Woodworking a family tradition for CPN’s Matthew Cheatwood

Since time immemorial, craftsmen across the world put their skills to use shaping wood into items that often outlive their creators. Coming from the forests of the Great Lakes region, skilled Potawatomi woodworkers passed their talent from generation to generation. Today, some of the fruits of their labor are on display at Citizen Potawatomi Nation’s Cultural Heritage Center.

CPN tribal member and employee Matthew Cheatwood carries on traditions learned from his own family as a finishing carpenter for the Nation.

Patrons of the Grand Casino Hotel & Resort, FireLake Golf Course and Citizen Potawatomi Nation Cultural Heritage Center have likely seen or touched his work without knowing it. The entrance to the Grand Event Center contains an ornate bench that Cheatwood and his two co-workers helped shape. He created the display cabinets at FireLake Golf Course’s pro shop in his studio with cementing his passion for the craft. Cheatwood credits his step-grandfather with cementing his passion for the craft. "I grew up in this industry," he said. "My grandpa Joe taught me about it, and I was always around it as a kid because he was always adding on to the house or building something."

CPN Director of Casino Operations Todd Brand. "We can have them built for less than it would be to buy tables from a vendor. We can also maintain and repair tables without having to call an outside vendor.” Those savings add up over the thousands of hours patrons use the tables.

"Matt can build a craps table for around $1,200 in materials," Brand said. "To purchase the same quality of table from our vendor would cost between $10,000 and $12,000. A high-end craps table might cost around $30,000."

Continued on page 13

A LOOK INSIDE
Page 6

Woodworking a family tradition for CPN’s Matthew Cheatwood

Top photo: Wild mustard growing at CPN’s community garden, Gtegangises (We Grow It) near Shawnee, Oklahoma.

Student to wear stole to recognize Native American descent

Page 9

CPN Chief Justice Riley highlights tribal successes

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Walking on
Potawatomi barrel racer places in the top 10 at Indian National Finals Rodeo

Amber Alsterlund’s life revolves around horses. When not working as a veterinary technician, she travels to compete in rodeos and equestrian competitions in the northwestern portion of the United States. The time spent on her grandparent’s farm in Idaho cultivated her passion from a young age.

“I was on a horse before I could walk. My family, we’re pretty committed,” she said.

She mainly barrel races but also likes roping and horse racing, and she won the women’s bareback race at the Pendleton Round-Up in Oregon last September.

The Darling family descendant enjoys your horse, regardless if it’s 100 degrees or in the snow. She grew up in northern Idaho, learning the basics of riding and caring for horses at her aunt and uncle’s quarter horse ranch. As she got older, she began participating in Gymkhana, which are display and skills-based equine competitions. Attending rodeos also inspired her to take on more challenging, physical events such as barrel racing.

“I feel like it’s just in my blood. There’s nothing better than when you’re on your horse, regardless if it’s 100 degrees or negative 20,” Alsterlund said.

Three years ago, some friends she made while participating in rodeos near the Yakama Indian Reservation in Washington told her about the Indian National Finals Rodeo. She researched the competition’s structure and then began regularly attending qualifying events.

“I honestly probably can say my life kind of revolves around it more than I revolve around it… Usually on Friday, I’m loading up and heading down the road. So, it’s pretty amazing,” she said.

The portion of Idaho she resides in is one of the region’s top contenders. The Darling family descendant enjoys the arena, I can count on her to give me 100 percent and always keep me safe.”

She bought her primary horse, Six, from a woman in Purcell, Oklahoma, four years ago. Alsterlund worked from the ground up on Six’s barrel racing skills. The two’s compatibility and reliance on one another account for much of their success.

“Six is a very smart horse. She’s a great horse, and I know exactly how she’s going to go through the arena,” Alsterlund said.

Alsterlund recently purchased her second horse, a gelding named Rowley, as her pro partner. This year’s goals include training him, participating more in breakaway roping and making another appearance at the Indian National Finals Rodeo. She received pep talks and reassurance from fellow competitors, family and Tribal members that make it all worth it, regardless of her performance.

“That is one of my favorite things about rodeos is it’s a family. If you need help, somebody’s there,” she said. “I think that’s a pretty unique thing to have in this world.”

Finishing strong

For the 2018 INFR, Alsterlund calmed Six, cleared her mind and focused on the long game. They clipped a barrel during their first run, but Alsterlund saved herself from the time penalty by reaching over and setting it up before it hit the ground. Her runs improved following the mishap.

“At the week went on, (Six) started to speed up, which is pretty usual for her. If we’re somewhere for a whole weekend, usually once the first run is out of the way, it only gets better from there,” Alsterlund said.

She placed in the top 10 each evening for the rest of the week. In the end, she took home sixth place among 30 women from across the United States and Canada.

“I’m not going to complain about that at all,” Alsterlund said. “Because the way I see it, I’m competing against some of the toughest girls out there. … I can’t wait to get back this year and see what we can do.”

CPN-sponsored Alsterlund for her trip to the finals, and she felt grateful for the assistance and the opportunity.

“To represent the Potawatomi Nation, it’s an honor, honestly, for me. I feel very blessed to be able to have that associated with my name,” she said.

Alsterlund recently purchased her second horse, a gelding named Rowley, as her pro partner. This year’s goals include training him, participating more in breakaway roping and making another appearance at the Indian National Finals Rodeo this October.

“Rodeos and horses,” she said. “They’re everything I could ever dream of wanting to have for my life.”

Tribal judicial positions up for renewal at June election

Two members of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Supreme Court will be on the ballot for the June 29 election at the CPN Family Reunion Festival.

Supreme Court justices Jane Braugh and Nicholas Jones are both being nominated to another six-year term on the Tribe’s highest court. If confirmed, their term will end June 2025.

The CPN legislature passed a resolution supporting their renominations to the court in an April 2019 meeting. The approving vote must be approved by an election of the Tribal General Council by absentee ballot or in-person voting at Festival 2019.

Justice Braugh graduated from the University of Kentucky with a bachelor’s before completing law school at the University of Houston. She has previously served as an assistant attorney general for the State of Texas’ Financial Crimes Division. She is currently a partner at Sico Hoelscher Harris & Braugh LLP, having opened their office in California in 2007. Braugh was first appointed as the district court judge for Citizen Potawatomi Nation in 2004 before her nomination as a supreme court justice in 2010.

Justice Jones completed his bachelor’s degree at the University of Oklahoma before completing his J.D. at OU’s College of Law. He is a practicing attorney at Barrow & Grimm in Tulsa, Oklahoma. His practice focuses on business law, estate planning, real estate and banking law. He has been on the Tribal supreme court since 2016.

Read more about the CPN Tribal Court system at cpn.news/judicial.
Inhalers now part of JD Bromagem’s daily routine

By Lenzy Krehbiel-Burton

A Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal member, kindergartner JD Bromagem uses an inhaled steroid twice per day to keep his asthma in check. A second inhaler is on standby in case.

“I’m not scared to use it,” he said with a big smile.

For almost a year, his parents and doctors wrestled with what was causing him to have extended coughing fits at night, checking for allergies, ear problems or other potential sources.

“He was coughing to the point he was throwing up. It was a medical mystery,” said Mandy Bromagem, JD’s mother. “Once we started treating him for asthma, it helped immensely.”

A common chronic disease among children, asthma is when inflamed or blocked airways in the lungs make it difficult to breathe. It can cause repeated bouts of wheezing, chest tightening, breathlessness and persistent, severe coughing fits.

During an asthma flare-up or attack, the insides of a person’s airways swell up, narrowing the space for air to pass in and out of the lungs. Additionally, the muscles wrapped around the airways in the lungs can constrict, making breathing even more difficult.

By comparison, seasonal allergies generally affect just the upper airway with a runny nose, sinus congestion, and when laying down, an intermittent dry cough.

Nationally, about 6 million children have asthma, or roughly one in every 12. According to data compiled by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Asthma Control Program, the pediatric numbers are slightly higher in Oklahoma, with asthma impacting almost 10 percent of the state’s children. Additionally, people with an asthmatic family member are up to six times more likely to develop the condition themselves.

Oklahoma declassified medical marijuana in 2018. With federal restrictions still in place on marijuana-related research, not enough conclusive data is available to determine whether marijuana smoke is as much of an asthma trigger as smoke from commercial tobacco products. Also, not enough data is available to confirm the impact of vapor from electronic cigarettes on asthmatics, as noted by Oklahoma public health officials at a panel during the Southern Plains Tribal Public Health Conference.

“Smoke is still smoke though,” Oklahoma State Department of Health’s Christin Kirchenbauer said. “Medical marijuana smoke still has fine particulate matter in it. With e-cigarettes, we need more research. It also varies from product to product, so it is hard to nail down the average (secondhand smoke) exposure.”

Dr. Fausat Adediji is a board certified pediatrician at Citizen Potawatomi Nation’s West Clinic. Acknowledging the research limitations on medical marijuana and e-cigarettes, she often encourages parents of asthmatics who smoke to either drop the habit or at least take it outside to reduce their child’s exposure.

She also acknowledges that pediatric asthma patients sometimes outgrow the condition but does not see that as grounds for summarily dismissing a child’s wheezing as a passing problem unworthy of medical attention.

“If left untreated and severe enough … it can lead to scarring and reduce overall lung capacity as they get older,” Dr. Adediji said. “If you have restricted lung volume, there’s a limit on how you can do, which can lead to chronic problems. If they do outgrow it, that’s a plus, but not everyone does. So, that is no excuse to leave it untreated.”

Meanwhile, with an inhaler dose scheduled for later that evening, JD Bromagem is able to breathe easily as he scales the playground with friends at his midtown Tulsa elementary school.

“It’s literally changed our lives,” Mandy Bromagem said.
Sanchez is first female president of Oklahoma Junior Beta Club

By Virginia Bradshaw, Countrywide & Sun

The below article about CPN tribal member Blakeley Sanchez appeared in the March 24, 2019, edition of the Pottawatomie Countywide & Sun newspaper. It has been reprinted here with permission from the editors.

Imagine being a pre-teenage Tecumseh Middle School student speaking before more than 20,000 people in a big Savannah, Georgia, conference center. That was one thing Blakeley Sanchez, now 15 and a Tecumseh eighth-grader, did successfully last summer while serving as state president of Junior Beta Club.

"I was scared for her," the young girl's mom said. "But she said when she got up there, it wasn't that bad.

Blakeley Sanchez is the daughter of Nicole Sanchez, who manages all marketing and social media work for FireLake Discount Foods, and Julio Sanchez, executive director for Shawnee Salvation Army Boys and Girls Club.

Beta Club is a national organization that has as its goal promotion of the ideals of academic achievement, character, service and leadership among elementary and secondary school students. Junior and Senior Beta has helped more than 7 million students nationwide, in its literature states.

About 60 Tecumseh fourth through eighth graders are members of that school's Junior Beta Club, of which Blakeley Sanchez has been president since March 2018 through February 2019.

She took office as state Junior Beta president last June and will serve until this June — when another Tecumseh Middle School student, Samantha Schweighardt, will succeed her. The incoming president's parents are Mike and Carol Schweighardt of Tecumseh.

Nicole Sanchez said both she and her husband are Tecumseh High School alumni.

"We're super proud of the girls and all their hard work," said Mrs. Sanchez. "Blakeley did not get the office for this year's state convention.

Sanchez became the first female president of statewide Junior Beta Club ever.

"She was really thrilled and excited," said Mrs. Sanchez.

During her one-year term of office, Blakeley Sanchez presided at all the state meetings throughout the year and headed all the planning for this year's state convention.

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During her one-year term of office, Blakeley Sanchez presided at all the state meetings throughout the year and headed all the planning for this year's state convention.

"She started planning how she wanted everything to go since January. She was the main one to create the whole convention," her mother said.

She has also traveled during her term of office. One important trip was to the national Junior Beta convention in Savannah, Georgia, when she appeared before the 20,000 people. She was one of 10 candidates competing for national president of Junior Beta Club.

"Blakeley did not get the office but had a wonderful experience," said Nicole Sanchez.

Another big trip was to Greenville, Tennessee, in July to participate in Junior Beta's national leadership camp where she met all the state officers of the clubs around the country. It was at one of those events that she met one of her very good friends, Hannah Baker of Dallas, state president of the Texas Junior Beta Club.

Baker surprised her last week by attending one of Blakeley Sanchez's conferences.

She has also traveled elsewhere during her year as president. Other highlights of her year have been "just meeting a whole lot of friends," said Blakeley Sanchez.

She also heard a talk by nationally known chef Paula Dean at the convention in Savannah.

"She had a great time and learned a lot," said her mother.

After she leaves office in June, following the national Junior Beta convention, which will be in Oklahoma City this year, Blakeley Sanchez will serve on the Oklahoma Leadership Team for Junior Beta during the year ahead.

She will continue being an active member of the Salvation Army Boys and Girls Club in Shawnee, the youth group of Tecumseh First Baptist Church, Tecumseh's FFA program and is a member of both Tecumseh Middle School softball teams' fast-pitch and slow-pitch groups. She is a former member of the school basketball team.

"We are very, very proud of her," said Mrs. Sanchez.

The Sanchez family also includes two college-age members, one who works for the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and the other who is a senior at East Central University in Ada, majoring in education; plus two younger boys, one first and one second grade at Barnard Elementary in Tecumseh.

Veterans report

Veterans and the general population.

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AR E  YOU  G RAD U A T IN G IN MAY?  
FULL NAME, HOMETOWN, POTAWATOMI FAMILY NAME, HIGH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE, AND DEGREE TYPE AND MAJOR

Are you graduating in May? Send the following information to graduation@potawatomi.org by May 15 at 5PM.

ARE YOU GRADUATING IN MAY?
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Are you graduating in May? Send the following information to graduation@potawatomi.org by May 15 at 5PM.
Navarre descendant’s hidden talent inspires Tribal members of all ages to learn new skills

During a volunteer shift at the Topeka Veterans Affairs Medical Center, a beautiful sound moved Citizen Potawatomi Nation member and veteran Mike Martin, Wagon Nana (Morning Man).

“It’s a haunting kind of music that’s really touching,” Martin said of the Native American flute performance that day.

Martin served two tours in the Vietnam War. Today, he volunteers at the hospital to give back to fellow service members and veterans. The musicians there inspired Martin to learn how to play the Native American flute.

He began researching various styles and techniques, and after an invitation, joined the flute circle at the local VA Hospital. His time with the performers continues to instill a deep, sincere appreciation for reciprocity:

“They’ve shared a little with me, and I share a little with them,” Martin said. He honors the lessons passed down from the group’s participants by leading a monthly flute class at the Citizen Potawatomi Nation’s Community Center in Rossville, Kansas.

Honing the craft

Learning the instrument “takes time and focus. And just like anything else, you need to practice to improve your skills,” he said.

“The hard part is getting the students to practice,” Martin said. “And when I say students, most are at least 50 years old, and one of my students is 82.”

Although picking up an instrument for the first time later in life can prove difficult, Martin has found his students do not let age influence their ability.

“They see how they are making progress, and that is certainly well worth it for them and for me,” he explained.

For those interested in learning the Native American flute, Martin suggests searching online for a variety of resources, tutorials and retailers selling the instrument.

“You can get a flute that plays pretty well for $30 (to) $40, but you can also spend $200, $300, even $400 if you get carried away, which I have been carried away a few times,” Martin said, then laughed.

He often attends Potawatomi events to play the flute or drum.

“It can be really emotional when we do naming ceremonies,” Martin said. “People really respond to it … it really touches them.”

Roles

Martin accepted a position with the Nation to maintain Tribal properties in Kansas five years ago. In the small town of Rossville, CPN operates an elder housing program, providing 10 affordable duplexes serving CPN members as well as a 10,000-square-feet community center.

“It’s my job to make sure that No. 1, all the residents are safe, and they’re living in an environment where their heating and cooling, appliances and all of that is up to standard,” Martin explained. He also strives to anticipate each of the 21 resident’s needs, ensuring they can live their lives to the fullest.

“The most rewarding part of the job is when I know everybody is in their little unit and everything is like it’s supposed to be,” he said. “Everyone is safe and sound and comfortable — that’s where I get rewarded.”

The community center serves as a place for CPN members to enjoy fellowship and hold cultural classes as well as discuss family connections and Tribal history.

During a phone interview with the Hownikan, he spoke a few lines from a song he recently wrote that pokes fun at those who ride the coattails of their family’s successes.

“I’m an old cowboy from Paxico. I go everywhere in a Silverado. Grandpa’s land has been good to me, I don’t pay taxes, and I got it for free.”

He pulls lyrical inspiration from various businesses, industries and people from northeast Kansas, considering himself an “armchair scientist.” Martin studies the behavior of those around him to learn more about the intricacies of modern life.

As a piece of wisdom from his observations, Martin encourages fellow Tribal members, young and old, to find their passions.

“Don’t be afraid to go out into the world and strive — set your goals high, and don’t give up,” Martin said.

2019 POTAWATOMI GATHERING BUS TRIP

The Citizen Potawatomi Nation will provide free bus travel to the annual Potawatomi Gathering for Tribal members and their immediate families.

A chartered bus will leave the Citizen Potawatomi Nation headquarters, 1601 Gordon Cooper Drive in Shawnee, at 6:30 a.m. on Monday, July 29, 2019, and the bus will leave to return home on Sunday, August 4, 2019. The bus will arrive back in Shawnee on Tuesday, August 6, 2019.

A $50 per passenger refundable deposit is required. Tribal members who attend Gathering will be responsible for obtaining their own passport, food, lodging and incidental expenses.

To reserve a seat on the bus and obtain more information about the hotel room blocks, please call Brandy Oswald at 405-275-3121 or 800-880-9880. You may also send an email: travel@potawatomi.org.

There is limited seating available. The deadline for reservations is 5 p.m. on Monday, June 24, 2019.

Wasaugking First Nation at Parry Sound, ON, Canada, will be hosting the Gathering this year.

Website – wasaugking.ca
Facebook – potawatomi gathering2019
Twitter – potawatomi2019
Instagram – potawatomi2019

Gathering contact: Harmony Redsky
potawatomi@wasuaking.ca
807-464-2929
BHS student to wear stole to recognize Native American descent

By Monica Brich, Beatrice Daily Sun

The article below about CPN tribal member Laney Baumfalk appeared in the March 29, 2019, edition of the Beatrice Daily Sun newspaper. It has been reprinted here with permission from the editors.

Along with the typical cap and gown, Beatrice High School senior Laney Baumfalk will be graduating with a special stole to celebrate her heritage in the Potawatomi Nation.

“Students that are of Native American descent and can prove that descent are actually citizens that have dual citizenship,” Principal Jason Sutter said. “They are both United States of America citizens — they’re also recognized as a citizen within their nation.”

Sutter said he was approached by the Baumfalk family last fall about allowing Laney to wear a stole.

“We had a good conversation. We talked about what that meant to her and her family — what that means to the Potawatomi Nation when a student goes through a graduation ceremony,” Sutter said. “What we did was we agreed to look into it some more, and to delve into what that would look like and what that could possibly mean if the school would be interested in doing something like that.”

During the Board of Education committee of the whole meeting, Sutter brought an amendment to administrative regulation 5225, which described the graduation dress code.

“It basically says that we recognize the historical significance of the Native American nations within the boundaries of the United States and the state of Nebraska,” Sutter said.

The amendment would allow students to wear “traditional tribal regalia as recognized as a religious or cultural significance as an adornment” during the graduation ceremony.

Sutter said that students would have to present proof of Native American or tribal membership and show what the regalia is and how it is to be worn. Sutter and the administration would then have the ability to approve or disapprove the request.

“In this case, the stole has been requested, and we feel that based on how that’s been described and shown to us through pictures, that would be appropriate,” Sutter said. “It would not be a huge distraction to our graduation ceremony.”

Baumfalk said wearing the stole at graduation means a lot to her.

“It represents who I am, and I’m proud to be a Potawatomi,” Baumfalk said.

Baumfalk will wear a Potawatomi stole to her graduation that is available through the CPN Department of Education.

Sutter said that this is the first time in the 20 years he’s been at the high school that a request has been made to wear a heritage stole. He said due to the narrow focus of the amendment, it will keep students from making other additions to their caps and gowns.

Students are not allowed to decorate their caps for graduation, but the regulations allow cords for National Honor Society members and a medal for students with a 3.5 or higher GPA.

However, several members urged Sutter to state a deadline for students to make requests to allow enough time to evaluate each case.

“If I think I’ve seen over the years, if there’s going to be anything that gets brought up, it will get brought up before one week out,” Sutter said. “We would still maintain our graduation ceremony to the highest degree, as I know the board members expect us to, and I think it’s the right thing to do.”

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ADVERTISED LEASE SALE #34 | MAY 30, 2019

Notice of sale of dryland farming and/or grazing leases to be held May 30, 2019, at the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Department of Real Estate Services for the sale of farming and grazing leases on Trust Restricted Indian Land to be conducted under the Provisions of Title 25, CFR 162.

LEASES STARTING 1/1/2020

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LEASES STARTING 1/1/2021

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Troy Biddy’s love and talent for welding captured the attention of Southwestern Oklahoma State University professors. At the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year, instructors offered Biddy a spot on SWOSU’s award-winning NASA Human Exploration Rover Challenge Team. The annual competition encourages high school and college students from across the world to develop human-powered vehicles designed to navigate other planets and moons. SWOSU team sponsors selected 10 students to compete this year, and together, they placed 22nd at the competition held on April 12-13 in Huntsville, Alabama.

“Troy has been a great asset. He is our lead welder, and he is working on the frame design, drivertrain, seats, wheels and axles. He has been an awesome addition to our team,” said Cindi Albrightson, SWOSU Rover Challenge Team co-sponsor.

Albrightson and fellow SWOSU faculty member Brett Chase recruited Biddy due to his vast skill set and construction knowledge.

“I mainly work on fabrication, just making sure all the parts are the right size, cut in the right way and welded correctly,” Biddy said. “Then I also help a little bit with the gears and steering.”

He first picked up welding at the age of 16 in his hometown of Fort Cobb, Oklahoma, and honed the craft in high school at the Caddo Kiowa Technology Center. After completing his basic collegiate courses, Biddy transferred from Redlands Community College in El Reno, Oklahoma, to SWOSU where he currently studies engineering technology.

“I wouldn’t probably be on the team if I didn’t go to Caddo Tech,” he explained. Biddy specializes in numerous methods including “TIG, stick, MIG, brazing, soldering — anything that involves melting metal together.”

The challenge

The NASA Human Exploration Rover Challenge creates a simulated experience that encourages students to employ strategy and prepares them for a potential career in space exploration. According to NASA’s website, “Just as in the Apollo 14 surface mission … teams have to make real-time decisions about which mission objectives to attempt and which to leave behind.”

Successful teams apply life skills — like problem solving and communication — to complete key obstacles before the six-minute simulated supply of oxygen runs out.

“I’ve learned a lot about how gears work and working with others in a situation like this,” Biddy explained. “When you have 10 people together, some ideas get rejected and some get approved. If it’s your idea that got rejected, you just have to act good about it.”

Teams earn points based on assembly, rover design, task accomplishments within the competition as well as pre- and post-event requirements. Additionally, one male and one female from each group must traverse the course in the team’s rover. Groups receive two attempts to complete the obstacle course, and the highest score goes into the final calculations. SWOSU’s team experienced several setbacks during the competition, but the team regrouped and placed 22nd.

“I love seeing their faces when we accomplish a goal,” Albrightson said. “More importantly, we strive to be ethical in our race. We follow all the rules and do our best with everything we do. I remind them often that we are representing our family, our school, our hometown and each other. I tell them I would rather lose ethically than win unethically.”

Future

Biddy recently accepted an internship with Gore Nitrogen Pumping Service LLC headquartered in Seiling, Oklahoma, and he looks forward to learning more about a potential career as a hydraulic fracturing engineer.

“It will all be out in the field, mainly in western Oklahoma, but some in Texas and maybe Kansas,” he said.

On top of coursework at SWOSU, the internship and participation on the SWOSU NASA Rover team, Biddy is a member of the Society of Manufacturing Engineers and holds a part-time position at Tesco Inc. in Watonga, Oklahoma. He strives to build as much first-hand industry experience as possible.

“I would like to get on as an engineer for an oil and gas company, and hopefully end up one day being a company man — running the production side of things in the oil industry,” he said.

Although his busy schedule makes it challenging to attend Tribal events like the Family Reunion Festival, Biddy hopes to connect after completing his degree.

Learn more about the event and SWOSU’s NASA Rover Team here, cpnnews/swosurover.

Tribe receives $36K air conditioning equipment donation

Tribal member and Trane Inc. Project Manager Chris Favre took notice when a contractor returned expensive air conditioning equipment to the warehouse. The original project’s specifications had changed, but Trane could not send the pumps back to the factory. Favre immediately thought of the Tribe and submitted the idea to donate the equipment to CPN.

After the company agreed, he contacted Citizen Potawatomi Nation Mechanical Manager Chad Maeson.

“(Favre) said, ‘Do you want a bunch of free equipment?’ and I said, ‘That’s a catch!’” Maeson recounted with a smile.

A few days later on March 1, he and several other mechanical maintenance department employees picked up six 2-ton water-source heat pumps, a 7 1/2-ton water-source heat pump and a 3-ton rooftop unit from the company’s Oklahoma City sales office.

“I think it’s a very good gesture, Chris looking out for the Tribe itself and the Nation,” Maeson said. “That typically doesn’t happen in this industry. You don’t ever get something for nothing, so to speak. So, that’s kind of a big deal.”

The ground source heat pumps given to the Nation require a significant amount of infrastructure. CPN began utilizing the renewable energy method in 2014 when the Nation built a chiller plant fed with water from a geothermal pond as air conditioning for FireLake Arena.

The Tribe is open to expanding its geothermal energy efforts, and Favre called the opportunity to donate a “providential moment.”

“It wasn’t something that we could just give at a discount or sell again. The only alternative was scrap it,” Favre said. “I hate to waste something when I know our people could use it.”

Depending on the terrain and machinery, different types of geothermal systems use the earth’s natural heat to control the ambient temperature on the other end. Trane’s donation includes three-phase units capable of cooling a medium-sized commercial building, which fits the Nation’s expansion over the last decade.

“It was a win-win for everybody, right?” Favre said.

“We need to constantly think, ‘How can we give back to our ancestors? How can we give back to our Tribe?’”

He began working for Trane approximately 18 months ago. Shortly after he began, Favre crossed paths with Chairman John “Rocky” Barrett, who asked him to keep CPN in mind.

“He plants that little seed, and then it comes into fruition,” Favre said. The mechanical maintenance department has not yet determined the use of the equipment. As the Nation continues to expand and build, the machinery will be considered as part of construction plans and options.

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Improving wellness across Indian Country one client at a time

Unforeseen circumstances can often reveal paths of potential, as was the case for Citizen Potawatomi Nation member Jesse James Whitney. Although his hometown of Chocowinna, Oklahoma, is only a 45-minute drive from CPN headquarters, Whitney had limited personal involvement with the Nation in his youth.

In 2017, the Navarre descendant began building new connections to his Tribal roots after enrolling in the nursing program at St. Gregory’s University and accepting a part-time position with the Tribe.

While the university’s abrupt closure that fall created stress, it provided him a sense of renewed purpose. Whitney realized he could use his passion for sports to serve CPN members and develop a career in an industry close to his heart since childhood.

“Baseball, that was my first love,” Whitney said with a smile. His exposure to athletics began as a toddler when he joined a local 6 and up baseball team at only 3 years old. He proudly wore the number 1/2 to highlight his age difference.

Today, Whitney continues his stride for fitness, serving as a full-time personal trainer at FireLake Wellness Center.

Call of the diamond

Whitney’s adoration for baseball continued after graduating from Chocowinna High School in 2012. He joined Oklahoma Wesleyan University’s baseball team in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, and transferred to Southwestern Christian University in Bethany, Oklahoma, where he played second base and obtained a bachelor’s degree in kinesiology.

While in college, Whitney completed a research assignment analyzing obesity rates across Indian Country. He learned that Native American populations suffer higher rates of obesity than other ethnicities.

The project inspired him to continue learning more about a variety of health disparities across Indian Country as well as ways to combat the negative statistics.

“I decided to study kinesiology thinking that I was going to go into nursing school,” Whitney said.

He completed his degree at Southwestern Christian University in 2017 before enrolling in the nursing program at St. Gregory’s University and joining CPN’s workforce.

“My job has inspired me to want to help everyone,” he said. “Working with Native Americans — whether or not they are Potawatomi — I want Native Americans to be healthy and live as long as possible.”

During his time at St. Gregory’s, Whitney completed a course taught by CPN Department of Education Director Tesa Zientek.

“In that class, I learned a lot about the Tribe,” he explained. “Now I want to work with the Tribe — whatever it is. Even if I move to another department later, I want to be around and learn more and be able to help other Tribal members.”

Although St. Gregory’s closed before he completed the degree requirements, Whitney is thankful the institution helped forge strong connections to CPN and provided the opportunity to build a career with the Nation.

“I really just kind of fell in love with my job here,” Whitney said. “It’s really fun, I have a good time, and I enjoy doing it.”

Training

For Whitney, personal efforts to live a balanced life inspire him to help others develop healthy habits.

“I am not going to preach something that I’m not living,” Whitney said. “I will never make a client do something that I can’t do or that I haven’t done or experienced.”

Whitney teaches a group fitness class every Friday at noon and has scheduled client appointments throughout the week. However, those interested in one-on-one physical training usually complete an assessment before beginning.

“It’s kind of a formal thing,” he explained. “We’ll sit down, and I’ll take notes. We’re going to go over any type of injuries, prior joint problems. And maybe you don’t have an injury, but you have a weakness in your shoulder; we’re going to talk about that.”

The physical trainers then use the information obtained during the assessment — including current medications and medical history — to develop a comprehensive, personalized exercise plan for each client.

“Everybody starts and stops at different places,” he explained. “Some people come in and they are already fit, and some people come in that have never been in a gym. It doesn’t make one better off than the other. One just may need a little help, and that’s what we’re here for.”

While not everyone can make it into the gym, Whitney encourages integrating healthy practices into daily life and uses his efforts to motivate others.

“I want to be the guy that people can look to and say, ‘Hey, he can help me,’” he said.

During his interview with the Hownikan, he highlighted the importance of setting attainable goals to increase the likelihood of long-term success and being mindful of opportunities outside of the gym to improve total wellness.

For more information on FireLake Wellness Center’s physical training services and group classes, visit cpnnews.firelakewellnesscenter.com.

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When I was a student at Harvard Law School in 1995-96, Joe Kalt was teaching a nation-building course at the JFK School of Government. Law students were allowed to take a few courses outside the law school, and I took the class. It was a continuation of my education in Indian law and tribal government. I spent much time with Joe and his colleague Native Nations Co-Founder, Stephen Cornell, for years. By the time I was in academia and writing extensively in the field, we had become friends and colleagues.

What are some of your responsibilities as a member of the board of governors for the program?

“The board is actually quite active and very engaged in the work. We provide guidance in terms of mission and instrumental support for the organization. But the primary work of the board is to review the applications from tribes and begin to narrow them to a smaller set. The board conducts site visits around the country and makes further assessments. Finally, we have our final board meeting where we make the final selections and give those honors out at NCAl.”

Why do you think Honoring Nations is important?

“The future is Indigenous. Native Nations have unlimited potential to develop as sovereigns and also to set the standard for good governance, which I believe the world needs right now.” The Honoring Nations program is dedicated to seeking out that kind of innovation, vision, grit, and leadership, and not only rewarding it but making it known in Indian Country to serve as a model for other tribes.

Since you have spent your career studying Native American law and sovereign tribes, what do you think are some of the major facets of a tribal program that help its government in the long term?

“I have to be transparent here — I've been truly inspired by Chairman Barrett and the leadership he has shown in numerous respects. I feel our own constitutional revitalization was critical to adopting a constitution that compels with our own Tribe’s governance and mission. As I've spent more than a decade studying Native Nations, the programs I have seen that are most successful share some common features. In the words of Joe Kalt and Steve Cornell, they constitute a ‘cultural match’. That is, they are culturally integrated into the tribal community and reflect tribal tradition and values in a way that belies support and buy-in from the community. They are run with principles of integrity and transparency, and think creatively about sustainability — they are sustainable. In my view, any sustainable, culturally relevant program helps the people, thereby helping the government. Tribes are a community, and must remain so to survive and succeed into the next seven generations.”

What do you think are some of the biggest challenges tribes face governmentally?

“People forget that many tribes are still recovering from an incredibly disruptive — and, in some cases, violent, destructive and brutal — process. This means that the governments established in the Reorganization Period might not be suitable for today’s challenges. Or the tribe may now be on lands away from their aboriginal homeland, making connection to traditional culture and spirituality more difficult. But I think some of our biggest challenges will come in figuring out how to be global leaders in marrying innovation with sustainability — both conceptually, a respect for our planet, the Mother Earth, and how to ensure her continuation into the future for all people. In addition, the pressures of the 21st century are significant, to say the least. As the Indian population moves off reservation in increasing numbers, we have to think creatively about membership, community, and tribalism for the future.”

What kind of feelings for the future of Native American governments do you have?

“I am constantly inspired by Indigenous peoples, in the U.S. and around the world. The unbelievable agility in adapting to new technologies and new innovations to revive tribal culture and tradition, is truly remarkable. When I read the applications and see tribes leading the way for their people in health care in remote Alaskan villages or in green food production in rural Oklahoma or creating Indigenous-based justice systems in Northern California, I am awed every single time by the human capital that goes into those programs and the unbelievable success that tribes have in relation to size and resources.”

What kind of future do you see for the program?

“Joe Kalt and Steven Cornell are committed to the program and fundraise for it, which will be based out of the Kennedy School at Harvard. But the program will evolve as its leaders and founders evolve in their own lives and careers. I was at Harvard as a student when the idea was hatched, and I'd love to see it maintain its Harvard affiliation. But whatever happens, the future is limitless for Native Nations, and that's really the most important piece of the story!”

For more information about Harvard’s Honoring Nations, including the 2018 finalist, visit lapsed.org/honoring_nations, or find it on Facebook at facebook.com/HonoringNations.
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JOHN TOM ANDERSON

THIS ELECTION

HE BRINGS A RECORD OF INTEGRITY AND RECOGNITION BY HIS INDUSTRY PEERS

• PRESIDENT OF F&M BANK
• CPN GAMING COMMISSIONER
• FNBOK BANK BOARD MEMBER
• LARGE TRIBAL FAMILY

I TRUST HIM TO BRING THE EXPERIENCE TO MAKE THE RIGHT DECISIONS FOR OUR TRIBE’S LARGEST ENTERPRISES IN GAMING AND BANKING.

VOTE JOHN TOM ANDERSON FOR DISTRICT 11

PAID FOR BY JOHN "ROCKY" BARRETT
Elexa Dawson awarded grant to spread music inspired by Tribal culture

As a lifelong performer, singer and guitar player, Ogee family descendant Elexa Dawson sees music as her life’s mission. She formed a female folk band named Weda Skirts (formerly The Skirts) in Kansas in 2008. While they considered performing together as a hobby, the band became more serious in the last few years and released two albums.

“They’re just kind of where I’m living in right now is a realization that what I’m doing is, it’s important. It allows people to connect to emotion, which is important for healing,” she said. “As I write a song, as I get a song out, I can really experience the healing that takes place within my own soul and my own spirit to get those words and those sounds out.”

Relaizing a solo record became the next step in Dawson’s musical career. As the idea solidified, she discovered the nonprofit First Peoples Fund, which supports Indigenous artists and their capacity to spread their culture. In late 2018, she applied for the nonprofit’s Artists in Business Leadership Fellowship grant and was one of the 25 candidates awarded $7,500.

“I felt really nervous but also very confident going through the application process because it seemed like they were offering a right to me because of what I had already made a decision in my life to do,” she said.

The grant

She began the year with the intention of developing her individual artistry and promoting herself as an act separate from her band. Dawson has written enough music to accommodate both.

“Weda Skirts have two albums of original music that we’ve released, and the entire first album and most of the second album is songs that I’ve written,” she said.

Dawson set another goal for 2019 of immersing herself in communities with other Nishnabek people and connecting with Potawatomi culture.

“I didn’t really know how those things went together, and I just kind of finally realized, ‘Hey, wait. These do go together, and this is who I am as a person, and I don’t need to hide that. And I need to be honest about where I am with my life and the culture,’” she said.

The application process built up Dawson’s confidence and made her form a plan on a timeline as well as budget the grant money in advance — something she had never done when considering artistic goals.

“It kind of made me resolve,” she said. “Like even if I don’t get this grant, I have to do this project because I had gone through the process of the planning to that point, and it seemed like it could really be a reality.”

Her plan includes traveling to the Potawatomi homelands in the Great Lakes region to learn traditional sugar bush syrup harvesting, fishing, Indigenous gardening, wild ricing and more to get inspiration for songs. She also budgeted for recording, the production of CDs or vinyl, and promotion.

“I really thought that the way forward was to be a whole person and to treat this as a holistic project,” Dawson said. “And so, creating music to further my community as a solo artist but then also just being vulnerable about this part of my life where I feel like so much of our culture is lost, and I feel the need to rediscover it, to experience it and hopefully, to reconnect the generations.”

Subject matter

“The art that I’m creating right now is based on a concept of retracing the steps of the ancestors and collecting those things that were left along the path,” she said. “Because that’s part of our Seven Fires prophecy that in that time that we are in right now that we have lost our way in a lot of ways, and that we’ll retrace the steps.”

For Dawson, that means participating in Potawatomi traditions in physical or distinguishable ways as a means of preservation.

“I see that functioning in my life in a lot of ways, whether is it that idea of pollination, that I’m connecting things that maybe exist in two different friend circles, but I’m bringing those people together, or ideas or concepts that are in my life that I sort of am able to put together,” she said.

First Peoples Fund brought all recipients together in Phoenix, Arizona, at the end of February to allow them to meet and discuss their projects. The other artists inspired Dawson and strengthened her resolve to continue her album.

“It let me know that I wasn’t the only one out there kind of doing this weird thing where I’m trying to be really respectful of my heritage and really careful about not exploiting it, but also understanding that the work that I have to offer this world is valuable and accepting that as work that I have to do,” she said.

She plans to work with the harvesting seasons and complete her collection sometime this fall.

“My whole mantra for this year is, ‘Music is medicine,’” she said. Find out more about First Peoples Fund and their opportunities by visiting firstpeoplesfund.org.

Teacher certification tests offered

By Charles Lee III, CPN Department of Education College Advisor

The Citizen Potawatomi Nation Department of Education and Workforce Development & Social Services have entered into a partnership with the Oklahoma Office of Educational Quality and Accountability to offer free teacher certification tests. Tests offered are the:

• Oklahoma Subject Area Tests
• Oklahoma General Education Test
• Oklahoma Professional Teacher Examination

• Oklahoma Subject Area Tests

All CPN tribal members are eligible. Citizens of federally recognized tribes in the CPN 477 service area (Potawatomi, Clevelan, Lincoln, Payne, and Seminole counties along with Oklahoma County east of Post Road) are also eligible for this benefit. To apply, contact Workforce Development & Social Services Education Counselor Kandi McCracken at 405-878-3854 or kandi.mccracken@potawatomi.org.

DEADLINES FOR APPLY FOR CPN INTERNSHIPS

SPRING: NOVEMBER 10 | SUMMER: APRIL 10 | FALL: JULY 10

To learn more or apply, email a current resume and cover letter to channing.seikel@potawatomi.org.
**District 10 – David Barrett (incumbent)**

How would you address the issue of growing Tribal enrollment? Is there a point where you believe it should be limited?

*We are happy at each legislative session to enroll approximately 200 new members each quarter. We have facilitated growing our enrollment through the Hownikan district meetings, Festivals and knowledge of our excellent services. By not limiting enrollment on Blood Quantum, we have grown our Nation from less than 1,500 members on the 1887 allotment rolls to now 34,582. Limiting our members is out of the question, however, for us to maintain the increased supply and demand that comes along with these new members, we are having to be very diligent, innovative, forward thinking not to jeopardize future generations.*

What are some specific ways you believe CPN can diversify investments?

*A prudent investor will never have all investments in one basket unless it is guaranteed. Our Nation has First National Bank and CDC. We have enterprises that affect our daily lives such as grocery stores, clinics, housing, casinos and real estate. What about creating entities that will affect our later years of living like a hospital, funeral home facilities, contractors, Potawatomi and Veterans Memorial Cemetery? I would like to set up immediately a Nation’s Endowment Foundation so individuals bequeath or donate. Diversification into manufacturing has many opportunities to bring employment and housing (another project) to our community.*

**District 11 – Lisa Kraft (incumbent)**

How would you address the issue of growing Tribal enrollment? Is there a point where you believe it should be limited?

*Limiting our membership, under current demographics, is the farthest thing from my mind. We do not base our decisions on blood quantum for good reason; we are family through lineage. Our family grows day by day. This is exciting thing for future leadership and our prosperity.*

A growing bona fide membership means more federal funding for our people. With more federal funds, we can invest our business profits in innovative growth and sustainable enterprises. I don’t see our 34,000 members as a crowded stadium. Rather, I see 34,000 people as individual rockets shooting for the stars.

What are some specific ways you believe CPN can diversify investments?

*Before we can discuss investment diversification, we need a clear picture of what our current assets are, what our plans are, and a fair system of proposing initiatives that can make it to the floor for vote.*

*I can’t sum this discussion up in 100 words but we need to close loopholes in existing federal regulations hampering our financial growth. For example, tribes are not allowed to participate in the phenomena investment of Opportunity Zones even if O-Zones are in their jurisdictions. O-Zones afford tax shelters on capital gains for investors that want to invest in impoverished communities.*

**District 10 – Norman Brasfield (challenger)**

How would you address the issue of growing Tribal enrollment? Is there a point where you believe it should be limited?

*Seeking the membership council’s advice is always a good place to begin with any perceived enrollment concerns.*

“Today our membership has grown to about 34,000 members. Comparison of this number against the membership of the 805 Iowa members is very large, but for perspective, consideration of the 355,000 members in the Cherokee Nation reduces CPN membership enrollment to a nonissue.”

What are some specific ways you believe CPN can diversify investments?

*“Currently, the Oklahoma legislators have no budget to ‘take the government to the people.’ Networking and building a Tribal member contact database can easily be accomplished, meet and greet with a smiling introduction and a handshake when seeing a Potawatomi tag. One contact can and will generate 10 to 20 other members or more.*

Today, the elders speak about the way things were done in the past. Young and old alike have not yet realized the quite power of the petition process available in the 2007 Constitution.

**How do you define leadership?**

“A leader is someone who has the art of motivating a person or a group of people to achieve a common goal. Strategic planners are not everything you need; however, strategies are nothing without effective communication to ensure both sides understands the tasks and is motivated. Leaders must also command respect and trust along with focusing on the job at hand with the attributes of being a good listener and being honest. A leader will give credit to everyone else when things go well; however, when things go wrong they look at themselves and take full responsibility.”
District 11 – Christina Brasfield (challenger)

How would you address the issue of growing Tribal enrollment? Is there a point where you believe it should be limited?

“Tribal enrollment is based on descendancy and that is fair, logical and practical. The strength of our Tribe comes from our members. As our Tribe grows, so does our sphere of influence. To make this influence more impactful, we should focus on improved education to open more opportunities to our members. ‘In regards to growing enrollment, we must understand that we coexist on Mother Earth and human overpopulation is a serious threat. Ideally we would walk through this life leaving only footprints and our lasting impact would resonate through planted love generations.’

What are some specific ways you believe CPN can diversify investments?

“What I have discovered about CPN’s basic business model is it manages all enterprises with their own capital and resources. The Tribe totally owns all enterprises and economic endeavors. Looking forward it may be time for CPN to examine their business and operating models to find a solution that will enable a change in performance of their economic development. Increased profit advantages can spill over to improved services to our people.”

Oklahoma legislators have a unique role as at-large representatives, what will you do to involve fellow Citizen Potawatomi in the governing process here?

“Our Anderson family members have been active with CPN for years. We have come to regional and district meetings, annual Family Festivals, naming’s, gatherings … participating at every opportunity. As a legislator, these opportunities will only increase. I am prepared to embrace other CPN members in helping them know and understand the rich culture and heritage that my own family has experienced as Tribal members.”

How do you define leadership?

“I believe that true leaders lead by example. The successful leaders will tell you that their success is due to the competent people they have surrounding them. A real leader’s legacy is when they are gone, their teachings move forward. People who are decision makers and make the right, common sense choices, usually rise to the top and are able to lead people in the right directions.”

District 11 – John Tom Anderson (challenger)

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How do you define leadership?

“No one ever advanced standing still. Leadership should be progressive and in the best interest of the constituents and keeping lines of communication open. Decision making is a key part of leadership, but it should always be based on an informed opinion of the constituency. ‘Leadership means being accessible, responsive, and have a clear understanding of the issues. ‘Leadership is bringing about the change we all want to see in this world.’

Cheatwood continued...

need. Cheatwood assisted on construction projects of all kinds for Oklahomans served by DHS, including those with developmental disabilities, the elderly and families in need of housing assistance.

“We would do trim carpentry, roofing, sheetrock, painting or anything to build a building. We were a part of it,” he said.

In search of less travel and more time at home, Cheatwood jumped at the opportunity to work as a finishing carpenter for CPN.

“Prague, Oklahoma, born and raised,” he responded when asked of his hometown.

Then and now

Sitting in his 2,000-square-feet workshop full of supplies, tools and equipment, Cheatwood laughs while describing his first days on the job at the Tribe. His first assignment was a podium for speakers at the Grand.

“When I first started, I had a little, old table saw … a 10-inch compound miter saw and a nail gun,” he said. “I had to borrow a hammer from the (auto pool) mechanic.”

As his time with the Nation progressed, Cheatwood’s assignment list grew. Eventually, he created tables for poker, blackjack and other games available at the casino. Working closely with John Gates in gaming operations, the two sketched out blueprints after receiving direction.

“Gaming operations would come over and show us a picture of what they wanted, and so I would build it,” he said. “I’d get some measurements on the width and height, and the rest was just, ‘Figure it out.’”

That flexibility continues to serve the needs required of a finishing carpenter at CPN, and Cheatwood says he is excited about his future work — whatever it may entail.

“I love it. I want to grow, get bigger and see where I can go with it.”

Leadership is bringing about the change we all want to see in this world.”
Tribal candidate Q&As: May 2019 continued

District 13 – Bobbi Bowden (incumbent)

How would you address the issue of growing Tribal enrollment? Is there a point where you believe it should be limited?

"I do not think the best way to handle growing Tribal enrollment is by limiting enrollment. In order to continue to provide the benefits and services to our members we need to take steps to insure our current enterprises continue to prosper as well as adding new enterprises and sources of income for the Nation. I like to think of our Tribes legacy being carried on by my grandchildren, their children and so on long after I leave this Earth."

What are some specific ways you believe CPN can diversify investments?

"While our Nation already has a very diverse portfolio, I believe adding residential and commercial real estate development would be an ideal addition to our Nations assets. These developments would create new jobs and economic opportunities to continue the growth of our Tribe."

District 13 – Michael K. Whistler (challenger)

How would you address the issue of growing Tribal enrollment? Is there a point where you believe it should be limited?

"A greater population of CPN citizens is better. Tribes that work to limit their size dwindle away until they change their policies to grow once more. Perhaps some think that their 'slice of the pie' will get smaller if there are more citizens. But like love, which just keeps growing, our Tribe can keep growing without hurting anyone."

What are some specific ways you believe CPN can diversify investments?

"We must pursue business opportunities that make products. These businesses not only generate profit from sales of the products, but create quality jobs that support families and our communities. The CPN has started down this path, but we need to turn that path into a road, and then expand it into a highway of opportunity and success."

District 13 – Jay Laughlin (challenger)

How would you address the issue of growing Tribal enrollment? Is there a point where you believe it should be limited?

"I don't see growing Tribal enrollment as an issue but rather as an opportunity."

What are some specific ways you believe CPN can diversify investments?

An opportunity to thrive in our culture, our heritage, and our prosperity. The key is to bring our Nation together during this growth. There are always challenges with every opportunity.

"To be eligible for citizenship individuals must have a lineal ancestor that was enrolled, and I firmly stand behind this. In no way should citizenship be limited based on blood quantum. By establishing blood quantum requirements sooner or later our Nation would be non-existent and our treaties with the federal government would be non-existent."

"Leadership is the ability to influence others and receive buy-in to reach a common goal. Leadership is provided by a leader that has passion, integrity, smart and the indifferent, and choose a direction that benefits all, yet does not upset so many that one is ousted ..."

"My role in the national association I worked with put me in daily contact with it's members for many years. I have become very adept at getting the desires of the members onto the agenda at the legislative table. I am a champion of other people's good ideas, which is required of a Legislator for our Tribe. I have some good ideas, but best ideas have usually come from others."

How do you define leadership?

"Leadership is the ability to sift through the good and the bad, the sad and the wonderful, the angry and the joyful, the smart and the indifferent, and choose a direction that benefits all, yet does not upset so many that one is ousted ..."
Hi. I am Christina Brasfield and I am running for Tribal legislature in District 11, Stillwater, OK.

I am a progressive candidate that is interested in diversifying businesses, strengthening member-to-member communications, and would like to hear from Tribal members about their expectations and experiences.

- nishnabe.com -
christina@nishnabe.com

Leadership in its most basic form is the ability to influence. We should leverage influence for the betterment of our Tribal members and take the government to the people.

Individuals have a choice - to go fast alone... or to go far together.

Paid for by Christina Brasfield

Paid for by Norman Brasfield
Tribal scholarship recipient gains business consulting experience

By Justin Neely, Director of the CPN Language Department

It has been a busy time in the language department. We just recently released the beta version of our online searchable dictionary. It has several very neat components to it. It has a baron for cultural context where we can give more information on a word like “eagle” or “tobacco.” We can explain the importance to our people.

It also has the ability to attach video to the word. It has an area for literal meaning where we can explain more about the word. Another neat component is that there will be an audio file for each word when we are done. We also have a number of historic audio recordings where you can hear different speakers say the words. In June, we hope to have an app version of it available.

Our kids competed in this year’s University of Oklahoma’s Language Fair, and we got second place with our little kids singing the Potawatomi morning song. We also, for the first time, had a partnership with Will Rogers Elementary. Serena Neely brought a group of elementary girls who sang “Girls Just Want To Have Fun” in Potawatomi. They got second place.

We are in our second year of offering Potawatomi anywhere in the state of Oklahoma. If you are interested in your district offering Potawatomi for world language credit, get aboard of us so we can get it set up. Right now, Wanette is in its second year of offering Potawatomi, and we will have our first Potawatomi class offered at Tecumseh this fall.

We are spending time adding sound files, images and video to enhance our online dictionary. Right now, it has about 8,300 words and 2,800 sound files as well as 600 images. We started a new 10-week Potawatomi language class on April 15. The class will be Mondays from 6-7:30 p.m. CST at the Cultural Heritage Center. We will be streaming these classes live in our Potawatomi language Facebook group. Search Facebook for “Potawatomi Language” and request to join the closed group. These classes will be archived and available for anyone to view at a later date.

Before long, it will be time to plan your trip to Shawnee for the Festival. We look forward to seeing everyone there, and please don’t forget to use your language! Whatever words or expressions you know. Nednahnem” (Talk Indian)!
Potawatomi women traditionally hold a special place in Tribal society, but translating these Indigenous ideals to European and American cultural practices has not proven a simple task. However, one Tribal member rose aboveWestern European ideologies of women and leadership. Massaw, daughter of Potawatomi Chief Wasato and wife of a French-Canadian fur trader, held stand-ings as a Tribal headman and prominent business owner in the Potawatomi vil-lage near Lake Keewaway in Indiana.

Named in honor of the community’s leader Keewaway, the community served as a key location to hold councils. After the Potawatomi removals west, settlers moved on the land and renamed it Bruce Lake.

“She is one of five women to sign the treaty of 1861,” Norton said. “While living in Kansas, they took allotments and had three children. They later moved to Oklahoma and took allotments.”

After moving to Indian Territory, Massaw’s granddaughter Charlotte married Hiram Thorpe and had twin boys, Charlie and James (Jim). “The boys were originally enrolled on the Citizen Potawatomi rolls at Sacred Heart, later removed and placed on the Sac and Fox rolls,” Norton explained.

Jim Thorpe gained worldwide attention as an athlete and the first Native American Olympic gold medal winner. “Her other descendants became founding members of a new community in Oklahoma, successful business people, farmers, athletes, decorated veterans and members of Tribal government, to name a small distinguished few,” Norton said.

Visit the CPN Cultural Heritage Center’s West of the Mississippi gallery to learn more about Massaw, the various roles Potawatomi women played during this harsh era and how these ideals continue to drive CPN today.

The document divided the Kansas Potawatamie Reservation between the two Potawatomi communities in Kansas. The treaty allowed one to continue living communally and provided the other, Massaw’s group, land allotments and a path to potential U.S. citizenship.

“Her daughter Elizabeth married Jacob Vieux, son of Louis Vieux and Shainote (Charlotte) Chesaugan,” Norton said. “While living in Kansas, they took allotments and had twin children. They later moved to Oklahoma and took allotments.”

Massaw had some civilized qualities of no mean pretensions,” Winter wrote. “She was in fact a gambler of no ordinary ability. She played euchre very well, and those who understand the game of ‘poker’ said that she was an adroit expert, often taking men of experience who attended her.”

Some of the U.S. officials Massaw hosted later forcibly removed her and the Potawatomi to lands west of the Mississippi on the Trail of Death. During the removal proceedings, her husband Andrew Goselins served as an interpreter. Records of Massaw after the Trail of Death are scarce, but the information available indicates she continued to hold her Tribal standing.

“She is one of five women to sign the treaty of 1861,” Norton said.
Tribal Chairman—John “Rocky” Barrett

We are making wonderful progress and expanding our services to the people and investments for the future. It is also the official date of our elections, although many of you vote by absentee ballot if you cannot vote in person on Election Day. This year there are three contested elections: District 10, District 11 and District 13. It is the policy of the Hownikan that elected officials may not use their monthly columns to express their political preferences. We are permitted, however, to purchase political advertisements in the Tribal paper. I have one in this issue of the paper, and I urge you to read it. Please.

During the weekend of Festival, I will be presenting an overview of the current projects and Tribal activities to the Tribal Legislature to provide input and ready them for consideration of the 2020 Tribal Operating Budget. The budget process, which has already begun at the department level, is a large and complex task for all of the management employees of the Nation. During the legislative consideration of the proposed budget, we go through each item of particular interest to each Tribal legislator, adjust line items to accommodate changed priorities, and arrive at a final budget to be voted on by the legislature in full session.

With more than 30 federal contracts and compacts, 14 Tribal enterprises, more than 2,400 employees and a budget in excess of $350 million, it is an intensive and demanding process. We have the advantage of a very professional and capable Tribal management and accounting staff, experienced and educated Tribal legislators, and a clear message from our constituents to come to an agreement if there are differences of opinion. Our record of progress depends on it.

We have long had a difficult relationship with the City of Shawnee and the Oklahoma Tax Commission. Under Oklahoma’s new governor, Kevin Stitt, this activity appears to have stopped. In the past, we found ourselves, along with the other three tribes with governmental jurisdictions in Pottawatomie County, the target of predatory actions by the city and state to collect sales taxes on our lands that encroach on our sovereign status and breach long-standing federal policy and United States Supreme Court case precedents. Governor Stitt recognizes the vital role tribal economies play in rural Oklahoma and recognizes the legal standing of federally recognized tribes. We are grateful to him. He has the insight to realize that “a rising tide lifts all boats.”

What is good for the Citizen Potawatomi Nation has begun beyond a doubt to be good for Oklahoma, Pottawatomie County and Shawnee. We live here too. The Nation recently had a very pleasant meeting with our new Oklahoma 5th District Congresswoman Kendra Horn. She spent over two hours with Vice-Chairman Capps and myself and has committed to help us with several federal legal objections we have been working to accomplish for more than three years. I find her to be an intelligent and well-informed woman who will serve the 5th District of Oklahoma well. She toured the entire Tribal complex and met many of our key employees. See you all at Family Reunion Festival!

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

Migwetch
(Thank you).

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

Vice-Chairman–Linda Capps

I recently attended the Good Samaritan Awards Luncheon in Oklahoma City at St. Luke’s United Methodist Church. What a wonderful community room they have for such an event. There were approximately 400 guests at the banquet. Many people do not know about Neighborhood Services Organization. I’ve taken some of their information and written it below.

Who are they?

NSO is a 98-year-old nonprofit organization serving the homeless and at-risk populations of the Oklahoma City community. It provides housing and health solutions programs that teach skills and transform lives.

What do they do?

Vision: To bring Christ’s love to the homeless and working poor and empower them to break the cycle of poverty.

Mission: Transforming lives and encouraging independence through safe, healthy homes, dental care and nutrition.

Values: Servant’s heart; community collaboration; future-oriented; ethically motivated; empowerment; family; service excellence and program integrity.

The NSO Martha’s House offers women and their children a safe, healthy, transitional home for up to two years while they gain the skills and resources they need to be independent. Each family is provided a fully furnished apartment, along with individualized case management services. Mothers attend weekly life skills classes to ensure that they are ready to take that next step toward independence.

In 2018, NSO provided a home and wrap-around services for 12 women and 33 children. Martha’s House receives about 20 calls a day from women seeking a home for themselves and their children. It is estimated that 21 percent of the homeless population in Oklahoma City are families with children.

Gateway provides pregnant women and new mothers a healthy home for up to two years. This transitional living program, which is structured so that women are safe and cared for while giving them hope for the future. These mothers also receive individualized case management services and attend weekly life skills classes. During 2018, NSO helped six women and six babies work toward independence while providing a stable place to live.

The above information are some examples of how NSO helps those residents of Oklahoma City. They also have an emergency shelter designed for young men ages 18 to 25, who are homeless or who have aged out of the foster care system. In addition, there is a program designed for single adult living with mental illness. This program has 36 apartment homes for permanent supportive housing so residents can live their lives in an environment that protects them from fear and abuse.

The Good Samaritan Society offers funding for the services listed within this article. Donors from all over the state of Oklahoma and beyond help provide funding for the program. NSO’s Dental Clinic in itself is a dynamic story. The clinic has been in operation for over 50 years, providing dental services to the homeless and the poor. Their outreach touches almost 20,000 Oklahomans each year. In 2018, the clinic performed more than 9,400 procedures, including over 1,900 preventive procedures. As a reminder, approximately 600,000 people in Oklahoma do not have health insurance. NSO also has a WIC Clinic, Rent and Mortgage Assistance and Ice Angels Ministry, a program of Skyline Urban Ministries, since 2016. The ministry is a food truck for the homeless with hygiene kits, clothing, toys, water, food and winter items. It would take a whole book to provide adequate information about this nonprofit. I wrote about it because there are so many good people in this state to “step up to the plate” and help with funding. Sadly, there is so much need that it is a difficult task. I am thankful that tribal people in Oklahoma have similar services to what I have referenced, but Tribal members make up only a portion of our state’s total population. Organizations like NSO are such a blessing to the public.

Migwetch
(Thank you).

Linda Capps
Segenakwe
(Black Bird Woman)
Vice-Chairman
405-575-3121 work
405-650-1238 cell
lcapps@potawatomi.org
District 1—Roy Slavin

I am writing this article this come with a sad heart. Julia and I have both had a family member walk on. Julia’s brother, William Messinger of Salem, Nebraska, walked on March 31 after a long illness of lung disease. On April 2, 2019, Bill Slavin, Jr., my nephew, walked on after suffering a heart attack while doing a project for his mother. I know we all have completed forms for the doctors about our family histories, and it seems to be just a lot of paper work and unimportant. I know firsthand this is not the case. I have been dealing with heart disease for more than 25 years. During that time, I have had two major heart surgeries. That in itself can get your attention. Over the years, I have lost seven siblings at an early age, all to heart disease. It doesn’t distinguish between men and women; heart disease affects both. It is a proven fact that heart disease is hereditary. I guess what I am trying to say is to make sure you tell your doctors of any heart problems in your family. Then make changes in your lifestyle. I stopped smoking, did lab work with the doctors to check my cholesterol level and started walking, eating habits. Heart disease is treatable, but it also depends on you.

On a happier note, our granddaughter EveVella, who is 7, is in gymnastics. On March 23, 2019, she traveled to Columbia, Missouri, to compete in the 2019 state gymnastics championships. She is in Level 3 and finished in 10th place all around. She has already started back to practice and will now be in Level 4. Good work EveVella; keep up the good work.

I will close this article, as always, with a plea for your contact information. If you do not get the occasional email from me, it is because I do not have your contact information. Due to privacy issues, the Nation cannot provide me with that information. Thank you for allowing me to serve as your representative.

Roy Slavin

District 2—Eva Marie Carney

postcard invitations are mailed to Potawatomi living within driving distance of a given meeting, please know that all Potawatomi, wherever they reside, are welcome to join our meetings. Just give the host a call, or send a note by the RSVP date to ensure we have enough food and chairs for everyone attending! We are accepting RSVPs now; please call or email Roy or me with the names and ages of all attending. We are looking forward to seeing old friends and new faces at these meetings. Children are welcome. Please bring your family stories, including genealogy charts and photos. You may leave the meeting having met a close relative you didn’t know you had.

Details on the National Archives visit, the Branson meeting, the Family Reunion Festival and the 2019 Potawatomi Gathering are just a couple of clicks away on my website, evamariecarney.com, under the “Calendar” tab. A list of the families that will be specially honored at upcoming Family Reunion Festivals (through 2022) is posted under the “Heritage” tab.

Tennessee meeting

About 50 Potawatomi and family members met at the end of March for our first District 2 Spring Feast. With logistical and instructional help from Dana Kisbev Rees and Bob Shawano and Karen Richey, the group shared family histories, learned feather wrapping, sang a welcome song and said a prayer of thanks in Potawatomi. We also recognized all veterans attending, had a delicious lunch, acknowledged the wisest, youngest and farthest travelled among us, and reviewed a short PowerPoint that highlighted our PLP program and the traditions followed at the Family Reunion Festival and the Potawatomi Gathering. And we posed for photos. I’ve included a photo of veteran attendees. Here is a bit of service detail on each veteran (left to right):

- Ralph Jerome (Jerry) Martin: U.S. Army; served in Infantray stationed at Fort Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, as your representative.
- Ralph Jerome: U.S. Navy; aviation boatswain’s mate fueler 1st class; served from September 1957 to August 1980.
- Taylor Grubb: U.S. Army; served in Germany as a motor sergeant and driver from February 1955 to February 1958.
- Gayle Buabek kishkikwe Maloney: U.S. Navy; served as a cryptologic technician interpretive; primary languages Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese.
- Ted Williams: U.S. Marines; served as radio operator in central and south Korea for 81mm Mortar Forward Observers, with Weapons Company, Unit 1st Battalion, 5th Marines; served from September 1974 to August 1980.
- Nevels Vandagriff: U.S. Army; stationed at a listening post on St. Lawrence Island, in the Bering Sea off of Alaska during the Korean conflict from 1953 to 1955.
- Taylor Grubb: U.S. Army; served as an 11 Bravo Infantryman, stationed at Fort Benning from 2010 to 2014.

Many more meeting photos are available via this link: spnnews3D. You don’t have to “do” Facebook to view the photos.
The next day, LeClair family Webb and your dear parents (Hello), March with Jean Hovland, I noted in my last column Meacham Webb and Gregg you) to hosts Kathy Wahsita you are a sleep and they decide with our granddaughter when summer is a law or marina requirement that children must have a life preserver on when on the boat or at the marina, it be outdoors enjoying the lake and it took my granddaughter she was a toddler, we had the shallow, and all of a sudden, the water was very important to us. As we age and our tastes, important situations or relationships change, there could come a time that the tattoo no longer something that we still want. About five years after I had one of my tattoos, I decided it was not what I wanted, I went to a doctor to have it removed. The only way to get rid of it at that time was to have it surgically cut out or have it incorporated into a new tattoo that changed what was there.

Bema pi (Until later), Eva Marie Carney Ojibedawen (Blue Bird Woman) Representative, District 2 2230 N. George Mason Drive PO Box #7307 Arlington, VA 22207 866-761-6988 toll-free evamariecarney.com evamariecarney.com

For those of you who are boaters: I just finished reading the paperback Experiment in Survival by George Sigler. This book covers how to survive on open water and covers his trip in a small raft where he and a companion sailed from Los Angeles to Hawaii. For navigation, they used a nomogram instead of a sextant. This item is excellent to have in a boat, be sure you have a cap with a wide brim. It should be under $5 — a very inexpensive piece of safety and security equipment.

For navigation, they used a nomogram instead of a sextant. This item is excellent to have in a boat, be sure you have a cap with a wide brim. It should be under $5 — a very inexpensive piece of safety and security equipment.

Cans and hats

For those who make a tattoo, you need to know that more people wearing short sleeve tops or shirts, and I see many with tattoos. When I was in my teens, I decided to get a couple of tattoos. No doubt there may be some of you who made that same choice in your early age. Often a tattoo is secured for something that was very important to us. As we age and our tastes, important situations or relationships change, there could come a time that the tattoo no longer something that we still want. About five years after I had one of my tattoos, I decided it was not what I wanted, I went to a doctor to have it removed. The only way to get rid of it at that time was to have it surgically cut out or have it incorporated into a new tattoo that changed what was there.

That all changed about 10 years ago, and now it is possible to go to a specialist that uses a laser that gets rid of the tattoo, fading the ink and leaving no scars. If you find yourself in this situation and want more information on how the procedure is done, I suggest you contact the Dallas Tattoo Removal Clinic. Their website is calltattooremoval.com. The website has several videos on the procedure, along with testimonials. I have not used this firm but accidently ran into a friend of a friend who had a tattoo removed. He has a licensed doctor at the clinic. Should you find a similar facility in your area, I would be sure that they have a physician there while any procedure is being done. This information is simply being given as information on a procedure that could be available, and it is not meant to say that I completely recommend it. Since I haven’t used this service, I can’t attest to it. However, the person I spoke to showed me their arms, and they stated they had tattoos in the past. Their arms were clean, no scars, and I didn’t see even a faint outline of anything that would look like a tattoo. So, if you have any interest in this, take a look at their website and decide if this is for you.

Absentee ballots

By now, if CPN headquarters has your current home address, you should have received your absentee ballot. Although, in CPN District 3, we have no candidates up for election, it is important that you vote on the budget. Simply return the ballot request sent to you, and an absentee ballot will be mailed to you for completion and return. If you have an issue with the postage paid envelope that would contain your personal information, you may insert the postcard paid return envelope with your ballot enclosed, and place it in a second envelope of your choice and mail it to the election committee. The ballots are sealed until election day when they are opened by the election committee. Voter turnout tends to be poor, and it is important for you to cast your vote that way the leadership knows that they have the consent of the citizens that the budget is to be accepted.

Join D3 and D5 meeting

Tentatively, a joint District 3 and District 5 meeting is planned for June 1, 2019, at the Marriott Towne Place Suites, 2141 Scottish Rd., Abilene, TX 79601. Look for a postcard announcement confirming the date, time and place. Please RSVP to the person noted on the invite or call the number on the postcard confirming your attendance and the number in your party. There will also be meetings in both north and south Texas for District 5 in late summer or the fall, after CPN Family Reunion Festival.

Closing

I look forward to seeing many of you at our June Family Reunion Festival meeting, I serve with honor and deeply appreciate your trust in me to represent you. Mwewiet! (Thank you) Bema pi, (Later)

Bob Whistler Bnashii (He Soars) Representative, District 3 112 Bedford Road, Suite 116 Bedford, TX 76022 817-228-6086 office 817-545-1507 home 112 Bedford, TX 76022 rwistler@potawatomi.org cpnLegislature@yahoo.com

HOWNIKAN

The meeting went well, and the website has several videos on the procedure, along with testimonials. I have not used this firm but accidently ran into a friend of a friend who had a tattoo removed. He has a licensed doctor at the clinic. Should you find a similar facility in your area, I would be sure that they have a physician there while any procedure is being done. This information is simply being given as information on a procedure that could be available, and it is not meant to say that I completely recommend it. Since I haven’t used this service, I can’t attest to it. However, the person I spoke to showed me their arms, and they stated they had tattoos in the past. Their arms were clean, no scars, and I didn’t see even a faint outline of anything that would look like a tattoo. So, if you have any interest in this, take a look at their website and decide if this is for you.

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HOWNIKAN
District 4—Jon Boursaw

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. when Dr. Eric Anderson, a member of the Nadace family, will give a presentation prior to lunch on the history of Haskell Indian Nations University. This is a different presentation than the one he gave a couple of years ago on what courses are offered at Haskell. Eric is head of the history department at HINU. Lunch will be followed by the unique opportunity to hear about the CPN Indian Child Welfare Program from its director, Janet Draper. This program operates within the judicial branch of our government. It is a program we don’t hear much about. Although it is one of our smallest programs, it is one of the most important and effective programs we have within the Tribal government. She will be followed by CPN District Judge Phillip Lajan, who will speak about Tribal sovereignty and CPN Judicial Branch. I heard both presentations last year in Wichita and found them to be extremely interesting and informative, and I hope you will also. Please RSVP by 5 p.m. on March 28 by calling me at 785-608-1982 or emailing jon.boursaw@potawatomi.org. Please indicate which meeting you plan to attend.

District 4 meeting in Wichita on Sunday, June 2, at the Mid-America All-Indian Center located at 650 N. Seneca St in Wichita

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 1 p.m. with a catered lunch, followed by Justin Neely, director of the CPN Language Department in Shawnee, speaking on the family clans that existed within the Tribe decades ago. Justin is one of the Nation’s authorities on our family histories, Tribal culture and traditions, and of course, the Potawatomi language. I think we can all look forward to this opportunity to become more about our individual family histories and the makeup of the Tribe’s early familial structure. Please RSVP by 5 p.m. on May 28 by calling me at 785-608-1982 or emailing jon.boursaw@potawatomi.org. Please indicate which meeting you plan to attend.

CPN Family Reunion Festival

2019 CPN Family Reunion Festival will be held in Shawnee, Oklahoma, on June 28, 29 and 30. This year’s honored families included the Johnson, Lafaiboombe, LaReau, LeClaire, Melott, Rhodd, Tesctic, Weld and Young families.

Summer scholarship applications

The deadline for submitting applications for CPN scholarships for the 2019 summer school session to the CPN Education Department is 5 p.m. June 15. For more information, go to college.potawatomi.org.

I recently served as the director of a youth leadership conference, which is held annually in Topeka. This was my fifth year serving as the director. I was fortunate to be recognized by the MCITC for my work in the conference. This summer, I will be hosting an informative conference on CPN scholarships for our students.

Handmade quilt

I was honored to have been invited to serve on the CPN Scholarship Committee. I am committed to ensuring that CPN students have the opportunity to succeed in their academic pursuits.

District 5—Gene Lambert

Bezho nich Bodewadmik (Hello), my fellow Potawatomi,

S

pring is here for most states now, but according to the temperatures, it is summer for Arizona. It is hot already. You heard about the dry heat, right? We had a winter just like the rest of you, but it went straight into the dreaded season, forgetting the dry heat, right?

TownePlace Suites by Marriott Abilene Northeast (2141 Scottish Rd.–Abilene, TX 79601) on June 1, 2019, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Lunch will be served.

District 3 Legislator Bob Whistler and I will jointly host the meeting. See his column on page 20 for the full invite!

We started our annual district meetings earlier this year in Arizona and had our first 2019 teleconference with Chairman John “Rocky” Barrett and Vice-Chairman Linda Capps. We also welcomed for our first time the CPN Director of Language Justin Neely, for a wonderful story time and short language lesson. In fact, he opened with the Potawatomi prayer. We are very fortunate to have Justin and his staff to help us along with our language. It was a great time sharing this experience with everyone who attended. You all made such a difference.

We orchestrated our first teleconference last year in Arizona, which did have its difficulties. You may remember the follow-up article. I think it was much better this year on this end of the controls.

CPN’s Director of Information Technology, Chris Abel, always does a great job. He has the knowledge and patience of Job and would have to, to guide me through it. Thank you, Chris! Regardless of what’s going on here, you make it happen from Shawnee.

In person is always best, but when you can’t be with the ones you love, put them on the screen. During our meeting this year, I would like to say (without names for privacy) we were able to witness a miracle.

There definitely is a God! The Creator was ever present.

I received a call from a wonderful new adoptive mother of a young Citzen Potawatomi boy. She wondered if she could come and bring her son to the meeting, as she wanted to ensure he would continue forward with his Potawatomi heritage.

Ecstatic, I assured her it was absolutely not only possible for her to attend with her son but how wonderful it was she cared enough to do so. She had fostered the young boy, and after the time was allowed on all sides to adopt and give him her love and name.

An unknowing grandfather and family members decided to attend, not realizing what was going to happen for them during the meeting. The grandfather was from another state, coming to join other family members.

We had a drum song for our veterans and handed out the family trees with a few for everyone to adopt and give in the original disbursement.

Neither knowing the other, the grandfather and new adoptive mother went to the table to sort out the unclaimed copies to see if theirs had been overlooked.

The mother mentioned to the grandfather the name of her son prior to the adoption in the hopes he would assist in her search.

Through family difficulties years before, the grandfather had lost his grandchildren and was not aware of what had happened to his grandson, as he had not been notified. He was enormously anguished with feelings of loss and regret.

Just then and in that moment, he realized this was his long-lost grandson he thought he would never see again.

Both the mother and grandfather were shocked, thrilled and emotionally overtaken as the truth poured out.

Surprisingly, they agreed it would be acceptable for the grandfather to visit and get to know his grandson.

This definitely brought closure to the pain and suffering of the past.

They call it a miracle. I call it a miracle. What would you call it?

These situations don’t always have such a warm, heartfelt and satisfying conclusion. This did, and I am grateful. The family is definitely grateful.

In the world of change, a young lady by the name of Lany Baumball — enrollee of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, granddaughter of Grandma Barb Baumball from Nebraska — made a difference in the articles and rules for graduation for the entire school district.

Laney wanted to wear her beautiful Citizen Potawatomi stole during graduation, and it was forbidden to have anything except the traditional cap and gown. This was her special day, and she and her family did not give up on her right to wear the stole in honor of and representing the success of our Native American community.

She had to appear before the school board and explain what it was and that it meant to her. Obviously, she did a fantastic
job representing us and future Native people of their right to be proud on such an honored day. They have now changed their very strict rules due to her determination and persistence. You can read more about her and her family by reading the article from her local newspaper here: cpn.news/2019stole or on page 6 of this issue.

District 6—Rande K. Payne

Since announcing the May drum making class, I have been contacted by many members who plan on attending and are excited about the opportunity to make a drum of their own. This should be a unique event. Our teacher, Paul Muxen, makes drums and Native flutes, and he is passionate about sharing his knowledge.

We have limited space and finite supplies, so while all are welcome, only the first 75 enrolled CPN members who RSVP and pay the materials fees will be guaranteed the opportunity to make a drum. The cost of the drum kit (deer hide) is $50. However, the Nation is subsidizing the event, so the cost to members is $25 per drum. No cash will be accepted, only checks or money orders made to CPN. If you plan to attend, plan on dressing casually and getting wet.

Hides are soaked for at least 24 hours before being stretched. I am looking forward to seeing members in May.

The Family Reunion Festival is coming up fast — as always, to say that while our leadership team isn’t perfect, we all share the same goal of moving our Tribe forward on a continued path of success and do so in a respectful and professional manner. I am honored to serve with each and every one of our CPN legislators. Please take a few minutes to exercise your greatest Tribal right and vote.

I look forward to seeing you all in Las Vegas and Shawnee! Wisdom from the Wood: “… Much is required from those to whom much is given, for their responsibility is greater.” Luke 12:48

District 8—Dave Carney

I am tentatively planning on a fall event in Minnesota. If you are a member within driving distance to Minneapolis, I’d like to hear from you! Please email me at the address below.

As always, it is my pleasure to represent you. Please feel free to contact me at dcarney@potawatomi.org.

Migwetch! (Thank you),

Dave Carney
Representative, District 8
520 Lilly Road, Building 1
559-999-5411 cell
rande.payne@potawatomi.org

Migwetch! Bama pi (Thank! Later),

Rande K. Payne
Muduca Gaba
Representative, District 6
31150 Road 180
Visalia, CA 93292-9585
559-999-3525 office
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rande.payne@potawatomi.org

HOWNIKAN

Thank you, Laney, and we want pictures of this exceptional win. We, as always, had our acknowledgements of the wisest. The youngest was Luke Bourbonnais and his team on the CPN Election Committee. While I am not in the habit of endorsing any particular candidate(s), I would like to offer my perspective regarding the makeup of our Tribal Legislature. I think the success and growth we’ve enjoyed speaks for itself and isn’t by accident. The services and benefits available to somewhere in the neighborhood of 32,000 members is quite impressive. And those outside of the Potawatomi County area may not know just how respected CPN is within its local community. CPN is a leader in community involvement for the benefit of all citizens. Public opinion is important in today’s political climate, but that’s not why we do what we do for the community at large within our Tribal jurisdiction. We do what we do to give something back in return for how we as a Nation have been blessed. It’s just the right thing to do.

Successful organizations are made up of a group or groups of imperfect people. No single team member has all the answers nor is any single team member a superstar at every aspect of the game. Great organizations almost always consist of a group of people that have strengths that lend themselves to the successful operation of the organization. Being humble enough to recognize your own weaknesses and trust others who possess those strengths we lack is “always easy, but this is one of the most important qualities needed to function well. There just isn’t any room for arrogance and glory hogs in great organizations. While we celebrate the success of our Tribe and recognize our Tribal members for their contributions, rooting our own horns just isn’t in CPN DNA! For Tribal members in Oklahoma faced with a record number of candidates, as far as I can remember, I would offer this: success isn’t based on luck. It’s based on hard work and personal sacrifice for the good of the organization. The best organizations are comprised of a group of leaders plugged into areas where their strengths can be utilized the best. And the best organizations consist of a group of leaders with a high level of respect for each other and the ability to problem solve without personal attacks and personal agendas. I am proud to see that while our leadership team isn’t perfect, we all share the same goal of moving our Tribe forward on a continued path of success and do so in a respectful and professional manner. I am honored to serve with each and every one of our CPN legislators. Please take a few minutes to exercise your greatest Tribal right and vote.

I look forward to seeing you all in Las Vegas and Shawnee! Wisdom from the Wood: “… Much is required from those to whom much is given, for their responsibility is greater.” Luke 12:48

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District 10—David Barrett

Growing up, I could watch Red Skelton and see someone who was funny. I looked up some facts from his biography on IMDB. He was born July 18, 1913, in Vincennes, Indiana, and died Sept. 17, 1997, in Rancho Mirage, California, from pneumonia. He was the son of a former circus clown and was introduced to show business at the age of 7. His numerous characters include Clem Kaddiddlehopper and Johnny Carson.

There is a saying that a joke that makes you think is worth twice its weight in gold. I also found a commentary on Skelton’s writing style in the June 29, 2019, edition of the Oklahoma Agriculture Journal.

TO THE FLAG — Our Standard; Old Glory; a symbol of Freedom; wherever she waves there is respect, because your loyalty has given her a dignity that she must maintain for everybody’s job.

UNITED — That means we have all come together.)

STATES — Individual communities with pride and dignity and purpose. All divided with imaginary boundaries, yet united to a common purpose, and that is love for country.

AND TO THE REPUBLIC — Republic—a state in which sovereign power is invested in representatives chosen by the people to govern. And government is the people; and it’s from the people to the leaders, not from the leaders to the people.

FOR WHICH IT STANDS, ONE NATION — meaning, so blessed by God.

INDIVISIBLE — Incapable of being divided

WITH LIBERTY — Which is Freedom, the right of power to live one’s own life, without threats, fear, or some sort of retaliation.

AND JUSTICE — The principle, or qualities, of dealing fairly with others.

FOR ALL — For all—which means, boys and girls, it’s as much your country as it is mine.

Skelton further wrote, “Since I was a small boy, two states have been added to our country, and two words have been added to the Pledge of Allegiance: ‘Under God.’ Wouldn’t it be a pity if someone said that is a prayer and that would be eliminated from schools too?”

To close, I wanted to clarify a bit from my April column where I mentioned the number of providers in the CPN Health Services. There are nearly 250 employees and health providers working for Tribal members, and a big thank you to all who help keep us and our loved ones healthy.

It goes without saying, thank you for allowing me to represent you and our great Nation.

Migwetch

(Thank you).

David Barrett

Mnedobe (Sits with Spirit)
Representative, District 10
1601 S. Gordon Cooper Dr.
Shawnee, OK 74801
405-275-3121
dbarrett@potawatomi.org

District 11–Lisa Kraft

I am so excited to be thinking Potawatomi, now more than ever. Just two months before the Oklahoma legislative elections are here. Please mail your absentee ballot back as quickly as possible, or plan to vote in person on June 29 before 2 p.m. This is history in the making. To win a seat, one person must get 51 percent of the votes or there will be a runoff election.

There are so many qualified and committed Tribal members desiring to represent our Tribal Nation. Yes, indeed; these are electing times to be Citizen Potawatomi. In Oklahoma, your votes will fill three of the five Oklahoma legislative seats. The other three seats of our legislature are held by the executive officers. This makes our legislative branch a lawmaking body of 16. There are eight lawmakers within Oklahoma and eight living outside of Oklahoma.

Both our Oklahoma land base and resident Indian population are directly tied to the millions of federal dollars we receive through negotiated compact/ funding agreements with the United States. These same variables also support the millions of dollars we go after in federal discretionary grants. Grants provide funding for new enterprises, new buildings and infrastructure, and the operation of criminal, elder, youth, social, education, daycare, and health programs to all Indians in our service area, not just our own members. The money is available to our Tribe, and we should go after every dollar we can, while we can.

As always, I am (respectfully and optimistically) thinking Potawatomi.

Lisa Kraft
Representative, District 11
601 S. Wash St #335
Stillwater, OK 74074
405-612-8068
lisa@cooperbearconsulting.com

District 13—Bobbi Bowden

It is right around the corner. The Festival will be held June 28 – June 30. Keep watching the website potawatomi.org for information on registering and for this year’s schedule of events.

A couple of the very important and meaningful events are voting and Grand Entry.

On Saturday, June 29, from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. is the time for you to exercise your right to vote in the 2019 national Tribal election and the Oklahoma Tribal legislative election. If you are unable to attend and vote in person, you may also do so by absentee ballot. All Tribal members of voting age will receive an absentee ballot request form. This form is sent to your last known address the CPN Tribal Rolls Department has on file. If you have moved and your address is not up to date, please call tribal rolls at 800-880-9880 and give them the correct information. Your request for an absentee ballot must be postmarked no later than June 9, 2019.

Voting is your first and foremost right and duty as a citizen of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. I hope you will exercise your right to vote, either by absentee ballot or in person. Hopefully, this year we will have a record voter turnout.

Grand Entry is held on Saturday evening after our General Council meeting. Here are a few tips on proper attire for Grand Entry should you decide to participate:

If you do not have your regalia, men should at least wear a ribbon shirt with long pants and closed toed shoes (no shorts or flip-flops). Women should wear a skirt and have their shoulders covered. I hope you will consider participating and encourage your children and or grandchildren to do the same.

One last thing in closing, scholarships, I believe, are one of the most important and impactful benefits our Tribe offers, and I would like to remind you that the deadline to apply for summer scholarships is June 15. You can apply at portal.potawatomi.org, or reach out to the education department at 405-275-3121. They offer individualize advisory and help regardless of age or location.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you as one of your Oklahoma legislative representatives.

Bobbi Bowden
Representative, District 13
bbowden@potawatomi.org
Robert N. “Bob” Foresman

Bob was born Sept. 19, 1957, in Topeka, the son of Walter E. and Wanda J. (McRoberts) Foresman. He graduated from Silver Lake High School in 1976. He was employed by Hallmark Cards as a press operator for over 42 years.

Bob married Pamela K. Sharkey on April 19, 1986, in Topeka. She died Oct. 28, 2009. Survivors include their daughters, Cheryl (Ryan) Turner, Kellie Foresman; grandchildren, Hayley and Harrison Turner, all of Topeka; his father, Walter (Dec) Foresman, Topeka; mother, Wanda Bise, Silver Lake; siblings, Mike Foresman, Deanna Lambert, Linda Erikson and Bill Foresman; and a step-brother, Jeff Forrenberry.

A visitation was held Feb. 2, 2019, at Dove Southwest Chapel. Private family inurnment was held later at West Lawn Memorial Gardens.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Cotton O’Neil Cancer Center, 1414 S.W. 8th Ave., Topeka, KS 66606.

Peggy Music Ward

Peggy Music Ward was born in Elk City, Oklahoma, on June 3, 1937, to Glen Music and Lois Music. She passed from this life on March 5, 2019, in her hometown, Norman, Oklahoma.

Peggy moved to Norman when she was 5 years old. She graduated high school in 1955 and later went on to earn an associate degree from American River College in Placeverc, California, in 1970. She worked as a bank teller for Norman Bank of Oklahoma and for an insurance company.

Peggy married and moved around, living in Phoenix and Flagstaff, Arizona; Bakersfield and Pollock Pines, California; as well as Kremmling, Colorado, before returning to Norman in 1981. After returning to Norman, she became a legal assistant for the Office of Legal Counsel for the University of Oklahoma until her retirement in 1999. She was OU’s most die-hard fan from 1952 to 2019. Peggy is survived by her two children, who were her primary focus in life, Warren and wife Pamela J. Ward of Fraser, Colorado, and Wendi Diane Ward of Greeley, Colorado, as well as a grandson, Noah Luthor Rumbaugh, and an extensive loving family throughout Oklahoma.

She is preceded in death by her husband, her parents; Jim Music and Barbara Lewis. They are survived by their son, Charles Bazhaw, II, and their daughter, Linda (Little) Bazhaw. She is survived by her two children, who were her primary focus in life, Warren and wife Pamela J. Ward of Fraser, Colorado, and Wendi Diane Ward of Greeley, Colorado, as well as a grandson, Noah Luthor Rumbaugh, and an extensive loving family throughout Oklahoma.

She is preceded in death by her parents; Jim Music and Barbara Lewis. They are survived by their son, Charles Bazhaw, II, and their daughter, Linda (Little) Bazhaw.

William Dean Slavin Jr.

William “Bill” Dean Slavin Jr., 56, walked into the arms of our Lord on April 2, 2019, at Lawrence Memorial Hospital. Bill, Watauga Giichda (Brave Warrior), was proud of his Citizen Potawatomi Nation heritage. He was born in St. Joseph, Missouri, on Sept. 9, 1962, son of William Dean and Kennetta (Hobbs) Slavin. He graduated from Eudora High School and then served as staff sergeant in the U.S. Air Force where he was honorably discharged after 13 years. He was owner/president of Firelake Construction Inc. As a grill master, he enjoyed yearly cook-off competitions. He liked relaxing with family and friends at his boathouse on Guntersville Lake as well as bow hunting and riding his Harley. Bill attended Connect Church in Guntersville, Alabama.

He was always a gentleman, greatly respected and admired. Known for his infectious smile, he will be missed by all who knew and loved him. Memorial services were held at Family Church of Lawrence, Kansas, Reverend Ron Channell officiating, on April 2, 2019. Military honors graveside service was held at Oak Hill Cemetery, Lawrence, Kansas.

He is survived by his wife, Mary C. Strintkus Slavin, whom he married on March 26, 1979. Survivors include his mother, Kennetha Slavin, Eudora, Kansas; his children, Aaron (Sunny) Slavin, Washington; Emilie Slavin, Alabama; Julie Slavin, Tonganoxie, Kansas; Katherine (Tanner) Burkhardt, Wichita, Kansas; Siblings, Jennetta (Floyd) Huitt, Lawrence, Kansas; Cynthia (Jerry) Reasoner, Eudora, Kansas; Diana (James) Theis, Paola, Kansas; Tim (Lisa) Slavin, Baldwin City, Kansas; Jackie (Greg) Foley, Lecompton, Kansas; 14 nieces and nephews; grandchildren, Eathan, Trenton, Michael Slavin; Allison Stephens, Kendal Spencer; Jackson, Joseph, and Jacela White; and Addison Burkhardt. He was preceded in death by his father, William D. Slavin in January 1992.

Thelma Katherine Beeson nee Negahnquenet

Thelma Katherine Beeson nee Negahnquenet was born March 14, 1922, in Macon, Oklahoma. She walked on Sept. 2, 2018, in Remselse, Indiana. She was preceded in death by her husband, Vernon Beeson; sons, Mark Anthony Beeson and Joseph Vernon Beeson; and four brothers and four sisters. She is survived by daughters, Mary Michele Negahnquenet (Brian Janecky), Joan Marie Stevenson (Steve) and Patrice Marie Crowley; her dear sister, Madeline Smith; seven grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews. Thelma was a proud member of the Potawatomi Nation, as well as a child, she attended the academy of St. Mary’s at Sacred Heart. She was a loving and caring person and will be missed by all who knew her.

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.

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 cclark@potawatomi.org.