

# Sorenson gets up to speed, sets office hours



**BRIDGETT SORENSON,  
DIRECTOR, UNIT III**

On Aug. 18, Aaron, Denny, Catherine, Cecil and I were present at the Larry Grimes estate

auction where the tribe purchased the 26 acres with home, including the cemetery, for just under \$155,000. This was a great day for our members who have family buried there. I do think this should have been taken care of years ago when Larry approached the tribe. From there I went to enjoy the Hessel powwow. Lana, Catherine and their community did a great job putting it together.

On Aug. 22, Darcy, Denise, Denny, Joan and I met in Lansing for a lunch meeting and property tour with Lansing Mayor Virg Bernero, his staff and the Lansing casino developer, to discuss why Lansing is "the place to build our casino." Such reasons are the City of Lansing wants us there and are being very accommodating (unlike Greektown); Lansing Community College, Cooley Law School, Davenport College and

Michigan State University are nearby; the Capitol Building is a few blocks away; and both the temporary casino and the permanent casino will be connected to the Lansing Center (conventions) and there is easy access to and from the casino. I think that if we do move forward to build the casino, we should consider allowing 18 year olds to gamble, with all the colleges nearby.

Later that day, we met with United Tribes of Michigan to discuss the November Michigan ballot proposal to add eight non-Indian gaming casinos in Michigan. At the time of the meeting, it was not going to be placed on the ballot, and still may not, but we must be prepared to lobby against this as it will devastate Indian gaming and being able to provide services to our members. If this does appear on the

ballot, please ask everyone you know to vote "NO."

On Aug. 24, Keith, Aaron and I walked behind the Unit III elder's float in the first annual Heritage Parade as part of St. Ignace's Heritage Week. We had a great time and threw lots of candy. I was very pleased with the amount of participation and organization by Mary Beth Powers and the community and I look forward to this event growing in the years to come.

On Aug. 25, I attended the Rendezvous at the Straits PowWow along with Aaron. It was a beautiful day for a powwow, and extremely hot, especially for those in regalia. Daryl Brown and the community do a great job with this event. I do, however, miss the old days of the powwow being held downtown on the Museum of

Ojibwe Culture's property. It was easier to access and many people stopped by when they were driving through town.

We have been very busy trying to move the tribe forward, and it seems like every time we meet, 10 new things come up that we need to discuss or deal with. I suggested that we need to prioritize what items are the most important and take care of them first.

It looks like my office hours will be on Fridays from 9 to 11 a.m. at the old Lambert Center unless meetings or conferences come up that I need to attend. Please feel free to call or email me with any questions or concerns or to set up an appointment: bsorenson@saulttribe.net, (906) 643-2123 (office) or (906) 430-0536 (cell).