for Modern Living

I saw these on my computer screen and thought you might enjoy them. Five more next month.

A Sacred Connection to Earth: "The earth does not belong to us, we belong to the earth."

A profound truth that urges humility. Instead of treating the planet as property, we must live as its stewards. Our survival depends on understanding this sacred connection and respecting the world that sustains us.

The Power of Listening: "Listen to the wind, it talks. Listen to the silence, it speaks. Listen to your heart, it knows."

This proverb teaches us to pause and listen, not just to others, but to nature and our inner voice. Answers often lie in what isn't said, which reminds us to embrace silence and intuition.

Legacy Through Actions: "We will be known forever by the tracks we leave."

Our actions define our legacy. The proverb encourages mindfulness about our marks on the world, whether in relationships or the environment. Each step matters as it shapes how we'll be remembered long after we're gone.

Wisdom Over Knowledge: "Seek wisdom, not knowledge. Knowledge is of the past, wisdom is of the future."

Knowledge is valuable but incomplete without understanding. It emphasizes learning beyond mere facts but focuses instead on experience and intuition. True wisdom lies in using what we know to build a better tomorrow.

A Life of Balance: "Take only what you need and leave the rest for others."

This principle emphasizes balance and sharing. By taking only what's necessary, we preserve resources and create fairness. It's a lesson in resisting greed and fostering harmony within our communities and with nature.

Megwetch (Thank you),

Jon Boursaw | *Wetase Mkoh* (Brave Bear) | jon.boursaw@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



Gene Lambert District 5

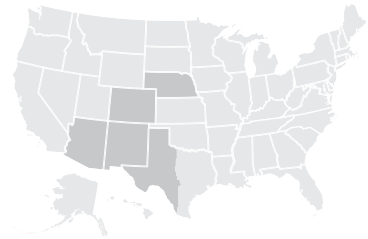
Bozho (Greetings),

You cannot be Indigenous and not know the legends about the turtle. Perhaps there is more to know than we imagined.

As Native Americans, we acknowledge how special the image of a turtle is. After all, we live on Turtle Island.

It would be like remembering the solar system and forgetting Earth.

Many cultures honor the turtle, but to most it represents protection, longevity, patience, endurance and wisdom. This might include Hindu, Japanese, Chinese, Native American, and, of course, the federal government has its protective laws too.



Did you know owning a turtle is illegal in many states, particularly the sea turtle or the box turtle? The sea turtle is known for its assignment to the ecosystem. One of the sea turtle's jobs is to protect the lobster, shrimp, tuna and coral in the ocean.

The box turtle is an endangered species and protected, making it a federal crime to own, breed or sell, much like the eagle and its feathers. You cannot take a turtle from the wild and keep it. The laws vary state to state, but it is considered a federal offense in some.

So, if you want to own a turtle as a pet, check the type of turtle you are wanting and the legalities involved.

The markings on a turtle shell are said to be like your fingerprints. They provide identification. I had absolutely no idea.

This all makes me feel a bit guilty for having a turtle purse, which is part of my regalia.

According to the world wide web, Justin Neely and others, the shell pattern acted as a lunar calendar, representing the cycles of time. The interpretations of the shell did vary, but I was fascinated by the likenesses.

Distinct "squares" on the shell are seen as symbolic of the 13 moons in a year, highlighting the turtle's role, thus the calendar.

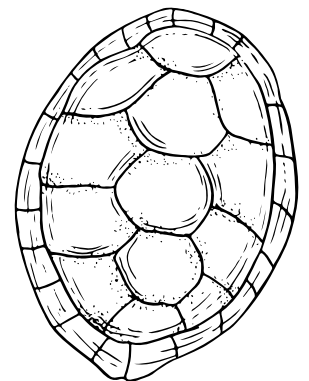
A turtle's shell and its markings were considered a keeper of Earth's history, in the same way as you judge the age of a tree.

Some Native American tribes see the 13 larger scales on a turtle's shell as representing the 13 lunar cycles in a year.

In certain Native American traditions, the turtle is believed to have played a role in the creation of the Earth.

We have been using the turtle's shell for generations as rattles, purses and when tooling a weapon for hunting.

The fact that the turtle is a symbol and connection to Earth and natural cycles gives us a deep respect for the creature.



The slow movement also represents taking it slow in life, and the shell acts as protection to the animal inside. He will not come out until he feels safe.

I did have a pet turtle (a legal one) named Nu who would run the backyard as if he owned it. That is until my shih tzu would spot the slow crawl. She would stand over the turtle and bark. He retreated into his shell until she either went away or stopped barking. She never tried to invade his space. She was just very curious about what made him tick. We didn't even notice after a few days.

Before we close on the turtle, I would like to announce the Arizona meeting has been confirmed for Saturday, March 22, at the Heard Museum in Phoenix, Arizona, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Watch for your invitation or just RSVP.

You will be able to visit the museum free of charge either before or after.

I look forward to seeing you all there. It will be great fun.

Love you all,

Gene Lambert (Eunice Imogene Lambert) | Butterfly Woman | glambert@potawatomi.org
672 E Press Road | Queen Creek, AZ 85140 | Cell: 480-228-6569 | Office: 480-668-0509



Rande K. Payne District 6

Bozho nikanek (Hello friends),

Even though the Super Bowl didn't go the way Chiefs fans had hoped, it was still another impressive season for their program. The Eagles dominated both sides of the ball and earned themselves a well-deserved Super Bowl win. Congratulations to CPN's Creed Humphrey on another great season even though the Chiefs three-peat was not to be. Another AFC Championship is no easy feat and certainly something to be proud of.

The Potawatomi Confederacy seems to be on the hearts and minds of some of our Tribal members. The Tribal members I've talked to are of the opinion that if CPN was to join the confederacy, it would promote opportunities for our tribes to strengthen our sovereignty, expand economic opportunities and give our Tribal members a deeper connection to our Potawatomi roots. While these may be worthwhile aspirations, as the articles are currently written, I don't see a clear and well thought out path forward. I don't have enough space here to fully elaborate but my primary reasons for not supporting joining the confederacy are as follows. The articles are loosely drafted with a lot of details not addressed. Some are advocating that CPN should join the confederacy and work out the details as we go. I don't see that as a recipe for success. To me, it's like signing a contract to buy a car with many of the key components left blank to negotiate after you take possession of the car. Our legal team presented the Tribal Legislature with a summary of pros and cons of joining the confederacy. In short, they identified several areas of concern and didn't see the benefits outweighing the concerns and associated risks. At issue for me is that there are non-Potawatomi First Nation tribes included in the Confederacy. How can it even be called the Potawatomi Confederacy in that case? I am all for being in relationship with our fellow Potawatomi tribes. I would like to see it be more than just an annual gathering, but I don't think joining the Potawatomi Confederacy, as the articles are currently drafted, is in the best interest of CPN.

As you may know, we will be electing our Tribal chairman in June. It's no secret that participation in our Tribal elections is dismal at best. As I have said before, we are blessed with dual citizenship with the right to vote in federal, state and local elections as well as Tribal elections. Thank you to those who take the time to be part of the process. And for anyone who doesn't vote for whatever reason, I would simply encourage you to consider taking just a few minutes to request your absentee ballot, fill it out and mail it in. If you have concerns about your personal information being exposed, you can always put your request for absentee ballot and your ballot envelopes in a master envelope addressed to the election committee. If you have questions about that please let me know.

I'm super excited about the Cedar City gathering. It's a new area and I'm looking forward to meeting with Utah and Nevada area Tribal members. I hope to see you there!

Potawatomi word of the Month: *mnokme* – spring it is

Wisdom from the Word: "Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples." 1 Chronicles 16:24

Jagenagenan (All our relations), *Nagetch* (Later)

Rande K. Payne | *Mnedo Gabo* | rande.payne@potawatomi.org | 31150 Road 180 | Visalia, CA 93292-9585 | 559-999-5411



Dave Carney District 8

Bozho nikan, (Hello friend),

Potawatomi word for dog – *nemash*

I've written about this topic in the past, however, I think it's something that deserves revisiting.

When invited to Native ceremonies, I learned that dogs are generally not welcome in sacred areas such as prayer circles. Being a big dog lover, I decided to look into the relationship between Native Americans and our canine friends.

The Spanish conquistadors are said to have introduced horses to the Americas. Prior to that, Native Americans used dogs as a means to pull carts and carry heavy items long distances. Native people valued the dogs' traits of loyalty, skill in hunting and protective nature. Anthropological digs have unearthed signs of dogs living with Indians for thousands of years.

Did man decide to make dogs his best friend or did the dog adopt the man? Explained in the book, *Dog People: Native Dog Stories* by Joseph Bruchac (Fulcrum Publishing, 1995) the dog offered to be man's companion.

"A spirit had assembled all of the earth's creatures. His task was to find the right animal to become a companion to human beings, who had not yet been created. He asked the animals how they would treat people. Some said they would tear people apart; others said they would live near people to steal their food."

The dog said his only wish was to live with people, share their food, help them hunt, guard their children and possessions, even at the risk of his own life.

A traditional explanation of the relationship between man and dog can be found in *The Mishomish Book: The Voice of the Ojibway* by Edward Benton-Banai (1998). The story is key to the Potawatomi naming tradition and is paraphrased here:

Gichi Manidoo (sometimes called the great spirit) put *Nishnabé* (original man) down on the earth to name all the plants and animals. The man noticed all the animals came in twos, yet he was all alone. So, *Gichi Manidoo* listened and sent the wolf (*mo'ewe*) to be a companion. The wolf travelled with the man, keeping him company, naming and learning about all the plants and animals. *Nishnabé* and the wolf would be like brothers and visit all the places on the earth. They also realized that they were like brothers to all the plants and animals and depended on them.

When they finally finished their task of visiting all the places, they spoke with *Gichi Manidoo* again and were told that now, they must go their separate ways, but whatever happened to one would also happen to the other. So, the man and the wolf set off in their different directions.

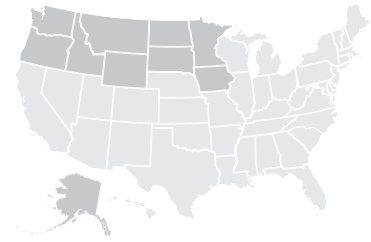
And although *Nishnabé* and *Mo'ewe* have their own separate worlds now, in some ways their fates have been similar. Both have lost land, both have been mistreated, misunderstood and hunted. On the other hand, both have survived, mating for life and raising their families.

As hard as it is to believe sometimes, our dogs come from the wolf, and dogs today are friends to us like the wolf was to *Nishnabé*, but since *Gichi Manidoo* separated the courses of man and wolf, they are not to be around ceremony.

I am in the process of setting up some meeting dates in our district. The only date that I can ask you to save at this time is Saturday, Oct. 11 for our Fall Feast. Alternating between Portland and Seattle has proven to work well since these are the largest pockets of citizens in our district. 2025's gathering will be in Seattle. Stay tuned for more details.

It is my honor to serve as your Legislator,

Dave Carney | *Kagashgi* (Raven) | dcarney@potawatomi.org | 360-259-4027



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Paul Wesselhöft District 9

Bozho, nikan (Hello, friend),

DIVINE MAESTRO

— Paul Chrisstarlon Wesselhöft

Matter, even dirt,

Is composed of spectacular sub-atomic particles

That oscillate, vibrate at frequencies

Like strings on a cello

Creating notes in the seen, unseen world.

Matter, never inert,

Pulsates like an orchestra accompanying arias

In a cosmic symphony so mellow,

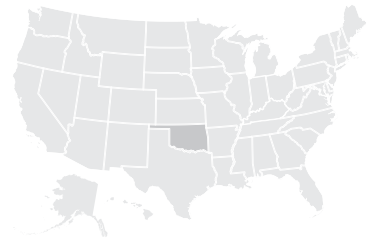
Composing, conducting

The designed fine-tuned laws of the cosmos—

God as maestro.

Migwetch (Thank you),

Paul Wesselhöft | *Naganit* (Leader) | reppaul@gmail.com | pwesselhoft@potawatomi.org



David Barrett District 10

Bozho (Hello),

We are beginning a new year. Allow me to provoke your thoughts about how proud I am to be a Potawatomi and to live in America.

Native Americans have had a long history of fighting in American wars, serving in various conflicts throughout history, often playing significant roles as scouts, cavalry soldiers, “Code Talkers,” and all of the military services that we are currently facing now and in the past.

Despite facing discrimination, Native Americans have historically served in the military at a rate significantly higher than the national average.

Native people cited multiple reasons for volunteering for military service including a powerful commitment to protect their country — both the United States and their ancestral homelands — from enemy invaders.

In the aftermath of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Native Americans were swept up in the national surge of patriotism and rushed to volunteer for military service. Over the course of WWII, 25,000 Indigenous men served in combat.

Allow me to discuss in my opinion two things with you about patriotism and nationalism from scanning different views on the internet.

PATRIOTISM:

- A positive sentiment that involves loving one’s country and serving its people
- A healthy love of country that involves working to improve it
- A willingness to criticize the government when it fails to live up to ideas



Members of the Citizen Potawatomi Veterans Group gather at an event.

- A belief that one's country can be improved, and that it can contribute to the betterment of all humanity

NATIONALISM:

- A political ideology that involves an extreme and exclusionary love of one's country
- A belief that one's country is the best, and that it should be promoted above all others
- A belief that one's country is the solution to the world's problems
- A belief that one's country is threatened by immigrants, people of color, or others who don't belong
- A belief that unity comes from a shared cultural background, rather than shared values



Native Americans, like those in the Citizen Potawatomi Veterans Group, have a long history of serving in the military.

An overview of patriotism is a love for one's country, while nationalism is a strong devotion to one's country that places it above all others.

There is no consensus on where to draw the line between the two words.

"Patriotism" encompasses devotion to the country as a whole, including all the people who live within it. "Nationalism" refers to devotion to only one group of people over all others.

"Patriotism" gives more emphasis on the values and beliefs of a nation.
 "Nationalism" finds justification for the mistakes done in the past.

For example, the United States of America was formed when a group of people had a shared sense of belonging (nationalism) that was separate from the government they lived.

American nationalism is a form of civic, ethnic, cultural or economic influences found in the United States. The terminology "patriotism" and "nationalism" are two similar terms: both refer to the love towards one country, however, patriotism is a subtopic under the concept of nationalism.

Above all, our sense of collective loyalty, responsibility, and patriotism are central to the health of our country. As President John F. Kennedy famously told his fellow Americans "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."

As Native Americans, in my view, we really can't distinguish whether we are more patriotic or nationalist. Our place in America has always been here all along with Native Americans clinging on to our sovereignty and self-determination.

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
 1601 S. Gordon Cooper Dr. | Shawnee, OK 74801 | 405-275-3121

Walking On

Glynda Joe Keasler
Weld/Ogee Family



Glynda Joe Keasler "Red Sky Woman," age 75, of Tecumseh, Oklahoma, passed away peacefully on Dec. 11, 2024.

Glynda Joe Keasler was born Feb. 22, 1949, to Glen and Ramona Higgins in Hale Center, Texas.

Glynda was able to experience several states while her father was in the military and his work industry. She primarily settled in Amarillo, Texas,

until moving to Oklahoma, where she retired from the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Grand Casino Hotel & Resort.

Glynda's spirit lives on with several surviving family members but also dear friends.

Our heart is broken while mourning a sacred soul on this earth but high above she is soaring with the Shepherd Chief; when you see a Red Sky, that is Glynda watching over all of us.

Glynda was a tender soul, enjoyed warm weather, sand in her toes all while sipping a margarita.

Please refer to the Indian Version of the 23rd Psalm, by Isabel Crawford.

Naomi Lynn Predmore

Laframboise/Kennedy Family



Naomi Lynn Predmore, a devoted mother, cherished daughter and dear friend, passed away unexpectedly on Nov. 11, 2024, at the age of 47. Born on June 2, 1977, in Groton, Connecticut, Naomi was known for her warm heart, radiant smile and unwavering generosity. She had an extraordinary ability to

make everyone feel welcome and loved, always putting the needs of others above her own. Naomi's laughter was infectious, and her spirit could light up any room.

Naomi was a proud citizen of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation from Shawnee, Oklahoma, and worked in construction with a work ethic that reflected strength and

determination with every piece of work she crafted. She also had a deep love for art, constantly seeing beauty in the world around her, whether it was watching the sunset on the beach or creating life with pencil and paper. Naomi was especially proud of her children, Cheyenne and Timothy, and was their most devoted supporter in everything they did. Her daughter, in particular, shared her mother's passion for creativity, and her son excelling in construction. Naomi was thrilled to see her children follow in her footsteps with the same love for the arts and life itself.

Naomi leaves behind her two children, Cheyenne (Ceejay) Shea Predmore (20) and Timothy David Edgett (19), as well as her parents, Erin Fox and Roy Predmore of Norwich, CT; two brothers, Roy and Chris Predmore of Norwich; and a wide circle of family and friends who will forever carry her memory in their hearts. Naomi will join her beautiful sister, NiColle Predmore, in rest. She will be deeply missed by all who knew her for her kindness, her laughter, her beauty and the love she gave so freely.

A memorial service to celebrate Naomi's life was held Dec. 14, 2024, at the Cummings-Gagne Funeral Home on 82 Cliff Street in Norwich, Connecticut.

Please visit cummings-gagnefh.com for full obituary and to leave condolences or share a memory.

Dora Kaliamos

Degraff Family



Dora Kaliamos, 85, passed away in the early hours of Nov. 16, 2024. She left us peacefully, surrounded by family and friends in the final days of her full and active life.

The eldest of eight children, Dora was born in St. Marys, Kansas, to Frank and Fredia Jager. Her Kansas roots were represented by her favorite flower, the sunflower, displayed throughout her home. Eureka, California, was home to Dora for most of her life. She traveled to all corners

of the U.S. and spread her wings globally with trips to Italy, a family visit to Greece and numerous adventures Down Under.

Dora led a life of service to others. Following high school graduation she entered the nursing profession, a career that spanned her entire life. She was a surgical RN at Vancouver Memorial Hospital, Washington, then St. Joseph Hospital in Eureka, California. Dora was recognized in 2004 by the St. Joseph Health System in the Values in Action Awards and was selected as the system-wide finalist for the Service Award. After

retiring, Dora continued to volunteer extensively in the community into the last year of her life.

Dora's Native American heritage was maintained as a Tribal member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, People of the Place of Fire. Her ancestry on her mother's side was the Bird Clan of the DeGraff-Navarre families. Dora will be interred next to her parents amid Jager family at the Mt. Calvary Cemetery in St. Marys, Kansas.

Daughter, sister, mother, and matriarch, Dora is survived by her two sons, Jim (Carol) and Tom (Leanne); her grandchildren, Ryan (Sheila), Eric (Christine), and Charlie; and her great-granddaughter, Valencia.

Dora leaves behind five of her seven siblings, Frank (Sarah), Mike (Sonia), Patty (Dave), Dorothy (Dennis), Adam (Gilian); her two brothers-in-law, Frank (Joanne), Bill (Clinton), and sister-in-law, Francie. She will be missed by her large, extended family, which includes many nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles and cousins. Dora was pre-deceased by her parents, Frank and Fredia, her brothers, Paul and David, and her husband, Jim.

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Connor Neal Bickford

Navarre Family

Connor Neal Bickford passed away on the early morning of Wednesday, Nov. 20, 2024.

Connor was born in Topeka, Kansas, to his parents, Deb (Rueschhoff) and Darwin Bickford, on Feb. 27, 1998.

One of the many lives he touched was that of his wife and high school sweetheart, Grace Marie (Horvat) Bickford. Though they first met in high school, it wasn't until their senior year that their friendship deepened. Their love spanned nearly 10 years, the last two as newlyweds, marrying on Nov. 12, 2022, in Kansas City.

In 2021, Grace "surprised" Connor with the greatest gift of his life, their precious goldendoodle, Dottie. The bond between Connor and Dottie was extraordinary — one that transcended words.

Connor was honored to be named a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation in the summer of 2017. Given the name *Baswewe*, meaning "Echo maker" — symbolized by the crane, at peace in delivering a message — Connor embodied these qualities with grace and strength.

Connor's heart was a rare and precious gift in this world, one that will continue to inspire and uplift his friends and family forever.

Connor is preceded in death by his brother, Jerad Lee Bickford; grandfather, Clifford Bickford; and grandparents, Day and Phyllis Rueschhoff. He is also preceded in death by marriage by grandfather-in-law, Joseph "Joko" Horvat; and grandparents-in-law, MaryLee "Grammie" and Lloyd Dale "PawPaw" Kientzy.

Connor is survived by his loving family, including his wife Grace (Horvat) Bickford; mother, Deb (Rueschhoff) Bickford; father, Darwin Bickford; sister, Lauren (Bickford) Fuentes; and many siblings-in-law, aunts and uncles, cousins and countless friends.

We celebrated Connor's life with a rosary and visitation followed by a funeral mass on Nov. 27, 2024, at 10 a.m. at Prince of Peace Catholic Church, in Olathe, Kansas. Burial followed at Oaklawn Memorial Gardens in Olathe.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be sent to The *Baswewe* - Connor Neal Bickford Memorial Scholarship Fund at cpn.news/Bickford.

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Sister Virginia Pearl Slavin Family



Sister Virginia Pearl died Oct. 19, 2024, at Nazareth Motherhouse in Concordia. She was 94 years old and a Sister of St. Joseph for 65 years. She was born in Rossville, Kansas, on June 24, 1930, to Thomas and Florence (Doyle) Pearl and was baptized Virginia Lou. She entered the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia on Sept. 8, 1958. On March 18, 1959, Virginia received the habit and was given the name Sister Thomas Ann, later changing back to her baptismal name taking final vows on March 19, 1963.

Sister Virginia received a B.A. in Education from Marymount College, Salina. In 1968 Sister Virginia changed her emphasis in education to Religious Education. In 1969 she earned the M.S. in Education/Religious Studies from Loyola University in Chicago and was director of Religious Education in parishes in Kansas and Colorado. Prior to retirement, she was serving as a Chaplain at Larned State Hospital, Larned, Kansas.

Sister Virginia was preceded in death by her parents, Thomas and Florence (Doyle) Pearl and her siblings; Majorie Guerich, Jim Pearl, Robert Pearl, Maureen Harris, and Jerry Pearl. She is survived by several nieces and nephews.

Ginger, her brother, alongside many other people of Potawatomi descent, traveled with the caravan every five years retracing the Trail of Death. She and her family placed 72 markers at every place they camped in memory of the Potawatomi who died in that place, from Indiana to Sugar Creek, Kansas.

Funeral and burial were Oct. 23 at 10:30 a.m. at the Motherhouse Chapel, Father Bob Schremmer presiding with con-celebrant Father Barry Brinkman.

Memorials may be given to the Sisters of St. Joseph Health Care/Retirement Fund or the Apostolic Works of the Sisters, P.O. Box 279, Concordia, KS 66901.

Carol Ann Williams
Juneau/Vieux Family



Carol Ann Williams (Hefner) went to meet her Heavenly Father on Dec. 6, 2024.

Carol was born on May 29, 1953, in Topeka, Kansas, the daughter of Albert Joseph and Yvonne Jeanette Hefner (Schwartz). Carol was the oldest of five daughters and was an avid tetherball and volleyball player, graduating from Hayden Catholic High School in 1971. She went on to attend Stormont Vail School of Nursing, where she graduated

with her degree as a registered nurse in 1974. While working at St. Francis Hospital she met Bruce Allan Williams in orientation. They married on May 1, 1976, at Assumption Catholic Church in Topeka.

Carol was a member of Assumption Catholic Church, St. Joseph Catholic Church and later in life Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Church. She was also a Tribal member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation in Shawnee, Oklahoma, and attended Papan's Landing Senior Center for many years.

Carol dedicated her life to serving others. Whether it was in her role as a nurse at St. Francis Hospital and Aldersgate Village, a home daycare provider, children's church teacher, librarian volunteer at Assumption Catholic Grade School or Our Lady of Compassion School, and most importantly her role as a mom and grandma, she always put others before herself. She lived to love her family and enjoyed playing games with her grandchildren, painting ceramics, making rosaries, crocheting, drawing, playing bingo and spending time with her family and friends.

Carol was preceded in death by her mother, Yvonne Jeanette Hefner (Schwartz) and father, Albert Joseph Hefner. Survivors include her husband, Bruce Allan Williams, of Topeka; daughter, Holly Michelle Hulsopple and her husband Branden, of Topeka; son, Brian Robert Williams, of Topeka; two grandchildren, Logan Daryl Hulsopple and Lauren Yvonne Hulsopple, of Topeka; sisters, Marlene Hogan and husband Michael, Susan Hefner, Elaine DeCoursey and husband Tim, Julia Lang and husband Larry, all of Topeka; niece, Jennifer Brewer; and four nephews, Tim DeCoursey, Shane Hogan, Matthew Hogan and Brandon Hogan.

Celebration of Life was Jan. 7, 2025, at Papan's Landing Senior Center, 619 NW Paramore, Topeka. Private interment will take place at a later date.

Memorial contributions in Carol's memory can be made to Papan's Landing Senior Center, the Citizen Potawatomi Nation of Shawnee, Oklahoma, or the Helping Hands Humane Society and sent to Midwest Cremation Services, LLC, 525 SE 37th St, Topeka, KS 66605.

Thelma Louise Campbell
Milot Family



Thelma Louise Campbell was born on March 16, 1958, in California and passed away on July 14, 2024, after a vicious battle with cancer, in her lifelong hometown of Shawnee, Oklahoma.

Thelma was a woman of great warmth and generosity. Known for her hospitality, caring nature, and boundless love, she opened her heart and home to all who knew her. She delighted in filling her home with loved ones, always ready to offer whatever

she had — even when she didn't have much. Thelma's faith in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, was the cornerstone of her life, and her character reflected His love and grace daily.

Affectionately called "Momma" and "Granny T," Thelma is survived by her adopted son, David Campbell; daughter, Laura Helms; son-in-law, Jerrod Helms; and granddaughters, Ella Kate and Linley Helms. She is also preceded in death by her beloved sisters, brothers, nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, and many others whom she loved dearly.

A small memorial service to honor Thelma's life was held on Jan. 26, 2025, at 1 p.m. at the Columbarium in Citizen Potawatomi Nation.

Eric Cryer
Bourassa/Bertrand Family



Eric Cryer died Sept. 29, 2024, in Norman, Oklahoma. He was born March 6, 1965, at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, the first child of David Cryer and Rebecca Schoemann Cryer.

He attended schools in Dallas, Texas; Memphis, Tennessee; Wanette, Oklahoma; and Norman, Oklahoma, graduating from Norman High in 1983.

Eric entered the U.S. Army in 1984 as an Army Bandsman, serving one tour of duty with the U.S. 6th Army at the Presidio, California.

He returned to Norman in 1988 and entered OU to study music education, while also working part-time for Firestone, and serving in the U.S. Army Reserves. There he met another music major, Melissa Tuttle. They married in 1995 in Dallas, Texas, and welcomed their son Nathan in 2001.

Eric re-entered the Army in February 1999, serving first with the 101st Airborne (AASLT) Band, then the 3rd Infantry Division Band, the 82nd Airborne Division Band and the 1st Cavalry Division Band. He deployed three times to Iraq

and once to Afghanistan. He was awarded the Bronze Star in 2010 and retired in 2018 as a Sergeant First Class.

After that he worked as an elementary music teacher for Oklahoma City Public Schools for two years.

Eric was an outgoing and social person who loved a good joke. He loved OU football and softball, history, jazz, classic rock, ham radios and car shows. He was a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation.

He was preceded in death by his parents. He is survived by his spouse, Melissa; son, Nathan (Natalie) of Norman; sister, Aimie (Jason) Black and their children, Ella and Ethan; and brother, Andrew (Julianna) and their children, Kane and Kenai; along with a host of extended family and friends.

Internment took place at Fort Sill National Cemetery, in Elgin, Oklahoma.

Marion Matlock

Lareau/Higbee/Bertrand Family



Marion Jean (Stubbs) Matlock was born in Oklahoma City on June 26, 1947, to Rex and Mary Jo Stubbs.

In 1965 Marion graduated from Star-Spencer High School. There, she was active in numerous organizations and was both head cheerleader and homecoming queen her junior and senior years.

Marion worked her way through college at Oklahoma State University. She joked that she graduated with precisely the required 124 credits and could have afforded to have more fun. She earned a 3.5 GPA while staying active in the Alpha Chi Omega sorority and other student organizations.

In the 1980s Marion began her teaching career at Shawnee High School, which culminated in a 31-year chapter at Mid-Del Technology Center. There, she created an historical program for students.

For 30 years Marion was creator, director and maternal figure over the New Beginnings Program. It was for pregnant teens to continue their education while learning crucial domestic and life skills. She regarded it much more as a calling than a job. Marion once said, "I have never been so proud of anything in my life as I am of the New Beginnings program and the young women who persevere through graduation to become healthy, productive young parents. They taught me more than I could ever teach them."

Some of Marion's hobbies included sewing, cooking, gardening, reading, spending time with friends, traveling and entertaining. She was a gifted and generous hostess.

She is survived by her sister Alison Dunaway, brother Stewart Stubbs, several cousins, nieces, nephews and innumerable friends. She is also survived by stepsons Scott Matlock and Ryan Matlock, grandchildren Porter, Lydia, Mary and Jack, as well as her sweet doggie, Sadie Louise.

Marion is preceded in death by her parents, grandparents, many beloved animals and, most recently, her husband John Matlock.

Barbara Brown
Rhodd/Bruno Family



Barbara Brown, age 79, passed away at her home surrounded by family on Dec. 24, 2024. Barbra Lee Bruno was born on Jan. 14, 1945, in Concho, Oklahoma, to Mike Bruno and Era Mae Bruno (Peery). Her family relocated to Arizona shortly after she was born. Barbara grew up there and called it home until returning to Oklahoma in 1975. She met a young man named Bill Brown, and they quickly fell in love. Barbara and Bill were married on Nov. 14, 1976, and made their

home of 48 years east of Lexington. From this marriage they were blessed with one daughter, Dana; a granddaughter, Autumn; and one great-granddaughter, GraceLynn. Barbara held several jobs over the years; before retiring she was a manufacturing technician for Central Plastics. When she wasn't working, she loved being outdoors. Barbara kept beautiful flower gardens and enjoyed watching the wildlife like deer and hummingbirds visit her yard. She had a deep love for the Lord and attended Rose Hill Church since 1983. Barbara often helped with events at the church and loved reading her Bible by the fire at home. She was especially proud of her Native American heritage and took part in numerous Tribal activities. Seasonal feasts, powwows, and gatherings held by the Potawatomi Nation were always special to her. She found beauty in God's creation everywhere she went. Barbara was known for collecting rocks, and never missed the chance to take a drive and see the beautiful fall foliage every year. She was beloved wife, mother and grandmother who will be dearly missed.

The **CPN Burial Assistance Fund** is available to all enrolled CPN members. Notify Tribal Rolls office of member's passing to receive \$2,000 aid. Burial process information and instructions sent to next of kin. Contact Tribal Rolls at tribalrolls@potawatomi.org or 405-878-5835.

Submit obituaries (300 words, 300dpi photo) and contact information to hownikan@potawatomi.org.

George Alvin Lehman
Bruno/Rhodd Family



George Alvin Lehman was born on June 16, 1930, to George and Retta (Sanders) Lehman in a Caddo County farmhouse and walked on from this life at OU Medical Center on Jan. 10, 2025, at the age of 94. He was a proud citizen of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and a descendant of the Bruno and Rhodd families.

Alvin was raised in Oklahoma and attended school until the eighth grade, when he

began helping his dad on the farm. As a young man, he drove a school bus for East Walnut Schools. He met his first wife, Lois Renfro, and they were soon married. In 1951, Alvin enlisted in the army and was stationed at Ft. Lewis, Olympia, Washington. They welcomed their first child, Alvin Keith Lehman, in 1954. When the family returned to Oklahoma, they, along with his parents, purchased the Cogar Store at the intersection of Hwy 152 and 37. Alvin worked as a mechanic and welder. They welcomed a daughter, Cheryl, in 1960 and continued to live there until 1965.

Alvin married Vera Andrews on Jan. 28, 1968, and they made their home in Bixby and Beggs, where Alvin worked as a heavy machine mechanic and welder at Albert Equipment Company and Sabre International. After retirement, Alvin and Vera returned to the family farm, where he lived until his passing.

Alvin was preceded in death by his wife, Vera, in 2015; parents, George and Retta Lehman; sister, Odellia Henderson; and brothers, Leroy, Gene and Carl Lehman.

Alvin is survived by his son, Keith Lehman; daughter, Cheryl Lockstone and husband, Barrett Williamson; sister, Elaine Greer; sister-in-law, Pat Lehman; five grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren.

Bert Clarence Compton, Jr.
Toupin Family



Bert Clarence Compton, Jr., a beloved Tulsa, Oklahoma, resident known for his quiet demeanor, passed away on Tuesday, Nov. 26, 2024, at The Parke Assisted Living Facility in Tulsa. He was 92 years old.

He was the son of Citizen Potawatomi Nation descendant Thelma Tierney, daughter of Theresa Turney.

Born on Aug. 10, 1932, in Trousdale, Oklahoma, Bert was the son of Bert Sr. and Thelma Olive

(Tierney) Compton. His professional life began in the grocery business in Shawnee, Oklahoma, and for most of his professional career he was a machinist at Rockwell International, a division of Boeing Aerospace.

Bert was a past master of Mannford Lodge #515, Mannford, Oklahoma, a 32nd degree Mason in the Tulsa Scottish Rite and a member of Tulsa Akdar Shrine. He was particularly active in the Scooters Club of the Akdar Shrine.

Bert's personal life was marked by two significant marriages. He first married Wauldine on July 1, 1950, and they had one daughter, Paula. Later, he met his second wife, Jessie, and they married on Halloween in 1970.

Bert and Jessie retired to Palm Harbor, Florida, where he indulged in his passion for golf.

In his later years at The Parke Assisted Living in Tulsa, he was often seen driving his scooter as a security volunteer, accompanied by his dear and closest friend, Lynn Sammons.

Surviving family include his daughter, Paula Maxey and husband, Richard; grandchildren, Jackie and husband, Carson Bontrager, and Richard Ryan and wife, Meghan Maxey; and great-grandchildren, Olivia and Jude Bontrager and Richard Aaron and Samuel Anthony Maxey.

Bert was preceded in death by his parents and his wives, Wauldine and Jessie.

Bert will be remembered for his quiet strength, community spirit and kind heart.

Harold Dean Weddle
Melot Family



Harold Dean Weddle, son of C.H. ("Buck") and Dorothy Bowen Weddle, was born April 22, 1939, in Shawnee, Oklahoma, and entered Heaven on Dec. 21, 2024. He lived in Berkeley, California, briefly during World War II but grew up in Shawnee, attending Washington Elementary and graduating from Shawnee High in 1957. During high school, he worked at The Daisy Q, where he made purple ice cream, played football for the Wolves, hunted along Squirrel Creek and pursued Nedra Fleming.

Harold was of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and First Baptist Church. He attended Murray State College in Tishomingo and East Central University in Ada for his engineering degree. He married the love of his life on July 22, 1960. They moved to Ada in 1963. He began working for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation. They had two children, Tanya and Steven. Harold was deeply involved in the lives of his children, attending school and church functions, supporting little league and high school

baseball, bringing in snacks for game nights at the Weddle home, building a tree house, and taking pickup loads of kids fishing. Harold deeply loved his wife and his children and never met a stray kid or animal he didn't offer to feed or rescue. He was a major fan of Sooner football.

After 26 years of service with ODOT and achieving full retirement, he continued working for multiple construction companies.

Harold knew well how to have fun and daily encouraged his children to do so.

He is survived by his wife, Nedra, of the home; daughter, Tanya Marical of Tecumseh, Oklahoma; son, Steven, and his wife, Kristi, of Edmond, Oklahoma; granddaughter, Skylar Daniel of Edmond; granddaughter, Kat Marical-Collins, and husband, Jon, and their children of Northlake, Texas; brother, Don of Jenks, Oklahoma; sister-in-law, Ladonna Marshall of Bethany, Oklahoma; and cousins, nephews, nieces and honorary grandchildren.

Harold was preceded in death by his parents; his in-laws; sister, Anna; brothers-in-law, Jack Marshall and Fred Rutherford; grandson, Chase; long-time friend, Rusty Hudson; and beloved dog, Gracie.

Ronald Lee Mulanax
Levier Family



Ronald Lee Mulanax, 75, of St. George, Kansas, passed away Saturday, Jan. 11, 2025, at his home. He was born May 21, 1949, in Omaha, Nebraska, the son of Kenneth A. and Ernestine (Mulanax) Wilson.

After graduation, he proudly served in the United States Army during the Vietnam War. He ran the asphalt plant at LZ Last Chance from 1970-

1971 with the 589th Engineer Battalion. He proudly served with Tom, Bobby and Harold — his brothers.

Ronald lived at St. George since 1972 and previously in Delia. He was a pressman for McCall's Pattern in Manhattan for 23 years.

He was a member of Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Church on the Prairie Band Potawatomi Reservation and was presently attending St. Bernard Catholic Church in Wamego. He was also a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and the American Legion We-Ta Se-Post 410.

Ronald married Iona "Kaye" Clark on July 15, 1972, in Emmett, Kansas. They celebrated 52 years of marriage.

Survivors include his wife, Kaye, of the home; two daughters, Angela L. Matter (James) of Belgrade, Montana, and Tina J. Ingle (Rudy) of Manhattan, Kansas; and six grandchildren, Austin Matter, Dylan Matter, Kelsie Renee, Skylar Ingle, Dustin Ingle, Laryssa Matter, Alaynie Matter and Angel Matter.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Ernestine Mulanax Wilson, and stepfather, Kenneth A. Wilson.

Celebration of life was Jan. 20, 2025, at the Mercer Funeral Home in Holton. Burial with military honors followed at the Shipshee Cemetery. Memorials may be given to the Kansas Honor Flight Program in Wamego, Kansas, c/o Mercer Funeral Home, P.O. Box 270, Holton, KS 66436. To leave a special message for the family, please visit mercervfuneralhomes.com.

Sherry Ann Gibbens
Vieux/Lafrombois Family



Sherry Ann Gibbens died on Nov. 25, 2024, in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Sherry was born on Aug. 12, 1941, in Anadarko, Oklahoma, to Leta (Loudermilk) Moore and Elton Kime. Elton was killed during WWII when Sherry was very young. She cherished her grandmothers, who helped raise her. Leta remarried Robert Moore, who became Sherry's second dad.

Sherry attended high school in Oklahoma and received

her medical technology degree from the University of Oklahoma. She proudly marched with the Pride of Oklahoma, especially during the Rose Bowl parade.

While working as a medical technologist, Sherry met Bill, the medical student who lived across the hall. They married five months later on Jan. 29, 1966. Their daughter, Kathy, was born in 1968. They moved to Spokane, Washington, where their daughter, Michelle, was born in 1969. Bill was transferred to Wethersfield, England, where they lived for several years. Thereafter, they moved to New Orleans, where Bill completed his residency. Their daughter, Tiffany, was born in 1973. In 1976, the family settled in Cheyenne.

Sherry was involved in the community and with her children and grandchildren, whom she adored. She crafted her daughters' prom, bridesmaid and wedding dresses, knitted baby blankets, planted flowers in her garden, loved music, and played the organ at church.

Sherry was very proud of her Potawatomi heritage, including being on the tribal rolls and owning land. She always displayed a picture of her great-grandmother, Hattie Vieux Kime, in her home.

Sherry enriched the lives of those around her with her love.

She is survived by her husband, Bill Gibbens; children Kathy (Bob) McCue, Michelle (Tim) Bush, and Tiffany (Nick) Healey; grandchildren Jackson (Caitlyn) McCue, Madison McCue (Oren Long), Hannah Thomas (Michael Boyle), Benjamin Bush, Collin Bush, Cooper Bush, Ethan Healey, Juliann Healey; great-granddaughter, Daisy McCue; and brother, Bob Moore.

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Subscriptions

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Hownikan
1601 S Gordon Cooper Dr.
Shawnee, OK 74801

hownikan@potawatomi.org or 800-880-9880

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Vol 2/Number 2 *Hownikan* (periodicals 25778)

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