

HOWNIKAN

Ktëgan Gizes | May 2026



**Important
election info
inside!**



What's inside

1

Rooted in community: Caring for our children together

2

KGFF's Derek Barton receives OAB award for OKC bombing segment

3

D1's collaborative beadwork wins CPN Department of Education Art Contest

4

Election candidates Q&A

9

2026 request for ballot

14

Sovereign appoints Anderson and Causby as new EVP and CLO

18

Updates on *Mnotagwzékwe* with *Nēmki*s

24

Powwow etiquette

29

Language update

30

What you need to know about voting

31

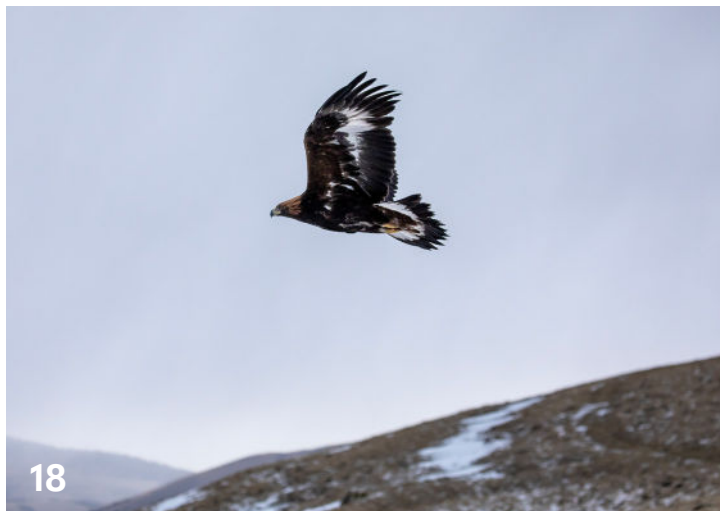
Getting the strongest recommendation letters

32

Tribal executive and legislative updates

44

Walking On





Rooted in community: Caring for our children together

By DeAnna Voeks, Foster Care & Adoption Specialist

There is something special about community and knowing that when one of our own needs support, we can come together and take care of each other. That's something Native people have always done, and it's something we can continue to do for children.

With National Foster Care Month here, it feels like the right time to talk about a need we're seeing more and more. Our children need safe, loving homes within our own community. We are looking for families here in Oklahoma who are willing to open their hearts and their homes, even for a little while, to a child who needs support. Becoming a tribal foster home is one of the most meaningful ways to help care for our children while keeping them connected to their culture, their traditions and their sense of who they are.

In 2025, 23% of children in out-of-home placement were Native — that's nearly 1 in 4 children being separated from their families. That's a hard reality, and it reminds us how important it is to have strong, supportive homes within our community. Every home that steps forward creates another chance for a child to stay close to their roots and surrounded by people who understand them.

If you've ever thought about fostering, even just a little, it might be worth learning more. You don't have to be perfect or have everything figured out. What matters most is being willing to provide care, patience and a safe place during a time when a child needs it most. And you won't be doing it alone. Our foster care program offers training, guidance and ongoing support every step of the way. Many families who have fostered say it's one of the most meaningful things they've ever done, not just for the child, but for their own family as well.

There are many ways to help. Some families open their homes for long-term placements, while others provide short-term, respite or emergency care. However you're able to help, it truly makes a difference.

If you'd like to learn more about becoming a tribal foster home, please reach out to DeAnna Voeks at deanna.voeks@potawatomi.org or 405-878-4831.

At the end of the day, our children are our responsibility and our greatest blessing. When we come together to care for them, we are strengthening not just their future, but our entire community. Let's continue to show up for our children and for each other. 🌱

Interested in going to the Potawatomi Gathering?

Contact our travel department at travel@potawatomi.org or 405-275-3121



KGFF's Derek Barton receives OAB award for OKC bombing segment

KGFF's Morning Show host, Derek Barton, recently won an Oklahoma Association of Broadcasters (OAB) award for long form programming for a segment honoring the 30th anniversary of the Oklahoma City bombing.

For the bombing anniversary in 2025, Barton interviewed fellow KGFF staff member Trey Davis, who was working for KTOK Radio in Oklahoma City in April of 1995. When the bomb detonated, Davis was already on his way to a regular assignment near the Murrah Federal Building.

"He literally turned the corner right after the bombing, so I thought with the 30th anniversary, we have an inside track because he really was the first media person on site at the time of the bombing," Barton said.

In his interview with Davis, Barton asked about the first-hand perspective, but also about balancing covering tragedy as a journalist with the human emotions that surface in the face of so much loss.

"Our goal was to remember that day not only for the devastation it brought, but for the strength, unity, and compassion that emerged in its aftermath," Barton said. "The response from our listeners was profound and heartfelt, reminding us that reflecting on April 19, 1995, was the right decision. Together, we continue to honor those who were lost, those who responded, and all who were forever changed by an event that remains an indelible part of Oklahoma's history."

After entering the segment for OAB's Outstanding Achievement Awards, Barton placed first for long-form reporting in the non-metro radio division.

He received the award at an OAB event in Oklahoma City in April.

Barton got his start in radio in the 1980s while in high school in Buffalo, Wyoming. He also worked in the media room and as music director and rodeo



announcer for the PRCA (Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association), covering professional rodeo at events such as the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas. He retired from rodeo announcing a few years ago and has worked at KGFF for about two years. He does the morning shows for the station Monday through Friday and is also a sales manager there. He is married to Sovereign Bank Executive Assistant Renah Barton.

Check out KGFF at kgff.com or on their Facebook page. 📌

Are you dually enrolled?

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

DI's collaborative beadwork wins CPN Department of Education Art Contest

A pattern for a collaborative beaded artwork, designed and submitted by Laura Hewuse, has been selected as the winner of the 2026 CPN Department of Education Art Contest. The piece is titled *Mno Bmadzewen*, meaning "good life" or "good health."

Several years ago, former District 1 Legislator Alan Melot and Hewuse created a Zoom Loom Beading Group that meets every other week, allowing participants to connect and share their talents. Over time, the group has grown into a close-knit community with the addition of District 1 Legislator Steve Livingston.

"It's a community formed, bonded and blessed, shared across all districts," said Hewuse. "We represent CPN proudly. Not only are we beadwork artists, but we are also mothers, fathers, grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters and friends."

For the project, Hewuse and Jennifer Dye collaborated with District 1 members to launch a district-wide beading project, as an extension of the Zoom Loom Beading Group. The intricate design consists of 229 bead columns and 206 bead rows. The panel measures 25 to 30 beads wide and 13 inches long.

In addition to Hewuse, Dye and Melot, other contributors include Madison Waters, Anna Johnson, Brian Hewuse, Kristy Nichols, Kortney Seeley, Rosanah Ziegler, Lorrie Underwood, Sierra Waterman-Wells, Kristina Komara, Dixie Summers, Rebecca Lewis, Danny Ferris, Brandy Schmitt and MaryEllen Godinez. Each participant created a small section of the overall design, which will eventually be joined into a single piece.

The finished beaded panel will be presented as a gift to the Cultural Heritage Center for public display.

Hewuse shared the special meaning behind *Mno Bmadzewen* in her art submission:

"It's deeper than that — it's physical, mental and emotional; holistic health. It's knowing our songs, dance, regalia, stories and the language is the thread which ties it all together."

She added that for her, *Mno Bmadzewen* represents community and a shared expression of identity.

"This project may have physical symbolism in depicting our medicines, clan animals and our language. But the underlying symbolism is we've stitched all the different but remarkable pieces together into one piece and that is what we've been able to do in this project — stitch together people from all over."



Collaborative beadwork project, Mno Bmadzewen

Participants range from experienced crafters to beginners, from those newly reconnected with the Tribe to members who have been active in the Tribe for years.

"We are all in different time zones, different parts of the country, have varying levels of reconnection to our identity and experiences. This is community — bringing together parts to make a whole, and that's what we hope for the CPN people," Hewuse told the *Hownikan*.

She continued to share that projects like this go beyond learning beadwork.

"All of us have our own lives, surrounded by friends or extended family that aren't CPN and likely not Native at all," Hewuse said. "This creates a space to be around other people with a shared identity and purpose, and to build friends, connections and conversations. We have built a place for people to connect and be Potawatomi." 🔥

Vice-Chairman election candidates Q&A

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



Martha Kimberly Nootbaar

What do you feel is the Tribe's most pressing issue it currently faces?

I believe communication is the most pressing issue. Members feel that they get the information after an event happens. We need to publish calendars in an easy to read format several months before an event. We need to have regularly

scheduled podcasts, facebook live, or somehow record the events or talks. Clear concise communication and easy to access formats should be a goal easy to accomplish. We need to be more transparent. Our activities, spending and income should be published. We can do better.

How can CPN better serve and engage its Tribal members?

I believe that we should make all our local programs accessible to all out Members.

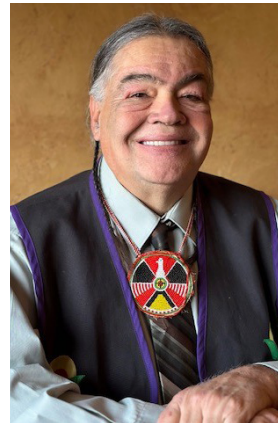
Either by podcast, accessible recordings online or even facebook live. We have great programs available at the Cultural Heritage Center every week. They could be advertised better and if there are craft supplies needed, publish the list, then publish how it can be seen or attended for out of town members. Again, it comes down to communication and transparency!

Describe what in your life has made you appreciate your CPN heritage. My family. I have been very fortunate to have know my Great Grandmother Birdie Josephine Burnett Martin. She made sure that I was enrolled as a Citizen at a young age. She instilled in me a love for our people that has only grown with time. I wish that I could have learned more from her. We have many teachings that have been lost through the years. I believe we have to listen to those that have the teachings and traditions passed to them. There is still much to learn.

What kind of future do you envision for the Nation? A strong and prosperous one. One that all our nation could be proud of. One that comes together to make decisions that would be the best for everyone. One that could work out disagreements civilly and celebrate the wins together. We are part of something bigger than ourselves and that should be celebrated. We are Citizen Potawatomi Nation! We have come so far from that little trailer on Gordon Cooper that no one really wanted to go in. We have wonderful, talented, smart people! We can be greater.

How could you, as an elected official, help Tribal members who feel disconnected from the Tribe? They think the leadership doesn't really care about them.

We need to work hard to include everyone, to explain decisions, and to assimilate information. That goes back to communication and transparency. We need to teach them about their families and their rich history. So many ancestors gave up much for their families to flourish and grow to give us a future. We have elders that can teach us. They should be shared, honored and celebrated.



Charles Scott

What do you feel is the Tribe's most pressing issue it currently faces?

I think we have two pressing issues. The first is how out of state citizens access or qualify for benefits. Typically our out of state members are at a disadvantage in that they are not equally entitled to the same benefits as Oklahoma Residents.

The second most pressing issue is voter turnout. Folks do not vote. I've asked many many members why they don't vote, it typically comes down to Term Limits.

How can CPN better serve and engage its Tribal members? We need better Government separation between the Executive and Legislative Branches of our Government, currently our Legislative Branch is not fully Independent. So to better "serve" our citizens we need to separate the Legislative branch and allow District Reps more leeway to engage citizens and help or solve their constituents' access to Government benefits.

Describe what in your life has made you appreciate your CPN heritage. Sitting on the drum, singing old traditional songs, learning about our Bear Clan and Bear Clan songs...attending the first known Bear Clan Feast in Oklahoma was a pretty special ceremony. Migwetch to Dub and Esther for helping us "Bears" get this started.

What kind of future do you envision for the Nation? Mostly I see change, Ms Capps retiring, Gene Lambert retiring, our elected Officials are getting younger, a few more have said this is their last term, this will bring new ideas and new visions. As long as we take care of our elders, continue to improve access to benefits, and maintain our educational scholarships, I think our future will remain bright.

How could you, as an elected official, help Tribal members who feel disconnected from the Tribe? As Vice Chairman, my phone number will always be available and published, 918-650-8631, my door

will always be open and I will hold regular meetings with our citizens, in state and out of state.

I will also advocate for fulling funding a Cultural and Language program that eventually will grow into a primary school, then elementary school. I envision a cultural immersion school in which each citizen can use their College scholarship to attend our Immersion School. Learning about culture, language, traditions, heritage, building a community, that's what connects us.



Jason Smalley

What do you feel is the Tribe's most pressing issue it currently faces? I believe the Tribe's most pressing issue is preserving and strengthening our identity as Citizen Potawatomi people. We face many important challenges, including tribal sovereignty, relationships with state and federal governments, and local budget and project decisions. We are fortunate to

have talented elected leaders and employees working on those matters every day. But through all of it, we must remain grounded in who we are, what we stand for, and where we want to go together. A unified message, shared purpose, and common approach will help bring our people closer and strengthen our Nation for future generations.

How can CPN better serve and engage its Tribal members? CPN can better serve and engage its Tribal members by improving how we communicate. We have many strong programs, businesses, projects, and outreach efforts, but at times the message can feel overwhelming or scattered. We need to streamline communication, so it reaches the right audiences in the most effective way. That means expanding virtual platforms for legislative outreach, using more direct mail, and making better use of local and national media opportunities. This goes

hand in hand with our larger mission: clearly defining who we are, what we stand for, and sharing that message in a unified way with our members and beyond.

Describe what in your life has made you appreciate your CPN heritage. My appreciation for my CPN heritage has grown through a lifetime of service. Serving our country in the United States Marine Corps and later serving the people of Oklahoma as a State Representative and State Senator taught me the value of duty, sacrifice, and perseverance. In each role, I came to better understand the strength it takes to lead through adversity. That appreciation deepened my respect for our Potawatomi ancestors, who endured hardship while preserving their identity, values, and future. Being Citizen Potawatomi is part of who I am, and that connection has helped guide me through both challenges and opportunities.

What kind of future do you envision for the Nation?

I envision a future where our Nation stands united, not fragmented, with a clear purpose and shared direction. I want to see us continue diversifying our income so we can sustain and expand programs that serve those who need them most. I also want to see the Nation grow its footprint in ways that create more jobs and strengthen our local economy. My greatest hope is that we invest in education for every member, helping families build generational wealth, expand opportunities, and create a path for more Citizen Potawatomi to return home and thrive.

How could you, as an elected official, help Tribal members who feel disconnected from the Tribe?

I believe this begins with better communication and genuine outreach. Many people who feel disconnected are often searching for purpose, involvement, and a sense of belonging. As a leader, I believe it is our responsibility to help place people in positions where both they and the Nation can thrive. I want Tribal members to know that their voice matters, their input is valued, and their involvement is important. My goal would be to help people reconnect, find their calling, and in turn help others do the same. When one of us rises, we all rise together. 🌟

A large graphic with a light blue background. On the left is a red circle containing a white checkmark with a blue outline. To the right of the checkmark, the words "HAVE A VOICE" are written in large, bold, white, sans-serif capital letters. Below this, in smaller, dark blue, sans-serif lowercase letters, is the text "in our Tribe's future, cast your vote in June!".

Legislative election candidates Q&A

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

District 5



Ryan Hubble

What do you feel is the Tribe's most pressing issue it currently faces? Honestly, I'm not sure I know enough about what the most pressing issues are that our Tribe faces. However, I do know that my ability to look at financial information and review budgets would help our Tribe continue to grow and establish itself as a powerful Tribe that can address any issue it needs to face.

How can CPN better serve and engage its Tribal members? I think the legislature representatives are the tools that can help serve and engage Tribal members. Those representatives have the responsibility to reach out to the members in their districts and ascertain what those needs are and then propose ideas to Tribal leadership of how those goals should be attained.

Describe what in your life has made you appreciate your CPN heritage. In my life, I've seen that service to others is the best way to demonstrate our love for people. I believe that and have tried to live that by serving in my church, community, and to my family and friends. The one thing I really appreciate about our CPN heritage is the way our leaders serve us. It takes a lot of time and energy to do what they do, and I know they do it because they love our Tribe and its members. And one of the reasons I'm running is so I can give back to our Tribe and help serve its members.

What kind of future do you envision for the Nation? I envision our Tribe as a Nation that continues to grow and expand the many resources it offers to our people. Our tribe is focused on helping tribal members be the best individuals and family members they can be. It does that by offering scholarships for schooling, helping with mortgages and housing, helping individuals find jobs, expanding the resources for the cultural heritage center so we can learn about our history and ancestors, etc. This Tribe offers so much, and I would love to see that continue and grow.

How could you, as an elected official, help Tribal members who feel disconnected from the Tribe? As I've stated before, I plan to reach out to the members of District 5 and get to know them, and hopefully by doing so, I can learn about their needs and how the Tribe can help them connect again to the great culture we have.



James Newberry

What do you feel is the Tribe's most pressing issue it currently faces? Lack of participation by all the cousins with reunion in Shawnee, district meetings and voting. I'm sure there are issues we are facing just as important I'm not aware of. Once I'm in office (if all you cousins will hire me) and I get a better idea of what's going on. I might have another answer for you.

How can CPN better serve and engage its Tribal members? In the past and even now I have felt left out. I would read about district meetings and other tribal events in the Hownikan after the fact or given maybe a week's notice. I could give more examples. Unacceptable! Communication will be key. Again,(if all you cousins will hire me) and I get a better idea of what resources are available to me. I'll do my best to utilize them for YOUR benefit.

Describe what in your life has made you appreciate your CPN heritage. When I was 8 to 10 years old my Grandmother Alice Vaught 'Nana' on a ride home in her Dark Blue 1966 Pontiac Lemans with the most serious voice and look on her face said "Never forget you're a Potawatomi." I never have.

What kind of future do you envision for the Nation? A bright and prosperous one with continued opportunities for education, health care, etc. The leadership has put us in a great position for continued future growth. As long as we don't squander it away with short sightedness and greed.

How could you, as an elected official, help Tribal members who feel disconnected from the Tribe? By reaching out to members. Please read the answer for question 2 again. It's the same answer I have for this one.



Lorrie Underwood

What do you feel is the Tribe's most pressing issue it currently faces? Our tribe faces two major challenges 1. citizen apathy and 2. governmental transparency. In a tribe of roughly 40,000 citizens, we have LESS THAN 10% Participation! I can see that our citizens need to feel like we have more

of a stake in our tribe as a whole. I plan to help District 5 citizens be much more informed.

How can CPN better serve and engage its Tribal members? CPN should help tribal members before we feed, clothe and medically help others! We need to build a strong community within our own tribe so that we are strong enough to help others. True charity begins at home. A vote for me is a vote for change.

Describe what in your life has made you appreciate your CPN heritage. I finally felt fully Potawatomi once I began attending ceremony. I felt well-rounded once I began learning our language. I appreciate all language teachers and/or knowledge keepers who share their knowledge and wisdom with others.

What kind of future do you envision for the Nation? I would like to see people more comfortable with being Potawatomi, with their names, and learning

our culture. Additionally, I would like for our administration to remember to honor 7 generations past and prepare for 7 future generations and be sure to consider those 7 future generations.

How could you, as an elected official, help Tribal members who feel disconnected from the Tribe? I hope to meet with and talk to each district citizen on an individual level so I can understand how each person can feel more connected. Each person will have a unique situation and there is no cookie cutter method to understanding each person's disconnect. A legislator's hands are tied regarding District member's contact information; we don't have it. The responsibility is then thrown back onto each individual citizen to know and reach out to their own legislator for help. The legislature should be allowed to be more independent in solving individual members' challenges.

District 7



Mark Johnson

Incumbent

What do you feel is the Tribe's most pressing issue it currently faces? That is an interesting question, which has a complicated answer. I would say there are many issues that are pressing, that we as a Tribal Legislature try to make an impact in a positive way. Tribal sovereignty

and our inherent rights are always an issue. We have many members outside of Oklahoma who have inadequate healthcare access, which is why the CPN Cares program is so important, and being able to steer members to Indian Health Services. Our Tribal economic diversity is important to sustain our services to members. Making sure we engage our youth to keep our Nation strong is also extremely high on the list.

How can CPN better serve and engage its Tribal members? Our Tribal nation is doing better than ever in this regard, but there is always room to do more. I would love to see a traveling history and cultural program from our Cultural Heritage Center to help engage those members outside of Oklahoma, who for whatever reason cannot travel to Shawnee. I will work towards making sure the Tribes online classes and information access are expanded and enhanced as innovative technologies become available. Making information accessible through the website portal is great, but we also need our members to take an active role in keeping their information current with the Tribe, so we can engage with you.

Describe what in your life has made you appreciate your CPN heritage. I was blessed to have a family that always kept our heritage in the forefront of our life here in California. With my father and his nine brothers and sisters, and all of us cousins holding a yearly family reunion, I was exposed at an early age to all our heritage and family traditions. I knew from an early age about the history of my great-great grandfather Louis Vieux and his involvement with our Tribe. My father was the family historian, so many of our families' historical items are now on display in the Cultural Heritage Center, including my grandfather's trunk he was given when attending the Carlisle Indian Industrial School.

What kind of future do you envision for the Nation? The future that I see is one filled with Opportunity, Hope and Optimism, but also a future that will hold many challenges that we must be able to meet head-on. As a current Legislator, I know that the demands for services and benefits that we are providing today as a tribe, will require our full attention to protect and grow those services as we grow close to 40,000 members. Our Nation will continue being a leader in preserving our heritage, culture, and language, this has been a high priority for myself, and the other members of our legislature. We do indeed have a bright future as a Nation, one built on the bedrock of wise, reasoned choices.

How could you, as an elected official, help Tribal members who feel disconnected from the Tribe? Addressing disconnects among our tribal members is tough and requires a mix of cultural and social approaches. The key is restoring belonging, identity, and access. Many individuals feel disconnected because they lack access to language, ceremonies, or traditional knowledge. I have worked at getting them connected with language classes, and other resources at the Cultural Heritage

Continued on next page

Center which helps rebuild identity in a practical, lived way. I have worked at getting our youth to apply to our Potawatomi Leadership Program, which connects our youth to their Tribe for life. And every year I have hosted a fall heritage gathering in California to help bring our families together in our shared experience.



Katie Bowie

Challenger

What do you feel is the tribe's most pressing issue it currently faces?

I believe that our most pressing issue is actually a multilayered issue steaming from the vast majority of our people being disconnected from each other and our culture and teachings. The loss of language and cultural education, lack

of connection to community for those who live in the outside districts and lack of concern and involvement from tribal members in our election & government process. A lot of our members who live in outer districts are unfortunately far removed in their everyday life from our nation & culture. From my conversations & engagement with other tribal members online, so many are hungry for that connection and belonging.

How can CPN better serve and engage its tribal members?

Giving each district legislator more responsibility and access to their members that they represent. This can be done with more resources to have gatherings and events around their respective districts that would take the hardship off of tribal members that do not have the means to travel so far. Providing more opportunity for tribal members to have input and autonomy to serve our people, with youth, elder and cultural committees. Potentially exploring the possibility to add online voting options within the Potawatomi portal. Finally, more online opportunities for those who live so spread out.

Describe what in your life has made you appreciate your CPN heritage?

I've always been extremely proud of my CPN heritage, I'm a direct descendant of Potawatomi Chief Waubensee (B:1780/D:1848) and I happen to be exactly seven generations from him. In our teachings there is a seven fires prophecy the current era is a time for cultural revival, stewarding the environment and strengthening community. I take these teachings seriously in my everyday life, instilling them in my children. I also appreciate that our past leaders chose to recognize tribal descendants as citizens and got rid of the government's attempts to enforce blood quantum, which was intended to end our sovereignty.

What kind of future do you envision for the Nation?

My prayers and vision for the future of our nation include expanding resources for our current cultural education & language revitalization: a funding boost could bring immersion programs to the other districts. I would love to see ethically appropriate economic development that reflects our 7 generation teachings. I would love to see an effort to decolonize as a whole tribe. Where I live in Northern California, my neighboring tribes have a strong connection to their ancestral land and culture. I would love to see our tribe reclaim that connection & focus on food sovereignty, land back, restoration & balance with Mother Earth.

How could you, as an elected official, help tribal members who feel disconnected from the tribe?

As an elected official, I would make myself available to my fellow tribal members to share what I know and help connect people to others in our community to build relationships and their sense of belonging. I am currently active online & try to pass along resources as I see them for events happening within my district and even those next to ours. We have a few social media groups where a lot of us have come together to form an online CPN community & even met distant relatives. As stated previously, I would love to facilitate gatherings within D7 to come together with others. 🍷

CPN INTERNSHIP PROGRAM IS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR FALL 2026

APPLICATION
DEADLINE
JULY 10

Do you want to serve the Tribe in an internship role that aligns with your career goals?

If so, this is the program for you. The internship program offers a paid, 160-hour internship with a CPN tribal department to members who meet qualifications.

To learn more or apply, visit portal.potawatomi.org.



CITIZEN POTAWATOMI NATION 2026 REQUEST FOR BALLOT

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

Citizen Potawatomi Nation
Election Committee
PO Box 310
Tecumseh, OK 74873-9900

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

Citizen Potawatomi Nation • Request for Ballot • 2026 Election

Name _____ Phone _____
please print

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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

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

Signature _____ Ten Digit
Tribal Roll # _____

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

Must be postmarked no later than June 7, 2026



“Let’s keep building — together.”

Over the last several months of this campaign, I have had the privilege of visiting with so many Citizen Potawatomi tribal members through calls, texts, meetings, and conversations across Oklahoma and throughout the country. Those conversations have meant a great deal to me. They have given me the opportunity not only to share my heart for this Nation, but more importantly to listen. Hearing your stories, your concerns, your hopes, and your ideas for the future has been one of the greatest joys of this campaign.

My family roots run deep in the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. I come from the Peltier family, and I am proud of the responsibility that lineage carries. To me, our heritage is not just something we honor in history, it is a responsibility we carry forward through service, integrity, and respect.

I live in Stroud, Oklahoma, with my wife of 24 years, C’Anne, and our three boys, Gideon, August, and Lincoln. My wife has spent the last 15 years teaching in public schools in our community. Like many of you, we are raising our children with strong values, a love for community, and a belief that service to others matters.

Service has shaped my life. I served six years in the United States Marine Corps, including deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. After returning home and earning my degree from the University of Oklahoma, I felt called to continue serving — first in the Oklahoma House of Representatives and then in the State Senate. During that time, I worked across party lines, led committees, and advocated for education, workforce development, and responsible government.

Today, I serve as Director of Government Affairs for Motorola Solutions, working with leaders across the country to support public safety and first responders. I have also had the honor of advising both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation on government relations and political strategy, especially at a time when tribal sovereignty continues to face challenges at the state level.

I am running because I believe leadership begins with listening. It requires stewardship, accountability, and a commitment to building on the success our Nation has already achieved. The Citizen Potawatomi Nation has made incredible progress, and I believe our best days are still ahead. We must continue protecting our sovereignty, expanding opportunity for our people, and preparing the next generation to lead.

I am deeply grateful for the many conversations, the encouragement, and the trust so many of you have shown me over these past few months. It has been an honor to hear from tribal members across our Nation, and I humbly ask for your vote as we continue building a stronger future together.

J. N. Smalley



CONTACT & CONVERSATION

Have a concern, an idea, or feel like the Nation isn’t meeting your needs?
I want to hear from you.

Communication is key — and how we communicate matters just as much.
Real progress starts with real conversations.

 **Call or text: 918-808-1669**
 **Email: smalleyjasonn@gmail.com**

I welcome your thoughts, questions, and perspective because strong leadership starts with listening.

Respectfully,
Jason N. Smalley

J. N. Smalley

— Candidate for Vice-Chairman

Paid for by Jason N. Smalley

From the Vice-Chairman Candidate

Paid for by Julie Jackson, Coos Bay Oregon, without consultation with the candidate
[Source: Facebook]



Charles Dwight Scott, Oklahoma

Recently someone asked me why I'm not campaigning harder — why I'm not buying ads, building a website, or creating a slick Facebook page.

The truth is, over the past several years I've been doing something more important. I've been talking with tribal members. I've been listening to your concerns, engaging with you, and working to understand what our people expect from an elected leader.

I'm running to advocate for you. I'm running to expand and strengthen our tribal benefits — for members outside our immediate area and for those here at home.

What you will get from me is honesty and truthfulness, guided by compassion and passion for our people. I will stand up for you and for our tribe.

Over the past three years, I have run for a legislative seat against my friend David Barrett. I ran against a man I deeply admire and have voted for many times, Chairman Rocky Barrett. Now I am running for the position currently held by our beloved Vice Chairman, Ms. Capps, as she prepares to retire.

Throughout this time, I have slowly and patiently built a foundation. I've spoken with our traditional elders, with mentors who currently serve in our Legislature, and with many of you. I've also spent time speaking with department heads and directors across our tribal government.

Because of these conversations and experiences, I have developed a strong understanding of our budget, our businesses, and how to balance those responsibilities with what our citizens expect from our tribal government.

I am asking for your vote.

If possible, I'd love for you to vote in person — and to attend our annual Festival while you're there. But if you can't make it, please request a ballot and vote absentee.

If you would like to know more about me — who I am, what I believe in, and what I stand for — please reach out. I'll let the people who know me speak for me. Talk to my friends. Talk to our traditional elders. Talk to our local citizens. And talk to me.

Igwien,

Charles Dwight Scott | Vice-Chairman Candidate |
Cell or text: 918-650-8631 | cdscott66@gmail.com |
Facebook: Charles Dwight Scott or Charles Scott for CPN Vice Chairman.

Keep Balance in the Executive Branch



**Vote for Martha Kimberly “Kim” Nootbaar
Vice Chairman**



Most know me as
“Kim”
Please vote!

nootbaar@aol.com
469-867-6724
Facebook: *Kim Martin Nootbaar*
M Kimberly Nootbaar for CPN
Vice Chairman

Paid for by Kim Nootbaar

LEADERSHIP

MEANS
**LISTENING, COLLABORATION,
AND RESPECT.**

I've seen **Jason Smalley** demonstrate those values for more than a decade.



I am proud to support
Jason Smalley
for
Citizen Potawatomi Nation Vice Chairman

Paid for by Jennifer Bell

I am proud to be a member of the La Reau / Higbee / Bertrand / Bourassa group of families. I am proud of my Potawatomi name, Pètëgizhgokwé, which means 'the bank of storm clouds in the distance, lying along the horizon'.

And, I would be proud to serve as your District 5 Legislator.

I have a Bachelor's degree in Technical Communication and worked in related fields for 15 years. My husband, Kevin, and I successfully operate a candle manufacturing business for the last 10 years. This is one of the main experiences that has provided me the wide variety of transferable skills that I bring to the table that benefit a tribal legislator. I am experienced at interacting with people and understanding their challenges, then helping them achieve solutions.

I have extensive knowledge of planning and managing events, understanding budgets, research, and organizing and coordinating work flows. I know how to identify and ask the hard questions, and push back when and where push back is needed. I genuinely like people, which leads to my greatest gift; the ability to really lean in and listen to people, hear their needs, and assist in resolutions.

- if you want Business Sense in tribal government, vote for me for District 5 Legislator
 - if you want Common Sense in tribal government, vote for me for District 5 Legislator
- if you want Compassion in tribal government, vote for me for District 5 Legislator



Call or text me at
303-507-4393

paid for by Lorrie Underwood

EXPERIENCE MATTERS

RE-ELECT MARK JOHNSON

For District 7 Legislator

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

Standing together, we are strong.

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

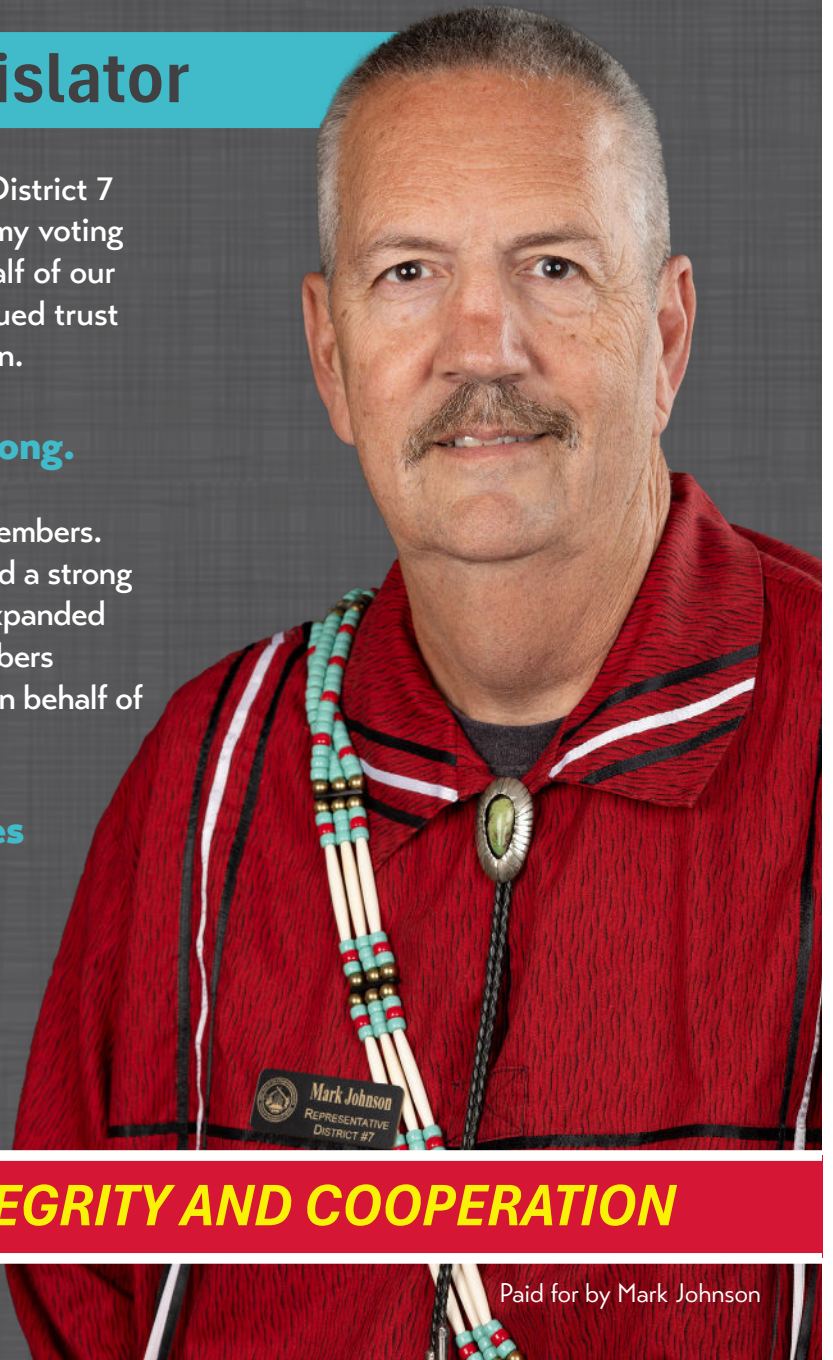
**I can only do so with the votes
of the members of District 7.**

**PLEASE EXERCISE
YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE!**



HONOR, INTEGRITY AND COOPERATION

Paid for by Mark Johnson



Sovereign appoints Anderson and Causby as new EVP and CLO

CPN's Sovereign Bank recently appointed Brian Anderson as executive vice president and chief credit and risk officer and Topper Causby as chief lending officer.

Executive Vice President Brian Anderson

Sovereign Bank appointed Brian Anderson as executive vice president, chief credit and risk officer. He previously served as interim chief credit officer and will continue leading the bank's credit administration and risk management strategy.



Brian Anderson

"Brian has demonstrated exceptional leadership and sound judgement during his time as interim chief credit officer," Sovereign Bank CEO Bryan Cain said. "His commitment to disciplined credit practices and relationship-driven banking has been invaluable to our team. We are proud to officially name him chief credit and risk officer as we continue to grow and serve our communities."

In his role, Anderson will oversee the bank's credit administration and risk management functions, helping guide responsible decision-making, monitor portfolio health, and safeguard the long-term financial strength of the organization. He will work closely with lending teams and leadership to ensure consistent credit practices, identify and manage potential risks, and support sound lending across the organization.

Anderson brings more than a decade of financial services experience spanning community banking and federal

regulatory oversight. Before joining Sovereign Bank, he spent 12 years with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), serving in several roles including capital markets specialist and financial institution examiner, where he evaluated the safety, soundness, and compliance of financial institutions. Earlier in his career, he gained hands-on banking experience at Pinnacle Bank. Anderson holds a Bachelor of Business Administration in finance from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and is both a certified enterprise risk professional and a dual-commissioned FDIC examiner in safety and soundness and compliance.

"I'm honored to continue serving Sovereign Bank in this capacity," Anderson said. "This organization is built on strong relationships, sound decision-making, and a genuine commitment to the communities we serve. I look forward to working alongside our talented team as we continue supporting the financial goals of our customers across Oklahoma."

Chief Lending Officer Topper Causby

Topper Causby was recently appointed as Sovereign Bank's chief lending officer. The move reinforces the bank's commitment to strategic growth, strong credit quality and relationship-driven community banking across Oklahoma.

"Topper brings a wealth of experience, strong leadership, and a deep understanding of community banking in Oklahoma," Sovereign Bank CEO Bryan Cain said. "His ability to balance growth with sound credit practices, along with his commitment to building lasting relationships,



Topper Causby

makes him a great fit for our team and the communities we serve. We're confident he will play a key role in advancing our lending strategy and supporting the bank's long-term success."

Causby joins Sovereign Bank with more than three decades of progressive leadership experience in commercial, consumer, and mortgage lending. A longtime Oklahoma

banking leader with deep roots in the Tulsa market, he most recently served as executive vice president and chief lending officer at AVB Bank, where he led lending strategy, portfolio growth and credit performance.

In his new role, Causby will be responsible for the overall direction and performance of the bank's lending division, including commercial business development, loan production, portfolio management and credit quality. He will lead a team of lenders across multiple markets, oversee mortgage lending operations, and contribute to the bank's strategic planning, pricing and growth initiatives.

"I'm excited to work alongside our talented lending teams to support our customers and to be part of an organization that truly values relationships and community impact,"

Causby said. "Sovereign Bank has a strong foundation, and I look forward to building on that momentum to help create meaningful growth opportunities – especially those that create long-term value for our customers."

Causby holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and Management with a minor in Finance from Oklahoma State University and is a graduate of the Graduate School of Banking at Colorado. He is actively involved in several professional and civic organizations across Oklahoma, further reflecting his commitment to the communities he serves.

For more information about Sovereign Bank and its services, please visit banksovereign.com.

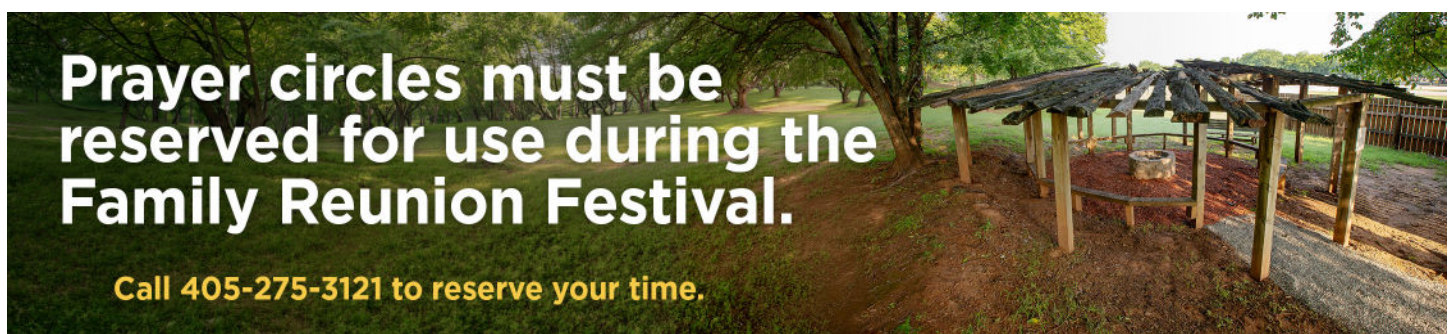


Effective leadership with a fresh perspective.

Elect JASON SMALLEY For Vice-Chairman

Paid for by Linda Capps and John "Rocky" Barrett

The advertisement features a photograph of three people standing in front of a building with the sign "CITIZEN POTAWATOMI NA". On the left is a woman in a red plaid shirt, in the center is a man in a grey blazer, and on the right is an older man in a light blue striped shirt. The background is a blue gradient with white text.



Prayer circles must be reserved for use during the Family Reunion Festival.

Call 405-275-3121 to reserve your time.

The advertisement features a photograph of a wooden prayer circle structure in a park-like setting with trees and a grassy area. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.



RE-ELECT MARK JOHNSON

For District 7 Legislator

EXPERIENCE MATTERS

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

PLEASE EXERCISE YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE!

HONOR, INTEGRITY AND COOPERATION

Paid for by Mark Johnson

Why We Support Katie



Katie has experience organizing events and cultural activities with tribes. She will use that experience to reach District 7 members both virtually and through more frequent gatherings. Katie has worked with her family's tribal culture department for years, learning about regalia making, food sovereignty, and the gathering and processing of traditional materials for basketry.

Katie received a 2023 California Living Cultures Grant. She used it to create her daughter's regalia and to teach other tribal members in her community to do the same for their daughters. Katie has worked with Native youth for years, advocating and helping them balance their life transitions by including cultural skills.

From another tribal member, "I support Katie because she's a genuinely thoughtful person who does things in a good way. She's open to learning while sharing what she knows. She follows our Teachings."

Paid for by Bill Jackson, San Rafael California

KEEP A TRUSTED AND PROVEN LEGISLATOR

RE-ELECT MARK JOHNSON

For District 7 Legislator

A member of the Vieux and Johnson Families



HONOR, INTEGRITY AND COOPERATION

Paid for by Mark Johnson



VOTE
RYAN HUBBLE
FOR DISTRICT 5 LEGISLATOR

PAID FOR BY LINDA CARPS

STRENGTH FOR OUR FUTURE



**HONORING OUR TRADITIONS.
 SECURING OUR NATION.**

Our strength comes from our heritage and our sacrifice.
VOTE to protect our sovereign rights, preserve our culture, and secure a better future for our children.

CAST YOUR VOTE. SHAPE OUR LEGACY.

Paid for by James Newberry

Lorrie Underwood for District 5 Legislator

Vote for me and I will work for you!

Strengthen accountability and build trust
 Able and willing to represent your questions and concerns
 Advocate for open communication and shared information

VOTE!!

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



paid for by Lorrie Underwood

Updates on *Mnotagwzékwe* with *Nēmki*s



By Bree Dunham and Jennifer Randell, CPN Eagle Aviary Managers

When the Aviary had the opportunity to release their first bald eagle, *Wadasé Zhabwé* (Brave Breakthrough), in 2013, the idea of placing GPS telemetry on her before release was the best option for her and the Aviary program. The data gathered from her telemetry helped monitor her wellbeing and progress and also helped guide the staff in evaluating their standards of care and criteria for future releases, but more than that, the telemetry was a way to continue to honor that *Neshnabé* responsibility that we have for Eagle.

Our traditional stories explain that it was *Kno* (Eagle), that intervened on our behalf and saved us from destruction, and we feel like we have a reciprocal obligation to care for them now. But that responsibility extends beyond our facility when it comes to those we are fortunate enough to release. Nearly every eagle that comes to our facility is injured because of humans, directly or indirectly. From habitat loss to our roadways, power lines, wind farms, pollution, lead ammunition, and fish and tackle, we pose the greatest threat to them in the wild. Telemetry tells the whole story.

Every three days, new telemetry data is downloaded, and staff checks in on *Mnotagwzékwe* (She Brings the Good News) and *Nēmki*s (Little Thunder), the young golden eagles that were released last October near White Sulphur Springs, Montana. While released from the same site, the eagles took drastically different paths. *Mnotagwzékwe* remains in a valley near the Montana-Wyoming border. She's never ventured further south than a few miles from Cody, Wyoming. She appears to have chosen her spring-summer territory just 150 miles from the release site.

*Nēmki*s traveled nearly 600 miles south before he made his way into the Arapaho National Forest in White Ranch Park in Colorado. He traveled through Yellowstone and continued down along the

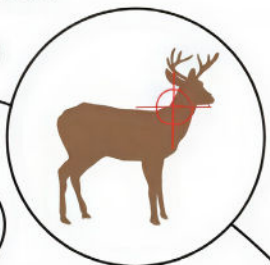
Lead Poisoning in Eagles



Hunting & Trapping

Pest Control

Lead or Lead Core Bullet



X-ray showing fragments

Humans who eat game meat can ingest lead fragments without being aware. Lead is a toxic, heavy metal and is most dangerous to children and pregnant women.

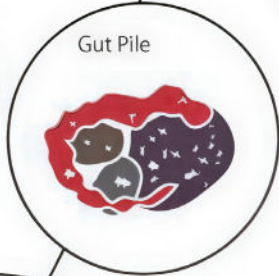


1 Lead and lead core bullets, commonly used in hunting and pest control, will fragment into hundreds of tiny pieces upon impact with the targeted animal.

2 Some of these lead fragments are so small they are not visible to the naked eye but are clearly present in x-rays taken of animals harvested with lead ammunition.

3 These fragments can travel up to 45cm (18") from the original entry point on the targeted animal.

4 Eagles and other scavengers will ingest the lead when consuming contaminated carcasses and remains left behind in the field.



Gut Pile



5 The lead is ground down in the eagle's gizzard and absorbed into the blood stream.



Typical lead bullet will fragment into hundreds of small pieces upon impact. Lead is Toxic.



An alternative to lead bullets is solid copper bullets. These bullets remain intact and will mushroom upon impact allowing the entire bullet to be removed.

Symptoms of Lead Poisoning in Eagles Are:

1. Eagle will be grounded, unable to fly.
2. Appears dizzy or unstable.
3. Show little fear of humans.
4. Difficulty breathing and swallowing.

A Standard 130 grain bullet contains enough lead to kill 102 eagles. It only takes 2 pieces of #6 lead shot to kill a bald eagle.

#6 lead shot actual size

eastern side of the Rocky Mountain range before his trek south slowed down. His telemetry looked as if he had found an area to settle. However, a lot can happen in between telemetry cycles. The following download told a different story as we examined the data and the height he was flying. His last points show him traveling into Denver. Before we could reach out to Colorado Parks and Wildlife, we received a phone call from Rob Domenech, director of Raptor View Research Institute, who put the telemetry on Nēmki. Domenech was notified Nēmki had been reported grounded and was taken to a wildlife rehabilitator. His bloodwork indicated he had high levels of lead in his system, had developed pneumonia from being grounded, and he had contracted aspergillosis. He did not survive the night.

We were fortunate, working with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services and Colorado Parks and Wildlife, to make the trip to USFWS Federal Repository to bring him home.

Without the telemetry we would have never known his full story. Nēmki did everything right. His instincts supported him across three states. He not only endured one of the harshest winters the U.S. has seen in decades but was thriving doing exactly what the Creator put him here to do. Unfortunately, the meal he found that had been left behind by hunters ended up costing him his life. However, his story does not end there. The Aviary will continue to use his story as an opportunity to educate the public. We are partnering again with Domenech



X-ray showing lethal amount of lead in an eagle.

and others to help educate people on how lead affects raptors and how they can be part of the solution.

Lead poisoning

The CPN Eagle Aviary knows firsthand lead poisoning poses a hazard to birds and is contributing to the decline in eagle populations. Eagles are skilled hunters and opportunistic feeders, often feeding on carrion.

"It's a protein source that's out there and ripe for the picking," said Domenech.

However, feeding on carrion is one of the ways eagles are exposed to lead. Domenech said many hunters in the western U.S. use lead-core, high-velocity rifle bullets designed to fragment upon impact.

"The fragmented lead bullet permeates through the muscle tissue and organs for as far as two feet from the entry wound," he said.

Hunters unknowingly leave lead-filled carrion behind, which scavengers like golden eagles then consume.

"It's a huge issue," Domenech said. "In fact, in a study we did on more than 170 migratory golden eagles, we found that nearly 60 percent of the eagles we captured while migrating south in the fall tested positive for lead."

In a separate study of wintering bald and golden eagles combined, Domenech and his team found that 87 percent tested positive for lead.

When ingested, this amount of lead is enough to poison and kill an eagle.



The issue hits close to home for the Aviary, where many of the eagles have been rehabilitated for lead poisoning. The Aviary shared that a lead fragment, even the size of a rice grain, can be enough to take an eagle's life. Lead poisoning can have severe effects on an eagle's health, such as damaging cognitive function, kidneys, liver and other bodily systems, and eventually accumulates in the bones.

"All of this contributes to maybe not being able to fly, getting out of the way of a car in time or not being able to hunt as efficiently," Domenech said. "So, if they can't hunt as efficiently, maybe now they are more reliant on carrion because they can't catch prey like they used to. And that perpetuates the problem."

In lead-poisoned eagles, stress or egg production can cause stored lead to be released back into the body.

"It's really an insidious neurotoxin that will find its way back into the bird's system time and time again after accumulation," he said.

Domenech shared a simple way to help prevent lead poisoning.

"Go to a non-lead alloy and you will not be poisoning the opportunistic scavengers that are feeding on the gut pile that's left behind after your hunt," he said. "It's that simple."

The Aviary would like to thank the community, Tribal leaders and employees for all their help and support through this journey. To learn more about lead poisoning in eagles, visit raptorview.org. To learn about alternatives to lead and ways to switch and hunt effectively visit sportingleadfree.org. For more information about the Aviary, visit potawatomheritage.com. 🌱



VOTE!!

District 5

Stand Up.
Be Heard.
Every Vote Matters!

- ★ Grow our Culture & Traditions
- ★ Transparent and Accountable Leadership
- ★ Clear Communication with every Citizen
- ★ Keep our Community Informed

Lorrie Underwood for District 5 Legislator





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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM**

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VISIT US ONLINE AT CPNHOUSEOFHOPE.COM

Associate Justice Braugh reflects on legal service, tribal sovereignty

Tribal member and Associate Justice Jane Braugh of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Supreme Court started her judicial service with CPN in 2004 when she was elected District Court Judge. In 2010, she was elected to the CPN Supreme Court as Associate Justice where she has served multiple consecutive terms.

Braugh was motivated to accept the nomination as a justice on the CPN Supreme Court by her desire to reconnect with the Tribe.

"I wanted to learn about my heritage, so I attended a regional meeting and met our Tribal leaders who invited me to run for the court," she said. "I am honored to participate in our Tribal courts and happy to serve."

Braugh is also a partner at Lydecker, a national law firm in Los Angeles, California, where she represents a publicly traded manufacturer and distributor in product liability cases.

After graduating from the University of Kentucky with a bachelor's degree in English, an experience in Braugh's early career sparked her interest in law school. She attended the University of Houston Law Center in Houston, Texas, where she received her juris doctor degree.

Her legal career has taken her across the U.S. and includes work on both plaintiff and defense sides. She formerly worked on the plaintiff's side in product liability cases, but now exclusively works on the defense side.

"I think this gives me an advantage since I have a wealth of experience strategizing and advocating for both sides," she said.

Braugh, descendant of the Freigon family, attributes traits such as her "aptitude for law, persuasion, storytelling, creative problem solving, love of reading, observation and curiosity, along with her genuine belief in equity," to her Potawatomi heritage. She also shared that there are a lot of lawyers in her family history.



"Serving the Tribe as a Tribal member in the CPN Supreme Court has been a good experience, and I have had the opportunity to meet and work with some very fine legal minds, which is always appreciated," Braugh told the *Hownikan*.

For Braugh, the privilege of tribal sovereignty, along with the ability for self-determination and self-governance sets the CPN Supreme Court apart from other courts.

"They are unique and sacred rights that should be appreciated and fostered," she said. "Tribal sovereignty, like fundamental freedom, is not granted by the U.S. Government; it is inherent."

Braugh explained that lessons learned from history can easily be erased or forgotten.

"I hope that we remember and work to preserve our cultural identity, the significance of what was taken and all the beautiful aspects of our true identity, differences and origin," she said.

Learn more about Associate Justice Braugh at lydecker.com. 🌱

FOLLOW THE POTAWATOMI TRAIL OF DEATH WITH GEORGE GODFREY



The Potawatomi Trail of Death Association is inviting Tribal members to join a caravan from Indiana to Kansas from June 20-25.

Since 1988, George Godfrey has been leading Citizen and Prairie Band Potawatomi and others on six-day driving caravans following the route of the 1838 forced removal of Potawatomi from northern Indiana to Kansas. Over the years, memorial markers have been placed at nearly all the sites of these overnight encampments, from *Menominee's* chapel to Sugar Creek Mission. As the caravan travels, stopping at many of the sites, Godfrey reads the records and re-tells the story of the Potawatomi on that forced march. In Lafayette, Indiana, travelers see the original George Winter paintings of Potawatomi who made that journey.

In 2026, the Potawatomi Trail of Death Association will be leading a caravan timed to end at St. Philippine Duchesne Memorial Park (Linn County, Kansas) on June 25, to allow participants to continue to Shawnee, Oklahoma, in time for the Family Reunion Festival.

With both hotel and camping options for the six nights, Tribal members can retrace the route with George Godfrey.

For more information, visit the Potawatomi Trail of Death Association website trailofdeath.org or call George Godfrey at 217-502-9340, Steve Livingston at 419-654-4183 or Rich Meyer at 574-202-3920.

Powwow etiquette

The Saturday powwow during the Family Reunion Festival is a highlight for many Tribal members who visit. Everyone, whether experienced or a first-time participant, is welcome to join. The powwow provides an opportunity to experience *Nishnabé* culture, both traditional and contemporary.

The dance circle is sacred and must be respected at all times. Following a few simple guidelines helps ensure a comfortable and enjoyable experience for all.

Is the powwow social or ceremonial?

Powwows are largely social but include ceremonial elements. It is important to be respectful. The dance circle is reserved for those dancing or singing. Do not walk across or stand inside the circle. Please ensure that small children do not run or play in the dance circle.

The powwow opens with Grand Entry at 8 p.m. Everyone who is able should stand as the eagle staff and flags are brought in by veterans and elders. During the Flag Song and other honor songs, everyone will remain standing. Men should remove their hats.

I've never danced before, but I'd like to dance. What do I need to know?

If you plan to participate in Grand Entry, head to the line up area just outside the arena a few minutes before it begins. An arena director will help everyone find their place. If you are participating with one of the honored families, gather with your family members. All dancers are welcome during Grand Entry and intertribal songs.

Listen to the Master of Ceremonies or emcee. They will announce when all dancers are invited to enter the circle.

Women should wear their regalia or a long maxi-type skirt and a top that covers their shoulders. Women may wear their shawl across their shoulders or carry it folded on their arm. Men should wear a ribbon shirt and slacks. It is acceptable to add ribbons to a commercially made shirt. Everyone should wear close-toed, flat shoes.

Dancers will move in a clockwise direction around the circle. During contest songs, or other special songs, exit the dance circle so that contestants or those being honored may dance.

I'm not dancing, so how should I enjoy myself?

Seating is available around the dance circle. You may bring your own outdoor-type chair or sit in the bleachers. The benches around the circle are reserved for dancers. Please do not sit on the benches or move any blankets or regalia placed on the benches.



Listen carefully to the singers and observe the rhythm. Sometimes you may be able to pick out *Bodéwadmimwen* words or other Indigenous languages being used. Watch the dancers and note the differences between each style of dance. Appreciate the wide variety of colors, beadwork and other elements each dancer wears. Notice the different materials used, both modern and traditional.

Many dancers spend months or even years preparing their regalia. Some pieces are proudly handed down from previous generations. Remember, it is not acceptable to touch a dancer's regalia without permission. Some regalia items may become damaged if casually handled, or they may hold spiritual significance and should not be touched by others.

Can I take photos?

Photography is permitted but do not use flash photography during a contest or honor song. It is distracting to the dancers. Do not step in or stand inside the dance circle while taking photos. Always ask permission before taking someone's photo. Please respect their preference not to be photographed if they decline.

A good opportunity for photos may be found away from the dance circle. Many dancers are happy to socialize and answer questions in between songs. To respect the sacred nature of the dance circle, food, beverages, smoking/vaping and pets are not permitted.

Read more about powwow etiquette at cpn.news/festival or watch a video on YouTube featuring Tribal members Dr. Kelli Mosteller, Coby Lehman and Tesia Zientek. 🍷

ADVERTISED LEASE SALE 42

NOTICE OF SALE OF DRY LAND FARMING AND/OR GRAZING LEASES TO BE HELD MAY 20, 2026 AT 2:30 PM AT THE CITIZEN POTAWATOMI NATION DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE SERVICES OFFICE FOR THE SALE OF FARMING AND GRAZING LEASES ON TRUST RESTRICTED INDIAN LAND. TO BE CONDUCTED UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF TITLE 25 CFR 162.

For further information concerning this advertisement, or to request a bid packet, please contact Tonya Turnpaugh at 405-395-0113 or tonya.turnpaugh@potawatomi.org.

ITEM	NUMBER	NAME	LEGAL DESCRIPTION	ACREAGE
1	821-35	James Burnett	W NW, Sec 31, T9N, R5E; Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma	40
2	821- 62-E	Josette Bennett	E NE NW & E W NE NW, Sec 17, T6N, R5E; Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma	30
3	821-84	Joseph Epeteska	E NW Sec 24, T6N, R4E; Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma	80
4	821-97	Clarissa Mars	E NW, Sec 7, T6N, R5E; Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma	80
5	821-S 116	John BaptisteVasseur	E SW, Sec 18, T6N, R5E; Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma	80
6	821-S 395-C	Pea-ish or Peter Curley	SE NW, Sec 4, T6N, R5E; Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma	40
7	821-S 510	Rozette Trombla	NE SW & NW SE, Sec 25, T8N, R1E; Cleveland County, Oklahoma	80
8	821-S 575-E	Almira C. Bayliss	Lot 01 = NE NE & SE NE, Sec 4, T8N, R4E; Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma	79.16
9	821-T 748	Joseph Lewis Acton	N N SW, Sec 31, T9N, R5E; Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma	40
10	821-809	Frank /Mucpuc/ Davis	N NE, Sec 15, T7N, R4E; Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma	80
11	821-S 900	Madeline Denton	E SE SW SE & W SW SE SE, Sec 6, T7N, R1E; Cleveland County, Oklahoma	10
12	821-1325-D	Harriet Pratt (Wilmette)	SW SW NW, Sec 13, T8N, R4E; Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma	10

MUST BE LEASED TOGETHER

13A	821-87	Ellen Yott	NE SE & SE NE, Sec 4, T5N R4E; Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma	80
13B	821-100	Joseph Haas	NW SW & SW NW, Sec 3, T5N, R4E; Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma	80
13C	821-S 326	Myra Na-hk-sa	NW NW, Sec 3, T5N, R4E; Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma NE NW, Sec 4, T5N, R4E; Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma	40

MUST BE LEASED TOGETHER

14A	821-ST 579-A	Laura I Bayliss	S N SW, Sec 3, T8N, R4E; Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma	40
14B	821-ST 579-B	Laura I Bayliss	S N N SW, Sec 3, T8N, R4E; Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma	20
14C	821-579-C	Laura I Bayliss	N N N SW Sec 3, T8N, R4E; Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma	20



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Bourbonnais Family
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University of Houston-Victoria

Steph Ackerly

Vieux Family
High School Diploma
The Excel Center Evansville SE

Ashley Adams

Curley/Acton/Rhodd Family
Bachelors of Education
Oklahoma State University

Sarah Alderson

Curley Family
Associate of Applied Science
Riverside City College

Gage Anderson

Lafromboise/Peltier Family
Bachelor of Arts
New Mexico State University

Autumn Armbruster

High School Diploma
McPherson Ranch
School of Excellence

Maci Ballew

Toupin Family
Master of Science
Northeastern State University

Kyla Barrett

High School Diploma
Bethel High School

Roslyn Bellscheidt

Weld/Ogee/Kennedy Family
Bachelor of Science
Duke University

Maicee Berry

Bertrand/Higbee/Clardy Family
High School Diploma
Noble High School

Jordyn Bise

Master of Social Work
University of Washington-Seattle

Ella Black

Beaubien/Weld/Kennedy Family
High School Diploma
Dickson High School

Jacqueline Bourbonnais

Anderson/Bourbonnais Family
Bachelor of Science
University of Nebraska

Kelsee Bratley

Lafromboise/Willimet Family
Doctor of Philosophy
Boston University

Audrey Braugh

Bourassa Family
Bachelor of Science
University of Texas-Austin

Tariah Brooking

Bourbonnais/Peltier Family
Master of Education
East Central University

Robyn Broyles

Bergeron/Lewis/Melott Family
Master of Laws
University of Oklahoma

Chris Brunin

Bertrand/Clardy Family
Master of Business Admin
Oklahoma Baptist University

Heather Bruno

Bruno/Rhodd Family
Associates of Business Admin
Wake Technical
Community College

Taylor Canter

Rhodd/Bruno/Vieux Family
High School Diploma
Epic Charter Schools

Jessica Castillo-Vreeland

Bourassa Family
Bachelor of Arts
Lewis University

Megan Cavallaro

Hardin/Anderson Family
Bachelor of Arts
University of Nevada-Reno

Ashley Chancellor

Bourbonnais Family
High School Diploma
Epic Charter School

Julianna Chesnut

Lafromboise/Anderson Family
High School Diploma
Rush Springs High School

Ashton Cockrell

Southwestern Oklahoma
State University

Shayna Collinworth

Bachelor of Arts
National University

Hailey Compton

Kennedy Family
Bachelor of Arts
Southern New Hampshire University

Isabelle Conley

East Central University

Lexi Coots

Peltier/Bruno/Rhodd Family
High School Diploma
Timber Creek High School

Catherine Crowe

Navarre Family
Bachelor of Arts
Southern NH University

Nakia Crumbo

Crumbo/Willimet Family
Bachelor of Science
Missouri Southern State University

Serena Davis

Burnett Family
High School Diploma
Amplus Academy

Brodi Diehl

Kennedy Family
High School Diploma
Bentonville West High School

Callan Dockry

Slavin Family
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University of Iowa

Greyson Doster

Johnson Family
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University of Pittsburgh

Julia Dyer

Doctorate of Nursing Practice
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Trevor Engel

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Doctor of Philosophy
Vanderbilt University

Charles Ferguson

Weld/Ogee/Weldfelt Family
Bachelor of Science
Towson University

Angela Ford

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Associate of Applied Science
Eastern Oklahoma State College

Jacey Gaddy

Willimet/Darling/Smith Family
High School Diploma
Ardmore High School

Noah Glasgow

Bergeron/Melott Family
High School Diploma
Strother High School

Sophia Goodman

High School Diploma
Fort Gibson High School

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Bachelor of Business Admin
University of Arkansas

Todd Gupton

Peltier Family
Bachelor of Arts
California State
University-Sacramento

Trenton Guthrie

Anderson/Hardin Family
Southern NH University

Sasha Hancock

Bachelor of Science
Indiana University Northwest

Kayden Harrell

Associate of Applied Science
Oklahoma City
Community College

Addison Harris

High School Diploma
Piedmont High School

Connor Hart

Bourbonnais Family
High School Diploma
Golden High School

Heidi Hart

Bourbonnais Family
High School Diploma

Alexander Hasley

Peltier Family
High School Diploma
Ada High School

Lacy Haynes

Vocational/Technical Certificate
Seminole State College/Gordon
Cooper Technology Center

Steven Hensley

Master of Science
John's Hopkins University

Andrew Hickman

Bourassa/Clardy/Bertrand Family
Master of Business Admin
Oklahoma Christian University

Noah Holderbaum

Muller Family
Bachelor of Science
University of Oklahoma

Timothy Holloway

Navarre/Holloway Family
Bachelor of Science
University of Central Oklahoma

Ariel Howeth

Willimet/Frapp Family
Master of Science
Southeastern Oklahoma State

Maddie Hubble

Peltier Family
High School Diploma
Piedmont High School

Joseph Huberty

Master of Education
Mount Mary College

RayLynn Hudson

High School Diploma
Broken Arrow High School

Taryn Hull

Bachelor of Science
Baker University

Logan Hulsopple
Juneau/Vieux Family
Vocational/Technical Certificate
Washburn Institute of Technology

Michael Ice
Bachelor of Science
Benedictine College

Camden Jurgensen
Vieux Family
Bachelor of Business Admin
Wichita State University

Keegan Jurgensen
Bachelor of Education
Emporia State University

William Keller
Navarre Family
Bachelor of Arts
University of Texas at Austin

Lauren Kelley
Rhodd Family
High School Diploma
Winfield High School

Alexis Ladner
Bourbonnais/Wamego Family
Bachelor of Science
Avila University

Jace Laughlin
Master of Science
Northeastern State University

Wyatt LeClaire
LeClaire/DeLonais/Acton Family
High School Diploma
Carl Albert High School

Allyson LeForce
Ouilmette/Darling Family
Juris Doctor
University of Arizona

Maximus Lefstad
Bertrand/Clark Family
Bachelor of Business Admin
North Dakota State University

Ty Lewis
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Springfield Catholic High School

Yvonne Longacre
Yott/Vieux Family
Master of Education
University of Chicago

Audrey Loving
High School Diploma
Norman North High School

Zackary Luker
Bourassa/Muller/Clardy Family
High School Diploma
Stuart High School

Rachel Machado
Wickens Family
Master of Science
Maryville University of Saint Louis

Rachel Maker
Curley/Acton/Rhodd Family
Bachelor of Arts
University of Central Oklahoma

Victoria Mallinger
Lafromboise/Peltier Family
Bachelor of Arts
University of Missouri-Kansas City

Clayton Marvin
Bachelor of Science
Indiana State University

Kent Mattena
Navarre Family
High School Diploma
Westmoreland High School

Janet McAfee
Master of Education
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Madison McBride
High School Diploma
Southmoore High School

Jace Milburn
Bruno/Vieux/Bourbonnais Family
Bachelor of Science
East Central University

Chelsea Miller
Navarre/Vieux Family
Doctor of Science
University of Oklahoma
Health Sciences Center

Micah Miller
Bertrand/Higbee Family
High School Diploma
Mansfield Legacy High School

Abby Morrow
Smith Family
Bachelor of Business Admin
University of Arkansas

Joanna Moss
Bachelor of Science
Oklahoma State University

Micah Murray
High School Diploma
Mustang High School

Paisley Nichols
High School Diploma
Purcell High School

Carsyn Nocktonick
High School Diploma
Royal Valley High School

Jimmy Norris
Greemore Family
High School Diploma
Wilburton High School

Shelby O'Steen
Peltier/Bruno Family
Bachelor of Science
Oklahoma State University

Zane Payton
High School Diploma
Perkins-Tryon High School

Mason Pendley
DeLonais/Acton/Rhodd Family
University of Oklahoma

Meadow Phelps
Vieux Family
Bachelor of Science
San Diego State University

Hailey Pierce
Curley Family
Bachelor of Science
Wingate University

Christopher Porter
High School Diploma
Charles Page High School

Mallory Porter
High School Diploma
Sand Springs Public Schools

Jessica Quirk
Bachelor of Science
Mid-America Christian University

Ariana Ramseyer
Vocational/Technical Certificate
Paul Mitchell The School Wichita

James Randolph
Bertrand Family

Kilee Raulston
Bachelors of Education
University of the Southwest

Emily Reiff
Tescier/Bourbonnais/Willimet Family
Bachelor of Science
Southern Nazarene University

Sydney Richardson
Bourassa/Clardy/Bertrand Family
Vocational/Technical Certificate
Ozark Technical Community College

Bailey Richey
Hardin/Lafromboise/Peltier Family
Bachelor of Science
Bowling Green State University

Camden Roberts
Navarre/Holloway/Melott Family
Bachelor of Arts
Oklahoma State University

Mackenzie Roberts
Bourassa Family
Bachelor of Science
University of California-Davis

Christina Robles
Willimet Family
Master of Science
Grand Canyon University

Alexis Rogers
Willimet Family
High School Diploma
Epic Charter Schools

Quinn Roubal
Bachelor of Business Admin
University of Notre Dame

Lauren Samsel
Bachelor of Arts
University of Oklahoma

Zane Sander
Navarre Family
High School Diploma
Silo High School

Allison Sanders
Wilmette Family
High School Diploma
Maysville High School

Alexander Santoro
Yott/Vieux Family
High School Diploma
Bishop McGuinness Catholic HS

Melissa Santoro
Yott/Vieux Family
Master of Business Admin
Oklahoma City University

Jonathan Schadegg
Navarre/Melott Family
Bachelor of Science
Southern New Hampshire University

Wynn Schoeman
Bertrand/Clardy Family
Bachelor of Arts
University of California-Irvine

Mariah Seedorf
Bourbonnais/Tescier Family
Bachelor of Fine Arts
University of Oklahoma

Mary Katherine Shultz
Beaubien/Ogee/Bourassa Family
Bachelor of Arts
University of Iowa

Kenna Silas
Bruno/Vieux/Bourbonnais Family
Bachelor of Science
Oklahoma State University

Valori Slaughter
Master of Education
East Central University

Olivia Snodgrass
Associate of Business Admin
Barton County Community College

Mattie Snowden
Bachelor of Education
Southwestern Oklahoma
State University

Alexus St. Clair
Yott/Vieux Family
Bachelor of Business Admin
Southeastern OK State University

Stetson Stavenhagen
Weld/Ogee Family
High School Diploma
Mansfield High School

Nixie Steiner
Bachelor of Fine Arts
Kent State University

Tyler Strobel
Vieux/Holloway/Johnson Family
High School Diploma
Chartertech High School

Grace Stugis
Bergeron/Lewis/Melott Family
Master of Social Work
University of Kentucky

Elijah Swann
Bourassa Family
High School Diploma
Lake Dallas High School

Tiffany Talley
Willimet/Darling Family
Bachelor of Science
OK Panhandle State University

David Tashnek
Bachelor of Science
University of Utah

Mady Teel
Willmet/Willmette Family
Bachelor of Science
University of Oklahoma

[Continued on next page](#)

Anthony Valburg
Bourbonnais Family
High School Diploma
Onaga High School

Jonathan Wahlgren
Willimet/Darling Family
High School Diploma
Nazarene Christian Academy

Jesse Waite
Willimet/Darling Family
Master of Science
University of Maryland

Jeremy Wakelee
Anderson/Hardin Family
Master of Science
Air University

Pamela Williams
Bourbonnais Family
Bachelor of Arts
University of Oklahoma

Carter Williamson
Acton/LeClaire Family
Doctor of Pharmacy
University of Kansas

Kennedy Williamson
Acton/Rhodd/LeClaire Family
Bachelor of Education
University of Kansas

Cassidy Wilson
Curley Family
High School Diploma
Epic Charter Schools

Andrew Wilson
Bachelor of Science
Kansas State University

Jada-Kaye Wilson
Nadeau/Vieux/Bourassa Family
Bachelor of Science
University of Mary Hardin-Baylor

Jessica Wilson
Bachelor of Education
Northeastern State University

Laurel Wilson
Master of Arts
University of Oklahoma

Chance Winsett
Bruno Family
High School Diploma
Varnum High School

Isabella Wooton
Bourassa/Clardy/Bertrand Family
Bachelor of Science
Missouri State University

Ashley Yeager
Smith Family
Master of Business Admin
Oklahoma City University

Skylar Young
Willimet/Frapp Family
Bachelor of Arts
Columbia University

VOTE
JAMES NEWBERRY
FOR CITIZEN POTAWATOMI NATION DISTRICT 5 LEGISLATURE

—♦—♦—♦—

**COMMITTED TO OUR HERITAGE,
DEDICATED TO OUR FUTURE.**

- VETERANS ADVOCACY**
- CULTURAL PRESERVATION**
- ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY**

PAID FOR BY DON SHIPMAN

The poster features a teal and white geometric pattern background. The text is centered and uses a mix of gold, dark brown, and black fonts. A small leaf icon is used as a bullet point for the campaign priorities. The Citizen Potawatomi Nation logo is circular with a central figure and the year 1841.

SUMMER SCHOLARSHIP
DEADLINE
JUNE 15 AT 5PM CT
apply at portal.potawatomi.org

The banner has a dark grey background with teal and white geometric patterns. A megaphone icon is on the left, and a large exclamation mark is on the right. The text is white and teal, with the word 'DEADLINE' in the largest font.

Language update

By Justin Neely, CPN Language Department Director

Bozho, jayek (Hello, everyone),

Ni je na ginwa ngom? (How are you all today?)

Ni je ngom zagech? (How is today outside? How is the weather?)

Migyamget shode. (It's strange here.)

Ngot gishget ksenyamget iw je azho-gishgest ewi gshatemgek. (One day it's cold then the next day it's hot.)

Mskawkik moshek bémadzejek ewi kedwat gishpen bwa medagwendemen ezhewébek "Babwichgen bgéji ewi ajgadek." (In Oklahoma most people will say if you don't like the weather, "Wait a little bit and it will change.")

We are wrapping up two of our beginner classes — one taught by Mr. Josey Wood and the other by Mrs. Shelly Watson. Justin Neely is also finishing an intermediate class in May. Shelly has an elders class which meets in person from 9 a.m. to noon every Thursday at the Cultural Heritage Center. We also have an intermediate class from 3 to 4 p.m. on Thursdays at the Cultural Heritage Center. We are also wrapping up *Neshnabe Nadzewen* (*Neshnabe Lifeways*) this month.

In May, we have our beginner two-week immersion camp, which will be eight hours a day Monday through Friday from May 11-22. We also will be having an intermediate/advanced two-week immersion course June 1-12. We have a number of folks who have already sent an RSVP to language@potawatomi.org. If you would like to attend, we will try and get you in, but we need your RSVP soon so we can have a head count. We will also be hosting a culture/language camp for kids ages 6-12 from July 6-10. Please RSVP to language@potawatomi.org.

We took two students to this year's OU Language Fair. They estimated over 2,000 people attended, making their 23rd annual event one of the largest ever. Peyton Neely competed in four categories, receiving an honorable mention, two second place trophies and a third place trophy. Prestynn Neely competed in one category and got a third place trophy. They worked hard against stiff competition. There were a number of immersion schools in attendance.

Our next community game night will be Wednesday, May 13. It has not been decided yet what games we will play. We may do another round of dice and bowl. Whatever games we choose to play should be good time for all. Let us know if you are planning on coming so we can plan accordingly. RSVP to language@potawatomi.org.

I would like take a moment to mention an elder and former Chairman Leon Bruno. He recently passed at the age of 88. He was a man of integrity and faith. I had



Peyton (left) and Prestynn Neely took home multiple honors at this year's language fair.

the honor and the privilege to get to know him well over the last 30 some years. He will be greatly missed by our community. I wanted to take just a small section of my column acknowledging him and asking you to keep his family in your prayers. He was a man who lead by example. *Igwien, nikan* (Thank you, friend).

Recently I had the opportunity to attend *Anishinaabemowinteg*. This conference has Ojibwe, Odawa and Potawatomi speakers. I was able to listen to several children speaking to each other in the Ojibwe language in a natural setting. I heard several people speaking the language to each other. I picked up a number of good ideas, not only for immersion programing but also ideas/topics for sharing the language. I also had the opportunity to speak with several fluent speakers of *neshnaabemwen*.

Festival will be upon us before we know it. We will have several classes as well as Potawatomi Bingo and a round of dice and bowl. These are always good times, so we look forward to seeing everyone.

Migwetch (Thank you). 🍷

What you need to know about voting

Each year, CPN's Tribal election takes place on the last Saturday in June at the Family Reunion Festival. Here are some things you might need to know about this year's election.



New voting location

This year, in-person voting takes place at FireLake Arena. After registration, follow signs to cast your vote.

What's on the ballot?

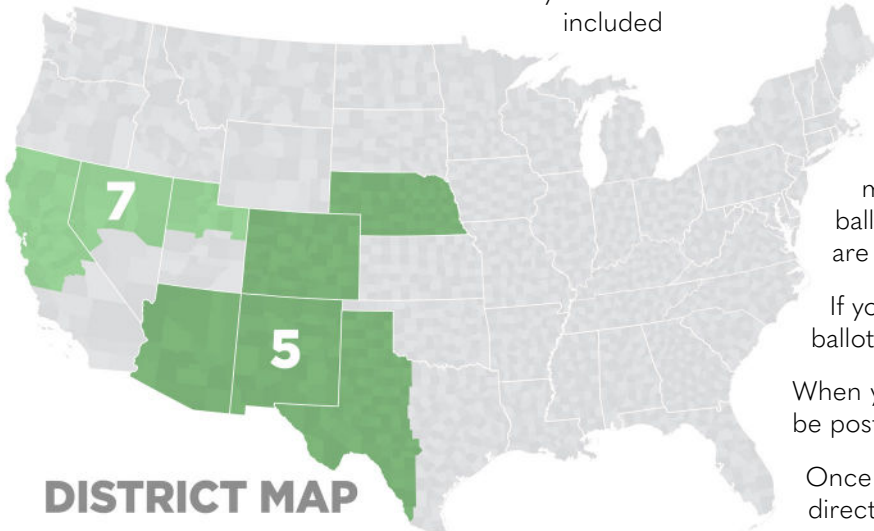
The office of CPN Vice-Chairman is up for election this year, with current Vice-Chairman Linda Capps deciding not to run again. Candidates include Martha Kimberly Nootbaar, Charles Scott and Jason Smalley.

In the legislative races, District 5 candidates include Ryan Hubble, James Newberry and Lorrie Underwood.

District 7 candidates include incumbent Legislator Mark Johnson and his opponent, Katie Bowie.

You can learn more about these candidates in the Candidate Q&As included in the *Hownikan* in the March, April and May issues. They will also offer final statements in the June issue.

Approval of Supreme Court justices Jennifer Lamirand, Zane Anderson and Alan Holloway will be included



DISTRICT MAP

on the ballot, as well as approval of Chief District Court Judge Gregory Quinlan and Associate District Judge 2 Stephen Barnes.

Also on the ballot will be approval of CPN's budget for the upcoming year.

Positions where the incumbent won the race due to running unopposed include Secretary/Treasurer D. Wayne Trousdale, District 6 Legislator Rande Payne and District 8 Legislator David Carney.

See the map included with the story if you have questions about which district you live in.

Who is eligible to vote in the election?

Every member of Citizen Potawatomi Nation who is 18 years of age or older is eligible to vote in the election.

How does voting work in person?

The election takes place each year on the last Saturday in June during the Family Reunion Festival.

All Tribal members who are of age may vote in person at FireLake Arena, located at 18145 Old Rangeline Rd, Shawnee, Oklahoma. Voting instructions will be provided at the polling location.

Polls will open at 7 a.m., Saturday, June 27, and will close at 2 p.m. Anyone in line to vote by 2 p.m. will be allowed to cast their vote.

To vote in person, you must bring your Tribal ID to confirm that you are an enrolled member of Citizen Potawatomi Nation. (If you have an old Tribal ID that does not include a photo, you will also need to provide a second form of ID that includes a photo, such as a driver's license.)

If you are physically unable to vote and need assistance, you may request assistance from the Election Committee.

How do I vote if I can't travel to Oklahoma?

If you aren't able to vote in person, you may cast your vote by mailing in an absentee ballot. All Tribal members who are eligible to vote are also eligible to vote by absentee ballot.

If you did not receive a postcard to receive your ballot, you can go to cpn.news/aballot to request one.

When you send your ballot request, it must be postmarked by no later than June 7.

Once you receive your ballot, follow the provided directions to cast your vote. Absentee ballots

must be mailed in time for the election committee to receive them by 10 a.m., Saturday, June 27.

If you do not send your ballot in time or forget to mail it, you can bring it with you to in-person voting to cast your vote at Family Reunion Festival on election day.

What happens after voting?

Results of the election will be announced the same day as in-person voting, Saturday, June 27, at General Council, held in FireLake Arena. The election results will also be published online and in the July edition of the *Hownikan*.

The winning candidates will be sworn in at General Council and take office immediately.

To win the election, a candidate must receive a majority of votes. If none of the candidates receives

a majority, the two candidates with the highest number of votes will go to a run-off election, which will be held within 60 days of the June election.

Why does your vote matter?

In the last Tribal election, fewer than 10% of Tribal members voted.

Voting is a civic duty, but also how citizens make their voices heard.

What matters to you? Is it culture or language? Growth? Stability? Tribal sovereignty? By voting for the candidate or candidates you believe will best lead the Tribe, you play a part in shaping the future of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. ♠

Getting the strongest recommendation letters

By the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Department of Education

College and scholarship applications often ask for a letter of recommendation. Choosing individuals for these letters can be daunting, with multiple options for who to ask and important factors to consider when choosing. It is important for students to get involved with different organizations or sports to create relationships with faculty advisors and coaches. Coaches will have seen their student athletes at their worst and their best, which gives them a unique perspective.

Certain scholarships will ask about the student's different aspects, such as strengths or weaknesses. They may also ask about how students handled themselves in certain experiences. Some students can stand out with recommendations from an elected Tribal official or Tribal staff, like your legislator or your advisor in the Department of Education. By forming a strong relationship to an individual within the Tribe, students can learn about the Nation while forming a connection that could provide a strong letter of reference. It is beneficial for students to be involved in a variety of activities to build relationships and broaden their views. Personal relationships will always yield stronger recommendations than letters written based solely on a resume.

The choice of who to ask depends on the scholarship. For example, having a strong faculty recommendation is helpful for an AISES scholarship, especially if the faculty member is familiar with your science, technology, engineering or math interests. It is important for you to ask someone who has been a mentor, such as a science teacher who runs your after-school robotics club. Creating a relationship with a teacher while involved in a club allows the teacher to see certain traits you display (such as perseverance) or how you handle stress. This helps them

list your specific traits and behaviors. Highlighting your involvement with a variety of groups is also important. If your scholarship essay was heavily influenced by a baseball team playoff run, it would be helpful to ask for a recommendation letter from someone from one of your other interests, such as an advisor for robotics club.

Certain scholarships will ask for multiple references. For example, Native Forward asks for two references. In addition to a teacher, a manager or a supervisor could be a good reference. If you were particularly close with a former manager at a part-time job, the manager may be a good option and would be able to speak highly of your work ethic and resilience. If a student has a strong relationship with their culture, they could ask for a reference from an individual with whom they have a strong connection within the culture. For example, if a student is involved in historical preservation and has participated in numerous projects, it would be beneficial to ask the individual who oversaw the project. The project coordinator would be a strong reference in the sense that they see your passion for the project, as well as your interest in the culture.

Choosing the best option for the scholarship can be daunting, but a student can make it much easier by forging as many relationships as possible. Choosing the right individual for the reference letter may be circumstantial, but having a variety of options allows for a complete view of the individual.

Your Student Success Advisor at the Citizen Potawatomi Nation can serve as a reference. Make an appointment with us through portal.potawatomi.org, email at education@potawatomi.org or phone call at 405-695-6028. It is best if we are able to meet you multiple times, and providing a resume can help us get to know you. ♠

From the executives



John “Rocky” Barrett Tribal Chairman

Bozho, nikan, (Hello, my friend),

In recent weeks you may have read about the state capitol in Oklahoma. State legislators tried and failed to pass a bill allowing sports betting in Oklahoma under the existing tribal gaming compacts. The legislation was supported by most tribes in the Oklahoma Indian Gaming Association, including the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. While no piece of legislation is perfect, it was a step in the right direction. In political and legislative matters, that is often as good as it gets.

For several reasons, the bill failed to garner enough support in the State Senate. Legislators across the political spectrum cited moral, budgetary and societal justifications as to why they couldn't support it. Many legislators representing tribal districts, where tribes and their gaming enterprises are the largest employers, cast votes in opposition.

We will continue to educate people on the basics about sports book. It is not a significant revenue generator, but it does generate revenue none-the-less. The benefits of having legal sports betting codified under the existing tribal compacts are significant for all Oklahomans. So called “prediction markets” are currently conducting sports betting in all but name. They are hiding behind a wave of litigation and — in my opinion — an incorrect interpretation from the Commodities Future Trading Commission that what they engage in is not wagering. These “prediction” platforms are generating significant revenues for themselves while contributing zero dollars to the state's education funds which Oklahoma tribal casinos, the state's horse racing industry and Oklahoma Lottery do.

Okies using these platforms are sending a cut of every “prediction” to an out-of-state company like Kalshi and Polymarket (both headquartered in New York) or Robinhood (headquartered in California). That means zero revenue is going to the state from these “predictions.” These companies have captured the market in Oklahoma while facing no competition from existing entities like tribes. This is because we are tied to the regulatory structure of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act. Another aspect that these platforms bypass that tribal casinos are subject to is strict regulations on problem users or enforcement for age limitations.

In Oklahoma, it is a two-tiered system. “Prediction markets” get a free pass. Meanwhile, the full regulatory weight sits on local Oklahoman businesses (AKA tribes) whose gaming enterprises contribute to the state. This is what was at stake with the recent Senate vote.

Should this bill have passed the Oklahoma Senate, and then moved through the House, it most certainly would have been vetoed by our lame duck governor. I feel confident in this prediction given he has stated as much. Unfortunately, it did not even get to that step.

That said, I would like to thank the bill sponsors in Rep. Ken Luttrell (R-Ponca City) and Sen. Bill Coleman (R-Ponca City) and Oklahoma Indian Gaming Association leadership for their efforts to codify sports betting under the law. Efforts to raise revenue for Oklahoma education are worth it. Hopefully with a new governor and fresh legislative session in 2027, the push can begin anew. For now, Oklahoma will forego millions in exclusivity fees that are now directed to for-profit companies on the coasts with no stake in our state's future.

As we enter the final stages of Tribal election season, begin preparations for Family Festival and the Gathering of Potawatomi Nations in Wisconsin, I again want to thank you for the honor of serving as your Tribal Chairman these past 40 years. It is the greatest honor of my life.

Migwetch (Thank you),

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



Linda Capps Vice-Chairman

Bozho (Hello),

Greetings to CPN Tribal members during this beautiful spring weather. I hope you are enjoying the same in your district. I want to continue with my recognition of important occurrences during my tenure. There are so many important dates that have influenced CPN progress in some manner. One that I have mentioned several times is our constitutional change in 2007. It was brought to light this past week as I was visited by members of an out-of-state tribe that was having difficulties with their form of government. Once again, the topic of the old constitutions that had elections every two years seemed to be at the forefront of this tribe's difficulties. That, along with five elected officials running the government of the people, seemed inadequate for their tribe's economic and structural development.

I am so thankful that our Tribe took the initiative to obtain the vote by our Tribal members to amend our constitution. The U.S. Secretary of the Interior authorized the special election that ratified a new governing document that resulted in the transfer of power from a five-member business committee with representatives from only Oklahoma to a 16-member legislative body with district representatives for all citizens of CPN, in whichever state they live. It also established checks and balances to further clarify the roles and responsibilities within the government. CPN's constitutional reform received an award in 2013 for Honoring Nations Profiles from the Harvard Kennedy School Project on Indigenous Governance and Development.

A significant part of the 2007 constitution change that we rarely make known are other important clauses within the constitution that are important to our government. One is in Article 16 — Rights of Persons. It is the same rights that are outlined in the United States Constitution. In addition, to further the power of the Nation's authority, the clause that required the U.S. Secretary of the Interior to approve future changes to CPN's constitution was removed from the new document. This change was monumental! I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge Chairman John Barrett for his role in writing the 2007 CPN Constitution.

I want to backtrack to February 1996. Citizen Potawatomi members from across the U.S. cast their vote during a special secretarial election to officially change the Tribe's name from the Citizen Band Potawatomi Tribe of Oklahoma to the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. This reform also required authorization for the U.S. Secretary of the Interior for a Tribe-wide election. The change reflects the Tribe's status as a sovereign nation. With our Tribe's frequent conflicts with the state of Oklahoma, the change is more important than it ever has been in the past. The Citizen Potawatomi Nation has every right to be a nation — to stand proud with a proven historical context, cultural identity, constitution, governance, legal recognition, sovereignty (the cornerstone of its identity), and self-determination. We are a strong, vital, viable, resilient nation — a nation that garners respect, even from tribes outside of our state.

With the name change in 1996, a new seal had to be designed. Prior to that, the seal featured a black circle and included the words "Great Seal of the Citizen Band of Potawatomi Indians of Oklahoma." Chairman Barrett drew the Nation's current seal with colored pencil, pen and ink. A digital version was designed in 2003, which is still in use today. The seal serves as a visual representation of the strength of the nation, its sovereignty, and its rich history and culture.

The above three topics contain points in history that I value and are certainly valuable to our Nation. I cherish the time I have spent as your Vice-Chairman with this great Nation.

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

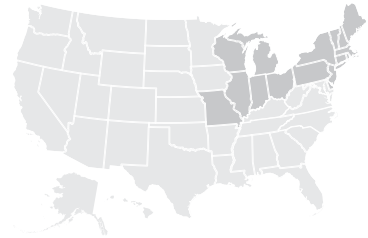


Steve Livingston District 1

Bozho (Hello),

Come this June, we will say goodbye to a devoted servant who has led her community with integrity, compassion and respect. Vice-Chairwoman Linda Capps is a woman of character who has led with quiet strength and grace.

What stands out to me most about Ms. Capps is not that everyone agreed with her on everything. That is not what leadership is, and it's not what made people love and respect her. What made her special was the way she treated people. Over a lifetime of service as an educator, community leader and Vice-Chairwoman since 1990, she built a reputation for showing up, helping others and making people feel seen.



Over this past year in the Legislature, she made me feel welcomed and valued. That should be normal, but too often it is not. She responds to every email and goes out of her way to find answers. She made sure I had what I needed, and she always made me feel respected as a partner in serving our Nation. She will be greatly missed and has my deep respect.

I had a conversation last year with Charles Scott, a current candidate for Vice-Chairman, about the role of leaders. He said something that stayed with me: "Leadership is putting the needs of others ahead of your own." That is exactly what Vice-Chairwoman Capps has done for decades. She has been present, accessible and grounded in the people she serves.

Her leadership gives us something to reflect on, because that kind of leadership feels harder to find these days. All around us and across the country, public life has taken on a different tone. People are quicker to dismiss than to listen, quicker to make things personal than to try to understand one another. When that becomes the example set by people in positions of influence, it wears on a community.

That is why this June's election matters. We will be choosing leaders for District 5, District 7 and Vice-Chair, and I hope our citizens will take that responsibility seriously. I hope people will read about the candidates, reach out and listen for more than promises. Listen for where their heart is, what they value and whether they carry themselves in a way that will strengthen this Nation.

Respect is one of our core values, not just in words, but in how we carry ourselves, especially when we disagree. Real respect is tested in those moments, and if we lose that, we lose more than civility. We lose trust.

Linda Capps showed us what that kind of leadership looks like in practice. She led without intimidation. She disagreed without disrespect. She made people feel heard, even when she saw things differently.

As she steps away from this role, I hope we do more than thank her. I hope we learn from her. I hope we hold onto the qualities that made her such a steady leader: compassion, humility, patience and the ability to disagree without making it personal. That is how trust is built. That is how people feel welcome to participate. That is how a community stays strong.

We are a strong Nation, but strength is not measured by how we treat those who agree with us. It is measured by how we treat those who do not.

If we want our people to re-engage, vote and believe in our institutions, then we must give them leadership that reflects the best of who we are.

Vice-Chairwoman Capps set that example for many years. The question now is whether we have the wisdom to follow it.

Steve Livingston | Legislator, District 1 | steve.livingston@potawatomi.org



Eva Marie Carney District 2

Bozho, nikanek (Hello, friends),



Florida CPN District 2 Meeting

Another great CPN District 2 family meeting is in the books! We had a sizeable group of Potawatomi family and friends meet up at Hillsborough River State Park outside of Tampa, Florida, in mid-March. The weather held, conversation flowed, lunch was delicious and we enjoyed each other's company. Dennis *Nawgishgok* Johnson, our host and key presenter, prepared a timeline for the Potawatomi and Seminole people from 1600 to 1907, demonstrating the parallels in our respective histories. He also prepared and gifted each family a flash drive of source and reference documents supporting his presentation. Attendees found the parallels intriguing and were excited to share their own family histories with the group. Another delightful elder, Ina Frances (Rhodd family), brought a table full of her watercolors, impressing us all with her talents. Ina was honored with a blanket for being our wisest attendee.

My second cousin Tom *Gshipto* Adornetto surprised me by driving several hours to attend the meeting; it was great to have another Juneau in attendance, and to catch up with him on our family news. I am grateful to Dennis and his adult children Denise Beil and Eric Johnson, for their hard work and graciousness — among other activities, they arranged for the venue, purchased drinks and supplies, carted everything we needed to the venue, and picked up our lunch from some distance away. *Igwien* (Heartfelt thanks) for your support!



Family Updates: Condolences and Graduation/College-Bound News



A dear Potawatomi *kwe* (woman), Shirley Kinne, walked on in late March. Shirley is from the Bergeron/Bazhaw family. She was trained as a registered nurse and was a loving, kind person who I admired for her grace and grit. District 2 was fortunate to have Shirley's help, back in 2009, in obtaining for us information about IHS-funded clinics in our District — this was before there was a comprehensive website providing that information (ihs.gov/findhealthcaremap). My thoughts go out to all her dear family. May her memory be for a blessing forever.

A young man I have known since he was a little guy is graduating high school and headed to the University of Wyoming! As of May 16, 2026, Kent *Giwéden* Mattena, of Westmoreland, Tennessee, is a Class of 2026 graduate of Westmoreland High School. He will be studying farm and ranch management, focusing on administration and operations. Let us send him off with best wishes and prayers for his bright future doing vital work.

Hand Games Team 2026

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

Request to Share Future Meeting Location Ideas and Family Updates

Do you have a suggestion for a future D2 meeting location? It should fit at least 40 and ideally 75 people comfortably. Please let me know if you do! Our best meeting locations have been suggested by local residents (like Dennis Johnson's suggestion of Hillsborough River State Park).

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

Migwetch (Thank you),

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



Brenda Trevino District 3

Bozho jayek (Hello, everyone)!



Our Georgetown Meet-and-Greet was about the same size as the one in The Woodlands (20+). Thank you to those who took the time to travel to our mini reunion. The facility was nice and the weather cooperated until the meeting was over. We discussed information provided by our language department. We also shared the importance of understanding what a large part the language plays in our continued sovereignty. As with our earlier meet-and-greet meetings, information was provided on the CPN Care App, the upcoming Family Reunion in June in Shawnee, Family

Gathering with other Potawatomi in July, naming ceremonies and the current progress of construction in Shawnee.

The wisest (Karen Gallagher), the youngest (Ari Sears with mom, Katie) and the one who traveled the farthest to attend (Tony Lyle) were in attendance.

After our May Tyler meeting, one more is planned for June 13 in San Marcos. There won't be a meeting scheduled to compete with the Family Reunion in Shawnee (last weekend in June) or the Family Gathering (last week in July).

2026 is a year of discovery and connection. I ask those who plan to come to Tyler also to bring questions and ideas about what you would like to see for our district in the future. If you have a particular interest in learning a specific aspect of our culture or services, I want to know. A suggestion box will be provided if you would like to share your ideas that way.

New feedback from the Georgetown meeting reflected an interest in learning our art mediums, specifically beading.



Left to right, farthest to attend Tony Lyle, the youngest Ari Sears with mom, Katie, and wisest Karen Gallagher were in attendance.



CPN District 3 Meet and Greet
Special topic: Regalia and Dancing

SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 2026
 10:30AM-1:30PM

SAN MARCOS ACTIVITY CENTER
 501 East Hopkins St.
 San Marcos, TX 78666

District meetings are for members, their spouses and immediate family.
 Bring your tribal IDs to sign in.
 Lunch Provided*

RSVP by June 8, 2026
 to brenda.trevino@potawatomi.org or call or text 281-466-7427

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

*Plus a raffle and give-a-ways for wisest, youngest and farthest travelled.

Several of those present were also added to the District email list.

Many of you know that travel is a passion of mine. I recently travelled to Antarctica to witness our creator's handiwork on the most uninhabited continent on earth. It takes little to remind me of the beauty I witness each day, but this trip reminded me of ALL our relatives (*jagenagenan*); humpback whales, orcas, seals and penguins to name a few. How wonderous is our creator and how amazing it is to experience the marine environment with such little human impact!

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

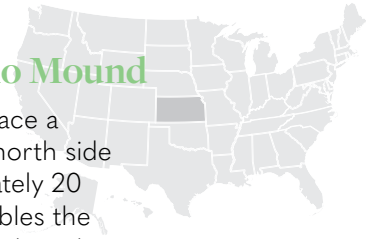
Migwetch (Thank you) for allowing me to serve each of you! Please reach out if I can be of assistance.

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



Jon Boursaw District 4

Native American Unmarked Burial Site on Buffalo Mound



I've been involved in another issue involving someone wanting to place a cross on the top of Buffalo Mound. The Mound is located on the north side of I-70 between the small towns of Paxico and Maple Hill approximately 20 miles west of Topeka. The silhouette of the Mound definitely resembles the outline of a buffalo. It doesn't matter which direction you are headed on the Interstate, you can spot Buffalo Mound 15 miles away. Recently an individual purchased a very large tract of pasture land that includes Buffalo Mound. Then it was disclosed that he planned to erect an 85-foot cross on top of the Mound with an access ramp to and from the Interstate. The plan included a road to the top of the Mound so travelers could enjoy the views or conduct religious services. The only problem was that on top of the Mound is a Native American Unmarked Burial Site. This means the owner cannot make any changes to the Mound including erecting a cross 85 feet tall. I have spoken with

the State of Kansas Archaeologist and she informed me that the new landowner has been told that his request to construct the cross has been denied. He does have the right to submit an appeal to the Unmarked Burial Site Board.

Native American unmarked burial sites are protected by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990. The State of Kansas has adopted the provisions of NAGPRA as there are over 400 unmarked burial sites in the state, with the vast majority being Native American. Wabuansee County, where Buffalo Mound is located, has eight such sites, of which only one is not Native American.

This is the second request to place a cross on Buffalo Mound. This earlier one occurred about 10 years ago. It was from a state-wide religious group who wanted to place a replica of the famous statue titled Christ the Redeemer (Cristo Redentor) on top of Buffalo Mound. The original of this statue is located near Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The same individual who alerted me to the latest request is the same one who contacted me 10 years ago. We worked together then

to alert the State Archaeologist, William Hoard, now retired. We also contacted Dr. Kelli Mosteller, then the Director of the CPN Cultural Heritage Center, who wrote a very comprehensive letter explaining NAGPRA. We have resurrected her letter for use in defending against this second request.



Buffalo Mound

Upcoming CPN Elders' Potlucks

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

June 12 Hamburgers & Hot Dogs RSVP by the 9th

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

Looks like I had a typo in March's article

I've been made aware of my error. It seems I mistakenly placed South Bend and Twin Lakes in Illinois, when they are both actually in Indiana. I knew that; I've been there numerous times. Maybe there should be a map check on our systems like we have spell check.

Migwetch (Thank you),

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

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



Rande K. Payne District 6

Bozho nikanek (Hello friends),



It all began in 2008. The Tribe was in transition from the old Business Committee era to our current form of government. Prior to the ratification of the new constitution, my siblings and I took our mother to the regional meetings. Those regional meetings seemed more like a family reunion to me and my siblings. It was mostly the elders sitting around eating and socializing. But our mother always had the best time visiting with cousins and other Tribal members she knew from Oklahoma now living in California.

That spring, we attended our first district meeting. This was a radical change from the informal regional meetings. Tribal Rolls was set up for issuing new Tribal ID cards on the spot for Tribal members. There was even a traveling gift shop set up. It was the first time we met Chairman Barrett and Vice-Chairman Capps. We were all so impressed with what we were

hearing about what was going on in Oklahoma. After hearing the Chairman speak and visiting with them afterwards, we felt like we were part of something special. After their personal invitation to come to Shawnee for Festival, we went home and began planning our trip. The morning I woke up to get ready to head to the airport, there was an alert on my phone that our flight had been cancelled. I tried finding other flights but due to severe weather issues, there was just no way. Oklahoma had been bombarded with virtually nonstop rain for most of the month of June. We were so disappointed we didn't get to go but maybe it was for the best as much of the Tribal grounds were either underwater or so saturated it was not usable.

Unfortunately, my mother walked on in January of 2009. My siblings and I attended the District 7 meeting again that spring. It was the first time we had gone to a Tribal event without our mother. I was able to speak with Chairman Barrett and Vice-Chairman Capps after the meeting. The more I learned about what they were doing in Shawnee and the plans they had for the future, the more I realized what great leaders and visionaries they were. Working in the corporate world most of my career, I had a pretty good understanding of what good leadership was and wasn't.

Most notable to me was Mrs. Capps' warm and humble way of communicating the achievements of the Tribe. She was quick to credit others with every success. But it was her faith that struck me the most. She shared how she prayed her way through the challenges along the way, again, giving credit to someone else. It became abundantly clear to me that she drew her strength and wisdom from the Lord. I saw a strong inner peace in her and I knew our Tribe was in good hands.

The rest is history, as they say. I've had the privilege of working with Mrs. Capps for the last 16 years. Her contributions to the Tribe are countless as many of the most important ones are intangible. I am blessed beyond measure to know her, work with her and call her friend. Her legacy and contributions to the betterment of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation will remain for generations. The love for her people will endure in our hearts forever. I am happy for her and wish her all the best in this new season of life.

Wisdom from the Word: "For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Mark 10:45

Jagenagenan (All our relations).

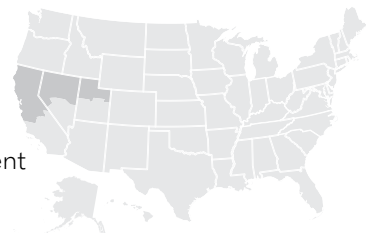
Migwetch (Thank you), *nagetch* (later),

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



Mark Johnson District 7

Bozho nikanek (Hello friends),



This past week, there has been quite the discussion from some folks regarding Native Americans and the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution as it pertained to the birthright citizenship question before the Supreme Court. The exclusion of Native Americans from the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution in 1868 was not accidental; it reflected how the United States government legally and politically classified Native peoples at the time. The amendment grants citizenship to "all persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof," but explicitly excludes "Indians not taxed." This phrase meant Native Americans who maintained tribal affiliation and lived under tribal governance were not

considered fully under United States jurisdiction. At the time, Native tribes were treated as distinct political nations, a concept reinforced by Supreme Court decisions like *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia*. Granting automatic citizenship would have conflicted with this framework of tribal sovereignty and treaty relationships. The United States policy in the 19th century aimed to manage Native tribes through treaties and federal oversight and encourage or force assimilation on a case-by-case basis. Citizenship was sometimes granted selectively (to individuals who left tribal life), but not broadly, because the government wanted flexibility in how it dealt with tribes. There was also a strong racial component. Many lawmakers in the Reconstruction era after the civil war did not view Native Americans as part of the United States community and considered them members of separate nations rather than citizens. So, while the amendment was expanding rights to formerly enslaved people, it deliberately avoided redefining the status of Native Americans.

Full U.S. citizenship for all Native Americans did not come until the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924, which granted citizenship regardless of tribal affiliation. The Potawatomi Allotment Agreement (1890-1891) was a legal accord between the United States government and the Citizen Band of Potawatomi Indians that implemented the Dawes Act (land allotments) for the Potawatomi in Indian Territory. The Potawatomi Agreement formalized this process for the Citizen Band, enabling each member to receive a personal land allotment and United States citizenship in exchange for ending communal ownership (the reservation). The land allotment fundamentally altered Potawatomi society. While it offered citizenship and legal recognition, it also led to substantial land loss as excess lands passed into non-Native hands. Over time, fragmented allotments and forced sales eroded the tribal land base. The agreement remains a pivotal event in Citizen Potawatomi Nation history, illustrating both adaptation and dispossession under federal assimilation policy. And while citizenship was granted in theory under the Dawes Act and the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924, many still had to go through the process of obtaining their citizenship from the United States government, as evidenced from my grandfather's paperwork from 1926 from the Department of the Interior, where he agreed to "take a bow and arrow, and shoot the arrow as his last act as an Indian" and to "take the plow handles in his hands, an act having chosen to live as a white man, and a white man is made to work." Sometimes you just can't make this stuff up, but it shows what the government thought of us Natives.

Remember to vote! If you didn't receive your ballot request form, or if it was misplaced, look for one in this publication or online at cpn.news/aballot.

Once again, I would like to say what an honor it is to serve you as your District 7 representative. As always, give me a call and I will be happy to work with you.

Migwetch (Thank you),

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



Dave Carney District 8

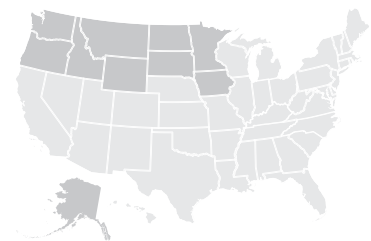
Bozho, nikan (Hello, friends),

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

Over the last few years I have become more and more interested in traveling and experiencing local foods and cultures. In December 2025 I was fortunate to be able to travel to Guatemala and experience fabulous Mayan ruins, Spanish colonial plazas with amazing architecture and unique food. This was a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and a special way to experience this part of the world is through their food.

Classic Guatemalan food is an amazing blend of Mayan and Spanish influences, defined by hearty stews (caldos), roasted spices, corn and chili peppers. The national dish, and my personal favorite, is pepian, a spicy chicken or meat stew, followed closely by kak'ik (turkey soup) and jocon (chicken in green sauce).

Applying this lens to our CPN Family Reunion Festival this June in Oklahoma would be an interesting exercise. In a similar blend and clash of cultures, we have Native American foods derived from commodity food, natural and healthy Native American food, southern fried specialties and barbecue.



There's a lot of joking on the internet about the unlimited brats, hot dogs and fried bologna sandwiches on fairgrounds during the weekend gathering, however I've never seen those trailers without a line. Among the more Native offerings are Indian fried bread (with honey and powdered sugar) and Indian corn soup. This corn soup (recipe shared with me by Margaret Zientek) is indescribable unless you have tasted it — and is definitely not vegetarian. It is made in large vats and the recipe (possibly two days in the making and feeding 50) uses the following ingredients:

- 15 to 20 pounds beef
- 24 packages Cope's dried corn (about one case)
- 1 pound Jamison's beef soup stock
- 1 large onion

Around our tribal enterprises, there are plenty of good food offerings at various price levels. One of the more expensive, but satisfying, options is "Flame," located in the Grand Casino Hotel and Resort. This is a Brazilian steakhouse experience with an amazing salad bar, where gaucho-style waiters bring around roasted meat on skewers. On the other end of the cost spectrum are two budget-friendly offerings: FireLake Frybread Taco and FireLake Pizza. They are both worth trying, as are all of the Nation's culinary endeavors.



There are several barbecue places in Shawnee that are worth seeking out. One of my favorites is Van's Pig Stand. This is traditional barbecue, including slow cooked brisket and ribs. There are multiple locations, but I like the original location on East Highland. It has been there since 1930 and claims to be the oldest BBQ place in the area. It's a treat I try to enjoy every time I get to Shawnee, Oklahoma.

A wise man once said to me that he should've insured his stomach, because that's where all his money goes.

Dave Ramsey, the finance guru, says that dining out is not about nutrition, it's about entertainment.

On a final food related note, have you ever heard of the mysterious "Potawatomi cake"? It is both mysterious and famous at the same time.

No one knows its true origin, but it is available

during the CPN Family Reunion Festival in the bakery coolers at FireLake Discount Foods. If anyone reading this has any information about this cake, I'd love to hear from you. It is very similar to German Chocolate cake.

By the way, save the date — Oct. 24 for the 2026 Fall Feast in Portland.

It is my honor to serve as your Legislator,

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

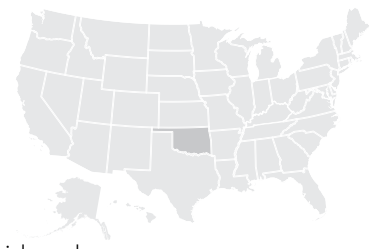


Paul Wesselhöft District 9

Migwetch (Thank you),

I often attend the Oklahoma City Astronomy Club. I enjoy learning and writing poetry about the cosmos. I've written a book of poems about the universe. Early Native Americans viewed the Sun as the source of life and the divine power. The moon was regarded as guardian spirit and keeper of time. The stars were considered as ancestors or spiritual entities that provided direction, navigation and wisdom.

I can imagine early Indigenous people being spiritually inspired by the night sky. And I wonder how our Potawatomi ancestors viewed the heavens. Well, for one Potawatomi Indian, below is how I view the planet Saturn:



Saturn

— Paul Chrisstarlon Wesselhöft

Iconic Saturn dressed in the Saturday night sky

Adorned with rings —

A pretty necklace of ice and rocks.

A lovely, stunning figure she is,

This mixture of fluids and fumes,

Invoking the question why?

She orbits the great light as in a dance.

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

Like a mysterious lady conjuring a trance,
She strikes the eye.

Her two hundred-seventy-four moons
Swirl around her, each like a purse.

Gazing on her inspires verse —

Named after a god,

She's a wonderful wonder in the cosmos —

This beautiful goddess of the universe.



David Barrett District 10

Bozho (Hello),

Allow me to update all the Potawatomi people on what our veterans organization has been participating in for our Nation in the last couple of months. Starting back in October 2025, the Veterans Organization was involved in the Wewoka Sorghum Festival Parade, which is always on the fourth Saturday in October. The Color Guard have been participating in this event ever since the Veterans Organization was formed on June 9, 2009.

We always have a couple of functions on Veterans Day in November. This last year the individual veterans went to their own grandchildren's programs at different schools but still were able to participate in a veteran ceremony at our local Gordon Cooper Vo-Tech by bringing in the colors and also the folding of the American flag by stating the meaning of each of the 13 folds.

The Honor Guard is made up of some of the Color Guard, but the uniform is completely different, in that we wear a black ribbon shirt with either a gold tie or ascot along with a black beret. The Honor Guard performed two services, one for Mr. Whitehead's inurnment at the Citizen Potawatomi Columbarium and one for Mr. Bland's interment at the cemetery.

The veteran Color Guard have been asked numerous times to the Shawnee/Tecumseh legislative luncheon where our local state and county officials attended. The meetings are conducted in a manner of telling us what is coming down the pike or they tell us what the problems are and how they are going to attempt to correct them.

Our veterans have always made an effort to oblige our Nation when they call on us to bring in the colors. It is our pride that we want to be able stand before our Nation and represent not only the veterans but also represent our great Nation.

Our veterans meet on the fourth Tuesday usually every month, so if you want to share your Potawatomi veteran pride come to our meeting or catch us when we ride on a trailer in one of the parades that we do. Also, we are hopeful that we will start having Zoom available for our meetings very soon.

I've said a lot about our veterans, but I truly think that even as we are veterans, we still are in the need of a dedicated support "machine." This machine is not "AI" but Always Involved. Vice-Chairman Capps has always mentioned to me how she appreciated me in the realm of the "glue" keeping the organization going strong. Linda, you know what we



CPN Veterans Organization members gather after the Color Guard presented the colors in a veterans ceremony at Gordon Cooper Technology Center



Vice-Chairman Linda Capps, center, stands with members of the CPN Veterans Organization.

are talking about and if it wasn't for you who furnished your personal support "glue," we might not have the organization as good as it is today. KUDOS to a fantastic supporter and friend. Vice-Chairman Capps and I have talked numerous times and numerous years about getting a Veteran Memorial in order to honor all of our veterans; so far it's not in the works, but keep hoping!

In conclusion, Vice-Chairman Capps and I have talked with each other as friends, as co-workers, as Christians, on family concerns, and always as a person who knows what our veterans means to each of us personally.

I have to mention that my granddaughter Kyla Barrett is graduating this semester from Bethel High School and will be attending Oklahoma Baptist University this fall. As you would expect, we are very proud of her and looking forward to her future endeavors.

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) | dbarrett@potawatomi.org
1601 S. Gordon Cooper Dr. | Shawnee, OK 74801 | 405-275-3121



Andrew Walters District 11

Bozho (Hello),

We have a problem these days with apathy. Not just in our daily routines, but in our personal Tribal identities. I guess it's understandable. The Tribe, in everyday life, is not important to a majority of our members. You see, we're all struggling to get through our daily "white" lives. We are so integrated into that indoctrinated paradigm that the duality of our existence isn't realized, and hence our identity as "Potawatomi" doesn't seem to matter. What the government had sought for years, the subjugation and extinction of the Native Tribes, has nearly come to fruition. We have been dropped from the classification of "proud sovereign Nation" to that of "nuisance" by the dominant culture. Our own apathy has contributed to the loss of our personal identity as Native Americans.



Needless to say, our language skills have nearly died out. We dress in the latest fashions. We covet the trendiest homes, gorge the dominant culture's food and drink. And when we cope with "white" diseases like diabetes, alcoholism, drug abuse, domestic violence, suicide, mental illness, broken families and poverty, we wonder "why?"

We have stopped honoring our elders, supporting our families with generational care, holding our women in high esteem, cultivating our children and helping each other in a collective, compassionate manner. We've turned from the Seven Grandfathers teachings. Our prayer smoke seldom reaches the sky.

We've lost our skills in "life crafts" that supported the Old Ones. We no longer need to weave baskets, sew moccasins, stitch clothing, or make implements for hunting and processing foods. Those things are considered archaic, useless. We are losing our stories and songs, our deep memories of the past. But even more tragically, our hearts and spirit have changed. That sense of community once cherished by our ancestors has become less important and, in many cases, not felt at all. That deep pride in the accomplishments of the collective Tribe is gone. We no longer participate. We have a "what's in it for me" attitude. We take. We don't give.

I am as guilty as anyone. But over the past years I have become acutely aware of the need for Tribal community in my life. I have grown close to others in the Tribe who are now so very important to me. I

see things and do things that have great significance to my heart, to my soul. I am changing. I try fervently to walk my own "Red Road." I falter, fail and fall at times, but I feel deeply compelled to keep trying.

The "Old Ones" lived and worked in a time when Tribal community was important. It was a time of great challenges. A time of formidable hardships, but those hardships acted as a glue, bonding our Tribe together. Back then WE were kinder, WE were caring, WE were respectful to each other. Long ago our children listened to us and understood family, clan and Tribe. Songs were sung and beautiful stories told. The heartbeat of the drum was heard. We knew where we came from. I fear that has been lost.

I don't know the answer. I don't have a star to guide me. I don't know how to get responsible Tribal members involved in a meaningful, sustainable way. I can only hope my words plants seeds and that the seeds find fertile soil and grow. Please, please, find the desire to seek your Tribal roots, your family. Be proud of who and what you are. Find that and hold it close. Somewhere deep in your heart are your ancestors' songs. Learn to sing them.

Cora and I love y'all.

Andrew Walters | andrew.walters@potawatomi.org | nibwemko@gmail.com



Bobbi Bowden District 13

Bozho nikanek (Hello friends),

If you're planning to fly soon, there's an important update from the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) that Tribal members should be aware of.

Beginning Feb. 1, 2026, travelers who arrive at the airport without a REAL ID or another accepted form of identification will have a new option. Instead of being turned away, they may choose to pay a \$45 TSA ConfirmID fee to have their identity verified and continue through security. That verification is valid for up to 10 days of travel. Honestly, \$45 is basically the cost of lunch at an airport these days, but it's still important for people to know their options ahead of time.

What This Means for Tribal Members

The good news is that photo Tribal IDs issued by federally recognized Tribes are still accepted at TSA checkpoints. If you have a valid Tribal ID, you do not need to pay the \$45 fee and can proceed through security like any other traveler. This is especially important for Tribal members who may already have acceptable identification and may not realize it.

If a TSA officer needs a little extra time to verify a Tribal ID, that's normal and does not mean the ID is invalid. Supervisors are available if any questions arise.

When the \$45 Fee Applies

The ConfirmID fee only applies if a traveler does not have an accepted form of identification at the checkpoint. TSA recommends completing the ConfirmID process online ahead of time, when possible, as identity verification can take longer than standard screening.

Helpful Travel Tips

- Check the expiration date on your Tribal ID before traveling
- Allow extra time at the airport, especially during busy travel periods
- Bring a backup ID, such as a passport, if you have one

Tribal identification remains a strong and valid form of ID, reflecting both sovereignty and federal recognition. Staying informed helps ensure smoother travel and fewer surprises at the airport.

For the most up-to-date information, travelers are encouraged to visit cnp.news/confirmid, review acceptable identification at cnp.news/id or follow guidance shared by national Tribal organizations such as the National Congress of American Indians at ncai.org.

Migwetch (thank you) and safe travels wherever your journey takes you.

Thank you for allowing me to serve you and our great Nation.

Bobbi Bowden | *Pkuhshnoqua* (Bald Eagle Woman)

Walking On

Cynthia Hope (Hamm) Strickland

Vieux/LaFromboise Family



June 5, 1949 – Feb. 25, 2026

Cynthia, 76, passed away peacefully, surrounded by her loved ones in Westminster, Maryland, where she has resided over the last few years. Born and raised in Shawnee, Oklahoma, she graduated from Shawnee High School in 1967. She was the daughter of Allie and G. Murphy Hamm and a member

of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. She will be greatly missed as a wonderful wife and mother.

Cynthia was preceded in death by her parents and Larry Strickland.

She is survived by her daughter Tiffany and husband Mike, of Westminster, Maryland; her son David and his wife Cheryl of Richardson, Texas; sister Gloria and husband John Waldrop of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; grandchildren Lexi, Madison, Bella and Lyndon; and nephews Dustin and Max and his wife Jennifer.

A celebration of life will be held in Shawnee, Oklahoma, later this summer.

Mary Katherine Lee

Peltier Family



Mary Katherine Lee was born Sept. 22, 1948, to Leston Henry Long and Clara Marie (Wilson) Long in Ada, Oklahoma. She graduated from Ada High School and attended East Central University for a time. She then worked as a cook and housekeeper in her early days.

Mary loved fishing, going to the beach, traveling and going to garage sales. She also loved spending time with family and her grandkids.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Leston Henry Long and Clara Marie Wilson Long; her sister, Debbie Shelton; and her brother, Carl Long.

She is survived by her children, Larry Loudermilk of Ada and Carla Loudermilk of Ada. She also had three grandchildren, Alex Hasley, Gage Loudermilk and Cassandra

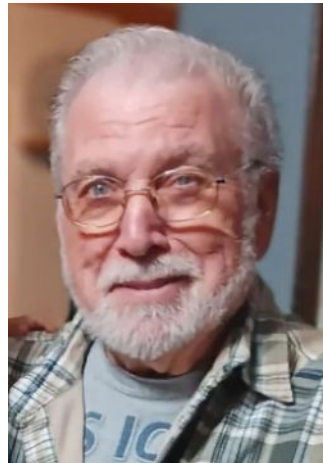
Loudermilk; one great-grandchild, Adalyn Loudermilk and Freddy (Teresa) Long of Skiatook, Oklahoma.

Pallbearers were Freddy Long, Leston Long, Larry Loudermilk, Jonathon Shelton, Gage Loudermilk and Jason Postoak.

Graveside services were Monday, March 9, at 2 p.m. at Memorial Park Cemetery under the direction of Phillips Funeral Home Ada.

Ray Leonard

Acton/Rhodd Family



Ray Leonard, 83, passed away peacefully on March 4, 2026, in Phoenix, Arizona. Born on Oct. 31, 1943, in Downey, California, Ray lived a life marked by dedication to his family, hard work and a love for adventure.

Ray proudly served his country in the United States Army for four years, stationed in Anchorage, Alaska. Following his military service, he built a career in construction in Stockton, California.

Later, he dedicated two decades of service to the Tracy Defense Depot in Tracy, California, before retiring to enjoy time with his loved ones.

Family was at the heart of Ray's life. He was a devoted father to his daughter, Lorraine Jewett, and a cherished grandfather to Amanda Rowen and Kayla Jewett. His legacy continues through his great-grandchildren: Liesa Rowen, Madisyn Rowen and Kazuyuki Smith. Ray's kindness extended beyond biological ties; he embraced stepchildren as his own with unwavering love and care.

Ray found joy in the great outdoors. He loved camping trips with family and exploring trails on ATVs. His passion for travel brought him countless memories and adventures that he shared with those closest to him.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Melba Johnson and Earl Leonard.

Those who knew Ray remember him as a generous man who would give the shirt off his back to help someone in need. He was a loving father, grandfather and great-grandfather whose warmth and selflessness left an indelible mark on everyone fortunate enough to know him.

May Ray's memory bring comfort to all who loved him and inspire acts of kindness in his honor.

Debra Kay Gonzalez
Acton/Rhodd Family



Debra Kay Gonzalez passed away on Sunday, March 29, 2026, in Wichita, Kansas, at the age of 64. She was born to Beverly June (Moore) and Dewey Jay Rhodd on July 8, 1961, in Winfield, Kansas. She had three siblings, Randy Rhodd, Dewey Rhodd and Lynda Grizzle.

Deb was preceded in death by her parents; brother, Randy; and son, Adam.

She is survived by her husband, Jose Gonzalez; children, Jeremy (Jessica) Lusk, Jennifer (Richard)

Vargaz, Stephanie Greer, Amber Greer, Amanda (Luis) Gonzales; grandchildren, Kaedyn, Maddox, Debra, Ronaldo, Richard, Samantha, Gabriella, Alexis, Lorenzo, Debra, Juan, Briana, Damien, Sophia, Sebastian, Pedro, Luis, Alex, Dewey, Elijah, Josiah, Juanita, Luis, Daleyza, Priscilla; and her beloved dog, Belina.

Services are pending.

Robert Coots
Peltier Family



With heavy hearts, we announce the passing of a beloved father, grandfather, great-grandfather and friend, Robert Lee Coots, who was born on July 22, 1952, in Shawnee Oklahoma. He passed from this life on March 26, 2026. He was proud of his Potawatomi heritage as a descendant of the Peltier family.

Robert Coots was a man who loved deeply

and lived a devoted life to his faith. He was a constant presence, a source of unconditional love, and a man whose life reflected his values. Whether through quiet moments of encouragement or unwavering support, he made those around him feel loved and secure.

He found great joy in life's simple pleasures. He was a passionate fan of the Oklahoma Sooners and the Oklahoma City Thunder, and many memories were made by watching games, celebrating victories and sharing those moments with family and friends. To say he was his grandchildren's biggest fan is an understatement.

He had a deep love for classic cowboy westerns and could sit for hours watching them. He also enjoyed the little things that made life sweet, whether it was a cold Diet Dr Pepper, peppermints in his pocket or

a stop for ice cream. These simple favorites became cherished memories for those who knew and loved him

To his family, he was more than a father — he was a foundation. He led by example, teaching the importance of faith, presence and perseverance. His love was constant, his guidance steady, and his presence always, especially at practices and games, is a gift that will be deeply missed.

He is survived by his children: Timothy Coots and wife Telie Coots, Tobey Coots and wife Ellie Coots, Casey Coots, Ryan Coots and wife Whitney Coots, Nichole Parsons and husband Cole Parsons, as well as 18 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Until we meet again... Boomer Sooner.



Hau ndenwémagnek

Ho my relatives

Ébyé yak shote gnom

We have come here today

Éwi nesh myé yak ode wdenwéma

To lay our brother to rest

Ngom she épam sét ode

Today he walks

Ga wje zhyé wat gi gambojek

Among those who have passed on

I yé i ébgednoyak ode ngemwen

That is why we offer this song

Émno shketot wa je zhyat ibe shpemsegok

That his journey will go well where he goes above

Iw énaj moyan

That's all I have to say

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

By Don Perrot

The **CPN Burial Assistance Fund** is available to all enrolled CPN members. Notify Tribal Rolls at tribalrolls@potawatomi.org or 405-878-5835 of member's passing to receive up to \$2,000 aid.

Submit obituaries to hownikan@potawatomi.org with:

- Word document with 300 words or less
- High resolution image (no photos of printed photos)

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HOWNIKAN

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Questions? Story ideas? Contact us!

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Address change?

Send to Tribal Rolls (tribalrolls@potawatomi.org)
or log on to portal.potawatomi.org.

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Vol 3/Number 5 *Hownikan* (periodicals 25778)

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