



Smoke rises from a fire at the center of a prayer circle on Citizen Potawatomi Nation grounds near Shawnee, Oklahoma.

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Walking on



# Citizen Potawatomi Nation Health Services educates public on overdose crisis

In the United States, synthetic opioids have become a token of drug overdoses. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, overdose deaths that included synthetic opioids, such as illegally manufactured fentanyl, rose more than 55 percent between Jan. 31, 2020, and Jan. 31, 2021. Many are accidental, and the problem has grown from one of addiction and recovery to one of public safety.

Citizen Potawatomi Nation Health Services hosted a community overdose awareness event in May 2022 at the CPN Cultural Heritage Center. More than 130 attendees watched a brief documentary, *Dead on Arrival* by Dominic Tierno, and listened to a panel discussion. Advocates and local resources also set up booths and answered questions.

The event sought to increase the public's understanding of the recent uptick in fentanyl overdoses, sometimes referred to as "the silent crisis." CPNHS Behavioral Health Psychologist Dr. Julio Rojas helped organize the event. In his experience, this type of substance abuse affects every socioeconomic background.



CPNHS Behavioral Health Psychologist Dr. Julio Rojas speaks to event attendees about fentanyl, a synthetic opioid responsible for an alarming increase in accidental overdose deaths.

"It's just human nature to hear about something like this and think, 'Well, we don't have this problem here. We don't deal with this here.' And that lack of information is just not the right attitude to have when there are dangerous drugs in our community. Now, we might say,

'There have always been dangerous drugs in our community.' True. But these are 'one pill can kill' kinds of substances. ... We can't be ignorant," he said.

*Continued on page 8*

## 2022 TRIBAL ELECTION RESULTS

<b>VICE-CHAIRMAN</b>	<b>SECRETARY-TREASURER</b>
LINDA CAPPS <b>NO OPPOSITION</b>	D. WAYNE TROUSDALE <b>NO OPPOSITION</b>
<b>LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT 5</b>	<b>LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT 6</b>
GENE LAMBERT <b>NO OPPOSITION</b>	RANDE PAYNE <b>NO OPPOSITION</b>
<b>LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT 8</b>	
DAVE CARNEY <b>NO OPPOSITION</b>	
<b>LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT 7</b>	
MARK JOHNSON	80
BROWNING NEDDEAU	56
<b>REAPPOINTMENT OF SUPREME COURT CHIEF JUSTICE ANGELA RILEY</b>	
FOR	1,411
OPPOSED	68
<b>REAPPOINTMENT OF SUPREME COURT ASSOCIATE JUSTICE ROBERT TIM COULTER</b>	
FOR	1,382
OPPOSED	91
<b>REAPPOINTMENT OF CHIEF DISTRICT JUDGE PHILIP J. LUJAN</b>	
FOR	1384
OPPOSED	93
<b>ANNUAL TRIBAL BUDGET</b>	
FOR	1,395
OPPOSED	63

# Child welfare advocate David Owens

David Owens' motivation comes from community. Whether as a town trustee in a rural portion of Pottawatomie County or as a volunteer firefighter, he wants to serve the people around him.

Owens brings that energy to his position as a child welfare advocate for Citizen Potawatomi Nation's FireLodge Children & Family Services, which he started in September 2021.

## A heart for helping

Previously, Owens worked as a child protective services investigator for the Pottawatomie County Oklahoma Department of Human Services. However, his family's experience with foster care and adoption reaches beyond his career.

Owens and his wife adopted their three children while living in Florida. They also previously fostered and gained experience with state foster care systems. Besides child welfare, he worked for FedEx and as a youth pastor for six years. His work demands increased at DHS, and he began searching for a way to use his skills while not sacrificing time with his family.

"I've always had a heart for helping kids and helping families, so I applied for Pottawattamie County (DHS) and was accepted," Owens said. "I went in wanting to be an adoptive or foster care worker. Then I ended up being in Child Protective Services, so it was the complete other end of what I would have thought I was going to be doing. And I really fell in love with child welfare."

He enjoys the investigative side of his duties as well as meeting a family's needs and acting as a resource.

## What makes FireLodge special

Throughout his career, Owens has noticed the differences between a large state agency and a smaller organization like FireLodge. The department's communication efficiency

and ability to quickly move between government institutions have made his time with CPN satisfying.

"Here in the Tribe, everything is a lot more streamlined," he said. "We are in the same building as our prosecutor and our judges and are able to make sure that things are handled properly. But I also like working with the Tribe where there's a much more streamlined process for resources and help for a family."

Owens also appreciates the ability to easily move through bureaucracy to serve families in a time-efficient manner. While FireLodge sometimes requests help from other community organizations, he finds satisfaction in knowing the Tribe provides funds to purchase household goods and other items for foster families and those in need.

"I can go out and help a family right now if we need to, and we have those funds available. I find that it's also a lot easier here because... we're all on the same hall here — foster care, family preservation, child welfare or permanency. We're all right here, able to communicate. And there's much more of a family and team aspect to our department here," Owens said.

As he approaches his first year with FireLodge, Owens reflects on some meaningful experiences working for Native American families. Moving from the State of Oklahoma as a case manager to a child welfare advocate for CPN has shown him both sides of the process involving Indigenous children.

"It's sort of interesting too because I wasn't working what we call permanency or foster care. I wasn't on that side, and now I'm on this side being able to follow up with (families)," Owens said.

"One family, in particular, needed a lot of assistance because it was five of their grandchildren they took in. And we were able to get them food. We were able to pay some utilities for them. ... And that was right around that time when I



Child welfare advocate David Owens

started, and so that just felt very good to be on the other side of things for that family and just being able to really get them streamlined to resources."

## Learning about Potawatomi heritage

Owens appreciates the time that FireLodge staff has taken to introduce him to Potawatomi culture. He was moved by his time visiting the CPN Cultural Heritage Center, especially the exhibits outlining the Potawatomi Trail of Tears. He had learned about the Trail of Tears in public school but not the Potawatomi's struggle and removal from the Great Lakes region.

"It just almost brought me to tears walking through that," Owens said. "And then being able to understand ICWA, the Indian Child Welfare Act, and how that protects the rights of our Tribal members. I've become a very avid ICWA advocate now, seeing how Native Americans have been mistreated and fight very avidly in court for those rights and for the rights of tribal children."

He described his first year with CPN and learning about Native culture, history and law through his job as "eye-opening."

## Taking time for family

Along with his wife, the busy father of three boys enjoys spending time outdoors on the family farm. Owens finds time to wind down after the workday by gardening, caring for the farm animals or fishing with his sons.

"We've got our own little patch of paradise out there," he said, near Lake Thunderbird, where they enjoy taking walks.

They also like to travel and take road trips to sightsee; one of their favorite places to revisit is Colorado Springs, Colorado. It helps them all decompress.

"It's always been a top priority," Owens said. "It feels nice to work in a place where my family is prioritized as well, not just myself. It's been a very good experience for everybody involved."

## Guiding philosophy of empathy

Owens' focus on family, his career in foster care and his personal experience with adoption bring out his empathetic side daily. While working for Pottawatomie County DHS, his director told the staff something he never forgot: as parents, they all had the potential to be in the same position as their clients. Owens uses the reminder to form his intentions when talking with and helping those he contacts.

"If, for some reason, I was on the other side of a worker, how would I want to be treated? How would I want to be handled?" he said. "And to work from an area of empathy for them and compassion, I think it's helped in a lot of situations. ... Just being able to help them work through all of those things is one of the main pushes for (my work) here at ICW."

Visit FireLodge Children & Family Services online at [cpn.news/firelodge](http://cpn.news/firelodge) or on Facebook @CPNFireLodge. ♡

# Know More Do More

By Kayla Woody, House of Hope DVPI Prevention Specialist

Citizen Potawatomi Nation House of Hope was able to host the Know More Do More: Identifying & Responding to Stalking event this past May for local service providers from around the state. The organization was excited to partner up with the National Stalking Prevention Awareness and Resource Center, or SPARC, to bring information to local law enforcement, family and victim advocates, mental health professionals, medical staff, and social service professionals. The training was offered free of charge and provided CLEET (Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training) hours to participants.

Jennifer Landhuis, the director for SPARC, presented at the event. She provided information on the dynamics of stalking, how these behaviors impact victims, how technology plays a part in stalking, how victims can safety plan and identify risk factors, and how professionals can work with victims to keep them safe while also holding offenders accountable.



House of Hope's Kayla Woody (second from left) hosts the Know More Do More event along with leaders from the National Stalking Prevention Awareness and Resource Center.

Stalking is a pattern of behavior directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others, or suffer substantial emotional distress, according to SPARC. These types of behaviors are categorized into four different areas:

surveillance, life invasion, interference and intimidation. Landhuis stated, "90 percent of victims will not say that they are being stalked but most likely will say something like, 'He/she is creeping me out,' or 'He/she is following me.'" This means that we not only need to educate

law enforcement and other professionals on these behaviors but also the community so that this can be prevented.

For more information on stalking please visit SPARC's website at [stalkingawareness.org](http://stalkingawareness.org).

The House of Hope provides services like safety planning, assistance with protective orders, emergency shelter, a 24/7 crisis line, address confidentiality program and even support in court proceedings to any individual who may be experiencing stalking.

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

## CPN Housing Department helps Tribal family find “forever” home

On a recent tour through their new house, Citizen Potawatomi Nation Tribal member Rogina Lopez, her husband Juan Lopez-Gonzalez and their three adopted sons, Wyatt, Rusty and Joaquin, buzzed with excitement. They showed off their bedrooms, a brand-new refrigerator and the two-car garage.

The family contacted the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Housing Department in November 2021 to inquire about its new lease with option to purchase program. It functions to help some Tribal members who meet certain U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development low-income limits transition from renting to owning.

“I said, ‘Juan! This is it. This is our way to owning our home,’” Lopez said. “And I think it was over the weekend. The next day, I ended up contacting (them) for the application and how to go about it and everything.”

The program offers tenants a three-year lease with the option to purchase the property after it ends. The Housing Department requires they take part in credit counseling services with the Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation to improve their credit score and prepare for homeownership.

The Melott family descendant and her family agreed to the requirements and sat on the waiting list through the beginning of the year. About halfway through March 2022, she contacted the department for an update from Program Manager Sherry Byers. They needed to move soon, and several different options presented themselves, including a rental.

Lopez knew this program provided a direct path to finally owning a home.

“I just had this gut feeling, ‘What if I could sign this lease and the Potawatomi call me because they said I was on a waiting list?’ And so, I picked up the phone. Something just made me pick up the phone and say, ‘Hey, Sherry, where are we at?’” Lopez said.

Byers told them about a new house that the department recently added to the program — approximately 1,300 sq. feet with three bedrooms and two bathrooms within the Bethel Acres School District in Pottawatomie County. They wanted to move back to the area, and a few other members of their extended family planned to as well.

Things then moved very quickly. They agreed to the house, signed up for credit counseling services and moved approximately two weeks later.

“It was just like a whirlwind and everything,” Lopez said. “And ... today I was sitting, getting ready. I sat on my bed, and I feel like I’ve been in a luxury motel. I don’t think this is my home. I feel like I’m in the luxury motel. That’s how I feel right now.”

She loves the pantry and the large closet space. The boys enjoy spreading out into two bedrooms instead of one, and Lopez-Gonzalez plans to add a workspace in the garage.

“It was kind of surprising because we were fixing to get into a different deal,” he said. “Then she called before we even signed the other lease. I said, ‘Oh, cool!’”



*The Lopez family looks forward to settling into their new home with the help of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Housing Department.*

The agreement outlines payments that resemble a mortgage, which is potentially more than what some renters usually pay. All the payments then go toward the cost of the house when the tenants decide to buy. If they are prepared to purchase within the timeframe, the lessees may also qualify for a \$20,000 buy-down grant toward the mortgage.

“The only issue, to some extent, is the income because (lessees) have to have enough income for these payments because they’re going to be set at something similar to what the house payment would be,” Byers said.

Lopez and her husband have looked forward to purchasing a home since they adopted her grandkids several years ago.

Now, with help from the Tribe, they see it as a certainty rather than a possibility.

“The kids keep asking us, ‘Mom, is this our forever home? We’re not going to move anymore?’ And I said, ‘This is your forever home,’” Lopez said.

Find out more about the CPN Housing Department’s lease with option to purchase program and watch a video at [cpn.news/leasevid](http://cpn.news/leasevid). To learn more about CPN housing programs, visit [cpn.news/housing](http://cpn.news/housing) or call 405-273-2833. Read about the Housing and Urban Development income limits at [cpn.news/HUDlimits](http://cpn.news/HUDlimits). ♡

## The Treasure Box

**By Lakisha Meade, CPCDC Grants and Finance Coordinator**

“Stroud Proud” is a slogan that you will become familiar with if you visit this progressive community more than once. Stroud, Oklahoma, has a population of approximately 2,700 and provides all of the downhome qualities you hope to find in a small town. The city’s main street, called Third Street, was the first marked highway across Lincoln County. This part of historic Route 66 was a dirt road until 1924. While there are many lovely shops to visit while strolling through downtown Stroud, one in particular stands out.

The Treasure Box, now located at 318 W. Main St., is where Michelle and Trent Whitson decided to move their growing business.



*Residents of Stroud, Oklahoma, enjoy finding something new and different every time they visit The Treasure Box in the city’s downtown area. (Photo provided)*

Michelle Whitson is a proud Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal member of the Wano family. She was born in Texas and grew up in Stroud, Oklahoma. She married her husband, Trent Whitson, in 2013. The two got involved with foster care and adoption and now have seven children.

“Working for myself has allowed me to be a mom first and still give back to our community,” Michelle said.

The Treasure Box offers a variety of items, including jewelry, boutique clothing, home décor, skin care products, children’s clothing, games, toys, collectibles and more. The idea came to her while going through her kids’ closets for the 10,000th time. She and her husband wanted to open a store for their small community and offer something the town did not currently have.

As if starting a business was not challenging enough, the Whitsons went through the startup right at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic. They had originally hoped to open their store in April 2020. However, the unexpected pandemic put a slight stall on their original plans. With persistence for their dream, they kept pushing forward. In June 2020, they were able to open their brick-and-mortar store but not without some concerns due to the current economy.

Originally, they started at 413 W. Main St. in Stroud. This was a small shop with limited space, but it was the beginning of their success today. They



*CPN tribal member Michelle Whitson and her husband, Trent, use the Nation’s services to help expand their business and their family. (Photo provided)*

sold children’s consignment clothing in early 2020 but longed to do more. They wanted to pave a way for their community members that were finding themselves without work due to the pandemic to earn some extra income. With many people now spending far more time at home than usual, they were picking up hobbies and finding peace in crafting. The Whitsons’ idea of wanting to allow local vendors to sell items in their store was in the making.

“We wanted to offer people without jobs a place to be creative, follow their passion and turn their dreams into something that could make a profit,” Michelle said.

They began advertising this opportunity, and it took off. The Whitsons provided

a physical space for others in their community to begin or expand their business while also building their own. Soon, a larger space became a necessity.

The Whitsons found the beautiful building located at 318 W. Main St. and moved in as soon as possible. They rented for a short time but really wanted to purchase the building. Michelle explained that her parents have owned their own business her entire life, and they recommended she check into the Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation to assist in the purchase.

The Whitsons said their upfront fees were significantly less than if they financed it through a traditional banking institution. Michelle said the process was quick and easy, and that having one point of contact to go back and forth with was nice. They now have a personal connection with the CPCDC anytime they needed something.

“I am proud to be part of the Potawatomi tribe, and I love that my business was financed and purchased through my Tribe as well,” Michelle said.

Find out more about the Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation at [cpcdc.org](http://cpcdc.org) or visit them on Facebook @cpncdfi. ♡

## Pioneer Library System aims to Spark a Change on Earth Day

In celebration of Earth Day, central Oklahoma's Pioneer Library System hosted a community event focused on pollinators at Boy Scout Park in Shawnee. It featured a presentation from an author, family-friendly activities and the chance to see a live beehive.

The library holds an annual reading program called PLS Reads. This year, they have selected several books with a theme and are hosting a Spark a Change event with each title, designed to empower community members to action and improvement. The 2022 theme is the environment, and their first book, *The Music of Bees* by Eileen Garvin, puts pollinators at the forefront of a regular woman's life.

Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal member and PLS programming specialist Britt Muirhead organized the family activities that filled the pavilion at the park. They included a meet-and-greet with the author and a presentation from Okies for Monarchs, an initiative to create and implement the Statewide Monarch Conservation Plan.

"I think it's just a great pairing between Eileen Garvin and her experience with beekeeping and Okies for Monarchs and their experience with pollinators. It's been really inspiring and educational," Muirhead said.



*Pioneer Library Staff and event coordinators make seed bombs with community members.*

"This topic is tons of fun and is very timely and something that's really important for folks to get some more education and information on."

The crowd first heard from Garvin about her fictional work *The Music of Bees*, the story of an amateur beekeeper and the friendships and earthly connections that change her life. An amateur beekeeper herself, Garvin was thrilled PLS Reads chose her first novel for their 2022 program and enjoyed speaking to the crowd.

"It's so wonderful to see funding and organization behind sharing stories

because we all know books do such good in the world but sometimes are prohibitively expensive for people. So, to be able to do something like, bring an author in and give (books) away, it really is a gift to the community," she said.

Muirhead also reached out to the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Department of Environmental Protection, who gathered donations of calendars, coloring books, leaflets on pollinators and other giveaway items from state and federal environmental regulatory agencies across Oklahoma. CPN tribal member and environmental coordinator Lexi Freeman believes places like public libraries present an important path toward ecological education.

"I think the library is a catch-all for everybody," she said. "You have young and old. So, when you can reach a broad audience, it's nice" because everyone has a stake in the environment.

The attendees learned while listening and then participated in activities, including creating seed bombs to promote the growth of pollinator-friendly plants; making bee puddles to provide a safe, shallow space for honeybees to grab a drink of water; painting rocks to beautify a butterfly garden and more. Local resident Chris Garner made seed bombs with her husband. They wanted to include a more natural habitat on their new property under construction.

"This (activity) sounded very interesting to me because I've never thought about doing something like this before. So,

we're making little cups out of clay, like a little miniature bowl. And I like to play with clay anyway. And we're just going to put some seeds in it and cover it with some soil. And then we'll put them in these little brown bags. And then when we take them home, we can put them out, and then ... we'll start growing some plants," she said.

The library system's first event of the year offered families a great way to learn and spend time together on Earth Day.

"We really want to help people connect with the world around them and understand all of the ways that we can help and impact and build better communities and a better world," said PLS Shawnee branch manager Peggy Cook.

Mary Garcia came with her family to meet author Eileen Garvin after reading her book as part of the Ravenous Readers book club in McLoud, Oklahoma. However, she also enjoyed the presentation from Stephanie Jones from Okies for Monarchs, and it got her thinking about her garden.

"It was great. It was very informative. I'm going to go plant some bee and butterfly-friendly plants now," Garcia said.

Pioneer Library System Director of Community Engagement and Learning Ashley Welke organizes the Spark a Change events with these types of interactions as part of her vision.

"That, I think, is what this event is all about for us," she said. "Obviously, with the library, we love books. We love reading. And I love this idea that a book can be inspiration to get curious and learn more about and maybe discover a new passion, or in this instance for this year, a new way they can support the environment."

Find out more about the Pioneer Library System and its programs at [pioneerlibrarysystem.org](http://pioneerlibrarysystem.org). ♡



*Event attendees take advantage of the chance to watch a beehive work.*

## Small steps can help consumers cope with inflation

**By James Boggs, president of community banking at First National Bank & Trust Co.**

The U.S. inflation rate recently hit a 40-year high, leading many Oklahomans to ask themselves what they can do to stay afloat during challenging financial times.

As a community bank, we often hear from people trying to adjust to new costs. High inflation affects everyone differently. Individual characteristics, such as income level, spending habits and financial obligations play a role in determining your ability to adapt to inflation. However, regardless of your personal circumstances, there are steps you can take to reduce or maintain your monthly expenses.

Drivers are currently experiencing sticker shock at the gas pump. While

completely cutting out gas isn't an option for most, many people can make fewer trips or carpool to work. By running multiple errands at once, you can save yourself both time and money.

If you aren't already budgeting, now is the time to start. Make it a habit to consistently review how and where you're spending your money. Set aside a specific amount for monthly housing expenses, groceries and other items. Some of these expenditures, such as a mortgage, are fixed and will remain the same month-to-month. For other areas, such as new technology or clothing, economists recommend practicing the "30-day rule." When an item catches your eye, give yourself a cooling-off period between the time you see it and the time you buy it. Ask yourself — is this something I need *now*?



*James Boggs*

Inflation is especially alarming for people on a fixed income, because rising prices

for food, gas and utilities can come at an even greater cost. Considering various options to reduce energy spending in your home, including unplugging electronics when they're not in use, sealing air leaks around windows and doors, and using fans to cool spaces.

Additionally, contact your county clerk's office to find out if you qualify for a homestead exemption. Doing so can lower the impact of property taxes, saving you a few extra dollars each month.

Changes in the national and global economy can be stressful but adjusting spending now will help prepare you for the road ahead. By implementing these tips, you can stay organized and help control everyday expenses.

Visit First National Bank & Trust Co. online at [fnbokla.bank](http://fnbokla.bank). ♡

## Bourassa family descendant serves hometown

Mark McBride dedicated most of his life to working for and getting to know his community in Moore, Oklahoma, even before he became the Oklahoma House Representative for District 53.

“For years, at 6 o’clock, I was at the local diner, Sunny Side Up, having breakfast with some of the old-timers that my parents went to school with. Just things like that. (I was) a member of the Moore Chamber of Commerce. My father was a member of the chamber. Moore’s home to us,” he said.

He and his father worked in construction, owning residential building companies. McBride also worked in oil and natural gas. He went back and forth with the idea of running for a legislative office and finally decided to try at 50 years old. McBride liked the thought of representing the same people with whom he began many of his days.

“I just had this urge to do it. It was kind of a weird thing. I had thought about it in my younger years, but I never saw a path. And I decided to run. Maybe it was a God thing. I don’t know. I decided to run and went and talked to 50 people that I knew and that I respected in the Moore area, and they all said, ‘Go for it,’” he said.

McBride was elected in 2012, celebrating a decade in the state legislature this year. He has served as Vice-Chair of the House Utility and Environmental Rights Committee, on the House Judiciary Committee, on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and as Chair of the Appropriations and Budget on Education Committee.

### Family

As a fifth-generation Oklahoman, McBride and his family have strong ties to Moore and the district he now represents. He and his father participated in the Chamber of Commerce as business owners and knew other community leaders.

“My family came to Moore probably somewhere in the 1930s, both sides of my family. ... My grandmother and grandfather on one side, they met in Oklahoma City. He was a taxi driver, and she worked at a little restaurant downtown, and they met there and married. People knew who I was — not that I was anything special,” he said.

McBride is a descendant of the Bourassa family, many of whom served in leadership roles throughout the Tribe’s history. His exposure to his Potawatomi heritage as a child was limited, but he began learning more about CPN and other tribes after he took office.

“When I first came in, I was a proud Tribal member but didn’t really get involved in anything. I read the paper and glanced through it and stuff. But as I got up here, I saw how much Indian Country plays into the affairs of Oklahoma,” he said, pointing out the tribes’ influence on health care, infrastructure and overall economic impact in rural Oklahoma.

McBride’s daughter Jimmie and her husband Greg expanded their family by becoming foster parents through CPN’s FireLodge Children and Family Services. They welcome Native babies and kids into their homes and keep them connected to their culture. McBride said the process changed his thoughts on foster care and adoption, and he felt proud of his daughter for reaching out to FireLodge.

“I was really impressed that they did that, that they took that route to keep some of our heritage within Tribal families,” he said. “I think that’s really important. ... Our whole family, we like to talk about our heritage and things and read books on it,” and they continue that with the children placed with them.

### Goals

After establishing himself, McBride looked toward larger aspirations for



District 53 Oklahoma House Representative Mark McBride (Photo provided)

his time in office. That included his appointment as chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. He became vice-chairman and helped negotiate key pieces of legislation. However, McBride’s local connections made him an ideal candidate to lead the Appropriations and Budget on Education Committee. He became chair in 2018 and still holds the position today.

“It’s been a really good fit. I’ve been able to negotiate some decent education budgets. We put more money into education in the last few years than (at any other time) in the state’s history,” McBride said.

“I want to leave education better than when I came in in 2012.”

The Oklahoma Education Association honored him with the Outstanding Legislator Award in 2020. He is currently working on legislation to attract teachers to the state and students to education as a profession and rethinking Oklahoma’s educational system. He wants to make improvements by creating a model that reflects and caters to the state’s diverse population.

“I want this to be an Oklahoma model. ... We’ve got 39 tribes. We’ve got German immigrants. We’ve got Russians. We’ve got Irish. This is a melting pot of people and different ideas and everything. Let’s find a model that fits (our population),” McBride said.

Besides education, he set his sights on establishing and renovating sites of cultural and architectural value, some with Native American ties. He watched the First Americans Museum flourish proudly with its grand opening in September 2021. Using a portion of state funds, the cultural center welcomed visitors after decades of anticipation and irregular support from the state government. McBride looked forward to its completion during his time in office.

He also hopes the state will renovate the Jim Thorpe Building near the Oklahoma Capitol. Citizen Potawatomi descendant and Sac and Fox Nation tribal member Jim Thorpe competed at the 1912 Olympic games in Stockholm, Sweden, and became the first Native American to win a gold medal. He still holds a reputation as one of the greatest athletes in history.

“(The building) carries a Native American’s name, but other than that, it’s a wonderful piece of architecture. There’s a lot of really interesting art deco inside the building. Some of it has been covered up by drop ceilings and just different things that should have never been done,” McBride said.

As he contemplates his goals and achievements for the rest of his time in the Oklahoma House of Representatives, he hopes his constituents reach out with their concerns. McBride is term-limited, and his final legislative session ends in May 2024.

Find out more about Oklahoma Representative Mark McBride at [cpn.news/mcbride](https://cpn.news/mcbride). ♡

## Language update

By Justin Neely, CPN Language Department Director

Bozho Jayek  
(Hello everyone),

By the time you are reading this, we should have completed our first Citizen Potawatomi Nation Family Reunion Festival in a couple of years. It will be great to get together with *jagenagenan* (all our relations). This year will mark the first year ever that we will have a Citizen Potawatomi drum setting up at Festival. We have been doing hand games the last few years, but this is the first time setting up during the dance portion.

We set up a drum for the Shawnee & Tecumseh Indian Ed powwow. It was a good learning experience. We were one of six drums that were set up that day. We did a few different songs and also got to see other drummers in action. There were a few big-time drum groups like Thunderhill and War Eagle. Also, Roe Kishketon who has been the main drum for our dance for many years.

We plan to continue drumming and getting better. We will plan on drumming a couple of times a week going forward

to continue to get better. Our goal is to set up next year not only at our Festival but also at the Potawatomi Gathering, where all seven groups in the U.S. and two in Canada come together once a year.

Also, by the time this article comes out, we should be wrapping up time with our four interns in the Language Department. We will be working with these folks intensively on the language as well as having them help us with various tasks such as helping work on our online dictionary and sending out our children’s books.

Speaking of our children’s books, we received a grant to make 12 children’s books. This year, we put four children’s books in every Festival bag. By the time this comes out, we will also have a website link through the Tribe’s portal to receive additional children’s books as they become available. Please be patient with us as this will be a very large process of sending out books to those interested.

If you haven’t been using our dictionary, check it out at [potawatomidictionary.com](https://potawatomidictionary.com). Also, check out our two YouTube channels: [cpn.news/langyt](https://cpn.news/langyt) and [cpn.news/childrenyt](https://cpn.news/childrenyt).

By this time, we hope to have a new online beginner course online or close to finished. We are moving away from our Moodle course, which we have had for several years, and have a new course on the Tuvuti online platform. We also still have two courses on Memrise. There will also be a new beginner class starting in the very near future, so contact the Cultural Heritage Center or Language Department for more information.

Here are a few phrases/words you can use around the house. My suggestion is to remember this is your language. Start using it; the more you use it, the more you will learn and the more in touch with our culture you will become.

*Nasena* — Be careful (nah seh nah)

*Dokem* — Be quiet (doe kum)

*Byé-wisnen* — Come eat (bee yah wees nin)

*Byé-wisnek* — Come eat everyone (bee yah wees nuck)

*Zagjewébnen* — Throw that away (zahg juh web nin)

*Zagjewébnen I wigdoyen* — Throw away that trash (zahg juh web nine e weeg doe yin)

*Zagjesen* — Go outside (telling one person) (zahg juh sin)

*Zagjesek* — You all go outside (zah juh sec)

*O mban* — Go to bed (om bawn)

*O mbak* — Go to bed you all (om bauk)

*Gdebanen* — I love you (like a child) (guh duh bawn in)

*Gdo-zhita ne?* — Are you ready? (guh doe zhee tah nay)

*Ni je ga zhwébek?* — What happened? (nee juh gah zhuh way buck)

*Kyéne!* — Hurry! (kay nup)

*Mishen I* — Give me that (meesh-in-ee)

*Bama mine* — Later again (bah mah mee nuh)

*Iw*  
(End) ♡

# CPN lends a hand to communities struck by tornados

On Wednesday, May 4, 2022, severe thunderstorms moved through southeastern Oklahoma for the second time in just over two days, causing flooding and minor damages to Citizen Potawatomi Nation properties and severe damages to the nearby communities of Seminole, Earlsboro and Strother, Oklahoma.

CPN's Emergency Management, FireLake Discount Foods, Health Services, Workforce Development and Social Services, and Grand Casino Hotel & Resort all mobilized to partner with nonprofit aid groups and the affected communities to respond to the disaster.

"We watched the storms go through on radar on TV and immediately offered assistance to communities that were affected," said Director of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Emergency Management Department Tim Zientek.

CPN's Electrical Department worked through torrential rain to install a replacement generator after lightning struck the unit servicing the FireLake Entertainment Center, FireLake Discount Foods, Citizen Potawatomi Nation Cultural Heritage Center, administration building and North Reunion Hall. The Emergency Management team worked with Pottawatomie County to set up barriers around flooded roads, including near the Tribe's Iron Horse Industrial Park and at Benson Park and Malone, southeast of Tribal headquarters.

As the night turned to early morning, CPN EM received requests for light towers and bottled water from the city of Seminole, which was struck directly by a multi-vortex tornado days after suffering significant damages in an earlier round of storms. Zientek and his crew purchased the water from FireLake Discount Foods and delivered it to affected communities and provided the requested light towers.

Thanks to donations from CPN Health Services, the Tribe delivered an estimated \$10-12,000 worth of masks, gloves and other personal protective equipment to survivors and clean-up teams in Seminole, Earlsboro and Strother as response efforts got underway. CPN also provided four portable generators to Tribal members and employees who lost power and helped to spread the word through the Tribe's emergency communication networks about tetanus vaccinations being administered by District 6 of the Oklahoma State Health Department.



Water from a recent severe storm floods portions of Tribal land near CPN headquarters.

CPN's Grand Casino Hotel & Resort contributed hot meals to survivors and response teams through a partnership with the Salvation Army.

Executive Chef Austin Kitsmiller told the *Hownikan* that the team cooked for 400 people on Friday, May 6, and for 200 people the following Tuesday. The meals included Salisbury steak, sweet potatoes, green beans, dinner rolls and gravy.

"We have the means to pull off (such a big operation), so we switched gears and fired up production staff and knocked it out. It was a full team effort," Kitsmiller said.

He values the involvement in the local community the Nation consistently displays. He also had a personal connection to this particular effort.

"I'm from Wewoka, born and raised," he said. "And about 90 percent of the people who had a hand in (making the meals) were from around that area. So, if you don't know someone directly, you definitely know someone who knows someone. It really hits home."

FireLake Discount Foods contributed chicken strips, mashed potatoes, green beans, and macaroni and cheese, which the Salvation Army distributed to 400 people on Saturday, May 7 and Sunday, May 8. The store also donated an additional 100 hot dogs and buns, which Bar-S employees grilled in Seminole for survivors

and response crews, FDF Director Richard Driskell told the *Hownikan*.

In addition to the direct aid CPN EM was able to supply, Zientek coordinated between municipal and nonprofit response teams in affected areas along with other CPN departments and services. He also served as a liaison with other tribal nations poised to provide supplies and aid.

Requests for bottled water from the city of Cromwell, for example, were filled by the Muskogee Nation, within whose jurisdiction Cromwell lies.

"It was quite a joint effort," Zientek said.

He also connected points of contact for the American Red Cross with CPN's Workforce Development and Social Services Department, which was receiving calls from Tribal members who experienced storm damage.

The Nation has a long-standing commitment to serving the surrounding communities, a testament to Zientek's expertise and care, the spirit of community shared by Tribal departments, enterprises and employees, and the values of Tribal leadership.

At the end of the day, Grand Casino Hotel & Resort General Manager Joe Garcia wants communities in the surrounding area to know that the Nation helps everyone.

"We're not just a casino. It's just what people do. ... And not just the casino, but the Tribe, are here to help," he said. "And that starts with our leadership — (Vice-Chairman) Capps and Chairman Barrett. They love helping out the community."

Zientek noted that CPN's resources, response infrastructure and community relationships have taken years develop.

In 2005, Zientek wrote the Nation's first pre-disaster mitigation plan, making CPN just the sixth tribe in the United States to have one outlined. He has since worked meticulously to secure the resources the Tribe would need in the event of a disaster — either directly affecting CPN or in the surrounding community.

"Because it's not 'if,' it's 'when,'" Zientek said.

He was also instrumental in founding the Inter-Tribal Emergency Management Coalition, a network connecting the tribes in Oklahoma to share resources, aid and knowledge in the case that disaster strikes any one of the tribes or their surrounding communities.

"We share resources. Not just material things, but we share information. We train together, we work together, we meet monthly to discuss what's going on in different parts of the state," Zientek said.

Beyond creating resource and response infrastructures — though he has led the way, both for CPN and for tribes across the country for many years — Zientek has dedicated his time and effort to developing relationships with local municipalities and organizations.

"It's taken years to develop that because there used to be a very heavy stigma about tribal governments and working with tribal governments," he said. "But it's building those partnerships and relationships and working together to respond to a situation like a tornado, where it's all the communities and all the tribes. Everybody comes together for the same goal. And that has been one of my happiest success stories is to have been able to bring all these people together."

Learn more about the Inter-Tribal Emergency Management Coalition at [itemc.org](http://itemc.org).

## THE CPN INTERNSHIP PROGRAM IS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR FALL 2022

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To learn more or apply for the fall 2022 session, visit [portal.potawatomi.org](http://portal.potawatomi.org).

## Big Heart Woman

By Jeannie Wamego Van Veen as told to Janet Rivera Mednik, *NEA Today for NEA-Retired Members*

*(This article and photographs originally ran in the National Education Association's NEA Today for NEA-Retired Members magazine in February 2022 and is reprinted here with permission and light editing.)*

I guess you could say I'm a lot like the land and people of Oklahoma, tough and persistent.

I credit both my Catholic faith and my Potawatomi heritage for fostering my grit as well as my compassion and optimism. My 12 siblings and I grew up in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in a home that was always open to others, even though space was tight. If someone needed a place to stay, we would find a bed and a seat at the kitchen table.

I, too, was blessed to meet people outside of my family who encouraged me along the way. Notably, a counselor



*Jeannie Wamego Van Veen (fifth from left) attends annual events to keep it touch with family and fellow Potawatomi.*

from a non-profit called Oklahomans for Indian Opportunity opened my eyes to becoming a teacher.

No one in my family had gone to college. My Potawatomi ancestors didn't even have basic human rights. In fact, they walked the aptly named Trail of Death, in 1838, when the governor of Indiana authorized the forced removal of the tribe from Indiana to Kansas. I carry this heritage with me always. As my grandfather always said, "Don't forget you come from the 'Big Woods,'" which is what he called his Native homeland.

I had the opportunity to enroll at Haskell Indian Junior College, where I loved meeting students from tribes all over the U.S., from Alaska to New York. Cherokee, Sioux, Navajo, Apache, Crow, Cheyenne — you name it, chances are, they were part of the student body. We weren't monolithic by any means, but we shared a love of the land and a desire to help future generations. On that campus, my spiritual faith, pride in my Native American heritage, and a desire to serve others all came together.

After a short marriage and the birth of a wonderful daughter, I completed my dream of becoming an

educator. With a bachelor's degree and a master's in special education from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, I felt prepared for the classroom. NSU professors had encouraged us to be involved in our professional associations, so I joined the Oklahoma Education Association as soon as I started my first job and eventually became a building representative.

When I had been a certified teacher for about 10 years, NEA invited me to a national conference with the goal of mobilizing People of Color to take on leadership roles. I took the honor seriously, pledging to learn our district contract backward and forward to ensure that I, along with my fellow educators, would be treated fairly. Given my ancestral heritage, I was fed up with injustice and proud to be in a position to stop it.

But as my college professors always said, "You can't fight systematic unfairness alone." This lesson stayed with me even when I retired in 2007. Turns out, I filed my paperwork two days too late to get a two percent cost-of-living adjustment. I also found out that all other retired pensioners in my state got a four percent COLA. Well, that set a fire under me. I got involved in my county unit, the Cherokee County Retired Educators Association, and then became a board member of the Oklahoma Retired Educators Association.

In 2020, after 12 long years of aggressive lobbying and mobilization, OREA scored another four percent COLA increase. That's more money for our retirees to spend on medicine, food, or whatever makes their lives easier.

My contribution to OREA and the charitable work I do with my husband, Dr. Hank Van Veen, makes me hopeful that I am living up to the Potawatomi name my father gave me: *Kche De' Kwe*, Big Heart Woman. ♡



*Van Veen (right) continues to better the professional lives of Oklahoma's educators after retiring in 2007.*



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**Overdose continued...**

Rojas also notes these types of epidemics reach all communities; however, fentanyl overdoses disproportionately affect Native populations. According to the CDC, deaths involving opioids among Native Americans increased from 2.2 to 13.7 per 100,000 people between 2000 to 2016.

Rojas believes that “knowledge is power, and it allows us to feel like we can do something,” which gives value to events like the one hosted by his department to help reduce involuntary overdoses.

**Definitions**

Pharmaceutical opioids for pain relief such as OxyContin and Vicodin include opium, the active ingredient traditionally derived from poppy plants. OxyContin’s popularity as a street drug exploded in the early 2000s. Purdue Pharma used unethical marketing practices to increase prescriptions and avoided a Food and Drug Administration black box label upon launch in 1995. Given its synthetic nature, fentanyl is cheaper and easier to manufacture, allowing illegal producers to significantly cut their costs and increase their profit margins.

According to the United States Drug Enforcement Administration, the synthetic opioid fentanyl is “50 to 100 times stronger than morphine” and was “developed for pain management treatment of cancer patients,” often as part of palliative or end-of-life care. The DEA also notes “2 milligrams of fentanyl can be lethal depending on a person’s body size, tolerance and past usage.” Their analysis of counterfeit pills found that more than 40 percent of them contained at least 2 milligrams.

Mark Woodward from the Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics told event attendees that now, almost every street pill or any other type of drug the department encounters — including cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine — includes fentanyl. They look like any other pharmaceutical or illegal substance, or even over-the-counter drugs like Tylenol.

“The stamps are going to look just like U.S. oxycodone. They’re going to look just like U.S. Xanax, and you’re not going to be able to tell the difference,” Woodward said.

Oklahoma County District Court Judge Kenneth Stoner runs the Oklahoma County Treatment Courts. He described fentanyl’s pervasiveness as “Russian roulette” to the event crowd and said he keeps Narcan, an overdose-reversal nasal spray containing naloxone, on his bench in the courtroom. He has seen program participants come back to court after relapsing who test positive for fentanyl without knowing they ingested it.

“You cannot trust street drugs anymore,” Stoner said.

**Mistakes**

According to OBN’s Mark Woodward, Oklahoma saw a 151 percent increase

in fentanyl-related overdoses between 2019 and 2020. He said that currently, Oklahoma City hospitals receive between seven and 10 overdoses each day.

“The drug trafficking organizations out of Mexico are getting the fentanyl from China, but we’re talking about right here on the streets of Oklahoma City and Shawnee and Tecumseh,” Woodward said. “And where we are finding the majority of the sources of the drugs that lead to an overdose, it is somebody that they know. And it is somebody they trusted,” like a boyfriend, girlfriend or close friend unaware of the addition of fentanyl.

Kyearra Morris is the business development director for Stonegate Center in Azle, Texas. She helped coordinate the event and at that time had attended 18 funerals since the first week of January 2022 for individuals who died from fentanyl overdoses. She emphasized youths’ inclination to experiment with drugs and the ease of access.

“We don’t need to go and find a hookup someplace,” Morris said. “All we need is Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook. Our phone is in our hand. We can have it delivered to our front door. They can drop it off in our mailbox. We can go to school and meet a friend. It can be something like, ‘I think I’m taking an Adderall or a Xanax,’ and it is fentanyl.”

The staggering rise in overdoses, accompanied by the fact many users were unaware of fentanyl in those substances, has caused many advocates to refer to them as “fentanyl poisonings” instead.

The documentary *Dead on Arrival*, screened before the panel discussion, told the story of several youths under 20 years old who died of accidental fentanyl overdoses. Lisa Carpenter Grant spoke on the panel about losing her son, Rylee, at 29 years old. He died of a fentanyl overdose in April 2022, despite being an experienced drug user purposefully trying to avoid synthetic opioids.

“I think he thought he was smoking meth, and it was laced with fentanyl because toxicology found meth and fentanyl. I don’t believe he would have ever used alone. He was too smart for that. So, it was an accident. He had no intention of dying that day,” she said.

**Resources**

CPNHS and event organizers welcomed approximately 10 groups and resource centers to discuss fentanyl overdoses as well as addiction treatment, therapy, preventative action during fentanyl overdoses and more.

Founded in 2020, the Oklahoma Harm Reduction Alliance offered free supplies and Narcan kits to everyone at the event. The organization’s motto is “Narcan your friends.” Their table included naloxone, fentanyl test strips and much more. They also accept online orders and then mail supplies

around the state. OKHRA Director of Operations Hailey Ferguson emphasized they serve anyone and everyone.

“We are really just about meeting people where they are, not where we expect them to be, without judgment or shame. We are very big on linking people to trusted community providers to make sure our participants are sure (of their choice) wherever they go,” she said.

Ann Benson from Parents Helping Parents spoke to the crowd about the power of connecting with others in the same situation, including those, such as herself, whose children deal with addiction.

“We realize when we’re connected, we can have the power to understand our own wellness is important as well. This isn’t just impacting others: our own health and our mental health, our physical health, our spiritual health. Everything becomes impacted,” Benson said.

Parents Helping Parents brings in panelists much like the CPNHS event, and she emphasized that while no “magic formula” for healing exists, meeting collectively “can be a game-changer.”

CPNHS’ Dr. Rojas believes one of the most critical resources is therapy — especially for young people — and combating overdoses and deaths requires exploration into the appeal of experimentation with mind-altering substances.

“We’ve got to communicate that it’s okay to talk to somebody about what’s going on. And you can talk to somebody before it gets bad. You don’t have to wait until it gets bad to talk to somebody. From my perspective, I think it’s just going to be important to think about what drives this destructive behavior,” Rojas said.

Attendee Robin Brothers took Dr. Rojas’ comments to heart after listening to the panel discuss resources. As a nursing professor at Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee and support group leader, she hopes to use her influence and voice “to raise awareness. To notice people that might be struggling mentally and reach out to them and let them know it’s okay to reach out.”

**Outlooks**

Stonegate Center’s Kyearra Morris also spoke about the life-saving properties of Narcan. She and several other panel members and resource providers agreed with her about the need to make it universally accessible.

“At the end of the day, we all need this in our car, in our house, in our backpacks, wherever we can,” Morris said. “Because you never know when you’re going to be presented with a crisis situation where you’re going to have to use it. And right now, it’s every single day. It’s every single neighborhood. It’s every single person.”

Pottawatomie County Sheriff’s Office Deputy Nick Doe carries Narcan in his patrol unit. He shared his story

with attendees about saving a young woman’s life the month before. During an overnight patrol shift, he was closer to her location than a dispatched ambulance and arrived first.

“I realized she was overdosing and administered Narcan,” Doe said. “And before EMS had arrived, she had started breathing regularly, her pulse came back; and by the time EMS arrived, she had started waking up. And they transported her to the hospital. We later found out that that Percocet she had bought off the street was cut with fentanyl.”

Drew LaBoon, Director of Admission and Marketing for Country Road Recovery, is a recovering addict and now helps others work toward sobriety. He believes Narcan provides an effective conversation starter for parents trying to talk to their children about fentanyl. It allows them to discuss its effects from the perspective of overcoming an overdose — zero judgment while providing a solution.

“We’re not going to fight this thing, we’re not going to beat this thing, and combat this thing in the judicial system. That’s a fact. We fight this thing and combat this thing in our homes and our communities every single day. ... I think one of the most valuable things we can do in our homes is (tell your kids) about Narcan,” LaBoon said.

Linda Koop attended the event with her girlfriend and had no prior knowledge of fentanyl, its dangers, or its effect on communities across the United States. After listening to the panel and watching the movie, she said she was “blown away” and “overwhelmed.”

“I came because I wanted to be educated on this because I have no clue. If you don’t have any family members involved, it’s something we need to be aware of. Now, I’m anxious to share what I’ve learned,” she said.

Morris hopes to continue leading more events like the one hosted by CPNHS in an effort to reduce overdoses through knowledge.

“We’re doing these to educate the community,” she said. “We’re doing these to provide resources before it gets to that point — before we’re attending funerals. ... We’ve made a career in our profession and our passion and our calling and our purpose to do just this, and that’s to help save lives as much as we can.”

Order Narcan kits from the Oklahoma Harm Reduction Alliance at [okhra.org](http://okhra.org), and watch *Dead on Arrival* at [cpn.news/DOA](http://cpn.news/DOA).

View the full panel discussion from the opioid overdose awareness event at [cpn.news/fentanylpanel](http://cpn.news/fentanylpanel). Find out more about Citizen Potawatomie Nation Health Services at [cpn.news/health](http://cpn.news/health). Visit CPN Behavioral Health at [cpn.news/bh](http://cpn.news/bh). ♡



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## Harvard University Native American Program announces new executive director

From *The Harvard Gazette*

Harvard University Native American Program (HUNAP) Faculty Director Joseph P. Gone has announced Kelli Mosteller (Citizen Potawatomi) as the new executive director of HUNAP.

Mosteller is an esteemed leader in the preservation of Citizen Potawatomi Nation history and a strong voice in the advancement of Native American and Indigenous communities. For over a decade, the Weld family descendant has been the executive director of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Cultural Heritage Center in Shawnee, Oklahoma, and a tribal historic preservation officer for the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, a role in which she consults and preserves tribal sites of historic significance throughout the United States. Additionally, she is a gaming commissioner for the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and serves on the Pottawatomie County Historical Society Board, Indiana University First Nations Leadership Ambassadors Council, Leadership Oklahoma Board of Directors, and Indiana University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology Advisory Board.

Mosteller will report to and partner with Gone, the program's faculty director and professor of anthropology and of global health and social medicine, to lead HUNAP. She will join the Harvard University community when she begins her appointment on July 11.

"Following a nation-wide search, HUNAP is delighted to have recruited Dr. Kelli Mosteller (Citizen Potawatomi) to Harvard to serve as our new executive director," said Gone. "Kelli's prior leadership experience across various tribal initiatives has been effective and impressive, and I am thrilled that she will join our team to guide

HUNAP toward a more vibrant, visible, and impactful future."

"With her devotion to the preservation of Indigenous culture through education, advocacy, and community-building, Kelli is the right person to advance HUNAP's mission," said Harvard University Provost Alan M. Garber, who oversees HUNAP. "HUNAP nurtures the Native American and Indigenous community here at Harvard while promoting Native American and Indigenous-led scholarship. I am delighted that Kelli will bring her passion, accomplishments, and extensive expertise to HUNAP."

"I am excited and honored to join Harvard University as the new executive director of HUNAP," Mosteller said. "I believe that Harvard University is uniquely positioned to bring together thought leaders and academic resources to make a significant impact in Indian Country. This opportunity to support students and scholars within the Harvard community and beyond who are dedicated to enacting Indigenous-led research and initiatives in Native communities is an incredible honor."

Philip J. Deloria, Leverett Saltonstall Professor of History, remarked, "Kelli Mosteller brings an extraordinary range and depth of experience to HUNAP. She's a scholar, administrator, and public-facing intellectual with deep ties to tribal communities. I've had the pleasure of working with her in the past and have really appreciated her thoughtful approach to challenges, as well as her creativity, enthusiasm, and positivity."

"Kelli brings to Harvard a remarkable combination of scholarly acumen, leadership experience and familiarity with Indigenous governance," said Daniel Carpenter, Allie S. Freed Professor of Government. "We are



*Kelli Mosteller, Ph.D*

lucky, and I'll be honored to work with her in the years ahead."

Mosteller is also a dedicated mentor in the Potawatomi Leadership Program, teaching Tribal youth in college about the history and culture of the Tribe, as well as its government and economic development.

"As a scholar in American history and manager of tribal institutions, Kelli Mosteller will bring a special and wide-ranging expertise to HUNAP," said Tiya Miles, Michael Garvey Professor of History and Radcliffe Alumnae Professor at the Harvard Radcliffe Institute. "Her extensive experience in working with the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, Native leaders across the country, policy makers in the state of Oklahoma, and students at the University of Texas ensures that she has the sensitivity and diplomatic skills necessary to support

HUNAP's exciting upward trajectory of growth and community engagement."

In addition to her career, Mosteller is an accomplished scholar in Indigenous studies, having earned a bachelor's degree in history from Oklahoma State University and a master's in American history from the University of Texas. While working full time as executive director of Citizen Potawatomi Nation Cultural Heritage Center, she earned her doctorate in American history from the University of Texas, with much of her research focused on Indigenous studies and Potawatomi history.

Mosteller has been a recipient of numerous awards and honors, including The Journal Record's 50 Oklahoma Women Making a Difference in 2017 and Achievers Under 40 in 2015. To fund her research, she was awarded the American Philosophical Society Philips Fund Grant for Native American Research, the Newberry Library Francis C. Allen Fellowship for Individual Research, and the Smithsonian Visiting Student Fellowship.

Her strong leadership and creative vision also led the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Cultural Heritage Center to gain national recognition and receive multiples honors, including the Top Ten Model Museum/Cultural Center from the 2020 Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries and Museums, and the Museum Institutional Excellence Award from the 2018 Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries and Museums.

Mosteller's appointment concludes a national search led by Gone and Lori E. Gross, associate provost for arts and culture at Harvard University.

Learn more about the Harvard University Native American Program at [hunap.harvard.edu](http://hunap.harvard.edu).

## Veterans report



*Bozho*  
(Hello),

The last few months have been a very patriotic time for many Americans. A lot of attention has been paid to active and retired military and veterans of the many wars and conflicts our troops have been involved with. Many have had injuries, both bodily and mentally.

What is it that compels a person to enlist in the military? There are many reasons. Some find it a way of getting away from home and being on their own. Others may look at it as a family tradition, and still others feel they are doing something for their God, country and loved ones back home. When they face the enemy for the first time, why are they there?

One soldier, a barber from a small town, Pvt. Martin Treptow, enlisted in the Army in 1917 and served with



*I JOINED THE MARINES BECAUSE THIS RECRUITER ASKED ME! NOBODY EVER ASKED ME TO JOIN ANYTHING BEFORE!*

the famed Rainbow Division, named for their ethnic diversity, to fight in France. He was killed on the western front trying to carry a message between battalions under heavy artillery fire. On his body, they found a diary. On one page they found an entry he had made under the heading, "My Pledge."

"America must win this war," he wrote "Therefore, I will work, I will sacrifice, I will endure, I will fight cheerfully and do my utmost, as if the issue of the whole struggle depended on me alone."

I believe what he wrote speaks for every man and woman who has ever worn a uniform. *Migwetch* (Thank you)!

The July CPN Veterans Organization's meeting will be held on the 26th of July in the North Reunion Hall at 6 p.m. (or as soon as you can get there). All CPN Veterans and their families are welcome. You do not have to be a member to attend. Just drop by and visit.

*Migwetch*  
(Thank you),

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

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# Inaugural *Mdamen* program connects Tribal members, plants seed

In the fall of 2021, the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Department of Education announced the launch of a new leadership program open to any Tribal member over the age of 18 residing anywhere in the United States. Through virtual sessions held once a week, the 29 members of the inaugural class learned about the government, culture and economic development of the Tribe and participated in talking circles with other CPN members to foster community and belonging.

## *Mdamen*

For Stephanie Hawk, the former CPN Department of Education Internship and Program Coordinator who facilitated this year's *Mdamen* session, connecting Tribal members across a wide range of ages was particularly impactful.

"It's really special when you get the opportunity to teach an elder; it's a give and take," Hawk said. "Something that stood out to me was that we had all different age groups because even the older ones learn from the younger ones."

It was also important that the program reach Tribal members in every part of the U.S.

"We, like so many other tribes, have the modern problem of a disconnected diaspora. And we're still figuring out the best ways to make connections," said CPN Department of Education Director Tesia Zientek.

Conceived as a virtual program even before the coronavirus pandemic made Zoom a household name, the increase in fluency and familiarity around virtual meetings over the last two years contributed to *Mdamen's* success.

"We wanted everyone to have an opportunity to learn about the different programs the Tribe has to offer, to learn about your own history, to learn about your culture and where you come from, as well as what's going on in the present day," said Hawk.

The program met for two and a half hours each week for seven weeks, with one hour allocated to presentations from different Tribal departments, enterprises and cultural centers. Each of the seven weeks was organized around a theme, and the Department of Education tried to include everything most integral to a person's understanding of the Nation.

Some themes included social services, featuring a panel with staff from Workforce Development and Social Services, FireLodge Children and Family Services, and House of Hope; and economic development with presentations from FireLake Foods, Grand Casino Hotel & Resort and Iron Horse Industrial Park. The Citizen Potawatomi Nation Cultural Heritage Center and Aviary also addressed the attendees.

Following a Q&A period, each meeting ended with an hour dedicated to talking circles. Participants joined smaller break out rooms and discussed what



*Sema grows in 2022 Mdamen participant Amanda Funk's office in Reading, PA, with seeds gifted by fellow participant Dwight Scott, who lives near Tribal headquarters. (Photo provided)*

they learned, their experiences being Potawatomi and questions of identity.

## Miraculous seed

The program name — *Mdamen* — comes from the word used in *Bodéwadmimwen* to refer to corn. *Mdamen* literally translates to "that miraculous seed."

Zientek explained that the name was chosen to reflect the purpose and values of the program — growing knowledge of and participation in the Tribe as well as strengthening the foundation of somebody's identity as *Nishnabé*.

Rhodd family descendant Tina Laney lives in nearby Shawnee, Oklahoma, and attends Family Reunion Festival every year. Nevertheless, she wanted to understand her history and identity better through participating in the *Mdamen* program.

"I wasn't raised (in connection with my culture), and my mom, as a matter of fact, was ashamed," Laney told the *Hownikan*. "And I hoped to gain knowledge of myself and the things that she went through."

Amanda Funk lives in southeastern Pennsylvania. As a descendant of the Tescier, Smith, Darling, Bourbonnais and Wilmette families, she also craved a connection to her Tribe and identity.

"My younger sister actually did go through the Potawatomi Leadership Program (for college students), and I know she has her name, and she has her regalia, and I don't have any of those things," Funk said. "I was really longing for an opportunity to get that sort of cultural education. ... (*Mdamen*) just seemed like something I needed to jump on because I didn't know when I would get another chance like this."

Wilmette family descendant Cole Rattan agreed.

"The most important thing was me walking away with more confidence in saying that I am *Nishnabé*. And I was not the only one that gained that," he said.

## Medicine grows in community

Another layer of significance in the program's name comes from fact that corn is one of the Three Sisters — corn, squash and beans — traditionally planted together for the benefits they mutually provide one another.

"Because corn is one of our three or four sisters, depending on how you look at it, it is one of our medicines that grows in community. ... *Mdamen* was not just about teaching individuals but also encouraging those individuals to grow in community, just like the three or four sisters do," Zientek said.

While each of the 2022 *Mdamen* participants who spoke with the *Hownikan* told of important knowledge that they gleaned from the departmental presentations each week, they all cited the weekly talking circles — and the community formed through them — as the most impactful part of the program.

Laney was struck by the openness of the others in the group.

"Vulnerability and your ability to be open minded — that was critical," she said.

Funk was thrilled to learn about Tribal members thriving and living out their passions all across the country.

"We were able to build such good relationships with other participants through this virtual environment," Funk said. "We have to adapt and move forward and thrive in the future. So I'm glad to see this unfolding, and I'm excited to see where it goes in the future."

## Seed corn

The name *Mdamen* also relates to the idea of seed corn, or careful investment in the future of the Nation. Tribal Chairman John "Rocky" Barrett holds the idea of seed corn close as a guiding principle for the Tribe and its operations.

In times of plenty, "you've got to save and plant some seed corn," Zientek said. "You can't eat your seed corn."

The CPN Education team view this new leadership program as a step in preparing for the next seven generations.

"I do feel like no matter where you are, local or out of the area, that any time you have an opportunity to learn and then give back is really important," Hawk said. "So, I wanted to make sure that if I did teach them something that they know they are to go forth and share it, whether it's with their family or whether it's with their friends or another Tribal member."

"I think there will be movement in the future in our Tribe. I strongly believe that things are going to happen for our Tribe. I don't think that we are over yet, that this is the end of us," Laney said.

"I want to be a part of it," she continued. "On the outside, you're not really a part of it. You just are. And so, I don't want to just *be* anymore; I want to be a part of it."

Laney is currently pursuing a degree in social work and hopes to someday put her skills and passion to use for the good of the Tribe.

Twenty-eight-year-old Rattan studies cultural resource management, and also hopes to bring his expertise back to the Tribe in the future.

"I think everybody wants to participate and cares about their Tribe in some way," he said. "They just might not know how (to get involved). And *Mdamen* covers that, and you actually get to do that in the program. It covered everything that the Tribe has to offer, every program, who the points of contact were and how to get involved," he said.

Funk was inspired by the other Tribal members she connected with through the program and is hopeful for the future of the Tribe.

"We do have pieces of this knowledge, and we do have people who care so much about the future of this Tribe and about the health and well-being of our people, and that is comforting," she said. "Comforting to know these people and to have formed relationships with these people and to hear all of their visions, their dreams for their communities, and what they're trying to do. And it gives us a sense of what's possible because we see other people doing it. Our family is doing it. Our people are out here doing it. And we can be a part of it, too. It's not too late for that. This is just a beginning point of building back all of this traditional knowledge."

Whether through Facebook groups for *Mdamen* alumni, ongoing Zoom gatherings, a meet-up at Family Reunion Festival or attending cultural classes together, Hawk hopes that the alumni of the program will be able to share with each other "what they're still doing in their communities to teach others about what they learned" for generations to come.

Applications for the 2023 *Mdamen* program will open in the fall, with the next session set to begin in January 2023. ♠



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## Peltier descendant shines in 2022 Oklahoma Sports Hall of Fame

As a high school senior, Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal member Shelby O'Steen received the Jim Thorpe High School Volleyball Player of the Year award from the Oklahoma Sports Hall of Fame in June 2022. The Bright Path Program recognizes the top high school athletes from across the state for their athletic and academic prowess.

"There are some great volleyball players all across the state," at every level, O'Steen said. "Knowing that I was the one picked out of all of those, I think that was special because there's great talent all over the state in volleyball."

The Peltier family descendant began playing volleyball as a fifth-grader. As she got older, it became her favorite sport, trumping softball, dance and tennis. O'Steen decided to attend Mount St. Mary High School in Oklahoma City beginning her freshman year, persuaded by its volleyball program's reputation.

"I went to a summer camp (at Mount St. Mary) going into my eighth-grade year, and I loved it. I absolutely loved the girls. And so, it was the only right decision when we decided where I was going to go to high school," she said.

O'Steen's time there proved why she deserved to be named the state's 2022 Volleyball Player of the Year. At Mount St. Mary, she was named the Offensive Player of the Year her junior year; held the most assists her sophomore, junior and senior year; and made the Oklahoma All-State volleyball team her senior year. As the captain of the varsity squad her junior and senior year, she led the team to the 5A State Championship

and All-Conference tournament and made the All-Tournament team herself.

"I just love being in a team aspect. I love being around people, and I love the competitiveness of it. I hate to lose. ... And just being able to do it with my friends, I think is the most important," O'Steen said.

She called her senior year season "probably the most memorable one" as O'Steen and her classmates became the winningest volleyball team in their school's history.

"We broke our own record that we set last year," she said. "We won many, many tournaments — even the state championship. We won state, which was really awesome because my freshman year and my junior year, we got second. This was the last hurrah for me and my fellow seniors, and it was just really special to win with them."

After witnessing the team's success and O'Steen's leadership, Mount St. Mary head volleyball coach James Ward encouraged her to apply for the Oklahoma Hall of Fame award. O'Steen admits that after they sent in her information and resume, it almost slipped her mind until her mom called to tell her the good news a few weeks later.

"It was kind of something we didn't really think would happen," O'Steen said. "And then finding out how big of a deal it was, I think, made me even more grateful for it. I'm very grateful for everything — every award I get and every accomplishment that I achieve. And then seeing how big of a deal it is and seeing some of the names that



*Peltier family descendant Shelby O'Steen graduates from Mount St. Mary High School in Oklahoma City with academic and athletic honors. (Photo provided)*

I'm standing next to in these other sports. It just makes me so grateful."

It felt like a high honor, not only for herself but also for her family. The award's namesake, Jim Thorpe, was both a Potawatomi descendant and an enrolled member of the Sac and Fox Nation and is considered one of the greatest athletes of all time. O'Steen's mom, Ashley, and grandfather, Bob Davis, always took pride in their Citizen Potawatomi ancestry.

"I think (this award) just ties back to my grandfather. He was very involved

(with CPN) and my mom was too. And they've always told me how important it is, how special it is that I am Potawatomi, and I think it's just a great way to tie it all back together. And for me to see it firsthand how things like volleyball can bring me back to my family," O'Steen said.

She ended her senior year also winning an Oklahoma City Metro High School Sports Award in partnership with the USA Today High School Sports Awards — one of the most extensive sports recognition programs for high schoolers in the country.

In addition to volleyball, O'Steen focused on a number of academic pursuits during her high school years, including as a member of the National Honor Society, Spanish Club, Spanish Honor Society, Mount St. Mary Student Council, and a Mount Ambassador, speaking with and giving school tours to potential students and their parents.

Despite her love of athletics, O'Steen plans to move on from volleyball while attending Oklahoma State University in Stillwater beginning this fall. She hopes to study communication sciences and disorders and American Sign Language, working toward a degree in speech pathology.

However, the sportsmanship she learned, the friends she made, and the recognition for her accomplishments, including the Bright Path Program award, will remain with her as she takes on the next challenges of her life.

"I was super, super grateful," she said. 🔥



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## Students blend virtual, real worlds in after-school program

A STEM education in high school looks much different now than even 20 years ago. With new technologies arriving almost by the minute, programs such as Oklahoma State University College of Education and Human Science's Mixed Reality Laboratory provide their students with necessary resources to meet that future. But what about those in primary school?

OSU received the Innovative Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers grant from the National Science Foundation. The grant reaches Native students at tribal schools in Oklahoma, including Citizen Potawatomi Nation's Child Development Center, to spark interest in STEM education and careers.

"The whole bottom line is Native communities typically get left out. Our kids are behind. Not cool in my book," said grant program coordinator Cynthia Orona.

She and the Mixed Reality Lab worked together to bring curriculum for science, technology, engineering and math to three tribes — including CPN's after-school program that serves students 6 to 13 years old. They provided software to teach the students how to digitally design almost any building or product imaginable as well as 3D printers and virtual reality goggles to bring them to life.

CPN's Department of Education Director Tesia Zientek connected OSU and the Tribe and saw some students present their projects in April 2022 after completing a year with the program. Student Rylee Penson started off hesitant but looked forward to the program every week.

"The first time I went, I was like, 'What am I doing? I don't know anything I'm doing,'" she said.

Penson used her imagination to "make new art, to make crazy stuff" and learned how to build and design structures by the end.

"To see it now at this point and understand what the kids were able to learn and even just hearing them just now understand the equipment better than I could have ever explained is so exciting," Zientek said. "The world is changing. The workforce is changing. Demand for different career fields is changing."

The OSU staff prepares the schools and after school programs to lead and continue the lessons with their students themselves. The machines and technology stay with the tribes, and Orona said they plan to expand throughout the next several years.

"We're piloting at three tribes so we can see how it goes, and we can continue to work on the curriculum and try to make it better every time," she said.



*Teachers from CPN's Child Development Center and after-school program and OSU's University College of Education and Human Science's Mixed Reality Laboratory present students certifications for completing a digital technology program.*

CPN after-school program teacher Randy Schlachtun knew this type of experience was invaluable for his students.

"They're doing the virtual reality, 3D printing, the engineering, all this type of computer-aided design and things like it. When you're able to have the possibility to offer that to your students — well, I think most any administrator or superintendent, school district, would be glad to give it a try. And luckily, we were on the ground floor and able to," he said.

### Reaching Native youth

According to a Pew Research Center report from April 2021, "Native Americans, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and people who identify with more than one racial group earned 4 percent of bachelor's degrees and 3 percent of advanced degrees in STEM fields."

Both OSU and CPN wanted to reach Indigenous students and nurture their interest in science, mathematics and technology. Schlachtun talked with them about patents and how to turn their creations into careers. It inspired some of them to imagine their work in someone's home or school.

"I don't think any of our students have owned their own VR system or 3D printer or anything like that. But sure enough, being able to provide access to it ... for the most part, all of them just got in there and really got after it and really focused hard and worked hard, and I was really proud of them," Schlachtun said.

They recreated and decorated rooms of the CPN childcare center, designed and 3D printed light fixtures and imagined the layout of their potential college dorm room. A few students then presented their projects at the CPN Cultural Heritage Center in April 2022 to celebrate completing the program. CPN and OSU gave them certificates of achievement as well.

"I saw major improvements in self-esteem in a few of them, which I thought was totally awesome because that's part of our job here is to give kids a good, strong sense of self-esteem," Schlachtun said.

At 9 years old, Eli Coe built a virtual outdoor garden complete with wheelchair ramps, lattice structures and plants. He wants to continue developing his plans.

"I'm still working on it," he said. "I still want to add my touches."

Presenting his project made him a little nervous, but the affirmation from staff at OSU, CPN and other community members motivated him.

"It was great to see them achieve and then be rewarded for it by Ph.D.s and masters and professors — really acknowledging their work and their mind frame because sometimes as we get older, we get into ... this one mind frame. Man, these kids — their imaginations are still fresh and wild," Schlachtun said.

### Time with elders

The CPN Child Development Center included collaboration with Potawatomi elders as an essential part of the students' time with technology. They wanted to bridge the generational gap and provide a space for them to think and talk through ideas together. Elder Theresa Talbot feels children lack time with their elders. She learned how to use the electronic equipment along with the students and presented opportunities to combine nature and Potawatomi culture into their designs.

"Interlink today with the past. You can walk into any gym, and what you're going to see are flat walls, a bare floor, and maybe some benches or stadium chairs or something like that. ... Why can't we have pictures of trees, pictures of animals, their tracks, the birds and how they fly?" she said.

Program coordinator Cynthia Orona and the rest of the OSU staff enjoyed seeing the relationships with the elders blossom much more than they anticipated.

"It made us happy because they were helping those kids make connections that I wouldn't say they weren't there, but they weren't formalized," she said. "And the elders kind of gave them some history, too, at the same time. And then we use the technology to engage the kids. So the technology really was for the kids. The elders were to help supplement that history in a fun environment."

On a cultural level, Schlachtun saw the opportunity for knowledge to move from generation to generation and watched the students fill their creations with the four directions colors, clan animals, Eastern Woodlands patterns and more.

"I think the elders that we had come up here were extremely open to what the kids wanted to bring to the table and what projects they wanted to do," he said. "It's really nice to be able to have that much energy from the youth and knowledge from the elders. And you put that together in this type of modern technology education program, and to be able to come out the end with tangible things like the lamps that they created or the virtual spaces that they created together, it was really neat."

Many of the students also considered inclusivity a high priority while designing their spaces, including Braille on signage and wheelchair accessibility.

"I thought, 'Man, that's just beyond for a 9-year-old kid to be anticipating those type of things,'" Schlachtun said. "And whether it's been Braille or ramp access for (people with disabilities) or just all the different ways that they thought about including everybody into whatever space they were creating ... they really put forth a lot of thought into that."

The CPN after school program plans to continue the STEM technology lessons for at least two more years. Schlachtun hopes to open it up to younger kids with the possibility of including 7-year-olds. He feels the earlier they engage students and give them a head start, they reach them at a more open and receptive period of their life.

"This is the latest technology, and to be able to have a 3D printer at our school now and to be able to have our children create what they want to create with the programs that we have. I hope that more schools like ours, where you're educating children who probably in normal circumstances would not have access to this type of thing ever, to be able to have that is pretty neat," Schlachtun said.

Find out more about the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Child Development Center and after school programs at [cpn.news/CPNCDC](http://cpn.news/CPNCDC).

## Tribal Chairman – John “Rocky” Barrett



Bozho nikan  
(Hello friend),

The news article printed here is from *Native Wire* describes testimony on the morning of June 13, 2022, from a witness at the Congressional hearings on the January 6th attack on the U.S. Capitol.

The allegations by former President Donald Trump are absolutely not true for the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. We paid no one to vote, for or against him. While there were many harmful legislative actions proposed by the Trump Administration and his Congressional allies against tribes — and he was quoted as saying a lot of untrue things about tribes — we played no part in influencing our people to vote in any certain manner.

The issue came up during testimony by Richard

Donoghue, an American attorney and prosecutor who acted as U.S. Deputy Attorney General under President Trump for approximately one month in December 2020 and January 2021. He also served as United States attorney for the Eastern District of New York from 2018 to 2020, appointed by former U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions in January 2018.

WASHINGTON — Former President Donald Trump believed that alleged irregularities involving the Native American vote negatively impacted his race against President Joe Biden in the presidential election of November 2020.

That revelation came to light this morning during the second January 6 Capitol insurrection-focused hearing of the U.S. House Homeland Security Committee in taped testimony by former acting U.S. Deputy Attorney General Richard Donoghue.

The former U.S. Justice Department official said that the former president pressed him and other Justice officials about the Indigenous vote in an effort to address perceived election irregularities that Trump believed hurt him.

Trump reportedly said that American Indians were receiving cash in exchange for voting for Biden and/or wanted the U.S. Department of Justice to find evidence of it.



Former acting U.S. Deputy Attorney General Richard Donoghue debunked President Trump's allegations regarding the 2020 Native vote.

“He said dead people are voting, Indians are getting paid to vote — he meant people on Native American reservations,” Donoghue testified. “He said, ‘There’s lots of fraud going on here.’”

“We told him flat out that much of the information he’s getting is false and/or just not supported by the evidence,” Donoghue continued. “We look at the allegations, but they don’t pan out.”

Trump’s idea has congruency with another incorrect trope regarding American Indians widely rooted in American culture — that they do not pay taxes. They do, in fact, pay taxes, but many people do not believe it to be true.

Like that tax fallacy, Trump’s beliefs on American

Indians getting paid to vote appear to be incorrect.

American Indians have largely voted Democratic in recent presidential elections — and Trump was unpopular with many tribes and tribal citizens due to his past anti-Indian views — so the former president’s beliefs here are perplexing for additional reasons.

He did do well with some tribes, like the Lumbee of North Carolina, but overall he did poorly on the most populous reservations in states he needed to win to be victorious, including those in Arizona and in Michigan.

American Indian voting advocates on both sides of the aisle expect the Native vote to

matter in several tightly forecasted midterm elections this year.

Politics in our country is dividing us into warring factions that are carrying over into our family, tribal and local politics. We all have to strive to seek another way to restore civil discourse in our political processes. It is harmful and destructive.

I believe that social media is responsible for the worst of it. It has been shown conclusively that Facebook and Twitter operate algorithms that emphasize hate speech and controversy in order to increase user volume on their internet sites. This has to stop. It has affected every election, including our own. The federal government should act to eliminate this categorization of speech used on the internet and leave it alone. I am not saying private internet messages should be censored. I am saying the manipulation of speech by internet companies to emphasize controversy should be eliminated. Let speech come as it may if it is legal.

Thank you for the privilege of serving as your Tribal Chairman.

Migwetch  
(Thank you),

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

## Vice-Chairman – Linda Capps



Bozho  
(Hello),

During December of 2021, Susan Brooks of South Rock Creek Schools contacted CPN to visit about a special project that her gifted and talented class had chosen to pursue. SRC Public School is a highly rated school located in Shawnee, Oklahoma. It has about 415 students from pre-K through 8th grade. The project consisted of purchasing bat boxes and preparing them to be hung near a pond or other body of water. Bats are attracted to water because insects may congregate there. An ideal bat habitat can be within a quarter mile, preferably less, of a natural body of water. Ms. Brooks hoped to get assistance from CPN in placing a few of the bat boxes on Tribal property. My first thoughts were that bats scare people, but then I did some research on bats’



important role in the ecosystem. Bats especially play an important part in pollinating crops. Most people associate pollination with bees and birds but often forget the work of their furry colleagues. Bats take the night shift, playing a major role in pollinating crops and spreading seeds.

Years ago, my family had a bat box near our swimming pool, so I was aware that bats ate insects, but because I was afraid of them, we took the bat box down. I learned some things about bats during my research that changes my attitude toward the little critters. I did not know that bats eat so many kinds of insects, which gives them the scientific name of insectivores for about 70 percent of the bat population. Bats like to eat mosquitos, moths, beetles, crickets, leafhoppers, chinch bugs and more. In fact, they can eat up to 500 mosquito-sized insects in an hour. I now realize that bats are our friends.

We gladly agreed to help Ms. Brooks and the students with their project. CPN even gave a donation toward the purchase of the bat boxes and material to hang them. The big day came on Friday, April 29, when a South Rock Creek bus delivered 20 gifted and talented students from the 3rd through 6th grade, along with their enthusiastic sponsor, Ms. Brooks. Tim Zientek and Jody Opela with the CPN Emergency Management Department helped with the project. Zientek had visited with Ms. Brooks prior to that Friday about the best locations for the bat boxes. Three bat boxes are now placed around the Sharp property on an area of about five acres. One is dedicated to the geothermal pond; another has been set aside to be placed near the golf course.

All in all, it was a great project. The bat boxes are monitored on a regular basis to see if they are inhabited by the bats. Research



South Rock Creek 3rd through 6th grade students place bat boxes around Citizen Potawatomi Nation as part of their gifted and talented class project.

reveals that 90 percent of bat houses that attract bats do so within two years, while the other 10 percent may take over three years. If this is the case, we may have to be more patient than we originally thought. Thanks goes to Ms. Brooks of SRC Schools for reaching out to CPN. We value relationships with schools in the area, all of which have CPN students in attendance.

I appreciate the opportunity to share this unique story with you.

I have cherished being your vice-chairman throughout the years.

My best to all of you,

Linda Capps  
Segenakwe  
(Black Bird Woman)  
Vice-Chairman  
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## District 2 – Eva Marie Carney



*Bozho nikanek*  
(Hello friends),

### Upcoming travel

I will be traveling to the Hannahville Indian Community near Escanaba, Michigan, starting July 27, for the 2022 Potawatomi Gathering. After two years without a Gathering, I am eager to reconnect with fellow Potawatomi, including Winona, Germaine and Geewadin Elliott from the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation at Neyaashiinigmiing, Ontario. Winona is one of the board members of The Kwek



*Kabl Wilkerson builds the ceremonial fire using turkey feathers at Mary Ruth Gossett's naming ceremony in January 2019.*

Society and our “woman on the ground,” securing school and community contacts and resupplying The Kwek Society’s Ontario province/First Nations partners. Germaine is her gracious mother, and Geewadin is her brother and a member of his Nation’s tribal council.

### Upcoming District 2 events

Here are some upcoming District 2 events to add to your calendar. The first is the CPN District 2 Family Meeting in Little Rock, Arkansas. I look forward to getting back to one of the most CPN-populated parts of District 2. The second is our Annual District 2 Fall Feast. Plans are not rock solid yet, but I am targeting Saturday, Nov. 12, 2022, assuming it will be safe to gather indoors in Northern Virginia. If we gather, the venue likely will be the Little Falls Presbyterian Church Social Hall, in Arlington, Virginia, from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. We will be making traditional rattles out of elk and bison hides. (I already have the supplies on hand.) Children are welcome, and the craft will be appropriate for kids with one-to-one adult supervision.

November 12th falls within the three days of a celebration planned by the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) in honor of Veterans Day. During this time, the NMAI will dedicate, after a long COVID-19 delay, the National Native American Veterans Memorial on the museum grounds. The formal dedication ceremony, along with the Native Veterans Procession, will take place on Friday, Veterans Day, Nov. 11, 2022. The processional will honor American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian veterans and their families. According to NMAI’s website, Native veterans are invited to participate in the procession along the National Mall from



*Courtney and Kabl Wilkerson and Charles Green*

the museum to the ceremony stage in front of the U.S. Capitol. Registration is open to individual veterans and veterans’ groups. Family members, friends and communities are encouraged to honor participating veterans from viewing areas along the procession route. The procession will be livestreamed. For more information and to register, visit [cpn.news/NMAIvetreg](http://cpn.news/NMAIvetreg). Celebrations at the museum during the three days will include hands-on activities, films in the Rasmuson Theater, performances in the Potomac Atrium and a veterans hospitality suite. Find all details at [cpn.news/NNAVM](http://cpn.news/NNAVM), and sign up for email updates from the NMAI at [cpn.news/NNAVMemail](http://cpn.news/NNAVMemail).

I plan to attend the processional on Friday and am hopeful that quite a few Citizen Potawatomi and family members will come to town to participate in these events and then scoot out to Arlington for our Fall Feast on Saturday. Please check my website calendar and this column for more solid Fall Feast details as I have them.

### More COVID-19 tests available at no charge

A third round of eight individual COVID-19 tests

now is available from the federal government, via the U.S. Postal Service. You can order the tests here: [special.usps.com/testkits](http://special.usps.com/testkits). Once you place your order, you will also get a prompt inviting you to “catch up” on any missed orders by submitting additional requests. All tests ordered through the USPS are free, including free shipping.

### Remembering Mary Ruth Gossett

Mary Ruth Gossett/*Wabmimi* (White Dove), a remarkable Potawatomi *kwe* (woman),



*Mary Ruth Gossett and grandson Kabl Wilkerson.*

walked on in April 2022 after a brief illness. She received her name in January 2019 from her grandson Kabl Wilkerson. She shared these photos with me afterward, writing:

*In January I received my Potawatomi name in a ceremony performed by my grandson Kabl Wilkerson. He gave me the name Wabmimi (White Dove) because, in his words, I am a “peacemaker” and “an activist who seeks a better world for all.” That’s a tall order for me to fill but I love his confidence.*

The photos are Mary Ruth’s. I am sharing them here in tribute to her love and beautiful spirit. To Kabl, Courtney and Charles, please accept our heartfelt sympathies for the loss of your beautiful grandmother and mother.

*Migwetch* (thank you) for the honor of representing you. I hope you will stay connected with me and others in our Nation’s government and will join our District 2 private Facebook page. (Write or call me for details or message me via Facebook.) Please also make sure to follow in Mary Ruth’s footsteps and use and share your Potawatomi name if you have one. These are among the things that will help connect you to the CPN community, your heritage and your ancestors. #WeAreStillHere

Eva Marie Carney  
*Ojindiskwe* (Blue Bird Woman)  
she/her/hers  
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## District 3 – Bob Whistler



*Bozho Gimwa*  
(Hello everyone),

### Sunday Night Live

Every Sunday evening from 6 to 8 p.m. turn your radio dial to 89.3 FM KNON. You will be listening to the Beyond Bows and Arrows Radio show. It is the oldest Dallas-Ft.

Worth Native American radio program airing. They will be playing traditional, powwow, flute, contemporary and much more music along with a bit of dialogue. You may find this a way to enjoy something a little different than your norm. So sit down, turn it on and just sit back, relax and listen. To access their information aside from their regular radio program, you may go to [KNON.org](http://KNON.org), or find them on Facebook or Twitter. Another option for info is [spinitron.com/KNON](http://spinitron.com/KNON).

### Eight Fights

Tribal member Penny Coates recently reposted this information on Facebook, and I believe it is worth sharing with those of you that may not have seen it. The topic deals with eight areas that you deal with

in raising your children when, for their own benefit, you need to stand your ground. Holding these so-called battles will result in your child being well-disciplined and respectful and will help them as they wander through their life’s journey.

**Reading fight** — Get your children to start reading early and continuously. It helps their focus.

**Outside fight** — Time to stop being constantly engrossed in that phone. They need to play and experience the outside. Enjoy what the creator has given us to be explored and expand their vision in nature.

**Work fight** — A little work or set of chores doesn’t hurt and the experience is the start of being responsible and accountable.

**Meal fight** — This is the basics of being a family. Sit down at the table for meals. It is a good time to cover news, plans and events, and relax away from the busy life we all seem to have now.

**Boredom fight** — Here is where you simply let them spend time alone with nothing to do. It is the start of taking time to stop and just remove yourself from all the activity and just think. It tends to be creative time.

**“Me first” fight** — This is a basic element in our culture — you will hear the message at meetings and so forth — that elders need to go first. They need to learn that they need to give way at times in respect for others.

**Awkward conversation fight** — At the right age some conversations need to be held on dating, values, sex, body

image and so forth. Better that you give them the values you feel is best for them than for them to be learning or experimenting with others.

**Limitation fight** — They need to learn that there are limits we must live with, laws obeyed, etc.

For those of you raising children, you may want to consider the use of these fights. Parenting may be hard. There is no real preparatory course, and some mistakes may be made. I know your mindset is to do the best that you can and hope that your children live wonderful fulfilling lives.

### More gas for the dollars

With the price of gas going up compared to just a year ago, we need to take every advantage to maximize the amount of gas we purchase per dollar. What many

of us forget is that gas is basically a chemical product, and its density will increase or decrease because of the temperature. A recent article from California reminded me of this fact. The article said that by purchasing gas in the morning when the temperature is cooler, the gas will be denser and each gallon going through the pump will actually contain more molecules of the product because they are clustered closer together. While if we wait until later in the day when the temperature is hotter, the mixture we are getting from the pump has fewer molecules per gallon because it is less dense and, volume-wise, has expanded. As we burn the fuel, the fuel in the gas tank is changed to a gas vapor from a liquid in the fuel injection system. This means that the denser liquid will generate more gas vapor fuel. Moreover, if your fuel tank

is filled in the morning in the hot summer months, you will have more fuel than if you filled your tank in the hot afternoon or evening. Ironically, as you go through the day with the temperature rising, your fuel tank, as the gas expands, will seem to take less time before the next refill. In the winter, we don't have this situation since the gas will maintain its density throughout the day. It is also best on the hot temperature days to fill up when the tank is half empty so there is less hot air in the fuel tank. The roof of the tank provides a seal and will also stave off evaporation that accompanies hot temperatures. For those of us living in these areas with temperatures over 90 degrees, we may want to take advantage of getting a little more fuel for our dollar. So, fill up early in the morning!

### Dancing for Our Tribe

In our November *Hownikan*, District 2 legislator Eva Marie Carney's article talked about our land taken in Chicago. She had several photos, one of which was of her with photographer and Citizen Potawatomi tribal member Sharon Hoogstraten. I have had the pleasure of knowing Sharon for quite a number of years. She is an excellent photographer, and for any of you that venture into our Veterans memorial room at the Cultural Heritage Center, on the east wall you will see four or five very large photographs taken by Sharon of our Tribal members in regalia. Sharon has been taking photos of Tribal members in regalia for all of the initial nine Potawatomi Tribes over the course of 10 or more years. While in Crandall, Wisconsin, when the Gathering

was held by the Forest County Potawatomi several years ago, she took a photo of me in regalia. She also had me write a short bio at that time. She later sent me copies of the photos she took. Sharon has finally put all of her work together and is publishing a beautiful hard cover book: *Dancing for Our Tribe: Potawatomi Tradition in the New Millennium*. It may be pre-ordered from Amazon. The hard cover price is \$80. Considering many textbooks in college can cost upwards of \$200, this is a tremendous bargain and an investment for your library that you will cherish about your Tribe's history. I want to thank Alton Ray Strange in District 5 for alerting me of this wonderful opportunity to add this valuable book to my own personal library. Later this month, I plan to attend the Potawatomi Gathering and hope to see

many of you there. Michigan is a beautiful place to visit and, as mentioned last month, gives us an opportunity to get sweetgrass, flat cedar leaves, *manoomin* (wild rice) and some maple syrup.

I am here to serve you and am your voice. So, please contact me if you believe there is an area or benefit that you would like information on or help with.

*Nagech*  
(Later),

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



*Bozho*  
(Hello),

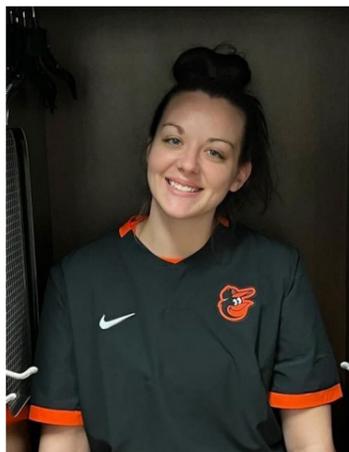
### Young Tribal member continues to pursue her goal in life

In February, Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal member Haley Brown accepted an athletic training position within the Baltimore Orioles organization. She spent six weeks in Sarasota, Florida, during Spring Training and received the opportunity to travel to the Dominican Republic where the Orioles are completing a new, state-of-the-art training academy. After Spring Training, Haley relocated to Baltimore, Maryland, to the Orioles' affiliate Minor League team, Aberdeen Ironbirds, in Harford County. They are a High-A class affiliate of the Baltimore Orioles and compete in the South Atlantic League. The

Ironbirds play in Leidos Field at Ripken Stadium and are currently number one in the South Atlantic League. At the end of the season, Haley plans to take a short break and continue to work in Major League Baseball/Minor League baseball as a professional baseball athletic trainer. In the fall of 2015, I had the pleasure of naming Haley, *Dok me noj mo kwe* (Quiet Healing Woman). She had previously expressed to me that her goal was to be a trainer. It looks like she is well on her way towards fulfilling her goal. Haley is the daughter of Toby and Kourtney Brown and is a descendant of the Bostick family.

### Chief Petty Officer Austin Martin recognized for his performance

On April 15, 2022, Chief Information Technician Submarines (SS) Austin A. Martin was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with a Gold Star device, symbolizing the fifth award of this medal he has received. This award was in recognition of his performance as Weapons Ship Superintendent Leading Chief Petty Officer (CPO) at the Trident Refit Facility, Kings Bay, Georgia, from August 2020 to April 2022. During this period, CPO Martin successfully led a high-impact team of military and civilian personnel in completing 5,000



*Haley Brown*

submarine repairs, totaling over 600,000 manhours. This superb effort ensured that all homeported Trident submarines at Kings Bay maintained a 100 percent material readiness. The citation that accompanied the award went on to state that CPO Martin's performance, personal initiative and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the U.S. Naval Service. CPO Martin is a descendant of the Navarre family. WELL DONE, CHIEF.

### CPN Veteran participates in Honor Flight to Washington, D.C.

As I am drafting this article, CPN member and veteran Dave Stadler is participating in the second day of an Honor Flight and Tour for veterans in Washington, D.C. Dave is a veteran, having served in the U.S. Navy in the mid-1950s aboard

aircraft carriers. Dave is also a descendant of the Nadeau Family.

### Upcoming CPN Elders' Potlucks

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

July 8: Goulash  
(RSVP by July 5)

Aug 12: To be determined  
(RSVP by Aug 9)

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

### My other part time job and upcoming renovation of the State Historical Museum

Many of you probably don't know that in addition to serving as the CPN District 4 Representative, I also serve as the treasurer of the Board of Directors for the Kansas Historical Foundation, the financial arm of the Kansas State Historical Society. Fortunately, there is a well-qualified accountant on the staff who handles the daily business and prepares the monthly reports. For those who didn't know, there is a major change coming soon to the Kansas State Museum in Topeka in the form of a total renovation of the museum's exhibit area. The only exhibit that will not be changed will be the train. The

museum exhibit areas and classrooms will be open through September 3 and are expected to remain closed for approximately 18 months. The renovation is estimated to cost close to \$7 million. The State Archives and other services of the Historical Society will remain open as usual during this period.

### Honored to serve you

It is an honor to serve you as your district representative. I appreciate hearing from CPN members in Kansas, whether in the form of a letter, email, phone call or in the office. Please let me know how I can be of assistance to you. 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 send me your email address, and I will enter you into my District 4 information file. My contact information is listed below.

*Migwetch*  
(Thank you),

Jon Boursaw,  
*Wetase Mkoh* (Brave Bear)  
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## District 5 – Gene Lambert



*Bozho*  
(Hello),

Hope everyone out there is staying safe and away from any new outbreaks of whatever is in the wind. I don't mean to be condescending as this is truly important, it's just we are all so worn out on the subject. Don't stop protecting yourself, regardless. Better safe than sorry.

Writing this article just prior to the election gives us no hint as to who was elected, nor can we say where it will end up after the votes are counted.

I do hope you voted! By now you know the outcome.

Hopefully you were able to attend the first Citizen Potawatomi Nation Family Festival "live" after such a long period of time. I, for one, was very excited to have the opportunity to see

people I haven't been able to touch base with in years.

Thankfully, we do have telephones, Facebook, Twitter, emails, texts and some even still write letters to stay in touch. It just isn't the same as human contact.

We have had two Zoom District 5 meetings since the pandemic started. The attendance allowed for more than 100 of you attending to get news of exciting things going on with the Citizen Potawatomi Nation.

In spite of the difficulties, my hat is off to all who kept our Nation running. It did impose a huge workload and commitment.

Several of you have kept me posted with pictures and calls to let me know of special events coming up for your family. Thank you for that. It makes me feel a part even if I could not be there.

It has been impressive for those of you who try and carry through with your Tribal traditions even though your lead and assistance may have needed to be by phone and text.

We had a story of one family and their graduating daughter who went to bat carrying out a desired tradition for her graduation walk. She is an impressive young lady. Laney Baumfalk helped change the rules as she wanted to wear the Citizen Potawatomi tribal shawl/yoke. Given her



*Taylor Vanover marries Chandler Brandert on May 21, 2022.*

commitment to herself and her people, she was able to change what had been written in stone and walked with honor at her graduation wearing the stole. Her determination made it happen for her and others in the future. Perhaps you remember the article a couple of years ago written in the *Hownikan*.

It is always worth a fight to change wrong back to right!

That same family had a wedding and a desire to have a traditional Native ceremony as well. They were on their own in Nebraska, yet determined to acknowledge the bride and the groom's heritage in their special vows.

Having had a few conversations with the officiant, the grandmother, mother and bride brought the Potawatomi tradition to life. Going forward, we now have another generation of a Potawatomi family.



*Patty Schoen officiates the wedding of Taylor Vanover and Chandler Brandert. Gail Schoen performs the smudging for the ceremony.*

The wedding was May 21; Taylor Vanover married Chandler Brandert. Patty Schoen officiated. Gail Schoen did the smudging. Barb Baumfalk and Teresa Vanover spread the cedar. Patty did forget to wrap the couple in the blanket, but Chandler (groom) did carry it out.

Never worry when things don't go perfectly as they seldom do. The "what went wrong" is what makes your ceremony special and belongs to you. Those are the things you will laugh about down the road. We all want perfect. Imperfect is life!

As I said, it is so impressive that these traditions go forward, and that in each ceremony, it becomes uniquely yours.

I truly recommend that when you can talk with Justin Neely before upcoming special

events, you will have the absolute in tradition on your side. I know he would be honored to suggest the proper ceremonial traditions to bestow honor to our ancestors.

We want to share your special times. Let us know how we can help make your day special in a Native way.

In the meantime, take care of yourselves and stay in touch.

Thank you for allowing me the honor of serving you.

Love to all,

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



*Bohzo nikan*  
(Hello friend),

I hope you all are enjoying your summer so far.

Planning any outside activity in the Pacific Northwest before July is a gamble weather-wise, and frankly, when planning this May cookout back in February, I checked Poor Richard's Almanac and other long range weather planning tools — and still came up with one of the soggiest days possible. The final turnout was about 66 members, after receiving over 100 RSVPs. This turned out to be an ideal number as we mostly huddled under the park's covered shelter area.

When planning a gathering, I am always looking to educate

members about our CPN history, or at least motivate them to become curious about our common past. One thing we did that was different at this gathering was to have a large, matted chart of the old Citizen Potawatomi reservation and the 1872 and 1887 allotments. As members arrived and signed in, they were given an 8.5" x 11" rolled up chart of their found family's allotment, a magnifying glass and a pin to place on their family's allotment(s). This was both interesting and a good icebreaker. We had members representing the following founding families: Tescier, Young, Anderson, Soocey, Nadeau, Burnette, Melot, Peltier, Acton, Slavin, LeClair, Welsh, Juneau, Ogee, Stockhouse, Pappan and Johnson



*PJ Larson wins the Under 12 division of the District 8 art contest with his piece "CPN Race."*



*Licia Villard wins the Fine Art division of the District 8 art contest with her watercolor, "Mushrooms."*

families. *Migwetch* (thank you) to Dr. Mosteller and Czarina Thompson of the Nation's Cultural Heritage Center for the materials to put this together.

Another learning opportunity was a brief discussion of famous Potawatomi artist Woody Crumbo. Several prints were displayed and his artistic contributions were discussed. *Migwetch* to Minisa Crumbo, the artist's daughter, for discussing her father's art and career prior to the event.

Bryce Lewis Smith, a grad student at the University of Washington, spoke eloquently about his recent participation in



*Penny Botswick displays her piece "Change," winner of the District 8 art contest Craft division.*

our inaugural *Mdamen* program, which is basically an adult, virtual version of the Potawatomi Leadership Program. His passion, energy and love for the Tribe were evident in his presentation.

District 8 is blessed with energetic and engaged members, like Julie Jackson, Robert White and John Kochanowski — also known by their drum group name, The Seventh Fire. They played several hand drum songs toward the beginning of the agenda, and after lunch, they handed out "loaner" drums so attendees could drum along and try their hand. The distributed drums were made at a prior drum making event and had



*Jana Thompson receives recognition as the Farthest Travelled at the recent District 8 meeting.*

never been used. A special ceremony was performed with tobacco and a prayer provided by



*Linda Jones is honored as the Wisest in attendance at the recent District 8 meeting.*

Language Director Justin Neely to awaken the drums' voices.

We recognized our Wisest member in attendance, Linda Jones of Helena, Montana, and Youngest member, Gabriel Sage O'Neil Perez, who were both presented with Pendleton blankets. The Farthest Traveled award (a Pendleton travel bag)

was awarded to Jana Thompson of Kalispel, Montana. During lunch, the two Montana winners had the difficult task of picking our art contest winners.

While we had several great pieces entered in the three categories (Craft, Fine Art and Artist 12 years old and younger) the winners were: Penny Bostwick

in the Craft category for her colorful paper masterpiece called *Change*; Licia Villard in the Fine Arts category for her water color called *Mushrooms*; and PJ Larson for his piece called *CPN Race*, which depicted a race car with a CPN logo on the top of the car. Winners received Michael's gift cards to purchase more art supplies to keep creating.

Special thanks to Timothea Sutton and her family for grilling the hamburgers and hotdogs for our attendees. Thanks to Jan Lamascus for arranging the food set up and making some cool dinnerware packets and Nancy Mitchell Fuller for taking photos. Many thanks to those not mentioned here and those who attended. Glad

we can start to gather again! As always, it is my pleasure to serve you as your legislator,

Dave Carney  
*Kagasghi* (Raven)  
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## District 9 – Paul Wesselhöft



*Bozho nikan*  
(Hello friend),

I wanted to share another poem I wrote this month.

### CANOE

By Paul Chrisstarlon Wesselhöft

In centuries back a few,  
Rivers, lakes, awaited the canoe.  
It was the Indian, the  
Potawatomi,  
Through early morning  
mist could see  
The need to move through  
clear cool waters.

Carving dugouts from  
large tree trunks  
Sufficed for a season.  
Then the Indian  
using sharp shells,  
Crafted canoes skinned with  
birch bark  
Laid over light wood  
frames without nails.

The boat bottom was burnt  
creating a flat surface  
Enabling the watercraft  
to carry large loads  
Yet glide through streams, seas,  
with ease.

The boat received a  
coat of animal grease  
To decrease draying, cracking,  
making it waterproof.  
Such vessels were easily  
portaged through woods.

Natives traveled the American  
waters,  
North, south, east, west, in  
their quest for tribal survival,  
Hunting fish with spears, the  
bow and arrow,  
Or with hooks  
made from antlers.

Canoes assisted in trapping  
beavers.  
Their pelts traded to merchants  
for making hats, coats.  
Such boats were utilitarian art,  
Which enhanced travel,  
pleasure, and treasure.

The Native American canoe was  
transformative



Enabling Indians to forge a  
water culture long ago.  
Sadly, the Federal government  
relegated tribes to  
Reservations, jurisdictions where  
clear cool waters do not flow  
The Indian canoe, venerable,  
is a relic of a bygone eon.

*Migwetch*  
(Thank you),

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

## District 11 – Andrew Walters



*Bozho*  
(Hello),

She was 15 and in love. Her first boyfriend. She was giddy and happy, couldn't keep from talking about him to her friends. Her parents didn't know, but everyone else in her circle did. The world to her seemed brighter and not so harsh. Her whole world focused on her new "love." Then, one morning, she felt a little off. A little sick. Nauseated. It didn't get better, so after talking to a friend, she decided to get one of those store-bought pregnancy tests. She followed the instructions, and to her horror, she found she was pregnant. Being 15 and having no life experience, problem solving skills or ability to communicate at any meaningful level to her parents, she was scared. And having a dad that was a little more than a self-righteous T.V. evangelist didn't help. Her mom was more concerned about her social

appearance than her kids. She went to all the social events, volunteered in all the school activities, but hardly ever talked to the girl on a one-to-one level. The girl was scared and didn't know what to do. She broke it off with her boyfriend, not telling him what had happened. He was angry and upset. It seemed like her whole world was falling apart. And then it did. You see, her dad found out after mom took her to the doctor for her "illness." Dad hit the roof with mom not too far behind. She shut down, until, finally, she told them, "I was raped."

Being 15 is tough. You don't think about the ramifications of your actions, only about the next day. She had thought there would be kindness found, and there was. As a victim, her parents came together and helped her. Dad insisted she have an abortion and called the police to make a report of the sexual assault. The police took a report after questioning her. Arrangements had been made to have the abortion, and it was understood that the fetus had evidentiary value in DNA comparison to the offender. It all happened in a whirlwind. That is where I got involved. I went one sunny April morning to the abortion clinic and took custody of what had been a child but was now evidence. I was to take the bottle to the University of North Texas in Denton for DNA testing. The bottle, for lack of a better description, looked like a large dill pickle jar.

It was filled with a preservative fluid in which floated pieces of what was left of the fetus. An arm, a leg, a torso, and a head, all torn asunder by the doctor's "tools of the trade."

The boyfriend had been arrested and was in jail under a \$50,000 bond. He was 18, so he was in the "big boy" jail — cuffed, stuffed, printed, photographed and put in with the general population. He'd never been in trouble before and was terrified. He insisted that their relationship was consensual, if that was possible with a 15 year old. But, the gossip was, "Of course he'd say that."

As I drove to Denton, with what was now only evidence, I wondered if the "baby in the bottle" would have grown up to be something in life? Would he have had a family? Would his life had meant something, or would he just be another average person, living an average life? Maybe he'd invent a world-changing something-or-other, or maybe he'd rob a bank. We'd never know. The whole thing saddened me. A little life lost. I understood what had happened, and I learned long ago not to make moral decisions for other people or to project my beliefs onto others. And in writing this, I am just telling my story; its consequence is yours to decide. I have had to work many sexual assaults, and I know the impact, the pain, the embarrassment, the anger involved. I get it. I understand it.

I handed the bottle over to the technician at UNT, got a receipt and started back. I was glad it was all over. Not a good way to start a day, and I have to say that I don't much like Dallas/Ft. Worth... too big, too many people. I drove south on I-45, and at about Centerville, my phone rang. It seemed as though the girl had recanted her statement and admitted that the boyfriend had not raped her. I was stunned. I'm sure it took a lot for her to admit the truth, and I have to say, it wasn't her fault. Fear is a strong motivator. And when you're scared and feel alone, nothing makes sense. The only thought is, "What's going to happen to me?" But how much damage had been done? I still wonder how things could have been different. If the parents were more understanding, allowing her to tell them the truth at the start. If the decision to abort the pregnancy had been made, not in the pangs of anger, but after careful deliberation and support of other services and options. If we, as the police, had responded in a way to provide her a more understanding, safe atmosphere rather than just responding to a call and taking a report would have made a difference. Then I wondered what I would do if someone in my family faced the same issues. The thought of it all still saddens my heart.

Since we write these articles about a month before they're published, I don't know if by this printing the alleged

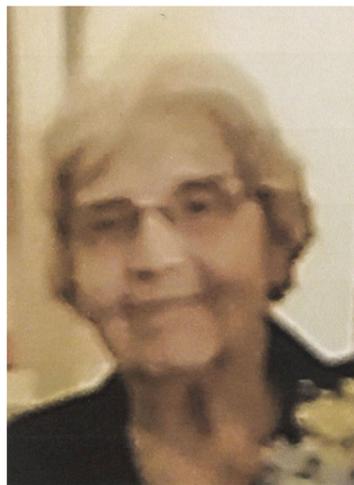
Supreme Court decision concerning *Roe v. Wade* will have been made. Governor Stitt said that "Indian Tribes" are "ultra-liberal" and may take advantage of a decision to do away with the *Roe v. Wade* to have abortion clinics on Tribal grounds. I guess he thinks we would open drive-thru clinics and rake in the cash from others' sorrows. After all, in his eyes, we are not Oklahomans; we are nuisances.

Native ways are different than the European ways. We value life above all else. We value the lives around us — the trees, the flying things, the crawling things, the swimming things, and the four-legged. We value our children. We value our elders. And in spite of what Governor Stitt thinks, we value the lives of our unborn precious children. We are Native Americans... with beliefs as ancient as the sky, held in the hearts of our ancestors, seated in the value of life... not bought, not bartered, not subject to the whims of politics. Our beliefs are embraced by our souls and entwined in our being. Maybe the governor needs to look back at his beliefs and try to understand what it means to be Native American... if he can.

*Migwetch*  
(Thank you),

Andrew Walters  
Legislator, District 11  
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## Sister Theresa Schmidlkofer Tescier Family



Sister Theresa Schmidlkofer was born Theresa Mae Schmidlkofer to Frank Schmidlkofer and Nellie (Tescier) Schmidlkofer in Shawnee, Oklahoma, on Dec. 1, 1931. Her siblings included her six brothers, Frank, Vincent, Leo, Bernard, Paul and Joseph; and her three sisters, Rita, Mary and Rosie. Sister experienced her early education and high school at St. Benedict in Shawnee. She continued her education and received a Bachelor of Arts at Webster University in St. Louis, Missouri; a Master of Arts in teaching from Notre Dame University in Indiana; and a CPE certification from St. Louis University.

Sister Schmidlkofer entered the Sisters of Mercy at Webster Groves, Missouri, on Sept. 8, 1949, and made her final profession of religious vows on Aug. 16, 1956. In 1959, Sister began her teaching career at Sacred Heart Elementary School in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. She also taught at Mount St. Mary's High School in Oklahoma City; St. Charles Borromeo School in Oklahoma City; St. Joseph School in Slaton, Texas; Our Lady of Guadalupe School in Amarillo, Texas; and Mercy High School in St. Louis, Missouri. Sister was later missioned as Director of Young Adult Ministry for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City; Social Services Director at Bethany Village Nursing Home; Pastoral Associate for the Senior Outreach Program at Sacred Heart Parish; and to Mercy Health Center Convent in 2016 — all in Oklahoma City.

Sister continued her daily prayers and enjoyed taking care of the convent flowers, reading and feeding the birds. She continued to love and was loved by her family, community members and co-workers.

Sister was preceded in death by her parents, brothers and sisters. Immediate survivors include her nieces, Catherine Brandon and Cynthia Hickson and their families; many other nieces, nephews and their families; Sisters of Mercy, Mercy co-workers and Mercy Associates; friends, compassionate physicians and caregivers.

Mass of Christian burial was held on Monday, May 23, 2022, at Mercy Health Center convent

in Oklahoma City followed by a burial at Resurrection Memorial Cemetery.

## Taegan James Brown Crumbo Family



Taegan James Brown, son of Jason and Kimberley Brown, was born in Sandy, Utah, on Aug. 18, 2003. Taegan's youth was filled with family, sports, friends, adventure and fun. Taegan loved playing football, and he was a standout player. He was an accomplished snowboarder, and he loved the mountains. Taegan was a wonderful example to his brothers Wyatt, Kavik and Shale (Peck).

Taegan was a senior at Riverton High School. Taegan left his earthly body on Friday, May 6, 2022, in a tragic accident when he fell from a Jeep. He was holding on to a strap that unexpectedly broke. That night was typical Taegan, embracing life with close friends, the wind in his hair and a smile on his face.

Athletic and active, Taegan loved four-wheeling, mountain biking and camping. He was fearless in hiking and scaling walls. His strength was remarkable, and he helped create a weightlifting gym in the garage.

Taegan learned to work hard at a very young age. He was an entrepreneur, building his own lawn mowing business and expanding to many clients in the neighborhood. He demonstrated his meticulous nature in all his work. At the time of his death, Taegan worked as an apprentice carpenter.

He was skilled in auto mechanics and excelled in concurrent enrollment courses through Weber State University.

Taegan was preceded in death by his grandfathers, Gregory James Brown and Herman Robert de Mik; and his uncle, Justin James Brown. Taegan is survived by his parents, Jason and Kimberley Brown; brothers, Wyatt, Kavik, and Shale (Peck); grandmothers Kathy (Mathis) Brown and Connie (Labrum) de Mik; and great-grandmother Jeanne (Crumbo) Labrum.

Taegan was a fierce defender of his family and friends. Like the song says, "Yeah, I believe 'em when they say you're in a better place. You had a wild side, but you had Amazing Grace!"

## Woody Crumbo Jr. Crumbo Family



Woody Crumbo Jr., beloved son of Woody Crumbo and Lillian Faye Hogue, walked on Oct. 15, 2021. Born Aug. 14, 1945, he is survived by his sister, Minisa Crumbo Halsey and her husband, Jim Halsey; and brother, Monroe Jeffrey. You will be missed. *Bama mine*, brother, son, uncle, cousin, friend and father.

## Sarah Ann Savory Wilson Bertrand Family



Sarah Ann (Bertrand) Savory Wilson passed peacefully on May 26, 2022, in Stillwater, Oklahoma, at the age of 88.

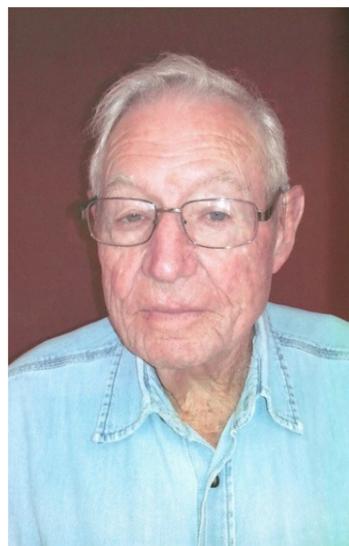
Sarah was born on May 2, 1934, the ninth child born to Warren Benjamin and Addie Bertrand Savory, in Frederick, Oklahoma. In a horse-drawn wagon, the family moved to Guthrie (on land claimed during the Oklahoma Land Run), followed by a move to Ripley, Oklahoma, where her dad built a rock house that still stands today. Attending high school in Ripley, she was the head twirler, drawing the attention of Gary Wilson, whom she married in 1952. To this union, four children were born. Sarah was a strong and faithful woman, wife, mother and grandmother. She experienced many challenges in her life, each one making her a stronger woman. Sarah was proud of her Potawatomi heritage. She was a member of the Bertrand family. Sarah attended Tribal activities and especially enjoyed spending time at the annual celebration. Sarah worked in many capacities, from clerical to being the first female oil field pumper in Oklahoma. She was most

known for her work as a nurse and caregiver until the age of 75.

Sarah is preceded in death by her husband, Gary; her son, Cary Wilson; and grandsons, J.W. Wilson and Tobin McTague. She is survived by children, Kay Porter (Galen) of Stillwater, Donnie Wilson of Cushing, Oklahoma, and Sue Jones (David) of Yale, Oklahoma; grandchildren, Julie Porter of Golden, Colorado, Jayme McTague (Marcus) of Ada, Oklahoma, Laddie Aldridge (Rochelle) of Waipahu, Hawaii, and Jackie Dawn Porter (Josh) of Enid, Oklahoma; great-grandchildren, Dani and Tyler McTague of Ada, Oklahoma; and numerous other family and friends.

Family would like to express our appreciation to the numerous health care staff at the clinic who have taken care of Sarah's needs over the years. Thank you!

## Donald Ray Anderson Muller Family



Donald Ray Anderson, of Norman, Oklahoma, died Friday, June 10, 2022, at Norman Regional Hospital, surrounded by family and friends. He was 86. A funeral ceremony was held on Saturday, June 18, 2022, at Temple Baptist Church in Shawnee, Oklahoma, with burial at Tecumseh Cemetery.

Don was born on Jan. 31, 1936, in Shawnee to Addie and Charles Emmett Anderson. Don graduated from Shawnee High School in 1955. On July 24, 1955, he married his high school sweetheart, Frances Kay Glenn. The couple was married for 66 years.

While still in high school, he joined the Air National Guard. In January 1956, he joined the U.S. Air Force. After four years of service, he was discharged from active duty and went to work for the Oklahoma Air National Guard Will Rogers until his retirement in 1993.

While working for the Air National Guard, he was also a member of the guard and served on active duty in the Air Force when doing missions.

Don was highly motivated and went from an 18-year-old Airman to a Chief Master

Sergeant and advanced from an airplane mechanic to a flight engineer and instructor. During his career, he flew in and out of Vietnam carrying cargo. He also flew disaster missions delivering hurricane relief, aid to farmers during extreme weather, on drug-seeking missions in South America and Hawaii, and many training missions around the world. Don was proud of his 37 years of service in the military.

Don was also proud of his Potawatomi heritage and was a member of the Potawatomi Veterans Organization, often carrying the Air Force flag during ceremonies. His Potawatomi name is *Wzawjigwe* or Yellow Thunder.

He was a man of strong faith and lived it through example. He never missed church services unless he was on an Air Force mission.

Following his retirement, he and Kay bought an RV and traveled the country from coast to coast. Some of their favorite trips were to Alaska and across Canada, revisiting the base in Newfoundland where he served in 1958-59. The couple also flew to Hawaii and Ireland. Don was a family man and loved spending time with his children and grandchildren, attending family reunions and gathering groups to go camping, fishing or having a cookout. His family meant everything to him, and he was always there to help anyone who needed help with car repair, moving or whatever the need.

He is survived by his wife, Kay; sons, Andrew, David Scott and wife Colleen; daughters, Elaine Warner and husband Chester, and Kristi Holderbaum and husband Mark; grandchildren, Nelson Anderson, Kayla Warner and Alison Holderbaum; brother-in-law, Dan Glenn and wife Sherry; sisters-in-law, Jane Cannon and Terry Glenn; and brother, Orville Anderson and wife Linda; nieces, nephews and many friends. He was preceded in death by his parents; brothers, Charles and Jim Anderson; and brother-in-law, Darrell Glenn.

Memorial donations may be made to Temple Baptist Church, Shawnee, Oklahoma, or Food and Shelter Inc. in Norman, Oklahoma, or the charity of your choice.

### David Slavin Slavin Family



David Layne Slavin, 67, walked on May 6, 2022, at North Kansas City Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri. He was born on Sept. 9, 1954, in Falls City, Nebraska, to Roy and Julia Ann Messinger Slavin.

David grew up in Hiawatha, Kansas. He graduated from Park Hill High School in Parkville, Missouri, in 1973. After high school, David joined the United States Navy on July 6, 1973, serving for four years during the Vietnam War era. He was honorably discharged July 5, 1977, achieving the rank of IC2. After military service, he attended Park University in Parkville, Missouri, where he received a bachelor's degree in communications. His career as an electrician took him many places, most notably working for Trans-World Airlines and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad. He retired in 2021 after 28 years of service to BNSF.

David was an avid Kansas City sports fan for both the Royals and Chiefs as well as supporting his children in their chosen sports of gymnastics and rugby. He loved music, playing guitar from his early days in college to playing as part of the musical ministries of St. Monica's Catholic Church.

David was preceded in death by his father, former CPN District 1 Legislator and veteran Roy Vern Slavin. He is survived by his mother, Julia Ann Slavin of Shawnee, Oklahoma; his children, Joshua and Eve-Vella of Kansas City, Missouri; his brother, Rodney of San Diego, California; his sister, Verna of Shawnee, Oklahoma; many nieces and nephews; and a host of relatives and friends.

The family wishes to extend their gratitude to North Kansas City Hospital's Palliative Care team and St. Monica's Catholic Church.

Funeral services were held Thursday, May 12, 2022, at St. Monica's followed by interment at Leavenworth National Cemetery conducted by Lawrence A. Jones & Sons Funeral Chapel. In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial donations be made to St. Monica's Catholic Church. Condolences may be left on David's online guestbook at [lawrenceajones.com](http://lawrenceajones.com).

### Eddie Hines-McClure Curley Family



Eddie "Edie" Hines-McClure (Wolfe) was born on Aug. 22, 1938, to Lester and Edith Wolfe in Shawnee, Oklahoma. She passed away from this life on June 4, 2022, in Gridley, California. On July 7, 1956, she married the love of her life, James Thomas Hines, and together they had two sons and two daughters. They were happily married for 41 years until his passing in 1997. After a decade of rebuilding her life, she remarried Ronald McClure. They enjoyed their life together until his passing in 2017. She loved caring for her grandchildren and enjoyed the company of her many friends and family. Tribal heritage was very important to her. She took pride in being a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. As a descendant of the Curley family, it was important to her to learn about her heritage and share stories with her family. She enjoyed many things in life, including reading, writing letters, socializing, playing Yahtzee and dancing, but the most important thing to her was spending time with the people she loved. Preceding Edie in death are her parents; both husbands; and her siblings, Shirley Mulvaney, Leslie Stilwell, Valerie Sankey and Tony Kacura. Left behind to mourn her passing are her two siblings, Veronica Dauenhauer and

Ron Ferrell; four children and their spouses, Randall "Randy" Thomas Hines, Rochelle Hines, Rodney Lee Hines, Peggy Dawn Fowler, Dan Fowler, Brenda Louise Wilson and Jeff Wilson; eight grandchildren; eleven great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren. To know her was to love her. She will be deeply missed. May she rest in peace.

### Elizabeth Hancock Bourassa Family



Elizabeth Jane Hancock (Maisch), 89, passed away peacefully on Feb. 9, 2022, after a brave fight with COVID pneumonia. Elizabeth was born Nov. 16, 1932, in Newkirk, Kay County, Oklahoma, to Carl and Laura Ogeal Bourassa Maisch. Her family relocated to Kansas City, Missouri, in the late 1930s. She attended Westport High School in Kansas City and married her high school sweetheart, William Claude Hancock, on Jan. 6, 1950. They had three children.

Elizabeth was very proud of her Potawatomi heritage. She was a great granddaughter of Joseph N. Bourassa and Elizabeth Curley Bourassa. Elizabeth and her family were one of the first families involved in the Council Fire of Greater Kansas City (later known as the Kansas City Indian Club), promoting fellowship of Native Americans of all tribes in the Kansas City area. She also volunteered at the Kansas City Indian Center in the 1980s.

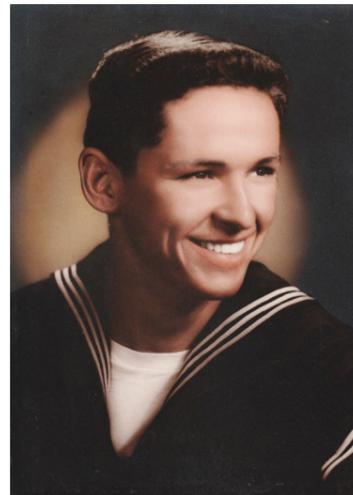
Elizabeth's Potawatomi name is *Zee-be'-kwe'*. Elizabeth enjoyed powwows, Southern and Northern drums, and all Native American and Potawatomi gatherings she could attend. Her knowledge of her Potawatomi lineage was extensive; her great-great-grandparents and their children were on the Trail of Death in 1838.

She is preceded in death by her husband, William Claude Hancock; son, Patrick Neal Hancock; her parents, Carl and Laura Ogeal Bourassa Maisch; and her brother, Jerry Lee Maisch.

She is survived by son, Michael Lee Hancock (Brenda); daughter, Peggy Hancock Kinder (Steven); sisters, Patricia Brollier and Barbara Brendalson; grandchildren, Michael Holmes, Tamara Cole, Phillip Hancock, Brian Hancock, William Hancock, William Kinder and Joseph Kinder; and eight great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

Elizabeth supported the Murrow Indian Children's Orphanage (Home) in Muskogee, Oklahoma, and Billy Mills' Running Strong program for Native American youths. The family encourages donations to these two organizations in honor of Elizabeth.

### Harold Jay Martin Ogee Family



Harold Jay "Marty" Martin, 79, returned to his Heavenly home on April 12, 2022. He passed away peacefully in Carson, California, with a daughter and granddaughter at his side.

Marty was born Nov. 21, 1942, to Robert and Martha Martin in Collinsville, Oklahoma, the youngest of six children. Golf was a huge part of his life, and at the age of 15, he was the highest paid caddy at the U.S. Open in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

He moved to California as a teenager and eventually joined the United States Navy. As a coxswain, he was the fastest at performing the landing craft duties, greatly increasing the safety of his passengers.

In 1962, Marty married Virginia Crispin, and together they had three children, Dean, Dawn and Terri. Marty worked the majority of his adult life in the aerospace industry and eventually retired as a manufacturing engineer.

Marty was preceded in death by his parents; his sisters, Chris and Kathy; and his brothers, John and Bob.

He is survived by his sister, Pat; his three children, Dean Martin, Dawn Murray and Terri (Jack) Evans; 15 grandchildren, Kevin (Amber) Martin, Ashley (Perry) Cook, Rachel (William) Moody, Kristen (Mario) Casillas, Trevor Martin, Faith Martin, Travis Murray, Brooke (Whit) Ericksen, Tanner (Katie) Murray, Troy Murray, Tucker Murray, Lauren (Emilio) Diaz, Erin (Joseph) Haddock, Katelyn (Cody) Blomburg and Maelyn Evans; and 23 great grandchildren, Nathan, Clara, and Andrew Martin; Liam, Greyson, Finley, and Callan Cook; Kaybree Shumway, Rexton, Masen, Benjamin, and RayLyn Moody; Brycen Casillas; Tate Wilkinson, Jace and Hayes Ericksen; Charlee Murray; Milo and Amanda Diaz; and Hailey, Lydia, Russell, and Jackie Haddock; as well as extended family, nephews and nieces – HIS LEGACY.

Funeral services were held at Riverside National Cemetery in Riverside, California, with full military honors, on May 10, 2022.

### Nakota Kai Crumbo Crumbo Family



Beloved nephew, son, brother, cousin, grandson and friend to all, Nakota Kai Crumbo walked on Oct. 31, 2021. Born Aug. 16, 1991, he was the son of Woody Crumbo Jr. and grandson of acclaimed Potawatomi artist Woody Crumbo and his wife Lillian.

He is survived by his aunt, Minisa Crumbo Halsey (and Jim Halsey); and uncle, Monroe Jeffrey.

## Submitting obituaries

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

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

## CPN burial assistance through Tribal Rolls

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

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

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