

# HOWNIIKAN

Bnakwigises | October 2025



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# Language update

By Justin Neely, CPN Language Department Director

Bozho jayek (Hello everyone),

We are getting ready to wrap up a six-week beginner course in person at the Cultural Heritage Center. Shelly Watson is teaching it. We are getting ready to start an intermediate/advanced online course which will be every Thursday from 3-5 p.m. Central time zone. This will be in person and online. Justin Neely will be teaching it. We will record as well and place it on our YouTube channel. Shelly will be doing an online beginner class from 5-7 p.m. starting Oct. 23 for six weeks.

We are also making preparations for our family game night Oct. 21. We will be playing bingo. Shelly and Josey have been working hard making some unique gifts as prizes. We plan on having food as well. If folks would like they can also bring a dish to share. It will be from 5-7 p.m. We hope to see you all there. If you have any questions about the family game night or other classes, please reach out to us at [language@potawatomi.org](mailto:language@potawatomi.org).

We are doing men's drumming every two weeks from 4-5 p.m. If this is something that is of interest to you, let us know and we will get you the exact dates.

We have been working on a number of different individual projects. We are already in the planning stages of what had been an eight-week summer immersion. Based on the experience of the last three years, we are revamping it a little bit to make it a little more manageable for people coming in from outside the area. We are planning on doing two-week beginner immersion, which will focus heavily on VAI/VII verbs and vocabulary building, as well as common words and phrases. Then after a week off we will do a two-week intermediate class, which will focus on VTI/VTA verbs, as well as less common modes like dubitive and counterfactual. Also, we will be working on getting folks conversational in the language.



Bingo prize for family game night



Bingo prizes for family game night

We are six weeks into our high school courses. We are currently offering the language at Shawnee, Tecumseh and North Rock Creek high schools. The students are progressing well.

Don't forget to check out some of our online content. We have the dictionary at [potawatomidictionary.com](http://potawatomidictionary.com) with over 10,000 words, many with audio files.

The site [learning.potawatomi.org](http://learning.potawatomi.org) has a couple of different courses, like an introduction course, a grammar heavy course and a course for middle school age students. Make sure to check out the tags, which show words listed by categories (like nouns, weather, animals, nature, etc.). There is also a conjugation tool that is helpful for conjugating VTA verbs, which have over 34 different combinations in just the independent. We are still working on this to make it handle more irregular forms. Right now, it works best with verbs that end in ma.

Our newest course is at [7000.org](http://7000.org) 7000 languages. This course is designed with day-to-day sentences you might use in different places in your house. For example, in the kitchen there is *gbekte ne?* Are you hungry? *Wegni je wjandayen?* What are you cooking? It starts with rooms in the house and then expands out to areas in the community, such as a doctor's visit or a trip to a restaurant.

*Nasena*: Be careful (Nah sin nah)

*Dokem*: Be quiet (Doe kum)

*Kyénepe*: Hurry (Kay nup)

*Mno waben*: Good morning (Minoh wahbin)

*Mno gishget*: It's a good/ beautiful day (Minoh geesh git)

*Nekshe ibe*: Look over there. (Nuk shay eebuh)

*Gbekte ne?*: Are you hungry? (Guh buck tay nay) 🔥

# CPCDC to host workshop for artists at CHC

Native artists will soon have a chance to attend a workshop to learn about navigating the arts industry.

The Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation (CPCDC) has partnered with the First Peoples Fund to host the free, two-day workshop from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Nov. 7 and 8, at the CPN Cultural Heritage Center, 1899 S. Gordon Cooper Dr., Shawnee, Oklahoma. Lunch will be provided for the event.

The Native Artist Professional Development workshop will cover topics such as identifying vision and values, planning calendars, marketing and pricing work, engaging effectively with the community, developing a business plan, and growing leadership skills.

The workshop will also feature an opportunity for participants to present and showcase artwork.

To register for the event, go to [formstack.io/86FD3](http://formstack.io/86FD3) or contact Rachel Heberling at [Rachel.heberling@firstpeoplesfund.org](mailto:Rachel.heberling@firstpeoplesfund.org) or 717-220-5702.

Instructors for the workshop include Leslie Deer of the Mvskoke Nation of Oklahoma and Felecia Freeman of CPN.

Deer is an apparel designer and artist known for elegant silhouettes, vibrant color palettes and intricate appliqué work inspired by Southeastern mound-builder motifs. She began her career creating regalia and has earned national recognition, including a 2016 First Peoples Fund Artist in Business Leadership Fellowship and 2017 Best of Division and First Place awards at Santa Fe Indian Market. Her work is part of the permanent collection at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian.

Freeman, *Jiqwes kwe* ("Little Thunder Woman"), is a commercial loan officer and certified credit counselor



## Native Artist Professional Development Training

+ NOVEMBER 7-8, 2025 + 9AM-4:30PM CT +

This training in collaboration with Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation and offers emerging and seasoned performing artists real-world tools to succeed in the arts industry as entrepreneurs. Participants will explore their vision and values, assess business, marketing, and financial skills, and learn to create budgets and pricing structures. The training also covers effective marketing strategies and guides artists in developing a mission statement and performance pitch to support and grow their careers.

Citizen Potawatomi Nation Cultural Heritage Center, 1899 S Gordon Cooper Dr Shawnee, OK 74801

Register Now: [formstack.io/86FD3](http://formstack.io/86FD3)



with the Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation, where she has helped provide more than \$40 million in loans to Native entrepreneurs. She also leads credit counseling for CPN members.

For more information about the First Peoples Fund, visit [firstpeoplesfund.org](http://firstpeoplesfund.org).

## Housing Department invitation to bid

The Citizen Potawatomi Nation Housing Department (CPNHD) is seeking bids for their FY'2026 Yearly Lawn Maintenance for all properties owned and operated by the CPNHD in Rossville, Kansas. All properties are to be mowed, weeded and trimmed starting March 16, 2026, through Oct. 12, 2026. Bid packets are available through Dennis Nadeau of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Housing Department located at 806 Nishnabe Trail, Rossville, KS, 66533, 785-584-6401 or email [cindy.anderson@potawatomi.org](mailto:cindy.anderson@potawatomi.org). **Bids are due on Dec. 1, 2025, at 10 a.m.**

Contracts for work under this proposal will obligate the bidder/contractor not to discriminate in employment practices. Also, contracts are subject to the provisions of Indian Preference/Tribal Preference in accordance with 24 CFR 1000.48. Bidders/Contractors claiming Indian Preference/ Tribal Preference will be required to submit proof of 51% Native American owned business. Award of this contract is subject to determination by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's eligible contractors.

# Meet District 3's new legislator, Brenda Trevino

After CPN's runoff in August, Ogee and Weld family member Brenda Trevino was elected as legislator for District 3. Read below for a Q&A where you can learn a little more about her.

## Where are you from originally, and where do you live now?

I was born in Shawnee, Oklahoma, and currently live in Shenandoah, Texas, which is a suburb of Houston, Texas.

## Tell us a little about yourself.

I retired in 2024 from the Port of Houston Authority. I still hold a Texas Professional Engineers License and Project Management Professional Certification.

My immediate family consists of my mom, sister, daughter and son. They have supported me in the journey to this new role from the beginning, and I love them dearly.

My interests include traveling in the states and around the world and learning more deeply about my faith, my ancestors and other cultures.

## What inspired you to run for office?

This was the best way I could give back to CPN. Over the years my family has been the recipient of several of the available benefits. My career experience seemed a perfect fit for the job, and, with Bob Whistler no longer planning to run, it was time.

## What has your experience been like so far?

For me, the experience so far has been open and responsive — exactly as I hoped it would be. Like any new job, I am finding my way, but at every turn there is someone there to help.

## What do you hope to accomplish as a legislator?

My goal is to build stronger communication, to expand the use of our benefits, and to increase involvement. Our



lives are so busy that I believe meeting more people near where they live will provide greater opportunity for that connection.

## What would you like to communicate to your constituents?

I want to be available when needed. You can call,

email, text or write any time and I will respond. Although any District 3 member can reach out any time, I have set aside Tuesdays from 8 to 9 p.m. as dedicated time for me to talk if you have a question.

## Any other thoughts?

In this month's column, I included a 'Save the Date' listing for January through June 2026 District 3 meetings, so families can mark them on their calendars in advance. Details of each meeting will be given as time gets closer. (Each meeting date has an alternate date in case of inclement weather.) RSVPs will be requested as each date approaches.

Each meeting will include a little culture, language, ceremony, history, art and a celebration for the current year's Reunion Festival honored families. There will also be a unique topic of focus such as benefits, educational opportunities, etc.

Last but not least, if you (District 3 members) have a topic of interest, an art talent or an ancestral story you would like to share, please let me know. 🔥

CONTROL IS NOT REAL LOVE



CITIZEN POTAWATOMI NATION  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM

24/7 CRISIS HOTLINE 405-878-HOPE  
VISIT US ONLINE AT CPNHOUSEOFHOPE.COM

# Johnson signs on to help advise CPN students

Kelley Johnson, a member of the Greemore family, is the newest employee with CPN's Department of Education, serving as student success advisor for special projects.

Rachel Watson, director of education, said Johnson will be able to help with the college fair, TED Forum, and events for high school counselors, as well as advising for CTE (Career and Technical Education) scholarship applications.

CTE scholarships are for certificates and licenses needed for careers. Students must use programs that are accredited, and CPN typically only funds one per student. The CTE scholarships are open to CPN Tribal members in any part of the United States, and the applications are now available through the portal.

So far, Johnson said it has been a wonderful experience working for CPN and very different from being in public education. She spoke of receiving a new laptop and how she'd been using a laptop that was 10 years old at her previous job.

"But that's what happens in public education, and, you know, we just purchased a lot of things on our own," she said. "My husband retired after 39 years in public education, and we both spent a lot of our money on not just things that we needed for our classroom, but for our students as well."

Johnson grew up in Maud, Oklahoma, where she graduated high school before receiving her bachelor's and master's degrees from East Central University.

Johnson said she worked at Seminole High School in Seminole, Oklahoma, for more than 30 years, first teaching family and consumer science and then working as the counselor for the last 10 years.

"Education is very near and dear to my heart," she said. "I've worked with kids for the last 10 years with scholarships, and prior to that, what I taught was career tech oriented. So I have a little knowledge in that, and knowledge with scholarships and helping students, which is what the education department is."



Kelley Johnson

Part of what inspired Johnson to work with CPN's Department of Education, she said, was that her children participated in the Potawatomi Leadership Program — her daughter in 2007 and her youngest son in 2013.

"I'd always heard that we were Tribal members, but I actually was not even on the roll until probably in my late 20s," she said, explaining that the

rolls had been closed to her until that time. "It was really neat for my daughter to tell us the things that she learned and found out about our family, things I didn't know because my grandmother was gone and so was my dad. Actually, his whole generation was gone at that point."

In addition to the connection her family was able to forge with her Tribe through the PLP program, she said they were also appreciative to benefit from CPN scholarships.

"It helped me with my master's, but not just for me. All three of my children utilized that and it helped them to get their education," she said.

Now, she looks forward to helping other Tribal members receive benefits such as those that she and her children have received.

"I look forward to helping Tribal members ... for them to make their lives better with education, whether that be through career tech or through college," Johnson said.

For more information about CPN's Department of Education and the services they offer, visit [cpn.news/education](https://cpn.news/education). 🔥

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## Request for statements of intent

The Citizen Potawatomi Nation Housing Department is requesting a statement of intent from any interested Native-owned economic enterprises or Native organizations who wish to submit a bid or proposal for the performance of services related to the carrying out of affordable housing activities. Services and work items include but are not limited to appraisal, building materials, construction, site work, tree removal, equipment, electrical, plumbing, HVAC, maintenance, inspections, lead-based paint testing and remediation, surveys, and legal. The statement of intent may be submitted to Citizen

Potawatomi Nation Housing located at 44007 Hardesty Rd, Shawnee, OK 74801. For more information, contact Cindy Anderson, CPN Development Assistant at 405-273-2833 or by email at [cindy.anderson@potawatomi.org](mailto:cindy.anderson@potawatomi.org). This request is being offered pursuant to the Indian preference/Tribal Preference requirements as stated in 24 CFR Part 1000. There is no deadline for submissions. However, submissions not received in a timely manner may prevent an otherwise qualified firm from receiving Indian preference or being able to compete for contract award under certain or previously announced solicitations. 🔥



# Museum opens family space

First Americans Museum in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on Sept. 18, 2025, opened the new 5,000 square foot FAMily Discovery Center.

The two-story space evokes a children’s pop-up book with its vibrant art and animals, many of which wear cultural adornments.

The center features many animals that are prominent in Indigenous cultures, including a turtle, rabbit, red-tailed hawk, deer, spider and coyote. The space resembles a forest where many other woodland animals, trees, insects and plants thrive.

Woody the deer’s coat is designed to pay homage to the works of famed Citizen Potawatomi artist Woody Crumbo. Grandma Turtle, who welcomes visitors, wears an apron with a Choctaw design. Reggie, a red-tailed hawk, wears a bone breastplate and proudly overlooks the entire exhibit from a giant nest.

Providing opening remarks were FAM Director Dr. Kelli Mosteller (Citizen Potawatomi Nation), Oklahoma City Mayor David Holt (Osage Nation) and FAM Deputy Director and Co-Curator Shoshana Wasserman (Thlopthlocco Tribal Town/Muscogee Nation).

Wasserman said the newest addition to FAM is important because it celebrates the lifeways of the 39 tribes in Oklahoma today, from the perspective of Indigenous peoples. The center includes lighting and audio that help change day into night and move through all four seasons within one hour.

Wasserman and Kimberly Rodriguez, FAM communications project coordinator and co-curator, collaborated with artists and tribal representatives to create the space. They included tribal cultural references, imagery and humor to ensure Indigenous cultures in Oklahoma today will enchant FAM’s youngest visitors.

While it is a children’s space, it encourages whole family connection and the message it sends is important for both children and their parents, the Indigenous values of community, respect, resilience and stewardship which unite all people.

“We knew we wanted it to be some place engaging that would allow family connections to happen,” Wasserman said. “We started to think about what makes our communities different as Native peoples and what makes us the same as human beings, and we came up with this idea of ‘we are all connected.’”

Admission to the FAMily Discovery Center is included with FAM’s general admission price. The FAMily Discovery Center requires a timed entry and waivers to be signed for guests who want to climb along tree top trail. Children must be 42” tall or 5 years old to climb without an adult. Close-toed shoes are suggested for climbing. For more information, visit [famok.org](http://famok.org).



# What is abuse?

By Kayla Woody,  
CPN House of Hope Prevention Specialist

“When someone shows you who they are, believe them the first time” is great advice from Maya Angelou. If you were able to remove the emotional connection with a person, these would be easy words to follow. However, love seems to skew our vision and makes it difficult to truly see the wolf in sheep’s clothing.

Intimate relationships are complex and often complicated. When you add abuse to the mix, the ability to differentiate between reality and manipulation becomes difficult and can cause individuals to become “entrapped in a world of confusion, contradiction, and fear.” (Stark, Evan (2007). *Coercive control: How men entrap women in personal life*. Oxford University Press.)

If domestic violence were more simplistic and easier to spot, fewer people would find themselves ensnared by its grip. Unfortunately, 24 people per minute become victims of abuse by an intimate partner in the United States, according to the National Domestic Violence Hotline. This equates to 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men experiencing violence from an intimate partner in their lifetime.

To prevent abuse from happening in a relationship, everyone must first understand what abuse is. There is a serious misconception that abuse is only physical. This is far from reality.

There are many tactics used to gain power and control by abusive partners. It’s important to understand what those tactics look like and how they can be used.

The CPN House of Hope is here to help anyone actively experiencing abuse in their intimate partner

## VERBAL

Abuse that includes insults, ridicule, name-calling, the silent treatment, or even saying hurtful things and then saying it’s a joke.

## EMOTIONAL

Use of behaviors to instill fear to control. Tactics include isolation from loved ones, shaming, humiliation, jealousy, and constant criticism.

## FINANCIAL

Withholding funds, sabotaging employment, controlling spending, stealing identity/property, refusing to work, hiding assets, running up large amounts of debt.

## PHYSICAL

Any intentional act causing physical injury/trauma, including: Slapping, Punching, Strangulation, Biting, Hair Pulling, Burning, Use of Weapons, or threatening to harm.

## DIGITAL

Monitoring devices and social media accounts, tracking devices, hacking email/personal accounts, demanding passwords

## PSYCHOLOGICAL

Using manipulation and coercion, distorting a victim’s thoughts and changing their sense of self in order to maintain control.

## IMMIGRATION STATUS

Using tactics to threaten one’s status in a country, like destroying papers, restricting education of the language, deportation threats

## SEXUAL

Sexual abuse is not about sex. It is about power, and includes any sexual behavior performed without a partner’s consent, like forcing acts, coercion, or pressure to perform certain acts.

## SPIRITUAL

This specific type of abuse uses religion or spirituality against a partner, either by not allowing them to act upon their beliefs or shaming and controlling with the ideas of religion.

## STALKING

A pattern of behaviors directed at a specific person to cause them to feel fear. Can include unwanted calls, texts, visits, sending unwanted gifts, following/watching, digital tracking, or intimidation.

relationship. There are a variety of services that are available for individuals who find themselves experiencing the abuse tactics listed above. Those services are completely free and 100% confidential.

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

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## The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

The FAFSA form for the 2026-2027 school year became available to fill out on Oct. 1. You should fill out this form if you will take classes at a college or career tech institution in the 2026-27 school year or if you think you might want to take classes.

This form helps you get all the federal student financial aid that you might be eligible to receive. Filling the FAFSA out as early as possible is important, because federal funding for Pell grants is limited. If you are Pell-eligible but file your paperwork after the Pell funding has already been distributed, you may not be maximizing your award.

Even if you are not eligible for federal grants and loans, many colleges, universities and scholarship organizations ask that you complete the FAFSA before you enroll or apply. They want to make sure that you are doing

everything you can to find all sources of funding for your coursework. Completing the FAFSA is free, and the United States Department of Education has done its best to make the process as easy as possible.

The FAFSA website has many useful tips and instructions for filling it out. You can find a lot of resources here: [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov).

If you need any additional support or want to talk through other ways to pay for your education, the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Department of Education is here to help! Student success advisors are able to answer your questions and help you find additional scholarships you might be eligible to receive. Please contact us by making an appointment through [portal.potawatomi.org](http://portal.potawatomi.org), emailing [education@potawatomi.org](mailto:education@potawatomi.org) or calling 405-695-6028. 🔥

# INDIGENOUS CLASS™

## Indigenous Class founder gifts free subscriptions to CPN tribal members

Caleb McDaniel, founder and CEO of Indigenous Class and president of tribal banking at Sovereign Bank, is gifting Citizen Potawatomi Nation (CPN) tribal members free subscriptions to his streaming platform starting Nov. 1.

### About Indigenous Class

Indigenous Class is a streaming platform that is 100% Native owned by McDaniel, member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and Mvskoke Creek Nation. The platform launched on Nov. 1, 2024, in honor of Native American Heritage Month. Similar to MasterClass, Indigenous Class offers high-quality educational and cultural classes.

"Leaders from across Indian Country are featured," McDaniel said.

A new class is produced and released each month, divided into multiple episodes. Each class features a different instructor and segment of Indian Country. In addition to the public classes, tribes with subscriptions can upload content exclusively for members of their own nations. A private section of the platform will house the tribe's content.

"This content is stored on a private cloud and is not owned or marketed by Indigenous Class," McDaniel told the *Hownikan*.

### CPN Subscription

A personal subscription to Indigenous Class is normally \$9.99 per month. However, starting Nov. 1, and in honor of Native American Heritage Month, subscriptions will be available to CPN tribal members at no cost. Tribal members will have access to view Native-focused classes on arts and culture, business, community, health and wellness, and leadership. CPN tribal members can also view any private content the Nation chooses to share on the platform.

To connect with your Indigenous roots and activate your Indigenous Class account, please visit your [portal.potawatomi.org](https://portal.potawatomi.org) account and select the "Indigenous Class" subscription option. A link and activation code will be emailed to the address on file with your portal account.

For more information about Indigenous Class, visit [indigenousclass.com](https://indigenousclass.com). 🔥

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## Housing Department invitation to bid

The Citizen Potawatomi Nation Housing Department (CPNHD) is seeking sealed bids for their FY'2026 yearly lawn maintenance and grounds keeping for **Father Joe Murphy I, II, III and CPN Housing Office/ Nichols St., Citizen Place North and Citizen Place East Phase I, II, Tribal Rentals**. These properties are owned and operated by CPNHD. All properties are to be mowed, weeded, and trimmed, starting March 16, 2026 through Oct. 12, 2026. Bid packets are available through Cindy Anderson, Development Assistant of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Housing Department located at 44007 Hardesty Road, Shawnee, OK 74801, 405-273-2833 or email [cindy.anderson@potawatomi.org](mailto:cindy.anderson@potawatomi.org). There are a total of five bid packets: one is for 30 mowings which will be once a week mowings, four are for 21 mowings every

ten days. You may bid on one or all the properties. **Bids are due by Dec. 1, 2025, at 10 a.m. at Citizen Potawatomi Nation Housing Department located at 44007 Hardesty Road, Shawnee, OK, 74801.**

Contracts for work under this proposal will oblige the bidder/contractor not to discriminate against employment practices. Also, contracts are subject to the provisions of Indian preference/Tribal preference in accordance with 24 CFR 1000.48. Bidders/contractors claiming Indian preference/ Tribal preference will be required to submit proof of 51% Native American owned business. Award of this contract is subject to determination by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's eligible contractors. 🔥

# Mdamen applications open for fifth year

A Citizen Potawatomi Nation leadership program that helps participants establish and maintain a strong connection to their Potawatomi heritage is now accepting applications.

For the fifth year, the Department of Education will host *Mdamen*. The application period opened on Oct. 1 and closes Dec. 1.

*Mdamen* comes from the *Bodéwadmimwen* (Potawatomi language) word for corn and translates as “that miraculous seed.” Education Department Internship and Project Coordinator Kym Coe said the goal of the program is to plant seeds of knowledge that will grow over time among Potawatomi people.

The nine-week virtual program was created to connect Tribal members, no matter where they live, Coe said.

“We are very excited to see people passionate about learning their culture. Every year, we have participants walk away sharing with their family to join the next year,” Coe said.

Education Department Director Rachel Watson agreed families can all share the experience.

“*Mdamen* is a special program to me; the first year we offered it was also the year I joined the department. My dad, and by extension my mom and sister, learned a lot about the Nation by signing up that first year. He was surprised by how much there was to learn even for him, since he lived close to headquarters and our family went to Festival as often as we could,” they said.

Once a week, participants will join a Zoom meeting to learn about government, culture and the economic development of the Tribe. Each session will touch on a different theme, from social services to economic development to culture and heritage. The program also includes smaller talking circles and breakout sessions with other CPN members. *Mdamen* concludes with a reflection session over what each participant learned.

*Mdamen* is modeled after the successful Potawatomi Leadership Program that is geared toward college-age Tribal members who are exploring their heritage. Tribal members asked if a similar program could be created for them after seeing the PLP’s success, and *Mdamen* was launched. The virtual format allows those who want to learn more about their Potawatomi roots to participate, even if they are unable to travel to CPN headquarters near Shawnee, Oklahoma.

Coe said *Mdamen* will follow a similar format to the inaugural program in 2022. Participants must commit to attending each virtual session and preparing a final reflection presentation.

She said past participants are eager to share their positive experiences.

“They’ve said things like, ‘I wish I would have done this sooner,’ or ‘I will get all of my family to join next year,’ and ‘This was a beautiful experience, and it was the start of my journey in finding my heritage.’ Many of them now have Potawatomi names and have been exploring how to become more involved,” Coe said.

Previous participant Zach Crumbo recently shared with a group how *Mdamen* changed his perspective.

“I could not be more grateful for the experience. There are a lot of people who are dispersed across the country who didn’t grow up with a strong connection to their Potawatomi kin and were looking for that at a later point in their lives,” he said. “I was so overwhelmed with the welcome and the kindness. And feeling that I was a part of this community is one of the most powerful experiences of my life. I can’t fully communicate how meaningful it has been for me, how much it has changed the way that I perceive myself.”

“Having watched the final reflections every year, I’ve gotten to see so many people grow and develop their connection with the Tribe,” Watson said. “In turn, I believe that the Nation has also grown. *Mdamen* alumni have suggested new programming for the Nation, produced new resources for Tribal members and worked to create a community of Citizen Potawatomi that supports each other and the Nation virtually. We have so many notable alumni and stories; each person is touched in a unique way and carries forward that miraculous seed.”

The program can spark an ongoing journey of learning more about Potawatomi heritage and create a network of support.

“They feel more connected after completing this program. Most have shared it’s a beginning to their journey. They don’t have anything to lose by joining, and they get to join a beautiful community,” Coe said.

“In only four classes, it’s amazing that we’ve already seen such transformation in what we can offer our Tribal members. Participants really learn to embrace what it means for us to all be family and part of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation,” Watson said.

*Mdamen* is open to Tribal members 18 and up. The deadline to apply is Dec. 1, 2025. Applications are reviewed by an independent committee. The sessions begin on Jan. 8, 2026, and continue each Thursday from 6-8:30 p.m. CST. The final session is March 5, 2026.

Learn more and apply at [portal.potawatomi.org](https://portal.potawatomi.org). Email [kym.coe@potawatomi.org](mailto:kym.coe@potawatomi.org) with questions and for more information. 🔥

# Battling BNPLs

By Bobby "Trae" Trousdale,  
CPCDC Grants and Finance Coordinator

CPN citizens and the Nation's employees are well aware of the felt experiences and challenges of the hardening economic reality. A return to "normal" of pre-pandemic pricing, supply, and financial operations are mere fleeting memories of years gone by with shrinking viable pathways to return. The Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation (CPCDC) is acutely aware of these challenges and stands ready to assist our citizens, and those working on their behalf, through a variety of consumer programs. These include Employee Auto Loans, Credit Builder Loans, and our robust Employee Loan Program. Underpinning each of these is our mission, our Community Development Financial Institution status, and our desire to provide the Nation with an alternative to predatory payday lenders.

Over the course of our two decades of operations, predatory lending has shifted and assumed various forms in an attempt to earn your business. While the Department of Treasury still reports that over 12% of Native American households remain unbanked, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York recently shared that total household debt hit \$18.4 trillion in the second quarter of 2025. This was inclusive of an all-time consumer high of \$1.21 trillion being reached using predatory credit card companies. These statistics enumerate the polar realities of the thresholds we operate between and show the resourcefulness that economic colonizers deploy to erode your fiscal stability and sovereignty.

A new tool to subvert your financial power has emerged by simply embracing a facelift to BNPL, or Buy Now Pay Later, schemes. You've most likely seen these integrated into online checkout processes under the banners of Affirm, Afterpay, Klarna, or Uplift. These are just a few BNPL



Bobby "Trae" Trousdale

companies, but each primarily markets itself to you by breaking your transaction down into bite-size chunks charged over a certain number of months. Factored into these payments, however, could be an interest rate of up to 36%. While the average person might think of factoring this into larger transactions, these BNPL grifts don't limit themselves to \$1,000+ transactions. They are pervasive and readily available wherever you may be. From holiday

shopping hauls and weekly grocery orders to next-day Amazon deliveries and all the way down to a single burrito purchased on a national chain's app, BNPLs satiate instant gratification and trap consumers in expensive cycles that could continue long after the byproducts are gone. We exist in an oppressive society where you, and more likely your younger relatives, can (or are being encouraged to) *finance* a cheesy bean and rice burrito.

In addition to this accrued cost of convenience, companies like Affirm, the largest BNPL company, are shifting their reporting to include the credit bureaus starting this year as they are projected to amass 91.5 American users and \$122.3 billion in transactions. While this isn't expected to initially affect traditional credit scores, the evolution of aging credit scoring models may come to include them in the future. Now, more than ever, sustainable financial health and wellness is shifting from an expectation of aging and maturity to a far-fetched dream and something that is only available to the elders among us.



CPN's Community Development Corporation is here to finance, promote, educate, and inspire your commercial and consumer dreams whatever your point of entry may be. We encourage you to explore and use the many financial tools available to our people and to remain aware of the intergenerational effects and unique implications that financial decisions carry. Know that our entire team is a resource to you and that we welcome the opportunity to serve you and your future ancestors. Please contact CPCDC by visiting [cpcdc.org](https://cpcdc.org) or by calling 405-878-4697. 🔥



## Artist shares how to use natural dyes

Like many cultures, Native Americans have used a variety of plants and animals to produce natural dyes. A Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal member hopes to revive interest in natural dyes.

Daisy Bourbonnais-Pelletier shared some of her knowledge during a Sept. 17, 2025, presentation at the Cultural Heritage Center. She has been interested in the technique for many years.

"I have wanted to do this my entire adult life, but I actually started learning about natural dyeing in 2018. I took a class on hand stitching, and we also did some natural dyeing," she said.

Bourbonnais-Pelletier said most of the resources she has found are from a global, rather than an Indigenous, perspective. However, some knowledge could still be applied to Indigenous practices.

"The references I have seen could apply to some plants that are native to North America that we would have used for natural dyeing. Walnut hulls, for instance, and then obviously some other plants that are more native to north America," she said.

### Reusing and recycling

After the invention of synthetic dyes, natural dyes became less popular. Bourbonnais-Pelletier hopes to see more people experimenting with

natural methods as the process can give new life to items that might otherwise be thrown away.

"Today I shared a couple of things that I made. Both of those were just some stained napkins that I dyed with indigo and now they're pretty again. We have gotten to a place in our wider culture, where everything is done synthetically and we don't have that hands-on experience."

Using natural dyes allows the user to connect with each plant or substance.

"Marigold is a really good one because marigolds are in everybody's garden. They're in every plant center so they're very easy to find. They make a really beautiful yellow color; they're easy to use. When you take your t-shirt or your napkin that's all stained and then you suddenly turn it into this beautiful art that you're excited to use again then that makes it more fun. The next time you go out and you see those marigolds, you'll say, 'I made this, and I have this marigold still in my garden.'"

### Research is important

Bourbonnais-Pelletier advises research to determine which kinds of plants are best for dyeing to get the best results. It's also important to know the difference between which plants can be used, or which may be invasive to the local environment.

Some plants may not be native to North America but likely came to the continent through trade routes. Research

indicates indigo plants from the Sonoran Desert may have been used by Indigenous North Americans.

"Indigo is not native to North America. We have false indigo, but it doesn't dye. People might find that in their garden and think they would be able to dye something with it, but they won't. So, that would be very disappointing," she said.

Another popular ingredient, cochineal, possibly came to North America from a South American source.

"I think cochineal actually is native to Peru. So, that might have been something that our ancestors might have had access to through trade routes, but not necessarily what we would have had to access to just in our surroundings," she said.

Bourbonnais-Pelletier hopes to plant a dyer's garden with native Oklahoma plants that are environmentally beneficial, while potentially helping local pollinators.

"I want it to all be plants that are either native to Oklahoma or are going to be good for the environment of Oklahoma, even if they're not native here. I don't want to plant something that will be invasive and will cause problems for our native grass," she said. "For the pollinators, for the birds, we want our songbirds to have a good source of food as well. It's a big circle."

Plants like Dyer's Woad have long taproots, which is environmentally beneficial, but is considered invasive in some parts of the United States, particularly in the west.

"Long taproots transfer nutrients down deep into the ground, but it's considered invasive because the seeds scatter well. Since (Oklahoma is) not that far from the west and it spreads really easily, I'll avoid it," she said.

## Supplies to gather

There are a few basic items she recommends people have on hand.

A stainless steel pot, dedicated only to dyeing, is essential. Pots should not be used for both food preparation and dyeing, Bourbonnais-Pelletier said. A spoon for stirring mixtures, gloves, a mask for mixing powders, a bowl and a bucket are also needed.

Pots should be stainless steel or enamel. No cast iron, copper or aluminum should be used because they can cause unexpected chemical reactions.

"I have a five-gallon bucket, but you don't need something that big. You could have something smaller if you're only dyeing a small amount of things. Your dye goods need to move freely in the liquids. So, whatever you're going to be dyeing that's what you need to keep in mind when you're choosing the size of the container that you're using," she said.

The technique isn't limited to fabrics. Bourbonnais-Pelletier has used natural dyes on a variety of materials, even rawhide. Before the presentation, a

CHC employee suggested putting porcupine quills in the dye mixture to see if the quills would accept the dye. Bourbonnais-Pelletier was eager to try.

"I'll put anything in the dye pot once. I've dyed all kinds of fiber, yarn and other things. The quills, that was exciting. The rawhide was because I want to make some rattles," she said.

She recalled a yarn project that didn't turn out how she expected, but she kept the yarn for years until she learned about a new process and tried it on the yarn.

"We did some Easter egg dyes on yarn one year, and one of them didn't work. It was terrible, but I had that yarn for probably five years," she said. "Then I took this class, and I said, 'Well, let me put it in the indigo' and it turned out beautifully. It still had all the variation in color from before, but then it had beautiful soft blues over the top of it. You never know what you're going to get when you put things in natural dyes."

Bourbonnais-Pelletier said those surprises are part of the fun.

"It really, really is. You just open it up and then it's a surprise every time," she said.

More tips on getting started can be found at Maiwa, [naturaldyes.ca](http://naturaldyes.ca). Retailers Botanical Colors ([botanicalcolors.com](http://botanicalcolors.com)) and Dharma Trading ([dharma trading.com](http://dharma trading.com)) also have resources.

For more information, contact [daisy@thenomadicmermaid.com](mailto:daisy@thenomadicmermaid.com) or follow Bourbonnais-Pelletier on Instagram at [@The\\_nomadic\\_mermaid](https://www.instagram.com/The_nomadic_mermaid). 🔥



# Wilmet family history

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

## Family beginnings

The Chicago, Illinois, area owes its earliest development to a Potawatomi family. Archange Chevalier was the daughter of Francois and Marianne (*Chopa*) Chevalier, a prominent Potawatomi family.

In 1796, she married Antoine Wilmet (Wilmette). Antoine was a French-Canadian fur trader and early resident of Fort Dearborn in Illinois. As an agent for the American Fur Company, he first moved to the area in 1790.

The couple had eight children: Sophia, Joseph, Louis, Francois, Elizabeth, Michel, Josette and an adopted daughter named Archange.

With his wife's ties to the area Potawatomi leaders, Antoine was one of the few non-Natives able to remain in the area following the Battle of Fort Dearborn and the War of 1812. Following the war, he was the only non-Native resident of the area. He also worked as a farmer and guide.

The family lived in a cabin near the shore of Lake Michigan. Traders and travelers were known to stop there to visit because of the hospitality of the Wilmet family. Today, that location is known as the village of Wilmette, Illinois.

Antoine had farms in Wisconsin and regularly traveled between Milwaukee and Canada. Following the Treaty of Prairie du Chien in 1829, Archange received two sections of 1,280 acres where the towns of Wilmette and Evanston would later be established.

Antoine was involved in the negotiations of the 1833 Treaty of Chicago that caused the removal of the Potawatomi from the Great Lakes and established reservations in Missouri and Iowa. Five years after the treaty, Antoine, Archange and their family removed to Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Their children would later petition the U.S. government to sell their mother's land holdings in Illinois. The government purchased 640 acres for \$1,000.

## Life in Kansas, Oklahoma

The Indian Removal Act of 1830 forced thousands of tribes, including the Potawatomi, to leave their ancestral



Elizabeth Wilmette  
Welch Darling

homes in the Great Lakes region. The first stop among the many removals that would occur was Council Bluffs, Iowa. It was here that Archange walked on in 1840. Antoine passed in 1841.

The Potawatomi then endured one of the darkest periods of history. The 1838 Trail of Death began when 859 Potawatomi were forced to march on foot from Indiana to Kansas. Over 660 miles, men, women, elders and children

struggled without adequate food, water or shelter. More than 40 people died before the group eventually arrived in Kansas.

In 1861, Tribal leaders would negotiate with the U.S. government on a new treaty, one they hoped would finally offer stability. Some members of the Tribe wanted to acquire fee-simple land allotments in Indian Territory and U.S. citizenship. Others wished to remain in Kansas and live communally. Those who accepted the terms became known as the Citizen Band Potawatomi. Those remaining in Kansas became known as the Prairie Band Potawatomi.

Descendants of the Wilmet family were among those who decided to navigate a new life in Indian Territory, including the descendants of Joseph Wilmet.

Joseph was born in 1827. He married Eleanor Hoose. Together, the couple had Harriet, Thomas, Kitty, Fordice, Estelle, Joseph, Frank, Zoa and Charles. Joseph operated a plank ferry for more than 20 years. His ferry customers were the troops from Fort Riley, including foot soldiers and mule drawn weapon carriers. Joseph and Eleanor remained in Kansas, but their children would eventually move to Oklahoma to live on their allotments. Records reflect that Joseph walked on Dec. 31, 1897.

Louis (Lewis) was born in 1808. He married Susan Masquas (*Wa-wiet-mo-quah*). The couple had daughters named Mary (BeBo) and Archange (*Nuk-kosh*). Later, he married Lizette. They were the parents of Antoine, Franklin, Mitchell, Louis Jr., Josette, Joseph and Hattie. Louis walked on in 1868.

Michel (Michael/Mitchell) was born in 1813. Records in the CHC archives did not indicate he ever married or had children.

Sophia was born in 1817. She married John Deroshee, and they had a son named Charles. She later married William

**Continued on next page**

# Veterans Report

Bozho (Hello),

October is here so soon. This is a busy time for the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Veterans Organization. We have a lot of growing in the works. We are now set up to video our meetings so they can be viewed by CPN veterans who are unable to attend our meetings in person. You can view the meetings in real time or at your convenience. We will be having guest speakers to keep our veterans informed about veteran issues and be able to communicate with the group in real time. We are looking forward to this new meeting form. Chris Lenggenhager is coordinator for this and many other projects. *Migwetch* (Thank you), Chris.

October is the month of our biggest parade of the year. The Wewoka Sorghum Festival is on Saturday, Oct. 25. All CPN veterans and their families are invited to join us on our CPN Veteran parade trailer. Bring your lawn chair, if you have one, or we will have extras if you don't, and join us in the biggest and most fun parade of the year. You won't regret it. The parade begins at 10 a.m., but they ask that we line up at 8:45 a.m. But you get to join us any time before 9:50 a.m. The parade will begin at the Seminole Nation Museum on Wewoka Avenue. We hope to see you there.

Remember our monthly meetings are on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the CPN Cultural Heritage Center's Veterans' Memorial Hall at 6 p.m. (or as soon as you can get there). A meal is provided. This month's meeting is Tuesday, Oct. 28. You do not have to be a member to attend; we welcome all CPN veterans and their families.

## Wilmet continued...

Martell. The couple had Israel, John, Charles, Jerome and Ambrose. Sophie Martell and her family settled on a farm in Belvue, Kansas, where she lived for 50 years. She later moved to Kansas City to live with her son, Israel Martell. Sophia walked on in 1911.

Francois (Francis) was born in 1819. He never married. Records in the CHC archives did not indicate he ever married or had children.

Elizabeth married Michael Welch on May 11, 1830. The couple had a son named Joseph, and a daughter named Catherine. They later divorced and Elizabeth married Lucius Darling. They were the parents of William, Francis (Frank), Eliza, Louis, Charles and Lucius.

Archange was the niece of Archange Chevalier. The younger Archange married Trouasant Tremblay in 1813. They had a daughter named Mary and a son named Lewis. The couple divorced in 1830, and Archange married John Mann.

Josette was born in 1846. She first married John B. Frapp. She later married Mr. Darling. Josette then married Mr. Vanansdale. Josette walked on in 1916.



## Meeting schedule

- Oct. 28, Game night: Dominoes, cards and so forth. A fun evening.
- No meeting in November
- Dec. 9, CPN Veterans Christmas Dinner at 6 p.m.

Daryl Talbot, Commander, 405-275-1054

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

David Barrett, Treasurer, 405-613-7313

Bill Wano, Secretary, 405-670-1200 🔥

## Reclaiming history

Wilmet family descendants are now leading efforts to reclaim Potawatomi history.

Family descendant Sharon Hoogstraten developed a photography exhibit and later a book, featuring the regalia and celebrating the culture of the nine Potawatomi Nations. "Dancing for Our Tribe" portrays the contemporary aspects of Potawatomi culture within 150 formal portraits.

Hoogstraten also helped dedicate a plaque in the village of Wilmette, Illinois, at the intersection of Lake and Michigan avenues. Located at the entrance to Gillson park where the Wilmet family cabin and garden once stood, the plaque is a reminder for present-day visitors about Indigenous contributions to their communities.

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

# From the executives



## John "Rocky" Barrett Tribal Chairman

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

We live in a world where the uninformed deliberately make provocative statements because they are influenced by media falsehoods and what I call "Chatroom Values." These values permit anyone to deliberately lie and to diminish the accomplishments of those with whom they disagree politically by challenging their honesty, integrity and moral fiber. This will not happen in the *Hownikan*.

We live in a political world where newly elected officials feel free to mislead their constituents by publishing innuendo and half-truths, believing that by attacking the integrity of the incumbent elected officials with whom they serve, they will somehow make themselves look better. These kinds of people show no consideration for experience or education, honor no time of service, and diminish the opinions of their peers. They just want attention. They demand respect while earning none.

Those that think this is appropriate behavior in the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Tribal Legislature, and who act in this manner do not know the Citizen Potawatomi people very well. We can all smell what we avoid stepping in on a cow trail when it is being slung around, even if it comes with the alibi that they are "just doing their job."

Steve Livingston, the newly elected Tribal legislator from District 1, got 121 votes in his election.

On his first day here at Tribal headquarters, he demanded to see the books of the Nation, all of which Secretary Treasurer D. Wayne Trousdale provided, along the outside audit and opinion. In his cursory examination of a small part of the records, he made no complaints about the results, the form, the quality and degree of examination, and no comment on the positive opinion of the professional auditors — auditors approved and required by the federal government.

Mr. Livingston apparently did not walk down the hall of our Accounting Department and see the long array of beautiful plaques recognizing 40 years of awards from the National Association of Government Accountants for "Excellence In Reporting."

The next evening at the meeting of the Tribal legislature, he cast the sole "no" vote on the CPN Annual Budget. This budget was a product of literally thousands of hours of work to mold the \$671,000,000 into a working document to guide the operation of our 40,000-member Tribal Nation.

His vote ignored the national and international recognition our Tribe has received for excellence and innovation in tribal government. His vote was cast in the face of a combined number of 244 years of experience in service that the other members of the legislature have given, a level of experience no other tribe can match.

To add insult to injury, he made the statement in his column in the *Hownikan* that he found our records did not have "transparency," a buzzword meant to imply that everyone else at the Nation is hiding something. It is understood between us all that members of the Tribal legislature do not use their column privileges to criticize other members of the essential government body that makes our laws and sets our budget.

Based on his length of service, employment experience, level of education, and support of the people of his district, he is the least qualified of all of our legislators.

I believe he owes his Tribal government the courtesy of gaining some experience and organizational knowledge before casting no votes and using innuendo to disparage the judgement and abilities of his fellow legislators and professional staff. I hope he learns.

It is my greatest privilege to serve as your Tribal Chairman. Thank you for your support these last 50 years.

*Migwetch (Thank you),*

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



## Linda Capps Vice-Chairman

Bozho (Hello),

### First Americans Museum (FAM)

Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal members can be proud of the fact that one of our own was chosen as the executive director and chief executive officer of First Americans Museum. Dr. Kelli Mosteller has served the prestigious museum in that distinguished capacity for just over one year.

The museum is amazing, with the collection of histories for all 39 First American Nations in Oklahoma in one section and state-of-the-art exhibits in another. Visitors marvel at the 175,000

square foot museum, located in Oklahoma City's new Horizons District. The museum also contains a restaurant and café offering Indigenous-inspired cuisine, a multi-purpose theater and a museum store that features items created by premiere First American artists.

One of the latest additions to the First Americans Museum (FAM) in Oklahoma City is the FAMily Discovery Center. The Grand Opening was Sept. 20 of this year. An invitation went out to tribal entities for a preview opening for Sept. 16. Several staff members from CPN attended to help begin the celebration of the new center. Dr. Mosteller was there to greet the attendees and give an overview of what the FAMily Discovery Center entails. A cheerful crowd came through from 6 to 8 p.m.

Those in attendance received a sit-down session that included Dr. Mosteller's comments about FAM and an introduction to the guest speakers. Jennifer Randell was on the agenda to talk about the Citizen Potawatomi Nation's eagle aviary, which was a pleasant surprise to both the Chairman and me. When Jennifer Randell talks about the flight of an eagle, your imagination can fly away from you. The aviary and WildCare Oklahoma were both incorporated into the premier program.

Dr. Mosteller described the FAMily Discovery Center as a giant pop-up-book world filled with Native stories, animal relatives and Oklahoma's changing seasons. Pictorial stories of WildCare Oklahoma's rescued animals were especially interesting that evening. The facts about the rescue center's wild animals were extremely fascinating.

CPN's resident education ambassador, an Augur Buzzard named *Nikan* who is trained to perch on Bree Dunham's (Jennifer Randell's assistant) glove, greeted attendees before they walked into the next portion of the program. Located right outside the FAMily Discover Center, the beautiful *Nikan* spread his massive wings for all to experience. What a beautiful bird, indeed! Inside the center is where imagination comes alive. The hands-on activities invite families to explore a beautiful pop-up world. Larger-than-life animals, each rooted in First American traditions, serve as forest friends. The animals help welcome children to a play area that becomes a living classroom through discovery and storytelling.

The time spent that evening was very enjoyable and educational. I can't wait to take my own family and grandchildren to the FAMily Discovery Center. What makes the museum incredibly inviting to our Tribal membership is the talent of Dr. Kelli Mosteller. She was the director of CPN's Cultural Heritage Center for 11 years. Judging by what she has done for FAM during her first year as executive director, I believe there are great things to come.

Thank you for letting me share what I think is important to our readers. I appreciate serving as your vice chairman since 1990. It continues to be a wonderful, exuberating voyage for my family and me.

Migwetch (Thank you),

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



Dr. Kelli Mosteller

# From the legislature



## Steve Livingston District 1

*Bozho, (Hello),*

In my September *Hownikan* article, I promised to share more about the *Bodéwadmi* Confederation. This is a condensed version from my website ([cpndistrict1.com/news](http://cpndistrict1.com/news)).

For some, the idea of 12 communities working together formally may raise questions. We've gathered and supported one another informally, so why take the step of building something new?

*Because what we are doing today may not be enough tomorrow.*

Since 1994, our annual Potawatomi Gatherings have brought us together to share dance, food, language and kinship. Our leaders discuss important topics yet rarely act together. When we return home, each Nation faces the world alone – negotiating with governments,

defending treaties, securing resources, keeping languages alive and creating opportunities for the next generation.

When seven Potawatomi nations signed the Articles of Confederation in 2023, it was historic. Article I states our purpose: *promoting unity, cooperation, and mutual support*. Article V empowers coordinated initiatives in economic development, environmental protection, cultural preservation and political advocacy. Some have asked about the phrase "political advocacy." In this context, it means ensuring we speak for ourselves wherever our rights may be questioned.

## Protecting sovereignty while building strength

It's fair to ask how this will work in practice. The articles affirm each nation's sovereignty. The executive council is not a ruling body but a coordinating one – it cannot bind any nation against its will. Leadership rotates, ensuring no nation dominates. CPN would chair the confederation in 2027. No nation is required to take part in initiatives it does not agree with.

This approach safeguards independence while creating room to act together when it benefits us all.

Examples can be found elsewhere – the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, Wabanaki Confederacy and the Blackfoot Confederacy. The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission brought four nations together to protect salmon. The Intertribal Council of Arizona demonstrates how 21 tribes amplify their collective voice.

For Potawatomi, a confederation could mean stronger advocacy in courts and legislatures, where 12 governments representing tens of thousands cannot be ignored. It could mean better coordination on protecting the Great Lakes and our watersheds, building sustainable economies, sharing language and cultural resources, or streamlining repatriation efforts. Cooperation was the strength of our ancestors, and it remains key to our survival today.

## Addressing Canadian First Nations questions

I've also heard questions about including Canadian Nations and navigating different political systems. But our relatives didn't stop being Potawatomi when they escaped removal. Our relatives in Ontario carried language, ceremony and community through the same struggles we did. The 1833 Treaty of Chicago was signed by the "United Nation of Chippewa, Ottawa, and Potawatamie Indians," showing how our peoples were connected. The confederation helps us return to that unity.

## In closing

As one of the largest Potawatomi nations with nearly 40,000 citizens, we bring perspective reflecting the wider Potawatomi diaspora. We have built a diversified economy and shown that self-governance can be rebuilt and sustained.

I know our leaders have weighed this question with care. CPN has faced many threats to sovereignty in Oklahoma, which makes us cautious and deliberate, and I respect that others may view this path differently.

We carry a unique history as among the first to reorganize after removal. That gives us responsibility. We need not hesitate out of fear of losing independence but should move forward with confidence that together we may accomplish more than any Nation alone.

The confederation is moving forward. The question is whether we will help shape it from the beginning or step into something built without our input. I hope we meet this historic moment and help build a future worthy of our ancestors and grandchildren.

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



## Eva Marie Carney District 2

*Bozho, nikanek* (Hello, friends),

### Rock Your Mocs Week/Upcoming Fall Feast

Did you know that Nov. 9 through 15 is Rock Your Mocs week? You might choose one day, the week or all November to wear your *mkesinen* (moccasins) — the idea is to celebrate with and to honor our ancestors and Indigenous peoples worldwide. To participate, wear your *mkesinen*, take a photo or video, add the hashtag #RockYourMocs and upload to social media. You will be helping to create an online album for the world to enjoy, and that will underscore that #WeAreStillHere.

If you join us on Saturday, Nov. 8, for our Annual District 2 Fall Feast, 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., you will have a new pair of *mkesinen* to wear during Rock Your Mocs Week, as this year's cultural craft is a return to pucker-toe moccasin-making, taught by Lyle Simmons. All materials will be provided.

We will gather in the social hall, Little Falls Presbyterian Church, 6025 Little Falls Road, Arlington, VA 22207 ([littlefallschurch.org](http://littlefallschurch.org)), craft, and share information, family updates, and a family meal. Bring favorite dishes (with recipes if you would like) to share. I will provide the turkey and a vegan main dish, along with beverages. Children are welcome! The craft is appropriate for children 10 and up with one-to-one adult supervision.

RSVPs are required. I look forward to seeing you; you do not need to be in District 2 to attend — but you do need to RSVP!

**CPN District 2 Fall Family Feast**  
Saturday, November 8, 2025 | 10:30AM-2:30PM

**Little Falls Presbyterian Church Social Hall,  
6025 Little Falls Rd, Arlington, VA 22207  
703-538-5230 | [littlefallschurch.org](http://littlefallschurch.org)**

Bring favorite dishes to share. I will provide the turkey and a vegan main dish, along with beverages. We will visit, work on a cultural craft together guided by Lyle Simmons, and share a family meal. And Kansas Legislator Jon Boursaw will provide an overview of our people's history. Children are welcome! The craft will be appropriate for children 10 and up with one-to-one adult supervision.

**Please RSVP by November 5**  
to [evamariecarney@gmail.com](mailto:evamariecarney@gmail.com), or leave a voicemail at (888) 849-1484

I have included a photo of Bob Shaweno Richey (Hardin family) with his completed bandolier bag; Bob started the bag during last year's Fall Feast. Bob and his wife Karen Richey, along with mother-son duo Kathleen Korzeniewski and Brett Mésko Mko Korzeniewski (Lewis family), led this craft during last year's Feast. We continue to challenge those who started their bag to complete and share with me a photo of your bag for publication in a future *Hownikan* column. You will help inspire fellow Potawatomi.



*Bob Shaweno Richey's completed bandolier bag, Summer 2025*

## New Novels of Note

If you like horror novels, you might enjoy "The Buffalo Hunter Hunter" by Blackfeet Native American author Stephen Graham Jones. It appeared on President Obama's 2025 Summer Reads List — but not mine! I read Graham Jones' "My Heart Is a Chainsaw" but cannot see reading another horror novel.

The latest novel by Ojibwe author Angeline Boulley, "Sisters in the Wind," is on my to-read list. I enjoyed her first two books ("Firekeeper's Daughter" and "Warrior Girl Unearthed") and love her backstory. As reported on her webpage ([angelineboulley.com](http://angelineboulley.com)), she had a long career in Indian education at the tribal, state and national levels

before publishing her first novel in her mid-40s. Most recently, she served as the director for the Office of Indian Education at the U.S. Department of Education and earlier was in a senior educational leadership role for her Nation, the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, and served on the Bay Mills Community College Board of Regents. You can read more about her and watch an interview with her, at [cpn.news/angelineinterview](http://cpn.news/angelineinterview).

## Please Keep in Touch and Continue to Share Family News

I am proud to share that my husband, Alan Cohen, is the 2025 inductee to the Council of Better Business Bureau's Hall of Fame. Alan is a committed protector of consumers who offers great insights and advice. He provided legal services to the Council and its self-regulatory programs for many years; I am thrilled to see him receive this recognition.

What is your family news? Please keep in touch and share your family news as you have it!

*Migwetch* (Thank you),

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



## Brenda Trevino District 3

*Bozho jayek* (Greetings all)!

*Migwetch* (Thanks) one more time to Bob Whistler for his leadership and dedication over the past 17 years. I have big shoes to fill and can only do that with your involvement and assistance. To represent you well, I need to hear from you. My new CPN email and the phone number at the end of this article are currently the best ways to reach me.

I mentioned in the new legislator's Q&A column that I would provide a **'SAVE THE DATE'** notice. It is with this column. I am also providing a general outline for the meetings. The meet-and-greet meetings will focus on introductions, available services and family celebrations. They will be a little shorter in duration and include time for me to listen specifically to those who come. In the larger meetings, I plan to include a guest speaker and an art project for the children, as well as information on naming/other ceremonies.

Both types of meetings will include limited giveaways for those who attend. Details of each meeting will be provided as the specifics become available, approximately a month ahead.

Your time is precious. Saving the dates up to six months in advance should give everyone who wants to come the ability to make attendance a reality. I plan to try this format through June 2026 and with your input adjust for the second half of the year. I do expect attendance to be smaller for the meet-and-greet meetings. The hope is that those within a 90-mile radius can come. Of course, if you want to come to every one of them, you are welcome to do so.

After the June 2026 meeting it will be time for the Family Reunion Festival in Shawnee again. This event was such a blessing for me in 2025. It truly did feel like one big family celebration!

I'll begin emailing those who were on the District 3 mailing list Bob Whistler



### SAVE THE DATE

Meeting calendar through June 2026

Primary Date	Alternate Date*	Location	Meeting Size
Jan. 10, 2026	Jan. 24, 2026	Corpus Christi	Meet-and-Greet
Feb. 21, 2026	Feb. 22, 2026	The Woodlands	Meet-and-Greet
March 7, 2026	March 28, 2026	Georgetown	Meet-and-Greet
April, 18, 2026	April 25, 2026	Waco	Larger Meeting
May 16, 2026	May 23, 2026	Tyler	Meet-and-Greet
June 13, 2026	No Alternate Date	San Marcos	Meet-and-Greet

\*Alternate date used only in case of inclement weather.

### General Meeting Outline

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Tribal history and storytelling
3. Language word or phrase
4. Ceremony
5. Lunch/snack
6. Art project for children
7. Services topic for this meeting
8. Celebrate
  - a. 2026 reunion families
    - i. Acton, Bergeron, Bruno, Curley, Delonais, Greemore, Slavin
    - b. Attendance - Oldest, youngest and farthest
9. Travel blessing

maintained. I would like you to respond when you get an email from me, to verify it is still the address you would like to use. And if you want to be added, please email me to add you. I need your permission to be added.

Blessings to all and *migwetch* (thanks) for your support now and in the future as I do my best to represent you!

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



## Jon Boursaw District 4

### Upcoming District 4 Meetings

**Wichita: Sunday, Oct. 26** at 12:30 p.m. at the Mid-America All-Indian Center located at 650 N. Seneca St. in Wichita. Lunch will be served. I have invited Kent Bush, Director of the CPN Public Information Department, to give a presentation on the functions of his office. In addition, he will give a slide presentation updating us on the Tribal projects ongoing in Shawnee, Oklahoma. Please RSVP no later than 5 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 21 by calling me at 785-608-1982, or email me at [jon.boursaw@potawatomi.org](mailto:jon.boursaw@potawatomi.org). Please identify which meeting you will attend. For those KC Chiefs fans, not to worry, their game is on Monday night, Oct. 27.

In addition, I would like to award at least one Quilt of Valor at the Wichita meeting. The Quilt of Valor is given to U.S. military veterans who have served honorably. If you are a CPN enrolled member and a veteran, I would be pleased to present

you with a Quilt of Valor for your service. I will need you to provide me with the following information:

1. Full name and contact information
2. CPN Tribal Family
3. Branch of Service
4. Dates of Service
5. Last Rank/Grade Held
6. Type of Discharge/Retirement
7. Primary Duty/Specialty
8. Personal Awards/ Decorations
9. Overseas Assignments
10. Served in Combat (where)

Please provide this information to me no later than Saturday, Oct. 18. You can reply by email or postal service (see contact information below). Obviously, you will need to be present at the meeting to receive a quilt. If you have any questions don't hesitate to contact me.

Rossville: Saturday, Nov. 1 at 10 a.m. in the CPN Community Center in Rossville. Lunch will be served. CPN Director of Education Rachel Watson will give a presentation on the programs, both youth and adult, offered by the Department. In addition, Rachel will be joined by Yale Taylor, the Native American Student Counselor for the Topeka Unified School District. They will jointly discuss the Title VI funding program available to public schools with Native American students. Please RSVP no later than 5 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 28 by calling me at 785-608-1982, or by email at [jon.boursaw@potawatomi.org](mailto:jon.boursaw@potawatomi.org). Please identify which meeting you will attend.

In addition, we may have the pleasure of hosting a brief visit by our U.S. Congressman Derek Schmidt, Kansas, District 2. Recently I have had two opportunities to personally speak with the Congressman about stopping by to speak to us. On both occasions his response was very positive, but with the comment that his schedule is subject to other priorities. I have recently responded to an inquiry from his Topeka office regarding the proposed meeting agenda.

### Upcoming CPN Elders' Potlucks

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

Nov. 24 Thanksgiving Turkey RSVP by the 11th

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

### Contact Information

If you are not receiving emails from me, it is because I do not have your current email address or what I have is incorrect. All you need to do is email me your email address.

*Migwetch* (Thank you),

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

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



## Rande K. Payne District 6

*Bozho nikanek* (Hello friends),



As of this writing, the Garnet Fire has consumed nearly 60,000 acres in the Sierra National Forest just northeast of me. Containment is at 70 percent. The fire started with a lightning strike on Aug. 24. Fortunately, a stand of giant sequoias at McKinley Grove will sustain only minimal damage due to the efforts of CalFire crews and other U.S. Forest Service partners working together to battle the fire. It appears that Wishon Village and all of the PG&E structures around the Helms Powerhouse will be spared as well.

I brought this up because just two weeks before the fire started, my grandson and I were camping at a location that, unfortunately, was consumed by the fire. Sawmill Flat was a beautiful place along the western slope of Granite Gorge, rising nearly 2,000 feet almost straight up from the North Fork of the Kings River to an elevation of 6,800 feet.

Starting with my parents, my family has been camping, hunting, off roading, boating and fishing in that area for well over 50 years. So many great memories. My grandson is the fourth, and unfortunately, the last generation of my family to experience that very special place. I wonder if the little buck that strolled through our camp early on the morning of our last day there made it out. My grandson's favorite place to fish will survive but unfortunately, his tee-pee fort won't.

Our family is deeply saddened and angry at yet another tragic loss of beautiful Sierra National Forest land. We're angry because Seven Generations means something to us. Traditions mean something to us. Family means something to us. Nature means something to us. We don't understand why the federal government would place the interests of a few ahead of common-sense forest management. The devastating ripple effect of their failed policies have had monumental adverse consequences just a few generations later. There



*Grandson Kade fishes at Sawmill Flat*

is an active petition to remove the regional Forest Service supervisor for his failure to act on fuel load removal. His removal is warranted, but it's a little too little, too late. In his defense, the fuse for this ticking time bomb was lit in the late 1970s, long before he was a Forest Service employee. This epic failure is much bigger than a single supervisor.



*Tee-pee fort at camp site*

Space doesn't afford me the ability to explain why this is important to us as Potawatomi people, but there is a lesson to be learned here. Hopefully, it will help ensure that we govern with vision and integrity, safeguarding the greater good and sustainability for generations to come. Stay tuned; Seven Generations mean something! To be continued in future columns.

I'm excited that our District 6 and 7 Heritage Festival is almost here. Mark and I are working on the agenda and will be putting the finishing touches on the event soon. We're sorry about the date change, but, due to unforeseen circumstances, we felt it would be best. Initially, Chairman Barrett and Vice-Chairman Capps were going to be able to come out in October. Because of a very important family event, they asked if we could move the date so they could still come. Of course, we said yes! We invite you to come and enjoy a fun day. We'll have a bounce house to keep the kids entertained, so be sure to bring them along. See you soon!

Wisdom from the Word: "Remember the days of old, consider the years of all generations. Ask your father and he will inform you, your elders, and they will tell you." Deuteronomy 32:7

*Migwetch, jagenagenan, nagetch* (Thank you, all my relations, later),

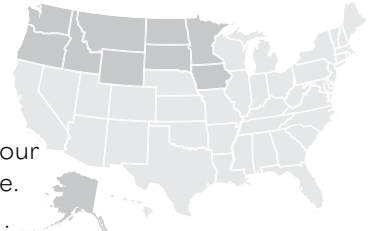
Rande K. Payne | *Mnedo Gabo* | [rande.payne@potawatomi.org](mailto:rande.payne@potawatomi.org) | 31150 Road 180 | Visalia, CA 93292-9585 | 559-999-5411



## Dave Carney District 8

*Bozho, jayek* (Hello, everyone),

It seems like it's been a long, hot summer in the northwest. At the moment, I am looking forward to winter and the famous drizzle in our area. I'm not sure if I'll feel the same way in February, but we will see.



We are a couple of weeks away from the September quarterly meeting of the legislature. One topic that will be revisited is whether or not we should join the Potawatomi Confederation. I have heard from many individuals about their thoughts on the topic — mostly in favor of joining. I have gone on record to support CPN joining, even though I believe there are many aspects of membership that are not clear. The confederation is in its infancy. Why not

be there to help shape it? I have promised to keep my district informed as to developments on this topic.

As I am becoming an elder and enjoying the privilege of growing older, I am experiencing the loss of several Citizen Potawatomi friends. I had written about the loss of my friend, Angel Arasmith of Seattle, in April. In July, another great friend and member of District 8 walked on, Anita Carly Redheart of Tillamook, Oregon. Both of these ladies were enthusiastic Potawatomi women and made great efforts to come to regional meetings whenever possible. Anita took up beading and other Native crafts later in life and created some special beaded treasures. It was my pleasure and honor to name Anita in Tillamook many years ago. The name I gave her was *WabenBonsé* (MorningHawk), and she used it with pride until her passing.



*Beadwork by Anita Carly Redheart*

Anita had been fighting cancer for years and took comfort in her faith and her CPN family. Over the years, I know she cherished visits from Andy Burns and George and Diane Gragg.

I'm calling for speakers from throughout to speak at the event. If you are a subject expert or are passionate about a Native American related topic, please consider reaching out to me. It's a great thing to learn from each other.

As always, it is my pleasure to serve as your legislator,

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

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## Paul Wesselhöft District 9

Bozho, nikan (Hello, friend),

### Starving artist

A creative writer becomes an artist when their work is elevated to the highest level. A creative writer must come to terms with one reality: We are not Shakespeare, nor do we have to be. We cannot write his work nor he ours. We have our own voice, images, metaphors, poetry and stories. And what we write and how we write is unique and a gift to many or a few who read us. We wish for our creations to be read or seen in paintings, photography or sculpture. We not only create art for ourselves, but we also create art to share. We may or may not earn financial security.

I was an actor for nine years and earned a B.A. in drama. I desired to continue in this endeavor. My father told me that if I was serious about being a professional actor, "then you better have a small stomach."

Concerning the economics of art, my good friend and fellow artist, Charles N. Clark, wrote these words, "The term 'starving artist' can mean more than economic hardship. We all strive to at least have our work appreciated."

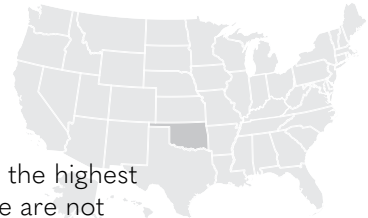
I wish to elaborate on this thought. By "appreciate" we don't mean for you to recognize us for internal selfish reasons. We may or may not be broken people, but we are not asking you to heal us. We simply need for you to externally validate us, to recognize us as we believe ourselves to be — artists.

We need you to reinforce our conception of ourselves. We need you to attest that we are not delusional. We know we are artists, but we need you to know that we are artists. And we need you to see and feel what we see and feel. Yes, we starve to know that you to intuit what true art looks and feels like, our art.

If you desire to read and see Native American art, please visit my Facebook page, "Potawatomi Artist."

Migwetch (Thank you),

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



## David Barrett District 10

Bozho (Hello),

Young people are back in school, and some are choosing to enter careers. I would like to discuss the statements "putting your heart into it" and "doing your best on everything." Can we do both? Yes! Ideally, you should put your heart into everything you do to foster personal satisfaction, professional growth, and to be more engaged and effective. Doing your best and being committed means making a firm decision to give your entire effort to a task or goal, even when motivation wanes, by understanding your "why."

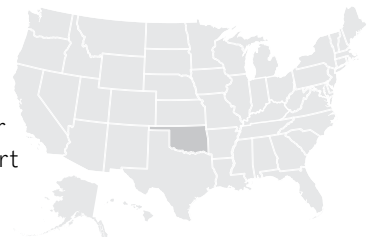
Finding your purpose with a deep, personal understanding of why you are pursuing a goal is crucial for sustained motivation. Ensure that

your commitment aligns with your core values to make them feel more meaningful and less like an obligation. Don't try to do everything in one step; break it down into smaller, manageable steps. Block out specific times in your calendar for working on your goals to build consistent habits. Developing these habits for me is very hard since I want to hurry and get things done. It takes time. Don't give up, and be patient! Sometimes, the hardest part is beginning, so focus on taking that initial step.

Let's go back to a heartfelt effort, which will allow you to approach tasks with passion, learn from mistakes, and experience



CPN Color Guard





*Jon Boursaw, Baylee Ogle, Ashlyn Ogle and Dave Barrett helped with colors at 2025 Gunlake Gathering*

contentment regardless of the outcome, leading to a more fulfilling life. A heartfelt approach fuels passion and enthusiasm, making you more motivated to engage with tasks and learn. Being aware of your actions and goals, you can intentionally choose to put your heart into them rather than just going through the motions. You need to recognize that while success isn't guaranteed, the value comes from the effort, passion and heart you put into it, not just the outcome. Now couple this with doing your best, which incorporates consistently applying maximum effort and leads to higher quality work and better results.

In the blog "InTheEyesOfLiz," the author writes: "commitment is a big word. It's not saying, 'I hope' or 'I'll try' but 'I will,' and the definitiveness of it is the reason many

don't last ... by saying, 'I'll try' ... you give yourself a card to fail ... Commitment can be scary, but if you put your everything into something, it works out more times than it fails."

In this same blog, dated Feb. 17, 2021, she said that she wasn't really getting "me" time and was too hard on herself. When things didn't go as planned, she never seemed to catch a break. Here is a direct quote: "Similarly, my relationship with God has always been there but I drifted a little over the years and I found myself turning to backup plans instead of turning to him first. It's great to have a plan but without faith, you end up stressing and spiraling, I used to say I would cast my fears to him, but in turning to backup plans I was contradicting my faith. Sometimes a little patience is all you need, instead, I would make hasty decisions that weren't always necessary, when allowing God to be my 'PA' and moving on with the next thing would have been far more efficient."

All my life I have tried to follow these rules and practices, some forming habits while others give me a challenge. In my professional career, I've used most of these guidelines.

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

# Walking On

## Janice M. Burnett Burnett Family



Janice M. Burnett, beloved mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and cherished friend, passed away peacefully on Aug. 21, 2025, at the age of 75.

She was born on April 7, 1950, in Wichita, Kansas, the daughter of Phyllis (Valentine) Burnett, with whom she held a special bond, and William Burnett. Janice was a proud member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, embracing her American Indian

heritage with passion throughout her life.

Janice's journey took her from the heartland of Kansas to the sun-kissed shores of California, where she developed a profound love for the ocean and its beauty. Nearly 20 years ago, she made her home in Vermont, where she flourished in the role she cherished most: "Gaga" to her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Her spirit was a beacon of warmth and kindness, and she shared her love freely with all who had the pleasure of knowing her.

A talented seamstress and craftswoman, she worked at Peerless Clothing in St. Albans and poured her creativity and heart into every stitch. She had an affinity for hummingbirds, symbolizing her vibrant spirit, and fittingly carried the Indian name Hummingbird. Her life was often filled with laughter, storytelling and the joy she brought to those around her.

She is survived by her two daughters, Suzie McMillan and her fiancé, Michael Messier, and Wendy Rye; grandchildren, Kyle and his fiancée, Vanessa, Jenna and her significant other, Josh, Trinity, and Madison; great-grandchildren, Easton, Raegan and Remi; siblings, Earl Valentine, Karen Slates, Judy Dyer-Metz, Mary Stinnett, Barbara Bowers, Kathy Hawk and Daniel Burnett; her sister-in-law and best friend, Patty Rose and her husband, Rich; and many nieces and nephews, especially Michelle Oliphant and Coco. Janice was predeceased by her cherished mother, Phyllis Burnett; her father, William Burnett; her brother, Gene Burnett; and a special nephew, Richie Rose.

A life celebration was held on Thursday, Sept. 4, 2025, followed by a memorial service at the Goss Life Celebration Home, 89 Grand Avenue, Swanton, Vermont.

For those who wish, contributions in Janice's memory may be made to Relay For Life, American Cancer

Society, P.O. Box 6704, Hagerstown, MD 21741 or Laurie's House through [voicesagainstvviolence.org](https://www.voicesagainstvviolence.org).

Condolences, photos and favorite memories may be shared through [gossfs.com](https://www.gossfs.com).

## Tammy Marie (Bell) Young Melott/Bergeron Family



Tammy Marie (Bell) Young of Ponca City, Oklahoma, went home on Aug. 19, 2025. Throughout life, Tammy honored strong ties to southwest Oklahoma and her Native American heritage. But her legacy is love. Forever remembered as a loving person and a good mom, Tammy's life reflected her favorite scripture passed from her grandma, Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Tammy's love of

people stems from this faith and touches her love of art, socializing and adopting people as her own. Being with people brought Tammy such joy. The great loves of her life were her husband, Steve, and her boys, Andy and Jesse. She remained close to several of Andy's high school friends, whom she called her adopted sons: Kevin Adams, Cory Anderson, Dylon Cheatwood, Dustin Strianese and Kyle Swinford. Tammy also adopted Dustin's wife, Jessica, and two daughters, Cali Jo and Madison Lane, as her own. She collected friends she deemed sisters: Diania Kendall, Stacey Warner, Sharon Jones and Tina Phillips. And her heart held many family members and other friends. Tammy was preceded in death by her son, Andy; her "adopted" son, Dylan; her dad, Verlin Bell; her step-dad, Don Jones; and other family and friends. Remaining on this world a while longer are her husband, Steve; her son, Jesse; her mom, Frankie Jones; and a host of people whose lives she touched.

Still wanting to put more love in the world, Tammy hoped you'd send a donation to the Wounded Warriors Project, Gold Star Families or your local humane society instead of sending her flowers.

Viewing for Tammy was Aug. 22, 2025, at People's Funeral Home, located at 1400 W. Main, Lone Wolf, Oklahoma.

Church services for Tammy were held Aug. 23, 2025, at the First Methodist Church in Mangum, Oklahoma, with interment following at Riverside Cemetery.

Online condolences for Tammy can be made by visiting [peoplescooperativefuneralhome.com](https://www.peoplescooperativefuneralhome.com).

## John Don Ming

Tescier Family

John Don Ming, age 51, of Midwest City, Oklahoma, walked on July 11, 2025.

He was born on Aug. 3, 1973, at Lawrence & Memorial Hospital in New London, Connecticut, to Terry Don Ming and Frances Marie (Maritt) Ming, while his family served in the U.S. Navy.

Raised in a proud Navy family, John graduated from Del City High School before enlisting in the U.S. Navy in the fall of 1991. He trained at the Naval Training Center in Great Lakes, Illinois, and went on to serve at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and Guam, Philippines. His service was marked by unwavering dedication and excellence, earning him multiple commendations before his honorable discharge in August 1995.

On Dec. 30, 1999, John re-enlisted in the Navy. His commitment and leadership earned further recognition, and in May 2000, he entered Naval SEAL training

John was deeply proud of his Citizen Potawatomi heritage, descending from the Bourbonnais, Tescier, Wilmette, Darling and Smith families. In honoring his roots, his passing is recognized in Potawatomi tradition as his moment to walk on, joining the ancestors who have gone before.

He is survived by his loving mother, Frances Ming Gordon of Midwest City; his dear Aunt Marlene of Del City; and many aunts, uncles and cousins from the Ming and Maritt families.

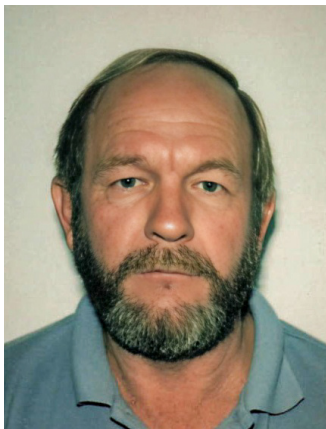
He was preceded in death by his father, Terry Don Ming (interred at Sunnyside Cemetery in Del City); and his brothers, Michael Wayne Townsend and Tony Dal Stephens.

John Don will be remembered for his service to his country, his love of the water, his devotion to family and the deep pride he carried in his Native heritage.

---

## Coleman Lamoines Snow

Bourbonnais Family



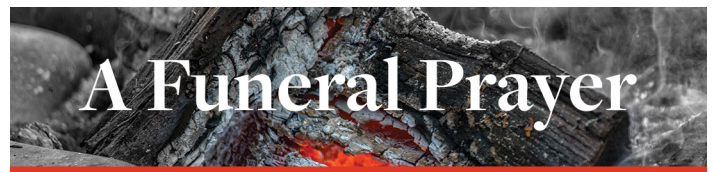
Coleman Lamoines Snow, age 81 of Stigler, passed away Monday, June 30, 2025. Born March 15, 1944, in Trousedale, Oklahoma, he was the fifth of six children born to Coleman C. Snow and Mable Beatrice (Sanders) Snow. He was raised in Lexington and attended school there. He married young to Louise Nance, and to this union, son Ryan and daughters Stacie and Terrie were born. Lamoines worked in general construction,

mainly in concrete, but also excelled as a plumbing and electrical contractor. He was literally a jack-of-all-trades, and could pretty much do anything he set his mind to. He enjoyed being outdoors, fishing and hunting and he liked the challenge in restoring old cars. A bit of a free spirit, he loved anything fast like boats, cars and motorcycles. He was fortunate to travel all 50 states and marked off a bucket list item when he was able to skydive. Lamoines was a simple man who enjoyed reading and was always learning something new. He lived life his way and enjoyed every minute of it. He will be dearly missed!

He was preceded in death by: his parents, Coleman C. Snow and Mable B. Snow; brother, Charles Snow; and sisters, Ramona Jones and Maxine Tucker.

Lamoines is survived by: daughters, Stacie Snow of Russellville, Tennessee, and Terrie Snow of Stillwater, Oklahoma; son Ryan Snow of Lexington, Oklahoma; sister, Charlotte Holiday of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; brother, Wyman Snow of Lexington, Oklahoma; three grandchildren, Cole Huff of Portland, Oregon, Jared Kerr of Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Jonas Huff of Ventura, California, and a host of other family and friends.

Immediate family will gather to remember Lamoines at a graveside memorial.



*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 ngenwen*

That is why we offer this song

*Émno shketot wa je zhyat ibe shpemsegok*

That his journey will go well where he goes above

*Iw énaj moyan*

That's all I have to say

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

By Don Perrot

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# HOWNIKAN

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or log on to [portal.potawatomi.org](http://portal.potawatomi.org).

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Vol 2/Number 9 *Hownikan* (periodicals 25778)

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