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Top photo: An ornament showcasing the CPN seal adorns a Christmas tree.

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Walking on



Capps and Barrett awarded Pottawatomie Power top spots

By Suzie Campbell and Alex Sloan, *Countywide & Sun*

Countywide & Sun originally published the following photograph and stories on Nov. 5, 2020, and the Hownikan is reprinting a compilation here with permission and light edits.

Every decade, the *Countywide & Sun* newspaper conducts the Pottawatomie Power Polls. Readers and residents nominate Pottawatomie County leaders and then vote to determine the top 10. In 2020, two of Citizen Potawatomi Nation's executive team received rankings as the county's two most powerful people.

Vice-Chairman Capps soared to the top of the polls and accepted first place during a gala held Oct. 10 at Crossing Hearts Ranch in Tecumseh, Oklahoma. Chairman John "Rocky" Barrett came in second.

"I like for my directors and managers at CPN to think of me as 'working with them' instead of them 'working for me,'" Capps said. "That attitude changes the whole undertone with relationships in the workplace. I want to have a supportive role, and I want our employees to feel empowered to make decisions on their own. I think if you have done your job as their leader, they should know the limitations of that empowerment."

Capps believes growing up and living in a small town gave her ample opportunities to be a leader. She attributes part of what she learned about leadership skills to her family. She said, "As the youngest sibling of seven, I learned a lot from watching my brothers and sisters achieve throughout the years."

Before being elected to Tribal office in 1987, Capps spent 25 years as an educator in Pottawatomie County and held several other jobs — all of which she said prepared her for the next challenge.

At the ceremony, Barrett said her new title was well deserved.

"Having experienced and long-tenured people in office has really helped us, you know," Barrett said. "We don't reinvent the wheel every two years."

Capps said Barrett's place at the top of the Pottawatomie Power Poll was also well deserved.

"CPN is fortunate to have Chairman Barrett as an outstanding leader, one with great visionary skills that have brought CPN to where it is today," Capps said. "It has been somewhat of a roller coaster, whirlwind, or a combination of the two."

"There were many important projects that the Chairman implemented for his leaders to work on until perfected," Capps said. "CPN progress has been a true team effort. In fact, our CPN workforce could be labeled 'Leadership' because there are leaders in every department who work diligently in the community."



Citizen Potawatomi Vice-Chairman Linda Capps receives a standing ovation as she is presented with a dozen roses, a glass ceiling necklace and a leadership lapel pin from the Countywide & Sun's Pottawatomie Power event manager Kayxandra Koonce during the gala held Oct. 10 at Crossing Hearts Ranch in Tecumseh. (Photo by Natasha Dunagan, Countywide & Sun)

It has been an exciting journey to be a leader of such a great Tribe."

Community work

Through their work, Barrett said he hopes that the people of Pottawatomie County see the Tribe as a benefit to the whole community.

"I hope that people in the county begin to realize that it's not a zero-sum game," Barrett said.

He said the Tribe's success enables it to create jobs and pursue investments that benefit the county as a whole.

"The rising tide lifts all boats," Barrett said.

Capps is proud of several initiatives she brought to CPN, including working with Tribal Rolls shortly after 2001 to develop picture ID for Tribal enrollment. "This was a huge undertaking for thousands of Tribal members," Capps said. "Charles Clark, director of Tribal Rolls, has done a tremendous job with that endeavor."

Capps was also instrumental in acquiring the Knight Farm, the Giverny Golf land, and the Luman property — all important parcels of land for CPN. She was involved with the electrical project to "bring CPN out of the dark" in 2005, installing streetlights on Hardesty Road from Gordon Cooper to Highway 177 as well as Gordon Cooper past CPN.

If there's a theme to CPN Chairman Rocky Barrett's legacy, it's the philosophy of reinvestment in the community. He was elected to his current office in 1985 and has worked to improve the Tribe and Pottawatomie County ever since.

"I had the privilege to write the new constitution that the Tribe operates

under," Barrett said. "And that's made all the difference in the world."

He said the re-written constitution established the legislative and executive structure that are still in place today. Since then, Barrett's philosophy of community reinvestment has put the CPN on an upward trajectory. One of the earliest such investments, Barrett said, was the purchase of First National Bank in 1989.

"And it was a little double-wide trailer in a gravel parking lot," Barrett said. "And it's grown to over \$300 million in assets that we have now."

In addition to First National Bank, Barrett said the Tribe has established other entities to promote growth and opportunity in the community.

"The Community Development Financial Institution is a treasury department entity that is designed to make higher-risk loans to individual Indians or businesses, or to tribes," Barrett said. "We've used that money to help our people develop their own businesses."

It now has \$27 million in lending capital. According to Barrett, it's the largest and most successful CDFI in the United States. Capps felt called to assist the greater community through her work with the CPCDC as well.

"My heart was in the middle of establishing the employee loan program at CPCDC, our Community Development Corporation, to help our employees with low-interest loans that can be repaid by payroll deduction," Capps said.

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Wadasé makes a return visit

By Bree Dunham and
Jennifer Randell, CPN
Eagle Aviary Managers

The first signs of fall for us here at the CPN Aviary weren't the changing leaves or even the weather but instead the air around us that was filled with migrating birds and butterflies. Monarchs were in abundance, many females laying one last batch of eggs as they passed through to their wintering grounds in Mexico. Large kettles of turkey vultures slipped by, one after another, as they rode thermals south. We also began to see groups of Mississippi kites, nighthawks and flocks of gulls about the same time the hummingbird feeders, which had been overrun with frenzied feeding, sat nearly empty. Fall was here with migration well underway.



Wadasé flies near
the CPN Aviary.

During the fall, we begin to gather items that will be needed to winterize enclosures and do any required maintenance or extensive site work now that the summer heat has passed. We also prepare for the breeding season and begin our yearly eagle and hawk nest site studies. We go over the

previous year's dates of nesting behaviors we noted, which include arrivals for nesting pairs, chicks in nests, fledging and departures. While doing this, we couldn't help but wonder about *Wadasé Zhabwé*. We have spent hours poring over her telemetry data since her GPS backpack stopped transmitting last November. Looking for patterns in frequent visits to areas during the fall and winter, we hope to narrow down locations that she might have chosen to nest. Although, there is one pattern and place unrelated to the focus of nesting that stands out. *Wadasé* has never failed to come home in the beginning of fall or during the winter months.

Every large bird that crosses the sky gets a second or third look, just in case. For weeks we've been on alert every time the eagle calls alert us to intruders above their airspace, with false alarms from turkeys walking too close to their enclosures and resident red-tails circling overhead. A few juvenile eagles have sent us scrambling to get binoculars, cameras or spotting scope, thinking it could be *Mko Kno*, but 2020 has been anything but predictable. And although the cause for alarm hadn't been *Wadasé* or even *Mko Kno* yet, we continued to look.

With that in mind, it should come as no surprise that one evening in mid-September, we noticed something sitting on the half-round enclosure. Neither of us could see clearly from where the aviary house now sets to determine exactly what it was. The eagles were quiet, and there were no alarm calls. But it definitely looked like a large bird of some kind



Aviary staff welcome Wadasé home.

looking down into the enclosure. As we stood watching, all of a sudden, the bird sat up and we could see a white head, and as its wings opened, we scrambled for binoculars. It took one half-flighted hop to the next rafter and looked back down. It was *Wadasé*. It had to be. No other bird in all this time has landed, done that to get a response, and not gotten a reaction from the eagles in the enclosure. We made our way to the aviary office to get a better look, and there was absolutely no mistake, seeing her sit on the edge of the enclosure as she peered in the office, *Wadasé* was home.

She was gorgeous and in perfect feather condition. However, when she flew from the corner of the aviary, we learned exactly why we had failed after numerous attempts to locate her GPS backpack anywhere near her last transmitted GPS point. We were shocked to learn that the unit was still seated squarely on her back. The problem was, the antennae was gone. She spent the evening out front in her favorite pecan tree until last light before heading west across the pasture. Sunrise, just like previous visits, there she was. She spent the better part of the day in and around the aviary, stopping by to rest in

between flights to the river and adjacent west pasture. Our resident wild eagle pair, Martin and his mate, may have kept her from venturing too far east of the creek. Everyone is a little territorial with nesting around the corner. The following day, from sunrise to sunset, we didn't see her.

Although her visit was short, it was a blessing to know that she is still thriving in the wild, and we have an answer about her telemetry. All of those "what ifs" and worries have been put to rest, and like all the other winged things that migrate, she has her patterns. We are fortunate that she chose to keep coming home, and with luck, we can use those patterns in the data to find her nesting grounds in hopes of following her and her offspring for years to come. For now, we are more than satisfied with this little victory in 2020 and look forward to the next visit. For more information about the CPN Eagle Aviary near Shawnee, Oklahoma, or to read previous updates, visit potawatomi.org or potawatomiheritage.com. Share your encounters with *Wadasé*, *Mko Kno* or any other eagles in Oklahoma or wherever you may be with us at aviary@potawatomi.org. ♡

Tribal scholarships offer a base for Anderson descendant's entrepreneurial endeavors

Christy Dotson created Premium Promos & Logos in February 2020 to utilize her education, funded by CPN scholarships, to build something for herself and help meet the needs of businesses around her home in Mustang, Oklahoma.

"Everyone I knew in my family were entrepreneurs, so that was far more natural for me than going to work in a 9-to-5 because I embrace all that — I embrace the hard work, and I embrace the freedom that comes along with it," Dotson said.

As a woman and Tribal member, she feels a sense of responsibility and humility for her accomplishments and business.

"It's been nothing but a bonus for me when I tell people that I am a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation," she said. "Their eyes get big. They want to know all about it, so I get to tell them about my Tribe and how much my Tribe has helped me be in the place I am right

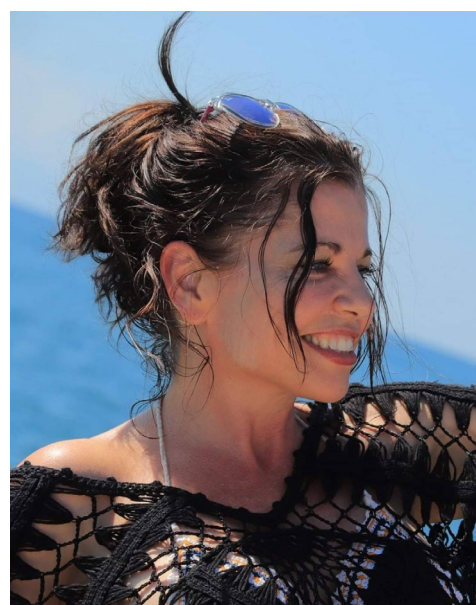
now. So, I just find it an enormous bonus and blessing to be a female and minority."

Education

Dotson balanced a full-time job, two teenage kids and her schoolwork to finish her bachelor's degree in 2015 from the University of Oklahoma. Upon receiving her degree, she learned about CPN and St. Gregory University's partnership. Wanting to continue advancing her education, she enrolled in the MBA program with Tribal scholarship support.

Sadly, as she neared the end of her MBA program in 2017, her 19-year-old son Tristen was murdered. Dotson wanted to take a break from education to mourn his loss, but St. Gregory's announced their closure. Instead of quitting in the face of adversity, she persevered and completed her MBA.

"I graduated with a 4.0, and walking across that stage, I was just crying and



Christy Dotson provides customers expert consultation to make their businesses more successful. (Photo provided)

crying," Dotson said. "I was grateful because I knew my little boy was there with me, and I knew my elders and

my ancestors were also with me — and they were celebrating with me."

Dotson received a note from CPN Chairman John "Rocky" Barrett after graduating, and she keeps it nearby as encouragement to achieve her dreams.

His letter read, "You are a shining example of the intelligent tenacity and courage of Potawatomi women."

One day, she hopes to sit down with Chairman to thank him for his words and leadership as well as the opportunities CPN has provided her.

"I knew that my MBA, from the support of my Tribe, had prepared me for exactly where I needed to be at exactly the right time," Dotson said.

Walking the Red Road

After receiving her MBA, Dotson worked as a liquor sales representative.

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Former Navy pilot aims to change aviation through education

Almost 86 percent of pilots and flight engineers are white, while less than 1 percent are Native American, according to the 2018 American Community Survey from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal member and former Navy pilot Paul Wynns believes his growing business, Flex Air, “can change the face of aviation.” The flight school founded by his partner Charlie Copeland has two locations — Manhattan, Kansas, and San Diego, California, where Wynns is located.

Wynns’ mother was Vietnamese and his father was a descendant of the Upton family. In a recent *Hownikan* interview, he said he rarely saw people like him in the aviation industry. Wynns’ mother immigrated to the U.S. after meeting his father during the Vietnam War in the 1970s. After a successful military career as an active duty Navy pilot for more than a decade followed by corporate positions, he sees Flex Air his chance to give back.

Mentorship

Wynns’ mother always told him his first word was “airplane,” and seeing the movie *Top Gun* in high school sealed his fate to become a pilot. After graduating, Wynns immediately earned his bachelor’s in aerospace engineering at the Naval Academy, followed by flight training. His experience there varied greatly from a commercial flight school, which often offers no career advice or counseling.

Flex Air’s mission is “to provide aviation education and airline career opportunities to minorities, veterans, and students from low-income backgrounds.” He and Copeland share the same entrepreneurial desires to make it happen.

“He had a vision of wanting to do stuff differently. ... He really wants to partner with people, provide good mentorship to them, not just the training. It was a philosophy that really resonated with me from the stuff I learned in the military about leadership,” Wynns said.

Many students lack the knowledge to choose between numerous paths in aviation. Flex Air begins a student’s program by asking about their desires for work-life balance, time spent traveling and where they want to live to help determine their end goals, whether flying for an international airline, cargo planes, jets for smaller companies or something else.

“That’s kind of a niche that we try to fill with that individualized approach,” Wynns said.

Investment

To improve Flex Air’s methods, Wynns enrolled in a doctoral program in fall 2020 at the Rady School of Management at the University of California San Diego with assistance from the CPN Department of Education scholarship. He plans to study “social impact investing” as a way to analyze success by more than financial reward.

“How many people can you help? Are you helping to lessen other problems that everyone in society pays by reducing unemployment, increasing outcomes for people because you are reducing the impact of climate change? There’s a whole area that is kind of small right now because it mixes a little bit of philanthropy with a little bit of investment,” Wynns said.

Flight school costs upward of \$70k. Federal education loans do not cover



Pilot and businessman Paul Wynns diversifies his aviation career with assistance from Citizen Potawatomi Nation’s scholarship program. (Photo courtesy of Flex Air)

the costs of flight school, and a lack of options forces students to fund their education through loans.

“I looked at it as an outsider, coming from military flight training, and my initial reaction, as I looked across the industry, was ‘What in the world? Why are people putting up with this?’ ... I see (social impact investing) as solving a problem that people really need help with, especially if they don’t have access to financing, which disproportionately affects people of color,” Wynns said.

He hopes to use his knowledge to open up Flex Air to those in need of financial assistance by creating new funding options.

“You need to get capital providers. You need to create loan programs. You need to create the types of alternatives to loans. And that’s all part of social

impact investing, and I think it’s going to take a lot of research in order to create a lot of those programs from scratch,” Wynns said.

He hopes Flex Air’s students see a vast set of career opportunities in aviation and the company’s ability to help them turn their love for flying into a reality.

“As an 18-year-old kid, I came for all the cool planes and everything, and I still think they’re cool,” Wynns said. “But why I stay in the industry is for the people. ... They have a passion. They believe in what they do. They’re self-starters. They believe in their own skills. They work hard to attain those skills. It’s just neat to be around that kind of a community.”

Visit Flex Air online at goflexair.com and on Facebook @goflexair. Find out more about CPN’s scholarship program at cpn.news/education. ♡

Bystander intervention could save others from abuse

By Kayla Woody, CPN House of Hope DVPI Prevention Specialist

Domestic violence is gaining more coverage in our society today. We hear about it on most news outlets and social media. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, more than 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men will experience rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by the hands of their intimate partner. The real question that most people ask is “What can I do to help out with this epidemic?”

The most effective way to help victims of domestic violence is learning to be an active bystander in your community. Bystander intervention is a vital part of the fight against domestic violence. An engaged bystander will be able to help someone by intervening before, during or after the situation. Many people will hesitate to intervene if they do not know the proper way to handle it.

Warning signs that a situation may be abusive

If the person you think is an abuser is:

- Acting excessively jealous of his/her partner
- Insulting or embarrassing his/her partner in public
- Yelling at or trying to intimidate his/her partner

Or, if the person you suspect is a victim is:

- Acting submissive
- Showing physical injuries or wearing unusual clothing as if to hide an injury (i.e., sunglasses indoors or long sleeves in summer)
- Anxious to please his/her partner
- Afraid of his/her partner, talking about his/her temper, possessiveness or jealousy
- Restricted from seeing family and friends
- Limited in access to money or a car
- Depressed, anxious or suicidal

Bystander barriers

- I am unsure what to do or say.
- I am not sure if it is safe to intervene.
- I do not want to embarrass myself or the people involved.
- What if it is not really abuse?
- I do not want to offend anyone.
- I do not know the people involved.
- It is really none of my business.
- I do not feel comfortable judging someone else’s behavior.
- No one else is doing anything.
- I hate conflict.

How to be an effective bystander

Depending on the situation, it may not always be safe to confront the perpetrator. Here are some tips on how to be involved at every stage of a situation.

1. Interrupt or distract.

When you witness the altercation, simply pretend to ask for directions, or act as if you know the victim and start a conversation.

2. Confront the perpetrator.

You can interfere by respectfully telling the harasser that their actions are not OK.

3. Request assistance from others.

The more people who can assist you in stopping the situation, the more likely the violence will end.

4. Make a scene.

Sometimes you can bring attention to the situation, and this could delay an escalation.

5. Call in professionals.

If the situation is a threat to your safety or the safety of others, it is best to contact law enforcement to assist.

6. Familiarize yourself with local domestic violence shelters.

The best way to assist someone after the fact is to give them contact

information to a local domestic violence shelter to seek safety and resources.

How can you make a difference?

With the staggering statistics of domestic violence, we all may know someone who is affected by it. Most of the time, violent situations remain behind closed doors, but if you pay close enough attention, you will see that perpetrators will also act aggressively in public. It is important to educate yourself on red flags to look for and spread the word in the community about helping.

- Recognize that domestic violence is a real problem in the community.
- Recognize the warning signs of violence or the precursors to abuse.
- Speak up about bystander intervention and the importance of helping others.
- Do not brush off uncomfortable situations; say or do something.

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

Teacher receives grant to uncover the untold stories of Native American veterans

History books often overlook Native American involvement in the military and their roles in protecting the United States' sovereignty. This inspired Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal member and middle school teacher Bret Godfrey to apply for a prestigious Fund for Teachers grant. His proposal includes bringing to light this often undiscussed part of American history through research and first-hand experience.

Godfrey teaches seventh and eighth grade history and geography at the American Indian Magnet School in St. Paul, Minnesota. With the significant fellowship, Godfrey will travel to Europe and study Native American's service during World War II and add his findings to his curriculum.

"It certainly goes back to being an American Indian magnet school. You're trying to find relevant material for our students, and there isn't much in the books beyond the Code Talkers," Godfrey said.

While he believes the Code Talkers play an important role in American history, Godfrey wants to uncover personal, deeper stories and highlight the tradition of service that so many Native Americans continue today. He also hopes to pay homage to those who never made it home, many of whom were not even U.S. citizens at the time.

"Why is it that Native Americans are more representative in the military per capita than any other groups?" Godfrey asked. "I think one of the themes that came out was, we lost our country, and we don't want to lose it again. And it's part of protecting your land and protecting your country — your homeland. Part of our traditions is being warriors."

The grant

Donor-supported Fund for Teachers awards fellowships to educational

professionals leading pre-K through 12th grade students. The teachers must have more than three years of classroom experience and seek to expand professional development to enrich their classroom, school and community's success. While many apply, the organization has selected only 9,000 educators nationwide since its incorporation in 2001.

"My wife received a Fund for Teachers grant, and she was pushing me. 'You need to do this and sit down and hammer it out,'" Godfrey said.

The two, along with friends and family — including their daughter Virginia Vogel and Godfrey's uncle, George Godfrey, who is a published author — worked on crafting the application and editing it to perfection.

Godfrey's grant request included visiting well-known World War II cemeteries in Normandy as well as others across Europe.

"I don't want to sound morbid, but I find cemeteries interesting. You go in there, you see history just by looking at a tombstone," he said.

While the *Hownikan* spoke with Godfrey through Zoom, his wife Debra highlighted the trauma involved when remains never make their way back home for families and communities to mourn and hold proper ceremony. Part of the trip includes honoring Native American soldiers by smudging and offering tobacco.

"It would be great to bless Potawatomi, if we find those graves," Godfrey said.

Overall, he is passionate about putting pieces together, keeping stories alive for future generations and reminding his students of the long-standing traditions within tribes to serve others.

"You've got the macro-type stories of the Battle of the Bulge in Normandy,



Bret Godfrey plans to use the Fund for Teachers grant to teach a more inclusive history of Native American service during World War II. (Photo provided)

and you got the story that we all pretty much learned in history," he said. "But, as you dig down deeper, there's that personal story — individual stories and families and tribal communities that really aren't told. And for a tribal community, we're a small community, that type of story should be told."

The American Indian Magnet School's students represent a variety of tribes.

"It's a good place for me to be," he said, and the grant will assist with reaching students both Native and non-Native alike.

Pandemic disrupts plans

Godfrey received notification of his Fund for Teachers award around the coronavirus pandemic's onset in the United States. This disrupted his ability to travel to Europe and conduct research over the 2020 summer.

"You're trying to keep pumped up about it and stay enthusiastic, then your hopes get dashed," Godfrey said. "So that's an emotional piece that a person has to work through."

However, he sees the delay as an opportunity to dive deeper into his studies and focus time on adapting to virtual instruction.

"It's nothing profound in what I am saying — it's across the board. (All teachers) are struggling with trying to keep our students engaged," he said.

"I don't want to get good at (teaching virtually). I want to get back into the classroom and be around the students."

How to help

Once coronavirus traveling restrictions are no longer in place, Godfrey will visit Europe and complete the fellowship. While he knows of other Native Americans who never made it home, he would like to learn more about Potawatomi servicemen and women buried in Europe due to the war.

"We want to honor them when we end up there," he said. "The cemeteries don't (organize the graves) by rank or race. You just have to go there and study to find out who these people are."

"If someone wants to reach out to me, we would love to have that piece of information."

Godfrey welcomes communication through email at bret.godfrey@spps.org.

Learn more about Fund for Teachers at fundforteachers.org.



CITIZEN POTAWATOMI NATION CARES ACT APPLICATIONS

HOW DO I APPLY?

Visit Potawatomi.org/cares to apply online or call (833) 481-0638 for an application to be mailed.

ARE FUNDS STILL AVAILABLE?

Funding is limited and applications are processed in the order they are received. Tribal members are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

DO I NEED TO BE AN ENROLLED CPN MEMBER TO APPLY?

Yes. Tribal members must have had their applications submitted to Tribal Rolls prior to Dec. 1, 2020 in order to be eligible to apply for the CARES Act programs.

WHEN WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT?

Most applications are processed within two weeks. Once an application is approved, it can take two to three weeks to receive payments. Tribal members may not receive payment until 2021.

Birch bark biting merges traditional skill and contemporary art

Several types of birch trees are indigenous to North America's Eastern Woodlands area and the Great Lakes. *Nishnabé* people use their wood for many different facets of everyday life, such as making canoes, *wigwams*, basketry, and art, including birch bark biting. Some of these date back centuries since they arrived in the area.

"Birch bark is one of the most versatile and most beautiful trees," said Gun Lake Potawatomi Tribe citizen Kelly Church. She discussed birch bark biting during a webinar in early October as part of the Collections Spotlight program from the Coe Center for the Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Church has harvested bark on her own for decades, with basketry as her primary art form.

Collecting supplies

She enjoys birch bark biting for the uniqueness of the creativity it requires. Artists create images — inspired by oral traditions, animals, other natural elements and more — with their teeth. The process all starts with picking the right piece of material.

"Winter bark" is darker and more challenging to harvest, whereas "summer bark" is lighter with almost a yellow tone. Harvesters collect it without harming the trees during a short period that comes in late June and early July, usually at the same time berries ripen. Church described the bark as popping off the surface of the tree trunk.

"It will not come off unless it's ready to come off," she said.

"You'll see the layers coming up. It's kind of telling you, 'I'm ready to be picked.'"

She reinforced the importance of never forcing the bark off the tree and not collecting more than needed.

According to Church, once separated from the trunk, the layers peel back from each other "like an onion." They continue to get thinner and thinner as they curl away from one another. Pliable sheets a little thicker than paper are ideal for biting.

Methods and practice

Creating symmetrical art in this form requires a specific technique. First, fold a thin piece of bark in half like a book, then fold it from top to bottom. Third, fold the sheet corner to corner, creating a triangle. Use the canine tooth of the upper jaw — also known as the eyetooth — to bite a pattern into the bark while moving it around to craft the image.

During the webinar, Church closed her eyes as she began to demonstrate the technique on a spare piece of bark in her studio. "I can't look at people when I bite," she said and laughed.

After a few moments, Church unfolded it back into a single sheet.

"You have to open it very carefully," she said. "As you open it, you'll see I have a circle. For me, this is the beginning of a turtle."

Church creates several animals and symbols on demand due to repetition throughout the years; otherwise, she practices to achieve additional requests.



Flowers and butterflies both retain cultural significance for Eastern Woodland tribes and frequently appear in art such as birch bark biting. (Photo provided)

Nishnabé people still carry on the rare art form through oral tradition like many other Tribal cultural practices. Church teaches others as she learned from an elder and encourages all Potawatomi people to try this beautiful way to create images with no apprehensions.

"Number one: there's no wrong bitings. ... Every biting is a good biting," she said.

"If it's not a turtle, what is it? A snowflake!"

Many artists learn how to imagine the final piece in their minds as they move the bark back and forth while making indentations with their mouths. The most important and productive way to improve that technique is practice.

Beyond art

While many people frame and display birch bark biting pieces on their own as art, the technique initially served a much more utilitarian purpose. Women mostly

learned how to bite patterns; the practice fit into their contributions and roles in the community, such as cooking, sewing and harvesting fruits and vegetables.

"I've read that people used to do birch bark biting as they picked strawberries to occupy their mouths so they wouldn't eat the strawberries," Church said.

Given the consistency of a thin piece of birch bark akin to cardboard, many women developed beautiful floral and other culturally significant designs into the flexible and durable material. They used them while making and decorating garments or other linens, often outlining their beading or quillwork. Potawatomi people carry on the symmetrical images in modern regalia and accessories.

To watch the full webinar with Kelly Church, visit cpn.news/churchcoe. ♡

FireLodge helps families during the coronavirus pandemic

By Kendra Lowden, Foster Care/Adoption Manager

FireLodge Children & Family Services advocates for and protects children and vulnerable adults who are at risk of being abused or neglected. Services provided include court advocacy, investigations, prevention services, parenting education, counseling, foster home approval and adoption. Social services and child welfare programs do not stop services, even amidst a global pandemic. Our team has worked with clients in innovative ways in order to continue offering the support many families greatly need. Through the development of an internal COVID-19 policy, we enhanced personal safety not only for those we serve but also for our staff.

FireLodge Children & Family Services operates four programs: Indian Child Welfare, Foster Care/Adoption, Family Preservation and Adult Protective Services. As 2020 comes to an end, we have reflected on our successes and growths in each program.

Indian Child Welfare

The Indian Child Welfare Program provides child protective services and permanency planning services for families of Potawatomi children. Serving families across the United States, our case managers assisted with reunification efforts and attended 380 court hearings, virtual and in person. We had the ability to provide additional funding support to families in need and prevent crises such as eviction and loss of utilities.

Throughout this public health crisis, we have continued to advocate for Citizen Potawatomi families involved in the child welfare system. We reunified 35 families this year. This means that dozens of CPN children were able to return safely to the homes of their birth families after their parents completed court-ordered services. In some instances, the case goal plan for children is adoption to another family who will keep connections to important people in their lives. We celebrated 10 adoptions with our families.

Foster Care/Adoption Program

The Foster Care/Adoption Program processes adoption paperwork for children and assesses applicants wishing to become a foster or adoptive home. The program constantly needs new foster and adoptive parents for Potawatomi children who have been placed into foster care.

Our team diligently worked to recruit new homes throughout 2020. This was a rather difficult task, as many families across Oklahoma have been impacted by illness and unemployment. Nearly all in-person recruitment events were also suspended. Despite these challenges, six new families opened their home to Citizen Potawatomi children in need. All of our new families currently have placement of CPN children. We provided gift baskets to each family to show our gratitude for opening their home to children during one of the most difficult times in the world. In addition to regularly providing children with car seats, beds and clothing, we also were

able to provide diapers and formula that were difficult for foster parents to find on store shelves for a period of time. Our favorite project is sending materials to children to make life books so they can preserve special memories, photographs and other important items. FireLodge Children & Family Services values foster and adoptive parents and is committed to helping them help Citizen Potawatomi children for years to come.

Family Preservation Program

The goal of the Family Preservation Program is to preserve Native American families and sustain an environment of safety and well-being by addressing family issues through a holistic approach. In order to be considered eligible for the program, families must be at risk of removal of children, have an identified need and actively participate in the program.

The family preservation coordinator typically meets with clients in their home or in our office. Case management services and education sessions were modified to virtual contact for a period of time. Clients have been able to utilize telephone calls and video chat programs to receive support from staff. While in-person office visits have currently resumed, clients have been able to continue participating in services virtually to protect their health while not delaying services vital to keeping their families together. We served more than 25 new clients and offered 121 parenting and budgeting classes in the last fiscal year.

We also completed 29 home visits and dozens of referrals provided to families for both tribal and community programs.

Adult Protective Services

Adult Protective Services provides vulnerable Citizen Potawatomi adults with protection from abuse, neglect or exploitation as well as offers services. The services help with proper medical care, self-maintenance skills, personal hygiene, adequate food, shelter and protection. We received a grant in January that has greatly enhanced the ability to provide services and needed supplies to at-risk elders.

Our staff completed 12 investigations alleging abuse or neglect of elders. During the course of these investigations, we identified needs to improve the safety and well-being of each elder. We made referrals to many programs, including social services, health care, legal advocacy and financial assistance. We completed 87 home visits; all of them focused on ensuring clients have safe and stable housing. While there are limitations to in-person contact due to the pandemic, such as nursing home facility visits, we still maintained meaningful relationships with elders and have plans for even more specialized contact.

With 2021 approaching, FireLodge Children & Family Services is continuing its commitment to offer safe and supportive services to Native American families in need. Find out more information, visit potawatomi.org/firelodge or call 405-878-4831. ♡

NAGPRA turns 30

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act is a federal law that protects Native American remains, funerary and sacred objects by establishing a requirement for museums, universities and other institutions that receive federal aid to repatriate and return these oftentimes stolen artifacts back to the tribal nations from which they originated. NAGPRA also sets guidelines for excavation on federal or tribal lands, and this year marks the 30th anniversary of its inception.

According to the National Park Service, “With this law, Congress sought to encourage a continuing dialogue between museums and Indian Tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations and to promote a greater understanding between the groups while at the same time recognizing the important function museums serve in society by preserving the past.”

Dr. Kelli Mosteller, Citizen Potawatomi Nation’s Cultural Heritage Center director, oversees the Nation’s efforts to uphold NAGPRA by working with Native communities across the United States to ensure the accountability of museums and other institutions. She strives to assist with returning Potawatomi ancestors, artifacts and funerary objects back to their final resting place.

Process

According to NAGPRA, those with Native American funerary objects, remains and/or sacred items in their holdings must conduct inventories of their collections to identify cultural affiliation and then consult with the tribes involved.

“One, they are supposed to discuss how they are cared for while they are still in possession of the institution. Two, if there is going to be repatriation, how that repatriation is going to happen. And three, look at their practices to make sure they are not continuing to bring in these objects,” Dr. Mosteller said.

The goal of NAGPRA is for Native American remains and funerary objects to no longer exist in museums, universities and other institutions.

Once reaching that milestone, “they will be back in their communities and back in the ground where they belong,” she said. “NAGPRA was long fought for.”

Importance

Since its inception, some universities and institutions have upheld the law, working with communities to repatriate their holdings. Some did not abide for years but are now trying to complete inventories and return items, whereas others have done little to no work in following the federal law.

“It’s one of the hardest parts of my job because whenever we do have consultations and we go out, we are given the chance to spend time with the ancestors to see how they’re being taken care of, and it’s traumatic,” Dr. Mosteller said.

When Dr. Mosteller learns about objects or remains, she consults with the museum or university to determine which community should receive the items and writes letters of support on behalf of fellow tribes. She also partners with Native Nations who still call the Great Lakes home, helping return ancestral remains and objects as close to their original resting place as possible.

“Our approach is that if there were ancestral remains found back in the Great Lakes ... we don’t remove them and bring them back to Oklahoma — they were never from Oklahoma. They never lived here,” she said.

Dr. Mosteller is passionate about being as respectful as possible throughout the process and finds NAGPRA work to be the hardest yet most rewarding part of her job at CPN.

“Sometimes you go in and think you’re going to have a conversation about the minutiae and the end result of ‘how will we get these ancestors home?’ And you get there, and you realize that ‘Oh, I have to start from the beginning and explain to you that these are people with families and loved ones,’” she said.

Not everyone involved in research and archival holdings understands the trauma



Grave robbing and unethical unearthing of Native American artifacts contribute to the holdings of many universities, museums and institutions, and Dr. Mosteller leads CPN’s efforts to uphold NAGPRA.

and negative cultural implications involved with taking Native American ancestral remains and objects from their communities or final resting place, and she works hard to bridge that gap.

“When I went to a reinternment ceremony up in Michigan, one of the elders was speaking directly to the ancestors whose remains were in this lodge with us, and he said, ‘I am sorry because we don’t have a ceremony for this. We don’t have a ceremony that was passed down to put ancestors back in the ground who had already been placed in the ground with proper ceremony. ... We’re going to do the best we can. We are sorry if we’re not honoring you in the right way. This was something that was forced upon us,’” she explained.

Her efforts help educate others about NAGPRA as well as Native American history and culture.

Accountability

Institutions obtain Native American remains and objects in a variety of ways. Oc-

asionally, individuals or businesses uncover them during a building project. Others instances, researchers or collectors do so deliberately, often through illegal means.

“The end result is the same — the ancestor is still removed from the place they were intentionally placed with respect and love,” Dr. Mosteller said.

Although NAGPRA does outline the potential loss of federal funding for non-compliance, tribal communities must hold universities, museums and others that receive federal aid accountable for their actions. Dr. Mosteller takes her role seriously as a NAGPRA officer. That requires staying up-to-date with changes in faculty, keeping in touch with universities and fellow Native communities and conducting investigations.

“There is a great amount of unpaid legwork being placed on tribes,” she said. “It’s following all these paper trails of what institutions were working in and what area.

“However, universities can apply for grants to help them follow through on the requirements and bringing out tribes for consultations.”

Future

Although NAGPRA has reached a 30-year milestone, the next three decades will require extensive time, effort and cooperation between all parties involved, including tribes, museums, universities, municipalities and states.

“I think it’s going to be a lot of proactive activity,” Dr. Mosteller said. “Hopefully, the work moving forward is finishing up and making good progress on getting ancestors who are already on shelves back where they belong and doing the hard work of protecting those ancestors who are in their resting place but are vulnerable because of continued building and human activity.”

Learn more about the Citizen Potawatomi Nation’s Cultural Heritage Center at potawatomiheritage.com and NAGPRA at nps.gov/nagpra. ♠

Power Top Spots continued...

Barrett and Capps have also worked to restructure the Tribe’s legislative and election systems, expand the Nation’s scholarship program and switch the Nation to descendency enrollment.

“If there’s something they can do to help fellow Potawatomis out or help the Tribe out, then that’s one way you can pay it back,” Barrett said. “The idea is, pay it forward.”

The two-forward thinking individuals have accomplished a lot over the last

decade — separately and as a team — which was seen by this year’s voters in the Pottawatomie Power Poll.

“The banquet (the *Countywide & Sun’s* Pottawatomie Power Gala) was so nice, and it was sheer joy to break bread with such wonderful people,” Capps said. “My heart is overflowing with gratitude.

“What a tremendous honor and total surprise for me to be part of the top leaders in Pottawatomie County,” concluded the ever gracious, leading lady of Pottawatomie County. “I certainly will try to live up to this recognition.” ♠

Tribal election notice for 2021

Tribal election season will soon be underway as Citizen Potawatomi Nation voters prepare to elect candidates for four legislative seats and Tribal Chairman. Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4 are all up for election this year. Election Day is June 26, 2021.

Candidates must be 18 years old prior to Election Day.

To run for Tribal Chairman, candidates must reside in Oklahoma six months prior to the filing deadline.

Legislative Districts 1-4 are located outside Oklahoma. Candidates must reside in their district for at least six months prior to filing deadline.

Declarations of candidacy must be mailed through the U.S. Postal Service and in the CPN Election Committee’s hands no later than 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 13, 2021. Request filing forms via email at elections@potawatomi.org or by calling 405-275-3121 and requesting the CPN Election Committee.

Applications will be available on Dec. 1, 2020.

Current incumbents are:

- Tribal Chairman
John “Rocky” Barrett
- District 1 – Open
- District 2 – Eva Marie Carney
- District 3 – Robert Whistler
- District 4 – Jon Boursaw

Tribal members will also vote on the budget that manages the Nation’s trust earnings. No principal from the fund is spent, but the budget pays for national service projects and the executive branch of the Tribe.

CPN members who are at least 18 years old on Election Day will be eligible to vote. All eligible Tribal citizens around the country can cast ballots for Tribal Chairman and the Tribal budget. In addition to those two elections, citizens of Districts 1-4 can vote only for the specific legislative district in which they reside. ♠



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Tesia Zientek furthers service to Indian Country through new board positions

Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal member and CPN Department of Education Director Tesia Zientek expands service to Native American education and overall well-being through the National Indian Education Association and American Civil Liberties Union of Oklahoma board service.

The NIEA focuses on uplifting Native American education, ranging from curriculum development to student access and teacher preparation. Its mission mirrors Zientek's passions, and she looks forward to serving on the NIEA board of directors.

"It's a huge honor and responsibility that I do not take lightly," she said.

During the annual NIEA convention's general assembly on Oct. 7, the organization announced election results for two at-large positions. The Oklahoma Council for Indian Education nominated Zientek for one of the positions, and NIEA members nationwide cast their votes. She then attended a virtual swearing-in ceremony on Oct. 9.

"I maybe would not have thought I was ready for that had I not had people who reached out and said, 'We think you are, and we support you.' And I was willing to accept that nomination because of my work over the past two years with the Oklahoma Council for Indian Education," she said.

Giving back

The Weld family descendant dedicates her career to Indian education. She has led the CPN Department of Education since its formation five years ago, which now oversees Tribal scholarships,

internships, college counseling and the Potawatomi Leadership Program.

"When I think back, pretty much all of my pivotal life moments can some way be traced back to Tribal educational programming," Zientek said. "I received a Tribal scholarship. I attended (Johnson O'Malley) functions. I attended employment and training summer camps. ... In a lot of ways, Tribal programming has been such a huge, integral part of my life that I recognize its importance, and I now want to give back."

For Zientek, her drive centers on uplifting and educating future tribal leaders across the country, and the NIEA board position provides that opportunity.

"That's something that I think tribal nations need to be conscious of and intentional about," she said. "We need to be aware of how we are investing in our younger generation to prepare them for future tribal leadership. I think that's something that the CPN has done really well since 2003 through the (Potawatomi Leadership Program). Some other tribes have similar programs, but that is one way that I see the CPN promoting Native control of education."

In addition to her new board position, Zientek now co-chairs the NIEA Native education systems committee and serves on the fiscal and membership committees. Her experience allocating the education department's budget and Tribal scholarships gives her a firm grasp on bookkeeping for a larger institution. She felt the two committees go hand-in-hand as the membership dues allow the organization to hold conferences and additional opportunities for tribes to teach each other and collaborate.



Tribal member and Citizen Potawatomi Nation Department of Education Director Tesia Zientek's responsibilities include a seat on the National Indian Education Association board of directors.

"To me, it's incredibly important to highlight the best practices of the people and organizations and tribes who are doing the good work of regaining that control. And then also providing technical assistance and help to those people and organizations and tribes who are just starting out, trying to figure out, 'Well, how can we assert our tribal sovereignty via education?'" she said.

While giving back remains her focus, Zientek also looks forward to expanding her awareness and connections during her four-year term.

"I'm most excited, I think, about just learning from my fellow board members," she said. "There's just such a wealth of knowledge there that it's like almost like an embarrassment of riches, and I just feel honored to listen to them speak and learn from them."

American Civil Liberties Union

In October, Zientek also accepted a position on the American Civil Liberties Union of Oklahoma board. She said the organization's values align with her own, and she felt that the time had come to heighten her involvement.

"Personally, as an Indigenous woman, there are a lot of civil liberties that we received relatively recently in history. So it's just important to me that we have an organization like ACLU monitoring any attacks on those freedoms and making sure that they're protected," Zientek said, including immigration rights, first amendment rights and social justice.

"These are things I care about, and ACLU, one, gives me an opportunity to be educated and informed and involved. And then, two, they're an organization that I trust to give me nonpartisan and clear positions on issues. And I think that that strengthens my position as an advocate and ally," she said.

Though these new roles bring additional responsibilities into her life, Zientek attributes her ability to accomplish her goals to the strength she receives from others who see her potential.

"For both of (these positions), it was totally because there were strong Indigenous women that encouraged and supported me to run, or else I wouldn't have even considered it," she said.

Find more about the CPN Department of Education at cpn.news/education. Visit the National Indian Education Association online at niea.org and the American Civil Liberties Union of Oklahoma at acluok.org.

First National Bank & Trust Co. gives back to our communities

By Amanda Estala, Marketing Director/AVP

This year has been a challenging year for many people. From the COVID-19 pandemic to wildfires in the Western states, hurricanes in the Gulf and along the east coast, and the ice storm in central and western Oklahoma, there are many in our communities dealing with unemployment, loss of loved ones, damage to property and other challenges.

The holiday season is always a time of togetherness and giving back, but that feels even more important than usual this year when so many are struggling. At First National Bank & Trust, there are several ways we give back to our communities during the holiday season.

The Angel Tree program is a cause near to our hearts at FNB, as it provides holiday gifts for children and senior citizens in

need. Each holiday season, participating companies set up a tree adorned with Christmas wish list tags for individuals and families in the area. People who want to give back through this program take a tag, purchase the items and return them to the participating location.

In addition to having a tree in our lobby for both employees and customers to select a tag from, our Shawnee branch has hosted the Angel Tree kickoff event the past two years. Other participating businesses in our area come to our main branch to pick up their packet of information and tags, so it's a great way to help out and meet other business and community leaders.

Annette Stuckey, CFO of First National Bank, enjoys crocheting in her free time. This year, she has the goal to ensure that every one of our Angel Tree children receives a warm winter hat through a

group she formed called Heart4Hats. This year, their goal is to collect 850 hats that have been knitted or crocheted by members of the community to be distributed with Angel Tree gifts to four different counties in Oklahoma.

Many of us know the familiar sound of the Salvation Army bell ringers each holiday season, whether they're greeting you outside the post office, pharmacy or somewhere else around town. And perhaps you've dropped some extra change or a few extra bills in that bright red bucket to help those in need. Employees all take shifts as a bell ringer to help spread Christmas cheer and raise funds to support those in need in our community.

Many of our employees, and even more of our customers, are also involved in local community groups like the Lions Club, Kiwanis and

Rotary Club. Others find ways to give back through specific nonprofits or through their church communities.

How are you giving back this holiday season?

We encourage our fellow businesses and any individuals who are able to seek out new opportunities to give back during this challenging year. Whether you sign up as a bell ringer, adopt a family through the Angel Tree program or simply spread cheer through a random act of kindness in your community, we thank you for taking the time to make this holiday season extra special.

For information regarding First National Bank & Trust and our many locations throughout Oklahoma, please visit fnbokla.bank.



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Pandemic brings surge in online ordering to FireLake Discount Foods

With more families staying home due to the coronavirus pandemic, online sales account for a larger portion of grocery stores' revenue in 2020.

According to data compiled and published in September by the market research firm Statista, the number of online grocery orders nationwide for pickup or delivery almost quadrupled between August 2019 and August 2020, going from 16.1 million to 59.5 million. In terms of sales, that is an increase of \$4.5 billion.

The explosion in online grocery shopping pushed the U.S. Department of Agriculture to announce on Nov. 2 that it was expediting the expansion of its SNAP Online Purchasing Pilot Program to include select grocery stores across 46 states and the District of Columbia.

Prior to April, the only states accepting Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits for online grocery shopping were New York, Washington, Alabama, Iowa, Oregon and Nebraska.

FireLake Discount Foods has experienced the surge in online sales as well. The location on South Gordon Cooper Dr. launched its own online shopping platform in 2018, and throughout the first year, the store saw some mild growth with approximately 15 to 20 orders per day for a two-person team.

And then came the coronavirus pandemic.

"When COVID hit, we saw that increase in the end of March, all through April, most of May," FireLake Discount Foods



FireLake Discount Foods employees remain dedicated to providing the best service to customers, whether in person or online.

manager Mike Lester said. "We saw our online orders increase by 100 times.

"There were days when we were filling 300 orders per day."

To accommodate the steep uptick, personnel from other grocery departments quickly found themselves moonlighting as personal shoppers. Originally, the shift was just among departments within the grocery store that management shut down early on to prevent spreading the virus, such as the bakery and deli.

However, it quickly became apparent that the store needed even more help to keep up with the increased demand for groceries, prompting employees from other Citizen Potawatomi businesses and programs to slide over and start pushing shopping carts.

Sarah Lawrence, a personal trainer at FireLake Wellness Center, was among the Tribal employees that helped fill the influx of online grocery orders during the pandemic.

However, when she first showed up at FireLake Discount Foods to lend a hand, she performed temperature checks instead.

After helping another employee fill some online orders during a lull, she was handed a customer's online shopping list and turned loose in the store. Within a short period, she began showing other employees the ropes and encouraging them to shop as if it was for their grandmother.

Acknowledging the importance of word of mouth to the store's reputation, Lawrence said she made a point while

shopping to call or text customers before making any substitutions, even at the height of the pandemic when certain items or brands ran in short supply.

As an example, one particular customer requested a gallon jug of a specific brand of barbecue sauce. It was not in stock at the time and needed a substitution. However, when it became available again, Lawrence texted that customer to let her know — a move that kept that shopper's business with FireLake Discount Foods.

"I've worked for the Tribe for 17 years and think of us as one big family," she said. "I don't want to do something that would give the grocery store a bad reputation, especially if I'm not going to be there full-time."

Since the initial surge that required assistants from Lawrence and other employees, the store has been able to adjust its operations to accommodate for the greater online shopping demand. FireLake Discount Foods plan to launch a mobile app by the end of 2020 to help facilitate ordering.

"Early on, we were adjusting on the fly," Lester said. "We have figured a lot of things out and are very close to offering the same personalized feel to our online shopping as we do for our in-person shopping. We've been working every day to help make the service better from a staff perspective."

Shop online with FireLake Discount Foods at firelakefoods.com. Visit the store on Facebook @discountfoods. ♡

Dotson continued...

However, she struggled with sobriety for many years, and she decided that she no longer wished to work in the industry and stopped her consumption entirely.

"I was able to get clean this year. It's a huge deal, especially in the Native American community. I want others out there struggling with addiction, as I struggled with it for more than 20 years, to know there is so much freedom on the other side — so much," she said.

Dotson hopes her success encourages others struggling with addiction to seek help.

"I've started my new chapter in life, and I'm exhilarated, terrified, full of hope, full of potential and chomping at the bit to get started," Dotson said. "Tristen has given me the gift of clarity, grit, determination and revealed to me my own true resilience. It is my gift to his memory to be the biggest, baddest, most successful version of me that I'm capable of."

Premium Promo & Logos

Dotson aids her sobriety by continuously improving herself and furthering her education. To establish an even greater business foundation, she enrolled in a program with Sandler Training to enhance her sales skills.

"Even though I was I was very successful in liquor sales, I knew that I needed far more support and help if I was going to do it on my own," Dotson said. "(Sandler Training) have been a catalyst for my growth in sales."

Dotson said Premium Promo & Logos provides a boutique, concierge service through her expert consultation.

"I typically work with businesses who are tired of having their advertising on TV and radio ignored and spending enormous amount on advertising dollars just to be ignored — businesses who are just frustrated having all of their hard-earned money with promotional products thrown in the trash because they didn't have people to help them find just the right promotional product," she said.

By discussing goals and aspirations with clients, Dotson provides the perfect advertising and promotional solutions to make businesses flourish.

"I walk them through what it could look like from point A to B, and then I hand deliver all their products because I want to make sure that they're happy," Dotson said.

Since establishing her business early 2020, Dotson has focused on providing the highest-quality customer service. Now, a large percentage of new business comes from referrals.

"I have a personal rule that if I am within 3 feet of somebody, I try to discuss and talk about what they do and then bring up what I do, and it works out quite a bit," she explained.

Although establishing a new business amidst the coronavirus pandemic has created unforeseen difficulties, Dotson believes her attention to detail and track record for helping businesses succeed will carry Premium Promo & Logos through.

Learn more about Premium Promo & Logos by visiting sweetswag.promo or facebook.com/PremiumPromosandLogos. ♡

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Bergeron family history

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

Potawatomi connections

The Bergeron Potawatomi family roots begin along the Kankakee River in Bourbonnais Grove, Illinois, with *Watchekee*, the daughter of Potawatomi/Odawa Chief *Shabonna* and *Monashki*. *Shabonna* (Built Like a Bear) was an ally of *Tecumseh* and *Tenskwatawa* during the War of 1812. He joined *Main Poc* and other Potawatomi leaders including *Waubensee* and *Winamac* to fight American forces. However, after the war, *Shabonna* abandoned his total opposition of the United States.

Watchekee was born around 1810 and had a reputation for being intelligent and beautiful. Although she had mixed tribal heritage, because of her father's leadership with the Tribe, Chief *Shabonna* raised



Jean (John) Baptiste Bergeron



Oliver Bergeron

her in a Potawatomi village. Family records indicate she was born during a bright star. Potawatomi often used natural phenomenon to denote time rather than years. After the Potawatomi signed the 1833 Treaty of Chicago, she was among those removed to Council Bluffs, Iowa, in 1837.

Watchekee never forgot her home in the Great Lakes and traveled back and forth from the reservations west of the Mississippi in Iowa and Kansas to Illinois by foot on multiple occasions, and because of this, was ultimately removed numerous times. Bergeron descendants estimate she walked more than 6,000 miles on her travels.

French-Canadian Francis Xavier Bergeron was born between 1815 and 1819 and arrived in the Great Lakes region as a young man where he met *Watchekee* on one of her trips back to the region. In 1840, she received the name Josette or Zozetta after her baptism. She and Francis wed around that same time, but it was not her first marriage. Before marrying Bergeron, she had two other husbands named LeVasseur and Hubbard. She had four children: Jean Batiste, Catherine (Kate), Matilda and Charlie.

Watchekee's children grew up in a pivotal, difficult time in Potawatomi history. They experienced forced removal, relocations and the countless adversities associated with navigating being Woodland people on the prairies of Kansas. Although Potawatomi had hopes the reservation would be safe from outside encroachment, it did not go unnoticed by settlers and travelers.

The Oregon Trail brought thousands through the area, and the railroad saw many economic opportunities.

As a result of Westward Expansion and commerce, the federal government approached the Tribe about the chance to take allotments and become U.S. citizens in 1861. The Bergeron family were among the Citizen Potawatomi listed on the 1863 census. However, this did not prove advantageous for many who gained American citizenship, and the allotted lands quickly passed from Potawatomi ownership to white settlers. A clause in the 1861 treaty provided opportunity for the Potawatomi to sell their remaining lands in Kansas and purchase a new reservation in Indian Territory.

In 1872, the Bergeron family joined six other Kansas-based families to become part of the original Potawatomi to settle on the new reservation in present-day Oklahoma.

Watchekee was one of the very few to live in the Great Lakes, experience removal and eventually settle on the reservation in Indian Territory. However, her influence in the Great Lakes region remains today with the city of Watseka, Illinois, near the Indiana border derived from her name. According to *Daily Journal*, community leaders renamed the town in 1865 from Middleport to Watseka to honor her kindness toward settlers. Today a large mural in town features *Watchekee*, serving as a visual reminder of the community's past.

Watchekee's daughter Catherine (Kate) Bergeron married Frenchman Joseph L.



Francis Xavier Bergeron, *Watchekee's* husband

Melott, and they became the principal founders of the Mission Hill community, now known as Wanette, Oklahoma. They had nine children: Will, Tom, Lewis, Elmer, Earl, Ruth, Grace, Lee and Ben.

Jean Baptiste Bergeron married Mary Hollaway in Wamego, Kansas. They had two children, William Oliver and Frank Alexander. Sadly, Mary passed when the children were young, and Jean Baptiste left William and Frank with the Indian Agency to find work out West. As a French last name, Bergeron's phonetical spelling is Bazhaw, and teachers with the agency used the phonetic spelling rather than the traditional French spelling.

Matilda wed Wesley Lewis, and they had 12 children. *Watchekee's* youngest son Charles married Mattie Leslie in 1876, and they had one son, Robert.

Today, Bergeron descendants continue the family legacy of leadership and service to others as Tribal historians, writers, safe-keepers of Potawatomi traditions and more.

If interested in helping preserve Citizen Potawatomi history and culture by providing copies of family photographs, documents and more, contact the Cultural Heritage Center at 405-878-5830. ♡



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New Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation director brings real-life experience to leadership

In late September, the Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation named Cindy Logsdon as its new director. She sat down for an interview with the *Hownikan* after her first full week leading the CPCDC.

“My head has just been full this week thinking about opportunities,” she said.

“I am just thrilled that trust has been placed upon me and that they asked me to take this position.”

Logsdon’s husband and children are Tribal members and descendants of the Anderson family, which feeds her excitement and drive at CPN.

“Zero to hero”

She started working for the Tribe’s accounting department in 2003. With 15 years of banking experience, Logsdon quickly received a chance to transfer to the CPCDC as its second employee.

“The CPCDC in my last 16 years has grown financially from zero to hero,” she said. “I mean, it’s really exciting, the upward trajectory that we’ve always been able to accomplish. We’re one of the largest Native (Community Development Financial Institutions), nonbanks in the country.”

CDFIs act as a source of cash and capital to promote economic revitalization in underserved and distressed communities. However, Logsdon said the CPCDC offers more that makes it valuable to Natives across the state.

“We’ve had some great programs, and we are cheerleaders. And sometimes a business just needs someone to know that ‘I have someone to call. I have somebody that’s my cheerleader. I have somebody that’s going to help hold me

accountable. I have a friendship with someone at the CPCDC,” she said.

The staff offers assistance buying a home, starting a business, establishing financial goals and much more through credit counseling and access to federal programs designed to serve CDFIs.

“That’s something I feel passion about, getting access to capital to Native Americans,” Logsdon said. “It’s all the other feel-good stuff, too, but bottom line, that’s our bread and butter. We’re a 45 million dollar organization, net worth and assets at this point, and we’re self-sufficient. ... And I just want to carry on and try to look towards the future and what that means to Native American families.”

Learning through doing

After high school, Logsdon sporadically attended college classes into her 30s. She spent 15 years in the banking industry, achieving promotions by putting in the effort and learning something new every day. Logsdon said gaining knowledge “through actually doing” serves her best.

“I do think it is important for a leader to be able to jump in there with the troops, you know, show that it is really teamwork that makes this engine work. And that’s exactly what we have (at the CPCDC) is an economic engine,” she said.

Logsdon graduated with a bachelor’s in organizational leadership from the University of Central Oklahoma in 2017. She shared that achievement with several others on the CPCDC staff who attended college with encouragement from CPN.

“At the same point in time, we had five of us within probably a year and a half received our degrees. So, we went from a staff that was not very



Joining Citizen Potawatomi Nation staff in 2003, Cindy Logsdon now serves as the Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation director.

educated to everyone being challenged. You know, why not? And it’s been a really, really good experience for the majority of us,” Logsdon said.

She also served as the secretary of the Tecumseh Ag Booster Club, the secretary of the Oklahoma Native Asset Coalition, treasurer of the Native CDFI Network and a board member for the Credit Builders Alliance — all invaluable experience while managing the CPCDC. Logsdon includes connecting with employees and intuitive forethought as leadership essentials.

“I think somebody that knows how to inspire you, is a good listener, is a trait of a good leader,” she said. “I think that training your staff and giving them the

tools that they need and pre-thinking the bigger picture. What does this look like in three years, five years, 10 years? ... And one day, when I pass this off, I’m going to be very proud of the accomplishments of the CPCDC.”

Managing the future

Although Logsdon began working with CPN more than 15 years ago, the consistent challenges and opportunities for improvement — for both clients and CPCDC staff — keep the job interesting and exciting.

“You don’t do the same thing every day. I think that’s what I like, the variety. It’s not a lot of repetition. But seeing the lives that we can impact and change, I think that is huge ... we have seen a lot of success stories through the years,” she said.

The CPCDC has improved and grown as a resource with support from the Tribe, turning it into one of the most successful organizations of its kind in Indian Country. Logsdon hopes to add staff members, double the CDFI’s assets and expand its offerings to clients during her tenure as director.

“We are an influencer in the industry, and I really am proud of that,” she said. “But, I can only imagine in the future that we will continue to grow programs. We’re going to be innovative. We’re going to think outside the box. We’re going to do programs or offer programs that truly benefit and complement tribal members’ lives and financial futures.”

For more information on the Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation, call 405-878-4697 or visit them online at cpcdc.org or on Facebook at [@CPNCDFI](https://www.facebook.com/CPNCDFI).

Improving land, soil quality provides sound return on investment

After experimenting with planting a mixture of cover crops on Citizen Potawatomi Nation-owned land in recent years, the Tribe has experienced financial and environmental gains. Because of this, the CPN Department of Realty that oversees the Nation’s agricultural endeavors recently expanded this practice to an additional 150 Tribally-owned acres.

“The main reason that we’re doing it is to improve soil health. We have some properties that just aren’t very healthy soil-wise and organic matter-wise,” said Tonya Kitchen, CPN agriculture programs manager.

Environmental benefits

According to Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service and Oklahoma State University, cover crops reduce soil erosion and runoff, decrease evaporation so that plants have more water available, and limit the growth of unwanted vegetation while also improving water and soil quality by adding important nutrients required for healthy production.

“The practice includes planting legumes to put nitrogen back in the soil for your next crop to use, and it’s a recurring cycle,” Kitchen explained. “Planting plants with deeper root systems pulls nutrients from the lower levels of the soil back up to the surface so that the next crop can use those.”



CPN employees prepare property for planting cover crops, which improves the Nation’s ability to make year-round farm income.

Cover crops also reduce carbon emissions caused by disturbing the soil. CPN and its lessees no longer incorporate tillage on the 237 acres of Tribal land that utilizes this practice. In Oklahoma, wind and water runoff erode topsoil, and according to the United States Department of Agriculture, regenerating one inch can take at least 100 years.

“This is a way to speed up that process,” she said.

Utilizing regenerative agriculture techniques is also an extension of CPN’s traditions of land stewardship.

“Basically, we’re planting crops now to add beneficial health matter for years to come, and this is a constantly reoccurring process,” Kitchen said.

Diversifying economic portfolio

Traditional methods include planting one to two cash crops per year, but CPN

benefits economically from the year-round production provided through cover crops. Instead of harvesting and planting cash crops at the same time as producers across the region, CPN has taken advantage of the ability to harvest early and late in the seasons, and in return, sell when prices are higher.

“If you hit the middle market, a lot of times, your price will be lower because there’s a market flood,” Kitchen said.

On land CPN leases to local farmers, the Tribe receives one-third of the profit. When these farmers can produce cash crops year round, this increases the return on investment for CPN. As the Nation continues expanding economic opportunities outside of gaming, incorporating regenerative agriculture has proven advantageous.

“The more benefit we can provide to the environment through carbon reduction and through soil health improvement, we would like to see it on as many properties as possible, and there is the added benefit of year-round income,” Kitchen said. “It expands our enterprise to a year-round income base as opposed to just cutting hay in the summer to get our money.”

Learn more about CPN’s agriculture endeavors at potawatomi.org/dres.

Veterans case highlights Navy quartermaster's tours in Vietnam

The Citizen Potawatomi Nation Cultural Heritage Center regularly honors and recognizes Tribal servicemen and women. The Veterans Spotlight case currently highlights Darling family descendant Denny Hopkins who served the United States as a U.S. Navy quartermaster.

He served four tours aboard the USS Aludra during the Vietnam War from the spring of 1966 until the fall of 1969 when the military decided to decommission the ship. CHC Curator Blake Norton chose to feature Hopkins in the Spotlight case for his essential position on the high seas.

"We wanted to honor his distinguished career and thank him for the invaluable contribution he made to the permanent collection with his vast donation of military artifacts," Norton said. "All will help the community better understand what it means to be a Potawatomi during conflict."

Hopkins donated several pieces to the museum in 2008, including a navigator's plotting instrument set, his dog tags, a Navy training center manual, work uniform jacket and several photographs.

Family lineage

As a child in the 1950s, Hopkins showed interest in a military career long before he enlisted.

"I didn't play cops and robbers and stuff like that. I was always fighting the Japanese or something when I was a little kid. Had a stick gun and all that stuff," he said.

"I'd make mom mad because I was trying to have a fox hole (in the yard)."

Hopkins was born in Norman, Oklahoma, and has three uncles who served in World War II — one in each the Air Force, Army and Navy. He attended the University of Oklahoma after graduating from Norman High School. As a junior in college, Hopkins decided to seek advice about military service.



The Veterans Spotlight case in the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Cultural Heritage Center honors Denny Hopkins and his service as a quartermaster in the U.S. Navy.

"I had an uncle that was in the Navy, and I talked to him. And he told me what he did, and he was in WWII. He told me about his adventures and how he handled his commitment. ... I followed Uncle Spot into the Navy," he said.

USS Aludra

After boot camp in San Diego in 1966, Hopkins joined the crew of the USS Aludra. The refrigerated cargo ship supplied other warships with goods and food, and the sailors sometimes moved their haul from ship to ship for up to five hours at a time.

"We were their grocery store," Hopkins said.

"Semi hazardous because the weather would get kind of bad and the ships could get kind of close together. ... Other than that, it was tedious with long hours."

Hopkins spent most of his deployments in the Gulf of Tonkin located in the northwestern portion of the South China Sea bordering Vietnam. The Spotlight case displays a patch that

reads "Tonkin Gulf Yacht Club," a nickname for the U.S. Seventh Fleet during the Vietnam War. The Aludra became an "unofficial" member for its service to the destroyers and battleships.

Another patch reads, "Hong Kong Blood Transfusion Service," which Hopkins and other crewmembers received for donating blood several times when illness and infection caused low supplies and an urgent need for blood in Hong Kong.

Stars at sea

Hopkins spent his time as a quartermaster, assisting in the navigation of the nearly 460-foot-long ship. His duties also required logging all of the happenings on the Aludra, no matter how small. He learned how to read stars using a sextant to locate the ship on a map.

"I had no idea when I joined the Navy that's what I'd end up doing," Hopkins said.

His favorite shifts included the overnight hours and watching the

sun move as it rose or set on the open water with no obstacles.

"People who have never been out at sea don't know how exactly how many stars there are. From the ground, where the ocean is, was like black, and all around you in every direction as far as you can see ... just nothing but stars. I mean, you don't see one-hundredth of what people do at night (on land)," Hopkins said.

He still enjoys looking at the night sky and picking out planets, although nothing beats the sight of the night sky on the ocean.

Hopkins received an honorable discharge on Valentine's Day in 1972 along with numerous commendations, including the National Defense Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal and Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal.

Ever humble, Hopkins said, "I'm not anything special; I know that. I'm just a sailor. I just did what I was told to do."

Following his military service, Hopkins had a long career as a United States Postal Service worker until he retired in 1999.

"Just the fact that I got to do it was a big thing to me. I'm really proud that I got to serve my country because a lot of my passing friends did it and didn't get to come home," he said.

If you are a veteran and a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and would like your place on the Veterans Wall of Honor at the CPN Cultural Heritage Center, please call 405-878-5830 and ask for KeAnne Langford or Blake Norton or email keanne.langford@potawatomi.org or bnorton@potawatomi.org. The CHC also encourages family members of CPN veterans to provide photos of their loved ones to feature on the Wall of Honor. Visit the CHC online at potawatomiheritage.com. ♡

December language update

By Justin Neely, CPN Language Department Director

The Citizen Potawatomi Nation Language Department applied for and received a Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development Living Languages Grant. This one year grant will help pay for the development and publication of 12 children's books. We will develop six books for Level 1, or very young children, and six for Level 2, or pre-k children. These books will be used at the Tribe's Child Development Center. They will also be available for distribution and/or purchase from the Language Department or through Potawatomi Gifts, the Nation's gift shop, online at potawatomigifts.com. We are excited about this opportunity to create original stories within the language to use with our Tribal youth.

The CPN Language Department recently wrapped up a short promotional video that gives a breakdown of the many language learning opportunities and tools that we have developed. It includes our various online language courses, online dictionary and two YouTube channels. This can be

found by going to youtube.com and searching "Potawatomi language promo" or visiting cpn.news/langpromo.

Just in time for Halloween, we wrapped up a Potawatomi version of the 1968 classic *Night of the Living Dead*. We did two versions: one with the closed captions in English and another with the captions in Potawatomi. We thought the English captions would be helpful for beginners, and for more proficient students, we included the captions in Potawatomi. *Night of the Living Dead* is one of a number of early films in the public domain. Once in public domain, we are able to reuse these films and make them available. Other films we have done in Potawatomi include the cartoon version of *Gulliver's Travels* and *Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer*. We have also completed a number of smaller pieces such as *Casper the Friendly Ghost*. We are currently wrapping up *Popeye the Sailor Man* and *Aladdin*. All of these as well as our *Mtek Wigwam* children's puppet shows are available on one of our two YouTube channels found at cpn.news/JN or cpn.news/langyt.

We have also been working on some original artwork for the Seven



Language department aid Ragan Marsee creates artwork to help teach the language and culture, including this piece that highlights one of the Seven Grandfathers teachings.

Grandfather teachings, which we are making into posters and T-shirts. The shirts and posters will be available from Potawatomi Gifts at the Cultural Heritage Center. We are also planning a

postcard series once we have finished all of the Seven Grandfathers. The Seven Grandfathers are a series of values that were important to our ancestors and continue to be important to us today and include wisdom, love, respect, bravery, honesty, humility and truth.

Our online high school course has been well received and is currently being offered in four school districts throughout Oklahoma. There is also a collegiate variation at Arizona State University. We have had interest from a couple of other school districts and would love to partner with more schools in Oklahoma in the future. Currently, our certification allows the course to be offered anywhere in the state, and the course counts toward high school graduation credit for students.

We will be looking in the near future into doing some more live online classes on the Potawatomi language Facebook group at cpn.news/langfb. So if you haven't joined our group, definitely take a look. We here in the language department are eager and ready to help you with your own language journey. Let us know how we can help. ♡

Pappan descendant creates international skincare brand

Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal member Christopher Szamosszegi set out to forge his own path in the skincare industry in 2015 through building connections in Los Angeles area. He met celebrity esthetician Mindi Walters, and the two bonded over their shared passions and business ideals. They officially launched Mindi Walters Skincare in 2016 based on a simple principle: their products would include only the best ingredients to help their clients' skin glow from the inside out.

"Facial treatments to me are so personal," he said. "It helps people become more confident in just their skin."

"If you have a few pimples, you aren't that thrilled to go out in public. When you can help someone with troubled skin and they can go out without any makeup, it increases their self-confidence. And hearing a compliment on your skin is the best compliment you can receive."

With his experience in product development and Walters' reputation with some of Hollywood's most recognizable faces, the two have become a force in the industry. They own a clinic in West Hollywood where they serve clients one-on-one, and their line includes the Regenerative Oil Complex and the Brightening Oil Complex. The oils combat a variety of issue such as wrinkles, moisture restoration, sun damage, reversing signs of aging and more.

"The market is so saturated, and there are so many products," Szamosszegi said. "I'm very, very picky, and this is why we only have two products that we sell online because I am very particular about the quality of ingredients that go into them."

Although using the best components increases costs, it is something Mindi Walters Skincare refuses to change.

"I think it is reflective of the fact that we've literally never had, whether it's our clinic or any of our products, we've never had less than a five-star review on anything," he said.

Celebrities have caught onto the benefits their products and services, helping their business flourish.

"We launched our product, and right after, Megan Fox posted about it. Then Chelsea Handler posted about it, and now we have customers in over 30 countries," Szamosszegi said.

Heritage and pride

Szamosszegi lost his Potawatomi father a few years ago, which forever changed his desires to learn more about their shared heritage. Shortly after, he turned in the information required to become an official CPN tribal member.

"He was always proud to be Potawatomi — so, so proud — and after he died and because he was so proud to be part of it, I wanted to follow in his footsteps," he said.

When the *Hownikan* approached Szamosszegi about his business and to schedule an interview, Szamosszegi said he felt a sense of honor.

"My first thought was, 'I want to call my dad, he would be so excited,' but obviously, he passed away," he said. "We've been featured in multiple publications like *Cosmo* and *Elle* and on Chelsea Handler's show, but to me, being featured (in the *Hownikan*) is more personal and more important than any of that."



Christopher Szamosszegi and Mindi Walters' business revolves around creating effective skincare using the most innovative and highest-quality ingredients. (Photo provided)

Becoming a CPN member has also provided him ample opportunities to learn and share his story and background with others.

"For example, my business partner, Mindi, she's from Wisconsin, and so when I was telling her I am Potawatomi, she was like, 'Oh, I've seen their casino.' And I explained, 'OK, well, that's a different band,' and I started researching why there are so many different bands," he said.

Traversing the pandemic

At the end of October, personal care businesses across Los Angeles County

could reopen with new restrictions. Before the notification, Szamosszegi used the extra time due to the coronavirus pandemic to build the brand and its e-commerce sales.

"It was super exciting to learn we could reopen," he said. "But we have to wear a face mask and face shield while doing a facial. Anyone coming into our building, we have to do a temperature check and ask them if they've had any symptoms."

In addition to being an esthetician at Mindi Walters Skin Clinic and developing products, Szamosszegi oversees marketing, social media, content creation and manages the Mindi Walters brand.

Although the coronavirus pandemic impeded serving customers in person, since its onset, their online sales have grown by 300 percent.

"It gave us an opportunity to buy new equipment, create new facial treatments and launch a new product," Szamosszegi said.

With the new lifted restrictions, he feels excited for their clients to experience Mindi Walters Skin Clinic's new facial add-ons and treatments. He is also focused on expanding Mindi Walters Skincare's online sales and their line while reopening the clinic.

To learn more about Mindi Walters Skincare, visit mindiwalters.com or follow it on Instagram @mindiwalters, and follow Szamosszegi on Instagram @chrisszamosszegi. ♡

Freeman recognized as one of Oklahoma's NextGen Under 30 recipients

Every year, *ionOklahoma* selects a group of leaders and achievers from throughout the state for its NextGen Under 30 awards. The publication receives nominations across 30 career categories, and this year, recognized 379 Oklahomans from 241 companies, including Citizen Potawatomi Nation's Lexi Freeman.

"The NextGen under 30 mission has been to identify and honor these very talented young Oklahomans as a way of encouraging them to follow their lifetime career goals in Oklahoma," said Donald Swift, *ionOklahoma* publisher.

In her role as the CPN Department of Environmental Protection environmental coordinator, Freeman teaches students about science, technology, engineering and math opportunities, oversees water testing across CPN land and waterways within Tribal jurisdiction, writes and manages grants to improve efficiency and reduce the Nation's carbon footprint, and more.

"It's such a big honor to be recognized, especially as a Native woman with most of my community outreach based around the Tribe," Freeman said. "I'm so proud to represent, and be a part of, the Nation and all the incredible things we're doing."

She believes good leadership requires many attributes, including the willingness to learn and listen.

"Whether it be from science, experts, your community, or your elders — the environment is so all-



Rhodd descendant hopes to inspire future generations to achieve their dreams.

encompassing, you have to be open to its stakeholders," she said.

Background

As a Rhodd descendant, Freeman believes in the importance of honoring and caring for CPN land and its resources for generations to come.

"I'm incredibly proud to be where I am today," Freeman said. "I'm so grateful to have my position at the Nation and work to benefit my Tribe after everything they've done for

me. Native Americans, especially women, are so underrepresented in STEM. I hope to continue promoting STEM to our Native youth."

Growing up on the Shawnee Milling Co. research farm introduced her to agriculture science, and at one point, Freeman wanted to become a veterinarian. While an undergraduate at Oklahoma State University, she changed her course and decided to pursue a master's degree in environmental science.

After graduating from OSU with her master's, Freeman joined CPN's workforce full-time. However it was not her first employment with the Tribe. She began working for the Nation's FireLake Mini PUtt at the age of 16 and continued working there as an undergrad at OSU. She also participated in the Potawatomi Leadership Program in 2012.

Since accepting the environmental coordinator position, Freeman has taught participants of the CPN Conservation Camp and STEM camps hosted by the Nation's Cultural Heritage Center, Workforce Development & Social Services and Department of Education.

"I love seeing the kids get excited about water, the environment, and I consider it a big win if I can get them to like entomology and insects," she said.

Freeman's day-to-day duties vary, depending upon the Tribe's current

needs, and she takes it upon herself to study to intricacies of her field.

"The Department of Environmental Protection is so multifaceted that I'm most proud of slowly learning the ins and outs," Freeman said. "Environmental laws, regulations and reporting are all so fluid and ever changing. I've loved learning and becoming more proficient in my job."

In addition to her career, she is also an active member of CPN's American Indian Science and Engineering Society chapter *Shkodedeajek* and an alumni of CPN's employee leadership group *Noek* where she serves as CPN Employee of Distinction Award committee member.

Freeman's work, whether for CPN or volunteer-based, stems from the desire to open doors for others and encourage fellow Native American youth to build successful careers.

"I want to see CPN Native youth take my job when I can no longer fill it," she said. "I want Potawatomi kids to go to college and study in a field they're passionate about and know that no goal or job is too high for them. ... Our dreams are never too big or too unattainable, and if I can show one Native that, then I'm proud of my legacy."

Find out more about NextGen Under 30 at nextgenunder30.com. ♡

Bootmaker finds artistry in tradition

Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal member Terry Don Peltier began his business Top Hand Boots located near Prague, Oklahoma, four years ago. He loves cowboy boots — a combination of versatility, strength and rugged beauty. The Peltier family descendant's collection spans both his closet and the workshop in his barn.

"I like Western culture. I raise cattle. I raise horses. And I've always had a fascination with cowboy boots. I don't know what that is, but I've always had a fascination with cowboy boots," he said.

Peltier remains dedicated to his craft after learning the basics six years ago. Now a skilled bootmaker, he handmakes footwear for friends, family and clients.

"There is nothing that's pre-manufactured," he said. "It all started out as a flat piece of leather at one time, and (you) cut it out and you mold it. You stitch it all together. ... The thing that makes it so gratifying is when that person puts that boot on their foot, and you see that smile and how happy with the fit, that's what makes it all worthwhile, right there."

Preserving the craft

Peltier spent more than 26 years in the oil industry before its downturn in 2015. He has always enjoyed working with his hands and chose to learn how to make cowboy boots, a physical process that requires precision and patience. Peltier then spent two weeks as an apprentice in Texas.

"And I just knew barely just enough to be dangerous when I got out of that," he said and laughed.

He continued to learn from others, and developed his own style and way of working. Peltier also built a workshop in his barn and spent two years traveling throughout the Southwestern United States collecting equipment from



Citizen Potawatomi Nation member Terry Don Peltier ensures the perfect fit on every pair of Top Hand Boots by making the customer part of the process.

retired bootmakers. The refurbished parts fill the 14-by-40-foot workspace.

"Some of it's right after the turn of the century, the 1900s. That's how old this stuff is," he said. "I got a Singer sewing machine that I stitch on that was made in like 1923, and I've got another machine that I stitch the souls. That was made in 1944, during (World War II). So, all this stuff is either being found in a scrap bin, or no one knows what it is and it's just getting hauled off."

Peltier and other bootmakers from across Oklahoma meet up a couple of times a year. They number fewer than 10, with some of them forced into retirement by arthritis and other health complications. The two that taught Peltier no longer practice their craft.

"I honestly think that, especially with some of these master bootmakers that are older and actually, you know, they're

passing away, a lot of this knowledge I don't think is getting passed on," he said.

The right fit

Peltier considers a good pair of boots an essential piece of equipment for a cowboy, and the fit often determines their utility. There is little to no breaking in a pair from his shop.

"I take most of the stretch out (of the leather), and when you put them on your feet, they should be like a glove," he said.

"I've had people put on a pair of custom made boots, and they're like, 'All right. I'm done. I'm done with going and getting a pair off the shelf.'"

Clients receive five different measurements on their feet before Peltier builds a pair of custom boots. He uses somewhat unconventional equipment to ensure a perfect fit, including where he records the information.

"I have an old accounting journal — one of them old-time accounting journals that are about a foot and a half long, and you open it up. Well, I set their foot on there, and then I trace the outline," Peltier said.

He spends up to two hours with a client, designing and measuring for their one-of-a-kind pair. Peltier knows they enjoy participating in the process and picking out their leather, stitching, heel height and more. Some people's specifications cover everything down to the color of the thread.

"Or they'll just tell me, 'Hey, you're the bootmaker. Surprise me,' which when someone tells me that, I like that because it gives me my freedom to try new things," Peltier said.

His collection from antique shops and thrift stores inspires him as well as the desire to keep designs alive that he learned and received from other master makers. Peltier also believes his creativity comes from men on the Potawatomi side of his family, which adds pride to his work.

"A lot of my artistic ability was from, of course, my grandfather and my dad," he said. "My grandfather, he would sit down with me, and he was really good at sketching and stuff like that. And my dad, he was a wood carver, so I think that's where I got my artistic eye from was from them two."

Raymond Peltier, his grandfather, was chairman of the Tribe in 1974, and is the namesake of CPN's Raymond Peltier RV Park.

A pair of Top Hand Boots starts at \$600 and takes Peltier approximately 40 hours to complete. He also requires a six-month work period, although he often completes them sooner. Find Top Hand Boots on Facebook @TopHandBoots. ♡

Made with love, gifted with prayers

By Tracy Kinderknecht, CPN Senior Support Network RN

Two retired ladies had to find something to do with their time when the coronavirus forced an end to activities at the CPN Center at the Elder Village in Rossville, Kansas.

Barb Smith, a retired hair stylist, had just spent a few weeks at the Rossville Manor following foot surgery and remembered the need for some colorful, pretty lap robes. The wheels started turning, and she enlisted the help of Felicia Brown, a retired nurse, to join her in making some new lap robes for the facility. Barb, a descendant of the Degraff family, and Felicia, whose husband was a descendant of the Boursaw family, both had a stash of fabric that needed to be put to a good use. They started the Lap Robe Project in April with a goal of 25 blankets by the end of July. The ladies must have sewn day and night, as they met that goal, and as of mid-September, they have made 110.



Felicia Brown (left) and Barbara Smith's giving spirit shines in their handmade quilts.

Each lap blanket takes about 3 yards of fabric to complete. Assorted patterns and prints are cut into two-three and

1.5 inch strips that are sewn onto an 8-by-8 inch square of plain cloth used as a foundation. After the strips are sewn

on the foundation, it is pressed and trimmed to the eight-by-eight inches, then sewn into rows of four squares. The lap blanket takes 20 squares — five rows of four squares. A backing is then pinned to the sewn squares, stitched around, turned right side out and tied with crochet thread to complete the blanket. Barb had some triangles already cut from another quilt project that she incorporated into some of the blankets.

Fifteen blankets were given to the Oakley Place, a memory care home within walking distance of the Elder Village. The Manor at St Mary's will receive 40 lap robes, and the Rossville Manor will get 55 blankets.

This project has given the two ladies something to do, and they used their fabric to spread joy — such a beautiful and needed gift. As long as these ladies have material and time, they will keep up on this project and gift more nursing homes with their love. ♡

Get the *Hownikan* via email!

If you would like your newspaper via email, please send your name and address to hownikan@potawatomi.org and let us know.

December is National Impaired Driving Prevention Month

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported an average of nearly 30 people in the United States die in drunk driving crashes every day — more than 10,000 people a year. The holiday season brings more parties around Christmas and New Year's Eve, causing the number of car wrecks caused by impaired drivers to increase in December.

Police began cracking down on drunk driving in the 1980s, and the average cost of an initial DUI charge now reaches up to \$10,000. More options exist than ever before for alternatives to drunk driving, and Citizen Potawatomi Nation Police Department Police Major Mike Hendrickson encourages everyone to remember them all.

"You need to have more than one means of getting home safely — be that a cab, Uber, phone a friend, or whatever it may be," he said. "Or be prepared to spend the night wherever you're at."

Hendrickson also recommends having one reliable person to call for a ride, even while in a group.

"Always have someone you can call on, even if you have a designated driver. ... Because as we all know, sometimes the designated driver will become more intoxicated than anyone else," he said.

More than 1,800 people died in drunk driving crashes in Oklahoma between 2009 and 2018, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The state issues between 10



days to one year in jail and a \$1,000 fine for a DUI. Those arrested in the Tribe's jurisdiction can face up to six months in jail and a \$3,000 fine.

"We do have a zero-tolerance policy on DUIs," Hendrickson said. "So

if they get in their vehicle and drive, and they're intoxicated, and we catch them, that's a 100 percent chance they're going to go to jail."

CPN has seen a drastic decrease in drunk driving in the last five years,

despite owning various establishments that sell liquor such as convenience stores and casinos. The Tribe requires Training for Intervention ProcedureS certification, also known as TIPS, for all staff serving and selling alcohol. Servers, bartenders and store clerks learn the skills necessary to recognize intoxication and interact with inebriated customers to prevent drunk driving.

"They notice somebody is a little tipsy. They contract security, and then security will try to find alternate means of transportation or encourage them to get a hotel room. And then we get involved if it goes beyond that. Normally, that's where it ends is we try to get them a place to stay, somebody to pick them up. We just don't release them out into the public," Hendrickson said.

"This is one aspect of our job that is truly a team event. We couldn't do it without our partners in the casinos."

As a result, CPN police arrested only two people for DUIs in fiscal year 2020.

"Chairman, came up with the phrase ... for the Grand, 'The safest place to play.' And that's true in more than just the COVID pandemic," Hendrickson said.

For more facts and information about drunk driving, visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's website at [nhtsa.gov](https://www.nhtsa.gov).

USDA offers assistance program for farmers and ranchers, deadline Dec. 11, 2020

The Coronavirus Food Assistance Program provides eligible producers with direct financial assistance due to market disruptions and associated costs because of the pandemic.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture will use funds from the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act and CARES Act to support row crops, livestock, specialty crops, dairy, aquaculture and many additional commodities.

Producers can apply for at USDA's Farm Service Agency county offices. This program provides financial assistance that gives producers the ability to absorb

increased marketing costs associated with the recent health crisis. Producers will be compensated for ongoing market disruptions and assisted with the associated marketing costs.

New customers seeking one-on-one support with the application process can call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee. This is a recommended first step before a producer engages the team at the FSA county office at their local USDA Service Center. Producers can also download applications and other eligibility forms from farmers.gov/cfap.

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE FOR ASSISTANCE THROUGH THE CORONAVIRUS FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM 2?

Farmers and ranchers, sign up for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP 2) that began on Sept. 21, 2020, and will continue through Dec. 11, 2020. CFAP 2 provides eligible producers with direct financial assistance due to market disruptions and associated costs because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Many more commodities are eligible for CFAP 2 than CFAP 1. Our new, easy-to-use CFAP 2 Eligible Commodities Finder makes finding payment rates specific to your operation simple.

TRY IT OUT AT CPN.NEWS/CFAP

Hownikan

1601 S. Gordon Cooper Drive, Shawnee, Oklahoma

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Tribal Chairman – John “Rocky” Barrett



Bozho nikan
(Hello, my friend),

We are now entering what many public health officials around the country are describing as a dark winter. At the time of writing, both Oklahoma and our country continue to see exponential growth of case numbers and deaths from COVID-19.

It is frustrating to see science and our most highly qualified public and medical health professionals disregarded, even scorned, out of

misunderstanding or plain defiance based on politics. At Citizen Potawatomi Nation enterprises and Tribal government properties, mask mandates will remain until we are past this.

We are anxiously waiting for vaccines that are able to help protect our people and neighbors. CPN will be a leader and an integral part of this process by offering storage of the vaccine, transporting the ultracold vaccine to other locations, and serving as a vaccine distribution site. To be selected for this task requires recognition of the brilliant foresight and lifesaving predictions of Dr. Adam Vascellaro and Dr. Kassi Roselius who began full emergency planning for this pandemic in January — long before many were even aware of the threat. Many lives were saved and serious illness treated by their medical expertise. I am proud to call them my friends and, in the case of Dr. Vascellaro, my personal physician.

CPN’s plans and actions are being duplicated around the state, as tribal governments and the facilities they own are being selected by state public health officials to provide a logistical means to store and distribute vaccines in rural areas. FireLake Arena, our 5,000-seat entertainment venue, is the largest and most capable facility to house the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. It requires cold storage facilities that must keep the vaccine at a temperature of -90 Fahrenheit. With large events canceled and much of our arena staff reassigned for other duties tied to coronavirus response, the arena can easily serve as a vaccination hub. This equipment is on order and partially in place.

I say this is being replicated around the state because as many tribes have said for years, Oklahoma’s Indian Nations are not just job creators. We are infrastructure and community support centers unlike any other business or government. Tribes have access to unique tools and talent that our counterparts

in the commercial and local government sectors do not. Almost exclusively, we are able to put them to use in rural parts of Oklahoma that have long been forgotten by urban centers in Tulsa and Oklahoma City.

It is tribal investments such as these, which may take years or decades to recognize, that are at stake when a small-town mayor or new politician at the State Capitol claims tribes “aren’t paying their fair share.” Tribes are good for Oklahoma, and our rural neighbors are about to see another example of why we are their proud partners. I have often said that a “rising tide lifts all boats,” and in this case, it is more than economic development. Tribal partners will be critical to health of all rural Oklahomans, not just our Tribal members. Vaccines only work if most of us take them. Please do the personal research. It will be safe. It will save our people, our economy and our Nation.

In this holiday season, I often encourage you to share your

family and Tribal stories at your get-togethers. However, with the virus making such large-scale gatherings unsafe, I think a bit of adaptation is wise, as most of us have learned in 2020. If you are distancing from loved ones but still plan to call or video chat with them, write down or record the stories you share about your elders and ancestors who may have walked on. Keep small notes that will remind you to write them out later. Believe me; having them written down will be more valuable one day than you realize.

It has been a challenging year, but help is on the way. Continue to be kind, have compassion and show grace to those who may not warrant it. As always, it is an honor to serve as your Tribal Chairman.

Migwetch
(Thank you),

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

Vice-Chairman – Linda Capps



Bozho
(Hello),

It is my sincere wish that everyone had a happy Thanksgiving while trying to stay safe from the coronavirus. Staying safe from the virus is a major undertaking within our part of the country. I am pleased to announce, however, that I am one of the coronavirus survivors. Both my daughter

and I had the virus a few weeks ago. I now have the antibodies and am negative for COVID-19. It is a good feeling, but I am not sure how long that status remains. Regardless, I am pleased to be safe for a period of time, whatever that may be. It does not keep me from wearing a mask, which is a mandate at both CPN and within our community.

I hope you and your Potawatomi family members have already applied for the CARES Act funds. There is a strong possibility that by the time you read this column, the funding will have been exhausted. As of this week, we are closing in on the \$40 million allocation for our Tribal members. The money is sure to last no longer than the first half of December. Please note: that does not mean you would have received the money by then — rather

it means that we cannot take new applications past that time. We will still be processing applications that have been keyed into the system. There is a rather lengthy process to each application. It is matched with a Tribal membership number, and all information has to be entered correctly.

One huge positive from June until now is that our Tribal membership has vastly grown. If a person did not get a dime out of the rush to get loved ones enrolled, at least that endeavor is completed. The procrastination is over, and you will have reaped the benefit of having your loved ones enrolled, finally. When you have the CPN picture IDs of everyone in the family, you will realize the true benefit. I must say that it has been a magnificent project. Our employees have worked so hard to distribute these funds. They

have processed applications, mailed out information, made phone calls, emailed and even texted on cell phones to reach out to Tribal members. I call it a supreme effort that has resulted in a project well done.

Ironically, at one time we feared that we could not give out all the funds. Today, we are faced with no longer taking applications. Although, it seems like a shortfall, it actually comes together quite beautifully. Perhaps if we had discontinued taking Tribal enrollment applications in about September, we could have come out just right. I’m thankful that we did not do that because at least we received more enrollees. Our enrollment has grown by more than 1,000 Tribal members during this time. Chairman Barrett did the right thing in encouraging enrollment. The tail end of

the enrollments in December may not receive CARES funds, but each person enrolled can be proud of the effort.

Approving the CARES funds and knowing that so many Tribal members were receiving checks is one of the most rewarding tasks that I have accomplished during my tenure. Having Tribal members write, call, email, and text words of thanks has been a sheer delight. I appreciate having served our membership for all these years. My love and respect for this Tribe runs deep.

Migwetch
(Thank you),

Linda Capps
Segenakwe
(Black Bird Woman)
Vice-Chairman
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Gifts for the Holiday Season

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District 2 – Eva Marie Carney



Bozho nikanek
(Hello friends),

Migwetch! thank you to everyone who attended the D1 and 2 virtual Zoom meeting in mid-November to learn more about the CARES Act distribution programs and to everyone who has shared information with other CPN citizens about the funds' availability. I hope by now word has spread far and wide and everyone has put in an application for, at a minimum, the \$1,000 in COVID-19-related expenses. If reading this is news to you, please get online right now and read about the funding available to CPN citizens of all ages at potawatomi.org/cares. Please contact me if you need assistance in accessing these funds — there's still time to apply!

Resource sharing: Potawatomi Feasting and Winter Stories

Please remember that many good resources are posted to my website under the "Heritage" tab, including a copy of *Potawatomi Feasting* (cpn.news/feasting), the cookbook I put together in 2018. It includes recipes that bring friends and family together. Most were contributed by CPN citizens as entries to the annual contest I run for District 2 citizens and families. As I note in the cookbook introduction, I strongly believe that one of my responsibilities as the CPN District 2 legislator is to grow and solidify community. Running annual contests like this recipe contest (and a similar contest in 2013), along with hosting district meetings, museum tours and other gatherings — including our annual Fall Feast — aim to do both. That is until this pandemic. We now meet only virtually, and there was no 2020 District 2 Fall Feast. But, it's lovely that a number of the recipes

found in the 2018 cookbook are for dishes contributed to past annual Fall Feasts. To set the tone, the cookbook begins with the Thanksgiving prayer used at District 2 Fall Feasts. Perhaps you can use it at your family gatherings.

Also posted under the "Heritage" tab is the book *Winter Stories 2015* (cpn.news/winterstories2015). This book also originated with a District 2 contest. A number of stories in the compilation were shared as part of that contest. I also gathered other winter stories and other traditional tales to compile the book. At the end of 2015, I mailed 100 requested copies and then posted the PDF for folks to download and print. Please note that Potawatomi teaching is that the traditional stories I've included that involve *Nanabozho* or *Wiske* are told only in the winter time. This is the time when the earth and the spirits are asleep.

End of year gift

I've settled on the token end-of-year gift I'll send to those who write me to confirm their mailing address. I hope you will add your name to my gift list! Please send me an email or leave a message with your current mailing address.

National Native American Veterans Memorial

The pandemic forced the National Native American Veterans Memorial to open "virtually." Please visit the Smithsonian NMAI's YouTube for a video tribute that recognizes Native veterans and shares a first look at the memorial. The memorial sits in a beautiful spot just outside the main doors of the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian. To celebrate the memorial's completion, NMAI put together more than 40 images and a brief film, *Why We Serve: Native Americans in the United States Armed Forces*, which covers the past 450 year of Native American military service. You can access it here: cpn.news/SINMAI. I had the privilege to attend the groundbreaking last year (see photo provided) and can't wait to get back over to the museum and tour the memorial and NMAI physical exhibits that tell the story of Native Americans, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians who have served our country. When

I am able to get out there, I'll take photos and share widely.

Land acknowledgment

Are you familiar with the practice of land acknowledgment? Land acknowledgement is a way that people insert an awareness of Indigenous presence and land rights in everyday life. A land acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes and respects Indigenous peoples as traditional stewards of the land and the enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous peoples and their traditional territories.

Often, land acknowledgements are concise, along the lines of "I want to acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of (nation names)." Some people may also mention the name of a local treaty. Some may learn the language and speak a few words in it. Sometimes they delve deeper, providing detail about Indigenous history and cultural teachings. Visit cpn.news/landmap for more information about land acknowledgments. The site has a search function that operates by city and state name, and even more precisely, zip code. When I entered my city of Arlington, Virginia, I learned that the land I live on is the home of the Nacotchtank (Anacostan) people.

Northwestern University's website offers a beautiful land acknowledgment at cpn.news/NWLA:

Northwestern is a community of learners situated within a network of historical and contemporary relationships with Native American tribes, communities, parents, students, and alumni. It is also in close proximity to an urban Native American community in Chicago and near several tribes in the Midwest. The Northwestern campus sits on the traditional homelands of the people of the Council of Three Fires, the Ojibwe, Potawatomi, and Odawa as well as the Menominee, Miami and Ho-Chunk nations. It was also a site of trade, travel, gathering and healing for more than a dozen other Native tribes and is still home to over 100,000 tribal members in the state of Illinois.

It is within Northwestern's responsibility as an academic institution to disseminate knowledge about Native peoples and the institution's history with them. Consistent with



Legislators Jon Boursaw (far left), Dave Barrett, Eva Marie Carney (far right), and CPN citizen and Air Force veteran Kimberly Pratt, pose with Harvey Pratt (center), designer of the National Native American Veterans Memorial. (Photo taken September 2019 at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian memorial groundbreaking, Washington, D.C.)

the University's commitment to diversity and inclusion, Northwestern works towards building relationships with Native American communities through academic pursuits, partnerships, historical recognitions, community service and enrollment efforts.

The site offers additional resources for crafting respectful land acknowledgments. I challenge you during 2021 to include land acknowledgments in your classrooms, work programming and more. We are still here, and it's good to formally acknowledge and teach that fact to others.

Please make sure to use your FSA dollars for you and your family or others in need.

Some of you are fortunate to have a flexible spending account. You deposit pre-tax dollars in this account to cover qualified expenses. One enhancement to these accounts, due to the CARES Act, is that can use your FSA funds to buy over-the-counter medicines and period supplies, including tampons, pads and liners.

CPN citizen Nancy Sheble Rogers wrote me in June 2020 to share her "lightbulb idea" (the subject line of her email) that this CARES Act change could mean more in-kind donations of period supplies for The Kwek Society. Here's what she wrote: "I wonder if you might be able to . . . push out (closer to the end of the year) that people purchase menstrual care supplies . . . [for] the schools in need with any money remaining in their FSA." I'm

reminded of Nancy's idea every time I make a period supplies purchase at CVS Pharmacy — each eligible item is marked with an "F" and the bottom of my CVS receipt reads, "F: Flexible Spending Acct Summary (FSA) Health Care Eligible Total" followed by the total in period supplies/FSA eligible purchases I made that shopping trip.

Now that it's December, I'm writing to (1) remind you to spend all the funds in your FSA and (2) invite you to purchase period supplies for those in need with the funds you aren't able to spend through eligible purchases for you and your family. You can deliver the period supplies you buy to your local domestic violence or homeless shelter, or community food or diaper bank, or give them to The Kwek Society for our delivery to Native students and communities needing these expensive, but often difficult to afford and obtain, necessities. Please contact us at thekweksociety@gmail.com if you need our address. You can also find it at cpn.news/TKSupport.

Migwetch! thank you for the honor of representing you. Here's to your happy holidays and Happy New Year in good health!

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THE Hownikan PODCAST

STITCHER

SOUNDCLOUD

District 3 – Bob Whistler



Bozho nikanek
(Hello friends),

June 26, 2021, Tribal election

During this month, candidates will file to run for the offices of Chairman as well as legislative districts 1, 2, 3 and 4. I will be filing to represent you again for District 3, which I have proudly served for the last three terms. In all probability, this will be the last time that I run for this office. Fortunately, I have had the time not only to attend almost all of the legislative meetings in-person in Shawnee, but I have attended every Gathering while an elected officer. I have also represented the Nation as an alternate delegate in the annual National Congress of American Indians for the last four years. I have been the past president of the American Indian Chamber of Commerce of Texas and served as an ambassador to the American Indian Heritage Day of Texas. I am still engaged in working with the Grand Prairie group to create a high school program to teach our history and culture as a separate high school course for credit. I would hope that in the future, whomever represents District 3 has the time to be away for several weeks during the year to represent you at these events and actively works when possible to serve the other 150-plus Native American nations that reside in our district.

Honoring our country

For roughly the last eight to 10 years, it appears our country has fallen out of favor by our own elected officials, schools, city government and citizens. U.S. flags are being burned in protest. Schools are no longer allowing students to conduct the Pledge of Allegiance. Students are being disciplined and even expelled for saying “God bless America.” The justification is that the word “God” is being used and it is forbidden, supposedly in regard to the separation of government and religion. There may be some of our children who still wish to use the words most of our U.S. presidents have used at the end of a presentation for decades, which is “God bless America!” Since there is no need to place any of our citizens in danger of being criticized or students expelled, I offer them this phrase in Potawatomi. Our CPN Department of Language Director Justin Neely was gracious enough to provide the translation:

Mamogosnan zhwendagwzen chemokman kik – God bless America.

For those of you that remember the Creation Story and that we are *Nishnabe* and our continent is referred to as Turtle Island, that translation would be:

Mamogosnan Zhwendagwzen mshike mnise - God bless Turtle Island.

I offer this not only as a way to honor our country but also as a step in learning our language. We have way too many of our ancestors as well as current Tribal members who are veterans or are now serving our country and fought, as well as died, in honor of this country. If we cannot openly say, “God bless America” in our common, English language, then why not revert to our Native tongue and say it in Potawatomi or *Bodéwadmimwen?*



Continuing the Potawatomi tradition of gift giving, Legislator Whistler (left) thanks Mr. Kenner for the opportunity by gifting him a book.

YouTube presentation

On Oct. 8, the Allen Public Library in Allen, Texas, allowed me the opportunity to make a PowerPoint presentation about our Nation to share on YouTube. I made the live presentation that night, and it was shown again on Oct. 31. If I have your email address, I was able to alert you of this event, and a number of District 3 citizens were able to view the presentation. Our Chairman John “Rocky” Barrett originally created the presentation in roughly 2007, and I updated it with some current information. You will find that it covers our historical and geographical migration from our Canadian origin to where we are today. I included references to several books at the end that cover Native American as well as our Trail of Death history. There was mention of *The Other Slavery: The Uncovered Story of Indian Enslavement* and Walter Echo-Hawk’s *In the Courts of the Conqueror: the 10 Worst Indian Law Cases Ever Decided*. At the end of the presentation, I did give a short briefing on prayer as well as using the drum, rattle

and other items in ceremonies and in prayer. For those of you that have never attended one of our district meetings with a historical presentation, you may find this is a way to learn more about your Nation. I want to thank the Chairman for the initial creation of the PowerPoint. Thanks also go out to our District 3 citizen, Ms. Robin Green Heisig, who suggested to Tom Keener, the manager of the Allen library, that I be offered the opportunity to be on YouTube. Credit also needs to be given to Kevin Vaught who took photos that have been used to promote the presentation. I thanked the library for the opportunity by presenting them with a copy of the book *An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States for Young People* by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz. This book is under consideration as a text for use in high schools to provide an unbiased historical review of our history. The YouTube presentation is now available 24/7 here: cpn.news/D3TX.

I hope that you find it informational and time well

spent. The presentation is just over an hour in length.

CPN CARES Act programs

Application for the various CARES Act programs must be received and registered with CPN by Dec. 30, 2020, in order to be eligible to receive appropriate funds. I personally voted in favor of granting as much money as possible for distribution within compliance of the federal guidelines. In addition, I requested that we review the programs as a legislative group each month during the final quarter to modify them where appropriate to ensure all the funds are used and no excess exists for return to the federal government. Please go online again to our Tribal website potawatomi.org/cares and check the CARES program offerings to be certain you have not overlooked anything you could be eligible to receive. If you have applied, but have family who may not have, please contact them now. Our funds must be spent by Dec. 30 unless Congress takes action to extend the spending deadline before the end of this year. Send your relatives or fellow Citizen Potawatomi this column if it helps.

Before closing, I am again asking you to send me your email address. If we are still required to continue delaying the holding of onsite district meetings, I may initiate Zoom meetings to reach you.

Thank you for the honor and privilege of representing you.

Gswe gweyen
(Thank you very much),

Bob Whistler
Bmashi (He Soars)
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District 4 – Jon Boursaw



Bozho
(Hello),

Holiday greetings

Peggy and I would like to sincerely wish you and your family a very merry Christmas

and a happy new year. We hope that your holiday season is safe and only filled with joy and happiness. Despite COVID-19, this past year has been a very active and rewarding year for me. I look forward to 2021 with great expectations and enthusiasm as I continue to foster the awareness of the history and presence of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation in Kansas and my endeavor to connect with and serve CPN members across the state. This coming year is also important to me, as I have announced that I will seek re-election in 2021.

Kansas City Chiefs recognize Native American Heritage Month

The Kansas City Chiefs celebrated Native American



CPN member Sandy Bentch proudly represents the Nation during the Kansas City Chiefs pre-game drum ceremony on Nov. 1, 2020.

Heritage Month in a variety of ways on Sunday, Nov. 1, at Arrowhead Stadium. One of the ways was to use the traditional pre-game drum ceremony to recognize a season ticket member

as Sunday’s drum honoree, and that person was CPN member Sandy Bentch, a member of the Bourassa/Ogee families. Sandy has been a season ticket member since 2002 and a Kansas City

Red Coater since 2006. Sandy volunteers with the Wounded Warriors Family Support organization, and for the last five years, she has been a driver for the High Five Tour that travels around the country to help bring donations into the organization.

In addition to the drum ceremony, Native Americans from other tribes participated in the recognition activities:

A ceremonial blessing of the drum, conducted by Alan Redbird, a member of the Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribes based in Oklahoma, was viewed virtually during the pregame events.

Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska member Pete Fee, a veteran of the Army, Navy and

Air Force, was recognized as the game's Salute to Service honoree.

The We-Ta-Se American Legion Post 410 of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation presented the nation's colors while four T-38 Talon jets from Vance Air Force Base in Enid, Oklahoma, provided a flyover at the end of *The National Anthem*.

Erica Bread, a descendant of the Kiowa and Cherokee Nations, performed *The Star-Spangled Banner* virtually prior to the kick-off.

Uniontown Cemetery ground penetrating radar project

Analysis of the geophysical data collected at Uniontown Cemetery is ongoing. Dr. Blair Schneider presented some of the preliminary results to a few interested CPN

members on Oct. 9, and she also gave a plan for some future data collection to complement the initial data collected within the stone enclosure, which you can see in the photo accompanying this article as Grid 4, near the center of the cemetery. Dr. Schneider opened the meeting by saying, "This site has the most data of any site I have surveyed."

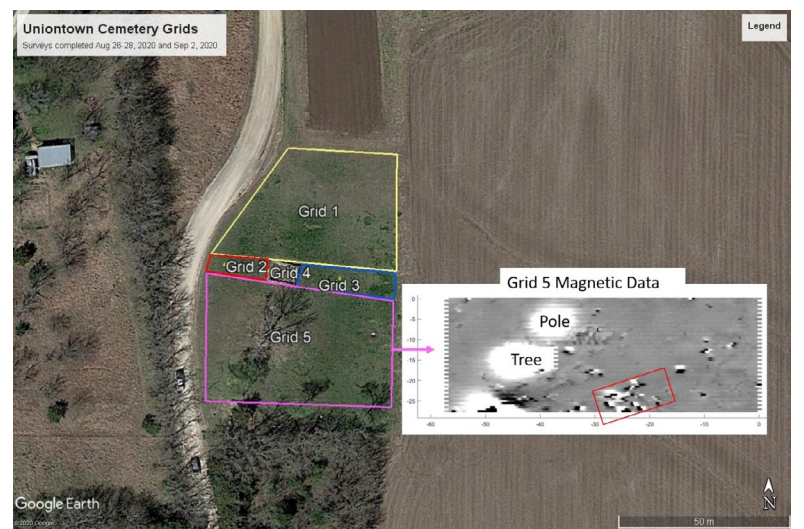
Five grids were set up for data collection, which are shown in a photo along with this column. Grids 1, 2 and 5 have produced several areas of interest for further analysis. An example of one of these areas of interest is included in the photo. This photo shows the magnetic data collected over Grid 5, which encompassed a large portion of the cemetery south of the stone enclosure. The large bright white spots, labeled "tree" and "pole," are areas where

data is missing. Highlighted in red is an area of magnetic anomalies that span a distance of 30 feet and appear to be in a rectangular shape. This anomaly is also seen in the GPR data. I will keep you updated as this project continues.

Email addresses

Recently, I have sent out several very important emails. If you are not receiving my emails, either I do not have your email address or what I have entered is incorrect or has been changed. If you would like to be added to my email list, simply send me an email at jon.boursaw@potawatomi.org.

Finally, it has been a pleasure to serve as your legislative representative this past year, and I am looking forward to the coming year with enthusiasm.



Aerial photo of Uniontown Cemetery shows the various grids.

Migwetch
(Thank you),

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Wetase Mkoh (Brave Bear)
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Other times: please call

District 5 – Gene Lambert



Bozho
(Hello),

Hopefully this article finds all of you in good health and in preparation of a beautifully prepared Christmas dinner — a family dinner that would put you all around a table enjoying each other's conversations and silliness since the last holiday.

Thanksgiving was trying, to be sure, with the continued pandemic we have all experienced and totally unlike the years past.

While the holidays this year may be like no other, let us give thanks for the simple fact we are still here and able to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Having said that, imagine what they went through and were only guided by a star and their faith in God. I talk about this every year, as I could not imagine having to go through that with the birth of one of my children. We must do the same and know everything happens in the Lord's time, not ours. That is an area I have to stay focused on, as I always want everything yesterday. So do we all. We know to do and then let go, knowing it is in the Creator's hands.

I do not want to leave out a very important reminder, given this is the end of the year. You all should be aware of the CARES Act funds available for each of you out there who qualify. That means if you have experienced

a loss of any kind related to the pandemic, you should seek assistance. I have heard many say they didn't want to apply as there were undoubtedly many out there who needed it more. I am saying that isn't the point, and this is not welfare.

We have been trying desperately to bring the awareness to everyone who paid more for groceries, needed additional supplies due to educational changes, elderly who need food supplies (which is retroactive back to March), difficulty with mortgage payments, inability to pay rent, loss of businesses revenue, or assistance for the disabled, etc. Please look at the website at potawatomi.org/cares or call 833-481-0638 to find out if you qualify. Timing is of the utmost importance! The program ends on December 30, and the federal government seizes the money back if we have funds left over.

Thank you to all those working on contacting our members to try and help get the word out. Let's see if we can help with checking in on our own relatives.

I wanted to acknowledge the holidays this year and remind everyone of the opportunities for assistance but also wanted to share some information I thought you might find interesting.

Did you ever wonder how our ancestors knew when to travel, when to plant, when to harvest and when to be still? I did and still do.

There was no technology, so they depended on each other, experience from prior years, and our elders, along with the sun and moon configurations.

I wanted to get this out so perhaps you could try and gage this upcoming year in coordination with God's creation, Mother Earth.

This all started when I saw a beautiful orange moon one morning as I was out walking. It was huge and the brightest

moon I had ever seen. We call it the Harvest Moon, I think.

Yes, a moon, it had not disappeared yet, and the sun wasn't out. I am a very early riser.

It inspired me to research the moon and how Native people utilized it.

I thought it would be fun and different to research and see what I could find.

Having done all my research on my own, I then decided I had better talk to Justin Neely, the CPN Department of Language director, as stories and beliefs vary from tribe to tribe. It wasn't as important to me to research general Native American ways but rather Potawatomi. Right!

Justin was so very helpful and responsive to my questions, so I have tried to organize it in this article. Thank you so much, Justin Neely. You are awesome.

From Justin:

"The moons often varied from area to area, since they often had to do with the events happening in an area. For example, strawberries ripen at different times in the south, so it might be May in some areas or June in others.

"Tribes gave names to each of the full moons to keep track of the passing year. The names are associated with the entire month until the next full moon occurs. Since there are 29 days on average (within a moon cycle), the moon will change from year to year. Our Native people were aware of their own time clock and responded in same."

Here are the months in English, Potawatomi and translation. I love it.

Kchemkogises — January (Big Bear Moon)

Mkogisos — February (Little Bear Moon)

Nmébnegises — March (Sucker Fish Moon) — I personally want to know more about this one.

Zisbaktokégises — April (Maple Syrup Moon) — The Potawatomi people are known for their maple syrup.

Gtegangises — May (Gardening Moon) — Time to plant our crops!

Démengises — June (Strawberry Moon) — We have always liked strawberries.

Aptenibnegises — July (Mid-Summer Moon) — In Arizona, this would mean stay indoors.

Minkégises — August (Blueberry Picking Moon) — You know what that means!

Zawbogyagises — September (first half, Leaves Turn Yellow Moon) — This is a beautiful time.

Watebgyagises — September (second half, Colored Leaves Moon)

Bnakwigises — October (Leaves Have Fallen Moon) — Full cycle, now wait for rebirth.

Giwségises — November (Hunting Moon) — Time to hunt for food and clothing.

Aptebongises — December (Partway Through Winter Moon)

The changes of the moon dominate the next experience. As you can see, they are pretty self-explanatory in terms of how it changes.

Now if you live in Arizona or the West, it would definitely vary in months. We must remember the Potawatomi were accustomed to the cold country, and I don't think there is a lot of that in Arizona, New Mexico or Nevada.

The moon also represents the rhythm of time throughout the cycle. The moon and its knowledge control the rivers and ocean waves within all the seasons.

Some also contend it represents human growth, as the new moon relates to infancy. The full moon represents new birth, and the lessening of the moon

represents the ending or a final sleep. It is about nature itself.

Of course, it also represents the woman and her gift of life. It has some sounds, as with the medicine wheel and the four directions.

Chief Seattle in 1854 said, "Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves."

Centuries of astrologists have depended on the moon and stars to foretell the future. Did you know that the White House was astrologically aligned? It is true. Search online for the Capitol and White House being aligned with the stars, just out of curiosity.

Most presidents had an astrologer during their time in office. The Reagans, for instance, wouldn't make a move until it had been astrologically cleared.

Donald Trump also called in a feng shui master prior to constructing and designing a large building.

So the moon and the stars have been directing lives and energy for many moons (pardon the pun).

The Native people instinctively or spiritually are attuned to Mother Earth in a way that has escaped the modern world for many.

So as we move through *Aptebongises* - December (Partway Through Winter moon), we can prepare ourselves for the upcoming year, even in the West.

There are many websites to go to as you learn more about the differences tribe to tribe.

Justin Neely and his department have organized the language website with numerous games, legends and stories of our people. Find more at potawatomi.org/language and cpn.news/stories.

During the meetings we have had up and until this year, I always tell the grandmothers, grandfa-

thers, moms and dads that you can go to the language section on the CPN website and find so much about our history to teach children our stories, culture and language. They will never know you didn't know it before either. They will remember they learned it from grandma or whoever. It is all laid out in such a beautiful way so the kids will enjoy it.

Additionally, there is a puppet cartoon that combines English and Potawatomi, put together in a story. It's called *Mtek Wigwam*, and it's available at cpn.news/jn. Just try it.

Before I go, I would last but not least like to know more about your personal family histories in your own words and

experiences. It would be nice to be able to write about specific families in our community. Others would love to hear them.

All the contact information for me is below, as always. And please, do let me hear from you. I have heard stories that made me cry and some

that make me laugh, but they are all your stories.

In the meantime, please *please* make this holiday special as no other. Find a way to celebrate as you have never before.

Do something everyone will remember.

Merry Christmas! I love and miss you all.

Eunice Imogene Lambert
Butterfly Woman
Representative, District 5
270 E Hunt Highway, Ste 229
San Tan Valley, AZ 85143
480-228-6569
euniceilambert@gmail.com

District 7 – Mark Johnson



Bozho nikanek
(Hello friends),

Well, I hope by the time you read this that winter

is here and you are warm by your lodge fire. I do not know about you, but I am ready for 2020 to go away. I am tired of all the pain that this year has brought to our nation and the people who I care about (you) — from pandemics, to fires, to governors who think that tribal governments should bend to their will. I hope that 2021 brings a collective sense of well-being to us all. To that end, a vast majority of your Tribal legislature has worked hard to make sure the CARES Act funding awarded to the Nation has been provided to you as best we can with the ever-changing rules from the U.S. government. Time is very short. Visit

potawatomi.org/cares to apply, if you haven't already. If you have family, send them this column and ask if they've applied. I will hate to see the money returned to the government, so apply; there is no income limit.

On Saturday, Oct. 24, Randy Payne and I hosted a Zoom meeting in place of our fall festival, which we promise to bring back as soon as we can be sure our elders will be safe. It was a good opportunity for those who joined to interact with and ask questions of Chairman Barrett and Secretary/Treasurer D. Wayne Trousdale. Many questions centered on the CARES Act benefits. While

not as many members as we had hoped for attended, I believe it was successful for the first try at this type of district meeting. All questions were answered, and those in attendance were thankful for the meeting.

December also marks the start of the election season in Tribal government. As someone who has watched or participated in our Tribal government for many years, I can tell you that we, as a Tribe, are absolutely blessed to have stable executive leadership whose vision has made our Tribe what it is today. That is not necessarily the norm in Indian Country; we are blessed.

Once again, I would like to say what an honor and privilege it is to serve you as your District 7 legislator. As always, give me a call, and I will be happy to work with you on any questions you may have or provide you with additional information you may need to access Tribal benefits that may be available to you.

Migwetch
(Thank you),

Mark Johnson,
Wisk Mtek (Strong as a Tree)
Representative, District 7
1565 Shaw Ave., Suite 202
Clovis, CA 93611
559-351-0078 cell
mark.johnson@potawatomi.org

District 11 – Lisa Kraft



Bozho
(Hello),

As if this year could not get any more bizarre, central and western Oklahoma suffered through a crazy ice storm Halloween week, knocking out power to more than 300,000 homes. Our neighborhood power was out for nine days.

Several mature trees that provided a canopy around the house were damaged, fell on the garage and back porch, and more were on the verge of crashing into the house. Several of my trees had to be cut down.

Freezing sleet fell for three days accompanied by high winds. All that blowing rain accumulated as ice on trees; many toppled onto homes, cars and power lines all over Oklahoma. OG&E had to call in 3,500 emergency workers to set new poles, lines and replace transformers. Almost 1,000 poles were damaged.

When I can, I plan to install solar panels and/or a wind turbine for my home so we don't have to go without electricity again this winter. I have totally taken electricity for granted. I think preparing for a bad winter



Cleanup from the October 2020 ice storm includes cutting down trees.

makes sense. In fact, I would like to see our Nation plan for any future power outages in our Tribal elder units so no one goes without heat again in freezing temperatures.

I pray that Thanksgiving is joyful and lots of fun memories are made with friends and family. I also wish you all many blessing this Christmas and a very happy new year. 2021 is going to be the best year yet; I have hope. Serving the citizens of the Citizen Potawatomi is a true honor for me.

As always, I am thinking Potawatomi.

Lisa Kraft
CPN District Legislator 11
Oklahoma At Large
Citizen Potawatomi Nation
Lisa@copperbearconsulting.com
Facebook: Lisa O'Connor Kraft

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Delia Zientek

A dedicated homemaker and wife of nearly 70 years, proud member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and devoted parishioner of St. Benedict's Catholic Church, Delia was beloved for her gentle smile and quick wit. A native of Shawnee, Oklahoma, she shared her musical talent as a band clarinetist and church pianist. Her father, Autwin "A.B." Pecore, was a former Tribal Chairman. Delia grew up around Tribal events and programming, even remembering that the Tribe's food distribution program operated from their front porch. As an adult, she opened her door, kitchen and heart to everyone.

Delia was preceded in death by parents, A.B. and Iness Logan Pecore; brothers, Anthony "Tony," Edward, and David Pecore; brothers-in-law, John Oglesby and Wayne New; and sister-in-law, Frankie Dickenson Pecore Bland; son, Andrew Zientek; nephews, Anthony "Tony" Pecore and Phillip Oglesby; and nieces, Lissia and Sherrie Pecore. She is survived by Julian Zientek, whom she married on Nov. 25, 1950; her sisters, Mary Alice New, Catherine Oglesby, and Peggy Pecore; brother-in-law, George Bland; sisters-in-law, Rebecca Scullaw Pecore and Hannelore Neuroth Pecore; children, Theresa and husband Daryl Talbot, Michael and wife Linda Poole Zientek, Cecelia and husband Mike Lenggenhager, Mary Elizabeth Zientek, Margaret Zientek, and Timothy Zientek; grandchildren, John and James Zientek, Chris and wife Janette Steele Lenggenhager, Kenny, Kevin and wife Sheila Keahnah Talbot, Tesia Zientek, and Joseph and wife Brittney Turner Zientek; and great-grandchildren, Dillyn, Jason, Brayden and Delia Talbot; Bryden and Myka Lenggenhager; and Blaine, Autwin, Emilia and Rosemary Zientek. She also lives on in her nieces and nephews, Greg and Tina Oglesby, Robert "Bobby" Pecore, Shannon Bland Sisson, Stacey Pecore Bennett, Chad and Jared Pecore, Linda Pecore Yott, Venus "Deanie" Pecore Hoffner, David Ryan and Jacob Pecore, Patience "Paige" and Payton Cooper, Odin Sanders, and John, Tom and Ron Pecore. She will be remembered fondly by longtime family friend, Marvin Vinson,

and countless others who called her "Mom" and "Grandma."

In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to St. Benedict's Food Pantry or Social Services.

Bill Cecil Powell

Bill Cecil Powell (Ogee Clan), of Round Rock, Texas, passed away on Oct. 22, 2020, at the age of 91 after a six-year battle with Alzheimer's disease.

He was born in Maud, Oklahoma, on May 13, 1929, to Mr. and Mrs. William Jefferson Powell of Clovis, New Mexico. He was the third of six children. He is survived by his wife of 68 years, Marilou of Round Rock; sons, Marc (Karen) Powell of Georgetown, Texas and John (Julie) Powell of Round Rock, Texas; daughter-in-law, Marcia Powell of Austin, Texas; seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, three sisters, daughter, Gaye Tenoso and son, Gary Powell. He is also survived by his brother, Jerry Powell of Shawnee, Oklahoma, and sister, Carole Passmore of Carrollton, Texas.

He attended elementary and secondary school in Clovis and graduated from Lubbock High School in Texas in 1947. He received a bachelor's in architecture and a commission as a second Lieutenant in the Regular Army from Texas Tech University in June 1952. He entered military service in August 1952 and served continuously until his retirement as Commandant of the U.S. Army Security Agency School in 1978. Throughout his career, he received numerous awards and decorations.

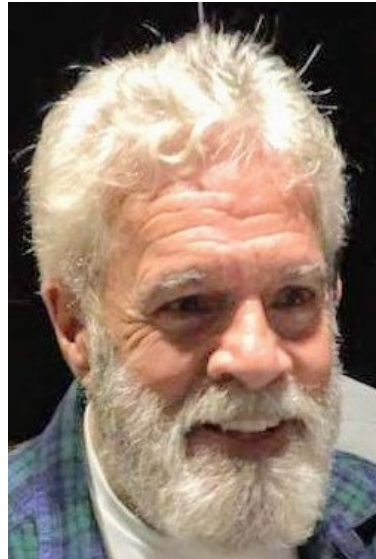
In 1959, he was selected for in-service graduate schooling and attended the University of Florida, graduating in 1961 with a bachelor's (with high honors) and Master of Science in building construction. He was a graduate of the Army Command and General Staff College, the Army Command Management School and the Army War College.

After military retirement in June 1978, he moved his family to Round Rock and worked as a

construction contract administrator. In 1984, he helped form the firm of Gill, Spencer, Powell Architects. After retiring in 1987, he spent the remainder of his years pursuing his love of golf, skiing, gardening, woodworking, building, grandfathering and pouring his time and energy into his expanding family.

He always liked to be active, have fun, and had a great sense of humor, which he maintained to the end.

In later years, his typical response when being greeted was "If I was any better, I couldn't stand myself!" Finally, he is better. He is fully restored and finally in the company of his Savior.

Barry Scott Branscum

Our beloved brother, uncle and friend, Barry Scott Branscum, passed away Oct. 21, 2020, at the age of 69 from complications of Lewy body dementia. Barry was born Jan. 23, 1951, in Shawnee, Oklahoma, to Truman T. and Joyce Baxter Branscum.

The family moved to Seminole in 1958, where Barry attended school, graduating from Seminole High School in 1969. He continued his education at Oklahoma State University, where he graduated in 1974 with a degree in political science. After working in the oil business for several years, Barry changed career paths, working in the health care field and Indian wound care.

Barry loved all sports, animals, politics, all things Native American, and most importantly, his family. He was extremely proud of his Native American heritage and was a proud member of the Peltier family of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation.

Barry was preceded in death by his parents. He is survived by his sisters, Leslie Helmey (David) of Katy, Texas, and Lisa Rumsey of Sapulpa, Oklahoma; niece, Brooke Demers (Dax) of Sapulpa; nephews, Matt Masilon of Hemet, California, and Trent Masilon of Oklahoma City; uncles, Johnny Branscum and W.R. Branscum of Shawnee; great-nephews, Xander

and Max Demers of Sapulpa; and numerous cousins and friends, especially long-time close friends Pam Shawn and Patricia Stevenson.

Fay Orr

Fay Orr (Dement), born on Dec. 19, 1932, went to our Heavenly Father on Sept. 9, 2020, at age 87. She was preceded in death by husband, Roy Orr; parents, Jack and Ethyl Dement; and siblings, Delores Waggoner, Carl Dement, Patricia Cooper and Jackie Dement. She is survived by son Roy Orr Jr., a granddaughter, and several nieces and nephews.

George David Miller

George David Miller was born on June 13, 1936, in Pawnee, Oklahoma. His father was Raymond Earl Miller and his mother, Olive Neddeau Miller. He had a sister, Patty, and two brothers, Gilbert and James.

He passed away from complications of cancer on Oct. 24, 2020.

He was a graduate of St. Gregory's High School and Central State College where he got his bachelor's in music.

He played upright bass and worked professionally with his wife Suzanne, a piano player, as jazz musicians/singers in Hollywood, west Los Angeles and all across the country.

He also worked as a graphic artist for Metropolitan Water District of Southern California in Los Angeles. He was a talented painter, and his paintings can be seen on his wife's Facebook page (Suzanne Miller).

His father, mother, sister Patty, and brothers, Gilbert and Jimmy,

all preceded him in death, and he is survived by his wife of 59 years, Suzanne, who lives in Pomona, California. There was a private get together with friends at his home in Pomona.

Paula Mae Wheeler

Paula Mae Wheeler, 82, of Emporia, Kansas, passed away on Oct. 21, 2020, at Midland Hospice House in Topeka, Kansas.

A funeral service was held on Nov. 6 at Maplewood Memorial Lawn Cemetery, Patio Garden.

Paula Mae Love was born in Arkansas City, Kansas, on July 18, 1938. She graduated from Ark City High School in 1956 and attended Arkansas City Junior College. Paula was a proud Tribal member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation.

Paula was married to James R. Kenney from 1957 to 1968. Later she married Wesley T. Wheeler (Wes), on July 1, 1977. They were married just shy of 39 years. Together, they enjoyed time with family, working in the yard, bike riding, fishing, canoeing, scenic drives and church activities.

Paula worked at Dolly Madison Bakery as a lead lady for 32 years. After retiring, Paula was a paraprofessional at Village Elementary School. She enjoyed going on walks, reading, working in the yard and spending time with her beloved dog Parker. She was actively involved in her church, Abundant Harvest, the bakery and Confectionery Union as well as other community organizations.

Paula is survived by her daughters, Julie Page and Suzann Kenney; her stepson, Brian Wheeler (Diane); her sister, Mary Emig; thirteen grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Wesley, and her son, Robert J. Kenney.

Submitting obituaries

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

hownikan@potawatomi.org

CPN burial assistance through Tribal Rolls

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

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

For more information, please call Tribal Rolls at 405-878-5835 or email cclark@potawatomi.org.